Linking Literacy

The Role of the Teacher-Librarian in Literacy Education

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CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure

Tables

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BCE	Brisbane Catholic Education
CPT	Cooperative planning and teaching
CT	Class teacher
ELA	English Language Arts
QUT	Queensland University of Technology
TL	Teacher-librarian

ABSTRACT

Teacher-librarians become involved in literacy education in a variety of ways. The different understandings people have of this involvement are the focus of this study. Becoming aware of these different conceptions provides teacher-librarians with an awareness of some ways in which they can address the literacy needs of primary school students. The relevance of this investigation lies in the new English Language Arts Syllabus (1991) presently undergoing implementation in Queensland schools. This syllabus incorporates current theories of cross-curriculum literacy skill development. Teacher-librarians are experienced in this integrated approach to skill development and are therefore well placed to be in the vanguard of the implementation of these literacy programs.

Conceptions of the involvement of teacher-librarians in the literacy education of students in Years 1 to 7 were sought using focus group methodology. A total of eleven focus group discussions were held with groups of primary class teachers and groups of primary teacher-librarians participating. Consulting class teachers as well as teacher-librarians was considered important since relevant literature demonstrated that the success of the teacher-librarian's involvement is dependent on collaboration with the class teacher.

The data collected were subjected to phenomenographic analysis. From the responses, seven different conceptions of the involvement of the teacher-librarian in the literacy education of primary students were discovered: the teacher-librarian is not involved in literacy education; teacher-librarian as assistant; as manager; as independent teacher; as equal teaching partner; as expert/consultant; as leader. The seven categories are related by means of the varying professional foci of the teacher-librarian that they reflect. Knowledge and expertise of the professional teacher and the professional librarian are recognized differently in each category.

The teacher-librarian's professional focus is expressed by the respondents in many different ways, indicating that the involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education can be widespread and varied. Resources, curriculum, professional development, environment, assessment and evaluation were highlighted as areas in which this involvement can occur. The diversity of involvement and the diversity of the levels at which it is conceived by the respondents have implications for student learning, staffing of school libraries, training of teachers and teacher-librarians, the position of teacher-librarians within the school and for areas beyond literacy education.

Note:
Quotations from focus group discussions are used throughout this report. These are referenced by a coding which refers to the identification of the source focus group and the page number from the transcript. Transcripts are not included in this report as their bulk is substantial.

Chapter 1.   Introduction

It just seems there is this huge scope for the teacher-librarians to be involved in literacy education. I mean it's all related to the work of the TLs. It needn't all take place in the library. It can take place anywhere. (D3, See 'Note' on p. v)

The purpose of this study is to elicit and describe primary class teachers' and teacher-librarians' conceptions of the involvement of the teacher-librarian in the literacy education of students in Years 1 to 7 and possibly utilize the subsequent data to enhance the teaching and learning of primary students' literacy skills. It would be valuable to understand more about the way that class teachers and teacher-librarians conceive the involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education as greater knowledge of the qualitatively different conceptions which these professionals bring to the task will allow them to work towards fostering the conceptions they consider to be most appropriate. Conceptions of both teacher-librarians and class teachers were sought in this study because these professionals should work in partnership to be effective in terms of student learning (Haycock, K., 1985a; Gawith, 1987; Henri, 1988; Haycock, C.A., 1991). Consideration of conceptions of one group without those of the other would not provide a full reflection of the way that teacher-librarians can be involved in literacy education.

Within the framework of literacy education, the *Years 1 to 10 English Language Arts Syllabus (ELA Syllabus)* (1991) is undergoing implementation in Queensland schools during the period 1992 to 1994. Anecdotal reports indicate that teacher-librarians are seeking to consolidate their role in the implementation of this syllabus. An analysis of the involvement that teacher-librarians can have in literacy education suggests direction for this role and so works to enhance the development of students' literacy skills. The *ELA Syllabus* (1991) is significant in this study because it provides the framework within which Queensland class teachers and teacher-librarians work towards the development of students' literacy skills.

The framework which the *ELA Syllabus* (1991) provides is a cross-curriculum approach to learning as it draws on the principles of the whole language approach incorporating literature-based reading and a genre-based approach to literacy development. Attitudes, knowledge, skills and processes are developed within the context of purposeful language use and language study. Subject barriers are broken down and literacy development occurs within all subject areas and is no longer the sole domain of 'the English lesson'.

This concept draws a parallel with the current approach to the development of information skills. These are the skills which empower students to define important problems, locate pertinent information, extract it, analyze it, organize it and use it effectively; and they are fundamental to the development of information literacy. It is widely advocated that these skills be developed through integrated learning programs which focus on resource-based learning. K. Haycock (1985a: 105) cites the teacher-librarian's major task as working with class teachers to plan, develop and implement units of study which integrate research and study skills.

In view of the similarities between the development of information skills and literacy skills, it follows that teacher-librarians could make a significant contribution to the development of students' literacy skills and that the nature of this contribution could

parallel that made by teacher-librarians to the development of students' information skills. This study seeks to investigate class teachers' and teacher-librarians' conceptions of the nature of this contribution.

Chapter 2.   The Problem

I guess the library shouldn't be an isolated part. There's more to libraries than what's inside the building (F12).

Rationale, Significance, Need for the Study

The *ELA Syllabus* (1991) is one of a number of syllabuses intended to provide continuity of learning across the years of compulsory schooling. These syllabuses provide detailed advice on provisions which schools are to make for courses of study in these compulsory years.

> The goal of ELA in Years 1 to 10 is to develop children's ability to compose and comprehend spoken and written English – fluently, appropriately and effectively – for a wide range of personal and social purposes. (*Years 1 to 10 English Language Arts: Curriculum Guide*, p. 21)

The understanding of literacy that is expressed in this goal encompasses the cultural knowledge that a language user brings to a situation. This knowledge enables the use of language that is appropriate and effective for a situation.

The *ELA Syllabus* (1991) integrates oral and written language, and it integrates development of both in learning across the curriculum. The syllabus thereby recognizes the inseparable relationship between the two as it capitalizes on the language competence and the language learning ability of children to make literacy development an extension of natural language learning. This study is concerned with literacy education in the primary school.

The National Secretariat for the International Literacy Year (1990) describes literacy as:

> ...integration of listening, speaking, reading, writing and critical thinking. It includes the cultural knowledge which enables a speaker, writer or reader to recognise and use language appropriate to different social situations. For an advanced technological society such as Australia, the goal is an active literacy which allows people to use language to enhance their capacity to think, create and question, in order to participate effectively in society.

It is urged by educators (Steven, 1988; Haycock, K. 1992; Miller, 1992) that teacher-librarians should not see their responsibility for involvement in student learning to rest with information literacy only. A review of relevant literature reveals that the relationship between information skills and literacy skills is not widely recognized and that the involvement of teacher-librarians in literacy education is most frequently referred to in association with fictional material. Taking into account the close relationship between the development of information skills and the skills of literacy, it is proposed that the teacher-librarian could make a more substantial contribution to literacy education. The significance of this proposal lies in the current implementation, in Queensland schools, of the *ELA Syllabus* (1991). Since widesweeping changes are occurring in the approaches to literacy education with the adoption of this syllabus, it is considered an appropriate time to conduct this study which seeks to investigate how

the players conceive the involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education. This is coupled with concerns expressed by K. Haycock (1992: 7) that some teacher-librarians appear to see their responsibility for cooperative planning and teaching to rest with information skills development only. Haycock (1992) suggests that well-integrated and well-supported literacy programs are neglected in preference for the easier role of story reader.

Research into conceptions of the involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education may provide some insight into the relationship between literacy skills and information skills.

Theoretical Framework

Several topic areas provide the theoretical framework for this study. Theories of literacy education underlie the *ELA Syllabus* (1991), and these theories reveal the way that students develop literacy skills and the components of a literacy program (Cambourne, 1988; Goodman, K., 1989; Goodman, Y., 1989; Brown, 1990; Maclean, 1991).

Theories of teaching partnerships are commonly known as 'cooperative planning and teaching' when applied to the way that class teachers and teacher-librarians work to facilitate the development of information literacy (Haycock, K., 1985a; Marland, 1987; Haycock, C.A., 1991; Henri, 1991).

From an examination of literature reporting examples of practice of teacher-librarian involvement in literacy education in Australian schools, the theories outlined below have been developed about the way that the principles of literacy education and cooperative planning and teaching have come together in practice and about the role of the teacher-librarian within this practice.

The expertise of the teacher-librarian is not reported to be widely utilized in literacy programs, and the close relationship between literacy skills and information skills is not widely recognized (Hambleton, 1986; Harper, 1989; Haycock, 1989). Although teacher-librarians are involved in literature-based reading programs, their role is often reported as one confined to resource selection (Tuohy, 1988; Tink, 1990). There is less reported involvement of teacher-librarians in the *teaching* of the skills of literacy. When this does occur, it is often related to the type of reading and writing associated with fiction (Piper, 1988; Ryan, 1990). Non-fiction texts and genres are only occasionally mentioned in terms of teacher-librarians and literacy skill development. There is limited recognition of literacy skills employed in dealing with non-fiction texts as being part of reading and writing programs (Hawkins, 1986).

This study works within the framework of all these theories as it seeks to identify conceptions of the involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to elicit and describe how primary class teachers and teacher-librarians conceive the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education for

students in Years 1 to 7 and possibly to utilize the subsequent data to enhance the teaching and learning of primary students' literacy skills.

Given the potential for making a significant contribution to student learning in literacy education, teacher-librarians are concerned about increasing their involvement in this area (Steven, 1988; Haycock, 1992; SAIL, 1992 and anecdotal reports from teacher-librarian networks in the Brisbane region). The study described here seeks to establish what the conceptions of the involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education are from the points of view of both class teachers and teacher-librarians. Analysis of these conceptions determines possibilities for class teachers and teacher-librarians working together to promote literacy development with students. Such analysis also highlights the relationship between the conceptions of the practitioners, the theoretical ideal and the practice reported in the literature reviewed in Chapter 3.

Research Question and Elements of the Problem

What conceptions do primary class teachers and teacher-librarians have of the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education for students in Years 1 to 7?

The investigation was carried out using a qualitative approach. Due to the nature of the data collected in this exploratory study, it was not possible accurately to state expectations of where the data might lead, or in fact what specific aims might be achieved prior to conducting the study. The data are qualitative in nature, and the excitement of this study lies in the process of discovery that accompanies the data analysis. Once collected, the conceptions which constitute the data were categorized and the categories described and relationships between these categories sought. This process is detailed in Chapter 4, 'Treatment of the Data' and in Chapter 5. Eleven synergetic focus group discussions were conducted to elicit conceptions from a total of eighty-two respondents. Forty-six of these were primary class teachers and thirty-six were primary teacher-librarians. They met in groups of like kind, yielding six focus group discussions involving class teachers and five involving teacher-librarians. This is described fully in Chapter 4, 'Data Collection Methodology' and 'Data Collection'. Such discussions allow respondents to pursue issues and topics of relevance to themselves rather than those that are relevant to the researcher. As a result of the difficulty in accurately predicting the course of the data, the following questions were posed as provisional guidelines for the study.

* Is the potential for involving teacher-librarians in literacy education recognized?
* Is the relationship between literacy skills and information skills recognized?
* Is the involvement of teacher-librarians in literacy education mainly associated with fiction, or is it recognized in the area of non-fiction?

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

Delimitations

The study is confined to the conceptions of primary class teachers and teacher-librarians; it did not seek the attitudes of bodies such as the Queensland Department of Education or Brisbane Catholic Education, the employers of the participants. The study views the respondents holistically. The groups are not reduced to variables but are viewed as a whole. The study does not seek to compare the conceptions of class teachers with those of teacher-librarians, nor does it seek to compare differences in conceptions of fully qualified teacher-librarians with teachers acting as teacher-librarians. By looking at the conceptions of the group as a whole, the study aims to discover the different ways that the key players, class teachers and teacher-librarians, collectively conceive the role of the teacher-librarian in the literacy education of primary students in Queensland schools.

Due to the nature of convenience sampling, as detailed in Chapter 4, 'Research Population', only primary class teachers and teacher-librarians in Brisbane were consulted. Since the *ELA Syllabus* (1991) is undergoing state-wide implementation, the study has relevance to class teachers and teacher-librarians outside Brisbane as they work within the same syllabus framework.

Limitations

The conceptions the respondents have of the teacher-librarian's role in literacy education are related to their own experiences as, or with, a teacher-librarian. This reduces the reliability of the application of the results to the wider population of primary class teachers and teacher-librarians. While bringing its own limitations, the inclusion of the group of respondents described below serves to reduce this effect by broadening the population sample to include respondents who would otherwise have been inaccessible to the researcher.

Included in the study is a group of respondents enrolled in the Graduate Diploma in Education (Teacher-Librarianship) course at Queensland University of Technology (QUT). The value to the study of this group of respondents is fully explained in Chapter 4, 'Research Population'. Although there are valuable advantages gained by the inclusion of this population, two limitations are created.

First, there was some difficulty in structuring each of the 'class teacher' groups from this population such that teachers of each of Years 1 to 7 were included in each focus group discussion because the population is fixed. However, this is not viewed as a serious limitation of the study because in Queensland class teachers tend to move broadly across the spectrum over a number of years. The absence of separate Infant and Primary departments in many schools encourages this movement. This means that participating class teachers are likely to bring experience in a range of primary levels to the discussions.

Second, the QUT group brought to the discussion the effect of their experiences in the course to date. This may be viewed as a limitation once again of the 'class teacher' group from this population sample because the class teachers participating from school sources will not have been exposed to the activities focused on teacher-librarianship that these class teachers have experienced. However, this limitation is not considered damaging to the study because the participants had not completed their first subject in the course. Their current role in their school is that of class teacher. Their exposure to teacher-librarianship at the point of participation in the study would be equalled or even surpassed by class teachers working in a school with an effective teacher-librarian who takes seriously the advocacy role and keeps staff informed of developments in teacher-librarianship.

Some further limitations arise from the nature of qualitative research and the use of the focus group data collection method. These include:

* the willingness and ability of individuals to participate in focus group discussions;
* the fact that data provided by focus groups are idiosyncratic;
* the small numbers of respondents that participate (even in several different focus groups) and the convenience nature of the focus group recruiting practices limit generalization to a larger population;
* the interaction of respondents with one another means that the responses from group members are not independent of one another; this also restricts the generalizability of results;
* results obtained from a focus group may be biased by a very dominant member.

These factors are not considered to be damaging to the study because their effect can be reduced through replication of the study with other groups in other areas. This study is an exploratory study. Focus groups have been demonstrated by Byers and Wilcox (1988) as a suitable method for collecting qualitative, exploratory data.

Definition of Terms

Class teachers in relation to this study are primary class teachers across Years 1 to 7. Class teachers are often referred to as *teachers* by the respondents in this study.

Conceptions: A conception describes how an individual makes sense of something. Describing a person's conception is equivalent to describing the way in which that person relates to, or experiences, the particular concept or topic in question.

Convenience sampling is a non-random sampling method in which the researcher uses some convenient group or individuals as the sample (Sproul, 1988: 117).

Cooperative planning and teaching (CPT) is the process of collaboration by which class teachers and teacher-librarians work together to bring about resource-based learning.

Information skills are the skills required to identify, locate, evaluate and effectively use information. Acquisition of these skills leads to the development of *information literacy* which is the ability to function effectively in society, to achieve one's goals and to develop one's knowledge and potential. The development of these skills is the responsibility of all teachers, but teacher-librarians have a special knowledge and role in this. In this study 'information skills' is used to portray this concept as this is the term most widely used in relevant literature and is the term better understood by the respondents in the study.

Literacy is described by the National Secretariat for the International Literacy Year (1990) as:

> ...integration of listening, speaking, reading, writing and critical thinking. It includes the cultural knowledge which enables a speaker, writer or reader to recognise and use language appropriate to different social situations. For an advanced technological society such as Australia, the goal is an active literacy which allows people to use language to enhance their capacity to think, create and question, in order to participate effectively in society.

Literacy skills are the skills required to achieve literacy. These include the skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and critical thinking. Associated with the learning of these skills is the development of an awareness of the cultural adaptations of the skills.

Phenomenography is a research method for mapping the qualitatively different ways which people experience, conceptualize, perceive and understand various aspects of, and phenomena in, the world around them (Marton, 1986b: 31).

Resource-based learning is the principal strategy for students using the school library as an integrated and integral part of the overall school curriculum.

Synergetic focus groups are groups of approximately five to eight people who are familiar with each other who meet to hold a discussion on a particular topic (Russell, 1993b).

Teacher-librarians have responsibility for the library/resource centre in a primary school. Their role is to work as an equal teaching partner with class teachers to plan, implement and evaluate resource-based learning programs which guide students towards developing the skills necessary to become independent learners. Teacher-librarians also coordinate the selection, organization and use of resources to support that learning. In addition to fully qualified teacher-librarians, this study includes as teacher-librarians, teachers who are employed in this role but who have not completed a tertiary qualification in teacher-librarianship.

Years 1 to 7 are the primary school year levels in Queensland.

Contribution of This Study

This study contributes to a number of areas of academic and professional interest.

First, it contributes to the body of knowledge about the teacher-librarian's role in literacy education. It provides a picture of teachers' and teachers-librarians' understanding of that phenomenon. More specifically the study contributes to understanding the ways in which teachers and teacher-librarians can form effective partnerships to enhance students' literacy education.

Second, it contributes to the body of research which describes the various ways in which a phenomenon is seen, experienced or understood. The study focuses on the ways the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is conceived rather than reporting on its characteristics.

Third, it contributes to the development of understandings about the usefulness of synergetic focus group discussions as a method for collecting qualitative data.

Chapter 3.   Review of the Literature

Have the library as the centre, the soul of the school as far as the variety of things and the fact that it encompasses everyone (A18).

Overview of the Literature

A review of literature that examined three topics related to this study was undertaken. Literature relating to the theories of literacy education that underlie the *ELA Syllabus* (1991) was examined for the purpose of summarizing the way students develop literacy skills and the components of a literacy program. This involved an analysis of the principles of whole language. Cooperative planning and teaching was researched as it applies to the way that teacher-librarians work with class teachers to facilitate the development of information skills. Parallels between the philosophies of literacy education and the development of information skills were sought to establish potential for the involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education. Reports of practice of teacher-librarian involvement in literacy programs in Australian schools were examined to seek ways that the principles of literacy education and cooperative planning and teaching have come together in practice. A synthesis of these areas provided the starting point for an investigation into the involvement of teacher-librarians in literacy education.

Selection of Literature for Review

Literacy Education

The field of literacy education is extensively reported in the literature, so much so that there were too many studies found to report on each individually. Cooper (1989: 126) explains that in the event of such an occurrence a presentation of prototypes is necessary. Several works that exemplify the methods of other studies were chosen to draw together the components of a literacy education program implemented under the guidelines of the *ELA Syllabus* (1991). The criteria of relevance that were applied to the studies uncovered by the search were:

  * a reflection of the philosophies of whole language – holistic, cross-curriculum and child centred – and;
  * recognition of the researcher or author as a well-established representative of the field. This was achieved by examining the full range of findings and selecting those who published widely and were frequently cited in the referencing of other works.

A restriction was not placed on publication date because some element of historical development of the philosophy was deemed relevant to the study. The research carried out during the period between the mid-1970s and early 1980s provided the base for present developments in literacy education. As whole language thinking is a relative newcomer, an examination of its earlier history was considered important to an understanding of this philosophy.

Information Skills and Cooperative Planning and Teaching (CPT)

The purpose of examining this literature was to establish the way that teacher-librarians work with class teachers to implement cross-curriculum teaching of information skills. Involvement of literacy education within this context was also sought.

The criteria of relevance applied to this search required :

* implementation of the process of CPT, which refers to the teacher-librarian working cooperatively with class teachers;
* application of the process of CPT to the cross-curriculum teaching of information literacy.

Many items were uncovered through this search, so again prototypes were synthesized following the procedure as detailed for selection of items to exemplify the methods of literacy education. Again no publication date restriction was applied because the process of CPT has been formulated only in recent years, with considerable developments occurring during the 1980s. The process has developed as a means of coming to terms with the demands of the 'information age'.

Reports of Practice

Reports of practice selected for analysis were those which had stated aims associated with the development of literacy skills and which involved the teacher-librarian in some way. In some cases the term 'librarian' was used rather than teacher-librarian. This was accepted where it was clear that the content was indicating a teaching involvement of the 'librarian' as it did at the very least indicate an acceptance of the concept of involving the school library and its staff in the literacy education program. Teacher-librarians are still referred to as 'librarians' in some schools, so the term 'librarian' can refer to teacher-librarians.

Criteria for relevance initially required reference to Australian primary school libraries. This had to be extended as the investigation progressed because little reference to primary school libraries alone was found. This did not necessarily mean that studies relevant to primary libraries did not exist; it simply meant that some articles referred to school libraries in general, thus including both primary and secondary schools, and that much of the practice could be successfully applied to both primary and secondary school libraries. The limitation therefore extended to the acceptance of studies relevant to Australian school libraries. Only studies published in 1985 or later were sought. The theory of whole language had begun to establish itself in practice by that time. The role of the teacher-librarian as a professional teacher working collaboratively with class teachers to plan and implement resource-based units was also coming into perspective. It was considered that reports published prior to 1985 would be less likely to present a participating role for the teacher-librarian in literacy education programs because of the fledgling nature of whole language and cooperative planning and teaching at that time.

Linking Literacy Education and the Teacher-Librarian

Literacy Education

Goodman (1989) suggests that the whole language movement is a grassroots teachers' movement which results from the coming together of a range of theoretical influences. Thus whole language has no central body of theory which underpins it, and no central authorities to say what is, or is not, an example of whole language practice. Maclean (1991) proposes that whole language practice varies according to what set of ideas has

most influenced the teacher, according to the nature of the school system, and according to the community background of the children.

A study of the literature on whole language reveals that whole language is not a set of instructional materials or a program or a practice; rather, it is a set of beliefs or a perspective. It is a description of how some teachers and researchers have been exploring the practical applications of recent theoretical arguments and research. It can become a practice, but it is not the practice itself. Practices become 'whole language like' because the teacher has particular beliefs and intentions.

It is recognized generally that whole language is not just an approach to instruction or a different set of materials. It is the type of resources selected and the way they are used that is significant in developing the skills of literacy. Goodman and Goodman (1982) believe no publisher or central test maker can know what every child needs next or how they will respond today. Lock-step reading schemes cannot satisfy the spontaneous needs of the child. However, Goodman and Goodman recognize that responsible, professional teachers can turn the tests and texts into resources to be used at their discretion at the right time with the right pupils. The Goodmans are not against tests, texts and technology but emphasize these are *tools* in the hands of the teachers. This is supported by K. Haycock (1989), who accepts that a teacher could use basal readers as a resource in a whole language classroom provided that natural language comprised the text rather than artificial language for vocabulary control. It is significant to note that Haycock conversely observes that 'literature-based reading programs, language experience approaches and theme studies can be, but are not necessarily, whole language programs, depending on the teacher's philosophy of education and how the program is taught' (Haycock, K., 1989: 22). The link is made to the involvement of the teacher-librarian in this area by Harper (1989: 18), who focuses on the belief of whole language proponents that resources should be selected for their literary value rather than for their controlled vocabulary. Harper reminds us that selecting for literary value is what teacher-librarians have been doing for years. It means that for schools that are now embracing whole language programs, the resource centre with its large variety of materials is a ready-made, well-stocked source to support whole language. Also the knowledge and support of the teacher-librarian in the selection and use of the materials are valuable program supports.

Goodman (1986: 5) explains that whole language is 'a way of bringing together a view of language, a view of learning and a view of people'. Zola (1989: 10) has found that in essence the term 'whole language' outlines the beginning stage of a paradigm shift. As a movement it encompasses prior research information then goes beyond to extend thinking about language and learning into new realms.

Goodman summarizes for the proponents of whole language that: 'Whole language is whole' (Goodman, 1986: 27). The message is that language is inclusive and it is indivisible. Sounds, phrases, clauses, sentences and paragraphs are likened to 'molecules, atoms and subatomic particles of things' (Goodman, 1986: 27). Their characteristics can be studied, but the whole is always more than the sum of the parts. Language is language therefore only when it is whole. Language can only be divided into the barest whole that makes sense.

Linguists are turning their attention from smaller parts to whole texts. Three language systems interact in written language: the graphophonic (sound and letter patterns); the syntactic (sentence patterns); the semantic (meanings). Whole language programs

focus on how people organize graphic, syntactic and semantic cues for making sense of language. This is clarified by Cambourne (1988), who explains that in focusing on any of the subparts of language there needs to be sufficient information for the learner to see how all the subsystems which make up language work within it.

Information Skills

When teachers and students look at words, phrases and sentences, they should do so always in the context of whole, real language texts that are part of real language experiences for children. This closely parallels current theories about the teaching of information skills. C.A. Haycock (1985) has looked at the evolution of 'library skills' through 'research and study skills' to 'information skills'. She defines 'library skills' as skills required to use the library, taught by the teacher-librarian in the library. 'Research and study skills' are skills required to locate and use materials taught either in the classroom or the resource centre by the class teacher and the teacher-librarian together. Haycock proposes that it is time to move to 'information skills' to denote more clearly a total school commitment to assisting young people to develop the skills necessary for purposeful enquiry, informed decision-making and lifelong learning. Lundin (1983) advocates the keeping whole of information skills by teaching them functionally in the context of a topic of study and not as a separate exercise. Just as the subparts of language cannot make meaning on their own, nor do isolated, unrelated information skills such as 'How to Use the Encyclopedia' have any meaning or proven transferability to other life situations.

The teaching of information skills in context means that a whole range of skills, knowledge and attitudes are built into existing or cooperatively planned curriculum activities in the various subject areas. Gawith (1987) proposes guiding students in the use of information skills in the course of normal curriculum work. Her approach is a spiral, integrated approach to the development of information skills: spiral, in that the same skills are needed at all school levels, their sophistication increasing spirally, incrementally, from year to year; integrated, in that skills are never taught in isolation as stand-alone 'skills' but learned by being practised in the context of curriculum-based work.

Linking Literacy and Information Skills

Gawith's definition of information skills draws the parallel to the skills of literacy even closer:

> Information skills are the skills needed to make efficient and effective use of information. Traditionally we have seen and taught this complex of skills in a fragmented way – as reading skills, comprehension skills, library skills, study skills. To use information effectively you need reading, listening, viewing, observing 'library' and retrieval skills; you need to know how to skim, scan, select, reject, analyse and synthesise and present information selectively, with originality and impact. (Gawith, 1987: 1)

An examination of this explanation of the complex nature of information skills reveals that not only do they *depend* on the development of the skills of literacy, but in fact they encompass the skills of literacy. Students use these skills to deal with information: to locate it; to analyze it; to process it; to present it. This becomes clear in Brown and Mathie's (1990) understanding of the term 'literacy':

> We define literacy as *the making of meaning and its clear communication to others.* We therefore believe that truly literate people not only can read and write, but regularly do so in order to sort out their ideas and put them in words, to fit them together and test hypotheses – in other words, to make sense and meaning out of our world. Truly literate people acknowledge that they *need* to write things down, to talk them out, to read widely, to listen critically and to respond articulately. Truly literate people are thinkers and learners. (Brown and Mathie, 1990: 2)

The connection lies in the 'thinkers and learners'. It is widely agreed in the literature that the reason for teaching information skills is to develop independent, lifelong learners. Marland (1987) pinpoints the essence of the issue by explaining that information skills are the skills of learning and their mastery allows the individual to handle information successfully. He bases this on the increasing need of individuals to be able to search out what is required, assess it critically, examine the ideas and facts offered, and then make use of the findings. He terms this 'learning to learn' (Marland, 1987: 9) and points out that this continues throughout adult lives. Gawith's (1987) analysis of the process of 'learning to learn' also relates closely. Her analysis is that we need to ask questions; we need to use information; we need to make decisions. The full extent of the skills domain is presented in four major areas by Lundin (1983: 9): *receptive skills* involve the whole range of location, reading, looking and listening skills; *reflective skills* are internal, process skills which bring the isolated bits of information into meaningful relationships; *expressive skills* enable students to organize and communicate knowledge gained through the receptive and reflective skills; *personal and social skills* are forms of expressive skills which tend to have some influence over the other processes, like manipulative skills, interpersonal skills and community participation skills.

Thus 'truly literate people are thinkers and learners' (Brown and Mathie, 1990: 2). Cambourne (1988) illustrates this same depth of insight into literacy skills as is described above in relation to information skills. Cambourne (1988) believes that for reading to take place, there must be *comprehension*. He proposes that the end result of any act of engagement with text must be comprehension of the meanings which the author of the text originally encoded. The effectiveness of any act of reading becomes a function of the degree to which the meanings in the text constructed by the reader matches the meanings which the author of the text intended. The higher the degree of similarity, the more effective the reading has been. Comprehension is the essence of dealing with text. Cambourne (1988) distinguishes it from correct pronunciation of words which is often termed 'reading'. He explains that it is quite possible for a person to correctly pronounce examples of text using their knowledge of the phonemic structure of English (phonics) and yet be unable to provide even a simple retelling of the message contained in the text due to a range of factors. The text may have been from a foreign language or from an article on a topic on which the reader has no background knowledge. Comprehension is conversely required by the writer of a text before the intended meanings can be imparted.

Reading therefore is the most important skill children learn at school. Harper (1989: 17) relates the skill of reading to the context of information skills by pointing out that as the world's store of information grows, reading will become even more crucial. With knowledge increasing at an ever accelerating rate, reading is necessary to stay abreast of any subject area. This is supported by Henri (1988: 4), who believes it is no

longer feasible to talk about learning a fixed body of knowledge as knowledge is doubling every five years or so. Technology will not reduce the need for the skill of reading but rather increase it. Harper (1989: 17) sees that computers, with massive banks of information, have made fluent reading vital because reading words is so much faster than hearing words. Harper does not believe that 'talking computers' will resolve the problem of non-readers in society because listening is too slow. To support this, Harper refers to studies of blind university students who find that listening to their texts on tape is so much slower than the reading of classmates that they can fall behind in their studies. Henri predicts that 'the emphasis must be on teaching students to teach themselves. They must be able to discover and learn for themselves and to learn faster' (Henri, 1988: 4).

Holdaway (1979) recognizes the connection between literacy skills and information skills when he puts forward literacy as the foundation of effective citizenship, human communication and social integration in a literate society. Therefore, it is important to foster the lifetime habit of purposeful and critical reading for information, education and recreation. Literacy is the foundation of learning in all areas of the curriculum. The conclusion is drawn that the skills of literacy and information skills are interdependent and inseparable because they are both necessary to the development of independent, lifelong learners. Similar relationships can be identified in the approaches to the teaching of these skills.

The Conditions for Learning Literacy

Pearson (1989: 10) advocates that whole language is much more than a way of teaching reading and writing. It makes very different assumptions about who is in charge of teaching and learning. Its intensely integrationist view of curriculum will influence everything taught in schools, not just reading and writing. These beliefs give rise to a language program which is holistic. It is integrated within language arts through the interdependence of listening, speaking, reading and writing. It is integrated across the curriculum. Since language is considered a tool for making meaning, its study is very much a part of the language program regardless of the subject area in which the interaction might be occurring. The integrated nature of whole language is further supported by K. Haycock (1989), who claims that whole language constitutes certain beliefs about curriculum, not just language arts, but everything that goes on in the classroom. He reinforces the notion that it is an educational philosophy which underpins teaching and learning processes in the classroom.

Gray (1983) explains that traditional language programs start by asking what content and skills children need to acquire. Next a teaching method is selected which will enable the content to be presented to children. Finally the class teacher organizes teaching-learning contexts in the classroom. Gray's research conducted at Treagar Park led to the conclusion that the natural language development model was essentially an inversion of this traditional model and that it is necessary to focus on the interaction in the classroom rather than on the content to be taught. Gray's project (1983) implies that what happens in the classroom for oral and written language should be an extension of the language learning process that the children are already involved in before they enter school.

A study by Goodman and Altwerger (1981) found the development of print awareness in environmental contexts to be the most common sign of literacy in all learners and the most well developed in the preschool years. In the print-rich environment of most

present cultures, young children are continuously interacting with, organizing and analyzing the meanings of visible language. The child develops a model which includes rules about the features of written language.

Studies were conducted by Haussler (1982), Romero (1983), Long *et al.* (1982) and Goodman and Marek (1984) involving seventy-eight children representing different populations and settings. The evidence from these studies indicates that children are inventing, discovering and developing literacy as they grow up in a literate society. They develop many insights about the functions of written language for themselves and for adults important to them. They discover that written language makes sense, and as members of a literate society they make sense of written language. Furthermore, they develop concepts about how written language makes sense. They develop notions about the graphophonic, semantic, syntactic and the pragmatic systems of written language. They provide evidence that they know some of these systems operate differently in oral and written language, and they show an understanding that reading and writing are symbolic systems. They are aware that reading and writing represent ideas, knowledge and thoughts as well as representing some aspects of oral language. All this is gained without formal lessons as it all takes place before the children enter school.

The importance of understanding the kinds of knowledge about reading and writing that children bring to school is in the insights this understanding provides for teachers. A whole language classroom functions under the belief that oral and written forms of language are only superficially different. Cambourne (1988) believes that the brain can learn to process oral and written forms of language in much the same way, provided the conditions under which each is learned are also much the same.

Cambourne (1988) has identified the following conditions for language development. *Immersion* refers to the quality aspect of an effective learning environment. Learning takes place more easily when learners are constantly involved in a wide variety of stimulating language experiences appropriate to their needs. This includes opportunities for discussion about reading and writing. This is referred to as 'conferencing'. The purpose for holding a conference is to clarify issues and help children make informed decisions to solve problems. Conferencing is an essential part of a whole language classroom. *Demonstration* refers to the multitude of examples, both written and oral, which a learner needs to develop language control. *Engagement* refers to that moment in the learning process when understanding occurs. *Expectation* refers to the messages, both subtle and overt, which teachers communicate to their pupils about learning and learning behaviours. *Responsibility* refers to that stage in the learning process when learners take responsibility for their own learning. *Approximation* refers to the learner's attempts to gain control of language through 'near misses'. *Practice* refers to the regular use of all aspects of oral and written language (talking, listening, reading and writing). *Response* refers to the responses learners get from both teacher and other learners about their oral and written language development.

These are the conditions which occur naturally in every culture for the learning of oral language, but they do not occur naturally for the learning of written language. Cambourne (1988) sees it as the function of schools to simulate these natural conditions that we know work for learning to talk so that they are available for the learning of reading and writing. Smith (1983) proposes that the development of such an environment is facilitated by providing children with stories that have intrinsic

appeal, making frequent use of items relevant to their daily lives and recognizing the potential of non-fiction texts as reading resources. Smith believes that children should experience printed language that has both interest and meaning for them. They should be immersed in meaningful print. Such opportunities will help children understand the functions of print, become familiar with written language, and therefore provide the chance to learn to read.

Writing develops simultaneously with reading. The process approach, which evolved principally from the research and development work of Graves (1973), provides an environment for individualized writing growth. For the purpose of teaching writing Graves identifies various phases in the process of composing a coherent, cohesive text. These are: prewriting or preparing to write; drafting; conferencing; editing; rewriting; conferencing; publishing. In practice the phases are recursive, and revision and conferencing may take place a number of times before children are ready to publish. Although it is the teachers' task to guide each child through the different phases, they must do everything possible to ensure that the child understands and is in control of the choices to be made.

Graetz (1990: 16) explains that teachers cannot force a student to engage with any task. They might be able to force students to *do* it but not to engage with it. By immersion, demonstration and expectation the teacher can set up a favourable environment for the child to wish to engage with the task. The teacher can provide opportunities for students to use their skills, accept efforts in the right direction and respond.

Linking the Teacher-Librarian and Literacy Education

This section is concerned with the role of the teacher-librarian in structuring the learning opportunities discussed above. The unique nature of this role is recognized by Hambleton (1986), who sees the term 'teacher-librarian' as a reminder of the functions of both teachers and librarians. There is a responsibility to blend both these areas of expertise by making resources an integral part of the learning process. Hambleton believes that the initiating of reading programs that make use of literature resources falls within the mandate of the role of the teacher-librarian and in fact is necessary to the success of the reading program. An important part of such programs is the celebration of literature for literature's sake. Hambleton believes that literature is important because it provides not only information but insight and understanding of what it means to be human. It is one way of equipping children with those qualities that will enable them to change the world.

Linning (1991) emphasizes the need for students to develop metacognitive processes. She observes that teacher-librarians are definitely 'on the right track' (Linning, 1991: 16) in this endeavour with their integration of information skills in cross-curriculum learning and their constant cuing and priming to facilitate transfer of learning. Linning relates this to the 'whole language' and 'across the curriculum' approaches to reading and learning. These approaches have been integrated into resource-based units of work in ways which would increase the opportunity for metacognition. An example based on a work of fiction is cited.

The 'track' of teacher-librarians to which Linning (1991: 16) refers is the 'track' of cooperative planning and teaching. Henri identifies this as 'an instructional model whereby the teacher-librarian and the class teachers become equal partners in the

instructional process' (Henri, 1991: 8). There is a recognition that small groups and self-paced learning are, in many cases, preferable to whole class instruction. Henri (1988) has based his recommendations on developments in learning theory that have shown that the use of only one mode of instruction hampers the learning of students who are weak in the aptitude required to learn in that mode. It is therefore necessary to adapt instructional technique to the learning characteristics of each child. If teachers are successfully to employ a variety of instructional methods, they must have support. There are clear implications here for the resource centre, which must provide space, resources and staff time to enable teachers to function effectively. The concept of the educational team of the class teacher and the teacher-librarian begins to emerge from this cooperation. The process that has been formulated as a means of coming to terms with the demands of modern research in the field of information studies is known as cooperative planning and teaching (CPT).

C.A. Haycock (1991) elaborates on this idea of CPT. The teacher-librarian works collaboratively with classroom teachers as a teaching partner. Together they work to structure resource-based learning environments where students have access to a wide range of 'suitable' resources. Both partners are actively involved in guiding and assessing student learning. In the course of these resource-based units a great deal of literacy learning can take place. This is one of the major avenues for the fulfilment of the aim of the *ELA Syllabus* to 'develop skills in using patterns of grammar, spelling, phonics and handwriting within the context of language use' *(ELA Syllabus: Handbook,* 1991: iii). The context provided by the resource-based units is a cross-curriculum context covering a wide variety of genres and including fiction and non-fiction texts.

The relationship of literacy skills to information skills and therefore to cooperative planning and teaching is drawn by K. Haycock (1985a), who states that 'the aim of the school library program is to assist students to develop a commitment to informed decision-making and the skills of lifelong learning' (Haycock, K., 1985a: 102). To achieve this aim, Haycock explains that teachers and teacher-librarians must plan and implement units of study as teaching partners. These units must integrate skills necessary to locate, evaluate, organize and present information. In the course of developing, mastering and extending these skills in different subject contexts and at varying levels of difficulty, language improvement and enjoyment occur, and reading and writing are seen to have purpose. This presents an integrated context for literacy development.

The proceedings of the seminar Cooperative Planning and Teaching through the Library (1985) focus on the need for cooperation between the class teacher and the teacher-librarian if skills development is to be integrated and meaningful. An important effect of this involvement is that the resource centre becomes the teachers' territory and not just the domain of the teacher-librarian. This helps to strengthen the partnership.

Heinich (1970) as far back as 1970 posed the question of the instructional involvement of the class teacher and the teacher-librarian. Heinich determined that school media specialists (teacher-librarians) needed to enter the curriculum development process prior to instruction, rather than as a result of instruction. This meant to Heinich that the function of the teacher-librarian should be carefully prescribed in the curriculum planning process and not left to chance.

Building on Heinich's earlier work, Grazier (1976) held that when the school media specialist enters into curriculum planning with class teachers, the instructional program is greatly enriched. Grazier summarized the role of the teacher-librarian as identifying resources, retrieving pertinent findings on the content being proposed, recommending learning experiences and teaching strategies, knowing what skills the students need to have when using the selected resources and, finally, ensuring that resources are an integral part of the curriculum rather than a supplement.

K. Haycock (1985b) brings the teacher-librarian into the role of curriculum planning and implementation because, as an experienced teacher, the teacher-librarian is able to diagnose learning needs and assess the degree to which a program has been successful. These functions, taken in association with the teacher-librarian's knowledge and understanding of resources and their functions, make the teacher-librarian's major task to plan, develop and implement units of study that integrate the skills of learning.

From these tasks Haycock (1985a) establishes planning as the priority. It is recognized that it is not possible to interact with all of the students all of the time, so the way for the teacher-librarian to have the greatest impact is through planning with class teachers. To illustrate this point, Haycock cites the increased effectiveness of putting effort into working with class teachers to promote voluntary reading in the classroom rather than presenting book talks in the resource centre. He bases this on the established fact that children will accept recommendations for recreational reading from their peers and then the classroom teacher long before the teacher-librarian. It is significant that this example relating directly to reading development was used. This concept is developed by Marland (1987: 11), who emphasizes the role of the teacher-librarian as a leader of teachers, an adviser and a guide even in preference to working directly with students. Marland advocates reconstructing the concept of the teacher-librarian's role as primarily a provider of in-service and a curriculum planning person. This role concept broadens the influence the teacher-librarian can have on student learning and suggests another avenue for involvement in literacy education.

The conclusion is drawn that teacher-librarians have an established practice of working cooperatively with class teachers to plan integrated, cross-curriculum units of work that provide an environment in which students develop and utilize information skills. Since this is also the type of environment advocated for the development of literacy skills, the stage is set for the involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education; the teacher-librarian has experience and expertise that benefit students working towards mastery over written language. Coupled with this is the teacher-librarian's knowledge and understanding of children's literature within which is found all of the natural language deemed so necessary for the teaching of reading by Goodman (1989), Cambourne (1988) and other proponents of whole language. At the same time this involvement in literature allows students to foster aesthetic appreciation of this art form.

Reports of Practice

This section looks at reports of practice where teacher-librarians are actively engaged in cooperatively planning and implementing resource-based learning programs that relate directly to the development of the skills of literacy. The purpose is to understand the extent to which this is occurring in Australian schools and to discover the nature of such programs. The following summaries are representative of the types of literacy-

related activities and programs in which teacher-librarians were reported to be involved.

Tink (1990) uses literature with Year 2 children to help them become enthusiastic and committed readers by showing them a purpose for learning to read, for pleasure, satisfaction or information. The program developed by this class teacher follows the philosophy of whole language by providing opportunities for children to select their own books, read quietly, discuss their reading with the teacher and pursue activities which increase involvement with the books. Tink finds the knowledge of the teacher-librarian helpful in selecting resources and recognizes that the class teacher must consult with the teacher-librarian to enable children fully to utilize the resources available to them. The role of the teacher-librarian in resource selection has been highlighted in this review by references to Harper (1989), Haycock (1991) and Hambleton (1986).

Davey (1988: 29) reports on a literature discussion program which is run through the school library. Students in Years 5 and 6 select a fiction book from a choice of six to eight titles of which there are multiple copies. They read the book within a fortnight and then meet with the other students who read that book. Teachers volunteer to lead discussion groups. In the discussion groups students are given an opportunity to share their thoughts on the book with six to eight other people. Discussion leaders complete a comment sheet which indicates whether the book has been completed and if the student showed an understanding of what was read and was therefore able to contribute to the discussion. Cambourne (1988) emphasizes the importance of discussions or conferences about material read.

Piper (1988: 31) describes a cooperative planning and teaching program based on a school-based information skills program and a 'Literacy through Literature' (Piper, 1988: 31) approach to language development. This program utilizes RIB-IT, a reading incentive program which has provided an effective avenue through which to meet particular needs of the school community. These are: to provide encouragement for students to develop individual responsibility for their own leisure reading; provide incentive for students to read across a range of literary types and styles; meet the needs of staff in relation to facilitating and encouraging student learning; provide a focus for cooperative planning and teaching between the teacher and the teacher-librarian in a 'Literacy through Literature' approach to language development. The teacher-librarian is involved in planning the program and takes an active part in its implementation. This includes activities at all levels: preparation; teaching; assessment.

An evaluation of the RIB-IT program is provided by Ryan (1990: 22-25). This program was conducted for Year 8 secondary students. Teacher-librarians prepared the work for the program and conducted weekly sessions in the library where twenty to thirty books were introduced. Students would then select and borrow from this collection. Books were presented from ten different genres. Over the year it was expected that each student would read at least one book from each genre and complete a worksheet for each genre. The completion of the worksheet was left to the English teachers to supervise as part of the set work for the class. Although the main objective of the program was to promote reading for enjoyment, three other objectives were included: to improve reading skills; to widen vicarious experience; to increase literacy skills.

The results of the evaluation of this RIB-IT program revealed that most students (57 per cent) thought that the teacher-librarians were encouraging them to read fiction in order to improve their reading. The students' most frequently held view (69 per cent) on the purpose of their RIB-IT session in the library was that it was a chance to find a good book to read. The techniques that most (65 per cent) considered most useful for encouraging reading were a movie or TV series of a book; 72 per cent said that the activity they would be most likely to do at home in 'free time' would be to watch TV. The worksheets were not popular with the students with between only 9 and 23 per cent of each one being completed. A friend's recommendation was considered by 60 per cent of students to be the most likely reason for selecting a book.

The question of the worksheets in this report is of interest. The communication between the library and the English Department was not close in this program. Although the English teachers attended the RIB-IT sessions in the library and were involved in supervising the completion of the worksheets for each genre, this was not done thoroughly. Ryan (1990: 24) suggests that greater collaboration between the teacher-librarians and the English teachers would lead to relating the objectives of the course being taught to the books read as part of the RIB-IT program. Ryan (1990: 24) refers to the ease with which this would be achieved in a primary school. The importance of the involvement of the teacher-librarian is highlighted by Ryan (1990: 25), who sees an enthusiastic teacher-librarian as the most important factor. This demonstrates in practice the theories of Harper (1989) and Hambledon (1989), who have been shown earlier to advocate the involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy programs.

A program of cross-curriculum literature promotion is presented by Tuohy (1988: 30). Tuohy aimed to take the reading of literature beyond the confines of the English Department in the secondary school and help students develop an appreciation of the value of wider reading across the curriculum. As teacher-librarian, Tuohy guided staff and students in selection of novels that assist with units of study in their subject areas.

A program titled 'Newsroom in the School Library' is presented by Hawkins (1986). Its objective was to produce an information sheet to introduce students to the facilities of the school library. The program was planned and implemented by the teacher-librarian and did not appear to have class teacher involvement. The activity was directly concerned with the development of literacy skills and also focused on a particular genre, the instruction sheet. It is significant because it is not using literature but has a non-fiction base.

Another example of a cross-curriculum literacy program is presented by Havel and Treagust (1986). The resources of the school library were used to teach secondary students about particular science topics. Traditionally, with low achieving students the science teacher is often faced with either non-use of the library or the need to develop a program that reduces dependence on reading and writing skills. This program was based on students working together to identify key words and then working in groups to complete their specific tasks. While this program occurred in the school library, a lack of cooperation between the science teacher and the teacher-librarian was cited as a problem in the implementation. This highlights the importance of a successful partnership between these two before CPT will become beneficial. C.A. Haycock (1991), K. Haycock (1985a) and Henri (1988) have been shown to support this earlier in this review.

A successful partnership is described by Johnston (1986) in a program which aims to develop good reading habits among students and to assist them in gaining an appreciation of literature. In this program students make their own book selections, there is time for individual reading and opportunities to respond to stories through discussion. The teacher-librarian works closely with the English teacher. Cards with activities have been prepared and are stored in the library. Their use is at the discretion of the teacher.

Grapper (1986) presents a case study of a literature-based reading program in a primary school. Behind this program is the belief that human relations are at the heart of schooling; therefore, one of the best ways to explore the human condition is through wide exposure and interaction with the creative, imaginative language of literature. This concurs with Hambledon's (1986) opinion on the aesthetic qualities of literature. Supporting this program also is Smith's (1983) belief that children learn to read by reading and that quality materials are required. This is a whole school program which sees reading to be closely linked with the writing process. An assessment folder is kept for each child with records such as anecdotal comments, notes from conferences, samples of book reviews and other writing. The teacher-librarian advises, selects in consultation and promotes a wide range of quality reading materials. The teacher-librarian shares expertise and background in children's literature with students and teachers by recommending materials, enthusing about books, modelling and challenging.

Some programs feature writing as a focus, recognizing the positive effect of reading on the skills of writing. Tancredi (1985) gives details of an 'Opinions Diary' that was compiled by students as they completed a novel. This diary was popular with Year 7 students as they did not see it as 'work' but as a response to something they had read. Each entry included a brief summary of the plot of the novel, a rating of one to five and the reader's opinion of the novel. The diary was kept at the loans desk where it served to promote literature to other students. The reading and the writing in this program centred on fiction texts. The teacher-librarian's role was to promote books through book talks and to select bulk loans from which the students selected their reading material.

Massey and Bopf (1990) led Year 11 and 12 students through a study of biographies which culminated in the students' writing biographies themselves. These were substantial works, and the finished items are part of the school library collection. The students learnt the need for drafting, editing and rewriting. Close liaison was maintained with the teacher and teacher-librarian who worked cooperatively on this project. Students were assessed in their understanding of the nature of a biography as a form of writing; the ability to impose personal style on available facts; the ability to use language appropriately. The project involved research on the life of their subject and so provided a close linking of literacy skills and information skills.

An example of a program where the features of whole language and cooperative planning and teaching mesh together is found in Stanelis (1990). This program shows what can be achieved when the teacher-librarian and the class teacher cooperate on strategies which will help to realize the aims of an integrated learning program. This program had among its aims that children would read for pleasure and for information and that they would read a variety of materials. Silent reading occurred daily. Regular reading aloud of stories by the teacher was another feature. Individual students were conferenced about the stories they were reading and suggestions were made as to

further stories or genres which might be attempted. Stanelis (1990: 19) integrated information skills development with the whole language philosophy by applying the techniques of literacy development to research projects. The projects used the strategy of the students setting their topics and asking who or what, where or when, how and why to establish the parameters. Modelling of the process and conferencing along the way were features of the program. Collection policies allowed for the acquisition of fiction books, recreational non-fiction and material to support curriculum areas. Activities were arranged to help create a classroom where literacy is accepted and given a high status.

The strategies being used in this Year 6 class exemplify many of the tenets of the whole language approach: reading based on real books and students' interests; providing opportunities for reading in the students' day; the development of skills in narrative and expository writing; the opportunity to use reading and writing in authentic situations; and continued input that helps students to build upon the things they can do to develop skills in learning how texts work so that they can apply these processes to their own situations.

Conclusions Drawn from the Literature

The literature on whole language advocates a cross-curriculum, child-centred approach to the development of literacy skills. The literature on information skills reports much about the effective teaching of these skills in the same type of environment. The literature on cooperative planning and teaching promotes the value of the involvement of teacher-librarians in information skill development. It is concluded therefore that teacher-librarians could make a similar valuable contribution to the teaching of literacy skills. The interrelationship of literacy skills and information skills is further highlighted by recognition that the teaching of information skills is no longer the sole responsibility of the teacher-librarian and the 'library lesson'; nor are literacy skills to be confined to the class teacher and the 'English lesson'.

Teacher-librarians have expertise in resource selection. Since suitable resources are crucial to the success of modern literacy programs, the adoption of the process of cooperative planning and teaching for the planning and implementation of literacy skills programs using these resources seems a logical course to follow considering the interdependence of literacy skills and information skills. Class teachers and teacher-librarians working together to implement literacy programs using quality resources available from the resource centre would result in resource-based, cross-curriculum literacy learning.

While this potential exists, an examination of practice reveals that the expertise of the teacher-librarian is not being widely utilized in literacy programs and that the close relationship of literacy skills and information skills is not widely recognized. Although teacher-librarians are involved in literature-based reading programs, their role is often confined to resource selection. This ranges from provision of literature resources in bulk for teachers, through the promotion of books to children in book talks, to the direct guidance of students in their own reading selections.

There is less involvement of teacher-librarians in the *teaching* of the skills of literacy. When this does occur, it is mainly related to the type of reading and writing associated with fiction. Non-fiction texts and genres are only occasionally mentioned in terms of

teacher-librarians and literacy instruction. While it is recognized that through information skills programs many non-fiction texts are utilized and literacy skills would obviously be employed in dealing with these texts, there is little recognition of this work as being part of a literacy program. Recognition by teacher-librarians of this interrelationship would enhance the spread of cross-curriculum development of literacy skills and so facilitate the implementation of the *ELA Syllabus* (1991) in Queensland schools.

Chapter 4.   Research Design

I thought the session was going to be on literature.
Well it is I suppose but not the way we thought of it.
I agree. That is part of it, just a part of it (F2).

General Method

Research Methodology

A qualitative research methodology was selected as being most appropriate for this study because concepts, insights and understandings were being sought from the data rather than the purpose being to collect data to assess preconceived models or hypotheses. Throughout this chapter the reasons for selecting the particular approach taken are explained. This study takes what is described by Guba and Lincoln (1987: 71) as an 'expansionist stance'. It seeks a perspective that will lead to the description and understanding of a phenomenon in a way that reflects its complexity. An open, exploratory stance was seen as the most appropriate way to elicit and describe class teachers' and teacher-librarians' conceptions of the role of the teacher-librarian in literacy education.

Qualitative methodology refers in the broadest sense to 'research that produces descriptive data: people's own written or spoken words and observable behaviour' (Taylor and Bodgan, 1984: 6). It was beneficial to elicit the respondents' conceptions of the involvement that teacher-librarians could have in literacy education through spoken rather than written form, and the spoken form developed through discussion rather than interview technique. Observable behaviour was not appropriate, thus application of ethnography to the scenario proved impractical because it requires participant observation in the natural setting. Since the researcher was not available to participate in different situations, this approach was not suitable to this study. Should the researcher have been logistically able to implement such participant observation, the sample size would have been very small, so the value of such an approach would be limited.

Collection of written responses to the question, 'How do you think a teacher-librarian could be involved in literacy education?' was regarded as restrictive because respondents would be presented with too daunting a task and also would respond only with conceptions that came to mind independently at the time. Similar restrictions applied to gaining the information through individual interviews. Group interaction to elicit these conceptions was considered a more effective way to stimulate ideas. The technique selected for use was the focus group discussion. Buttram (1990) sees focus groups as useful in generating new data. Their goal is not consensus building but identification of a variety of needs. Through this process it was envisaged that respondents would provide different conceptions of the ways in which teacher-librarians could enhance the literacy needs of students in Years 1 to 7.

To interpret the data, a phenomenographic approach was adopted. Phenomenographic research aims to describe the qualitative differences in conceptions of a specific phenomenon, in this case the involvement of the teacher-librarian in the literacy

21

education of students in Years 1 to 7. The approach focuses on describing qualitatively different ways in which a phenomenon is experienced or understood.

Phenomenography makes a distinction between two perspectives. These are described by Marton (1981) as being the 'first-order' perspective and the 'second-order' perspective. From the 'first-order' perspective the aim is to describe various aspects of the world. This is done by orientating ourselves towards the world and making statements about it. The field of study encompassed by the topic of this research study could indeed be approached from the 'first-order' perspective. In that case the study would ask what involvement in literacy education do teacher-librarians have? Any answer to that question would be a statement about reality and would reveal the current degree of active involvement occurring. The study however seeks to describe, analyze and understand the conceptions of the involvement. This may not always relate to current practice.

The important aspect of this study is not the phenomenon itself but the way that the phenomenon is experienced. Following the explanations of Saljo (1988) and Marton (1986b), this study is set in the arena of phenomenography. Marton (1981: 177-189) explains that phenomenographic studies aim at describing people's experiences of various aspects of the world. From this 'second-order' perspective we orient ourselves towards people's ideas about the world or their experience of it, thus phenomenography focuses on 'second-order' perspectives. In this context this study involves an analysis of the conceptions that teachers and teacher-librarians have about the involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education as opposed to the 'first-order' perspective of the situation which would report on the status quo.

In all phenomenographic research 'conception' refers to the 'experienced meaning of the specific part of the surrounding world' (Svensson, 1989: 530) and not to the concept itself or the process of concept development known as conceptualization. In essence phenomenography is concerned with the human-world relationship, as neither is examined in isolation (Marton, 1981, 1986b; Renstrom, Anderson and Marton, 1990).

Data Collection Methodology

In collecting data for a phenomenographic approach, research enquiries are focused on understanding rather than on explanations and should make qualitatively different answers possible (Van Rossum and Schenk, 1984: 73-75). Essentially respondents need to be encouraged to explain their thought processes and their reasoning (Lybeck *et al.*, 1988: 84). The question or questions should encourage respondents to reveal their thoughts about a subject rather than seek to reproduce a normative response. The method of data collection selected as suitable for this study is the 'Synergetic Focus Group' discussion.

The focus group methodology is a cost-effective technique which brings together a group of approximately five to eight people at one time to provide data on a focused topic. Lederman (1990: 117) advises that the focus group technique involves the use of in-depth, group discussions for which participants are selected because they share a purpose. Byers and Wilcox (1988) see the advantages of focus groups to be the release of inhibition by the participants, the generation of a wide range of responses and the creation of a valuable source of exploratory information. The focus group technique was selected for use in this study because it has particular advantages in providing in-

depth information from the perspective of participants about their needs, interests, concerns, perceptions, feelings and attitudes (Krueger, 1988: 21)

Focus groups are seen to have advantages over surveys and single-person interviews because they allow individuals to respond in their own words, using their own categorizations and perceived associations. Structured surveys channel the respondents to the conceptions presented by the researcher but provide limited scope for further expression. Taylor and Bodgan (1984: 6) explain that the objective observer is likely to fill in the process of interpretation with their own surmises in place of catching the process as it is presented. While there is capacity to cover a wider population sample using the survey methodology, the nature of the data was considered too restrictive for this study. A smaller population sample which provided a richer data was considered a better option.

Single interviews, while allowing more scope than a survey for responses, lack the interaction of the focus group discussion. Lederman (1990) explains the capacity of the focus group discussion to allow interaction between participants of a 'like-kind' which provides support for its members to express ideas. The effect of the group dynamic can enhance the ferreting out of valuable information. The effect is akin to the rationale underlying the technique of brainstorming: 'that the group provides a synergy which results in more than the sum total of what individuals could create alone' (Lederman, 1990: 119). Another important advantage is that researchers can gather more data in a shorter time than could be collected in individual interviews.

Focus groups produce data of interest to researchers. In this respect the purpose differs from other group interactions where the goal is to reach consensus, provide recommendations, or make decisions among alternatives (Krueger, 1988: 21). In this study the purpose is to discover the ways the involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education are conceived by the participating class teachers and teacher-librarians. The study does not seek a consensus on a particular way that the role should be conceived.

The focus group discussion method, as presented by Bers (1989), Krueger (1988), Buttram (1990) and Lederman (1990), involves a moderator who directs and guides the discussion. Russell (1993b) modifies this approach and presents a synergetic focus group discussion method. This is based on a non-directed group discussion method used by Mackay (1993). It requires the researcher to set a permissive environment for the discussion and then allow the group to discuss the topic among themselves without intervention. This approach was adopted for this study. To achieve this, an introductory monologue was prepared for presentation on video to each group at the commencement of each focus group discussion. Following this presentation the researcher withdrew from further participation and spent the session writing a transcript of the discussion. Participants see that everything is recorded, that there is no selection or rejection of any contribution. The respondents can see that for the qualitative researcher all perspectives are valuable. Audio tape recordings were made of the discussions.

Russell and Lidstone (1993) have considerable experience in using the synergetic focus group discussion method. They have successfully used it to review a university course, plan units of work, design specific multimedia resources, plan promotional campaigns and improve the environment of school media centres. Their experience with the non-intervention of a moderator has been positive. They have found that if the

discussion wanes, this is only temporary and it will revive; and if it wanders off the track, then it is wandering in a direction that is important to the participants and this too provides useful data.

Less structured groups tend to pursue those issues and topics of greater importance, relevance and interest to the group members themselves. This is appropriate if the objective of the researcher is to learn about those things that are most important to the group (Stewart, 1990: 11) as is the case in this study. When the moderator takes a more directive and structured approach to encourage discussion of issues relevant to specific information needs, participants are discussing what is relevant to the researcher and not necessarily what they consider significant.

When investigating people's understandings of various phenomena, concepts and principles Marton (1986b: 30-31) repeatedly found that each phenomenon, concept or principle can be understood in a limited number of qualitatively different ways. Data from the focus group discussions were systematically analyzed to arrive at a small number of qualitatively different categories of description of conceptions, perceptions or approaches as described by Van Rossum and Schenk (1984: 83) and Saljo (1988: 42). Further details of this analysis and the resulting relationships that were identified between the categories of description are given in Chapter 4, 'Treatment of the Data'.

Specific Procedures

Permission

Permission to conduct focus groups with class teachers and teacher-librarians from state and Catholic primary schools was sought from both the Queensland Department of Education and Brisbane Catholic Education Centre. Copies of correspondence sent to these authorities and replies received are included as Appendices 1 and 2. Principals of all schools involved were contacted by the researcher for permission to conduct focus group discussions with some members of staff.

Permission was granted by course lecturers Dr Anne Russell and Mr Paul Lupton to hold focus group discussions with students enrolled in the subject Foundations in Teacher-Librarianship, a core subject of the Graduate Diploma in Education (Teacher-Librarianship) course conducted at QUT. The design of the course activities is the responsibility of the lecturers presenting the subject, so further permission was not required. These lecturers viewed the topic for discussion as a relevant aspect of course work and saw value in including the focus group discussions as an activity for the course participants. The suitability of these participants is discussed in Chapter 4, 'Research Population'.

Introductory Monologue

An introductory monologue was prepared on video for presentation to all focus groups. This is discussed in Chapter 4, 'Instrumentation'.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to test the effectiveness of the monologue in focusing the group discussion and to test the suitability of the method to the study. This is discussed in Chapter 4, 'Pilot Study'.

Subject Selection

Details of the selection of focus group participants are given in Chapter 4, 'Research Population'.

Data

Eleven focus group discussions were held to obtain the data for this study. Eighty-two people participated in these discussions. The data were fully transcribed from audio tapes made of each discussion and the transcripts qualitatively analyzed using the methodology of phenomenographic analysis. During the analysis there was consultation with a co-judge who verified the presence of the categories of description of the conceptions identified from the data by the researcher. The data collection procedures are detailed in Chapter 4.

Research Population

Literature on focus groups (Krueger, 1988; Lederman, 1990) suggests that focus groups are homogeneous. The participants are selected because they have certain characteristics in common that relate to the topic of the focus group. It is also suggested that the participants be unknown to each other. Russell (1993b) however believes that it is preferable to compose the groups of people who are known to each other. Russell's experience in conducting focus group discussions has shown that within such a group there is understanding of the characteristics of the group members and individuals are not trying to determine how much they should contribute or what the reception will be. The stresses of the unknown are removed and so participants are more likely to relax and contribute freely. Such people also share a common background of experiences upon which they may draw to explain aspects of the topic under discussion. The synergetic focus group discussion methodology was adopted for this study because of a belief in the advantages to the data collection of the synergy created by a group of participants known to each other. It is also significant that it would have been more difficult to assemble respondents unknown to each other than those known. Four groups drawn from Queensland University of Technology would have been ineligible, and locating sufficient numbers of teacher-librarians who had not met would have been difficult.

Based on the experience with focus group discussions involving participants who are known to each other, this study collected data from six groups whose members were primary class teachers familiar with each other and five groups whose members were primary teacher-librarians also familiar with each other. Participants in all groups knew each other well enough to be comfortable sharing their perspectives on the topic. Group size ranged from six to nine participants. This provided a research population of eighty-two people made-up of forty-six primary class teachers and thirty-six primary teacher-librarians.

Stewart (1990: 53) explains that convenience sampling is one of the most common methods of selecting participants in focus groups, and this is the method employed in this study. Stewart emphasizes however that, in order to draw some conclusions about the population of interest, the group must consist of representative members of the larger population. In this study the respondents represent the larger population of class teachers and teacher-librarians in Queensland primary schools.

The conceptions held by class teachers of the involvement of teacher-librarians in literacy education were considered of equal significance to the conceptions of teacher-librarians of their role since the latter cannot work effectively in isolation. The success of the role is dependent upon the equal partnership developed between class teachers and the teacher-librarian (Haycock, K., 1985a, 1985b; Marland, 1987; Henri, 1988, 1991; Haycock, C.A., 1991). With this in mind the population sample for this study was drawn from primary class teachers and primary teacher-librarians, from both government and non-government schools. Due to the need to assemble the respondents in focus groups, the sample population was drawn from Brisbane. Because the *ELA Syllabus* (1991) is undergoing state-wide implementation, literacy education is being viewed in a similar way throughout Queensland schools. The outcomes of this study therefore have relevance to class teachers and teacher-librarians outside Brisbane.

Focus group participants were drawn from two broad sources:

* Brisbane state and Catholic primary schools: teacher-librarians drawn from these sources were all qualified in that they hold a tertiary qualification in teacher-librarianship;

* students enrolled in the subject Foundations of Teacher-Librarianship, a core subject in the course Graduate Diploma in Education (Teacher-Librarianship) conducted at QUT: teacher-librarians drawn from this source were not qualified but were filling the role of teacher-librarian in their schools.

Table 1 shows the breakdown of the composition of the research population.

Table 1. Sources of Focus Group Participants

Source of participants	Class teachers	Teacher-librarians	Total
State primary schools	1 group	1 group	2 groups
Catholic primary schools	3 groups	2 groups	5 groups
Queensland University of Technology	2 groups	2 groups	4 groups
Total	6 groups	5 groups	11 groups

Class teacher groups drawn from schools were made up of members of the same staff. It was necessary to approach two state primary schools before one was found where sufficient staff members were able to participate. Class teachers representing each primary year level were sought in each focus group. This was to provide a greater scope for data collection as 'literacy' itself can often be perceived differently by lower, middle and upper primary teachers. It was not always possible to establish this representation exactly, but in all teacher groups lower, middle and upper primary levels were represented. Population selection followed the common method of convenience sampling used in selecting focus group participants (Stewart, 1990: 53). The groups established were volunteer groups formed from a convenience sample rather than randomly selected.

Teacher-librarians drawn from schools were members of the same network of teacher-librarians within a region, i.e. one state primary teacher-librarian network and one Catholic primary teacher-librarian network. Networks meet on a regular basis so group members were familiar with each other. Only one network in each system needed to be approached before enough members willing to participate in the study were found. Again the population was volunteer. Members of the West Metro Network of primary teacher-librarians within Brisbane Catholic Education participated. Written communication was posted to each teacher-librarian within that network asking them to participate in a focus group discussion following a Network meeting. From this group of teacher-librarians, two focus group discussions were held, as a total of fourteen teacher-librarians agreed to participate. Members of the Western Region state school teacher-librarian network were contacted individually by 'phone by one of the members of that network, on behalf of the researcher, and a meeting for the purpose of conducting a focus group discussion was held after school hours at the researcher's school.

QUT course participants, as described earlier, were asked to participate in focus group discussions to provide data for this study. As this course is conducted out of school hours, most of the participants fall into either of the two required categories of practising class teachers or teacher-librarians. This group provided a population sample of twenty-four. The participants were known to each other by virtue of their 'course' experiences. It was fortunate that four focus groups could be formed within this group with a fairly even balance between class teachers and teacher-librarians. As indicated in Table 1, there were two teacher groups and two teacher-librarian groups formed from this sample.

Two limitations are created by the inclusion of the QUT group in the research population of this study. These are the limitations placed on, first, representing each year level from 1 to 7 in the 'teacher' focus groups formed from this group as the population is 'fixed', and, second, the degree to which the students have focused on the role of the teacher-librarian during their course experiences. Both these factors have been discussed in Chapter 2, 'Delimitations and Limitations of the Study', and their effects were considered to be outweighed by the benefits of including this sample in the study. Access to this group greatly enhanced the study because it allowed the population sample to be substantially widened beyond what would have otherwise been within the range of the researcher. The course participants came from a wide range of geographically diverse government and non-government schools. Their inclusion greatly increased the variety of background experience that was brought to the discussions by the participants.

The teacher-librarians drawn from the QUT population do not yet hold a tertiary qualification in teacher-librarianship. However, since they currently fill this role in their schools, they are making decisions and operating in the mode of a teacher-librarian and for the purpose of this study are regarded as teacher-librarians. Many of them have filled this role for a long time and are taking advantage of opportunities recently offered to enrol in the Graduate Diploma in Education (Teacher-Librarianship). Their school experiences and attendance at Network meetings and teacher-librarian in-service distinguish them from the class teachers represented in the QUT group and identify them as teacher-librarians within the framework of this study.

The Queensland Education Department employs the majority of teachers practising in Queensland. No attempt was made to match the number of subjects selected from government and non-government systems to the proportions employed by each. This decision was based on the factors that: no statistical analysis was undertaken; the aim of the research was to describe differences in conceptions, not possible sources of differences; and no comparisons between systems were made. It is significant that the education systems in Queensland can be seen as being compatible in most professional aspects and in particular in relation to this study as they work from a common literacy document, the *ELA Syllabus* (1991).

One final point on sample selection is the question of males and females. Although literature on focus groups advocates the separation of males and females in different groups (Russell, 1993b), this study did not make this distinction because of the low availability of male teacher-librarians as members of the focus groups. This is caused by the female dominance of the teacher-librarian in the population accessible to the researcher. Since the distinction was not made with regard to selection of participating teacher-librarians, to be consistent it was not imposed upon the teacher groups where there is also a male/female imbalance; i.e. it is difficult to find male class teachers in lower primary levels (Years 1 and 2).

Instrumentation

The operative instrument in this study is the introductory monologue which provides direction for the focus group discussions. The researcher used this to set the scene for the participants. In this study a video recording of the researcher's presentation of the monologue was used to ensure that each group received identical input. The

monologue, which is five minutes long, was presented at the commencement of each focus group session.

The purpose of this monologue was to make the participants aware of the reasons for holding the discussion and to explain that the researcher is interested in *all* aspects of their ideas on the ways they believe that teacher-librarians can be involved in literacy education. It is also an important function of the monologue to identify the interpretation of literacy that this study takes. Another function of the monologue is to set the participants at ease and to assure them of the confidentiality and the ultimate anonymity of the thoughts they share.

Appendix 1 contains the text of the introductory monologue. A wide range of suggestions of ways that teacher-librarians could be involved in literacy education is made in this monologue. These suggestions are not confined to those that the researcher views as effective but cover as many positive, negative and neutral aspects as possible. It is explained in the monologue that there are no right or wrong responses and that reflections on any aspect of the topic are relevant for discussion. Individuals pick up on any aspects that have meaning for them, and other ideas serve as a springboard to stimulate further contributions. In no way do these suggestions represent an agenda for the discussion. The diversity is also intended to be sufficient to avoid unintentionally directing the respondents down a particular path. Nothing was presented in writing to the group. The purpose was to set the topic for discussion, to stimulate thought on that topic, and to illustrate that all ideas are acceptable. The tone of the discourse is non-judgmental. The monologue concludes by reminding participants that the researcher is very interested in everything that they have to say about the role of the teacher-librarian in the literacy education of students in the primary school. No questions were posed during the monologue.

Pilot Study

Pretesting of the introductory monologue was carried out to provide an opportunity to determine whether the introduction elicited discussion on the topic of the involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education or if in fact the guidelines were not easily understood. It is impossible to predict in advance the way that respondents will interpret and respond. This means that some degree of pretesting was appropriate.

Two focus group discussions took place in the pilot study. The first involved eight class teachers and the second six class teachers. These participants were drawn from the staff of the school where the researcher is teacher-librarian. The introductory monologue was successful in eliciting discussion on the topic of the involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education; however, some minor changes were made to the introductory monologue as a result of one respondent's concerns expressed at the beginning of the first group's discussion. This respondent felt that 'there was so much in the introduction that I can't really think of anything she didn't say.'

The changes made addressed this aspect. The aim was to make quite clear to the respondents that they could discuss the aspects of the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education that were mentioned in the monologue if they wished and should not feel that they could only discuss additional aspects. This was achieved by increasing the generality of the notions presented in the introduction.

It is interesting to note that the respondent who expressed this thought worked through his confusion and made substantial contributions to the discussion as it progressed; in fact his dialogue seems to represent his coming to terms with what was being asked of him. It is also significant to note that no other respondents indicated confusion with this, and in fact one respondent indicated a clear understanding of what was required by urging this person to 'say it again then.' Nevertheless, minor changes were made to the monologue to clarify the guidelines. An analysis of the section of the transcript which led to these changes is presented in Appendix 2.

Four teacher-librarians were asked to respond to the monologue. No areas of concern arose from their interpretation, so the amended version of the introductory monologue was adopted for the study.

The pilot study also determined the suitability of the focus group method for data collection in this study. Analysis of the data from the pilot study revealed that it was possible to categorize the data collected into threads that can relate the teacher-librarian to literacy education. As a result the method was declared suitable and the study proceeded using the planned methodology.

Since the data collected from the two focus group discussions that took place as part of the pilot study were suitable for analysis, it was appropriate to include these data in the study. It is the nature of phenomenographic research that all the data are put together and not treated as separate, so the inclusion of these data added to the diversity. Thus the pilot study contributed two groups of class teachers to the population sample.

Data Collection

The type of data required for this study is qualitative data concerned with understandings rather than explanations. Although the interview technique has been the most common method of gathering such data for phenomenographic research, this method is not essential to phenomenographic data collection (Johansson, Marton and Svensson, 1985; Marton, 1988). This study utilized focus group discussions for data collection. Chapter 4, 'Data Collection Methodology' details the advantages of focus group discussions over individual interviews for this study. These advantages centre on the scope of focus groups to allow individuals to use their own categorizations and perceived associations and the group synergy created which serves to enhance the ferreting out of information.

Data were collected for this study by conducting eleven synergetic focus group discussions structured as illustrated in Table 1. The discussions were recorded on audio tape and later transcribed for analysis. Transcripts are full and unaltered. Constant notes taken by the researcher during the discussion sessions lent support to the transcripts. These notes are themselves a written record of the discussions. They record verbal information only. Their purpose is three-fold:

* continued note-taking provides an activity for the researcher thus 'removing' the researcher from the discussion group;
* participants can see that all information is being recorded and nothing is passed over; and
* the notes fill in any unclear dialogue on the audio tape.

An audio tape was considered a suitable record of the discussion since only verbal information was required. Non-verbal communication was not sought. Data did not need to be individualized as data were treated as a whole during analysis. This is explained in Chapter 4, 'Treatment of the Data'.

The role of the researcher during the focus group discussions has been explained in Chapter 4, 'Data Collection Methodology' and further above. Briefly summarized, the researcher took the role of 'moderator'. This entailed presentation of the introductory monologue and then withdrawing to allow the discussion to take its course. The monologue was presented to nine groups on video to ensure that the groups received the same presentation in the same way. The text of the monologue was read to the groups in the pilot study. The text of the monologue is presented in Appendix 1.

The focus group discussions were held in a variety of locations which were chosen to be most convenient for the participants. The QUT groups convened at QUT. The discussions took place during a routine lecture session at night. Groups of class teachers from the two primary schools met in their own schools after school hours. The groups formed from the Brisbane Catholic Education West Metro Teacher-Librarian Network remained after a network meeting at one of the member schools of the network. Members of the Western Region State School Teacher-Librarian Network met at the researcher's own school one evening. Tea was provided by the researcher for focus group participants.

Provisions for acquiring follow-up data existed. Permission was granted by the employing authorities for the researcher to approach schools until sufficient numbers volunteered for the study. Only one school approached was unable to provide a group of participants.

Human rights were protected in this study as the participation in focus group discussions was voluntary. It was crucial to the success of the research that the researcher suspended judgment on the conceptions elicited and that the researcher proceeded with minimum prior assumption, bias or prejudice. Anonymity is protected because phenomenography is concerned with 'pools of meaning' (Saljo and Marton, 1984), and so the ability to identify individual respondents becomes lost as analysis proceeds. All transcripts are coded by letter, and references to names of individuals in the transcripts and quotations used are disguised.

Treatment of the Data

The eleven transcripts of the audiotaped focus group discussions constituted the data for analysis.

Lederman (1990: 124) suggests that various analytic approaches can be used with the data obtained from focus group discussions. One is to code the data into predetermined categories. A second is to use the data as the basis of categories which emerge from them. A third suggestion is to use the data as a basis for summary statements which attempt to capture the essence of the participants' responses. In this study the data were analyzed by the second approach described by Lederman (1990: 124), viz. to code the data into categories that emerge from the data themselves. Since this is the approach to data analysis followed by established phenomenographers (Larsson, 1986; Marton, 1988; Saljo, 1988; Svensson, 1989; Renstrom, Andersson and Marton, 1990), the

suitability of focus group discussions as the method of data collection for this study is supported.

Bruce (1992: 51-55) examines two distinctive approaches to data analysis followed by phenomenographers. One approach focuses on quotes which have been extracted from data collected, while the other focuses on whole transcripts. The second difference identified between these approaches is in the means of verification of the results. In the first approach the analysis is carried out by the researcher and verified by a co-judge, while in the second approach the analysis is carried out by a team. Researchers argue for or against the inclusion of data in a particular category. Eventual agreement on category definition and placement of transcripts into categories constitutes verification of results. The first approach, which is advocated by the Swedish phenomenographers Marton (1986b), Saljo (1988) and Svensson (1989), was selected as the more appropriate methodology for this study over the second approach advocated by Bowden (1990). There were several reasons for this. The transcripts were long, and a range of conceptions was presented within each. The first approach seemed more flexible in accepting that conceptions change during any discussion of a phenomenon by respondents. This allowed for multiple conceptions being contained within each transcript. By treating transcripts as a whole, ownership is attributed to individual groups. Saljo (1988: 42) disassociates conceptions from having individual ownership. At an early stage in the analysis there is a move away from the individual. Data collected in focus group discussions are not individual. Data generation is dependent on group interaction. Individually, such data would not be generated. Finally, a team of researchers was not available to analyze the data according to the team approach advocated by Bowden (1990). However, a co-judge was available to verify the results obtained by the single researcher.

Categories of Description

The result of phenomenographic research is the construction of descriptions of the conceptions revealed by the analysis of the data. The outcome of such research, however, is not a list of the conceptions but categories of description of those conceptions. These categories are seen as the most important result of the research enterprise (Marton, 1988: 181). A fundamental aspect of the approach to the analysis is that the categories of description cannot be defined before the analysis but result as an outcome. Svensson (1989) has labelled this methodological approach as 'contextual analysis'. This approach not only sorts the data but searches for distinctive characteristics that appear.

Exact techniques for analysis could not be specified before the arrival of the data because it takes some discovery to find the qualitatively different ways people experience or conceptualize certain phenomena, and there are no algorithms for making discoveries. Marton (1988) however suggests and describes a three-phase analysis procedure which was adopted in this study. Within phase one the selection procedure is based on relevance; phase two shifts from analysis of the individual focus group transcripts to comparing group data and seeking the qualitatively different ways of seeing or explaining the phenomenon; while phase three sees a refining of the categories.

The first phase of the analysis is a selection procedure based on relevance. Utterances found to be of interest for the question: 'What are the conceptions of the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education?' were selected and marked. Although the meaning of an utterance can occasionally lie in the utterance itself, in general the interpretation is made in relation to the context from which the utterance is taken. Svensson and Theman (1983) have shown that the same utterance takes on different meaning when it appears in different contexts. The phenomenon in question (conceptions of the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education) is narrowed down to, and interpreted in terms of, selected quotes from all the focus group discussions.

These selected quotes make up the data pool which forms the basis for the second phase of the analysis. The boundaries separating individuals and isolated focus groups are abandoned and the focus shifts to 'pools of meaning' discovered in the data (Marton, 1988; Saljo and Marton, 1984). To achieve this, similar responses are assigned to groups. Each quote then has two contexts in which it has to be interpreted, the discussion from which it was taken and the 'pool of meaning' to which it belongs. The interpretation is thus an interactive procedure that goes back and forth between the two contexts for each unit of analysis.

Phase three involves a differentiation being made between the 'pools of meaning'. Utterances have been brought together into groups on the basis of similarity, and the groups are delimited in terms of differences. This makes explicit the criterion attributes defining each group. Of particular importance is the contrast between the groups. On this basis the groups of quotes are turned into categories defined in terms of core meanings and borderline cases. Each category is exemplified by quotes belonging to the group of utterances denoted by the category. Quotations illustrating each category are included in the description. The process is indeed interactive; bringing the quotes together develops the meaning of the category, and at the same

time the evolving meaning of the category determines which quotes should be included and which should not.

It has been repeatedly found that phenomena are experienced in a relatively limited number of ways. This finding is supported by Marton and Saljo (1976) and Renstrom, Andersson and Marton (1990); it was confirmed in this study because the conceptions held by the participants in the eleven focus group discussions could be categorized into a smaller number of seven categories of description. Marton (1988) advises that in the analysis procedure described here there would be repeated changes during the process of bringing the quotes together and in the finalizing of the exact meaning of each group of quotes. This was indeed the case; there was a decreasing rate of change, and eventually the categories stabilized.

Full details of how the process of phenomenographic analysis was applied to the data collected in this study are found in Chapter 5.

Outcome Space

An important feature of the categories of description is the existence of what Saljo (1988: 46) refers to as an internal logic between them. Categories of description which originated from a contextual understanding become decontextualized and hence may prove useful in contexts other than the one being studied. As a result, each category is a potential part of a larger structure in which the category is related to other categories of description. Marton (1986b: 34) explains that it is a goal of phenomenography to discover these relationships. This is achieved by discovering the structural framework within which various categories of understanding exist.

The 'outcome space' of the conceptions is a visual or diagrammatic representation of the categories of description which illustrates the relationships between them. Marton, Carlsson and Halasz (1992: 6) explain that the categories can be related to each other logically and a structure formed for them. The structure represented in the outcome space is between the categories, not between the transcripts or the respondents.

The ability to relate the categories of description to one another is an important outcome in phenomenographic research. Marton (1981: 190) explains that there exists the ability to point not only to conceptions but also to the relations between certain conceptions of one aspect of the world. The relationships between the various conceptions identified in this study are graphically illustrated in an 'outcome space'. This is fully discussed and represented in Chapter 5, 'Interpreting the Outcome Space'.

Validity and Reliability

Considerations of validity and reliability in this study experience all the problems raised in relation to these issues in qualitative research. The term 'validity' in the qualitative research paradigm is taken to refer to the replicability of the research. In that sense phenomenographic enquiry cannot be validated as a different researcher may identify a different set of categories of description. It has also been acknowledged by Saljo (1988: 45) that it is not possible to prove that the categories of description that result from the analysis are the best or most appropriate ones.

Marton (1986b: 35) argues that the original identification of the categories of description is a form of discovery and discoveries do not have to be replicable. Indeed,

the very nature of a discovery depends on its originality. Replicability of the study depends on whether the categories of description can be found or recognized by others once they have been described to them by the original researcher. It is supported by Svensson (1989) and Renstrom, Andersson and Marton (1990) that it must be possible to reach a high degree of intersubjective agreement concerning the presence or absence of the categories if other researchers are able to use them.

Saljo (1988) proposes verification of the categories of description by establishing that a co-judge is able to perceive the same distinctions that have been found by the researcher given a set of 'judgment instructions' which describe the differences between the categories and examples of statements belonging to the various categories (Saljo, 1988: 45). In this study a co-judge who is familiar with the process, as specified by Renstrom, Andersson and Marton (1990), verified the presence of the categories of description.

Saljo (1988: 46) also proposes that if the categories of description relate to each other in certain ways, they have an 'internal-logic' and they are more likely to be reliable. In this study the ability to establish an outcome space which graphically illustrates logical relationships between the categories is a significant mode of verification.

By examining the distribution of the categories of conceptions discovered across the eleven focus groups it is possible to form an impression of the spread of these conceptions across the population sample. A wide spread of the conceptions across the groups increases the generalizability of the conclusions to the general population, since this type of spread gives rise to an expectation that these conceptions might occur beyond the research sample. Were particular conceptions confined to only one group, this ability to generalize would be reduced.

Chapter 5.   Findings

Here the library is an integral part. It's the centre. It's as important as any classroom. It's got its own identity (A7).

Conceptions of Literacy

From the literature reviewed in relation to this study the conclusion is drawn that the teacher-librarian is well placed to make a significant contribution to the development of primary students' literacy skills. The close relationship of literacy skills with information skills and the teacher-librarian's mode of working cooperatively with class teachers towards the development of information skills strongly suggests that a similar involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education would sit well with the current integrated, cross-curriculum approach to literacy education.

As a prelude to discussing teachers' and teacher-librarians' conceptions of what this involvement might be, it is relevant to note that the relationship between literacy skills and information skills is recognized in the conceptions of literacy that were revealed by the respondents in the focus group discussions. Following are quotations from the discussions that support this relationship and provide the reader with an awareness of how the respondents conceive the phenomenon of literacy. The term 'ELA' is used extensively by the respondents in the discussions and is taken to be synonymous with literacy education. 'ELA is an acronym commonly used in Queensland for the *ELA Syllabus* (1991). It has been explained in Chapter 1 and in Chapter 2, 'Rationale, Significance, Need for the Study' that this syllabus provides the framework within which literacy skills are developed in Queensland.

The coding at the end of each quotation identifies the transcript from which the quotation comes and the page number on which it appears. Transcripts are not included in this report because their bulk is great. Groups of class teachers and groups of teacher-librarians are not identified in this report because the data were analyzed as a whole, and no comparison between the conceptions of class teachers and the conceptions of teacher-librarians is made. Distinguishing between the make-up of the groups is irrelevant to this study. This information is retained by the researcher.

> Just leaving literature aside for a moment what do you feel about the teacher-librarian's involvement in information skills?
> I think as a follow-on to our literacy programs it's just part and parcel. Six or eight years ago I might have thought they were two different roles. I don't any more (J14).

> ELA as I see it is heavily oriented towards genre. That is what I think they're trying to push (C2).

> Of course information skills are becoming involved in literacy too. Now you have a continuum. Now you're away from the library lesson where you might have done a skills program and a literature program. I know they're integrating our skills lessons with integrated units of work. It's language across the curriculum (K23).

Social studies and language are so often integrated (J3).

Literacy goes right across the curriculum so anything that you do when you speak in your science and maths lessons and when you write and when people are thinking and listening and all of that all belongs (F1).

I thought the session was going to be on literature.
Well it is I suppose but not the way we thought of it.
I agree. That is part of it, just a part of it (F2).

Literacy is a developmental thing (I3).

The way things are we have to consider all facets of the curriculum. Literacy covers all that (H15).

That's going to be a different emphasis in how you search for information [library automation]. It will be a new set of literacy skills (F11).

I'm pleased to see that someone is looking at the 'ELA Syllabus'.ÉI don't think in actual fact that they've been taught the skills.ÉIs this the information skills?ÉYes and general skills – what's in the 'ELA Syllabus' – main idea, keyword, information skills, skimming, retrieval skills (H1).

When you mention literacy education I automatically think books but is it videos and other media (J1)?

Keyboard literacy is going to be really important in the future. It's becoming a necessary writing skill (B6).

And in those library units I find in the upper school that it can help you pick up the kids who've got the gaps say for example a group might have zero mapping skills and then it comes out that some of the other kids need one kind of activity so there's a basic skill there and an extension for the kids that can already do it. 'D's very good at developing them and I think that's a very necessary part of the TL's role because that's all part of literacy (A2).

When people talk about literacy in general they still talk in terms of reading and writing and those sorts of things. Computers are very much to the fore now but visual literacy, media literacy, need to be literate in those sort of things. The TL can be involved. Equipment for this is in the library and the TL has the skills for this (D1).

Procedures

The discovery procedure used to identify primary class teachers' and teacher-librarians' conceptions of the involvement of the teacher-librarian in the literacy education of students in Years 1 to 7 is described in detail in this chapter. Four key phases describe the analysis:

*   Phase 1: Selecting relevant material;

* Phase 2: Discovering conceptions of the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education;
* Phase 3: Reviewing, finalizing and defining categories of conceptions;
* Phase 4: Constructing the outcome space.

Phase 1: Selecting Relevant Material

The data from the eleven synergetic focus group discussions were transcribed in total. This was done personally by the researcher, an action which was found to be a valuable alternative to using the services of a typist as it allowed for the development, by the researcher, of a high degree of familiarity with the data. This familiarity was increased by many subsequent readings of the transcriptions. The first phase of phenomenographic analysis is a selection procedure based on relevance (Marton, 1988). It was found to be a simple task to identify and discount irrelevant utterances initially as these were few. Irrelevant utterances were those which had no connection with the topic of the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education. They appeared in only four of the transcripts at either the beginning or the end of the group discussion and represented the respondents' way of feeling their way into or out of the discussion. These utterances related to clothing and people and were generally of a light-hearted nature and easily recognizable among the relevant data.

After discounting such utterances, there remained a vast amount of relevant material. To gather this in a manageable form, the topics discussed by the respondents were identified:

* resources: book and non-book, fiction and non-fiction;
* curriculum;
* professional development;
* environment;
* assessment and evaluation.

All the quotes which signalled the existence of these topics in the discussions were selected and marked. This identified the utterances found to be of interest for the question: 'What are the respondent's conceptions of the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education?'

Subdividing the data under these headings made it possible later to examine the areas in which particular types of teacher-librarian involvement in literacy education are manifested or dominant.

Phase 2: Discovering Conceptions of the Teacher-Librarian's Involvement in Literacy Education

In the second phase of phenomenographic analysis, the boundaries separating individuals are abandoned and the focus shifts to 'pools of meaning' discovered in the data (Marton, 1986b: 43). The boundaries separating isolated focus groups were abandoned as the transcripts were cut up and assigned to groups with similar responses. This was done within the topic areas identified in Phase 1 in order to keep the data in manageable groups. Within these topic areas varying conceptions of the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education were emerging. Although the meaning of an utterance can occasionally lie in the utterance itself, in general the interpretation is made in relation to the context from which it is taken (Svensson and

Theman, 1983). In order to keep in touch with the context of each quote throughout the analysis, each quote was marked with transcript and page identification. These remain throughout this report.

This phase of the analysis fostered the emergence of an initial set of categories denoting the respondents' conceptions of the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education. In keeping with the philosophy of phenomenographic analysis as described by Marton and Saljo (1976), the categories were allowed to emerge from the data rather than being imposed upon them. This objectivity was aided by constantly referring back to context, reviewing the categories and the evidence of their existence frequently and over time, and by not making assumptions about surface statements. Instead there was a need to examine what conceptions were underlying the discussion; how the respondents were seeing the teacher-librarian in the context of literacy education; to what they were comparing the teacher-librarian; what expectations they had of the teacher-librarian. At this stage seven categories of conceptions were identified and named:

* teacher-librarian is not involved;
* teacher-librarian as assistant;
* teacher-librarian as support teacher;
* teacher-librarian as equal teaching partner;
* teacher-librarian as expert/consultant;
* teacher-librarian as leader;
* teacher-librarian as manager.

Diagrammatic representations of the ways that teacher-librarians are seen or understood were drawn. These helped focus on the exact meaning of each category and proved to be a vehicle of clarification throughout as categories developed and modified.

These initial categories are briefly described with accompanying quotations to illustrate the conceptions as recognized at this stage in the analysis:

Not involved. The teacher-librarian is not involved in aspects of literacy education.

Our TL is three days a week. If the in-service falls on the days when she's not there she doesn't do any in-service like the ELA in-service (H13).

Assistant. The teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/understood as helping the class teacher and students with tasks as requested to save others time and effort. These tasks could be performed by a library aide.

It's more of a resources list. You just fill in the areas you need resources for and the next day there it is, all that you wanted (E8).

Support teacher. The teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/understood as working independently from the class teacher or by providing professional support to class teachers and students. This support differs from that given by 'Assistant' because it requires a professional input.

I try to send up to the classroom teacher poetry to go with their topics (J6).

She [the teacher-librarian] taught them how to write a news report after they'd watched something (E8).

Equal teaching partner. The teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/ understood as working in an equal teaching partnership with the class teacher.

We have planning time at the beginning of every year where I work with every teacher from every grade (J3).

Expert/Consultant. The teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/understood as being a 'fountain of knowledge' about implementing and resourcing literacy education.

The teachers rely on the teacher-librarian to be computer literate and everything else literate (K17).

That's where the teacher-librarian is good because she knows all the resources that go with those things [literacy programs] (F10).

Leader. The teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/understood as leading teachers and students towards new and expanded horizons.

I think it's really important that the teacher-librarian create a love of books and literature and to enjoy it (A6).

I seeÉin terms of the video aspect and the visual literacy there, that not only are we [teacher-librarians] to help teachers to realize that it's not just a fill in for half an hour, that if we're actually involved in the teaching of literacy using the visual medium that there is some sort of learning going on (J2).

Manager. The teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/understood as facilitating the implementation of literacy programs within the school.

You can have a great library but if you don't know what's there and what's available you can't use it (B3).

If we're going to have continuums then I think the teacher-librarian is the person who is more flexible and able to organize it. Even the 'ELA Key Teacher' doesn't know what everyone else is doing (H13).

These initial categories developed and were modified as further analysis of the quotes representing them was undertaken. Discussion of these modifications and developments follows.

Phase 3: Reviewing, Finalizing and Defining Categories of Conceptions

Further consideration of the conceptions that were emerging developed as a differentiation was made between the 'pools of meaning' (Marton, 1986b: 43). This resulted in some reshuffling of utterances as the process of bringing them together into groups on the basis of similarity continued. The process of describing the emerging categories of conceptions involved delimiting them in terms of differences. Thus there was a simultaneous search for similarities and differences in the data. The

developments discussed in this section emerged from further consideration of the data in the light of the preliminary categories identified above.

It became clear that the 'Assistant' category was evidenced by utterances that indicated that the teacher-librarian has a knowledge of what resources are in the library, but there was no indication of a professional input in selection of these resources for teacher and student use, using the skills of either a professional teacher or a professional librarian.

> I find it's very useful the way 'D' [teacher-librarian] has a knowledge of what's in the library (A1).

This contrasts with the conception of 'Expert/Consultant' which indicates the application of professional knowledge and expertise in the actions of the teacher-librarian.

> It's the teacher-librarian who can start plugging up those gaps [in the collection] so teachers can actually use the material for 'ELA' (D1).

> I'm [the teacher-librarian] showing them what we've already got. Even a lot of the old books have elements in them that are relevant to that approach to literacy development, like examples of different genre (J11).

So it began to emerge that 'Expert/Consultant' provides a service, as does 'Assistant'. Both emerged as reactive roles responding to the needs of class teachers and students, but 'Expert/Consultant' utilizes the professional skills of the teacher and the librarian in providing that service, while 'Assistant' utilizes only a knowledge of the collection.

The reactive nature of the role of 'Expert/Consultant' became the key to defining the limits between this category and 'Leader'. Both utilize the professional knowledge and expertise of the teacher and the librarian, but the distinction lies in the source of the action. 'Leader' emerges as a proactive role taking class teachers and students beyond the status quo.

> Some TLs are great storytellers. They can inspire kids to a love of literature (H15).

> Teachers are very often broad with activities. We [teacher-librarians] can focus on more specific skills. For example a teacher recently told me she wanted the children to learn about an animal. That was really broad. In planning with her I was able to help her involve more than just factual content (G12).

Another significant adjustment to the original track occurred in the area of 'Support Teacher' which evolved to become 'Independent Teacher'. This developed upon discovery that the resource support being offered by teacher-librarians in the 'Support' category was using the special skills of the teacher-librarian (the resource 'expert'), and that these skills encompassed both educational and librarianship skills. In this way such utterances supported the 'Expert/Consultant' category.

This was an enlightening realization because it allowed the category of 'Independent Teacher' to emerge clearly in its own right. In the original category of 'Support

Teacher' there were two conceptions lurking: teacher-librarian working independently from the class teacher, and teacher-librarian providing professional resource support to class teachers and students. 'Independent Teacher' was now able to represent the conception of the teacher-librarian utilizing educational knowledge and expertise in teaching students independently from the class teacher. While some of these learning programs may be initiated by the class teacher, they are planned and implemented by the teacher-librarian.

> This is what our TL's doing. She's running a program with the Sevens in the library where she's taking ads and getting them to look critically at ads on television and in print (E9).

> I still like the teacher-librarian doing a lot with the information type of skills relating to the use of the library and relating to fact finding (F3).

It is the isolated action of the teacher-librarian in 'Independent Teacher' which distinguishes this category from 'Equal Teaching Partner'. Both utilize the educational knowledge and expertise of the teacher-librarian, but the 'Equal Teaching Partner' works collaboratively with class teachers to plan and implement learning programs.

> She [the teacher-librarian] and I planned together what we wanted to do and what we were achieving (H5).

The conception of 'Manager' was also refined. Here too there was a dual thought contained in the original category. Facilitating the implementation of literacy programs encompassed the ideas of resource management procedures and organization of the structure of learning programs. Further reflection on the latter led to the understanding that this was support for the conception of 'Expert/Consultant', leaving the 'Manager' as an administrative involvement utilizing the librarianship knowledge and expertise of the teacher-librarian, i.e. the expertise of the professional librarian.

> There's so much to sift through and there's only so much time available that it's important to have systems where it's easier to locate that information (B3).

No change was made to the category 'Not Involved'. This is a straightforward category supported by utterances which clearly indicate occasions when respondents perceived teacher-librarians not to be involved in literacy education. The evidence here relates only to particular aspects of literacy education, and not to the entire field.

During this stage of the analysis the diagrammatic representations of the categories were also refined and developed in accordance with the discoveries being made. The diagrams developed simultaneously with the descriptions and contributed to clarification of what was emerging from the data.

Full descriptions of the categories of conceptions and sample quotations supporting each category are presented in Chapter 5, 'Description of Categories of Conceptions of the Involvement of Teacher-Librarians in Literacy Education'.

Phase 4: Constructing the Outcome Space

The outcome space expresses the logical relations between the categories. Renstrom, Andersson and Marton (1990: 558) describe it as 'a pictorial representation of the

space over which thoughts range'. Saljo (1988: 44) conjures the picture of a 'map of territory in terms of which we can interpret how people conceive a reality.'

The relationship between the categories is alluded to in the previous section; it is explained that discovering the distinctions between the categories was important because, while bringing the quotes together, it develops the meaning of the category. At the same time the evolving meaning of the category determines which quotes should be included and which should not. This process involves recognizing the distinctions between the categories. Following the final evolution of the categories and the writing of their full descriptions, the outcome space for this study emerges as portraying a variation in the focus of the teacher-librarian's professional knowledge and expertise in both education and librarianship. These relationships are described fully in Chapter 5, 'Interpreting the Outcome Space', where a pictorial representation of this relationship is presented.

Evidence Supporting the Research Question

Description of Categories of Conceptions of the Involvement of
Teacher-Librarians in Literacy Education

The seven categories of conceptions, by primary teachers' and teacher-librarians', of the involvement of teacher-librarians in literacy education are presented with a full description of each category and quotations from the transcripts to support the existence of each conception.

Teacher-librarian is not involved. In this conception the teacher-librarian is seen/understood as not being involved in aspects of literacy education. This conception is manifested through the areas of resources, curriculum and professional development.

In the area of resources:

> Video has been totally neglected in our school (J1).

> I'm in a position at my school where we have such a competent computer consultant that I'm not in the picture at all. I don't need to be. I mean I probably should be but I'm not because she runs everythingÉthat's one area I don't deal with (J9).

> I think they've got to channel it [TL involvement] into certain areas though. If you try and touch on the whole spectrum it's too difficult. I think focus in certain areas. Well here 'M' [not TL] basically looks after the computer literacy side doesn't he (F2)?

In the area of curriculum:

> You often hear the TL referred to as 'librarian'É
> That's because people don't associate it with the teaching side (D10).

> When you plan around ELA do you plan around a specific genre or a literature-based unit into which you can incorporate literacy skills?
> It depends who I am planning with. Some teachers are not into it (G15).

In the area of professional development:

> There'd be some librarians who'd not be qualified to be involved in literacy development whereas 'A' is. To involve a lot of them would be a bit dangerous really, especially with ELA. If they're not up to date they could do a lot of damage if they were made to be involved and they didn't have the expertise. See most of them are part-time. Would they all be attending the ELA in-service like 'A' is (C6)?

> Our TL is three days a week. If the in-service falls on the days when she's not there she doesn't do any in-service like the ELA in-service. Now I feel that's incorrect (H13).

> Would you consider it your role to help the teachers who haven't had the in-service to guide them in literacy development?
> I don't know that I'd see it as my role because some of the teachers seem a little bit embarrassed that they don't know about ELA (G4).

Teacher-librarian as assistant. In this conception the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/understood as supporting the class teacher and students. The focus is on tasks initiated by class teachers. These tasks do not utilize the teacher-librarian's educational knowledge or expertise but require a knowledge of the collection and the ability to operate equipment. These tasks could be adequately performed by a library aide. This conception is dominant in the area of resources.

In the area of resources:

> 'C' will get them for you. Remember the good old days when you had to come and get it all for yourself and some schools still do (F11).

> When you went searching for information and resources [at a school without a teacher-librarian] it was up to you and you'd be there for hours so they're good scavengers. They could buzz around and collect all the goodies for you (F11).

> It's more of a resources list. You just fill in the areas you need resources for and the next day there it is, all that you wanted (E8).

> If they write down on the board what they're doing, I guess that's how we're helping, I can supply them with not only books but videos or posters and everything (J3).

> And another way I like the librarians to be involved is in choosing books for subjects like sometimes we've had themes like 'The Sea' and things, asking us if

we need other books and pictures and cassettes and equipment on the topic (F6).

The teacher might decide to focus on diaries for four or five weeks. I pull out things like 'Penny Pollard' and all the rest (G7).

Recently I was helped by the TL.ÉShe went through the library for me and she marked off with little coloured stickers where all different Australian authors were to make it easy for the childrenÉ.That was one way that she was helpful to me and the children (D2).

We videoed assemblies and at the end of the year the teacher-librarian copied everything for a class onto a tape and we could use it for self-evaluation for the children, for teacher-evaluation and even to show parents which was really good for talking about children's language development and confidence and things like thatÉ.My Year One class used it as much as the upper school did. The TL helped them operate it and they used it in the same way (A8).

It's not only books where the TL is. You've got all sorts of media available there so it should be utilized and the TL's the best person to do it (E8).

I find it's very useful the way that 'D' has a knowledge of what's in the library (A1).

Mind you 'D's' very good. She knows exactly what's down there (A14).

It must take at last six months to get to know what you've got (E13).

'A' has the best knowledge of what's in the library so if you wanted to do something in poetry or something she could put her hand on it straight away while you'd be searching for ages. So I use her a lot there because ELA as I see it is heavily orientated toward genreÉand so because 'A' is so knowledgeable on all the things that are in the library that makes it so much easier for the teacher. So resources. Knowledge of resources (C2).

I'm new to my library and the most difficult thing was having teachers come down the first week saying I want a bulk loan of this particular genre. I was searching through the shelves trying desperately to find resources (K7).

TLs are running round with their heads cut off always trying to find something, always scrounging around trying to find some particular genre (D1).

Teacher-librarian as manager. In this conception the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/understood as an administrative involvement. The focus is on developing and maintaining organizational systems and procedures. This involvement utilizes the teacher-librarian's professional knowledge and expertise in librarianship. This conception is manifested through the areas of resources and environment.

In the area of resources:

You can have a great library or cupboard full of books but if you don't know what's there and what's available you can't use it (B3).

It's important to have systems where it's easier to locate that information [literacy resources] (B3).

There's so much you have to sift through and there's only so much time available that it's important to have systems where it's easier to locate that information (B3).

Once you're familiar with the computer [library automated catalogue] it will tell you anything quickly.ÉThat's what I mean (B3).

I agree we need more video machines but is that the job of the teacher-librarian to make sure there's enough or is it up to the administration?
It's one of the resources of the school for being involved in media (B6).

A lot of our professional material isn't centralized. It needs to be (B4).

Even with libraries they can be catalogued but stored elsewhere (B5).

I tried to get all our computer programs together and get them catalogued (J8).

I thinkÉif 'D' headed a resource committeeÉI think a resource management committee is a really good idea (A13).

We've got a policy that nothing is bought unless it goes by me [teacher-librarian] first (J10).

I find that she [computer resource person] tends to go ahead and order programs that she wants whereas I feel that it should be her and another person who's interested in computers and me because I know what everyone's doing (J10).

Our 'ELA' Key Teacher bought new resources and everything that she bought I gave a literacy-type subject heading on the computer (K6).

We should be networking more because we've got a limited budgetÉif we were all computerized and were connected into each other's collections we wouldn't be duplicating. We would become specialists in certain fields and we'd be able to draw upon those databases (I6).

I think that's important – networking with other libraries like she gets things from wherever instead of having to buy every single thing for just one activity (A3).

You've now got to stocktake what [reading] resources you've got and somehow centralize it and store it so it's efficient because there's going to be money spent on all those new reading materials to fit in with 'ELA' (K1).

And I like to see some sort of system set up where teachers can easily see new materials that have come in.ÉYou really need to have access and have your

44

attention drawn to something that could be really useful to you in your language teaching (F7).

It's a funny thing but if someone said give that job [accessioning] to someone else I'd say 'No' because then you lose touch with what you've got (K18).

Have you found it difficult to supply good examples of a particular genre?ÉI think we've got to start keeping good lists (I6).

So we need a network of some description where we're feeding in information [about genre] (K6).

I'd like to see our teacher-librarian putting different resources into packages that we can draw on because that will help us to teach the different genres that we suggested we were going to teach this year. So I see her very much in a resourcing role (A1).

In the area of environment:

> To be effective in our job without successful effective systems we are lost aren't we. We can waste so much time (K3).

> I think 'D's' organization helps us, like she is so perfectly organized that in itself is an assistance (A16).

> We can have all these [activity] corners in the library. That will encourage literacy development (A9).

> There are kids that like the Lego and the wonderful language interaction that occurs with it is tremendous but you've got to work out a way of keeping the noise down so others can work and frisking them when they leave. I can see how things have to be well thought out and organized (D11).

Teacher-librarian as independent teacher. In this conception the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/understood as that of a professional teacher working independently from the class teacher. The focus is on programs which may be initiated, planned and implemented by the teacher-librarian, or initiated by the class teacher but planned and implemented by the teacher-librarian. This conception is dominant in the area of curriculum.

In the area of curriculum:

> I still like the teacher-librarian doing a lot with the information type of skills relating to the use of the library and relating to fact finding (F3).

> She taught them how to write a news report after they'd watched something (E8).

> She's [the teacher-librarian] operating in literacy education by designing programs around the literature units. I think that's very helpful (C5).

> This is what our TL's doing. She's running a program with the Sevens in the library where she's taking ads and getting them to look critically at ads on television and in print (E9).

> 'D's' very good at developing mapping skills and that's a very necessary part of the TL's role because that's all part of literacy (A2).

> I think that in a lot of schools they tend to see their role as library people and therefore they would teach the skills that they think are relevant in the library when in actual fact it should be a cross-curricular thing (H2).

> What I [teacher-librarian] do in the library I assess. I assess every child at the end of every unit on what I do with themÉI hand that to the teachersÉ.So I am doing part of their assessment for them (I12).

> Our TL satÉwith both of us Year 1 teachers for our planning when we were actually doing the planning module from ELA and we told her exactly what skills we wanted to work on and that we were going to get stuck right in and

that we were going to do this, this and this and that we wanted to start with nursery rhymes and so she did a whole unit on nursery rhymes in the library (E6).

I [class teacher] told them they couldn't present it in book form, they couldn't present it on paper. They could use other media and they came up with some very good ideas. Our TL is going to do work with them now and expand it even further (E5).

We were talking about that thing the lady wrote about the 'Tournament of Minds' using brainstorming as part of their language arts and I said to 'V' that a good thing to do would be to use that in the library as part of the library lessons so all of the children are taught it because even if you put it in the language arts not every teacher might do it but if it became part of the library program you'll know that all children will have been exposed to it. In the classroom it might have been optional but through the teacher-librarian everyone experiences it. To me that was a good one because they're good skills for later on in life that type of thing, thinking through the problem, brainstorming and the sort of things that go with that. I thought that was a great way to do it (F5).

Teacher-librarian as equal teaching partner. In this conception the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/understood as an equal teaching partnership with the class teacher. The focus is on the teacher-librarian having a direct involvement in student learning programs at a level which makes use of the teacher-librarian's educational knowledge and expertise. Programs are initiated, planned and implemented cooperatively by class teacher and teacher-librarian. This conception is manifested in the areas of environment, curriculum, professional development and assessment and evaluation with dominance in the area of curriculum.

In the area of environment:

I agree about working with 'A' in small groups in the library because in the classroom you need lots more resources to be able to do it (B6).

If teacher-librarians are working closely with teachers and especially when you are CPTing, the library isn't exclusively the domain of the teacher-librarianÉ.If you're working cooperatively and using all the resources, the library is an extension of the classroom (H17).

If the TL is working with the class teacher they could take the class in two different groups and work more closely with the children. You'd have to model together. Joint instruction (G7).

With the two of you in the same room you find it a lot easier to do that sort of thing [cooperative learning strategies for literacy education]. With just the one teacher you might think 'Oh I can't do that myself.' But if there's two of you you might feel a lot more at ease (D9).

She [TL] actually comes up into the classroom. She prefers to come into the classroom so the kids don't see her as just associated with the library (E3).

For this I [TL] went to the classroom. This unit of work is all cooperatively planned (G3).

But the TL doesn't have to work only in the library with you, like all those literature-based units come to our rooms and only part of the work is done in the library. They really cover huge areas of the 'ELA Syllabus'. All of those, all that work we're doing with 'A' really covers everything you want to name like information skills, literacy, computers, visual literacy and all that like in Year 3 we've got in the 'Pirate Unit', social studies, reading, writing, science, language, music, drama, you name it (B8).

In the area of curriculum:

I'm working with every teacher in the school through either a year level unit of work or with individual teachers so we're doing it [planning] all different ways and doing all different things and it's jolly hard work. All the units have very large literacy components (K13).

We have planning time at the beginning of every year where I work with every teacher from every grade (J3).

I think that [what the TL does] has to be reinforced by the teacher as wellÉget a lot more benefit out of what I'm doing in the library if I'm doing it with the teacher (J6).
I've never come across cooperative planning like this. I've always had to sit down and plan myself. I feel working with 'A' [teacher-librarian] and the other Year 3 teachers is helping me get 'ELA' into perspective (B9).

Talking about selection of topic [for talk], the TL can help there. We did a whole activity on choosing a topic. It worked in with the computer catalogue to find information on something that interested you. 'A' worked with them at the computer and I was at the shelves helping them find what they wantedÉ.That was preparation for lecturettes (C4).

She [TL] and I planned together what we wanted to do and what we were achieving (H5).

Planning with 'D', we actually plan 'ELA'É.And which genre will you be studying?
It's not really a genre study. It's a whole language unit. It's just that all the phases of 'ELA' are well incorporated in the units (A4).

On a positive note I'd like to say that I hope our CPT days continue because I see that they're a great way of supporting and enhancing the literacy program especially with the emphasis on the information skills. The way the library supports and reinforces what we're doing in the classroom wouldn't occur without those planning sessions with 'A'. The information skills are in a continuum and this is good and I hope that we continue to link them in with the ELA units that we've started off. I think that's important too. I feel very positive about the CPT days where we put it all together (B12).

When you look at our CPT time you see that it's all sort of literacy-based isn't it. It's integrated and that's what the 'ELA Syllabus' wants (C2).

That [assignment writing unit] could work really well for a TL I think doing it in conjunction with the teacher (E3).

With 'D' the way we spoke and the way we planned was actually in 'ELA' phases and the activities will reflect that and so they will reflect the language program (A5).

It's good to plan with the teacher-librarianÉ.We planned for ten weeks (F9).

I think you sit down with your whole school – your teacher-librarian and your teachers and you work out a whole school program. It has to be everyone. It can't just be the TL (H11).

I've just done a unit on 'Realistic Fiction' with the Year 7 in cooperation with the teacher. There was a lot of reading of realistic fiction (J4).

That's just how a language program should work [children working at their own pace].ÉWe're teaching language at all different levels. The TL can be involved in this. When the TL comes in you want to have small groups that you can work with (H11).

Recently we did report genre with Year 6. We decided at a planning meeting that I would do the lead in skills, the questioning skills, etc. We'd do notetaking from specimens and pictures and that sort of thing. I'd do the lead in work and they'd do more in the classroom. We went through it and they finally gave their reports. One of them said when we finished, 'I just didn't realize how good it would be' (K25).

I saw a teacher-librarian who had a lovely example of genre and she had done it collaboratively with a teacher. It's a story.ÉIt starts with a few friends who are going on a journey and they need a list of things to take with them so the kids have to write a listÉthen the kids might have to make a map so as you work your way through this book they need a lot of different genre. That's what puts it in context which is important for the development of literacy....The TL's job in that is that she does some of those pages in the library and the teacher does some of those pages in the classroom and they develop the skills as they go (G7).

[If] you want them to progress to doing reports and recounts and all this when they haven't had the basics you've got to go back to teaching the skills. The teacher-librarian is probably more proficient with teaching the skills and I'm not, so between the two of us we can hopefully teach children to note take and go through the process of note taking and then that could lead to a research activity on bushrangers.
And do you relate that to ELA?
That is my ELA unit so we might be doing a recount of what happened so they'll need to research bushrangers and they can do a recount (E7).

In the area of professional development:

Also [TL involved] with planning because 'D' attends the 'ELA' in-service and knows how to use the framework (A1).

In the area of assessment and evaluation:

I [TL] spent last year working with the 'ELA' Key Teacher, producing a literacy profile to be used in conjunction with the report card. It covers the four areas that are covered by the 'ELA Syllabus': process, knowledge, skills and attitudes (I1).

Does anyone get involved in assessing, like developing a criteria sheet for a report or something?
We've done it in several year levels. We've done it by having them present the finished product by a video tape and there's been two teachers working on it and we've assessed it as they've given the report and then we've watched the video tape and gone through our assessment and checked it and then given them feedback (K25).

Teacher-librarian as expert/consultant. In this conception the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/understood as that of an expert who is consulted for their wide knowledge and experience in resourcing and implementing literacy education. The focus is on the teacher-librarian as a 'fountain of knowledge' about resources for literacy education for both teachers and students and as a provider of in-service education to class teachers. This involvement is a reactive role initiated by the needs of teachers and students. This conception is manifested through the areas of resources, curriculum and professional development.

In the area of resources:

It's the teacher-librarian who can start plugging up those gaps [in the collection] so teachers can actually use the material for 'ELA' (D1).

It's not many of us get a chance to go to the bookshops to see what kids' books are there. It's part of the teacher-librarian's job to see what new books are available, Book of the Year and that sort of thing so they can let us know what's there, what's available and what's recommended (B1).

It's very difficult to keep abreast with so many changes needed in professional reading as well but that's what the teachers look upon us as pilots in our roles just to keep them in touch with the resources (J15).

I think there's a strong case for keeping teacher-librarians in the one school for a number of years so that they can become familiar with everything within the school and the community (F12).

That's where the teacher-librarian is good because she knows all the resources that go with those things [literacy programs] (F10).

The teacher-librarian does come in handy because they do know lots of those sorts of people that relate to lots of subjects. 'C' just told me about a fellow round here who would be helpful if I wanted to do Canada (F12).

I really had to sit down and analyze her [student's] interests and steer her into other areas of the collection (I11).

A really important point is for the TL to really know the resources not just the print material but to really know the videos and to really know what resources she has so therefore cooperative planning sessions go much better. Teachers' needs can then be met more easily. I think that's very important.
And also not necessarily knowing all the information and knowing the resources but knowing where to find them (E13).

'D' has a knowledge of what's in the library. When we're doing the cooperative planning she advises what resources are there. There's many things that she advises on that I don't even know and I can incorporate it into my planning (A1).

We're trying to keep up with educational videos for those teachers who float in and say well I want something for the kids for half an hour or so. What I say to them is what's your language topic? What topic are you working on? What's your theme for this video? And then we try and find something that will suit the class level (J1).

We've got to look for those [visual resources]. I think our training puts us one ahead of teachers....I think the teacher-librarian's got a great responsibility, especially with the new 'ELA Syllabus', to put his or her expertise to the fore in selecting books that are good visually and have good captions and all of those things to enhance that learning process because too much text just cannot compete with that highly visual world that the children are growing up in (I6).

As teacher-librarians we're there gathering the [video] programs, being aware of what's on, being involved in that wayÉ.
And previewing them yourself to see what level they're suited for (J2).

Being more familiar as far as what's suitable for children and what's geared to their age level. I wouldn't mind more information on that so that when you're selecting books for your class you're at least familiar with the range of books (B3).

I have a lot of kids this year who are behind in reading and you need some good high interest books for kids who are behind in reading age and I think a librarian can be really good in helping you find that sort of thing and maybe have a special section or a special collection that you could take back to your room and use for those kids (F6).

Those planning days and planning the ELA units are giving me a better understanding of the ELA. Like we're all sitting down together and going through what's in the Guidelines and what's in the library. You need to do that with the teacher-librarian because you need so many resources to implement ELA (B13).

I'm showing them what we've already got. Even a lot of the old books have elements in them that are relevant to that approach to literacy development, like examples of different genre (J11).

TLs need to broaden the variety of media rather than just print, video tapes and people too – parents probably right on the doorstep. I had a teacher aide staff who was Polish and could talk about that country (D1).

I think the teacher-librarian is nicely poised to give a multi-media approach. 'D' can draw out such things as slides, maps, charts, videos, pictures, whatever, to fit the topic, not just books. You have difficulty in the classroom laying your hands on such a wide range of forms of information (A3).

And then when the teacher comes and asks for a book to read to Year 5 can you recommend one? You've got some awareness. You need to do a lot or reading to be able to supply books to teachers (K19).

When we do cooperative planning she points us in the direction of things that can be used and then we take that into account with our planning (A2).

We [CT and TL] used literature as a starting point for a whole lot of skills, information skills and literacy skills (G13).

You've got a real literacy focus [in unit planned by CT and TL]. You'll need more than just reading material. You'll need audio, visual and computer programs. We've got computer programs for literacy skills – CD-ROM (G10).

One of the things I like about the language units [planned by CT and TL] is the video component. I like the videos that 'A' [TL] selects to fit in with the theme.

I think that's much more productive viewing than just watching ABC programs because they're there (B9).

In the area of curriculum:

The teacher expects a lot from her [T-L]. She organizes a lot of the curriculum work in the school. She's on all those committees. ELA's the big one at the moment (E12).

At CPTÉshe gives us lots of suggestionsÉ.She comes up with great ideas. I couldn't think of ideas from resources like she can (D6).

I think the teacher-librarian can be involved in getting the whole school keyboard literate too, getting into the computer programs starting early in Year 1 (B6).

It's a continuum [information skills, genre] and they know what they're covering. Teacher-librarians need to be the centre of those. The TL can keep it all going, even across three strands of Year Sevens (H3).

If we're going to have continuums then I think the teacher-librarian is the person who is more flexible and able to organize it. Even the 'ELA' Key Teacher doesn't know what everyone else is doing (H13).

We've got to have this continuum so that by the time they're in Year 7 they've come across all the different types of fiction (I14).

The teacher-librarian is in the position now of seeing all the different classes come in therefore it's part of that role to keep the overview of it (H4).

It's important for the teacher-librarian to have an overview of the whole thing. The teacher-librarian is the one person who can see what's going on from Year 7 down to Year 1 and see where there's a gap (H11).

The TL can see if any class has a specific problemÉbecause they're looking at the whole picture and where they fit in. The TL can say you can't do that at the beginning of Grade 4 because they did it at the end of Grade 3. You're looking at it in a different way but it's too close to have the same subject matter (H11).

In the area of professional development:

There's a high expectation of TLs. People say, 'Oh that's the TL. The TL knows everything' (D9).

Like all of a sudden if the computer program packs up and doesn't work you have to go running for the one person who knows how it works. 'Help it won't work. It's frozen. Get the teacher-librarian!' (B7).

That's another thing. The teachers rely on the TL to be computer literate and everything else literate (K17).

I find that having someone like that [the teacher-librarian] to advise you on the structure and management of groups has helped me a great deal (A2).

I wonder how many TLs are 'ELA' Key Teachers in their schools.
I am. I'm the FLIP [Further Literacy In-service Project] tutor in our school (K5).

'C' would be the ideal resource personÉto rely upon to help us through that ghastly maze of papers that 'T' gave us that day. 'C' seemed to know where we were going so perhaps that could be one of her important roles. There seems to be a need for somebody on staff to be there to back us up (F7).

We are going to have to back up for the staff because they are going to want to know – How? What is this genre? How does it work? What's the structure? – and it would be up to us to give them examples (K6).

But the thing is she [the T-L] knows so much more. She knows so much more than I do about all this 'ELA'. If you had to go to someone on staff about it you'd go to her (C2).

You're going to have to be a step ahead of them [teachers][in knowledge about genre]. That's the hardest thing because we're still working, or I feel I'm working at their pace but somewhere along the way you have to jump ahead so you're there when they need you (K6).

So what's also happening is that suddenly TLs are expected to be experts in genre and a lot of the genre I just ho ho ho. And this is another thing and I think teachers generally would teach what they are comfortable with but now that's not the case. You have to now research and be familiar with a whole range of genre and it's up to us to find out the structure of each (K5).

TLs always have to attend seminars and do a lot of reading to keep up with everything (D9).

I think probably if you're a librarian now that you'd have to be very well versed in the 'ELA Syllabus' because otherwise you wouldn't be able to help teachers properly if you took a fragmented approach to it (A5).

I've been teaching myself as I go because I missed a couple of modules. I feel it's really important as a teacher-librarian that I know exactly what I'm doing with literacy skills (G5).

I think we need to be comfortable with it [CD-ROM] too and I see that part of 'A's' job, as well as incorporating it in the kids' program, is to develop our literacy skills too. Part of the teacher-librarian's role is helping the teachers to become comfortable with it as well (B2).

I just feel that because the area [literacy education] is so broad maybe 'A' could focus on a few things to help us in language arts. There's just so many areas that's where I find it difficult in 'ELA'. It's a matter of where to start (B7).

Teacher-librarian as leader. In this conception the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/understood as leading the class teacher and students beyond the status quo towards expanded horizons. The focus is on initiating, motivating and inspiring. This involvement is a proactive role initiated by the visions of the teacher-librarian. This conception is manifested through resources, environment, curriculum and professional development.

In the area of resources:

Try to find something on Australian inland explorers for a child with a poor reading level – not easy.
So what do you do then? Make your own?
You end up researching yourself and writing out information. That's what I've done. I've made resources myself (I8).

The way she enthuses children to read magazines is greatÉ.She gets the children reading in a wide range of genre, not just books (A16).

Some TLs are great storytellers. They can inspire kids to a love of literature (H15).

I really enjoy the reading of stories to children and I think that's part and parcel of our involvement to encourage the enjoyment (K10).

Also we can't forget that we want to get children to enjoy books just for reading for the sake of just plain literature for enjoyment or pleasure (E8).

I think it's really important that the teacher-librarian create a love of books and literature and to enjoy it (A6).

Where does literature go now? It's all being used for a subject or as an example of a genre. Where's literature for literature?É (K7)

ÉYou wonder if we've lost this don't youÉ (K8)

Éand I think a major part of the literacy program is literature for literature's sake.

That's right. Which is something that TLs can do to remind teachers about literature for literature and not always as part of this genre study (K9).

And I think it's time we got those older kids back into picture books too (K8).

The thing is you can't force them [to read]. You've somehow got to encourage them (J12).

You've got to bring them to books because so many of them would rather just watch TV (F15).

It's the same with children in the library isn't it. Show them a good book and they all want one. Other kids always gravitate around and interest spreads. It's a good way to spread reading suggestions. TLs need to be good advertisers (I13).

I find that if I talk about an author that everybody rushes for the books. I think a lot of it's advertisingÉ.Promotion, we've got to do a lot of that (I13).

If you've got a computer actually in the library you can do something about incorporating it into programs so that teachers who aren't using it can be lead into it.ÉYou're introducing them, getting them up and running with it and then you've actually helped then a little further along the track – facilitators (J9).

Our teacher-librarian brings all the new resources to staff meetings and also books that we didn't know we had that she thought were really good for 'ELA' (D6).

I find that unless you promote them and send them out on bulk loans that they will sit there, teacher reference books, on the shelves, and not be used at all (K21).

In the area of environment:

The teacher-librarian is important in bringing the school togetherÉ.The teacher-librarian can see everything that goes on and can encourage teachers to share what they are doing in their different classrooms (D5).

Well you need to be the sort of person who can relate well to all staff members. And relate well to children as well because it's no use having a brilliant library if the kids are too frightened to go into it and use it (F13).

I think 'D' develops a love of books just by getting kids to go to the libraryÉbecause it's such a place of activity and fun and the kids just love it so that in itself engenders a love of literature (A7).

In the area of curriculum:

To my mind where we slot into 'ELA' the access we've got is in the planning and we can see that 'ELA' is being addressed in the planning (G10).

Teachers are very often broad with activities. We [teacher-librarians] can focus on more specific skills. For example a teacher recently told me she wanted the children to learn about an animal. That was really broad. In planning with her I was able to help her involve more than just factual content (G12).

In a way it could be hard couldn't it because some people could resist having the amount of involvement in their planning and that's something she'd [teacher-librarian] have to work towards, breaking down those barriers if there were people who felt uncomfortable. So that's probably a big part of the job too in some cases (F13).

I think the relationship between the teacher-librarian and the principal is important. I'm thinking of the principal's support in implementing cooperative planning and teaching (D11).

I think that's a really key area that teacher-librarians can get into in encouraging teachers to use a lot more of those cooperative group strategies and developing those higher level skills (D9).

I seeÉin terms of the video aspect and visual literacy there, that not only are we to help teachers to realize that it's not just a fill in for half an hour, that if we're actually involved in the teaching of literacy using the visual medium, that there is some sort of learning going on (J2).

I think that we will find that part of their literacy is reading comics. Let's face it. Some of our kids will not read anything elseÉ.I think that we will have to consider that as part of our role – teaching them to be selective (I15).

Last year we had that science competition [organized by the teacher-librarian]. The kids were encouraged to read and interpret the experiments and then develop some simple science experiment of their own and share it with others. The literacy skills in that were pretty complex and even the young children were doing it well. That really got a whole lot of kids into reading especially the ones that don't have the patience to read long books. They're all involved with reading and following instructionsÉ.They're developing their reading skills and comprehending while they're having fun. That kind of thing involves the whole school (A17).

In the area of professional development:

In your school where there's been a lot of patchy ['ELA'] in-service do you see it as your role to try and pull it all together?
I do. Yes. In my CPT planning definitely (G9).

Would you consider it your role to help the teachers who haven't had the in-service ['ELA'] to guide them in literacy development?É
ÉWell, when we CPT I use the opportunity to bring it ['ELA' in-service] into our planning (G11).

I had no idea that teacher-librarians even worked with teachers. It was only that she took me under her wing and pointed out to me what assistance she could be to me or I would never have known.É
ÉIt's a great combination, the enthusiasm of a brand new teacher and the experience and ideas of a TL and I felt in that first year I accomplished a whole lot and I only did it because of her assistance and direction (D4).

It's very challenging for teacher-librarians because they come across a lot of teachers who don't know about things or don't feel competent about doing thingsÉso TLs end up teaching teachers as much as they teach students.
Probably in many ways that is as valuable a role as any contact that TLs have with the children – what TLs are getting through to the teachers as regards teaching strategies and current educational thinking (D9).

I think teacher-librarians are in a really good position to help parents become knowledgeable about what happens in the school (D5).

I like the way she [the T-L] in-services parents. I know that when they come up for library units she's got a core group now that she's in-serviced on what they're supposed to do and how they're supposed to do it and so that's really good how she sort of extends herself by directing them (A11).

Interpreting the Outcome Space

The relationships between the categories of conceptions that emerged from the data are drawn by the variation in the focus of the teacher-librarian's professional knowledge and expertise in both education and librarianship in relation to literacy education. The range of this professional focus varied from no professional focus, through single professional focus (where expertise in either education or librarianship is recognized), to joint professional focus (where expertise in both education and librarianship is recognized). The outcome space portrays the increasing complexity of the categories of conceptions, thus revealing the place of each in a hierarchy from 'Leader' to 'Not involved'. The logic of the place of each category within the outcome space, based on the variable of professional focus, is expanded below and is presented pictorially in Figure 1.

Teacher-librarian is not involved. In this conception there is no recognition of the teacher-librarian's expertise in education or librarianship (no professional focus). The teacher-librarian is regarded as being uninvolved in aspects of literacy education.

Teacher-librarian as assistant. In this conception there is no recognition of the teacher-librarian's knowledge and expertise in education or librarianship at a professional level in relation to literacy education. A knowledge of what is in the library collection and an understanding of what type of resources might be suitable for particular year levels indicate a non-professional focus, one that could be equally provided by a library aide and can be termed 'resource awareness'.

Teacher-librarian as manager. In this conception there is recognition of the teacher-librarian's professional expertise in librarianship (single professional focus). This conception grants the teacher-librarian a more complex involvement in literacy education than that of 'Assistant' by recognizing qualities of professional librarianship to develop and maintain organizational systems and procedures for managing literacy

resources and library space for literacy education. The involvement is that of a professional librarian.

It was not until the analysis reached the stage of compiling the outcome space that the relationship of 'Manager' to the other categories became clear. Originally it seemed to stand aside, out of the flow of the other categories. Later it appeared as a blanket category encompassing all others. It was not until the variable of professional focus emerged as the relationship between the categories that 'Manager' slotted into the flow. This explains its position at the end of the list of categories in Chapter 5, 'Phase 2'.

Teacher-librarian as independent teacher. In this conception there is recognition of the teacher-librarian's professional expertise in education (single professional focus). The involvement is that of a professional teacher working in isolation from the class teacher and parallels that of 'Manager' in the outcome space.

Teacher-librarian as equal teaching partner. In this conception there is also recognition of the teacher-librarian's professional expertise in education (single professional focus). However, this conception is more complex than that of 'Independent teacher' due to the nature of the professional focus. The educational involvement is collaborative, teacher-librarian working with class teacher, in contrast to that of 'Independent teacher' which occurs in isolation from the class teacher.

Teacher-librarian as expert/consultant. In this conception there is a joint professional focus. The teacher-librarian's knowledge and expertise in both education and librarianship are recognized. The direct flow in the hierarchy is evident from 'Assistant' to 'Expert/Consultant' as both are reactive involvements, but professional expertise in both education and librarianship has been added as the conceptions have developed from 'Assistant' to 'Expert/Consultant'.

Teacher-librarian as leader. In this conception there is also a joint professional focus as the teacher-librarian's professional expertise in both education and librarianship is recognized. The complexity has increased from 'Expert/Consultant' because 'Leader' is a proactive involvement.

Hierarchy of conceptions of teacher-librarians' involvement in literacy education

Teacher-librarian is seen as:

Figure 1. Outcome Space

Establishing the Reliability of the Categories of Description

The process of identifying the categories in a phenomenographic study is a form of discovery. As such, another researcher, working independently on the same data, might not discover the same categories. Marton (1986b: 35) explains that it is not reasonable to expect that another researcher should make the same discoveries independently, just as it is not required that different researchers working independently should invent the same experiment. On the other hand, once the categories have been identified, it must be possible for the researcher and another person to reach a high degree of agreement about their presence. To continue the analogy, once an experiment has been invented, it should be carried out with similar results by different researchers. Recognition by a co-judge of the presence of the categories discovered verifies their reliability. This is necessary if other researchers and practitioners are to be able to use them. For this purpose a co-judge was asked to classify responses from this study according to the categories discovered.

While the role of the researcher is to discover the categories from the data, it is the role of the co-judge, in phenomenographic data, to recognize the categories to which the quotations belong. This ensures that the categories are unique and verifies the existence of the categories. If agreement can be reached between researcher and co-judge, after discussion of discrepancies, then the reliability of the categories is said to be established (Marton, 1986b: 35).

Descriptions, illustrations, representative quotations and one transcript which represented all the categories were given to the co-judge. The co-judge independently assigned quotations from this transcript to the categories. The researcher and the co-judge compared where each had assigned quotations and focused on discrepancies. Adjustments made to the categories of 'Teacher-librarian as independent teacher' and 'Teacher-librarian as expert/consultant' resulted in some utterances, both from this transcript and others, being relocated between these categories. These utterances concerned the involvement of the teacher-librarian in resource selection, where the knowledge of the collection includes an understanding of the suitability of resources for particular curriculum applications and individual students' use. This clarified the resource selection component of the teacher-librarian's role in literacy education as involving the joint professional skills of the teacher and the librarian. This led to the final definition of these categories and resulted in a 100 per cent agreement between the researcher and the co-judge in assigning quotations to the categories.

The reliability of the categories is further strengthened by the distribution of the categories across the focus groups as detailed in Table 2. Of the seven categories, more than half are represented in ten of the eleven groups, with three categories represented in the remaining group. This indicates that the conceptions elicited by this study exist broadly across the population sample. From this it could be expected that a similar distribution might occur across another set of eleven groups should the study be replicated. Had each conception been represented in only a small number of the groups, then the extent to which the findings of this study could be related to the general population of primary teachers and teacher-librarians would be reduced.

Identifying Distributions

The seven categories of description were discovered as a result of interpretations made at a collective level. The categories were discovered from the data provided by eleven focus group discussions. The categories of description themselves are qualitative results and are the principal findings of this study. They answer the question: 'What are the conceptions held?' It is possible to identify the distribution of these groups over the categories and also to identify the distribution of categories across the groups. Such distributions provide quantitative data and answer the questions: 'How many groups hold these different conceptions?' and 'Which conceptions are represented in each group?' (Marton, 1981: 195-196). Marton (1993) explains that the inclusion of such information is for the value of impression. Marton (1993) includes similar distributions in his study of scientific intuition for the purpose of impression. Table 2 indicates the spread of focus groups across the categories and the spread of categories across the focus groups. The purpose of the inclusion of such information in this study is to assist in recognizing the value of these categories of conceptions to the main parties involved, namely primary teachers and teacher-librarians. This is discussed further in Chapter 6.

Table 2 indicates that in categories lower in the hierarchy, expressed by the outcome space, there are fewer focus groups represented than in categories higher. This suggests a greater recognition of a joint professional focus for the teacher-librarian than of a single professional or a non-professional focus. It is noted that while 'Teacher-librarian as equal teaching partner' recognizes only a single professional focus for the teacher-librarian, the collaborative element of the teacher-librarian's educational involvement in this category is superior to the isolated approach represented in 'Teacher-librarian as independent teacher'. This was concluded from the review of literature relevant to this topic.

Table 2 also shows that, with the exception of only one group (B), more than half of the seven categories of conceptions are represented in each focus group (B includes three categories). F is represented in all categories. This spread indicates that there is a high incidence of the categories across the groups and that they are not clustered in few groups. This increases the reliability of the study, i.e. the extent to which it can be generalized across the population and therefore the extent to which its conclusions have application to the general population of primary teachers and teacher-librarians.

Table 2. Distribution of Focus Groups across the Categories of Conceptions

NI = Not Involved; ASSIST = Assistant; MAN = Manager; INDEP = Independent Teacher; EQUAL = Equal Teaching Partner; EXP/CON = Expert/ Consultant; LEAD = Leader.

Unanticipated Findings

The Library Is Central to Literacy Education

Some conceptions about the role in literacy education of the library itself were revealed:

> I guess the library shouldn't be an isolated part. There's more to libraries than what's inside the building (F12).

> Here the library is an integral part.
> It's the centre.
> It's as important as any classroom. It's got its own identity (A7).

> Have the library as the centre, the soul of the school as far as the variety of things and the fact that it encompasses everyone (A18).

These conceptions relate closely to the apparent impact of the introduction of the *ELA Syllabus* (1991) on the use of resources in literacy education.

The Use of Resources in Literacy Learning Is Expanding

The introduction of the *ELA Syllabus* (1991) is promoting a greater awareness of the role of resources in literacy education. There is a recognition that the broader concept of literacy that is presented in this syllabus means that the range of resources we use to support literacy learning must be extended.

> Their idea and mine of what I'd like them to read are different but they're still reading (K11).

> I've got four children and one child, one boy is an avid readerÉand will read all the novels and I think he is a successful reader but I don't think the others are. I think how can I get the other three to read?ÉThey read but they don't read what I want them to read.ÉThey're all quite competent readers except I only consider one of them is. He reads everywhere like I do so I consider him a successful reader. The others are no less successful. They're reading what they want to read.ÉOne of my sons has great computer literacy but my book reader doesn't have that but really they're both developing literacy skills (I20).

> Don't you think that's one of the things with ELA that non-fiction has come more to the fore?
> Oh yes very much so (K7).

> ELA might make us rethink [our preoccupation with books] (I19).

> It comes out more with ELA that we have to focus on things that we mightn't have thought of before. People resources become more important. Take interviewing (D1).

> But as far as our job as a resources expert it's becoming bigger then 'Ben Hur' because of the amount of resources available now in the literacy area (K18).

Because you have to immerse the children in a particular genre so you have to have resources for that.
A wider range of resources as well. I mean I don't think one scheme's the be all and end all. You need more than that so we've got to extend the range to cover all genres (K4).

Looking at the ELA program and all the different genres it's really affecting what's going on in the library, what the teachers are wanting in the library and what's being bought (J11).

So the idea should be then that we have all different types of resources.
I think we have to and I think we have to expand our way of thinking about resources (I18).

Well I think ELA has made more books circulate (K21).

Resources are assuming a much greater importance than they did prior to ELA (F3).

Right now a lot of it [the role of the teacher-librarian in literacy education] is getting materials in that we need to teach the way that we're supposed to be teaching. And also materials to back up a lot of the genres. That's what we're often trying to do aren't we – back up a lot of those genres and find the resources in the library (F3).

You need so many resources to implement ELA (B13).

Involvement in Literacy Education Has an Impact on the Teacher-Librarian

Magnitude of the role. There is realization that the wide ranging involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education creates a broad and demanding role:

It's a mammoth task (B1).

There's so much TLs can do that there is no way they can do everything (D10).

Lots of demands on TLs – more than on class teachers (D1).

It just seems to me that if teacher-librarians are going to take on all those things [aspects of literacy education] they're going to need about ten of them instead of one (C1).

The problem for 'C' is that there are so many people. There are so many demands and so many areas have to be covered (F8).

It's hard when you're there only three days a week. I have to do a lot of this at home (J2).

She [teacher-librarian] doesn't get paid for all the work she does in the weekends and the holidays. She's overloaded as it is now (C1).

Don't you think that genre thing [continuum] we've got makes 'C's' job just about impossible? It's so wide (F3).

I think it's a very hard position, the teacher-librarian. I really do. You've got to be Jack and Jill of all trades (E12).

If you're a TL you've got to be on the ball. There's no way you can sit back and say 'Oh well I'm here and that's that' (D9).

Restrictions on Fully Implementing the Role

Time. Insufficient time is regarded as a substantial restriction on the teacher-librarian becoming fully and effectively involved in literacy education. Many teacher-librarians are employed on a part-time basis and many schools have large student populations and only one full-time teacher-librarian. These factors contribute to a shortage of time for teacher-librarians.

> She [teacher-librarian] would love to do all those things but it's impossible. She doesn't have the time (E13).

> You get an assembly, fire drill, LOTE. Finally, to fit the six units in you stretch it out to another week and you lose the continuity. I feel that I'm just skimming on the surface (K13).

> Do you ever feel that the job is all encompassing and we don't ever get enough time in the day to do it so we are just always frustrated (K10)?

> And where does 'ELA' sit if there's only half the staff working with you?
> I'm just so busy with the half I work with that it takes up all the time I'm in the school (G9).

> We didn't particularly like staying back until eight o'clock last night. We'd have preferred to be doing it in school time (F9).

> But you have to realize that it obviously takes a lot of initial planning of the unit for all that to work out and so many teachers are just not committed enough to do it. You need extra time. (E14)

> I think the teacher-librarian's biggest problem is the time to be familiar with the [computer] program. You have to work your way through it (J7).

> It's still a matter of the amount of time she's [teacher-librarian] got though isn't it? If 'A' is involved with a class and you send down and say I need some particular genre material she can't help you then (C2).

> It's becoming harder with the school getting bigger to find time to be in the library (A10).

> Sometimes what concerns me is that there is no way that we [teacher-librarians] can be expert in each area that we are involved in.ÉThere is just no way in the time allocated, even if you are full-time, that you can fill all the shoes expertly (J11).

Environment. Lack of space in the library is another factor which can restrict the contribution of the teacher-librarian to literacy education. This limits access to students and also the type of activities that can occur there.

> Environment can make a heck of a difference to planning and organizing. At my last school the library was big enough to accommodate three classes at a time and so there were a number of different teaching areas which made a difference to access (B7).

I'd love to ring up and say I'm sending half the class down [to the library] to have a quiet time reading or to do research but you can't because there are too many people there (C5).

Psychological. Promoting the role of the teacher-librarian is necessary if some teachers are resisting their involvement. Teacher-librarians must also emphasize their teacher role over the librarian role if they are to make a significant contribution to literacy education.

A lot of teachers still want ownership of what they're doing and it's very hard sometimes to get them to let you work with them and that's what you're there for (K13).

Also a lot of older librarians were not teachers so if teacher-librarians can overcome that idea and show they are competent teachers they can maybe work more profitably with a teacher. I think sometimes that battle has to be overcome first (E11).

Summary

In this study verbal responses were gathered from eighty-two class teachers and teacher-librarians in response to a request that they discuss the topic of the involvement of teacher-librarians in the literacy education of primary school students. Respondents were invited both to draw upon and to extend beyond the involvement that occurs in their own school and to share their own ideas on this topic. The discussions were held in eleven groups. The details of the groups are given in Chapter 4, 'Data Collection Methodology'. Analysis of these responses led to identification of the following seven conceptions of the involvement of the teacher-librarian in the literacy education of primary school students:

* teacher-librarian is not involved;
* teacher-librarian as assistant;
* teacher-librarian as manager;
* teacher-librarian as independent teacher;
* teacher-librarian as equal teaching partner;
* teacher-librarian as expert/consultant;
* teacher-librarian as leader.

In addition, evidence from the transcripts supports the library as central to literacy education. This is related to the expanding use of resources in developing literacy skills. The introduction of the *ELA Syllabus* (1991) is promoting a greater awareness of the role of resources in literacy education.

Finally, involvement in literacy education has an impact on the teacher-librarian. This leads to restrictions on fully implementing the role brought about by the magnitude of the role, the time available to teacher-librarians to work in this capacity and environmental and psychological problems.

Chapter 6. Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations

You've only got to look at the 'ELA' documents to see how much emphasis is placed on resource-based learning and I don't see how you can effectively do it without the assistance of the TL (D11).

This study concludes that the potential for the involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education in the primary school is recognized by class teachers and teacher-librarians in seven different ways which relate to form a hierarchy. The factor which relates these conceptions in the hierarchy is the recognition of the degree of professional input of the teacher-librarian. This ranges from no professional focus, through single professional focus to a joint professional focus where the roles of professional teacher and professional librarian are recognized. This is supported by the principal findings of this study.

It is also concluded that a recognition of the relationship between literacy skills and information skills is emerging as a result of the emphasis of the *ELA Syllabus* (1991) on cross-curriculum skill development. This is expanding the traditional concept of the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education through the area of fiction which literature, reporting on current practice, appears to be the dominant area of involvement for teacher-librarians in the field of literacy education. Again the influence of the *ELA Syllabus* (1991), with its emphasis on non-fiction texts, written, visual and spoken, is drawing the teacher-librarian into the non-fiction arena. This is occurring through involvement in selection of resources and in the area of curriculum planning.

Principal Findings of the Study

The principal findings of this study are the seven categories of description representing class teachers' and teacher-librarians' conceptions of the involvement of teacher-librarians in the literacy education of students in Years 1 to 7. The conceptions identified in this research indicate the variety of ways in which the involvement of teacher-librarians in facilitating the development of literacy in primary students' is recognized. Full analysis of the categories of description, including diagrams and representative quotations, is found in Chapter 5. Each category is represented here by its name, identifying description and an illustrative quotation from the focus group discussions.

The Teacher-Librarian Is Not Involved

In this conception the teacher-librarian is seen/understood as not being involved in aspects of literacy education. This conception is manifested through the areas of resources, curriculum and professional development.

> I'm in a position at my school where we have such a competent computer consultant that I'm not in the picture at all. I don't need to be. I mean I probably should be but I'm not because she runs everythingÉthat's one area I don't deal with (J9).

The Teacher-Librarian as Assistant

In this conception the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/understood as supporting the class teacher and students. The focus is on tasks initiated by class teachers. These tasks do not utilize the teacher-librarian's educational knowledge or expertise but require a knowledge of the collection and the ability to operate equipment. These tasks could be adequately performed by a library aide. This conception is dominant in the area of resources.

> The teacher might decide to focus on diaries for four or five weeks. I pull out things like 'Penny Pollard' and all the rest (G7).

The Teacher-Librarian as Manager

In this conception the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/understood as an administrative involvement. The focus is on developing and maintaining organizational systems and procedures. This involvement utilizes the teacher-librarian's professional knowledge and expertise in librarianship. This conception is manifested through the areas of resources and environment.

> It's important to have systems where it's easier to locate that information [literacy resources] (B3).

The Teacher-Librarian as Independent Teacher

In this conception the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/understood as that of a professional teacher working independently from the class teacher. The focus is on programs which may be initiated, planned and implemented by the teacher-librarian, or initiated by the class teacher, but planned and implemented by the teacher-librarian. This conception is dominant in the area of curriculum.

> She's [teacher-librarian] operating in literacy education by designing programs around the literature units. I think that's very helpful (C5).

The Teacher-Librarian as Equal Teaching Partner

In this conception the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/understood as an equal teaching partnership with the class teacher. The focus is on the teacher-librarian having a direct involvement in student learning programs at a level which makes use of the teacher-librarian's educational knowledge and expertise. Programs are initiated, planned and implemented cooperatively by class teacher and teacher-librarian. This conception is manifested in the areas of environment, curriculum, professional development and assessment and evaluation with dominance in the area of curriculum.

> I've never come across cooperative planning like this. I've always had to sit down and plan myself. I feel working with 'A' [teacher-librarian] and the other Year 3 teachers is helping me get 'ELA' into perspective (B9).

The Teacher-Librarian as Expert/Consultant

In this conception the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/understood as that of an expert who is consulted for their wide knowledge and experience in resourcing and implementing literacy education. The focus is on the teacher-librarian as a 'fountain of knowledge' about resources for literacy education for both class teachers and students and as a provider of in-service education to class teachers. This involvement is a reactive role initiated by the needs of class teachers and students. This conception is manifested through the areas of resources, curriculum and professional development.

> We [teacher-librarians] are going to have to back up for the staff because they are going to want to know 'How?' 'What is this genre?' 'What's the structure?' and it would be up to us to give them examples (K6).

The Teacher-Librarian as Leader

In this conception the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education is seen/understood as leading the class teacher and students beyond the status quo towards expanded horizons. The focus is on initiating, motivating and inspiring. This involvement is a proactive role initiated by the visions of the teacher-librarian. This conception is manifested through resources, environment, curriculum and professional development.

> The teacher-librarian is important in bringing the school togetherÉ.The teacher-librarian can see everything that goes on and can encourage teachers to share what they are doing in their different classrooms (D5).

A logical relationship exists between these categories. This relationship is represented diagrammatically in the outcome space shown in Figure 1 in Chapter 5. The outcome space is the structure formed to illustrate the relationship between the categories and may be considered as a model, depiction or map of the space over which the thoughts of the respondents ranged (Renstrom, Andersson and Marton, 1990: 58). The categories are related in this study by the variation in the focus of the teacher-librarian's professional knowledge and expertise in both education and librarianship. Discovery of this relationship led to the development of the outcome space which depicts a hierarchy showing this professional focus ranging from a combination of professional teacher and professional librarian, through the recognition of professional teacher or professional librarian to no recognition of professional focus.

Conclusions and Implications

Presented in Table 1 in Chapter 5 are distributions showing the spread of focus groups across the categories and the spread of the categories across the focus groups. From these distributions it is evident that there is a wide recognition of the levels of teacher-librarian involvement in literacy education from the upper end of the hierarchy depicted by the outcome space Figure 1 in Chapter 5. This is involvement where there is a joint focus of professional teacher combined with professional librarian or the high level of a single professional focus which recognizes the collaborative aspect of the professional teacher. Table 2 indicates that this is wider than the recognition of the professional focus at the lower levels of the hierarchy. As this study sought to elicit conceptions of how the teacher-librarian might be involved in literacy education and was not limited to seeking how teacher-librarians are actually involved, it does not follow that the conceptions described by the categories are necessarily translating widely into current practice. In this chapter the balance of the categories is compared with the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education discussed in the literature and considered in terms of how the knowledge of the categories of conceptions may be used to facilitate the involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education in primary schools.

Respondents' Conceptions Compared with Teacher-Librarian Involvement Reported in the Literature

Literacy skills and information skills. The study of the literature related to this topic concludes that there is a relationship between literacy skills and information skills and this relationship could be utilized through the common thread of the teacher-librarian

to enhance students' development of each. A study of reports of current practice indicates that teacher-librarians are frequently involved in literacy education through the medium of literature, but there is less involvement reported that links literacy skills with the teaching of information skills. This study sought to investigate the recognition of any links between literacy skills and information skills and to investigate the respondents' conceptions of the role of the teacher-librarian in making these links.

Throughout each of the eleven focus group discussions participants drew such links. These links were widely attributed, by the respondents, to the introduction of the *ELA Syllabus* (1991), and in particular the emphasis this syllabus places on developing literacy skills through exposure to, and analysis of, a wide variety of genres. Since substantial emphasis is placed on non-fiction genre in the syllabus, in addition to the traditional literary genres, it is concluded that the introduction of this syllabus in Queensland primary schools is increasing awareness of the value of non-fiction resources in teaching literacy skills:

> Don't you think that's one of the things with 'ELA' that non-fiction has come more to the fore?
> Oh yes very much so (K7).

Participants recognize that the skills required for using these non-fiction resources are closely associated with information skills:

> Is this the information skills?ÉYes and general skills – what's in the 'ELA Syllabus'? – main idea, keyword, information skills, skimming, retrieval skills (H1).

This makes the connection to the teacher-librarian, whose involvement in literacy programs is discussed by the participants through this non-fiction aspect:

> Just leaving literature aside for a moment what do you feel about the teacher-librarian's involvement in information skills?
> I think as a follow-on to our literacy programs it's just part and parcel. Six or eight years ago I might have thought they were two different roles. I don't any more (J14).

> [If] you want them [students] to progress to doing reports and recounts and all this when they haven't had the basics you've got to go back to teaching the skills. The teacher-librarian is probably more proficient with teaching the skills and I'm not so between the two of us we can hopefully teach children to note take and go through the process of note taking and then that could lead to a research activity on bushrangers.
> And do you relate that to 'ELA'?
> That is my 'ELA' unit. We might be doing a recount of what happened so they'll need to research bushrangers and then they can do a recount (E7).

A discrepancy is therefore identified between the extent to which teacher-librarians' involvement in literacy education through non-fiction aspects is reported in the literature and the awareness of the teacher-librarian's potential for this involvement. As this connection was drawn by focus group participants, the implications are for this involvement to become a reality. Since the *ELA Syllabus* (1991) is credited as the instrument encouraging this involvement, in establishing such action it could be

relevant that the syllabus is in the early stages of its implementation. There is a need for publication of reports of successful literacy programs involving teacher-librarians through the avenue of information skills.

Literacy education and CPT. The relationship between information skills, literacy skills and the teacher-librarian is further highlighted by the focus group participants in their recognition of the value of implementing the strategies of CPT, which is highlighted by the category of 'Teacher-librarian as equal teaching partner'. This is a strongly recognized category, being represented in each of the eleven focus groups. The recognition of the application of CPT to literacy education is a strong acceptance of the teacher-librarian as a teaching partner in literacy education. Through the process of CPT, curriculum boundaries are transcended in the teaching of information skills; and so the implication is that this framework encourages the same cross-curriculum approach to literacy skills.

Blending teacher and librarian. Hambleton (1986) sees the term 'teacher-librarian' as a reminder of the professional functions of both teachers and librarians. Hambleton (1986) believes there is a responsibility for the teacher-librarian to blend both these areas of expertise. Specifically cited as an example of this blending is the teacher-librarian's contribution to reading programs that make use of literature resources. Hambleton (1986) advocates the celebration of literature for literature's sake. This concept is expressed in the category 'Teacher-librarian as leader', where it is seen as the role of the teacher-librarian to preserve and perpetuate the contribution of literature to the literacy education of primary students. The implication is that if teacher-librarians do not take responsibility for this, then it may not occur at all:

> I think a major part of the literacy program is literature for literature's sake.
> That's right. Which is something that TLs can do to remind teachers about literature for literature and not always as part of this genre study (K9).

The blending of the two professional roles of the teacher and the librarian is also expressed in 'Teacher-librarian as expert/consultant'. This meshing is highlighted in the literature by references to Hambleton (1986), Harper (1989) and Haycock, C.A. (1991). Harper (1989:18) in particular emphasizes the importance of the knowledge of resources that the teacher-librarian has. The value of this knowledge increases when it is coupled with the educational knowledge of the teacher-librarian, who is able to support literacy programs with quality resources, selected from the appropriate curriculum perspective. This concept appeared frequently in the 'Reports of Practice' examined from the literature (Grapper, 1986; Tuohy, 1988; Tink, 1990). This idea was also frequently expressed by the focus group participants:

> The teacher-librarian has a knowledge of what's in the library. When we're doing the cooperative planning she advises what resources are there. There's many things that she advises on that I don't even know and I can incorporate them into my planning (A1).

> That's where the teacher-librarian is good because she knows all the resources that go with those things [literacy programs] (F10).

It is concluded that the educational involvement of the teacher-librarian is closely related to this resource expertise. This is one of the factors which makes the role unique and one of the factors upon which its value stands.

The professional focus of the teacher-librarian. The factors identified in the literature which indicate an effective involvement of the teacher-librarian are:

* establishing the practice of CPT;
* working with class teachers cooperatively to plan units of work which integrate skill development in a cross-curriculum approach;
* utilizing resources and curriculum knowledge to enhance literacy programs.

These concepts are recognized in the categories of conceptions that lie towards the upper end of the hierarchy depicted by the outcome space. These categories therefore acknowledge the higher professional levels of teacher-librarian involvement in literacy education. The high frequency of these categories across the focus groups supports the more complex involvement of the teacher-librarian that occurs at these levels. The following information taken from Table 2 in Chapter 5 illustrates this:

* teacher-librarian as equal teaching partner (represented in 11 groups);
* teacher-librarian as expert/consultant (represented in 11 groups);
* teacher-librarian as leader (represented in 9 groups).

This information indicates a wide recognition by the focus group participants of what is presented in the literature as an effective involvement for the teacher-librarian in literacy education. It is therefore concluded that the involvement of the teacher-librarian can enhance literacy education in the primary school. Consideration is now given as to how this might occur.

Involving the Teacher-Librarian in Literacy Education

The higher incidence of the categories from the upper end of the hierarchy indicates a strong recognition of the professional knowledge and expertise of teacher-librarians in literacy education. It does not indicate that this recognition is always utilized however, as respondents were asked to include in their discussion not only their experiences but also their own ideas of how a teacher-librarian can be involved in literacy education. It cannot be concluded from this study that teacher-librarians *are* widely involved in literacy education at these higher levels, but it can be concluded that their involvement is *recognized* at those levels.

However, the teacher-librarian's involvement is also conceived at a non-professional level or not at all in relation to some aspects of literacy education. From the nature of these conceptions lying at the lower end of the hierarchy, it is concluded that there also exists a lack of understanding of what skills, knowledge and expertise a teacher-librarian has, coupled with a lack of understanding of how to use these professional qualities in literacy education. Here lie implications for pre-service and in-service training of class teachers and teacher-librarians to establish and increase these understandings.

Another consideration is that the focus on professional teacher and professional librarian may also indicate that the categories with a non-professional focus should not be part of the role of the teacher-librarian but should be filled by support staff. This concept is discussed further later in this chapter.

It may be that the type of involvement described in each category has a place in a literacy program in different situations. Teacher-librarians do not perform in only one category all of the time. Situations where involvement at certain levels might occur are clearly indicated in the quotations which illustrate the description of each category. These are presented in Chapter 5. Teacher-librarians may be involved in literacy education across a range of the categories in a single day. An understanding of the overall relevance of a teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy programs in the primary school is what can to be gained by an awareness of the categories identified in this study. This relevance is closely linked to the particular knowledge and expertise of the teacher-librarian, i.e. professionalism in education and librarianship. An awareness of the categories allows class teachers and teacher-librarians to see in what way they can elicit the greatest benefit from the professional qualities of teacher-librarians.

The discovery of these categories of conceptions attaches a defined value to the contribution a teacher-librarian, working largely in the higher categories, can make to students' literacy development. This contribution can take the form of direct involvement with the students themselves, or indirectly through involvement with

their class teachers and others such as teachers of English as a Second Language and Learning Support teachers.

The professional development component of the role, where the teacher-librarian is seen as a provider of professional development to class teachers, as highlighted in the 'Expert/Consultant' category, attaches the added dimension of a need for expertise in adult education as part of the teacher-librarian's bank of skills. Implications lie here for teacher-librarianship training courses. Teacher-librarians should receive training in the principles of adult learning to prepare them for their role as provider of in-service.

The expectations of the 'Expert/Consultant' and the 'Leader' categories highlight the dynamic role of the teacher-librarian who is fixed, in what is often a unique position in a school, as the only person with a full awareness of what is happening throughout the school with curriculum implementation. While the principal and the management team are involved in curriculum development and may be observers and part-time participants in its implementation, the teacher-librarian is actively involved in grassroots planning and implementation with class teachers at all year levels. This conception is highlighted in the study by quotations such as:

> The teacher-librarian is the one person who can see what's going on from Year 7 down to Year 1 and see where there's a gap (H11).

The conceptions found in this research have implications for the way that principals and employing bodies consider the position of teacher-librarian in a primary school. If these conceptions of the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education are to be fulfilled across the board, there is a need for recognition of the impact of this role on student learning. A role of such influence should form part of the management team of the school. This is important because much of the work done by the teacher-librarian at this level requires consultation with management. In state secondary schools and some independent colleges in Queensland, teacher-librarians are able to hold Head of Department, Resources positions, thus facilitating their access to management and at the same time providing recognition for the contribution they make at this level. At this time there is no such promotional position available to teacher-librarians in primary schools. Inclusion of teacher-librarians on management teams would both enhance their involvement in literacy education and provide recognition for their high level contribution throughout the school.

The Role of Resources in Literacy Education

This study indicates that there is a significant increase in resource use and resource-based learning accompanying the introduction of the *ELA Syllabus* (1991) in Queensland primary schools. This has implications for the work load of the teacher-librarian as evidenced by the following quotation:

> But as far as our job as a resources expert it's becoming bigger than 'Ben Hur', because of the amount of resources available now in the literacy area (K18).

Evidence from the study indicates that the teacher-librarian's resource role is twofold. There is a need for the teacher-librarian to have knowledge about what resources are available and to make professional judgments about their suitability for curriculum application both at the acquisition stage and at the unit planning stage. Second, the

teacher-librarian is required to have expertise in management of those resources. An ever increasing number of resources increases the complexity of both these tasks. While the increase in resource use is a favourable event for students' literacy learning, there are considerations here for the effect on funding bodies and the magnitude of the task of the teacher-librarian.

Funding bodies must be made aware of the need for an increase in quality, quantity and range of resources required to support the current approach to literacy education. In addition to the role of the principal or the school budget committee in allocation of funding, the teacher-librarian is often required to prepare annual resource budgets; thus it becomes part of the teacher-librarian's role to make these bodies aware of the need for increased funding to support literacy education through resources.

The magnitude of the task of becoming familiar with an increasing range of resources and considering their curriculum application is only one aspect of the impact that becoming effectively involved in literacy education has on teacher-librarians. 'Restrictions on Fully Implementing the Role', detailed in Chapter 5, show that insufficient time, environmental difficulties and psychological factors all contribute to restricting the effect of the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education. In the light of the findings of this study, which indicate that the teacher-librarian can enhance literacy education, consideration should be given by employing bodies to school library staffing schedules. If teacher-librarians are to operate effectively in the categories at the upper end of the hierarchy, they will require more time. This could be achieved by increasing teacher-librarian hours in the case of part-time teacher-librarians and by increasing the number of teacher-librarians employed in larger primary schools. In addition, increased support staff could free the teacher-librarian from some of the activities in the 'Assistant' category to allow for development of the professional focus of the higher categories. There is a need for the support offered teacher-librarians to take the form, not only of librarianship support provided by library aides, but also of educational support, offered by teacher aides. When considering that it is not unrealistic for one teacher-librarian to be involved in the literacy education of 800 primary students, some support on the educational aspect of this is also required.

Finally, the categories suggest implications for teacher-librarian in-service training. If teacher-librarians themselves are to become aware of their role in literacy education, then their professional development should emphasize this. It has been shown in this study that there is a recognition of the interrelationship of information skills and literacy skills.

> What do you feel about the teacher-librarian's involvement in information skills?
> I think as a follow-on to our literacy programs it's just part and parcel. Six or eight years ago I might have thought they were two different roles. I don't any more (J14).

Training should reflect this relationship, and teacher-librarians should become accustomed to recognizing and implementing their role in a totally integrated way. Class teachers too should fully understand this concept of integration and be aware of the perspective of the teacher-librarian if they are fully to utilize the professional focus of that role. This has implications for the training of class teachers, who should become aware of the role of the teacher-librarian. Inclusion of the teacher-librarian in

in-service training programs such as the 'ELA' Key Teacher program would enhance this awareness.

Extending the Theoretical Frameworks of the Role of the Teacher-Librarian, Literacy Education and the Research Methodology

The Role of the Teacher-Librarian

While this study has focused on the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education, it has implications for the theory surrounding the overall role of the teacher-librarian. The study brings together aspects of this role in a hierarchy which has not been previously recognized. While the literature on teacher-librarianship focuses on the role of 'Equal teaching partner' as it promotes the positive aspects of CPT, there is little emphasis on the professional librarianship of the teacher-librarian. It is often necessary to turn to literature on general librarianship to gain information in this area. This study highlights the need for recognition of this aspect of the teacher-librarian's role and its special application to education in general and to literacy education in particular. Its discussion in association with aspects of education is often relevant.

While there is recognition of teacher-librarians as leaders in establishing and implementing CPT, the concept of 'Teacher-librarian as expert/consultant' has emerged in this study. This conception presents the teacher-librarian as an important agent in the professional development of class teachers and in enhancing the development of learning programs through a consultancy role where their specialized knowledge is sought. This role responds to the needs of class teachers and students and is raised as relevant in all eleven of the focus groups (Table 2 in Chapter 5). This frequency equates with the perceived value of involvement by the teacher-librarian in the more widely understood role of 'Equal teaching partner', which is also represented by all eleven groups. Thus the importance of this emerging role is highlighted. This is coupled with the conception of 'Leader', which sees the teacher-librarian as an innovator. These conceptions expand the notions proposed by Haycock (1995a) and Marland (1987: 11), who suggest the teacher-librarian need not always work with students to be effective in literacy education. In this role as a provider of in-service and a curriculum consultant, the teacher-librarian is seen as having a dynamic and powerful involvement in literacy education in the primary school. Given the depth and breadth of this involvement, the position of teacher-librarian within a school is a key consulting position.

The relationship of the seven categories of description of the role of the teacher-librarian expresses the wholeness of the role. The value of the knowledge and expertise of the professional teacher and the professional librarian is expressed in these categories.

Literacy Education

This study highlights the teacher-librarian as an important agent in the literacy education of primary students. The teacher-librarian's contribution is wide-reaching, stretching across areas of planning and resourcing, through implementation, to consultancy and leadership. The impact of these influences is seen by the respondents to enhance literacy learning, and thus the way that people can view literacy education is broadened.

While the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education was already traditionally recognized through the avenue of literature, the study has found that the cross-curriculum nature of the *ELA Syllabus* (1991) is leading to a greater integration of skill development, and as a result literacy skill development is recognized as 'part and parcel' (J14) of information skill development. This takes the teacher-librarian's involvement in literacy education beyond the traditional arena of literature into the non-fiction domain.

The study indicates that the value of resources in literacy education is recognized. The *ELA Syllabus (1991)* is shown to be influencing the use of resources. The teacher-librarian is in a position to develop this concept by influencing the development of resource-based literacy programs. This expands the approaches to literacy education.

Methodology

Synergetic focus groups. This study expands the theoretical framework of this adaptation of the focus group methodology. As more studies are carried out using this method of data collection, it becomes possible to draw conclusions about the suitability of the method. In this study the use of synergetic focus groups to provide data emerged as a notable success of the study. This is further discussed in Chapter 6, 'Strengths of the Study'. This study can now be cited as another example of the use of this method.

Phenomenographic research. The particular implication of the study for this methodology is the effectiveness of the use of synergetic focus groups to collect data for this type of analysis. Russell (1993a) has identified a connection between these two methodologies and proposes their associated application as a very suitable combination for qualitative research. This study supports that application for reasons detailed in Chapter 6, 'Strengths of the Study'.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

Strengths of the Study

The use of synergetic focus group discussions as the data collection method in this study is proposed as one of the strengths of the study. It proved to be a non-threatening method of learning what the respondents actually thought about the involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education. Discussions all started quickly and held very little irrelevant data, with conversation flowing freely in all groups most of the time. The familiarity of group members with each other facilitated this. During analysis of the transcripts of the discussions it was interesting to discover that all threads of discussion were rounded off. Even in instances where a respondent was interrupted before completing a thought or topic, this person invariably returned to the issue to conclude it. This, in some cases, was many pages further on in the transcript, but it did indeed occur. This factor is interpreted as a strength of this data collection method because it seems that respondents expressed their ideas to an extent which satisfied them.

There was positive feedback from focus group participants following the conclusion of the discussions. Many indicated that the opportunity to discuss the topic was very welcome. Many requested the opportunity to hold similar discussions on other topics at other times. In instances where school staffs gathered they felt it was a worthwhile topic for their 'staff meeting'. The topic fitted well into the area of study for the QUT participants. Some respondents indicated that they felt they had extended their understanding of literacy education as a result of participation in a focus group discussion. Such a response to a professional discussion is very positive.

The inclusion of QUT course participants in the study strengthened the range of the sample. These respondents were drawn from schools spread over a far wider area than the researcher would have otherwise been able to access, and they were able to fit the criteria for selection as familiar with each other by nature of their coming together as course participants.

Limitations of the Study

The nature of qualitative research gives rise to particular limitations, among them being the willingness and ability of individuals to participate in focus group discussions. Only one school approached was unable to provide a group of participants.

The interaction of respondents in the focus group discussions means that the group members are not independent of one another. The data have been described at a collective level, and so it is not possible to attribute these categories of conceptions to any individual.

The study sought to elicit the conceptions that class teachers and teacher-librarians have of the involvement of teacher-librarians in literacy education. It did not seek to compare the conceptions of these two groups, or to establish current practice. Many aspects of current practice were expressed, but these have not been distinguished from what people think could occur. It is therefore not possible to make statements about what is actually occurring in relation to teacher-librarians and literacy education.

Alternative Explanations for the Study

Because of the qualitative nature of this research and the accepted limitations of phenomenographic analysis, there always remains the opportunity for another researcher, working independently, to arrive at a different set of categories if studying the same data. Marton (1986b: 35) explains that this is related to the process of discovery. In answer to the question: 'Would other researchers find the same conceptions or categories if they were doing the study for the first time?' Marton asks: 'Would two botanists discover the same plants and species if they independently explored the same island' (Marton, 1986b: 35)? In the instance of this study it is possible that a different set of conceptions and categories might emerge from the data for another researcher, although it is likely that the essence of the findings would remain constant or be similar.

Recommendations for Further Research

Replicating the Study

This study drew its sample population from the Brisbane area only. The reliability of the study is strengthened by the inclusion of the QUT group of respondents, which allowed a wider representation across schools than would otherwise have been possible, and by the wide distribution of the categories of conceptions identified across the focus groups as illustrated in Table 2. Nevertheless, the findings reflect the conceptions of those class teachers and teacher-librarians who participated. Replicating the study in other areas would strengthen the findings. Analysis of further focus group discussions might support the existence of the same categories of conceptions or lead to the development of others.

Relationships to Current Practice

It has been explained that this study did not investigate the *actual* involvement of teacher-librarians in literacy education but related to the respondents' conceptions of how teacher-librarians might be involved. Similar methodology could be used to elicit information about how TLs are actually involved in literacy education. This could provide a useful follow-on from this study, as it could indicate factors limiting the teacher-librarian's involvement such that these could be addressed. This information could also be collected using the categories to develop a survey of practice. Again it would be necessary to involve class teachers and teacher-librarians.

Relationship to Educational Policy

The findings of this study will be brought to the attention of employing authorities and policy decision-makers, in particular principals. This will occur through publication of articles in appropriate journals. These will include education journals and journals of teacher-librarianship. More specifically, a report of the study will be sent to Brisbane Catholic Education Office and the office of the Queensland Department of Education in response to the request from both bodies for a report on the outcomes of the study.

Other Curriculum Areas

Similar methodology could be used to seek conceptions about the involvement of teacher-librarians in other curriculum areas. Findings of such studies could be compared.

Differences in Conceptions by Class Teachers and by
Teacher-Librarians of the Involvement of the
Teacher-Librarian in Literacy Education

The data collected in this study could undergo further analysis to elicit and examine any differences between the conceptions of primary class teachers and of teacher-librarians concerning the involvement of the teacher-librarian in literacy education. This study did not seek comparisons. Further research to investigate comparisons might reveal areas of strength or weakness in the working partnership of class teacher and teacher-librarian. Details of which focus groups comprised class teachers and which groups were teacher-librarians are held by the researcher. This information is not provided in this report as it is not relevant to this study.

Summary

This study concludes that the involvement of the teacher-librarian can enhance literacy programs in the primary school if both class teachers and teacher-librarians utilize the knowledge and expertise that teacher-librarians have in both education and librarianship. When the categories of conception are compared to the findings of the literature on this topic, a close relationship is revealed. The literature advocates the success of class teachers and teacher-librarians working cooperatively to plan and implement resource-based learning programs which integrate skill development in a cross-curriculum approach. The category of 'Teacher-librarian as equal teaching partner' interprets this concept. Throughout the focus group discussions there were many references to the interrelationship of information skills and literacy skills, indicating that these could be developed simultaneously. This sets the scene for the involvement of the teacher-librarian.

The teacher-librarian is also seen as an 'Expert/Consultant' and as a 'Leader' in literacy education. Such conceptions give rise to a need to review the status of the position of teacher-librarian in primary schools. A high level of responsibility is attached to these conceptions of the role, and this needs to be recognized at the school level by principals and class teachers and by employing bodies.

The *ELA Syllabus* (1991) is encouraging an increase in resource-based learning. This has implications for the teacher-librarian from the point of view of resource use and resource management. With an increase in the magnitude of the role there should be a corresponding increase in staffing structures of school libraries in both professional and support areas.

Recommendations for further research arise mainly from the limitations of this study and suggest both further applications for this study and follow-up studies that could expand the understanding of the roles of the teacher-librarian.

Finally, while this study focuses on the involvement of the teacher-librarian in the literacy education of primary students, the integral nature of the school library itself is highlighted. The library is seen as encompassing the whole school and does not exist

simply between four walls. The idea of a library as a storehouse for resources is expanded to a recognition of the dynamic role it can play in the literacy education of primary school students.

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APPENDIX 1: Introductory Monologue

Thank you for joining me today. The purpose of being here is to discuss a particular topic. I'm very grateful for your commitment of time and energy to this activity and I thank you in advance for that. I would like to assure you that all you say will be treated with the utmost respect and confidence.

I will not be involved in your discussion but I am interested in everything you have to say on any aspect of the topic.

The topic I would like you to discuss is the involvement of teacher-librarians in the literacy education of students. Please do not feel confined to the involvement that occurs at your school although you may indeed draw on that. Please share your own ideas and use examples from your own experiences.

You are all involved in the implementation of the new ELA Syllabus and this leads to considerations of integration of oral and written language development across the curriculum. The syllabus recognizes the inseparable relationship between the two as it urges us to make literacy development an extension of natural language learning. I'm interested in all your ideas on how teacher-librarians can be involved in these syllabus requirements.

Literacy is wider than just oral and written language.Literacy involves the integration of listening, speaking, reading, writing and critical thinking. It includes the cultural knowledge which enables a speaker, writer, listener or reader to recognize and use language appropriate to different social situations.

Developing skills of literacy allows people to use language to enhance their capacity to think, create and question. This allows them to participate more effectively in society. I am interested in all your ideas on how teacher-librarians could be involved in helping students develop these skills.

I'm going to talk about some of the ways that I've thought of that this could happen. You don't need to remember what I say. You might discuss these aspects or you might introduce new thoughts. I am interested in details of how you think the involvement of teacher-librarians in literacy education can occur.

Library resources are used for many purposes related to the development of literacy skills. Teacher-librarians could be involved in selecting resources and they could work with teachers in using these resources.

With the emphasis the ELA Syllabus places on using different genre, teacher-librarians could use their knowledge of resources and the curriculum to structure the library collection to facilitate access to sources of specific genre. Teacher-librarians could contribute to the development of whole school literacy policies and skills continuums.

Teacher-librarians may be involved in designing and presenting in-service on literacy education or in taking part in in-sevice as participants. Teacher-librarians could do a variety of things with professional journals.

Teacher-librarians can be involved in designing teaching strategies to develop students' literacy skills.

The involvement of teacher-librarians in literacy education might encompass quality literature. It could include guidance for students in selection of suitable fiction and non-fiction reading material. It could include interaction with film, video, television, radio, sound, theatre and drama. It could include arranging visits to the school by members of the community or arranging visits to other community locations such as museums and environmental centres. Teacher-librarians could be involved in literacy education through the development of information skills.

New technologies are presently appearing in schools – automated catalogues, CD-ROMs, telecommunications, databases and so on. Teacher-librarians can become involved in helping teachers as well as students to develop their skills in these areas.

We hear about lots of 'literacies' – information literacy, computer literacy, visual literacy, media literacy – I am interested in what involvement you think teacher-librarians could have in these.

In fact I am interested in anything you have to say about the involvement of teacher-librarians in literacy education. You can talk about your experiences and your ideas related to anything I have said or introduce new lines of thought. There are no right or wrong responses and reflections on any aspect of the topic are relevant for discussion. I will not be involved in your discussion. I want to know what YOU think about the involvement of teacher-librarians in literacy education. Now it is over to you.

APPENDIX 2: Clarifying changes to the introductory monologue

Below is an excerpt from the early part of the transcript of a focus group discussion conducted as part of the pilot study. This is presented to clarify why minor changes were made to the introductory monologue following this focus group discussion. The analysis shows that the respondent worked through his uncertainty but adjustments were made despite this to clarify the guidelines for future respondents.

É preceeded by comments relevant to the topic from two respondents É

Respondent A
I just found that there was so much in the introduction that 'C' gave that I can't remember what was and what wasn't in there like if we had just started with just a little bit and talked about what we thought we might have had a springboard into something else but there was so much in the introduction that I can't really think of anything she didn't say.

Respondent B
Say it again then

Respondent C
I was going to suggest that one thing that did stick in my mind was locating books suitable for certain children

Respondent A
I mean I agree with everything that was said

Respondent C
You know the below and above average I think that it would be very helpful to have an area or at least the names of books that are in the library that below average children could read the teacher-librarian could do that that would help with reading

Respondent A

The teacher-librarian can help with
books for kids from different cultures
in the school to read É

Point of interest:
Respondent C returns to her conception
later in the discussion.