

Integration Library (ib) and U21 (Switzerland)

Easy Access Materials and Services for Adolescents in a library (Switzerland)

The focus of the library is based on research results that identify the combination of two factors as a particular hurdle in the development of reading competence. These two factors are: belonging to a disadvantaged social status and bilingualism. The library pursues its goals through materials and services in the respective first languages of its young users, as well as attractive and easily accessible texts in standard German.

Besides school, the library is one of the few places where status-specific shortcomings in reading competence and literacy can be levelled out. An easy access, open library with attractive rooms and a variety of media are basic preconditions for reaching this target group at all.

The library promotes reading on the secondary level through the *Integration Library (ib)* and *U21-Library*, which is a special section for young adults in the library.

ib and U21 function according to the focus group principle. This means that the target groups are directly involved in shaping the profile of the library collection and the programmes that the library offers. In the case of the integration library, specialists in each of the language groups work with the librarian. For the U21 project, a group of young people together with the library staff are responsible for the materials and services on offer.

Integration Library ib (Integrationsbibliothek ib)

A good 25 % of the inhabitants of the visited city speak a first language other than German. With its Integration Library, the library wants to give them access to the main languages. In addition, through appropriate learning media and books with simplified texts it wants to simplify the acquisition of standard German.

In the adolescent section – in which the combination of status and language factors typically make reading difficulties worse – the ib offers easy access materials. This includes magazines and comics. In addition, there are computer stations with internet and games that are reserved for children and adolescents. This especially benefits those library users who, for financial reasons, do not have access to modern information and communication media.

The ib also focuses on the promotion of first-language reading in the school and preschool areas. It thereby conveys the message that multilingualism ought to be experienced as an exciting, additional qualification.

U21-Library

The U21 of the library is a division of and for adolescents and young adults between the ages of 14 and 21. The young users mainly determine the profile of the U21 themselves. Interested young people regularly meet in a focus group to help shape the media on offer and the programme of the library. The U21 has an attractive and up-to-date selection of media that can be borrowed or used on location in the library. It is primarily aimed at leisure, entertainment and everyday life. Electronic media and magazines are treated equally and stand next to the books. The young users can find media for school and education purposes in the relevant general sections of the city library.

By young people: The media of U21 is not selected by the library staff but in the focus groups by the young people themselves. Books, DVDs, CDs and games are acquired in online sessions or in shopping trips when the focus group goes to the local bookstore. The librarian intervenes only as a guide. Anyone who is interested can join the focus group. The librarians responsible present the project in youth clubs and schools and talk about it to users.

For young people: The U21 has media that addresses young people and interests them. Currentness, attractiveness, and particular youth-specific themes are more important criteria in the development of the collection than are books which are produced specifically for young people. Meeting place: Food and drinks are expressly allowed in the sitting area and the workplaces of the U21. Many pupils spend lunch and free periods here and meet their friends.

Infrastructure: Internet-PCs and Playstations are reserved for the young people and can be used free of charge. Over lunch and in the early evenings music can be played in the U21 using the music bar with an integrated DJ fitting. The rest of the time Discmen can be borrowed from the Info desk. The furniture of the sitting area was chosen by young people from the focus group and the interior decoration was done in the focus group meetings.