

# Reading in changing society

Edited by

Marju Lauristin and Peeter Vihalemm



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## STUDIES IN READING AND BOOK CULTURE 2

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Edited by Marju Lauristin and Peeter Vihalemm

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# Reading, democracy and discipline: Premises for reading activities in Swedish primary schools from 1967 to 1969

*Mats Dolatkhah, Anna Lundh*

## Introduction

In Sweden, as well as in many other countries, children's literacy is a much debated topic. In the public discourse, politicians, researchers, and other groups are discussing the reading abilities, reading habits, and changing media preferences of children and youth. These discussions encompass several different lines of thought, but perceived problems with computers, digital media, and document technologies are often at the heart of the debate. For example, the computerisation of children's home environments has been interpreted as one of the major causes for the decline in traditional reading interests and reading skills among children and youth (Rosén 2012). It has also been argued that the heavy use of digital media actually restructures the human brain and makes it more suited to superficial skimming and scanning than the in-depth concentrated reading associated with traditional printed books (Carr 2010). Some studies have found that educators and librarians associate printed books with good childhoods, and digital media technologies are thought to endanger the childhoods of contemporary children (Lundh, Davidsson & Limberg 2011).

In these discussions, many different values are attributed to book reading. Some relate to cognition, such as creative imagination, concentration, as well as linear, abstract, and complex thinking. Other values are social, such as the idea of book reading being a part of a good childhood. In the Swedish debate, researchers and politicians also connect the reading of literature to the democratic capital of the society. It is seen as a practice by which the citizens access the information they need and by which they can develop and mature as potential political actors (Government Bill 2013/14:3; Persson 2007).

In summary, it can be said that the contemporary discussions of reading often centre on an experience of transition from one culture or practice of reading to another, and on the role played by new media technologies in this

process. We argue that in order to understand this transition – and the experience of it – it is important to explore not only the most recent developments and the use of new media technologies today. It is also important to critically scrutinise historical evidence of the culture of reading that we are now said to be leaving behind, and thus avoid taking it for granted.

This article is one of the first steps in a larger research project, *Reading, traditions and negotiations: Reading activities in Swedish classrooms 1967–1969*, which is an examination of how reading as an activity was shaped in Swedish primary schools in the late 1960s. The primary data for this project consist of a large number of video and sound recordings from Swedish primary school classrooms between 1967 and 1969. By analysing this material, we hope to contribute to the understanding of changing reading habits by investigating an important part of Swedish reading culture as it developed in the decades after World War II, namely the reading practices taught in the schools. The public school system was one of the most important cornerstones in the building of a reading culture in post-war Sweden, and it was also a product of particular historical and societal circumstances and ideologies.

Since an important aspect of reading practices is the degree to which they are embedded in historical circumstances and institutions, a contextual understanding is required for the research project generally. Christine Pawley, who studies the history of reading, has drawn attention to organisations, both commercial and public, as foci for the research on reading practices (Pawley 2009). Organisations, she argues, represent a theoretical meso-level of analysis, where the interplay between macro-level structures and micro-level actions occurs. Pawley pays particular attention to structural categories such as gender, race and class. We assume that organisations can also mediate and manifest structural phenomena such as ideologies and discourses, and that they are places where individuals can negotiate, contest, adapt to, and contribute to such structures.

During the decades after the World War II, the Swedish educational system was thoroughly reformed. In 1962, a new curriculum instituted comprehensive and compulsory public schooling, which was intended to tackle certain social and political issues. In addition, the curriculum provided the school system with a normative conceptualisation of reading. Analytically, the institution of the new comprehensive and compulsory school system – and its curriculum – can be seen an important link between reading as an activity and broader societal circumstances. The intention of this paper is to lay a foundation for our further studies, by analysing the historical and institutional context in which school reading took place, with a particular focus on the curriculum and its conceptualisations of reading that was current at that time.

## The curriculum as a premise for reading activities

The curriculum that is our focus is called *Läroplan för grundskolan 1962* [*Curriculum for Comprehensive Schools 1962*]. Some comparisons will also be made with the predecessor for the elementary schools (in Swedish, *folkskolan*), *Undervisningsplan för rikets folkskolor den 22 januari 1955* [*Teaching Programme for the Country's Elementary Schools 22 January 1955*], and its successor, *Läroplan för grundskolan 1969* [*Curriculum for Comprehensive Schools 1969*] (1969).

The 1962 curriculum consists of four parts, not counting the appendices. The schooling goals and guidelines in general and abstract terms are presented in the first part, while the second presents more tenable instructions. These consider the relationships between the school, home, and society at large, but more specifically, the internal organisation and work of the schools. For example, the methods for teaching and grading, as well as, how to teach classes for children with special needs. The second part also provides instructions for resources, such as the school's health service, study and vocational guidance services, and school libraries. In the third part we find the time schedules for each year and subject. The subjects as such are described in the fourth part, which is also the largest.

In this article, we will focus on the subject of Swedish, as described in the fourth part of the curriculum. The section where Swedish is described as a subject is the largest subject section and consists of 40 pages. Of course, it could be argued that reading as an activity is an integrated aspect of most subjects; however, it is an *explicit* object of teaching in the subject of Swedish. The main interest of this article is how this object of teaching is conceptualised. Before moving on to these conceptualisations, however, we will consider A) the institution of comprehensive and compulsory schooling and B) the subject of Swedish as a whole, within which reading was to be taught.

## Comprehensive and compulsory schooling as a political project

In essence, the post-war reforms of the school system constituted a transition from a hierarchical and differentiated school system to a nine-year compulsory and comprehensive school system. This has been described as the most significant reform in Sweden since schooling was institutionalised in 1842 (Thavenius 1999: 15). Primary education was now the same for all children, except for some optional subjects and the 9<sup>th</sup> year, when opportunities for some specialisation in more or less practical or theoretical classes were provided.

Traditionally, the implementation of comprehensive and compulsory schooling is seen as a result of a political spirit of democratic progressivism. As an institution, this new type of school was intended to strengthen the democratic

values in society. The experience of World War II and the totalitarian regimes in Europe provided the background for this and the goal of the new public school system was to educate citizens who were capable of actively participating in a democratic society. Also, the social democratic educational policy was aiming at giving all children equal access to education regardless of socio-economic background (Richardson 2010: 111–116).

The curriculum repeatedly places the education of the democratic citizen alongside the goal of individual personal growth and the goal of social responsibility. The importance of individualization contrasts with school systems in other countries and periods where violations of individual personality and strongly suggestive teaching led to the creation of “uniform collectives”<sup>1</sup> (*Läroplan för grundskolan* 1962: 32). However, individualisation was to be complemented by social responsibilities – to family, society, and other societies. (*Läroplan för grundskolan* 1962: 18 and *passim*). This balance is repeatedly stressed in the curriculum and especially in its general goals and guidelines.

In recent research, the interpretation of the comprehensive school based on the processes of progression and democratisation has been challenged, or at least “destabilized”. Using Michel Foucault’s genealogical perspective to question the view of historical processes as linear, teleological, and progressing on historical processes, Jonas Qvarsebo, a historian of education, has suggested that the disciplinary regime in the schools actually expanded and intensified during the period leading up to 1962, although in a different form than before (2013).

The progressivists claimed that the school system needed to steer clear of authoritarian disciplinary methods, and let democratic, individual personalities develop. However, others were worried about the development of a youth culture, and the new behaviours and attitudes were seen as threatening to the social order. Many teachers – faced with the practical task of maintaining a degree of discipline in the classroom – as well as conservative politicians, were of this mind when it came to the schools (Qvarsebo 2013: 224).

New disciplinary methods were developed. According to Qvarsebo, the manual for the children’s teaching and growth, which was intended for the higher forms (issued by the National Board of Education in 1959), considered the ideal disciplinary method to be peer-to-peer measures, with the teacher monitoring the situation from a distance (Qvarsebo 2013: 230). Another way of reinforcing the disciplinary power of the school was to extend the discipline into the homes and families of the schoolchildren. Through new methods, including information meetings, counselling and contact books, the norms of the school were to be transferred into the homes, which were seen as potential hearths of “negative patterns of behaviour” (Qvarsebo 2013: 231). In minute detail, different campaigns for character formation sought to regulate the behaviour and conduct of the schoolchildren.

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<sup>1</sup> All translations from Swedish originals are made by the authors.

Qvarsebo's argument is that the stern authoritarian methods and targets of discipline were transformed, "...from the surface of the body of the disobedient pupil to more complex and efficient systems of internal discipline of the soul and behaviour." (Qvarsebo 2013: 234). However, the disciplinary regime as such was actually expanded and intensified by this transformation. Thus, the activity of reading took place in an institution characterised by paradoxical dynamics which allowed democratic progressivism to lead to an expanded disciplinary system.

## The subject of Swedish

A closer examination of the curriculum reveals that a fundamental part of the institution in which reading was taught, i.e. the main components of the subject of Swedish, include not only "reading", but also "speech", "writing", "linguistic observations and practice" and "Danish and Norwegian". Swedish had a central position in the curriculum and it constituted about 30% of the scheduled teaching hours (Ewalds 2007: 111). The subject of Swedish, as manifested in the curriculum, has been interpreted as an expression of modernisation. Earlier, Swedish as a subject – "the mother tongue" – was based on the foundations of language and literature, tied to a tradition of "*bildung*", and was permeated by religious and nationalistic values (Kåreland 2009: 102ff; Malmgren 1996: 94). In the 1962 curriculum, the subject was formulated in a way that would let the pupils function well in a modern, industrialised, media society (Malmgren 1996).

The goals for teaching of Swedish, as stated in the curriculum, are to let the pupils develop their abilities to understand and evaluate what they hear, see, and read, and to clearly and correctly express themselves. Exercises in listening, viewing, speaking, reading, and writing were supposed to develop these abilities. Therefore, the teaching should fulfil the different demands of everyday life, as well as contribute to the pupils' general knowledge, personal development, independent creativity, and ability to cooperate. The curriculum further states that teaching the subject of Swedish should lay the foundation for study skills, invoke a desire for reading, as well as an interest in good literature and the beauty of language. Some modern authors and the language and literature of the Nordic states should also be taught to the pupils. (*Läroplan för grundskolan* 1962: 125)

When presenting reading as a part of the subject of Swedish, it should be pointed out that the curriculum explicitly states that the division into different components has been done solely to provide an overview. When it comes to teaching, the curriculum states that the unity of the subject should be maintained by joining the different components into thematic studies, for example.

## Reading conceptualised

In the 1962 curriculum, the teaching of reading is divided into five main sections. For the middle school, these are:

1. Reading practice and study skills
2. Information reading
3. Experience reading
4. Independent reading
5. Prepared oral reading

These reading styles are carefully described in the curriculum, with regard to the different forms. Silent as well as oral reading is included, as are basic bibliographical skills, and the use of phonebooks and timetables. Instructions for teaching basic reading skills are also proposed for the lower forms, as well as suggestions on how reading can be incorporated in other parts of the subject of Swedish, as well as into other subjects. It is emphasised that reading should always take place in natural circumstances. Texts, reading styles, and reading materials chosen for exercises should also match the maturity of the students. For example, the critical reading of texts with commercial or political agendas should be practiced in the higher forms. The point is that it should be able to understand the texts without very detailed instructions or comments. “The schools should guide the pupils from fairytales through youth books to proper literature.” (*Läroplan för grundskolan* 1962: 145).

A wide range of reading materials is mentioned; for example, textbooks, encyclopaedias, brochures, magazines, and journals. Among the genres and topics suggested are stories about animals, stories about children home and abroad, adventure stories, and stories about children’s everyday experiences. Young teenagers are supposed read adult literature, but care should be taken to satisfy their interest in fast-paced, exciting stories and their need for ideals, dreams of faraway places, and expectations for growing up (*Läroplan för grundskolan* 1962: 145). Extensive book collections and classroom libraries are seen as necessities (*ibidem*: 151) and the potential of school libraries is discussed. The curriculum repeatedly stresses that the text chosen for reading must fit the maturity and interest of the pupils.

Pictures are also seen as relevant sources of information, along with fantasy experiences, but how they are to be interpreted requires attention (*ibidem*: 148). “Audiovisual” media, such as film, radio, and TV, are treated as a separate component of Swedish, called *Listening, viewing and speaking*. It might be of interest to note that this is not the case in the 1969 curriculum that followed, in which the interpretation of film and TV are treated as parts of reading.

The 1962 curriculum, defines information reading as non-fiction such as encyclopaedias, textbooks, magazines and journals, as well as maps, tables and diagrams. Textbooks on other subjects are also considered suitable (*Läroplan*

*för grundskolan* 1962: 145ff). Localising particular facts, speed reading, and scanning are aspects of this type of reading, which also includes interpretive intellectual operations, such as critical scrutiny, summarizing, and drawing conclusions from what is read. Techniques such as taking notes in the margins and underlining particularly significant parts are to be practiced (*ibidem*: 148). When assigning homework – a means of independent training in study skills – attention should be paid to the “varying home environments” of the students, and the teachers should discuss the subjects of the assignments to be completed at home with the parents (*ibidem*: 149).

Terminologically, “experience reading” is a translation of the Swedish term *upplevelseläsning*, which generally, and also in this particular context, has rather strong connotations of reading for pleasure. However, we wish to avoid that translation, as the curriculum assigns other purposes to this kind of reading beside “pleasure”, such as “aesthetic growth”, development of good taste, etc. Perhaps it should also be noted that “experience reading” as conceptualised in the curriculum is not primarily aimed at making the pupils into experienced readers.

Experience reading is to be applied to fiction and literature, and can also be used to provide depth to and enrich the studies of other subjects. Experience reading is meant to contribute to personal growth, “aesthetic growth”, and the development of good taste. Besides, it is noted that reading for pleasure will lead to an expanded vocabulary and other language skills. The curriculum states that students should engage in extensive reading for pleasure. Independent reading, with individual guidance provided on book choice, is supposed to invoke a desire to and a joy for reading, but it is also a way of satisfying the pupils’ “legitimate” need for fantasy experiences within the school environment (*Läroplan för grundskolan* 1962: 151).

The curriculum states that discussions of fictional texts can be used to explore ethical and social problems, thereby contributing to the sense of responsibility and solidarity with the family and community and “...also with humans of other races, cultures and environments” (*ibidem*: 146). But some literary texts should also be allowed to “...speak for themselves, without any comments whatsoever” (*ibidem*: 148). Recordings can be used to make the teacher into a listener, instead of a reader, with the others. This is also the case with lyrics and poetry. Regarding these genres, the curriculum states that “The less instruction from the teacher the better” (*ibidem*: 150), and adds that the mood and the message as a whole are more important than word-for-word comprehension. It is also considered suitable to read poetry on special occasions, such as the appearance of the first spring flowers (in Sweden, the changes of seasons are considered to be special occasions).

From the start of their education, the pupils are meant to practice and use both silent and oral reading. However, the emphasis is supposed to move from oral to silent through the course of their studies, which implies a progression in these ways of reading. Prepared oral reading is focused on fiction, and has the potential

of invoking strong, shared experiences. It is also considered suitable to combine prepared oral reading with choral singing, dramatisation, and music.

Both information reading and experience reading are intended to influence the pupils' reading habits outside of school. Information reading should contribute to the pupils' own learning about topics of interest, and experience reading should "if possible" focus on growth (*Läroplan för grundskolan* 1962: 145). Social reading circles and reading groups should be encouraged by the teacher. These activities can contribute to the recitations and dramatisations performed by the students on occasions such as parental and school meetings. When discussing school libraries, the curriculum states that pupils should develop good reading habits. The pupils should, of their own accord, be able to distinguish and reject books that are "accessible", but of "dubious value" (*ibidem*: 100f).

In summary, the conceptualisation of reading is quite multifaceted – perhaps even fragmented – in the 1962 curriculum. This pertains both to the reading styles as such, and to the kinds of texts considered suitable for reading. However, the underlying structure is divided between fiction and experience reading on the one hand, and non-fiction and information reading, on the other (see Malmgren 1996: 94). The other reading styles that are mentioned can often be understood to be aspects or versions of these two fundamental forms of reading.

### Reading as a democratic and disciplinary activity

To some extent, the concepts of democracy and discipline seem to be useful concepts for interpreting the conceptualisation of reading in the 1962 curriculum. It could reasonably be argued that elements of discipline are present in most educational situations, and that education itself is a form of discipline. It is also important to note that this does not necessarily contradict the concept of democracy. Discipline may well be inherent to a democratic project, as its actors need to submit to certain norms. However, we are interested in *how* specific democratic and disciplining aspirations are manifested in the 1962 curriculum. Discipline and democracy may take different shapes in different institutions and situations. We suggest that the dynamics between the specific disciplinary and democratic projects comprised in the new institution of comprehensive school were parts of a historical situation in which a modern culture of reading was established.

Qvarsebo (2013) points out that one fundamental aspect of this kind of discipline is the idea that the norms of the school were supposed to be transferred to the homes and families of the pupils. This idea is also apparent – though not to a great degree – in the instructions on reading. One part of this idea was making sure that the home is a good environment for doing homework, with what was called a proper "study hygiene". The explicit intention to impact

the pupils' spare-time reading by developing their literary taste can be seen as another example of how reading was incorporated in a disciplinary project aimed at extending school norms into other parts of society.

However, the 1955 curriculum is actually a clearer example, where the teaching of reading was explicitly intended to counter children's reading of "simpler comic books and other dubious literature" (*Undervisningsplan för rikets folkskolor den 22 januari 1955*: 72).<sup>2</sup> Such reading habits were supposed to motivate consultations with the parents, and this idea corresponds to the general disciplinary strategy of extending the norms of the school into the homes and families. In comparison to its predecessor, the 1962 curriculum is thus not as explicit in this regard.

Malmgren regards the division between information reading and experience reading as an expression of *modernisation* (Malmgren 1996: 94). But we would argue that it actually seems to be an iteration of a classical distinction in the history of reading, which, in some version, dates back at least to Cicero and his remarks on those who read history for pleasure rather than for usefulness (Cavallo 2003: 67). The other forms of reading indicated in the curriculum – such as "independent reading", "prepared oral reading" and "study skills" – can often be seen as aspects of these two fundamental elements. Unlike Cicero's readers of history, the pupils were to be taught to apply different reading styles to different categories of documents, to fact and to fiction.

The idea of democratisation through equal access to education is apparent in information reading. Information reading was closely linked to the practice of study skills, which provided pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds with better prerequisites to enter secondary and tertiary education (Malmgren 1996: 15). Some of the instructions related to experience reading may be interpreted as expressions of more general anti-authoritarianism, as democratic ideals aimed at strengthening the individual personality, and avoiding the creation of uniform collectives. Partly, experience reading was seen as a means of entering ethical, social and political discussions. But the curriculum also explicitly instructs the teacher to refrain from imposing their own interpretations on the pupils' experience reading, or at least, in case of some of the texts read in this style. The individual pupil's own interpretations were to be given precedence at least in some occasions, thereby allowing space for the democratically important independent spirit. These kinds of ideas, as well as the legitimacy of individual fantasy experiences in school, were severely criticised during the 70s. A radical group of pedagogues particularly criticised the practice of independent

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<sup>2</sup> The year before the curriculum of 1955 was enacted, physician Nils Bejerot had launched a vigorous frontal assault on comic books in his influential book *Barn, Serier, Samhälle* [*Children, Comics, Society*] (1954/1981). This book was a Swedish parallel to Wertham's *Seduction of the innocent*, and suggested that it was not inadequate to draw parallels between certain kinds of comics and narcotic drugs (Bejerot's professional specialisation).

reading as “pornographic” as it was centred on the individual’s private experiences and wasn’t used to explore moral and societal issues for educational purposes (Ehrlin & Malmgren 1976, *passim*).

However, we wish to emphasise that the curriculum is an expression of an ideology and of different norms of what reading *should* be like. In contrast to the democratic idealism expressed in the curriculum, commentators with insights into school practices at the time present a somewhat different picture. In practical teaching, the subject of Swedish ran the risk of fragmenting into many different small elements focused on formal skills rather than on content and literature. In particular, this was often the case in the more practically oriented classes in the 9th form (Dahl 1999).

During the 1960s, another important characteristic of the practical teaching of Swedish (as well as school teaching in general) was the large presence of commercial, comprehensive teaching materials. The influence of these materials was great, not least because there was a shortage of educated teachers, and it was easy for substitutes and new teachers to use these teaching materials. Since the pupils worked with the textbooks and exercise books at their own pace, opportunities were also provided for developing the ideologically important aspect of individualisation, which we touched upon earlier (Dahl 1999: 46ff, Malmgren 1996: 15).

In regard to reading in particular, Annette Ewalds, a researcher and former teacher, remembers that when practicing experience reading in the 1970s, the class silently read a text chosen by the teacher and then answered questions prepared by the author. The answers were then reviewed. Sometimes these reviews led to broader discussions, but usually, the aim was just to establish the correct answers. “Independent reading” was used to fill the gaps in scheduled teaching, for example, at the end of lessons. And even if the pupils had to present their reading when they finished a book, the pedagogical aspirations were usually limited (Ewalds 2007: 113ff).

## Reading and societal change

Researching the near past is a productive way of gaining perspectives on the present. If we compare these findings to the present debate, we find that some of the qualities we decry today and associate with the advent of digital media technologies, such as quick skimming and scanning through textual fragments, were actually part of the reading skills taught in the public schools in the 1960s, at which time it was applied to print materials. Study skills and information reading contained these elements, which were considered to be important in order to provide equal access to education. Thus this style of reading was promoted by particular political interests in a particular societal situation.

Characterising today's changes in reading habits as a shift from the in-depth, linear reading of printed books to a quick, fragmented form of scanning – and blaming it all on new technologies – is a simplified view. “Fragmented” and quick skimming and scanning are certainly not new ways of reading that appeared along with digital media technologies, but are social practices, which we may or may not choose to teach children with or without particular political goals in mind. As we can see in the document analysed here, these ways of reading were actually seen as desirable and as objects of teaching and learning in the 1960s.

Of course, this is not to say that different reading technologies are not central prerequisites for reading; however, the impact of technologies also depends on social organisations, values and expectations. While new media technologies may inherently promote certain styles of reading, so do the social and political initiatives and institutions in our past and present.

For example, some versions of the form of discipline pointed out by Qvarsebo are still present – and have been accentuated – in contemporary schooling. However, Qvarsebo primarily considers the discipline of behaviour and character formation to be a paradox similar to the one between individualization and discipline that is encountered in the pedagogical work in contemporary schooling. When analysing more recent classroom interactions during the 1990s and 2000s, Swedish researchers (Alexandersson & Limberg 2012; Bergqvist & Säljö 2004; Carlgren 2005; Lundh 2011; Österlind 1998) have described how the student-centred teaching methods, which became widespread during these decades, engendered a paradoxical freedom for the students, who had to learn how to take responsibility for their own school activities, while simultaneously conforming to the explicit and implicit expectations for their behaviour and learning outcomes. All these studies (Alexandersson & Limberg 2012; Bergqvist & Säljö 2004; Carlgren 2005; Österlind 1998) are influenced to some extent by Foucault (1979) and describe how these teaching methods lead to an internal disciplining of students, as opposed to an external physical disciplining – something that Qvarsebo (2013) also identified in the reforms leading up to the 1962 curriculum.

These issues of discipline are important to reading. The reports of the declining interest in reading and the loss of skills related to reading books and literature among children and young people today are raising a lot of concerns among politicians, researchers and teachers. Different initiatives for promoting reading have been implemented at various levels of society to counter these tendencies. However, research often assumes that the promotion of reading among children and youth works best if they feel that reading is voluntary and subject to individual freedom, and the feeling of compulsion is avoided (Krashen 2011).

Here the paradoxical dynamic between anti-authoritarian ideals and discipline reappears – what should be done with those students who would use their

freedom to choose activities others than reading books. The 1962 curriculum expected the pupils to develop an internal sense of literary quality and voluntarily refrain from reading low-quality materials. Similar expectations exist today, even if literary quality may be less pertinent today than the choice between different types of media. Another view of the current changes in reading habits is presented by the proponents of “new literacies”, who are reluctant to prioritise literature or books. The case is made that the character of reading is always multifaceted and that important literacies are developed through children’s – often voluntary – use of different kinds of media-related, linguistic and symbolic expressions (Fast 2008).

During the last decades, research into the history of reading has also contributed to an increased understanding of the complexity of reading. Sequential histories of reading, divided into neat phases each characterised by a particular practice of reading, run the risk of oversimplification. As David D. Hall, a historian studying literacy, has pointed out (1996): a reader may, in any historical situation, have access to several different models and traditions of literacy. This is quite evident in the 1962 curriculum, which could actually be seen as bordering on fragmentation, if it were not for the explicit instructions related to the requirement to always maintain the unity of the subject of Swedish (which were not always followed in practice).

The curriculum expressed a normative and institutionalised conceptualisation of reading in effect during the period of interest. However, as Pawley (2009) points out, reading is often shaped by the interplay of structures and actors within the framework of institutions. Therefore, in upcoming papers we will explore reading practices as they were implemented in the field of tensions that developed between the institutional ideologies of the new comprehensive school system and the children and teachers as individuals in particular situations.

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