# **Tracing the Global in the Local**

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# Focus and Outline

- think about "the local" and "the global" as ideas (imaginaries?). What do they mean to us?

-  talk about how this relationship has been theorised and what might be a useful way to work with it to think about literacy policy

- give some examples from recent (mainly UK) policy

- suggest the local as a starting point for tracing and analysing global connections

# My own background and interest in this topic

- Adult literacy as a research area - data from *Changing Faces* project and beyond to the present – why it is telling example
- Policy and Practice – everything changes, everything stays the same
- Importance of theorising literacy - situated practices – linking the everyday and faraway
- The possibilities for intervening in the policy process

# Literacy as part of Social Practice

Literacies are part of social practices which are observable in literacy "events" or "moments" and are patterned by social institutions and power relationships. This approach encourages us to look beyond texts themselves to what people <u>do</u> with literacy, with whom, where and how
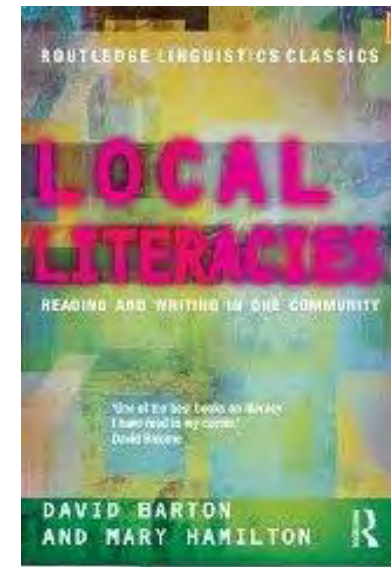
Barton, D. and Hamilton, M. (2nd ed) (2012) *Local Literacies: Reading and Writing in One Community.* London: Routledge

# Imagining the "the local" and "the global"

# Reading the Signs: Traces of the Faraway in the Local

This wall of the English Polish Asian Food store tells quite lot about changing communications and communities.

Note original date of the building over the door, also cctv camera and the wheely bin (red for businesses?) which are both signs of the time.

# Regeneration

## Retro Retreat: Midland Hotel in Morecambe

# Death bay at dawn

# Job Description Foyer night-worker

**Project Worker**

**Wage**

£ 17,500 per annum

40 hours per week, days and times to be agreed

**Location**

XXXXX, Lancashire PR1

**Duration**

Permanent

**Pension details**

**Description**

**How to apply**

You can apply for this job by visiting www.saha.org.uk and following the instructions on the webpage.

**Employer**

Salvation Army Housing Association

This is an exciting opportunity to work as a Project Worker at our foyer in [xxxxxx]. This important role includes working closely with young people to provide support and advice to enable them to achieve independent living. Identifying and addressing their needs forms a vital part of the role, therefore, you will need to work effectively with the whole team. You should be an effective communicator with an approachable nature and have the ability to deal with our tenants in a calm and understanding way. We are looking for a Project Worker with the ability to offer young people support with housing, employment, counselling and welfare benefits. Successful applicants are required to provide an enhanced disclosure. Or e-mail careers@saha.org.uk or contact the Customer Service Centre, Salvation Army Housing Association on……

Winner Of The Orwell Prize
**WINSTON SMITH**

GENERATION F
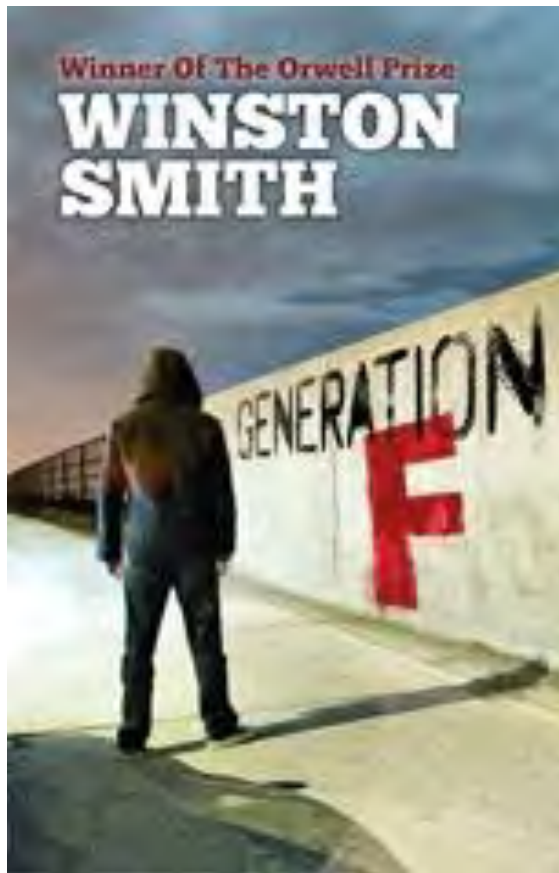
'*I bought that because that's my job, that tells everybody what my job is*'

# **Making sense of the local with The Jeremy Kyle show**

# To summarise: the faraway and the everyday are assembled through…..

- **first hand experience - intercultural and intergenerational contacts**

- **a sense of place** is mediated by experience and representations of localities

- **popular culture, public discourses**

- **interfaces with** public agendas, institutions and services

# Some recent ways of thinking about the relationship between the global and the local

- *superdiversity*
- *glocalisation*
- *institutional ethnography*
- *socio-material theory*

# *superdiversity*

□ Unprecedented migration and flows of people, cultures and languages have led to new levels of diversity within local settings

□ The contexts in which people orient their interactions reach far beyond the local communicative event itself.

Vertovec, S. (2007). Super-diversity and its implications. *Ethnic and racial studies*, *30*(6), 1024-1054.
Blommaert, J., & Rampton, B. (2012). *Language and superdiversity*. MPIMMG.

# *glocalisation*

**The global and local are inextricably and irreversibly bound together through a dynamic relationship, with huge flows of "resources" moving backwards and forwards between the two.** Neither the global nor the local exists without the other. The global-local develops in a symbiotic unstable and irreversible set of relationships in which each gets transformed through billions of worldwide iterations dynamically evolving over time.

Urry, J. (2003:84) *Global Complexity*, Polity Books.

# *institutional ethnography*

starts from the everyday, everynight activities of people

a social world that is *mediated through texts* which organise social contexts and the social relations that are at work within them

the idea of "institutional capture"

Smith, D. (2005) *Institutional Ethnography: a sociology for people.* Lanham: Altamira Press

# *socio-material theory*

Imagining Complex Social Processes.

Social reality is seen in terms of "flows" and "networks". ANT offers a framework for analysing the trajectory of a social project (like a policy)  the flow and concentration of resources within this project.

This fits with the idea of "glocalisation" as forces flowing between localities.

LaTour, B. (2005) *Reassembling the Social* Cambridge University Press
Fenwick, T. and Edwards, R. (2010) *Actor-Network Theory in Education*. Routledge

# Key Ideas within Socio-material theory

- Objects as well as human being have power and agency when linked together in networks

- The power of a network depends on its size and the actors "enrolled" into it

- In growing the power of a network, things get translated into new categories and re-defined as "in" or "out" or "irrelevant

- Travelling objects whose meaning can be stabilised are key to developing links between localities
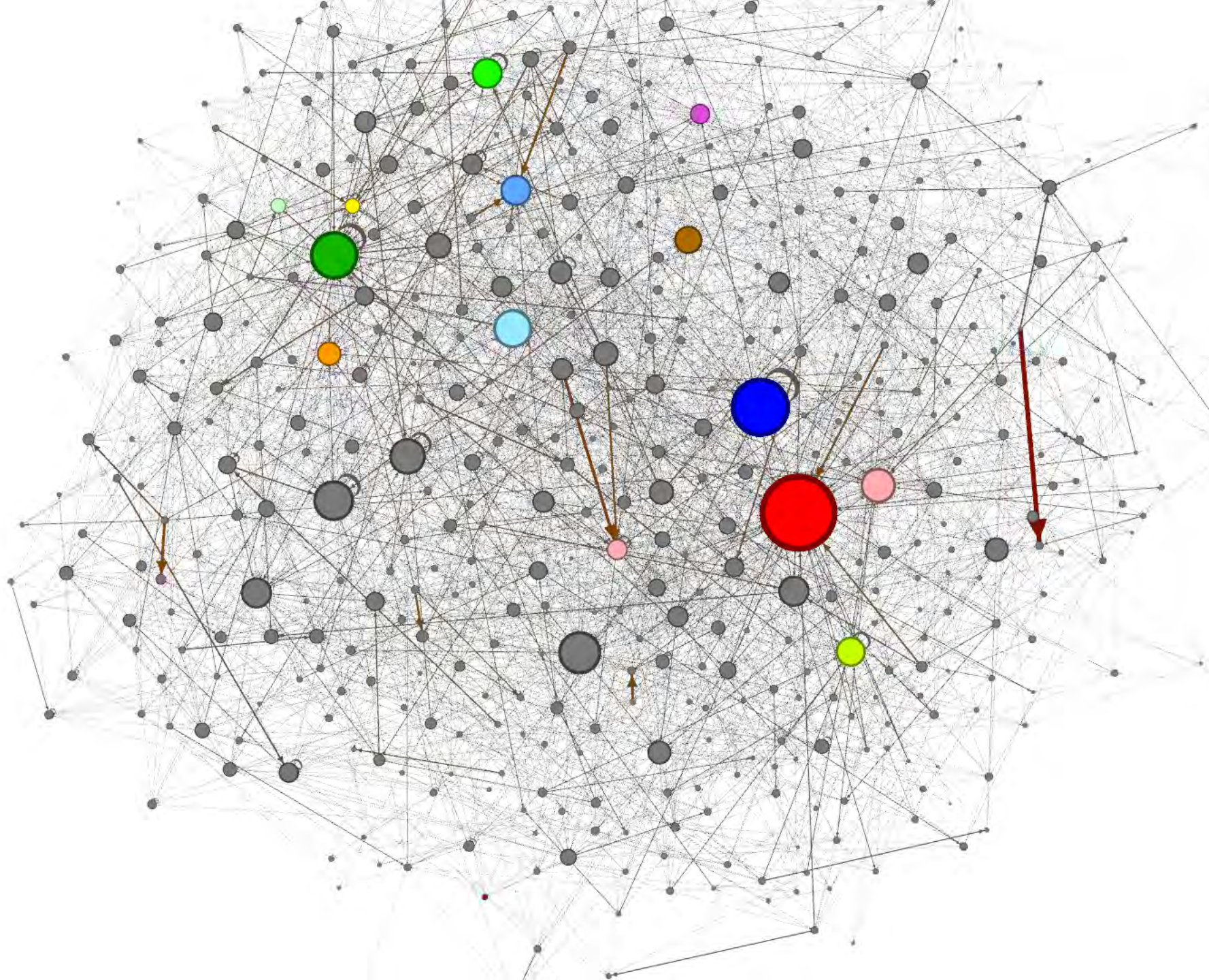
# Transnational actors within UK Adult Literacy Policy

- UNESCO – since 1950s; discursive, symbolic 'rights discourse' moral, humanistic level

- OECD – since 1980s, growing in importance; global citizen in the market place, economic prosperity; league tables and indicators based on expert evidence as levers

- EU – framing discourse (e.g. social inclusion) commensurability of qualifications and funding as levers; plus practical and material issues such as patterns of migration

# To understand the global and the local in literacy work we need to

☐ Keep our eyes firmly on the local – what people are doing

☐ Focus on the ways in which literacy and literacy learners are represented and categorised through texts and discourses of various kinds

☐ Trace how these texts and discourses travel: where do they come from and how are they carried (who by? and how? and where to?)

# How discourses have been carried with recent Adult literacy Policy in England

- ☐ Representations of Literacy and Literacy Learners in the Media

- ☐ Representations of Literacy and Literacy Learners in Policy Texts

- ☐ Alignment of National tests and curricula for Literacy with transnational discourses and frameworks

- ☐ Performance Indicators, generated from policy reach into everyday encounters between teachers and learners

# Multimodal representation: image, number, text

# The Power of Metaphor

**The Illiterate man
is like a blind man**

**Get rid of your gremlins**

# THE MATRIX
## The national standards for literacy, with examples and equivalents
**Adapted from *Moser Report*, 1998 and *Skills for Life* Strategy Document, 2001 p 46**

| National standard | At this level, adults will be able, for example, to: | School level equivalent (Key Skills, National Curriculum) | Curriculum reference | IALS Equivalence |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Entry 1 | read and obtain information from common signs and symbols | Level 1 (age 5) | **Rw/E1.1** | |
| Entry 2 | use punctuation correctly, including capital letters, full stops and question marks | Level 2 (age 7) | **Ws/E2.3** | |
| Entry 3 | organize writing in short paragraphs | Level 3 (age 9) | **Wt/E3.2** | Level 1 –crosses Entry level and Level 1 of National Standards |
| Level 1 Foundation Level 1 NVQ | identify the main points and specific detail in texts | Level 4 (age 11) | **Rt/L1.3** | |
| Level 2 Intermediate Level 2NVQ | read and understand a range of texts of varying complexity accurately and independently | GCSE A*-C (age 16) | **Rw/L2.3** | |

# What is the relationship between the ALLS and ACSF frameworks?

When comparing the levels across frameworks, a similar pattern was seen for both the reading and numeracy constructs. That is, Level 1 on both frameworks appeared to be similar in their complexity, whereas Levels 2 and 3 on the ALLS were found to be more complex than ACSF exit Level 2 and exit Level 3 respectively in both constructs, with the difference more pronounced for reading. That is, ACSF reading exit Level 3 appeared to be more similar to ALLS reading Level 2 than ALLS Level 3, and ACSF reading exit Level 4 was closely aligned to ALLS reading Level 3. For numeracy, the difference between frameworks at Levels 2 and 3 was still evident, but not as pronounced as seen in the reading construct. The indicative empirical relationship between the levels is summarised in table 1.

**Table 1   Empirical alignment of ACSF to ALLS by ACSF level**

| Reading | | Numeracy | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ACSF level | ALLS level | ACSF level | ALLS level |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 2 | 1–2 | 2 | 1–2 |
| 3 | 2 | 3 | 2–3 |
| 4 | 3 | 4 | 3–4 |
| 5 | 4–5 | 5 | Uncertain |

The small number of ratings made against Level 5 numeracy items meant that the relationship between the ALLS and ACSF frameworks at this level could not be determined reliably; hence, the inclusion of 'uncertain' in the table.

# The Skills for Life Strategy

"A shocking 7 million adults in England cannot read and write at the level we would expect of an 11-year-old. Even more have problems with numbers. The cost to the country as a whole could be as high as £10 billion a year. The cost to people's personal lives is incalculable. People with low basic skills earn an average £50,000 less over their working lives, are more likely to have health problems, or to turn to crime."
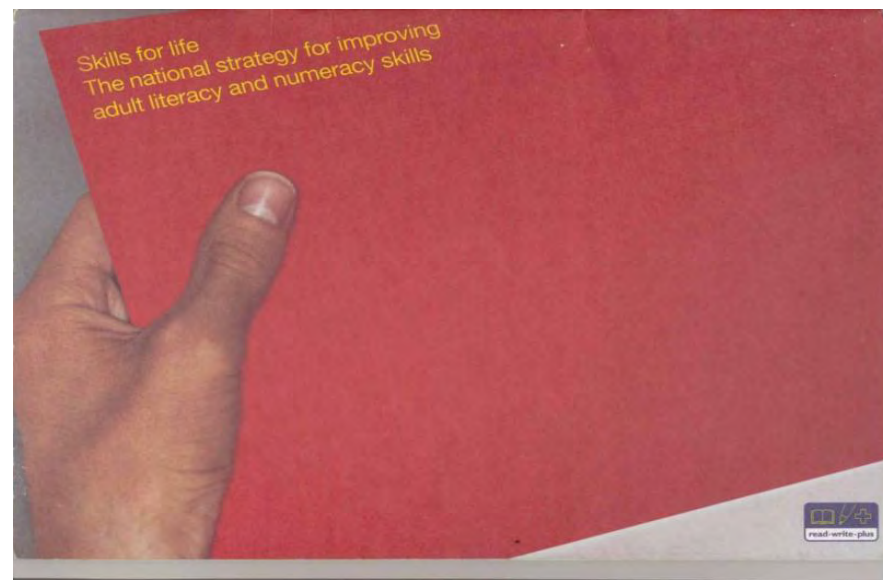
# National Foundation Skills Strategy for Adults

"More than 7.5 million Australian adults do not have the literacy and numeracy skills needed to participate fully in today's workforce…. The Gillard Government is driving vital reform with state and territory governments to ensure that all working-age Australians have the necessary foundation skills to succeed at work and share in the prosperity of the nation"

## *Using Learner testimonies to speak the policy line*

Wayne wants to become a studio sound engineer. At his home in Jamaica, he spent some time around singers and studios. He recognised that to be a sound engineer he needed proper training, and applied for courses, but his basic skills were not good enough.

By the end of November he had started to improve his written and spoken English and Maths.

"It's a wonderful feeling," he says. "I think coming on the course has changed me. It's made me have a wide open mind. I feel cool and calm, thinking constructively."

He is keen that other people know about adult literacy and numeracy courses and join one themselves.

SARAH DINGLE: In Sorell, east of Hobart, Don McKenzie has gone back to school. The 49 year old has been illiterate for most of his life after he dropped out in Year 8.

DON MCKENZIE: My reading and writing before I came to these classes was totally crap. You know, I never used to be able to pronounce real long words.

SARAH DINGLE: And your maths?

DON MCKENZIE: Maths, well, I still need a hell of a lot of work to do on that.

SARAH DINGLE: Half of all Tasmanians aged 15 to 74 are functionally illiterate. This means they don't have the skills needed to just get by in the modern world, like filling out forms or reading the instructions on their prescriptions. This can have a devastating impact on their everyday life.

DON MCKENZIE: I used to lock myself up a fair bit inside. When we used to go shopping I used to just sit in the car.

What I was afraid of was going into the shop and then I can't understand what the labels are and stuff like that and I'd get the wrong thing and stuff. And I'd think well I'm not going to do that just in case I'm getting the wrong thing and I could end up poisoning someone.

SARAH DINGLE: Don McKenzie has never been formally employed.

# re-presenting the local

- The examples I have offered show how involve the experience, characteristics and aspirations of the social actors involved with adult literacy education are re-presented in texts of various kinds

- Representations of adult learners "smooth out" and delete the complexities of lived experience.

- Policy documents present narratives about adult literacy that fit the preoccupations of current political and economic contexts

- These representations are ubiquitous in the media and reach into literacy classrooms

International TESTS AND SURVEYS

MEDIA

Commercial Educational Products and Services

Travelling Academics

POLICY Agents

ACTIVISTS

FRONTLINE SERVICES TEACHERS AND LEARNERS

# *Beware of global solutions that frame local problems*

- ☐ Important to focus squarely on the local – not as a bounded location but as a starting point for tracing and analysing global connections

- ☐ Technical/scientific processes always involve creative imagination and local actions

Steiner-Khamsi, G. I. T. A. (2013). What is Wrong with the' What-Went-Right' Approach in Educational Policy?. *European Educational Research Journal*, *12*(1), 20-33.