What is in a book?
A critical discourse analysis of the e-book debate between 2012 and 2016

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The main objective with this Master’s thesis is to, through a critical discourse analysis, explore the overall discourses on e-books appearing in general Swedish media. The texts chosen for analysis consist of articles and debate entries published in four of Sweden’s largest newspapers during a five-year period. The texts were examined using Norman Fairclough’s three-dimensional conception of discourse, which means that language use as communicative events were analyzed on the three levels of text, discourse practice, and social practice. The results from the analysis show that three dominating discourses can be identified in the material; the comparison discourse, the financial discourse, and the availability discourse. Within the comparison discourse, the e-book is in many ways positioned in comparison to the paper book. This occurs in several contexts, for instance in the contexts of pricing, access, and e-lending. A recurrent issue within the financial discourse is conveyed as the concern that e-book lending will become too big of a threat towards e-book sales or that e-lending will become too expensive for libraries. Within the availability discourse, the e-book is constructed in connection to democracy and free access to e-books is viewed as a condition for libraries as democratic institutions. The different discourses use different strategies to legitimize their point of views, and accordingly, achieve or maintain a hegemonic status. To achieve hegemony in this situation means gaining power over the presentation of the discussion about e-books, that is the power over the order of discourse.

E-books, E-book debate, Discourse analysis, Norman Fairclough, Public libraries, Publishers, Media
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1. Introduction

Berg (2014) describes the e-book as a fast train in slow motion. The e-book is a great structural transformation, but even so, it has gone through such a slow process that at least the discussions about it have been losing energy and momentum on the way. The e-book has immense potential but the development has gone much slower than expected (Axelsson, 2013).

As recently as just a few years ago, several analysts predicted that digital books would completely have replaced paper books by now. They had numbers and statistical data to support their predictions (Alter, 2015). According to the New York Times, the reading of e-books increased with 1260 percent between 2008 and 2010. The development seemed unstoppable. However, the same newspaper reported in 2015 that the number of e-books sold in the US that year surprisingly had decreased with more than 10 percent (Westrin, 2016). Readers mentioned that they more and more had gone back to reading paper books or that they are hybrid readers, that is, flips between e-books and printed books (Rainie & Perrin, 2015; Westrin, 2016). According to a survey conducted in 2016 by Nielsen Book Research UK, figures show that the number of e-book sales is declining, while sales of paper books are increasing. The results from the survey show that younger generations of people are the ones most responsible for this shift. Paper books are used by young people as a break from social media, smartphones and their overall busy digital life (Cain, 2017). This favoring towards the paper book seems to be one reason as to why the e-book no longer increases its number of readers.

Sweden has been experiencing a similar situation. From 2012-2014, the number of e-book readers doubled from 9 percent to 18 percent (Bergström & Höglund, 2015). In 2013, the quantity of e-book loans increased by 42 percent from the previous year and there were no signs to indicate that the development would begin slowing down. These rising curves show a cautious start followed by a fast growth, which depict great similarities with the growth usually found when it comes to innovations. Eventually, the growth normally starts to decrease (Bergström & Höglund, 2014). This is what has happened to the e-book. After the above-mentioned period, the e-book market seems to have halted (Bergström & Höglund, 2015). This plateau can for the e-book signify a time-out in the development curve, which could start to pick up speed again in case some of the circumstances change. One of these circumstances can for instance be to lower the costs for buying an e-book (Bergström & Höglund, 2016), which today are closely the same as for buying a printed book (Axelsson, 2013). Another development can be implementing a different model for e-book lending used by the public libraries, which would mean more available e-books and less restrictions on the number of titles that can be borrowed at the same time by the same person. To increase the publication of e-books, both by publication houses and through self-publishing, could also lead to an increase in the reading of e-books (Bergström & Höglund, 2016).

1.1 Problem description

The book market is now subjected to a similar process like the one that both the music industry and the newspaper world have undergone. The original product, the printed book, is changing its character as all media becomes more digital (Bergström & Höglund, 2016). The digitization of books is certainly changing the book market and the continuing development of the e-book engages publishers, libraries, booksellers, authors, and other stakeholders as well (Balas, 2010; Bergström & Höglund, 2016; Nilsson, Maceviciute, Wilson, Bergström, & Höglund, 2015). In
the spring of 2011, the debate revolving the prerequisites and obstacles for the e-book, along with the involved stakeholders’ differentiated standpoints on the issues, was intensified. This can be referred to as the e-book debate (Kungliga Biblioteket, 2011).

There is limited research done on e-books and what consequences working with and providing digital media have for these stakeholders. Although, a few things that can be ascertained are that libraries struggle to find a balance between the demand for e-books and the costs for providing them. Publishers feel apprehensive about being able to uphold their role as a distributor of books, which is made easier through e-books, as well as they fear that unregulated access to e-books will lead to a decline in profits (Nilsson et al., 2015). Libraries have gained a strong position on the e-book market and this advancing exhibits a difficult situation for booksellers as libraries offer consumers free of charge and nearly unlimited access to e-books (Axelsson, 2013). E-books attract new readers, which although positive, results in higher availability and functionality costs for publishers and libraries. E-books can help authors gain greater exposure, but self-publishing and other forms of e-book distribution can also complicate the author’s right to royalties (Rønning, Slaatta, Torvund, Larsen, & Colbjørnsen, 2012).

These findings show that the e-book holds an uncertain place on the market and that the world of e-books both involves and affect many different actors, in different ways. This has caught my interest and led me to investigate in what ways e-books are being displayed in different contexts and how the different stakeholders’ perspectives on the matter are being illustrated. This interest has further motivated me to explore how these issues are displayed and what discourses about e-books can be discerned in articles published in Swedish newspaper media.

One of the reasons why I am choosing newspaper articles as source material, is because I am interested in the different roles this media serves. Media function as channels for entertainment and seek to keep people politically and socially informed, but they can also be said to have an ideological function as they contribute in reproducing social standards. This ideology is often implicitly embedded in the everyday use of language that both journalists and recipients take as given (Fairclough, 1995). With the media having an ideological function, the ideological elements that appear in medial texts are particularly important to subject to critical scrutiny (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

The study will be conducted using Norman Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis. A discourse analysis connects action and language, as well as it diverges the distinction between what is true and what is an idea (Bergström & Boréus, 2012). This means that when taking a discursive approach, the researcher does not determine which perception of reality that is true, but instead aims to emphasize the different discourses that exist. The purpose with a discourse analysis is neither to examine what certain writers are saying in their texts, but instead it is what is not explicitly said in the text but implicitly understood in it that is of interest. Through a discourse analysis, it is possible to access discourses and patterns to which a specific text is part of (Sahlin, 1999). A more thorough description of discourse analysis and Fairclough’s approach will be presented in the upcoming theoretical and methodological part of the thesis.

What motivates me to use discourse analysis as theoretical and methodological approach is that through a discourse analysis, it is possible to display what facts that are taken for granted. By visualizing given truths and certainties, it becomes possible to subject them to discussions and criticisms, which in turn is a foundation for being able to create changes in society (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).
1.2 Goal and objectives

The objective with this Master’s thesis is to, through a critical discourse analysis, explore the overall discourses on e-books appearing in Swedish newspaper media. By studying the e-book debate I aim to gain knowledge about the dominant notions about e-books and the concerns related to e-books voiced in Swedish newspaper media.

The expectations on the e-book and the discussions as to whether the e-book boom is already here, or if it will ever arrive, have long been debated and are still valid questions. My contribution to this area of research is relevant as I find it important to display that the debate is still ongoing. By increasing the visibility for the issues concerning the e-book, I aim to show that there are still several changes that need to be done if we wish to push the e-book market forward.

By using discourse analysis as methodological and theoretical approach, I also intend to identify how the e-book is positioned among other forms of media as well as to understand the conversations that reflect and construct the e-book. Most previous research about the e-book debate have focused on the e-book issues in relation to public libraries. I however intend not to limit my objective. Therefore, I will investigate if the context of public libraries dominates, or if it is another context that is more prominent. To achieve the purpose, the following research questions have been formulated:

- What different actors are involved in the e-book debate? How are the different actors’ standpoints portrayed in newspaper media in Sweden?
- What dominant discourses can be identified in the e-book debate?
- Is the discursive practice being repeated or is it changing during 2012-2016? What constitutes that repeating or change?

1.3 Limitations

To provide a consistent analysis of the current e-book debate I have in this Master’s thesis chosen to make some required limitations.

I am solely focusing on e-books which can be read on a screen. Other forms of electronic media such as electronic journals, audiobooks and DAISY, which are digital talking books for people with reading disabilities (Daisy, 2017), will not be included in the term e-book.

My research area is limited to Sweden and the Swedish e-book market. Therefore, the e-book situation and the expansion of e-book reading in other countries are not included in the analysis.

When investigating e-books in connection to libraries I am referring to public libraries. I therefore exclude other forms of libraries such as school libraries, research libraries, and university libraries. I believe including these other library forms as well can result in professional and interesting perspectives on the issue, but to limit the area to only include public libraries was a conscious decision as a large part of the e-book debate revolves in particular around public libraries, and this perspective was the first to capture my interest.

The articles selected for the discourse analysis are limited to debate entries and news articles written in Swedish newspapers during 2012-2016. The debate concerning e-books started to intensify in 2011, but after quickly reading through articles published this year and the upcoming year, I claim that 2012 was the year the debate really got its attention in the newspapers. Because the debate was especially intense in 2012, I selected this year to be the
starting point for the sample, and articles up until and during 2016 were selected to provide an up-to-date perspective on the e-book debate. Overall, I found it necessary to narrow the time-period to be able to give a coherent perspective on the e-book issues.

1.4 Outline of the thesis

After this disposition chapter, a literature review of earlier research and a background to relevant events and investigations are provided. This chapter is followed by a theoretical and methodological chapter which contains a description of the theoretical starting points as well as the method approach which this thesis is based on. The theory assumes a critical discourse analytical perspective and builds on Norman Fairclough’s concepts of discourse and methods for discourse analysis. After this chapter, the material selection chapter is presented where I describe my sample of newspaper articles and debate entries. Then, a thematic presentation of the articles follows where I present the content of the articles pertaining to my source material. In connection to this chapter comes the analysis and discussion that is divided into subheadings formulated based on identified discourses. In the end of this chapter, an analysis of discursive changes in relation to social practice is presented. Lastly, a conclusion of the discussion and a summary of the thesis is given.

2. Literature review

In this chapter, I will first present a background to relevant information revolving the development of the e-book and different e-lending models. The background is useful in order to get a better understanding of the content of the selected articles which will be analyzed in the discussion chapter of the thesis. The second part of the literature review will cover other previous research, such as articles, papers and theses written about discourse analysis or the e-book debate. With this section I am providing a foundation to my area of research, as well as I am displaying what information my thesis is building on.

2.1. The e-book – History and Definition

The first electronic book is said to have been created in 1971 when Michael S. Hart used a mainframe computer to type in the text of the Declaration of Independence. The same year, Hart founded Project Gutenberg, a project with the purpose of developing a free public library of 10,000 e-books. In 2003, this mission was achieved when the 10,000th e-book was added to the Project Gutenberg collection (Hane, 2004). Project Gutenberg is today considered to be the oldest digital library and comprises mainly books for which the copyright has expired (Lebert, 2005).

A clear and universal definition of what constitutes an e-book seems however to be lacking. Suarez and Woudhuysen (2013) define an e-book as a text- and image-based publication which is produced and published in a digital form and can be read on a computer or on other digital devices. Steiner (2012) provides a similar description of what an e-book is,
but also underlines that there are some disagreements when it comes to the definition of the concept. In certain contexts, the definition includes that the publication also must be published as a physical book for it to be considered as an e-book. The larger publishers most often release an e-book after or at the same time as a printed edition of the same book.

A report concerning the entry of the e-book and the difficulties revolving that introduction was in 2011 conducted by The National Library of Sweden. In that report, the definition of e-books describes as problematic and elusive due to rapid changes in the technical development. Digital techniques influence practically everything in our everyday lives, which includes the book. Many written pieces are now created in a digital environment, and libraries, as well as, publishers are continuously digitizing analogue material. This difference between digitally born material and the convergence of material contributes to the troubles in defining the e-book. The report does provide one commonly pronounced definition of the term where the e-book describes as an electronic version of a printed book intended to be read with means of a computer, tablet, smartphone, or other portable reading devices. In addition to one of these tools, a piece of software is also required for the e-book to be readable. These components need to be compatible with the file format of the e-book. Problems with the compatibility arise when suppliers use different formats when producing an e-book (Kungliga Biblioteket, 2011).

Since the e-book is a digital file, it is more exposed to the risks of copying than the printed book. In order to protect e-books from illegal dissemination and copying, the e-books are usually protected with DRM (Digital Rights Management) (Kungliga Biblioteket, 2011). DRM involves applying technological restrictions that will avert users from using the digital content in ways that distributors or publishers want to prevent (Walters, 2014; van Arnhem & Barnett, 2014). The restrictions can for instance be used to limit the number of users who can lend one single e-book at the same time (Price, 2014) or they affect how long a loan taker can borrow an e-book (Dougherty, 2010).

To define an e-book in a financial or legal context becomes problematic when it comes to VAT rates. Since 2002, the Swedish government subsidized the sales of magazines and books. This support means that books only have a VAT rate of 6 percent, unlike the regular 25 percent which applies to most other products for sale (Fleischer, 2011). This reduced VAT rate does however not apply to e-books. A printed book has 6 percent VAT but the same book in an e-book format has 25 percent (Axelsson, 2013). These different VAT rates show that the content does not define what constitutes as a book and what does not (Fleischer, 2011).

2.2 E-book distributors – Publishers, Elib, and Publit

There are over one thousand different book publishers in Sweden today. Most of them are smaller ones operating as sole traders (Axelsson, 2013). In the year 2000, the four largest publishers in Sweden got together and established the company and service platform called Elib (Axiell Media, 2016a; Kungliga Biblioteket, 2011). Elib is mainly an e-book distributor that provides all the technical solutions necessary for a reliable and secure production and distribution of e-books (Axiell Media, 2016a). The company supplies the service of converting a file into ePUB or PDF, which are e-book readable formats (Svedjedal, 2012). In addition to supplying the entire distribution chain of e-books from publishers to retailers (Axiell Media, 2016a) such as Adlibris and Bokus, Elib has since 2001 also offered a platform for library loans and business models for every public library wishing to join the platform (Kungliga Biblioteket, 2011). The majority of all public libraries quickly acceded to Elib and the company is still holding a dominant position for e-book loans among the public libraries. From the beginning, Elib became a channel for e-book loans rather than a channel for e-book sales.
Elib was long seen as the one and only imaginable distributor of e-books to libraries, but during 2012 other companies started to establish themselves on the book market (Svedjedal, 2012). One of these is the company Publit. Publit is mainly a producer of e-books, but is also a distributor of e-books through iTunes, online bookstores, and the National Library (Kungliga Biblioteket, 2011). In 2013, Publit partnered with the IT company and system provider Axis Group AB and together they created their own lending platform for e-books called Atingo. The goal with this new aggregator of e-books was to challenge Elib's current model for e-book loans (Strömberg, 2013). In 2015, it was announced that Axis Group AB had bought 70 percent of Elib (Axii, 2015) and, as a result, Atingo was closed down (Laxgård, 2015). Elib is today owned together by Axis Group AB and Bonniers, Norstedts, Natur & Kultur and Piratförlaget, which are the four largest publishers that first founded the company (Axii Media, 2016a).

E-book loans now corresponds to about two percent of all library loans (Bergström & Höglund, 2016). Elib distributes hundreds of thousands book titles from 650 different publishers to retailers and about 300 libraries. As the leading distributor, as well as producer, of e-books in Scandinavia, Elib has since the start distributed approximately 9 million e-book- and audiobook loans to libraries (Axii Media, 2016b).

2.3 General acquisition and e-lending models

Petersen (2011) explains that it basically exists three fundamental models used for e-book loans. For libraries, the access-based model involves paying for access to an entire e-book collection. Normally this model uses flat rates where the library pays the same amount of money for every e-book loan, irrespective of the number of e-books that are borrowed (Rønning et al., 2012). The overdrive-model, also known as the ownership model (Petersen, 2011), means that the library buys an e-book file and then treats the digital copy the same way as physical book (Skagegard, 2012) where only one person, or a limited number of loan takers, at a time can borrow the book (Kungliga Biblioteket, 2011). To be able to lend multiple copies simultaneously, the library must purchase more digital copies of the e-book. A usage-based model involves payment per loan. Positive aspects with this model are for publishers that they receive larger payments when the usage of e-books increases, and thereby they are somewhat compensated for a potential decrease in e-book sales. For several libraries, the usage-based model means that the price per loan the library pays will decrease as the number of loans grows, thereby encouraging libraries to further promote e-book loans. These models can be combined in several different ways and publishers, e-book distributors, and libraries may choose to go with a completely different solution (Petersen, 2011).

2.4 E-book pricing and lending models – then and now

Swedish public libraries have since 2001 offered e-book loans through Elib. The libraries have not had the possibility of buying separate titles but instead they have subscribed on a complete book catalogue (Fleischer, 2011). The business model Elib first, and for a long time after that, offered allowed for an unlimited amount of simultaneous loans of the same book and complete accessibility to all titles at a flat rate, which means that all loans and every title had the same cost (Kungliga Biblioteket, 2011; Svedjedal, 2012). The determined sum was 20 SEK where 10 SEK went to Elib, and the other 10 SEK went to the publisher of the book. This
compensation was based on the costs for purchasing, administer, and lending a physical book (Axelsson, 2013). The benefits for this business model are mainly that no one needs to reserve an e-book and wait for it to be available (Fleischer, 2011), and that it is positive for e-books with a low level of demand as the library does not need to weigh the purchase cost against the popularity of said e-book (Kungliga Biblioteket, 2011). The disadvantages on the other hand are that the libraries have no control over their selection and expenses (Fleischer, 2011), and that the costs for loans of popular e-books can be extremely high (Axelsson, 2013; Kungliga Biblioteket, 2011).

The libraries got evidence of the latter in 2012 when it was discovered that the biography of Zlatan Ibrahimovic had been downloaded more than 13,000 times from the libraries, while online book retailers such as Adlibris only had sold about 5,000 copies of the book. After these events and when the public interest for e-books first began to grow (Fleischer, 2011) the libraries realized that what they were paying for every e-book loan was not financially sustainable and wished to bisect the compensation. The publishers and Elib on the other hand did not (Axelsson, 2013; Kungliga Biblioteket, 2011; Svedjedal, 2012). However, publishers began to view the high percentage of library loans as a threat towards the commercial book market (Augustsson, 2012; Svedjedal, 2012), and started to create obstacles to suppress the demand (Axelsson, 2013). In some occasions, they began to release the e-book later than the printed version of the same book or sometimes they inserted waiting periods for new e-books where the e-book would not reach the library until months after the print release (Augustsson, 2012; Svedjedal, 2012). To reduce their e-lending costs, libraries responded by inserting restrictions, some by deciding a maximum amount of e-book loans for the entire library, and some by limiting the number of loans for the individual loan taker (Svedjedal, 2012). These limitations contributed in putting restraints on the e-book usage (Augustsson, 2012).

2.4.1 Stockholm Public Library, Publit, and Ordfront

In 2012, Elib was the only distributor for e-books that public libraries in Sweden could use. One rather large publishing house, Ordfront, decided not to distribute their e-books through Elib which meant that no libraries could offer their borrowers any of Ordfront’s titles. To solve this, Stockholm Public Library formed an agreement with Ordfront. Since Ordfront did not want to use Elib as a distributor they used Publit instead, which also charged (Hjerpe, 2014). The agreement involved a dual-licensing model where Stockholm Public Library would finance the digitization costs and in return they would get unlimited access to both frontlist and backlist titles according to a differentiated pay-per-loan model (Mount, 2014). This means that Ordfront called off any embargos on new titles and that the cost for lending an e-book would decrease from 25 SEK for a new title to 15 SEK when the title got four months older (Westlund, 2014). When the aggregator Atingo was launched in 2013 (Strömberg, 2013) several libraries using Elib decided to join Atingo instead (Wilson, 2016). Atingo offered the libraries a pay-per-loan platform and the publishers a system through which they could adjust the prices of individual e-book titles as they saw fit (Mount, 2014). This model appealed to several libraries and Elib got a competitor (Wilson, 2016).

2.4.2 Elib introduces a new e-lending model

The arrival of Publit and Atingo as a competing platform for e-lending, together with increasing dissatisfaction from the library sector regarding Elib’s access-based e-book lending model caused Elib to introduce a new licensing model in 2014. The new model offers two different options for e-book lending, pay-per-loan or license-based. The pay-per-loan option is a
modified version of the previous access-based model. Publishers can now set their own prices for individual titles which means that instead of the fixed rate of 20 SEK per loan, publishers decide what different titles will cost (Mount, 2014). All titles from the publishers are available without first being put in quarantine and the price varies between new and older titles. Libraries thus pay on a sliding scale where a recently published title usually have a high price and then as older it gets, the lower becomes the price (Wilson, 2016). This new pay-per-loan model has led to a large price gap where a new best-seller may cost over 10 times as much as an older title (Mount, 2014). This new flexible model also allows for libraries to choose what specific e-book titles they wish to take in as well as they like before have the ability to limit lending to what they can afford in accordance with their budget. The license-based option means that the libraries pay in advance for a certain amount of loans. There are two different license models, one which includes a fixed fee for unlimited number of loans and one with a fixed fee for a determined number of loans where, for instance, the library pays 100 SEK for 50 loans of a certain e-book (Wilson, 2016).

2.5 SKL

In 2013, the involved parties in the e-book debate started to consider the possibilities for a more dynamic pricing. Svedemyr (2014) concludes that it then was decided that SKL (Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting) would take on the role as a central negotiating agent and work towards making e-books available in libraries according to a new and improved business model. The starting point for SKL’s work towards reaching an agreement about e-books in public libraries was based on the notion that many e-books are either too expensive for libraries to lend or they are not available for lending at all. SKL identified the problematic situation and asked for a more differentiated access-based lending model where all e-books will be available for the libraries to acquire immediately when they are published. The same e-book can be borrowed an unlimited amount of times to as many users as the library chooses. SKL also felt that a differentiated pricing in relation to the book title’s age and character will provide excellent conditions for the continuing development of a commercial e-book market (SKL, 2013). To solve the problems and provide public libraries with better capabilities to lend e-books, SKL managed in November 2014 to reach an agreement with six different publishers (SKL, 2016). The publishers who decided to be a part of this agreement are Natur & Kultur, Modernista, Virvelvind Publishing, Humlan Publishing, Bokförlaget ETC, and Melker Publishing. The engagement involves e-book lending at public libraries and applies to all e-book titles provided by the publishers (SKL, 2015).

Together with the few publishers, SKL developed a business model that Elib started to offer the libraries. The price for every e-book was added according to a staircase model where the cost for lending an e-book decreased as the title became older. The purpose with this setup was to help the libraries keep better track of their costs and to lower the average price for lending an e-book (SKL, 2016). The e-books from the six different publishers are available for the libraries according to the following staircase model:

- Titles which are 0-3 months old will cost a maximum of 30 SEK/loan
- Titles which are 4-24 months old will cost a maximum of 20 SEK/loan
- Titles which are older than 24 months will cost a maximum of 13 SEK/loan
The agreement also means that no titles will no longer be quarantined, and the publishers will adjust the prices for all their e-books according to the staircase model. The prices in the model are maximum prices, which means that the publishers may choose a lower starting price than 30 SEK for a new e-book. It is voluntary for any public library to use this agreement for as long time as they wish to without signing any particular contract (SKL, 2015).

2.6 Evaluation of the new e-book agreements

Elib has evaluated the new lending model which was introduced in 2014 and can now share some of the experiences learned from the libraries and publishers. Some of the objectives with the more flexible pricing of e-books were to make it easier for libraries to get access to new titles, which during the old model usually were quarantined, and to allow publishers to set a reasonable price on an e-book that makes distributing them sustainable. The evaluation shows that the libraries’ supply has increased substantially since implementing the new model. The libraries seem satisfied with the fact that they according to the new model also have the opportunity to actively control their e-book supply. The negative side with an access-based model is that it is extremely hard to predict potential costs as the libraries cannot decide how many users will want to lend a certain e-book. Therefore, libraries have ever since they started offer e-book loans set limitations, both for how many books one specific borrower may lend, and how many books in total a library can afford to lend during a certain time-period. The introduction of the new lending model has made these restrictions more flexible. During just over the two years since the new model was adopted, the libraries’ average costs for e-book lending have stopped increasing, and there are significantly fewer libraries who reach their overall limit of how many e-books they can afford to lend. There are however still room for improvements in this area. Elib’s evaluation also shows that both publishers and libraries call for more distinct criteria for how e-books are being priced. Since publishers often set different prices, it becomes unclear what prices the libraries should expect. Perhaps the utmost important results from the new model show that the rigid boundaries found in the old model have been dissolved. Unlike a strict e-lending model which contains only one option as to what an e-book should cost, how the libraries should get access to an e-book, and how they should pay for it, this new e-lending model provides an agreement that encourages further cooperation and makes it possible to build even more flexible solutions in the future. All public libraries in Sweden have now used the new e-lending model. This does however not mean that the work is done. A digital business model is never finished as it constantly needs to keep on developing to meet users’ changing expectations as well as it needs to evolve together with new technical solutions (Axiell Media, 2016c).

In the spring of 2016, SKL also evaluated their new business model by conducting a detailed study of the effects the agreement had had on the libraries’ costs. They also conducted a survey study where those responsible for library issues in the different municipalities in Sweden answered questions about how they experienced the effects of the agreement. Approximately 80 percent of the asked municipalities answered the survey. The results from the survey revealed that the participants consider the major benefit from the agreement to be that the libraries got better control over their costs. The largest negative aspect on the other hand was that the respondents thought the agreement did not apply to enough number of publishers, and consequently not enough titles available on the book market. Several municipalities raised concerns that the libraries’ e-book supply reduces if they follow the principles of the agreement on all titles in their digital library. According to the agreement, the
maximum cost for lending an e-book is 30 SEK, but several of the publishers which SKL did not make an agreement with have much higher prices than that (SKL, 2016).

2.7 Other previous research about e-book issues

To gain further relevant knowledge for the analysis, I have read through previous scientific papers, research articles, and Master’s theses published within my area of research. One thing I believe is quite certain after reading through earlier research about e-books, is that the e-book as a product engages several different actors. As for instance Hjarvard and Helles (2015), Rønning et al. (2012), and Zubac and Tominac (2014) proclaim, the digitization of books includes every step in the process, from production to consumption, involving bookshops, libraries, how publishers manage distribution, and the way we consume books. The e-book has found its way into becoming a natural part of the book chain (Zubac & Tominac, 2014), and as Sieghart (2013) puts it “The arrival of the digital book has already profoundly changed the world of publishing” (p. 6).

2.7.1 E-books, publishers, and public libraries

There have been a few studies written about e-books in Sweden and Europe, many of them focusing on issues revolving e-lending through public libraries (Böttger, 2013; Maceviciute, 2016; Matulionyte, 2016; Wallin & Maceviciute, 2014), but research on the subject also identifies the publishers as important actors in the situation revolving e-books in Sweden (Hjarvard & Helles, 2015; Nilsson et al., 2015; Rønning et al., 2012). One specific characteristic that separates the Swedish book market from the English-speaking one, is that the e-books primarily reach the readers through the libraries (Bergström & Höglund, 2014). The libraries stand for approximately 85 percent of all distributed e-books (Bergström & Höglund, 2016; Wischenbart, 2016) and almost 90 percent of the publishers’ revenues for e-books comes from library loans (Bergström & Höglund, 2016). A commercial platform for e-books where consumers buy e-books does practically not exist in Sweden. This may seem odd since Sweden usually is an early adopter of digital trends. Sieghart (2013) explains that the reason behind this lack of a genuine market for e-book sales to consumers is due to a combination of the libraries’ superior role and very high retail prices for an e-book.

The relationship between publishers and public libraries has since the initiation of the e-book been troublesome (Böttger, 2013; Sieghart, 2013; Wilson & Maceviciute, 2016). This applies primarily to the English language book market where book publishing is mainly performed by a few publishing houses. Findings from a survey of publishers in Sweden, Croatia, and Lithuania and from a report about these publishers’ feelings towards global e-book publishing show that publishers have not been very willing to make e-books accessible through public libraries (Wilson & Maceviciute, 2016). Publishers fear that e-lending will lead to a decrease in e-book sales and an increased risk of e-book piracy. The publishers’ reluctance to e-book lending has been demonstrated by for instance pricing e-books higher than printed books or putting embargo on new releases (Matulionyte, 2016; Wilson & Maceviciute, 2016). Publishers even have the ability to withdraw a title from a library’s e-book supply if the publisher considers that an e-book is becoming so popular among library users that there is risk of losing too much revenue from sales (Zubac & Tominac, 2014). Matulionyte (2016) expresses that such exerted control from publishers can be understood since free access e-lending, without any restrictions, would mean that no one would buy an e-book and subsequently, it would
weaken and undermine the still evolving e-book market. From a library’s opinion, e-lending functions as a way of further encouraging a strong reading culture that will enable a steady flow of e-book sales directly from producer to consumer. Publishers cannot quite disagree with this argument. So even though many publishers exhibit a rather conservative attitude towards e-lending, they still acknowledge public libraries as a significant distribution channel for e-books (Hjarvard & Helles, 2015) as e-lending allows users to freely discover the world of e-books and consequently, the distribution and the consumption of e-books will increase (Matulioniute, 2016). Still staying on the topic of e-lending, from earlier research, where accentuated opinions and concerning the e-book situation can be found, it is possible to draw the conclusion that one of the main issues in the e-book debate has for a long time considered to be the libraries’ economic agreement with Elib. According to Maceviciute and Wilson (2013), e-book provision through Elib represents an efficient way for publishers to distribute e-books, however, the agreements offered by Elib is problematic in relation to libraries’ information freedom, user accessibility, and reading promotion. The agreement with Elib also makes it difficult for libraries to budget and predict their costs. This financial perspective is discussed in connection to libraries’ finances, which are strained due to the costs for e-book lending, and the publishers’ level of economic compensation (Michnik, 2015; Wilson, 2016).

2.7.2 E-books, authors, and booksellers

In addition to libraries and publishers, the perspectives of other stakeholders, such as authors’ and booksellers’, have also been given attention in previous research about e-book issues. Böttger (2013), Renton (2016), and Steiner (2015) express a concern that e-books and digital publishing threaten publishers, libraries, physical bookshops as well as online book retailers. The apprehensiveness is based on the fear that a lot of authors may in the future start to publish their own books, without any help from publishers, which will force small publishing houses to close their businesses, booksellers will not manage to survive, and libraries will have difficulties in being able to take the costs. However, there seems to be a rather ambivalence among the different stakeholders towards how big of a threat self-publication actually poses and what effects it may have on their businesses. According to a study by Nilsson et al. (2015) where they surveyed publishers’ reactions toward self-publishing, the majority of the respondents believed that self-publishing has little impact on the publishing industry and that it does not threaten their current market position. Self-publication functions more as a way for new authors to be discovered. And what is the general opinion about e-books and self-publication among authors? Hjarvard and Helles (2015) describe that most authors have little interest and comprehension in publishing their work in an e-book format and that they still perceive themselves as authors of paper books, the e-book is merely a by-product. The same opinions can be found in the analysis made by Nilsson et al. (2015) from their interviews with Swedish authors. Other inferences from this study are that many authors view self-publication and e-book publishing as mainly a chance to spread their written works, using digital channels which through they can reach many readers at a lower cost. The motivation lies in the opportunity of spreading their works, not in selling e-books. Nilsson et al. (2015) have gathered information concerning Swedish booksellers’ attitudes towards e-books. Survey results from their conducted study show that many booksellers do not view e-books as significantly important for the level of book sales in the bookshops. The explanation to this is that they have not experienced any particularly demand from customers and therefore e-books do not have any great effect on the sales in bookstores. However, several of the booksellers also believe that most e-books soon will reach consumers from online sales directly from the author or publisher. This conviction together with the belief that the e-book will increase its popularity within the next few years, may result in a decline in book sales in bookstores.
2.7.3 E-books and users

Recent studies also show an interest toward analyzing e-books through a user perspective (Bergström & Höglund, 2014; Soules, 2009). This approach also includes studies focusing on user’s attitudes toward the e-book and how they experience using and reading an e-book (De Fino & Lo, 2011; McLure & Hoseth, 2012). Earlier studies have shown that library habits have a great impact on the e-book. People who are frequent library visitors, especially those who usually do their library matters online, tend to read e-books to greater extent than those who do not (Bergström & Höglund, 2014). Bergström and Höglund (2016) have through different surveys measured people’s perceptions of the e-book. They have measured this with emphasis on a cognitive perspective focusing on functions, and through an affective perspective where the focus was on mapping emotions toward the e-book. Regardless which perspective that was used to measure attitudes, the results showed a strong support for the printed book. Several other studies about e-books and format preferences have also disclosed that many users prefer the printed book over the e-book (Croft & Davis, 2010; McLure & Hoseth, 2012; Walton, 2008; Van der Velde & Ernst, 2009), whereas other studies reveal that users have an interest towards both printed books and e-books (Jamali, Nicholas, & Rowlands, 2009). According to Bergström and Höglund (2016), this support for printed books can mainly be derived from the perception of the book as a cultural product which not easily can be replaced by a digital product. Many readers do not find reading a book on a computer screen appealing, and even though portable e-book readers are being produced and spread along the world, not many people are eager to accept those (Bawden & Robinson, 2012). Sweden has plenty of portable reading tools for e-books, such as tablets, smartphones and e-readers. But no particular model has yet made the impact enough to become market-driven (Svedjedal, 2012). Fleischer (2011) explains that according to neurologists, words on paper leave a bigger impression in the memory than words on a computer. However, it is not always certain that more or deeper memories are better.

2.7.4 E-book values

Other research revolving the e-book have also examined how the values of the e-book are discussed (Böttger, 2013; Littman & Slipigni Connaway, 2004). By analyzing articles in library and book journals, Norman (2015) concludes that public libraries and the book industry have different views on the e-book and thus also treats it differently. The public libraries are mainly focused on the literary value of the e-book and in providing democratic access to all sorts of media to everyone, whereas the book industry see the economic value as prominent (Böttger, 2013). This difference in assessing the e-book value can be one explanation as to why public libraries and the book market have difficulties in finding a solution to e-book lending. The e-book has also other values than the monetary and the literary, namely the sentimental value and the format value. The value of the format is connected to how the e-book is defined. There are different definitions of what an e-book is and this makes it problematic when the book market and the public libraries are trying to agree on a functioning e-lending model appropriate for both parties (Norman, 2015). According to Svedjedal (2012), customers likely view the difference between owning and lending an e-book as much smaller than the corresponding difference when it comes to a printed book. Not many people choose to buy an e-book if its unique benefits, such as portability, accessibility, and searchability, are just as penetrable with a borrowed e-book as they are with a purchased one.
2.7.5 Value Added Tax (VAT)

“Why are e-books a problem for libraries? Because an e-book is not actually a book” (Böttger, 2013:3).

As previously mentioned, the digital format of a book is not included in the tax law’s definition of a book and the e-book is therefore coated with 25 percent VAT instead of 6 percent as for paper books (Snickars, 2012). This difference in VAT rate has generated discussions on how this has affected the promotion of e-books and what potential effects a lowering of the VAT rate would have on e-book demand and sale prices. The absence of a reduced VAT rate for e-books has inhibited e-book sales (Rønning et al., 2012; Wallin & Maceviciute, 2014), and according to (Axelsson, 2013) also contributed in subduing the demand and distribution of e-books. However, a study measuring the impact the reduction of VAT rate has had on printed books conclude that it has not had an influence on reading, that is, the people who read few books before the reduction are not reading more now (Rønning et al., 2012). If this fact will also apply to e-book reading is something we cannot know yet. A reduction in VAT rate would for publishers mean that they can lower their sale prices, which consequently will lead to an increase in demand. Publishers will likely become less disinclined to take risks and therefore will be more eager to publish a wider range of titles and not just bestsellers. Booksellers will also become less risk averse, and thus be able to increase their profit as well as improve their book supply (Linklater, 2014). The Swedish government has for years asked for a reduced VAT rate for e-books. In December 2016, the European Commission finally announced a proposition to allow its member countries to choose for themselves if they want to lower the digital VAT for e-books and electronic magazines. A process has now been initiated within the EU-collaboration for the new legislation to become implemented. If the proposal will become reality, the Swedish government will as soon as possible propose to reduce the VAT rate from 25 percent to 6 percent for digital publications. In doing so, the government wishes to improve the conditions for the media industry (Andersson & Bah Kunke, 2017). If a lowering of the VAT rate would occur, it would probably result in a more equal market and the paper book would get a real competitor in the e-book.

2.8 Media coverage

Past studies have investigated how general media as well as library- and book magazines express and position different aspects of the e-book debate in Sweden. Most interest is shown towards issues about e-books in relation to public libraries. Maceviciute (2016) has in her paper “Is a balance necessary? E-book lending and sales in Sweden” investigated the level of interest mainstream media shows towards e-books by searching the database Artikelsök for articles, published in the time-period 2013-2015, focusing on the subject. Artikelsök stores articles from the major Swedish newspapers and magazines and the database was in the study used in to see which e-book issues mentioned in Swedish media that generated the most articles. Overall, the number of articles written about e-books was not very high. However, out of all issues revolving e-books expressed in media, the issue of e-books in public libraries generated nearly twice as many articles than the second most popular topic, which was digital reading. Other findings from the paper show that those who see e-book lending through libraries as a positive occurrence mainly are small consumer publishers and readers, who read e-books only borrowed.
from libraries as they find purchasing e-books to be too expensive. Those who are more critical towards e-book lending are especially librarians, who consider the cost of e-books is too high, and big publishing houses, who find it problematic that lending of e-books is much more popular than e-book sales and that they therefore keep losing much sales to libraries (Maceviciute, 2016). These findings correspond to previously mentioned results from the survey conducted by Wilson and Maceviciute (2016).

2.8.1 Discourse analysis within Library and Information Science (LIS)

Several scholars have accentuated the benefits and the appropriateness of using discourse analysis as a research method in Library and Information Science (LIS) research (Budd, 2006; Frohmann, 1994, 2001; Haider & Bawden, 2007; Lennartsson, 2005). The method is useful as it allows analysis of the different ways in which information, the utilization of information, and those who use information are discursively constructed (Frohmann, 1994). The analysis of different discourses of information is what dominates modern society (Haider & Bawden, 2007). Discourse analysis involves studying social phenomena with focus on linguistic features and socially or culturally discursive relations (Budd, 2006; Lennartsson, 2005). Discourse analysis has the possibility to connect traditional interests of LIS, such as recorded facts, with significant activities and processes that constitute the social way of life (Frohmann, 2001). Fairclough’s discourse analysis demonstrates an approach that represents a more critical perspective to social analysis that is easily forgotten in some perceptions of social constructionism (Lennartsson, 2005).

Previous dissertations have used discourse analysis as methodological approach for analyzing media debates about libraries, for instance Hedemark (2009). This study I find particularly relevant as it helps in providing a view about the perceived mission of the library, how it has changed, and about how different discourses have been created and practiced over time. In a dissertation written by Lindsköld (2013), Laclau and Mouffe’s perspective on discourse is used to create knowledge about what conceptions of aesthetic quality that can be discerned in Swedish cultural politics. By studying the public discourse about the government’s aid to new, Swedish fiction literature 1975-2009, the political aspect of the construction of the literature aid is visualized. Söderlind (2009) bases most of her dissertation’s theoretical and methodological approach on Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis. In brief, discourse analysis is in this study used to examine how personal integrity in relation to information management and in conjunction with the political process concerning the introduction of a data law were discussed in the early 1970s in Sweden.

Fairclough’s discourse approach has earlier also been used in Master’s theses when analyzing texts about e-books published in library literature and in media articles written by people connected to the library sector. In for instance a thesis written by Karjalainen (2012), different discourses about e-books and public libraries are identified to be present in the analyzed material. In this thesis, it is concluded that the e-book tends to be discursively constructed based on a number of determined perspectives. For example, within a service and user-focused discourse, the e-book is declared as an available resource which intends to improve the libraries’ service at the same time as non-user friendly aspects which can limit the accessibility of e-books are illustrated. Within an economic discourse, financial questions and issues bound to the e-book are presented. The democratic discourse emphasizes the e-book as a matter of information freedom. One discursive change found in the research material is that pessimistic discourses about the future of e-books and public libraries are added into the discussions during 2010-2011 and different issues revolving the e-book become the focus of the discourses (Karjalainen, 2012).
This research done using discourse analysis show that there is an interest in this method and theory among LIS researchers. In my thesis, I am drawing on this experience as well as I am contributing to it.

3. Theory and method

The theoretical and methodological approach I have chosen for the analysis is based on Norman Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis, which will be more closely presented under the following headings. Discourse analysis as a method means that theory and method are connected (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). Using discourse analysis in this study is a means of interpreting what beliefs and perceptions about reality that are being conveyed in medial e-book debates by different actors. Discourse analysis is also used to analyze what language that is being used for constructing different discourses and to see the relations between the discourses and the discursive practice in a sociocultural context.

3.1 Theoretical starting point - discourse and discourse analysis

The concept of discourse originates from semiotics and linguistics and has spread to be a part of the humanities and social science disciplines. The discourse theory starts with the assumption that all actions and objects are meaningful, and that their meaning is a product of a historically specific set of rules (Howarth, 2007).

Discourse as a word usually contains the idea that the language is constructed according to different patterns that people’s statements follow when they are acting in different social domains, such as medical discourse. Discourse analysis can be defined as a way of analyzing these patterns (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). Consequently, discourse analysis investigates how social practitioners construct and question those discourses that constitute the social reality (Howarth, 2007). Discourse analysis is not only one single approach, but several multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary techniques which can be used in different sorts of studies in different social areas of research (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

The main focus in discourse analysis is put on discursive relations, which are certain forms of linguistic expressions. Due to this property, discourse analysis is a stage of social phenomena where the language is the center. Commonly for each and every approach to discourse analysis, is that they all have their own determined way of viewing language and the use of language. The language does not reflect the reality in a simple and direct manner, but instead contributes in shaping it. The discursive approach bounds together action and language, as well as it breaks the distinction between what is reality and what is an idea (Bergström & Boréus, 2012). This means that in a discourse analysis, the researcher does not determine or decide which representation of the world that is more or less correct, but the purpose however is to highlight the different discourses that exist. The purpose with a discourse analysis is not either to investigate what specific writers are saying with their texts, but instead it is the way the text is written and what is not said in the text but implicitly understood in it that is of interest. Through this method, it is possible to access those discourses and patterns which the text is a part of (Sahlin, 1999).

The discourse analysis approach includes methods for analyzing data as well as it is a methodical and theoretic whole. This package contains philosophical premises about what role
the language plays in the social construction of the world, it contains methodological guidelines on how to approach a field of research, it contains theoretical models, and finally it includes particular techniques for linguistic analysis. Thus, in discourse analysis, theory and method are linked together (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

The different discourse analytical traditions are rooted in a social constructionist perspective. Social constructionism is a broad concept, but it is possible to discern four main social constructionist premises that the discourse analysis is based on. The first premise is that the knowledge about the world should not be seen as an objective truth, as that knowledge is based on how we categorize the outside world. This means that our worldview is not a reflection of the reality. Secondly, how we view the world and our knowledge of it is strongly characterized by our history and culture, and therefore, the world is represented according to this specific view. Accordingly, our way of perceiving the reality is contingent, which means that our worldviews change due to changing circumstances and thus that view could have been different. The third premise is about the connection between knowledge and social processes, which includes that knowledge is created through social interactions and that we together with other people build shared truths. The final premise includes the fact that the different ways of viewing reality get different consequences based on social actions. In one determined way of perceiving reality, one type of action appears natural whereas another appears impossible. Our different knowledge about the world therefore leads to different actions (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

3.2 Different approaches to discourse analysis

Discourse analysis exists in different shapes and covers several various approaches. Most commonly are three different approaches considered (Bergström & Boréus, 2012; Howarth, 2007; Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

The first approach belongs to the poststructuralist field and is strongly associated with Michel Foucault (Bergström & Boréus, 2012). Foucault was the first person who clearly started working with discourse analysis, both by developing related concepts and theories and through conducting empirical studies using the method. Therefore, Foucault is usually seen as a figure as to whom a researcher doing a discourse analysis should comment on, quote or criticize (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). Foucault’s work is normally divided into two different focuses; one archaeological phase and later a genealogical phase. This distinction is made despite that the two forms of studies overlap in time (Fairclough, 1992; Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). In his archaeological phase, Foucault focuses on visualizing discourses as objects of knowledge, that is what is known in a certain historical period, and that discourses are a way of constructing society. He also accentuates that every text always utilizes and transforms previous texts. This is an attribute which normally is labeled intertextuality of texts (Fairclough, 1992). The genealogical approach does not necessarily emanate from the history of the past, but instead teaches us to view what we already know in a different way (Bergström & Boréus, 2012).

The Anglo-Saxon representatives, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, provide the second approach to discourse analysis. Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe’s discourse theory is the one approach considered to be the purest poststructuralist theory as it describes that discourses construct the meaning of the social world and that that meaning can never be locked down, due to the fact that language is fundamentally unstable (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).
The third orientation is represented by the *critical discourse analysis*. There are several different approaches to critical discourse analysis (Bergström & Boréus, 2012). According to Winther Jørgensen and Phillips (2000), Norman Fairclough’s approach is the most advanced theory and method for research about culture, society, and communication within critical discourse analysis.

Unlike Laclau and Mouffe, Fairclough maintains the notion that the discourse is only one of many aspects of every social practice. To distinguish this difference between discursive practices and other social practices is a trait of a more traditional Marxism which is embedded in Fairclough’s theory. This makes the critical discourse analysis less post structural than Laclau and Mouffe’s approach to discourse theory (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

### 3.3 Norman Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis

As mentioned previously, in this study I am using Norman Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis. For researchers operating according to the critical discourse analysis field, discourse is an important form of social practice which both constitutes and is constituted by other social practices (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). As social practice, discourse stands in a dialectical relationship between the particular situation and a certain discursive event, and the social structure that reflects it. The discourse event it shaped by other social dimensions, but at the same time it also shapes them (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). Fairclough means that the task of discourse analysis is to investigate this dialectical relationship of mutually constitutive relations between discourses and the social systems in which they appear, and to show how those in power use language and meaning to deceive the dominated (Howarth, 2007).

The fact that Fairclough describes discourse as both constitutive and constituted is something that separates Fairclough’s approach from other critical discourse analysis procedures. Another important difference between Fairclough and other post structural discourse theories is that Fairclough builds theories and methods in regards to empirical research about how language is used in everyday social interactions (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). Fairclough (1995) means that a critical discourse analysis can be explained as an effort to show systematic connections between texts, discourse practices, and social practices. He visualizes these links through a three-dimensional model (Fairclough, 1992). More information about this model and how its components can be used in an analysis of empirical material will be covered in the next section.

### 3.4 Theoretical description of Fairclough’s three-dimensional model for critical discourse analysis

When analyzing any form of discourse, the analyst should alternate between two equally important focus. These are the *communicative event* and the *order of discourse*. The communicative event can for instance be a newspaper article. The concern when analyzing a certain communicative event is on the one hand to examine its continuity with known formats, and on the other hand how it is changing by how it is using known resources in a new way. The general structure of the order of discourse, and how that order is developing when put into the context of a social domain, is the other focus the analyst is concerned with (Fairclough, 1995).
Within an order of discourse there are different discursive practices, which are being produced, consumed and interpreted through writing or speech (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

Every form of language use is a communicative event which is composed of three dimensions or levels. Performing a critical analysis of a communicative event is to analyze the relationships between these three dimensions, which Fairclough distinguishes as text, discursive practice, and social practice (Fairclough, 1995). To conduct a critical discourse analysis of a specific empirical material, Fairclough has, as previously mentioned, developed a model composed of these three different analytical dimensions (Fairclough, 1992).

![Three-dimensional conception of discourse (Fairclough, 1992:73)](image)

The text analysis focuses on formal traits of linguistic analysis which for instance include analysis of vocabulary and the grammatical structure of sentences (Bergström & Boréus, 2012; Fairclough, 1995; Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). Vocabulary deals primarily with individual words whereas grammar deals with different words being combined into sentences and clauses (Fairclough, 1992). Text analysis is about analyzing both the forms and meanings of certain texts. The difference between the two can however in reality be difficult to establish (Fairclough, 1995).

Discursive practice refers to the production, distribution, and consumption of texts, and consequently the analysis of the discursive practice focuses on these stages (Bergström & Boréus, 2012; Fairclough, 1992). The production is concerned with how a text has been created in relation to other texts and how the text is built on already existing discourses, distribution is about how texts change when they are being published in different contexts, and consumption deals with the certain group of readers a text addresses and how these people experience and interpret the text. One important notion to emphasize is that production, distribution, and consumption in this sense are not about physical actions, but instead intangible conditions (Fairclough, 1992). The nature of the processes revolving text production, distribution, and consumption is changing between different types of discourses due to varying social factors. A certain social context thus influence in what ways a text is produced. For instance, a newspaper article is collectively produced by different members who all have their own specific role in the different phases of production (Fairclough, 1992, 1995).

When the social practice is included in the analysis, the discourse is connected to the greater social context which it is a part of (Bergström & Boréus, 2012; Fairclough, 1992). This involves including the term order of discourse and thus clarifying the relationships between a specific discursive practice and the order of discourse it belongs to (Fairclough, 1992).
According to Bergström and Boréus (2012), for the critical discourse analysis, it is necessary to somewhat explore how these orders of discourse are designed.

Through the three-dimensional model, Fairclough (1992) visualizes important relationships between the three dimensions. Discourse practice functions as a mediator between text and social practice as it helps creating an indirect link between the social and the textual. People use language to produce and consume texts through discursive practice, and it is through discursive practice that texts both constitute and are constituted by social practice. The linguistic features of a text at the same time have an impact on the production and the consumption of a text (Fairclough, 1995; Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

In conclusion, a critical discourse analysis of a communicative event thus includes an analysis of the text’s linguistic features (text dimension), different discourses that are being pronounced in the production and consumption of the text (discourse practice dimension), and considerations as to whether the discursive practice replicates or restructures the current order of discourse, and what consequences this has for the social practice (social practice dimension) (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

In addition to the methodological approaches, Fairclough (1992) has developed several analytical tools for each of the dimensions in his model. Fairclough’s understanding about discourse practice and relations of power is based on a definite conception about ideology and hegemony (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). So, before describing my choice of specific tools used for analyzing the different levels in Fairclough’s model, I will provide a theoretical background to these concepts.

3.4.1 Ideology, power, and hegemony

The importance discourses have for ideology, power, and hegemony is prominent within Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). According to Fairclough (1992), analyzing discourse as social practice includes talking about discourse in conjunction with ideology and power, and to put discourse in connection to a viewpoint of power as hegemony, and to see development and changing of power relationships as a struggle towards reaching hegemony. One purpose with the critical discourse analysis is to contribute to social change towards more equal relations of power in processes of communication and in society as well (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

Discourses have an ideological function. Ideologies are different constructions of reality which manifest themselves in for instance social relations. These structures are in turn built into the discursive practices and contributes in producing, reproducing, or transforming relations of domination or power. Ideologies are created in societies which have dominance relations or unequal relations of power between different social groups, for instance due to different social classes, ethnic groups or genders. The discursive practices that help in maintaining or transforming the relations of power are more ideological than the types of discourses that to the same extent do not contribute in preserving dominance relations (Fairclough, 1992; Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). Discourses are therefore more or less ideological and every discourse is in various ways more or less susceptible to ideology. Some forms of discourses are more ideological invested than others. For instance, marketing is to a much larger extent permeated by ideology than the natural sciences or physiology. Fairclough means that this is a fact that should not be too difficult to demonstrate. I believe this depends on that marketing is more open to interpretations and more affected by social relations than physiology theories. It is through a text analysis one can prove that a specific interpretation of a text’s characteristics is more correct than other interpretations (Fairclough, 1992). Responsibility and causes can, depending on wording, be presented as either vague or clear. Wordings that cover up the responsibility for a certain process occurring is a way of hiding...
power. Wordings in newspapers often seem to be built on media’s own choice of words but frequently they benefit social power-makers (Fairclough, 2001).

Critique has been directed towards Fairclough’s approach to critical discourse analysis as it is thought to be unclear when it comes to defining what separates an ideological discourse from a non-ideological discourse. It has been questioned if it is even possible for non-ideological discourses, that is discourses unaffected by social relations and power relations, to exist. Another opposition mentioned is that people not necessarily always are aware of the ideological dimensions in their discourse practice and therefore they do not consider the ideological assumptions that are embedded in their language use (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

Within Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis, the concept of hegemony is essential (Fairclough, 1992). Hegemony can be described as a condition where prevailing social beliefs, that is discourses, are not being challenged, even when one social class is subordinate to another (Bergström & Boréus, 2012). Hegemony is not simply dominance, but a negotiation process wherein alliances are built and consensus is achieved (Fairclough, 1992; Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). The concept of hegemony also provides a way to analyze how discourse practice is a part of a larger social practice where different relations of power are included (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). According to Fairclough (2001), there are two different ways one can exert power. One is through coercion, for instance by physical violence, and the other is by creating consent. In modern society, it is more common to exercise power through consensus than through violence, and it is often through different media channels that discourses control through consensus.

No discourse is a closed unit in itself but instead the discourse is persistently being reshaped in its contact with other discourses. This state can be described as discursive struggle. Different discourses which separately represent a certain way of perceiving and writing about the social world constantly struggle toward each other to achieve hegemony, that is confirming what the language means in their own manner (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

3.5 Method for analysis

I am analyzing my material according to Fairclough’s model of the three-dimensional conception of discourse. My analysis follows this analytical framework of critical discourse analysis as it is based on all three dimensions of analysis, namely linguistic analysis, analysis of the discursive practice, and analysis of the social practice (Fairclough, 1992, 1995; Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

To be able to analyze what is being said about e-books in the articles I have chosen to include in my source material, I have used several of Fairclough’s methodological tools. For each analytical dimension, I have selected a number of categories which I have found appropriate and helpful in the work of achieving the aim of the thesis. This decision to include certain tools and exclude others was made in accordance with Fairclough’s statement regarding that the analyst should use those tools which are useful and relevant in the specific sample that is being analyzed, because not all categories are applicable to all sorts of texts (Fairclough, 1992).
3.5.1 Linguistic tools for text analysis

Fairclough (1992) describes several linguistic tools to choose from in the analysis of the text dimension. The most commonly used are the grammatical properties of texts called *transitivity, nominalization*, and *modality*.

The purpose with analyzing transitivity is to see how processes and participants, which are elements in clauses, are connected and if these processes are represented as *actions* or *events*. An action is described as an active form of process where something is committed intentionally and the person, or *agent*, committing it is in control of that action. An event is a passive occurrence happening without having someone deliberately doing it. No one is in control of this event (Bergström & Borèus, 2012; Fairclough, 1992). An example of an active action can be found in the news headline “the police started chasing a 27-year old with a knife”. This describes a physical form of action (Bergström & Borèus, 2012). The sentence “50 nurses were fired yesterday” describes a passive event where the agent is omitted. The process of firing the nurses here appears as a phenomenon that just happened without any agent being responsible for the event. In a clause like this, the participation, or the *agency*, of an agent responsible for the occurrence is excluded (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). Another language use which downplays the process of agency is *nominalization* (Fairclough, 2001). This involves replacing adjectives or verbs, that more thoroughly can describe a process, with nouns. Instead of using an expression such as “a police officer has been indicted by a prosecutor” it is possible to simply write “police officer indicted”. Consequently, nominalization makes it possible to exclude certain participants from the process (Bergström & Borèus, 2012). These ways of presenting agency can have an ideological meaning. When completely excluding agency or not explicitly mentioning the agent, it is possible to conceal whom is responsible for why a certain event or action occurs (Fairclough, 1992).

In order to analyze how the texts in my material construct the reality revolving e-books and the involved stakeholders, I have explored modality. Analyzing modality involves focusing on the degree of affinity a writer or speaker expresses with a sentence and to investigate how representations of reality are being discursive controlled (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). In the sentence “the world is flat” the writer describes this as an indisputable truth while “the earth may be flat” expresses a lower degree of affinity (Fairclough, 1992). Words such as perhaps, somewhat, or little are called hedges and are used as ways of expressing low affinity with a statement (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). Modality can also be expressed subjectively or objectively. In the proposition “I think the earth is flat” it is explicitly announced that the degree of affinity is subjective to the person expressing it, whereas in “the earth may be flat” the subjective perspective is implicit and the modality is therefore objective (Fairclough, 1992). Media often bring forth interpretations as facts by using objective modalities such as “that thing is dangerous” instead of the subjective form “we believe that thing is dangerous”. Media’s use of objective modality often reflects their authority and suggests some form of power (Fairclough, 1992; Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

Fairclough (1995) further explains that text analysis also involves analysis of *cohesion*, which means dealing with how different sentences are connected. When analyzing cohesion, the aim is to look at how clauses are linked together into forming sentences, and how these sentences successively are linked together to form larger sections of texts. Linkage is created by for instance using synonyms, repeating words or using conjunctive words such as “but” or “although” (Fairclough, 1992).
3.5.2 Methods for discursive practice analysis

In addition to the tools used for the text analysis, I have also focused on different methods pertaining to the discursive practice analysis. As mentioned previously, the analysis of the discursive practice involves focusing on how texts have been produced, distributed, and consumed (Bergström & Boréus, 2012). I have chosen the analytical tools intertextuality in combination with presuppositions, manifest intertextuality, and interdiscursivity. These tools are all forms of a text’s intertextuality and focus upon text production. Distribution entails specifying the intertextual chains a text undergoes when it is published in different contexts. For instance, a text based on an informal conversation will probably only be transformed into new texts by other people involved in that conversation, while a speech by a president will be turned into reports, media articles, other speeches that paraphrase it, and so on. So, depending on the type of text, the distribution and intertextual chains take different directions (Fairclough, 1992). As all my analysis material consists of articles and debate entries published in newspapers, and do not belong to any large distribution network in this sense, I do not find it relevant to analyze distribution. Analyzing consumption involves determining what subjects a text addresses and how those subjects interpret the text (Fairclough, 1992). This is not part of my objective so I have chosen to exclude studying consumption. In the analysis of the discursive practice I have therefore chosen to focus on how the texts’ have been produced.

The analysis of intertextuality functions as linking together the text and discursive practice dimensions in Fairclough’s three-dimensional model (Fairclough, 1992). Intertextuality is about how texts are related to each other (Bergström & Boréus, 2012) and is essentially the quality texts have of being full of pieces from other texts (Fairclough, 1992). It is not possible to avoid using words that others have used (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). According to Fairclough (1992), the intertextual perspective emphasizes the historic properties of texts and explains this by stating: “The concept of intertextuality sees texts historically as transforming the past - existing conventions and prior texts - into the present” (Fairclough, 1992:85). Manifest intertextuality refers to one form of intertextuality where it is obvious that a specific text is built on a previous text, for instance by referring to that other text (Fairclough, 1992).

One aspect of importance in Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis is to investigate change. Language use always refers to previous structures of discourse and a text is always built on meanings that are already established. It is through merging elements from different discourses that the language use can change individual discourses and thereby also the social and cultural society. By studying a text’s intertextuality, it is thus possible to look upon the reproduction of discourses, where no new elements are introduced, and the transformation of discourses, where new elements are assembled. Fairclough thus views intertextuality as an expression for both continuity and transformation of discursive practice. Transformation is created by using existing discourses in new ways, however, the possibilities for social change are limited due to the reproduction of already established discourses which are controlled by power relations and hegemony (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

One form of a text’s intertextuality is presuppositions (Fairclough, 1995). A presupposition is a proposition in a text which is assumed as something already established and something which is taken as a given truth. For instance, the sentence “the rain” presupposes that it was raining, or “the Soviet threat” presupposes that it exists a Soviet threat (Fairclough, 1992). All texts contain both explicit meanings, that is what is actually said, and implicit assumptions, which is what is not said but taken as evident, as presupposed. Presuppositions are thus something left unsaid, but that can be imagined through linguistic features. One concern related to presuppositions is that presupposing something is equal to supposing that it exists other texts whose contents correspond to what is presupposed in one specific text. This might
not be true but instead a general opinion. In different news articles or reports, presuppositions contribute to determine common ideas of reality as convincing (Fairclough, 1995).

Sarcasm, irony, and negative sentences can be used for polemical intentions. For instance, the negative sentence “I did not do it”, presupposes that in another text it is proposed that the person saying this did in fact do it. From an intertextual perspective, negative sentences work as a way of rendering other texts only with the purpose of rejecting or contradicting them. Another way of dissociating oneself from a represented discourse is to put a single word or a sentence within quotation marks, also known as “scare quotes” (Fairclough, 1992).

Interdiscursivity refers to analyzing the relation and influence between discourses within an order of discourse, and the relation and influence between different orders of discourse. A high level of interdiscursivity is associated with change, while a low level indicates reproduction of the consisting (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). An order of discourse can be constructed by four different elements, which are genre, style, activity type and discourse. A genre is not only a type of text but also implies the process of producing, distributing, and consuming a text. For example, a poem and a newspaper article are not very similar. An article is often produced collectively whereas a poem is produced individually, they are distributed differently, and are consumed in different ways. Since I am only focusing on one type of text in my analysis, newspaper articles, and because I am interested in studying how the discourses in the texts are being expressed and viewing the changes happening in the discursive practice, I have chosen not to specify genre. Style and activity type focus on the interaction between different subject types, such as customer and store owner (Fairclough, 1992), and have not been relevant for my objectives with my analysis. If it is not obvious if something is a genre, style, activity type or discourse or if the elements are not applicable to a research area, it is possible to use the term discourse type (Fairclough, 1992). Accordingly, I have analyzed interdiscursivity based on the overall term discourse type.

3.5.3 Social practice analysis

The main objective with conducting a critical discourse analysis is to map the relations between language use and social practice. Focus is put on role which the discursive practitioners play in social change or the upholding of the social order. This is investigated by analyzing specific cases of language use or the communicative event as a part of the order of discourse. Every communicative event is a form of social practice as it either reproduces or challenges the order of discourse. This means that a communicative event both constitutes and is constituted by the wider social practice through its relation to the order of discourse (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). This contextualization means clarifying the different discourses the discursive practice is part of, the relations between the discursive practice and the order of discourse it is included in. The concept order of discourse can be defined as different discourses that partially are covering the same terrain, to which they all are struggling to provide their own specific content (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). Discourse relates to both other discourses as well as to non-discursive areas (Bergström & Boréus, 2012). Therefore, an attempt to map non-discursive sociocultural relations and structures for the discourse practice can also be made at this stage. It is at this final point in the analysis that the analysts discover the ultimate conclusions (Fairclough, 1992). It is now time to look on transformation and ideological consequences and try to answer if the discursive practice is reproducing the order of discourse, and thereby helps maintaining the status quo in the social practice, or if the discourse order is being transformed in a way that creates social changes (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).
3.6 Implementation of method

In chapter 5; thematic presentation of the articles, the articles pertaining to my source material will be presented according to different themes, which are based on an analysis of common denominators found in the articles. The articles which content discuss similar issues, will therefore be presented in conjunction to each other and will thus be presented according to the themes that I have identified as distinctive in the material. In the analysis and discussion-chapter, I will discuss the discourses identified through an analysis of the material presented in chapter 5. I will now go into more detail and analyze my material according to Fairclough’s model of the three-dimensional conception of discourse. My analysis follows this analytical framework of critical discourse analysis as it is based on all three dimensions of analysis, namely text analysis, analysis of the discursive practice, and analysis of the social practice (Fairclough, 1992). The discussion parts of the thesis will however not be strictly structured according to Fairclough’s three-dimensional model because it is not possible to draw a clear line between the different dimensions. There is a form of interaction happening between the different levels, which makes it difficult to separate them from each other. In the discussion, I will implement Fairclough’s methodological tools; transitivity, nominalization, modality, cohesion, intertextuality, and presuppositions, and combine the results from the analysis of the linguistic level with the results from the analysis of the discursive practice level with the purpose of closely present the discourses appearing in the texts. I will investigate changes in the discourses using the concepts of intertextuality and interdiscursivity. Finally, I will analyze how the discourses relate to the social practice. I will throughout the analysis interpret and understand the language dynamically. In the chapter I call thematic presentation of the articles, the analysis is part of a wider spectrum, while the larger parts of the analysis and discussion chapter focus more on selected parts. Conclusively, I will shift focus back to the whole picture and discuss how the discourses are a part of the social practice.

This process of understanding, by going from the whole, to parts of the whole, and then back to the whole again, can be identified as the hermeneutic circle (Cole & Avison, 2007). A hermeneutic circle is an attempt to characterize the dynamics of the understanding and interpretation process (Ödman, 2016).

4. Material selection

When collecting the newspaper articles for the analysis part, I chose to search the database “Artikelsök”. For the five-year time-period 2012-2016, the database registered 390 articles that contained my search word, which was the Swedish word “e-bok”. I chose to use truncation (*) to the word e-bok to include all different endings and variations of the word in the search. This rather low number of hits shows that general media does not show great interest in e-books. Since the database also logs articles from magazines and local Swedish newspapers, which are not of relevance for my thesis, several articles were excluded. Library magazines, book journals and smaller local newspapers were excluded because they do not reach the same wide readership as newspapers issued in the entire country do. For this reason, large morning and evening newspapers were assessed to be more suitable for analyzing a public media debate. This sampling method left me with 70 articles, but after reading through the selected articles, I realized that a high number of the articles were false hits, which means that these articles were not about e-book issues, but for instance simply announced that an author had recently
published a new book which was now available in both print and in electronic format. Accordingly, these articles did not have anything to do with the e-book debate and were excluded from the sample. To increase the number of articles and the scope of the material, I also searched for articles about e-books by using the newspapers’ search function on their websites. On these websites, I often let a form of “snowball effect” lead me from one text to another by making use of their links to similar articles. This method turned out to be useful as I found several relevant articles this way.

The debate revolving e-books started to intensify in 2011, but after quickly reading through articles published this year and the upcoming year, I claim that 2012 was the year the debate really got its attention in the newspapers. Due to this, and according to my wish to provide an up-to-date perspective on the e-book debate, I have chosen to limit my source material to include articles published between 2012-2016. The final material chosen for analysis consists of 25 news articles and debate entries found in four of Sweden’s largest newspapers; Aftonbladet, Dagens Nyheter (DN), Svenska Dagbladet (SvD), and SVT Nyheter. These newspapers, and by extension these articles, were consciously chosen since they are widely issued and thus reach a large readership. Apart from SVT Nyheter, the newspapers are issued as traditional paper newspapers as well as they all have web-based versions of the newspaper where readers through social media can comment on the articles and interact with the newspapers. SVT Nyheter separates from the other newspapers on other bases as well. SVT is financed through the television fee, it is independently operated and its activities are therefore not conducted based on commercial or political interests (SVT, 2017). I conclude that the meaning of this is that SVT Nyheter do not need a newspaper to sale, as they are not financially dependent on sales figures. Therefore, it becomes easier for them to avoid “sensational news” and they can thus be considered to possess higher status than the other mentioned newspapers. Also, what SVT Nyheter publish, can be considered to have higher credibility than what is published by the others.

Social media posts and comments can be of great relevance for debates and contribute in shaping discourses, but I have excluded these from the material as I find a delimitation necessary to have a manageable quantity of qualitative information.

The articles in my source material have each been given an individual number. When referring to the articles in the upcoming chapters; thematic presentation of the articles and analysis and discussion, I will cite the sources by inserting the assigned number of the specific article. Which article that has been assigned to which number and complete references to the articles can be found in the reference list at the end of the thesis.

The decision to incorporate this presentation of these source citations was based on the aim of the thesis and accordingly it is not of the utmost importance who the writers of the articles are, but how the voices of the involved actors are represented in the texts.

The articles’ original language is Swedish, which means that all article headlines, as well as quotes taken from the texts are products of my translation from Swedish to English. This inevitably means that some linguistic meanings and expressions will get lost in the translation. I have throughout the analysis tried to be aware of this fact and keep the translations as accurate as possible to the original texts. Some sentences were extra challenging, as a direct translation would result in a completely different meaning of the sentence. The words and the sentence structure I chose may not be the ones the text authors would have chosen for the translation. Since the texts are being analyzed all the way down to word-level, it is possible that the results of the study may have been affected by the translation. This does not necessarily mean that the study becomes less valid, but it adds another subjective factor to the analysis. Nevertheless, it is my interpretation of the texts that are expressed and discussed.

In the reference list, I will include both the original Swedish titles and the translated versions of them.
5. Thematic presentation of the articles

In this chapter, I will thematically present the articles pertaining to my source material. The different themes are the result from a process of reading through all articles in the search for common denominators or similar discussed issues, and then determine the most distinctive ones. The content of the articles is thus structured according to themes as I want to display what is present in a way that shows certain common tendencies in the material, as well as I aim to provide a clear view of the opinions and discussions that I have discerned from the sample.

I will consequently refer to all 25 texts that are part of my material selection. I will refer to them once or at several different occasions. The different sections are thematically arranged, which means that during the presentation of the results, I will return to the same article in different places. This is a conscious decision as I want to present the content in a way that shows certain common tendencies in the material.

This chapter will answer most of the first research question as I in this section will identify the different actors involved in the e-book debate. A more thorough analysis of how different actors’ standpoints are portrayed in media will be conducted in the next chapter of the thesis; analysis and discussion.

5.1 Paper book versus e-book

Several of the texts in my source material display different ways of comparing the e-book to the paper book. This occurs in several contexts, for instance in the contexts of pricing, access, and e-lending. Media presents different stakeholders’ opinions on the matter, which in many cases differ from each other.

An article published in 2012 with the headline “E-book war on Zlatan biography: Bonnier Publishing wants to limit libraries’ downloading abilities” (6) describes that multiple publishers wish to take away the Swedish e-lending model, which allows for free and unlimited access to e-books in libraries. The main argument for this is said to be that publishers and retailers lose sales when libraries offer free and unlimited access to e-books. The article explains that publishers draw parallels to the physical book, which is only available in a limited number of copies at libraries. Further, the publishers mean that library users should have to wait in line to a restricted number of e-books. This suggestion is explained to have been highly rejected by the Swedish Library Association. However, it is in the article also mentioned that the Swedish Writers Association chose to join the publishing houses’ side of the matter. In a text called “Introduce one loan per book even for e-books” (12), representatives from the Writers Association prompt that the e-lending model for printed books, where a book only can be borrowed one at a time, is a well-functioning model that should be applied to e-books as well. The text continues arguing that e-lending can amount to great possibilities, as long as all actors can agree upon a solution that connects the commercial market, society, literature heritage and readers.

Not all publishers and authors believe the paper book model will work on e-book lending. In the article “Do not kill the e-book” (7), a small publisher states that the fact that the same model should be applied to e-book lending as it is for paper books is not a feasible solution. An e-book can be instantly downloaded by multiple loan takers simultaneously; this is one of the e-book's greatest advantages. The text writer explains that we do not know where...
the e-book is headed and instead of obstructing its benefits, we should embrace and develop them. The writer of the text does however agree that e-book lending needs to be adjusted, but for other reasons than the one submitted by the Writers Association. The suggestion presented is that libraries should be disengaged from e-book distributors in order to afford more e-book loans. As of now, libraries pay 20 SEK for every loan to the dominant e-book distributor Elib. This can according to the article lead to high costs for libraries and therefore they are forced to limit their lending capabilities.

Karin Linder from the DIK-union says in “Embrace the opportunities” (11), that she does not agree with the Writers Association’s proposal. She writes that instead of embracing the opportunities the new technology brings to the readers; the Writers Association wants to lock up the digital freedom in an analogous regulatory system. The consequences of their position will be absurd because with their proposed e-lending model, a loan taker wishing to borrow an e-book from a library can be met with the response; “Unfortunately, our e-book is already borrowed. Please try again next week” (Linder, 2012) (11). Linder determines that it is important that we all admit that we are living in a time of transition where new technology completely changes the conditions for producing, distributing, and consuming culture. This also means that the involved parties’ traditional roles must change as well.

The writers of “Stop searching for lost time” (4) are authors and skeptical as well to what was proposed in the previously mentioned article (12). In their text, they write that the Writers Association want everybody to ignore the digital progress that has been made and pretend that an e-book is the same thing as a paper book that can be charged multiple times and only be borrowed one at a time. The idea that an e-book should be the same thing as a paper book is as constructive as pretending that a printed book is the same thing as a clay tablet or a papyrus roll. The text continues by stating that library lending of e-books is not a threat against sales. Sales of a book often increases if the same book is popular in libraries. The ability to read borrowed books is the foundation on which the entire book industry’s economy is based on. If one would to take away this possibility, it would slowly begin to undermine the sales potential of authors, retailers, and publishers.

The standpoints of authors continue to be presented in “Authors are being used when the book industry goes digital” (10). In the text, the CEO’s of Sweden’s and the US’ Writers Association describes a dark future for the Swedish book culture and the value of the book when everything becomes digitized. They write that in the beginning of the digital era, it was predicted that printed books would come to disappear, this has however not happened. E-books have not come close to cannibalize the market for printed books. What they have done is to upset the balance between publishers, authors, and distributors. To the distributors’ advantage. The writers of the article are concerned that publishers’ effort to increase the minimal e-book reading will lead to price reductions for e-book sales, and that this in turn will minimize the value of the book. They conclude that it is important to protect the literature and authors. An author’s work to finalize a book is the same, regardless of format.

In “Lower the prices of e-books - they are not worth more” (2), author and publisher Tina Back states that e-books are cheap to manufacture and lack print, inventory, and shipping costs. An e-book cannot be resold as you only buy the right to read the book. Therefore, even new e-books should cost less than a paperback. In a time of increased economic inequality, reasonably priced e-books make it possible for everyone to take part of the culture. Back continues her reasoning by referring to previous statements made by the CEO of the Writers Association. She opposes his argument that e-book prices should be kept high. He claims that books are special, and thus should have high prices. Otherwise, the value of the book is depreciated. The problem with this argument is according to Back that the value a book may have for a reader, is not linked to what the book cost. She believes that hardcover books should cost more because they cost more to manufacture than a paperback. E-books should cost less
than a paperback because they cost less to produce. Back concludes that the book industry should demand reduced e-book prices, increase the sales, and let the book buyers freely support authors and book culture. E-books allow more voices to be heard and they are good for readers, literature, and democracy.

Another article which also debates the high e-book prices in comparison to the paperback is “Therefore are Swedish e-books difficult to sell” (20). The writers of the text name a number of factors which inhibit the e-book market in Sweden. The one having the largest impact is said to be the price. E-books are expensive, often as expensive as a hardcover book, and always more expensive than a paperback. Most e-readers and tablets are too expensive as well. In the text, it is said that publishers have been criticized for their pricing policy and a lot of commentators mean that it should cost a lot less to produce an e-book than a printed book, and that this should be reflected in the pricing. The high price is presented as one vital reason as to why most end users are reluctant to buy an e-book. The increased lending of e-books in libraries shows there is a great interest in e-books. According to the text authors, the libraries have become the largest intermediary of e-books; nine out of ten purchased e-books are bought by the libraries.

In the article “A book is a book - albeit on an iPad” (5), different authors and prominent media writers debate about the fact that it is still more common to read printed books than digital ones. In terms of sales, despite increases in both publishing and sales, e-books constitute only a few percent of the Swedish book market. One reason why the digital market is not getting started is presented to be that copyrighted material is now at risk of being illegally published online. It is therefore important that the respect for copyright is strengthened and that the use of the legal sites that do exist is increased. Another argument found in the article is that it is required to create a reasonable balance between libraries’ e-book lending and the commercial market, in the same way that today exists for printed books.

In the article “No, the paper book is not “better” (3), reading researcher Alexandra Borg mentions that the word “better” is often used in comparisons between paper books and e-books. However, the studies that points out the paper book’s superiority are said to have major flaws. Borg means that instead of putting e-books against printed books, one should focus on how to improve readability on digital screens. In this article, Borg refers to another article published in DN, in which the word “better” refers to reading comprehension. In that text, a study is described from which a hypothesis could be determined that says that a text is better understood when read on paper. Researchers find the explanation to this to lay in the materiality of the paper book, that it is possible to smell the paper and to physically turn the pages. In this article, statements made by a computer linguist and an expert on measuring eye movements are also described. He notes that digital texts do not have the same readability as printed ones. Borg ironically concludes that there is a connection between readability and reading comprehension and that we instead of declaring one medium as better than the other, we should devote research to figure out how to technically make the digital text more readable.

Sam Sundberg, the author of the article “The death of the book takes us back to the Middle Ages” (1), displays in the text a somewhat ideological approach to the meaning of digitization. The headline is an exaggeration and more of a metaphor or parable used to paint a strong picture. What the content really describes is that with the first printing machine the book got authority and permanency that replaced a long period where information only had been spread verbally. Sundberg writes that we are now in the end of the printing machine’s dominating era and this dominance is now being replaced by a new way of verbally spreading information, due to the internet’s possibilities of sharing words, sound, and images. He states that the digital text can in comparison to the book’s permanence be described as more fluent and constantly ready to be edited, copied, commented, and spread. The medieval society was strongly hierarchic. But the book made knowledge available to the masses and planed down the
level differences in society. It is in the article thereby explained that the authority was transferred from the social context to the book as a significant and permanent object. Sources on the internet lack this authority, and so the users are forced to determine which online newspapers, posts, and social media entries that seem trustworthy. Sundberg poses the question what this new era means for the book, e-book, publishers, and newspapers. He concludes the article by saying that there are no clear answers yet.

5.2 E-book VAT-rate

One highly debated subject within the e-book debate is the VAT. Digital books are coated with a 25 percent VAT-rate, whereas all other book formats have a 6 percent VAT-rate (5). These unequal VAT-rates have generated discussions on how this has affected the promotion of e-books and what potential effects a lowering of the VAT rate would have on e-book demand and sale prices.

The authors of the article, “A book is a book - albeit on an iPad” (5), states in the preamble that having different VAT-rates on different book formats is unreasonable. When retailers must add 19 percentage points more VAT on the digital book, compared to the printed book, the price on e-books becomes higher than it must be. It is in the article explained that the Swedish VAT legislation is governed by the EU. So even if a member state wanted to, it would not be possible to lower the VAT-rate on e-books without breaking that legislation. According to the authors of the text, Sweden should take advantage of its membership in the EU to influence the common legislation in a direction that is favourable for all member states. The writers claim that it is now time for the finance minister to act decisively in the EU to remove the distorted VAT-rate on books and the discrimination towards the e-book. As it is now, the EU’s legislation is opposing all forms of literary culture that is electronically mediated. This is according the text writers bizarre.

This text is not the only one debating about the VAT-rate. In the article “MP opens up for lowering digital media VAT-rate” (17), Niclas Malmberg, a spokesperson from the political party Miljöpartiet, says that there is no logic in having different VAT-rates on digital products and paper editions. Therefore, he welcomes a radical reduction of the criticized VAT-rate, from 25 percent to 6 percent. He claims there is consensus within the party that a reduction is urgent, but he underlines that the hopes for an actual reduction are his own. A potential solution demands the VAT issue to go through the entire EU regulation system, which is stated as not being an easy process. According to Malmberg, the digital VAT is a real issue that has been discussed for a long time, but the former government did not have the energy to see it through. He hopes that the new government do.

In “High VAT-rate impedes the e-book” (23), representatives from different publishing companies replies to another text published in the magazine Svensk Bokhandel written by Johan Kleberg, the CEO of Sweden’s largest online bookstore, Adlibris. In that article the CEO criticizes the publishing houses’ pricing methods and claims that a new e-book should not have to cost more than 99 SEK and that “even a seven-year-old can figure out that it is less expensive to produce an e-book than a printed book” (Haggren, 2015) (23). The publishers’ response to these statements, is that the 25 percent VAT-rate plays a large part in why the prices for e-books are as high as they are. Kristina Ahlinder at the Writers Association believes the VAT-rate is unfairly high and that the most modernized book also should be subjected to the reduced rate. The CEO of Bonnier Publishing, Håkan Rudels, agree that the 25 percent VAT-rate on e-books is a major issue. He explains that he for quite some time has been waiting for a VAT reduction, but with a government that does not dare to challenge the EU, he does not believe it will happen
in the foreseeable future. He also thinks that it is a misunderstanding that publishers price e-books based on costs for printing and distribution. It is people, time, and knowledge that costs money, and it requires a lot of everything to create a story. Eva Gedin, publishing manager at Norstedts Publishing, also comments on the high VAT-rate on e-books and considers it to be an illogical nuisance. She continues by saying that it is important that the price for an e-book is in line with what the consumer is willing to pay, which accordingly is to be lower than that for the paper book. At the same time, it is vital not to devalue the value of the book itself. She believes that Kleberg provides a somewhat simplified picture of the e-book prices in his article and states; “It is simplistic to say that it does not cost anything to make an e-book. It costs to make a book, point” (Haggren, 2015) (23).

One other text that describes criticism directed against the different VAT-rates is an article found in DN with the headline “The industry demands vigorous action against unequal VAT” (13). The writer of the text presents information regarding that book and newspaper publishers have long been protesting the higher VAT-rate on books and newspapers published in digital format, without any changes being made. Advocates for the affected media industry think that the government has been too passive. The CEO of the media industry organization, TU, explains that they have received clear signals that the government shares their vision, that the VAT-rate should be the same for both printed books and digital. But the government has also said that it is the EU who must do the work. The higher VAT-rate on digital products is presented to make the transition from print to digital difficult. In the end, it is the consumer who must pay the costs and choose to pay a higher price for a digital product. In the article, it can be read that in the end of 2016, a proposal from the EU commission, that will give the member states the possibility to choose for themselves to insert a lower VAT-rate, is expected to come. After that, the text concludes that it is up to the government to react and consider how to proceed with the opportunity.

5.3 Competition

In the article “Political lack of interest threatens the future of the book” (8), journalist Johanna Westlund states in the beginning of the text that the book industry has long been considered old-fashioned and slow-moving. Today, it is book policy rather than the book industry that seems sluggish and old-fashioned. The text continues by explaining that in the past decade, a series of events have fundamentally changed the terms of the book industry and put its basic business model in motion. This is said to be largely due to the technology evolution. The new technology has brought new online retailers and introduced new products in the shape of e-books. This has generated problems for the physical book’s business model, broadened the gap between different actors, as well as in one single stroke made the legislation on books obsolete.

In the text, different stakeholders involved in the e-book debate are mentioned, as well as their differing opinions on the matter. Westlund writes that in the past, bookstores and publishers stood united in their purpose of simply selling books, but today the two actors often stand on opposite sides in for instance matters concerning about whether copyright is to be considered a national right and how the sale of rights should function. At publishing houses, it is generally believed that the rights to a book are not territorial, which benefits the publishers. For booksellers on the other hand, it can be devastating when large foreign actors can enter and compete in any other European country. Not even libraries and publishers stand united. In libraries, it is often considered that the publishers charge too much for e-book loans and the libraries are seen by many publishers as an e-book competitor, and yet there appears to be no model for the lending of e-books that both parties are satisfied with. Authors and publishers are
in the article displayed as not always being on the same side either. For instance, the two stakeholder groups were earlier asked if they believed there is a need at a EU-level to regulate certain clauses in copyright contracts. The Writers Association said yes, while the Publishers Association said no.

Once again, the e-book VAT-rate is in this article mentioned as a topic which needs to be dealt with. Westlund states that the fact that e-books are considered a service, and thus are coated with a higher VAT-rate than printed books, has long been a highly debated subject in European countries. Sales, copyright, competition, and VAT are all important issues for the future of the book industry and everything is now being questioned at an international level. Despite this, they are not high on the political agenda. So, the question remains whether there will be a solution that can unify a fragmented industry.

The authors of “Publishers control e-book loans” (14) include a historical perspective on the book issues of today. In the article, they write that in the government’s legislative to the new Library Act it is established that libraries will promote the development of the democratic society by contributing to the dissemination of knowledge and freedom of opinion. A large part of this is today happening through digital channels, especially among younger citizens. Public libraries are presented to play the same important role in the development of a democratic knowledge society today as in the 1930s when Sweden, after a long and intensive debate, decided to make a culture-motivated restriction on copyright and start to lend books for free. The wish for a generally high knowledge level among the population ultimately weighed heavier than the concerns that the change would erase people’s willingness to pay for books. The text writers explain that public libraries still make a qualified selection of titles, purchase media, and lend them free of costs to borrowers. Thus, the libraries coexist with commercial interest but do not let their selection be controlled by the market. The writers conclude the article by saying that libraries and publishers should together contribute to increase the rate of digitization, instead of seeing each other as competitors.

The fact that libraries play such a big part in the e-book issue means a great challenge for libraries, and for publishers and other parties as well. In “The government urges the e-book issue” (15), it is explained that for libraries, the issue of e-book costs is of great importance. The issue of compensation for e-books to publishers and authors is a contractual matter between publishers and libraries. However, it is vital that the libraries have the ability to handle agreements that benefit both access to e-books and provide reasonable compensation to authors and publishers.

In the text “Let the libraries decide the number of e-book loans” (21), it is mentioned that the same fears that were uttered when the public libraries first arrived are now being raised again, although on a new level. The question was then if libraries lending of books would become a threat to the selling of books? Today, the publishers are said to with horror see potential e-book buyers, that instead of purchasing an e-book, choose to borrow the book at libraries. The libraries on the other hand are explained to be worried that their costs for providing e-book lending are getting too high for them to handle. The authors of this text claim however that these concerns are unneeded. According to a survey conducted by the Public Library of Stockholm, it appears that those who borrow books, also buy books. The same conclusion was earlier mentioned in the article “Stop searching for lost times” (4).

According to the authors of (21), the relationship between library lending and sales is basically about to change. They explain that e-book lending has been dominating the e-book market for years, but the book industry has now begun to invest more consciously on the e-book and this has yielded positive results. In 2013, e-book sales increased by 133 percent compared to 2012 and the book industry’s own predictions indicate a continued increase. The lending of e-books is also increasing, however, at a slower pace.
In the text “Publishers welcome the ambition to increase the extent of lending” (16), different publishers from various publishing houses respond to what was said in “Let the libraries decide the number of e-book loans” (21). The publishers here contradict some of the facts presented in the previous article, mainly regarding that e-book sales are now catching up to e-book loans. How much the publishers’ commercial sales of new e-book titles actually are affected by sales to libraries can be deduced from the publishers’ own sales statistics. The writers of this text explain that although the libraries’ purchases and loans proportionally have dropped slightly, the imbalance between the number of e-books procured by libraries and the number of commercial e-book sales is still big. The publishers keep questioning the other article’s reasoning by saying that the Public Library of Stockholm’s own survey shows, they say, that those who borrow e-books also want to buy them. However, they mean that this is not the same thing as saying that the borrowers actually do it. It is not a matter of fact that those who are accustomed to borrow their e-books quickly and for free, eventually will choose to buy these on the market at full price.

The article “Six questions about the book crisis to Kristoffer Lind, publisher at Lind & Co” (24) begins by referring to a text published in the magazine Svensk Bokhandel, where it is reported on the crisis in the publishing industry. The reason behind this crisis, Lind considers to be that the book market has changed. He claims it has been popularized and polarized and the publishing houses have not yet adapted to these changes. Even though people still read as much as before, Lind explains that the profitability for publishers is inferior. The prices have fallen, at the same time as the top selling authors are demanding more royalty and marketing. Due to this, they become less profitable for the publishers. One major question posed in the article is: what happens to the e-books? According to Lind, they need to become cheaper. He says that because it has taken so long for the e-books to gain momentum, a lot of people believe there is no market for them, but this is a false thought. The e-books will come. The last question posed is; What should the publishers do? Lind responds that they need to be flexible, fast, and more than halve the prices of e-books.

5.4 E-book restrictions

The Secretary General of the Swedish Library Association, Niclas Lindberg, writes in the article “E-books for everyone” (25) that libraries have a central role in the democratic society to make knowledge, information, and culture available to everyone. With the e-book comes great possibilities to spread knowledge and reading. New readers can be reached through the ability to read e-books on computers, smartphones and tablets. The e-books possibility to broaden the access to knowledge and information is now being threatened by a monopoly-like distribution, consciously introduced technical barriers that reduce accessibility, and embargos on new releases put on by large publishing houses. If libraries no longer can lend current media in different formats and through those channels which the users choose, the role of the library as a hub in the information society will become reduced. The library will then become an archive holding only older paper material. Lindberg continues his arguments by stating that this would also mean a development that goes against the government’s ambitious goal of Sweden becoming the world’s number one country in taking advantage of the digitization possibilities. He means that a world-class knowledge society needs a modern and well-functioning business model for e-lending. Unfortunately, this is according to Lindberg not the reality. He writes that in the provision of e-books, libraries can only purchase e-books that publishers have approved for lending. These do usually not include new released titles as publishers keep them for a few months before letting libraries buy them. The fact that libraries must pay 20 SEK for every loan
can make e-books a costly business and difficult for libraries to budget and control these recurring costs. The publishers equip e-books with a so-called DRM-protection to control the spread and usage of the digital material. Lindberg is skeptical to this as well as he believes this is a way of using technology to obstruct reading. It is in the article presented that there exists essentially only one distributor of e-books to libraries, Elib, which is also owned by publishers. Monopoly tends to mean higher costs; therefore, it is important for more distributors to establish themselves on the market. Libraries make all the e-books they can acquire available, even those that do not have an obvious place on the market. So according to Lindberg, libraries practically promote e-book titles for the publishers and pay for their effort. By e-book lending, the libraries help increasing the availability to new and popular titles as well as introducing new technological opportunities to new groups of users. This will in the long run benefit the publishers. Lindberg concludes that he hopes the publishers in Sweden are prepared to take advantage of new technologies and that they see the important role the libraries have in democracy and for information freedom.

The article “Publishers control e-book loans” (14) is composed by 26 different culture and leisure managers in Stockholm. They write that everything indicates that the number of people who read books has increased since e-reading started to become popular. The authors of the article ask themselves why e-book loans are so expensive then, and why the libraries’ digital supply is limited. Like the previous article (25), e-book prices, restrictions, distributors, and publishers are discussed. The text authors write that out of the 20 SEK that libraries pay for each e-book loan, one half goes to the publisher and the other half goes to Elib. The cost per loan is the same regardless of whether an e-book is popular and is borrowed a lot of times or if the book only has a few loans. This pricing model is explained as making it difficult for libraries to afford multiple loans of popular e-books and at the same time afford to highlight and increase the lending of digitized older books. Due to a strained economy, it is in the article noted that several public libraries are forced to insert automatic brakes in the system that limit the number of e-book loans. The authors of this article also direct criticism towards the publishers as they are said to control the libraries’ digital supply. Popular e-book titles are quarantined for several months before they become available for downloading through libraries and publishers decide to remove e-books from libraries as some titles become too noticeable and popular. In the physical library, it had attracted attention if publishers made visits and removed certain books from the library shelves. According to the text authors, this happens regularly in the digital library.

5.5 Towards a new business model for e-lending

Changes in the criticized e-lending model finally started to happen in the end of 2013. In the text “Let the libraries decide the number of e-book loans” (21), librarians in Stockholm explain that a new business model is on its way. The Public Library of Stockholm has signed an agreement with Ordfront Publishing and the distributor Publit that will result in free access to all the publisher’s e-books immediately after they have been released. The agreement is also explained to entail that the libraries will pay the publisher for each loan, however, they will pay a lower price for older titles than new releases. The writers of the article summarize that clearly there is a need for a renewed consensus between the book industry and libraries. Restrictions in e-book lending, when they must be done, should be based on qualified librarian work, not on complicated licensing models and waiting periods for new e-book releases.

The Minister of Culture expresses a positive view on this new e-lending model in the text “The government urges the e-book issue” (15). She welcomes new discussions between
libraries and other involved parties in order to find new opportunities for promoting access to free e-literature. The digitization of the book market together with the libraries abilities to provide e-books is an important issue for the future. She explains that the government has therefore seen digital development as a key part of renewing cultural policy within the area of literature and library.

Representatives from different publishing houses states in “Publishers welcome the ambition to increase the extent of lending” (16) that the new e-lending model presented in “Let the libraries decide the number of e-book loans” (21) entails differentiated pricing, a pricing method which most publishers have advocated for a long time. New e-book titles must cost more than older titles if the economy is to work. The question regarding libraries immediate access to new e-book titles is also a financial issue and therefore important to authors and publishers as well. The publishers respond in their article that they are not responsible for preventing libraries to decide for themselves the number of e-book loans and purchased e-books, but rather it is the libraries budgeting, e-lending model, and the larger flow of e-books that have become an obstacle. Many older titles that are being digitized and released as e-books gain little attention. The publishers therefore write that they welcome the libraries’ striving to shift focus from top-level e-book titles to the expanded release of e-books that the publishers have.

In the article “Important to be able to lend out newly released books” (19), Inga Lundén, one of the librarians that wrote “Let the libraries decide the number of e-book loans” (21), responds to the publishers’ reply published in “Publishers welcome the ambition to increase the extent of lending” (16). She writes that they welcome the publishers’ replies to their article on a new e-book strategy and that they are pleased to see that all parties have taken important steps towards a closer collaboration. Lundén explains that a comprehensive business model for e-books that benefits both publishers and libraries is what we all need for current and future readers to have the best possible access to literature. However, she also says that they lack the publishers’ response to one central issue; access to all e-books, as soon as they are released. She concludes that the publishers choose to completely omit this important point in their reply.

In May 2014, the publishing industry in Sweden made a final decision to remove all embargo on new e-book titles. In “No more embargo on loans of new e-books” (18), it is informed that the e-book distributor Elib has implemented a new business model which means free pricing on each title and no new e-books will be quarantined. This implies however that the most borrowed e-book titles can cost each library up to 100 SEK per loan. The Unit Manager at the digital library in Stockholm states in the article that this, in practice, means that the costs for these e-books can become so unreasonably high that the libraries will not be able to purchase them for lending. Thus, this pricing method is expressed to become a new form of embargo. Nevertheless, the CEO of Elib views the decommissioning of waiting periods for e-books as a way towards a better functioning book market.

The text also says that together with SKL, Sweden’s third largest publisher, Natur & Kultur, at the same time made their own agreement and introduced an e-lending model that means that newly released e-books from the publisher will cost the libraries 30 SEK per loan, whereas titles older than three months will cost even less. Nowhere else in the world have publishers and libraries agreed on something similar.

Mikael Delin, the writer of the article “More expensive lending threatens e-books” (22), also writes about the new business models and what effects they may bring. The old e-lending model, where the libraries paid 20 SEK per loan, already led to the fact that some libraries completely stopped lending e-books. The new agreements with the publishing houses mean that older e-books become cheaper, but new titles become more expensive. As a result, it is in the article explained that libraries are inserting new restrictions. For instance, in Malmö, a loan taker can borrow 50 paper books at a time, but only two e-books per week. The text continues
to voice the opinions of librarians. From interviews with librarians, Delin writes in the article that they state that digital books were supposed to revolutionize the public libraries, and increase reading. What started as an explosive development now seems to come to a stop. High costs, poor supplies, and complicated systems are said to be the reasons for the decline. It can further be read in the article that in five years, almost 100 public libraries have disappeared and the number of borrowed printed books per year has decreased by more than three million during the same period. Although, the lending of e-books has increased. In 2009, Swedish library visitors borrowed only 276,000 e-books. In 2013, that number was up to almost 1,544,000 e-books. In 2014, the increase was “only” at just over 40 percent and the increase is expected to decline further. According to the article, several public libraries state that the increase would have been higher if libraries were not forced to limit the lending of their e-books due to financial issues. The manager for the digital library in Malmö believes that the interest for e-books will continue to decline unless the libraries quickly readjust their business to digital reading. He says that today, it is technically difficult for people to borrow e-books and that scares people away. There is no focus on availability. He also feels that many libraries lack knowledge and ambition to improve e-lending.

In “Physical libraries are being closed - digital ones are too expensive” (9) it is confirmed that the lending of e-books has begun to decrease. In the text, the Statistics Manager at the National Library states that in 2015, the number of e-book loans was lower than the year before. This is said to probably be due to financial reasons. It is expensive to provide e-books as the libraries must pay for every borrowed e-book. Therefore, multiple public libraries are still limiting the possibility of e-lending. Several physical libraries are being closed and consequently it becomes more important to be able to borrow books online. But if that lending is limited, as is the case for many libraries because it has become too expensive, the book industry has not kept up with the technological development.

6. Analysis and discussion

In this chapter, I will continue to illustrate the voices of the different actors involved in the debate and present the dominating and underlying discourses I have identified through an analysis of my collected material. I will use Fairclough’s methodological tools for the three different dimensions in order to concretize the different parts so I can understand the meaning of the different pieces and conclusively understand the whole. By using these tools, I will discuss formal features of the texts, such as grammar and structure of sentences. I will also investigate which power relations are framed linguistically and how, as well as whether the discursive practice is changing or maintaining the social order.

In the previous chapter, I answered parts of the first research question. In this chapter I will also discuss how the different actors’ standpoints are portrayed in newspaper media. In addition, I will discuss the discourses that can be identified in the e-book debate. A further analysis of the thematization conducted in the previous chapter constitutes the basis for the specific discourses I have been able to discern.

Overall, three dominant discourses have been identified which I have chosen to entitle; the comparison discourse, the financial discourse, and the availability discourse. These discourses all interact interdiscursively with each other at the same time as they operate together with a number of additional smaller discourses that also interact on different levels in the debate. The dominating discourses clearly resemble the different themes presented in chapter 5. This
shows that these discourses, to large extent, can be said to be representative for the e-book debate.

The discussion begins with an analysis of the three different discourses and all the aspects of them. In the final section of this chapter, I will discuss the order of discourse as well as discursive changes in the social practice and thus conclude the relations between text, discursive practice, and the social practice. In this section of the discussion, the final research question, if the discursive practice is being repeated or is changing during 2012-2016, will be answered.

The social practice, that is the social domain to which the discourses relate to, I have identified as the book industry. My interpretation is that all actors involved in the issues regarding the e-book, in different ways find themselves within the book industry. In the sense of the social practice, I therefore also include libraries as part of the book industry, even though the libraries in the texts are often presented as a counterpart to the commercial book industry.

6.1 The Comparison Discourse

The domain for this discourse is e-books and the book industry while the discourse is constituted by a comparison perspective.

Within the comparison discourse, there is a tendency of displaying different ways of comparing the e-book to the paper book. The texts in this discourse also show a tendency of describing certain processes in the e-book debate as deliberate actions or passive events, with or without including the involved participants as responsible for the specific occurrences.

An article in SvD with the headline “E-book war on Zlatan biography: Bonnier Publishing wants to limit libraries’ downloading abilities” (6) describes that multiple publishers wish to implement the same lending methods on e-books as are used on paper books. An analysis of the headline shows that the type of process represented in the sentence is an action and Bonnier Publishing represents the agent in this sentence. An action is distinguished from an event by being a process that is intentionally executed by a person responsible for that action. This person is called the agent. The verb structure found in the headline is wants to limit, and to want something is a process that I would categorize as requiring intent. Conclusively, in the article’s headline, Bonnier Publishing is presented as the responsible participant for wanting to limit the process that is libraries’ downloading abilities.

One other article also debating if comparing the e-book to the paper book in the context of lending can result in better prerequisites for libraries and authors is “Introduce one loan per book even for e-books” (12). In this article, it is prompted that the e-lending model for printed books, where a book only can be borrowed one at a time, is a well-functioning model that should be applied to e-books as well, a tendency of excluding an acting agent is present. When analyzing the headline, it is not clear who is urging whom to introduce one loan per e-book and no participant is given control over that ever happening. This can be classified as a passive event where the agency is excluded. To not include certain participants in a process is called nominalization. However, one unspoken actor in this sentence is of course libraries, as they are the ones that are lending e-books. However, this is a decision that libraries cannot decide for themselves. The text does not explicitly say who should implement the change in the current e-lending model but from analyzing the content I regard that it is representatives from Sweden’s Writers Association that wishes that the Swedish government together with publishers, authors, and libraries should make it happen. This vagueness in communicating who should be responsible for the introduction of equal lending model for e-books and paper books can be viewed as concealing power. Responsibility and causes can, depending on wording,
presented as either vague or clear. Wordings that cover up the responsibility for something occurring is a way of hiding power. Sentences in newspapers appear as being media’s own choice of words, but often benefits those in power in a society.

When analyzing how the texts construct the reality revolving e-books and the involved actors’ point of views in the comparison discourse, I have explored modality. In the article with the headline “The death of the book takes us back to the Middle Ages” (1), the writer of the article expresses that it is a truth and an undeniable fact that the book is, or will be, dead. The sentence voices objective modality, which is a way of describing statements as universal truths. With the wording in the headline it is not evident if what is implied is the writer’s’ subjective truth and his interpretation of the situation. Therefore, the modality comes out as objective. Media has a tendency of passing interpretations as facts by using objective modalities and thus excluding the subjective form “I” or “we”. So instead of writing “I believe the death of the book takes us back to the Middle Ages”, the author of this article conveys the statement as a known fact by being objective in his choice of headline.

Another text containing multiple examples of objective modality is the article with the headline “Authors are being used when the book industry goes digital” (10). The article is written by officials from Sweden’s and the US’ Writers Association. They express concerns about the potential diminishing of the value of the book when everything becomes digitized. The authors of the text continue by saying that for long it has been predicted that paper books will come to completely disappear and the e-books will take over. This has however not happened. The development of e-books cannot even be compared to the success of the traditional paper book. What the e-book has done, is to upset the balance between authors, publishers, and distributors. The distributors seem to be winning this battle while the authors’ livelihood is threatened. The content of this article is presented as certainties, without any clear subjective expressions. Although, as authors, they write from their point of view and about their perspective on reality. For them, what they are saying is true and implicitly they express that it is also a truth for everyone else.

Modalities with a high degree of affinity is used in both the headline and in the other content of this article. The degree of affinity shows how certain the writer is of what he or she is suggesting or how well the writer agrees with the content. Throughout the text the writers appear neutral and objective and the level of truth appears as high.

An additional part of the text analysis includes dealing with cohesion, which means analyzing how different sentences are linked together. This connection is created in sentences by for instance repeating the same word or using conjunctive words such as “although”. In the article in Aftonbladet with the main headline “A book is a book - albeit on an iPad” (5) it is possible to see a clear example of how cohesion as a text analysis tool is used. Repeating the word “book” and colligating the sentence by using the conjunctive word “albeit” is here used as a way of mediating to the readers that a book and an e-book should be treated as equal products, even though they in many ways are viewed as two different products. The fact that the printed book is read on paper and the e-book is read on an iPad, other e-readers or a smartphone does not mean they are different, only that how we use the product is different.

Analyzing linguistic features in the text dimension is not enough to form an opinion of what a text is really about. Transitivity and modality also need to be combined with an analysis of the discursive practice. I have therefore performed an intertextual analysis of the texts in order to find out what distinguishes the discourses and how they are linked together. In the articles representing the comparison discourse, several cases of manifest intertextuality can be identified. Manifest intertextuality refers to when it is distinctively clear that a text is built on a previous text, by for instance referring to that other text.

A text in which manifest intertextuality is used is the article “No, the paper book is not “better” (3). The writer of the text explicitly criticizes what is said in another article. In that
article, it is said that the paper book is better than an e-book, a statement which this text sarcastically refers to as incorrect. From an intertextual perspective, using sarcasm and negative sentences like this, by starting the headline with the word “no”, can be described as a way to reproduce what others have said, at the same time as a negative attitude is expressed towards what is pronounced. Another way of dissociating oneself from a represented discourse is to put a single word or a sentence within quotation marks, also known as “scare quotes”. In the article, the word “better” is put within quotation marks and by highlighting that word and surrounding it by scare quotes the writer can emphasize that she does not agree with how the other article in DN uses that word. This example of the use of negative sentences and scare quotes is not limited to the headline but the writer continues to use the discursive practice tools in the text:

Now and then it is reported on research findings that show that the physical book, the codex, is superior to the e-book. Here, nearly twenty years into the digital revolution it was believed there would be an end to these types of “truths”. But no (Borg, 2015) (3).

In order for a reader to be able to decode a reproduced statement as ironic or sarcastic, a precondition is that the reader can understand that what is said does not correspond to the text author’s real opinion. In this case, it is by the text writer’s use of negative sentences, scare quotes, and by the entire content in the article, which conforms to the sarcastic headline, easy to decode the irony.

Two debate entries published in SvD; “Do not kill the e-book” (7) and “Stop searching for lost time” (4) both explicitly refers to the same article, namely, “Introduce one loan per book even for e-books” (12) written by Sweden’s Writers Association published in SvD in 2012. This is manifested in the beginning of “Stop searching for lost time” (4):

In the Writers Association’s debate article (SvD 14/1) a request to limit libraries abilities to e-book lending is spoken. How is it possible that those who say this claim to be on the side of the authors, at the same time wish to limit their possibilities to reach as many readers as possible? (Drougge & Troberg, 2012) (4).

A similar example of manifest intertextuality can be found in “Do not kill the e-book” (7):

In SvD January 14, Sweden’s Writers Association writes that e-book lending at libraries should be organized so that only one loan taker at a time can borrow an e-book. The model is known from the paper book: one loan taker borrows a paper book and the next loan taker must stand in line for the same book. The justification is that the commercial market should be protected (Vogel, 2012) (7).

The writers of the two debate entries here use manifest intertextuality as a way of contradicting what was written in the article they are referring to. In these articles, an intertextual chain emerges where the debate continues to build on a previous text and the ideas presented by another text author.

The author of the article “Embrace the opportunities” (11), also disagrees with the Writers Association’s proposal. The text does however not use manifest intertextuality to refer to that text because it does not explicitly say when and in which article the original proposal was published. Even so, it is from the content possible to derive that it is the article “Introduce one loan per book even for e-books” (12) that is being commented on. So, this is, after all, an
example of intertextuality, which is about how different texts are related. The text “Embrace the opportunities” (11), urges the book industry to make use of the possibilities of reaching more readers, which the new technological solutions bring, not to limit them. The implications of their position will be absurd because with their suggested e-lending model, a loan taker wishing to borrow a specific e-book can be met with the response; “Unfortunately, our e-book is already borrowed. Please try again next week” (Linder, 2012) (11). This fabricated response is, just like I demonstrated in the analysis of “No, the paper book is not “better” (3), an example of “scare quotes” and irony. These discursive tools functions as ways to detach oneself from another person's statement.

In “Political lack of interest threatens the future of the book” (8), it is explained that according to copyright law, the book is a product, while the e-book is a service. This means that different rules apply and the book and the e-book are automatically treated in two different ways, within and by the book industry. This can be viewed as not only as a legal difference, but also as a cultural difference. The e-book is in the text “Lower the prices of e-books - they are not worth more” (2) constructed as a mediator of culture. E-books should cost less than a printed book in order to take advantage of the technological possibilities and thus facilitate the dissemination of literature. E-books makes it possible for everyone to take part of culture, regardless of where they are.

The technological advancements that have made the creation of the e-book possible together with the possibilities information technology and e-books possess for spreading literature and culture permeates the entire availability discourse. Therefore, I identify a cultural discourse and an information technology discourse internal discourses within the availability discourse.

6.2 The Financial Discourse

In the previous section I showed that the medial debate about the e-book tends to compare e-books to printed books. A parallel discourse that occurs in the source material is a discourse that I have chosen to call the financial discourse, which I will analyze further in this section. In this discourse, economic terms are used when speaking about e-books and media here continues to put the e-book in comparison to the printed book in terms of costs and business models. The financial discourse can due to these characteristics also be labeled the economic discourse. The subject area is still e-books and the use of financial terms is the determined manner used to interpret and present the subject area. This does not mean that the discourse only occurs when financial aspects regarding the e-book are being debated, but what is distinctive for the financial discourse is that it uses financial terminology when describing the relationship between e-books and the wider social practice, which is the book industry.

Common within the financial discourse is the concern that e-book lending will become too big of a threat towards e-book sales or that e-lending will become too expensive for libraries. These outspoken concerns correspond to the same findings from a study conducted by Macevičiute (2016), which I presented earlier in the second chapter of the thesis; literature review. These fears are also mentioned in “Let the libraries decide the number of e-book loans” (21). In the text, it is said that publishers worry about potential e-book buyers instead of purchasing an e-book choose to borrow the book at libraries. The libraries are at the same time afraid that they will not be able to bear the costs for providing e-book loans. The authors of this text claim however that these concerns are unneeded as it appears that those who borrow books, also buy books. That e-book loans are not a threat to sales is also concluded in “Stop searching for lost times” (4).
In the text “Publishers welcome the ambition to increase the extent of lending” (16), publishers from various publishing houses respond to what was said in “Let the libraries decide the number of e-book loans” (21). The heading of the current article shows an active process with the publishers being the agents that intentionally are committing an action. This part of the text analysis is called transitivity. The headline does however lack a clear image of exactly what the publishers are welcoming the lending of. Here, it is the context that helps the reader understand what type of lending the headline refers to, and when reading the article in its whole, it is explicitly explained that it is lending of e-books the article is about. In the article, the publishers contradict some of the facts presented in the previous article, mainly regarding that e-book sales are now catching up to e-book loans, something they believe is not completely true. They are also doubtful regarding the statement that those who borrow e-books also want to buy them. Not nearly everyone who borrows an e-book for free also feels compelled to pay for an e-book.

In “Lower the prices of e-books - they are not worth more” (2), the e-book is presented as lacking print, inventory, and shipping costs. Therefore, it is implied that even new e-books should cost less than a paperback. The text uses intertextuality and refers to previous statements made by the CEO of the Writers Association. The CEO claims that books are special, and thus should have high prices. Otherwise, the value of the book is depreciated. This argument is highly opposed as the value a book may have for a reader, is declared to not be linked to what the book cost. Instead, it is constructed that hardcover books should cost more because they cost more to manufacture than a paperback. E-books should in turn cost less than a paperback because they cost less to produce. The text concludes that the book industry should demand reduced e-book prices, increase the sales, and let the book buyers freely support authors and book culture.

Another article which also debates the high e-book prices in comparison to the paperback is “Therefore are Swedish e-books difficult to sell” (20). Attention is once again drawn towards the e-book price that in comparison to the paperback, due to lower production costs, should cost a lot less to buy. The text also construct the publishers as being the actor most responsible for the declared high prices. The headline leaves little room for interpretation as it objectively communicates that the text has the answers to the presupposed statement, that e-books are difficult to sell. This is a form of implicit assumption, which is what is not said but taken as evident, as presupposed.

Another text in which it also states that an e-book should be considerably cheaper than a paper book is “High VAT-rate impedes the e-book” (23). In this article, representatives from different publishing companies replies to another text published in the magazine Svensk Bokhandel written by Johan Kleberg, the CEO of Sweden’s largest online bookstore, Adlibris. In that article Kleberg criticizes the publishing houses’ pricing methods, claims that a new e-book should not has to cost more than 99 SEK, and that “even a seven-year-old can figure out that it is less expensive to produce an e-book than a printed book” (Haggren, 2015) (23). In this sentence, the authors of the text are repeating words written in another text, and by putting the statement within quotation marks makes it into a sarcastic contradictory quote. Sarcasm in sentences can be used for polemical intentions and using so called “scare quotes” is from an intertextual perspective a way of reproducing other texts with the solely purpose of rejecting them. The publishers respond to Kleberg’s statement that the publishers are not to blame for the high e-book prices, but that it is the high VAT-rate of 25 percent that plays a large part in why the prices for e-books are as high as they are. More on how the VAT-rate is constructed as playing a large role in the e-book debate will be covered later in this discourse.

Once again, it appears that the different actors involved in the debate have different views on the costs associated with the e-book. In “Political lack of interest threatens the future of the book” (8), it is said that publishers and bookstores that in the past used to stand united in
their work of simply selling books, now often stand on opposite sides. Publishers and libraries are not on the same side either. Libraries often think that publishers charge too much for e-book loans, and the same concern that was previously mentioned in “Let the libraries decide the number of e-book loans” (21), publishers view libraries as an e-book competitor. Publishers and authors are not always on the same side either.

This can further be interpreted in “Six questions about the book crisis to Kristoffer Lind, publisher at Lind & Co” (24) from which it can be understood that publishing houses are one of the book industry’s stakeholders that financially is affected by the e-book’s entry on the book market, and much of it has to do with their collaboration with authors. The article begins by referring to a text published in the magazine Svensk Bokhandel, where it is reported on the crisis in the publishing industry. Lind says that the prices on books in general have decreased, at the same time as successful authors are demanding more royalty and marketing. Due to this, the authors become less profitable for publishers. He also believes that e-books need to become cheaper and as a step towards that goal, the publishers should more than halve the prices of e-books. In the article’s headline, it is presupposed that there exists a book crisis. Presuppositions are part of a text’s intertextuality and means that something is assumed as something already established as a fact. One concern related to assumptions taken for granted is that it is often also supposed that there are other texts whose statements correspond to what is presupposed in one text. This might not always but true but simply a widespread opinion. In this case however, the article explicitly refers to another article in which it has been written about the mentioned book crisis.

Another discourse within the financial sphere involves libraries’ discontent over the publisher’s insertion of waiting periods for new e-books and the payment model to the distributor Elib. This discourse mainly characterized the debate from 2012 to 2014.

In the article “E-books for everyone” (25), the Secretary General of the Swedish Library Association, Niclas Lindberg, discusses his negative view of the fact that libraries, according to Elibs’ business model, have to pay 20 SEK for every e-book loan. These recurring costs can be difficult to budget and therefore lead to too high expenses for libraries. Elib is practically the only distributor of e-books and this monopoly tends to mean even higher costs. The author of the text then explains the importance for more distributors to establish themselves on the market. Competition can be healthy for a business as it helps to equalize prevailing power relations. Lindberg is also critical towards the fact that publishers prevent libraries from buying newly released e-books. Libraries make all the e-books they can acquire available for lending and from this he makes a connection that libraries practically do the publishers work of promoting e-books, while at the same time also pays the publishers for the work the libraries have put in.

The text “Publishers control e-book loans” (14) also provides criticism directed towards Elib’s business model where out of the 20 SEK that libraries pay for each e-book loan, one half goes to the publisher and the other half goes to Elib. The headline is expressed with a high level of affinity as it is presented as an undeniable fact that publishers control e-book loans. This is what describes as objective modality. Modality is about the level of affinity a speaker expresses with a statement in a clause and is used to investigate how representations of reality are being discursively controlled. When expressing statements with objective modality, it hides the interpretation of reality that has preceded the choice of formulation. In the comparison discourse, I showed other examples of how objective modality is used in the discourses and I also explained that media often has a tendency of presenting interpretations as known facts. Media’s use of objective modality often reflects their authority and suggests some form of power.

Conclusively, due to financial issues, libraries are forced to insert restrictions on e-book loans and publishers to put embargo on new released e-book titles. This is in the texts
constructed as a consequence leading to a limited supply of e-books and concerns the society’s right to access information. More about e-book restrictions and the consequences they are expressed to be bringing will be discussed later in the next section where I analyze the availability discourse.

Changes in the criticized e-lending model finally started to happen in the end of 2013. An analysis of the texts pertaining to this time of the debate shows a high level of intertextuality, or more particularly, manifest intertextuality. Intertextuality is about how texts are related to each other and is essentially the quality texts have of being full of pieces from other texts. The analysis of intertextuality links together the text and discursive practice dimensions in Fairclough’s three-dimensional model.

In the text “Let the libraries decide the number of e-book loans” (21), librarians in Stockholm explain that a new business model is on its way. One part of the agreement entails that the libraries will still pay the publisher of the e-book for each loan, however, they will pay a lower price for older titles than new releases. The other part is that the libraries will gain access to all released e-books and can thereby decide for themselves what should be lend to borrowers. In “Publishers welcome the ambition to increase the extent of lending” (16) representatives from different publishing houses explicitly respond to the statements published in the previously article. This is evident in the preamble:

“Let the libraries decide the number of e-book loans”, Inga Lundén and Mikael Petrén write in an article here in DN Debate last Monday (Ahlinder et al, 2013) (16).

This quote shows the use of manifest intertextuality. Manifest intertextuality refers to one form of intertextuality where it is obvious that a specific text is built on a previous text, for instance by referring to that other text. The publishers’ use of manifest intertextuality is here used to continue to discuss a presented discourse and to get their point across on the subject. The publishers write that that the new e-lending model presented in “Let the libraries decide the number of e-book loans” (21) entails differentiated pricing, a pricing method which most publishers have advocated for a long time. New e-book titles must cost more than older titles if the economy is to work. They mean that they want the same thing as the libraries. They are also in favor of letting libraries have immediate access to new e-book titles as this question is also financial issue and therefore important to authors and publishers as well. However, they contradict some of the accusations posed by the library representatives. The publishers are not responsible for preventing libraries to decide for themselves the number of e-book loans and purchased e-books, but rather it is the libraries budgeting, e-lending model, and the larger flow of e-books that have become an obstacle.

In the article “Important to be able to lend out newly released books” (19), Inga Lundén, one of the librarians who wrote “Let the libraries decide the number of e-book loans” (21), responds to the publishers’ reply published in “Publishers welcome the ambition to increase the extent of lending” (16). She refers to their text but does not use manifest intertextuality but simply mentions those who responded to their article and repeats her own previous statements:

We welcome the Publishers Association’s and several publishers’ reply to our article on a new e-book strategy and we are pleased that all parties have taken important steps towards a closer collaboration (Lundén, 2013) (19).

These three articles together create an intertextual chain where the discourse is keeps evolving.
In May 2014, the publishing industry in Sweden made a final decision to remove all embargo on new e-book titles. In “No more embargo on loans of new e-books” (18), it is informed that the e-book distributor Elib has implemented a new business model which partly means free pricing on each title. This is however not expressed as a perfect solution to the long-debated issue revolving publishers’ embargos and libraries’ e-lending restrictions as the new model implies that the most borrowed e-book titles can cost each library up to 100 SEK per loan. The Unit Manager at the digital library in Stockholm states in the article that this, in practice, means that these e-books can become so unreasonably high that the libraries will not be able to purchase them for lending.

With the article headline “More expensive lending threatens e-books” (22) it is with objective modality mediated that the new business model for e-lending undoubtedly will lead to even higher prices for e-book loans, which ultimately will threaten the spread of the e-book.

The text with the headline “Physical libraries are being closed - digital ones are too expensive” (9) is published more than two years after the implementation of the new e-lending model. In the article, there is no mention of the model, but it can be read that practically the same issues that were present before, are still relevant. High lending costs force libraries to still limit their lending of e-books. An analysis of the headline’s transitivity shows a passive event and also shows that agency is completely excluded from the sentence. An event appears as a phenomenon that happens without including an agent responsible for the occurrence. The first part of the sentence simply states that physical libraries are being closed down, no one is said to be responsible for that happening. It is fairly safe to say that the physical libraries are not being closed down by themselves. By choosing a passive verb form and omitting an agent, who or what responsible for the libraries shutting down is not revealed. In the second part of the sentence, the headline reads “digital are too expensive”. It is not explicitly said for whom digital are too expensive. By the context in the other content of the article it is although clear that it is for public libraries that digital libraries are too expensive. To exclude certain participants that more distinctly can describe a process is a form of agency, which I previously explained is called nominalization. It is here important to consider if it has any real meaning that the agent is completely excluded from the sentence. Who is the agent responsible for physical libraries being closed down? That digital libraries are too expensive for specifically public libraries may be so much implied that it is not necessary to mention them explicitly in the headline. Presenting agency by using passive events and nominalization has an ideological function. When excluding the causal relationship between a process and an agent it is not possible to hold someone responsible for the occurrence of a specific event or action. The headline can also be said to be quite ambiguous as it does not explicitly mediate if physical libraries are being closed down as a consequence of digital books being too expensive for libraries to acquire and provide, or, if the two different issues are equally problematic. The two initial sentences in the preamble of the article does however explain the situation:

When the number of physical libraries is being reduced, it becomes even more important to be able to borrow online. But to provide e-media is expensive for the libraries. Several municipalities are now limiting the ability to borrow digitally (Haimi, 2016) (9).

Here it is evident that the two issues are both problems, not only for libraries, but for users as well.

Within the financial discourse order, the VAT-rate aspect is highly noticed and can be described as an internal discourse. In the literature review and in the results chapter I mentioned that the e-book is not included in the tax law’s definition of a book and the e-book is therefore
coated with 25 percent VAT instead of 6 percent as for paper books. This has long been a subject for debate within the book industry.

An analysis of the headline, “The industry demands vigorous action against unequal VAT” (13), shows that the connection between process and participant in the sentence is quite unclear. Analyzing the elements of processes and participants are part of the text dimension in Fairclough’s three-dimensional model of a communicative event. The verb “demands” signals a sequence of events that have the intention of occurring and therefore the process in the sentence is a form of deliberate action. An action involves at least one participant, known as the agent, that is responsible for making something happen. In the sentence, the industry is displayed as the agent responsible for demanding a reduction of VAT. The industry is in this case the media industry. This becomes apparent when reading the rest of the text. The headline does also not say who the media industry thinks should act against the unequal VAT-rates. However, it can in the text be read that the Swedish government has long been criticized by representatives from the media industry for being too passive in their attempts to change the EU regulations that control the country’s right to change the VAT for digital products. It can therefore be concluded that the media industry’s demand is aimed at the Swedish government that together with EU should pursue the matter. To exclude an agent from a process like this is called nominalization. The current article downplays agency by not explicitly saying who is in position to actually lower the VAT-rate on e-books. To exclude the word “media” and simply say “the industry” can easily enough be because the reader implicitly should understand that the writer of the article means the “media industry”. Also, to not explicitly say that the media industry demands the Swedish government to take vigorous action against unequal VAT can be because a newspaper headline cannot be too long and is meant to capture the reader’s attention. Or these applications of nominalization may be based on the concepts of ideology and power. Ideologies are different constructions of reality and that discourses have an ideological meaning. To hide or not mention a participant in a process conceals responsibility and thus presents vague power relations.

In “MP opens up for lowering digital media VAT-rate” (17), Niclas Malmberg, a spokesperson from the political party Miljöpartiet, says that he welcomes a radical reduction of the criticized VAT-rate, from 25 percent to 6 percent. Without providing any background information on why the VAT-rate is criticized or referring to previously published critical statements about it, he presupposes that it is commonly known that it exists a desire to change the VAT. He also says that the members within the party agrees with each other that a reduction is urgent, but he underlines that the hopes for an actual reduction are his own. According to Malmberg, a potential lowering of the digital VAT-rate has been discussed for a long time, but the former government did not have the energy to see it through. He hopes that the new government do. Here it is evident that his claims are his own and thus it is a high level of subjective modality in the text. Subjective modality can be distinguished in a text when it is explicitly announced that the degree of affinity is subjective to the person expressing it.

Another example of subjective modality can be found in “High VAT-rate impedes the e-book” (23) where the CEO of Bonnier Publishing in an interview explains that he for quite some time has been waiting for a VAT reduction, but he also says he does not believe it will happen any time soon. The reason for this he believes is because the Swedish government does not dare to challenge the EU legislation.

The authors of the article, “A book is a book - albeit on an iPad” (5), states in the preamble that having different VAT-rates on different book formats is unreasonable as the price on e-books then becomes higher than it must be. They urge the finance minister to act decisively in the EU in order to remove the distorted VAT-rate on books and, what they are calling it, the discrimination towards the e-book.
Similar to “The industry demands vigorous action against unequal VAT” (13), “MP opens up for lowering digital media VAT-rate” (17) “High VAT-rate impedes the e-book” (23), and “A book is a book - albeit on an iPad” (5) all present direct criticism towards the different VAT-rates. Another common distinguishing feature is that all the texts formulates the issue as being the government’s responsibility. The texts convey critique against the EU, politics, and against the government who is considered to be too passive in its efforts of making a reduction happen. The government is thus assigned all the power. In an ideological sense, the critique is discursively shaped in a way that aims to make a change carried through, that in the end benefits the social domain, that is the book industry. Ideologies are different constructions of reality which manifest themselves in for instance social relations. These structures are in turn built into the discursive practices and contributes in producing, reproducing, or transforming relations of domination or power.

6.3 The Availability Discourse

Another discourse that is strongly connected to the financial discourse, is the availability discourse. These two discourses occur in parallel and often appear in the same arguments in the articles. As a consequence of the financial issues, there is a tendency for limiting both lending and purchasing of e-books, which ultimately leads to availability limitations. This discourse could also be called the democratic discourse because availability of information, and in connection e-books, are in this context demonstrated as an important democratic right. But since the discourse is not limited to democracy, I have chosen the wider perspective and consequently call it the availability discourse. The domain of this discourse is of course also e-books in connection to the book industry, while an availability perspective is what constitutes the discourse. Distinctive for this discourse is that the most represented voice is the one belonging to the libraries.

In “Lower the prices of e-books - they are not worth more” (2), author and publisher Tina Back intertextually refers to previous statements made by the CEO of the Writers Association, without explicitly stating in which article, and in with newspaper these opinions were published. She rewrites his statements and consequently, she presents her interpretation of the ideas. She opposes his argument that e-book prices should be kept high because books are special, and if the e-book prices will be reduced, the value of the book will become diminished. I can clearly draw a parallel between these differences in value perspectives to previous research made by Böttger (2013). In that research, Böttger does not mention writers, but libraries and says that public libraries are mainly focused on the literary value of the e-book and in providing democratic access to all sorts of media to everyone, whereas the book industry see the economic value as prominent. This difference in assessing the e-book value I believe can be one explanation as to why public libraries and the book market have difficulties in finding a solution to e-book lending and e-book sales.

Back concludes in “Lower the prices of e-books - they are not worth more” (2), that e-books allow more voices to be heard and they are good for readers, literature, and democracy. Similar to what I discussed in the previous chapter, the financial discourse, the writer of the text says that the book industry should demand reduced e-book prices, increase the sales, and let the book buyers freely support authors and book culture. She calls for the entire book industry to act on the matter. By this I mean that this urging affects the whole social domain in which the discourse occurs, that is the social practice that is the book industry. The choice to either keep the prices high or reduce them both constitutes and is constituted by the social practice.
The availability discourse partly expresses itself in terms of democracy, and, more particularly, the library’s mission and role in the democratic society. The linguistic features in the texts that serve as a legitimacy for the importance of the library in society is their expressed role as provider of information. Access to information is in turn legitimized with democracy. Democracy is a multifaceted concept that can have many different meanings, but in this debate, it is mainly the information aspect of democracy that is accentuated.

The authors of “Publishers control e-book loans” (14) write in the article about the Library Act and that the act states that the library’s mission is to contribute in the dissemination of knowledge and promote the further development of the democratic society. They take on this historical perspective in order to shed light on how the digital development has changed the nature of the mission. The scene for the mission is now digital channels. Public libraries still play an important role in the development of a democratic knowledge society where the work of spreading knowledge and information should outweigh any concerns about free lending being a threat towards people willingness to still pay for books. Libraries coexist with actors on the commercial market, such as publishers and distributors, and even though they still lend purchased media for free to borrowers, they are affected by commercial interests and they must work hard not to let their supply be controlled by the market.

In “E-books for everyone” (25) it is also said that libraries have a central role in the democratic society to make knowledge, information, and culture available to everyone. By extension, the e-book becomes connected to democracy as the free access to e-books is seen as a condition for the library as a democratic institution. The availability to electronic literature can be said to secure democracy and right to information and is here demonstrated as something people have an obvious right to. This statement can in turn be said to be connected to the presupposition that it is viewed as a threat against the library’s democratic role if the access to the e-book is restricted and that the role of the library as a hub in the information society will in that case become reduced. Presuppositions are statements that are being treated by the writer of a text as given truths.

What is said to be threatening libraries from fulfilling their democratic role in society are technical barriers that reduce availability and embargoes on new e-book releases put on by publishing houses. I will now analyze the restrictions and how these are discursively constructed in the texts.

The texts “Publishers control e-book loans” (14) and “E-books for everyone” (25) both represents the library’s voice and are not shy to formulate criticism towards publishers for preventing availability. Apart from putting newly released e-book titles in quarantine for a period of time, and thus not letting libraries purchase these for lending, it is in the text “Publishers control e-book loans” (14) also stated that publishers can decide to withdraw certain e-books from the libraries if they consider them being too popular and thus are becoming too big of a competitor towards e-book sales. This I interpret as a way for the text to convey that the publishers are exerting their power over libraries and borrowers, as well as obstructing availability and collaboration. Publishers’ insertion of DRM-protection on e-books (15) is conveyed as a way of using technology with the purpose to obstruct dissemination of reading. Here the publisher’s restrictions are constructed as a step towards a development that goes against the government’s ambitious goal of Sweden becoming the world’s number one country in taking advantage of the digitization possibilities. Throughout the text, implied formulations are used that practically conveys that publishers are preventing lending and destroying the role of the library.

“E-books for everyone” (25) can be interpreted as an ambiguous headline as it is not evident if it refers to a request or a description. It implies a result that is preceded by a process, for instance that e-books are now available to everyone, as opposed to in the past where only a few had access to them. However, the arguments in the text are more aimed at describing an
unsatisfied situation and then at providing the publishers with a request that all e-books should be available to everyone. The assembly of the sentence mediates an expression of objective modality as it hides the interpretation of the reality that has preceded the choice of formulation.

Earlier in the financial discourse I wrote that in the text “Let the libraries decide the number of e-book loans” (21), it is explained that The Public Library of Stockholm together with Ordfront Publishing and the distributor Publit introduced a new e-lending model. This agreement was also presented in the literature review chapter where I described that the agreement involved a dual-licensing model where Stockholm Public Library would finance the digitization costs and in return they would get unlimited access to both frontlist and backlist titles according to a differentiated pay-per-loan model (Mount, 2014). Wilson (2016) even said that this model appealed to a number of libraries and Elib got a competitor. In retrospective, it can be argued how much of a competitor Publit actually became as this agreement only involved a small limited group of players. However, shortly after this collaboration, Elib did adapt their business model (18) according to a similar structure.

A positive view on this new e-lending model is expressed in the text “The government urges the e-book issue” (15). The headline presupposes that the reader of the text knows what is meant by the “e-book issue”. In this text, the e-book issue is constructed to be about the conflict between publishers and libraries and their joint abilities to increase the availability of e-books. All texts contain both explicit meanings, that is what is actually said, and implicit assumptions, which is what is not said but taken as evident, as presupposed. Presuppositions are thus something left unsaid, but that can be imagined through linguistic features.

About the e-book issue in this context, the government is constituted as being proactive and a driving force, as opposed to in the VAT-aspect of the financial discourse where it is noted that the government is receiving a high level of criticism regarding their passivity on making a reduction of the VAT-rate a reality. In this sense, the discourse as social practice also constitutes the government’s ambitions and thus corresponds to the fact that discourse is a form of social practice which both constitutes and is constituted by other social practices.

In the text “No more embargo on loans of new e-books” (18) it is informed that the e-book distributor Elib has implemented a new business model, which apart from free pricing on each title, new e-books will no longer be quarantined. The voice represented in this text is not continuously provided with quotation marks but instead it is mixed together with the journalist’s voice, which means that the choice of words used in the text might as well be originated from the newspaper writer. With this said, I do not mean that the choice of words is misleading in relation to the represented discourse. I however mean that it should be understood that an interpretation of the discourse has occurred when the text was composed, which means that specific vocabulary and sentences used in the texts, for instance “this new pricing method becomes a new form of embargo” (Delin, 2014) (22), and the discourse which is constituted by the words, are more representative for the producer of the article than the discourse itself. The headline begins with the words “no more” which is a form of negative sentence which in turn is a form of presupposition. The wording implicitly presupposes that in another text it is proposed that previously embargos were put on new e-books.

In the article “More expensive lending threatens e-books” (22), attention is drawn to new restrictions in e-lending that are being inserted by libraries as a reaction to the new e-lending model. The new agreement means that older e-books become cheaper, but new titles become more expensive. Libraries are therefore adding new restrictions. For instance, in Malmö, a loan taker can borrow 50 paper books at a time, but only two e-books per week. The content of this text both explicitly and implicitly links to earlier statements published concerning the expressed concerns and actions pertaining to the former business model. This shows a high level of intertextuality which is about how texts are related to each other and is essentially the quality texts have of being full of pieces from other texts.
The ability to change the e-book situation is in the text assigned exclusively to the libraries. Technical barriers and zero focus on availability are in the text presented as real and urgent problems for libraries that needs to be dealt with. Otherwise, the beliefs are constructed in a way that states that the interest for e-books will continue to decline.

6.4 Discursive changes in relation to the social practice

In the following discussion, I will now answer the third question by analyzing in what ways the discursive practice is repeating itself or how it changes during 2012-2016. I will look at potential changes in the discourses with help of two of the methods for discursive practice, intertextuality and interdiscursivity.

Language use always refers to previous structures of discourse and a text is always built on meanings that are already established. By studying a text’s intertextuality, it is thus possible to look upon the reproduction of discourses, where no new elements are introduced, and the transformation of discourses, where new elements are assembled. In the theory and method chapter, I explained that interdiscursivity mainly refers to analyzing the relation and influence between discourses within an order of discourse. The concept order of discourse can be defined as different discourses that partially are covering the same terrain, to which they all are struggling to provide their own specific image of reality and to achieve hegemony, that is a state where the discourse is not being challenged. I will also investigate if the discursive practice is reproducing the order of discourse, and thereby helps maintaining the status quo in the social practice, or if the discourse order is being transformed in a way that creates social changes.

Considering that practically all texts in my analyzed material contain more than one discourse, it is not possible to conclude that the discourses replace each other or that new distinctive hegemonies are created. It is however possible to discern certain changes in how the relations between e-books and the book industry are discursively constructed between 2012 and 2016.

In 2012, a large part of the debate was characterized by the comparison discourse where the suggestion to implement the same lending model for e-books as for paper books was constructed as a solution to a problem. The problem was the publishers’ and retailers’ fear of losing sales when libraries offer free and unlimited access to e-books (6). The e-book’s relation to the social practice is here constructed as pessimistic and threatening. The publishers as well as the Writers Association are constituted as being in favor of this new lending model (12) whereas The Library Association resistance is clearly stated (6). However, a union representative (11), a publisher (7), and authors (4) pronounce their aversion to the proposition. This can be described as a discursive struggle within the discourse as well as within the order of discourse where different aspects of the comparison discourse struggle to get their point across in media. When analyzing the intertextuality in this matter, the involved actors refer to each other’s statements but no new elements are introduced in the discourse. This describes a reproduction of a discourse.

Common within the financial discourse, and thus those texts that address the financial aspects of the e-book, is that they in different ways deal with the question of the increased costs that the e-book has caused and what consequences this have for publishers, public libraries, authors, and bookstores. The discourse is also characterized by disagreements between the different involved parties as they blame each other for who is responsible for the high costs. The perception is that e-book lending will become too big of a threat towards e-book sales or that e-lending will become too expensive for libraries. These fears are for instance mentioned in “Let the libraries decide the number of e-book loans” (21).
As a consequence of the financial issues, there is a tendency for limiting both lending and purchasing of e-books. This is when the availability discourse enters the source material. Embargos put on new e-book releases, DRM-protection, and a monopoly-like distribution are constructed as a threat towards the e-books possibility to broaden the access to knowledge and information. Libraries are highlighted as having a central role in the democratic society to make knowledge, information, and culture available to everyone. By extension, the e-book becomes connected to democracy as the free access to e-books is viewed as a condition for the library as a democratic institution (25).

From a library perspective, limited e-book supplies and the costs for e-books are in several articles, for instance in “Therefore are Swedish e-books difficult to sell” (20), “E-books for everyone” (25), and “Publishers control e-book loans” (14) conveyed as something that prevents availability and is at risk at hollowing the libraries’ economy. In all the texts, it is perceived that the publishers are the ones who are responsible for these issues. This perception is however not shared by the publishers that in the text “Publishers welcome the ambition to increase the extent of lending” (16) express that the publishers are not responsible for preventing libraries from deciding the number of purchased e-books, but rather it is the libraries budgeting, and the e-lending model that have become an obstacle.

A large part of the e-book debate that took place between 2012 and 2014 did indeed concern discontentment over Elib’s business model for e-lending.

Changes in the financial discourse and the availability discourse occurred when Elib changed its e-lending model in 2014. New elements were added and the discourse changed from being dominated by negative declarations such as “Do not kill the e-book” (7) to more positive exclamations like for instance “No more embargo on e-book loans” (18). However, shortly after the changes were implemented similar issues started to be reported again; too high prices on e-book loans (9) which leads libraries to insert new restrictions that in turn functions as a new form of embargo (22). No actor is longer explicitly constructed as being responsible for the new issues, so the discourse has transformed. Transformation is created by using existing discourses in new ways, however, the possibilities for social change are limited due to the reproduction of already established discourses which are controlled by power relations and hegemony. It is here possible to say that changes in the discursive practice happened, but due to a reproduction of already existing discourses affected by established power relations, this transformation did not lead to any particular social change in the book industry.

The VAT-rate aspect of the financial discourse is one highly debated subject within the e-book debate. This discourse began to attract large attention in 2014 and is still an issue of interest. It can be said that the discourse somewhat changed direction from mainly revolving around conflicts between publishers, authors, and libraries, to also explicitly involve another stakeholder, namely the government. “The industry demands vigorous action against unequal VAT” (13), “MP opens up for lowering digital media VAT-rate” (17) “High VAT-rate impedes the e-book” (23), and “A book is a book - albeit on an iPad” (5) all present direct criticism towards the different VAT-rates and representatives for the affected media industry think that the government has been too passive in their work to make a reduction happen. The government is thus assigned all the power. In an ideological sense, the critique is discursively shaped in a way that aims to make a change carried through, that in the end benefits the social domain, that is the book industry. In the literature review, I earlier explained that in December 2016, a proposition to allow member countries of the EU to choose for themselves if they want to lower the digital VAT for e-books came through and a more concrete process towards a wanted change was initiated. The process is still ongoing, which means that the discourse is still evolving and hegemony is not yet achieved. The concept of hegemony provides a way to analyze how discourse practice is a part of a larger social practice where different relations of power are included. In this discourse, several different relations of power are represented. The
involved actors are trying to set in motion a discursive change in their wanted direction. In modern society, it is most common to exert power by creating consent and it is often through different media channels that discourses control power through consensus.

An analysis of the discourses in relation to social practices in the domain of the book industry provides clarity that the discursive practices in different aspects of the e-book debate reflects established systems of knowledge and belief. In the introduction of the thesis, I claimed that most previous research about the e-book debate have focused on the e-book issues solely in relation to public libraries. I however intended not to limit my objective and investigate if the context of public libraries dominate, or if it is another context that is more prominent. From my study, my interpretation is that in each of the three identified discourses, the libraries are the stakeholder that to the greatest extent is struggling to convey its specific image of reality and reach a hegemonic state where the library perspectives on the discourses are not being challenged. The library perspective on the e-book is most evident in the availability discourse where parts of the discourse is constructed around the central role that libraries play in the democratic society to make knowledge, information, and culture available (25). Conclusively, the context of libraries gain the most attention in media, and in several aspects, their perspective prevails. But not exclusively of course. As I have analyzed in both the results and the discussion, the voices of publishers, authors, book stores and other parties that all have an interest in the e-book are also represented and interpreted.

There is interdiscursivity between all three dominating discourses in the order of discourse as they are all influencing each other. The discourses also interact in relation to other dimensions. The comparison discourse interacts with a cultural dimension, the financial discourse with an economic dimension, and the availability discourse interacts with a social and democratic dimension.

Within the comparison discourse, it is debated in terms of treating the e-book in the same ways as the paper book can be a solution to expressed issues in the contexts of pricing, access, and e-lending. The financial discourse displays financial obstacles for the e-book and directs the ability to change them to those in power. The availability discourse emphasizes the access to e-books a democratic right. The different discourses thus use different strategies in order to legitimize their point of views, and accordingly achieve or maintain a hegemonic status. To achieve hegemony in this situation means gaining power over the presentation of the discussion about e-books, that is the power over the order of discourse.

7. Conclusion

In this study, I have carried out a critical discourse analysis where the main objective was to explore the overall discourses on e-books appearing in general Swedish media during the time-period 2012-2016. By studying the e-book debate my aim was to also gain knowledge about the dominant notions about e-books and the concerns related to e-books voiced in Swedish media. The analysis was conducted using Norman Fairclough’s three-dimensional model of a communicative event. I believe the theoretical and methodological tools provided by Fairclough’s discourse analysis approach were in most areas of my thesis well suited in my aim to identify and clarify the discourses appearing in the collected material. His approach allowed me to in detail analyze language use and to provide concrete examples from the texts that show how I have interpreted the discourses. However, conducting a discourse analysis is not without difficulties. Although Fairclough provides useful analytical tools for the different dimensions, there are no definite explanations as to what all the theoretical and methodological parts entail.
It can therefore be difficult to for example show what is a discourse and what is not, or to define the social practice in different contexts. I believe there is a very large step from the micro-level, that is analyzing specific words in a text, to connecting it to the extensive social practice. It is not an easy process to analyze and see the relations in such a large spectrum of information.

The first research question was about identifying the different actors involved in the debate and to see how their standpoints are portrayed in media. The research revealed that the voices that are most represented in the debate belong to publishers, libraries, and authors, but also booksellers, union representatives, and politicians. No direct user perspective is represented, but the other stakeholders tend to speak for the users of e-books.

The analysis shows that publishers and libraries not always stand united. In libraries, it is often considered that the publishers charge too much for e-book loans and libraries struggle to find a balance between the demand for e-books and the costs for providing them. Publishers view libraries as an e-book competitor and fear that unregulated access to e-books and the libraries free e-lending to users will mean reduced e-book sales and consequently a decline in profits. The prices for books in general have fallen, at the same time as the top selling authors are demanding more royalty and marketing. Due to this, they become less profitable for the publishers. In the past, bookstores and publishers stood united in their purpose of simply selling books, but today the two actors often stand on opposite sides. Booksellers are at risk of losing sales to larger online retailers. Authors express concerns that publishers’ effort to increase the minimal e-book reading will lead to price reductions for e-book sales, and that this in turn will minimize the value of the book and the authors’ work of producing a book. It is important to protect the literature and authors. The government is said to be too passive in important matters which they have the power to change. The question regarding libraries immediate access to new e-book titles is both an access and a financial issue and therefore important to authors and publishers as well.

The second research question was to identify what dominant discourses that appear in the e-book debate. Three dominant discourses have been identified in the e-book debate which are entitled the comparison discourse, the financial discourse, and the availability discourse. There is interdiscursivity between all three dominating discourses in the order of discourse as they are all influencing each other. This means that the discourses appear in parallel to each other, and as a consequence, it is not possible to declare one of them as superior to the others.

Within the comparison discourse, the e-book is in many ways positioned in comparison to the paper book, and in newspaper media it is often mediated that the e-book, despite careful predictions, has not come close to replace the printed book. The discourse also indicates that there is a conflict between different actors, as well as within the same groups of actors, as to whether the e-book in terms of lending can be treated the same way as the paper book. The prevailing opinion is that the e-book should not be locked up in the same format as the printed book, but instead its qualities and the possibilities it possesses of reaching more readers should be embraced.

A recurrent issue within the financial discourse is the concern that e-book lending will become too big of a threat towards e-book sales or that e-lending will become too expensive for libraries. The e-book is presented as lacking print, inventory, and shipping costs. Therefore, it is implied that even new e-books should cost less than hardcover books, and definitely less than a paperback. Today, a new e-book usually costs the same as a hardcover book. Another discourse within the financial sphere involves libraries’ discontent over the publishers’ insertion of waiting periods for new e-books and the payment model to the distributor Elib. It is due to financial issues that libraries are forced to insert restrictions on e-book loans and publishers to put embargo on new released e-book titles. The issue revolving that e-books are coated with a 25 percent VAT rate instead of 6 percent as for paper books has long been a subject for debate within the book industry. When retailers must add 19 percentage points more VAT on the digital
book, compared to the printed book, the price on e-books becomes higher than it must be. Involved actors have long been protesting the higher VAT-rate on books and newspapers published in digital format, without any changes being made. Advocates for the affected media industry think that the government has been too passive regarding their shared efforts to make a reduction of the VAT-rate possible.

As a consequence of the financial issues, there is a tendency for limiting both lending and purchasing of e-books, which ultimately leads to availability limitations. The availability discourse partly expresses itself in terms of democracy, and, more particularly, the library’s mission and role in the democratic society. The libraries are presented as having a central role in the democratic society to make knowledge, information, and culture available to everyone. By extension, the e-book becomes connected to democracy as the free access to e-books is viewed as a condition for the library as a democratic institution. The availability to electronic literature can be said to secure democracy and right to information and is here demonstrated as something people have an obvious right to. What is said to be threatening libraries from fulfilling their democratic role in society are technical barriers that reduce availability and embargoes on new e-book releases put on by publishing houses.

The last research question involved analyzing if the discursive practice was repeated or if it changed during the beginning of 2012 and the end of 2016 and what could be said to constitute that repeating or change. Considering that practically all texts in my analyzed material contains more than one discourse, it is not possible to conclude that the discourses replace each other or that new distinctive hegemonies are created. Most of the constructed concepts and ideas are repeated in the discourses during this time-period. I interpret that the conceptions of the e-book are often repeated using manifest intertextuality. However, I believe it is possible to discern one change in the financial discourse and the availability discourse which occurred when Elib changed its e-lending model in 2014. New elements were added and the discourse changed from being dominated by mainly negative declarations to at least a few more positive exclamations. However, shortly after the changes were implemented similar issues started to be reported again; too high prices on e-book loans which led libraries to insert new restrictions that in turn function as a new form of embargo. The discursive practice changed for some time but practically went back and started to repeat itself again. Overall, no significant changes that can be said to be representative for the entire discursive practice and which led to changes in the social practice can be distinguished.

Suggestions for further research in connection to this thesis would be to continue to analyze the ongoing VAT-rate debate. The issue has been discussed for many years and during 2017 everything indicated that the EU would finally come to a mutual agreement and let the member countries decide their own legislation on the matter. However, this did not happen this year either. So, to keep considering the progress or setbacks of the VAT can be an interesting subject. Also, if a change would occur, it would also be interesting to investigate how this actually affects the book market.

Another angle could be to analyze the audiobook in connection to the book industry. The audiobook has gained a lot of ground the past few years and it might even become an even larger competitor to the paper book.
8. Summary

The objective with this Master’s thesis was to, through a critical discourse analysis, explore the overall discourses on e-books appearing in general Swedish media during the time-period 2012-2016. By studying the e-book debate my aim was to also gain knowledge about the dominant notions about e-books and the concerns related to e-books voiced in Swedish media. By using discourse analysis as the methodological and theoretical approach, I also intended to identify how the e-book is positioned among other forms of media as well as to understand the conversations that reflect and construct the e-book.

The material chosen for analysis were 25 articles, published in four different Swedish newspapers, that all address issues revolving the e-book as a subject. The articles were then subjected to a thematization in order to highlight the common themes and the actors involved in the debate. The research revealed that the voices that are most represented in the debate belong to publishers, libraries, and authors, but also booksellers, union representatives, and politicians. No direct user perspective is represented, but the other stakeholders have a tendency to speak for the e-book users.

Based on the results from an analysis of the thematic presentation of the articles, three dominating discourses were identified, namely the comparison discourse, the financial discourse, and the availability discourse. The texts pertaining to the discourses were then subjected to Norman Fairclough’s three-dimensional concept of discourse and accordingly analyzed on a linguistic level and a level of discursive practice.

Within the comparison discourse, the e-book is in many ways positioned in comparison to the paper book. This occurs in several contexts, for instance in the contexts of pricing, access, and e-lending. A recurrent issue within the financial discourse is conveyed as the concern that e-book lending will become too big of a threat towards e-book sales or that e-lending will become too expensive for libraries. Within the availability discourse, the e-book is constructed in connection to democracy, and free access to e-books is viewed as a condition for libraries as democratic institutions.

Most of the constructed concepts and ideas are repeated in the discourses during the time-period 2012-2016. This means that no significant changes that can be said to be representative for the entire discursive practice, and which led to changes in the social practice can be distinguished.

The discourses were then analyzed in relation to the social practice, which was identified as the book industry. This analysis indicates that the different discourses use different strategies in order to legitimize their point of views, and accordingly achieve or maintain a hegemonic status. To achieve hegemony in this situation means gaining power over the presentation of the discussion about e-books, that is the power over the order of discourse.
References


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**Source material for analysis**


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