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Professional learning as ‘diffractive’ practice: Rhizomatic peer coaching

Abstract

Acknowledging an abundance of technicist models for teacher continuing professional development (CPD), the authors draw from Deleuzoguattarian theory to frame peer coaching as rhizomatic practice. Rhizome theory enables engagement with the creative breaks and departures in peer coaching assemblages. Agentic and innovative teacher learning can occur when teachers can take lines of flight to think differently about their teaching practices. Deleuzoguattarian notions of rupturous lines signal teacher-generated possibilities for new initiatives. Located in an Aotearoa/New Zealand facilitated inquiry CPD context, the article explores how nine teachers engaged in a formal process of collaborative dialogue. A rhizomatic approach to dialogue encompasses a dynamic view of teacher learning. Openness to emergence can enable educators to theorise pedagogy creatively to potentiate a multiplicity of pathways forward.

Key Words: continuing professional development, rhizome, Deleuze, peer coaching, diffraction

Introduction

Collaborative continuous professional learning (CPD) needs to do more than promote collegiality. Considerations of teacher learning, agency and innovation are important features of transformational professional learning. Assemblages “are heterogeneous collections of actions and entities that somehow function together” (Bogue, 2007, p. 20). This article presents an data assemblage gathered during an Aotearoa/ New Zealand teacher CPD project that had a collaborative emphasis on inquiry and teacher agency. Mockler (2013) argues that the achievement of ambitious goals for teacher education will rely on “an agile teaching profession with a strong sense of purpose and a confidence in their own judgement and agency [and] an impoverished view of teachers and their work will not get us there” (p. 45). The impetus for this paper stems from our interest in the moments during facilitated professional development dialogue when teachers creatively shift in their thinking to take new directions in the focus of their learning. As teacher educators we are interested in exploring these practices that make

space for transformational teacher learning to take place. In keeping with poststructural theories we strive to avoid constructing a totalising narrative and falling into the trap of simplifying complex processes of teacher learning and development. Just as Mazzei and Jackson (2013) use the Deleuzoguattarian notion of plugging in to capture their methodology of complicating voice, we draw from our work as professional developers in a school CPD context (authors) to think differently about teacher peer coaching conversations.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) provide a box of tools –as an array of machinic concepts -that can be plugged into other concepts and made to work (Malins, 2004). Deleuzoguattarian theory can be used to forge different ways of engaging with research data. The “war machine” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 409) supports a rhizoanalytic approach to CPD, where teachers can engage their professional judgement creatively and act agentially to meet their own and their students’ learning needs. Rather than being a destructive influence, the concept of a war machine can have generative possibilities that are afforded through forces enacted within a group of relations or an assemblage. When captured in constraining forces of the state, for instance, rigid one-size-fits-all programmes of CPD, war-machines can lose their affirmative force or potential for “deterritorialization” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 56). Deterritorialization takes place through rhizomatic lines of flight where new ground is covered and fresh meanings can be revealed before there is any delimitation (Deleuze, 1995).

To explore the war machine (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) of a professional development initiative rhizoanalysis is used. Rhizoanalysis allows for practices that are “fluid, flexible, conjunctive, regenerating, and fun – not a place of dry linear intellectualisation” (O’Riley, 2003, p. 28). Through putting Deleuzoguattarian rhizome theory (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) to work, we deterritorialize formulaic CPD that is structured in such a way that there is little room for non-linear innovation. Engaging with lines of flight as ‘points of departure’ that take place in the smooth spaces of peer coaching conversations, we consider what language *produces* as teachers construct something new in their thinking and potentially their practice. In constructing this assemblage we use teacher voices, our own voices and voices from scholarship. These voices are hybrid, emerging and relational and co-constituted through social assemblages in schools (Taylor, 2013). They can be viewed as social configurations where parts plug in and out of each

other and energy flows in assemblages (Malins, 2004).

The article commences by engaging with concepts from the geophilosophy of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) and Barad (2014). An assemblage of these points of departure is shared to productively work with Deleuzian concepts of affective intensities, rhizomatics, lines of flight and diffractive practice. A rhizomatic approach to teacher learning is discussed. In the latter section of the paper, we explore a range of rhizomatic moments that emerge during peer coaching intra-actions and conclude with a discussion on the implications for teacher CPD.

Affective assemblages

This rhizomatic inquiry is an assemblage ethnography (Gale & Wyatt, 2013; Youdell & McGimpsey, 2014) that illustrates a series of departure points during the peer coaching dialogue ebb and flow. The notion of assemblage is both a metaphor and a strategy for constructing an ethnography that moves beyond engagement with the truth of one context to explore the lines of flight that can take place through affective intra-actions in school settings. Barad's (2014) conception of refraction demonstrates intra-action where bodies, material objects, ideas and discourses can come together and insights can be read through one another.

The assemblages are affective intensities where as researchers we were drawn into the collectively shared "emotional cultural biographies" (Skattebol, 2010, p. 79). Conceived as a "force" or "active relation" with "influence, intensity and impact", affect has generated an immense surge of interest over recent years (Wetherell, 2012, p. 2). Unlike emotion that operates at a physiological level, affect transcends consciousness and disputes "separations between mind and body; and between the individual, their communities and political contexts" (Skattebol, 2010, p. 78). Affect is generative and the intra-relationships between people can cause the original affect to transform (through sharing during dialogic professional development, in this case).

Affective flows are the heart of Deleuzian agency. Affects are prepersonal expressions that represent a change of state or capacities of an entity (Massumi, 1987, p. xvi). Fox and Alldred (2015) point out that rhizomatic changes within affective assemblages may be social, emotional, psychological, or physical.

Affects produce further affective capacities within assemblages (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988, p. 400); and because one affect can produce more than one capacity, social production is not linear, but ‘rhizomic’ (ibid. p. 7), a branching, reversing, coalescing and rupturing flow. (Fox & Alldred, 2015, p. 402)

These branching reversing and rupturing flows can be seen as rhizomatic intensities.

Rhizomatic CPD

There is growing interest in the application of Deleuzoguattarian theory to teacher education (McKay, 2013; McKay, Carrington & Iyer, 2014; Reilly, 2014). Thinking with rhizome theory (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), we explore how teachers can engage in embodied encounters during peer coaching CPD sessions. Teachers are always in a state of becoming and can be “understood as continually becoming different from themselves, as continually folding into new possibilities” (Ellwood, 2009, p. 33). Teachers are enfolded in the constant movement of the affective flows of the assemblage. These flows can be seen as lines.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe a range of lines (lifelines) that have different functions as they forge connections within and between assemblages. Firstly, break lines also called segmental or molar lines, are lines of territorialisation that colonise and exist in binaries. Secondly, crack lines or molecular lines are supple lines that support social formations and do not break with the status quo. Lastly lines of rupture or lines of flight are demarking a clean escape. These are movements of deterritorialization and destratification that form a break from what can be taken for granted and are the lines that are our chief concern in this article (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

Rhizomes can be seen as a multiplicity of lines connected with other multiplicities through these lines of flight. As non-static, non-linear becomings, rhizomes can be characterised by cracks, ruptures and lines of flight or deterritorialization (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987). The notion of becoming in Deleuzian terms destabilises fixed ontologies through these cracks, ruptures and lines of flight. Deleuzian ontology suggests that becoming takes the place of being and people become rather than are. “This perspective on being and identity creates alternative and unknown spaces for differencing and for individualization rather than centering on similarity and

sameness” (Hendricks & Koro-Ljungberg, 2015, p. 277). Davies (2009) writes of becoming in pedagogical terms of openness— as “being vulnerable and open to the unknown and to the other. Pedagogical relationality...opens up the possibility of learning differently...of becoming reflexive, creative makers of meaning, rather than mere recipients of over-coded, fixed knowledges” (p. 1). Becomings are unpredictable and this escape from sameness can be witnessed in the lines of flight that shoot through assemblages of discourse, troubling them and forging possibilities for new connections.

[They] break free from structure ... [They are] becomings, without future or past, without memory, which resist the binary machine... [They] leap from one line to another, between completely heterogeneous beings; cracks, imperceptible ruptures, which break the line even if they resume elsewhere, leaping over significant breaks... The rhizome is all this. (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 26)

Deterritorialization pertains to the movement or process by which something escapes or departs from a given territory. In turn reterritorialization relates to the ways in which deterritorialized elements recombine and enter into new relations in the constitution of a new assemblage or the modification of the old. These lines always tie back to one another, which is why a rhizome can never construct a dichotomy (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Through social networks we can see the affects of rhizomatics on thought and what is produced through it. Waterhouse (2011) contends that in thought, lines of flight forge novel connections and enable different kinds of thinking, the invention of a new idea or concept that disrupts the status quo and releases the creative power of affects. Lines of flight that signal affective flows are integral elements that are inherent in ongoing activity of rhizomatic assemblages. They are a key to the dynamic and non-linear conception of CPD that is proposed in this paper.

Conceptualising CPD as rhizomatic, we explore the nature of affective peer coaching intra-actions that enable teachers to take lines of flight in their thinking and, by extension, potentially their practice. Peer coaching is a dialogic co-constructive activity where teachers “engage in joint activities which are negotiated rather than imposed” (Wells, 1999, p. 227). A rhizomatic conception of CPD focuses on creative ways to think about teacher learning and practice. Lines of flight in a teacher CPD context are rhizomatic moments in peer coaching dialogues. Deleuze

and Guattari offer an ontology of peer coaching that is not static or linear in that it is affective and always becoming – in flux and flow.

Diffractional Intra-action

Teachers can collaborate in embodied spaces to work through their own classroom experiences and generate new pathways through the ‘mattering’ of peer coaching. We acknowledge the materiality of spaces and frame school based dialogues in this research as diffractive in that the physical presence of their objects and peers (researchers included) can enable people to read insights. Barad (2007) writes of the relationship between discourse and matter.

Discursive practices and material phenomenon do not stand in a relationship of externality to each other; rather the material and the discursive are mutually implicated in the dynamics of intra-activity. The relationship between the material and the discursive is one of mutual entailment. (2007, p. 152)

This article is aligned with writers who have made rhizomatic moves away from reflection as a simplistic way of thinking about teacher learning (McArdle & Coutts, 2010). For example, in their application of Deleuze to reflective practice, Done and Knowler (2011) critique Schön’s (1983) seminal work, emphasising that a rigid separation of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action that is limited by its positivistic emphasis on rational consciousness. Rather

[e]very practice situation involves memory as Deleuze and Guattari (1980/2004, p. 276) conceive it – as a becoming or movement where the past is both part of the continuous present and future-bound. There is no static Cartesian, Kantian or Husserlian transcendental consciousness that necessarily unifies experience, but instead an affected and affecting practitioner-subject that interprets practice settings uniquely by virtue of a memory that is theirs alone. (Done & Knowler, 2011, p. 850)

The data are an assemblage of non-Cartesian teacher voice through which lines of flight are mapped. These interpretations of teacher interviews do not convey truths but rather are shaped and filtered through the research process.

The Study

This research is located within five Aotearoa/ New Zealand schools that were undertaking CPD. As teacher educators we were charged with the task of assisting teachers to develop practices aligned with “Teaching as Inquiry” (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 35) and providing ‘assessment for learning’ CPD. More specifically, our role was to assist teachers and school leaders to develop cohesive school-wide assessment practices and processes in order to give effect to the New Zealand Curriculum.

The data are drawn from nine teachers although the wider study was conducted with thirteen teachers across five New Zealand primary schools. The CPD groups of two to four teachers engaged in a formal process of collaborative dialogue over two years. The teachers gave their informed consent when they responded to an invitation to participate in the research. The teachers analysed and critically explored student and teacher voice data that had been collected by peers or the researchers during a visit to their classroom. We participated in this analysis through presence in the dialogue although we did not actively direct it. The sessions were video recorded and viewed individually by the teachers. We spoke with the teachers after these videos were viewed to elicit the teachers’ thoughts about the nature of dialogue and learning afforded through the process.

The analysis that follows focuses on how teachers work rhizomatically to mine and interpret their classroom observation data. Masny (2013) observes that “rhizoanalysis eschews interpretation. To seek interpretation would be asking what something means” (p. 341). By engaging with a post-qualitative methodology, we strive to avoid the representational trap of trying to figure out what the teachers thought. “Post-qualitative research seeks not to get bogged down in categorization, in causal explanations, and in attempts to represent what already exists; its focus is, rather, on the encounters through which the entangled enlivening of being is emergent” (Davies et al., 2013, p. 680). We therefore resist the desire to create a coherent narrative (Mazzei & Jackson, 2013). Diffracting the data we have used for other qualitative studies (authors), we plug into the scholarship of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) to note where in the assemblages teachers took lines of flight to escape habitual patterns of teaching in their search for new territory. The following data assemblage is an arrangement that “forces or enables

thought” (Anderson, Kearnes, McFarlane & Swanton, 2012, p. 213) and provides illustrations of rhizomatic moments.

Lines of Flight

For Louisa, the teacher of year 3 students in a rural school, lines of flight were fast rhizomatic movements that emerged spontaneously as she heard herself talk. She took these lines of flight to push out and deterritorialize her thinking. For Deleuze (1997), to stutter is to “grow in the middle” (p. 107). It is a rhizomatic expansion similar to “an effable manner of walking, while rolling and pitching” (Deleuze, 1997, p. 111). We can see this Deleuzian stutter of ‘AND’, ‘AND’, ‘AND’ as Louisa articulates her departure in a ‘rolling gait’.

It was actually my out loud reflection reflecting and then I would build onto something else or I would— come to something and then go ‘oh and’ and then add onto it...When I was talking about the better questioning and more thinking and reflection time and all that happening in the classroom and then the personal experience and then I’d go talk, talk, talk, talk, talk - light bulb! (Louisa)

Through her “talk, talk, talk”, Louisa articulates an assemblage of aspects: the promotion of questioning; the use of ‘wait time’; the cuing of her students’ prior knowledge and reflection; and, her actions as a teacher. These elements connect rhizomatically to form a multiplicity – her assemblage that she calls a light bulb. Louisa did not make the rhizomatic connections until the talk happened.

Through talking with others I might have a couple of “hows” going on in my brain or sometimes I might not actually have an idea but it’s the talking with others that I go - that the light bulb. (Louisa)

The performance of constructing the assemblage through this AND, AND, AND (“talk, talk, talk”) creates new thought. Deleuze writes that “characters speak like they walk or stumble...speaking is no less a movement than walking: the former goes beyond speech toward language...” (Deleuze, 1997, p. 111).

I built on her experience and I actually turned it into something a little bit different actually to what she had shared but it was still built on her experience but I could do this. (Louisa)

Dialogue can be a rhizomatic collaboration, an ambling walk together as participants take lines of flight, their ideas emerging in the spaces between bodies. “The two becomings interlink and form relays in a circulation of intensities pushing the deterritorialization ever further” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 10). The affective flow is described as a tornado by Louisa.

It creates some enthusiasm I think like you could actually see it, you could see it was almost like watching something like you know build and build almost like a tornado building up or something you could hear just the tone in our voices and then we got faster blablablabla! (Louisa).

The stuttering of language becomes a performance, a becoming and in this diffractive, ‘mattered’ process, there is an affective flow between the colleagues in the space. Louisa’s colleague, Tina, who is in the same dialogue group, details experiencing this flow.

What I get so much out of is the motivation and the inspiration from my colleagues. You know, it’s ACTION. What I love most about it is that it’s really thoughtful focused conversation about something specific. And there’s her ideas and then mine and back and forth and I do find it really motivating and inspiring and I think that’s the biggest thing for me (Tina)

Belinda is a teaching principal of a small rural school. Sitting in her small office that has been converted from a shed, she describes how when she engages in dialogue with her colleague, Dee, she takes lines of flight as points of departure from the terrain she is familiar with. These departures provide opportunities for deterritorialization. This example illustrates rhizomatic teacher inquiry. Belinda’s line of flight to determine a new direction demonstrates a conception of professional learning that is more than just a series of movements from fixed points. Her professional learning is not linear as she frames her next steps from a place of curiosity.

You’re bouncing around off; you’re trying to make connections to what you already know. Something that you may have heard somewhere. What you’re seeing. So that

you're really trying to find a connection. I think, when you look back inside and think what's happening here? You also identify what you don't know. And if there's nothing, it's not finding anything to connect to, then you think I need to find out more about this.
(Belinda)

Dee works with Belinda. There is potentially an uneven power relation between Dee and Belinda with Belinda being the principal and Dee working only part time. Dee is older than Belinda and is encouraged to risk take in her inquiry process. She describes how she is enfolded in the professional learning assemblage when she evokes new ideas to promote change in her school.

But I think in our role as colleagues, sometimes you need to just throw things out there and see what happens because otherwise you do just accept the status quo. (Dee)

There is also a power relationship for Teresa who engages in diffractive dialogue with her more experienced colleague Kevin. Teresa and Kevin work in a New Zealand total immersion school where the students and teacher speak in *te reo Māori* (the Māori language) during lessons. (Māori are New Zealand's indigenous people). She takes a line of flight to deterritorialize what she sees as her senior colleague's approach to teaching and learning. Teresa notes the existing molecular line taken by her colleague and diffracts out to make her own meaning - to go to a different place through developing an alternative pathway that could be generative for her students.

I think although I can hear Kevin, I don't want to do it exactly the way he does things. I don't want him to think that I'm taking what he has and use it for myself. I want to come up with my own ideas. [His ideas] come from how he feels he needs to do things... I want to do things the way that I think will work for me. (Teresa).

Andy, a young, early-career teacher, speaks with the researcher about how in the video he engages in dialogue with experienced teacher colleagues - one of whom is his team leader. In the group dialogue Andy was a listener. When he mentions his teaching experience, the researcher asks both how it feels to be less experienced and the extent to which he thinks that this may influence the way he contributes to the group dialogue. The researcher, the video, Andy and the non-present colleagues comprise a rhizomatic assemblage of various affective flows. It is unclear

if the affective exchange between Andy and the researcher is uncomfortable. Agency is demonstrated in the affective flows of the recorded meeting spilling into the research interview assemblage. Andy surfaces power structures in both assemblages.

I don't think it does –not in that sense. I'm not threatened by it all. I'm not - I don't feel I'm down on any level or anything but I've got lots to learn from them. That video was good because I noticed I bided my time. I waited 40 minutes for my turn. I am a much better listener than I am talker. I know it might not seem like that now but I find it quite uncomfortable to talk and it's gotten like that over time. I used to be quite good with speaking but now I find it quite awkward. Actually professional things aren't so bad but it's that social aspect I find a bit hard. There's a knack to it. (Andy)

In pursuing Andy's response, the researcher probed further reminding him of the role of group members as questioners and coaches for each other, noting that because he was quiet, did he feel that he had a coaching role with others in the dialogue. Enfolded in the assemblage of the professional learning meeting, Andy spoke of his silent presence in the meeting.

Although I didn't really consciously go out to be quiet, I was really listening, I was aware that it was sort of what we'd looked at the week before - just listening because we tend to jump in and say things. So I was conscious of that. But I think I'm kind of like that anyway. (Andy)

The temporality of previous meetings and the present was brought together by Andy in the interview. Andy's connector from the professional learning talk the previous week to the recorded video footage (above), created a line of flight to a conversation about the purpose of questioning and how it changed the dialogic processes in the school. He describes a shift from the social ("a bit of a moan") to professional dialogue in an affective deterritorialization that promotes agency in that it potentially addresses group power structures.

Yeah - but it's the quality of questioning that you've introduced and I know Roberta talked about it last year. Moving from... just bit of a moan -to talking about professional things. And then actually really questioning what you're doing. (Andy)

Susan is the Associate Principal of a primary school in a large rural town and the designated leader of the junior school. Her line of flight is an ‘out of the blue idea’ that she recognises as such. This de-stratification comes about when in the dialogic moment she realises that she is closing down possibilities rather than enabling lines of flight.

It would be more effective if I learnt to question better because remember I popped in and I was trying to put words in her mouth. I don't know if you remember the bit –that I said did they have a purpose and I should have said “what do you think would have helped the children?” so I've got to learn in these situations to phrase what I'm saying in a way that makes them think rather than... (Susan)

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) note that “language is made not to be believed but to be obeyed, and to compel obedience... [it] is not life; it gives orders (p. 88). Susan articulates that her position as a team leader requires specific skills of her. These words are as utilitarian as a ‘shovel and or a pickaxe’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 88). She plugs in the peer coaching skill of questioning to her practice and, in a diffractive move on the basis of her experience in peer dialogue, identifies a direction for her own leadership practice. Rather than a telling approach where her order words directly connote her hierarchical position as a school leader, she acts to afford rhizomatic connections to be made. Thus in this becoming she moves to support her colleague’s learning through the development of her questioning skills.

Well I guess it's giving me the [peer coaching] skills, cause I go and observe at times to help with the questioning process - getting others to think for themselves. (Susan)

Kay teaches Information Technology and also works in a support role for other staff across the school. She is a member of the same peer coaching group as Susan. In the follow up interview the researcher asks her about the influence of Susan’s questions during the peer coaching dialogue. Kay describes them as a “curve ball”. It is possible that these questions promote diffractive moves to new classroom actions.

It's almost being forced to stop and think um you know - on the spot. Because a question from someone else, it's a different perspective. They're making you look at it from a different perspective and I think the questions made me look at things I hadn't considered

before. You sort of go along your own little path and someone throws a curve ball at you and you think oh, hang on a minute. (Kay)

Although Susan's order words come from a schooling improvement agenda, a conception that could be aligned with the war machine (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), Kay takes a line of flight forward, departing the conversation. The peer coaching assemblage of bodies enable diffractive departures. Kay speaks of a process that subverted hierarchical models of professional development where an experienced expert provides explicit teacher guidance.

I think it was the whole process of having that conversation here with you and Susan. [I was] listening to her and trying to help her think of things from a different point of view. (Kay)

The diffractive reading and lines of flight 'matter' (in a material sense), in that the materiality of the computers are integral to Kay's classroom assemblage. She comments on changes to her teaching.

And as a result of that I've noticed that the minute a kid hears 'I want to learn how to make my words a different colour', someone else a couple of computers down will say 'Oh I'll show you'. So it's really cool. It has actually changed the whole dynamic of the lessons. It's working really well. (Kay)

Kay further articulates her teacher actions that followed the peer coaching session.

[The] pace of the lessons [has changed]. I'm deliberately stopping the learning and we're winding up and talking and the kids are sharing the learning with each other. They have discovered something they can share with someone else. So it has been really good. It's made a difference. (Kay)

There now follows a discussion on how affective flows in professional learning assemblages can forge diffractive opportunities for lines of flight.

Discussion

With the abundance of technicist models for CPD, a Deleuzoguattarian approach to peer coaching as 'diffractive' practice provides rich possibilities for teachers and school leaders.

Points of departure are moments where teachers take lines of flight across the affective flows of

school assemblages. Dialogic lines of flight shoot through peer coaching assemblages, disrupting them and opening the way for new connections to happen. Teacher CPD is creative and dynamic when rhizomatic dialogue deterritorializes the stasis of taken for granted practices. The examples of data illustrate points of departure in ethnographic assemblages. They demonstrate practices where there is space for diffractive opportunities that point to potential transformations in teacher learning. By “re-turning” to think further about both professional learning and teaching practices, the teachers were able to turn the ideas over and over again afresh “– iteratively intra-acting, re-diffracting, diffracting anew, in the making of new temporalities (spacetime-matterings), new diffraction patterns” (Barad, 2014, p. 168).

Coleman (2007) notes that society organisation centres around the ordering of affective flows where the movements of life are controlled. Peer coaching that takes into account affective flows in schooling assemblages, embodies rhizomatic ebbs and flows. In rhizomatically oriented dialogue, teachers are freed from the “reductive molar workings of social organisations” (Albrecht-Crane & Slack, 2007, p. 102), to take lines of flight (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). In keeping with Deleuzoguattarian politics we do not focus our gaze on what language *represents* in these peer coaching moments, but rather what language *produces*. Therefore rhizomatic opportunities emerge during dialogue interplay when there is openness to emergence (Somerville, 2007); where there is space in the dialogue for these points of departure. As a further point of departure we wonder in what ways teachers who participate in forms of CPD, that recognise and actively foster deterritorialization, are inclined to foster student lines of flight in their own classrooms.

Although Albrecht-Crane and Slack (2007) write about classroom dynamics, their conception of the ‘politics of affect’ can be applied fittingly to CPD contexts. “What happens...often exceeds what is perceived as the task at hand and engulfs [researchers and] teachers in spaces of ‘affect’ that matter in the politics of everyday life” (p. 100). Furthermore, considering peer coaching contexts specifically, we echo Camden-Pratt (2009) who advocates that we should create conditions in which “teachers are able to take lines of flight [as] political act[s] with implications for the individual and the community” (p. 66).

To create fertile conditions for lines of flight, we envisage that those responsible for designing and implementing professional learning in schools could facilitate opportunities for intellectual space, silences, and teacher-driven articulations of practice. However, to prescribe a formulaic set of protocols could paradoxically constrain the very practices a rhizomatic coaching approach would aspire to achieve. Nevertheless, practices that support openness to emergence and divergence, would encourage lines of flight as generative initiatives. For all parties, this requires a significant shift from conventional coaching approaches that focus on the 'core business' of a particular skill development.

The intensities and sensations of the schooling assemblages where the dialogues took place comprise a multiplicity of thoughts, ideas that span multiple corporal agents. We noted a 'pedagogy of affect' and intrapersonal flow of animate and inanimate action between the bodies of the teachers as they co-facilitated lines of flight together. Deleuze and Guattari advocate thinking about agency in terms of how connections 'happen' rather than the actions of individuals (Albrecht-Crane & Slack, 2007). Teachers can constantly deterritorialize space and find moments of possibility for new possibilities and practices. It cannot be assumed however that teachers would automatically step into a rhizomatic approach to CPD. We envisage the practice analysis conversations could be sensitive to affective flows where teachers notice, recognise and respond to moments of rupture or unexpected emergence. Awareness of these moments could be facilitated through classroom video footage, where teachers select a particular classroom episode to discuss. Deliberate CPD approaches could enhance these processes. This is an area for further research.

The research data itself is rhizomatic in that, as a block of data, it has no beginning and no ending and researchers always enter in the middle (Coleman & Ringrose, 2013). Therefore it is not problematic that we do not trace the onward classroom connections. We do not provide a cartography with snapshots of classroom practice to supplement the lines of flight teachers took during the CPD dialogue. The provision of additional data is beyond the scope of this assemblage. However exploration of further assemblages could be a fruitful direction for ongoing research into rhizomatic practice. In this analysis, we offer a caveat that in exploring a diffractive approach to CPD we must avoid providing a new set of labels that teachers might use

to examine their peer coaching encounters. We note that the moments of departure were not frequent in the transcribed interviews. This suggests that these moments are infrequent and only occur when teachers are deeply engaged in a creative exploration of their practice.

During the research the contrast between school reform discourse and Deleuzoguattarian imaginings became apparent to us. The molar lines of institutional learning territorialise, control, and segment space and bodies in ways that supports the establishment of binary structures of professional development (Albrecht-Crane & Slack, 2007). However, it must be acknowledged that power relationships shoot through schooling assemblages. Although the teachers in their dialogic groups intra-act and respond to each other, we also acknowledge the potential danger of lines of flight that transcending CPD relationships that challenge what is deemed to be 'appropriate' and 'effective' classroom practice.

Conclusion

The purpose of this article is to draw attention to agentic points of departure in peer coaching. Those facilitating professional learning within schools, or external providers, can listen for moments of affective flow -when lines of flight become possible. Taking a decentred view of voice, we shun essentialised commentaries on how teachers as unitary subjects respond to their CPD dialogues. Rather, we look at the territories that the teachers inhabit to consider what the production of desire and affect can produce in a teacher professional development context. Deleuze and Guattari's geophilosophy enable the construction of assemblages of becoming that deterritorialize peer coaching practices as linear processes. The mobility of the assemblage frees the potential of these points of growth and enables diffractive practice as departures from predictable pathways for practitioner learning.

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