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Edited books in the Social Sciences and Humanities: Characteristics and Collaboration analysis

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ABSTRACT

Monographs and edited books are important in scholarly communication, especially in the Social Sciences and Humanities (Gorraiz, Purnell, & Glänzel, 2013; Nederhof, 2006). An edited book is a collection of chapters written by different authors, gathered and harmonized by one or more editors. This article analyses the characteristics and collaboration patterns of edited books in the Social Sciences and Humanities as practiced in Flanders, the Northern Dutch speaking part of Belgium. It is based upon a comprehensive set of 753 peer reviewed edited books, of which at least one of the editors has a Flemish university affiliation, and the 12.913 chapters published therein. The article analyses various characteristics of edited books, i.e. the distribution over publishers, the places of publication, language use, the presence of introductions and conclusions, the occurrence of co-editorship and co-authorship, and the number of unique authors and book chapters per volume. Almost half of the edited books are published with about 5% of the publishers. English is the dominant publication language for all places of publication. Writing a conclusion seems rather uncommon. All in all, about 90% of all volumes are co-edited. Edited books in the Social Sciences have a more diverse authorship than edited books in the Humanities. In general, the more co-authorship for articles occurs within a discipline, the more co-authorship occurs for book chapters, whereas the number of editors is independent from this trend.

KEYWORDS

Co-authorship, Co-editorship, Social Sciences and Humanities, Flanders, collaboration, edited books

MSC: 01;94 en JEL: A14; 038

INTRODUCTION

An edited book is a collection of chapters written by different authors, gathered and harmonized by one or more editors. This definition is based on the online dictionary for library and information science (ODLIS: http://www.abc-clio.com/ODLIS/odlis_e.aspx) which defines an edited work as “a single work, or two or more shorter works by the same or different authors, prepared for publication by a person other than the author, whose name usually appears as editor on the title page.” Two main differences between both definitions appear: the ODLIS definition includes collections of one and the same author as being edited works and states that the editor is a different person than the author. The latter occurs for example in the case of text editions of literary work. Because this article focuses on scholarly peer reviewed edited books, our definition requires contributions by at least two different authors and allows for the common practice that book editors also contribute to the volume as authors of the introduction, the conclusion and/or one or more of the chapters.

An edited book can come into being at the initiative of the publisher, the editor(s) and/or as a result of a scholarly meeting or conference (Lewis, 1996). Our definition of edited books allows us to distinguish edited books from other types of research literature (e.g. those listed by the Finish Association of non-fiction Writers <https://www.suomentietokirjailijat.fi/en/>), such as monographs, scientific series, chronicles, scientific journals, research reports, and proceedings (a work published in preparation, rather than as a result, of a conference). In accordance with the ODLIS, a publisher is defined as a person or corporate entity that prepares and issues printed materials for public sale or distribution, normally on the basis of a legal contract in which the publisher is granted certain exclusive rights in exchange for assuming the financial risk of publication and agreeing to compensate the author, usually with a share of the profits.

Previous research (Edwards, 2012; Engels, Ossenblok, & Spruyt, 2012; Gorraiz et al., 2013; Leydesdorff & Felt, 2012; Nederhof, 2006; Torres-Salinas, Robinson-Garcia, Cabezas-Clavijo, & Jiménez-Contreras, 2013) has emphasized the importance of edited books and book chapters in scholarly communication in the Social Sciences and, especially, in the Humanities. The number and share of peer reviewed edited books, indicates the importance of edited books within scholarly communication. In Flanders, about 2% of all peer reviewed publications in the SSH are edited books (EB), with proportions up to 6% in Linguistics, Literature and Theology (Ossenblok, Verleysen, Spruyt, & Engels, 2013). The number of citations they receive also shows the importance of edited books in scholarly communication. Analysis of the Book Citation Index (Web of Science; WoS), indicates that books in the SSH are relatively more cited than books in the Sciences (Leydesdorff & Felt, 2012). Furthermore edited books have a significantly higher citation rate than monographs, although the difference is smaller for the Humanities than for the Social Sciences (Torres-Salinas et al., 2013). Chapters too can be highly cited (Gorraiz et al., 2013; Leydesdorff & Felt, 2012; Torres-Salinas et al., 2013), although, especially within the SSH, the number of citations varies between commercial publishers and university presses (Torres-Salinas et al., 2013). However, as the authors of these studies point out, the research results have been influenced by some known limitations of the BkCI, such as: bias towards English as publication language (Gorraiz et al., 2013), a restricted publisher selection (Torres-Salinas et al., 2013), a restricted time frame and the distinct indexation of book chapters in monographs (Leydesdorff & Felt, 2012). Gorraiz et al (2013) conclude that the BkCI will stimulate authors in disciplines in which books have already been important to publish monographs and (in) edited books.

To the best of our knowledge, no empirical study has addressed the role of a book editor. Thomas and Hrebenar (1993) state that editing a book consist of 25% organizing and managing, 25% communication and 50% academic work. Although editing a book is far more time consuming than writing an article (Lewis, 1996; Thomas & Hrebenar, 1993) and appears to be undervalued for the academic career (Edwards, 2012; Nederman, 2005; Thomas & Hrebenar, 1993), there are some major advantages in editing a book. For the author these advantages are: a great learning experience, in academic, organizational and interpersonal skills (Thomas & Hrebenar, 1993), network building possibilities (Edwards, 2012; Thomas & Hrebenar, 1993), time saving (in comparison with e.g. writing a monograph) (Edwards, 2012; Nederman, 2005) and the sense of satisfaction (Thomas & Hrebenar, 1993). In addition, the edited book has a possible academic and educational value to the field (Edwards, 2012; Gold, 1999; Heumann, 2001; Leal, 2013; Lewis, 1996; Thomas & Hrebenar, 1993). Edited volumes can bring together a greater variety of skills and knowledge than a monograph, resulting in a publication with multiple perspectives, a broader scope, more data analysis, multi-disciplinary research and a wide variety of methodologies (Edwards, 2012; Leal, 2013; Lewis, 1996; Nederman, 2005). Edited books offer space to authoritative comparative perspectives across dimensions such as time and geographic location (Edwards, 2012). The value of the book is largely determined by the choice of contributors who have significant expertise and a balanced view on the issues addressed. Moreover, the choice of the contributors determines the chances of success in finishing the edited book, as contributors who do not follow the deadlines can make the project fail (Edwards, 2012; Galanter, 2008; Leal, 2013; Lewis, 1996; Nederman, 2005; Thomas & Hrebenar, 1993). The quality of an edited book is determined to a considerable extent by the editing process and the possibility of uniting the chapters into a whole (Heumann, 2001; Nederman, 2005).

According to Leal (2013) the difference between papers and book chapters is to be found in the peer review process. Journal articles are mostly individually reviewed whereas a reviewer of an edited book is often asked to comment on several or even each chapter. Harnad (1986) and Leal (2013) put forward that a reviewer of an edited book might not be able to discuss all chapters with equal authority. However, Leal (2013) also points out that an edited book is evaluated at different levels: the volume editors, the other participants, the series editors (if applicable) and the press editors. Nederman (2005) states that good academic and commercial presses are aware of the misapprehension of quality control and therefore are even more rigorous about the content in volumes than in journals. Derricourt (2012) argues that as journals have their subscribers signed up in advance, and books have not, the publishers will take less economic risk by publishing books from an editor whose ideas and research the publisher thinks important or have been checked by an external confidant.

The structure of this article is as follows: In the data and method section we describe the data set and show that edited books are of special interest for the Humanities. As, hitherto, little is known about edited books, we then present data regarding publishers, places of publication, language use and of the presence of introductions and conclusions in the edited books. The second part of the results focuses on collaboration within edited books and the importance of including edited books in research describing collaboration patterns, especially for the Humanities. When measuring collaboration within the Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), previous research focused on co-authorship of articles and book chapters (Ossenblok, Verleysen, & Engels, 2014). However, as collaboration within edited books comprises on the one hand the authors of the chapters and on the

other hand the editors of the book and the collaboration between them, the question arises whether measuring co-authorship of articles and book chapters suffices to quantify the degree of research collaboration within SSH disciplines. Sula (2012) elaborately showed that measuring collaboration in the SSH requires going beyond the analysis of co-authorship. Lewis (1996) argues that contributors to a multi-author book work separately, whereas Nederman (2005) puts forward that collaboration between the contributors, such as sharing and commenting on chapter drafts of the authors, improves a sense of unity and hence the quality of the edited book.

Figure 1: Aspects of collaboration in edited books

In the analysis of collaboration in edited books we focus on five aspects (see also Figure 1): the number of editors per book, the number of chapters per book, the total number of authors per book, the number of unique authors per book, and the number of authors per chapter. In Ossenblok et al. (2014) we show that the stronger a disciplinary tradition in co-authoring papers, the more frequent co-authorship of book chapters occurs. Edwards (2012) indicates that in SSH disciplines co-editing a book is more common than co-authoring an article. The author points to four possible explanations: 1) editors share the workload with a colleague in order to maximize impact relative to effort; 2) as editing mostly is not validated for career advancements, co-editing does not imply fractionalizing publication counts; 3) more editors means adding more networks to the project, which can potentially lead to attracting a more esteemed contributor; 4) having a co-editor means dividing the tasks when negotiating changes to a chapter, in this way the editor with the furthest relation to the contributor can be the ‘bad cop’, if necessary. We therefore expect most edited books will have more than one editor. Furthermore we expect that there will be relatively more co-edited books than there will be co-authored articles and book chapters. However, as the average number of authors per article is higher in the Social Sciences than in the Humanities (Ossenblok et al., 2014), we expect a comparable difference of the number of editors between the two fields. As we will show in the results, the average number of editors is indeed higher in the Social Sciences than in the Humanities, although the difference is small.

DATA AND METHOD

The data used for this article consists of two sets: (1) data from the Flemish Academic Bibliographic Database for the Social Sciences and Humanities (VABB-SHW) and (2) additional data harvested online and in the university libraries.

The first set contains bibliographic information on 753 edited books, all identifiable with an ISBN, and 33.702 journal articles from the period 2000-2011 and registered in the VABB-SHW database as having gone through a peer review process prior to publication. Engels et al. (2012), Ossenblok et al. (2013) and Verleysen, Ghesquière & Engels (2014) provide detailed accounts of the database and more information as well as online access is available at www.ecoom.be/en/vabb. The VABB-SHW database is similar to the Norwegian Cristin (Sivertsen, 2010) and the Danish Research Agency's database (Ingwersen & Larsen, 2014) but is unique in that it is the only database in its kind which includes edited books as a separate publication type that is taken into account for the calculation of the performance based university research funding. Only publications with at least one author or editor affiliated to at least one of the Flemish universities are eligible for inclusion in the database. Publications are assigned to one or more of 16 SSH disciplines according to the research unit or departmental affiliation(s) of these authors and editors. The bibliographic information available in the VABB-SHW includes the publication language, the publisher, and the place of publication. Missing publication information was collected manually from the colophons of the book copies. The place of publication in this research is based upon the first city mentioned.

The second data set, the bibliographic information on the book chapters in the 753 edited books included in the VABB-SHW, was harvested manually by the first author of this paper and three assistant researchers. The information was collected online and/or in the libraries of the University of Antwerp, KU Leuven and Ghent University and resulted in information on 12.913 book chapters. We requested a small proportion of the edited books via interlibrary loan. Data regarding the number of book chapters and the authors per chapter were entered in a database. Introductions, conclusions, analyses and/or reviews were included; prefaces, post scripts, epilogues, and abstracts were not included in the data set. Furthermore, missing bibliographic information (e.g. missing editors or places of publication) of the edited books was added manually.

Table 1 shows per discipline the number of journal articles in VABB-SHW, the number of edited books conform our definition, and the number of book chapters in these edited books. In order to ensure the robustness of the analyses, the 8 disciplines with more than 40 edited books in the period 2000-2011 are included separately in this study. Therefore, in addition to the whole of the data set and the aggregations 'Humanities' and 'Social Sciences', Table 1 includes the following disciplines for the Humanities: History (n=57); Law (n=57); Linguistics (n=144); Literature (n=102); Philosophy (n=66); Theology (n=88) and for the Social Sciences: Economics & Business (n=54) and Political science (n=46). However, in the total for Humanities also Archaeology, Art History and Communication studies are included and in the total for Social Sciences also Criminology, Educational sciences, Psychology, Social Health Sciences, and Sociology are included.

Table 1: Number of VABB-SHW-articles, edited books and book chapters under study (2000-2011).

	articles	edited books	book chapters
discipline	#	#	#
SSH	33702	753	12913
Humanities	14352	599	10646
Social Sciences	18711	175	2710
Economics	4931	54	916
History	1220	57	973
Law	5127	57	1019
Linguistics	1907	144	2504
Literature	963	102	1953
Philosophy	1849	66	1058
Political science	1383	46	628
Theology	953	88	1549

In order to measure collaboration we apply a measure of co-authorship, namely the Revised Collaborative Coefficient (RCC). This measure of collaboration leads to values between 0 and 1, where 1 represents maximal collaboration and 0 no collaboration, or only single authored papers. This makes it a good measure to compare different units, in this case different disciplines. The RCC takes into account the total number of papers, the total number of authors as well as the total numbers of papers having a certain number of authors. The RCC is calculated as

$$= \left(\frac{n}{n-1} \right) \left\{ 1 - \frac{\sum_{j=1}^q (1/j) f_j}{N} \right\}$$

where N= total number of publications, n= total number of unique authors in the collection, j= number of authors per publication and f_j= number of publications having j authors in the collection and q= the max number of authors in a single publication. In addition, in the RCC the number of authors per publication (j) is fractionalized (1/j) in order to give gradually less weight as publications have more co-authors. By subtracting this weighted average from 1, an inverse effect occurs, i.e. more (fractionalised) weight is given to each collaborative publication, resulting in a value between 0 and 1 to represent a low respectively high degree of collaboration. By multiplying the result of the second part of the formula by n/n-1 we obtain a value of 1 when there is maximal collaboration, i.e. all co-authored publications have the same number of authors as there are co-authored publications. When all publications have 1 author, we obtain a value of 0, i.e. minimal or no collaboration (Ajiferuke, Burell, & Tague, 1988; Egghe, 1991; Rousseau, 2011). In this article, we calculated the RCC not only for the authors of the articles and book chapters, but also for the editors of the edited books. To this end we replaced 'author' with 'editor' in the formula above.

In table 3 we used the independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis Test, a non-parametric test to show if there is a statistically significant difference in the distribution for four of the collaboration aspects between the different disciplines included in this study. However, the edited books are allocated to one or more disciplines depending on the editors' affiliation, therefore 27 edited books belonged to 2 or more of the 8 disciplines included in this study. The Kruskal-Wallis test requires an independent

sample, therefore we left the 27 edited books out from this part of our study. In addition to the Kruskal-Wallis Test, we calculated the Pearson correlation to indicate the correlation between four of the collaboration aspects for the Social Sciences and the Humanities. Here 1 indicates a perfect positive correlation, 0 no correlation and -1 a perfect negative correlation. Finally, we calculated the chi-square (χ^2) goodness of fit to show if there is a statistical significant difference between the distribution of the number of editors per book between the Humanities and the Social Sciences. However, 25 edited books were assigned to both the Humanities and the Social Sciences and therefore were left out of the chi-square calculation. One (8,3%) of the expected values was less than 5 but more than 1, hence the chi-square calculation is valid. Because of the limited occurrence of multiple co-editorship in both Humanities and Social Sciences, the analysis was conducted using six categories, i.e. single editor, two editors, three editors, four editors, five editors and six or more editors. Hence in these analyses there are five degrees of freedom (DF) and the distribution among categories of two sets is significantly different when χ^2 exceeds 11,0705.

RESULTS

In the first part of this result section we describe the distribution of the edited books among publishers and among places of publication, and we analyse language use and the occurrence of introductions and conclusions in the books. In the second part we present the findings regarding collaboration in edited books.

Publishers and places of publication

Figure 2: Share of edited books (n=753) per publisher (2000-2011).

Figure 2 presents the share of edited books per publisher. The distribution of the edited books among publishers is Lotkaian, with $C=0,4589$ and $\beta=1,6421$. Furthermore, the distribution of edited books over publishes is highly rightly skewed (min=1, max=155, avg=8.6, median=2). One in five edited books in our data set is published with Peeters, a scholarly publisher headquartered in Leuven, Belgium. Almost half of all edited books (47,0%) is published with 5 publishers: Peeters (n=155), Rodopi (n=57), Brepols (n=53), John Benjamins (n=50) and Brill (n=39), all being academic publishers located in Flanders or the Netherlands. In total 88 publishers published the 753 edited books, where 14 (15,9%) publishers represent more than 75% of all edited books and 74 (84,1%) publishers represent the remaining 24,4% of all edited books.

Table 2 confirms the importance of Flanders (31,9%) and the Netherlands (23,9%) for publishing edited books that are (co)edited by an editor affiliated to a university in Flanders. The United Kingdom (22,3%) appears as the third main publishers country for edited books. Together, Flanders, the Netherlands and the UK account for almost 80% of the publishing places of the edited books in our sample. However, previous research demonstrated a gradual evolution over the period 2002-2011 towards publishing monographs, edited books and book chapters more often with UK publishers (Verleysen & Engels, 2014a).

Language use

Table 2 also indicates the share of edited books published in English, Dutch, French and other languages for the SSH as a whole, for the Social Sciences, for the Humanities, Flanders, the

Netherlands, the UK, Germany, the USA and other places of publication. Most (62 out of 74) edited books written in Dutch are published in Flanders; however, the majority (56,8%) of the edited books published in Flanders are in English. For Germany, the Netherlands, the USA and the UK, the percentage of edited books in English is substantially higher, ranging from 75 to 99%. French and German are mostly represented in Flanders (n=42; 17,1%), Germany (n= 11; 16,2%), and the Netherlands (n= 25; 12,8%).

Table 2: Proportion of edited books written in Dutch, English, French and other languages for the SSH, Humanities, Social Sciences and per place of publication.

		Dutch		English		French		Other languages		All languages	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	% of total EB
Field	SSH	74	9,8	586	77,8	59	7,8	34	4,5	753	100
	Humanities	68	11,4	441	73,6	57	9,5	33	5,5	599	79,5
	Social Sciences	7	4	163	93,1	4	2,3	1	0,6	175	23,1
Place of publication	Flanders	62	25,8	137	56,8	36	14,9	5	2,1	240	31,9
	The Netherlands	6	3,3	149	82,8	15	8,3	10	5,6	180	23,9
	UK	-	-	167	99,4	-	-	1	0,6	168	22,3
	Germany	-	-	45	75,0	-	-	15	24,6	60	8,0
	USA	1	2,3	42	97,7	-	-	-	-	43	5,7
	Other countries	1	4,8	11	52,4	6	28,6	3	14,3	21	2,8

Furthermore, Table 2 shows that for the whole of the SSH almost 4 in 5 edited books are written in English (n=586; 77,8%), one in ten are written in Dutch (n= 74; 9,8%), 59 (7,8%) are written in French and 34 (4,5%) are written in other languages. Dutch is more often used as a publication language for edited books in the Humanities (n= 68; 11,5%) than in the Social Sciences (n=7; 4,0%). English is dominant as publication language in both fields (H: n=441; 73,6% and SS: n=163; 93,1%). French is more often used in the Humanities (n=57; 9,5%), especially in Literature (n=22; 21,6%) and Linguistics (n=25; 17,4%), which can (partially) be explained by the Roman language study sections in those disciplines. Other languages occur mostly in Literature (n=10; 9,83%) and Philosophy (n=6; 9,1%).

Occurrence of introductions and conclusions

Figure 3 shows for the Social Sciences and the Humanities the share and number of edited books with and without an introduction and/or conclusion. For the Humanities, 380 (63,4%) of the edited books have an introduction and 52 (8,7%) have a conclusion. For the Social Sciences the proportions are slightly higher with 126 (72,0%) of the edited books in our study that have an introduction and 37 (21,1%) that have a conclusion. One or more of the editors mostly writes the introduction and conclusion. In addition to the conclusions, 21 (2,8%) edited books, i.e. 13 (2,9%) for the Humanities and 8 (4,5%) for the Social Sciences, have an afterword, a summary, an epilogue, or a postscript. Political science stands out as the discipline where it is most common to write an introduction

(67,4%) and/or a conclusion (32,6%) to an edited book. Overall, 67 (8,9%) of all edited books have an introduction and a conclusion, whereas 245 (32,5%) have neither. 423 (56,6%) edited books display an introduction but no conclusion and 18 (2,4%) edited books comprise a conclusion but no introduction.

Figure 3: Number and share of edited books in the Humanities and in the Social Sciences with or without an introduction and/or conclusion.

Collaboration within edited books

Research collaboration brings together diverse people and interests to achieve a common purpose (here the scholarly edited book) via interactions, coordination of activities and sharing of information, competences and resources (Bukova, 2010; Melin & Persson, 1996). For researchers, the reasons to collaborate are manifold, e.g. researchers gain access to expertise and equipment, enhance productivity and speed up the process, reduce isolation and create networks (Beaver, 2001). Furthermore, collaboration correlates with the visibility of research in terms of citations (Didegah & Thelwall, 2013; Puuska, Muhonnen, & Leino, 2014). Co-authorship data are commonly used to measure collaboration and the resulting indicators are quite easily compared regardless of the underlying characteristics of the collaborative process (Bukova, 2010). However, discussion concerning co-authorship bibliometrics and their relationship to collaboration remain (Katz & Martin, 1997; Laudel, 2002). Therefore other aspects of collaboration need to be taken into account while measuring collaboration, especially within the Social Sciences and Humanities (Sula, 2012).

Collaboration within edited books includes collaboration between authors who co-author a chapter, collaboration between the volume editors, as well as collaboration between the editor(s) of the book and the authors of the book chapters. One could even argue that there is some collaboration among the authors of the different chapters. Measuring this multidimensional collaboration is complex and comprises different aspects, as shown in figure 1. In the following section, we discuss the different aspects separately and in relation to each other.

Table 3: The average and median number of chapters, of authors, of unique authors and of editors per book and the Revised Collaboration Coefficient for edited books, based on editors, and for book chapters, based on chapter authors.

discipline	av# chapters /book	Median #chapters/book	av# authors /book	# Median authors/book	av# unique authors /book	Median # unique authors/book	av# eds /book	Median #eds/book
SSH	17,1	14	23,1	18	19,7	17	2,7	2
Humanities	17,8	14	22,1	18	19,1	16	2,6	2
Social Sciences	15,5	13	26,9	22	22,5	18	2,9	3
Economics	17,0	12	30,9	23	27,0	20	3,3	3
History	17,1	13	19,9	16	17,4	15	2,6	3
Law	17,9	16	34,2	21	21,7	19	2,6	2
Linguistics	17,4	14	21,4	18	19,1	16	2,6	3
Literature	19,1	16	20,2	17	19,0	16	2,9	3
Philosophy	16,0	13	18,0	15	16,9	14	2,5	2
Political science	13,7	12	21,2	18	16,4	14	2,3	2
Theology	17,6	16	19,2	18	17,4	15	2,4	2

Table 4: Pearson correlation of four aspects of collaboration in edited books, i.e. number of editors, number of book chapters, number of authors and number of unique authors.

Pearson Correlation	# book chapters	# authors	# unique authors	# editors
# book chapters	1			
# authors	,553**			
# unique authors	,842**	,568**		
# editors	,156**	125**	,259**	1
Total (N)	753	753	753	753

** Correlation is statistically significant when <0,05 (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows four of the aspects of collaboration in edited books: the average and median number of book chapters, of authors, of unique authors, and of editors. In addition table 4 provides the Pearson correlations between these four aspects of collaboration for the Social Sciences and Humanities as a whole.

The first aspect is the number of book chapters: The average number of chapters per book is 17,1, with 17,7 for the Humanities and 15,3 for the Social Sciences. In Literature the average number amounts to 19,3 whereas in Political science it is only 13,7. The median number of book chapters ranges from 12 for Political science and Economics to 16 for Literature. Large differences between

the average number of book chapters and the median number of book chapters are an indication of outliers, as seems the case in Economics (average: 17,0; mean: 12).

The second aspect of collaboration shown in table 3 is the number of authors per book, i.e. irrespective of the number of times an author is named as author of a chapter. There are on average 23,1 authors per book, 22,2 in the Humanities and 26,9 in the Social Sciences. The highest average number of authors per book is found in Law (34,2) and the lowest in Philosophy (18,0). Table 4 indicates a moderate positive correlation of the average number of authors with the average number of chapters per book ($r = 0.553$) and of the average number of authors with the average number of unique authors ($r = 0,568$).

The third aspect of collaboration shown in table 3 is the average number of unique authors per book. The average number is 19,7, for the Humanities this is 19,1 and for the Social Sciences this is 22,5. The average number of unique authors is the highest in Economics (27,0) and the lowest in Political science (16,4). The largest difference between the mean and the median is found in Economics, again indicating some outliers in the data set. Although the average number of unique authors is higher in the Social Sciences than in the Humanities, the average number of book chapters is lower in the former than in the latter. This implies that on average there is a more diverse author pool per edited book in the Social Sciences than in the Humanities. When e.g. comparing the average number of unique authors and of chapters in Economics with the numbers for History, Linguistics, and Theology, this greater diversity becomes very clear. Table 4 indicates the correlation between number of book chapters and number of unique authors and, overall, there is a very strong positive correlation (0,842) between these two collaboration aspects, meaning that the more book chapters there are in a volume, the more unique authors will be found and vice versa.

The fourth aspect of collaboration shown in table 3 is the number of editors per book. There are on average 2,7 editors per book, and the difference between the Humanities (2,6) and the Social Sciences (2,9) is tiny. The highest average number of editors is found in Economics (3,3) and the lowest in Law (1,7). However, apart from these two disciplines, all disciplines have an average between 2,3 and 2,9 editors per book. The median for each of the disciplines varies between 2 and 3 editors per edited book, which confirms our expectation that co-editing a book is a common practice in all disciplines. When comparing the number of editors per book with the three aforementioned aspects, table 4 indicates a negligible or weak correlation for all aspects. This means the number of editors is independent of the number of book chapters (correlation: 0,156), the number of unique authors (correlation: 0,259) and the number of authors (correlation: 0,125).

The independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis¹ Test is used to indicate the mutual independence of the averages per discipline per aspect shown in table 3. The results indicate that for all 4 aspects of collaboration, the distributions differ significantly (each $p < 0.05$) among the disciplines. However, when comparing the disciplines pairwise, not all differences are significant (see appendix). E.g. whereas Political science has a significant different distribution in the number of book chapters

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¹ To be able to calculate the independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis Test, all records belonging to more than one discipline (#27) were left out (i.e. defined as missing). When calculating the independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis Test including the records belonging to more than one discipline (i.e. duplicating the records for each of its corresponding disciplines), the results remain overall the same but show a lower significant level for number of editors per book (#chapters/book: sign ,000; # unique authors/book: sign ,000; # authors/book. sign ,000; # editors/book: sign ,005).

compared with all disciplines in this study except Economics, Linguistics has no significant different distribution in the number of book chapters compared with all disciplines in this study except with Political science. Political science seems to have a different tradition in the sense that volumes consist of less chapters than in most other disciplines.

Figure 4: Per discipline the Revised Collaborative Coefficient (RCC) based on authors of articles in VABB-SHW on the Y-axis and the RCC based on authors of the book chapters (BC) and the RCC of the editors of the edited books (EB) on the X-axis.

Figure 4 shows per discipline the correlation between the RCC of articles, as shown on the Y-axis, and the RCC of book chapters and of the edited books, as shown on the X-axis. Figure 4 shows that the more researchers within a discipline collaborate together in writing articles, the more they collaborate in writing book chapters, although co-authorship of articles is more common than co-authorship of chapters (Ossenblok et al., 2014). The RCC values for co-editing, however, are all larger than the RCC values for co-authoring of book chapters. Moreover they are all within the range of 0,47 (Theology) and 0,60 (Economics), indicating a strong tendency to co-edit in disciplines. In addition, the RCCs for book editing are almost not correlated to the RCCs for authorship of articles. This underlines the distinctive nature of edited books in the SSH and of the collaboration habits of the editors.

Figure 5: Share of edited books per number of editors per book for the Social Sciences and for the Humanities.

Indeed, Figure 5 displays the share of edited books per number of editors per book for the Humanities and for the Social Sciences. For both the Humanities (86,2%) and the Social Sciences (91,4%) the large majority of the edited books are edited by more than one editor. Previous research (Ossenblok et al., 2014) showed that in the Humanities almost 30% of all articles and book chapters is co-authored whereas for the Social Sciences co-authoring amounts to over 80%. Hence in the Humanities edited books are relatively more often co-edited than are articles or chapters co-authored. Yet although it appears from the distribution of edited books by number of editors as shown in Figure 5 that the number of co-editors is rather similar in the Humanities and in the Social Sciences, the distributions do differ significantly ($\chi^2=13,172 > 11,0705$; $df=5$; $sign=,022$; Cramer's $V=,135$, $sign=,022$). In particular, editing a book with 4 or more editors is more common in the Social Sciences (25,6%) than it is in the Humanities (17,7%), whereas sole editors are more common in the Humanities (13,4%) than in the Social Sciences (8,6%).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this article we study peer reviewed edited books as an important publication channel for the Social Sciences and especially for the Humanities, defined as collections of chapters written by different authors gathered and harmonized by one or more editors. Previous research has shown the importance of monographs and edited books in the Social Sciences and Humanities (Engels et al., 2012; Gorraiz et al., 2013; Nederhof, 2006). Literature on edited books is rather scarce and comprises on the one hand essays, mostly based upon own experiences, and on the other hand data-driven research using small local databases or the Book Citation Index from Web of Science. In this article we study edited books based on a comprehensive regional database, the Flemish Academic Bibliographic Database for the Social Sciences and Humanities (VABB-SHW see Engels et al., 2012). Additional information concerning the edited books has been added to the database, resulting in 753 edited books and 12.913 book chapters included in our study for the period 2000-2011.

To start with, we looked at some general characteristics of the edited books in our data set: the distribution over publishers, the places of publication, language use and the presence of introductions and conclusions. The results of the first three characteristics demonstrate the international feature of the edited book and the highly concentrated distribution of edited books over publishers. The analysis of the presence of introductions and conclusions demonstrates the diversity in the editing process of the books. Firstly, the international feature of the edited book is reflected in the publication language and the scope of the publisher, as English and international publishing houses are directly related to worldwide accessibility (Hicks, 2004; Verleysen & Engels, 2014b). English is the dominant publication language (78%) for both the Flemish (57%) as the non-Flemish publishers and for both the Social Sciences (93%) and the Humanities (74%). When comparing these last two results with findings in previous research (Verleysen, Ossenblok, Spruyt, & Engels, 2015) we find that in both fields English as publication language for edited books is more common than English for articles, as only half of the articles in the Humanities and 4 in 5 articles in the Social Sciences are published in English. Moreover, in the Humanities proportionally more edited books than monographs are written in English, whereas, in contrast, in the Social Sciences no difference has been found in this regard. Besides, half of the edited books are published in the Netherlands (24%) and the United Kingdom (22%), both countries housing large international publisher houses. However, Flanders remains the main publication place for edited books (32%), which might be explained by the economic logic of the publishers. Derricourt (2012) states that the name and institution and background of the author/editor form part of the decision of the publisher to support a project, even though the publisher is also likely to take a risk with an unknown author with interesting ideas. Previous research (Verleysen & Engels, 2014b) showed that especially in the Humanities, peer reviewed book literature is often published with local publishers. Secondly, our results demonstrate a high concentration of edited books (75%) published with only a few (#14; 16%) publishers and a low concentration (25%) with the remaining 74 publishers in our study. These results might confirm previous statements that publishers are seen as rather reluctant of accepting and supporting an edited book project (Thomas & Hrebendar, 1993; Nederman, 2005; Edwards, 2012) and that proximity for both the editor and the publisher (Derricourt, 2012) is important in reducing the economic risk. However, these results might also be an indication of the ever changing publishers landscape, with acquisitions and mergers and growing publisher conglomerates (Thompson, 2005). Lastly, we found differences in the editing process concerning the inclusion of an introduction and a conclusion. Although including an introduction, a conclusion or bridging sections in an edited book is

advised to frame the volume as a whole (Nederman, 2005), it does not seem to be very common for neither the Humanities nor the Social Sciences. However, some of the first chapters might replace the introduction in its role of unifying the chapters contextually. On average 3 in 5 edited books have an introduction and 1 in 10 edited books have a conclusion. Overall, almost 1 in 10 edited books have an introduction and a conclusion and 3 in 10 edited books have neither.

In the second part of this article we studied the collaboration patterns within edited books using 4 aspects related to measuring collaboration: number of chapters per book, number of authors per book, number of unique authors per book and number of editors per book. We found that all four aspects correlate positively two by two except for number of editors per book. Most edited books in both Social Sciences and Humanities have more than 2 editors, irrespective of the number of book chapters, number of authors and number of unique authors in that book. In general, the Humanities and the corresponding disciplines have on average more book chapters per book than the Social Sciences. However, the Humanities have on average less unique authors and less authors per edited book than the Social Sciences. This shows that within (some of) the Humanities disciplines, collaboration is less frequent than it is in (most of) the Social Sciences disciplines, also in edited books. Furthermore, these results indicate there is a more diverse author pool per edited book in the Social Sciences than in the Humanities. The number of unique authors per edited book is not only positively correlated to the number of book chapters and the total number of authors, it is possibly also influenced by the number of authors per chapter. Ossenblok et al (2014) demonstrated that book chapters are more often co-authored and have on average more authors per chapter in the Social Sciences than in the Humanities. Further possible explanations can be found in the different publication cultures related to the prestige of editing a book and the nature of the research topics as well as in the size of the editors network and the number of international authors participating in the edited book project. However, further research is needed to fine-tune all the aforementioned possible explanations. Additionally in this research we used the number of authors per article and per book chapter and the number of editors per edited book to calculate respectively the Revised Collaborative Coefficient (RCC) of articles, book chapters and edited books. Whereas the RCC of book chapters correlates positively with the RCC of articles, this is not true for the RCC of editors per book. Meaning, the more co-authorship we found in articles within a discipline, the more co-authorship we found in book chapters, but not in co-editing a book, because most edited books have more than one editor. However, the distribution of number of editors for the Humanities differs significantly with that of the Social Sciences where the latter has more co-edited books and more editors per co-edited book. All in all, though, for both the Social Sciences and especially the Humanities, co-editing a book is relatively more common than co-authoring an article or a book chapter (Ossenblok et al., 2014).

Limitations and future research

Some limitations of this study should be put forward. First, our study focusses on edited books with one or more editors affiliated with a Flemish institution, resulting in a comprehensive but rather small selection of edited books. When focusing on the different disciplines, only 2 Social Sciences disciplines, i.e. Political science and Economics, were studied in detail as all other disciplines did not have more than 40 books within the chosen time frame (2000-2011). Including other comparable local and international data sets in future research would facilitate a more elaborated robust data set which enhances the possibility for interesting disciplinary comparisons. In addition, the selection of edited books is based on the selection of the publishers included in the VABB-SHW (for a full account

see: www.ecoom.be/vabb). The main selection (list of 2010) is based on the Norwegian publishers list (level 2), which includes mainly international publishers. Only 2 Flemish publishers were fully included in the publishers selection for the VABB-SHW: Peeters and Brepols, resulting in a share of 1 in 5 edited books published by Peeters, half of which belonging to only two disciplines: Theology (n=60; 38,7%) and Literature (n=28; 18,1%), both disciplines included in our study. Also, when looking up the place of publication, we always used the first city mentioned as the place. This might give a small but distorted view in place of publication as 7,5% of the publishers have more than one city mentioned (e.g. Leiden – Boston). In addition, publishers might change the place of publication without changing their headquarters.

More research on edited books and the related collaboration practices is needed. Using co-authorship and co-editorship as measures of collaboration is based upon the assumptions that all authors and editors took part in the research collaboration process and that all scientists who collaborated became co-authors (Laudel, 2002). Laudel (2002) further indicates different types of collaboration practices exist within articles. Further research is needed to define the different types of collaboration within edited books and especially concerning the nature of collaboration between the editor of the book and the authors of the chapters. Furthermore, as is assumed that editors often use their network in the process of editing a book (Edwards, 2012), a more detailed study of these networks would give more insights in the making of edited books and the collaboration patterns. Comparing co-authorship networks and co-editorship networks per field, discipline and on an individual basis will give more insight in the bridging role of the edited book for its contributors. Looking at the number of editors, the use of English as publication language in both Social Sciences and Humanities and the broad range of topics edited books cover, we assume international collaboration is more common practice in edited books than it is in articles. Although we found only a weak correlation between the number of editors and the number of unique authors, looking at the difference between international collaborating editors and locally collaborating editors, i.e. number of non-Flemish editors and chapter authors, could give more insight in the network structure and the use of the international networks by editors.

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APPENDIX

Significant difference between two disciplines per collaboration aspect		Economics	History	Law	Linguistics	Literature	Philosophy	Political Science
History	# book chapters	,468						
	# unique authors	,000						
	# authors	,000						
	# editors	,212						
Law	# book chapters	,006	,037					
	# unique authors	,406	,000					
	# authors	,136	,025					
	# editors	,054	,470	,411				
Linguistics	# book chapters	,089	,371	,114				
	# unique authors	,007	,007	,078				
	# authors	,000	,025	,032				
	# editors	,139	,978	,470				
Literature	# book chapters	,006	,043	,742	,141			
	# unique authors	,002	,058	,022	,424			
	# authors	,000	,274	,002	,202			
	# editors	,822	,228	,047	,127			
Philosophy	# unique authors	,819	,597	,008	,122	,008		
	# unique authors	,000	,961	,000	,007	,060		
	# authors	,000	,672	,000	,005	,112		
	# editors	,049	,467	,402	,467	,041		
Political science	# book chapters	,093	,015	,000	,000	,000	,048	
	# unique authors	,000	,936	,000	,012	,070	,899	
	# authors	,000	,325	,014	,373	,934	,165	
	# editors	,012	,481	,116	,164	,009	,595	
Theology	# book chapters	,039	,186	,314	,549	,428	,053	,000
	# unique authors	,000	,228	,003	,102	,435	,240	,237
	# authors	,000	,487	,001	,080	,654	,238	,661
	# editors	,016	,266	,191	,280	,009	,768	,459