

DANSEDAGE MED UNGE

en kunstnerisk co- produceret film
om krop, lederskab og kreativitet

Helle Winther Lektor, ph.d.

Institut for Idræt og Ernæring

Københavns Universitet

og

Mette Skovhus, Lektor

VIA University College, Pædagoguddannelsen i Randers



Dansedage med unge - om bevægelsesglæde, innovation og lederskab



Winther, H. (2018). Dancing days with young people: An art-based coproduced research film on embodied leadership, creativity, and innovative education . *Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 17. DOI:

Utraditionelt samarbejde

Denne film blev skabt i et tæt samarbejde mellem

21 studerende - 200 gymnasieelever

Dokumentarfilmsinstruktør: Helle Toft Jensen

Musiker og komponist: Sten Ørting

Kreativ filmklipper: Ghita Beckendorff,

Tekniker: Oskar Fanta

Underviser & forsker: Helle Winther



Udfordringer og muligheder

Research shows that it can be **challenging** for many young people to develop teaching competency and **the leadership** they will need in their impending work as teachers (Diddams & Chang, 2012; Lundvall & Meckbach, 2008; Winther, 2012; Jørgensen, Winther, Nybo & Svendler Nielsen, 2018).

This is an issue which applies to many professional areas, including **movement teaching and dance** (Lundvall, & Meckbach, 2008; Mattsson & Lundvall; 2015; Rustad, 2017; Jørgensen, et. al. 2018).

On the other hand, research also shows that there is a clear **connection between embodiment and leadership** (Winther, 2012; 2013; Berg, 2018; Ladkin & Taylor, 2010; Avolio, Walumbwa, Weber, 2010; Ashkanasy & Dasborough, 2010).



Taking the Beautiful Risk of Education

Biesta's writing too is a framework for the rationale of this project.).

In his critical writing, Biesta (2013) states that teachers and educators in present-day society are increasingly asked to take the risk out of education in order to create strong, secure, effective and predictable courses of study.

Such an orientation, Biesta states, is not just about how we can get the world into our students – but perhaps more importantly, how we can help our students to involve in, and thus come into the world (ibid).



Research questions

Therefore, the research questions examined how we can develop somatic awareness, creativity and embodied leadership through innovative educational processes.

And how close-to-practice, *artistic elicitation methods* may contribute to both **researching and portraying** this process.



Artbased research – performative social science

Here, the possibilities for transforming research data into *artistic* productions, either as ethnodrama, performance, film or dance, have been developed throughout the years (Bagley and Canzienne, 2002; Douglas & Careless, 2008; McNiff, 2009; Roberts, 2008; Snowber, 2002; Sparkes, 2002; Sparkes, et al., 2003; Jones, 2017; Pink, 2014).



To hear the heartbeats of other people

Art-based and performative research practices have the possibility to help researchers give insight into lived experiences and "**hear the heartbeats**" of other people (Richardson, 2004; McMahon, 2016).

They can emphasize the dynamic and expressive tone of the data, and hence have the possibility to sustain sensory life in the experiences, which other forms of representation may not have. Furthermore, they have the possibility to lead the audience on a **journey, after which they come away with a sense of what the experience must have felt like** (Sparkes, 2002).



The film

When the butterfly and the idea of the film came, it was not a question of how to transform data into an artistic production, but rather an idea about documenting, researching and visualizing the whole vivid educational process through a creative visual medium.



A progressive process

The film follows the students through a progressive process in which they gradually learn to be the captains of their own ships.

The film also documents Dance Day, where the young university students teach 200 high school pupils various styles of dance.

Here there's also focus on creating joy in movement, creativity, and fellowship across age, sex and culture.

The students



Three phases

First phase: Dance, teaching roles and embodied leadership competence.

Second phase: The students teach each other in independently chosen dance styles - microteaching and peer feedback

Third phase: Youth and Leadership Dance Day



Two interwoven tracks

During the initial phases, the film instructor and I therefore agreed on letting the film answer the research questions via two interwoven tracks:

One track is the documentation of the education process **chronologically**.

The other track is following several students and the themes in their **subjective yet interwoven processes in** the mirror of the chronological phases.



From enemy stuff to love and leadership

"Dancing itself is now progressively less unfamiliar to me, but tomorrow I'll still be moving out into deeper water than I've done spontaneously previously. Just personally, I know that I'm a very sensitive person who can easily let my feelings change rapidly and let them get control over me. Therefore, one of the important things tomorrow is, that I can have good self-contact in order to avoid getting into one of the three classic reactions to insecure teaching: fight, flight or freeze."

"I'm prepared for the role of leader – especially after the microteaching sequence – I feel capable of taking the room and holding it while I'm teaching. Now only time will tell, if this succeeds"



How films are seen, sensed, created and expressed is also shaped by the cultural values and experiences that both the photographer - and later the viewer, bring to them

How film - and images - are seen, sensed, created and expressed is also shaped by the cultural values and experiences that both the photographer, and later the viewer, bring to them (Liebenberg, 2009; Hearing & Jones, 2018).

This was also a theme present in this project. At the same time as the filmmaker was making the documentary, she was also a co-researcher together with me. As she was familiar with documentary films, performative research methods seemed to be very close to her world.

Furthermore, she was the one who chose the camera's angles – an “eye” that could thus also be regarded as a subject of research.

(



The fusion of art and science

▪

Composing the film - the collaboration between the film instructor, the researcher and the creative editor.

Creating music from the inner ear.

Collaboration with the musician



12 minutes

In spite of the film lasting only 12 minutes, it builds on, as mentioned, a large amount of data.

This applies to both the filmed material, the themes of the film, the young people's vivid movement expressions, and their spoken voices.

The themes are also reflected in the students' inner voices and phenomenological-inspired experience descriptions.

They form a partly unexpressed sounding board in the film.



From enemy stuff to love and leadership

"Dancing itself is now progressively less unfamiliar to me, but tomorrow I'll still be moving out into deeper water than I've done spontaneously previously. Just personally, I know that I'm a very sensitive person who can easily let my feelings change rapidly and let them get control over me. Therefore, one of the important things tomorrow is, that I can have good self-contact in order to avoid getting into one of the three classic reactions to insecure teaching: fight, flight or freeze."

"I'm prepared for the role of leader – especially after the microteaching sequence – I feel capable of taking the room and holding it while I'm teaching. Now only time will tell, if this succeeds."



Challenges

The filmed material has a fullness that even with large amounts of written data; it would be difficult to convey it briefly.

Beyond this, throughout the whole process, we acknowledged artistic feeling and our different intuitive voices in order to let the material speak to our heads, arts and hearts.

At times, these various languages unified and melted together, and everyone was enriched.

At other times, we had discussions between the arts.

And many times, one of us had to make a compromise.

Ethical issues- and the students



The significance of music

With reference to Denora, 2001 (p. 165), Carless & Douglass (2011) states that although music is found everywhere in modern societies, *"the significance of music's ubiquity often goes unnoticed within social sciences."*

Music, rhythms and instruments have the capacity to communicate experiences in powerful ways, expressing human emotions as well (ibid; Winther et. al., 2015).

Given the expressive power of music, choosing the instruments and rhythms, and finding the tones was also challenging in the film process.



The unexpressed emotional universe

Only after several attempts, – and long nights for the musician, did the music begin to take form.

We found each other, and the music began to play its own role in a research narrative, that is primarily carried by the visual filmic expression, and by both concrete and interpersonal dance – including also the partially unexpressed emotional universe.

It was obvious to both of us when the music and the chosen instruments were resonating with the chosen themes of the story and the young people's various emotional tones in the film.



Challenging the risk of education

The co-produced film, the music, the students' underlying voices, and this text show one of many ways to develop body awareness, creativity, and leadership through innovative courses of education.

It is not an easy task. It opens up for innovative educational processes, which do not minimize, but rather challenge the risk of education.



Art or Science?

"What is Performative Social Science (PSS) then, Art or Science? It isn't one or the other. It is a fusion of both, creating a new model where tools from the Arts and Humanities are explored for their utility in enriching the ways in which Social Science subjects might be researched and/or disseminated or communicated to various communities." (Jones, 2017, p. 2)



Now

"Now it's time to dare to come forward. I put out my chest and straighten my back. I smile to the participants, while I take a step closer to them, so they can hear me better. I remind myself to speak clearly and distinctly. I look out at the mass of people. I can see all of them, and they can see me. All right – let the dance begin."

Haka

Hip-hop

Salsa

Cha-cha-cha

Jumpstyle

