



1

Multiple Approaches to Literacies in the Age of Mobility

Annika Norlund Shaswar^{ID} and Jenny Rosén^{ID}

Introduction

In contemporary times, the lives of many people are characterised by mobility (Blommaert, 2010). This mobility implies physical movement (categorised as both legal and illegal) as well as increased opportunities for interaction across geographical borders, including the many possible ways of engaging with literacies and different modes of texts (New London Group, 1996). As argued by Canagarajah (2017) language is important for mobility as our language repertoires become an important human

A.N. Shaswar (✉)

Department of Language Studies, Umeå University, Umeå, Sweden

e-mail: annika.norlund.shaswar@umu.se

J. Rosén

Dalarna University, Falun, Sweden

e-mail: jro@du.se

J. Rosén

Department of Language Education, Stockholm University,
Stockholm, Sweden

capital but mobility has also changed our understandings of language (p. 3) including literacy. Regarding the many possibilities of literacy, this includes different media and linguistic resources that are used for audio, video, and written interaction between family members, relatives, friends, and strangers who are in different places in different countries. Those who leave the places where they have lived most of their lives, in order to search for somewhere to settle down temporarily or permanently, are affected by the aforementioned aspects of mobility: physical migration and interaction in different languages and modalities. De Fina et al. (2017) note that '[t]hese changes and developments have deeply affected the ways people use language to communicate in all contexts of life and indeed in all countries, thus calling for a rethinking of the traditional concepts and methodologies underlying the practice of sociocultural linguistics' (p. vii).

The primary goal of this volume is to offer insights into questions related to literacy practices and language learning of temporary and permanent migrants in post-migration settlement. By applying different theoretical and methodological perspectives on literacy and language learning, the chapter authors explore the complex relations between literacy and mobility. Our aim is that the volume will contribute to a widened integrated approach to literacies and mobility. The migrants who are in focus are adolescents and adults. While most children have the possibility to attend formal school in post-migration settlement, adults and adolescents may be offered neither formal language learning programmes nor other forms of education to support integration into the new country. Moreover, adults and many adolescents are, despite their previous experiences, expected to immediately use language and literacies in many domains of their new country of settlement. The chapters in this volume address the learning and use of literacies in both informal and formal educational settings such as state-mandated schools, community settings, and libraries. However, neither adults nor adolescents can be seen as homogenous groups. The chapters address both temporary migrants that travel voluntarily to study in a new country and more permanent migrants who migrate due to war or other hardships. Hence, relations between mobility and literacies include both spatial and temporal dimensions.

In this first chapter, we will introduce aspects of mobility and literacies by drawing on the narrative of Rizgar, a man who migrated from the Kurdish part of Iraq to Sweden. Rizgar was one of the participants in a study by the first author (Norlund Shaswar, 2014), which researched the literacy history and the present literacy practices of five adult Kurdish migrants in Sweden. The participants were all learning Swedish as a second language in the educational context of municipal adult education, Swedish for immigrants (SFI).

Rizgar

Rizgar grew up with his mother, father, two sisters, and three brothers in a city in the Iraqi part of Kurdistan. His father's first language is Turkmenian, but Rizgar only speaks and understands very little Turkmenian. The family spoke the Kurdish dialect of Sorani mixed with many Arabic words and still today, Rizgar uses many Arabic words when he speaks Kurdish.

During his years in school and at the university, Rizgar learned to read both in Kurdish and in Arabic. During the Arabic lessons, he and his classmates read the Quran and Arabic poetry, learned Arabic grammar, and practiced their reading skills. When Rizgar later started studying mechanics at the Technical institute, the teaching was mainly in Arabic and English, but Kurdish was also used during classes. He also studied English until he finished his university education but says that he did not learn much of the language.

Rizgar worked in different types of jobs in several cities in Iraq. As a child, he worked in a hair-dressing saloon. After he had graduated as an engineering assistant, he first worked as a cabinetmaker, a driver, and with purchases and sales. Later he worked as a mechanic at a factory and as a supervisor in a fish farm where he wrote daily reports and orders when oil or petrol was needed for the generator. After that, he was employed as a security driver by foreign oil companies and seismic companies.

The first time Rizgar was employed as a security driver, he had limited skills in English. However, he needed to use English to interact with his colleagues and Rizgar had to learn the language while he was working. The way he was learning differed a lot from how he had learned English at school. At work, he always had one or two English-speaking individuals nearby with

whom he talked, discussed, and quarrelled while they were working and he says that after only six months he had learnt fluent English. Competence in English meant a lot to Rizgar, since he knew that the company could offer him a good job and good chances for the future.

After a while Rizgar started working as an assistant and then as an advisor responsible for Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) in different oil companies and seismic companies. He was responsible for protecting the health and safety of the employees and the environment of the workplace. In interviews, he describes this work in detail. Before he started his employment, he took part in an educational programme for one month where he was taught by a Canadian man and Rizgar found reading and writing in English a little bit difficult during this time. The reading and writing that Rizgar performed in HSE work, including using Word and Excel on a computer, were skills that he learned at work. He wrote and read texts in many different genres, e.g. incident reports, daily security reports, and action plans. Rizgar not only read, wrote, and spoke English, but also Arabic and Kurdish. His language skills meant that he was able to interact both with, as he calls them, 'the foreigners', i.e. employees from other countries than Iraq, and 'the locals', i.e. employees from the local area.

Rizgar's living situation changed because two of his brothers became ill. He had to choose between continuing to focus on his HSE work or helping his brothers get health care abroad, in Sweden. He decided to leave Iraq and his work as an HSE advisor. When the first author meets Rizgar, he lives in a village in the north of Sweden. When he compares how much he writes today to when he lived in Iraq, he says that he writes less now since he does not have a job. Still, when he talks about his everyday life, it is clear that he reads and writes a lot in English, for example when looking for a new apartment and helping his two brothers who live in the same village. Rizgar also chats digitally in English or Kurdish with his friends, using Latin orthography. He also writes letters in English to one of his brothers who does not live in Sweden. Rizgar uses his laptop for reading interesting international news. He says that he gets a headache from reading things that don't interest him but not from reading things on the Internet that he wants to know about and learn from.

Although Rizgar goes to the SFI programme to study Swedish and takes part in the lessons, he is not interested in learning Swedish. He would like to

work as an HSE again, and for that, he does not need Swedish but English. If the teacher asks him a question, he answers, because he does not want to be rude to her and tell her that he does not intend to learn. Going to school keeps him occupied, so that he has something to do. Rizgar says that learning languages is easy for him and if he could focus, the texts that the teacher has given to him would be easy for him. The fact that he has not finished the SFI educational programme quickly is due to his lack of interest, because he cannot focus, and since he has had to spend so much time helping his brothers and that the educational programme follows the same routine every day. He explains that he has finished studying and does not have the energy to study anymore, but now he has arrived in a new country and has to start from zero all over again.

The narrative illustrates the complex and dynamic relations between languages, literacies, mobility, identity, and migration in contemporary societies. Rizgar's linguistic repertoire includes Kurdish (Sorani), Arabic and English and he uses both Arabic and Latin orthography. While he learned Kurdish and some Arabic in his home, Arabic, especially in reading and writing, was introduced in school. Although Rizgar also studied English at school and at the university, it was at his workplace he felt that he developed skills and became fluent in the language. In Sweden, Rizgar uses Kurdish and English for digital communication using a Latin orthography even though Sorani is usually written in a modified Arabic writing system. He shows minor interest in learning Swedish as he mainly interacts in English, for example with his brothers' caregivers, and as he sees no need for Swedish for his profession. Furthermore, the narrative also reveals the importance that access to and practices of literacies had in different parts of Rizgar's life and how this affected his possibilities and identity. A multitude of literacy practices were integrated with the activities he was involved in, particularly in his work life. Thus, languages and orthographies are intertwined, constructing a complex and unique linguistic repertoire. From the perspective of a multilingual turn, Rizgar's linguistic repertoire exemplifies the need to problematise and rethink conceptions of languages and literacies as separate codes, as well as categories, such as first and second languages (see for example de Fina et al., 2017; García & Kleifgen, 2020; Otheguy et al., 2015). The question of literacies in regard to a

multilingual turn will be further developed after introducing the two main notions of this volume: mobility and literacies.

Mobility

Although mobility is not a new phenomenon, increased and rapid globalisation has changed its character. While the main research interest previously was in social mobility (vertical mobility) the focus has shifted towards emphasising mobility in regard to time and space (horizontal mobility) (Urry, 2000). In relation to the mobility of people, changes in migration patterns have been observed by Vertovec (2007), who introduced the notion of *superdiversity*. The concept has been used by scholars in several fields, especially in sociolinguistics. Vertovec (2007) originally used the concept to describe new movements of people in the British context, reflecting an increasing number of countries of origin and with different legal statuses and related conditions, divergent labour market experiences, gender and age, patterns of spatial distribution, and mixed local areas' responses by service providers and residents (p. 1025). Moreover, Vertovec (2019) suggests that the new migration patterns not only combine these different characteristics but also that the combinations produce new social hierarchies and statuses of stratification (p. 126). Hence, superdiversity does not only refers to *more* diversity or *more* ethnicity according to Vertovec (2019). The concept can, however, be criticised for a Eurocentric perspective, since the complexities of migration and mobility cannot be seen as new in relation to experiences of the Global South. Moreover, the condition of superdiversity in the European context needs to be presented in relation to growing global inequality and polarisation (Kell, 2017).

In the field of sociolinguistics, Blommaert (2010) used the concept of *sociolinguistics of mobility* to focus not on language-in-place but on language-in-motion, with various spatiotemporal frames interacting with one another, which he described as scales. In relation to questions of power and inequality, access to, and control over, scales are unevenly distributed, which becomes clear 'when we consider typical resources for access to higher (i.e. non-local and non-situationally specific) scales such

as a sophisticated standard language variety or advanced multimodal and multilingual literacy skills' (p. 5). Similarly, Blackledge and Creese (2017) argue that understanding mobility is essential to understanding social life in the twenty-first century and that the understanding of mobility involves the movement of linguistic and other semiotic resources in time and space. However, as noted by Blommaert (2010), the migration or movement of people is never about movement across empty spaces. Thus, the spaces are always the space of someone else and therefore filled with norms and conceptions about what counts as normal language use (including literacies) and what does not. In relation to Rizgar's story, the knowledge of English that in Iraq had been essential in his profession did not generate opportunities for employment in Sweden but positioned him as a language broker between his two brothers and the caregivers. Thus, English rather than Swedish, has become essential for Rizgar's settlement in Sweden. On the other hand, oral and literacy practices in English were crucial for his identity as a global citizen who had no need of learning Swedish, because he did not plan on settling there permanently. Mobility from a sociolinguistic point of view 'is therefore a trajectory through different stratified, controlled and monitored spaces in which language 'gives you away'. Big and small differences in language use locate the speaker in particular indexical and ascriptive categories (related to identity and role)' (Blommaert, 2010, p. 6).

In regard to globalisation, already in the 1990s, Appadurai (1996) highlighted the cultural dimensions of the phenomena, suggesting that 'electronic mediation and mass migration mark the world of the present not as technically new forces but as ones that seem to impel (and sometimes compel) the work of imagination' (p. 4). Thus, the imagination of mobility in terms of migration to new places has become part of many people's everyday life. Moreover, the increased mobility and changes in societies also change how we make sense of the world and the way we understand society (Adey, 2017, p. 7). These changes also affect our literacy practices and in the coming section we will zoom in on the notion of literacies.

Literacies

In the beginning of the 1980s, research on literacy took a new direction, in reaction to the dominance of a psycholinguistic perspective. The focus had mainly been set on cognitive processes of the individual reader and writer and on the development and assessment of literacy skills in educational contexts (Baynham & Prinsloo, 2009; Street, 2003). In reaction to this, many scholars turned their interest towards peoples' ways of engaging with literacy in various contexts in their everyday life. These scholars became part of the transdisciplinary research field known as *New Literacy Studies* (NLS). Research in NLS can be described as made up of three generations (Baynham, 2004, p. 285; Baynham & Prinsloo, 2009, p. 1; Prinsloo & Baynham, 2008, p. 4). The studies conducted by the first generation comprise, among others, Scribner and Cole (1981), Scollon and Scollon (1981), Heath (1983) and Street (1984). Here, theoretical perspectives and foundational concepts were formulated, for example by Scribner and Cole (1981), who performed a study on reading, writing, culture, and cognition among the Vai in Liberia. In this study, they researched cognitive skills connected to different types of reading and writing. Scribner and Cole found that literacy skills to a high degree vary along with those social practices into which they are integrated. This finding was fundamental as it contradicted the perception of a general connection between literacy skills per se and specific cognitive effects (Scribner & Cole, 1981, p. 132 f). Thus, Scribner and Cole had an important role in the development of the concept *practice*, which they defined as 'a recurrent, goal-directed sequence of activities, using a particular technology and particular systems of knowledge' (Scribner & Cole, 1981, p. 236). This concept has, since the 1980s, been of central importance to a sociocultural approach on literacy.

In relation to the concept or literacy practice, Heath (1982, 1983), in her research, focused on *literacy events*. She outlined them as 'occasions in which written language is integral to the nature of participants' interactions and their interpretive processes and strategies' (Heath, 1982, p. 50). She also depicted situated 'ways of knowing' in the literacies that

children meet in their everyday life outside of school as critical to their school results.

Like Heath, Street (1984, 2003) problematised the view on literacy in for example schooling and development programmes. Street was critical of what he referred to as the *autonomous model* of literacy, that is, the understanding that literacy is made up of skills that are not dependent on the contexts where they are learned and used. He formulated an *ideological model* for the understanding of literacy. In this model, literacy is understood as always contextualised, entailing that it is learned and used in specific ways depending on the political, social, and cultural patterns of the setting. This understanding implies that there are *multiple literacies*, some dominant, supported by powerful social institutions, and some marginalised or resistant (Kell, 2017, p. 415; Street, 2001, p. 1).

Second generation NLS studies developed the theoretical frameworks and concepts in empirical, often ethnographic, studies. Literacies were researched from a *social practice perspective*, by, among others, Barton and Hamilton (1998). The focus was set on *everyday practices* in which people engaged in contexts outside of educational domains. Barton and Hamilton understood empirically observable literacy events, situated in specific contexts, as part of literacy practices and found that in these events, oral and written language were almost always intertwined.

In third generation studies in the NLS, critiques that have been directed to the research field from two angles have met in empirical works where the theoretical understandings are problematised in different ways (Baynham & Prinsloo, 2009, p. 1). This will be outlined below. As a first strand of critique, and of great importance to research on literacies in relation to mobility, it has been argued (Brandt & Clinton, 2002; Collins & Blot, 2003) that researchers in the NLS paradigm have exaggerated the impact that local contexts have on literacy practices, while material prerequisites are not given enough attention. Brandt and Clinton write that ‘if reading and writing are means by which people reach – and are reached by – other contexts, then more is going on locally than just local practice’ (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 338). According to Brandt and Clinton, this results in an insufficient theorisation of the possibilities of literacy travelling between different settings and being integrated into and remaining outside of the settings where it has

originated. Based on the work of Latour, they describe literacy and artefacts used in literacy as actors. They want to bridge the two opposite understandings of literacy as on the one hand a decontextualised skill, and on the other hand, as having originated in local contexts, and they argue that neither of these understandings is true. In Kell's (2017, p. 414) words: 'how do we account for textual practices which are both situated/contextualised and distributed/transcontextual?' Following the critique formulated by Brandt and Clinton (2002), a number of explorations have been made where researchers, to a larger extent, focus on modalities, media, and artefacts such as technologies and texts (Kell, 2017; Pahl & Rowsell, 2010).

A way of coming to terms with the dilemma of understanding literacy as both situated and mobile has been suggested by Ivanič (2009). She suggests that a more nuanced definition of *literacy practice* would be helpful. Presently, *literacy practice* is on the one hand used to refer to all reading and writing in relation to an activity (e.g. all the reading and writing conducted when paying bills or searching for a job). On the other hand the concept is used for referring to specific literacy processes on a micro level (or *micro practices*) performed when participating in that activity (for example scanning through a text, taking notes or drawing a mind map). From an Actor-Network perspective, Ivanič, quoting Star and Griesemer (1989, p. 393), points out that literacy practices have the potential to function as *boundary objects*, objects that are:

[p]lastic enough to adapt to local needs and the constraints of the several parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites. ... They have different meanings in different social worlds but their structure is common enough to more than one world to make them recognizable, a means of translation. The creation and maintenance of boundary objects is a key process in developing and maintaining coherence across intersecting social worlds. (Ivanič, 2009, p. 111)

Ivanič argues that literacy practices in comprehensive understanding are not plastic enough and the domains of everyday life and formal education are too dissimilar for literacy practices to travel across the contexts.

They are too closely connected to the domain where they take place and will therefore change when people take part in them in a different domain. For example, the literacy practice of reading a newspaper is something very different when it takes place by the kitchen table at home compared to when it takes place in a classroom. At home, the reader can decide for themselves what to read in the newspaper, and how to read, depending on their interests and needs. When a student reads the newspaper in a classroom, the teacher, as a part of their role within the school as an institution, will decide the purpose of the activity, and the overarching purpose will be learning in order to assess the students' skills and knowledge. However, literacy practices in the more restricted sense, *micro practices*, can be a factor which is meaningful to several domains and therefore are mobile and can cross the borders between them, according to Ivanič (2009, p. 117). For example, some micro practices from the everyday life of adult migrants can be built upon in the classroom domain where they are learning the dominant language of their new country (Norlund Shaswar, 2012, 2014).

The second strand of critique directed to NLS, entails how the impact of power needs to be brought more to the fore than has been done in previous studies within the field. Collins and Blot (2003) argued that the ethnographic methodology which was prevalent in NLS research was valuable in the sense that it contributed an understanding of diversity and variation of literacy practices, but did not explore the endurance of literacy's role in reproducing inequality (Kell, 2017, p. 415).

New in New Literacy Studies (NLS) refers to the fact that the emergent research field constituted an alternative to a psycholinguistic paradigm (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006, p. 24; Norlund Shaswar, 2014, p. 16). The two research fields can be described as separated by a divide in the sense that many researchers either direct their studies towards connections between literacy and cognition, or towards the links between literacy, ideologies, and social practices (Karlsson, 2011). If we look at Rizgar's narrative, a psycholinguistic paradigm entails a focus on his reading and writing proficiency and skills. A social practices perspective implies an exploration of the literacy practices he engages in, for example within

settings of the home and with friends and how he identifies in relation to the literacy events he takes part in, which attitudes he had to different genres that he learns to consume and produce, etc.

However, there are also researchers who apply a widened perspective on literacies, which includes a psycholinguistic as well as a social practices or critical literacy perspective (see for example Alatalo & Johansson, 2019; Chen et al., 2012). This results in an integrative approach where complex literacy practices are understood both in terms of skills which people develop, and in terms of practices in which they participate. We argue that such a widened perspective is in line with the sociolinguistics of globalisation, and also with Gee's (2001) sociocognitive perspective on reading that 'integrates work on cognition, language, social interaction, society and culture' (Gee, 2001, p. 714). A similar integration in the field of second language learning has been made by Cummins (2000). In the same way, Alatalo and Johansson (2019) argue that writing and reading are complex activities and in order to understand them, knowledge from different research fields needs to be integrated. For example, research on cognitive learning processes needs to be combined with studies on learning in social interaction and in relation to students' earlier experiences. We argue that in order to research multilingual literacy practices in contexts characterised by mobility, a widened integrated approach is needed.

Literacy and the Multilingual Turn

The complexity and blending of language and literacies was previously addressed in relation to Rizgars' narrative. As part of the multilingual turn, basic assumptions and norms in second language learning have been questioned in favour of a shift towards a multilingual norm in research, policy, and practice (see for example May, 2014). Several scholars have problematised a monolingual bias and the striving for linguistic homogeneity, suggesting that the idea of language itself is founded in European nationalism and colonialism (Gal, 2006; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007). While ideas of language separation have dominated in both research on bilingualism and second language learning as well as in education policy, a

sequential view of bilingualism (including biliteracy), that suggests that the first language has to be developed in order to develop literacy skills in the second language, has dominated. Thus, in many educational programmes, skills in the first language were supported in order for students to later achieve skills in the dominant second language. Bagga-Gupta et al. (2019) identify disciplinary boundaries between bilingualism and second language acquisition on the one hand and the field of literacy on the other hand, arguing that since SLA scholars have traditionally focused on learners and the learning of language (in terms of oral/written, received/produced and often labelled in terms of a first, second, or foreign language), this has not been the focus of literacy researchers.

An important contribution in bringing research in bilingualism and literacies together was the continua of biliteracy model presented by Nancy Hornberger, which highlights the conjunction between literacy and bilingualism, focusing on the dimensions of development, context, media, and content where biliteracy skills and practices develop (Hornberger, 2003; Hornberger & Skilton Sylvester, 2000). As well as other scholars such as Cummins (2000) and Martin-Jones and Jones (2000), the model emphasises the potential for positive transfer across literacies in relation to contextual social and political factors. The model has later been developed by emphasising the transformation of power in relation to mobility (Hornberger & Link, 2012; Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester, 2000). A dynamic view of language and a critique of the notion of named languages have especially been developed through the concept of *translanguaging*. As part of the multilingual turn, translanguaging takes its point of departure from how individuals use and live with and in language (García, 2009; Paulsrud et al., 2017). By challenging traditional perceptions of languages as discrete, countable entities, the notion of translanguaging includes the simultaneous use of different kinds of linguistic forms, signs, and modalities (Otheguy et al., 2015), with attention to how people make meaning and sense of their multilingual world and for who they are in it through ‘multiple discursive practices’ (García, 2009, p. 45).

García et al. (2006) suggest a pluriliteracy approach, which moves beyond the continua of biliteracy presented by Hornberger, with its different interrelated axes, by putting ‘an emphasis on *literacy practices in*

sociocultural contexts, the *hybridity* of literacy practices afforded by new technologies, and the increasing *interrelationship of semiotic systems*’ (p. 215). Like the NLS approach presented above, the approach of pluriliteracy brings forward the social and cultural contexts in doing literacy and the transfers between contexts. In regard to Rizgars’ narrative, the concept of pluriliteracy can support an understanding of his contemporary literacy practices where he moves between four named languages and two alphabets that he also sometimes integrates in new creative ways, such as when using Kurdish (Sorani) but with a Latin orthography when chatting with friends digitally.

Moreover, the concept of pluriliteracy, founded in a dynamic view of multilingualism, brings forward an understanding of individuals’ linguistic repertoires as intertwined rather than separated into different languages. García et al. (2006) argue that a pluriliteracies approach has the potential to capture the sociolinguistic realities in the contemporary world. Canagarajah (2013) uses the concept of translingual practices (similar to translanguaging practices) to address an orientation that moves beyond named languages and given meanings. He argues that compared to the multilingual or plurilingual concepts that view competence, including literacy skills, as tied to a specific language, the concept of translingual enables a ‘consideration of communicative competence as not restricted to predefined meanings of individual languages, but the ability to merge different language resources in situated interactions for new meaning construction’ (2013, pp. 1–2).

Preview of Contributions in the Volume

The chapters in this volume explore relations between literacy and mobility in different geographical settings. The authors share an interest in the literacy practices of adult and adolescent migrants. Several chapters investigate literacy practices in relation to formal education in the majority language for adult migrants (Hall & Al Dhaif; Lundgren & Rosén; Norlund Shaswar) and formal education for adolescents (Dewilde; Wedin). Moreover, the chapters by Baquedano-López and

Gong and Filimban et al. address literacy practices in educational settings organised by volunteers or community centres.

Although the volume originates in the perspective of literacy as a social practice embedded in relations of power, there is also a variation. In their chapter, Baquedano-López and Gong develop a critical and de-colonial perspective advancing the ‘notion of “spatial tense” to complicate how literacy practices of diaspora highlight the sometimes compliant, and sometimes insurgent, ways people reframe location, and the location of knowledge in a diaspora and in the face of continued marginalisation’ (p. 26). The different examples presented in the chapter address the importance of recognising indigenous knowledge (both ancestral and present-day knowledge) and the different ways of seeing literacy that connect students and families to language, cultural knowledge and practices. The chapter also explores the importance of educators being open to such alternative ways of seeing literacy and knowledge.

In relation to literacy and power, the chapters by Wedin, Lundgren, and Rosén use the continua of biliteracy presented by Hornberger (1989, 2003) as the start for analysing literacy practices. Lundgren and Rosén examine the emergence of a translanguaging pedagogy at one school for municipal adult education in Swedish tuition for immigrants. Focusing on the teachers at the school, the study describes a project working with a novel parallel in two languages. The teachers expressed that the possibility of moving between languages created a space in the classroom where students could use their voice and agency to talk about their experiences of migration and of settlement in Sweden. The chapter by Wedin examines education for adolescents in Sweden. The aim of the chapter is to investigate how diverse linguistic and multimodal resources are used for writing in the subjects of Swedish as a second language (SSL), social sciences, and natural sciences. The methodology comprises linguistic and ethnographic perspectives and the data consists of classroom observations and interviews with recently arrived students. The two literacy practices dominating in the classrooms were first whole-class instruction, also known as *chalk-and-talk*, and second, writing where students worked with texts and produced written answers to questions. Two types of writing were prevalent in these two practices: first, writing following instruction and modelling, and second, so called

show-you-know. The most prevalent strategies used by students comprised activities where students (1) searched for explanations and translations (2) copied texts and (3) shuttled between linguistic resources in their search for ways of expressing themselves in Swedish. The study shows that despite the available resources in terms of staff (teachers and bilingual support) and digital tools (multilingual reading service, instructional films), not much subject-specific writing took place in the natural science and social science classrooms. Moreover, the study problematises the introduction of multilingual practices in the classroom, as these were invited but not valued as an asset for the future.

The writing of adolescents in a multilingual classroom is also explored by Dewilde. In her chapter, she examines how a class of migrant students and their two Norwegian teachers engage with language and orientation for writing in a class for migrant students with little previous schooling before migrating to Norway. The theoretical framework is Goffman's (1959) distinction between front region and back region. The study shows that the students and teachers constructed opportunities and barriers with regard to building on students' minority resources, practices and knowledge. Students drew on their larger linguistic repertoires and biographies back stage, sometimes self-censoring and actively choosing not to push minority resources to the front stage. Teachers sometimes insisted on the usage of majority resources in the front region, at other times allowing students to draw on their minority resources back stage for meaning making. As a way forward, Dewilde turns to Meyrowitz's (1990) concept of middle region. Perceiving students' usage of minority resources as middle region behaviour, Dewilde suggests that they do not intend to hide them from the teachers. Also, it may be easier for teachers to allow and build on minority resources in the middle region as they may feel freer from monolingual expectations than in the front region. She concludes by arguing that 'the middle region [thus] holds pedagogical potential for teachers and students to negotiate minority language resources, practices and experiences and ultimately push them to the front region of writing instruction' (p. 257).

Pujol-Valls et al. investigate connections between literacy as practices and literacy as skills in their explorations of the role played by psychological and socio-psychological factors in L2 literacy development of

students who are temporarily abroad. The participants are five university students from Catalonia who undertook a language teaching placement abroad within the Erasmus+ programme. Pujol-Valls et al. aim to analyse how the students self-report their second language written text production before and after participating in the practicum abroad and the students' written self-report on their second language literacy and professional learning development. They also study personality traits manifested in the students' journal writing. The students reported that their second language writing did not improve during their stay abroad. Neither did they relate to their written text production in their second language when writing their journals. However, they frequently described their stay abroad as important to their professional learning. The personality traits most strongly manifested were agreeableness, extraversion, and conscientiousness.

The chapters by Al-Dhaif et al., Filimban et al. and Norlund Shaswar centre on language learning of adult migrants with little to no formal education. A social and critical perspective is used by Al-Dhaif et al., as their chapter focuses on the experiences of a 42-year-old Syrian refugee in order to explore the relationship between her non-literacy in her first language, Arabic, her investment in learning and becoming literate in a second language, English, and the implications of this for her navigation and negotiation of her identity/ies in the multiple domains of her life in Britain. The chapter shows how the participant's self-reported non-literacy skills in Arabic in various ways (directly and/or indirectly) had an impact on her sense of self and her (dis)investment in learning English in and outside the ESOL classrooms.

Identity and *investment* are concepts in focus also in Norlund Shaswar's chapter where she studies how Noor and Muhammad, two married adult second language learners of Swedish, engage in literacy practices as they struggle for Muhammad to pass the theory part of the Swedish driving test. They are learning Swedish at Swedish for immigrants (SFI). The study focuses on how the participants narrate literacy practices for passing the driving test and asks if these literacy practices are mobile in the sense that second language learners with brief formal education can draw upon them in their second language and basic literacy development in the SFI context. Norlund Shaswar argues that some aspects of the researched literacy practices could be mobilised into the participants'

second language and literacy learning in SFI. Having a driving license is central to Muhammad's identity as an adult, and for that reason he is prepared to invest time and effort in literacy practices for passing the driving test. Such investment, Norlund Shaswar argues, can be mobilised into a formal educational second language learning context if learners find that the literacy practices of the educational context resonate with their identities outside of the classroom.

Questions of identity and agency are further addressed in the chapter by Basic et al., who employ language biographies to explore how two migrant women adapt to their new country of settlement and develop high literacy and language competence in the new language. The two women were forced to migrate from Bosnia during the Balkan wars of the early 1990s and the chapter addresses questions of trauma in relation to forced migration. The chapter focuses on agency expressed in meta-agentive discourse through analysis of the language biographies of the women based on interviews.

Filimban et al. explore a volunteer-based, student-run pleasure-reading programme for adult migrants who lacked or had brief formal education. The learners engaged mainly in co-reading and in some individual reading. The programme aimed to support the learners in reading for pleasure by providing them with fiction and an environment that would inspire them to participate on a regular basis. The authors explored how the learners engaged with the texts and how they benefited from this. 106 learners participated in total, and nine of them took part in a more detailed study that explored the learners' abilities (phonological awareness, reading level, and morphosyntactic competence) and their engagement with the books during the sessions. They found that the majority of the nine learners found the books suitable in terms of level of difficulty and enjoyed reading them. However, they also found that three out of four learners, whose organic grammar was at a low level, found it difficult to comprehend the texts they were reading. Still, most of the nine participants said that they enjoyed reading the books and perceived them as easy to comprehend. The authors conclude that the programme was successful in producing a culture of pleasure reading in the sessions.

Finally, in the epilogue, Jonsson considers how an increased focus on mobility influences the theoretical development of the term *literacies*. She

argues that how the concept of literacies is understood has consequences not only for what researchers focus on in studies about literacies, but also for the pedagogical implications and possibilities that these studies can offer. Reflections about how to unthink, rethink and reinvent literacies in mobility are developed throughout the epilogue by discussing the concept of language, the multilingual turn (May, 2014), literacies as ‘translingual practice’ (Canagarajah, 2013) and various power aspects in relation to literacies in mobility, e.g. issues of social inequality and social justice. The chapter shows how translingual, translocal, multimodal, and embodied perspectives open up for new understandings of literacies.

Although the interest in finding ways of looking at literacies from multiple approaches is not at all new, and although this endeavour is more important than ever in the age of mobility, there are still many researchers who stay within the borders of one paradigm in their research on literacy(ies). Literacies of adult migrants are complex, and in order to understand them, many different ways of researching and conceptualising them, many angles to start out from and many different research methods are needed. We hope and believe that the different perspectives presented in the chapters in this book will contribute to such a development of literacy research.

References

- Adey, P. (2017). *Mobility* [e-book]. Routledge.
- Alatalo, T., & Johansson, V. (2019). Tvärvetenskapliga perspektiv på läs- och skrivundervisning i tidiga skolår: Redaktionell introduktion [Interdisciplinary perspectives on reading and writing education in early school years: Editorial introduction]. *Nordic Journal of Literacy Research*, Special Issue: Tvärvetenskapliga perspektiv på läs- och skrivundervisning i tidiga skolår [Interdisciplinary perspectives on reading and writing education in early school years] 5(3), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.23865/njlr.v5.2025>
- Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalization*. University of Minnesota Press.

- Bagga-Gupta, S., Laursen, H.-P., & Golden, A. (2019). Bridging language, literacy and learning. In S. Bagga-Gupta, A. Golden, L. Holm, H. P. Laursen, & A. Pitkänen-Huhta (Eds.), *Reconceptualizing connections between language, literacy and learning* (pp. 15–32). Springer.
- Barton, D., & Hamilton, M. (1998). *Local literacies: Reading and writing in one community*. Routledge.
- Baynham, M. (2004). Ethnographies of literacy: Introduction. *Language and Education*, 18(4), 285–290.
- Baynham, M., & Prinsloo, M. (Eds.). (2009). *The future of literacy studies*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Blackledge, A., & Creese, A. (2017). Translanguaging in mobility. In A. S. Canagarajah (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of migration and language* (pp. 31–46). Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Blommaert, J. (2010). *The sociolinguistics of globalization*. Cambridge University Press.
- Brandt, D., & Clinton, K. (2002). Limits of the local: Expanding perspectives on literacy as a social practice. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 34(3), 337–356.
- Canagarajah, A. S. (Ed.). (2013). *Literacy as translingual practice: Between communities and classrooms*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Canagarajah, A. S. (2017). Introduction: The nexus of migration and language. In A. S. Canagarajah (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of migration and language* (pp. 1–28). Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Chen, X., Geva, E., & Schwarz, M. (2012). Understanding literacy development of language minority students: An integrative approach. *Reading & Writing*, 25(8), 1797–1804. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-012-9400-9>
- Collins, J., & Blot, R. K. (2003). *Literacy and literacies: Texts, power and identity*. Cambridge University Press.
- Cummins, J. (2000). *Language, power and pedagogy: Bilingual children in the crossfire*. Multilingual Matters.
- De Fina, A., Ikizoglu, D., & Wegner, J. (Eds.). (2017). *Diversity and super-diversity: Sociocultural linguistic perspectives*. Georgetown University Press.
- Dewaele, J. M. (2007). Predicting language learners' grades in the L1, L2, L3 and L4: The effect of some psychological and sociocognitive variables. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 4(3), 169–197.
- Gal, S. (2006). Migration, minorities and multilingualism: Language ideologies in Europe. In C. Mar-Molinero & P. Stevenson (Eds.), *Language Ideologies*,

- Policies, and Practices. Language and the Future of Europe* (pp. 13–27). Palgrave Macmillan.
- García, O. (2009). *Bilingual education in the 21st century: A global perspective*. Blackwell.
- García, O., Bartlett, L., & Kleifgen, J.-A. (2006). From biliteracy to pluriliteracies. In P. Auer & L. Wei (Eds.), *Handbook of applied linguistics. Multilingualism* (Vol. 5, pp. 207–228). Berlin: Mouton-De Gruyter.
- García, O., & Kleifgen, J. A. (2020). Translanguaging and literacies. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 55(4), 553–571.
- Gee, J. P. (2001). Reading as situated language: A sociocognitive perspective. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 44(8), 714–725.
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Doubleday.
- Heath, S. B. (1982). What no bedtime story means: Narrative skills at home and school, *Language in Society*, 11(1), 49–76.
- Heath, S. B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life, and work in communities and classrooms*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hornberger, N. H. (1989). Continua of biliteracy. *Review of Educational Research*, 59(3), 271–296.
- Hornberger, N. H. (Ed.). (2003). *Continua of biliteracy: An ecological framework for educational policy, research, and practice in multilingual settings*. Multilingual Matters.
- Hornberger, N. H., & Link, H. (2012). Translanguaging and transnational-literacies in multilingual classrooms: A biliteracy lens. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 15(3), 261–278. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2012.658016>
- Hornberger, N. H., & Skilton-Sylvester, E. (2000). Revisiting the continua of biliteracy: International and critical perspectives. *Language and Education*, 14(2), 96–122. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500780008666781>
- Ivanič, R. (2009). Bringing literacy studies into research on learning across the curriculum. In M. Baynham & M. Prinsloo (Eds.), *The future of literacy studies* (pp. 100–122). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Karlsson, A.-M. (2011). Great Divide, Social Practice eller Motivated Sign? Materiella, sociala och semiotiska perspektiv på skriftspråkande [Great Divide, Social Practice or Motivated Sign? Material, social and sociosemiotic perspectives on use of written language] In A. C. Edlund & I. Mellenius (Eds.), *Svenskans beskrivning 31. Förhandlingar vid trettioförsta sammankomsten för svenskans beskrivning, Umeå den 20–21 maj 2010* [Describing

- Swedish 31. Proceedings at the thirtyfirst conference on the description of the Swedish language] (pp. 13–30). Umeå University.
- Kell, C. (2017). Travelling texts, translocal/transnational literacies and transnational analysis. In A. S. Canagarajah (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of migration and language* (pp. 413–430). Taylor & Francis.
- Lankshear, C., & Knobel, M. (2006). *New literacies: Everyday practices and classroom learning*. Open University Press.
- Makoni, S., & Pennycook, A. (Eds.). (2007). *Disinventing and reconstituting languages*. Multilingual Matters.
- Martin-Jones, M., & Jones, K. (Eds.). (2000). *Multilingual literacies: Reading and writing different worlds*. J. Benjamins Publishing.
- May, S. (Ed.). (2014). *The multilingual turn: Implications for SLA, TESOL and bilingual education*. Routledge.
- Meyrowitz, J. (1990). Redefining the situation: Extending dramaturgy into a theory of social change and media effects. In S. Riggins (Ed.), *Approaches to semiotics* (Vol. 96, pp. 65–98). Mouton de Gruyter.
- New London Group. (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies. Designing social futures. *Harvard Educational Review*, 66(1), 60–92.
- Norlund Shaswar, A. (2012). Skriftpraktiker i gränslandet mellan hem och SFI-klassrum [Literacy practices in the border land between home and SFI-classroom], In D. Andersson & L.-E. Edlund (Eds.), *Språkets gränser – och verklighetens. Perspektiv på begreppet gräns* [Linguistic borders – and borders of reality. Perspectives on the concept border] (pp.157–166). Umeå University.
- Norlund Shaswar, A. (2014). *Skriftbruk i vardagsliv och i sfi-utbildning: en studie av fem kurdiska sfi-studerandes skriftbrukshistoria och skriftpraktiker* [Literacy in Everyday Life and in the Swedish for Immigrants Programme: The Literacy History and Literacy Practices of Five Kurdish L2 Learners of Swedish] Diss. Umeå University.
- Otheguy, R., García, O., & Reid, W. (2015). Clarifying translanguaging and deconstructing named languages: A perspective from linguistics. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 6(3), 281–307.
- Pahl, K., & Rowsell, J. (2010). *Artefactual literacies: Every object tells a story*. Teachers College Press.
- Paulsrud, B., Rosén, J., Straszer, B., & Wedin, Å. (Eds.). (2017). *New perspectives on translanguaging and education*. Multilingual Matters.
- Prinsloo, M., & Baynham, M. (Eds.). (2008). *Literacies, Global and Local*. John Benjamins.

- Scollon, R. & Scollon, S. B. K. (1981). *Narrative, literacy and face in interethnic communication*. ABLEx.
- Scribner, S., & Cole, M. (1981). *The psychology of literacy*. Harvard University Press.
- Star, S. L., & Griesemer, J. R. (1989). Institutional ecology, 'translations' and boundary objects: Amateurs and professionals in Berkeley's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology. *Social Studies of Science*, 19, 387–420.
- Street, B. (Ed.). (2001). *Literacy and development: Ethnographic perspectives*. Routledge.
- Street, B. (2003). What's 'new' in new literacy studies? Critical approaches to literacy in theory and practice. *Current Issues in Comparative Education*, 5(2), 77–91.
- Street, B. (2009). The future of 'social literacies.' In M. Baynham & M. Prinsloo (Eds.), *The future of literacy studies* (pp. 21–37). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Street, B. V. (1984). *Literacy in theory and practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Pitkänen-Huhta, A. (2019). Young people's emerging multilingual practices: Learning language or literacy, or both? In S. Bagga-Gupta, A. Golden, L. Holm, H. P. Laursen, & A. Pitkänen-Huhta (Eds.), *Reconceptualizing connections between language, literacy and learning* (pp. 35–54). Springer.
- Urry, J. (2000). *Sociology beyond societies: Mobilities for the twenty-first century*. Routledge.
- Vertovec, S. (2007). Super-diversity and its implications. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 30(6), 1024–1054. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870701599465>
- Vertovec, S. (2019). Talking around super-diversity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 42(1), 125–139. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1406128>