IS1404 E-READ: Evolution of Reading in the Age of Digitization

Position paper

Name: Göran Rossholm

WG(s): WG3

1. **Potential research contribution** in light of, or linked to

A. WG interest and Scientific programme:

Several aspects of my ongoing research in narrative theory touch upon some themes which are important in the EREAD project. I argue that two central relations in any narrative reading are a) the reader's search for coherence, and b) directness, i.e. the reader's experience of being in direct, unmediated contact with the story world (this relation is most often called "immersion"). Coherence may be of several kinds, in particular three: basic linguistic coherence (what the text linguists some decades ago sometimes called "cohesion"), causal coherence and thematic coherence. The reader plays an active part with respect to all three, and the coherences found or created are crucial for the reader's ability both to remember the story and to form expectations which in turn help finding and creating more coherence. The second basic narrative characteristic, directness, has (like coherence) several functions, but in the E-READ context one is particularly important. The word "directness" applied to reading is of course a figurative term, and as such it is closely related to its literal counterpart – to acquire information by sensing what's happening here and now. By sponging on this epistemic practice, the oldest and best entrenched one that has ever existed, the reading becomes cheap and easy.

The term "narrative" in my research comprises fictional narrative literature as well as factual, the reading of books as well as the listening to a storyteller. My thesis is that some basic terms apply to all this narrative material (the terms just mentioned, to be precise). However, the three mentioned kinds of coherence might apply more or less to narratives in different genres and times and cultures. A particular question in this perspective concerns the role of the book (and its precursors), and, which goes without saying in the present context, which is the role and effect of our present digital resources.

B. Action objectives (pages 7-10 in the MoU):

2. Interest in

A. organizing and/or participating in a **short-term scientific mission (STSM).**

Optional: pursuing what research questions/projects; where to/with whom; linked to what objective(s) of the Action:

B. organizing and/or participating in a **Training School** (please indicate what kind of training [theoretical; methodological; technical]).

Optional: linked to what objective(s) of the Action: