Chapter 8
Thinking Bodies: Practice Theory, Deleuze, and Professional Education

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> The body is not simply a sign to be read, a symptom to be deciphered, but also a force to be reckoned with (Grosz 1994, p. 120).

Introduction

Imagine a classroom – a teacher and her class. The classroom is located in a primary school, somewhere, anywhere. The world is turning apace, and 'education' is going on, is being practised, here, now ... Voices, bodies, spaces. 'Look at me, everyone'.

What do they see, this Early Years class of children, all engaged (still) in learning the game of school? What are they looking at? First and foremost, they see somebody, a body-subject, a Teacher. This is likely to be a gendered body, in such classrooms – a woman, as a significant (m)other, although that wasn't always the case (Vick 2000; Vick and Martinez 2011) – exemplary but abject, all the same, or all too often. S/he looks like a teacher... What do they hear, these children? – a voice, inextricable from the body, embodied speech, a teacher's voice, speaking with authority, and yet care-fully. But then we might also ask: Whose voice? Whose body? What other voices and bodies are in play here? Already we are unsettled, excited, wondering, thinking ...

This chapter draws specifically on the work of the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze within an explicitly post-Cartesian exploration of the body in (professional)

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practice. It explores what it means to think the body in such circumstances, to think about the body, to draw the body into Thought. This involves seeking first of all a way of *thinking the body* – that is, of rendering the body as an object of Thought, or rather as a specific concept. This means among other things working with Deleuzian notions such as affect, virtuality, multiplicity, etc., to reconsider how practice and the body might come together, conceptually and empirically. In particular, the challenge here is one of avoiding unities and identities, and hence *thinking bodies* (i.e. the body as necessarily, inevitably pluralised, or as multiplicity, rather than as singular). What (other) bodies need to be taken into account in our exemplary classroom? How to (re)think the body of the professional practitioner – in this instance, the teacher?

The chapter begins by reviewing, specifically in the context of addressing the question of the body in professional practice, learning and education, what has come to be called practice theory and philosophy – a loose assemblage of arguments and interests centred on *practice* as concept and primary organising principle for the social world. Schatzki (2002), a key figure in the contemporary 'practice turn', is considered here as a representative instance. Of particular interest here is the manner in which the body is mobilised in Schatzki's self-described 'residually humanist' theory of practice, bearing in mind too his own measured, somewhat ambivalent engagement with Deleuze and Guattari. This is followed by a Deleuzian account of the body, albeit somewhat attenuated, and always provisional. A final section is addressed specifically to the Early Years classroom, reading pedagogy, and the body-work of teaching, in seeking thereby to offer a (different) way of thinking about the relationship between bodies and practice in professional education.

On Practice Theory and Philosophy: Engaging Deleuze?

Practice theory is arguably a rich resource for (re)thinking professional education. This is because professional practice, appropriately conceptualised, is crucial to understanding professional education, as the initial, transitional and continuing education of professionals, or professional practitioners. Hence, a rigorously theorised view of professional practice is absolutely central to professional education. Practice theory indeed offers much in this regard. However, as yet it is still being articulated, and some see how this is unfolding as already rather constrained; indeed, a certain orthodoxy may even be emerging on the scene. In this chapter, I want to push at the edges of practice theory and philosophy, accordingly, by drawing in the work of Deleuze in order to explore various ways and means of thinking differently about practice and the body, and hopefully opening up the discussion overall to a productive re-assessment.

An important issue in such considerations is the extent to which practice theory and philosophy is seen as oriented more to the past than the future, or vice versa – whether, that is, it is organised more by a concern for stability, and the maintenance and renewal of current-traditional states of affairs, or by a focus on change and innovation. More often than not, of course, this is something that must be understood

dialogically and dialectically. Hermansen and Nerland (2013) nonetheless usefully observe two distinct strands in what they call 'the broader landscape of practice theories', with one strand 'pay[ing] primary attention to structures and routine actions, and … concerned with accounting for how practices are reproduced and kept stable over time', while the other 'directs analytical attention to the emergent and constructive dimensions of practice, and is concerned with how collective actions and patterns of practice are achieved and developed' (Hermansen and Nerland 2013, p. 5). My interest, in this context, is more aligned with the second of these strands. This is consistent with how one perceives the possibilities offered in Deleuze's work, especially in his emphasis on 'becoming'. Practice in this view is best conceived as characterised by *becoming-ness*, and even, indeed, at times becoming-other. What is it, then, that emerges in and through (professional) practice?

Schatzki's work is extremely important within the field of contemporary practice theory, and highly generative, not the least of its value being its effort to engage and embrace a wide range of practice-theoretical perspectives. Much of this practice-theory work, including Schatzki's, acknowledges and references the philosophical influence of the convergence of early Heidegger and late Wittgenstein. However, in noting that Schatzki 'has elaborated the most systematic and detailed version of a social practice approach', Reckwitz (2012, pp. 247–248) suggests somewhat surprisingly that, in doing so, 'he leans' on Wittgenstein and Deleuze. It is true that Deleuze figures quite significantly in Schatzki's elaboration of practice theory and philosophy, but arguably more as a counterpoint than anything else. Indeed, Schatzki has recently distinguished his position quite explicitly from a Deleuzian perspective, setting his own focus on activity as 'event' against that of activity as 'process', locating Deleuze in this latter regard with '[a]n impressive cadre of thinkers … including … more recently, Gilles Deleuze, Anthony Giddens, and Tim Ingold' (Schatzki 2011, p. 2). Elsewhere, Schatzki draws extensively on Deleuze (and Gauttari) but it is mainly as a foil, a counter reference-point, in articulating, elaborating and defending his own position. In his account of practice-arrangement bundles and site ontology, for instance, he refers to 'Deleuze and Guattari's theory of social assemblages', acknowledging how it helps clarify 'the entire issue of arrangements and contextures', but asserts that it 'stands for a pervasive twentieth-century school of thought that explains the progress of social affairs by reference to abstract structure' (Schatzki 2002, p. 69). This is a familiar stalking-horse in Schatzki's work: what he sees as the persistent and insidious influence of neo-Saussurian thinking, which he criticised here in Laclau and Mouffe, and others, working more often than not from a poststructuralist perspective. This is consistent with his overall concern with what he sees as the valorisation of language and discourse in contemporary thought. Whether or not it is appropriate to link Deleuze/Guattari with de Saussure in this way, of course, is debatable. Suffice it to say at this point, then, that it may well be interesting and useful to explore a Deleuzian perspective in practice theory and philosophy.

One way to do this is through what Nigel Thrift calls 'non-representational theory', as 'a body of work which is 'due largely to the historical impact of the convergence between Wittgenstein and Heidegger', with other traditions (like American

pragmatism) acting 'as a sounding board and amplifier'' (Thrift 1999, p. 302). Further, and more specifically, he describes non-representational theory as 'the theory of practices' (p. 304), and a style of thinking and a form of theorising which is 'a practical means of going on rather than something concerned with enabling us to see, contemplatively, the supposedly true nature of what something is' (p. 304). Elsewhere he links it with notions of 'movement' and 'performance', and describes it as 'an approach to understanding the world in terms of effectivity rather than representation' (Thrift 2006, p. 113). Like practice theory more generally, there is, if not a refusal then certainly, an ambivalence about representation – something which is perhaps better directed against representationalism, or 'that view of the world predicated on a spectator view of knowledge for which the primary reference-point is the authorial subject of rationality and realism, a stance "burdened by lingering, if not overtly, neo-Cartesian conceptions of representation"' (Green 2009, p. 50). Thrift cites practice theorists such as Bourdieu and Schatzki, moreover, in elaborating non-representational theory and its programmatic focus on 'practices', describing them as 'productive concatenations that have been constructed out of all sorts of resources and which provide the basic intelligibility of the world' (Thrift 2006, p. 8). Nonetheless, as he asserts, what he is espousing is 'no naïve practice theory' (p. 8), and this is perhaps nowhere clearer than in his emphasis on invention and the experimental, both in the matter under scrutiny and in one's own research practice. It is clear, too, that Deleuze is important for non-representational theory, though Thrift is quick to stress that he sees this in terms of a resource rather than as a master-code.

In their commentary on non-representational theory, Anderson and Harrison (2012) make direct connections with practice theory and philosophy, noting that it has 'a practical and processual basis for its accounts of the social, the subject and the world, one focused on "backgrounds", bodies and their performances' (p. 2). As they write: 'Insisting on the non-representational basis of thought is to insist that the root of action is to be conceived less in terms of willpower and more via embodied and environmental affordances, dispositions, and habits' (Anderson and Harrison 2012, p. 7). However they also point to a shift in emphasis in this body of work from an 'initial interest in practices' per se to 'a concern with Life, and the vital processes that compose it' (pp. 11–12), which among other things indicates a movement beyond human-centredness and into a fuller engagement with the socio-materiality of the extra-human world. It also indicates at least a greater congruence with Deleuzian thought, in opening up the study of practices to notions of mutability, emergence, complexity, flow and becoming. Practices in such a view push into the future, even as they are presently anchored in bodies and artefacts, 'things', architectures, and traces of the past – they overflow with possibilities and opportunities. That is, practices are matters of both constraint and possibility, preconfiguration and experimentation, or invention. The issue is partly to do with what might be called practice ontology, where the emphasis is placed on process and movement, on emergence and becoming, and also the interplay of materiality and virtuality. In such a view, the emphasis is more on 'practice-ing' than on the noun ('practice'). It needs also bearing in mind that, just as practices precede practitioners

(i.e. as individuals), so too do they proceed without or perhaps exceed volition on the practitioner's part. This is not to say that practitioners don't have agency – rather, within the practice as it plays out, they are to some significant extent produced in and through it: it informs and shapes what they can do and say, and how they relate to others, without ever being determinative in any absolute sense. At the same time, that particular practice is always linked with and in various ways fashioned out of other practices, in a 'partly reproductive, partly ever-evolving network comprising human bodies as well as artefacts' (Reckwitz 2012, p. 248). What is named here as 'Life' refers to the energy and vitalism of a world in motion – a Lifeworld, to appropriate and regenerate a term – 'a world of becomings' (Anderson and Harrison 2012, p. 21), where things are always happening, and life-work is ceaselessly going on, and getting done.

What does this mean for (re)thinking the body, however? Reference has already been made to the manner in which the body (along with artefacts of various kinds and also, presumably, architectures) operates as an 'anchor' in and for practices. Schatzki certainly sees the body's significance in referring to 'sayings' and 'doings' – his foundational activities – as being 'bodily' in nature, arising from the embodied nature of practice, and he has written extensively and quite specifically about the body (e.g. Schatzki 1999; see also Schatzki 1996). A range of commentators note the centrality of the body in and for practice, with practice theory being described indeed, somewhat aphoristically, as 'a body of work about the work of the body' (Postill 2008, p. 6), and Reckwitz (2002, p. 251) asserting that '[a]t the core of practice theory lies a different way of seeing the body'. This is the human body, as both material and cultural, but also the interplay of bodies in situ. As such, it is readily available for research, whether that be phenomenological or ethnographic. This is, as it might be called, the *empirical* body: the body as lived and perceived. It is, moreover, the *bounded* body – the body with boundaries – and as such, it is as much a commonsense category as it is anything else. But it is also to be understood as a *realist* body, in the sense that it is a matter of representational knowledge. This is representation in the classic 'modern' sense, which has previously been described as 'representationalism', and decisively critiqued in post-Cartesian thought more generally. Such a 'non-representational' perspective as that critique makes available unsettles the commonsense, received sense of the body. Or rather, it provides a way of seeing beyond that particular understanding of the body, not so much as to refuse it altogether as to exceed it, incorporating it within a richer, more dynamic understanding of corporeality. An important resource in this regard, and a powerful incitement to such rethinking, is the philosophy of Deleuze, and particularly his work on the body, to which I now turn.

Deleuze and the Body

'It *moves*. It *feels*': Brian Massumi's memorable opening to his Deleuzian account of contemporary culture provides a powerful relay in this particular instance, in our

focus on professional practice, learning and education. ‘When I think of my body and ask what it does to earn that name, two things stand out’, he writes: it moves, and it feels – ‘In fact, it does both of these at the same time’. He continues thus: ‘Can we think a body without this: an intrinsic connection between movement and sensation whereby one immediately summons the other?’ (Massumi 2002, p. 1). To this, we might well add, especially apropos professional practice education: it knows, and moreover it *learns*.

Debate continues as to whether there is indeed a theoretical account of the body in Deleuze’s philosophy. Hughes (2011, p. 2) notes the seeming paradox that while ‘[t]he theory of the body in Deleuze’s work is ... a problematic site’ and ‘Deleuze rarely discusses the body directly’, nonetheless, as he asserts: ‘Not only is the concept of the body nearly everywhere we look in Deleuze’s work, but it has gone on to inform some of the most influential conceptions of the body in contemporary critical debate’ (Hughes 2011, p. 1). Not the least of the latter is the work of such notable feminist scholars as Elizabeth Grosz (1994; see Colebrook 2000). Grosz is particularly important here, as she provides a way of thinking about subjectivity and the body, or the ‘body-subject’, beyond and outside Cartesian dualism(s). Her ‘corporeal feminism’ involves ‘a refiguring of the body so that it moves from the periphery to the center of analysis, so that it can be understood as the very “stuff” of subjectivity’ (Grosz 1994, p. ix). It has the added value of enabling due account to be made of matters of gender and sexuality, or ‘sexual difference’. Work such as this is important because it makes the body a matter of philosophical but also political inquiry, while indicating the extent to which thinking the body is profoundly and emphatically a philosophical challenge.

This means, at the outset, acknowledging the body as *concept*. The body is an exemplary philosophical concept. In their last co-authored book, Deleuze and Guattari (2009, p. 2) describe philosophy as ‘the art of forming, inventing and fabricating concepts’, charged specifically and exclusively with ‘concept creation’, or the ‘continuous creation of concepts’ (p. 8). They go on to discuss the nature of concepts in and for philosophy, which for them have a quite distinctive quality: ‘With its concepts, philosophy brings forth events’ (Deleuze and Guattari 2009, p. 199). In this sense, philosophy is productive, affirmative, force-full. Outlining ‘Deleuze’s “concept of the concept”’, Smith (2012, p. 62) refers to ‘concepts, from a Deleuzian perspective’ as having ‘no identity but only a *becoming*’; concepts in all their singularity change, or emerge, in the course of thinking:

> For Deleuze, no concept is ever simple; not only does it refer to other concepts (its exo-consistency), but each concept also has its own internal components (which in turn can themselves be considered as concepts). A concept is therefore always a multiplicity: it is composed of a finite number of distinct, heterogeneous and nonetheless inseparable components [...] (Smith 2012, p. 69).

In particular, what is of interest here, therefore, is the manner in which the body becomes thinkable. This is not so much a matter of embodiment or identitarian logic(s) – what a body *is*, or how it might be defined, and known – but a momentum, a trajectory, a process, with interest focused more on ‘the capacities and unknown potential of the body, to do things, to engage in practices’ (Grosz 1994, p. 168–169).

Hence Deleuze's use of Spinoza in this regard, and in particular the question: *What is a body capable of?* Or, as Buchanan (1997, p. 74) writes, regarding 'the philosophical problem from which their [ie Deleuze/Guattari's] constructivist account of the body actually derives, namely the Spinozist question: What can a body do?'. The focus goes then on the 'energetics' of the body, its 'activity, or what might be called its "doing-ness" – *energeia*' (Green 2009, p. 43), its practice: the body in motion, or movement, becoming-body.

This is consistent with Massumi's (2002) account of 'incorporeal materialism', and his emphasis on the primacy of change as 'qualitative transformation', emergence, invention, continuity, difference, affect. As he writes:

> For Spinoza, the body is one with its transitions. Each transition is accompanied by a variation in capacity: a change in which powers to affect and be affected are addressable by a next event and how readily addressable they are – or to what degree they are present as futurities (Massumi 2002, p. 15).

This take on the body, adopted and adapted by Deleuze, is therefore 'a rare, affirmative understanding of the body', with it being seen not as an (id)entity, or 'some-thing', but rather 'more in terms of what it can do, the things it can perform, the linkages it establishes, the transformations and becomings it undergoes, and the machinic connections it forms with other bodies, what it can link with, how it can proliferate its capacities' (Grosz 1994, p. 165 – in this regard see Mulcahy, Chap. 7, this volume). This is registered crucially in terms of, or in the form of, the relations it effects, its capacity to affect and be affected, its 'force'. This productivity is nicely evoked by Buchanan (1997), in referring to a given body's 'health', or its positivity, whereby

> those relations which ensure an open future, which is to say, those which promote the formation of new compounds, are considered healthy; while those relations which lead to the decomposition of old compounds and are not accompanied by the elaboration of new ones are considered unhealthy (Buchanan 1997, p. 82).

The point here is that 'healthy' bodies form a dynamic network of affects and relations, opening up new possibilities and generating new intensities.

Two further Deleuzian concepts are particularly pertinent here, and can be briefly discussed. One follows on from what has just been outlined, and this is the notion of *multiplicity*; the other involves taking into account the significance of *virtuality* in Deleuzian thought. Understanding the body as multiplicity means getting away from commonsense views of the body, as dogmatic singularity, a bounded entity, caught up in biological and representational constraints and presumptions. '*The* body' is classically one of those 'massified' entities that Grosz (1994, p. 181) saw as characteristic of 'binary thought', and a lasting legacy of Cartesianism. Rather than thinking (of) the body as One, it is far better to posit it as multiple, as bodies, as Many – as 'legion' (see Loftus, Chap. 9, this volume). If a body is always-already multiple, the challenge becomes one of working with that proliferation, that multiplicity, *and looking out for it*, notwithstanding that it is itself ceaselessly in motion, moving, shifting and changing, playing out as a force-field of 'microprocesses', and 'a myriad of intensities and flows' (Grosz 1994, p. 181).

Similarly, to see the body as virtuality, or to speak of the virtual body, is to enter into the realm of Deleuze's ontology, for which the relationship between the 'virtual' and the 'actual' is of crucial importance. As Deleuze (1994, p. 263) writes: '... the virtual is not opposed to the real; it possesses a full reality in itself. The process it undergoes is that of actualization'. This is because '[t]he virtual is opposed not to the real but to the actual. *The virtual is fully real in so far as it is virtual*' (Deleuze 1994, p. 258). Within such a perspective, the body must be understood as, in effect, 'virtual-actual' in its mode of existence. Here, Massumi's emphasis on movement and sensation vis-à-vis the body is directly pertinent. This is for him, as already noted, an 'intrinsic connection', involving what he calls an assertion of 'qualitative difference', as a fundamental expression of *change*; hence his formulaic articulation: 'body – (movement/sensation) – change' (Massumi 2002, p. 1). The body moves and it feels, ceaselessly; it flickers. 'The body is as immediately virtual as it is actual. The virtual, the pressing crowd of incipiencies and tendencies, is a realm of *potential*' (Massumi 2002, p. 3). How then is the body to be understood, in its fullest potential, in all its virtuality, or even grasped in the rich, intricate play of its actualization(s)?

Rounding off this section, it is useful to review a recent study of contemporary body-work practices, whereby young people seek to work on their physical appearance and in particular their bodies, through dieting, exercise and the like (Coffey 2012). 'Body work' and 'body image' come together in the study, which explicitly takes a Deleuzian perspective. Its 'challenge or aim' is described as developing 'non-dualist, embodied approaches to studying the body empirically, while understanding and critiquing the social conditions [framing] the bodies of the participants' (Coffey 2012, p, 6). Of interest here is firstly the fact that this is an example of *empirical* research, specifically informed by Deleuzian theory: '... empirical work which uses Deleuzian theory explicitly in methodology and analysis is relatively new in sociological studies of the body' (Coffey 2012, p. 7). Secondly, central to the study is its emphasis on notions of 'affect' and 'becoming'. As Coffey (2012, p. 16) writes: 'A focus on the affective dimensions of body work enables the visceral, embodied complexities of bodies to be foregrounded'. She continues: 'Deleuzian concepts such as affect can enable us to see the infinitely more complex ways bodies ... are defined by their relations and affects, opening up or closing down possibilities for the embodied self'. The body is understood as 'in continuous movement and negotiation and involved in a complex set of relations, rather than [as] a fixed object ... or 'project' that can be completed' (Coffey 2012, p. 16). This is a positive, affirmative, constitutive view of the body in practice, or performance, interacting and moving, feeling, becoming, with bodies understood as 'intensities, rather than entities' (Coffey 2012, p. 7). This includes pathologised bodies – for instance, those caught up in body dysmorphic disorders (Coffey 2012, p. 14), or anorexia (Buchanan 1997). The point is, such practices and conditions can be seen differently, or otherwise, and a Deleuzian perspective is instrumental in this regard. But there is more than this at issue – how to rethink pathologised or failing bodies – in taking up such a view, including how the body might be re-assessed in the context of professional practice, learning and education, as crucially implicated

in its project. Buchanan (1997, p. 75) writes: 'By making the question of what the body can do constitutive, what Deleuze and Guattari effectively do is reconfigure the body as the sum of its capacities [. . .]'. What might this mean then for thinking about a professional practice like teaching reading, in the early years of schooling? I turn now to that.

Teaching/Reading: Or, Thinking Bodies?

Teaching and caring for young children is clearly a professional practice field. One of the most significant activities in this context is teaching them to read, which ranges from orienting and predisposing them to books and reading, text and language, story and image, to guiding them in actual letter and word recognition and articulation. The conventional even commonsense view of reading is that it is first and foremost a cognitive matter, with associated forms of psychological and physiological skills development. Moreover, this is a fundamentally and distinctly Cartesian view, involving a 'centred', representational view of the human subject, as Masny (2012) observes, extending readily into pedagogy and research: '[Reading] research, operationalized within a humanist, Cartesian, closed determinate system, places at the centre the autonomous thinking subject' (Masny 2012, p. 73). Furthermore, and given that such an account is apposite for literacy more generally: '[T]he received views of literacy often translate into school-based ways of reading and becoming literate' (Masny 2012, p. 72). That is, reading is commonly associated with schooling – one learns to read in school, or rather, that is presumed to be the case; and this means, further, that it is seen necessarily as a matter of *teaching*, of being *taught*. Reading and schooling are complicit social practices, in other words, and ideologically and discursively intertwined.

Here, however, the starting-point is an emerging view of reading pedagogy in practice-theoretical terms. This involves first of all understanding reading as itself a practice – purposive, embodied, situated, dialogical, etc. (Green 2009) – involving an organized array of text- and meaning-oriented activities (Schatzki 2001). Reading pedagogy is to be similarly understood, in this case contextualizing the practice of reading, and especially how that practice is taught and also how it is learnt. Of course learning to read is not at all consequent solely on teaching, and certainly not exclusively a feature of schooling – although all this continues to be a matter of public debate and considerable controversy. The point is, taking up a practice(-theoretical) view of reading pedagogy enables the focus to be on the complexly interrelated practices of reading, learning, teaching and schooling, so that it becomes possible to think differently and productively about the work of Early Childhood/Early Years educators, as professional practice.[1] This includes how we think about those teachers themselves, as teaching bodies.

In what follows, the focus is specifically on the body of the professional-practitioner, the teacher. It must be acknowledged, all the same, that the body of the learner-reader is clearly always implicated in the co-production of reading

pedagogy, and indeed there has been some work done in this regard, from different perspectives (e.g. Luke 1992; Grumet 1988).[2] Even so, reading remains overwhelmingly regarded as a matter of mind(s), in an emphatic assertion of Cartesian dualism – something that happens quintessentially 'in the head'. But what if we specifically ask, What do teachers *do*, in teaching reading? What pedagogic ('teaching') practices are involved? Relatedly, how and to what extent are these practices *embodied*? With regard to those teaching reading, how do their bodies figure? How do they operate? As noted already, this is the Deleuzian question *par excellence*, following Spinoza: What is it that bodies do? What are their capacities? What are they capable of?

'Look at me.' This is the teacher, speaking, calling the children to attention, a class-cohort. Presumably they do; and thus a lesson begins. Their bodies have become attuned, and so too the teacher's body. The classroom becomes a dynamic affect-field. In terms of what is involved in Early Years education and more particularly reading pedagogy – the initial teaching of reading – with respect to body-work, it may be that what is most striking is its realization as the One and the Many: the teacher, on the one hand, and on the other, the class as a whole, as in effect a corporate body (cf Kamler et al 1994). That is, there are two distinct but related bodies here, in interaction. But the class itself is composed of a number of children – these days, anywhere between 10 and 30 – each a separate body in and of itself: bounded, or perhaps still becoming so, as the children learn, again and again, how they must be in the world. That is to say, it is a matter of being alone but together, an individual but also invariably part of a population, and always learning that there are limits. *This is mine (my body, etc.), and that is yours; this is allowed, and that is not . . .*

Learning to read doesn't only happen in school, of course, but it always involves bodies – in the family, for instance, where parents read to and with their children, in various forms of what had been called the 'lap method' (Moffett 1991, p. 47), involving typically 'a bedtime situation in which the child is sitting on the parent's lap, looking at and perhaps holding the book himself [sic] and getting the audio in his ear by the parent. The child is seeing the text while hearing it read aloud'.[3] What is notable here is the embodied relationship of parent and child, as it is enacted, or practised, involving touch, and voice, and perhaps even movement, and rhythm ('The wheels on the bus go round and round . . . '). It matters, too, that these particular teaching and learning bodies are likely to be well-known to each other, familiar, attuned, engaged in something marked by its repetition, and become habitual.

But teachers, as professionals, are not parents, at least in the context of their teaching, even though legally and morally they may be acting in loco parentis. As already noted, teaching reading is commonly held to be a professional practice, conducted in schools and school-like settings, and largely in 'batches', as well as one-on-one in certain circumstances. Good teachers however read to the children in their charge and their care, seeking to engage them. They also model and perform 'active' reading. Learning to read aloud to children, within a comprehensive reading program, is what has been described as a 'core practice' (Grossman, Hammerness

and McDonald 2009, p. 286), and clearly involves learning how to use one's body to best effect – not just voice, but also gesture, gaze, movement, etc. (Reid 2011). Such expertise doesn't come naturally to novice teachers; it requires practice, training, performance. Performing reading, or reading aloud, as a 'core practice' of Early Years teaching, arguably cuts across what has been called the 'literacy wars' (Roy 2005), too, pertaining not just to meaning-oriented approaches ('whole language') but also those emphasizing sound-letter correspondence ('phonics') and explicit, focused instruction and micro-level 'drill-and-skill'. Whereas the former is commonly and characteristically associated with pleasure and play and the latter more with work and learning, as training and skill-development, both are amenable to playfulness and performance. As Grumet (1988, p, 140) observes of phonics pedagogy:

> Despite the drill sequences and the repetition and highly organized character of phonics, the mimesis and recitation of sounds that it requires are reminiscent of the echolalia that constitutes the babble of infants and early speech.

This is notwithstanding her own commitment to rich, meaning-oriented literacy pedagogy overall, featuring the committed work of informed, thoroughly professional teachers who recognize that 'the complexity and richness of the reading process are hospitable to multiple instructional approaches' (Grumet 1988, p. 140), and hence require phronetic judgement. Her view is consistent with Roy's explicitly Deleuzian account of reading pedagogy, which is addressed to 'the sense-nonsense relation', as a 'reciprocity [that] teaches us to explore the limits of what language can express' (Roy 2005, p. 108). Among other things, taking up such a (Deleuzian) view leads to 'a heightened sensitivity to language' (p. 140), not only on the part of those learning to read *but also* those engaged in teaching them to read. Such an understanding for teachers (and teacher-educators), as a component of their professional knowledge, has clear implications for practice. This involves due regard and indeed a re-assessment of the body, including its intrication with language and expressivity. As MacLure (2013, p. 663) writes, we need to find ways of 'engag[ing] more fully with the materiality of language itself – the fact that language is in and of the body; always issuing from the body; being impeded by the body; affecting other bodies'.

To this point, a case has been mounted for the body's significance in the professional practice of teaching reading, with specific reference to the early phase of schooling. Now the focus shifts to draw in a Deleuzian account of learning, knowledge and the body, with the view of connecting this explicitly with the teaching of reading, as elaborated to date. Cutler and MacKenzie (2011) work with Deleuze's argument in *Difference and Repetition* (1994) regarding what he calls the 'dogmatic image of thought' (p. 185). What Deleuze is referring to with this expression is the dominant view of thinking and rationality in Western philosophy, as realized especially powerfully in Descartes – what has become, in effect, 'the orthodox form of thought' (Sellar and Gale 2009, p. 105). Crucial to this is 'the postulate of knowledge' (Deleuze 1994, p. 207), formed wholly within a representationalist frame, and hence a denial or refusal of Difference, of the New. Deleuze (1994, p. 207) refers to 'the postulate of the end, the result, the postulate

of knowledge', which he further describes as 'the subordination of learning to knowledge, and of culture to method'. This is immediately apposite not simply to reading/pedagogy but to practice theory more generally.

Cutler and Mackenzie (2011) draw on Deleuze's account of swimming to argue that what must be recognised are what they call 'bodies of learning', moreover that 'learning' has priority over 'knowledge'. '[L]earning to swim is a process that requires the engagement of one's own body with a body of water' (Cutler and MacKenzie 2011, p. 53). Swimming is presented as quintessentially a practice: something one learns to do by actually doing it, that is by activity, engagement, and apprenticeship. 'We learn nothing from those who say: "Do as I do". Our only teachers are those who tell us to "do it with me", and are able to emit signs to be developed in heterogeneity rather than propose gestures for us to reproduce' (Deleuze 1994, p. 26). In learning to swim, there is more than one body involved – that of the swimmer – since what must be accounted for is the wave itself, as a body of water. Learning is, further, the practice of difference:

> When a body combines some of its own distinctive points with those of a wave, it espouses the principle of a repetition which is no longer that of the Same, but involves the Other – involves difference, from one wave and one gesture to another, and carries that difference through the repetitive space thus constituted (Deleuze 1994, p. 26).

But further to this, there is the body of knowledge, itself exemplified and embodied in the instructor, the teacher: 'there are always at least three bodies involved – the body of the swimmer, the body of water and the body of knowledge' (Cutler and MacKenzie 2011, p. 54). Thinking along these lines opens up new possibilities with regard to learning more generally, as a form of practice that is also an adventure of Thought. The challenge becomes one of 'creating new relationships between the three bodies involved in the learning process: organic bodies, physical bodies and bodies of knowledge' (Cutler and MacKenzie 2011, p. 59).

An intriguing analogy presents itself here, whereby this account of swimming, as 'a powerful story' (Semetsky 2013, p. 82), is drawn on to think about reading, and by extension reading pedagogy. Learning to read, learning how to read – how to go on – is an exemplary form of practice. One learns to read by reading, by firstly orienting oneself towards the book and the page, the surface of inscription, by adopting reading-like behaviours and comportment, by imagining oneself reading, desiring it, doing it . . . The teacher's challenge is to help/make this happen. S/he cannot *tell* the novice reader how to do it; there is no definitive (propositional) knowledge to be transmitted, and there is no singular Method. S/he 'merely' provides a model – the Model Reader, reading – and, as actively and imaginatively as possible, constructs and manages an environment rich in learning opportunity as well as resources, all the while encouraging and (re)directing the learner-reader in his/her reading, its *practice*. The reader reading, learning, is immersed in language, in what MacLure (2013, p. 658) describes as 'the materiality of language – its material force and its entanglements in bodies and matter'. This includes a deep engagement with what Deleuze calls '*sense*, this non-representing, unrepresentable, "wild element" in language' (MacLure 2013, p. 658), and hence its counterpart and complement, *nonsense*. This would seem especially apposite for early reading pedagogy. 'If we

are aware of the actual process of the struggle between sense and nonsense', as Roy (2005, p. 108) asserts, 'a reinvigoration or re-intensification of language can take place in our use of language'. Learning to read thus is about entering into the materiality of language, in all its intensity, its wor(l)dliness, and becoming-other.

From this viewpoint, reading pedagogy and more particularly the teaching of reading is to be understood as an interplay of bodies, and of making good connections – between text and reader, learner and teacher, language and the world. It involves capitalising on 'the body's power', understood in Deleuzian terms, as 'the capacity to multiply and intensify connections' (Semetsky 2013, p. 88). This adds another dimension to understanding reading pedagogy in terms of a reader/text/teacher triplet (Green et al. 2013), a three-way relationship at the very heart of modernist schooling and literacy pedagogy alike. *The body of the teacher – the body of the reader – the body of the text.* These come together in the teaching and learning of reading, expressly in the context of schooling. That is, attention is thereby drawn to the body-subject, on the one hand, with regard to both teacher and pupil, the learning-reader, and on the other, to the body of the text and of language itself, with the text also, in particular, 'standing in' for knowledge – which is to say, the body of knowledge at issue, in this or that particular transaction. While the focus here is on the teacher, as an embodied professional, a practiced/practising body – the teaching body with regard to teaching reading – there are, in fact, always other and indeed multiple bodies to consider. These are to be understood, moreover, as *learning* bodies, precisely because they are in practice, moving, feeling, etc. 'Learning happens when a body actualizes in practice the multiplicity of its virtual potentialities' (Semetsky 2013, p. 82). This refers equally to professional learning, potentially, as it does to school learning and reading pedagogy. Learning understood thus is always creative and transformative, a practice *par excellence* – in Deleuzian terms, a matter fundamentally of *actualization*. 'It is only actualization that engenders the new' (Grosz 1999, p. 27).

Conclusion

This chapter has taken up the challenge of (re)thinking the body in professional practice, learning and education through a Deleuzian lens. This has involved, among other things, a radical defamilarisation of how the body itself is to be understood. Working with notions of multiplicity and virtuality, in particular, and relatedly of affect and becoming, opens up ways of thinking the body differently. This makes it possible to think outside and beyond not simply what might be called the anthropomorphic body, but also the realist, representational body – the body of commonsense and of orthodoxy. As such, it provides a supplement to existing and alternative perspective on such matters, in pedagogy and research alike. Above all, perhaps, such an exploration hopefully encourages a more flexible, dynamic, creative understanding of practice and the body in professional education.

Working with young children is always an embodied activity, crossing the professional practice fields of health, education and care. This is something that is fundamental, in fact, to its functionality, its productivity: the very fact that bodies are necessarily foregrounded in how professionals and children interact and relate to one another, and that the practice itself is often essentially a corporeal conversation. That is a matter of risk, too, all the more so when realised in terms of gender and sexuality, as is inevitably the case in Early Years settings as they are currently and traditionally realised and understood. Moral panics over 'touch' (Piper and Stronach 2008) are the other side of the affective power to be observed in professional practice(s) such as discussed here, in beginning reading pedagogy, where bodies truly matter, in all their multiplicity, their complexity and their effectivity. Focusing on the implications and challenges of the embodied professional is therefore likely to be especially important and generative in such contexts.

Notes

1. This is not to say that such teaching isn't already highly professionalized and increasingly understood through rich theoretical lenses. It needs to be noted here, further, that considerable work is now available addressing the value of Deleuzian perspectives in Early Childhood education more generally (e.g. Sellers 2013).
2. See Watkins (2009) with regard to writing pedagogy, also in the Early Years.
3. See also Meek (1982) with specific regard to 'beginning early': 'Read something to the baby before he [sic] can talk. Put him [or her] on your knee with the book in front of you both' (p. 44).

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