

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 444 165

CS 217 215

AUTHOR Thwaites, Trevor
TITLE Multiliteracies: A New Direction for Arts Education.
PUB DATE 1999-11-00
NOTE 15p.; Paper presented at the Joint Meeting of the Australian Association for Research in Education/New Zealand Association for Research in Education (Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, November 29-December 3, 1999).
AVAILABLE FROM For full text:
<http://www.swin.edu.au/aare/99pap/thw99528.htm>.
PUB TYPE Opinion Papers (120) -- Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Art Education; *Curriculum Development; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; Language Arts; *Literacy; *National Standards; Semiotics
IDENTIFIERS *New Zealand

ABSTRACT

The New Zealand Curriculum Framework identifies seven Essential Learning Areas, namely, Languages, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Technology, Health and Physical Education, and the Arts. These have been in the process of development since 1993, with the Arts section written in draft form in 1998 and released for consultation in 1999. Being positioned last in curriculum development implies that the Arts are at the bottom of a preferred hierarchy of knowledge promoted by the state. This has been further reinforced by the increased drive to promote literacy, numeracy, and information technology in schooling. The "knowledge economy" catch-cry in New Zealand totally ignores the notion of a "creative knowledge." In an effort to increase the perceived value of the arts, the writers of the draft "Arts Curriculum" embraced the concept of multiple literacies, which seeks to broaden the understanding of literacy in teaching and learning and to acknowledge a multiplicity of discourses within the school curriculum. Literacy should imply a mode of meaning other than the purely linguistic, it needs to incorporate visual, aural, gestural, spatial, and multimodal meanings (The New London Group, 1996). Literacies in the arts are developed as students learn in, through, and about different arts forms within the arts disciplines and use its languages to communicate and interpret meaning. This paper details the development of "The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum" and the acknowledgment within the curriculum of the notion of literacy in the arts. It takes the view that the concept of multiliteracies might be a direction for the arts to take in order to counter the pro-literacy canon embraced by the state. The paper discusses the potential of such a concept in preventing further marginalization of the arts in New Zealand schools. (Contains 22 references.) (Author/RS)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

Multiliteracies: A New Direction for Arts Education.

by Trevor Thwaites

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS
BEEN GRANTED BY

T. Thwaites

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

MULTILITERACIES

A New Direction for Arts Education

Trevor Thwaites *Centre for the Arts, Auckland College of Education, Auckland,*

New Zealand. Email: t.thwaites@ace.ac.nz

ABSTRACT:

The New Zealand Curriculum Framework identifies seven Essential Learning Areas, namely, Languages, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Technology, Health and Physical Education, and The Arts. These have been in the process of development since 1993, with the Arts being written in draft form in 1998 and released for consultation in 1999. Being positioned last in curriculum development implies that the Arts are at the bottom of a preferred hierarchy of knowledge promoted by the state. This has been further reinforced by the increased drive to promote literacy, numeracy and information technology in schooling. The 'knowledge economy' catch-cry, in New Zealand, totally ignores the notion of a 'creative knowledge'.

In an effort to increase the perceived value of the arts, the writers of the draft "Arts Curriculum" embraced the concept of multiple literacies, which seeks to broaden the understanding of literacy in teaching and learning and to acknowledge a multiplicity of discourses within the school curriculum. Literacy should imply a mode of meaning other than the purely linguistic, it needs to incorporate visual, aural, gestural, spatial and multimodal meanings (The New London Group, 1996). Literacies in the arts are developed as students learn in, through and about different arts forms within the arts disciplines and use its languages to communicate and interpret meaning.

This paper details the development of "The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum" and the acknowledgement within the curriculum document of the notion of literacy in the arts. It takes the view that the concept of multiliteracies might be a direction for the arts to take in order to counter the pro literacy canon embraced by the state, and the potential of such a concept in preventing further marginalisation of the arts in New Zealand schools.

Introduction

Development of the New Zealand Curriculum Framework began in 1993 under the direction of the Ministry of Education and directed by the then Minister of Education, Dr Lockwood Smith. There are seven identified curriculum areas within the Curriculum Framework and the canon-subjects were developed first with The Arts coming last (with the draft document first appearing in 1999). Significantly, Technology has been given its own select curriculum space and has set about capturing various subjects (e.g., Visual Arts) in attempts to justify its presence as a body of knowledge rather than a set of tools.

Development on The Arts draft curriculum document began in March 1998 with the directive to include Dance, Drama, Music and the Visual Arts. While it was suggested that Dance and Drama should share a specific curriculum space, it was decided to give each its own Discipline Area. It is important to note that Dance also appears in Health and Physical Education, and Drama in English; nevertheless, it was decided that these disciplines were in The Arts for creative, and not instrumental, purposes.

The Ministry of Education, in order to make the document more "manageable", insisted on generic strand headings for all four of the Arts disciplines. This has subsequently caused concern through interest groups, who feel each discipline should be unique. The Visual Arts are most insistent that they require their own separate curriculum document, and they promote the notion of Music, Dance and Drama as Performing Arts.

The State, seeking stability among the paraphernalia of dictates it has issued over the past ten years of rapid education change, is reluctant to make the document too radical. When the development team asked whether the document should be the last of the old, or the first of the new forms of curriculum documents, there were vague murmurings, but nothing specific. It was only when the document was handed over and subjected to Ministry adjustments that we discovered that the document was in fact the last of a redundant breed. At the launch of the draft Arts Curriculum document, the Minister asked whether it would cause him any problems both in educational circles and in his own Cabinet.

The Arts curriculum development was informed by earlier Syllabus statements (1989) in the Visual Arts and Music, and current best practice in all four disciplines. Movements which also informed development included: Progressivism, Modernism, Discipline-based Art Education, to which we insisted on adding: Postmodernism and the Arts and Cognition. Shortly after development commenced, the Government announced a new push for literacy and numeracy, demanding that extra attention be given to these so that New Zealand's position in the world economy might be made more secure. In tandem with this was the canonising of information technology as the prime force in advancing the New Zealand economy. The Government adopts the narrow view that the technology itself represents the knowledge economy, rather than the uses to which it might be put.

The Arts Curriculum Development Team sought some form of advocacy to counteract these trends by firstly reclaiming technologies in the arts. For example, in music, these might be rice shaken in canisters, through to the most sophisticated electronic technology such as Pro-tools. Secondly, the team sought a central concept to bind the document and inform the outcomes. Later a casual meeting with Australian educator Doug Boughton confirmed what was already in the team's mind, some notion of literacy in the arts. The Arts Curriculum Development Team decided upon four strand headings which would give some direction to teachers, would allow for each discipline's specific knowledge to be discrete, and would advocate the depth of arts education. The four headings were: *Exploring the Languages of the Arts (dance, drama, music, or the visual arts)*; *Developing Ideas in the Arts*; *Communication and Interpreting Meaning in the Arts*, and, *Investigating the Arts in Past and Present Contexts*. However, the Ministry felt that explore could not be assessed and changed the heading of strand one to *Learning the Languages of the Arts*. Strands two and three were left untouched, but because a stated outcome of curricula is "understanding", the heading of strand four was changed to read *Understanding the Arts in Context*. The aim of the document now reads (p10):

The aim of *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* is to enable students to develop literacies in dance, drama, music, and the visual arts as they:

- Learn the languages of the arts
- Develop ideas in the arts
- Communicate and interpret meaning in the arts
- Understand the arts in context

Literacy

Literacy has traditionally been used as a token of power and status. Leonard Shlain, an associate professor at an American medical school, claims that literacy has "promoted the subjugation of women by men through all but the very recent history of the West" (Shlain, 1998: 3). Shlain, a brain surgeon, is convinced of the very real hemisphericity of the brain. He claims that the right brain is distinguished by its ability to "cognate images" (ibid: 20), and that "speech gave the left brain the edge to usurp the sovereignty of the mind from its elder twin" (p 21).

Schooling also used literacy to deliver hegemonic messages.

Schooling in general and literacy teaching in particular were a central part of the old order. The expanding, interventionary states of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries used schooling as a way of standardising national languages. In the Old World, this meant imposing national standards over dialect differences. In the New World, this means assimilating immigrants and indigenous peoples to the standardised "proper" language of the coloniser (New London Group, 1996:68).

Gee states that "language cuts up the world in different ways" (in Lankshear & McLaren 1993:274). For example, the systems of production and consumption we call Fordism stress *systems* that produce meanings (values) over the individuals who carry out the production.

Linguistic and cultural diversity have become central issues in education and the meaning of literacy pedagogy must change to meet this shift away from the "old order". Differences can be used as a productive resource, and the ability to switch between cultural discourses, whether through language, gesture, symbols, or material objects, offers a break from the old monocultural ways of meaning making. However, tensions are likely to develop between hybridised cultural expressions and technological endeavour which is hegemonic in nature and expansionist in its relentless invasion of private space. Tensions might occur in language between the global, cross-cultural and traditional literacy messages of the lifeworld. Nevertheless, the notion of a 'global community' should not embrace one single technocratic language, but a community of differences, with overlapping parameters, and the autonomy of choice in any given situation. Schooling has the power to lead the way towards diverse kinds of literacy, to move knowledge from particular set written forms, and to offer a pluralistic pedagogy. This means changing the notion of literacy pedagogy.

Literacy theorist David Olson (1977: 75) stated that "to take explicit written prose as the model of a language, knowledge and intelligence has narrowed the conception of all three, downgrading the general functions of ordinary language and common-sense knowledge". In other words, Olson has identified a literate bias in schooling, one which presumes that all knowledge can be translated into words. Literacy obviously needs a broader definition, one which opens up the potential for a more pluralistic view of literacy. For example, Graff (1995: 321) claims that we should note:

...the many literacies in addition to or "beyond" "traditional" alphabet literacy – from those of science and numeracy, to the spatial literacy that some geographers term "graphicacy", to the loudly touted and seemingly highly vulnerable "cultural literacy", "historical literacy", and "moral literacy". Some among the lengthening lists are long established in presumption but much more novel discursively or semantically: ecological literacy, "teleliteracy" and other media literacies, food literacy, emotional literacy, sexual literacy.

Raymond (1982) encourages us to see literacy not as a style of language, but as a style of thought. In the same way, writing is not a language, it is a way of giving some permanence to a language we hear and speak by means of marks we can see. Children are encouraged to make marks as a part of their development, but what is the difference between marks which bear alphabetical resemblance and those which express other meanings and identities such as 'child art'. The drawings of a developing child are symbolic in nature and form a part of a maturing ability to think symbolically. Not all symbols need to be marks on a page, and actions, gestures, and spoken or musical sounds can be viewed as forms of symbolic representation.

Ong (in Raymond, 1982: 199) reminds us that "all real words are spoken words (not marks on a page). Yet the evolution of consciousness demands that the originally oral human word be distanced from orality, be technologised, reduced to writing and print and ultimately to computers, where it can be fed back into the oral world again". A dialectic is thus formed between the spoken and the written word. Oral sounds form a common community, as reading alone cannot, whereas a text has to create its own world within the consciousness of the reader (ibid:197–8). Therefore, the common, socially constructed way of viewing the world becomes inscribed in the language and codes which constitute a text (Morgan, 1997). The 'truth' that the reader finds in a text is but one discourse among many, and this is supported by the views of the critical literacy theorists.

Critical literacy takes a 'poststructuralist' and 'postmodern' perspective on meaning. It questions truth, and points to language as metaphorical (in the same way that the Arts are). Gee (in Lankshear & McLaren, 1993: 271) asks: "What is the meaning of the word *bird*? One answer is that the meaning of the word *bird* is a *concept* in my mind or brain (an image or a mental description), a concept of birds out in the world. It is in virtue of my having this concept in my head and its being associated with the word *bird* that *bird* can be used to refer to birds". This Gee calls the " 'first' view of meaning". Some cultures use the same word for a range of meanings, or a single word to embrace a category (such as dull or bright colours).

Language is not necessarily complete meaning. If we are told: "There was a tree in the valley", then our experience and ability to visualise informs our mental imagery. What kind of valley? Large, small, wet, forested? What kind of tree? What time of year? What hemisphere? Many questions must be asked to form one kind of 'truth', but it is not only linguistic literacy that informs us.

Hoggart (1957) identified working class tastes in language and literacy, concluding that 'mass media/art' implies little or no choice. Therefore, we can conclude that language is a set of discourses through which meanings and beliefs are reproduced. We can then ask: "Is this any different from the discourses embedded in the arts?"

If we see language as a symbolic exchange: oral, written, or electronic—characterised by informational simulations—in which the "self is decentred, dispersed, and multiplied in continuous instability" (Poster, 1996:6), then we can see that all signs carry information, and that literacy is a "mode of information". The present infatuation with the 'knowledge economy' gives a "certain fetishistic importance to 'information'" (ibid).

Thirty years ago Marshall McLuhan (1967) claimed that the principle *means* of communication moulds a society more than the *content* of that communication. Under the "technology of transmission" he classified speech, pictographs, ideographs, alphabets, print, radio, film and television. Robert Logan extends McLuhan's notion that the alphabet is a technology. Logan states that:

...a medium of communication is not merely a passive conduit for the transmission of information but rather an active force in creating new social patterns and new perceptual

realities. A person who is literate has a different world view than one who receives information exclusively through oral communication. The alphabet, independent of the spoken languages it transcribes or the information it makes available, has its own intrinsic impacts (Logan, 1986: 24).

The arts carry messages informing class and sub-culture alike, and it is possible to see the arts as a form of social text. Treating the arts in this way enables us to better understand the structures, symbols, and the various constituent characteristics that implicate visual, kinaesthetic and aural texts with the beliefs and value systems at work within a social context. Signs and codes (for example, music notation, choreography, gesture, iconography, grunge music) are produced by, and reproduce, cultural meanings and values.

Reading cultural forms - Semiotics

The meaning of language lies in its function as a system and in the subsequent systems of language usages: the synchronic (the conditions for existence of any language) and the diachronic (the changes which take place in a language over time). A collection of signs within a given art form might be ordered as, for example, phrases, themes and motifs. The elements involved form in their synthesis, syntagmic relations with each other, and in turn may be represented and interpreted.

How they are interpreted, and by whom, is crucial in terms of the communication of meaning. The meaning of the arts is constructed, through signs and symbols, according to the social and cultural context through which the work is interpreted. For example, in particular contexts a plagal cadence (music) could communicate religious intent, in others a soulful closure; and a carved container or vessel could evoke concepts of memory, containment, or protection. The symbol might have ambiguous connotations, so a large speaker stack at a rock concert would seem normal, while the same thing at an orchestral concert would cause concern even before a note of music was heard.

Connotations are the set of possible signifieds, and connotations become denotations. The denotations of a sign are the most stable and apparently verifiable of its connotations. The signified is the abstract or mental concept the sign invokes, such as calling something an "impressionistic painting", a "ballet", or "jazz". The signifier is the sensory impression of the sign, the mental image of marks on a page or in clay, the sounds in the air, the movements of the body. It is material in nature, the vibrations of the vocal cords or instrument, the physical movements of the body, the piece of clay. For example, the actor's words or the singer's song become forms of 'verbal signifiers, or what Saussure described as a "sound image". The connection between signifiers and signifieds might be so imbedded that separation rarely occurs. Metaphorical relations might be subconsciously constructed. For example, Renaissance Art appears to form a bridge between heaven and earth, and Classical Music implies civilised living and social order.

On the other hand, what distinctions need to be made between digital and analogue signs? The former is manipulated by discrete units of numbers or words, while the latter is a part of an infinite range of gestures and images. This raises the question of what form of signification a copy takes—such as a print, a CD, a taped drama or filmed dance? Is the digital photograph of the model the same as the real-life person? Does the recording realistically represent the musicians playing live? These questions relate to Baudrillard's notion of simulacrum, and their understanding forms a significant part of arts literacy. What is real and what is copy or a synthetic image? Does a recording realistically represent the musicians playing live—what and who has intervened in the process? To be arts-literate means to be able to ask critical questions.

The 'signified' can be constructed as a cultural (or subcultural) 'way of seeing', a way of categorising and structuring. The cultural and social conventions dictate the appropriate uses of, and responses to, a sign. Signs might have characteristics of one arts discipline which might transfer quite well into another arts discipline, but there is no such thing as a sign without a discipline (medium). Each arts discipline is not neutral and is imbedded within its own constraints and cultural significations. The understanding of these significations requires forms of arts literacy.

Seeing the arts in this way makes it clear that limited forms of cognition need broader domains within which to work. To this end, the theories of multiple intelligence promoted by Howard Gardner (1993) and his team give some direction. However, for the project team developing the draft arts curriculum document, the discovery of the movement for 'multiliteracies' (or 'multiple literacies'), and the writings of the New London Group (1996) in particular, authenticated our goal.

Multiliteracies

The New London Group claim that literacy pedagogy should connect with the changing social environment through what they call "multiliteracies". They argue that the multiplicity of communications channels and increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in contemporary society calls for a "much broader view of literacy than portrayed by traditional language-based approaches".

The New London Group maintains that the pedagogical use of multiliteracies will enable students to gain access to:

...the evolving language of work, power, and community, and [will foster] the critical engagement necessary for them to design their social futures and achieve success through fulfilling employment (1996:60).

Through this view, literacy takes on a broader definition and it is already becoming increasingly common to refer to, for example, scientific literacy (Shamos, 1995), media literacy (Quin, 1998), cultural literacy (Hirsch, 1987), political literacy (Freire, 1985) and critical literacy (Lankshear & McLaren, 1993).

The traditional view of literacy in New Zealand has been centred around the English language and culture with its associated grammar and rules. It could be seen as a post-colonial project and the literacy movement yet another form of hegemonic domination. In coining the term "multiliteracies", the New London Group seeks more equitable social and cultural participation. They refer to "the understanding of literacy and literacy teaching and learning to include a multiplicity of discourses" (New London Group, 1996). They elaborate by claiming that:

...literacy...now must account for the burgeoning variety of text forms associated with information and multimedia technologies. This includes understanding the competent control of representational forms that are becoming increasingly significant in the overall communications environment... (ibid, p61).

Meaning-making in the life world often requires the interpretation of several modes which might be integrated with the textual, such as the audio, the visual, the spatial, and the behavioural. The various expressions of media, whether mass or multi, give evidence to this. This implies the necessity for the valuing of diversity and viewing the world as a multiplicity of cultures, experiences, ways of making

meaning and ways of thinking.

Tyner (1998) suggests that a tendency to oversimplify the concept of *multiliteracies* can be problematic. She further states that:

Multiliteracies suggest a splintering of literacy into discrete parts that belie the true nature of literacy as a complex and intersecting set of social actions...Because their competencies and characteristics overlap, multiliteracies are not necessarily discrete from one another, although there may be discrete facets to each articulation of literacy...Furthermore, the goal of the teacher is to expand the number of choices available to students. An understanding of the many literacies and their uses offers opportunities for students to become as proficient in as many literacies and learning styles as possible –not only those with which the students finds an affinity (p64).

This suggests cross-curricular approaches to education which can only be beneficial to students as connections are made. The New London Group note that the "...revolutionary changes in technology and the nature of organisations have produced a new language of work. They are all reasons why literacy pedagogy has to change if it is to be relevant to the new demands of working life, if it is to provide all students with access to fulfilling employment (1996:66)".

Literacies in the Arts

Literacies in the Arts are developed as students learn in, through and about the different arts forms and use the specific languages of each discipline to develop ideas, and to communicate and interpret meaning. The Arts are seen as forms of representation, modes of meaning and, significantly, "modes of information" (Poster 1990, 1996). This makes possible a climate of cultural and sub-cultural pluralism in our schools and society as global arts forms are learned and expressed, and are given value and understood. This is especially important in New Zealand with its declared commitment to biculturalism.

Literacies in the arts also means that students should have the opportunity to gain skills in contemporary technologies and to learn how these might transform the way the arts function in that society.

The development of literacies in the arts in the New Zealand Curriculum assumes that:

- literacies have political, social and cultural significance – they cannot be regarded as autonomous;
- the meaning of a particular arts literacy depends on the context in which it is embedded;
- the processes through which the arts literacies are learned and understood help to construct their meaning;
- each arts discipline embodies a range of discourses which may themselves constitute literacies.

(Ministry of Education, 1999b:27)

The draft document for *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* devotes a page to explaining literacies in the arts (p9). The page reads:

Literacies in the arts involve the ability to communicate and interpret meaning using the languages of the arts disciplines. We develop literacy in dance, drama, music, or the visual arts as we acquire skills, knowledge, attitudes and understanding in the discipline and use its particular signs and

symbols to convey and receive meaning.

The languages of the arts disciplines are distinct. They do not form a universal language or communication system, and literacy within one discipline does not imply literacy in another. Each discipline has particular signs and symbols that relate to specific art forms or genres, such as haka, jazz, role-play, painting, rock videos, or tapa-making. Literacy in the art forms and genres of one culture or period does not imply literacy in those of another culture or period. It requires the ability to understand an art work in relation to its cultural and social contexts and to recognise its functions within those contexts. For example, literacy in relation to Maori arts requires an understanding of the tikanga and whakapapa (origins) of Maori art forms within each of the four disciplines.

Becoming more literate in the arts develops the mind and expands the ways in which we can express our ideas, feelings, beliefs, and values and understand those of others. Arts literacies are as important to people who make art as to its audiences. The maker or presenter of an art work needs to develop literacy in order to structure ideas and communicate meaning. So too do viewers and listeners, in order that they can interpret the work in an informed way as they bring their own perceptions, experiences, and values to it.

Learning in dance, drama, music, and the visual arts significantly enhances our opportunities to contribute to our communities and cultures in a world where multiple literacies are important for communication, understanding, and intellectual growth. Developing arts literacies is central to this curriculum. It is a lifelong process of learning and participation that begins in the general education of all New Zealand students.

The central message in this statement is the acknowledgement that a culture or subculture needs to be understood and deliberately engaged with in order to learn valid forms of arts literacy. One cannot truly communicate or interpret Maori art forms without a knowledge of Maori customs/traditions (tikanga) and genealogy/origins (whakapapa). The same might apply to musical styles and subcultures (rock, grunge, jazz, orchestral, choral, etc).

A jazz musician who quotes a phrase in their playing from an acknowledged master jazz musician is demonstrating the same kind of literacy that someone adept at quoting Shakespeare or other master authors might be credited with. A techno-musician who utilises the tape techniques of 'musique concrete' while using contemporary digital equipment is demonstrating they are literate with past movements in the genre as well as technological literacy. A 'classical' musician performing what is now known, somewhat pretentiously, as "western art music" needs a particular kind of reading literacy as they engage with musical notation; they also need to be literate enough to communicate the appropriate expressive detail and literate in the valid performance practice of the particular style/genre. Likewise, a gospel singer needs to be aware of the codes of the African-American experience and a choral singer in the English choral tradition the particular desired tones, diction and articulation.

How one comes to learn and engage with these literacies needs further inquiry. The New London Group propose a metalanguage of multiliteracies based on the concept of "design" (1996:73). Therefore, any semiotic activity should involve three elements: available designs, designing, and the redesigned; this emphasises the active and dynamic processes of meaning-making (p74). "Available design" includes the grammars and conventions of a particular arts language—the resources with which to make meaning. "Designing" is the process of shaping emergent meaning, it involves transformation whether creating, re-creating, or recontextualising—working with the "available designs". The "redesigned" requires human agency to reconstruct and renegotiate identity—that which is reproduced and/or transformed.

To treat the grammar and languages of a particular arts form, say jazz for example, as a discourse opens up particular design conventions such as style, genre, articulations, harmonies, altered notes, voices, to name a few. *Style* embraces semiotic features; *genre* the configuration; *articulation* the expressive components; *harmonies* the textures and layers which blend either concordantly or discordantly to give particular meanings and structure to the music; and *voice* adds the personal touch. To use the notion of grammar implies a specialised language which best describes the representation. Jazz literacy does not mean literacy in all other forms and dimensions of music, only degrees of literacy in the grammar of jazz and the messages it is capable of imparting.

Using an idea promoted by the New London Group (1996:73-77) the concept of jazz design can be linked to the specific elements of linguistic design:

<i>Delivery:</i>	Features of intonation, rhythm, accents, pitch, articulation, harmony.
<i>Vocabulary and Metaphor:</i>	Includes the scales, harmonies and rhythmic configurations necessary to impart particular meanings.
<i>Modality:</i>	The musicians' commitment to the message/music.
<i>Transitivity:</i>	The nature of the jazz language used for example to give a particular feel, or to produce a pre-conceived emotional response.
<i>Nominalisation of Process:</i>	The packaging of the musical message (e.g., musical motifs and phrases) including hidden meanings, 'hipness', trends, etc. Also relates to the musician's ability.
<i>Information Structures:</i>	How the music is presented – structure, solos, embellishments, etc.
<i>Local Coherence Relations:</i>	Whether the music being played is coherent – do the solos fit the melody and nature of the tune; the venue; the audience.
<i>Global Coherence Relations:</i>	The overall organisational properties of the performance, such as genre and style (can it be categorised as bop, neo bop, fusion, funk, acid jazz, etc).

In outlining the increasing complexity and inter-relationship of different modes of meaning, the New London Group identify six major areas in which functional grammars—the metalanguages (the active, generative description of language as a means of representation) that describe and explain patterns of meaning—are required (1996:78). These are "Linguistic Design, Visual Design, Audio Design, Gestural Design, Spatial Design, and Multimodal Design. Multimodal Design is of a different order to the other five modes of meaning; it represents the patterns of interconnection among the other modes" (ibid). The implication for the Arts is quite clear, each of the above modes of meaning is central to the portrayal of at least one arts form.

Even within a single arts form, hybridity can occur. For example, in popular world music the cultural

musical forms and languages come face-to-face with modern audio electronics and the global music industry itself. The exponents of forms of world music might assimilate other musical languages (e.g., rap, soul, etc), as well as incorporating visual and gestural actions from other musical styles or cultures into their performance (especially if video is involved). This potentially highlights a need to view literacy in a cross-arts and cross-curricular way, otherwise teachers will be swamped by specificities as they endeavour to meet student needs. We must therefore ask: What is appropriate pedagogically for the incorporating of the Arts into modes of multiliteracies?

Multiliteracies and Arts Pedagogy

Tyner (1998:32-33) comments that "...the public's image of literacy still belongs in the little red schoolhouse of long ago. To the average citizen, the purposes of literacy are practical and applied: to get a good job, vote in an informed way, and understand the labels on consumer products". Tyner (p33) goes on to quote Peter McLaren, who comments that:

...mainstream theories of literacy conceive of being literate as possessing only that requisite fund of knowledge – that privileged form of linguistic currency – necessary for students to succeed materially in an industrialized capitalist society... the non-standard literacies of minority groups and the poor (that is, different dialects, non-standard English) are regarded as deficits or deprivations rather than differences (McLaren.1988:214).

This gives rise to a view that the acknowledgement of multiple literacies in education might be potentially empowering. I refer to a broader concept of literacy than even McLaren, one which not only acknowledges cultures and subcultures, but different knowledge forms such as music, dance, technology, and health.

The New London Group (1996) remind us that pedagogy is:

...a complex integration of four factors:

- *Situated Practice* based on the world of learners' Designed and Designing experiences;
- *Overt Instruction* through which students shape for themselves an explicit metalanguage of Design;
- *Critical Framing*, which relates meanings to their social contexts and purposes; and
- *Transformed Practice* in which students transfer and re-create Design of meaning from one context to another (p83).

Does the draft Arts Curriculum construct these into a useful pedagogy for the teaching of music? I believe it does. For example:

- Situated Practice takes the experiences and knowledge of the learner as a basis for particular forms of skills development and the acquisition of knowledge and understanding. It should also acknowledge that learner's cultural and subcultural attitudes and not merely make the learner the object of teacher directed norms. The students are immersed in practical experiences utilising a range of discourses (pop, jazz, 'classical', rap). This might involve mentors, which in the New Zealand education system

could come in the form of itinerant teachers of composition or instruments who effectively scaffold the learners development. The draft curriculum document acknowledges these in the strands of *Developing Ideas in Music* and *Communicating and Interpreting Meaning in Music*.

- Overt Instruction occurs as the teacher introduces new concepts, drills and activities which allow the learner to gain explicit information. The focus is analytic and conscious understanding. It is where the language and vocabularies of music are engaged with as forms of discourse. Such explorations form the basis of a developing musical literacy, and in the draft curriculum document overt instruction takes place primarily in strand one – *Learning the Languages of Music*, as well as to varying degrees in the other three strands.
- Critical Framing involves the interpretation of music, both as a performer and as a listener, and supports the notion of music as a social text as they interpret the social and cultural context of specific musics. "Through critical framing, learners gain the necessary personal and theoretical distance from what they have learned, constructively critique it, account for its cultural location, creatively extend and apply it, and eventually innovate on their own" (New London Group, 1996:87). In the draft curriculum document this occurs again in *Developing Ideas in Music* and *Communicating and Interpreting Meaning in Music*, and especially in strand four *Understanding Music in Context*.
- Transformed Practice is the result of reflective practice, one which grows from the notion of a spiral curriculum and co-constructivist pedagogical teaching practice. Students in the Arts are well used to reflecting on what they do, both in action and in design. They transform their meaning-making into practice through a range of musical contexts. The valuing of students as composers and performers acknowledges this as a key outcome of music education.

Conclusion

This paper has set out to demonstrate that traditional views of literacy need to change and expand. I have espoused the notion that literacy is not the sole domain of the verbal and/or textual forms of representation. As we move into what could become a 'post-textual age' broader definitions of literacy have become a necessity. The learner and citizen of the twenty-first century must learn to interpret a range of codes which will interface through a wide variety of media. The increasing dependence upon electronic media means that visual and audial messages may well predominate much of our daily intake of information. Even so, the re-assertion of cultural identities means that the spoken and gestural message will also carry some impact. Of course, text is by no means dead, as Drucker (1998:57) indicates when he states that: "all of us hear 'Electronics' or 'Computers' when we hear 'Information'. But the number of *printed books* published and sold in every developed country has gone up in the last thirty or forty years as fast as the sales of new electronics".

The challenge for education will not only be in educating for new breadth and forms of literacy, but also in educating how to critically interpret these forms as sources of information, expression and personal identity. The possibility of domination by rival ideologies and discourses is real. It could well mean that education will be forced to compete with the 'information industry' as a dominant mode of information. There is also a danger that the notion of multiliteracies could be captured by market-driven discourses in keeping with the "new fast capitalist literature (*which*) stresses adaptation to constant change through thinking and speaking for oneself, critique and empowerment, innovation and creativity, technical and systems thinking, and learning how to learn" (New London Group, 1996:67).

Notions of a "cultured person" must change to match this new world of literacy and education. This was signalled by Hoggart in 1966 when he laid down the basic premises upon which Cultural Studies was to be based:

First, without appreciating good literature, no one will really understand the nature of society; second, literary critical analysis can be applied to certain social phenomena other than 'academically respectable' literature (for example, the popular arts, mass communications) so as to illuminate their meanings for individuals and their societies (Hoggart in Hebdige, 1988:8).

This acceptance of a broader notion of a literate person points the way towards the necessity for educating for the purpose of decoding new modes of information. The reality is that these things take time and should be approached with care.

The extent to which the newly proliferating literacies signify little more than a semantic "name game" or a feature of the politics of literacy and education or professional specialization raises hard questions...An enormously important set of critical developments, whose potentially revolutionary consequences for learning and teaching are largely unappreciated, thus far remain prisoner to scholarly, cultural, and pedagogical fragmentation (Graff in Tyner, 1998: 67).

By way of advancing this notion beyond ideological capture and into the lived domain, I suggest that we need to view literacy as ways of thinking, the language of which is a coded text which forms a set of discourses through which meanings and beliefs are communicated and interpreted. In music, for example, communication is through signs and symbols, either seen or heard, through which sonic images are created and metaphorical relations are constructed and interpreted.

I see literacy in the arts as encompassing the knowledge, skills, attitudes and understandings within an arts discipline. It does not define the discipline itself.

A specific literacy, such as jazz literacy in music, contributes to the formation of literacies within that discipline and even multiple literacies across the arts. These literacies might contain shared characteristics and competencies and all will contain elements of linguistic design (and vice versa).

Nevertheless, the question should be asked whether using literacy in the arts could signal an alliance with New Right ideologies through embracing the term 'literacy' and remove the discrete identity of the arts disciplines by rationalising thinking in the arts in ways that could become generic.

In conclusion, the languages of a literacy follow design conventions which dictate how meaning is communicated and interpreted. These include intonation, vocabulary, commitment, genre, packaging, presentation and coherence. Degrees of literacy are dependent on how these are perceived and understood, and forms the fund of requisite knowledge within the specific arts. To be considered fully literate in the arts, this knowledge should embrace culture and subculture, as well as race, class, gender and difference.

References

- Drucker, P.F. (1999) *Management Challenges for the 21st Century*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Freire, P (1985) *The Politics of Education: Culture, Power and Liberation*. New York: Bergin and Garvey.
- Gardner, H. (1993) *Frames of Mind*. London: Fontana.
- Graff, H.J. (1995) *The Labyrinths of Literacy: Reflections on Literacy Past and Present*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

- Hebdige, D. (1979, 1988) *Subculture – the meaning of style*. London: Routledge.
- Hirsch, E. (1987) *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Hoggart, R. (1957) *The Uses of Literacy*. London: Chatto and Windus.
- Lankshear, C & McLaren, P (eds) (1993) *Critical Literacy. Politics, Praxis and the Postmodern*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Logan, R. (1986) *The Alphabet Effect*. New York: William Morrow.
- Lunenfeld, P. (1999) *The Digital Dialectic: New Essays of New Media*. Cambridge Mass: The MIT Press.
- McLuhan, M & Fiore, Q. (1967) *The Medium is the Massage*. Harmondsworth, U.K: Penguin Books.
- Ministry of Education (New Zealand). (1999a) *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (draft document). Wellington: Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education (New Zealand). (1999b). *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum – a Background Paper*. Auckland: Project Development Team (Shane Foley, Tina Hong, Trevor Thwaites).
- Morgan, W. (1997) *Critical Literacy in the Classroom: the art of the possible*. London: Routledge.
- New London Group, The (1996) A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures, *Harvard Education Review*, Vol 66, No 1, Spring 1996.
- Olson, D. (1977) The Language of Instruction: On the literate bias of school. In R.C. Anderson & W.E. Mantague (eds), *Schooling and the Acquisition of Knowledge* (pp 75-86). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Poster, M. (1990, 1996) *The Mode of Information*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Quin, R. (1998) 'Media Literacy and the Information Age' in Livermore, J *More Than Words Can Say*; Canberra: Australian Centre for Arts Education.
- Raymond, J.C. (1982) *Literacy is a Human Problem*. Alabama: University of Alabama Press.
- Shamos, M. (1995) *The Myth of Scientific Literacy*. New York: Rutgers University Press.
- Shlain, L. (1998) *The Alphabet Versus the Goddess: The conflict between word and image*. London: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press.
- Tyner, K. (1998) *Literacy in a Digital World: Teaching and learning in the age of information*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.



U.S. Department of Education
 Office of Educational Research and Improvement
 (OERI)
 National Library of Education (NLE)
 Educational Resources Information Center
 (ERIC)



Reproduction Release

(Specific Document)

CS 217 215

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: <u>MULTILITERACIES: a new direction for arts education</u>	
Author(s): <u>Trevor Thwaites</u>	
Corporate Source: <u>AARE/NZARE</u>	Publication Date: <u>NOV. '99</u>

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, Resources in Education (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign in the indicated space following.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents	The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents	The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents
PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY _____ _____ TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)	PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY _____ _____ TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)	PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED _____ _____ TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
Level 1	Level 2A	Level 2B
Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g. electronic) and paper copy.	Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only	Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits.
 If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche, or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Signature: <u>T. Thwaites</u>	Printed Name/Position/Title: <u>TREVOR THWAITES</u>	
Organization/Address: <u>AUCKLAND COLLEGE OF EDUCATION</u> <u>PRIVATE BAG 92601 SYMONDS ST</u>	Telephone: <u>(64 09) 623 8899</u>	Fax: <u>(64 09) 623 8898</u>
	E-mail Address: <u>t.thwaites</u>	Date: <u>28/8/00</u>



III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to:

ERIC/REC Clearinghouse
2805 E 10th St Suite 140
Bloomington, IN 47408-2698
Telephone: 812-855-5847
Toll Free: 800-759-4723
FAX: 812-856-5512
e-mail: ericcs@indiana.edu
WWW: http://www.indiana.edu/~eric_rec/

EFF-088 (Rev. 9/97)