



**Symposium title:**

**Practicing thinking with new materialist theory: What animating storied objects can teach us**

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**Symposium format:**

- **On-the-ground Symposium**

**Symposium mode:**

- **100% in-person (only for on-the-ground symposia)**

**Sub-themes:**

- (APPLIED) LINGUISTIC THEORY: history, (usage based) approaches, CDST-complexity, theory, approaches and analysis, phonology, psychology
- LANGUAGE RESOURCES: multi-modality (including gesture), corpora, artifacts,
- LANGUAGE & TECHNOLOGY: media, tools, digitals humanities, Natural Language Processing (NLP)
- LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING: teacher education, curricula and education, classrooms, instruction, task-based learning, EAP, study abroad, (virtual) exchanges, materials and methods
- LEARNER CHARACTERISTICS: autonomy, strategies, young, old, non-instructed, individual factors or differences, emotion
- LINGUISTIC SOCIAL ISSUES: linguistic (in)justice, power, advocacy, attitude & bias, diversity-emancipation, discriminations, ethnicity and gender, ideology, language & social justice
- LANGUAGES IN SOCIETY: bilingualism, multilingualism, plurilingualism, multilingual classroom, translanguageing, literacy & literacies, heritage language, home language, migrants, deaf, sign/gesture
- RESEARCH: methods, approaches and (collaborative) practices

**Workshop Summary**

The workshop is inspired by new materialist and post-human perspectives on education and invites participants to reflect on research methodologies and pedagogical approaches engaging with new materialist thinking (Toohey et al., 2020). While the conceptual underpinnings of new materialist research often remain opaque and difficult to grasp for scholars and practitioners new to this field, this workshop attempts to provide a hands-on introduction to notions such as *assemblage* (agencement), (Deleuze/Guattari, 1987), *becoming*, *rhizome*, *de- / re-territorialisation*, *affect* (Spinoza, 1985; Strom & Martin, 2015) and *intra-action* (Barad, 2007). Working in small groups and with (material) objects and stop motion animation, we will explore the impact of materiality in an assemblage, including human and non-human parts, such as objects and technology in form of pieces of material equipment and a stop motion animation app.



**Argument (2 pages maximum, i.e. about 500 words or 3000 characters including bibliography):**

The workshop is inspired by new materialist and post-human perspectives on education and invites participants to reflect on research methodologies and pedagogical approaches engaging with new materialist thinking (Toohey et al., 2020). While the conceptual underpinnings of new materialist research often remain opaque and difficult to grasp for scholars and practitioners new to this field, this workshop attempts to provide a hands-on introduction to notions such as *assemblage* (agencement), (Deleuze/Guattari, 1987), *becoming*, *rhizome*, *de- / re-territorialisation*, *affect* (Spinoza, 1985; Strom & Martin, 2015) and *intra-action* (Barad, 2007). Working in small groups and with (material) objects and stop motion animation, we will explore the impact of materiality in an assemblage, including human and non-human parts, such as objects and technology in form of pieces of material equipment and a stop motion animation app.

The workshop will be divided into two parts, each session will be 1,5 h long. The first part can be chosen alone, or in combination with part two.

The first part is an exercise to explore the notion of 'assemblage' (*agencement* in French), exploring processes of assembling and arranging things by creating a display. Questions we will think about are: How do we make choices? How does lived experience and the materiality of objects inspire us and how do they shape these decisions? How do humans and objects collaborate in creating an assemblage? What do we learn from that process? The activity we propose includes fruit, storytelling, language work in different languages – depending on the repertoire of the participants – the assembling of material stuff, as well as the sharing and interweaving of storied life experiences. This part will be concluded by a discussion and feedback round and conceptual clarification of the idea of 'assemblage' and 'intra-action'.

Brief for participants :

1. Select one piece of fruit that appeals to you for whatever reason (*one piece of fruit per participant*)
2. Think of one word that you associate with your chosen piece of fruit – it can be a memory or an emotion. Use a variety of languages and scripts within your group. Write it down on a post-it.
3. Share your thoughts in your group.
4. Create a display with fruit in your group.
5. Come up with a short story for your fruit display.
6. Think of a title for your story.
7. Share your story with the others.

Think about questions such as: How did I make my choice? What role played the storied materiality of objects in making these decisions? How did humans and objects collaborate in creating the assemblage? What did I learn from that process? How could it be useful in teaching?



The second part of the workshop (1,5 h long) is dedicated to animating this display using a smart phone and a stop motion animation app. We will use Stop Motion Studio which participants are invited to download on their phone before the workshop (We will work with the free version. There is also a paid version for 5.99€ which offers more options in terms of musique and sound effects. For the purpose of the workshop, the free version is fully sufficient). In this section of the workshop we will explore notions of affect – as the ability of bodies to affect other bodies – (Spinoza, 1985), and conceptual ideas such as *becoming*, the *rhizome* and again *intra-action*, as the joining of forces and collaboration between human and non-human elements as co-agentive entities in producing movement and – in this case action in form of a short animation film. We will share our short films and feedback on the film production, discussing the possible impact of *affect* and the usefulness of the *rhizome* as a notion capturing the nature of the experienced process.

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<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-5446.2011.00429.x>

Fox, N.J., & Alldred, P. (2015). New materialist social inquiry: Designs, methods and the research assemblage *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 18(4), 399–414.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2014.921458>

Leander, K.M., & Ehret, C. (Eds.) (2019). *Affect in literacy learning and teaching: Pedagogies, politics and coming to know*. London, England: Routledge.

Spinoza, B., & de Spinoza, B. (1985). *The Collected Works of Spinoza, Volume 1* (Vol. 1). Princeton University Press.

Strom, K.J., & Martin, A.D. (2013). Putting philosophy to work in the classroom: Using rhizomatics to deterritorialize neoliberal thought and practice. *Studying Teacher Education*, 9(3), 219–235. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17425964.2013.830970>

Thiel, J. J. (2015). Vibrant Matter: The Intra-Active Role of Objects in the Construction of Young Children's Literacies. *Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice*, 64(1),

Toohey, K., & Dagenais, D. (2015). Videomaking as sociomaterial assemblage. *Language and Education*, 29(4), 302–316. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2015.1006643>

Toohey, K., Dagenais, D., Fodor, A., Hof, L., Nuñez, O., Singh, A., & Schulze, L. (2015). "That sounds so coooool": Entanglements of children, digital tools, and literacy practices. *TESOL Quarterly*, 49(3), 461–485. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.236>