This volume explores teacher and librarian partnerships in literacy education, showing that such partnerships are essential to literacy education in the 21st century. Teacher and librarian partnerships contribute significantly to the realization of the democratic mandate of the teaching and library profession. Partnerships respond to the educational challenges characterized by an unprecedented pace of knowledge development, digitalization, globalization and extensive transnational migration.

The contributors reconceptualize literacy education based on teacher and librarian partnerships. Studies from Sweden, Norway and the U.K. analyze such partnerships as sociocultural and intercultural practices, documenting ways in which teacher and librarian partnerships in literacy education enhance reading literacy, learning, empowerment and social justice. The authors treat literacies as social practices, rather than as an autonomous skill, working with interdisciplinary perspectives that draw on educational research, New Literacy Studies, library and information science and interprofessional studies.

Partnerships facilitate reading for pleasure and reading engagement in work with school subjects and curriculum goals, irrespective of socio-economic or cultural background or gender. The partnerships facilitate work with multimodal literacies and inquiry-based learning, both of which are essential in the 21st century. Equally important, the contributors show that the partnerships foster work with the multiple literacies of students and communities, and students’ attachment to the public and school library. The contributors also analyze tensions and contradictions in literacy education and in school library policy and practice, and attempts to deal with these challenges.

Teacher and Librarian Partnerships in Literacy Education in the 21st Century brings together leading scholars in educational research and literacy studies, including Brian V. Street, Teresa Cremin, Joan Swann and Joron Pihl. The volume addresses scholars, and is relevant for students, teachers, librarians and politicians.

Teacher and Librarian Partnerships in Literacy Education in the 21st Century
NEW RESEARCH – NEW VOICES

Volume 6

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Teacher and Librarian Partnerships in Literacy Education in the 21st Century

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1. WHY TEACHER AND LIBRARIAN PARTNERSHIPS IN LITERACY EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY?

INTRODUCTION

Why do we consider teacher and librarian partnerships to be essential to literacy education in the 21st century? An unprecedented pace of knowledge development, digitalization, globalization and extensive transnational migration characterizes the 21st century (Bottery, 2006; Daun, 2011; Delgado & Norman, 2008; Sassen, 1998). These phenomena, the subsequent social inequalities through education and the multiplicity in schools, challenge us to reconsider the purpose, pedagogy, theory and practices within literacy education. Based on the contributors’ educational and interdisciplinary research, New Literacy Studies (Street, chapter two in this volume) and international research in the field, we find that teacher and librarian partnerships provide fundamental contributions to literacy education in the 21st century.

By reconceptualizing literacy education based on teacher and librarian partnerships, including partnerships between schools, public libraries and school libraries, we introduce a paradigmatic shift in literacy education. This has philosophical, pedagogical and structural foundations and implications. We reconceptualize literacy education by treating literacies as forms of social practices rather than autonomous skills. We reconceptualize teacher professionalism based on interprofessional collaboration. Teacher and librarian partnerships facilitate reading for pleasure and reading engagement in work with school subjects and curriculum goals. The partnerships facilitate work with multimodal literacies and inquiry-based learning, which are essential in the present era of digitalization and worldwide knowledge development. Furthermore, teacher and librarian partnerships facilitate work with students’ and communities’ multiple literacies, intercultural education and community building in multicultural communities.

We propose to reiterate the purpose of literacy education as democratic education. Democratic literacy education develops literacies and empowerment among all pupils and students (Andreotti, Biesta, & Ahenakew, 2015; Biesta, 2007, 2014). We suggest that literacy education based on teacher and librarian partnerships can make a major contribution to literacy development for all, and contribute to democratic agency and citizenship (Pihl, 2009b, 2012a). We define the purpose of literacy education against a social background in which inequalities through education are persistent and even increasing in several countries. Systematic differences in literacy achievements persist, depending on gender and
the social, linguistic and cultural background of pupils (OECD, 2009, 2010). Neo-
liberal policies prioritize literacy education in terms of high-stakes international
standardized assessments and competition, the teaching of individual literacy skills,
outcome-based education (Davies & Bansel, 2007). However, rather than reducing
social inequalities, research indicates that these policies, in fact, strengthen the
reproduction of social inequalities through education (Au, 2009; Davies & Bansel,
2007; Fibkins, 2013; Méhaut & Winch, 2012; Mulini & Neergaard, 2010; Pihl,
2015; Walford, 2013). The case studies we present from Sweden, Norway and the
U.K. highlight partnerships in work with reading literacies, multimodal literacies
and learning, and community building. Common to the contributors is that they
apply sociocultural and intercultural theory and treat literacies as forms of social
practice, in line with New Literacy Studies (NLS) (Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanic,
2000; Martin-Jones & Jones, 2000; Street, 1995, 2003). In chapter two, Street
presents theoretical perspectives within NLS, focusing on Literacy as Social
Practice (LSP). According to Street, the sternest test of NLS is to apply NLS/LSP
perspectives to mainstream education. We present case studies that do just that.
Moreover, they integrate other theoretical perspectives, such as the cultural-
historical activity theory (Engeström & Sannino, 2010, 2011), to analyse conflicts
and contradictions within literacy education (Eri, chapter eight in this volume).

The case studies adopt a bottom-up approach, in which teachers implement a
paradigmatic shift in their professional work from the implementation of top-down
concepts of literacy education and teacher professionalism promoted by the state
(Evetts, 2006; Fournier, 1999) to the implementation of bottom-up concepts of
literacy education and teacher professionalism developed by researchers and
teachers themselves, thereby involving interprofessional partnerships. With respect
to the theory of professionalism, teacher professionalism is reconceptualized in
terms of specialization in combination with interprofessional collaboration and
partnerships (Pihl, 2009b). This is highly appropriate in relation to the challenges
that multiplicity and digitalization represent to education in the 21st century.

The contributors build on research that documents the powerful impact of reading
(Krashen, 2004; Krashen, Lee, & McQuillan, 2012) on learning and
language development (Dickinson, A, Golinkoff, & Hirsh-Pasek, 2012; Small &
Snyder, 2009) and democratic agency (Freire & Macedo, 2005). We address a gap
in educational research related to the development of reading engagement (Guthrie,
2016) and inclusion of the school library and librarians in the very concept of
literacy education and practice in the 21st century (Pihl, 2012a), drawing on studies
in library and information science.

PARTNERSHIPS AND LITERACIES AS SOCIAL PRACTICES

NLS defines literacies as forms of social practices. Literacies are socially and
culturally specific (Street, 2003, 2005). In line with sociocultural educational
theory (Vygotsky, 1978), NLS assumes that literacy education should build on the
literacy resources among pupils and communities. We define public libraries and
school libraries as literacy resources in the communities that are invaluable to
literacy education. We conceptualize pupils’ extensive voluntary reading and the sharing of reading experiences and multimodal literacy activities as social practices that are fundamental to literacy education. Partnerships between teachers and librarians facilitate such literacy education.

In the information age, inquiry-based learning is becoming increasingly important. Children and young people learn how to investigate a topic or problem and make use of multiple communication channels in exploring the phenomenon. The use of research-based methods is one form of inquiry-based learning. In inquiry-based teaching and learning, school librarians are vital partners for teachers. Guided inquiry means that a team of teachers and school librarian guides pupils in the use of a wide range of information resources, to provide in-depth understanding and a personal perspective of the problem (Kuhlthau, 2010). Guided inquiry is responsive to educational challenges in the information age in the 21st century. It equips pupils with the abilities required to address an uncertain and very rapidly changing world (Kuhlthau, 2010). School librarians are experts in guided inquiry.

School librarians are vital partners in creating schools that enable students to learn through vast resources and multiple communication channels. School libraries are dynamic learning centres in information age schools with school librarians as primary agents for designing schools for 21st century learners. (Kuhlthau, 2010, p. 17)

In the following, we expand on what we mean by teacher and librarian partnerships, the rationale for such partnerships, and discuss some of the challenges. The contributors to this volume examine teacher and librarian partnerships in the contexts of sociocultural and intercultural practices (Pihl, chapter three) and community building (Avery, chapter four). We also explore challenges to such partnerships.

We define partnerships as professional and institutional collaboration. Partnerships imply professional and institutional agreements to collaborate within literacy education. We shall see that such partnerships can take many forms. One interesting example is a partnership in a library network in Sweden, in which a public library branch, five school libraries and two preschool libraries pooled institutional and professional resources (Avery, chapter four). Another example is the research and development project Multiplicity, Empowerment, Citizenship: Inclusion through the Use of the Library as an Arena for Learning (Pihl, 2011, 2012c), which involved partnerships between teachers, school librarians, public librarians and educational researchers, as well as headteachers and a library director. At the institutional level, the partnership included a municipal public library and a public library branch, two public schools and two teacher education institutions. These institutions collaborated on the development of literature-based literacy education (Tonne & Pihl, chapter five).

A prominent characteristic of partnerships is that the professions and collaborating institutions formalize their partnership agreement and their plans for collaboration. This is an important precondition for sustainable partnerships.
(Edwards, Daniels, Gallagher, Leadbetter, & Warmington, 2009; Eri & Pihl, 2016; Kuhlthau, 2010). At the level of school leadership, this implies that teacher and librarian partnerships are included in the strategic plans of the school, and are formalized in the teaching plans at every grade level, in preschool, primary school and secondary school (Pihl, 2012b).

Our concept of “teacher and librarian partnerships” implies interprofessional collaboration, but transcends Montiel-Overall’s concept of teacher and librarian collaboration (Montiel-Overall, 2007, 2008), in that “partnerships” imply formalized professional and institutional collaboration. The use of “partnerships” in the plural communicates that there are many possible types of partnership. At the professional level, partnerships involve collaboration between teachers, public librarians and school librarians, as well as partnerships between public librarians and school librarians and even researchers. The contributions show that for successful partnerships to evolve there needs to be an available partner at each school; that is, a qualified school librarian and a well-developed school library that is staffed and open during all school hours (Carlsten & Sjaastad, 2014).

In this volume, we present innovative case studies of different forms of partnerships between teachers and librarians and libraries and schools. We also focus on policies for the development of school libraries (Carlsten & Sjaastad, chapter seven). The contributors document how partnerships enhance reading engagement, high educational achievement, empowerment and democratic agency and community building, and they discuss some of the challenges of teacher and librarian partnerships.

MULTIPLICITY AND TEACHER AND LIBRARIAN PARTNERSHIPS

Teachers and librarians share a democratic mandate, namely to contribute to literacy education, democratic inclusion and agency in multicultural societies (Aabø, 2005; Audunson, 2005; Pihl, 2009b). The Multicultural Library Manifesto outlines the library profession’s interpretation of their democratic and professional mandate in multicultural societies:

Each individual in our global society has the right to a full range of library and information services. In addressing cultural and linguistic diversity, libraries should:

– serve all members of the community without discrimination based on cultural and linguistic heritage;
– provide information in appropriate languages and scripts;
– give access to a broad range of materials and services reflecting all communities and needs;
– employ staff to reflect the diversity of the community, who are trained to work with and serve diverse communities. (IFLA/UNESCO, 2009)

In her contribution, Helen Avery shows how librarians implement this democratic mandate in a multicultural suburb in Sweden (Avery, chapter four).
By joining forces and professional expertise, we argue that both the teaching and library professions strengthen their potential for the realization of their professional mandate. Librarians are knowledgeable about children’s literature and information literacy, and this is complementary to teachers’ knowledge about pedagogy within literacy education. Librarians are media experts, knowledgeable in guided inquiry, literature dissemination and the use of library resources for the benefit of the user.

Heterogeneity and hybridity in school populations today cut across the “majority”/“minority” divide. The traditional concept of “difference” – usually reserved for “the other” – does not adequately capture the complexities and diversity that transcend the “majority”/“minority” divide. These complexities pertain to social, linguistic, cultural, religious and gender variations as well as to variations in abilities, interests and individual and collective histories. Such variations unfold even within the “majority” and “minority” populations in schools.

Against this background, we introduce the multiplicity concept as a foundation for dealing with difference. Multiplicity is an ontological concept meaning “difference in itself” (Deleuze, 2004). Deleuze introduced this concept in contrast to the traditional concept of “difference”, which defines “difference” as the opposite of “identity”. In the traditional conceptual framework, identity and difference are binary concepts, with identity being the norm and difference being subordinated to identity. Difference is constructed as inferior and subordinate to identity.

In contrast, the multiplicity concept assumes that all things, people and phenomena are multiplicities, that is, differences “in themselves”. Multiplicity (difference) is even a characteristic of identity. Multiplicities are continuously in processes of becoming, in other words, continuously in processes of change. This ontological assumption has important implications for education with respect to how we theorize about the content of education, pedagogy and the school population in the 21st century.

Historically, the development of a national identity has been a priority in public education (Pihl, 2009a). Today, the development of a European identity is the purpose of education in many European Union countries. However, from an ontological perspective, it becomes problematic to define the development of a national or European identity as the purpose of education. Any attempt to define “identity” as a primary analytical concept will reify a dominant “identity”, which is then applied across a diverse population. Similar arguments can be made in relation to knowledge. Multiplicity is also a fundamental characteristic of knowledge. Thus, we argue that work with multiplicity in content, rather than standardized content, ought to be the purpose of education, especially in the present era of globalization, digitalization and migration.

Taking the multiplicity concept as a point of departure for dealing with “difference”, the most interesting question concerns which multiplicities may be put into interaction to promote democratic literacy education in the 21st century. This is the issue that we address here, faced with today’s educational challenges and the continuous reproduction of social inequalities in education. Starting with
the democratic purpose of education, and literacy education, in particular, we find that the teaching profession (teachers) and the library profession (librarians) share a democratic mandate. Accordingly, we propose that when teachers and librarians join their expertise and engage in partnerships, they may generate new literacy practices and experiences that benefit all children. Multiplicity in the content of public and school libraries is conducive to the school population in the 21st century. These philosophical reflections were at the foundation of the research and development project *Multiplicity, Empowerment, Citizenship: Inclusion through the Use of the Library as an Arena for Learning* (Pihl, 2011, 2012c). Education that includes library resources in teaching and learning is potentially more relevant to the multiplicity in schools than education that relies heavily on standardized text-books and literacy materials. Libraries are recognized as essential to teaching and learning in higher education. Likewise, in the information age, access to good school libraries and good public libraries with multimedia resources and the expertise of librarians is equally essential to teaching and learning in schools (Kuhlthau, 2010).

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

NLS document that people engage in reading and other literacy practices that are meaningful to them (Barton, 2007; Barton et al., 2000; Martin-Jones & Jones, 2000). How can schools facilitate reading that is meaningful to the pupils? Research indicates that extensive access to and time to read high-interest books of one’s own choice are powerful incitements to further reading and the development of a passion for reading (Guthrie, 2016; Krashen, 2004). Consistent with NLS, the contributors in this volume show that the sharing of reading experiences and other literacy events is equally important. Sharing is a type of social practice that can take many forms; from dialogue about reading experiences at school libraries and public libraries to work with aesthetic and multimedia literacies and the sharing of this work with fellow pupils/students. Schools can make a fundamental difference in children’s lives by providing all children with such reading and literacy experiences. We propose that teacher and librarian partnerships within literacy education and the use of public and school libraries are essential to the development of inclusive literacy education in the 21st century.

Librarians work with situated literacies (Street, 1995) and take people’s multiple literacies and interests as a point of departure. These characteristics of librarianship are important from an educational and democratic perspective. Teacher and librarian partnerships stimulate young people to pursue their knowledge interests and social interests through the use of library resources (Hedemark, 2012; Rafste, 2005). Helen Avery (chapter four) shows that teacher and librarian partnerships make important contributions to empowerment among young people, democratic agency and community building. Many children and youth who use the public and school libraries frequently in school become devoted library users.

International assessments, however, indicate that there is a decline in reading literacy among children (Hedemark, 2012). According to the Progress in
International Reading Study (PIRLS), in 2007 the proportion of 10-year-old children qualified as readers had fallen over the previous five years (Hedemark, 2012); further research confirms this situation in the U.K. (Cremin & Swann, chapter nine). An achievement gap between children with an immigrant background and first-language learners has been widely documented (Carlile, 2011; Mulinari & Neergaard, 2010; Thompson & Allen, 2012). Children who are exposed to books in the home often have extensive reading experiences and a positive attitude towards books before they enter preschool and school. A recent extensive literature review documents the decisive and persistent positive impact of book reading worldwide on children’s cognitive and emotional development (Dickinson et al., 2012). Children with few books in the home tend not to be as familiar with reading as children from homes with many books, which contributes to inequalities through education (OECD, 2010, 2013). Schools can make a decisive difference by providing all children with positive and extensive reading experiences.

A major focus in the studies we present is children’s reading in and out of school. We address their use of public and school libraries and the role of teacher and librarian partnerships in facilitating reading engagement (Eri, chapter eight; Cremin & Swann, chapter nine). Several of the case studies investigate “literature-based” literacy education in which the pupils read fiction at school. They read fiction in language classes, they read fiction for pleasure, and they even read fiction for their school subject work (Tonne & Pihl, chapter five; Damber, chapter six). In the present era of digitalization and globalization, reading facilitates reading the world and self, and facilitates intercultural education (Dressman, 1997; Limberg, 2003; Montiel-Overall, 2007; Pihl, 2009b, 2011, 2012a; Rafste, 2005). However, we are aware that teacher and librarian partnerships challenge dominant conceptions of teacher professionalism and trends in literacy education that prioritize basic skills. Eri specifically addresses the tensions and contradictions that occur in literacy education based on school librarian and teacher partnerships (Eri, chapter eight).

RECONCEPTUALIZING THE LITERACY AGENDA

We reconceptualize the literacy agenda by including teacher and librarian partnerships and literacies as social practices in the very concept of literacy education and teacher professionalism in the 21st century. For sustainable partnerships to take place in primary and secondary education in general, a paradigmatic shift is needed that would recognize the educational, social and democratic value and contributions of partnerships for quality education for all.

Reading and writing are bound up with sociocultural processes and power relations (Barton et al., 2000; Street, 1995). Debates about literacy education centres on what counts as literacy, the content of literacy education and how to teach and learn reading and writing (Street, chapter two). Street points to the significance of social context in the development of literacy programmes and education. Meanings associated with literacy practices are located at deep
epistemological levels, raising questions about truth, knowledge and legitimate sources of authority. This often goes unnoticed within a framework that primarily focuses on accountability and reading and writing as technical skills (Davies & Bansel, 2007). The current Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) definition of reading literacy is as follows:

Reading literacy is understanding, using and reflecting on written texts, in order to achieve one’s goals, to develop one’s knowledge and potential and to participate in society. (OECD, 2006, p. 46)

According to PISA, reading literacy covers the domain of reading, “not so much in terms of mastery of the curriculum, but in terms of knowledge and skills needed in adult life” (OECD, 2006, p. 12, emphasis added). We will see that this has major implications for literacy education.

In contrast to the PISA definition, which emphasizes skills that are required in the future workforce, the PIRLS defines reading literacy more broadly:

The ability to understand and use those written language forms required by society and/or valued by the individual. Young readers can construct meaning from a variety of texts. They read to learn, to participate in communities of readers in school and everyday life, and for enjoyment.3

Both definitions are historically, politically and culturally specific. They capture important dimensions of literacy. However, international and national assessments by PISA and PIRLS are more influential than literacy definitions in terms of structuring literacy education today. Governments hold teachers accountable for pupils’ performance on high-stakes standardized international and national assessments. This generates extensive competition between children and between teachers, headteachers and schools. It places competition at the forefront of literacy education. We argue that this is at the expense of teachers’ professional work with multiple literacies. In many schools, teachers respond to pressure from international and national assessments by “teaching to the test”, which in turn leads to increased inequality and marginalization in schools (Au, 2009;; Lipman, 2004).

Schools constitute a specific domain for literacy practices. Teachers are obliged to assess literacy practices and rank and sort pupils based on standardized tests. Thus, schools frame literacy work within a top-down, mandatory, instrumental, competitive and disciplining context. This context shapes the children’s conceptions of reading. Children are crucially aware that their reading is subjected to assessment: excellent, average or poor. Embedded in the assessment process is the identification of deficiencies and deviance, which in education are often linked to incapacity, deprivation and ignorance (Barton, 2007). Furthermore, schools ascribe language and learning disabilities to pupils from linguistic and cultural minorities in disproportionate numbers (Beratan, 2008; DiBello, Harlin, & Carlyle, 2007; Dyson & Gallanauagh, 2008; Oswald, Coutinho, & Best, 2001; Pihl, 2009a; Trainor, 2008).

NLS is an alternative theoretical framework that recognizes the linguistic and cultural resources among pupils and local communities regardless of their social,
cultural or linguistic background (Avery, chapter four). NLS informs the studies we present. Several of the case studies focus on literacy education that facilitates students’ extensive reading of fiction and democratic agency in local multicultural communities. These forms of literacy education are in contrast to compensatory pedagogy and literacy education, which has the identification of linguistic deficiencies and remedial measures as an important target.

When schools treat the literacy practices of powerful groups as correct at all times and in all places – as autonomous of social context – “students from marginalized communities tend to have difficulty with learning to read and write in institutionally approved ways” (Collin & Street, 2014, p. 352). If teachers and headteachers want to apply other literacy concepts, models and pedagogy than those that educational directors or the Ministry of Education prescribe or approve of, they experience that politicians intervene and take control over the literacy agenda and practices in school (Eri & Pihl, 2016). Moreover, even though government White Papers may recognize the educational value of school libraries, policy implementation may fail to do so (Barstad, Audunson, Hjortsæter, & Østlie, 2007; Carlsten & Sjaastad, chapter seven).

Collin and Street’s new synthetic model of literacy emphasizes that the interaction between sociocultural, ideological and institutional relations and artefacts constitutes literacy practices:

[T]he new synthetic model defines literacy as the outcome of interacting processes in different spheres (i.e., technologies, social relations, institutional arrangements, labour processes, relations to nature, the reproduction of daily life, mental conceptions of the world. (Collin & Street, 2014, p. 358, emphasis added)

Their model is particularly interesting in that it emphasizes the interaction between material and ideological forces. Interaction between material forces, social relations, institutional arrangements and labour processes generate literacies. In line with Collin and Street’s synthetic literacy model, we expand literacy education in schools to include interaction with other spheres and institutions, namely libraries and the library profession.

**THE LIBRARY: A COMPLEX, DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING ARENA**

Libraries are differentiated learning arenas, characterized by multiplicity in content. From an educational perspective, libraries are treasures. Good libraries contain books, music, newspapers, internet resources, games and most importantly, the professional expertise of librarians serving the library user, all free of charge. Libraries constitute the collective memories and knowledges of peoples and civilizations. Complex and multiple library resources can potentially engage pupils with very diverse abilities and social, linguistic, historical, cultural and gender backgrounds.

With their professional expertise, librarians can engage with teachers in their educational planning, which includes the use of fiction and prose in literacy
education and work with multimedia resources, to provide all children with reading experiences and learning that is meaningful to them (Kuhlthau, 2010; Pihl, 2012c). The public and school libraries are different from the classroom. Libraries are places for dialogue, social interaction and the sharing of literacy events. The public library has great potential as a low-intensive meeting place in multicultural societies (Audunson, 2005). Being a place for dialogue and social interaction, the school library is a unique learning arena that pupils and students cherish (Cremin & Swann, chapter nine).

When teachers and librarians plan literacy education together, they coordinate their plans for literacy events in and across classrooms and at the school library (Kuhlthau, 2010; Pihl, 2012c). They discuss curriculum goals and the teacher provides the school librarian with information about topics they are working on in class, the pupils’ proficiency in the language of instruction and their mother tongue and the pupils’ abilities and interests. The librarian recommends literature at different levels of complexity, relevant to the specific class and pupils. The school librarians guide children at the school library in their work with particular subjects or topics.

Van der Kooij and Pihl (2009) explore negotiations between teachers, educational researchers and librarians within the research and development project Multiplicity, Empowerment, Citizenship: Inclusion through the Use of the Library as an Arena for Learning (Pihl, 2012c). The teachers disagreed with the researchers and the public librarian about how to use the public library. The teachers planned to implement “tracked reading” (where good and poor readers are placed in different groups). They used the public library as a compensatory pedagogical measure for “low achievers”. However, based on discussions and the positive results from collaboration with librarians and researchers in terms of pupils’ reading engagement, the teachers eventually changed their practice and included all children in the use of the public library (van der Kooij & Pihl, 2009). The introduction of theoretical concepts about the reading experience and literacy as a form of social practice was important in the partnership between researchers, teachers and librarians. Discussions about these concepts in relation to the literacy work in classrooms and libraries facilitated expansive learning and changes in literacy and professional practices.

The use of public and school libraries in literacy education makes non-segregated literacy education possible. This differs from organizational differentiation, in which the children’s presupposed proficiency level in the language of instruction is decisive (often based on standardized assessment). When pupils get to read library books of their own choice in school subjects, all children can be included in the same literacy events, regardless of linguistic background or special needs. Segregated teaching (i.e., “tracked reading groups”) can be avoided. Based on our theoretical and democratic perspective, we argue that non-segregated literacy education is very important. Segregated educational provisions have many negative consequences, particularly for children with linguistic minority background and pupils with learning disabilities (Mulinari & Neergaard, 2010; Pihl, 2009a; Vaught, 2011). In contrast, non-segregated teaching has positive
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Effects on children’s reading and learning (Pihl & van der Kooij, 2016; van der Kooij & Pihl, 2009). Teacher and librarian partnerships and the use of the school and public libraries in literacy education constitute a structural measure that facilitates socially and pedagogically inclusive literacy education.

Several studies report the importance of school librarians in work with reading and learning. Dressman (1997) notes the important role of school librarians in stimulating reading for pleasure. Hedemark (2012) documents Swedish children’s attitudes to reading and public library services, where reading promotion activities increase children’s reading interest. However, to reach reluctant readers, reading promotion activities need to recognize the “multiliteracies” with which children enter the library. Small and Snyder report the positive impact of school libraries on student achievement (Small & Snyder, 2009). A number of studies explore the transformation of professional roles and institutional practices related to teacher and librarian collaboration (Oberg & Henri, 2002; Oberg, 2008; Small, 2002). Montiel-Overall has published extensively on the collaboration between teacher-librarians and teachers, outlining the professional preconditions for successful collaboration (Montiel-Overall, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009). Montiel-Overall concludes that when teacher-librarians become an integral part of instruction, student learning improves.

In educational research, relatively few studies have addressed teacher and librarian collaboration (Pihl, chapter three). One noteworthy study is Limberg’s investigation of the pedagogical role of school libraries in teaching and learning (Limberg, 2003). In addition, Rafste discusses the role of the school library for the purpose of learning and draws a distinction between the school library as a place to learn and as a place for pleasure (Rafste, 2005). The contributors to this volume argue that the school library is both. Their studies show that when children learn to use public and school libraries, they also learn to take charge of their own reading agenda – for pleasure as well as for learning. Any attempt to make the school library a mere extension of the classroom is problematic and may cause the school library to lose its attractiveness (Eri, chapter eight). The library as a “low-intensive” space (Audunson, 2005) – what Rafste calls “backstage” compared with the classroom, which is “frontstage” (Rafste, 2005) – is fundamental to children’s attachment to the school library and the public library, and their engagement in literacy events and social activities therein. Avery (2014) studies the role of school libraries within intercultural education and concludes that teacher collaboration with school librarians can make an important contribution to intercultural education based on the inclusion of diverse library resources. For this to happen, teachers need to engage as “co-learners”, “reformers” and reflective practitioners.

From an educational point of view, Pihl has explored the professional roles of teachers and librarians, as well as the challenges and the educational benefits of interprofessional collaboration (Pihl, 2011). In several studies, she has explored the potential for empowerment, intercultural education and the development of social justice on the basis of teacher and librarian collaboration within literacy education (Pihl, 2009b, 2012c, 2014, see also Tonne & Pihl, chapter seven). Pihl argues that successful collaboration between teachers and librarians requires the development
of a shared object of activity; that is, agreement on what to collaborate about and how (Pihl, 2011). This also implies a distribution of labour between professionals concerning who does what. Such deliberations are important, particularly in relation to educational planning, literature dissemination and guided inquiry, because teachers and librarians come from different fields with different literacy traditions and discourses (Pihl, 2009b). Genuine collaboration involves the co-planning, co-implementation and co-evaluation of literacy events (Montiel-Overall, 2009), which in turn requires reflection by teachers and librarians concerning their respective professional mandates, their own professional expertise and the expertise of the other profession. It also requires reflection on the limits of one’s own expertise, and how collaboration can enhance the professional and democratic mandate of the respective professions (Pihl, 2011). Teachers and librarians need to collaborate and learn to establish partnerships in their professional training.

The development of sustainable teacher and librarian partnerships involves considerable challenges (Eri & Pihl, 2016; Pihl, 2012c) that relate primarily to relatively weak support for school and library partnerships at the policy level, in educational research and in teacher training. Subsequently, there is weak support for partnerships at school level (Carlsten & Sjaastad, chapter seven). Up-to-date school libraries/media centres staffed with qualified school librarians and open during all school hours are fundamental preconditions for successful partnerships. In spite of the obstacles to partnerships in Norway, Sweden and the U.K., the contributors in this volume show that there is pedagogical space for bottom-up initiatives and partnerships.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES, PARTNERSHIPS AND GUIDED INQUIRY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

School libraries and teacher and librarian partnerships are essential for working with curriculum goals in the information age. This pertains to work with specific school subjects, work with interdisciplinary topics (Pihl, 2012c), and work with research-based approaches to learning and guided inquiry, which is becoming increasingly important in the 21st century (Kuhlthau, 2010). Inquiry-based learning facilitates in-depth exploration of a topic using multimedia resources. Kuhlthau (2010) proposes specific recommendations for the bottom-up development of sustainable teacher and school librarian partnerships in work with guided inquiry. First, systemic support for such partnerships must be obtained from fellow teachers and the headteacher. Second, a plan for joint implementation of inquiry-based learning must be developed. Kuhlthau suggests creating flexible three-member teams of teachers and school librarians that collaborate, according to students’ needs and curriculum requirements. This facilitates constructivist learning in a “third space”, which is at the intersection of the pupil’s knowledge and experience (first space) and curriculum goals (second space). Third, a network of teachers and librarians is needed for sharing stories of success and dealing with problems encountered (Kuhlthau, 2010). To this, we add a fourth recommendation. We argue that a theoretical framework is needed for the analysis of expansive learning and
for dealing with tensions, conflicts and contradictions in teacher and librarian partnerships. One such theoretical framework is cultural-historical activity theory (Edwards et al., 2009), which has proved fruitful in the analysis of expansive learning in interprofessional collaboration, as well as in the analysis of specific conflicts and contradictions in teacher and librarian collaboration (Eri & Pihl, 2016; Pihl, 2011).

The establishment of teacher and librarian teams is important for coordinating literacy practices in classrooms and at the school library. When school librarians participate in discussions about curriculum goals and the implementation of these goals in and across school subjects, they can co-ordinate their plans for literacy work in classrooms and at the school library. This ensures that children and teachers will use library resources and receive quality support and guidance during their work. Research indicates that close collaboration between a public library and a school library guarantees the quality of school library services. Thus, even a public librarian can join a teacher and librarian team, if possible.

Competition in schools and society is increasing, generating marginalization, especially among children from poor families and with parents with low levels of education (Bastien & Holmardottir, 2015). A loss of hope for the future among young people may generate social unrest (Balibar, 2007). From this perspective, the attachment of children and young people to a school library and a public library in the local community can prevent the processes of marginalization.

At the school level, teachers and school leaders have the power to define the literacy agenda in schools; that is, the content and methods used within literacy education. It follows that responsibility for the inclusion of librarians and libraries into the work with literacies in schools lies heavily on teachers and school leaders. For teachers to initiate partnerships, they need knowledge about how partnerships can support their work with curriculum goals. Educational research, teacher education and educational policy can provide teachers with such knowledge through teachers’ concurrent and consecutive training as well as in professional competence development activities. Ultimately, political and educational research support for school and library partnerships is fundamental to the development of sustainable partnerships in the 21st century.

**READING ENGAGEMENT AND SOCIAL LITERACIES**

Reading is by far the most important factor influencing language development and learning among all children. Extensive reading outweighs the negative influence of low socio-economic status on educational achievement (Dickinson et al., 2012; Krashen, 2004; Mullis, Martin, Kennedy, & Foy, 2007; OECD, 2010; Ross, McKechnie, & Rothbauer, 2005; Sullivan & Brown, 2015). Literature-based education has powerful effects on reading and learning (Morrow & Gambrell, 2001). Access to high-interest books and reading material fosters reading engagement and extensive reading (Elley, 2000; Guthrie, 2016; Krashen et al., 2012). It is firmly established that reading for pleasure and partnerships between schools and libraries contribute to literacy development along with better and more
reading (Cullinan, 2000; Krashen, 2004; Krashen et al., 2012; Limberg, 2003). Therefore, it is paradoxical that there is a research gap in education related to the development of reading engagement in preschools and schools (Dickinson et al., 2012; Guthrie, 2016).

It is the actual reading experience and the sharing of these experiences with others that generate more reading (McKechnie, Oterholm, Rothbauer, & Skjerdingstad, 2016). What children and young people read and the social context of reading are crucial to the development of reading engagement. Pupils’ choice of library books and time to read for pleasure generate reading engagement, especially if and when the library provides books in different languages, genres and levels of complexity, as well as a stimulating reading environment (Dressman, 1997; Krashen, 2004; Krashen et al., 2012; McKechnie et al., 2016; Pihl & van der Kooij, 2016).

Studies indicate that the reading of fiction of one’s choice strongly affects reading engagement. Such reading can even facilitate reading above the child’s proficiency level in the language of instruction (Axelsson, 2000; Morrow & Gambrell, 2001; Pihl & van der Kooij, 2016) and may generate amazing reading experiences that children and youth cherish. They learn about other people’s experiences in the world and reflect on their own positions in it (Pihl & van der Kooij, 2016). The pedagogical assumption that pupils and students only should read books at their proficiency level (i.e., tracked reading), is questionable from our theoretical perspectives. When they read a book that really interests them, they often continue to read even though the book may have passages, vocabulary or syntax that are not immediately intelligible to them (McKechnie et al., 2016; Pihl & van der Kooij, 2016). Fascination with the content pushes the reader forward. In this respect, the reading experience is not that different from an adult’s reading experience. The reading experience stimulates the reader intellectually, emotionally and even ethically, prompting the reader to continue reading despite any difficulties. This is yet another important argument for why schools should provide all pupils and students with the opportunity for extensive reading of fiction and other books that interest them in school subjects and for pleasure.

In the following section, we give a brief overview of the chapters in this volume.

MULTIPLE LITERACIES, EMPOWERMENT, AGENCY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

In chapter two, Brian V. Street expands on key concepts within NLS and LSP in educational contexts. Street focuses on social partnerships as opposed to seeing literacy as an asocial “autonomous” skill as in many dominant approaches. He emphasizes the application of LSP in the context of “school and library partnerships”, arguing that it makes better sense educationally to name and define literacies in the plural. This is an approach that can be applied to school contexts as well as libraries, where a variety of genres and texts are to be found. In addressing these issues, Street presents key concepts within NLS, including literacy events and literacy practices, and ethnographic perspectives. He then applies these concepts to the issues of learning in and out of school and applications to education.
In chapter three, Joron Pihl explores in a literature review the extent to which educational research addresses library use, and how the library can contribute to intercultural education. Pihl notes that within educational research, the topics of teacher and librarian collaboration and school and library partnerships are under researched. Empirical studies indicate that education based on the use of library resources can help realize important aims of intercultural education and reduce social inequalities in education. These aims include non-segregated education, reading engagement among first- and second-language learners, the integration of information literacy in content teaching and learning as well as the empowerment of pupils as library users, and intercultural education. In line with educational theory and NLS, Pihl argues that recognition of the interests and linguistic and cultural resources of the reader should be the foundation for literacy education. Access to literature provided by the library is a precondition for such literacy education.

In chapter four, Helen Avery explores partnerships between a public library branch, five school libraries and two preschool libraries in a multi-ethnic urban neighbourhood in Sweden. This chapter is a study of the social literacy work of a school library network that builds on the multiple literacies among children and adults in the community. The network draws on the democratic ideals of the Swedish popular education tradition. Close collaboration took place between the librarians and the preschool educators, teachers and staff of the leisure time centres, which are part of the education system in Sweden. Such collaboration allowed the network to pool school library resources and work strategically with the professional development of school librarians. The library network also takes a proactive stance in developing opportunities for social action and communal cultural spaces in the neighbourhood. The outreach activities of the network provided children and adults with access to books and library resources from the cradle to old age. Young people learnt critical information skills and the network worked with multimodality and provided opportunities for social engagement in the community, thereby generating empowerment, agency and critical and multilingual literacies.

In chapter five, Ingebjørg Tonne and Joron Pihl analyze literature-based literacy education and library use in multilingual classes, focusing on the development of reading engagement. They present findings from the Multiplicity, Empowerment, Citizenship: Inclusion through the Use of the Library as an Arena for Learning project in Norway (Pihl, 2012c). A municipal public library, a public library branch, two schools and two teacher education institutions engaged in partnerships within literacy education for a period of four years. The teachers and public and school librarians implemented a “book-flood” programme, in which the pupils had extensive access to books and voluntary reading of fiction and prose in school subjects. The findings indicate that literature-based education, non-segregated literacy education and the sharing of reading and other literacy events and extensive use of library resources facilitated reading engagement in the language of instruction among both first- and second-language learners. Reading engagement was irrespective of gender and socio-economic or ethnic background. The authors
argue that this reduced inequalities in education. Tonne and Pihl attribute this to the “book-flood” programme, which was founded on NLS and teacher and librarian partnerships.

In chapter six, Ulla Damber investigates the literacy work of a public librarian in collaboration with preschool teachers and primary schoolteachers in Sweden. In this study in a multilingual, multicultural suburb on the outskirts of Stockholm, a public librarian tells her story about a joint project with preschool teachers and schoolteachers in grades one to three. The aim was to increase children’s interest in reading and the development of engaged readers. In a “book-flood” programme, children were literally flooded with books in preschool classrooms and at the public library. Damber highlights the work of the public librarian in collaboration with teachers and parents. Teachers, children and parents had extensive access to authentic children’s literature and shared reading experiences. As the linguistically and culturally diverse children were at different points in their reading development, as well as in their acquisition of Swedish as a second language, multimodal activities played a vital part in the work with reading. The multimodal activities included artwork and established a preunderstanding of texts, and were used as a means to enhance all children’s meaning-making and analysis of texts.

In chapter seven, Tone Cecilie Carlsten and Jørgen Sjaastad present and discuss an evaluation of a state-run school library development programme in Norway conducted between 2009 and 2013. They found that the goals set by the state for the development of school libraries in Norway were not met. Moreover, they found that the state did not take into account the results of the evaluation for the purpose of further development of school libraries in Norway, despite the fact that the state had commissioned the evaluation. The authors situate and discuss these findings from Norway in a broader context for school library politics. Their chapter summarizes some of the previous research related to school library development in several countries. The review shows that state support of school libraries is crucial for developing sustainable school libraries and institutionalizing teacher and librarian partnerships. They discuss the relationship between policy aims, valid implementation strategies and outcomes at the school level. Carlsten and Sjaastad examine possible reasons for the gaps between the stated political aims for school library development, and the weak political support of school libraries in Norway.

In chapter eight, Thomas Eri analyses the work of a school librarian and multilingual teachers in a multilingual book café at the school library. The school librarian and a group of multilingual teachers organized the multilingual book café for children and parents. The purpose of the book café was to provide a space for reading for pleasure in the children’s first and second languages and to involve parents in the children’s reading. However, the school librarian and multilingual teachers experienced problems with declining parental participation in the book café. Eri discusses these problems, focusing on contradictions between a “school literacy” discourse and a culturally sensitive discourse. He also addresses the role of the teacher-librarian without formal qualifications as a librarian. The study highlights the importance of addressing the tensions, conflicts and dilemmas in literacy practices as possible manifestations of systemic contradictions between
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literacy discourses. Eri discusses the conflicts that arise when teachers implement classroom pedagogy into the space of the school library.

In chapter nine, Teresa Cremin and Joan Swann focus on the role of secondary school librarians in extra-curricular reading groups in the U.K. Cremin and Swann examine the nature and construction of the reading groups’ practices and the dialogic dimensions to reading evidenced in such groups. Their research draws on case studies of reading groups that participated in a national book award “shadowing scheme”, which involved student groups reading and discussing literature short-listed for the Carnegie Medal and the Kate Greenaway Medal and comparing their views with those of the award judges. The study indicates that the school librarians, working to develop students’ pleasure in reading, profiled reading choice and agency in the shared social space for reading that they created. They sought to differentiate the extra-curricular reading groups from classes in English. Group members – both students and attending teachers – contributed to the shaping of these reading events. The informal relationships within the reading group afforded space for readers to construct a dialogic understanding of the literary texts, and in some instances, of the texts of their own and each other’s lives. The pupils cherished these literary experiences, which to them were qualitatively different from the literary experiences in English lesson classes.

REFLECTIONS

The contributions in this volume highlight that teacher and librarian partnerships in literacy education, which include partnerships between public and school libraries and schools, enhance multiple literacies. The partnerships generate reading engagement, inquiry-based learning and agency irrespective of the students’ socio-economic status, linguistic background or gender. These are important contributions to social justice in the 21st century. Partnerships enhance realization of the democratic mandate of both the teaching and the library profession.

We hope that the volume provides concepts, theoretical framework and empirical evidence for the value and importance of including teacher and librarian partnerships and the multiple literacies of pupils and communities into the very foundation of literacy education in the present era of multiplicity and digitalization. Teacher and librarian partnerships provide all children and youth with the opportunity to read the world and self. In so doing, young people learn to take charge of their own reading and literacy agenda, which is a resource for lifelong learning and citizenship. Children and youth gain knowledge and agency that open up participation in the local community and society in collaboration with other readers – hopefully for democratic agency in the 21st century.

NOTES

1 We use “school librarian” and “teacher-librarian” interchangeably in this volume. These are not protected professional titles. There are no formal educational requirements for the position as school
librarian or teacher-librarian. Some have formal qualifications as librarians while others, especially teachers who work in school libraries, may have no formal qualifications or limited qualifications.

2 The Library Manifesto: http://www.ifla.org/lll/misc/im-e.htm
The Multicultural Manifesto: http://www.ifla.org/node/8976


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INTRODUCTION

This anthology explores school and library partnership as sociocultural and intercultural practices and community building. A key component of this approach is the recognition of literacy as a social practice that involves exactly such social partnerships, rather than seeing literacy as an asocial skill. I will elaborate on literacy as social practices and point towards its application in the context of “School and library partnership”.

Rather than using the term literacy with a large L and a small y, in a general, technical sense as though it were “autonomous” of social context, I have argued it makes better sense educationally to name and define literacies in the plural, as literacy practices (Street, 2000). We need to look more closely at which literacy practices we are addressing, whether in school contexts or in libraries, where a variety of genres and texts are to be found. This approach to ethnographic and linguistic studies of literacy practices has been termed New Literacy Studies (more recently Literacy as Social Practice, LSP). I will unpack further what that means.

NEW LITERACY STUDIES

New Literacy Studies (NLS) have proposed theoretical perspectives rooted in critical ethnography and culturally sensitive research, leading to programmes that are negotiated and participatory (Gee, 1991; Heath, 1983; Heath, Mangiola, Schecter, & Hull, 1991; Villegas & Baur, 1991). NLS consists of a series of writings about both research and practice that treat language and literacy as social practices rather than technical skills to be learned in formal education (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Hamilton, Barton, & Ivanic, 1994; Gee, 1991; Street, 1984). The research requires language and literacy to be studied as they occur naturally in life, taking account of their different meanings for different cultural groups and the general context. The practice requires curriculum designers, teachers, and evaluators to take account of the variation in language meanings and uses that students bring from their home backgrounds to formal learning contexts such as the classroom. NLS, then, emphasizes the importance of culturally sensitive teaching (Villegas & Baur, 1991) in building upon students’ own knowledge and skills (Heath, 1983; Heath et al., 1991). Such research and practice are based upon new ideas about the nature of language and literacy and have in turn reinforced and


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