Multiple Literacies Theory

A Deleuzian Perspective

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and

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The essays in this book think through and with Deleuzian concepts in the educational field. The resultant encounters between concepts such as multiplicity, becoming, habit and affect and Multiple Literacies Theory exemplify philosophically inspired and productive thinking.

Paul Patton, Professor of Philosophy, University of New South Wales

Taking one of the most exciting voices of the twentieth century beyond the range of philosophy and theory this edited volume provides a timely intervention into the problem of literacy. More than the simple application of Deleuze to the question of reading this stunningly bold and incisive collection of essays will make all of us think again about what it is to read and think. Masny and Cole have assembled an impressive range of contributions that will open up new avenues for research and thinking for years to come.

Claire Colebrook, Department of English Literature, University of Edinburgh

Education is now so littered with ‘literacies’ that the term seems almost disposable – an empty signifier – but at the same time obsessions with literacy testing have reduced much literacies research to tiresome debates about the pros and cons of this or that approach to reading instruction. Exploring more fertile territories, Multiple Literacies Theory stages a dozen exhilarating encounters between Gilles Deleuze’s philosophical concepts and each contributing author’s approach to representing and performing multiplicity in literacies research. Although I usually avoid metaphors that insinuate violence, I see Multiple Literacies Theory as an example of what the late Timothy Leary called a ‘transitional meaning-grenade thrown over the language barricades’ – a weapon of non-destruction that produces an explosion of possibilities for destabilising conventional wisdoms (including fashionable contemporary positions coded by terms such as ‘multiliteracies’ and ‘multimodal literacies’), and clearing the ground for new materialisations of ‘becoming literate’ in conditions of complexity, multiplicity and uncertainty.

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SENSE PUBLISHERS
ROTTERDAM/BOSTON/TAIPEI
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Since his death in 1995, well over a hundred books on Deleuze have been published in English alone. Much of the territory of Deleuze’s complex thought has been mapped; critical positions have been staked out; sites of contention and controversy have been established. But what has by no means been clearly determined is the extent to which Deleuze’s ideas may serve as catalysts in fields beyond philosophy. Today, much of the most exciting work on Deleuze is coming from writers, artists, practitioners and scholars in fields as far flung as architecture, political science, ethnomusicology, social geography and topology. The research collected in this volume is yet another instance of the creative possibilities that are emerging as Deleuze’s thought is extended beyond its established precincts.

Deleuze famously compared his books to tool boxes, the various ideas within them being so many conceptual hammers and saws that readers/artisans might use as they saw fit. It would be a mistake to assume from this remark that Deleuze’s concepts are unrelated to one another, but what Deleuze was suggesting with this metaphor was that his thought is systematic without constituting a closed system, that his concepts cohere without ceasing to form a multiplicity, and that his ideas are modes of action rather than representation—ways of doing things rather than simply classifying them.

Multiple Literacies Theory (MLT) makes use of a number of Deleuze’s conceptual tools and interrelates them in innovative configurations. Most intriguing is MLT’s integration of Deleuze’s language-oriented, structural study of sense and his more broadly semiotic work with Guattari—two bodies of thought often judged to be at odds with one another. The conjunction of the two strains in MLT not only demonstrates the validity of such a combination, but also affords an efficacious means of opening the questions of linguistic literacy to other forms of literacy as well as to broader semiotic practices of both social and material origin.

Among the many key elements of MLT, three are particularly striking. First, MLT stresses the transformative possibilities inherent in social institutions and their practices. While recognizing the shaping constraints of macroscopic political, economic and cultural forces on classrooms, teacher and learners, MLT also insists on the micro-level negotiations of group interactions that can disturb those constraints and produce new possibilities for enhancing the learning process. Second, MLT offers an alternative to a phenomenological model of the experiential and emotional dimensions of learning. For MLT, analysis of the learning situation starts not with the subject but with affect, or the power of affecting and being
affected. Affects are relational forces and processes that come into being in open networks of interaction, and the individuals within those networks are as much products as producers of those affects, which pass through them and permeate the context within which they act. Hence, analyses of the personal experiences of teachers and learners need not decline into solipsistic impressionism but may engage relational affects among the participants through qualitative yet rigorously empirical methods. And through such analysis, conceptual and pragmatic tools may be generated to enhance future relations in the classroom. Finally, MLT stresses the improvisational nature of learning. The learning context is a dynamic process of becoming, and as such MLT emphasizes modes of engagement among learners and teachers that empower learning by making use of the interactions specific to each situation.

MLT’s creative deployment of Deleuze’s central concepts has generated fresh readings of them that had lain dormant as vague possibilities before this disciplinary encounter between philosophy and literacy studies. The first signs of the productivity of this encounter are evident in this volume, whose contents suggest that its potential benefits have yet to be exhausted.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Diana Masny & David R. Cole would like to acknowledge the excellent work of Monica Waterhouse, who has helped enormously with the editing of this book. Monica’s work was facilitated by a grant from the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Education.

All chapters in this book have been peer reviewed before publication.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION TO MULTIPLE LITERACIES THEORY

*A Deleuzian Perspective*

**INTRODUCTION**

This book comes at a time when literacy has perhaps been overly researched and theorized around the world. Governments are especially interested in investigating and collecting data about how their citizens become literate. One might legitimately ask the question: Why do we need more research and theory about literacy? The short answer to this question is that we do not need more information about the processes of literacy. What we do need is work that combines data with a theoretical frame that makes sense of the diverse literacy practices and complex demographics of populations through which literacy is now apparent. In poststructural terms, it could be said that literacy research is an area of ‘over-coding’ (Webb, 2009). This means that the balance between signification and the content of the signification is out of phase. For example, the enormous attention that has been given to reading comprehension in educational research is incongruous with the role that reading comprehension plays in the educational process. Reading comprehension has been over-coded by outside bodies solely interested in the results of reading comprehension, i.e., literacy tests. This volume addresses this situation by going outside of the norm, and proposing a new way of conceptualizing literacy, Multiple Literacies Theory (Masny, 2006), combined with data to solidify this view.

**WHAT ARE MULTIPLE LITERACIES?**

Multiple Literacies Theory (MLT), *reading, reading the world and self* is a theoretical framework influenced by the philosophical work of Gilles Deleuze, and the social theory of Gilles Deleuze with Félix Guattari to underpin the concept of literacy. The concept of literacy has been much debated, and is a synthetic term that has come to encompass reading, writing, speaking and listening practices. The idea of literacy has also expanded and become a serial collocated suffix in new terms such as media literacy, information literacy, critical literacy, affective literacy, medical literacy, statistical literacy, technological literacy. This is not the way in which literacy should be understood in this volume, as Multiple Literacies Theory posits multiplicity in the conception of literacy from the start, and foregrounds Gilles Deleuze as the thinker of multiplicities *par excellence*. Multiple literacies as
understood in this book are therefore in part a philosophical position that designates multiplicity as an operating principle for the practices included in literate communication. Another part of the multiple literacies in this volume is actual happenings in the world, where real groups and individuals ‘do’ literacy. This volume therefore needs empirical evidence to uphold the multiplicity that has been designated from the start as a philosophical proposition. Furthermore, this book requires sensitive analysis of the evidence that does not over-write ‘real life’ with ideology or assumptions, but teases the designation of multiple literacies from the evidence with the “ease of an artist and the precision of a scientist” (Deleuze, 1995, p. 29). This collection of chapters ultimately builds a theoretical framework for literacy as multiple, and collects evidence for this claim through empirical research.

WHY DELEUZE?

As has been mentioned above, the work of Gilles Deleuze has been chosen to underpin Multiple Literacies Theory (MLT) due to his rethinking about multiplicity. The critical aspect of his thinking through of multiplicity comes when he expands the notion of quantitative multiplicities to include qualitative multiplicities (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 30). These qualitative multiplicities have the effect of establishing differences in nature. Henri Bergson undoubtedly heavily influenced Deleuze in this conception, as Bergson was concerned with thinking through the relationship between ecological and evolutionary systems and the ways in which these systems may be represented and conceived in notions of creativity such as the “élan vital” or “durée” (Deleuze, 1988). Deleuzian multiplicities are therefore simultaneously numerical and qualitative. They attest to the fact that the harder that one analyses a concept, idea or notion – the further one is able to differentiate between different aspects of that ‘unity’. Dualism dissolves in transversality. Dichotomies become assemblages – dialogue is thought of as a symphony of voices, most of which are not usually heard or are suppressed due to power concerns. Deleuzian multiplicities also more closely conform to the processes of change to be found in any system:

Living organisms are autopoietic systems: self-constructing, self-maintaining, energy-transducing autocatalytic entities. They are also systems capable of evolving by variation and natural selection: they are self-reproducing entities, whose forms and functions are adapted to their environment and reflect the composition and history of an ecosystem (Harold, 2001, p. 232).

The problem in education is that systems are often designated as being closed or finite. For example, primary literacy development can take on a linear aspect in curriculum and syllabus documents that list different stages in reading, writing, spelling and oral language (Annadale, Bindon, Handle, Johnston, Lockett & Lynch, 2004). Yet educators know that linear development in literacy skills is a myth, and that students develop at different rates, depending upon certain internal and environmental triggers. Students may find the activities of the classroom exceedingly dull and not develop their literacy skills, even though they are fully capable of engagement. The same students may at another time find the classroom
environment and activities extremely interesting and suddenly take off in their desire to read, write and communicate. Multiple Literacies Theory recognises this disparity, and designates multiplicity at the heart of literate communication. Developmental charts may be comforting and provide solace for the spectator who needs a clear progressive story in terms of understanding the way literacy works. Yet these myths are far from the truth. Using Deleuzian multiplicities to underpin literacy theory points to the ways in which communication abilities form feedback loops and aggregate in internal and external ways. These changes in nature are qualitative and chaotic, time based and spatially inferential. This book looks to chart these changes and provide guidance for educators who wish to understand multiple changes in literacy, and the factors involved with these changes that will influence their planning, classroom management and assessment principles.

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN DELEUZE, AND DELEUZE & GUATTARI

Gilles Deleuze wrote about the history of philosophy, cinema, and theoretical treatises called *Difference & Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense*. These works are markedly different from his combined writings with Félix Guattari. Working with Guattari opened Deleuze up to new ways of thinking and a spontaneous and joyful approach to theorization. Multiple Literacies Theory (MLT) keeps the best of both ‘Deleuzes’ to enable a fuller understanding of the multiple in literacy study. For example, qualitative multiplicities are certainly a powerful and important philosophical concept, designed to provide clues for thinking about changes in nature in education and the ways in which communication is a non-linear process. Yet there are also social consequences in designating multiplicity at the heart of literate activity. In their first combined work, *Anti Oedipus*, Freud and Marx were blended by Deleuze and Guattari (1984) to create a critique of the ways in which bourgeois European society has projected images of itself and attempted to reconcile these images through synthesis and economic activity. In the series of essays entitled, *A Thousand Plateaus*, this blending is taken to another level and increased numbers of scientific and artistic positions are incorporated into the analysis to understand the developing relationship between capitalism and schizophrenia. All this could take us a very long way from understanding how students become literate. Yet the processes and reversals, flips and knots, jokes and false pathways do resonate with the ways in which literacy has itself gone beyond simple definition. Today children may be sat in front of televisions at home and imbibe the contents of cable television and this will certainly affect their communication skills and resultant literacies. Conversely, teachers and students may be determined in their educational practice by the use of literacy benchmarks that are standardized tests designed to provide literacy information for external bodies. The concept of literacy is therefore a highly convoluted construction, especially when one considers its societal consequences. The proposition of this volume, and Multiple Literacies Theory, is that the use of Deleuze’s central philosophical ideas, combined with the social theory of Deleuze and Guattari, takes us closer to understanding how literacy is presently constructed.
MULTIPLE LITERACIES THEORY (MLT) AND MULTILITERACIES

One might perceive a distinct similarity between Multiple Literacies Theory (MLT) and multiliteracies as has been theorized by the New London Group (1996). Multiliteracies was conceived by the group to incorporate the ways in which literacy is changing in contemporary society with the need for social justice in pluralistic, multicultural contexts. This convergence of changing literacy landscapes and unstable demographics neatly sums up the educational environment in countries such as the United States, Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom, as well as other industrialized countries where the teaching of English is as a second language. At the heart of the multiliteracies framework is a concern for design, and a specific focus on designing social futures that are equitable and inclusive. This central conception of design in multiliteracies may be built upon and makes up the multimodality of textual use — that includes gestural, spatial, audio, visual and linguistic meaning. Such multimodality is especially pertinent when one considers the construction of electronic text, in, for example, the Internet. Yet one should not mistake this mode of operation with the social/cultural consequences of multimodality, that have been drawn out in recent times by work on the ‘new literacies’ (Lankshear & Knobel, 2003). The new literacies movement has been busy since the designation of Multiliteracies as a manner of explaining the contemporary explosion in literacies that has been primarily mediated through the application of digital technology to communication processes. The new literacies ‘map’ emerging literacies that are connected in complicated and entangled ways through the social lives of the students and in the relationships between official school communication, and out of school, tacit and group codes that are often not recognized in the official curriculum, for example, SMS messaging and social web sites such as Facebook. This is where multiliteracies and new literacies substantially differ from Multiple Literacies Theory (MLT). In summary these differences may be explained as:

Multiliteracies is philosophically based in phenomenology (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000), whereas MLT is based in transcendental materialism (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Whilst this philosophical difference between the two approaches may seem to be trivial when one is teaching or learning literacy, it has profound effects for both systems. The multiliteracies framework argues that the social agenda for literacy should be in experience. MLT would counter that the social agenda of literacy is in the many aspects of life that flow through the subject and that constitute memories, desire and the mind. As such, experience is extremely difficult to render as a stable category when examining exactly what aspects of life determine literacy learning according to MLT. The philosophy of multiliteracies maintains the stable category of experience, especially when contrasting its construction of literacy with respect to previous iterations of literacy that relied heavily on print literacy practices. Multiliteracies says that the study of the media, which should be included in the design of new literacy curricula, dominates new literacy learning experiences. MLT accepts media influence as an important aspect of current literacy studies, yet would not posit this influence as an over riding or meta-narrative that might disrupt the primacy of qualitative multiplicities.

Technology is of fundamental importance in multiliteracies, and this theoretical frame has led to the present diversity of technological and digital literacies that are...
being charted through the new literacies. In the MLT frame, technological mediation is of equal importance with every other contemporary literacy practice. The use of multiliteracies encourages literacy teachers to engage with technology in every aspect of the literacy-learning program, as it prepares students for the technological and global workplace (Cope & Kalantzis, 1995). MLT examines and incorporates technology wherever necessary, but does not make technological affordances dominant or a singular concern that might prelude more primitive ways of working in literacy, to be found, for example in the distribution of affect.

Power is distributed differently in MLT and in contrast to the multiliteracies model of literate behavior. In MLT the emphasis on power flows very much from local interactions that cause changes and transformations in micro-systems that direct power from the bottom-up and into macro-systems through various processes such as the rhizome or the machinic phylum. In multiliteracies, the focus on intelligent design is spread as a system property that guides all participants to work towards the globalization of literate behaviors and ultimately feeds into the power of corporate or governmental organization (if perhaps unknowingly). This is because design is a way of rationalizing behavior, and valuing literate performance as work: i.e. producing marking criteria that evaluate the design base of literacy.

MLT as a means to assessing literate progress includes non-organized modes of becoming literate that are not open to the same power concerns as rational design, for example, the notion of desire and collective enunciation.

Multiliteracies encourage communities of learners through design, whereas MLT promotes action in learning. This action may come together in terms of a specified community, such as the French speaking educational communities of Canada, yet the actions and connections between actions that MLT produces are disparate and complex, and are not defined by any preconceived agenda. The meaning that one may take from MLT action learning is invariably communal (Goodchild, 1996); however, these meanings are not fixed in a standard western democratic or civil direction, as is the case with multiliteracies. MLT has the potential to be taken up by a plethora of communities as it deals with the issues of multiplicity that are at the core of their literate progress. A good example to illustrate this point is the situation of Aboriginal communities in Australia, and the struggle to keep their cultures alive.

Creativity takes on a fundamentally different orientation and focus in MLT and multiliteracies. MLT relies on the random collisions of affects (Parisi, 2004) that one might find in the teaching and learning context, whereas multiliteracies prioritize organized and structured projects that are the outcome of designing social futures. The application of multiliteracies in educational contexts may lead to interdisciplinary curriculum methods that encourage students to think holistically and to link knowledge areas through, for example, ICT software. MLT works through local knowledge to produce moments of inspiration, experimentation, critique and art (Deleuze, 1995).

Otherness, strangeness and alienation are included as parts of the MLT system, as they may be explored through personal literacy (Fiumara, 2001) and affect. Furthermore, difference in literacy practice is established in kind through MLT via
the use of qualitative multiplicities that make apparent the workings of the creative unconscious as a powerful driving force in becoming literate. Multiliteracies will tend to shut out such considerations through communities of practice working towards pre-defined social goals and coordinated design – even though the placement of critical literacy in the multiliteracies frame does signal a critical evaluation of which voices are being prioritized through literacy.

THE CONTENTS OF THE BOOK

This book brings together the work of researchers from Australia, Canada and the United States who link their studies in education to Deleuze and to Multiple Literacies Theory (MLT). MLT may be understood through Masny’s (2006) headline literacy dictum as: Reading, Reading the World and Reading the Self and is positioned here as a new way to conceptualize literacy based on the work of Gilles Deleuze. Multiple Literacies Theory is a framework and lens for understanding empirical evidence that consists of words, gestures, attitudes, speaking, writing, and valuing; and ultimately examines the processes and manners in which these literate behaviors come together through becoming with the world. Literacies may also be thought of as texts that express multiple meanings and are taken up as visual, oral, written, and tactile located in local contexts. Literacies as multiple constitute texts in a broad sense – i.e. music, art, physics, and mathematics. Multiple literacies fuse with socio-political, cultural, economic, political, gendered and racialized groups through practices that may be studied in schools or in the community. This is the process through which literacies are coded, and in the context of literacy research, has been over-coded as governments have poured funding into understanding the ways in which children become literate. The contexts for literacy research are however not static. The dynamics of local literate behaviors are fluid and transform literacies themselves and produce speakers, writers, artists, and new communities of practice that innovate on any established ways of becoming literate. In short, one might say that literacies – e.g. personal, critical, community, and school-based are about reading, reading the world, and reading the self as texts. This volume has been organized into chapters that illustrate these processes and ways of becoming literate in the world:

In chapter two, Diana Masny is interested in exploring children’s’ understanding of writing systems when they are acquiring more than one system simultaneously. The case study of writing acquisition that is included in this chapter is the context to examine the central theme of MLT that is becoming. Questions that this chapter confronts include: How do reading, reading the world and reading the self transform becoming in the processes of learning writing systems? As primogenitor of MLT, Masny shows how to join theory with practice. The case study of this chapter provides a platform to understand MLT, and the ways in which it may be used by researchers to extract the intricate influences that shape and form literacy. The girl in the study is simultaneously involved with three languages, and Masny looks at how she is negotiating the differences in these languages as well as her own emotions and processes of socialization and schooling.
Chapter three is by Megan Watkins, and is called, *Deleuze, Habit and the Literate Body*. In this chapter, the view of literacy as a cognitive ability is placed under erasure. This is because motor capacities such as posture, bodily composure and sustained concentration are tied to the notion of bodily literacy through the use of notions taken from continental philosophy such as the habitus. Literacy pedagogy tends to neglect the necessary training of the body in perfecting these skills by over emphasizing linguistic priorities. Watkins explores the enabling potential of habit in learning to write through several case studies. Becoming literate in these studies is predicated on habituation, in Deleuzian terms, which is the embodiment of skills whereby they no longer receive conscious attention but simply provide the means by which we are enabled to write. Watkins broadens the notion of Multiple Literacies Theory (MLT) to incorporate bodily literacy into the ways in which a literate body must habituate a range of skills to not only ensure the efficient production of text but its creative manipulation. While much of learning to write implicates the body, the corporeality of the process is generally given little attention in literacy research.

Linda Knight constructed the next chapter, *Desire and Rhizome: Affective Literacies in Early Childhood*, and through this writing she positions young children as desiring machines. This conception is a deliberate move to make explicit certain relationships in educational thought such as passionate engagement and how thinking is processed and communicated. The discussion in this chapter uses rhizomatic connectivity and referencing in relation to MLT, and focuses on the inherent relationships in early childhood drawing. Drawings undertaken by young children act as empirical evidence and assist in exploring and detailing concepts of the desiring-machine and the rhizome. Knight is interested in exploring how such concepts have important implications for early childhood teaching and learning; particularly in subverting dominant early childhood education discourses of desire and communication. This chapter also has the effect of producing affective literacies for use in early childhood education. These affective literacies help us to understand how young children process information and learn to draw in a creative and spontaneous manner.

David R. Cole wrote chapter five, *Deleuzian Affective Literacy for Teaching Literature: A Literary Perspective in MLT*. He changes the focus from the previous three chapters and the early childhood data to the teaching of literature. This piece of writing positions Deleuzian affective literacy as a practice for teachers of literature that uses affect positively to enhance textual practice. Deleuze came back to the notion of affect throughout his career, and as such it is a powerful philosophical thread that one might extract from his oeuvre. Affect also acts as an important part of MLT as multiple literacies theory must include a connection to a means of education, whereby pragmatic goals may be realized. Cole’s chapter shows how Deleuzian affect may be put to work in the classroom as an organizing principle for teaching literature, and as a means to establishing emotional pedagogy without recourse to personalization or subjectification. This outcome is due in part to the choice of text to be used by teachers employing Deleuzian affective literacy in their work and the ways in which text will be manipulated according to
Deleuzian notions that one may draw out from affect such as literate becoming and literate desire. This chapter includes examples of texts that may be profitably used by teachers of literature wishing to employ Deleuze in their teaching, and the ways in which these texts can be taught in unison with Deleuzian affective literacy.

Anna Hickey-Moody and Robert Haworth co-authored chapter six, *Affective Literacies* that focuses on emergent, radical literacies through the theoretical lens of Deleuze, and Deleuze and Guattari’s theories of affect and the smith. The authors relate this perspective to MLT and the role community literacy can play in resisting state power and intervention. The writers are interested in sites of learning that demonstrate activism against dominant or assumed knowledges. Hickey-Moody and Haworth argue that there are holes in totalizing state systems from which affective economies emerge that are brokered by smiths. Such affective, kinesthetic systems are pedagogical in that they teach emergent, radical literacies. While affect may refer to different philosophical and psychological notions, the authors apply the concept of *affectus* in exploring three vignettes, or situated case studies of relational knowledge production, which are embedded within American and Australian youth counter-cultures. Through the concept of affect, these three sites are each readable as modes of shaping participants’ literacy practices and ways of becoming subjects while at the same time facilitating the creation of new literacy practices and economies of cultural production. The implications are that cultural and political literacies can be broadly understood as being taught and learnt through affective economies.

In the following chapter, Inna Semetsky focuses on *Traversing Towards Ecoliteracy* in relation to Deleuze’s philosophy, educational theory and MLT. She argues for ecoliteracy as a way to reconceptualise education embedded in lived experience which is qualified by three lines of flight: critical, clinical and creative – and that together form becoming-ethical. Ecoliteracy in education can only be achieved by traversing towards the three C’s according to Semetsky. The drawing out of Deleuze’s informal pedagogical model is helpful in bringing the oft-cited yet missing element of values in education that should be understood in terms of becoming-other and becoming-ethical. Semetsky uses her in depth knowledge of Deleuzian philosophy to skillfully blend together elements of his thought to the benefit of an enhanced educational practice. This enhanced practice, in a similar way to the previous two chapters, points to an educational future that might use the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze to connect local concerns with global pronouncements to be found in policy and curriculum statements. The point of doing this work here is to set up the grounds through which educationalists may include affective and ecoliteracies within an MLT frame.

Therese Dufresne extends this argument and examines the concept of *Readings of Self* within MLT in chapter eight. Through her work with two children, Mathieu and Andrew, this chapter offers a conceptual framework for the *Readings of self*. The writing in this chapter addresses how children in multilingual contexts conceptualize language, and how such conceptualizations and perceptions contribute to learning and MLT. Dufresne explores linear and non-linear forms of teaching and learning and demonstrates that learners can be in a situation to succeed if we are willing to recognize the unpredictable nature of teaching and learning and the
openness of school systems to advocate for non-linearity. The author also uses innovative writing strategies to illustrate these points and draws on her experience as an educator as well as an educational researcher. This chapter gives force to the argument that the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze may be employed to transform education. Dufresne shows how many misunderstandings in education may be resolved through attention to the behaviors and explanations of these behaviors using MLT. The examples in this chapter make sense of this procedure and add to the weight behind the call to incorporate MLT into mainstream educational practice and policy.

David R Cole put together chapter nine that is entitled, *Indexing the Multiple: An Autobiographic Account of Education Through the Lens of Deleuze and Guattari*. This chapter picks up in many ways on points made in the previous section as it provides a close reading of the self. The self under scrutiny is the writer of the chapter who was teaching in secondary inner city contexts in the UK. This experience is the powerful underpinning for the theorization of the chapter that uses the work of Deleuze and Guattari, and in particular, their thesis entitled *Anti Oedipus*. The author takes up theoretical aspects of *Anti Oedipus* to understand the processes and practices that were apparent in the contexts of a UK school. In particular, the relationships between teachers and students, the organization of the lessons, the atmosphere of the school, the ways in which authority is distributed and understood are all analyzed in this chapter. The author also uses evidence taken from literary works to enhance the reading of the self, and he makes an index of the sections in the chapter to add to the MLT frame. This chapter is a synthesis of educational experience, poststructural theory and MLT in an organizing index.

Chapter ten, *Reading Peace as Text: Multiple Literacies Theory as a Lens on Learning in LINC* takes us away from mainstream educational practice and brings us into the world of adults attending language instruction classes for newcomers to Canada (LINC). Monica Waterhouse is interested in how investment in multiple literacies produces transformations in the context of the LINC program. She explores how adult immigrants take up reading, reading the world and self. Waterhouse is also interested in what investment in multiple literacies produces: this investment is resolved through reading peace, reading world, reading self – and the processes of becoming through difference. In this chapter, peace is deterritorialized as Waterhouse undertakes an intensive and immanent reading in her study of reading peace as text in the process of immigrant adults acquiring English language literacies. This chapter includes a case study, which is broken up into vignettes that illustrate the concepts and processes that are being theorized. The vignettes are recorded conversations between the researcher and the participants in the language classes that demonstrate the political significance of applying MLT to reading peace as a text. The concept of peace has already been broken down by the participants in the study, and is unpacked by them as they speak to the researcher.

In chapter eleven, *Experimenting with Multiple Literacies Theory: Exploration of a New Lens for Policy Analysis*, Marzieh Tafaghodtari explores a class of English as a second language (ESL) adult-learners at university. The author begins
her chapter with a brief history of competing notions of literacy and the current emphasis on functional literacy that prevails in ESL courses. The study that is detailed in this chapter brings the researcher to this class to examine how program policies support or interact with literacy orientations; i.e., the value that is placed on literacy and multiple forms of literacy and how the subject position is produced in the policy texts. In her study, Tafaghodtari illustrates how a functional orientation towards literacy might fall short of understanding learners’ critical engagement in sense making processes. MLT opens up avenues for uncovering creative processes that are involved in sense making and literacy experiences. The author of this chapter also provides clues as to how one might understand MLT as a type of semiotics that can be used to interrogate literate moments in the lives of ESL students. This process is in contrast to policy documents that designate descriptors and progress statements without reference to moments in the lives of the students. This chapter shows how MLT is a framework to enable real language events in the lives of students to explain their progress in language learning.

The next chapter of this volume is called, *MLT as a Minor Poststructuralism of Education*. David R. Cole uses Deleuze and Guattari’s combined writing on Kafka to provide a platform for understanding MLT. This chapter explains the significance of defining MLT as a type of poststructuralism, and how this relates to education. Deleuze and Guattari explore how writing in the manner of Kafka, who constructed stories in terms of the worries and fears of his characters, opens up literary and social questions. These questions are answered from the perspective of a minor philosophy, and this has consequences for educational research, that is a vital aspect of MLT. This chapter shows how social questions of identity and representation are dealt with by positing MLT as a minor postructuralism of education. For example, the position of teachers and learners are explored through this lens, as well as Oedipal influence in education and the machinic qualities of post-industrial educational practice. This chapter puts MLT to work as a positive perspective that encourages radical change and acts as a challenge to stable formulations of education that act through concrete or uncritical axioms.

In the final chapter entitled, *What’s in a Name* Diana Masny has explicated a number of concepts central to MLT. Some of these concepts include reading, reading the world, and reading the self. The necessity for including this chapter is to illustrate how the creation of these concepts works in MLT and is particular to MLT, ways of becoming with the world.

**CONCLUSION**

MLT is not a universal solution to literacy problems. Neither is it a theory that explains every situation in which one might become literate. Yet the application of Multiple Literacies Theory does act as a means to coming closer to dealing with the multiplicities of literacies that are present in any communicative arena. Using the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and the social theory of Deleuze and Guattari, gives the literacy analyst a new vocabulary and set of conceptual tools through which they might approach literate behavior.
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CHAPTER 2. LITERACIES AS BECOMING

A Child’s Conceptualizations of Writing Systems

Literacy is often considered as the ability to read and write. Recently it has also included numeracy as well as the ability to process information. Up until now, the type of literacy that has taken hold in the research and teaching of literacy is what is known as school-based literacy, that is, literacy valued by school and similar institutions. In this chapter, it is important to unhinge or release literacy from its privileged position as the printed word valued by institutions by not allowing it to govern all other literacies. How can we do this? Through Multiple Literacies Theory (MLT) as presented in this chapter. In this way, literacies open themselves to what is not already given. Briefly, developed by Masny (2001, 2005, 2006), MLT refers to literacies as texts that take on multiple meanings conveyed through words, gestures, attitudes, ways of speaking, writing, valuing and are taken up as visual, oral, written, and tactile. They constitute multimodal texts in a broad sense in multimodal forms in a broad sense that fuse with religion, gender, race, culture, and power. It is how literacies are coded. These contexts are not static. They are fluid and transform literacies that produce speakers, writers, artists, communities.

Multiple Literacies is a theory constantly becoming, indeterminate and not fixed as it continuously undergoes transformations mainly influenced by Deleuze (1990, 1995) and Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 1994), in particular as MLT ties into such concepts as desire, subjectivity, difference, investment, reading and deterritorialization.

Through the research presented here, the aim is to create different connections between languages, literacies and educational practices. If we can conceive understandings that permit and encourage different ways of living in the world, can we consider the case of multiples literacies as ways to provide different and differing educational opportunities?

This chapter examines how a child acquires two or more writing systems simultaneously in order to gain a greater understanding of literacies processes in a bilingual/multilingual environment. Following a brief introduction, the MLT framework is presented. Then follows an application of MLT in the form of a case study, a child age 7, Estrella, who is learning to write. She is proficient in 3 languages Spanish, French and English. This study foregrounds the concepts of affect, creativity, and deterritorialization.

MULTIPLE LITERACIES THEORY: A CONCEPTUALIZATION

The concept of literacy has been transformed in many ways. One common element that has changed is that literacy has become inherently plural, Multiliteracies, New
literacies (Lankshear & Knoble, 2003), New Literacy Studies, Multiple Literacy Theory (Bloome & Paul, 2006; Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Gee, 1999; Kim, 2003; Kress, 2000; Lankshear & Knobel, 2003; Lotherington, 2003; Masny, 2005, 2006; Street, 2003). Before presenting the Multiple Literacies Theory (MLT), I want to point out that in the research on literacy, important contributions have been advanced by many in particular New Literacy Studies (NLS) (Barton, Hamilton and Ivanić, 2002; Gee, 1999; Kim, 2003; Street, 1984, 2003; Reder & Davila, 2007) and Multiliteracies (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000; Jewitt, 2008; Unsworth, 2001). Street would argue that the NLG perspective differs from the NLS in that it implies a reduction of the concept of multiliteracies to *multimodality* (e.g. visual, media, print, etc.) whereas the NLS’s “emphasis is not so much on the medium as on the practices” (Street, 1999, p. 38). With regard to MLT and NLS, MLT sees literacies as ongoing *processes* whose directions, multiplicities of possible lines of flight, are not predictable a priori. There will be a transformation, but where it is heading is not knowable in advance. Rather than literacies as processes, NLS suggests that literacies are conceptualized in terms of products which, in the case of NLS studies can be informed by a critical theory stance, usually involve empowerment and emancipatory outcomes in the Freirean sense.

With regard to MLT and Multiliteracies, Masny and Cole (2007) have argued that the paradigmatic position held by Multiliteracies is different from the paradigm espoused by MLT. Multiliteracies are philosophically based in phenomenology (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000), while MLT is based in transcendental materialism (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). While this philosophical difference between the two approaches may seem to be trivial, it has profound effects for both systems. Multiliteracies argue that the social agenda for literacy should be in experience. MLT would counter that the social agenda of literacy is in the many aspects of life that flow through the subject and constitute memories, desire and the mind. As such, experience is extremely difficult to render as a stable category when examining which aspects of life determine literacy learning according to MLT. The philosophy of multiliteracies maintains the stable category of experience, especially when contrasting its construction of literacy with respect to previous iterations of literacy that relied heavily on print literacy practices. It says that the new literacy learning experiences are dominated by the media, which should be replicated in our design of literacy curricula.

**MULTIPLE LITERACIES THEORY (MLT)**

Multiple Literacies Theory refers to literacies as a social construct (Masny, 2001). Literacies take on multiple meanings conveyed through words, gestures, attitudes, ways of speaking, writing, and valuing. Accordingly, literacies constitute ways of *becoming*. Literacies are texts that take on multiple meanings and manifested as visual, oral, written, and tactile. They constitute texts, in a broad sense (for example, music: a music score, a symphony; art: sculpture, physics: an equation, architecture: a museum) that fuse with religion, gender, race, culture, and power, and that produce speakers, writers, artists, communities. In short, through reading, reading the world, and self as texts, literacies constitute ways of *becoming* with the world. The theory allows
LITERACIES AS BECOMING

for multiple literacies to become Other than and move beyond, extending, transforming and creating different and differing perspectives of literacies (Masny, 2006). MLT is interested in the flow of experiences of life and events from which individuals are formed as literate. The meaning of literacies is actualized according to a particular context in time and in space in which it operates.

Reading, Reading the World, and Self as Texts

Reading is intensive and immanent. To read intensively is to read critically. To read critically signals that cognitive, social, cultural, and political forces are at work in reading critically. In so doing, reading critically is reading disruptively, and in interested and untimely ways. Moreover, because reading happens in untimely ways, there is no prediction about how reading is taken up. This leads us to reading as immanence. Take the example of watching a movie. How often do you see a scene that may transport you to think of what is happening next. Another possibility might be creating connections with your life and the thought of this happening to you. Not only is reading untimely but is also the thought of what could happen. In this way, reading as sense emerges has a power to become. (for elaboration on reading, reading the world and self as texts, please refer to chapter 12)

Literacies as Processes

By placing the emphasis on how, the focus is on the nature of literacies as processes. Current theories on literacies examine literacies as an endpoint, a product. While MLT acknowledges that books, Internet, equations, and buildings are objects, sense emerges when relating experiences of life to reading, reading the world, and self as texts. Accordingly, an important aspect of MLT is focusing on how literacies intersect in becoming. This is what MLT produces: becoming, that is, from continuous investments in literacies literate individuals are formed. A person is a text in continuous becoming. Reading and reading the world through text influences the text that a person continually becomes (Dufresne and Masny, 2005). (for elaboration on literacies as processes, please refer to chapter 12)

CASE STUDY

Acquiring literacies involving different writing systems create an environment for worldviews to collide because of the social, cultural, and political situatedness of learning literacies. Worldviews collide when different values and beliefs about language, about literacies are introduced as a result of encounters with other literacies. Learning literacies do not take place in a progressive linear fashion. In a Deleuzian way, they happen in response to problems and events that occur in life experiences. Literacies are not merely about language codes to be learned. Learning literacies is about desire, about transformation, becoming Other than through continuous investment in reading, reading the world, and self as texts in multiple environments (e.g. home, school, community).
The research questions addressed are: (1) How do children perceive competing writing systems? (2) How do their perceptions of these systems impact their reading, reading the world, and self?

**Methodology**

In this section, the MLT framework is the lens used to examine how competing writing systems in learning a second literacy transform children and become *Other than*. Furthermore, putting a line through methodology indicates that the concept and the term are being deterritorialized and reterritorialized as a rhizomatic process that does not engage in methodological considerations in a conventional way. It resists temptations to interpret and ascribe meaning; it avoids conclusions. St. Pierre (2002) identifies two specific problems with received notions of qualitative data: (1) that they “must be translated into words so that they can be accounted for and interpreted” (p. 403); and (2) that they are produced and collected, coded, categorized, analyzed, and interpreted in a specifically *linear* fashion. In this study, we find ourselves facing these same problems as we encounter what St. Pierre has called ‘transgressive data’: data that escape language and become “uncodable, excessive, out-of-control, out-of category … [in short] the commonplace meaning of the category, data, no longer held” (p. 404). At the same time research processes become rhizomatic; the “linear process is interrupted because the researcher enters this narrative in the middle” (p. 404). Instead rhizoanalysis views data as ‘fluid and in flux’, thus keeping the way open and working rhizomatic in-betweens to ask what connections may be happening between multiplicities. Traditional qualitative data analysis becomes reframed as “rhizomatous map making” (Alvermann, 2000, p. 118).

**Participant**

Estrella (a pseudonym chosen by the child) was born in Western Canada. Her mother is Mexican and speaks Spanish while the father speaks Portuguese. At age 2, Estrella moved to Ottawa with her mother while her father moved to the United States. Her mother wanted to study French in Ottawa. Meanwhile, Estrella continued to speak Spanish with her mother, English with her friends and Portuguese with her father. When time came to register Estrella for school at age 4 (Junior Kindergarten), Estrella’s mother opted for a French language school (French is the sole language of instruction). The French language was closer to Spanish structurally than English.

**Activities**

This study was conducted over a one-year period (2005–2006). Activities include: (1) observations of literate events in class and at home. (2) interviews with Estrella’s mother about experiences with multiple literacies and the child’s literate development, (3) texts produced by the children, and (4) a photo session (Capiello, 2005) during which Estrella was given a photo camera and was asked to take photos of anything that was related to literacies. We showed photos we had taken. They included a sculpture, musical notes, a newspaper, a logo, and a street sign.
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ANALYSIS – VIGNETTES

Do not look to these vignettes as data and seeking to find concrete proof of transformation. Data in the more traditional way is about empirical data. Deleuze and Guattari (1994) have moved away from empiricism because it supposes a foundation grounded on human beings who seek to fix categories and themes. They call upon transcendental empiricism. It transcends experience (Immanence). It deals with perceptions and the thought of experience creating connections and becoming Other than.

The analyses presented at the end of each vignette are informed by the MLT framework 2002. Square brackets indicate that the utterances are translated from French. E = Estrella, M = Estrella’s mother, R = researcher.

Vignette 1 – Affect (Desire) & Aesthetic

The children in the class had just visited the renowned Cordon Bleu Culinary Institute in Ottawa. Then each child in the class wrote a thank you card. Estrella had decided to do something special because as she said, “Cordon Bleu is very special”. The virtual potentials of affects are actualized through multiple literacies as aesthetic figures that are blocs of sensations – percepts and affects. How are these at work in Estrella’s decorations which she distinguishes from letters? How are these decorations another mode of thinking, another form of knowledge, another way of inventing and creating, in short multiple literacies?

R [Writing letters like this, writing your message with special letters] En train d’écrire des lettres comme ça, écrire ton message avec des lettres spéciales, là.
E [because Cordon Bleu is very special. When something is not special, I do not write nicely] Parce que le Cordon Bleu est très spécial. Quand quelque chose est pas spécial, j’écris pas beau.
R [how did you decide to write letters like this] Comment t’as décidé de faire des lettres comme ça.
E [I had already invented them] Je les avais déjà inventées.
R [You had already invented. Did you use them elsewhere] Est-ce que tu les avais déjà inventées, les utilisées ailleurs, oui, ok.
E [When I was little] Quand j’étais petite.
R [What were you doing when you were little?] Qu’est-ce que tu faisais quand tu étais petite ?
E [I would scribble and now I do letters] Je barbouillais, ben maintenant et faisais les lettres [bruit].
R [Yes.] Oui, ok, d’accord.
E [It was almost always like this and then I did not like it and I stopped] Comme presque toujours comme ça et eum, moi j’aimais pas ça donc j’ai arrêté.
R [Why?] Pourquoi ?
E [Well, now I do them because I like them now] Ben, maintenant je fais parce que je les aimes maintenant.
R [You like them now. Are there other times where you use these letters? Do you do it as well in Spanish] Tu les aimes maintenant, oui ? Est-ce que y’a d’autres situations où tu as utilisé ces lettres ? Est-ce que tu fais en espagnol aussi ?
E [Only for my mother and my father] Seulement pour ma mère et mon père.
Multiple Literacies Theory involves creativity and invention in the Deleuzean sense. Creativity is manifested in an event that produces novel connections, different assemblages, and becoming (Bonta and Protevi, 2004). The invention of these special decorations may be read as an actualization of creativity expressed through multiple literacies. However, if decorations are not letters, not writing, then what are they? Does their aesthetic quality make them art? Something else? What would Estrella say? Decorations are nice; they are for nice people in nice situations. So how do they work? What connections do they make? What kind of thinking becomes possible? Is the thought of becoming the thought of (immanent) art? How are these decorations another mode of thinking, another form of knowledge, another way of inventing and creating, in short multiple literacies?

Flows of desire (as experiences in life that connect) and investment in multiple literacies produce becoming in untimely ways. Estrella tells us that she “almost always” scribbled decorations when she was younger and then stopped because she didn’t like it. She has begun again because now she likes it. Is this how Estrella expresses becoming other than? Through investment in multiple literacies how is Estrella transformed?

Vignette 2 – Language Cartographies

In this second vignette we see a deterritorialization of writing. Writing becomes aesthetic figures, blurring boundaries and writing becomes reterritorialized differently through multiple literacies. This process of reterritorialization involves a creative re-mapping of languages (French and Spanish) along aesthetic and narrative lines. Cartography is about drawing and drawing is about creativity.

R  [Do you also write in Spanish?] Est-ce que tu as écris aussi en espagnol?
M  [Not stories, stories only in French.] Pas les histoires, les histoires juste en français.
R  [Only stories in French. Do you write in Spanish?] Seulement les histoires en français. Et qu’est-ce que tu écris en espagnol?
E  [Only cards] Seulement des cartes.
Figure 1. Dear Mommy, I love you with all my heart. This love is bigger than a black hole.

R [Only cards] Seulement des cartes.
E [Cards and messages] Et des cartes et des messages.
R [How is it that you do stories in French and cards in Spanish?] Ah, pourquoi tu fais des histoires en français pis des cartes en espagnol?
E [Because I don’t like to write very much in Spanish] Parce que j’aime pas beaucoup écrire maintenant en espagnol.
R [You don’t like to write in Spanish? How come?] Tu n’aimes pas beaucoup écrire en espagnol maintenant, oui pourquoi tu dis ça?
E [Because Spanish is nicer in cards] Parce que l’espagnol c’est plus beau dans les cartes.
How are language territories mapping? From a cartography perspective, French is associated with school and story-writing that happens there. Other mappings and connections are made with Spanish linking it to home and the writing of cards for "special days", messages of love and thanks, and poems for her parents. But these territories map over each other as in the case of the mother’s day card written in
French, because it was written at school. This overlapping of maps also occurs in the creation of a card half Spanish and half French. According to Estrella, she wanted to do a card in Spanish but some words she did not know and accordingly wrote parts in French. This is a creative response to a multiple literacies problem that presented itself and through this process learning happens.

Figure 2. Cover of card. Spanish: Dear Mommy, I love you.
From their study, Alvermann and Eakle (2007) showed that school’s ways of doing involves setting up territories, how one should read, and write. Institutionalized literacy education is about conventions, closed systems (do and don’t). Their research pointed out that literacies in school involve setting up territories, just as in the vignette presented, territories that “serve to mark off and harness the chaos of the world” (Alvermann and Eakle, 2007, p. 145). But Alvermann and Eakle go on to show that “after-school spaces … can accommodate, resist, or even provide escape routes from boundaries set up by schooled literacy” (p. 148). In the case of Estrella, home experiences provide the environment for opening up writing systems to produce a card for her mother in both languages. How do multiple literacies offer Estrella ways to deterritorialize writing systems and reterritorialize them differently?

Figure 3. Inside of card: Spanish: Hello Mommy, Please excuse me for writing this late. French: I wish you a nice evening on this mother’s day.

Vignette 3 – Creativity & Invention

In this next vignette we continue to explore the significance of creativity in relation to MLT. When asked about the name of a dish Estrella made with her mother as a dessert to follow an Italian-style meal of pizza “mamagachi” becomes an invention for the dish.
MLT sees how desire feeds creativity enabling the invention of a novel word. A number of life experiences come together and connect – actual Italian words Estrella has heard (e.g. *mangiare*), experiences with her Italian care-giver, her experiences of how writing systems work, a meal of pizza, a new dessert – to bring
on the thought of… a new word. What else might experimentation with language through multiple literacies produce?

While there may have been few actual experiences with Italian, drawing on the virtual creates an event where imagination and creativity flow and invent an Italian-sounding name for this dessert. The flow of experiences brings on creation and invention. Is this resistance to the territory of Italian, to the territorialization of language?

**Vignette 4 – Creativity & Invention**

In the next three vignettes, Estrella’s language creations break free of all territories in her own invented language, which she is careful to emphasize, is not imaginary, but exists in another galaxy.

R: [Do you write in another language?] Est-ce que tu écris dans une autre langue ?
E: [No, ah yes. I write in a language I invented.] Non, ah oui, j’écris dans une que j’ai inventée.
R: [Ah, yes, tell me about the language you invented.] Ah, oui, parle-moi de ta langue, t’as inventé une langue ?
E: [No, it is me and Mona.] Non, c’est moi et Mona.
R: [What is this language? Tell me about it.] Qu’est-ce que c’est cette langue là, parles-moi en donc.
E: Blah blah language. [You want me to tell you?] Tu veux que je t’en parle ?
R: [Well, yes.] Ben oui.
E: [Ah, it’s difficult.] Ah, c’est difficile.
R: [Difficult to talk about it?] Difficile d’en parler ?
E: [Ah you want me to write!] Hmmmhmmm, tu veux que j’écris.
R: [Well try. Tell me some things in your imaginary language?] Ben essaye, dis-moi des choses dans ta langue imaginaire.
E: [It is not imaginary. It exists.] C’est pas imaginaire, ça existe.
R: [Ah, it exists.] Ah, ça existe.
E: [In another galaxy.] Dans une autre galaxie.
R: [Ok, if you could give me an example. Can you write it for me?] Oh ! Ok, ben si tu voulais un exemple, est-ce que tu veux me l’écrire ici ? Est-ce que tu veux écrire quelque chose ?
E: [Excuse me, it makes a lot of noise sometimes. Do you remember this language?] Excuse, ça fait trop de bruit des fois. Tu te rappelles de cette langue là ?
R: [well, no, I don’t know it.] Ben, non, je connais pas ça.
E: [Do you recall when I told you that when I was little I made letters like this (gesturing) and then like this and like this?] Tu te rappelles quand je t’ai dit que moi quand j’étais petite je faisais comme ça des lettres, après comme ça, après comme ça et après comme ça et après comme ça.
R: [AH, yes.] Ah, d’accord.
E: Je adadad da. [And then I wrote like this and all this.] Et après j’ai écrit comme ça et tout ça.
R: [Well tell me, can you read to me what you have just written.] Ben dis moi, est-ce que tu peux me lire ce que tu as écrit ici.
E: [You won’t like this word. When it is this, it means eum excuse me. It is not a bad word. But it’s only when people are so ashamed of someone and he talks and talks and talks and one says “what” and one says keep “quiet” in English.]
Not in another language, it is violent, it is like “keep quiet” (Estrella raises her voice) ] Tu vas pas aimer ce mot là. Quand c’est ça, ça veut dire, eum, excuse me, c’est pas un méchant mot, mais c’est juste quand on est tellement quand les personnes sont tellement [honte] de quelqu’un, il parle, il parle, il parle, et on dit: « quoi », on dit: « tais-toi ! » et ça ça veut dire : « tais-toi » en anglais, mais dans la langue c’est plus violent, c’est comme : « tais-toi ! »

R [Ok, let’s continue. Read to me what you have written.] Ok, continue, lis-moi ce que t’as écrit.

E [egrasache se toca se caraje dongisala toca te sara que se singola caci a see sara que si cholie carise] (approximate transcription of the language from another galaxy)
(April 19, 2006 – after a math class)

What might the virtual dimensions of multiple literacies produce? In other words, what may become actualized? This vignette offers one possibility: a language from another galaxy. Estrella’s perceptions of language are produced as an effect of experience. Drawing on the virtual, connections happen between experiences that create a novel assemblage that then may be actualized as language from another galaxy. How has creativity opened possibilities for invented language?

In this event, language is deterritorialized, escaping Earthly boundaries, and is reterritorialized, reinvented in another galaxy. However, with each deterritorialization and reterritorialization event, difference comes into play. Is this what Estrella expresses when she tells us that the invented language from another galaxy is different from English? This invented language “is violent” she tells us. How might this express a resistance to the conventional pragmatics of politeness in other learning of literacies?

The creation of this language from another galaxy has other deterritorializing effects as well. In this event, how does creativity produce a reversal, a kind of deterritorialization, of child and adult roles? How does this invented language reterritorialize the researcher as the language novice and Estrella as the teacher? How does this event involving multiple literacies, in turn, effect the transformation of the learner? What reading of the world and self occurs?

Vignette 5 – Multiple Literacies at Work in Languages: «Extra-Terrestres»

Estrella’s deterritorializations. How does Estrella’s language – extra-terrestres – actually describe a kind of deterritorialization, outside the earth?

E [I wanted to tell you, you have to guess, how do we say ñ in Spanish?] Je voulais te dire, il faut que tu [divine], comme, c’est comme, c’est quoi, c’est comme, comment on dit ñ en espagnol.

R Ñ.

E [This is an extra-terrestrial] Ça c’est un extra-terrestre.

R [Oh, the ñ in Spanish is like an extra-terrestrial?] Ah, comme le ñ en espagnol c’est comme un extra-terrestre ?

E [Yes, because ñ is an n with a little tail like that (gesturing)] Oui, parce que le ñ c’est un n avec une petite queue comme ça.

R [What makes it an extra-terrestrial?] Qu’est-ce qui fait que c’est extra-terrestre ?

E [It is the little thing like that (pointing to the tail)] Y’a une petite chose comme ça.
In this study, MLT becomes a lens to consider the ways in which children perceive competing writing systems and multiple languages. This vignette suggests connections between MLT and emerging linguistic language awareness in two languages: Spanish and French. Particular sounds in both languages appear as extra-terrestrials “parce que ça brise les règlements.” Experience with these extra-terrestrials has brought on the thought of rules, but what rules? Are they the conventional rules of French and Spanish? Are they perceptions of how Spanish and French pronunciation ought to work? Are they something else? How is “the little thing like a tail” creating a
disruption? How does it deterritorialize the rules of Spanish language? Out of this rupture, what different learning is happening?

Vignette 6 – Desire & Creativity Flowing with Extra-Terrestres!

In this vignette, Estrella tells us more about perceptions of extra-terrestrials and where they come from.

R [And you will continue to write in Spanish? You like to write in Spanish? Yes? Do you remember when we talked last time about how Spanish is different from French and you told me certain sounds were extra-terrestrial? Do you remember that?] Et tu vas continuer à écrire en espagnol? Tu aimes ça écrire en espagnol. Oui? Tu te souviens qu’on avait parlé la dernière fois des comment l’espagnol était différent du français pis tu m’avais parlé de certains sons et tu m’avais dit que c’était des extraterrestres. Est-ce que tu te souviens de ça?

E [Yes]

R [And why did you call them extraterrestrial?] et pourquoi tu as appelé ça des extraterrestres?

E Because really, I did not know the word.] Parce que vraiment, je ne connaissais pas ce mot.

R [So why extra-terrestrial?] alors pourquoi extraterrestres?

E [Because I did not know it – the others—on the other planets, I think they invented words like ñ, ch (č) and all that.] Parce que je le connaissais pas — les autres — dans les autres planètes, je pense qu’ils ont inventés les mots comme ñ, ch et tout ça.

R [Ok and on this planet what was created?] Ah, ok, pis sur cette planète qu’est-ce qu’on a crée?

E [All the others.] Tous les autres.

R [All the others. Then how is it decided that certain sounds are on a certain planet and other sounds on our planet.] Tous les autres. Alors, qu’est-ce qui fait que on décide certains sont sur une autre planète et certains sur notre planète?

E [Sometimes, people, astronauts go on the other planets and steal sounds.] Et des fois les personnes, les astronautes vont dans les autres planètes et volent les sons.

R [Steal sounds, yes!] Volent les sons, oui!

E [The other sounds and now they have ñ, ch (č), one and all that.] Les autres sons et maintenant ils ont ñ, ch, un ou et tout ça.

M [But this planet is called Mexico and Spain also.] Mais cette planète s’appelle Mexique et Espagne aussi.

[laughter]

E [Spain] Espagne.

(June 28, 2006 – home)

In the previous vignette (#5), Estrella explained that extra-terrestrials were those that broke the rules. However, here she tells us that these sounds are words she doesn’t know; words that were invented on another planet and then stolen by astronauts. Language features that do not fit her worldview, “how things work or how things should work” are destabilizing and deterritorializing. Is it this unfathomable difference or “nonrelation” (Dufresne, 2005/2006) that Estrella expresses so aptly as an extra terrestres? An extra-terrestrial, exterior to a territory, the boundaries
of her worldview of how Spanish ought to work? There are French extra-terrestrials as well…

WHERE TO?

This study aims to complicate and disrupt what teaching and learning language and literacies entail. The vignettes with Estrella in class and at home demonstrate the awareness of writing systems, the disruptive reading going on in untimely ways and the thought of how each block of writing led to others and each time, what the literacies produce: transformation and becoming. Opening up writing systems opens up lines of creativity. Going beyond the immediate boundaries of texts, optimizing creativity so that connections made are part of the processes of transformation and becoming through multiple literacies. Experiences assembled in and across different contexts are complex and multilayered and contribute to sense making while reading, reading the world, and self,

There is more to literacy than what continues to inform school practices. Literate practices are multiple, occurring at home, in school and in the community (Masny, 2005). This study showed how a learner is an effect of continuous investment in multiple writing systems. This study responds to the call to reformulate research (Green & Luke, 2006), “to produce different knowledge and to produce knowledge differently” (St. Pierre, 2002, p. 399) by demonstrating the conceptual, theoretical, and analytic usefulness of a Deleuzian-Guattarian conceptual framework for qualitative educational research in language and literacies. It could also enrich thinking about the complexity of rhizomatic connections and processes involved in becoming with multiple literacies. Finally, this study offers the possibility of informing and transforming pedagogies within language and literacies classrooms and programs based on the notion that learning presupposes an encounter with something as yet unknown (Semetsky, 2003). Creative processes allow literacies to move beyond, extend, and transform multiple literacies and learners. This research provides a different avenue to literacies research.

The Multiple Literacies Theory retained in this chapter becomes a way to examine how out of complexity and multiplicity, in untimely ways, differences are continuously transforming in becoming Other than. In the words of Deleuze and Guattari (1994, p. 169): ‘We are not in the world. We become with the world’. In the context of this chapter, we become with reading, reading the world, and self as texts – Multiple Literacies.

NOTES

1 This research was made possible due to a research grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Heritage Official Languages Support Program.

2 The transformation from literacy to multiple literacies corresponds to a similar conceptual movement from intelligence to multiple intelligences (Brand, 2006; Gardner, 2006).

3 The point Estrella is raising relates to French verbs. The present tense 3rd person plural of the verb to walk, *marcher*, is *they walk, ils marchent*. The last 3 letters are not pronounced. The gerund form of the verb is *en marchent*, while walking. In this case, the letters *[en]* are pronounced as a nasalized vowel and *[t]* is not pronounced.
REFERENCES


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