FOLKSONOMY IN SEGMENTED SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES (SSNS) IN BOOKS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE GOODREADS INTERFACE

FOLKSONOMIA EM SITES DE REDES SOCIAIS SEGMENTADAS (SSNS) EM LIVROS: UM ESTUDO EXPLORATÓRIO DA INTERFACE DO GOODREADS

FOLKSONOMÍA SEGMENTADA EN SITIOS DE REDES SOCIALES:
UNA INVESTIGACIÓN EXPLORATORIA DESDE LA INTERFACE DE LOS GOODREADS

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[1]Adriana Amaral
[2]Tarciso Salvador
Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos[1]
Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul[2]

Correspondência

[1]Adriana Amaral
Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos
Porto Alegre, RS
Email: adriamaral@unisinos.br
ORCID: http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9159-2352

RESUMO: This article aims to map and discuss the concepts around folksonomy and tagging in Segmented Social Network Sites in books. To do so, one takes into account the different forms of classification and categorization made by the users of the Goodreads site. The present investigation starts from the theoretical debates about the different nomenclatures used for folksonomy and Segmented Social Network Sites (SSNS) and their different uses. In order to observe the applications of these concepts, we made an exploratory observation of the US site Goodreads describing its potential for social labeling. The initial results indicate that folksonomy in Goodreads can be understood as a process for personal organization of the readings, and social cataloging can work for the visibility and searchability of book reviews.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Folksonomia. Sites de Redes Sociais Segmentadas (SSNS). Livro. Etiquetamento. Goodreads.

ABSTRACT: This present paper aims to map and discuss concepts about folksonomy and tagging in Segmented Social Network Sites (SSNS) book-based. We´re considering diferent ways of classification and categorization done by Goodreads users. Our investigation starts from theoretical debates about recommendation systems and folksonomy in social networking sites and their diferent uses. In order to develop the application of these concepts we´ve made an exploratory observation of Goodreads and its potentialities of social tagging. Initial results shows that Goodreads folksonomy can be understood as a process for personal organization of readings and social tagging can work for searchability and visibility of the book reviews.

KEYWORDS: Folksonomy. Segmented Social Network Sites (SSNS). Books. Tagging. Goodreads.

RESUMEN: Este documento tiene como objetivo mapear y discutir conceptos sobre folksonomía y etiquetas en sitios de redes sociales segmentadas (SSNS) basado en libros. Estamos considerando diferentes formas de clasificación y categorización realizadas por los usuarios de Goodreads. Nuestra investigación parte de debates teóricos sobre sistemas de recomendación y folksonomía en sitios de redes sociales y sus diferentes usos. Con el fin de desarrollar la aplicación de estos conceptos hemos hecho una observación exploratoria de la interfaz de Goodreads y sus potencialidades de etiquetado social. Los resultados iniciales muestran que la folksonomía de Goodreads puede entenderse como un proceso para la organización personal de las lecturas y el etiquetado social puede trabajar para la búsqueda y visibilidad de las revisiones de libros..

PALABRAS CLAVE: Folksonomía. Sitios de redes sociales segmentadas (SSNS). Libros. Etiquetas. Goodreads.

1 INTRODUCTION

The advancement of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the popularization of Web 2.0[1] and its social systems on the Internet have brought new challenges to society, especially those working with issues related to the areas of knowledge. As Antoun (2008, p. 7) states, "since the internet surfaced to the public in 1984 through BBS, and became popular in 1995 with the emergence of the Web, many predictions and speculations surrounded its manifestations.

One of the many changes that have occurred in the production of knowledge and practices in the area of librarianship and information science is related to the processes of categorization and indexation of content in general. On the one hand, this transformation facilitates and empowers the user to be the curator and organizer of their content, allowing a quick retrieval of this data and a kind of personalized social cataloging of books and other content shared in an online environment. Folksonomy[2] differs from information processing practices because it is not necessarily performed by professionals, so it is the duty of librarians and other information specialists to analyze how these transformations orchestrated by the user impact and may or may not influence themes such as: ontologies, taxonomies , thesauri, indexing, curatorships of content, influencing even in reference service models.

In the present article we will deal with this theme from a theoretical approach in which we will discuss the concepts around folksonomy and the labeling in social bookmarked web sites, taking into account the different forms of classification and categorization made by the users of Goodreads[3] observed in an exploratory way to illustrate the concepts discussed. Our general goal is to map the discussions about the concepts and practices of folksonomy (VAN DER WALL, 2006) and of social indexing in social networking sites, to then describe the Goodreads.

For that, the article was organized in three parts. In the first part, we discuss the broader discussion of Social Networking Sites in their terminologies such as Segmented, Thematic, Niche Networks, among others. In the second part, we will discuss specifically the notions about Folksonomy, Categorization, Labeling and Recommendation Systems that happen in the context of these sites. Finally, in the third part, we will make a description of

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[1] Discussion on what will be called Web 2.0, by Tim O´Reilly (2005), emerges at the turn of the millennium. (ANTOUN, 2008, p.11)

[2] "In the scope of information science research, the possibility for users to participate in the representation of information is, in particular, an important question to be researched and analyzed, since Folksonomy has the power to aggregate the intelligence of the people who can collaborate in the significant production of semantic metadata in databases and digital repositories. Thus, the theme Folksonomy has been integrating into a field of study still to be explored". (SANTOS; CORRÊA, 2016)

[3] Available at: http://www.goodreads.com

the North American site Goodreads presenting some possibilities and processes of labeling used by the users.

2 SOCIAL NETWORKS AND THE TERMS FOR ITS SEGMENTATIONS

According to Raquel Recuero (2009, p.21), studies on social networks are not new, since areas such as mathematics, sociometry and sociology and other sciences have been discussing the concept of networking since the beginning of the 20th century. The transformation, however, occurs when there is the possibility of social network formation and aggregation on the Internet, thus generating new possibilities for connections as well as new studies on the subject. According to the definition of Recuero (2009, p.24):

> A social network is defined as a set of two elements: actors (people, institutions or groups, the network nodes) and their connections (interactions or social ties) (Wasserman & Faust, 1994; Degenne & Forse, 1999). A network, therefore, is a metaphor for observing the connection patterns of a social group, from the connections established between the different actors.

The author also states that these elements can not be analyzed separately and that there are different dynamics of social networks on the Internet (cooperation, competition, conflict, rupture, aggregation, adaptation and self-organization) as well as different types (Emerging or Affiliation). In this article we consider the Social Network Sites as

> defined by Boyd & Ellison (2007) as those systems that allow i) the construction of a persona through a profile or a personal page, ii) interaction through comments, iii) public exposure of each actor's social network. Social networking sites would be a category of the social[4] software group, which would be software with direct application to computer-mediated communication (RECUERO, 2009, p. 102).

The popularization of social networking sites has brought one of the tendencies to the segmentation in niches of themes, or tastes, such as fashion, professional performances, music, books, among others (BAYM & LEDBETTER, 2008). Research on the theme of social networking sites has grown along with the emergence of the same. Authors such as Recuero (2009), Boyd & Ellison (2007), Hodkinson (2007), among others, present different analyzes and methods for them. Such segmentation generated a series of specific nomenclatures on segmented social networking sites that we seek to organize (Chart 1) from a first attempt at systematization by Jeffman (2014)[5] and other materials consulted.

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[4] Researcher and graphic artist Lev Manovich (2013) on the other hand, believes that the term social networking site should be replaced by the term social software.

[5] This first attempt to collect the terminologies on segmented social networks elaborated by Jeffman (2014) is interesting for having brought the discussion in a systematized way, but it shows incoherence when mixing authors that are in different discursive plans like researches that deal with theoretical concepts to the authors of the scientific divulgation or manuals marketing, in addition to mixing materials of different orders such as books, presentations and scientific articles. There is also a lack of criticism of the concepts presented.

Chart 1. Terminologies for Social Networking Sites.

Terminology	Author	Definition
Niche Networks	Lima (2013, Online) – internet article	With each passing day, new niche social networks are springing up for whatever the subject. They are Social Networks geared to work, the professions themselves, some for music, for dating, books, movies, and a lot of interests.
Segmented Networks	Amaral (2010, Online)	Although the author does not make a definition, she comments on the possibility of appropriation and characterizes segmented social networks from her studies on social music networks. Some features can also be applied in social networks focused on books. They are: Personalization, Fruition of symbolic goods, sharing of preferences, dash of relationships, databases of information, social memory, reputation and brand constitution, recommendation, hierarchical organization around the object, segmented audience self-awareness.
Thematic Networks	Montardo (2008, p. 76)	"A thematic network can be defined as a social network on the web, therefore as a set of nodes and their connections (Recuero, 2005), which is structured around a specific theme and remains restricted to it." In several cases, there are social networks established in the most diverse media (blogs, fotologs, social networks, microblogs, etc.) whose actors group in the name of some affinity expressed in them. However, in these cases, it is seen that the affinity to some theme is the starting point for the exchanges undertaken, but not necessarily the point of arrival. In other words, the initial affinity to one theme unfolds in many others, some of which eventually take off entirely from the initial theme. "
Thematic Networks	Carrera and Paz (2012)	Uses the same approach as Montardo.

Source: the authors.

In this paper, we chose to use the terminology SSNS because of the more focused issue in the relationships with users' uses and behaviors, which is at the heart of labeling and folksonomy practices. Even so, for other studies other terminologies can be discussed and applied. In this context of changes promoted by technology, the article is part of the transformations undergone in the way users categorize their readings and share them on the Internet at an intersection between information science, librarianship and communication. We will observe how the SSNS Goodreads interface enables the practices of "social tagging" and folksonomy for the categorization of the books registered.

3 FOLKSONOMY, CATEGORIZATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Folksonomy processes are part of this complex scenario in social networking sites (RECUERO, BASTOS & ZAGO, 2015),

> Folksonomy was coined by Thomas Vander Wal in the year 2004 in order to describe the act of assigning tags to features present in Web 2.0. The author then defines folksonomy as the result of marking information and objects (anything with an electronic address) made freely by the person who consumes the information for his or her own recovery, which is performed in a social environment, that is, shared and open to other users (SOUSA & CORREIO, 2016, p. 522).

In terms of folksonomy, there are a number of terms used to describe the labeling or tagging process. Catarino and Baptista (2009, p.50-51) compiled these terms by arguing that there are authors who understand folksonomy as a process/product (Chart 2) and others as method.

Chart 2.

Product	
Wal (2006)	Folksonomy is the result of free and personal assignment of tagging information or objects (anything with URL), aiming at its recovery.
Lund et al. (2005)	Folksonomy refers to a vocabulary, or list of terms, that arises from the overlap of labels defined by several users when marking their favorite links, that is, their markers for later retrieval.
Mathes (2004)	Folksonomy is a set of terms that a group of users used to tag the contents of digital Web resources.
Trant (2006a, 2006b)	Folksonomy is the result of a socially constructed classification system, or, collection of concepts expressed in a classification system developed in a cooperative way. Folksonomy is an informal and organic set of related terminology.
Sturtz (2006)	Folksonomy is a set of tags - with one or more keywords - that users of a shared Web content management system apply to individual resources in order to group or classify them for later retrieval.
Process	
Russel (2005)	Folksonomies have provided the possibility to create in a loose text, metadata assigned by users to existing resources (books, images, URLs, etc.).
Guy and Tonkin (2006)	Folksonomy is a type of distributed classification system, folksonomy is usually created by a group of individuals, typically resource users.

Ohmukai, Hamasaki and Takeda (2006)	It is a system that manages labels assigned by users to the resources they index, sharing them with other users, and also making available information from other resources available on the Web that have been indexed in the same way.
Quintarelli (2005)	An emerging new approach to the distributed classification of digital resources.
Hammond et al. (2005)	An unstructured classification made by users themselves of digital resources.
Valongueiro (2006)	A new classification paradigm, because it respects the cultural differences and personal characteristics of those who used and classified certain information.

Source: Catarino and Baptista (2009, p. 50-51)

Santos (2013, p. 98) speaks about the importance of understanding the motivations of folksonomy uses by users of information, whether for a social issue or "own benefit of information organization", which can also be an influencing factor for the sharing of tags.

> The importance of the user grows in opening up to his participation through comments or the possibility of intervening in collaborative processes that Web 2.0 has provided. We can then reach, say, an era of customization of the user interfaces and interaction platforms (SANTOS, 2013, p.98).

These categorization practices can be scaled by the organization of searches and information about a nucleus of literary genres - and the possibilities of recommendation can be an important factor in this constitution, since from these two elements (tagging and recommendation) we can measure the presence and permanence in the system as Thelwall & Kousha (2016) tells us. According to the authors' survey of a sample of 50,000 Goodreads user profiles, its members have a balance between categorization and book review activities and engaging with other users, so it would be a hybrid site-book recommendation site of social network, and the authors call it social navigation site (THELWALL & KOUSHA, 2016, p.02).

In this sense, it is important to define what would be a recommendation system:

> Systems of recommendation are, therefore, exactly what the expression suggests. Simply defined, these are software, also called intelligent agents, which try to anticipate consumer interests in the digital environment and predict their tastes in order to recommend new products (SÁ, 2009, p.01).

In the context of technological mediation and the segmentation of social practices and the consumption of data and information and their dissemination in social networking sites, it is important to observe the importance of these new behaviors in a network to understand these processes of social categorization, who do not formally rely on classification systems established by librarianship, although their origin is not wholly opposed to such systems. In spite of the expressive number of users, economic interests and the impact on the

informational issues of these online platforms, there is a scarce bibliography about the intersection of these three themes: recommendation systems, folksonomy and social book sites in the national context. Abroad some papers already investigate this question from different approaches and in different fields such as information sciences, librarianship, communication and media studies, computer science, design and related fields.

Amaral & Aquino (2009) and Sá (2009) dealt with the recommendation and folksonomy systems from a more cultural perspective and their objects were social music networks such as the Last.fm website. On social bookmarking sites the work of Carrera & Paz (2012, page 13) dealt with Skoob and resulted in the understanding of recommendation

> [...]that participation in thematic social networking sites tends to be differentiated compared to the interactions constituted in more generic sites, in what concerns to provide resources and ambience for the management of impressions and the creation of relationships.

Researchers Montardo & Silva (2015) discussed the issue of consumption and uses of thematic social networking site using objects like Scribd (from reading files) and Skoob (from books). In our understanding, the mediation of this consumption of information and data organization in the recommendation systems presents important possibilities that "go beyond the limits of the area of information retrieval ... since the recommendation per se is, first and foremost, the result of a social process and has the influence of the established social links throughout the human action in this process ". (FIGUEIRA FILHO, GEUS & ALBUQUERQUE, 2008, Online). Based on this assumption of transformations in the contexts of categorization and curation of content and in the importance of understanding the study of the new ways in which users have organized their books into social networks specific for such purposes, we have chosen to study Goodreads.

4 THE GOODREADS CASE

There is a huge amount of data and user profiles found on these sites, since "each individual represents a case that requires specific attention. It is not possible to study, one by one, all groups and profiles of information users. It is necessary to bring together groups with similar characteristics ". (SANTOS, 2013, p. 91). Thus, it was necessary to make a cut of the object of research, to which we chose the North American site Goodreads due to three justifications arisen from our initial observations:

a) When researching articles in Google Scholar by the sites of social networks oriented to the books, all the articles found in Portuguese until the present moment are focused on Skoob, a Brazilian site of reviews, organization and recommendation of books. Thus, we understand that Goodreads, whose functionalities are similar to the national site, even being used by Brazilian users, has received little academic attention in Brazil;

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b) We noticed that there are strong differences in the interface with the easiest labeling in Goodreads, which possibly impact forms of categorization and search of the books by the site's own search engine, whose official categories are formulated by librarians who work in this site;

c) Although it is an American platform, Goodreads is progressively increasing its space for Portuguese-language books, as well as a migration of Brazilian users leaving Skoob and opting for thematic scope, bilingual option, as well as greater technical stability of the site;

Before we proceed with our description and observation of Goodreads, it is important to take into account that our method was exploratory. "This type of research aims to provide greater familiarity with the problem, in order to make it more explicit or to construct hypotheses" (SILVEIRA & CÓRDOVA, 2009, p.35). According to the authors, the exploratory research includes the bibliographic survey and analysis of examples. In addition, our sample was intentional and of subtype of intensity, since "the selection favors the elements in which the characteristics that interest the research are present intensely or evidently, but are not characterized like extreme cases" (FRAGOSO, RECUERO & AMARAL, 2011, page 79). The observation of the platform at the first moment was made at the same time as the theoretical survey was carried out (during the two month period between October and December 2016). However, we have updated both the references and the observation during the first half of 2017.

Goodreads is a social networking site for organizing, promoting and sharing literary tastes, details about literature and literary genres, book recommendations and reviews, created in January 2007 by Otis Chandler. According to data from the website[6], Goodreads has about 55 million members and around 1.5 billion books registered in different languages, taking into account the multiple editions that each book can offer in different parts of the world. Still according to company data, the platform has about 50 million reviews on all types of books. This gigantism motivated the purchase of the site by Amazon[7] in 2013 for an undisclosed amount

All of the publications offered on Goodreads were registered by a company librarian. The site interface presents fixed elements that accompany the book: miniature cover, list of editions (number of editions or foreign editions if any), official synopsis, number of pages, year of publication, ISBN, possibility to make and publish a review and online purchase of the work. Other details accompanying the publication on its official website are a brief biography of the writer, the keywords to describe his literary genre and at the bottom the reviews and forums that make it possible to discuss the work. The site allows the user to

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[6] https://www.goodreads.com/about/us

[7] http://www.amazon.com

select and add a book to their profile, making their list of readings visible, as well as all the data and debates related to that book that the user participates in. With reading through Kindle, a device for reading digital books (E-reader) it is still possible to make notes on the device and send reading comments or even reviews directly to Goodreads.

To use the site it is necessary that the user sign up for free, where personal information is provided, the main one being an extensive list of possibilities for the choice of favorite literary genres. Once chosen, these lists can be edited and will be used as a reference in the book and author reading recommendations that the system will make to the new user. These genres will be available for access and editing in a single tab located in the upper corner of Goodreads (Image 1).
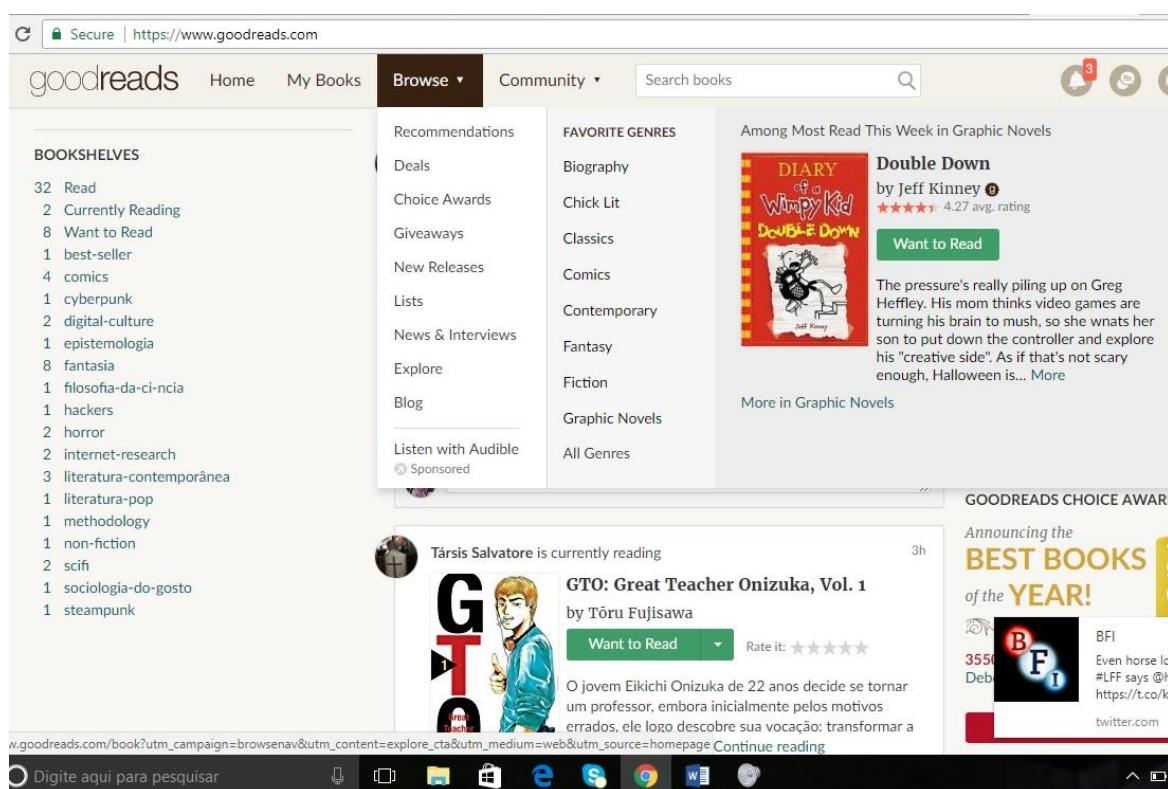

Image 1. Goodreads tags.

Source: Screenshot done by the authors.

Once defined the registration and the consequent choice of favorite literary genres, you can add on your bookshelf different types of books: read books, not read or books to be read. During this process of selecting the books, the user labels their readings, firstly for their own organization of the selected books.

It is possible to organize the books on the site by creating or adopting the most used tags. This process of social cataloging will later impact the system of the site as a whole, expanding the list of most important shelves, serving as a reference for other users in the

process of retrieving information through the site search system, or recommending your choices. This dynamic has a dual purpose: to organize users' reading display through the information indicated in the process of reading organization while facilitating the process of reviews available on the site, a fundamental part of this system of recommendations proposed by Goodreads, which addresses these indications for direct purchase on the Amazon website, as highlighted in Image 2[8].
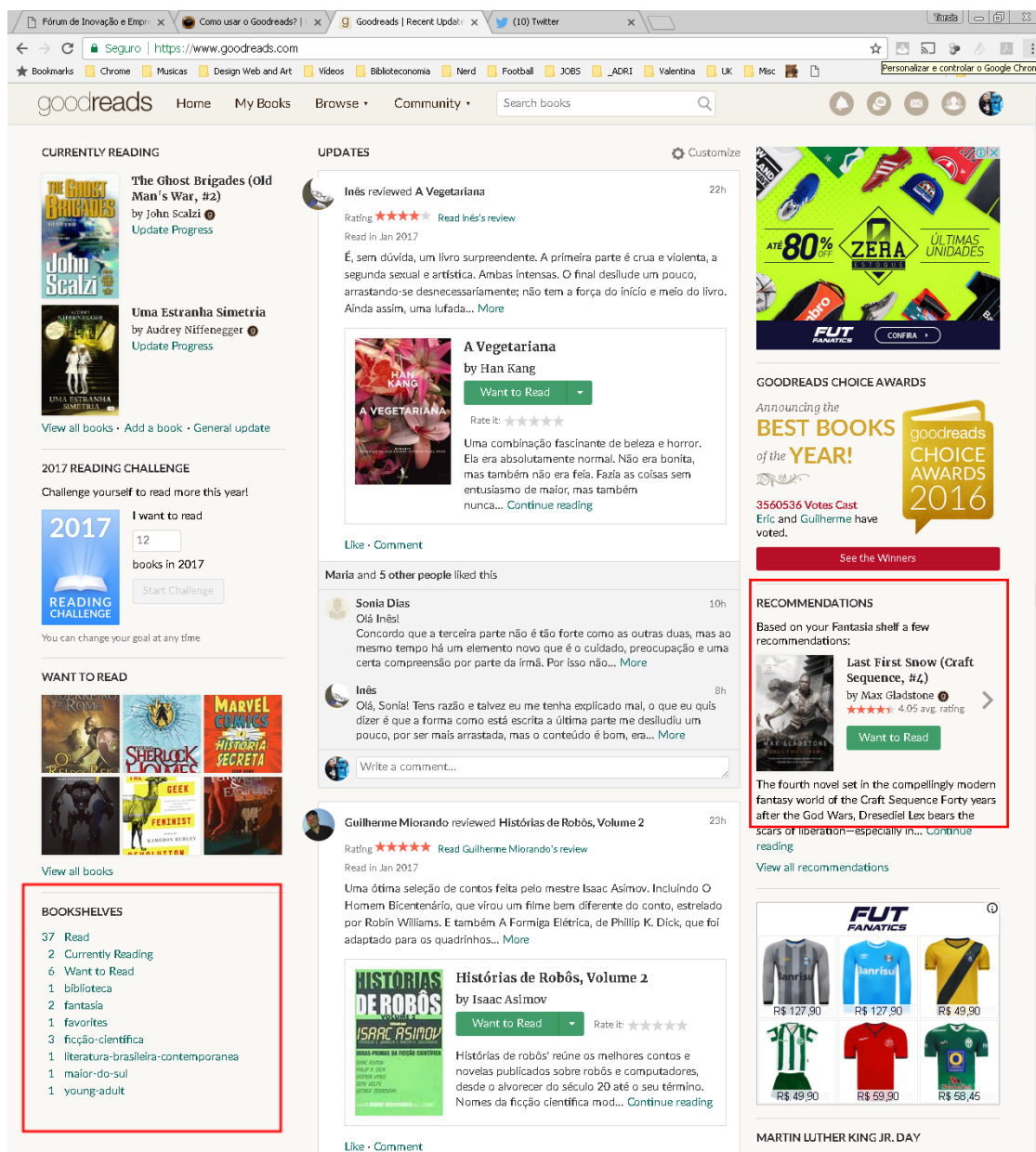
Image 2. Organization and Reading recommendation tags.
Source: Screenshot done by the authors.

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[8] Outline the left hand bookmarking (Bookshelve) and the recommendations whose indications are based on the literary genres chosen when registering

As we can see (Image 3) the options are title, author and genre, and once chosen a literary genre the system crosses the official tags defined by the librarians with the tags chosen in the folksonomic system.
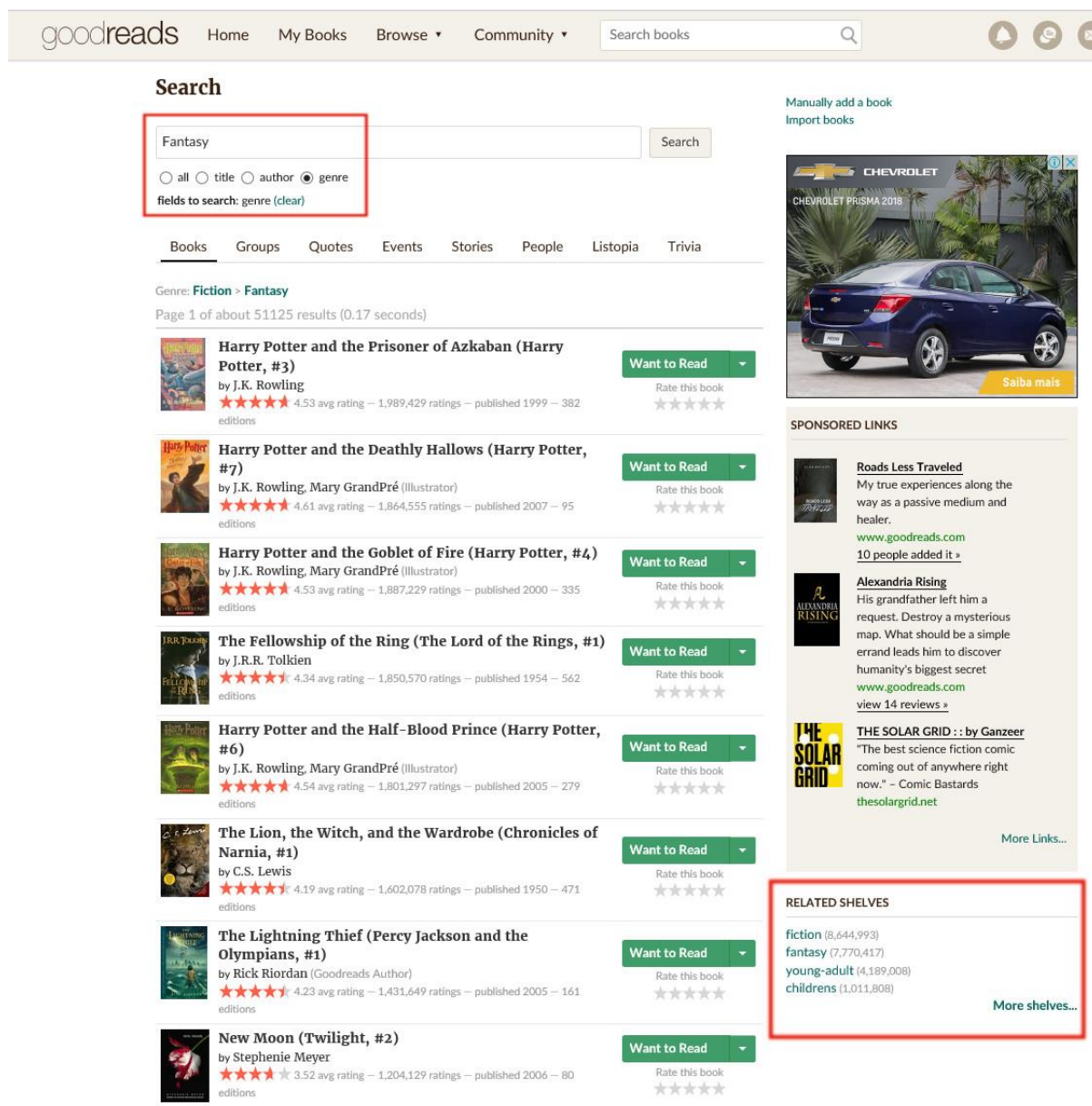

Image 3. Book search engine of the website.

Screenshot done by the authors.

It is through the system of more shelves that the user can see all the "shelves", that is, the most popular labels listed that are suggested on the site by its users, in a diversity of options and combinations that open a myriad of options of indications of reading, going beyond the initially proposed indication model. This multiplicity of options extends the possibilities of recommendations. On the other hand, it creates excessive segmentation and

presents subjective descriptors that can compromise accuracy in relation to the reviews and the categorization of the books in the system.

5 FINAL THOUGHTS

This article discusses some concepts about folksonomy and tagging in Segmented Social Network Sites (SSNS) in books, considering the different forms of classification and categorization of users of the Goodreads site from an initial observation of the different forms of classification and categorization made possible by this platform.

Preliminary results indicate that Goodreads is a hybrid platform that has the characteristics of an SSNS - for the specificity of its focus - and takes into account the appropriations of the users (especially with regard to the production of the reviews and the interactions coming from them: groups of thematic debate, reading groups, reading challenges, nominations, prizes, etc.).

An initial observation that is worth highlighting is that folksonomy in Goodreads is much more visualized as a process and less as a product (CATARINO & BAPTISTA, 2009), since the labeling is done optionally to the user, who appropriates the interface to the personal organization of reading as Santos (2013) indicates, since this is the first function that the interface allows at the time of registration. In addition to social cataloging, the issue of "searchability", visibility and sharing of book reviews also becomes important at the time of labeling, since it is the main functionality of the site and from which the site uses for its system of reading recommendations. The reading recommendations translate into business, that is, marketing of books, which in turn bring more indications and reviews, in a feedback model. In the next studies it is necessary to problematize more closely the tensions that are generated from these processes between users and the market.

Thus, based on these initial observations, we hope to contribute to new studies in the area of librarianship and communication that deal with the relationship between SSNS - especially those focused on books - folksonomy practices and users' behaviors in recommendation systems. A more in-depth study of the site with user interviews and a longer observation of its interface - a concept that also deserves further deepening in its relation with design - could operationalize the undertaking of new researches on the subject, at the same time in which can provide us with more data to understand the applications of folksonomy.

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