

Mission Possible:

The role of university libraries in 21st century scholarly communication in Hungary

Gyongyi Karacsony

gyk@lib.unideb.hu

Life Sciences Library

University and National Library, University of Debrecen

Debrecen, Hungary

Abstract

The current global changes in the nature of scholarly communication slowly penetrate into the Hungarian research community. The most active players in this changing environment are university libraries.

There are ten institutional repositories in OpenDOAR and twelve OA journals registered in DOAJ from Hungary.

University Libraries and the Library of the Academy of Sciences have joined their forces in HUNOR: HUNGarian Open access Repositories. They are represented in many European projects, they are maintaining an information site on OA in Hungarian, and are working with different groups of the scientific community to create a culture of open access in the country. The Database of Hungarian Scientific Works is under development with bibliographic and bibliometric data and links to fulltext where available.

The Hungarian Research Fund has signed the Berlin Declaration and is preparing new regulations on the open availability of scientific results of funded projects.

The proposed presentation intends to give the audience an overview of all these aspects of changes, achievements, plans, legislation, etc. that are taking shape on the map of 21st century scholarly life in Hungary.

Introduction

Changes in the established patterns of scholarly communication have accelerated in the last two decades with the advent of the Internet and its services. Electronic resources, social softwares, web2.0 services and open access practices penetrate into all disciplines.

Following global changes, universities have to transform their information resources and scholarly practices at an institutional level. Libraries are reframing their mission to reflect changes in their environment and the expectations of their users. In their strategic priorities they concentrate on publishing and scholarly communication. They are reshaping their service structure and strive for a new position in the organization of the university. Once they have entered this process, they successively face new roles and needs for related competencies. The speed and intensity of the way academic libraries respond to these challenges vary by discipline and by geographic area/country.

In Eastern and Central Europe technological evolution happened parallel with the political change and intensive processes on all social levels (including academic life) since the early 1990s.

Considering the new evolving scholarly environment, Hungarian academic libraries have been in the intersection of changes and challenges. The focus of the present study is to examine whether the above mentioned processes in social and academic communication represent a constructive or destructive interference in the changing structure and operation of higher educational libraries, and how the reorganized functions of such libraries can incorporate the working concept of open access.

Positioning open access in Hungary:

The Hungarian research structure is bipolar:

- On the one hand, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS) maintains 48 research institutes and other institutions (libraries, archives, information systems, etc.).
- On the other hand, there are 71 higher education institutions in the country. In 2000 many smaller specialized higher education institutions were merged to create universities and colleges with more faculties.

According to the Higher Education Act (1993) no higher education institution in Hungary can operate without a library or library system. For historical reasons several smaller and bigger departmental and faculty libraries function within each institution. Most of them are part of the central library, but some of them are integral parts of the faculty or a department.

Since there is no ministry for research and science in Hungary, all university libraries work under the Ministry of Education and Culture. Their professional work and lobbying activities are coordinated by the *College of the Directors of University Libraries in Hungary*.

In our national research structure there is no central institution which would initiate participation and task distribution in international scholarly processes, therefore higher education units have to take a very active role in monitoring and joining global initiatives, such as open access publishing, in order to keep up with technical and structural developments, and thus, be part of the international scholarly community.

University Libraries and the Library of the Academy of Sciences have joined their forces in HUNOR: HUNGarian Open access Repositories to advance national open access practices. The members of HUNOR are dedicated to promote Hungarian research both nationally and internationally and to achieve effective dissemination of scientific outputs through implementing a national infrastructure of open access repositories. Other proposed activities include the organization of a methodology center, adopting international know-how and standards, the establishment of complementary scientific communication channels, and international relations. HUNOR members build and maintain <http://www.open-access.hu> – an information portal on open access in Hungarian.

There are four institutional repositories maintained by HUNOR members (<http://www.open-access.hu/index.php/HUNOR>) and some more Hungarian archives are registered in ROAR and OpenDOAR.

There are 15 open access journals in Hungary (http://www.open-access.hu/index.php/Magyar_Open_Access_foly%C3%B3iratok) published by university departments and HAS research institutions.

The Hungarian Research Fund (OTKA) has signed the Berlin Declaration and it is preparing new regulations on the open availability of scientific results of funded projects.

There are two Hungarian universities on the signatories list of Berlin Declaration (<http://oa.mpg.de/openaccess-berlin/signatories.html>): Central European University (2003) and the University of Debrecen (2009).

Regulations affecting the open availability of research results in Hungary

There are two pieces of national legislation affecting electronic library services. Academic collections could be digitized and made electronically available to determined groups of users.

1. According to the Copyright Act "... works forming part of the collection of publicly accessible libraries, ... may be, for the purpose of research or private study, freely displayed to individual members of the public on the screens of dedicated terminals on the premises of such establishments ... provided that this is not for direct or indirect earning or increasing income." This means that libraries are entitled to digitise documents from their collection (eg. textbooks that are out of print or are available only in a few copies) and provide access on dedicated terminals for students and researchers. The idea is not in support of OA but we can archive and provide at least limited electronic access to research outputs (eg. books by university authors) as well.
2. According to a governmental regulation all PhD dissertations must be made electronically available on the websites/archives of universities.

Apart from jurisdiction academic institutions have no stated self archiving policies. We can find Intellectual Property Rules at some universities but these mainly concentrate on patenting and economic rights rather than on moral rights of scholarly publications.

The only self-archiving policy we can find in ROARMAP from the country is that of the Hungarian Research Fund stating: "All scientific publications resulting from support by an OTKA grant are required to be made available for free according to the standards of Open Access, either through providing the right of free access during publication or through depositing the publication in an open access repository. The deposit can be in any institutional or disciplinary repository, as well as in the Repository of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences – REAL: <http://real.mtak.hu/>."

In addition to national legislation and the OTKA policy academic libraries can rely on funder mandates (Wellcome Trust, NIH, EC, EUA, EURAB, etc. – see ROARMAP for details) and publisher copyright policies in their intention of collecting and archiving the scholarly results of their universities.

A case study

The institution

From an OA perspective, the University and National Library of the University of Debrecen is one of the most advanced institutions in Hungary. The Library has got two main missions:

- to provide access to the information needed to support and develop learning, teaching, research, and medicinal activities at the university.
- tasks related to the national collection. We are the center of the Hungarian interlibrary loan service with our deposit collection and an extensive collection of print and electronic academic journals and we maintain the national document supply database and registry.

From the point of view of my presentation the academic function is of major importance, but I have to add that we do make use of the national collection and our privileges as a national library to serve academic needs.

The University of Debrecen is one of the largest universities in the country with more than 30.000 students and approximately 2000 academic staff. The University has 15 faculties and 25 doctoral schools. In 2010 UD became one of the five Hungarian universities awarded the prestigious 'research university' title by the Ministry of Education.

Geographically the University has 5 campuses scattered in about 200 square kilometers in and around the city of Debrecen.

The structure of the University and National Library (DEENK) was created according to the fragmented nature of university campuses. We have seven libraries:

Agricultural Science Library

Arts and Sciences Library

Library of the Conservatory

Life Sciences Library

Engineering Library

Library of the Faculty of Education

Social Sciences Library

Our library has a really complex collection, staff and task structure, therefore the availability of our electronic services from anywhere on a 24/7 basis is of major importance. Perhaps that is why our library is so sensitive to global changes in scholarly communication. We have to adapt new technologies and integrate them into our services very quickly.

Web presence

We have a central website and we have created seven further websites customized to the needs of the different user (scientific) communities. Currently we are in the process of recreating them on a portal system (Drupal). This means a more active involvement of librarians in the maintenance of website content. They need to acquire new skills and a new attitude to our services. They have to be able to communicate our services on the websites.

Everything is on the website: our users can renew books online, order items from our closed stacks, send documents to the library's printers, and they can use all our electronic services (databases, e-journals) from remote computers through our proxy server.

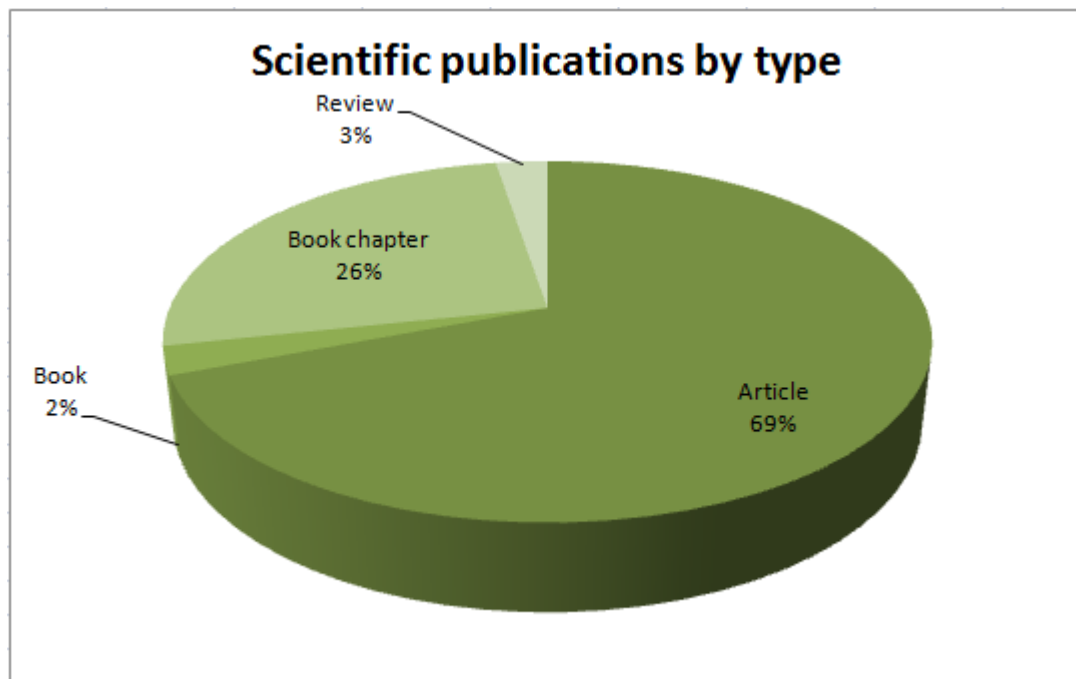
Collecting and archiving the scientific output of the university

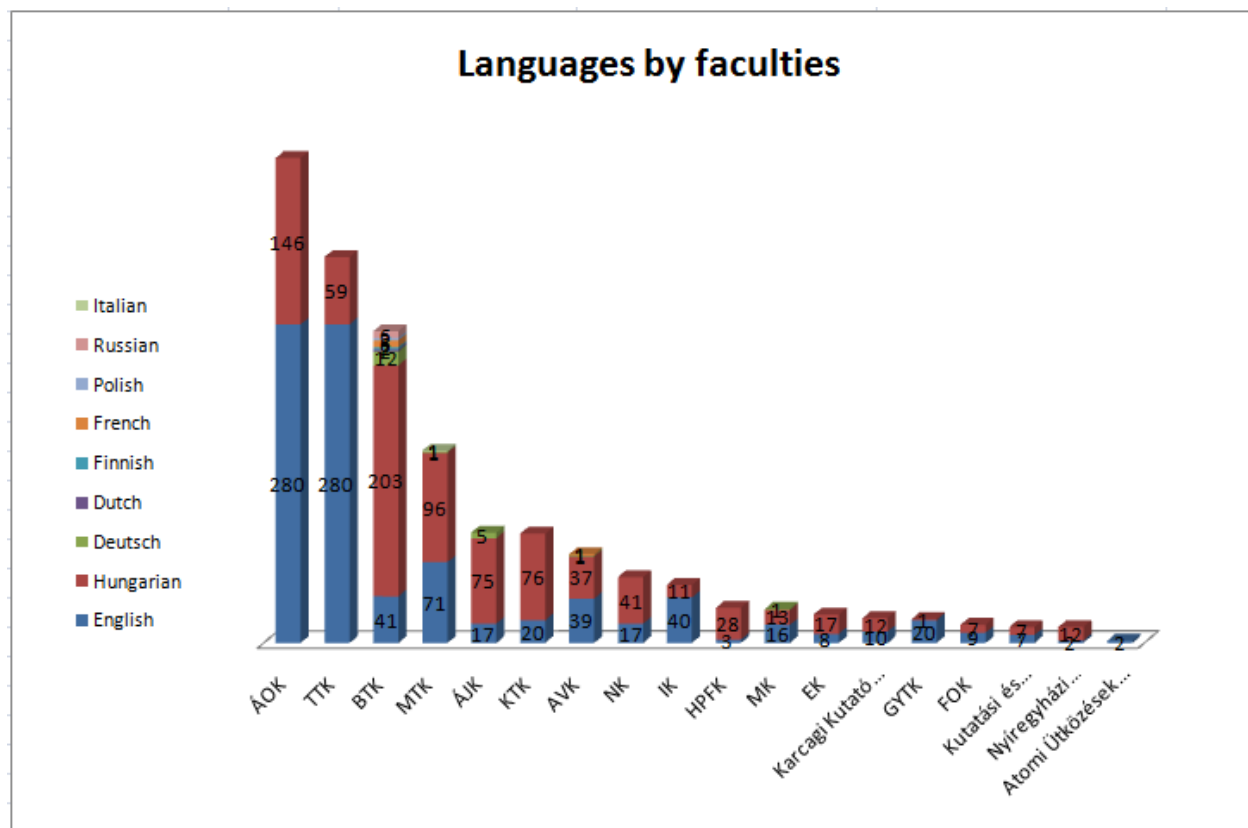
It is of major importance for our library to become an active participant in the process of scholarly communication. That is why we started to collect metadata and archive the fulltext of publications by university researchers.

We have support from university administration in the creation and maintenance of our publications database. It is compulsory for researchers to upload every April the bibliographic data and the full-text of all the publications of the previous year. We have to check (and correct if necessary) about 2000 metadata records in a couple of weeks. We are planning to have continuous upload integrated in the process of publication, with pre- or postprint deposit and open access where available. We have a proposal for modifying the University's Intellectual Property Rules accordingly – this might become a university mandate or policy.

We have online submission forms for uploading different document types (books, book chapters, articles, reviews). RIS upload from reference softwares is also available. We create a MARC metadata record in the bibliographic database and a Dublin Core record with attached fulltext in our DSpace repository.

We can provide statistical data and print or online institutional/faculty/personal bibliographies from the Publications Database (<http://ebib.lib.unideb.hu/>).





DEA, the University of Debrecen Electronic Archive is our institutional repository (<http://dea.lib.unideb.hu/>).

OA is not strong enough in the country and in our university, therefore we use our IR for diverse purposes.

We archive documents like student thesis, doctoral thesis, digitized materials, and e-prints here. DEA itself is becoming a huge electronic background archive on which we are building services like our book-on-demand service of course materials for students. Both DART-Europe and DRIVER harvest our relevant DEA collections, and our digitized documents can be found in the Hungarian Digital Image Library and Europeana. We are a COAR member institution and we provide the National OA Desk service for OpenAIRE.

We have developed an Open Journal System for university OA journals. The first instance (<http://gerundium.lib.unideb.hu/>) was published for the 10th anniversary of the integrated University of Debrecen in February 2010.

From the management point of view: we have to deal and scope with different habits and attitudes not only of the users but also of the librarians. We have to convince them about the need and importance of the change and educate them accordingly.

I coordinate a group (we call it „Content Development Team”) of 5 colleagues whose task is to be intermediary: we coordinate and help our colleagues identify and acquire necessary skills to deal with issues of the new emerging structure of scholarly communication.

Conclusions

Hungarian academic libraries are trying to join the current trends in global communications however, depending on their infrastructure and available resources, they respond in various ways and speed to the changes in scholarly communication. There are libraries which have already developed and successfully manage institutional repositories, while others are just taking the first steps in digitizing their collections.

There are only a few libraries which consolidates global trends with national regulations and institutional resources. They are taking active roles in international initiatives, thus they represent the new standards in collecting, preserving, and managing scholarly results.

A clear statement on the ownership and rights of academic institutions is needed in IPR Rules or self archiving policies, which can be achieved with a stronger lobbying activity on the level of university administration.

References

Act no. LXXVI of 1999 on copyright (consolidated text as of 01.01. 2007). 2007. Article 38 (5)

OpenDOAR <http://www.opendoar.org>

ROAR <http://roar.eprints.org>

ROARMAP <http://www.eprints.org/openaccess/policysignup>

SHERPA Romeo <http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/>