Transforming Knowledge Hierarchies and Educating for Freedom:

Incorporating Diverse Texts in Elementary Literacy Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

Transforming Knowledge Hierarchies and Educating for Freedom:

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Meg Grieve

In this thesis I examine the potential of the intersections of critical pedagogy, new literacy studies and examples of qualitative ethnographic research of non-print based texts to transform elementary school literacy programs, educate for freedom, and allow more diverse voices and ways of knowing to be incorporated into the curriculum. I ask (a) Can an expanded understanding of "text" transform the literacy curriculum to allow students to develop and share their voices, be heard and to also learn from multiple perspectives? And (b) Can an expanded understanding of "text" contribute to the incorporation of a diversity of activities and experiences into elementary school literacy programs? With my theoretical foundation in Critical Pedagogy, I argue that western ways of knowing and the autonomous model of literacy are placed in a hierarchy above different ways of knowing and the recognition and application of the ideological model of literacy and multiliteracies. Furthermore, I argue for expanding our understanding of text to help transform hierarchical constructions of knowledge. I review literature in qualitative ethnographic research that demonstrates the use of non-print based texts for diverse multicultural education and I develop a framework to organize these diverse texts. Bringing together key elements from each of the theories I then begin to work towards a curriculum framework, including identifying foundational principles and offering strategies for how to practice teaching with diverse texts. The benefits for students, especially elementary aged children, and teachers are highlighted, as well as the challenges and future directions.

Keywords: critical pedagogy, multiliteracies, texts, voice, elementary literacy, curriculum design.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my mum and dad. My mother, Paula Chmilar, encouraged me to find my path to teaching. She passed away before I became a teacher and she continues to inspire me every day, and so I dedicate this thesis to her memory and her own work as a teacher in early literacy. My father, Tom Grieve, is the first person I call with good news and my biggest supporter and mentor. Thanks for always listening to and encouraging me Dad.

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Introduction

I see children spend most of their time in school at a desk with a paper and a pencil. As a teacher (and substitute teacher) in public elementary schools I see too many worksheets and workbooks, too many papers pushed into desks, and piles of paper in recycling bins. I see boredom and predictable routines, and many classrooms organized around what adults want, rather than what children's minds, bodies and souls desire and need. I also see the exclusion of those children who do not fit into the standard ways of knowing, learning and expression. People have a diversity of ways of knowing, learning and expressing themselves but schools tend to focus on a narrow range of knowledge that is focused on paper and pencil work. I see many children who are not heard or understood and whose talents are not recognized or nurtured. I see these voices and ways of knowing marginalized in the classroom.

Most often it is authority and power that are heard in a classroom. Teachers voices are authoritarian, and the standardized curriculum structures learning with hierarchical power imbalances. As a critical pedagogue, I look for spaces for transformation to create schools that do not privilege certain people or uphold harmful power structures. My foundation in critical pedagogy will be elaborated upon in my first chapter. I believe I can help to change systems of power and privilege that are harmful by identifying a space for change and this thesis explores a space for transformative change in literacy. I believe many voices and perspectives are excluded when we focus our literacy education primarily (and often solely) on reading and writing and I see a space for transformation in our literacy practices to allow diverse voices and knowledges to be included.

Background Information

My teaching experiences have been in multicultural Canadian urban, suburban and rural public elementary schools. Educators say that they want to work towards mandates and goals for diversity and multiculturalism, but curricula do not reflect diverse ways of knowing and diverse knowledge systems. "Official" knowledge that is based in objective standards dominates the curriculum, while "unofficial" knowledge that is more reflective of culture and community is non-dominant. In this thesis I argue that expanding our understanding of a "text" can help transform hierarchical constructions of knowledge that place western ways of knowing, official knowledge and print-based forms of literacy above different ways of knowing and multiple literacies. Working with the framework and methods of critical pedagogy and with research in the area of multiliteracies I believe we can work to stretch the literacy curriculum from within (Noddings, 2013) by incorporating diverse texts.

When I write *diverse texts* I am discussing the possibility of an expanded understanding of text that arises out of ethnographic research in many different places that point to different types of texts that are not print-based. Texts that are not print-based have in common the capacity to open up new and diverse spaces for learning and dialogue. The idea of diverse texts recognizes that communicating, passing on, teaching and developing knowledges can arise out of different pattern-based symbols that are negotiated and interpreted by a social group in different places and cultures. In this thesis I explore examples of a variety of diverse texts from recent research, such as land-, art- and music- based texts, and I discuss how using a variety of texts can help to incorporate more diverse voices and ways of knowing in education and learning. My understanding of the importance of voice is built out of the work of bell hooks (1994) whereby incorporating more diverse voices and ways of knowing can work towards educating for freedom

from injustice and discrimination and towards education that is freer; that is, more open, liberating and with the recognition and celebration of difference.

> hooks (1994) also writes that we need to create classrooms that recognize diversity, Multiculturalism compels educators to recognize the narrow boundaries that have shaped the way knowledge is shared in the classroom. It forces us all to recognize our complicity in accepting and perpetuating biases of any kind. Students are eager to break through barriers to knowing. They are willing to surrender to the wonder of re-learning and learning ways of knowing that go against the grain. When we, as educators, allow our pedagogy to be radically changed by our recognition of a multicultural world, we can give students the education they desire and deserve. (p.44)

I believe that when we attribute knowledge consistently and often exclusively to books, paper, and the written word this shapes a very narrow way of sharing knowledge. There are multiple and multimodal ways of communicating and learning. I use the terms multiliteracies and literacies in the plural form to point towards the multiplicity of communication modes that New Literacy Studies identifies. They explain how we communicate, read and write the world through a variety of objects and texts that are non-print based and this is fully developed in the second chapter of this thesis. Being able to discuss, learn, listen and name are examples of multiliteracies. To be literate today—to understand, communicate, discuss, listen, share, and contribute—children need a multiplicity of modes and methods of communication. For their voices to shape knowledges and design transformative social futures we must encourage breaking barriers between the hierarchies of knowledge and develop dialogues that open learning to diverse ways of knowing.

Research Questions

1. Can an expanded understanding of "text" transform the literacy curriculum to allow students to develop and share their voices, be heard and to also learn from multiple perspectives?

2. Can an expanded understanding of "text" contribute to the incorporation of a diversity of activities and experiences into elementary school literacy programs?

Brief Overview of Chapters

This thesis is divided into three chapters. First, I outline my theoretical foundations in Critical Theory and Critical Pedagogy, I explain the differences between official and unofficial knowledges while reviewing the literature that has shaped my understanding of this division, and I establish a theoretical understanding of "stretching the literacy curriculum from within". In the second chapter, I situate my understanding of literacy in the field of New Literacy Studies, I define my expanded idea of "text" by drawing on research in this area, and I demonstrate, through various examples, the types of texts that can be used to expand the literacy curriculum and de-center written texts. Finally, in the third chapter I work towards a curriculum framework for thinking about a stretched literacy curriculum for including diverse texts. With the aim of leading teachers and students to embrace directly the potential of including diverse voices into our knowledge base and active daily practice, this thesis works towards de-centering privileged voices and educating for freedom and diversity.

Chapter 1. Theoretical Framework

Introduction

The theoretical foundation of this thesis lies in Critical Theory and Critical Pedagogy. These critical perspectives frame my understanding of how knowledge and education systems are constructed to maintain positions of power for dominant voices. I use a critical perspective and methods from critical pedagogy because I want to question the kinds of knowledge elementary educators privilege when teaching a standardized, objective traditional literacy curriculum. I also want to think about how to begin to transform hierarchies of knowledge that uphold dominant perspectives and voices in literacy learning.

Many educators, philosophers and researchers who are aligned with critical pedagogy have discussed the way power and knowledge are constructed in education (Freire, 1970/2000; Giroux, 1997, 1992, 2012; hooks, 1994; Gutek, 2013; Canella, 2008; Apple, 2000; Harvey, 2005). The work of Paolo Freire, bell hooks and Henry Giroux offer methods that are grounded in teaching for and from a place of critical consciousness, to think about education that is critical of dominant, powerful constructions of learning, and to allow for different voices to be included. I explore these critical theories and the major theoretical underpinnings of critical perspectives of education—that schools and education are not neutral social institutions; that schools tend to maintain systems of oppression between dominant and non-dominant peoples; and that schools construct the subjectivities, identities and paths that are available to learners—as a lens for looking at spaces for transformation in elementary literacy education.

This chapter is divided into three sections. To begin, I lay the foundations briefly in critical theory and then in more detail I specifically outline my understanding of critical pedagogy. I also briefly explore difficulties with critical pedagogy and try to address these difficulties. I then examine and identify through a sociological lens how knowledge hierarchies

are constructed to separate official and unofficial knowledges. Finally I define how I believe we can work to transform these knowledge hierarchies by "stretching the literacy curriculum from within", based in Noddings' (2013) idea of "stretching the disciplines from within".

Critical Theory

Critical theory, broadly, encourages understanding that all of our ways of knowing and being are socially constructed and built in power relationships. Specifically, my interest in basing this research in critical theory is in order to help explain how elementary education (specifically the official curricula and prescribed learning goals) has been shaped by the scientific tradition (most particularly the field of Developmental Psychology). These constructions have shaped a powerful division between official and unofficial knowledges. A focus on measurable objectives separates the learner from what they are learning. Critical theory explains how these structures and relationships are constructed to control what is deemed as official knowledge thereby marginalizing a diversity of other knowledges.

The context of critical theory begins with Marxism as an ideological base. Marxism explains that there is a class struggle for the means of production and the economy. Dominant classes, who have the means of production, also control institutions and use social control (like school systems) to reproduce their dominant places (Wotherspoon, 2014). Critical theory also shares theoretical orientations with postmodernism. Postmodernism is a view of knowledge as human invention where it is understood that constructions of knowledge are rooted in power relations. The knowledge created by those in power dominates (Gutek, 2013). Postmodernism also rejects the Enlightenment's rationale for positions of truth and neutrality from scientific reasoning and pushes us to deconstruct the motives and purposes behind those who have constructed those truths. Through postmodern lenses we can deconstruct these "truths" to read, interpret and reveal the power and meaning behind these constructions in order to "fictionalize

hegemonic truth and unlock the door to multiple possibilities" (Canella, 2008, p.16). In practicing deconstruction, critical theory helps to find places that can enable the empowerment of marginalized voices, and critical pedagogy helps me to understand the methods to do so specifically for education.

Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogues understand that educators, learners and community members can reconstruct together the type of schools and education that reflect ways of living and thinking that can help to build a better society. The foundations of critical pedagogy lie in Paolo Freire's concepts of teaching for critical consciousness and teaching through dialogue. Critical pedagogy encourages educators to recognize the powerful practices that guide our actions and to seek ways together in conversation to reconstruct and transform these ways of being. I delve into three main areas of critical pedagogy: teaching for critical consciousness, dialogical learning and border crossing through some of the work of Paolo Freire (1970/2000), bell hooks (1994), Henry Giroux (1997), Maxine Greene (1971/2013; 1995) and Kevin Kumashiro (2000).

Figure 1. Main areas of critical pedagogy used in this thesis.

Critical consciousness. Friere (1970/2000) discusses the importance of teaching for "conscientizacao", or critical consciousness, which is the idea of teaching for understanding the world critically, where education leads to freedom from being controlled by oppression. Freire

(1970/2000) writes that by teaching for critical consciousness learners learn how "to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (p.96). This is also a journey of humanization, where both the oppressed and the oppressor learn about the world and their place in it. Teaching for critical consciousness means teaching people to see through the ideologies that have been constructed by those who are in power, to see the world as more complex where we question to discover more complicated understandings of who we are and what we know (Gutek, 2013). Teaching for critical consciousness is meant to lead to learners becoming aware that they have the power to construct their own life stories (Gutek, 2013), and to name (Freire, 1970/2000) the world for themselves. In this way education is not a "mouthpiece" for those who are in charge (Giroux, 1997), but can be transformational in changing communities and the ways that we live and know the world.

With critical consciousness we learn and unlearn that the world and ways of knowing are created and couched in discourses of privilege where some groups are favoured, that we ourselves might be privileged and that we may be a part of creating privileged positions, or a part of oppressive ways of being (Freire, 1970/2000; Kumashiro, 2000). Critical pedagogues try to bring about change through critique and transformation by understanding that there is no normal way of knowing or being, but that "normal" is socially constructed (Kumashiro, 2000). Contradictions and social inequities that are taken for granted are made visible and understood, and with these inequities identified, critical pedagogy tries to find spaces for transformation. Transformation comes not just from acquiring knowledge of the constructions of power and privilege, but also in understanding that we can act to change part of that power and privilege.

Maxine Greene (1971/2013) talks about the journey of developing consciousness as recognizing that we are always incomplete and working towards becoming. Greene writes about education as an interior journey of developing awareness of process, knowing and believing,

where the learner can break from their ego, and see beyond themselves, from different points of view. She writes,

> Consciousness, being intentional, throws itself outward *towards* the world. It is always consciousness of something—a phenomenon, another person, as object in the world: Reflecting upon himself as a conscious object, the individual—the learner, perhaps—reflects upon his relation to the world [...and,] the changing perspectives through which the world presents itself to him (Greene, 1971/2013, p.130).

To teach for critical consciousness, or conscientizacao, means active reflection on our points of view and how we see the world, to find the contradictions, and the relationships that we are a part of, and that in becoming we create and learn ways of being that can be transformative.

Dialogical learning. Learning through dialogue—speaking with others, and listening to different voices, is necessary for learning critically. As a critical pedagogue teaching elementary school aged students, I believe that children need opportunities to engage in dialogue with other children and adults of different ages in different situations and with different materials. I think it is important for children and young learners to develop different pathways for dialogue so that children can approach the act and art of dialogue through different activities and experiences that engage them with a variety of voices, new vocabulary, points of view, ways of moving and being, and opportunities that demonstrate different ways of seeing and knowing. I think diverse texts are pathways to "available designs" for "designing social futures" (New London Group, 1996) and that dialogue with these diverse texts can lead to new ways of being and learning. These are concepts that I will discuss in greater detail in my second chapter, and so it is important to construct a solid theoretical understanding of the importance of dialogue for critical learning opportunities. In this section I base my understanding of dialogue in Freire's work, and I expand this understanding with bell hooks' work.

Learners can gain critical consciousness and build knowledge of their world by naming it together in dialogue (Freire, 1970/2000). Freire (1970/2000) writes,

> Apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis, individuals cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other (p.72).

Through discussion, together, in the world, learners gain and build understanding and name their worlds.

Freire developed the idea of a dialogical model of learning in opposition to what he calls the "banking model" of education. The banking model of education describes the type of learning where knowledge exists outside of a person (in a book, in the teacher) and is given to the learner. In this model knowledge is objectified, prepared, explained, owned and narrated by the teacher to the students. In the banking model learners do not create knowledge, they are given knowledge. There is no critical reflection or the development of critical consciousness, nor the activity of building and naming the world together.

By contrast, in dialogical learning people are connected to each other, their community, and the realities of life. Through dialogue people create their understanding of the world and this learning experience is freeing. Freire writes that education that is freeing, "denies that man is abstract, isolated, independent, and unattached to the world; it also denies that the world exists as a reality apart from people." (p.81). Dialogical education works to humanize people—to allow them to be connected to each other and their world through inquiry and connection, through creativity and critical thinking.

Freire discusses the power of dialogue between teachers and students who are learning together. A "problem-posing" educator creates spaces and conditions for questioning and being

critical about the ways that we live, act and know (Freire, 1970/2000, p.80). Freire explains that the problem-posing educator is not the owner of knowledge nor outside of knowledge but is always re-forming knowledge through and with the reflections of the students (p.80). As a critical educator who uses dialogue to encourage the process of growing and understanding together I am a facilitator and I am learning and becoming with my students.

In most schooling that I have experienced, children's voices are not valued as creators of knowledge in dialogue. I believe that children need to talk to each other in many different ways and to share their voices in many different ways and with different mediums in order to learn that they have the capacity to create their world and name it.

bell hooks (1994) believes that classrooms need to allow students to share their voice, to de-center the teacher as all knowing, and to allow space for all student's voices and perspectives to be heard. She asks of our classrooms: "Who speaks? Who listens? And why?" (hooks, 1994, p.40). The schools that I have worked in typically demand quiet places so that children can focus in silence to learn. As hooks indicates below, silence, order and discipline privileges very specific ways of being, behaving and learning. These types of classrooms generally teach and privilege official knowledge taught in a banking model, and this marginalizes different ways of being and knowing.

hooks (1994) writes that "bourgeois, middle class levels of decorum" permeate schooling (p.180). To me bourgeois schooling means encouraging "respectable behaviours" and tying those behaviours to the ability and possibility of achieving middle class levels of wealth and success. For example, students are encouraged to behave calmly and to be concerned about fitting into the mediocrity of life and ways of being that perpetuate an uncritical middle class. hooks explains how this agenda of decorum silences students and teaches them to be quiet, behave and follow

instructions, say the right things and obey the teacher, and not to think critically about their circumstances. This is a hidden curriculum (Jackson, 1968/2013) that does not encourage dialogue. hooks (1994) explains how quiet classroom spaces are constructed to appear as neutral safe spaces, while in fact this silence is not neutral, but perpetuates a bourgeois value of social order and obedience (p.39; p.178-180). hooks writes that we must, "confront the biases that have shaped teaching practices in our society and to create new ways of knowing, and different strategies for the sharing of knowledge" (p.12). I agree. Classrooms must become more inclusive places where conversation, disagreement, and dialogue around activities encourage sharing, learning, changing, questioning and becoming together. This type of space will have friction and difference, disagreement and difficulty; it will welcome diversity of opinions. hooks writes about the importance of students coming to find and express their voices, and the importance of creating classroom spaces that allow diverse voices to be shared and heard. She writes,

> A distinction must be made between a shallow emphasis on coming to voice […] and the more complex recognition of the uniqueness of each voice and a willingness to create spaces in the classroom where all voices can be heard because all students are free to speak, knowing their presence will be recognized and valued. (hooks, 1994, p.186)

In my experience children need a diversity of experiences, models, modes, spaces, people, and opportunities to find their voices. Teaching with dialogue in mind will by necessity create a classroom that cannot be as focused on completing objective learning goals, because we cannot control where conversations go. Instead, we must work to create spaces in our classrooms where we allow conversations, knowledge and learning to develop out of diversity. We must teach children to listen to each other and to speak about their world in exploratory ways. I believe that for young students to do this we need multiple modes and diverse texts that introduce them to our

different ways of communication and expression. I believe also that in learning through these texts they will recognize how we can communicate differently in different modes. These thoughts will be developed throughout this thesis.

Border crossing. The idea of crossing borders re-emerges often in the work of critical pedagogues. The curriculum is fragmented into subjects, disciplines and official categories, creating borders between these fragmented pieces. It is further fragmented into individual objectives of knowledge, while people are divided from their homes and ways of knowing, and distanced from their own critical consciousness. Henry Giroux (1992), Greene (1995) and hooks (1994) discuss the possibilities of border crossing and transgressing boundaries. These are useful perspectives from critical pedagogy for building towards how and why to stretch the literacy curriculum.

Henry Giroux, in *Border Crossings* (1992), discusses the divisions and borders that educators should cross between intellectual work and labour, theory and practice. Giroux writes that education can be a place for continuing social control or a place for transformation, and that when educators cross borders into roles as public intellectuals and cultural workers they can create transformative spaces. Educators cannot be transmitters of official knowledge in a banking model who act as a mouthpiece for dominant and powerful ways of being and thinking; critical educators must reflect on themselves and the world, and connect reflection with action (Giroux, 1992).

In *Teaching to Transgress* hooks (1994) discusses how university and college students and teachers can transgress boundaries in order for education to be a practice of freedom. hooks identifies differences, such as race, class and gender as boundaries, and others, like the division of the body from the mind, and teachers from students. She writes that educational institutions such as universities have accepted and maintained systems like the Western canon that are also

boundaries that silence those voices that are not included and are kept outside, and thus keep away those ways of knowing from changing and reconstructing education. hooks (1994) writes of students, "They must believe they can inhabit comfortably two different worlds, but they must make each space one of comfort. They must creatively invent ways to cross borders. They must believe in their capacity to alter the bourgeois settings they enter" (p.183). This quote is important to remember when thinking about how young people in schools have the capacity to alter schools with their voices, diversity and experiences so that each classroom and each school can be altered with the voices of individuals.

Greene (1995) writes about seeing the world big, and seeing the connections between people and subjects where we use our imaginations to break through the ordinary classifications to find openings to move through (p.14). Greene writes, "All I can do is try to provoke my readers to come together in making pathways through that world with their students, leaving thumbprints as they pass" (p.16). Greene calls for educators to open up the passages for seeing things large, for communicating across boundaries, for opening our imaginations to see things from multiple points of view, or, "our lives narrow and our pathways become cul-de-sacs" (p.17).

There are borders to cross in many ways. This idea of crossing borders is an important metaphor for this thesis, since I work to help find ways that elementary educators can stretch the borders of literacy learning. I will return to this idea later.

Challenges and criticisms of critical pedagogy. There are difficulties and criticisms of critical pedagogy from educators who also work in the area of anti-oppressive pedagogy. I deal with these issues here because it is important to recognize these drawbacks. Each theoretical framework has its drawbacks, but I believe that critical pedagogy offers the most appropriate framework for my work at this time. In dealing with these criticisms, especially from Kevin Kumashiro (2000), I have also recognized how and where to bring in other methods and theories

for anti-oppressive education. While this thesis is grounded in approaches from critical pedagogy I bring in some of Kumashiro's alternative frameworks in the final chapter, in part to deal with some of the difficulties of critical pedagogy, and to recognize different approaches that can be used to implement the use of diverse texts.

Kumashiro (2000) and Macedo (2000) have discussed a similar drawback of critical pedagogy. This is that learning from a position of critical consciousness tries to place the learner outside of the situation as if able to be objectively outside of reality looking back at oppression, as if to see the "truth" of oppression. Kumashiro writes, "Consciousness raising puts into play a modernist and rationalist approach to challenging oppression" (p.39) and that the position of critical consciousness comes from a place that agrees with the possibility of a rationalized truth of a way of being. He writes that the possibility of detachment is to perpetuate a mythical norm where the oppressed are othered and able to look back at themselves as oppressed (Kumashiro, 2000). This criticism is important to recognize because the foundations of critical pedagogy are based in criticisms of scientific positivism and the impossibility of neutrality. Kumashiro explains that rational detachment is impossible; our identities always influence our points of view and we cannot get outside or find an objective position; there is no position of truth and oppression is never uniform, people have multiple identities, and structures do not account for diverse experiences of oppression. I agree.

Furthermore, Kumashiro (2000) discusses how this stepping outside in consciousness to reflect back on reality comes from an academic point of view that excludes and marginalizes as well. He writes,

> Critical pedagogy needs to move away from students need this/my critical perspective
> since such an approach merely replaces one socially hegemonic framework with another
> (academically hegemonic one) [and that] rather than aim for understanding, anti-

oppressive pedagogy should aim for effect through engagement and analysis to one's own

life. (p.39).

I believe that engagement and analysis to one's own life can be done while still being a critical

pedagogue. Donaldo Macedo (2000) helps to explain this point.

Macedo (2000), in the introduction to *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, is critical of the

criticisms of critical pedagogy I described above. He writes that Freire did not imply a correct

method of approaching reality, or that it is possible to know the identity of the oppressed, or that

oppression is anything categorically (Macedo, 2000, p.19). Macedo discusses that the educator

must have political clarity to recognize that no one is neutral and that no clear view is available to

all and that there is no stepping outside of anything.

I do not believe that anyone can step outside themselves. Maxine Greene (1995) helps me

to understand how we can use our imaginations to see from different points of view and to step

into and away from ourselves in order to learn. I do not think that children can step outside

themselves entirely, but I think that teaching or putting them in situations of different peoples and

different ways of thinking can enable transformative learning. If we only put children constantly

in the same frameworks and boxes (for example, traditional literacy models), taking strategies to

enable them to step into different frameworks (for example, multiliteracies) can enable

transformative learning. Giving children different literacies for thinking about the world could

allow them to imaginatively step into different experiences of consciousness. For example,

through learning to create personal expression through art they can communicate differently and

learn that different communication is possible in art.

I think that if we try to step outside the literacy curriculum and look at that structure

critically we can consciously try to step into different ways of knowing, seeing and

communicating. There is strength in this stepping outside of oppressive structures to look back

and reflect. And while we are not neutral, critical pedagogy teaches critical consciousness to try and see things as they have been constructed to find an opening for change—to try and see the structure as it is to see a piece that is changeable. For me the activity of trying to do is useful for finding spaces for change and transformation.

In summary, this first section of the theoretical framework has explored key thinkers that have developed my understanding of Critical Theory and Critical Pedagogy. Salient points in this discussion have been teaching for freedom through critical consciousness education that uses dialogue and crossing borders to allow learners to share their voices.

In the next section I explore an important divide that creates hierarchical constructions of knowledge, and identifies the specific area of education that I am interested in transforming.

Official and Unofficial Knowledge Hierarchies

Critical pedagogy works to detect practices and conditions that give power to some over others; it seeks to understand how these conditions are constructed and maintained; and it seeks transformations of these conditions (Bogdan & Bilken, 2007). This thesis detects the practice/construction of knowledge hierarchies as a space for transformation. This thesis, as guided by critical pedagogy and critical theory, seeks to challenge how "official knowledge" is privileged in curriculum over different ways of knowing and different types of knowledge, which can be thought of as "unofficial knowledge".

Official knowledge constructions. Official knowledge is a powerful construction in education that privileges certain ways of knowing. In this section I explore ideas of rationalization, standardization, neoliberal ideology, and the reduction of knowledge to measurable objectives. The following graphic organizer visualizes the four areas of this section.
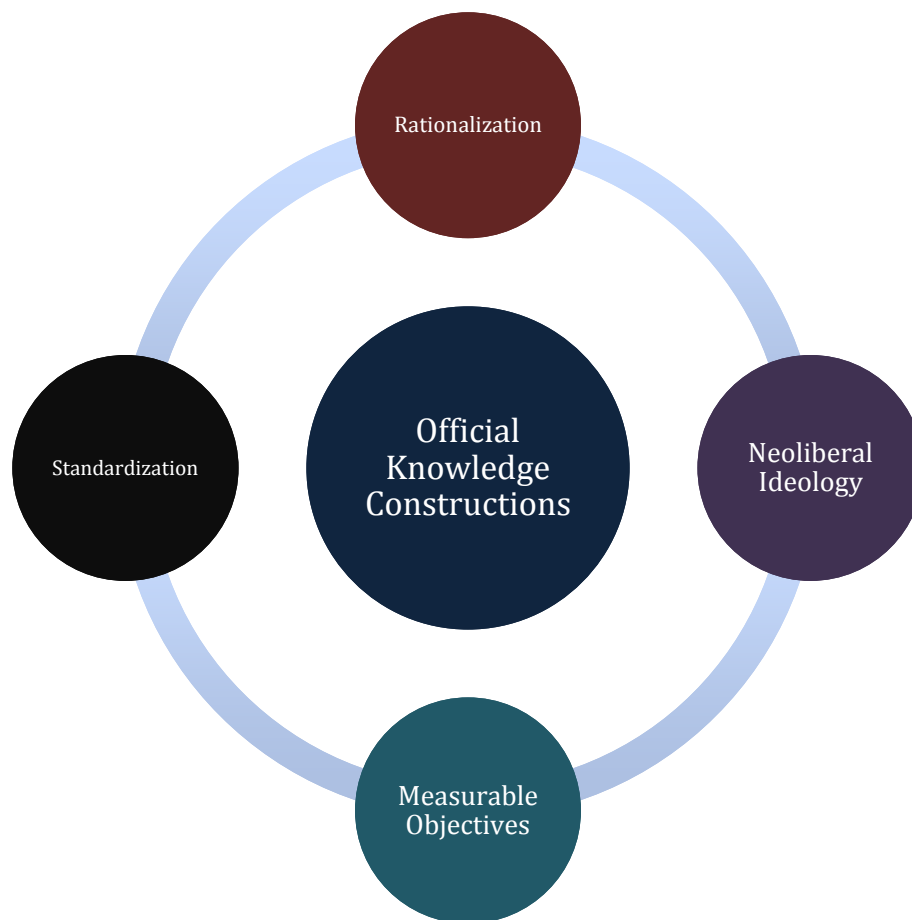
Figure 2. Four main components of official knowledge constructions. This figure illustrates the strong construction of official knowledge.

Measurable objectives. In curriculum studies it is recognized that the scientific method has greatly influenced how curriculum has been designed around official objectified outcomes. Franklin Bobbitt, in 1918, began the steady development of curriculum making along these scientific lines. He wrote then that the "age of science is demanding exactness and particularity" (Bobbitt, 1918/2013, p.22) and he developed and argued for accurate methods of measuring and evaluating educational processes and prescribing remedies for the future of education. Ralph Tyler (1949) continued this work of objectifying learning goals by employing the expertise of subject specialists to define the objectives, materials, content, instructional procedures and tests

to create educational programs that are distinctly designed for product-based learning. James

Popham (1972/2013), too, continued the argument for rationalized objective planning through

"measurability and clarity" with "specific indicators" and "measurable learner behaviour" (p.97).

Popham's curriculum plan looks very much like the provincial curriculum that I work with today.

This dominant view of knowledge and learning continues to dominate the field. This is not a

neutral position. The goals of objectified learning are not objective. As Elliot Eisner (2001/2013)

writes, the standards movement is "the legacy of the Enlightenment" (p.281) that focuses on

quantifiable measurement of precisely defined, predictable goals that are based in a belief that we

know what works, that we know what outcomes are important, and that we know that those

outcomes will make for the best learning. This legacy of the Enlightenment has endured in our

constructions of knowledge as official as if scientifically reasoned outcomes can control how and

what people learn through systematic planning for achievement.

Rationalization. The context of these scientific views of curriculum planning as

connected to the Enlightenment are illuminated by Max Weber's work in explaining

rationalization. Rationalization is associated with the rise of instrumental reason, capitalism and

modernity (Wotherspoon, 2014). Rationalization turns life into bureaucratic and systematic

planning for the achievement of predetermined objectives (Wotherspoon, 2014). Weber

recognized that rationalized learning with clear paths to credentials changed people's roles in

society into technological, mechanistic cogs, trapped in bureaucracy (Wotherspoon, 2014). While

the bureaucracies of school are meant to allow people to achieve objective measurements based

on merit and to select those that attain these levels to contribute their capacities to society, Weber

argued that rationalization created a hierarchy of authority where credentials are used to advance

the positions of the already powerful (Wotherspoon, 2014). This type of reasoning and

rationalization led to the type of organized curriculum planning for objectives that Bobbit, Tyler and Popham worked towards for attaining specialized objectives.

Wotherspoon (2014) explains how this rationality has affected schooling so that subjects and disciplines are organized into domains with their own rational ends and goals. Exams and testing control classrooms, stream learners and try to predict what kind of learning is useful for the economy. Schooling organized in this rationalized way creates curricula that is focused on official knowledge. Official knowledge is typically book-based, text-based, canonical and usually there is one right answer that is legitimate, testable and relatively unchallenged (Wotherspoon, 2014). For example, in British Columbia on the first day of my professional teaching degree we were taken to the Ministry of Education website to be introduced to the "Prescribed Learning Outcomes" (PLOs). As teachers each of our lessons or units should be specifically tied to one or more PLO; as if the objective of teaching is to reach a productive outcome that has been prescribed; as if it is not possible that children are learning things more important that we have not labelled, listed, categorized, objectified, quantified and defined. These product-oriented objectives are not value free. As a critical pedagogue I recognize that objectives are constructions that lead most often to specific ways of teaching and learning that focuses on market oriented western educational models.

Neoliberal ideology and standardization. Official knowledge is also supported and maintained by neoliberal politics and ideology. Neoliberalism is a political ideology that is characterized by the belief in an open and free global market, support for increased private ownership through deregulation of trade to support economic growth, and decreased support and funding for government directed public services (Apple, 2000; Arshad-Ayaz, 2008; Carnoy, 2000; Giroux, 2012). Neoliberal reforms have altered the education landscape considerably since the 1980s (Harvey, 2007), which has reinforced the power of official knowledges. The neoliberal

discourse, with its belief in the centrality of market and focus on productivity, sees education as a means to create knowledge that upholds and even deifies market, productivity, competition and consumption as the main organizing forces in the society (Apple, 2000; Arshad-Ayaz, 2008; Sidhu, 2007).

Increasingly the objectives of official knowledge content are geared towards skills that are valuable in the neoliberal knowledge economy and this orientation has led to increased standardization and testing. I believe that a school that is focused on test results will not be teaching for creativity, imagination, judgement, citizenship, democracy, ethical reflection or community. Au (2007/2013) demonstrated that there is a significant relationship between the implementation of high-stakes testing and changes in the content of a curricula to align with the test including the structure of the content knowledge and the types of pedagogy associated with communication of that content (p.242). Au demonstrated that this narrowed curriculum to meet test-based norms and, "increased fragmentation of knowledge forms into bits and pieces learned for the sake of the tests" (p.246) and that teachers turned to instruction that focused on narration and memorization. Sleeter and Stillman (2005/2013) demonstrated similar results in a California study. They write, "Like a century ago, curriculum is being organized scientifically for efficiency, deriving learning objectives from social and economic needs and casting teachers as managers for the process of producing student achievement scores." (Sleeter & Stillman, 2005/2013, p.266).

This market orientation devalues the lives and experiences of students, cultures and democratic values. Specifically, research has shown that in the neoliberal globalized world there is an agenda to avoid controversy, disagreement, open-ended thinking, reflection and debate. This is demonstrated by education systems slashing school subject areas that do not contribute to the economy, such as the arts and humanities, while math, literacy, science and technology continue to be supported as these are cost-effective areas that will increase global industrial

competitiveness (Stromquist, 2007; Arshad-Ayaz, 2008; Mahjanovich, 2008; Apple, 2000; Carnoy, 2000). Naseem and Arshad-Ayaz (2013) also found that focusing on education for the neoliberal knowledge economy, where the product of education is sold as a harbinger of democracy and equality, can lead to a nation's traditional and local knowledge being lost.

As Giroux (2012) writes, it is corporate pedagogy that is governing our schools where quantitative performance indicators allow schools to be run like a business and students' productivity is measured and reported. This standardization impinges upon cultural and national differences, contributes to increased hegemony and sameness in education systems in different countries, and it forces efficiency, measurement, competition and accountability on students and teachers (Carnoy, 2000; Mahjanovich, 2008;) who structure and regulate curriculum around rationalized, objective, measurable standards. As social structures like school support official knowledge through testing standards and prescribed learning outcomes, while slashing non-market subjects, they also transmit beliefs about the value of different types of knowledge in society (Wotherspoon, 2014, p.123). All of these factors come together to create power and authority for official knowledge that simultaneously creates inequalities and marginalizes other ways of knowing.

Dominant voices recreate the inequitable conditions that place marginalized peoples and culture outside of decision making that determine values. While there are some subjects and ways of knowing that are quantifiably measurable I believe that too much of education is based in official knowledge learning.

Unofficial knowledge on the margins. "Un-official knowledge" is the type of learning that is less recognized in schools. Currently official knowledge occupies the focus of the curriculum. All *knowledges* should be part of education. Wotherspoon (2014) writes, "knowledge

is dialogical and interactive in the sense that all educational participants, whether they acknowledge it or not, share in the ongoing transfer and interpretation of knowledge" (p.138). This interactive and participatory understanding of knowledge understands that learning involves people who produce and create knowledge, rather than consume it, through dialogue, interpretation and re-interpretation (Freire, 1970/2000; Wotherspoon, 2014). It is important for this thesis to recognize what has been done in this area in order to enter into and continue this conversation. The following graphic organizer helps to visualize this section, and to recognize the complex nature of knowledge.
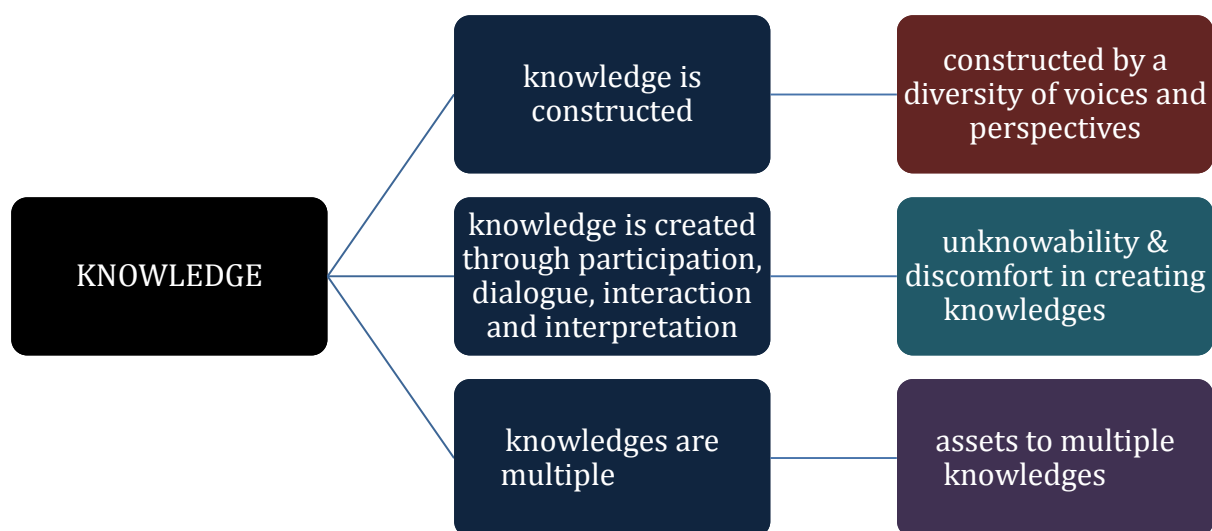
Figure 3. The complex nature of knowledge creation. This figure illustrates the key points for understanding how knowledge is created by learners.

When we focus on objective standards for students to succeed in the economy, we have seen that culturally diverse voices, artistic voices, and different languages are not largely included in the curriculum. These types of knowledges cannot be predetermined and they are typically marginalized in schooling. Scholars like Ladson-Billings (1995, 2015), Kumashiro (2000, 2002), and hooks (1994) have worked on how to bring un-official knowledges into education, and to

change the way we think about knowledges. In this section I explore the three key areas on the right of the above chart: voices and multiple perspectives; ideas around comfort, discomfort and unknowability; and the assets of unofficial knowledges.

Diversity of voices and perspectives. I am interested specifically in the knowledge and ways of knowing that arise from diversity and different individuals' positions in the world. It is specifically important to note what kind of knowledge is being pushed to the margins, and who is being alienated by these practices. Whose voices are not heard and how can they be included? Kumashiro (2000; 2002) discusses how in schools some people are marginalized while some are favoured. He discusses how the system legitimizes structures and ideologies of thinking so that schools are complicit in continuing unjust practices that uphold harmful discourses and hegemonic ways of being. These practices are supported and legitimized by "couching it in the language of 'normalcy' and 'commonsense'" (Kumashiro, 2000, p.36). Official knowledge like I have described above also works within this idea of "normalcy" and "commonsense". Kumashiro calls for critique and movement against this complicity, through various approaches and not just critical pedagogy, in order to work against oppression and "othering". A multiplicity of knowledges and voices are being pushed to the margins as we teach children to forget their differences and conform.

bell hooks (1994) writes about educating for freedom, where diverse voices are included and powerful and privileged voices are de-centered. These diverse voices include student perspectives, and the perspectives of people who are marginalized, oppressed or underprivileged. She writes that in the traditional banking system learning models excitement and emotion have been separated from learning. She believes these differences and emotions need to be acknowledged, confronted, discussed and included in education because they have been silenced and continue to be silenced in favour of white, male western ways of knowing, behaving and

teaching. These differences and emotions that arise when we allow teaching and learning that challenge ways of being make it so that our classrooms are sometimes uncomfortable, noisy, and where we may not know where we are "going".

Comfort, discomfort and unknowability. The idea of teaching with difficult and challenging situations in mind emerges in hooks' and Kumashiro's work. For example, hooks writes that teachers should include texts that are written by people of colour, women, and in different vernaculars, and students should also be allowed to speak their languages and vernaculars. hooks also writes that teachers should create situations that allow people to speak about their perspectives on life, barriers and their ways of understanding the world and that teaching for quiet decorum silences students. When students are allowed to speak from their experiences it is possible that difficult topics will arise, opening spaces for inclusion through dialogue and also teachable moments (about empathy, for example)

Kumashiro (2002) writes about the desire in schools to create comfortable places with predictable learning, and that this desire for comfort distances knowledges and ways of knowing that are difficult, problematic, uncomfortable, unstructured and challenging. He writes, "The desire to learn only what is comforting goes hand in hand with a resistance to learning what is discomforting, and this resistance often proves to be a formidable barrier to movements toward social justice" (Kumashiro, 2002, p.4). To challenge oppression Kumashiro believes that we must, "address our resistances to discomforting knowledges, and [address] what it means to put uncertainties and crisis at the center of the learning process." (p.8). These voices and experiences that are uncomfortable are on the margins. Unofficial knowledge is usually unknown when you begin teaching something, and so we must provide spaces for these types of knowledges to be included.

Assets of unofficial knowledges. Finally, Gloria Ladson-Billings' (1995) research helps us to understand the assets in unofficial, marginalized knowledges. Ladson-Billings introduced the terms "culturally relevant pedagogies" and "asset pedagogies" into education scholarship. These terms are now used widely to recognize that students who are regularly alienated and marginalized from school systems have knowledges that are assets, rather than liabilities, in their learning. Her research in culturally relevant pedagogies described how and why bringing in the home-based cultural knowledges of students is important. In Ladson-Billings' (2015) talk she discussed how schools that follow pedagogies that are culturally relevant and "firmly grounded in one's culture of origin" create "nets and not sieves" to reach all students so that they can all be given opportunities in school. She also discussed how culturally relevant curriculum can develop critical spaces where students can be multiculturally competent to deal with a global, cosmopolitan world, and are taught to alleviate the everyday problems that are linked to their cultural lives. With this work she helped to recognize and include usually unofficial knowledges into the classroom.

Official and unofficial knowledges, in conclusion. By understanding the constructions of official and non-official knowledge we can examine whose knowledge dominates and whose knowledge is non-dominant. Whose voices are heard and whose voices are silenced? This examination has led me to understand how western middle-class, white ways of knowing, and the voices associated with those ways of knowing, are privileged as "official knowledge" that has been upheld by systems that perpetuate this domination. These are the voices we hear most, and this is the knowledge we focus upon. However, education and learning require multiple perspectives, a recognition of the assets of those multiple voices, and a willingness to be in places of uncertainty. If multiple voices are included in learning, and when uncertainty is taken up as an asset, we may come to reach places of interactive and dialogical learning where we produce and

create knowledge together, actively, rather than consuming objective goals for an economic world. When learning is reduced to officially sanctioned outcomes there is no space for releasing our imaginations to the complexities of undefined perspectives and ways of knowing. Greene (1995) writes,

> When habit swathes everything one day follows another identical day and predictability swallows any hint of an opening possibility. Only when the given or the taken-for-granted is subject to questioning, only when we take various, sometimes unfamiliar perspectives on it, does it show itself as what it is—contingent on many interpretations, many vantage points, unified (if at all) by conformity or by unexamined common sense (p.23).

The habits and routines of classrooms focused on predetermined outcomes are not good for learning, not healthy for children, and nor does this reflect the wonderfully diverse ways that each of us see and experience the world. We must find ways to include many different types of knowledge.

Summary of the Theoretical Framework

The following chart helps to summarize the theories I have brought together thus far. I will add onto this chart at the beginning of my third chapter to bring all the pieces together.

THEORIES:	Critical Theory	Critical Pedagogy
SUMMARY OF THE THEORIES:	Our ways of knowing and being are socially constructed and built in power relationships. Pushes us to deconstruct the motives and purposes behind those who have constructed powerful ideas of truth and neutrality.	Critical pedagogy encourages educators to recognize the powerful practices that guide our actions and to seek ways together in conversation to reconstruct and transform these ways of being. Key authors: Freire, hooks, Greene, Giroux.

KEY POINTS:	**Official curricula** are shaped by the scientific tradition of measurable outcomes. This controls what is deemed official knowledge thereby marginalizing a diversity of other knowledges. **Deconstructing** a way of being, or learning can reveal power and meaning behind the construction.	**Critical consciousness:** learning to see though ideologies of those in power and take action against oppression. **Dialogical learning:** Through discussion learners are connected and create understanding. **Border crossing:** Crossing borders de-fragments our lives and connects ways of knowing and learning.
INTERSECTIONS:	- Knowledge is socially constructed - We produce and create knowledge actively; we are not consumers of knowledge. - There is no neutrality, we are embedded in ideology and culture, and socially bound. - Powerful constructions are privileged; while others are marginalized. - Change and transformation is possible because we are creating knowledge.	

Figure 4. Summary of the Theoretical Framework.

Stretching the Literacy Curriculum from Within

With transformation being a key goal of critical pedagogy it is with this theoretical

framework in mind that I establish a theoretical position in this section for transforming the

hierarchies in literacy curriculum. The previous section established that there is a hierarchy of

knowledges in schools where official knowledges are privileged. The details of the hierarchies of

the literacy curriculum will be fully developed in my second chapter. At this stage, and as part of

the theoretical framework, I want to establish my idea of "stretching the literacy curriculum from

within" to build a critical understanding of how these hierarchical constructions can be

reconstructed through an expanded understanding of literacy. I borrow and adapt Nel Noddings'

(2013) idea of "stretching the disciplines from within" (p.62).

I believe that we cannot overhaul the entire objective-based curriculum initiated in the early 20th Century by curriculum specialists like Bobbitt, Tyler and Popham. Nor do I believe that we can do away completely with the framework that separates the curriculum into subject disciplines. Nor is this something that I can tackle alone. I am writing this thesis for right now, for what I can do as a teacher today in my classroom, and to share these ideas with other teachers. In this respect I turn to Noddings' (2013) thought that we should "stretch the disciplines from within" (p.64), to find places that connect and blur the lines between subjects and allow students space for different types of development, and to "talk to one another across disciplines" (p.64). In these ways, Nodding's connects with ideas of border crossing.

In Education and Democracy in the 21st Century (2014), where this idea of stretching originates, Noddings discusses ideas and approaches for a changing, globalized world. The idea of pushing back on the boundaries of the disciplines by stretching them from within is one of these ideas. Noddings (2013) takes issue with schooling centered on the traditional and "sacred" disciplines where "territorial lines are tightly drawn" (p.21). She discusses the fragmentation of the curriculum and how it needs to be brought together to create effective communication in order to solve problems and, "be flexible in the face of change" (p.81). Noddings gives the example of social studies curriculum as a "stretched curriculum" because it brings together economics, politics, history and sociology. In this way a social studies curriculum is an example of how de-fragmented disciplines are brought together to make connections in the content and ways of knowing to find places of interdisciplinarity.

I borrow Noddings' (2013) terminology and idea of connections but I also adapt it to include more diverse voices, and to fit with a critical pedagogy lens. Noddings uses various examples of how educators can connect and blur the lines between disciplines. The book has many suggestions of connections that illustrate how canonical texts can resonate across the

disciplines. Unfortunately, she mostly cites predominantly white Anglo-Saxon males, and she does not explore whose voices are predominantly heard and expressed in these traditional texts. For example, she suggests that biology and religion can be brought together in the classroom by reading Darwin (p.63), or how calculus and philosophy could be brought together by reading Leibniz (p.129). For her, stretching the disciplines means allowing us to see connections between the disciplines, and that knowledge does not exist in silos. She writes, "When teachers of English, mathematics, history, science, and music all mention Beethoven, Gauss, Goethe, and Napoleon, students get a sense of the world and its wonders at a given time" (p.62). Connections are important but I believe Noddings' approach can be carried out by using a variety of texts outside the canon and traditional texts. I believe that we need to change the narrative of our past and our future more drastically by allowing our students to see themselves in more diverse classroom material, content and knowledge, beyond canonical texts that are primarily written by white men.

In many ways I am accepting the boundary of the literacy curriculum by working within it. I focus specifically on stretching within the elementary literacy curriculum rather than stretching the disciplines to overlap and blur as Noddings does. I want to stretch the literacy curriculum from within to transform the dominant hierarchies that privilege certain literacies and particular voices. I want to include more diverse student voices, diverse texts, and to think about the literacies that children need to develop to demonstrate their voices, and to be heard, in order for their voices to become a part of learning, communication and expression. I want to think about how to design literacy curriculum to be expanded to promote new aims for literacy in the 21st Century. My focus is to open the door to multiple, expanded understandings of literacy and this expanded understanding of literacy includes marginalized knowledges. By doing so I also want to read and interpret how literacy has been constructed to reveal silences and sites of power

and to find ways to open up these spaces for diverse understandings and manifestations of literacy.

Noddings (2013) writes, "It isn't that we need a common body of knowledge in order to communicate; it is that we need to communicate in order to build a common body of knowledge" (p.30). I believe that we need to rebuild our common body of knowledge to include diverse texts and that through this rebuilding process we can change the ways that we teach to be more open to the multiple literacies that we communicate with. If we recognize, accept and certify these diverse ways of knowing we may begin to develop literacy curriculum that is better representative of our collective understanding of what knowledge and communicating actually are.

Building on the theoretical framework I have discussed in chapter 1, the next chapter explores the research in New Literacy Studies, multiliteracies and multimodality to present findings for a much broader and inclusive understanding of literacy that explores communicating in diverse ways.

Chapter 2: Literacies

Situating Literacy

I was a substitute teacher at a school with a school-wide literacy program called "Success for All". The program's focus was guided reading and writing in levelled groups. Before beginning Monday's lesson I asked the small group of children what they did over their long weekend. A girl, for whom English was not her first language, tried very hard to tell us about her weekend and what happened, but I could not understand her. She did not have the vocabulary to talk about her time with her family, or she was not accustomed to speaking without a guided lesson. During the lesson this same girl could read the levelled reader very well, follow the lesson model and respond to questions in full sentences. How is this literacy program "success for all" when she could not tell a story about her life? How can literacy learning encourage real conversations and communication? How can children's voices and experiences become a part of the classroom if we focus only on reading and writing in guided, structured, repetitive lessons? How can we allow her stories and knowledge to become a part of the classroom?

What is literacy? As a core subject in school, schooled official literacy curriculum is most often very focused on reading and writing for academic pursuits. However, for example, the British Columbia language arts curriculum also includes listening, speaking, viewing and representing. While literacy may be immediately thought of as quite simply using language effectively, and most often connected to reading and writing, understanding literacy is complicated and complex. In conversation with colleagues we discussed that typically literacy learning tangentially includes things like learning social cues to decipher visual and written texts, to comprehend the world around you, to make informed understandings, and to read subject area materials. Literacy is also used as part of human development, as in, "by this age you should have this level of literacy". Illiteracy is discussed as though it is a disease that must be eradicated.

I believe that typically elementary schooling has a rather narrow or autonomous view of literacy. This thesis takes an idea of literacy as multiple, and as arising from work and research in New Literacy Studies (NLS) (see Street, 1993; Gee, 2008; New London Group, 1996; Kress, 2000). NLS explains how literacies are multiple, ideological, social, and multi-modal. This chapter explores these ideas of multiple literacies and then more specifically explores the idea of diverse texts. I begin first with a survey of the concept of literacy where I describe the foundations of New Literacy Studies and how they form an area of intersections between primarily the work of Brian Street (1993) describing literacy as autonomous or ideological, James Paul Gee's (2008) understanding of the power dynamics of literacy, the New London Group's (1996) understanding of multiliteracies, and Gunther Kress' (2000) work in multimodalities.

Is the ability to read and write cognitively superior? Brian Street (1984; 2001) discusses how a traditional understanding of literacy conceptualizes reading and writing as autonomous skills, distinct or separate from context or culture, a set of abilities that confers upon a person greater intelligence and cognitive power. Street (1984) challenged the idea that literacy itself was responsible for cognitive development, rationality and ability through his ethnographic research to understand a variety of literacy practices in a village in Iran in the 1970s. Street (2001) writes that often literacy is seen as "bringing light into darkness" where it is thought that learning the technical decoding of letters will have effects on other social and cognitive practices (p.7). He has observed, in his extensive ethnographic research, how people use and practice literacies in different ways depending on the context (such as in the home, at the market, and in school) (Street, 2001). His research in Iran aided in developing a theory for the ideological model of literacy, which highlights how different practices are socially contextual literacies – oral, visual, written. The ideological model of literacy makes visible the complex variations of literacy

practices and forms an integral base to understanding New Literacy Studies and stands in contrast to what Street (1984) calls an autonomous model of literacy.

The autonomous model of literacy conceptualizes a standard view reading and writing that is detached from context and can be abstracted from culture and ideology in order to apply it as a value-added skill (Street, 1984). The autonomous model conceptualizes literacy as a skill that translates to a job, mobility, freedom and a fuller life, economic gain, and safety. This model does not recognize that the previous list of possibilities are tied and embedded in social context. James Paul Gee (2008) writes that the autonomous model of literacy, "situates literacy in the individual person, rather than in society" (p.31) and that schooled literacy carries with it, "attitudes, values, norms, and beliefs (at once social, cultural, and political)" (p.50). Gee understands that literacy is not autonomous but that literacy, education, learning and knowledge are connected in close relationships with sociological and cultural realities. Street (2001) writes that the autonomous model of literacy, "disguises the cultural and ideological assumptions that underpin it" (p.7). This model also allows some to dominate and others to be marginalized while allowing a conception of literacy from the West to be imposed on other cultures, especially in economic and social development contexts (Gee, 2008; Street, 2001).

The ideological model sees literacy as embedded in ideology and culture. The model understands that no literacy is politically neutral but that it is a socially bound concept built and shaped by the ideas, history and political beliefs of a society including the constructions of power in that society (Street, 1993; Gee, 2008; New London Group, 1996). Literacy occurs in everyday practices, arises differently depending on the place, it is used in context and it is embedded with the dimensions of power that govern conceptions of knowledge, of identity and of being. Many ethnographic researchers have demonstrated how the ideological model of literacy helps to describe different literacy events and practices in different places (for example: Heath, 1982; Pahl

& Rowsell, 2010, 2006; Street, 1984, 1993). These literacies are multiple and diverse and change depending on context.

Street's models help us to understand that "literacy" is not an autonomous skill that can be abstracted and inserted in an individual for greater intelligence. Literacy, and our notions of what it means, is constructed in and by our place and our ideologies. However, we continue to associate literacy levels with a de-contextualized ability for abstract reasoning rather than understanding how literacy is implicated in societal ideas and relations, social hierarchy and power constructions. Gee (2008) writes that there are and have been large claims for the power of literacy and that this has built a "master myth of our society" (p.49) that has been foundational to how we make sense of reality. Gee (2008) writes,

> Across history and across various cultures, literacy has seemed to many people what
> distinguishes one kind of person from another kind of person. Literate people, it is widely
> believed, are more intelligent, more modern, more moral…literacy it seems, makes us
> 'civilized' (p.50).

Literacy levels are used consistently as assessment tools for intelligence and capability, as part of development agendas, as a panacea to alleviating poverty, and as a tool for streaming learners. Literacy is at the top of our knowledge hierarchy and we test for reading and writing levels daily in classrooms (in formative, informal and, summative ways.).

It is problematic to measure and base cognitive levels on literacy scores, and yet, we continue to level and stream children based on decoding language at the earliest levels. Gee (2008) explains how "literacy crises" are a social and political dilemma based more clearly in socioeconomic status and focusing on literacy is an evasion of more significant social problems. The ability to read and write is not a marker of intelligence. Literacy levels do not assess intelligence, but they can demonstrate the crises of socioeconomic inequality as school success is

strongly related to social class (Gee, 2008; Majanovich, 2008). For example, Gee (2008) cites a study where tracking systems distributed intelligence and opportunity based on literacy levels. In this study "high-track" high school English students were taught critical thinking, to ask questions, and to have confidence in their own opinion, whereas "low-track" students (many of whom were not first language speakers of English) were taught reading as a tool to fill out forms, write a cheque, get a job, develop good manners, respect the teacher and follow instructions (Gee, 2008, p.54). Literacy hierarchical ordering leads to different types of teaching in this example, which demonstrates the value we place on literacy levels. This ordering of tiers and testing demonstrates how schools tend to replicate social and knowledge hierarchies.

Literacies, plural. We have typically in the West attributed much success to the ability of reading and writing print language, and through this attribution these abilities have gained much currency. In this way, literacy is linked to survival and growth in our culture and community. Today, different types of literacy are needed for survival and growth depending upon the place. Monica Heller (2015) discusses the communicative capital of literacies, and that these are slowly shifting due to global changes. Children and learners are increasingly needing to negotiate different landscapes of communication and to negotiate different systems of meaning. Global changes, like for example the internet which combines video, visual and print in new forms of literacy, means that different literacies are needed for survival and growth. Literacy practices are also not the same everywhere, and there are a variety of culturally relevant ways of knowing that are embedded in different literacies that are tied to survival and growth in different places. Gee (2008) writes that "literacy as singular can no longer be foundational to how we make sense of reality, nor does it necessarily lead to a just, equitable, and humane world" (p.51). We exist in specificity, localism and indeterminateness but our constructions of literacy in schools privilege a dominant, official type knowledge that is standardized for everyone. This focus acts as an agent

of social and cultural reproduction, ensuring the continued grasp on social and political power and literacy as singular and autonomous is part of this power structure.

Whose literacy are we teaching in Canadian public elementary education in general? And, for whom and for what purpose? If schooled literacy is taught autonomously and singularly we will replicate and continue the power imbalances that are imbued within teaching for an autonomous model. As a tool for survival, literacy can continue to privilege those that hold it and know the power structures, but these power structures and literacies are changing with a globalized world. We now have a different need for and development of literacy for many reasons, including for social justice issues, and for more diverse knowledges to be a part of education, as well as for technological changes in communications. A broader understanding of "being literate" may help transform literacy programming in elementary education to allow for transformative practices that recognize different ways of knowing. With diverse classrooms and a variety of voices to be heard how can we build a more complex understanding of literacy that is inclusive of diverse literacies?

Teaching for a multiple and ideological model of literacy may offer the possibility for transformation of these imbalances. First I would like to briefly explore specifically the landscape of New Literacy Studies and how it influences me.

The landscape of New Literacy Studies. Understandings of literacy have recently been developed by researchers in the New Literacy Studies (NLS) that extend and bring clarity to a complex understanding of literacy for a contemporary world. The New London Group (1996) and Gunther Kress' (2000) work are central to my understanding of New Literacy Studies. I also use their language, terminology and concepts to frame my understanding of literacies.

A changing society. The New Literacy Studies recognize significant changes in the way that contemporary society communicates. Both The New London Group (NLG) (1996) and Kress

(2000) identify the development and growth of a globalized and technological society as a major change. With global communications and technology, communication takes multiple literacies to communicate effectively. While in the past the authoritative communication tool was primarily the printed word, the NLG argue that today our communication values multimodality, and in particular visual literacies, sound and film, combined with the printed word. This is a complex and changing communication landscape. Kress (2000) argues that this is a revolution that calls for us to, "rethink the social and semiotic landscape", to "dislodge written language", and to "set a new agenda for communication and representation" (p.182). Kress recognizes that print language has been privileged but that it is not sufficient for the communication needs of a changing society.

The NLG (1996) describe how the skills for success are changing and that people need to be able to speak, negotiate, and engage with changing social conditions. Like Street, they see the human mind as embodied, situated and social, and knowledge as embedded in social, cultural and material contexts (p.82). Therefore, the NLG's projects work to develop learners who are able to participate fully in all facets of changing globalized contemporary life, including civic, work and personal lives. They describe the new work-life as a multi-skilled, flattened hierarchy characterized by teamwork, computer use, informal and interpersonal discourses, and increased comfort with changing discourses and informal networks (NLG, 1996). Private lives are also changing to "layered lifeworlds" (NLG, 1996, p.71) where individuals are involved in various subcultural communities where they practice different discourses and use various communication methods. Finally, public lives are also changing to include more diversity and less assimilation. Difference is the norm, and diversity is discussed as a resource.

Recognizing diversity and culture. The NLS calls for understanding and recognizing pluri-cultural diversity for communicating today. The NLG (1996) discuss the way multiple and

diverse cultural differences should be central to the way educators design, through collaborative interactions, communicative changes that include diverse skills and backgrounds. They discuss this diversity as an asset, not a deficit. The NLG (1996) writes that educators should work to, "recruit the subjectivities (interests, intentions, purposes) that students bring to learning and use these as a resource for learning" (p.72). It is a social, pluri-culturalism that both the NLG and Kress advocate for. Kress (2000) also recognizes the integration of diversity and cultural approaches to communication. Kress (2000) writes that pluri-culturalism, "ensures that the most valued communicational modes of any one society are unsettled through the contestation by the valued forms of all the cultural groups" (p.183). For Kress, understanding and recognizing diversity means unsettling the printed word's hold on communicative value by being open to the possibilities of other communication modes.

The NLG also recognizes that schools need to develop models that work towards meaningful success for all, where success is not defined exclusively in economic terms but understands that successful change critiques hierarchy, power imbalances and works towards economic justice (p.67). As such, a pedagogy of multiliteracies "does not involve writing over existing subjectivities with the language of the dominant culture" (p.72), but incorporates meaningful appreciation and integration of a pluri-cultural society. This includes the use of multiple languages, and also multiple modes.

Kress points to the importance of the whole body, and all of its senses, in diverse modes of communications. He recognizes that modes of communication are implicated in hierarchical orders of communication practices. Kress (2000) writes,

> The selection and concentration by a culture on one or several modes (and the non-selection of others) opens up and facilitates my bodily engagement with the world in these specific ways. At the same time it closes off, or makes more difficult, an engagement with

the world in other ways….Assuming that we, as biological and physiological beings, are

not all equally disposed to the forms most developed and valued by our cultures, some

members of one culture will be less well served than others; some will be affectively and

cognitively at an advantage over those others whose preferred sensory modes are not

valued or are suppressed in their culture. (p.187).

In this quote, Kress points to what, I believe, is the hegemonic ways of being when we operate,

communicate and privilege certain forms of communication over others.

These changes that are identified by the NLG and Kress point to an ideological shift. With

these changes in mind researchers in the NLS explore the language and discourse needed to adapt

literacy to expand to these new modes of communication. These terms, which are integral to my

understanding the landscape of NLS, are: multiliteracies, multimodality and design.

New Literacy Studies' key terminology.

Figure 5. New Literacy Studies key terminology.

Multiliteracies. The NLG (1996) describes the multiplicity of communication channels

and media, and the increasing saliency of cultural and linguistic diversity as multiliteracies

(p.63). These literacies are broader than language alone. Their project is to broaden literacy for

the context of diverse and global societies, and to account for texts that come from multimedia

technologies, where there are relationships between texts and visuals, film, and sound. Like

Street, the NLG recognizes literacies change according to culture and context and they recognize that in some cultures or places some literacies could be more powerful than others. Multiliteracies are, "dynamic representational resources, constantly being remade by their users as they work to achieve their various cultural purposes" (NLG, 1996, p.64).

Multimodality. Kress (2000) uses the term multimodal to explain how all of our modes of communication involve our bodies and senses. A simple example is how speaking and conversing uses gesture and facial expressions. Spoken language uses a plethora of devices available to speech—pace, pitch-variation, rhythmic variations, tone of voice (Kress, 2000). Kress recognizes that one mode can dominate a type of communication, but his focus is to dislodge written language and re-focus our understanding of communication on the whole body and its senses. Multimodality recognizes our senses do not operate in isolation; the whole body senses and engages with the world to take in information.

Kress discusses how we have separated expression from use. He uses the example of past understandings of music where music had a communicative use, but that today it is understood as a mode of expression. He wants us to understand that music is also useful for communicating, as are other modes that we have de-valued. He finds that this division has created a priority towards hearing and seeing, rather than using our whole bodies as useful communication tools. All communication is multimodal: gestures, movements, music and art are part of our modes of communication, and it is not possible to represent whole areas of our sensory lives by only talking or writing.

Designing Social Futures. The NLG use the term "design" in interesting and helpful ways for understanding how multiliteracies can shape future communication and to discuss how multiliteracies are constituted by past literacies and constitute future literacies. They discuss how we are inheritors of patterns and conventions of meaning, and active designers of meaning (NLG,

1996, p.76). The NLG recognize that meaning-making is an active process with changing rules that are developed and built in social context with the users in the social group who draw on past sociolinguistic practices and systems. Literacy educators and students must see themselves as active participants in social change, as learners and students who can be active designers—makers—of their social futures.

Available Designs. The inherited patterns are our "available designs" and are divided into six design elements: Linguistic, Visual, Audio, Gestural, Spatial and Multimodal (NLG, 1996). Multimodal, in this context of design, means integrating modes to design communications that are related to visual, audio, spatial and behaviour, and that there cannot be one set of standard, single modal skills for literacy. Therefore, available designs are multimodal, and they are available because they are what we draw upon in the present to design and redesign. The NLG discusses how these available designs exist in a "chain of past texts" so that designing and redesigning is constituted only by what is available. In drawing on available designs we are designing changes to our communication and literacies.

Designing. Designing is using literacy practices (like reading, seeing and listening) to reproduce or transform knowledge, reality or identity (NLG, 1996, p.74). Designing is re-configuring available designs to make and create meaning in the present. I understand this as building knowledge from within the situated, contextual position of the learner.

Redesigned. The redesigned is new meaning that has come from these practices and available designs. The redesigned is not a reproduction, it is, "founded on historically and culturally received patterns of meaning" (NLG, 1996, p.76). In this way, redesigning social futures draws on culturally diverse literacies (like diverse texts), and it is through this process that multiliteracies are involved in transforming social futures. However, because the future is

constituted in the past, the NLG sees transformation happening incrementally through a process of supplementing what has been done, to create possibilities for social futures.

Design as transformational practices for hierarchies of knowledge. I find this idea of designing social futures very helpful to thinking about transformational practices for the hierarchy of knowledges. If educators only use and deal with traditional schooled literacies how are we designing social futures that are new, adaptable and forward thinking? Multiliteracies (cultural and home literacies for example) are left out of schooled literacy. We also often exclude marginalized literacies, such as First Nations literacies. If we consider these available designs we can begin to design social futures that reflect and are constituted by diversity. We need cultural, linguistic and cognitive transfer of home literacies to school literacies so that we draw on the multiliteracies that are available in our community to design social futures.

Designing social futures means that we can view literacy as a part of the reconstruction of dominant social hierarchies that place certain ways of knowing above others. Multiliteracies are useful for constructing vibrant learning spaces for children who need to feel a sense of belonging and voice, and to have classrooms that are inclusive to various ways of knowing. If you are literate (and hold the skill and knowledge making of the dominant group) then you can change things, you can act upon and transform knowledge in ways that are unavailable to those who cannot read and write, you have power and agency to be heard. Whose voices and what kinds of voices are heard and are constructing knowledge in the traditional classroom? I am not suggesting replacing reading and writing, but expanding it to include, grow and develop literacy learning to reflect current research and understanding and develop rich, exciting, permissible classrooms layered with multiple ways of seeing and being, with voices of diversity. In this way we need to teach literacy for survival, but also for thriving into a newly designed social future.

Identifying a gap in the New Literacy Studies arguments. Street, Gee, Kress, and the NLG argue for the strengths of multimodal multiliteracies for economic life, personal life, development of the senses and the body, and pluri-culturalism. However, I find that a large part of the NLG's (1996) argument for changing the landscape of literacy to multiliteracies is for developing different forms of communication for the new economy and for productivity. The NLG (1996) also recognize that meaningful success for all is not defined only in economic terms, but also in economic justice terms (p.67), but I find that they use a lot of terminology and language that is reminiscent of business discourse and economic productivity discourse. They write that people need to learn multimodal multiliteracies to "negotiate changes in working lives" (p.67), and gain, "access to languages of power" (p.65), create networks and understand technological changes.

Their diversity goals are also aligned with global economic futures. For a pluri-cultural world, the NLG argue that diversity will aid in production where culture is, "harnessed as an asset" for creativity, participation and networking globally (p.71). The NLG argue that in order for people to succeed, navigate and negotiate in a globalized technological world they need to learn how to access evolving languages of power, work and success. Kress (2000) also argues for education that matches a changing economy. He writes that changes in economy towards information-driven and knowledge-based production call for different modes to be taught. He identifies verbal, visual, film, electronic and mass communication modes as changes that are needed for successful communication in a new economy. The "communicative capital" that Heller (2015) discusses also explains how a technological shift is changing what types of communication are valued. In a technological world communicative capital has shifted from a focus on written language to more of a multimodal focus, especially to the combination of text that is both written, visual and aural.

Goals for education are often tied to market productivity and schools have consistently been tied to goals for future success as workers (Wotherspoon, 2014). We want our children to develop skills that will aid them in achieving successfully in their future adult lives as workers and contributors to society, and these skills are influenced by what is needed in the marketplace. These arguments for economic, market-oriented, productive communicative capital are important. In my experience they provide fodder for conversation from various angles and allow for articulating important reasons for multiliteracies. As a public elementary school teacher, I need to recognize and use these arguments to speak with parents, children and administration. The neoliberal market-orientation of our lives today is clear and dominant and so in many ways I do believe that I need to be able to argue within this type of focus when necessary.

I recognize that communicative capital and preparedness for success in the economy driven adult world of work is an important piece of education, however, continuing the argument of multiliteracies for economic productivity and advancement or market-based success indicators is not my focus. These arguments have been made by others and I do not need to do or want to continue this argument. I strongly believe in developing arguments that are not aligned with economic production. I believe that we are overly focused on these goals towards quantification of learning and preparedness for lives as employed productive adults. I would like to change the focus by arguing for teaching for multimodal multiliteracies in ways that have not been argued as pointedly yet.

My Arguments for Multimodal Multiliteracies. Less argued is the importance of teaching for multimodal multiliteracies for the following three reasons that I believe are important. I propose teaching for multiliteracies and developing a framework around diverse texts because of these reasons.

A focus on literacies for the whole body, diverse communities and rich communication.
First, I believe that success should be measured as much more than economic gain and productive growth. Literacy arguments are often made in terms of economic growth indicators, or as Street (2001) writes, "bringing light into darkness". Official knowledges, it seems, are those that are most recognized by the market. Literacy education that includes a multiple approach to building literate children will recognize that literacy is not just for survival, but for thriving in social, situated communities with other people. Education that recognizes that the whole body should be involved in becoming literate will teach children that literacies are for more than surviving, but also for thriving in all facets of life. Children need to be taught and aware of communication not just for dominant communicative capital, but for expression, creativity, sharing ideas, reading emotions, and connecting with others on multiple levels.

I believe that many multiliteracies are needed to allow children to develop and demonstrate their voices, and to be heard, in order to be a part of the fabric of social life that is not hegemonic or western centric, or built and based on official knowledges, but that take into account different ways of knowing, learning and understanding. Working to accept these differences in our classroom and preparing literate people who can deal with life's challenges in different ways, and approach understanding how to change the ways that we interact and communicate together could, I believe create literacies for thriving in today's world and in the uncertain, to be decided future.

Deconstruct hierarchies of literacies. Second, I believe that we must deconstruct knowledge structures in literacy education that privilege dominant voices. I believe with the incorporation of diverse texts for multimodal multiliteracies there will be an opportunity for more diverse voices to resound in the classroom, and de-privilege the canon and other dominant voices. I will develop this idea further in my section on texts. This idea is dealt with partially by the NLG

(1996) in terms of thinking about accessing the available designs of a diverse global community to be, "used as a resource for learning" (p.72), and Kress (2000) discusses how in a pluri-cultural world different cultures recognize the use of modes differently (p.183). My focus is different, although these ideas are encouraging and helpful. I believe that educators should teach directly against the hierarchy of literacies. Teaching for critical consciousness about the power structures that privilege the written word with a focus on understanding and teaching for multimodal multiliteracies will help transform these privileges, and I return to these ideas in detail in my final chapter.

Children need to see that their multimodal communicative abilities are recognized and appreciated as literacies, and they need to learn that these are part of schooled literacy. Diverse voices and literacies belong as available designs and they have potential for designing and redesigning the literacies of our collective futures. We should argue and teach for these directly and clearly. I believe multiliteracies are integral for diverse voices to be spoken, expressed, heard and felt in diverse classrooms. These voices should be a part of the redesigning of social futures where unofficial, marginalized knowledges and voices become part of our understandings of what it means to be literate. Those children who are less capable of seeing and feeling themselves as a part of the knowledge that is privileged in schooling may be able to build a sense of belonging, strength, talent and ability in multimodal communications. When we incorporate diverse texts, we allow a diversity of available designs for everyone, where their home literacies and cultural literacies become a part of shared designs for the future. Teaching clearly and directly that multiliteracies are part of literacy, and to question critically the power differential between modes of communication and how to transform these hierarchies can transform them.

Interesting and fun. Third, I believe that multiliteracies will create more exciting, interesting, vibrant, fun and enjoyable learning environments. There seems to be less argument

for multiliteracies as enjoyable. It is also healthy for kids to use their bodies, and good health and movement makes us happy. I do not mean for this point to come across as simplistic. Literacies and diverse texts can allow for children to be engaged in learning that does not bore them or keep them in their desks with a pencil and paper all the time. In my experience when we bring in multimodal learning opportunities children have more fun. We spend so much of the day focused on literacy, if we expand our literacy programs to include multiliteracies children will use their whole bodies in interesting and engaging ways to learn, grow, share and develop a love for learning.

Diverse Texts

The second half of this chapter, on diverse texts, explores why texts are a place of transformation, the problems with print, defining *texts*, and the last section of this chapter details a variety of examples of qualitative ethnographic research that describes the use of diverse texts for multiliteracies.

Why texts? It has been a personal journey for me to discover texts as a place for transforming and expanding literacy curriculum and as a space for transformational education and teaching. The first ethnographic studies that I read that explained the land as a text struck a deep chord with me. I decided, about ten years ago, to become a teacher because of volunteering with a program called Growing Chefs! in Vancouver, BC. In this program the garden and cooking were a text for environmental literacy (growing your own food and cooking, relationships with the land) and science literacy (learning about plants, seeds, soil, seasons, for example), but I did not know that at the time. I knew that the program was important for learning and community building, and that it was fun. The conversations and experiences that followed from interacting with the garden and cooking were, for me, integral to seeing that education and learning could be exciting and interesting. The garden provided pathways for conversations and learning that were

in depth, situated, and socially constructed in the classroom and in the garden. Being able to now speak about that experience from this place of understanding literacy as expanded, and now writing about that experience and thinking forward how to create more opportunities for those kinds of learning experiences has been an important piece to understanding why expanding understandings of text are important for creating better learning environments for our diverse classroom communities.

The other main ethnographic work that has influenced my understanding of texts, and specifically of the importance of culturally and socially situated texts, comes from research by Helen Balanoff, Emily Kudlak, Alice Kaodloak and Cynthia Chambers (2009), and Carol Rowan (2014; 2015). These researchers have done important work in northern First Nations communities to develop culturally sustaining early childhood education programs. Their work has developed an understanding of text that has greatly expanded my understanding of text and literacies, and how pattern-based texts can be included in literacy learning and programming. Reflecting now on my first professional teaching experience in a northern First Nations community I see where texts then were also providing pathways to dialogue, and opening up spaces for learning around activities. In the community where I taught, the carving studio at the High School was the most vibrant and interesting place to be. The teacher there facilitated a space where the text of a mask or a canoe provided pathways for discussion, learning, emotional development and culturally sustaining activity. These personal connections and reflections have for me now been brought into an academic language that helps to create a layered and complex discussion of text.

It is in these situations around and with diverse texts that I have seen dialogue, critical consciousness and border crossing happen. I believe that my idea of incorporating diverse texts into active, daily literacy practices will stretch the literacy curriculum from within. I think that using diverse texts are appropriate ways of developing, sharing and demonstrating knowledge for

all students, especially when we acknowledge the diversity of experiences, abilities and lives of our students, and the reason for which we need to develop culturally sustaining pedagogies. We need to get on board with multiliteracies in a larger, public sense that allows us to question literacy, be critical and develop critical consciousness to allow for transformation and a stretched literacy curriculum.

This section defines and describes diverse texts. I begin with a brief discussion as to why printed texts specifically are a problem. Then I define texts. Finally, I explore some examples of texts from ethnographic research.

The problem with print. I love reading; sitting with children reading a picture book is one of the loveliest things about being an elementary school teacher. We read books to children in elementary school for many reasons. Some of these are to get them to enjoy reading, to bring them together around a common focus, to tell a story, to have a conversation and sometimes just to calm and focus them. We also read to them to learn content, to pass-on knowledge, to teach vocabulary, to model reading, speaking and oration, and to incite dialogue and critical thinking. I do not propose that we do away with printed text, but that we recognize the problem with print.

Books are packaged with powerful authority. I was a substitute teacher for a high school history class where the students were involved in a typical type of "find the answer in the book" worksheet. Their regular teacher had made it clear that they could not plagiarize and copy the answers word-for-word. One student had figured out how to deal with plagiarism. He had his history textbook directly in front of him, open to the page with the answer, and his laptop computer directly above the book; with his hands on the keyboard and his eyes on the book he carefully copied the answers while changing each of the words, sometimes using the synonym help function in Microsoft word. He got stuck on a question that required him to think about his opinion, and partially infer the answer from the information in the textbook. I suggested that he

close the book, read the question again, and reflect on what he had read so far to think about an answer. He would not try my suggestion and he said, "but I need the book, the answer is in the book". It seemed to me like he had forgotten that the answer does not always reside in the book. It is as though these types of activities, and in my experience these types of activities are dominant, teach that meaningful knowledge is expressed in writing that is published officially, and that other ways of knowing do not count. When we consistently use books, packaged print, worksheets and lessons that deal with finding facts in the book, I believe students will be less likely to think for themselves, and to question the authority of print. If we use other texts they may also gain authority towards helping create understanding and build knowledge.

The official knowledge of a book or a printed text prioritizes a certain way of thinking and a certain type of literacy. Kress (2000) recognizes this focus over-prioritizes our senses of hearing and seeing and that there are multiple modes in all texts. Furthermore, some knowledges, like for example indigenous knowledges that are passed on via pattern-based texts, have been labeled as primitive, and are placed below alphabetized forms of communication. Some cultures require reading the land or the weather to be considered literate, and others communicate gender, kinship and life stories through clothing, while others consider reading directions on an aspirin bottle as being literate. Literacy practices are multiple, inclusive and situated, and there are different sets of skills, and different texts to read that are needed to "be literate" in different cultures. Respect and recognition of different types of texts is needed in order to work against prioritizing western ways of knowing.

Defining text. In this section I work to broaden my understanding of the definition of text. I begin by briefly returning to multiliteracies to connect explicitly to text.

Return to multiliteracies: diversity in practices, events, and reading. In order to stretch the literacy curriculum we need to understand the way diverse texts are conducive to becoming

multiliterate. Print-based text and the autonomous model of literacy have been privileged over multiple literacies and different types of text, and in many cultures less acknowledged forms of communicating and passing on knowledge have been marginalized in favour of the printed word. Ethnographic studies in multiliteracies have worked to identify *literacy practices* and *literacy events* (Heath, 1982; Street, 2000) in order to identify where and how literacy occurs in diverse ways. Literacy practices are values and attitudes associated with being literate, and literacy events are particular episodes of literacy such as writing, drawing and storytelling. The categorization and examination of literacy events and practices have helped explain the activities of literate people where they are situated in different places. Using this categorization and understanding of the idea of practices and events, literacy research has developed a rich understanding of literacy situated in place. Literacy research has developed understandings of different types of literacy events by documenting people reading signs, food containers, notices, bus schedules, maps, news, novels, lists, writing memos—these are the patterns of literate people in one type of place. The types of events that I just listed are all print- and visual- based, but if we understand reading differently to include a diversity of modes and to recognize a diversity of practices and events then we can expand our understanding of text. Reading calls upon our place and background knowledge in that place. Gee (2008) and Kress (2000) help to illustrate how different texts are read and that they are embedded in their relations to being understood within particular places with their own social and political constructions.

Gee (2008) writes about the way literacy has something to do with the ability to read something, but that different types of texts call for different types of background knowledge. Depending on context and background we read texts in different ways because, "all texts are fully implicated in values and social relations" (Gee, p.48). Kress (2000) illustrates this idea by demonstrating that objects are read, and uses an example of a collection of water bottles with

various bottle and label designs to show that these objects are read in multimodal ways. He describes how we buy water and consume the water with the information given to us by the label and the design of the bottle. He demonstrates how if the label describes with images, design and colour that the water will be "mountain fresh" that this will effect our taste of the water, thus implicating many of our senses in meaning making. Kress writes, "The object—appearing without the support of any language—communicates as effectively as does the written text of a set of instructions." (p.190). Materials and objects have culturally ascribed values that are read too. Kress uses examples like art movements, religious icons, hieroglyphs, Chinese pictograms and Australian aboriginal iconographies to demonstrate this point, and, "to insist on the semiotic, communicational and meaningful aspect of objects and the elements of each in them" (p.191). With this important connection between multiliteracy practices, events and reading established, I turn to defining the qualities of texts.

Qualities of texts. What is a text? I have found three qualities of texts: Texts pass on and teach knowledge; they are socially constructed; and they are communicated via pattern-based symbols that are negotiated and interpreted in a social group to make meaning.
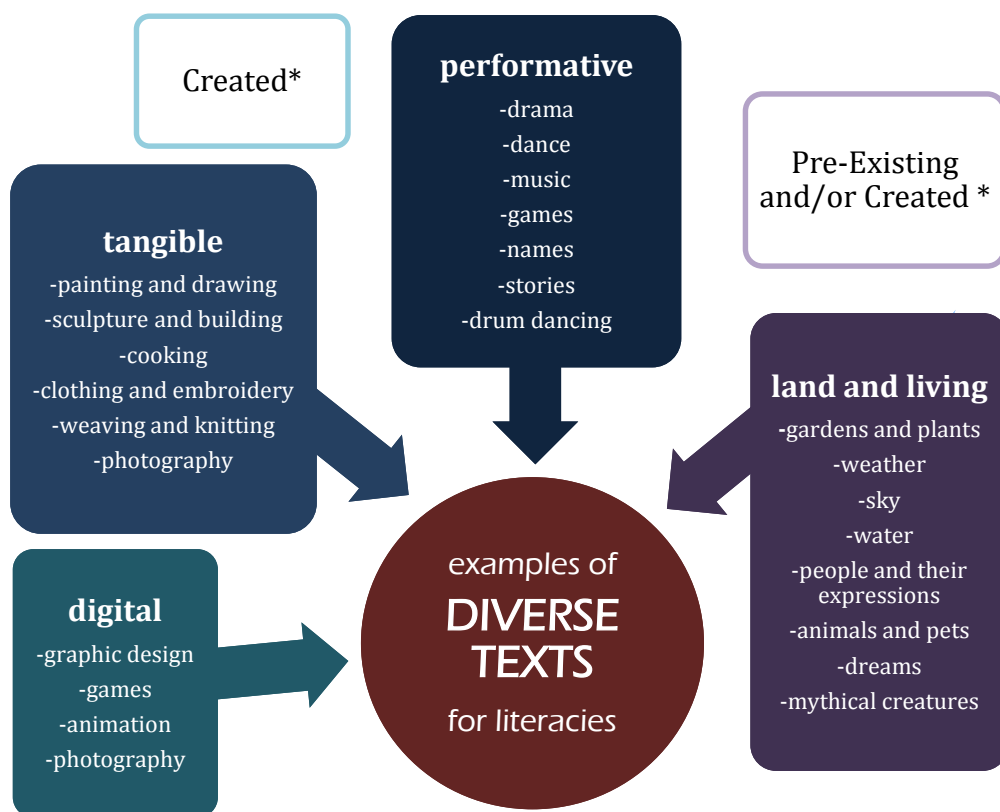
Gee (2008) explains how texts are socially constructed and embedded in social practice. You cannot understand, discuss or negotiate the meaning of a text unless you understand the social situation it is a part of because different levels of meaning arise depending on the text's situation (Gee, 2008). Alphabetized communication and alphabetization of thoughts takes knowledges and practices and transfers them into codes that pass on knowledge (Ingold, as cited in Chambers & Balanoff, 2009, p.76). A diversity of texts can also take knowledge and practices and transform them into codes that pass on knowledge. For example, the patterns on a pair of First Nations traditionally made boots carry multiple layers of meaning that are open to interpretation, dialogue and negotiation.

Texts cannot be pre-scribed for specific use, they need to be socially situated and embedded in their use. The examples that I have compiled in the following section demonstrate socially constructed texts that are different than the written word. For these researchers texts cannot be separated from how they are interpreted and used because they are ideologically situated and this creates and builds their complexity.

Examples of diverse texts. In this section I use examples from qualitative ethnographic research to demonstrate the use of diverse texts for multiliteracies. These texts inform my development of a framework for discussing a broader elementary literacy curriculum.

Organizational Chart for Diverse Texts. Balanoff and Chambers (2005) developed a chart to organize what constitutes texts as they are understood in Inuit culture where reading the world is understood differently. Balanoff and Chambers (2005) worked with Inuit elders to have their literacies, and related texts, to count as literacies. They demonstrate the ways multimodal texts like stories, clouds, songs, dreams, clothing, tools, ceremonial items, stars, drumming and dancing, and names educate the young about the land, their communities, and their traditions. They organized these Inuit literacies in a chart that groups texts according to whether they are existing, pre-existing and/or created, or created (Balanoff & Chambers, 2005, p.11). For example, the weather is a pre-existing text, facial expressions and ocean currents are pre-existing and/or created texts, and tattoos, food, clothing and drum dances are examples of created texts. With their chart and categories as a starting point, and then by thinking about the other examples that I have compiled here I developed the following framework, on the next page, for thinking about diverse texts for elementary educators. The framework is helpful for thinking about the way diverse texts can be organized and understood. I will also discuss this framework in my final chapter for thinking about ways to teach using diverse texts.

Balanoff and Chambers' (2005) categories and examples are included here as "created" (the three categories on the left; performative, tangible, and digital) and "pre-existing and/or created" (the land and living texts). Within these main areas I have found four groups for categorizing texts: digital, tangible, performative, land and living.

Created*

performative
-drama
-dance
-music
-games
-names
-stories
-drum dancing

Pre-Existing and/or Created *

tangible
-painting and drawing
-sculpture and building
-cooking
-clothing and embroidery
-weaving and knitting
-photography

land and living
-gardens and plants
-weather
-sky
-water
-people and their expressions
-animals and pets
-dreams
-mythical creatures

examples of **DIVERSE TEXTS** for literacies

digital
-graphic design
-games
-animation
-photography

Figure 6. Examples of Diverse Texts for literacies. This figure gathers together and organizes various diverse texts.

The lines between the categories are blurry. For example, land and living texts can use tangible texts, for example, cooking with garden-grown foods. Land and living texts can also become performative through recursive use if the land and living texts is filmed and re-watched. Performative texts could also involve tangible texts, or take place with or on land and living texts.

Land and living texts can also become tangible texts, for example, if a learning activity in the forest about trees is photographed so that the living text becomes a recursive tangible text as a photograph. While these categories are blurry and interrelational I find that they are helpful for thinking about the different culturally and multimodally diverse literacies that we can discover and encourage by teaching with diverse texts.

In my examples in this section I focus on demonstrating examples of land and living texts and tangible texts. Digital texts and performative texts are an area of research that I have not pursued here due to limits of space and time. This is an area for further research. In describing the different texts I try to point out the way each text has the three qualities of a text I outlined previously: that they are socially constructed, that they are communicated via pattern-based symbols and that they are negotiated and interpreted in a social group to make meaning. At the end of each section I bring the examples together and I discuss the reason each category of these texts is important for different types of literacies.

land and living
-gardens and plants
-weather
-sky
-water
-people and their
expressions
-animals and pets
-dreams
-mythical creatures

Land and living texts. In this section I bring in examples from different ethnographic research that demonstrate the way that land and life can act as text for multiliteracies.

Garden as text. In Rahm's (2004) study, a garden acts as a text for science literacy. Rather than reading a textbook, students are taught to read the plants and the soil. Rahm (2004) discusses the natural text of a garden, and the social construction of the garden as text through the conversations of the participants. The interaction with a garden, through conversation, questioning, pointing and observing, demonstrates the way the living text changes and grows with the users in the social group (Rahm, 2004). Thus, the environment becomes a text beyond the school walls. Texts are pattern-based and communicated via coded symbols that are interpreted and negotiated. Rahm

writes that through conversation, students interpret the changes and developments of the garden and that in order to make meaning of the garden-text they discuss and negotiate with the educators and each other what the signs in the garden signify.

Soil as text. Wane (2014) finds that indigenous Kenyan women have complex knowledge of the land. In her qualitative study of food-processing practices among Kenyan rural women, Wane records Ciarunji, a farmer, talking about her understanding of the land through working the soil by hand with a digging stick. Ciarunji says that when they work the soil with their hands they feel the soil, talk to each other about what they notice, observe, and question what is going on (Wane, 2014, p.23). In this way, the women are working together to read the land and interpret what it is saying about the environment. In terms of education, children are taught through observing their families' interaction with the land; how to read it, plant it, and harvest food. Through daily social interaction between people and the land, knowledge of the land is communicated, explained and passed-on. One of the ways to be literate in this community is to be able to understand the land as a text, in order to grow and prepare food.

Wayfinding, naming and aboriginal texts. Balanoff, Kudlak, Kaodloak and Chambers (2009) describe the way aboriginal people in Ulukhaktok, North West Territories, read the land. Their work defining text and supporting literacy development has been integral to my expanded understanding of text and literacies. Balanoff and Chambers (2005) write clearly about the literacies that come, partially, from being able to read the land. They write of the elders in this community who, "can read their world, make meaning of it, and engage with it on a daily basis…they can recognize and interpret symbols, decode, understand, imagine, create and pass on knowledge" but are considered illiterate by traditional assessments of reading and writing (Balanoff & Chambers, 2005, p.19). They describe how aboriginal literacies are complex and there are numerous examples of the land and life as texts. For example, stars guide and tell time

in the darkness of winter, and snowdrifts "formed by the west wind, and the wind direction" can be read on journeys to wayfind (Chambers, 2010, p.9). To be literate in this place is to be able to understand the coded symbols of the land.

In Ulukhaktok places, and their natural features, are also tied to the names that they are given. These create interwoven texts that connect content with processes and use. Content and process cannot be separated from text because they are socially situated in use (Balanoff & Chambers, 2009). For example, Ulukhaktok is the name of the place where this research takes place. "Ulu" means the slate material used to make arrowheads and the ulu, a woman's knife; Ulukhaktok means "the place of the material used to make the woman's knife" (Chambers, 2010, p.10). The various texts (tool, land, gender, place name) are all connected, socially situated and interpreted. This also describes how the relationships between person and world, land and place are contained in the content and processes of text. Within these texts there are mnemonic memory aids that act like archives for knowledge to continue, so place names are embedded with stories of people, events, activities (Chambers, 2010).

Carol Rowan (2014; 2015) also works in the Canadian North to have traditional Inuit literacies included as literacies. Her research has helped to incorporate Inuit literacies and texts into early childhood education (ECE) programs in order to unsettle eurocentrism with local knowledges and multimodal practices and pedagogies (Rowan, 2015). In a recent project called *Aniingualaurtau, Let's Play Outside* she explores how very young children can learn to "think with land", and to get outside. Another project, *Thinking with Nunangat* explores early childhood ecocentric learning with land, water and ice. These curriculum projects focus on excursions, making things, learning with traditional knowledges and Nunangat (land, water and ice) as a source for knowledge, language and skills development (Rowan, 2015). She encourages early childhood educators to develop Inuit intelligence, literacies and ways of being and knowing

through recursive texts that begin with activities and events that are based in the land and living things.

Rowan (2015) discusses documentation for recursive experiences with texts (events, activities) to talk and understand and think about the activity more. This documentation is inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach, where an activity can be experienced recursively and deeply through repeated interaction with the documentation of the activity (Edwards, Gandini, Forman, 2012; Rowan, 2015). For example, she discussed the story of going ice fishing with an ECE class in an Inuit community. The idea for the activity came from the interest of a child. It was discussed and organized, then they went fishing and filmed the experience, and then they watched the film to discuss what happened. In these types of activities, Rowan explains how the film creates pedagogical documentation for recursion, but also acts as an assessment with a different political purpose than typical ECE assessments. She discusses how these types of experiences and texts are powerful reminders of the powers of doing, the strength of awareness and that nature is a source of our being. These experiences and texts allow knowledges, culture and learning to be available, lived and accessible for continuing language and knowledge.

Walking and talking urban text. Louise Gwenneth Phillips and Linda-Dianne Willis (2014) are Australian researchers who discuss a living text in a different way than the others in this section so far. Their study explores walking and talking with a living text where children guide a curated walking tour of their urban neighbourhood. The tour, talking and the neighbourhood as text adapts with the audience. In this way, the talking text is created with the users in the social group in a similar way as Rahm's garden texts for science literacy. In walking and talking, the discussion and dialogue of the participants create understandings of interrelationality, decoding and meaning making of their neighbourhood (Phillips & Willis, 2014). In this study living texts are, "experienced events and encounters that offer meaning-

making that is fluid, interactive and changing" (Phillips & Willis, 2014, p.76) and they are, "fluid meaning making that is action-oriented, generative, authentic, open, relational, affective, changing, engaging" (p.79).

These authors explain how the students who are involved in creating the walks are involved in complex meaning making of the multiple codes in their text-saturated urban landscape. They demonstrate how the learners make meaning from their surroundings dynamically from one mode to another to "decode in rapid succession" (Phillips & Willis, 2014, p.82), where they are drawing on multiple knowledges to interpret their surroundings. Phillips and Willis (2014) believe that living texts connect curriculum to community-relevant and culturally significant texts that welcome in children's background knowledges.

The authors also argue that these types of texts can loosen rigidity in standardization of literacy practices because these types of texts are against archiving ("anarchiving") knowledge and experience. They write, "Living texts defy the order of archiving that preserves, defines, classifies and standardises what is and can be English and literacy education" (Phillips & Willis, p.79). Furthermore, they write, "We see the relational and anarchic space of living texts as a refreshing counter experience to the global movement of increased standardization and regulation of English and literacy education" (Phillips & Willis, p.78). This example fits very well with my idea of stretching the literacy curriculum from within to de-hierarchize knowledge, by explaining clearly and with different terminology and theoretical connections how living texts work against standardization and open up multiliteracies created by children. In this study the walking texts help shift away from texts that have decided, archival meaning, and where they understand that the text is shaped by the users and participants (p.80). Phillips and Willis (2014) also advocate for creating opportunities for anarchical spaces that include parents and teachers engaging together

with students in constant processes of creation to produce living texts that can enrich teaching and learning English and literacy in schools (p.85).

Bringing the land-based text examples together. These five examples of land and living texts have some common understandings of the value and need for teaching with land and living texts. Environmental knowledge of a place, and the act and art of observation, situated discussion and ability to read surroundings stand out to me as particularly important. Chambers (2010) writes,

> Listening carefully to the Elders' life histories contemporary audiences learn that people "back then" studied the world carefully. And they shared what they learned through stories. And those stories were "smart, too," said Andy Akoakhion. But, these "smart stories" are "disappearing," along with the sea ice and the caribou. Smart people pay attention to what is around them. Learn to watch and listen. They remember what they see and hear. Paying attention, listening to these Elders, remembering their stories, that would be really smart. Because their stories tell us about the kind of smart that the tired, old earth needs. (p.32)

Land, the earth and observing our surroundings, whether they are urban neighbourhoods, gardens or parks can be read as texts for learning and decoding, and discussion together to create understanding in dialogical learning.

To see and read changes in the land will also mean that we see ourselves as a part of the land. By reading land and living things we can learn about them and see ourselves as connected and a part of building understanding and knowledge. In this way we can learn to develop different bodily engagement with the world where we are connected and able to communicate. I have given a few examples of learning with land and living texts, and my chart describes others. Other living texts are also gestures and faces, which we also need to learn to read and interpret

and understand as literacies. These are texts that are very accessible and reading them are part of multimodal multiple literacies.

tangible
-painting and drawing
-sculpture and building
-cooking
-clothing and embroidery
-weaving and knitting
-photography

Tangible texts.

Urban art text. Melissa Proeitti (2015) and Ana Christina DaSilva Iddings, Steven McCafferty and Maria Lucia Teixeira da Silva (2011) discuss the urban arts in education for high school students. These are some great examples that point to the power of community culture and new globalized art movements to inform teaching texts. Proeitti (2015), a PhD Candidate, is involved in helping to develop the first high school in Canada, in Montreal, with a focus on the urban arts. Her projects with students include making and performing hip hop music, painting murals, break dancing and growing urban gardens. The mural that she guided students in creating at the school was the focal point for developing a conversation around the importance of the urban arts at the school (Proeitti, 2015). The mural became the gathering point for conversations around art, critical thinking and community in a school that has a low socioeconomic population that does not necessarily see themselves as belonging in the typical school curriculum. She does not talk about the mural being a text for literacies but the way she talks about the mural is the same way that I think about tangible texts, where the art or craft becomes a central point or pathway to discussion, comprehension, creation, critical thinking and community. This is also illuminated by DaSilva Iddings, McCafferty, Teixeira da Silva (2011) study in Brazil.

DaSilva Iddings et al. (2011) explore the possibilities of grafitti as text for literacies in Sao Paulo, Brazil. They find that graffiti is a resource for the community that helps people engage in critical perspectives of their worlds. They use a critical pedagogy framework, informed largely by Freire, to discuss how reading and writing the graffiti are part of a process of developing

conscientizacao, where, "graffiti promotes critical awareness of social and political circumstances at the national level" (p.17). They write, "grafitti interventionists we talked to confirmed that they often deliberatively use street art not only as a form of protestation but also as a vehicle to inform and foster critical awareness", and, "graffiti provides a certain opportunity for individuals to reflect on and talk critically about these issues and for action to take place" (DaSilva Iddings et al., 2001, p.19). As a mode for critical awareness they explain how graffiti allows readers to interpret the world in ways that disrupt common interpretations and, "provides contexts for viewers to reconsider themselves and objects and events in the world as different from what they might have presumed… These qualities induce those unable to read the word to still be able to read the world" (DaSilva Iddings, et al., 2011, p.20). Some of the participants in their study are "illiterate" in the sense that they cannot read or write, but they are literate in being able to read graffiti and interpret it as aligned with it's use in social practice (DaSilva Iddings, et.al, 2011, p.18).

In their discussion of graffiti as a literacy they show that grafitti has been, "a part of the human repertoire of expression and communication from at least the time of ancient Pompeii" (DaSilva Iddings, et.al, 2011, p.5), and that in Brazil there is a thriving graffiti scene that captures political and poetic communication that is otherwise not heard. Figurative imagery expresses cultural reflection and art mixed with print creates a layered, multimodal communication method on the streets. They write,

> Graffiti is considered a literacy practice (in a broad sense), as it entails different ways of socially organizing communicative events involving written language and semiotic signs that can provide opportunities for access to social and cultural understanding. In this way, we were interested in the way people, "text", and content act on and interact with one another to produce meaning (DaSilva Iddings, et al, 2011, p.6).

They also write about the process of understanding the literacies in graffiti as patterns and symbols that are negotiated and constructed by the people in that space at that time. This is an important quality of a text that I identified earlier. They use ecosocial semiotics to explain how objects and environments work together for multiple layers of social interpretation that are available to those people who are part of that community. They explain how graffiti is, "grounded in urban environment for community, by community- codes, and part of ecosocial semiotic environment…the organisms and the environment in which they live shape one another and thus resonate in each other" (DaSilva Iddings et al, 2011, p.14). Zezao, a graffiti artist that is interviewed in this project says, "As I paint on a wall, I feel I am intervening, acting on, and building the community" (p.19).

I believe that this project, outlining the text and literacies of graffiti, is a powerful indication of the power of art to allow voices to be expressed and heard, to allow points of view and critical awareness to shine through, for marginalized voices to be seen, heard and expressed in an urban art like graffiti.

Textile text. Another tangible text is clothing. Connerton (1989) writes about how clothing is a text for social memory where clothing has a lexicon and a grammar that only those with specific competence can interpret or make the clothing. The patterns and symbols on the clothing is a shared language that is context dependent and ideologically situated. Therefore, the clothing's meaning is socially constructed and interpreted in that situated place with specific people. Balanoff and Chambers (2005) point to the study of the socio-cultural functionality and aesthetics of clothing, rather than the technology of making the clothing which had been previously studied, to show how there is shared cultural meaning and functionality in visual representations. Clothing carries complex coded information such as where the person comes from, their gender, age, what they hunt, and what social group they belong to (Balanoff & Chambers, 2005, p.9). The patterns

and symbols on the clothing is a shared language which is context dependent, socially constructed and interpreted. To write the texts is to make them, and to read them is to be able to interpret the symbols and discuss their meaning (Connerton, 1989).

Crafts and objects. Gerdes (2005) discusses the knowledge that is held in art objects in traditional African cultures. These tangible objects can also be understood as a text. His work in ethnomathematics shows how baskets, pottery, pictograms, tattoos and sand drawings contain traditional mathematical knowledges related to pattern making, geometry and counting systems. His studies in ethnomathematics described mathematical literacy previously unrecognized by western math education and helped to incorporate these culturally occurring math activities and ways of knowing into African math education. If we recognize these objects and activities as socially created and interpreted objects for passing on knowledge, then they can also be incorporated into our understanding of a text.

Bringing the tangible text examples together. The tangible texts in this section demonstrate how valuable these types of texts can be for learning and living. Graffiti and the urban arts can allow students to feel a sense of belonging in school, they can help build community, and allow for critical thinking and critical consciousness to be expressed, seen and developed in counter culturally modes. These arts also allow voices and points of views to be expressed in visual and artistic forms. Tangible texts are also useful as texts for social memory, as in the cases of Balanoff and Chambers' (2005) work, and Gerdes' (2005) work. These texts are also culturally relevant, interesting, fun and multimodal examples that build multiple skills to thrive and grow together with diverse voices and building critical consciousness.

Conclusion to Chapter 2

I have identified a broader understanding of text that has been defined and then clarified by my examples. These examples bring in a variety of texts from diverse cultural areas and

demonstrate how in different places different texts are available for different literacies. From the urban arts in Brazil, to Inuit ice fishing, to school gardens, these diverse texts represent an impressive array of diverse literacies shown in ethnographic studies. Research like these examples recognizes and explains how knowledge is passed on through diverse texts. This creates a stronger dialogue for these activities to become part of our understandings of texts and multiple-literacies, to break down the privileging of written texts as ways of knowing and passing on knowledge.

This chapter has also explored literature in multiliteracies and in defining and giving examples of texts. I began generally by exploring understandings of literacy and then describing in more detail the landscape of New Literacy Studies (NLS) particularly through the work of Brian Street, James Paul Gee, the New London Group and Gunther Kress. In this section I pointed to some general themes in NLS including a changing society, recognizing culture and diversity, and I defined key terminology: multiliteracies, multimodality and designing social futures. Finally, I identified my three main arguments for teaching for multimodal multiliteracies: transforming hierarchies of literacies, creating interesting and enjoyable learning opportunities, and recognizing that people need to thrive and grow together beyond economic indicators. In the second section of this chapter I explored diverse texts. I discussed the problems with a focus on printed text, I defined texts and introduced a chart for categorizing texts, and I explored numerous examples of ethnographic studies of land and living texts and tangible texts.

In my final chapter, Towards a Curriculum Framework for Multiliteracies, I will explore how diverse texts can be the main way teachers can think about how we can stretch literacy curriculum for multiliteracies and contribute to developing culturally relevant curriculum that allows diverse children's voices to transform literacies and learn from multiple perspectives.

Chapter 3: Texts in Practice,
Towards Developing a Curriculum Framework for Multiliteracies

Introduction

In this final chapter I explore guiding principles and some strategies and approaches for developing a curriculum framework for multiliteracies. In doing so I return to many of the ideas of the previous chapters to draw them together to form a foundation of guiding principles, and to think about what types of strategies and learning opportunities elementary school teachers can explore with the use of diverse texts to practice teaching for multimodal multiliteracies. This is my contribution to this field. By drawing together the ideas I have brought forth in the previous chapters in this chapter I work to begin to develop a curriculum for multiliteracies through outlining my guiding principles and strategies. I would like to highlight some key ideas from the previous chapters as I begin this chapter.

Schematic summary of the theories.

THEORIES:	Critical Theory	Critical Pedagogy	New Literacy Studies	Texts
SUMMARY OF THE THEORIES:	Our ways of knowing and being are socially constructed and built in power relationships. Pushes us to deconstruct the motives and purposes behind those who have constructed powerful ideas of truth and neutrality.	Critical pedagogy encourages educators to recognize the powerful practices that guide our actions and to seek ways together in conversation to reconstruct and transform these ways of being. Key authors: Freire, hooks, Greene, Giroux.	Literacy is socially contextual, ideological, cultural, and changing. Literacy as an abstracted, autonomous skill is challenged by studies that show a variety of literacy practices and events. Key authors: Street, Gee, New London Group, Kress.	Texts are socially constructed, culturally situated and understood and negotiated in social interaction. Written texts are privileged and carry authority, marginalizing other communication methods.

KEY POINTS:	Official literacy curricula are shaped by the scientific tradition of measurable outcomes. This controls what is deemed official knowledge thereby marginalizing a diversity of other knowledges. Deconstructing "literacy" can reveal power and meaning behind the construction of literacy as singular.	Critical consciousness: learning to see though ideologies of those in power and take action against oppression. Dialogical learning: Through discussion learners are connected and create understanding. Border crossing: Crossing borders de-fragments our lives and connects ways of knowing and learning.	Ideological model of literacy. Multiliteracies & Multimodality: emphasizes ethnographic research that demonstrates diversity. Designing Social Futures: We are inheritors of patterns and conventions of meaning, and active designers of meaning.	Ethnographic qualitative research gives examples of diverse texts: Land & living: -garden -soil -wayfinding, & naming -urban walking tour Tangible: -urban art -textiles -crafts
GATHERING THE THEORIES TOGETHER:	- Knowledge is socially constructed - We produce and create knowledge actively; we are not consumers of knowledge. - Knowledges [and therefore literacies] are embedded in ideology and culture, and constitute and are constituted by social activity. - There is no neutrality, we are embedded in ideology and culture, and socially bound. - Powerful constructions are privileged; while others are marginalized - Change and transformation is possible because we are creating knowledge.			

Figure 7. Schematic Summary of the Theories. This figure illustrates the salient points of the research and findings of the first two chapters of this thesis.

The bottom section of the above figure, "Gathering the theories together" highlights intersections among the many theories that I drew upon to develop this thesis. These intersections lie most strongly in the understanding that knowledge and learning is a construction and can be reconstructed in social interaction. The potential for transforming education, our ways of teaching, knowing and communicating, and grounding part of this transformation in the recognition of multiliteracies and multimodal communications leads towards the development of teaching for diverse texts.

We live and teach with diverse communities with various ways of knowing and communicating and our literacy learning can and should reflect this diversity. Literacy must be

radically expanded for a future that is reflective of the vibrant diversity that children bring to our classrooms. Maxine Green (1995) writes,

> There are, of course, many kinds of literacy. But as an object of hope and desire, any literacy will be associated with a yearning to make some sense and to leave that thumbprint on the world…Imagination will always come into play when becoming literate suggests an opening of spaces, an end to submergence, a consciousness of the right to ask why (p.25).

We must ask why and how we can allow our students to have hope that they can leave their mark on the world in new, diverse and expansive ways, and how they can transform themselves and their relationships.

We must make space for the diversity of children's voices to become part of the redesign of our literate futures. Understanding and reading the world extends into all areas of life and manifests in different texts that pass-on and teach knowledge; these texts can be a transformative space for stretching the literacy curriculum from within. I believe education systems and schools need to recognize, accept and practice teaching through diverse texts.

Outline of the third chapter. In this section I seek to define three of the essential characteristics and guiding principles of a curriculum for multiliteracies, I then explore five strategies and approaches that can be used by teachers who want to stretch their literacy curricula from within. This section is a work in progress, and I hope to continue this work in the future, in practice, in conversation, in community and with children.

The guiding principles I will outline can be summarized and organized in the following schematic chart. This illustration places the principles on the outside of the honeycomb shaped strategies. The shape describes the interconnected principles and strategies while not directly connecting any strategy to one principle.
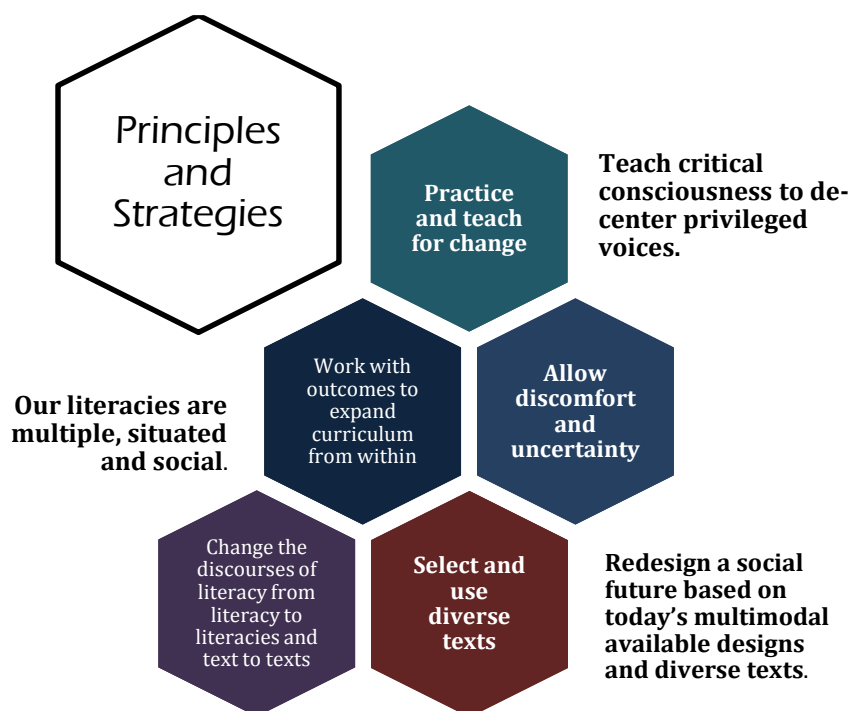
Figure 8. Principles and Strategies. This figure illustrates the three principles (on the outside) and the 5 strategies (the honeycomb pieces) for a stretched literacy curriculum.

Principles

The following principles summarize the theories that I have gathered together in this thesis into principles for a stretched literacy curriculum. These principles are evolving still with my teaching and practice. It is important to distil the key points from the previous chapters into principles to hold in mind.

> **1. We must actively work to de-center privileged voices by teaching critically and so as to not perpetuate power relations that are unhelpful to peace and social justice.**
> We must teach with change in mind and teach for critical consciousness. Knowledge hierarchies that privilege western, hegemonic ways of being and knowing and label some knowledges as official should be actively and critically approached with the goal of liberating and opening to ways of knowing that are diverse.

This principle arises directly from critical pedagogy and the work of Paolo Freire and bell hooks and my foundational chapter in critical theory and critical pedagogy and the hierarchical constructions of official and unofficial knowledges. This principle recognizes that a consciously critical approach to education can lead to transformation of power relations.

By continuing to socialize children in the 'western' world for dominance, their education becomes inappropriate and perpetuates power relations that are unhelpful to peace. Educators should not be upholding the western ideology of autonomous literacy, we should understand how knowledge systems categorize and divide knowledges and texts and we should work to deconstruct the hierarchical power structures that guide unequal education. Especially as our population grows and we become more globally connected we must learn to cooperate, collaborate and understand different points of view. This will also require being able to deal with and create spaces for discomfort, uncertainty, disagreement, and questioning, as suggested by hooks (1994) and Kumashiro (2002). By bringing in literacies, diverse texts, languages and vernaculars we can work to de-center privilege.

2. Our literacies are multiple, situated and social.

We are situated in place, context, ourselves, and in global context. A vibrant social community requires recognition of diversity, cooperation, and collaboration; with multiliteracies, diverse texts, and in dialogue. Parents, teachers, students and the community are connected in their place and their multiple views inform what texts and literacies are included.

Drawing on understandings of multimodal multiliteracies (Kress, 2000) and the ideological model of literacy (Street, 1984) this primary principle understands that literacies are situated in place, socially embedded and always connected to relations of power. Teaching children with a situated and social understanding of literacies is to teach them that what they need to succeed in the world locally and globally includes an expanded notion of literacy. Our social communities are diverse and include a variety of voices where there are intricate networks that connect people, places, ideas, objects, and texts. Our classrooms and communities are ever-increasingly composed of people with various points of view and ways of understanding the world. We need to hear those multiple voices through diverse methods of communication. To work together we need to find intersections between ways of knowing through social interaction in diversity. As our population grows and we become more globally connected we must learn to cooperate, collaborate and understand different points of view.

Many curriculum and educational theorists understand learning and knowledge as social and situated. I have discussed in a previous section how Street (1984) and Gee's (2008) understandings of literacy arise from this idea where literacy is constituted in social activity. Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991) also inform our understanding of a socially situated curriculum. Lave and Wenger (1991) place all learning as anthropologically and socially situated in the living history of people making meaning and developing their understanding (p.31). For Lave and Wenger (1991), learning, thinking and knowing happens as a social activity with other people in a place with specific objects and activities that constitute that social world (p.39). Their theory of legitimate peripheral participation recognizes that the whole person is an agent in activity with others in social co-participation in communities of practice, and that the world is mutually constitutive (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Recognizing that education is mutually constitutive and

grounded in the relationships and social activities of learners through the work of these theorists contributes to understanding a transformational literacy curriculum.

I see all learning as situated in the social world, and so all learning is generated by living and practising with others. Children should be learning in dialogue and discussion with other children (of different ages) and adults (with various strengths) with various modes. In order for learning to be social, classrooms should be places where children talk and discuss and work together. Furthermore, community members and parents should be involved in this social learning community to create overlapping communities. I believe that this can be centered around talking with diverse texts to develop literacies and diverse ways of knowing.

3. We are redesigning a social future based on today's multimodal available designs and diverse texts.

Our redesigned and transformed social future can be multiliterate if we include diverse available literacies today: the diverse voices, texts, and multimodal multiliteracies of our communities. The transformation of literacy to literacies will happen incrementally based on current diverse literacies and ways of knowing and being. Dialogical learning with diverse participants helps to access these available designs. There must be a focus on transformation.

Drawing on the work in new literacy studies and particularly the work of the New London Group (1996) this principle recognizes that transformation is constituted in and by what is currently available. Grounding our literacies in the diversity of available designs today will redesign a social future with more voices included. This principle is also grounded in an understanding of texts as socially constructed, practiced and interpreted in place, as described by Gee (2008). We can look to our communities, locally and globally, for the types of texts that are

available within them so that we can design a more diverse social future. This principle understands that our classrooms and communities are ever-increasingly composed of people with various points of view and ways of understanding the world. If we change the language and conversation in the classroom to include the voices of children themselves in dialogue then their voices and experiences can become a part of our available designs. If we allow them to create and learn through diverse texts these texts will be based upon available designs, and these will incrementally change the texts that we learn from, use and create. Thus, this principle recognizes the diverse texts that are available in our communities, including home literacies, and I explored some examples of these types of texts that have been identified in my second chapter. Therefore, this principle is greatly influenced by the qualitative ethnography research done in the area of diverse texts as shown by the work of those that were cited and brought together in my second chapter (Balanoff & Chambers, 2005, 2009; Balanoff, Kudlak, Kaodloak and Chambers, 2009; Rahm, 2004; Wane, 2014; Connerton, 1989; Rowan, 2014, 2015; Phillips & Willis, 2014; DaSilva Iddings et al, 2011; Gerdes, 2005). We can engage with the contexts of learner's lives, and the patterns of their lives so that their literacies and home literacies are continued and reflected in schooling, and used and redesigned in situated practice. We can also look to multimodal models happening in other globally diverse communities to bring diverse ways of knowing into our classrooms.

By actively building communities of learning that include different voices, ways of knowing and communicating, learning through dialogue allows encountering the world through different points of view. This is an active process of redesigning and transformation whereby in schools student's voices, perspectives, ways of knowing, and points of view shape the classroom content. I will elaborate more on this in my next section on strategies and approaches.

In the next section I explore five strategies and approaches that can be used by teachers who want to stretch their literacy curricula from within and to create transformational opportunities for learning.

Approaches and Strategies

In this section each of the approaches and strategies (the honeycomb pieces in the figure on page 75) are expanded in detail. These are useful for redesigning and stretching the literacy curriculum in the classroom.

1. Practice and teach for change. This approach is grounded in critical pedagogy. As a critical pedagogue I understand that teaching for change means questioning how privilege, power and knowledge are constructed. For these reasons I will return briefly to highlight three key themes from my first chapter to think about the importance and ways of applying the theories of critical pedagogy in the classroom. These three foundational themes in critical pedagogy are critical consciousness, dialogue and border crossing.

Teaching for critical consciousness means explicitly teaching children to question how some ways of being, thinking and people are privileged, and that there is no "normal" or "neutral". As such, it is not normal or better to be able to express oneself or learn through printed text. We can actively teach that literacies are multiple by talking with our students directly about the prioritization of print, that this is privileged but does not need to be privileged. We can also teach them how they can advocate for themselves to be able to express their understanding and their learning through diverse texts in school, and that they have the capacity to be empowered as part of the change in communication modes. I believe that teachers need to be explicit and explain to their students the value and the reasons behind teaching in this way. When children ask why they aren't completing a worksheet or sitting in individual desks (like my students have

done), we need to explain to them why changing these ingrained, routine systems of learning are important. This may also teach them to advocate for themselves and lead to transformation that carries forward.

Teaching with dialogue means allowing and creating pathways for dialogue in different and diverse ways, where all voices are accepted and heard. Dialogical learning can be transformative when it encourages questioning and reflection, and it is in opposition to transferring knowledge in a banking model. Dialogue with diverse voices and through diverse texts can lead to conversations and areas of transformation that may otherwise not be encountered.

Teaching with border crossing in mind means actively working to find connections across different worlds: disciplines and subjects, life experiences, home and school, children and adults, teachers and students, teachers and parents, to name a few. bell hooks writes that students "must believe they can inhabit comfortably two different worlds, but they must make each space one of comfort. They must creatively invent ways to cross borders." (p.183). Some of these different worlds are home and school, and this is a border that must be crossed and connected. Teachers, then, must facilitate this border crossing by connecting the classroom with the community and the home. Classroom content and curricula are other borders to be crossed. We can include marginalized knowledges in official curricula and teach that knowledge does not just exist in books, but that in their homes, communities, talents, passions and selves there is knowledge. Again, we must talk about these changes and our actions to teach for critical change and for our students to understand that schools and education are not neutral social institutions, but that they tend to maintain systems of oppression by upholding borders that define and divide.
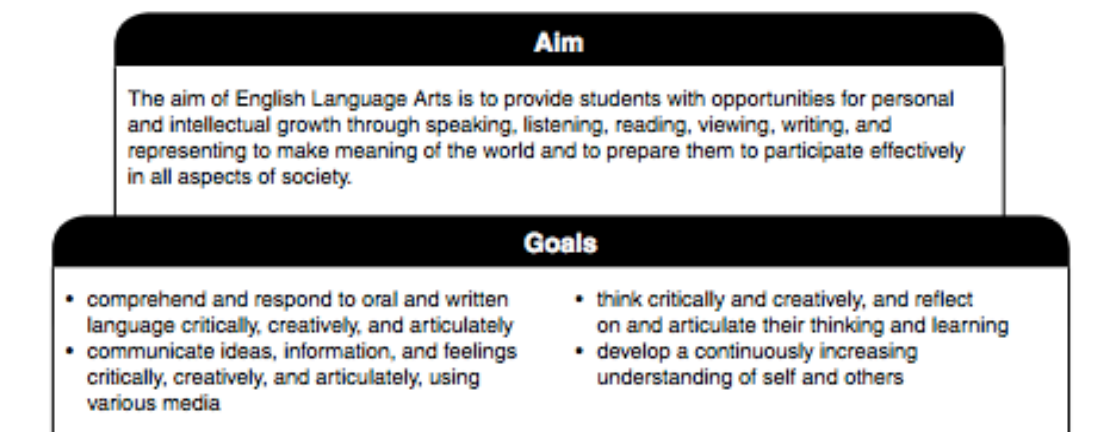
2. Work *with* outcomes and to expand curriculum from within. This strategy recognizes that change will come from cooperation with the structures of the curriculum that currently exist.

The official, provincial curricula that I have worked with as a public elementary school teacher divides learning into assessment outcomes which are categorized into the traditional subject disciplines. While I know that there are problems with these outcomes, which I outlined in detail in my first chapter, I know that I cannot easily change these outcomes in my current role as a classroom teacher. Therefore, I find that if I look at the outcomes simply as a piece of my job I know that I can reach these outcomes in many different ways. Change will happen incrementally, and in my classroom I can reach the outcomes for literacy in diverse ways. This is why I think about stretching the literacy curriculum from within, as I described in my first chapter when discussing Noddings' (2014) approach to curriculum. In this way I believe that the principles for literacies I have described can be applied towards many different English or language arts curricula (and other subjects as well), and towards different government mandated curricula in different places. As an elementary generalist teacher we need not separate the subjects clearly for students into divided blocks of time even though we must report out within these borders and guidelines. If we know our outcomes we can be creative with the pathways to get to them. This idea of stretching from within can be applied in many ways, in different places, by critical teachers anywhere.

Outcomes in the British Columbia English Language Arts Integrated Resource Package (BC ELA IRP) curriculum, for example, are based in literacy aims and goals that I believe can be reached through the use of diverse texts. The BC ELA IRP (2006, p.2) states:

Figure 8. English Language Arts Grades 1 to 7: At a Glance. From the British Columbia English Language Arts Integrated Resource Package (2006).

The aim of this curriculum is general and seems to take into account understandings of literacy as multiple. The aims describe learning language arts as including listening and representing, and acknowledge the need to teach students to participate in "all aspects of society". The goals for this curriculum also seem to take into account an understanding of multiple literacies. The goals include communicating using various media, and understanding self and others. I can accept and work well within these aims and goals.

Turning to the curriculum organizers of the BC ELA IRP Curriculum (p.2) (which is the second half of this page), we see the following organizational structure:

Curriculum Organizers		
Oral Language (Speaking and Listening)	Reading and Viewing	Writing and Representing
Purposes Use oral language to interact, present, and listen	**Purposes** Read and view to comprehend and respond to a variety of grade-appropriate texts	**Purposes** Write and represent to create a variety of meaningful personal, informational, and imaginative texts
Strategies Use strategies when interacting, presenting, and listening to improve speaking and listening	**Strategies** Use strategies before, during, and after reading and viewing to increase comprehension and fluency	**Strategies** Use strategies when writing and representing to increase success at creating meaningful texts
Thinking • Use oral language to improve and extend thinking • Reflect on, self-assess, and set goals for improvement in oral language	**Thinking** • Use reading and viewing to make meaningful connections, and to improve and extend thinking • Reflect on, self-assess, and set goals for improvement in reading and viewing	**Thinking** • Use writing and representing to express, extend, and analyse thinking • Reflect on, self-assess, and set goals for improvement in writing and representing
Features Recognize and apply the features and patterns of oral language to convey and derive meaning	**Features** Use the structures and features of text to derive meaning from texts	**Features** Use the features and conventions of language to enhance meaning and artistry in writing and representing

Figure 9. English Language Arts Curriculum Organizers. From the British Columbia

English Language Arts Integrated Resource Package (2006).

This chart provides a general overview of the skills, competencies and outcomes for the BC ELA

IRP curriculum for Grades 1-7. If you are to look further into a specific grade each of the boxes

above are broken into prescribed learning outcomes at developmentally appropriate levels. The

outcomes at each grade divide the chart above into bite-sized assessable chunks of learning

material. I chose to include this chart because it is the framework for the curriculum that the

objectives are grounded in. Indeed, the prescribed learning outcomes, as separated assessable

objectives are harder to stretch but I think that transformation begins with looking at how to

stretch the foundation, and to find strategies that work towards incremental change. It is easier to

teach authentically and with critical purpose with a big picture in mind rather than teaching

towards specific abstracted outcomes.

I think that teachers who want to teach for multimodal multiliteracies can work with the chart above. If we expand our understanding of texts, if we can explain this expanded definition, and if we teach the connections and defend this standpoint using the language of the curriculum then we can use diverse texts to reach these goals. For example, speaking and listening goals can be achieved and pursued in multiple ways through the use of diverse texts. Furthermore, one of the writing and representing strategies listed here is, "Use strategies when writing and representing to increase success at creating meaningful texts" (ELA IRP, p.2). I believe that I could stretch this outcome to include diverse texts. Students can be taught strategies for representing their ideas through diverse texts, and with practice with a diversity of modes they can increase their success in creating diverse texts, rich with meaning, that can then be discussed with peers; thereby working towards other, oral language, goals. We can also teach using a diverse text, like a garden, and develop proficiency in all of the oral language areas that are outlined. Finally, if we recognize reading diverse texts as part of reading and viewing we can also work towards the areas outlined in the reading and viewing columns. Teachers need to know why they are expanding the literacy curriculum and to teach clearly and explicitly with critical consciousness in mind for these expanded approaches to work.

Comprehension is an important outcome in literacy learning. We teach decoding words and sentences easily but it seems to be harder to teach comprehension. Could comprehension of diverse texts improve overall literacy goals for critical thinking, inferencing and comprehension? If students are taught to read the land, or each other's facial expressions more clearly, and if they learn to discuss these readings and how we create understanding, will their capacity to comprehend more traditional texts also improve? This is an interesting topic and goal that I would like to explore in greater detail in my future research.

3. Change the discourses of literacy from literacy to literacies, and text to texts. This approach for change suggests that we must actively rework our discourses through poststructuralist strategies as adopted from Kevin Kumashiro's (2000) work.

I wrote in my first chapter that I would return to Kevin Kumashiro's ideas for anti-oppressive education because he critiques critical pedagogy and he suggests alternatives. Kumashiro (2000) discusses the use of poststructuralist approaches for teaching for anti-oppressive pedagogies. Poststructuralist theory explains that it is impossible to fully escape our structures, and in this case especially structures of language. How we think is framed by our language and what is said and what is not said. Kumashiro's (2000) discussion centers around issues of discourse and citation. Analysis of discourse from a poststructuralist lens suggests that oppression and harm originate in the citing of particular discourses which are the repetition of harmful histories (Kumashiro, 2000). For example, stereotypes are cited and repeated, and the repeated iterations of the past cause harm as they cite those past iterations. Kumashiro explains how through citing harmful discourses we perpetuate oppressive practices, so, if we alter our citational discourses we can change our practices of citing harmful discourses.

Kumashiro describes an idea of supplementing and re-working our discourses through the idea of performativity. He explains that performativity is an active and purposeful change of the language that we use and what that language use cites. He explains how we can "repeat with a difference" so that we performatively re-work our discourses through disruption and supplementation (Kumashiro, 2000, p.41). This supplementation of our language will help to change our practices of repeating what was harmful.

I believe a discourse that can be performatively re-worked is our use of literacy as singular. While it seems simple, if teachers use the word literacies, plural, and refer and talk with

children about developing their literacies we may be able to work to change the discourse that cites literacy as singular. Building and referring to children developing their literacies is a repetition with a difference that disrupts and supplements. Repeating "literacies" with a difference also means teaching with literacies in mind, and identifying with children when they are building their literacies. Changing our discourse then also requires building that discourse in situated social change, by practicing learning with literacies.

I believe that the hierarchy of knowledges comes from separating out art, music, crafts, film, photography, gardening, traditional knowledges, etc, from our understandings of knowledge worth knowing and revering. If we stop separating these diverse literacies and texts from our language, reading and writing lessons, and if we use texts and literacies in the classroom *and call them literacies and texts* we can re-work our discourses, and performatively and actively transform what we cite as literacy and text, thereby creating new citations and discourses for literacy learning. Finally, I would also like to return to an issue that came up in my theoretical chapter where Kumashiro finds fault in the approaches from critical pedagogy's focus on critical consciousness. I would like to suggest that to support a performative reworking of our discourses we need to couple this language we use with the spirit of teaching with critical consciousness. Performativity of literacies coupled with teaching for critical consciousness for me means that we must recognize and discuss with students critically why diverse texts are part of literacy, and how print-based texts have been privileged. This critical awareness, alongside a performative practice in supplementing harmful discourse could be transformational.

4. Allow discomfort and uncertainty. While I do not propose to restructure the objective outcomes of the curriculum I do believe that we need to teach with uncertainty and openness, and to be able to deal with discomfort and situations

where we do not know where things will go. Classrooms that are focused on dialogical learning cannot be focused entirely on outcomes. We do not know where conversations will go, and in conversations people disagree. We must be okay with creating and being able to facilitate conversations and dialogue where disagreement and different points of view are acceptable and encouraged. In spaces of discomfort we can breakthrough to new ways of knowing.

The path towards literacy learning that is not clearly learning to read and write, with dialogue around and with diverse texts is an unclear space. For many teachers and students learning to make meaning and communicate with diverse texts, like perhaps a piece of contemporary art, will not be a clear path. Trying to understand a piece of art, I believe, comes from a place of discomfort that might make us question what we believe and think we know, where our self and what ourselves are and believe are unclear.

hooks (1994) recognizes that in classrooms where marginalized voices are included there will be disagreement and difficulty, but that in classrooms that appear to be neutral, safe spaces we are silencing voices that shape dialogue (p.39), which then also shape how we build knowledge and understand each other. Kumashiro (2000) writes that learning in places of uncertainty are "antithetical to traditional learning and thinking" (p.42), and that they also involve crisis, irrationality and that students can and will get upset, but that crisis is what allows movement to new intellectual/emotional/political space (p.45).

Kumashiro (2000) also writes that we can make use of psychoanalytic approaches and strategies for anti-oppressive education that deal with the issues of learning in places of uncertainty and discomfort. Psychoanalysis explains how our ego has an unconscious desire for repetition and a psychic resistance to change or disruption of what we know and are comfortable with (Kumashiro, 2000, p.43). For educators, this understanding of the ego is an interesting way to think about discomfort and resistance to change. Kumashiro writes that we are resistant to

knowledge that disrupts what we already know. We are resistant because our unconscious ego desires to affirm what we already know and our sense of self; that we are good people who do good things (p.43). This idea explains that we really are not good at changing because our unconscious wants us to stay safe and comfortable doing what we always do. Kumashiro explains that to change the ways that we are and act (which are oppressive) we must be able to overcome resistances to discomfort and change. With these understandings from psychoanalysis in mind, Kumashiro recommends that anti-oppressive education works to overcome our ego's resistance to change by making it more common to be unsatisfied, and to be in disrupted and distorted learning environments (p.44).

It is in these spaces of distortion and crisis that we can rethink how we live, learn, act, and interact. I believe questioning texts, literacies, and what it means to know will also happen in spaces that are uncomfortable and uncertain.

5. Select and use diverse texts.

The following strategy explores diverse texts in practice, including how can teachers can select diverse texts for their learners, and how they can use these diverse texts. This is an important strategy, the final strategy for this thesis, and I am working on applying these ideas in my teaching currently. This section relates directly to my second chapter and the examples of diverse texts from qualitative ethnographic research that I cited and brought together in that chapter, and the graphic organizer of diverse texts (figure 6) on page 60.

Selecting diverse texts. The powerful examples of diverse texts that I included in my second chapter come from situated learning that was important in that place, to those learners. The chart that I made is helpful for thinking about selecting a diversity of texts from the various categories. This chart is on page 60, and to remind my reader the categories of diverse texts that I

outlined in that chart are digital, tangible, performative and land and living. This chart should help teachers to think about selecting diverse texts that are multimodal and that draw from various traditions of multiliteracies.

I believe that to select appropriate, vibrant, relevant, interesting, meaningful and important texts teachers must begin with observing their students and their communities. What do the children know? What do they want? Educators should begin by selecting diverse texts that are relevant to students, about who they are and what they want or need. They should get to know their students by listening, watching and talking to them, and stretch their literacy curricula to include diverse texts that include children's needs and ways of knowing. Using texts that are connected to the lives of students will also help build and develop the literacies and ways of knowing that they have begun to learn elsewhere; to connect home and school. The selection of diverse texts should not be based on what teachers need, know or want but on relevant literacies for the students in their classroom.

Culturally sustaining and relevant pedagogies are terms that help to illuminate the selection of texts for students in classrooms. Gloria Ladson-Billings' (1995) idea of culturally relevant pedagogy, which was extended by Django Paris (2012) to culturally sustaining pedagogy, discusses and recognizes the assets of students' cultures for developing and informing classrooms that are culturally diverse. With a focus on culturally sustaining literacies selecting diverse texts for classrooms can take into account students' culture, where culture can be understood as being created in the moment. Ladson-Billings (2015) discussed that what students create today in their classrooms does not need to be "of" a culture, but that they are creating a culture now in living with others. She described how this is an anthropological idea of culture because each child has a home culture that is different than another. This idea rejects tokenistic stereotypical cultural topics and activities and recognizes the deep and changing nature of culture

and diversity. This is an important thing to note to be careful that our selection of diverse texts are not tokenistic or based in stereotypical representations of culture(s).

With the selection and recognition of a variety of diverse texts we will not be upholding a singular, standard model of literacy that attempts to perpetuate hegemonic tendencies, and a curriculum that stretches to include diverse texts is appropriate for all. Multiliteracies are for everyone and multiliteracies happen within diversity and pluri-culturalism, and all people need multiliteracies to demonstrate, pass on and share knowledges. Therefore, in every classroom and community there is a diversity of texts that can be selected and incorporated.

Using diverse texts. My main goal is to use diverse texts in my teaching, and so, it is with hope that I discuss how to use them. While I know I have been using diverse texts in my teaching in the past I look forward to actively applying my ideas and further developing my curriculum. To carry out this goal I will continue to turn to the work and examples of the use of diverse texts.

For example, Rowan's (2015) ideas on documentation from Reggio Emilia approach are strategies that are helpful for using diverse texts. With regular documentation of the use of diverse texts, through photography and film for example, we can create recursive experiences with these texts so that deep learning and dialogue can occur. I believe that if we act and discover, and then film or photograph our activities then this will lead to discussions about the texts we have created. Rowan (2015) discusses building learning stories from learning experiences with the land. By filming and photographing activity students can recursively experience and discuss their interaction with the land as text. These visual texts can be compiled and communicated via a class blog where there can be a space to gather together, record and document learning that is not on paper. By gathering together learning stories that document our learning a blog can be revisited and discussed, and can communicate what we are learning about to each other and to the

rest of the school community, like for example, parents. Chains of texts will create recursive connections that draw on shared experiences from situated social learning with diverse texts.

This is one way to use diverse texts, and I am excited to see the possibilities for vibrant, fun and exciting learning through the use of diverse texts. I believe that with use and active practice for change diverse texts will gain authority and legitimacy in literacy curricula.

Conclusion

In conclusion I will first return to my research questions to answer what I have found and addressed in this research. I will address each question separately, then I will discuss the benefits, challenges and recommendations of this thesis' findings.

Addressing My Research Questions

1. Can an expanded understanding of "text" transform the literacy curriculum to allow students to develop and share their voices, be heard and to also learn from multiple perspectives?

In response to this first question I will begin by revisiting my definition of texts. An expanded understanding of a text recognizes the following:

- texts are understood within the ideological model of literacy where reading and using our literacies is embedded in social context.

- diverse texts are understood to pass-on and teach different kinds of knowledge and ways of knowing, as well as allow access to different methods of expression and communication.

- texts are understood to be pattern-based and negotiated, interpreted and understood in dialogue to make meaning.

With this expanded notion of text the literacy curriculum can stretch and transform to include texts that are embedded in the diverse social contexts of our diverse communities. By accepting and working within an understanding of text as expanded and socially situated we can begin to transform the types of texts that we use, thereby including multiple perspectives. If we teach using diverse texts and teach our students to create diverse texts multiple perspectives, that are not available in written texts, can be accessed and expressed. And, through discussion with these texts, and their position in our lives, we can transform whose voices are heard, and how

these voices can be expressed. However strong this argument is, more research and fieldwork is needed to respond to these findings, theory and argument in further detail.

2. Can an expanded understanding of "text" contribute to the incorporation of a diversity of activities and experiences into elementary school literacy programs?

An expanded understanding of text can definitely contribute to the incorporation of a diversity of activities and experiences for elementary schools. I began this thesis with a problem: children spend too much time at a desk with paper and pencils. With the incorporation of diverse texts into our understandings and practice of literacy education we can include multimodal literacies that get children and teachers to be involved in different activities than those with paper and pencil. Gardens, film, photography, textiles, and our land, for example, open up to possibilities for communicating and passing on knowledges, developing new dialogue and bridging school experiences with home experiences. The riches of our communities can be accessed in the texts we use to develop literacies.

To reflect back on this thesis is partially to acknowledge the time that I have spent at a desk writing on my computer. I am happy to be finishing this time and to turn towards my teaching, which is often spent outdoors, or in making music, and in acting and painting, and in discussion and argument. I wish I had had more encouragement and time when I was younger to develop my means of communicating in more diverse texts, and that these multimodal texts had been recognized as legitimate, important and equal ways of communicating and learning. I hope to give children the opportunity to do so while developing my own abilities in this area as well. If in my teaching I can find ways to encourage a diversity of expression and communication so that my students have more experiences in their schools and communities I will be very happy.

Benefits for Students and Teachers

There are many benefits for students and teachers. In particular, an expanded understanding of text will allow a greater diversity of experiences and activities for students. With practice and trial, questioning and experimentation students will be involved in creating knowledge while they create, dialogue and develop understanding together. This uncertainty and discovery will allow for flexibility of understanding and expression, bringing change from dull routines for teachers and students alike. This will challenge all learners, educators and students alike, to discuss and define the literacies in their communities and to develop new texts and literacies.

An expanded understanding of text will also particularly benefit goals in schools and school districts in aboriginal education and multiculturalism. When we look to our communities for home literacies and place based literacies we will find the many ways people, land, living and objects communicate. Aboriginal education goals are clearly defined and supported in the school district where I work, and throughout Canada, and I believe that when these goals are embedded in our daily lives and in our daily curriculum we will strive to meet these goals with authentic, dedicated, and purposeful activities. To embed these goals in our daily activities we can use diverse texts for multiliteracies. We can stretch our literacy curricula to include the diverse texts of aboriginal knowledges and ways of knowing, which are central to the explorations of this thesis.

Children can be taught to conform to the standardized, objective outcomes and to believe that literacy is an autonomous skill that will in itself allow them to succeed, or we can teach a child's whole body to be actively and imaginatively engaged in communicating, learning and passing-on knowledges through multimodal activities, the land, our communities and our objects.

As a critical pedagogue, I look for spaces for transformation to create schools that do not privilege certain people or uphold harmful power structures. Another benefit of this research is that I have tried to find a space for more voices and practices to be included in literacy education. If we are focused on a very narrow range of knowledge, I believe the voices of the privileged few who are and have been in power will continue to be heard above others.

Challenges

It has been a year since I began writing this thesis and I am now teaching full time rather than being a graduate student full time. It is good to have been finishing this thesis while working. I am reflecting daily on my practice as related to my theory, and thinking forward on how to apply my understandings.

With the aim of leading teachers and students to embrace directly the potential of including diverse voices into our knowledge base and active daily practice, this thesis works towards de-centering privileged voices and educating for freedom and diversity. This aim towards active daily practice is something I am working on every day.

Recently I had a heated discussion with some colleagues about literacy and oral language goals for our students. One colleague had a rubric of performance standards for reading levels used at another school. As a kindergarten teacher this year, I know that my students will quite definitely not be reading at the high reading levels dictated by these performance standards by the end of this school year. This is both because they do not need to (and the curriculum and research supports me on this) and because I know that if reading levels were my only priority we would do nothing else but read and write, which would do nothing for their literacy development overall, and would only determine their reading level on levelled readers. I discovered during this discussion about literacy goals that it is difficult to have discussions with colleagues who do not have a familiarity with the type of research I have in multiliteracies. It was a challenge to argue

against teaching children to read, but with the language and discourse of multiliteracies and early childhood educational philosophy I argued my point. Upon reflection I realized that this argument was the kind of discomforting dialogue that can lead to critical awareness and change. I had to listen and think about how to respond to these bright teachers I work with without being insulting or overbearing. I felt disliked at the end of our conversation and like I was instigating bad feelings among our group of teachers by voicing my understandings of literacy and learning to challenge entrenched beliefs about reading and writing. It will be a challenge to have these types of conversations in the future, however, I hope in dialogue and through diverse texts with my colleagues, my students, and different communities of people we can all begin to redesign our literacies.

Recommendations and Future Directions

I believe education systems and schools need to recognize, accept and practice teaching through diverse texts. Understanding and reading the world extends into all areas of life and manifests in different objects that pass-on and teach knowledge. Incorporating diverse texts into literacy learning may help challenge how western ways of knowing are held above other knowledges. Educators should not be upholding the western ideology of autonomous literacy, and we should try understand how knowledge systems and texts could help deconstruct the hierarchical power structures that guide unequal education constructions. I recognize that it is part of my job to connect with educators who are also interested in social change and to participate in teacher education through conferences and workshops.

As I have shown in these pages, questioning, experimenting and dialogue are important. I recommend trying to use the strategies I have recommended, and to recognize the principles I have developed. I also recommend having fun with discovering diverse texts for developing literacies. Listen to, observe and talk to your students and to those in your community to discover

opportunities for including diverse texts. I believe that if we teach while remembering our priorities we are better teachers who have a vision. For me, and hopefully others, this will mean our priorities include developing new ways of being, knowing and learning, and thinking about how to critically redesign our literacies to be inclusive of the diverse voices in our lives.

Future directions for my research and teaching primarily include practicing the theories I have developed here. I hope to develop a true multimodal multiliteracies practice and to bring back the lessons learnt to enrich my theoretical framework in collaboration with my colleagues and thus arrive at a true praxis cycle.

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