

## Looking for Children's Experiences in Movement: The Role of the Body in "Videographic Participation"

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**Key words:**

videography;  
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**Abstract:** The focus of this article is to give insights into how videography and phenomenological philosophy and methods (GENDLIN, 1997; TODRES, 2007; SHEETS-JOHNSTONE, 1999; VAN MANEN, 1990) are used in combination to explore how embodied learning as a phenomenon can be understood in dance and movement education. A field study carried out with a second grade class in a school in Copenhagen during a year is used as an example of how these methodological inspirations are combined with the purpose of exploring how a video camera and the researcher's embodied involvement can be used to get close to children's bodily expressions and experiences in movement. "Videographic participation" as a method has been developed to help solve the challenge of getting close to and communicating children's embodied experiences.

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## 1. Introduction

*How can I create knowledge about learning processes in movement that touch children at an embodied and existential level that is, other kinds of learning processes than those leading to skill development? How is it at all possible to explore embodied experiences? And how do I communicate the children's, the teachers' and my experiences in ways that touch other practitioners in the field of dance and movement education? How do I act in relation to my own body's role and influence on that which I wish to dig deeper into? It is not easy. Not at all. Video observation and interviewing are methods that are often used in qualitative research. But how can observation with a camera and interviewing be carried out in ways that widen the possibilities of understanding that which goes on at an embodied level? So they become more than methods for documentation of what was said and done? And how much can I allow myself to influence the praxis that I explore? Is it at all possible not to? When one participates as a human being? One who is present? Can I instead make a deed of my role? Now when I do not think that it helps ignoring it? When I believe much more that my active and empathic participation is the approach that can contribute to developing new ways of understanding children's experiences of their bodies? And as a consequence also new ways of working within dance and movement education? Ways that highlight the body as lived and living in a phenomenological sense? [1]*

The opening of the article highlights some of the thoughts and challenges that I am dealing with when doing research focusing on embodied learning. The methodological challenges of getting to know more about children's embodied experiences and learning processes in dance and movement education move around questions of how to create knowledge about "the bodily." Because when entering the sensuous dimensions we find ourselves in "places" where words no longer exist. Or perhaps they exist in some way? We *can* tell about experiences we have had and we *can* see what people do and make meaning of their actions, both when they are alone and interacting with others. We all do this intuitively in our daily lives and a teacher also does it in his/her lessons. The challenge is that I wish to bring this knowledge to a more conscious level and to communicate my findings in forms that put the body into play in embodied ways. I meet the challenge with inspiration from different methodological approaches. Let me therefore begin by zooming into these approaches. [2]

The article will start with an introduction to what aspects from videography, phenomenology and performative social science are the inspirations of this research. Then a situation from a dance lesson is presented as an example of the empiric material that I have collected during a project followed by an analysis of the phenomenon of attention, the phenomenon which appears to be central in the situation. Finally the concrete steps of the research process are laid out and the article closes with a discussion of the significance of research that works with different kinds of narratives. [3]

## **2. A Videographic and Phenomenological Way into Experiences of Movement**

When using video in a qualitative research process the film media can be more than a way of documenting what happens in the field in a positivist sense, and it can be more than just another and more "lively" way of expressing findings. A researcher with a camera can come very close to the participants' actions and both verbal and non-verbal expressions. It is also possible to focus on becoming attentive in an embodied way, because one can follow the processes very closely without pausing to take notes. [4]

Anthropologist and film director Perle MØHL (2003, p.163) states that filming is "a knowledge creating practise" and by "going filming to a field" one can create a scene for production of new insights. Videography as a methodology is about working ethnographically with video and by use of the recordings describe and interpret human actions as they occur in natural settings (BJÖRKLUND, 2007). The way of working with videography that I have developed is inspired by phenomenology of the body (TODRES, 2007; GENDLIN, 1997; SHEETS-JOHNSTONE, 1999), hermeneutic phenomenology (VAN MANEN, 1990; RICOEUR, 1991), videographic approaches to the study of teaching and learning described by RØNHOLT, HOLGERSEN, FINK-JENSEN & NIELSEN (2003) and by performative social science (JONES, 2007; GERGEN & JONES, 2008). With the technological possibilities we have in the Western world today the use of visual research methods has become increasingly widespread (KNOBLAUCH, BAER, LAURIER, PETSCHKE & SCHNETTLER, 2008). In the areas of dance and movement it has been a challenge to communicate knowledge created about people's experiences of movement and processes going on at an embodied level. In these areas there is also an increasing understanding of the fact that video observation as a method can be very useful to catch the bodily actions and processes and that audiovisual narratives can be a way to communicate people's expressions and experiences. Central to the research approach presented in this article is that a performative and phenomenologically inspired videographic research process can help creating new insights into people's first-person perspectives communicating both the verbal and the nonverbal dimensions of their experiences. [5]

### **2.1 Body phenomenology: A theoretical base for exploring experiences of movement and the body's role in research**

Phenomenological research always starts "in the lifeworld" (VAN MANEN, 1990, p.7) and has as its aim to create deeper understandings of what meaning people make of experienced phenomena. Central to phenomenological research is that methods have to be developed along the way so that they can help to explore the phenomena that are in focus and in dialogue with the concrete praxis that the investigation is part of (p.29). Body phenomenology as an epistemological base can give tools to come close to "the felt sense" (GENDLIN, 2007)—both the participant's and the researcher's. The embodiment of the researcher is

significant because our experiences as human beings play a role in the ways that we conduct research and in what knowledge we are able to create. [6]

Following the Finnish dance researcher Jaana PARVIAINEN (2002) a dance teacher makes use of embodied experiences and kinesthetic empathy in order to understand the pupils' experiences and help them learn. In a phenomenological understanding empathy is "an act of knowing within others" (p.151) and PARVIAINEN emphasizes that one can create knowledge about another person's embodied experiences through verbal communication or empathic understanding. PARVIAINEN is inspired by former dancer and now body phenomenologist Maxine SHEETS-JOHNSTONE who states that: "(...) we can distinguish kinetic bodily feelings such as smoothness and clumsiness, swiftness and slowness (...) we make bodily-felt distinctions" (1999, p.57). To be able to conceptualize such movement nuances demands sensitivity for differences in the qualities of movement and to be able to dive into and understand others' movement experiences and expressions. In body phenomenologically based research the embodied experiences of the researcher are of great importance for the knowledge that can be created (DEPRAZ, VARELA & VERMERSCH, 2003). During many years I have worked on developing my embodied sensitivity and my abilities within scenic expression through different dance techniques. These experiences are with me through all phases of the research as will be illustrated in the following paragraphs. [7]

In qualitative research data is often primarily collected focusing on the information that we can receive through the eyes and the ears (ALEXANDER, 2003). The sight and the hearing are thus often given more value than other senses and ways of collecting data. If one wants to put emphasis on the body's multi-sensuous possibilities and meanings it is not enough to use one's eyes and ears, one will then also have to "listen" and "see" by means of other senses and pay attention to what one feels through the experiences, how "the felt sense" appears (GENDLIN, 2007). [8]

In videographic investigations video recordings are traditionally used to register what can be seen and heard. But a body phenomenological inspiration makes it possible to underline that participation in a praxis is multi-sensuous, i.e. visual, auditive, kinesthetic, etc. Using "videographic participation" is therefore a way to widen the focus to what we can see, hear, feel, sense or shortly put: *experience* with the *whole* body, also when using a video camera to collect data. [9]

## 2.2 Hermeneutic phenomenology: Interpreting the "texts of life"

In educational and other practice oriented contexts we need to pull themes out of phenomenological first-person narratives in order to be able to discuss what is going on and how we can use the experiences in other situations and contexts. Max VAN MANEN (1990) suggests a hermeneutic phenomenological approach which basically is characterized by a process interested in the production of texts. But when "text" as is the case by philosopher Paul RICOEUR (1991) and VAN MANEN (1990, p.7) is understood in a broad sense—as every kind of expression

that carries meaning—it is central that the conceptualization not only takes place in the written word, but as in the research presented here also in production of (audio) visual narratives. In such processes the development of theory becomes the result of reflections in and about praxis and the theory which is developed can contribute to making us more conscious about what we do when practicing (p.15). Phenomenological first-person descriptions (here: the "voices" of children and teachers and my descriptions of the children's actions and expressions) can help to get to the core of a phenomenon (in this case embodied learning) by making special themes and qualities visible. But in a constant hermeneutic forward and back between parts and whole dialogue between the empiric (praxis) and the conceptualization (development of "text") it is possible to give insights as to how phenomena appear in a praxis and contribute to describe deeper understandings of "the 'texts' of life" (p.4). [10]

### **2.3 Performative social science: Developing knowledge about the non-verbal**

Performative social science (JONES, 2007; GERGEN & JONES, 2008) is a relatively new methodological frame of reference that supports and appreciates that it is possible to experiment with artistic knowledge production within humanities and social sciences. Performative social science can be used to create other understandings than for example "a strict report of the interview statements would have been" (GERGEN & JONES, 2008, §5). The ways that the art forms can inspire research is through their methods and the courage to experiment in the process as it is seen as crucial to let cognitions appear through the process. The process in the research presented here departs from more traditional hermeneutic phenomenological analyses that I present in performative form and as a parallel thread I work performatively with pictures and video material. I use the performative dimension as an analytic strategy where connections appear while I create narratives in words, pictures and video, and I also use this dimension as a way of communicating the findings of the hermeneutic phenomenological analyses in a performative form with the purpose of opening for an embodied understanding of the reader (JONES, 2007). [11]

Narrative and performative research approaches can obviously be connected to body phenomenological theories and the narrative tradition in educational science (BRUNER, 1986, 1990) and within human and social (sport) sciences (SPARKES, 2002; SMITH, 2007; ENGEL, 2008; WINTHER, 2008). The latter puts emphasis on the role of the narrative in processes of cognition and body phenomenological theory (SHEETS-JOHNSTONE, 1999) discusses how form (the how) and contents (the what) are interwoven in meaning-making processes. The coupling between the performative as artistic processes and the phenomenological as an epistemology has the purpose of creating experiential knowledge about the actions and intentions of human beings and discussing the valuable meanings that can be experienced and interpreted. [12]

### 3. Intermezzo

During a year I carried out a field study with a second grade class (eight year-olds) in a school in the center of Copenhagen focusing on the children's learning experiences in dance and movement education. Alongside the compulsory physical education lessons the class had dance as a separate subject with a dance educator who came into the school to carry out the teaching as part of a municipal project. In the following I give an example of how I caught situations from the lessons of the class with my camera, transcribed and analyzed them and here communicate what I experienced in the situation through the production of narratives in words and pictures (Figure 1). [13]

#### 3.1 Dance of the heart

*Second grade has a project about the Danish poet Hans Christian Andersen. I am holding my digital video camera following Tom and Frida closely. We are midways in a dance lesson in which they are working on creating a short choreographic piece. They start by selecting forms from a paper clip that they have cut inspired by paper works of Andersen. They take turns in suggesting movements and are deeply involved in trying out each other's suggestions. One of the forms from the paper clip that they have chosen is a heart. They both lie down on the floor and mirroring each other they make a heart shape; they lie on their sides and their feet meet in the end of the heart, they use their arms to make the curves of the heart and their fingertips meet in the middle. I am standing just beside them filming close-up, but they do not seem to take notice of neither me nor the camera. They have their attention focused on one another and the common work. With a shy smile Tom makes a wavy movement with his arms. He follows Frida who moves her arms in soft waves up and down, up and down, up and down. A new idea is occurring to Frida: "And then we could make one like this [she turns around herself whilst moving her arms up and down around her body in a wavy movement]. Tom answers: "Yes, we can do that" [while trying Frida's movement] "and we could also do like this!" [he continues Frida's movement by stretching his arms out from his body]. Frida also makes a stretch-the-arms-out-from-her-body movement and continues turning and waving the arms around herself. They wave and stretch the arms while turning around themselves on the spot. I follow them closely with my camera. I completely forget my intentions of broadening my focus to the rest of the children once in a while. What goes on in this long moment between Tom and Frida is so intense that I just have to follow while they do their little phrase again and again and again ... Now it is time for everyone to gather and all the groups to show the others what they have come up with. Tom and Frida are last. When they finish their little performance a girl spontaneously says: "I think it is nice that Tom moves like that—I don't think many boys would dare doing that!" And the dance teacher adds: "Yes, it was really fantastic to see the attention between you."*



Figure 1: Dance of the heart: A visual narrative (captures from video recordings © the author) [14]

### 3.2 Exploring the phenomenon of attention in a creative process

What happens in the process when Tom and Frida work together to choreograph a little dance piece? Both the dance teacher, the girl who spontaneously comments on their performance and I fall under the spell of the attention between the two. Attention seems to stand out as a central phenomenon in their creative process. Attention can be of different qualities: It can be sensuous and emotional —i.e. it can be seen and felt as a kind of quietness in the group or among single children, or as a kind of directedness expressing that they are directed against the common task. Whether a child or a group of children are attentive can also be interpreted through what they express in words and the way they use their voices. When this is the case the phenomenon of attention is thus of a more "cognitive" quality. Attention can both be expressed and experienced with different qualities and for many different reasons, which is why the viewpoint of the children is also important in the interpretation of the processes that are going on in a lesson. It can be important to know what has happened earlier in the lesson and in other lessons. The situation in which I followed Tom and Frida stands out in clear

contrast to the dance lesson they had the week before when there was another girl in their group. A couple of times during that lesson the other girl made Tom cry. His tears the week before and his deep involvement in the collaboration with Frida in this lesson show that his experiences must have been of very different characters in the two lessons where he worked with the same movements, but in different groups. When the group constellation was different negative emotions and dislike seemed to dominate Tom's experience. His attention was presumably directed more against when the class would finish than against the contents of the task. [15]

The narrative about Tom and Frida illustrates how attention in the sensuous and emotional meaning here is prerequisite for creativity. If a child does not feel well it is hard to participate in bodily expressive and creative activities in the intense and attentive way that Tom and Frida did in their common choreographic process. When there is trust and attention the children open up and then they create "in-movement" (SHEETS-JOHNSTONE, 1999) in the sense that the bodily creative processes are dominating. All the other groups spent a lot of time thinking about and discussing what figures to include from their paper clips and what movements they should create. But Tom and Frida got inspired by each other at an embodied level and created in-movement: Frida made a "sketch" which Tom elaborated on etc. and their movement inventions very slowly took over from each other in a common process. They made variations over the same form—a heart—and over the movements that the other suggested (for example ways to move the arms). Very quickly they created a little choreography that they just had to dance again and again and again. Attention is not only important in the creative process, but also in the appreciating process of the spectators. The children make meaning of the expressions that they experience, are touched and become attentive to what they see when what they experience is different in one way or another; when it is especially slow, fun or when somebody shows that he or she can do something that nobody had expected. [16]

To sum up the analysis of the "moment" of Tom and Frida attention stands out as a central phenomenon for a meaningful and creative embodied collaboration to take place in dance. Attention can hence be characterized as holding sensuous, emotional and cognitive qualities. From a pedagogical viewpoint possibilities for attention can be brought about by thinking about the ways that the groups of children are structured. [17]

In the following I go deeper into how the "videographic participation" approach can help to open our understandings of a praxis in order to become aware of what is going on and what we as professionals consider important to the children's learning processes in movement. [18]

#### **4. Performative and Phenomenologically Inspired Videographic Participation: The Study of "Moments"**

VAN MANEN (1990, p.163) mentions that descriptions of "significant moments" are central when we want to understand human experiences and lived meanings. Those moments can come forth in "(...) concrete stories that present moments of teaching" and "may provide opportunities for reflecting pedagogically on actions, situations, and relations of teaching" (VAN MANEN, 2002, p.54).<sup>1</sup> With a phenomenologically inspired way of working with video I intend to experience and analyze what goes on in different moments in movement and dance educational practices. The narrative about Tom and Frida presented above is an example of such a moment. [19]

As a researcher in the process of hermeneutic phenomenological analysis I move between moments of closeness and moments of distance (TODRES, 2007, p.58) in relation to the phenomena and the people whose experiences and practises I am exploring. The moments of closeness happen when I am involved in collecting and communicating the participants' and my own experiences in narrative form. The moments of distance happen when I intend to pull meanings forward from the texts through hermeneutic interpretations. In the interpretations I constantly move between single sentences and the whole story in order to get to a deeper understanding of the themes that are communicated about the phenomena in focus. The analysis is done in a three-step process: First I read the text as a whole and feel into what word or concept might describe the overall theme which is being communicated; VAN MANEN (1990, p.93) calls this "the wholistic reading approach." The next steps are the selective and detailed reading approaches through which I mark certain phrases that tell something about the overall theme and then go into exploring what the selected sentences reveal about the theme. Phenomenological first-person descriptions (the children's and the teachers' "voices" and my descriptions of what I experience that the children express in different ways) can help to get to the core of the phenomenon of embodied learning by making special themes/qualities visible. By second-person interpretations (STELTER, 2008) I try to get to a deeper understanding of "the 'texts' of life" (VAN MANEN, 1990, p.4). [20]

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1 "The moment" has been the theme in a number of investigations within the phenomenological tradition. VAN MANEN (1990, p.163) mentions "significant moments" as central to understanding the pedagogical action, and psychologist Daniel STERN (2004) explores the phenomenon of "the present moment" as the background for psychotherapeutic processes. Experiences hold different qualities and some "moments" hold a very special experiential or expressive intensity, while others are more everyday-like.

#### 4.1 First step of the research process: The camera as a notebook



Figure 2: Filming children in a dance class (photographer: Henning HJORT) [21]

In a video recording there will always be a focus and an angle and the camera therefore only films limited parts of a room. Even when filming with the broadest possible focus it is not possible to capture all the dimensions that a social situation holds. In the live situation there are also sensuous impressions like the temperature in the room, different smells and the filming person's interactions which are not seen directly in the pictures. But at the same time as filming in a relatively limited angle it is possible for the person filming to be multi-sensuously attentive. Through the body one can experience more than can be taken in by the camera. During the field work I developed a technique to hold the camera still in the height of my belly and support it by my folded hands so that I can move around changing focus between the whole picture (where are we? what is the task initiated by the teacher?), go close to specific situations and open up to the wide perspective again without the camera moving. When filming from the distance, i.e. with the wide angle, it is possible to document what is going on in the room as a whole. When filming close up, i.e. with a focused perspective, then it is possible to give insights to how the children participate because their facial expressions can be seen and it can be heard what they are saying to each other. With the hand-held camera I can also look at the children with my eyes, let the camera film in the direction of my look and only cast a sidelong glance at the flap with the screen once in a while. If the children look in my direction they then first look at my eyes and not at the camera and in this way my contact to them becomes more human and direct. In the research process the camera is such an integrated part of my presence in the lessons that I feel it really acts as a help to catch my experiences in the room. Sometimes it almost feels like an extra body part which is there with me when I for example am swaying slowly from side to side to a new age melody used for relaxation or my feet are marking the beat of a piece of percussionist music, where I feel the same pulse as the children are asked to feel. It works as my notebook and by "taking notes" through the camera I feel that I can involve myself deeper in the experiences than would be possible

using pen and paper. Crucial to the method of "videographic participation" is the consciousness that my body has "a wider angle" than the camera and it is by this consciousness of the role of the researcher's body that the "videographic participation approach" expands both videographic (BJÖRKLUND, 2007; RØNHOLT et al., 2003) and "filmic ethnographic" (MØHL, 2003) approaches. [22]

#### *4.1.1 The camera's and the researcher's influence on praxis*

To pay attention to the influence that a camera can have on the situation that one wants to create knowledge about is just as important as in other kinds of observation where one is present as someone who does not actively participate in everything that others in the room are occupied with. Working from a phenomenological perspective the researcher's presence as a human being that influences and is being influenced by what is going on in the room to some degree will be central, but also an aspect which necessarily must be reflected upon. Media researcher Tove ARENDT RASMUSSEN (1997) concludes that the presence of a researcher and a camera can intensify existing patterns of interaction, but that they do not directly change them. MØHL (2003, p.170) writes that people who are being filmed continue to live their lives, but they do it in a "slightly different" way. This is an experience she has had as a filming and participating anthropological researcher in people's everyday lives in cultures where most of the people have never seen a camera before. In teaching situations with children in Denmark most of them are used to being filmed by their parents and so many other things are going on that actually occupy them much more than a researcher with a camera. The children only seem to pay attention to the camera in few occasions which are often in the beginning or at the end of a lesson when nothing else occupies them. They then come and ask if they can try to film or if they can watch some of what I have filmed. Mostly I let them do that because I see it as a way of de-dramatizing the role of the camera and I also find it a good way to get to talk informally with the children about their experiences and to hear what they talk to each other about. The few times when some children become more interested in the camera than in doing what the teacher says I either move to a different spot in the room, move the direction of the look of my eyes to a different direction than the one I am filming, or I simply turn off the camera to change their focus of interest. The question of the influence of the camera is often more relevant in relation to the teachers. They continue their usual practice, but like MØHL (p.170) puts it: in a "slightly different" way. The teachers always have a professional goal and that is what is most important to them and what they first act in relation to. MØHL (p.171) also emphasizes that an activity which is being filmed often has "(...) its own frames that are independent of that of the camera, and which will interact with these in different ways." According to the teachers I have worked with my questions and presence only change their practice in the way that they reflect deeper on their pedagogical choices. This they feel have a positive influence on their own and the children's learning. With reference to ARENDT RASMUSSEN's (1997) experience that as a researcher one helps to intensify already existing patterns of action and to MØHL's (2003) experience that life is lived in a "slightly different" way one example from my research is that the presence of me and the camera probably

means that the values which the teachers see as important in their subjects become clearer—both to the camera and to themselves. According to the teachers it is, however, more the presence of me as a person who is studying their practice than the presence of the camera that has an influence. But in the case of the second grade class I was there every week during a year which meant that to both the children and teachers I became a natural part of the teaching space and they did not pay much attention to what I was doing. [23]

#### **4.2 Second step of the research process: Textualizing of bodily data**

In the analytic process I "transform" praxis to pictures and narratives where significant phenomena and themes appear. A deeper description of the phenomena helps to conceptualize what is going on in the praxis in relation to the children's embodied experiences and learning opportunities. The video camera captures the participants' expressions and the impressions of the researcher. The next step in the research process is to transform the video material to a form that can be discussed and used for conceptualization of what seems to be central when wanting to understand how learning in movement happens. I first save the digital recordings as computer files so that they can be used in a program for qualitative video analysis<sup>2</sup> and in a program for editing films<sup>3</sup>. Then I start a first watching through of the material. When watching through a recording it goes so fast that the first impression of what is going on happens at an intuitive level. But the same video recording can be watched many times, with different speed and focusing on different situations in the overall situation. Using these approaches one can get deeper in an understanding of the material and they also help the process of widening my pre-understandings of the subject I study. Nathalie DEPRAZ, Francisco J. VARELA and Pierre VERMERSCH (2003, pp.24-43) describe that to bracket one's pre-understandings and let other answers and perspectives appear—"letting something come to you"—is a central approach when working phenomenologically. To be open instead of looking for something specific. They underline that it can be quite hard to practice, but suggest that using different relaxation techniques and taking time for "quiet time" one can get into a more receiving state of being. The video recordings and the possibility they give of looking at what I have filmed again and again helps me to be able to bracket my pre-understandings. For example as someone educated in dance and physical education part of my pre-understanding of the field is that it is important to warm up in the beginning of a lesson. When in the case of the physical education lessons of the second grade class there was generally no warm up I could ask questions like: "They do not warm up—what do they then do? And what significance does what they do seem to have?" After having withdrawn from the field I also think back on what situations and themes come to my mind as being especially interesting to explore further. I close my eyes and focus on sensing what the situations are about, try to come up with words that can describe what I have experienced happening. These research "focusing exercises" (GENDLIN, 1997) have in the project carried out with the second grade class resulted in

2 Transana: <http://www.transana.org/> (for examples of other research using Transana see EVERS, MRUCK, SILVER & PEETERS, 2011).

3 Sony Vega Pro: <http://www.sonycreativesoftware.com/vegaspro>.

poems and narrative descriptions as the one about Tom and Frida presented above. [24]

"Phenomenological reduction," another central method when working with a phenomenological approach, has also been applied in the study of the second grade class as a way to find themes in narratives—"not to effect a radical introspection (...) not to look inside, but to gain new insights into that which manifests itself, and into its condition of possibility" (ZAHAVI & PARNAS, 1998, p.702). Concretely I have applied the method in a phenomenological reading of stories told by children and teachers and my own narratives written from the video recordings to ask: What moments are significant and what word feels completely central to this moment? (In the example given above it was the word of "attention"). [25]

In the analyses I also use a more performative strategy (JONES, 2007). In the analysis program I mark "significant moments" (VAN MANEN, 1990, p.10) and play those parts of the recordings into the editing program. When using the editing program a "performative phenomenological" approach (SVENDLER NIELSEN, 2009) leads the work in the sense that I play with how clips from the recordings of the classes and from the interviews can be put together in video narratives that can make central themes in relation to the children's first-person experiences visible. [26]

Psychologist Les TODRES (2007, p.56) writes that: "(...) a way of knowing that is grounded in both 'head' and 'heart'" can be helped by different forms of communication. He also asks (p.5) "what kinds of qualitative description of human experience produce a feeling of understanding in the reader?" I go on asking: Can the one writing move her/his "body" into a text and can the "bodily text" then be moved "into" another body (the reader's)? Embodied ways of knowing can also be written forth (VAN MANEN, 1990, p.13). Where do the ideas of the written text come from? The ideas come from my body—"out through my fingers"—while I create connections between my experiences and those of the children and the teachers. And this body is not just "any body," it is a body educated in the area that I am digging deeper into. But at the same time as I have to be aware of and to bracket my pre-understandings my experiences also play a crucial role for what it becomes possible to "see" and for what stays "unrevealed." When three girls working on a choreographic piece taking point of departure in forms from paper clips they have made for example move their hips in ways which are essential to jazz dance, my dance experiences help me interpret their expressions. Someone unfamiliar with the field would perhaps not recognize the movements as a certain style which is very present in MTV videos and youth culture and would therefore probably interpret the movement expressions differently. [27]

### **4.3 Third step of the research process: Performative phenomenological analysis and production**

The third phase of the research process is about finding ways to communicate my findings back to the praxis that I have been involved in and to other practitioners and researchers in dance and movement. But it is hard to say precisely when the analysis ends and the communication begins, because the analyses are phenomenological at the same time as they are performative productions. [28]

TODRES (2007, p.46) emphasizes that "structure" (the analytical) and "texture" (the bodily communicated) should be in balance in order to make central themes visible. In the research process I play with ways of connecting "structure" and "texture" in narratives about children's embodied experiences. The performative dimension helps making the process phenomenological and experiential, because in the performative productions I work more with "the whole picture" than in the hermeneutic analyses where the material is split up in parts. For example I have worked with gathering different children's stories about the same situations in ways that communicate their experiences and learning opportunities. [29]

## **5. Closing Discussion of the Significance of Narrative and Performative Research in Education**

It seems important to let the communication of embodied experiences move away from the more realist, academic style because in the process of creating narratives in varied genres (here: narratives in words, visual narratives made from clips of video recordings, and video narratives) possibilities occur for more embodied cognitions. Through narratives in different forms the multi-sensuous is put into play because other forms of expression can communicate experiences more directly—"body to body." A combination of narrative approaches also help to get into the material from many angles which make the analyses deeper and the findings accessible to different media and receivers. [30]

The narrative/performative productions presented in this article are my interpretations of the meanings that I see as central from what the children in the second grade class have expressed, from the teachers' perspectives and from my researcher perspective. It is a dialogue between the verbalized and the bodily expressed, between the children, me and the teachers who initiate it all. A dialogue (or perhaps a "trialogue") where I put the children's perspectives into play with a movement educational discussion and world of possibilities.

Changing between focus and wide angle

I make a view over the class room

children tell and express themselves

—about their experiences

teachers tell and express themselves

—about their intentions  
I—the researcher  
am there  
with a bodily bird perspective  
and a camera  
I get very close  
relate myself to their stories  
and to what I see happening in the room  
ask questions and understand  
perhaps  
a little more ... [31]

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Without the acceptance of children, parents and teachers researching with a camera in educational contexts would not be a possibility. I am grateful that this class let me into their lives for a while and hope that their participation in my research will help developing our knowledge about embodied learning and guide developments of educational approaches.

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