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Lori McKee, Anne Murray-Orr and Evan Throop Robinson

Article abstract

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# Learning to Teach Outside the Box:
## Exploring Newness in Literacies Pedagogies in a Pandemic

LORI McKEE
St. Francis Xavier University

ANNE MURRAY-ORR
St. Francis Xavier University

EVAN THROOP ROBINSON
St. Francis Xavier University

*Abstract*

This article explores the innovative lesson planning assignments of preservice teacher, Marie, as part of an alternate teaching practicum during the pandemic closure of schools in Spring 2020. Marie viewed this shift in context as an opportunity to "think outside of the box", to be creative and divert from a traditional lesson planning template. As we read the examples from Marie's lesson plan assignments, we think with posthumanist theories of entanglement, intra-actions and the producing of newness in literacies pedagogies. We share data that show the entanglements of more-than-humans and humans within the innovative lesson plan format. In exploring Marie's lesson plan redesigns and her reflections on them, we consider the ways these pedagogies were produced through the intra-actions of assignment criteria, provincial curricula, Marie's knowledge of her students, families, available learning materials, and pandemic conditions. We consider how the implications of this lesson format contribute to newness in our ways of thinking and doing as teacher educators of literacies.

*Key words:* literacies pedagogies; lesson planning, preservice teacher education; pandemic; entanglements

*"Wow. These lesson plans look amazing. I wasn't expecting anything like this…". Author A commented as she read preservice teacher (PST) Marie[1]'s lesson planning assignments created to support Grade 1 and 2 students and their families in experiencing poetry during the pandemic closure of schools in Spring 2020. Marie's lesson plans were unlike any other Author A had previously seen: they were in a colourful and graphic layout supported through hyperlinks and icons and invited children and parents to compose poetry together using digital and analogue media in indoor and outdoor spaces (See Figure 1). These lesson plans were assignments, part of an alternate teaching practicum designed by a Faculty of Education in rural Nova Scotia, Canada when the pandemic prevented working in schools. In a written reflection on her lesson planning experiences, Marie explained that she viewed the alternate practicum lesson planning as opportunities*

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[1] Names are pseudonyms.

*for her to "be creative and think outside the box".  Author A wrote to Authors B and C saying, "As I have been marking the practicum tasks, I keep wondering 'what can we [our elementary team of teacher educators] learn from… the students…?' I think that there are some learning opportunities that are specific to the pandemic situation, but I also wonder if there are some more enduring learning opportunities that can (maybe even should) inform our teaching even when the world rights itself…" (email to Author B on April 27, 2020).*

*Figure 1.* An Example of the Innovative Lesson Plan Format Provided by Marie



   The innovative lesson plan format provided by Marie was the impetus for our research on the alternate practicum and the learning opportunities created within these plans and beyond them. As we engaged with each other and the lesson plans and reflections provided by Marie, we recognized that the theoretical understandings rooted in multiliteracies (e.g., NLG, 1996) that had previously framed our research and teaching seemed inadequate for understanding the complexities these literacy artifacts were producing (e.g., Kuby, Spector, & Thiel, 2018). As we turned to posthuman understandings of literacies and pedagogies, we started to appreciate these onto-ethico-epistemologies (e.g., Kuby, Spector, & Thiel, 2018), recognizing their resonance for us as literacy educators. In this article, we focus on Marie's innovative lesson format as a portal for considering newness in literacies pedagogies. Further, we explore the ways these innovations contribute to newness in our ways of thinking and doing as teacher educators of literacies.

*Theoretical Orientation: Thinking with Posthumanist Theories*

In this article, we discuss the lesson planning format provided by Marie from our posthuman orientation to the world, mindful of Kuby, Spector and Thiel's (2018) observation that posthumanism "is not a theoretical framework that we 'apply' to data but an array of concepts that we diffractively put to work with data to produce newness" (p. 6). Although there are 26 preservice teachers' lesson planning assignments in the data set, we keep returning to Marie's because it appears different (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). This difference provides a space for us to "put to work" (Kuby, Spector, & Thiel, 2018, p. 6) the posthumanist theories we are reading and thinking with, alongside the data (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Within our turn to posthumanism, we recognize that our previous understandings of literacies and pedagogies (e.g., NLG, 1996) are entangled with our "more-than-human onto-ethico-epistemologies" (Kuby, Spector, & Thiel, 2018, p. 2). As we "think with…posthumanist theories" (Kuby et al., 2015, p. 395) in relation with Marie's assignments, we engage with theories of entanglement, intra-actions (Kuby, Thiel & Spector, 2018), and the producing of newness in literacies pedagogies (Kuby, 2017).

*Literacies pedagogies produced through entanglements*

Whereas "most theories in literacies education are human centered, even if they discuss materials and texts (nonhumans)" (Kuby, Spector, & Thiel, 2018, p. 4), posthumanist theories recognize literacies, pedagogies, and learning as produced through human, nonhuman, and more-than-human[2] entanglements (Heydon et al., 2021). The term entanglement comes from Barad's (2007) theorizing, using quantum physics to describe the ways that "entities" (Kuby, Thiel, & Spector, 2018, p. 69) such as waves and particles intra-act with one another. This theory of intra-action "*signifies the mutual constitution of entangled agencies*" (Barad, 2007, p. 33, emphasis original) across space and time. Barad (2007) theorizes that these entangled agencies, produce newness: "intra-actions not only configure spacetimematter but reconfigure what is possible" (p. 182). In this way, as human, nonhuman, and more-than-human entities intra-act, they merge with one another and cannot be understood as independent objects; they are inseparable from each other (Kuby, Thiel, & Spector, 2018). Barad (2007) describes this broadening of scope around what things are considered to have agency in causal relationships, encompassing both humans and nonhumans: "In an agential realist account, agency is cut loose from its traditional humanist orbit" (p. 177).

Kuby (2017) invited us to think with "the material⟵ ⟶discursive relationship of humans and nonhuman materials" (p. 892) in ways that offer re-imagined understandings of literacies pedagogies. In posthuman onto-ethico-epistemologies, materials, such as digital devices, paper and pencils, along with less concrete (im)materials (Burnett et al., 2014) such as time, space, and matter have agency in the intra-relationships that produce literacies pedagogies. Within these intra-actions, "spaces, contexts, locations and ways of

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[2] The posthumanist literature reviewed uses the terms nonhuman and more-than-human to refer to entities that are not human. We use the term more-than-human to include nonhuman entities (e.g., texts and materials) as well as time, space, matter, and affective dimensions. We use the term nonhuman to refer to materials such as books or digital devices when that is the term used in the sources referenced.

being within these are always entangled and changing—producing newness dynamically" (Kuby & Rowsell, 2017, p. 292). The pandemic produced opportunities for us to see literacies pedagogies in new ways as schooling was relocated to home. Teachers and preservice teachers like Marie designed lessons in new formats that invited new materials and ways of being for teachers, students, and their families. As we read Marie's assignments with theory, we began thinking of our pedagogies as teacher educators and so this became another entanglement, and another way that newness was incited (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012).

*Newness and Literacies Pedagogies*

Posthumanism in literacies research opens possibilities to "extend, expand, and disrupt received wisdom" (Kuby, Spector, & Thiel, 2018, p. 1) and offers opportunities to consider newness as produced through "*entangled agencies*" (Barad, 2007, p. 33, emphasis original) of humans and more-than-humans. For example, Kuby (2017), Wargo (2018), and Lenters and Whitford (2018), in their studies of literacies produced with elementary-aged children, point to the opening up, the unboundedness, and possibilities that a posthumanist orientation offer. These researchers' descriptions of the entanglements of humans, non-humans, and more-than-humans (e.g., Kuby, Spector, & Thiel, 2018) invite intra-actions with the newness produced in/through the literacies of children and educators in classrooms and other spaces.

The conceptualization of more-than-human and human entanglements also has implications for literacies pedagogies. Kuby and Christ (2020), inspired by the work of Puig de la Bellacasa (2017) explain that:

> pedagogy…is a human trouble, but it can no longer be conceptualized as human-only; we cannot take the human out of pedagogy…, but neither can we ignore the entanglements of humans, nonhumans, space, time, materials, and so forth in our pedagogies. (p. 60)

In this way, posthumanism opens possibilities to work within a complexified view of pedagogies that "embrace(s) a paradigm that…moves us beyond anthropocentric (human) and logocentric (language) ways of researching" (Kuby, 2017, p. 878) and invites us to think in unbounded ways about how newness and perhaps new literacies pedagogies are produced.

As teacher educators in an elementary teacher education program, we are concerned with literacies pedagogies produced within elementary and teacher education classrooms. In preservice teacher education, lesson planning has commonly been approached using models that start with lesson outcomes or objectives and move through a standard format that has often been "criticized [as] being too linear" (Ruys et al., 2012, p. 366). Posthumanism opens opportunities to attend to the newness of lesson plan formatting within Marie's assignments. The newness in lesson formatting, an unbounded or less bounded approach to lesson planning that we had not seen before, was produced though the entanglements of Marie, the digital and analogue materials, and the (im)materials (Burnett et al., 2014) (e.g., the pandemic-enforced alternate practicum assignment, Marie's knowing of her students, and her preservice teacher education courses). Building from Kuby and Crawford's (2017) article on Writers' Studio as an "intra-activity of humans and nonhumans" (p. 20), we consider Marie's graphic lesson plans as multimodal artifacts that

were produced through such intra-actions. As we explore the lesson planning assignments provided by Marie, we wonder if some of the intra-actions of Marie's assignments with other agencies or entities, human and more-than-human, entangled in the pandemic context, might offer new possibilities for us as literacies teacher educators. As we trace the newness produced in Marie's work and imagine these possibilities, we recognize that "we are already entangled in producing the world through our intra-actions with humans and nonhumans" (Kuby, Spector, & Thiel, 2018, p. 6). In other words, these entanglements include our involvement as teacher educators and researchers and produce newness as we, Marie's assignments, and other agencies continue to intra-act. As these "intra-actions configure spacetimemattering", we begin to see how they also "reconfigure what is possible" (Barad, 2007, p. 182). This leads us to consider *how* Marie's literacies pedagogies were produced through the intra-actions of these entanglements.

*Thinking with Theory: Methods of Data Production and Analysis*

As we began to engage with posthumanist theories of literacies that required different ways of thinking and doing, we considered how we might study with(in) posthumanism. Though a bounded, qualitative case study (e.g., Yin, 2014) was a comfortable methodology for us, we considered that *thinking with* theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) might better appreciate phenomena as "multiple, subjective, and produced from a series of complex relations" (Ulmer, 2017, p. 5). Jackson and Mazzei (2012) explain that their "methodology-against-interpretivism disrupts the centering compulsion of traditional qualitative research; …[their] project is about cutting into the center, opening it up to see what newness might be incited" (p. viii). We engage in a process of "plugging in" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 2) the data set with Barad's (2007) conceptualizations of intra-actions and entanglements. We look to explore newness through "reading-the-data-while-thinking-with-theory" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 4). Within and through this process, we consider that theory and data "constitute or make one another" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 137).

*Methods of data production*

Thinking with (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) theories of intra-actions and entanglement (Barad, 2007) led us to trace the more-than-human and human entities within Marie's literacies pedagogies through her novel lesson plan format. We follow Kuby et al.'s (2015) work, which traces the intra-actions of the entanglements of children in Writers' Studio and more-than-human entities such as time, paper, and paint. As we think with theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012), in other words, knot together (Jackson & Mazzei, 2018) the texts of posthumanist theories and the lesson plan innovations), we view these plans as being produced within intra-actions of humans and more-than-humans (Barad, 2007). As we identify these entities, we recognize these "data are partial, incomplete, and always in a process of a re-telling and re-membering" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. ix). We next identify some of the more-than-human and human entities that were a part of the production of these lesson plans.

*More-than-human entities*

Though it would be impossible to identify all the more-than-human entities that were a part of the lesson plans provided by Marie, a number of these entities were visible within the alternate practicum assignments. We identify a particular context for teaching, learning, and living in Nova Scotia in Spring 2020, and the parameters for lesson plans outlined by the Faculty of Education (FoE) for the alternate practicum.

*Pandemic context.* As the pandemic began in Canada in Spring 2020, communities went into lockdown and schools suddenly closed. This rapid shift was surprising for us and our students as our PSTs were prepared to return to their classrooms following the March Break holiday. In Nova Scotia, the lockdowns created challenges for communication as high-speed internet is not universally available in this rural province (McKee et al., 2022). These conditions and others contributed to an isolating experience for many. We recognize that while this description reflects our view of a pandemic context, the PSTs may have had other experiences of which we are unaware.

*Alternate practicum assignments.* The lesson plans provided by Marie were assignments created in response to guidelines issued by the FoE. Within the alternate practicum, PSTs completed three tasks:

- Assignment 1: create a set of lesson plans that would be suitable for in-person pre-pandemic teaching;
- Assignment 2: re-design these lesson plans to support at-home learning; and
- Assignment 3: reflect on their experiences in planning and describe their decision-making when translating the lesson plans from Assignment 1 to Assignment 2.

These lesson plans and reflection documents were data sources for the study. These assignments were shared with Faculty Advisors and were not implemented in classrooms or shared with the families or partnering inservice teachers. This decision was due to concern raised by the provincial Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) that the unprecedented and stressful changes to teaching and learning for inservice teachers produced conditions too challenging for the mentoring of PSTs (McKee et al., 2022). Though not implemented, the lesson plans were planned with the children in their Fall practicum classrooms in mind.

Since the translation of lessons to support in-person learning to at-home learning was a novel experience, the FoE threaded guidance through the assignment descriptions to support PSTs; this guidance encouraged PSTS to "aim to take 'normal' in-class lessons and create out-of-school learning experiences, as possible (clearly, some elements will change, though learning outcomes should remain)" (Faculty of Education, personal communication, March 2020, n.p.). This guidance considered the lesson planning for in-class instruction in pre-pandemic conditions as normal or typical and positioned this planning as a resource for the new context. The FoE guidance for PSTs to maintain learning outcomes mirrored the guidance the provincial DEECD gave to inservice teachers in planning for at-home instruction (McKee et al., 2022). Further, the FoE encouraged PSTs to consider how parents and families might be a part of the lessons they designed to support at-home learning (McKee et al., 2022). In this way, the FoE required traditional elements

to lesson planning such as curriculum outcomes, but also invited PSTs to determine what elements of lesson planning should shift in the context.

*Human entities*

There are a number of human entities in this study. One human is PST Marie, who was one of 26 elementary PSTs who elected to be a part of the research study. Marie was in her second year of a two-year post-degree teacher preparation program and had completed all of her courses. These courses included two courses in English Language Arts (ELA) methods (for Kindergarten to Grade 6), and an Integrating Curriculum course, along with other required courses. As mentioned previously, Marie's work was the impetus for our research study; once we viewed Marie's work, we sought and received approval from the Research Ethics Board at the university where the authors work. Recruitment for the study began after the alternate practicum ended and when the PSTs were no longer students of the authors.

As teacher educators, researchers, and authors, we are also entangled in this work (Kuby, Thiel, & Spector, 2018). We were no longer teaching or assessing Marie's work or that of any of the PSTs when we began this research and solicited the alternate practicum assignments that became our data, so held no authority over Marie, but we knew her nonetheless. Through our work as teacher educators, we had all taught Marie as a student in our courses and worked with Marie on previous lesson planning activities. Further, Author A worked directly with Marie as a faculty advisor during the alternate practicum. While these experiences with Marie in our classrooms and advisory discussions are not included as data sources, we recognize they are entangled in this work in visible and invisible ways.

There are other humans within the entanglements that produced these lesson plans. Some of these humans are visible in the lesson plan and reflection assignments of the alternate practicum (e.g., as Marie considered how she might support children and their parents in the plans). Since the plans were not implemented with families, we cannot say how the newness in the plans influenced learning or relationships. There may be other humans in the entanglements as well (e.g., the classroom teacher, Marie's roommates or friends that made suggestions to her work, and family members who are a part of Marie's life). With this in mind, we make attempts to show some intra-actions that produced Marie's lesson plans but recognize these attempts can only partially represent the complexities of these entanglements.

*Methods of Analysis*

As we engaged with each other and the lesson plans provided by Marie, we began *thinking with* (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) Barad's (2007) notion of intra-actions. We looked through the texts provided by Marie and we considered what more-than-human and human entities might be a part of producing newness in the lesson plans. We contemplated the intra-actions that produce Marie's lesson plans as dynamic and connected to *her* past and futures, while also being a part of *ours* (Kuby & Rowsell, 2017).

The processes of analysis were entangled with theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) and were non-linear as we were sometimes drawn to the human entities in Marie's work in ways reflective of our past understandings of literacies theories. Thinking with theory

(Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) reminded us to look in-between the human and more-than-human entities (Kuby et al., 2015) as we plugged in the data set with theories (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Like Jackson and Mazzei (2012), in our readings of data, "we were attentive to our own theoretical and methodological perspectives on voice, truth, and meaning" (p. 4) which are in motion. We were also attentive to our professional and pedagogical proclivities as we considered how the lesson plans affected our practices, as we discussed theoretical concepts alongside the data and our roles as teacher educators and researchers and our power associated with those roles (e.g., Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). As we began thinking with theory, we asked questions of ourselves and of the data. Like Jackson and Mazzei (2012), "The 'intra-action[s]' that characterized our process…[were] made of re-considering the mutual constitution of meaning as happening in between researcher/researched; data/theory; and inside/outside" (p. 11). As we (re)present newness in the lesson plans provided by Marie, "We acknowledge that we alone are not the authors of this assemblage; the research participants and the theorists inserted themselves in the process" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 2). As such, we consider that these (re)presentations are themselves produced through intra-actions (Barad, 2007).

### (Re)presenting Out of the Box Planning

As we turned to (re)presenting the newness in the lesson plans provided by Marie, we were keenly aware of "the limits of language and linear publishing formats" (Kuby, 2017, p. 880) for showing the complexities of the intra-actions that produced the new lesson plan format and our plugging in data with theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). We aim to disrupt some of the linearity of a traditional text by altering the script format and showing examples from the lesson planning assignments in Marie's original font and format. Since the alternate practicum was comprised of three connected assignments, we include examples from each assignment: the plans Marie created for classroom learning in pre-pandemic conditions (Assignment 1), the redesigned lesson plans to support learning at-home (Assignment 2), and excerpts from her reflection assignment (Assignment 3) where she explained the entities she viewed as part of her pedagogical choices. We include comments made by Marie, not to centre our discussion on her, but to look through her comments to expose some of the entities implicated in the entanglement (Barad, 2007). Interspersed throughout this section, we include text boxes that make visible some of our thoughts in relation to what we are learning in/through the assignments provided by Marie and include questions that emerged through thinking with theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). We use a permeable line around these text boxes to show our thoughts as entangled with the data. Within these text boxes, we use a different font to further distinguish our thoughts and questions in analysis from the assignment examples provided by Marie.

### What Newness is Visible in Marie's Literacies Pedagogies?

The lesson plan format provided by Marie to support her Grade 1 and 2 students and their families in experiencing poetry at home during the pandemic was unexpected and innovative. We expected to see lesson plans that were similar in format to the template often used in the FoE coursework and aligned with the lesson plans submitted for Assignment 1 (See Figure 2 for excerpt of the lesson plan format Marie employed in

Assignment 1). This lesson plan format is comprised of a series of boxes, laid out in a linear format, and uses black text without additional images.

*Figure 2.* Lesson Planning Using a Traditional Template in Assignment 1

| **Title of Unit:** Spring into Poetry:… An Integrated… Project-Based Unit [for Grades 1 & 2] … | |
|---|---|
| Unit Overview: | <ul><li>This unit is designed for students to engage with reading and writing poetry…</li><li>Students will…write, illustrate, and create a video orally sharing their poem ….</li><li>We will… go outside …</li><li>Students will use graphic organizers…to write their poem….</li><li>I will use a…range of assessment tools…:<ul><li>Observation and anecdotal notes (formative)</li><li>Rubric (summative assessment tool)…</li></ul></li></ul> |
| Student Information: | This unit will be differentiated… to support learning…. The learning will be hands on in design… Learning centers and small group instruction will be used…. |
| Student prior knowledge… | ELA: Students have prior knowledge reading and writing letters and short stories. Students have also been expressing their emotions and feelings through choice writing in their journals …. |
| [English Language Arts]: Outcome/ Indicators | **Outcome 6:** Learners will use writing and other forms of representation including, digital texts… (Grade 1)<ul><li>write, using drawings, a combination of letters… and known words, a variety of poetry, fiction, and non-fiction texts… (Grade 1)</li><li>write a variety of poetry, fiction, and non-fiction texts (Grade 2)….</li></ul> |

In contrast, the lesson plan format Marie submitted to support at home-learning in Assignment 2 is visually different. This innovative format is colourful, includes icons, images, and hyperlinks and is intended for use by parents and their children (Figure 3).

*Figure 3.* New Lesson Planning Format in Assignment 2

The lesson plans highlighted in Figures 2 and 3 are both designed to support children in Grades 1 and 2 in experiencing poetry. However, they are formatted different ways to support learning in the school (Figure 2) and to support learning at home (Figure 3).

Though the multimodal lesson planning format provided by Marie is novel, we also see the lesson planning elements commonly used in our teacher education program infused throughout the plans. Both lesson plan formats include: the lesson duration, lesson purpose(s) and goals, the relevant curriculum outcome(s), information about students' prior knowledge, how students' learning will be assessed, and the design of the lesson sequence.

In what ways are Marie's lesson plans examples of newness? What produced this newness?

Marie considered that the relocation of schooling to home required a new format for lesson planning. She explained:

> I decided to create my at-home learning activities to be almost like a children's book[3] - easily read, bright colours, encouraging text, and with visual images and cues [see Figure 3]. The idea was that parents would be reading and delivering the lessons, but the template overall was also engaging, eye-catching and easy for students to navigate as well. In my design, I tried to carry that messaging throughout the graphics and text…

The at-home learning context prompted a new purpose/function of lesson plans. Whereas the traditional lesson plan was intended solely for the teacher's use, Marie envisioned her lesson plans as guidance and support for families who would be engaging with one another and materials to enact the lessons she designed. This new purpose was in addition to the FoE's assignment requirements to design lessons that responded to curricular outcomes, outlined lesson sequences and assessment criteria, and identified required time and materials.

The lesson-plans-formatted-as-children's-book could enable new ways for parents and children to join together in learning activities Marie provided. For example, Marie explained that she included icons and images on each page to support parents and children in co-navigating the activities, where parents could read text-based instructions and the children could read the icons. Since Marie would not be physically present as parents and children engaged in the learning activities in the home, the format of the lesson plans supported parents' and children's co-navigation of learning activities as Marie provided a description of each of the icons used in her children's book as a guide (see Figure 4). These icons were a novel way to include some more expected components of a lesson plan (e.g., curriculum outcomes, materials needed, and activity duration).

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[3] We understand Marie's description of her lesson plans as a children's book to refer to those picture books that are designed to be read by an adult alongside children.

*Figure 4.* Explanation of Icons to Support Parents and Children in Co-navigating Lesson Plans



In addition to the icons and step by step instructions that guided parents and children through the lesson plans, the lessons included "options" that parents and children could choose to pursue. Some options could be accessed through hyperlinks to videos that explained different formats of poetry and word banks. Other options did not rely on technology and offered suggestions of additional poetry writing options using pencil/crayons and paper.

We see possibilities for leveraging the affordances of the children's book genre for a lesson plan, especially within the new context of at-home learning in the pandemic. Children's books can offer an accessible format and would likely be a genre that many parents and children have engaged with together pre-pandemic. As we imagine parents and children reading stories together, we see a sense of togetherness as a parent might read the text and the child might read the images. It is exciting to think of a lesson plan as a children's book because a children's book tends to be open and invites exploration and interpretation; it is not fixed. This is in stark contrast to some teacher-driven prescriptive lesson plans we have seen.

What would happen if we conceptualized lesson plans as stories that could be taken up in different ways by children and families? What might envisioning lesson plans as pedagogical stories produce within our teacher education classes?

*What are the Intra-actions that Produced Newness in these Literacies Pedagogies?*

Many human and more-than-human entities intra-acted to produce the new lesson format. For example, the affective dimension was entangled as Marie described her lesson planning processes in Assignment 1 as "extremely challenging" and "draining" and explained that she felt "discouraged and not motivated" to design these lessons. As Marie

redesigned her lessons to support learning at home (Assignment 2), she described a shift in her thinking and planning and explained, "I finally gained momentum in [Assignment 2] because it gave me the opportunity to apply and consolidate what I learned in the Bachelor of Education program in a creative and innovative way."

The knowledge of pedagogies and of her students Marie gained in past practica were a part of producing the novel lesson format. For example, within her reflection assignment, Marie considered that her students required her to be innovative in her teaching in the classroom; this knowledge informed how she planned to support children and their families in the alternate practicum:

> In my [fall] practicum, I found it challenging to teach my students in the traditional way where you list the curriculum outcomes, materials, lesson hook, body of the lesson, closing, etc., in a neat and easy table where you follow the lesson chronologically. Through my experience in [this Grade 1 and 2] class, I learned that my class did not learn in the 'traditional' way…. I kept wondering what I was doing wrong? I had seen the traditional way [of planning and teaching] work through my… experience in practicum last year.

The relocation of schooling to home meant that pedagogies that were supportive in the classroom might not directly "transfer into their new environment" (Marie). In addition to the learning needs of children, the circumstances affecting students and their families were also a part of the lesson planning:

> I …[worried] about whether or not some of [the children] were getting enough to eat…whether their parents lost their jobs, whether or not they had a working computer or phone, whether they had access to pencil and paper. Were they safe, did they feel scared?

The lesson plan format was produced through Marie's knowledge of her students, an anticipation of varied and challenging circumstances in the home, a need for innovative pedagogies in this uncertain environment, and her learning in her teacher education courses. Marie explained, "My idea for my [visual template] design…came from a project where we made an infographic to explain curriculum integration to parents from our Integration of Curriculum course… [I used this] as a springboard". In addition to her awareness of how past experiences shaped her design decisions, Marie also considered her own preferences as she described herself as a "visual and hands-on learner". As Marie contemplated her experiences in teacher education, she explained:

> I have found that the [teacher education] classes where I have learned the most, are where the teaching and assessment are different, where we are asked to be creative and think outside of the box. Create a video, an infographic, have a one-on-one conference, teach a mini-unit to the class…[Thinking of these experiences,] I wanted to graphically represent my lesson plans in a way that would be supportive, enriching, and easily accessible for parents and their students at home. I am wondering why I had chosen to always follow the mold of a lesson plan template instead of trying to create a more visual template, something I would actually use… in my future classrooms.

In addition to the entanglements Marie identified, we see others in her redesigned plans and her reflection assignment. The temporal element is entangled in Marie's plans, as she thought back across previous practica and her courses over the two years of the teacher

education program, while also looking ahead to her desire to develop her plans using "a more visual template" in her future teaching. Human ←→ more-than-human entanglements of Marie's knowing of the students and of herself as a learner can also be seen as she considered the context of this classroom, as well as the parents and students who were suddenly thrust into the at-home learning situation, and her own lesson planning preferences.

Also visible in Marie's novel lesson plan format are the human←→more-than-human intra-actions of Marie with Canva, the software which she used to produce the redesigned lesson plans. In her previous classes in teacher education, Marie observed how the visual appeal of resources created with programs such as Canva could enable communication with parents, and adapted this to support families during at-home learning. The advent of at-home learning, brought about by the pandemic, was itself a more-than-human element in the intra-actions in Marie's redesigned plans. Similarly, the alternate practicum assignment guidance and curriculum expectations intra-acted in her redesigned assignment. Without these entanglements, these lesson-plans-formatted-as-children's-book might never have been produced.

> As we view Marie's innovative literacies pedagogies, we can see the format as produced through intra-actions of Faculty of Education assignment criteria, provincial curricula, Marie's knowledge of pedagogies, curricula, her students and their families, and of herself as a learner. Also enfolded in these entanglements are the pandemic conditions which included fear and uncertainty. It feels like Marie's pedagogical design is in motion as she describes her lesson planning assignment as being connected to the past, designed for an uncertain present, and generative to her post-pandemic futures.
>
> What can we learn in/through Marie's pedagogies in a new era?

*Pausing to (Re)think:*
*The Entanglements of Pandemic-provoked Innovations in Literacy Pedagogies*

We view the innovative lesson plan assignments provided by Marie to support learning at home during the pandemic as a portal for considering the entities that intra-acted (Kuby, Spector, & Thiel, 2018) to produce newness (Kuby, 2017). Initially, we were drawn to Marie's lesson plan format because it was different (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012); this difference prompted us to "pause" (Kuby, 2017, p. 893) and take a closer look. As we "put to work" (Kuby et al., 2018, p. 6) posthumanist theories, we considered that the lesson plan innovations were produced not only by Marie, but through entanglements of humans← →more-than-humans (Barad, 2007). Our *thinking with* (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) Marie's lesson plans and theories also generated new thinking in our work as teacher educators and researchers (Kuby, 2017).

Reading the innovative lesson plan format provided by Marie alongside her description of "think[ing] outside of the box" opens spaces for us to think about newness as unbounded (Kuby, 2017) as we consider where traditionally inscribed boundaries were

dismantled, diffused, or redefined in Marie's lesson plans. For example, the lesson-plans-as-children's-book provided by Marie departed from a traditional linear format (e.g., Ruys et al., 2012) as the boxes of her lesson plan format from Assignment 1 (Figure 2) were literally dismantled to produce something visually unique (Figure 3). Within this format, boundaries were further redefined as the lesson plan function shifted to a communication tool with/for parents and children and invited learning to take place on couches and outdoor spaces in/around the home (McKee et al., 2022). In addition to including new spaces for learning, the lesson plan format promoted opportunities for children and families to interpret and adapt the lessons to respond to their unique circumstances through the inclusion of hyperlinks, suggestions for additional practice, and invitations for video calls. In this way, the lesson plan format invited teachers, parents, and children to join together in new ways to support early literacy learning during the pandemic.

There were also instances where traditional boundaries were reinscribed as examples of newness were entangled with past practices and experiences. For example, though the lesson plans in the lesson-plans-as-children's-book are visually unique, some of the activities represented, such as the creation of an acrostic poem (Figure 3), are similar to those identified in the traditional lesson plan (Figure 2). Additionally, some of the typical lesson plan elements, such as the time suggested for the lesson (5-10 minutes), the English Language Arts curriculum outcomes, and the procedures for enacting the plan in three steps of the lesson, are visible in the novel plan. We cannot definitely say what prompted Marie to reinscribe these boundaries, but recognize that the FoE's assignment guidance is likely implicated as PSTs were reminded that "some elements [of lesson plans] will change, though learning outcomes should remain" (Faculty of Education, personal communication, March 2020, n.p).

These examples forward a complexified view of pedagogical newness, where newness, or examples of "thinking outside of the box" are entangled with inscribed or traditional practices (e.g., Barad, 2007) of lesson plan formatting. In this way, newness is not a binary construct, where something is new or it is not. Instead, there are elements of newness produced within intra-actions of humans and more-than-humans (Barad, 2007). As we plug in the data with theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012), we consider that the innovative lesson plan format provided by Marie is not completely unbounded and inventive (Kuby, 2017), but that there are elements that move in that direction.

This view of new/not-new supports us to think about literacies pedagogies in motion, moving back and forth between the familiar and the new, and about lesson planning as a far-from-linear activity. Inherent in this complexified view of newness are intra-actions between human and more-than-human entities (Barad, 2007), as the representations of the lesson planning illustrate. Within this view, tensions arise as teachers like Marie endeavour to "think outside the box" but cannot quite disentangle from traditional practices of lesson planning due in part to these intra-actions. These tensions are also entangled with our thinking about how intra-actions described in this article "configure[d] spacetimemattering" in new ways, and as we began to consider how they also "reconfigure what is possible" (Barad, 2007, p. 182).

As teacher educators and researchers, *thinking with* (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) posthumanist theories of intra-actions, entanglements (Kuby, Spector, & Thiel, 2018) and newness (Kuby, 2017) prompts us to appreciate pedagogies, both our own and those of our

students (both teachers and preservice teachers) in new ways. That is, we view pedagogies as not produced solely by the teacher or teacher and student, but through "entanglements of humans, nonhumans, space, time, materials" (Kuby & Christ, 2020, p. 60). The recognition of the human← →more-than-human entanglements of lesson planning provides spaces for teachers (and teacher educators) to begin to grasp the idea that other entities are inextricably involved in this planning (as well as the teaching and learning) (Barad, 2007). Some of these entities are visible and some less visible. The pandemic context provides an example of a visible entity, in that this more-than-human entity which prompted closure of schools produced a pause during which teachers in schools, and in teacher education programs, had to think about how we plan and teach, as we could no longer continue as we had before the pandemic.

In this way, Marie's pause, her need to "think outside the box", becomes our pause too, as we "plug into" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 1) posthumanist theories. As we engaged with the assignments provided by Marie, opportunities for newness emerged in our teaching and research as we attended to the human ←→ more-than human entanglements (Barad, 2007). As we read the examples highlighted by Marie of teacher education course assignments that supported her innovation, we recognize how these examples are entangled in the pedagogies of our teacher education classes. Our engagement with the assignments and with each other has prompted us to consider ways we may promote newness through inviting the use of less-bounded lesson plan formats in our teacher education courses.

However, just as the newness of Marie's lesson plan formats could be explained as new/not-new, the same can be said of our teaching and research. We value posthuman onto-ethico-epistemologies (Kuby, Spector, & Thiel, 2018), but are sometimes pulled back to the certainty/solid ground/comfort of what we have historically known in terms of multiliteracies theories (e.g., NLG, 1996). For example, in writing this paper we have continually had to question ourselves. Are we considering the more-than-human and human entanglements (Barad, 2007) within the lesson plan format of Marie's assignments? Are we remembering that pedagogy is not a human-only enterprise (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017)? Are we falling back into a humanist perspective? Is our language use aligned with that of the posthumanist theories we are *thinking with* (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012)? We expect this paper reflects a sense of the new/not new space we are in; perhaps this liminality is part of the "'intra-action[s] that characterized our process" (Jackson & Mazzei. 2012, p. 11). We are beginning to experience what Jackson and Mazzei (2012) suggest regarding "…the mutual constitution of meaning as happening in between researcher/researched; data/theory; and inside/outside" (p. 12). We have felt a bit torn apart by the multiplicity of intra-actions, a bit changed by the tensions of this mutually constitutive process (Barad, 2007).

As we contemplate implications for pedagogies in a future which includes COVID as an endemic reality, we do not suggest that Marie's lesson planning format should be taken up by all, which would simply be inscribing of another format. Rather, we consider that the element of newness produced within this entanglement opens a portal to the possibilities of different pathways in lesson planning, which could in turn open spaces for expansive literacies teaching and learning in elementary and preservice teacher education classrooms. In our teaching, we are attending in new ways to the more-than-human entities

that are a part of teaching and learning. In our research, we are more attuned to ways that our past ways of knowing, being, and doing are entangled with our presents and futures. What other newness might be produced through attending to "the entanglements of humans, nonhumans, space, time, materials, and so forth in our pedagogies" (Kuby & Christ, 2020, p. 60)?

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*Author Biographies*

**Dr. Lori McKee** is an Assistant Professor at St. Francis Xavier University where she teaches teacher education and graduate courses in elementary literacies and pedagogies. Previously, she was a Reading Recovery teacher and taught in the early elementary grades in Ontario. Her current research includes professional learning opportunities for teacher educators about how/why to address equity issues of academic reading in their classrooms, elementary preservice teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in literacy instruction, and an exploration of preservice teachers' experiences in lesson planning during an alternate practicum in the pandemic.

**Dr. Anne Murray-Orr** is a Professor of literacy and elementary pedagogies in the Faculty of Education at St. Francis Xavier University. Previously, she taught early elementary grades in Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia. Her current research areas include middle school teachers' use of culturally relevant literacy practices, elementary preservice teachers' experiences of an alternate practicum during the pandemic, and preservice teachers' multiliterate identities.

**Dr. Evan Throop Robinson** is an Associate Professor at St. Francis Xavier University. He is a former elementary teacher, instructional leader, and instructor for teacher education with experience in schools and universities in BC, ON and NS. Evan continues to work in classrooms through research activities with children and support for preservice teachers. His research focuses on how students and teachers communicate mathematical thinking and understanding. He collaborates on the Moving Achievement Together

Holistically (MATH) project to provide culturally relevant and sustaining learning experiences for children from historically excluded communities.