

Review of Research

Marjorie Siegel

Rereading the Signs: Multimodal Transformations in the Field of Literacy Education

Given the reading and writing responses of the children we studied, the multimodal nature of the linguistic sign is a key feature not only in literacy but in literacy learning.

—Harste, Woodward, & Burke, 1984, p. 208

Surely it is time for all those interested in multiple languages and language variants, in diverse cultural practices and world views, in the expanding symbolic repertoire of our time to appropriate and re-accentuate this word "basics."

—Dyson, 2004, p. 214

These two quotes, published 20 years apart, can serve as points on a compass to guide this exploration of research on multimodal transformations in a field we still call the "language arts." The first is taken from *Language Stories and Literacy Lessons* (1984), a book that conveyed the researchers' insistence that young children's encounters with print be taken on their own terms rather than held up against adult literate practice. Harste, Woodward, and Burke (1984) accomplished this shift from adult conventions to child inventions by bringing a semiotic perspective to the study of young children's literacy learning. Semiotics is an interdisciplinary field of studies that examines how meaning is made through signs of all kinds—pictures, gestures, music—not just words. Expanding the con-

ceptual lens for understanding what children did when reading environmental print or writing a story led Harste, Woodward, and Burke to conclude that literacy and literacy learning were multimodal events, a proposal that has taken on new significance today. The second quote is taken from a recent essay by Anne Haas Dyson titled "Diversity as a 'Handful': Toward Rethorizing the Basics" (2004). In one brief sentence, Dyson catalogues the theoretical shifts that have made diversities of language, culture, and symbolic resources the "basics" of literacy practice and development. The urgency with which she argues for the need to take back the meaning of "basics" from its use in the discourse of current legislation, policies, and practices is a warning to us that the access and meaning that multimodal transformations have offered to so many children are now in danger of being erased through a narrow and regressive vision of literacy learning in school.

In choosing "multimodal transformations" as the theme for their inaugural issue, the new editorial team of *Language Arts* has signaled a change in the literacy landscape that puts images, gestures, music, movement, animation, and other representational modes on equal footing with language. We need only consider the ease with which children today can not only draw, sing, and dance, but also produce their own

digital movies, master the intricacies of computer games, and participate in fanfiction or interactive websites such as Neopet.com to recognize that literacy today means more than "knowledge of letters," as the OED would have us believe. Contemporary literacy scholars have argued that literacy is always socially situated and ideologically formed (Gee, 1996; Luke, 2000; New London Group, 1996; Street, 1984). Thus, language arts education can no longer ignore the way that our social, cultural, and economic worlds now require facility with texts and practices involving the full range of representational modes. The question we face as literacy educators is how we might begin to theorize these multimodal transformations and how research can be a resource for addressing the pedagogical challenges we currently face. My aim in this essay, therefore, is to take stock of what research on literacy has to say about multimodal transformations, and what questions we might pursue to understand the possibilities such transformations hold for children's learning and lives.

THE MULTIMODAL NATURE OF YOUNG CHILDREN'S LITERACY LEARNING

Despite the claim that multimodality is new on the literacy scene, children have always engaged in what are now called multimodal literacy practices.

The turn toward multimodality can be traced back to the interest in understanding young children's literacy learning and development that took hold in the late 1970s. Spurred on by observations of how children invented the written language system (e.g., Bissex, 1980; Clay, 1975; Read, 1975), literacy researchers began to question the idea that learning to read required formal instruction (i.e., "reading readiness") and initiated studies of "literacy before schooling" (Ferreiro & Taborsky, 1982). This research, which came to be known as "emergent literacy" (Teale & Sulzby, 1986), shifted attention to the knowledge and processes of literacy learning that children demonstrated as they participated in events such as storybook reading and dramatic play. The language of "preliterate behaviors" thus gave way to an awareness that when children wrote signs (famously DO NAT DSTRB, GNYS AT WRK [Bissex, 1980]) or read familiar storybooks, the results could not be interpreted as unsuccessful imitations of adult writing and reading, but as reflections of children's growing facility with the full array of knowledge required to mean through written language (see Yaden, Rowe, & MacGillivray [2000] for an update on this literature). Yet, re-envisioning children's literacy development as "emergent" did not necessarily mean re-envisioning literacy or literacy development; the definition of conventional literacy as mastery and control of the systems and processes of written language, as well as the developmental continuum from emergent to conventional literacy, remained firmly in place.

Anne Haas Dyson, (1982, 1983) and Jerome Harste, Virgin-

ia Woodward, & Carolyn Burke (1984) pursued emergent literacy along a different path, one that did not privilege written language above all other symbol systems in their accounts of literacy learning and development. For example, both studies showed that when young children wrote, they did not just make meaning through linguistic signs. As Harste et al. argued (1984), talking, gesturing, dramatizing, and drawing are "an intimate and integral part" of the writing process (p. 37). These studies, initiated more than 25 years ago, were most responsible for questioning the centrality of print in literacy and for expanding the symbol systems that were deemed necessary, not just "nice,"¹ for literate practice. Taken together, this work represented an important break with conventional theories of literacy and literacy development. Though quite different methodologically, each study emphasized the importance of sign-making in all modes, and, in doing so, challenged the prevailing belief in conventional or adult-defined literacy as the lens for and endpoint of literacy development.

In their study of young children's initial encounters with print, Harste et al. (1984) asked children ages 3–6 to engage in a variety of researcher-designed literacy activities, including reading environmental print, reading a predictable book, writing everything they could write, drawing

¹Here I allude to the title of Andrew Ortony's important paper on metaphor and language, "Why Metaphor Is Necessary, Not Just Nice" (1975), in which he argued that metaphor was not merely a linguistic ornament, but the basis of comprehension.

a picture of themselves and writing their names, and writing a story and a letter. These researchers could have categorized children's responses as successful or unsuccessful approximations of conventional literate behavior, but in doing so they would have missed the complexity of children's literate acts by "confusing product with process . . . and confusing convention with language" (p. 15). Instead, they looked through socio-psycholinguistic and semiotic lenses, and interpreted the children's responses as instances of sign-making that were organized, intentional, generative, and social (i.e., situated and mediating). As they observed children making sense of environmental print, they realized that for children, text is not limited to the printed marks but is part of a "sign complex formed by print and other communication systems in relation to situational context" (p. 169) (e.g., The Crest toothpaste carton signified "Brush teeth"). Given this view of text, it is not surprising that the researchers paid close attention to the "border skirmishes" (p. 178) over meaning and form that erupted as children moved from writing to drawing and back again. Harste et al. thus proposed that literacy learning was not a matter of gaining control over linguistic signs but involved "semantic negotiation" (p. 168) of the multiple semiotic resources available when encountering texts in contexts.

The researchers' reflections on this theoretical shift are as striking today as in 1984 when they wrote:

In short, our program of research forced us to abandon what in retrospect might be termed a "verbocentric" [Eco, 1976] view

of literacy and to adopt a semi-otic one, in which the orchestration of all signifying structures from all available communication systems in the event have a part. (1984, p. 208)

The idea that moving across sign systems could serve a generative and reflective purpose for learners became a starting point for designing literacy curricula they called “the authoring cycle” that challenged the verbocentrism of conventional school literacy. For them, “authoring” was a metaphor for children’s intentional acts of generating, organizing, and reflecting on texts in social contexts in/through multiple sign systems.

Dyson’s studies of young children’s writing (1982, 1983, 1989, 1993, 2001a, 2001b, 2003) are distinctive for their insistence on conceptualizing it in relation to children’s development as symbol makers, and on understanding how children structure and use writing to enact social agendas wholly their own. Dyson documented child writing in the context of open-ended writing events in classrooms, paying close attention to children’s talk and social interactions as they wrote. Drawing on Vygotsky’s (1978) observation that writing development is related to other symbolic tools and Werner and Kaplan’s (1963, cited in Dyson, 1982) notion of development as a process through which children gradually come to differentiate and manipulate what begins as undifferentiated concepts and processes, Dyson challenged the idea that learning to write is a straightforward matter of learning the written language code (i.e., moving from letter-like strings to the kind of orthographic inventions Read [1975]

documented). From her earliest studies, Dyson’s aim was to:

... unhinge writing development from its narrow linear path and to portray its developmental links to the whole of children’s symbolic repertoires and the breadth of their textual landscapes. These developmental links foreground our key human strengths—social and symbolic flexibility and adaptiveness—as key also to children’s growth as skillful users of written symbols. (Dyson, 2001b, p. 127)

Yet, Dyson’s interest in symbol weaving and the productive tensions that arise from this act was not limited to what these choices could tell us about literacy development. Acknowledging the range of symbolic media children take up and their inventiveness in using these media were also a way to understand how children position themselves in their multiple social worlds. What distinguishes Dyson’s approach to children’s use of the semiotic resources, then, is how children use these resources to engage in the social work of childhood (1993, 2001a, 2001b, 2003). Thus, whether examining the role of oral language in child writing, or children’s symbol weaving, or children’s appropriation and re-contextualization of popular culture in their writing, Dyson has shown that children’s multimodal texts are evidence of engagement in a far more complex mapping activity than mapping oral language onto written language. She writes:

Learning about written language is thus not just about learning a new code for representing meanings. It is about

entering new social dialogues in an expanding life world. As such, written language learning is inevitably a part of learning about social and ideological worlds and about the place of a child’s own relationships and experiences in those worlds. (Dyson, 2001b, p. 138)

Working at a time when the “writing process” was taking hold in elementary classrooms, Dyson advocated open-ended composing periods with opportunities for children to rehearse, perform, play, and draw, since these “diverse symbolic media provide an enabling loom for children’s early symbol weaving, and, moreover, feed the formation of classroom textual communities” (Dyson, 2001b, p. 139). To create this textual community, she encouraged official sharing of child texts so children and teachers, alike, could grow in their awareness of and language for the resources children use to produce texts and produce effects in their child audiences. What distinguished her recommendations for classroom practice, however, was her belief that literacy development should be theorized as participation in the vital work of childhood, that is, learning about and acting on their world and their place in it.

Looking back, it is hard to appreciate the quiet way in which these studies tuned the field of literacy education to “a new key” (Langer, 1942). Declaring literacy to be multimodal and literacy development to consist of stretching symbolic and social resources did little to disrupt the curricular frameworks, teaching and assessment practices, or instructional materials that dominated school literacy lessons in the early 1980s. But these researchers did succeed

in directing attention to new theoretical perspectives and research questions. This was due, in part, to emerging developments in literacy theory and practice in the mid-1980s. Interest in social theories of language (Halliday, 1978), transactional theories of reading (Rosenblatt, 1978), writing process pedagogies (Graves, 1983), and social theories of thinking and learning (Vygotsky, 1978) provided an opening for this possibility by putting the spotlight on the learner as meaning-maker and social actor. In this way, early research on children's multimodal literacy practices set the stage for the explosion of interest in multiliteracies (New London Group, 1996; Cope & Kalantzis, 2000) and multimodality (Carrington & Marsh, 2005; Duncum, 2004; Hammerberg, 2001; Hull & Nelson, 2005; Jewitt & Kress, 2003; Kress, 1997, 1998, 2003; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; Vasudevan, 2004) we are witnessing today.

CONCEPTUAL TOOLS FOR UNDERSTANDING MULTIMODALITY: SEMIOTIC THEORY

The ease with which people can now edit photos, create iMovies, and design websites means that semiotics has ventured out from the academy and into our everyday lives. As Daniel Chandler (2002) notes in his introductory text (available online: <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/S4B/sem01.html>):

There is no escape from signs. Those who cannot understand them and the systems of which they are a part are in the greatest danger of being manipulated by those who can. In short, semiotics cannot be left to semioticians. (p. 219)

Innis (1985) had his own wording to define semiotics: a broad field of studies that looks at "meanings and messages in all their forms and all their contexts" (p. vii). As such, semiotics is uniquely suited to understanding multimodality because it offers a way of thinking about meaning and text that does not privilege language over all other sign systems. Despite its unfamiliar vocabulary and its resistance to easy definition, semiotics has proved useful to language arts educators interested in what is usually called "the arts." Semiotics first found its way into the pages of *Language Arts* through the Fact Sheets (Suhor, 1982) and ERIC Digests (Suhor, 1991) that Charles Suhor prepared during his long career as Deputy Executive Director of NCTE. His interest in the role of nonprint media in the English curriculum led him to develop a model for a semiotics-based curriculum (1984) that introduced the concept of transmediation ("translation of content from one sign system into another" [p. 250]), which remains vital to understanding multimodalities. In what follows, I discuss some of the key terms in semiotic theory. This vocabulary is difficult, in part, because it tries to make the familiar strange so that the very processes we use, consciously and unconsciously, to interpret and communicate can become visible for analysis and critique.

Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914) and Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913) are most closely associated with the development of semiotic thought in modern times. Saussure, a Swiss linguist, described a sign using terms that have entered ordinary usage: signifier and signified. Peirce, an American phi-

losopher, used terms that are less familiar: representamen, interpretant, and semiosis. The most important idea semiotics offers is how signs work. Saussure, who was interested in language as a system (*langue*), not the messiness of speech (*parole*), proposed that a sign is an association between a signifier (material form) and a signified (concept). This association is arbitrary (i.e., there is no resemblance between the word "dog" and the concept of a dog), which means that the signification that results from this association results from social convention. Peirce is best known for his taxonomy of types of signs: index, icon, and symbol. An index achieves its meaning through direct connection (smoke means fire), an icon through resemblance (the Olympic icon for swimming resembles a swimmer in motion), and a symbol through a convention that has been established. But it is Peirce's description of how signs become meaningful, which he termed "semiosis," that can be most useful in understanding multimodality because Peirce focused on process rather than structure. Peirce proposed that signs become meaningful through an enlargement and expansion of meaning, not a simple substitution of one thing for another, as in Saussure's model. Peirce depicted semiosis through a semiotic triad in which a sign (representamen or sign vehicle) stood for an object (what is being represented) in relation to a third element—another sign—which Peirce called an interpretant. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) have linked the idea of semiosis to the concept of metaphor and proposed that "the process of sign-making is the process of the constitution of metaphor." For example, when a young child drew

some circles and, in his first act of naming a drawing, announced, "This is a car" (p. 7). Kress and van Leeuwen argue that a metaphor (a car is a circle) has been produced in two steps: "a car is (most like) wheels" and "wheels are (most like) circles." Signs thus result from a double metaphoric process in which analogy is the constitutive principle (p. 7). This notion that semiosis is a metaphoric process in which meaning multiplies through a two-step process becomes even more visible when meanings in one sign system are transformed into another sign system, a point I will develop further below. What is important about semiosis is that it involves transformation, not simply by translating a signifier into a signified, but by expanding the meaning of one sign through another sign. Peirce's interpretant is thus a key concept in understanding the way multimodal texts work.

Peirce's characterization of a sign as a triadic relation that always stands in relation to other signs shows that generativity lies at the core of meaning-making. In an important passage Peirce states that "a sign is something [that] by knowing, we know something more" (Hardwick, 1977, p. 31). The "something more" that we know is provided by the interpretant, which brings the object and representamen into relationship with another sign, and in this way, sets in motion an unending process of translation and interpretation that Peirce called "unlimited semiosis" (Eco, 1976). This is why Eco (1976) concludes that "the sign always opens up something new. No interpretant, in adjusting the sign interpreted, fails to change its borders to some degree" (p. 44).

Recently, some literacy scholars (Kress, 1997, 2003) have begun to outline a theory of social semiotics to redress a limitation of semiotic theory. They draw on Halliday's idea of language as a social semiotic. Halliday rejected Saussure's structural approach to semiotics because it did not address the basic social fact that people talked to one another in particular sociocultural contexts, and when they do so, they reflect on things (ideational function) as well as act out the social order (interpersonal function). "Language as a social semiotic" thus means "interpreting language within a sociocultural context in which the culture itself is interpreted in semiotic terms" (Halliday, 1978, p. 2). For Kress, then, it is not enough to consider how people *use* signs, as if the system were a simple dictionary of ready-made meanings. Instead, social semiotics seeks to explain how signs participate in social life as part of specific meaning-making practices with all that implies about power and the social order. Although semiotics has always had a social basis—Saussure defined signs as social conventions and Peirce claimed that signs do not exist without interpreters—social semiotics draws our attention to the sociocultural and sociopolitical nature of sign-making.

THE SEMIOTIC TURN IN LANGUAGE ARTS EDUCATION: BEYOND VERBOCENTRISM TO MULTIPLE SIGN SYSTEMS AND TRANSMEDIATION

Early efforts by educators to make room for semiotic systems other than language in the school literacy curricula showed

that children come to school with well-stocked semiotic toolkits that, when tapped, positioned them as meaning makers. This was particularly significant for students who acquired labels when they failed to display the language required for successful participation in schooling. In these cases, treating drawings, dramatic play, and 3-D constructions as evidence of literacy led to multimodal transformations in their identities as literate people.

Inspired by research documenting the multimodal nature of literacy learning, educators turned their attention to literacy teaching and began to explore ways to acknowledge, encourage, and expand children's multimodal literacy practices. Two concepts introduced by Suhor (1984)—media-specific analysis and transmediation—anticipated contemporary thinking about multimodality. Media-specific analysis meant using the language and constructs particular to whatever media was being employed. Rather than using literary concepts to analyze a film, students would learn how to talk about a film in terms of camera angles, dissolves, panning, and shot composition. By including alternative sign systems in his model and arguing that each sign system had its own syntax (i.e., structure of signs and systems of signs), Suhor hoped to secure a place for the study of media such as film on its own terms, rather than an adjunct to literary texts.

Transmediation, defined as the "translation of content from one sign system into another" (Suhor, 1984, p. 250), was meant to provide a rationale for experiences, such as creating book reviews through collage or role-playing based on the theme of a story, that

had been dismissed in the wake of the “back to basics” movement following the publication of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). What was important about Suhor’s definition of transmediation was the idea that moving across sign systems was a generative process that could produce new meanings. In my own work on transmediation (Siegel, 1984, 1995), I drew on Peirce’s theory of semiotics to argue that transmediation is a special case of semiosis in the sense that learners use one sign system to mediate another. When a learner moves from one sign system to another, semiosis becomes even more complex, in that an entire semiotic triad serves as the object of another triad and the interpretant for this new triad must be represented in the new sign system. And, because no pre-existing code for representing the interpretant of one sign system in the representamen of another sign system exists a priori, the connection between the two sign systems must be invented. This is how transmediation achieves its generative power. The absence of a ready-made link between the content and expression planes of two different sign systems creates an anomaly that sets generative thinking in motion. Cliff’s sketch of *Ira Sleeps Over* (Waber, 1975) can illustrate this generative power (see Figure 1).

A fourth grader assigned to the lowest reading group, Cliff was rarely engaged in reading and sketching when I worked with his group once a week in the last four months of my year-long ethnographic study of how children transacted with texts through drawing (Siegel, 1984). But on the day I brought in *Ira Sleeps*

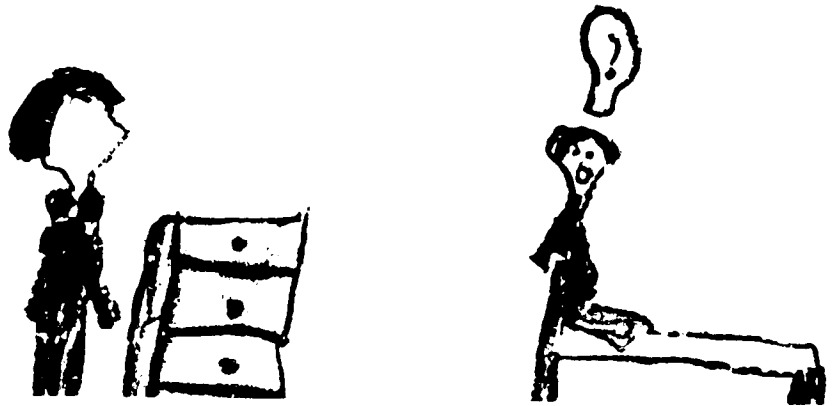


Figure 1. Cliff's sketch of *Ira Sleeps Over* (Waber, 1975)

Over as one of the choices, he was different, and after reading the book, drew a scene from the book before moving to the upper left-hand corner of the page to produce an “equation.” When it was his turn to share what he’d drawn with the group, he said:

Ok, see this [the scene at the bottom of his page] is when Ira's over at his [Ira's friend Reggie] house and he's [Reggie] gonna grab the teddy bear out of his drawer. And he's [Ira] on the bed, you know, and he's saying "What?" And see this [the equation at the top] is the kid plus his teddy bear plus another kid plus his teddy bear equals two friends. That's what it's trying to teach us.

In this example, we can see how Cliff generated an interpretant (the drawing of Reggie pulling out his teddy bear) that served to represent his understanding of the story, and then produced a second interpretant (perhaps as a response to a question I had begun posing to the children, “What was the story trying to teach you?”).

The first interpretant was a multimodal text that made use of color, line, spatial arrangement, perspective, and the cartoon convention of a thought balloon with a question mark inside, whereas the second combined icons and mathematical symbols to represent what he thought the author was trying to teach him. The result was a chain of interpretants that expanded his understanding of the story from one pivotal scene to an abstract thematic statement. Cliff’s interest in this story and his desire to make his sketches “interesting” so as to engage his friends during sharing time were bound up with his meaning-making. Thus, transmediation enabled Cliff to elaborate his understanding of the story while simultaneously situating himself within his peer world.

Spurred on by an interest in the arts, and an understanding of the role multiple sign systems played in young children’s literacy development, teachers and researchers were eager to know more about children’s knowledge and engagement with signs

in the context of the school literacy curriculum. Harste, Woodward, and Burke built on Suhor's ideas about transmediation and the findings of their research to develop a curricular framework—the “authoring cycle”—that gave transmediation a central place in literacy and learning. This proposal sparked new interest among literacy educators in experimenting with teaching practices and curricular designs that challenged the verbocentric status quo.

Much of this work occurred prior to the rise of the standards movement, yet the teachers in these studies rarely had free reign to teach however they chose, so their work can still aid teachers and researchers facing curricular mandates today. This body of literature has documented:

- *Children's knowledge of how different sign systems work, including drawing (Gallas, 1994; Hubbard, 1989; Siegel, 1984; Smagorinsky & Coppock, 1994; Whitin, 1994, 1996), drama and movement (Enciso, 1992; Rowe, 1998; Wilson, 2003), and construction (Fueyo, 1991).* Studies that documented children's use of drawing, for example, showed they were aware of how elements such as line, color, size, shape, and spatial arrangement worked; knew the cultural conventions for depicting thoughts, movement, emotions, and change; and often produced visual metaphors. Notably, their drawings often incorporated words, punctuation marks, and mathematical symbols.
- *How teachers designed literacy curricula that acknowledged making meaning in and across multiple sign systems (Berghoff, Borgman, & Parr, 2003; Clyde, 2003; Leland & Harste, 1994; Hoyt, 1992; Rowe, Fitch, & Bass, 2003; Short, Kauffman, & Kahn, 2000; Smagorinsky & O'Donnell-Allen, 1998; Whitin, 1994, 1996).* These research projects provide case studies of multiple sign systems in action in classrooms and call attention to the teachers' roles in valuing students' semiotic toolkits. These studies also show that, over time, teachers developed ways of talking with children about sign-making in an effort to build awareness and a shared language about how to mean.
- *How children appropriated sign systems and invented signs and metaphors to make their own meanings (Berghoff, 1993; Gallas, 1994; Rowe, 1998; Siegel, 1984, 1995; Smagorinsky & Coppock, 1994; Whitin, 1994, 1996).* These studies document children's powers of imagination and generativity.
- *How children's "literate sensibilities" (Feuyo, 1991, p. 641) became visible when multiple sign systems were treated as basic, not peripheral, to literacy learning.* This finding proved especially significant for children labeled at risk for school literacy failure (Berghoff, 1993; Clyde, 1994; Fueyo, 1991; Noll, 1998; O'Brien, 2001; O'Brien, Springs, & Stith, 2001; Siegel, 1984; Smagorinsky & Coppock, 1994; Wilhelm, 1995). Clyde's study of Douglas is a particularly striking case of how access to and acknowledgement of sign systems other than language repositioned him as a competent knower. Similarly, Noll's study of two Na-

tive American youth revealed the sociocultural significance of symbolic resources such as drumming that have no place in school literacy curricula.

Taken together, these studies demonstrated that when teachers immerse children in a curriculum that values multiple sign systems, children's prior knowledge and experience as sign-makers become resources for “multiplying meanings” (Lemke, 1993), which they accomplish with intentionality and a growing consciousness about the meaning potential each sign system holds. This is enhanced when teachers support students' reflections on their semiotic choices and, in some cases, develop a norm of intentionality (Whitin, 1996) that propels students to consider what a sign might mean, even if they had not initially intended a sign to mean in that way. Reflective work of this kind helped students rethink their “schooled” notions that drawing or drama didn't “count” as real work (Siegel, 1984). One of the most significant findings of this literature is that students who had acquired labels began to reposition themselves as literate subjects when curricula expanded the meaning of literacy to include meanings made with multiple sign systems.

MULTIMODALITY AND MULTILITERACIES: NEW BASICS FOR NEW TIMES

With the 1996 publication of the New London Group's manifesto for a pedagogy of multiliteracies, literacy educators were put on notice that “new times” would require “new basics” (Luke, Matters, Land, Herschell, Luxton, & Barrett, 1999), and coined the term “multiliteracies” to signal

changes in society and the academy. Within the academy, literacy scholars had challenged the view of literacy as a monolithic skill with an unchanging essence that develops through an unfolding of school-oriented skills. In contrast, they argued that literacy is a set of social practices that are socially situated and discursively constructed, making it more appropriate to speak of multiple literacies than a single literacy (Gee, 1996; Street, 1984). "Multiliteracies" was thus a call to educators to rethink literacy pedagogy in light of the diverse "cultures that interrelate and the plurality of texts that circulate [as well as] the variety of texts associated with multimedia technologies" (New London Group, 1996, p. 61). From this perspective, the goal of literacy education becomes the development of a semiotic toolkit (Dyson, 2001b, 2003; Hammerberg, 2001; Jewitt & Kress, 2003; New London Group, 1996) that builds access to the literacy practices and discourse resources that constitute the contemporary social landscape (Luke, 2000). The New London Group made "design" the central process of multiliteracies, which signals both their grounding in social semiotic theory (sign/design) and their debt to the field of graphic design, which is essential to their project since most literacy researchers and teachers are not equipped with knowledge of how multimodal texts work.

WHAT'S NEW?

What's new in the literature on multimodality can be traced to changes in society and in the academy, both of which played a significant role in shaping the

arguments for challenging verbocentric literacy curricula and proposing design principles for curricula that acknowledge multimodalities and multiliteracies (see Table 1 and Figure 2). First, studies of transmediation were an attempt to support students' engagement in reading literature and composing written texts. The emphasis placed on crossing sign systems was meant to help learners recast their knowing and gain new perspectives on the texts they were reading or writing. This is not surprising, given the dominance of conventional reading and writing as the goals of literacy curricula in the 1980s and 1990s, a dominance that continues today. In contrast, interest

in multimodality reflects the shift "from page to screen" (Snyder, 1998) that supports a wide array of modes and media essential to students' literate futures. As previously noted, this change moves semiotic theory from the margins to the center of theorizing literacy, a change that makes an analysis of students' sign-making central to literacy (Kress, 1997, 2000). This is evident in the emerging research on multimodality, as studies by Jewitt (2003) and Hull and Nelson (2005) make clear. In each of these studies, analyzing the relationship between and among the various sign systems becomes the primary analytic tool for understanding students' learning and literacy.

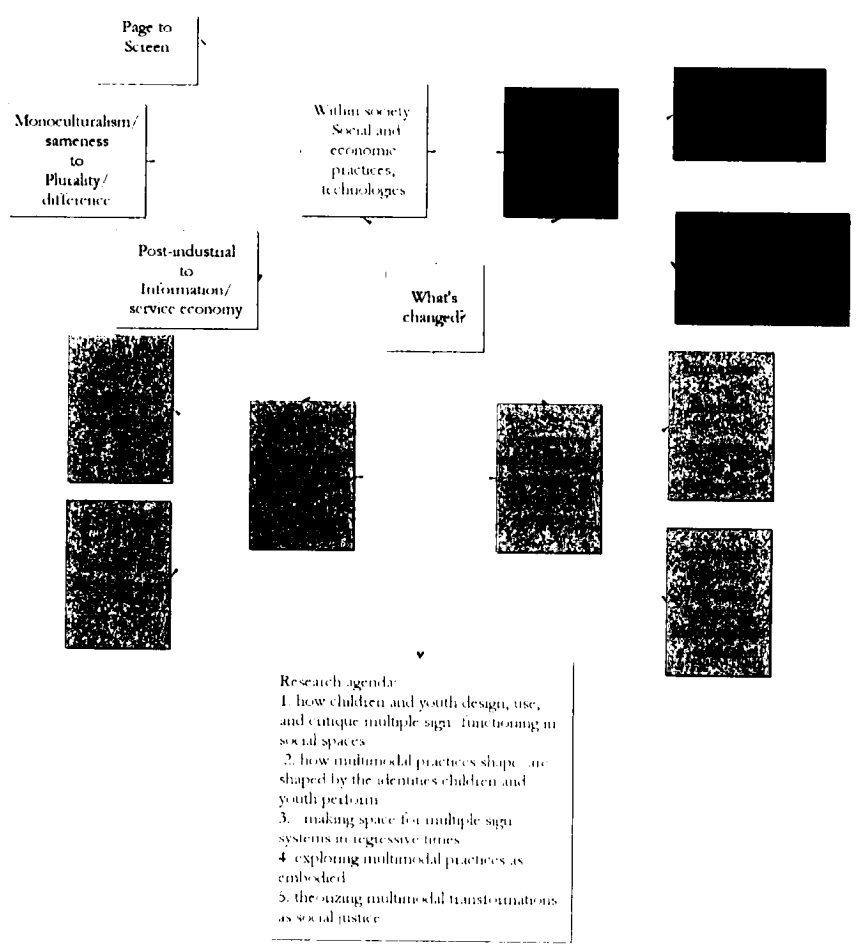


Figure 2. Changing perspectives in multimodal theory and research

Another limitation of this work derives from Suhor's use of the word "translation" in his discussion of transmediation. Despite Harste, Woodward, and Burke's observation that multimodality is a feature of all sign systems, the focus on translating content from one sign system to another had the effect of orienting subsequent researchers to crossing sign systems rather than considering the multimodality of all texts.

WHAT'S NEXT?

What's next for theory and research on multimodal transformations? First, we must certainly develop a research agenda that addresses the issues Kress (2000) has outlined, including:

... a theorisation and a description of the full range of semiotic modes in use in a particular society; a full understanding of the potentials and limitations and all these modes; of their present use

in a society; of the potentials for interaction and interrelation with each other; and an understanding of their place and function in our imaginings of the future. (Kress, 2000, p. 184)

But this agenda grows more comprehensive when learning is the focus, whether in school or other social sites. In particular, Kress and Jewitt (2003) suggest that research is needed on the contribution of various modes ("the means for making representations and meanings—speech, writing, image, gesture, music" [p. 6]) and media ("the technologies for making and distributing meanings as messages—such as book, magazine, computer screen, video, film, radio, billboard" [p. 6]) to learning literacy, mathematics, science, and so on.

This is a robust agenda, but as literacy educators working in regressive social times (at least in the U.S.), the agenda must also take account of what hap-

pens when multimodality meets school literacy, and we must stay wide awake to theoretical developments that have implications for understanding multimodality, such as the interest in literacy as performance (Blackburn, 2003), which calls attention to the body and to sign-making as identity work. Finally, if multimodalities are going to be more than the "next big thing," the research agenda should consider what it would mean to treat multimodal transformations as a matter of social justice.² Research to date shows that when curricular changes include multimodality, those youth who experience substantial success are the very ones who've been labeled "struggling reader" or "learning disabled" or whose semiotic toolkits consist of resources and sociocultural practices other than those defined as standard in school literacy. Given these repeated findings, perhaps the most significant multimodal transformation we can achieve is to radically transform what counts as "the basics" in school. Anne Haas Dyson's observation, with which I began this essay, bears repeating: "Surely it is time for all those interested in . . . the expanding symbolic repertoire of our time to appropriate and re-accentuate this word 'basics'" (2004, p. 214).

Critical Questions as a Basis for Future Action

As a starting point for this agenda, I want to briefly list some of the questions that are already being addressed and outline some

²I wish to thank the members of the *Language Arts* editorial team for encouraging me to make this point explicit.

What's changed?	Literature on multiple sign systems and transmediation	Literature on multimodality
Changes in society: social, economic, and technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monocultural • Post-industrial economy • Page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plurality and difference • Information/service economy • Screen
Changes in the academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-psycholinguistic and transactional literary theories • The "social" as individuals in social contexts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sociocultural theories and New Literacy Studies • The "social" as individual practices as discursive constructions
Changes in reasons for moving beyond verbocentric curricula	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School literacy does not acknowledge children as sign-makers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School literacy does not prepare students for their literate futures
Changes in designs for literacy curricula	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immersion • Intention • Invention • Reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immersion • Intention • Invention • Reflection • Metalanguage • Critical framing

Table 1. *From transmediation to multimodality: What's changed?*

that have not yet received much attention. For each question, I point to recent research and work-in-progress as possibilities to consider.

- *How do children and youth design, use, and critique multiple sign-functioning for their own purposes as well as the purposes of learning literacy, mathematics, science, and the like in school?* We probably know the most about this question, as the overview of research on transmediation and multimodalities indicates. Recent work by Dyson (2003), Epstein (2003), Jewitt (2003), Vasudevan (2004), and Wells (2001) indicates that children and youth are not empty vessels waiting to be “filled” with knowledge about multimodality. Rather, their knowledge is considerable, if teachers can recognize it in all its cultural forms, and use it as a resource for curriculum and teaching.
- *How do multimodal performances shape and how are they shaped by the identities children/youth perform?* Dyson (2003), Kontovourki & Siegel (2006), Siegel, Kontovourki, Bean-Folkes, Rainville & Lukas (2005), and Taylor (2006) vividly show how children’s and youth’s multimodal performances shape and are shaped by identity markers such as gender, race, ethnicity, language, class, sexuality, size, ableness, and their intersections, but also by the Discourses—culturally authoritative ways of talking about things, along with social practices, forms of subjectivity, and power relations (Gee, 1996; Weedon, 1996)—that construct what it means to be literate in school. Clearly, more research

is needed to understand these connections.

- *What might it mean to theorize multimodalities as embodied?* Here there is a rich literature on drama that can push us in the direction of understanding how multimodalities are embodied. Starting with Grumet’s notion of bodyreading (1985); the work of Salvio (1990), Wilson (2003), and Epstein (2003) on transmediation involving tableaux; and Rowe, Fitch & Bass’s (2003) study of dramatic play in writing workshop, the collective research suggests that multimodalities are embodied. Gavelek (2005) has argued that we are in danger of reinscribing the mind/body dualism in research on multimodalities if we ignore the way in which human semiosis involves the body.
- *How are teachers making space for multiple sign systems in regressive times?* The changes that have made multimodality a necessary focus for literacy theory, research, and practice do not automatically make multiple symbol systems more welcome in schools. Studies that document what happens when multiliteracies meet school literacy are needed. This question is one I have taken up as part of a year-long study of a mandated balanced literacy curriculum in an urban kindergarten in which a daily reading and writing workshop and a weekly computer lab were components of the official literacy curriculum. To illustrate how children are positioned and position themselves in the writing workshop and the computer lab in this high-poverty, under-resourced school, I will conclude with

one brief thumbnail sketch of a focal student in this study.

Sketch 1: Hector Negotiates Space for His Own Literacies

Hector, a five-year-old Dominican American boy who was a monolingual English speaker, was acknowledged as a competent reader and writer, able to demonstrate in different ways his knowing of the Discourse of being a reader and writer in this specific kindergarten classroom: he invented “games” during Reader’s Workshop; imported elements from his daily life and acted out his writing; and, used new tools and innovative ways to decorate his pages in the Computer Lab. In June 2004, the teacher launched a fiction writing genre study, and Hector chose to write a story about Garbage Hulk, based on his favorite cartoon hero. His story consisted of both words and pictures. He sang the names of letters, stretched out words, and added details to his drawing (coconut head, pickles for fingers) explaining his choices. Hector enjoyed his story—as he said, he “love[d] his character”—and oftentimes reread it: he sat up in his chair and, as the story progressed, leaned on the table and whispered “Oh, no!,” the crying voice of the melting Hulk. Hector concurrently interacted with his peers: he joked and challenged them with phrases like, “The person who’s nicer to me, I give him \$1.48,” which turned into a turn-taking game. Other times, he discussed writing issues with the teacher (e.g., how the word “the” was a good word to know). Examples like this illustrate that Hector was positioned as a successful student and creative author of multimodal texts, composed of images and

words. By acting out his stories, Hector expanded his multimodal text to include voice, movement, and emotion combined with the appropriation of popular culture, not traditionally valued in school (Dyson, 2003; Hammerberg, 2001). His engagement with literacy was consonant with approaches to literacy that consider texts as cultural productions that combine symbol systems and lived experiences (Dimitriadis, 2001). Hector also acted like a good friend, a person with meta-languages, and a capable manager of multitasking. He was positioned as a participant in multiple social practices, considering that his focus was not as much on reading and writing but on what he could do with literacy (Barton & Hamilton, 1999).

How did he manage to get counted as a successful literacy learner when he was clearly engaged in a multimodal performance of text? Our preliminary analysis (Kontovourki & Siegel, 2006) suggests that through his strategic management of resources, Hector was able to link his multimodal practices with the school-based literacy practices that were mandated. Linking all his practices to the Discourses circulating in this classroom meant he didn't have to leave his multiple identities behind when he entered the writing workshop. As such, his positioning work (Davies & Harre, 1990) seems to have served as a way for him to negotiate a space for his own literacies in the mandated literacy curriculum. In kindergarten, at least, there was room for multimodalities and multiliteracies to coexist with school literacy. But the accountability pressures build in the primary grades, leaving less room to move for teach-

ers and students alike by the time they reach the third and fourth grades when high-stakes testing takes over.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Multimodalities and multiliteracies have appeared on the literacy landscape at the very moment when literacy is shrinking to fit federal and state educational policies that place severe limits on what it means to be literate, and, thus, on *who* can be literate. In our enthusiasm for all that is "new" about multimodalities, it is critical that we not lose sight of the fact that these two cultural storylines are on a collision course, with schools being held to a monomodal, autonomous view of literacy. Reframing our work as social justice may allow us to maintain political clarity while we read and reread the signs.

Author's Note: *I am grateful to Pat Enciso for inviting me to write this essay. I benefited from her helpful feedback on an earlier draft of this paper, her encouragement, and her patience. I also wish to thank Stavroula Kontovourki for her assistance in reviewing the literature on transmediation and multimodality, and her insights into the theoretical issues raised in these literatures.*

References

- Barton, D., & Hamilton, M. (1999). Literacy practices. In D. Barton, M. Hamilton, and R. Ivanic (eds.), *Situated Literacies*. New York: Routledge.
- Berghoff, B. (1993). Moving toward aesthetic literacy in first grade. In D. Leu & C. Kinzer (Eds.), *Examining central issues in literacy research, theory, and practice* (42nd Yearbook of the National Reading Conference) (pp. 217–226). Chicago, IL: National Reading Conference.
- Berghoff, B., Borgmann, C. B., & Parr, C. (2003). Cycles of inquiry with the arts. *Language Arts*, 80 (5), 353–362.
- Bissex, G. (1980). *Gnys at wrk: A child learns to read and write*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Blackburn, M. (2003). Exploring literacy performances and power dynamics at The Loft: Queer youth reading the world and the word. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 37 (4), 467–490.
- Carrington, V., & Marsh, J. (2005). Editorial overview: Digital childhood and youth: New texts, new literacies. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 26 (3), 279–285.
- Chandler, D. (2002). *Semiotics: The basics*. London: Routledge.
- Clay, M. (1975). *What did I write?* London: Heinemann.
- Clyde, J. A. (1994). Lessons from Douglas: Expanding our visions of what it means to "know." *Language Arts*, 71 (1), pp. 22–34.
- Clyde, J. A. (2003). Stepping inside the story world: The subtext strategy—a tool for connecting and comprehending. *The Reading Teacher*, 57(2), 150–160.
- Davies, B. & Harre, R. (1990). Positioning: The discursive production of selves. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 20 (1), 43–63.
- Dimitriadis, G. (2001). *Performing identity/performing culture: Hip hop as text, pedagogy, and lived practice*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Duncum, P. (2004). Visual culture isn't just visual: Multiliteracy, multimodality, and meaning. *Studies in Art Education*, 45 (3), 252–264.
- Dyson, A. H. (1982). The emergence of visible language: Interrelationships between drawing and early writing. *Visible Language*, 6, 360–381.
- Dyson, A. H. (1983). The role of oral language in early writing processes. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 17, 1–30.
- Dyson, A. H. (1989). *Multiple worlds of child writers: Friends learning to write*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Dyson, A. H. (1993). *Social worlds of children learning to write in an urban primary school*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Dyson, A. H. (2001a). Where are the childhoods in childhood literacy? An exploration in outer (school) space. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 1(1), 9–39.
- Dyson, A. H. (2001b). Writing and children's symbolic repertoires: Development unhinged. In S. B. Neuman & D. Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook of early literacy research* (pp. 126–141). New York: Guilford.
- Dyson, A. H. (2003). *The brothers and sisters learn to write: Popular literacies in childhood and school culture*. New York: Teachers College Press.

- Dyson, A. H. (2004). Diversity as a "handful": Toward retheorizing the basics. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 39 (2), 210-214.
- Eco, U. (1976). *A theory of semiotics*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Enciso, P. (1992). Creating the story world: A case study of a young reader's engagement strategies and stances. In J. Many & C. Cox (Eds.), *Reader stance and literary understanding: Exploring the theories, research, and practice* (pp. 75-102). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Epstein, S. D. (2003). *Reimagining literacy practices: Biblical interpretation through tableau in one Jewish supplementary school*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.
- Ferreiro, E., & Teberosky, A. (1982). *Literacy before schooling*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Fueyo, J. (1991). Reading "literate sensibilities": Resisting a verbocentric writing classroom. *Language Arts*, 68 (8), 641-648.
- Gallas, K. (1994). *The languages of learning: How children talk, write, dance, draw, and sing their understanding of the world*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Gavelek, J. (2005, December). Toward a theory of semiotically-mediated instruction. Paper presented at the 55th Annual Meeting of the National Reading Conference, Miami, FL.
- Gee, J. P. (1996). *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in discourse* (2nd ed.). New York: Falmer.
- Graves, D. (1983). *Writing: Teachers and children at work*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Grumet, M. (1985). Bodyreading. *Teachers College Record*, 87 (2), 175-193.
- Halliday, M.A.K. (1978). *Language as a social semiotic*. Baltimore, MD: University Park Press.
- Hammerberg, D. (2001). Reading and writing "hypertextually": Children's literature, technology, and early writing instruction. *Language Arts*, 78 (3), 207-216.
- Hardwick, C. (Ed.). (1977). *Semiotics and signifiers: The correspondence between Charles S. Peirce and Victoria Lady Welby*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Harste, J., Woodward, V., & Burke, C. (1984). *Language stories and literacy lessons*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Hoyt, L. (1992). Many ways of knowing: Using drama, oral interactions, and the visual arts to enhance reading comprehension. *The Reading Teacher*, 45 (8), 580-584.
- Hubbard, R. (1989). *Authors of pictures, draughtsmen of words*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Hull, G. & Nelson, M. (2005). Locating the semiotic power of multimodality. *Written communication*, 22 (2), 224-261.
- Innis, R. (Ed.). (1985). *Semiotics: An introductory anthology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Jewitt, C. (2003). Computer-mediated learning: The multimodal construction of mathematical entities on screen. In C. Jewitt & G. Kress (Eds.), *Multimodal literacy* (pp. 34-55). New York: Peter Lang.
- Jewitt, C., & Kress, G. (Eds.). (2003). *Multimodal literacy*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Kontovourki, S. & Siegel, M. (2006, February). Hector and the Garbage Hulk: Negotiating space for his own literacy in a mandated literacy curriculum. Paper presented at the 27th Annual Ethnography in Education Research Forum, Philadelphia, PA.
- Kress, G. (1997). *Before writing: Rethinking paths into literacy*. London: Routledge.
- Kress, G. (1998). Visual and verbal modes of representation in electronically mediated communication: The potentials of new forms of text. In I. Snyder (Ed.), *Page to screen: Taking literacy into the electronic era* (pp. 53-79). New York: Routledge.
- Kress, G. (2000). Multimodality. In B. Cope & M. Kalantzis (Eds.), *Multiliteracies: Literacy learning and the design of social futures* (pp. 182-202). London and New York: Routledge.
- Kress, G. (2003). *Literacy in the new media age*. London: Routledge.
- Kress, G., & Jewitt, C. (2003). Introduction. In C. Jewitt & G. Kress. (Eds.) *Multimodal literacy* (pp. 1-18). New York: Peter Lang.
- Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (1996). *Reading images: A grammar of visual design*. London: Routledge.
- Langer, S. (1942). *Philosophy in a new key*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Leland, C., & Harste, J. (1994). Multiple ways of knowing: Curriculum in a new key. *Language Arts*, 71 (5), 337-345.
- Lemke, J. (1993). Multiplying meanings: Literacy in a multimedia world. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Reading Conference, Charleston, South Carolina.
- Luke, A. (2000). Critical literacy in Australia. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacies*, 43 (5), 448-461.
- Luke, A., Matters, G., Land, R., Herschell, P., Luxton, P., & Barrett, R. (1999). The new basics technical paper. Brisbane, Qld, AU: Education Queensland.
- National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983). *A nation at risk*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- New London Group. (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures. *Harvard Educational Review*, 66 (1), 60-92.
- Noll, E. (1998). Experiencing literacy in and out of school: Case studies of two American Indian youths. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 30, 205-232.
- O'Brien, D. (2001). "At risk" adolescents: Redefining competence through the multiliteracies of intermediality, visual arts, and representation. *Reading Online*, 4 (11).
- O'Brien, D., Springs, R., & Stith, D. (2001). Engaging at-risk students: Literacy learning in a high school literacy lab. In E. Moje & D. O'Brien (Eds.), *Constructions of literacy* (pp. 105-123). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Ortony, A. (1975). Why metaphors are necessary and not just nice. *Educational Theory* 25 (Winter), 45-53.
- Read, C. (1975). *Children's categorization of speech sounds*. Technical Report No. 197. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Rosenblatt, L. (1978). *The reader, the text, the poem: The transactional theory of the literary work*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Rowe, D. W. (1998). The literate potentials of book-related dramatic play. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 33 (1), 10-35.
- Rowe, D. W., Fitch, J. D., & Bass, A. S. (2003). Toy stories as opportunities for imagination and reflection in writer's workshop. *Language Arts*, 80 (5), 363-374.
- Salvio, P. M. (1990). The world, the text, and the reader. In A. A. Lunsford, H. Moglen, & J. Slevin (Eds.), *The right to literacy* (pp. 269-275). New York: Modern Language Association of America.
- Short, K. G., Kauffman, G., & Kahn, L. (2000). "I just need to draw": Responding to literature across multiple sign systems. *The Reading Teacher*, 54 (2), 160-171.
- Siegel, M., Kontovourki, S., Bean-Folkes, J., Rainville, K., & Lukas, S. (2005). Assembling literacy in kindergarten: One child's practices and identities across writer's workshop and computer lab. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada.
- Siegel, M. (1995). More than words: The generative potential of transmedia for learning. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 20 (4), 455-475.

Siegel, M. (1984). *Reading as signification*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University.

Smagorinsky, P., & O'Donnell-Allen, C. (1998). Reading as mediated and mediating action: Composing meaning for literature through multimedia interpretive texts. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 33 (2), 190–226.

Smagorinsky, P., & Coppock, J. (1994). Cultural tools and the classroom context: An exploration of an artistic response to literature. *Written Communication*, 11 (3), 283–310.

Street, B. (1984). *Literacy in theory and practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Suhor, C. (1991). Semiotics and the English language arts (ERIC Digest). Bloomington, IN: ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills. ED329960.

Suhor, C. (1984). Towards a semiotics-based curriculum. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 16 (3), 247–257.

Suhor, C. (1982). Semiotics. (Fact Sheet). Urbana, IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills.

Taylor, I. D. (2006). Dangerous literacies: Contextualizing the interplay of the critical literacies and identities of four

African American youth. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.

Teale, W. & Sulzby, E. (Eds.) (1986). *Emergent literacy: Writing and reading*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Vasudevan, L. (2004). *Telling different stories differently: The possibilities of (counter)storytelling with African American adolescent boys*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes* (M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman, Eds.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Waber, B. (1975). Ira sleeps over. *Ms.*, 75–78.

Weedon, C. (1996). *Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Wells, G. (2001). Learning to pay attention to other modes of meaning making. In G. Wells (Ed.), *Action, talk, and text: Learning and teaching through inquiry* (pp. 78–95). New York: Teachers College Press.

Whitin, P. (1994). Opening potential: Visual response to literature. *Language Arts*, 71 (2), 101–107.

Whitin, P. (1996). Exploring visual response to literature. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 30 (1), 114–140.

Wilhelm, J. (1995). Reading is seeing: Using visual response to improve the literary reading of reluctant readers. *JRB: Journal of Reading Behavior*, 27 (4), 467–503.

Wilson, P. (2003). Supporting young children's thinking through tableau. *Language Arts*, 80 (5), 375–383.

Yaden, D., Rowe, D., & MacGillivray, L. (2000). Emergent literacy: A matter (polyphony) of perspectives. In M. Kamil, P. Mosenthal, P. D. Pearson, & R. Barr (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research (Vol. III)* (pp. 425–454). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Marjorie Siegel is associate professor in and chair of the Department of Curriculum & Teaching at Teachers College, Columbia University.

LITERACY COACHING CLEARINGHOUSE

What is a literacy coach? A literacy coach assists teachers in developing strategies to improve student literacy, forms long-term partnerships with teachers and school districts, and provides help to students to read content effectively. NCTE and the International Reading Association have developed Standards for Middle and High School Literacy Coaches, and have formed the Literacy Coaching Clearinghouse. For more information about literacy coaching, the standards, and the Literacy Coaching Clearinghouse, please visit the NCTE website at <http://www.ncte.org/about/press/key/124382.htm>.

2006 PROMISING RESEARCHER WINNERS NAMED

Deborah Bieler, Ph.D., University of Delaware, Victoria Haviland, University of Michigan, and Jessica Zacher, Ph.D., California State University, Long Beach, have been named the 2006 NCTE Promising Researchers, an award for articles based on a dissertation, a thesis, or an initial independent study after the dissertation. In commemoration of Bernard O'Donnell, the NCTE Standing Committee on Research sponsors the Promising Researcher Award. Beth L. Samuelson, Ph.D., was selected a *finalist* for this award.

The 2006 Promising Researcher Award Committee Members: Deborah Hicks, Chair, Colette Daiute, Joel Dworin, and Lesley Rex. Standing Committee on Research: Sarah Freedman, Chair.