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Ebooks in the Academy: Impacts on Learning and Pedagogy

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Ebooks in the Academy: Impacts on Learning and Pedagogy

Beth M. Transue, MLS

Messiah College Murray Library

PALA Annual Conference

October 2, 2012

This isn't new!



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQHX-SjgQvQ>

History of ebooks

- 1971 – Project Gutenberg – manually typed print book text to create ebooks (Declaration of Independence)
- 1993 – National Academy Press – publish some books in digital format. Free of charge. Sales increased.
- 1995 – Amazon launched. Started with excerpts and reviews

History

- 2006 – Google Books. Full text of public domain or with permission. Excerpts or citation only from other books. Most books digitized through participating ***libraries***.
- 2007-current – ereaders, ipad.

Ebooks and Academic Study

What does the research say?

- There is currently a **usability divide** between ebooks for leisure/linear reading, and for academic/non-linear reading.
- Survey contradictions: After using ebooks, about 60% still prefer print for academic use (BISG, 2013). 58% prefer etexts for class (Pearson, 2012).

Pilot Studies

Cornell, Indiana U, U of MN, UVA, U of WI
Cooperative etextbook pilot (Internet2, 2012)

Liked: Portability, Storage, Costs, Multimedia
Features

Disliked: readability, navigation, highlighting,
annotating, note sharing, lose access at end of term,
not aware of advanced features

Most students preferred paper text at end of pilot

Pilot Studies

University of WA (Hickey, 2011)

Less than 40% of students still used ereaders by the end of term

Cognitive mapping: students complained that they couldn't use physical cues of book (location) to help memory, recall, and learning new material

Cognitive Mapping

- Readers create structural map while reading. Increases recall. (Payne & Reader, 2006)
- The “structure” of an ebook is critical.

Comparing Print to Ebook

10th graders (digital natives) given reading assignment in print or in pdf. (Mangen, 2013)

Reading comprehension was significantly higher in group reading print than group reading pdf.

Comparing Print to ebook

University of Western Ontario

Students instructed to find identical piece of information in identical academic print and ebook

In print, students used predictable linear and logical process to find information.

- TOC, index, keywords, alternate words, scanning page

Comparing Print to Ebook

In ebook, students were non-linear and there was no predictable or logical process to find information.

- Unaware of TOC or index. Poor searches.
- When scanning, missed seeing relevant information more often than in print
- No sense of place. Mentioned they felt “lost” in the book.



Library and Faculty Concerns at Messiah College


- No course reserves.
- Will students/faculty request ILL of print book when we have ebook?
- Revocable collection, cost.
- Ordering becomes more complex.



Messiah College Student Perspective

Swinging Bridge (student newspaper)
article, October 2010

“For novels, reference works, and all kinds
of classic literature, e-readers are great.....



....When I read non-fiction such as philosophy or theology, however, I need to look ahead. I need to be able to quickly flip pages so that I can see the layout of the argument. Then, when I begin to read from the beginning, my mind fills in the gaps. My comprehension is improved and I'm less likely to get lost among the trees while walking through the forest.” (Brown, 2010)

Future developments



<http://www.physorg.com/news/2012-01-smart-e-book-convenient-paper-based.html>

Conclusion

Enormous potential!

- Portability, storage, ADA, multimedia links, supplements, social learning and connections

But there are also serious obstacles.

Conclusion

- How do we structure and teach about our ebook collection to minimize pedagogical and utilization challenges.
- Instruction should include: Basics, Creating a cognitive map of the ebook, Access points, Searching, Annotating, Bookmarking
- Choice of format when ordering should consider benefits AND challenges.

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