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Beyond the Observable
Conceptions and realizations of enacted multiliteracies in Ontario Social Studies Curriculum–One Multi-verse of Madness

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Résumé de l'article

This research focuses on one teacher's lived experience as he contributes towards a broader understanding of possibilities and constraints afforded by technologies, materials, and relationality during this recent shift in pandemic pedagogy. The pandemic drastically altered the way curriculum is enacted as there were shifts in the learning environment, the subject matter, and the way teachers and students engaged in literacy practices. To understand this shift, we explore: What are the participating teacher's perceptions about how multiliteracies are utilized for classroom practice and pedagogy? How did this teacher's pedagogy continue or change once the pandemic influenced curriculum enactment? This paper focuses on how one grade 6 teacher explored this pandemic pedagogical landscape in his classroom. This experience contributes to learning from the past, navigating the present, and continuing to shape the future of effective instruction in an elementary classroom.

Beyond the Observable: Conceptions and realizations of enacted multiliteracies in Ontario Social Studies Curriculum - One Multi-verse of Madness

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Abstract

This research focuses on one teacher's lived experience as he contributes towards a broader understanding of possibilities and constraints afforded by technologies, materials, and relationality during this recent shift in pandemic pedagogy. The pandemic drastically altered the way curriculum is enacted as there were shifts in the learning environment, the subject matter, and the way teachers and students engaged in literacy practices. To understand this shift, we explore: What are the participating teacher's perceptions about how multiliteracies are utilized for classroom practice and pedagogy? How did this teacher's pedagogy continue or change once the pandemic influenced curriculum enactment? This paper focuses on how one grade 6 teacher explored this pandemic pedagogical landscape in his classroom. This experience contributes to learning from the past, navigating the present, and continuing to shape the future of effective instruction in an elementary classroom.

Keywords: commonplaces, elementary classroom, multiliteracies, Ontario social studies curriculum, pandemic pedagogies, teacher perspective

Introduction

In the movie, *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* (Raimi, 2022), tension exists between what is observable in the universe and what is not. The plot of the movie explores this tension as discovering potential multiverses creates a chaotic storyline full of surprises. Similarly, the chaos of pandemic pedagogies was felt by teachers as they navigated the learning environment, the subject matter, and the learners in their charge. In this research, our participant, Keegan—a grade 6 teacher—experienced similar chaos and "madness."

Keegan has been teaching for over 10 years, mostly at the same culturally and linguistically diverse urban public elementary (K-6) school. He also taught Special Education programs for 4 years. While his own interests were in math and the sciences, Keegan became an expert in all subject areas, including technologies. During the pandemic, Keegan wanted to teach in-person but often found himself teaching hybrid and online. As we followed Keegan's lived experiences with teaching from a pre-

pandemic lens into a 'post'-pandemic lens, there were both similar themes that crossed the span of his teaching through these times as well as differences.

As Keegan navigated the observable landscape of pedagogy and learning, a crisis of teaching occurred. The knowable and observable suddenly became unrecognizable as the COVID-19 pandemic created pedagogical chaos. Since the beginning of the pandemic, teaching alternated between in-person and online instruction, changing the way curriculum was conceptualized, enacted, and assessed.

The focus of this research centres around one teacher's lived experience of teacher effectiveness and the often-times unrecognized and yet powerful reliance on multiliteracies. Keegan explored a broader understanding of multiliteracies from before, during, and after the pandemic and reflected upon his enacted curriculum, planning and supports, to understand how these elements enhanced his teaching practices as effective constructs. The result was a broader understanding of the possibilities and constraints afforded by materials, technology, learning environments and pedagogy (Kalantzis & Cope, 2005; Milman, 2020; Schwartzman, 2020). Within this unique instructional universe, multiliteracies promoted multimodal forms of communication and supported cultural and social diversity–which are the foundational principles of multiliteracies (New London Group, 1996, 2000). Schwab's (1973, 1983) and Ricketts' (2013) commonplaces complement the variety of factors for this curriculum enactment through the interrelationship among teaching, learners, subject matter, and the environment where teaching takes place, all involving pedagogical expertise. The findings contribute to the global collective experience so that we can learn from the past, navigate the present, and uncover future worlds for effective multiliteracies instruction.

The Research Story: Our Lived Experience
As much as our findings illuminate multiliteracies and pandemic pedagogies, this research also took on a life of its own as we pivoted our research thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic. Originally, we had interviewed four participating teachers in 2019 about their perceptions of multiliteracies in their practice. The plan was to continue observing the enacted curriculum in each of these four classrooms to see how multiliteracies pedagogy and practice unfolded. However, once the COVID-19 pandemic hit, schools in an urban centre in southern Ontario, Canada were shut down, visitors were not allowed in classrooms for the foreseeable future, and we had to come up with a plan B. We sought and received permission from our institutions' research ethics board as well as the participating school board to shift our research plan. We interviewed the same four participating teachers to compare their pre- and post-pandemic practices as the pandemic unfolded. All four participants agreed to be part of our continued, yet altered, study. Our shift in focus resulted in a slightly modified research question: What are the participating teachers' perceptions about how multiliteracies are utilized for classroom practice and pedagogy? How did these teachers' pedagogy continue or change once the pandemic influenced curriculum enactment? This paper focuses on Keegan—one of these four teacher's lived experiences--and how he explored this pandemic pedagogical landscape in his classroom.

Literature Review

This study considers pandemic pedagogies and teacher's perceptions of curriculum enactment in elementary classrooms. Changes over how technologies are utilized in classrooms, particularly through the last few years of the pandemic, are explored. Our study advances the literature as we share pre- and post-pandemic classroom work, illuminating the need for a shift in pedagogical practice.

Pandemic Pedagogies

The COVID-19 pandemic caused many people in Ontario, Canada to pivot in their work and home places. In education, this transformation became *emergency remote teaching and learning (ERTL)*, a sudden shift, and often a struggle, to remote learning and instruction (Milman, 2020; Schwartzman, 2020). Navigating this pandemic pedagogy, while a challenge, provided educators with an "opportunity frame" (Schwartzman, 2020, p. 513). In this way, we can rethink and redesign a new learning environment with digital access and equity.

While research into the ways teachers and learners share their ERTL educational work is still ongoing, studies are emerging regarding changes in online learning and teaching, community building, and curriculum connections. While often seen as 'best practices', the gaps in using digital technologies to support teaching and learning were made evident by ERTL (Scully et al., 2021). Globally, questions about teacher preparedness, parental perceptions, and digital equity (Greenhow, et al., 2020) and new issues with engagement (Ewing & Cooper, 2021) challenged educators and communities alike. Experiences with digital teaching (Khlaif et al., 2020; Parmigiani et al, 2020) and learning (Yates et al., 2020) remain at the forefront of this research, as online readiness and self-efficacy (Howard et al., 2020) continue to be addressed.

Considering literacy practices and educators' shifts into pandemic pedagogies, further studies (Chamberlain et al., 2020; Kervin, 2022) focus on literacy practices during synchronous, remote, asynchronous remote, and in-person learning. Chamberlain et al. (2020) showcase multimodal learning and literacy in their study about teaching and learning during school closures. Highlighting experiences at two institutions, sustaining a sense of classroom community and finding new teaching practices, particularly in writing, created a shift in new literacy practices through virtual learning. Connections for writing were made outside of school and at-home literacy events where games, messages, and creative posters designed by students and family members were multimodal in nature. Kervin (2022) describes how teachers emphasized oral communication during this shift to accommodate remote learning experiences. Kervin focuses on the collaborative ways students were asked to perform, share their ideas, and create products, such as a collaborative writing session mediated by technologies, and how remote learning offered the "potential for digital technologies and the future of education" (p. 22).

Curriculum Enactment

As our focus spanned teachers' perceptions of curriculum enactment in the elementary (K-6) grades, we highlight these areas within the research literature. Teacher perceptions of curriculum enactment vary depending on the teaching landscape (Chang, 2022; Loerts & Heydon, 2016; Krishnan, 2021; MacKay, 2014;

Pishol & Kaur, 2015). This teaching landscape altered from pre- to post- pandemic classrooms and that distinction played a key component in Keegan's teaching practice.

During pre-pandemic times, the research literature gives a glimpse into how teachers did utilize multiliteracies to increase student achievement. In MacKay's (2014) study, practicing teachers learned how to plan multiliteracies pedagogy as they had limited previous knowledge of how to do so. As they learned the pedagogical practices of multiliteracies pedagogy, they included more of their own students' life experiences into their teaching. In another study by Loerts and Heydon (2016), a grade six teacher's enactment of literacy took an unexpected turn with one of her students when he was able to visually represent through drawing his understanding of a storyline which further enhanced the written component. It was the first time this student had focused for any length of time to showcase his understanding when provided with multimodal opportunities that he took full advantage of for his learning.

With the increase of online and technology-heavy teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, multiliteracies pedagogy was at the forefront of classrooms, aiming to provide space for online learning and social environments (Chang, 2022). In a study by Pishol and Kaur (2015) focusing on students' life-worlds through their experiences with graphic novels in an ESL classroom, teachers perceived that a multiliteracies approach was a more enriching experience in the construction of students' interpretations and understanding of texts. Educators also perceived that classroom instruction through a multiliteracies pedagogical lens created intentional communication and situated learning spaces for students with complex educational support needs (Krishnan, 2021). Teachers do not necessarily always have a clear theoretical understanding of how to teach with multiliteracies pedagogy (Dewi, 2020; Ghimire, 2020; Shanahan, 2013). Our research study aims to help fill the gaps in research where multiliteracies pedagogy is enacted, or not enacted, in classrooms during the pandemic period and beyond.

Theoretical Framework: Multiliteracies

Multiliteracies grounds our research as we look at the lived experiences of a teacher's multimodal literacy practices. A dual understanding of multiliteracies theory maintains that literacy pedagogy needs to be multimodal in nature and transformative to honour cultural and linguistic diversities through various contexts (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; New London Group, 1996; 2000). Multiliteracies has taken on a new sense of enactment, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, when utilizing technology, became even more central to schooling (Lim, Cope & Kalantzis, 2022). As Kress and van Leeuwen (2021) indicate, educators "live in a period of profound social change" (p. xviii) that has escalated thanks to our dependency on online, multimodal resources.

As a result of this two-fold understanding of multiliteracies, the way we *do* literacy has continued to evolve since the inception of the New London Group's (1996) framework. Doing literacy in multimodal ways now means that we utilize different modes of communication to include audio, spatial, gestural, visual, and linguistic design (New London Group, 1996, 2000). It also takes into account the multilingual nature of the learning environment to capitalize on students' funds of knowledge. While the focus of this study was collecting narrative evidence of current teacher's perceptions of how they enacted multiliteracies, elements of multiliteracies pedagogy did reveal

themselves as one of the ways the participants *did* literacy. The original and updated versions of knowledge processes as a support for multiliteracies are important to consider as part of classroom practice (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, 2022; New London Group, 1996). An overview of this pedagogy of multiliteracies includes:

1. Situated Practice (Experiencing): Connecting learning to what students know, or helping them make sense of something new through experiencing.

2. Overt Instruction (Conceptualizing): Explicit instruction in the affordances of modes and media to help discover patterns and meaning.

3. Critical Framing (Analyzing): Teaching learners about the meaning of texts and analyzing them to discover the social or cultural contexts.

4. Transformed Practice (Applying): Learners apply their new knowledge to other contexts to further develop their understandings in creative ways.

Because of the multiplicity of design opportunities available for teachers to teach and students to use, multiliteracies use can sometimes be overt or unintentional - both of which have their opportunities and constraints for learning. However, intent, accessibility, and understanding are part of the landscape for multiliteracies (Lim, Cope & Kalantzis, 2022), and as such the more we explore how teacher perceptions and use of multiliteracies impacts classroom learning, the more we will understand how to further strategically leverage optimum learning opportunities that will benefit all students - whether during a global pandemic or not.

Research Methodology

Setting and Participants

This research occurred within an urban public elementary school board in southern Ontario, Canada. Keegan had been teaching for over 10 years, mostly in this same urban elementary (K-6) school. While he was teaching a grade 6 class during the period of this study, he had previously taught grade 5 and spent four years teaching Special Education programs for all elementary grades. He also taught in the local grade 7-8 school for one year. Keegan specified that math and sciences were "more of a passion of mine". He attended, and led, professional development opportunities for teachers in STEAM, robotics, Lego creation, and Maker classes. When discussing what qualities encompass an effective teacher, Keegan replied, "I think a teacher just has to be very aware of what's going on in the class and their learners. They have to be aware of their learners' strengths and… knowing your students."

Approximately 400 kindergarten to grade 6 students attend this public urban school, which Keegan shared was welcoming, caring, and in a culturally and linguistically diverse community. The school is composed of many cultural groups, the majority speak English as their first language. Among the first languages in this community, Tamil and Urdu are the most frequently spoken. Keegan shared that approximately one-third of the students in his class utilized an Independent Educational Plan (IEP) for behaviour, language, social, and academic identifications and support.

Consent was obtained for this research and was ethically reviewed by university and school board Research Ethics. Keegan was interviewed once in 2019 before the

Covid-19 pandemic hit, and then once again in 2021 after he had been teaching during the pandemic for over a year. A pseudonym was assigned to protect his identity.

Methods and Data Collection

We employed a qualitative case study methodology (Yin, 2017) rooted in literacy (Dyson & Genishi, 2005) while utilizing a narrative inquiry approach (Gee, 2011). We engaged narrative inquiry to explore the lived experience of teacher participants to gain insights into the many factors influencing the enactment of multiliteracies in their teaching. Through semi-structured interviews, we encouraged the participants to expand by telling stories and having their voices be the focus. We listened carefully to their responses and clarified or asked questions along the way. The 2019 interviews were done in-person, audio recorded, transcribed, and member checked. The 2021 interviews were audio and digitally recorded through zoom due to the inability to meet due to Covid-19 protocols. These were also member checked before disseminating the data.

Data Analysis

The data analysis used Handsfield's contant comparative format and included paying particular attention to keywords, verbs, themes, repeated language, and key thoughts. Each transcript was individually analyzed. and our first round of coding picked out meaningful keywords. In the second round of coding, we assigned initial codes to them. For the third round of coding, we came together to discuss our own coding results, talked through the similarities and differences, and then picked out the overarching themes to fit. Doing this separately and then together promoted a rigorous interpretation of the data.

Findings

Our findings showcase Keegan's lived experiences as he integrated multiliteracies into his curriculum. The four themes we identify highlight some of the changes in Keegan's experiences as he enacted curriculum before the Covid-19 pandemic started (which we will call 'stage 1'), and after he had been teaching over a year during the pandemic (which will be 'stage 2'). The four themes are that 1) multiliteracies is used as a hook for learning, 2) being a responsive educator, 3) affordances and constraints of technologies and programming, and 4) forward thinking.

Multiliteracies as a hook for learning

This theme revealed Keegan's understanding of multiliteracies as part of professional practice. He saw the value of pictures, word boards, mind maps, graphic organizers and voice-to-text features as ways to facilitate learning in both the 2019 and 2021 interviews. However, despite the intentionality of multimodal forms of communication options, multiliteracies was not overtly practiced to support an informed pedagogical framework. Instead, Keegan's understanding of how multiliteracies was enacted before the pandemic related "in terms of the report card and how they break up literacy itself," namely through oral literacy, reading, and writing, and media literacy. Media literacy was enacted in the following way: "you can get a lot more from a video than you can a text because I feel like we look at building their

learning." What really showed how multimodality was used as a hook for learning was when Keegan further explained:

> Technology, especially, I find often times it's more of a tool for engagement to… I don't want to say, trick students into realizing that they're learning and they're being engaged without knowing it, but it's… to provide something new, or something interesting, that helps motivate their learning.

As Keegan continued teaching during the pandemic, it was clear that he relied more on technology for teaching during pandemic shutdowns, and within the classroom when in-person as well. Through the use of e-Books, Flipgrid, blogs, or Google classroom, learning became convenient options. There was a subtle shift in the use of some multiliteracies metalanguage as Keegan described some of his pedagogical choices for using technology. He mentioned that the choices of his online tools were meant to hook students but that "students still had to respond to whatever they saw via, you know, writing things down … so it's like you're halfway there" as they reconceptualized their understandings from visual means to writing. When using the technological tool Flip, which served to record audio and visual representations of student learning, Keegan said it promoted "connections in a more visual sort of way." However, it was still very telling that the multimodal literacy opportunities using technology was more of a hook than a legitimate literacy practice, as is seen in this quote from the 2019 interview:

> Flipgrid, although it's not 100% accurate, it gives you a closed caption afterwards, so you can actually go back and it will go voice to script, and you can go back, and you can read that… From a marking standpoint, it makes it easier for me to keep track of it as well.

This focus on more linguistically based practices still is a driving force when it comes to curriculum and instruction, as well as assessment. Though Keegan's understanding of multiliteracies theory was still developing, there were missed opportunities for deeper learning that could have come from a more nuanced understanding of the potential of multiliteracies.

Being a responsive educator

Even with his developing understanding of multiliteracies, in 2019 and 2021, Keegan explained showed that he offered a variety of both traditional and multimodal literacy experiences using a variety of media. Keegan got to know his students and planned his curriculum to engage and build content knowledge. He enjoyed teaching Social Studies through discussing social issues that related to the curriculum. Before the pandemic, he said of his teaching:

> I'd like to think that I instill a lot of creativity and a lot of thinking. I have a lot of discussions with my students, and I try to make everything as relevant as possible, even when it's difficult. I think often times the discussion needs to be at the forefront of it, and whether that is just as discussion as a class, whether it is setting up a question of which there are multiple answers, and then seeing how people side, or whether it's presenting a video or a scenario that is so unlike anything they know – that really instills that curiosity.

These discussions revolved around case studies and exploring influential Canadians (such as Terry Fox). The multimodal reports included research about different topics,

such as the work of Malala Yousaszai or the history of Residential Schools. But there was a definite shift in pedagogy after teaching during the pandemic. Keegan expressed this himself:

> …given the vast amount of current issues and conflicts happening in the world, I didn't necessarily go through the curriculum content text like I normally would… we got to look at it in a completely different mindset in terms of how COVID-19 has unfairly, or inequitably affected certain groups of people throughout the world. … It is a real event happening, it's not just something that happened in the past or it's not just a lesson in a textbook. This is a real-life thing. … We looked at the lockdown and how it changed our daily life.

This shift in knowledge highlights how Keegan mobilized knowledge through media to honour global voices, stories, and learning opportunities, especially through a social justice lens. Similar to Allan Luke's work on authentic content and context when working with teachers in Australia (2000), Keegan decided to use different social justice issues like the COVID-19 pandemic, issues going on in the Ukraine and Russia, Black lives matter, and child labour to make learning real, relevant, and engaging. Cross curricular connections of these issues to the Language curriculum utilized more multiliteracies pedagogy. Students created "I Am" poems (see how George Ella Lyon's poem inspired similar activities at http://www.georgeellalyon.com/where.html), researched inspirational quotes, voted on new historical figures that they thought should be added to the list of influential Canadians after researching online, and debated hot topic issues, such as child labour and access to education.

Affordances & Constraints of Technologies and Programming

As Keegan was responsive to his students, it was evident in the findings that there were affordances and constraints that both advanced and hindered some of the learning experiences of his students. There was an obvious distinction of practice before the pandemic and after over a year of teaching during the pandemic.

Affordances

Both before and during the pandemic Keegan utilized technology and programming to contextualize learning. Whereas before the pandemic, he used supporting resources as a way to jump start learning, during the pandemic Keegan was forced to learn about more available online resources that he never used before, such as Flipgrid and school board resources. Keegan acknowledged that "the board has always had great virtual resources. It definitely encouraged a lot of teachers to make use of what was out there that they may not have been implementing as much as they could have [before]."

This is one time where it is obvious that the shift between stage 1 and 2 shows that Keegan was looking for the affordances of technology and programming to benefit the learning for his students. The multimodal design of those "I Am" poems through Flip came with an understanding that it was more than words on a page that helped to make meaning. Keegan said there was "mood, tone and expression" that helped students communicate their understanding. This is the first glimpse in the findings

where Keegan was explicit about the pedagogical choices of those multimodal affordances.

Constraints

Our 2019 interview with Keegan revealed that his school was sharing technology on a cart between classrooms so that teachers had to sign them out to use them for a particular class. The constraints to his teaching in 2019 included: access, convenience, and program planning for consistency of student learning. As Keegan stated, "no teacher wants to monopolize the technology" but he also said that it was hard not to monopolize it because if you shared it, you lost the momentum for the learning as you "look at it one day, then skip it for three days, then go back to it on the fourth day."

In the 2021 interview, Keegan stated that the beginning of teaching amidst COVID-19 was "just kind of *madness*. It was figuring out how to make the best of a terrible situation." The constraints were exacerbated by the school board as he noted how:

> We got virtually no directive from the board. You know, it started off with *you need to use Google Classroom*, and then, you know, midway into this year they're basically saying, *oh, you've got to use Brightspace*, and then, *don't use Zoom, it's not safe* … and there were all these directives either coming from the board, or even the ministry itself. And none of them jibed with what was actually practical, and we were just learning things as they were being released. … So this year was at least, we knew what we were in for.

As time went on, eventually materials were sorted and all of Keegan's students had a device to learn from. However, there were still constraints.

Pedagogically, Keegan found it difficult to gauge student comprehension and do effective assessment. He said, "not being within the proximity, not having those small intentional groups, really made it difficult to get a good gauge of their comprehension." For moments that were fully online, hybrid, it was sometimes constraining to keep that consistency, which in turn impacted the kinds of learning experiences that Keegan wanted to facilitate.

The back and forth between in-person and online was difficult for planning, and for student learning. Keegan lamented, "Do I really want to harass a student, or make them feel like they're not keeping up with their obligations and responsibilities at this point?" He felt that virtual learning presented concerns on different learning styles "so a lot of motivation issues, a lot of attention issues" had to be considered for pandemic pedagogy.

The constraints contributed to the way that curriculum was planned and delivered as Keegan navigated in-person and remote learning. From these pandemic pedagogical experiences, Keegan gained insights into multiliteracies by "allowing [students] to choose the format that allows their strengths to excel allows them to basically show you everything they actually do know without being basically pigeon-holed into one type of literacy."

Forward thinking

The trajectory of curriculum and instruction with a multiliteracies lens became a priority in the pandemic for Keegan. Keegan navigated new multimodal platforms,

ways of thinking and responding to students. He also noted the affordances of multimodal tools, which have both streamlined and constrained learning opportunities. During our second interview with Keegan, he reflected on his and his students' resilience and adaptability to these new challenges when he shared: "I think it [the pandemic], gave a little bit more perspective to the idea of conflict and inequities being out in the world, but living in Canada, most of these students never really experienced it."

Keegan focused his Social Studies teaching on world topics and social justice issues, such as the global conflicts mentioned above, because he believed that young students "still have a really good sense of what's right and what's wrong and what's fair and what's not." He used technology to access articles, videos, and online platforms for students to create video responses to their learning. Through various literacy practices and media accessible content, Keegan adapted his pandemic pedagogy to engage students, and to open their eyes to lived realities as they worked through education during the pandemic. He shared that they "quickly shifted to using e-books that had the option having it read to them" and "picture-heavy content books [as] they gain a lot of information and comprehension from the pictures." Keegan found that he incorporated online newspapers that used "quick, fast-paced videos that are high-rich and high-interest topics" to enhance his curriculum. Keegan was open to the possibilities that pandemic pedagogy provided to improve student learning when he said: "We have made better tools … why would we continue to withhold this resource if it's going to be more practical for them moving forward?"

Discussion

When looking at the influencing factors that altered the landscape of teaching between the first interview in 2019 and the second in 2021, Schwab (1973) and Ricketts' (2013) commonplaces illuminate subject matter, learners, milieu, teachers and the curriculum as aspects of multiliteracies enactment, which we now turn to in our discussion of the findings.

Subject matter

Keegan was drawn to specific teaching methods to facilitate learning. Decisions of what to include, what not to include, and how certain kinds of knowledge are privileged revealed themselves in the findings, especially when Keegan envisioned how he wanted to plan curriculum to include more than reading and writing. Keegan said,

> If you walk around and just drop a worksheet on their desk, you're pretty much making up their mind about how they feel about what's happening. Whereas, if there's discussion or there's a video watched to peak their interest, and *then* you're able to address the content, the worksheet, then it's going to be far more effective.

While multiliteracies pedagogy was practiced in subtle and sometimes unconscious ways, Keegan did not describe modelling affordances of modes and media, nor metalanguage. Admittedly, Keegan sought to be overt about the possibilities of multiliteracies pedagogy as he integrated *learning by design* (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015). He did have the right idea about facilitating learning with more than just linguistic opportunities (Bailey 2012; Burgess, 2020; Doyle-Jones, 2019). He acknowledged that

only using worksheets would suggest that "you're pretty much making up their mind about how they feel about what's happening." Keegan used videos, pictures, oral discussions, and other modes and media to help students engage in subject matter. Similar to Wong's (2021) work with grade 6 multilingual learners as they brought their digital lifeworld experiences into the classroom, he realized that having students utilize multimodal formats to showcase their knowledge promoted success and engagement.

There were times when Keegan was more successful, such as when he used the online platform of Flip. He noted how the affordances of audio and visual representations promoted more holistic learning. However, certain knowledge is still privileged as more legitimate within this practice; the closed captioning enabled the written mode to be captured which made it easier for assessment purposes. Multiliteracies became more of a hook or convenience for learning that seemed to "trick students into realizing that they're learning and they're being engaged without knowing it." These affordances of digital tools to engage with subject matter further created space to encourage student learning by adapting pandemic pedagogies (Milman, 2020).

Learners

The findings of this study revealed how Keegan did invest a lot in getting to know his students. As Schwab (1973) noted, this commonplace must include "intimate knowledge of the children under consideration - knowledge achieved by direct involvement with them" (p. 502). There were many things Keegan noted in both his 2019 and 2021 interviews that showed he valued relationships with his students to get to know them. Keegan taught numerous culturally and linguistically diverse learners, utilizing the strengths in multimodal pedagogies to support their knowledge and understandings (Cummins & Early, 2015; Yaman Ntelioglou, Fannin, Montanera & Cummins, 2014). He mentioned, "I know what their strengths are and how I can use them to build upon some of their areas of need, and I think knowing not only about your students but what teaching techniques are the most effective, is a huge thing." Understanding his students' strengths and needs is one of the reasons why Keegan worked with multimodal subject matter strategically, so that his students with IEPs, the multilingual learners, learners with diverse backgrounds, and learning preferences could be woven into the curriculum to support their learning.

Teaching in 2021 altered the learning environment and the subject matter Keegan was teaching too. Keegan didn't follow what the curriculum expectations were as in previous years. Instead, he tied what was his students' lived experiences with the pandemic into current issues and conflicts that resulted from the pandemic. In his words, Keegan "looked at the lockdown and how it changed our daily life." Keegan honoured his students and put them first as "knowledge of the children should include a range of information about their present state of mind and heart" (Schwab, 1973, p. 503). The pandemic pivoted what was important and the curriculum didn't always take precedence. Instead, students' mental health and well-being became more important than "mak[ing] them feel like they're not keeping up with their obligations and responsibilities at this point." Pandemic pedagogy, indeed.

Milieu

Knowledge of the setting and community in which teaching takes place along with the power structures embedded in the school or board are other influences that impacted the possibilities and constraints of multiliteracies pedagogy in Keegan's

classroom. As the findings show, there was careful attention paid to the expectations of curriculum coverage, report card marks, and resources to use - especially before the pandemic. This resulted in practices where linguistic modes were privileged, literacy was broken up into digestible bits for report card marks, and assessments were guided, modelled, practiced, and collected as benchmarks for success. Once the pandemic hit however, priorities changed.

Pandemic pedagogy became a fast-tracked professional development nightmare as Keegan struggled to shift his teaching from in-person to virtual learning on a computer. Everything was a "full-on scramble" with "no directive from the Board" making it even more difficult to be responsive to learning in whatever format it became. Even when back in person, there were so many disruptions. His class was hit with COVID-19 outbreaks numerous times requiring two-week quarantine periods. Assessments became nearly impossible without an accurate picture of their comprehension due to these interruptions. All of these constraints had a huge impact on the quality, quantity, and purposeful pedagogy - let alone thinking overtly about multiliteracies pedagogy. While the only thing Keegan felt prepared for was uncertainty, he did redesign a new learning environment for his learners, thoughtfully considering the unease felt by students and teachers alike (Schwartzman, 2020).

Teachers

As one of the curricular commonplaces, teachers play a pivotal role in the lives of their students and the learning opportunities that take place within the classroom space - whether it was in a classroom with four walls, or virtually on a computer screen. Before the pandemic, Keegan felt confident of his ability to get to know students, understand his subject matter, and interpret the setting within which he got to know his students, community, and school board. It was predictable. It was relational. And it was more equitable for students and teachers alike.

Within his pandemic classroom, Keegan felt like he had to be the most flexible teacher he had ever been. What seemed like major annoyances to navigate before COVID-19, such as signing out a computer cart to be used in his classroom for a couple of class periods a week, became what felt like insurmountable challenges to equip each student with a computer, keep relationships going virtually, and all the while try to keep students' mental health and engagement going. Keegan's pedagogy shifted to prioritize students' mental health, which determined how and what he was going to teach (Schwartz, Exner-Cortens, McMorris, et al., 2021; Trudel, Sokal, Babb, 2021). He immersed his classroom in relevant current events, elicited his students' opinions and beliefs, contextualized their learning to consider their cultural and religious backgrounds, and created a safe environment to have serious discussions about equity, inequality, and the rights of children around the world – especially those impacted by the global pandemic.

Keegan embodied what Schwab (1973) promoted as an ideal teacher by asking "how flexible and ready they are likely to be to learn new materials and new ways of teaching" (p. 504). Keegan's flexibility in pedagogical choices of modes, materials, and motivation were determined in part because of virtual learning, but also out of his belief of how kids learn and how the new educational landscape was affecting their learning.

Curriculum Making Process

The last curriculum commonplace recognized by Ricketts (2013) acknowledges the stakeholders who make curriculum decisions. During the Pandemic, Keegan acknowledged the board influences on the direction of learning, the decision-making process of determining a virtual platform for learning, and the virtual resources that were made available for teachers from the board—however these reflections were absent from our pre-Pandemic interviews. In a way, the pandemic forced teachers like Keegan to become more familiar with what was available for curriculum resources and materials, and as he mentioned, "it definitely encouraged a lot of teachers to make use of what was out there."

Looking at Schwab's (1973) curricula commonplaces as a lens for Keegan's multiliteracies enactment before and during the pandemic, it is clear that he aligns with Schwab's thinking about curriculum design. Schwab (1983) said:

> Curriculum is what is successfully conveyed to differing degrees to different students, by committed teachers using appropriate materials and actions, of legitimated bodies of knowledge, skill, taste, and propensity to act and react, which are chosen for instruction after serious reflection and communal decision by representatives of those involved in the teaching of a specified group of students who are known to the decision makers (p. 240).

The findings show how interrelated each of these components are when enacting curriculum - not an easy task before nor during pandemic times (Swift, 2023).

Implications

A key contribution of the multiliteracies pedagogy is that it has "awakened literacy educators to recognise that the skills required to communicate effectively in society are constantly changing" (Mills, 2009, p. 108). Keegan, as a seasoned educator, recognized that literacy has changed because of the changing multimodal literacy landscape, and the COVID-19 pandemic. What we have learned from Keegan is how he seeks to respond to students and take their learning to heart but that his multiliteracies pedagogy is still a work in progress. Keegan demonstrates that he is discovering how those essential multimodal building blocks of learning might encourage students to be imaginative meaning makers. Multiliteracies is not central to his pedagogy but is acknowledged as important. Integrating pandemic pedagogy provided educators like Keegan with opportunities to re-imagine curriculum planning and learning environments.

Pandemic pedagogy has forced educators like Keegan to re-think how they teach. Cope and Kalantzis (2000) have said that the traditional ways of literacy learning, and education in general, have "reached a crisis point. … What literacy teaching used to promise to do, we don't seem to need any more; and even if it is of some use, some of the time, it's certainly not enough" (p. 147). Keegan discussed the centrality of equitable literacy practices, making school relevant, and figuring out how students can represent their understanding in different ways. Further cultural, linguistic, and social support of students is required utilizing multiliteracies as equity-informed pedagogical practice (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013; Chamberlain et al., 2020; Kim, 2021; Kleinfeld, 2019).

Like Keegan acknowledges, multiliteracies pedagogy is very important to support student's literacy development. However, many teachers do not have sufficient

skills and proficiency to enact it (Boche, 2014; Ghimire, 2020). In his pandemic pedagogy, Keegan was navigating multi-worlds "of madness. It was figuring out how to make the best of a terrible situation." Because of COVID-19, Keegan had to reinvent how to be relational with students across the internet with virtual teaching, how to navigate the multiple demands of school board initiatives for curriculum and instruction, and how to translate curriculum expectations into meaningful experiences that allowed students to flourish while still learning content. Keegan also recognized that his students' mental health was impacted by the pandemic because of alternate ways of learning-both in delivery and content. Keegan reflected on how "the big thing that I'm sure we'll hear about in the future is the mental health and well-being, and how that is going to be affected moving forward."

Educators need to reflect on what the "new normal" could be (Lim, Cope, & Kalantzis, 2022, p. 1). Keegan's lived experience of teaching through the realities of the pandemic offers the potential for how students might access learning in equitable ways. Multiliteracies helps to create order out of the multiverse of chaos in curriculum conceptualization, enactment, and assessment. This develops more knowable and equitable pedagogy for optimal learning opportunities for students. Lim, Cope, and Kalantzis (2022) champion multiltieracies through this time and space as it has "highlighted the centrality of multimodal meaning-making both as a reflection of the students' present lifeworlds and a necessity as part of their future work competencies." (p. 13). As responsive educators, we need to respond hopefully to the future of teaching and learning. As Keegan attests, "the lockdown changed our daily life … this is all changed."

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