



Re-thinking inspiration as in-betweens in arts-integrated literacy practices

Sofia Jusslin^{a,b,*}

^a Faculty of Education and Welfare Studies, Åbo Akademi University, Po Box 311, Vaasa FI-65101, Finland

^b Theatre Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland



ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 4 January 2022

Revised 4 August 2022

Accepted 10 August 2022

Available online 17 October 2022

Keywords:

Arts integration

Creative dance

Intra-action

Non-representational

Rhizome

Literacy education

Writing

ABSTRACT

Inspiration is a widely used concept in everyday speech, and it is used especially when people talk about what they do in their creative processes. This article presents a re-thinking of the notion of inspiration through a non-representational approach to challenge the assumption of dance as a mere stimulus to and representation of texts and vice versa when integrating creative dance into literacy education. Based on diffractive analytical engagements, this article proposes an understanding of inspiration as intra-active and rhizomatic in-betweens producing new-ness and other-ness. This understanding can produce rich and diverse opportunities that value and cherish writing and dancing non-hierarchically in the literacy classroom; both have pedagogical value, without either acting as a servant of the other. The article concludes with a discussion of the extent to which literacy education is prepared to take dance seriously, emphasizing that the proposed understanding of inspiration can contribute to that end.

© 2022 The Author. Published by Elsevier Inc.

This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

1. Introduction

Arts integration encompasses a pedagogical approach to teaching and learning different disciplines in combination with an artistic discipline, aiming to deepen learning in all included disciplines (Hanna, 2015; Koff & Warner, 2001; Marshall, 2014). Previous research has investigated arts integration in literacy education using creative dance as the artistic approach (e.g., Jusslin, 2020; Jusslin & Höglund, 2021; Leonard et al., 2016; Makopoulou et al., 2021; Sharma et al., 2021). Creative dance is neither bound to a specific dance style nor to developing technical perfection. Instead, it combines the artistry of expression and mastery of movements when interpreting and expressing ideas, thoughts, and feelings through movements created from one's body and abilities and in relation to the material environment (Gilbert, 2015; Payne & Costas, 2021).

Working with artistic mediums is common in literacy education, but dance remains somewhat unknown and unexplored in that context. Then again, in dance education, using texts as inspiration, or stimuli, for dance-making is common (see, e.g., Hanna 2015). When it comes to integrating dance and literacy, I have elsewhere offered a critique of how viewing dance or texts as merely stimuli to and representations of one another consti-

tutes a narrow and weak view of integration (Jusslin, 2020). Inspiration has often been understood in terms of stimulus (Thrash & Elliot, 2003), which would suggest that dance could be seen as an inspirational departure point for literacy and vice versa. This conceptualization suggests a representational understanding of inspiration that proposes linearity and cause-effect relationships. A representational approach limits the understanding of the possible depths in both disciplines and how students can move between them. Such a view risks undermining the value of the integrated art form and constrains the understanding of different disciplines' mutual contributions to one another.

The concept of inspiration is important because it pervades arts-integrated teaching in and beyond the literacy classroom. Accordingly, there is a need for new understandings of inspiration that move beyond stimuli and representations to explore inspiration as non-representational. I recognize the urgency to re-think and (re)conceptualize inspiration in bolder and more generative ways that can allow for understanding inspiration as ongoing processes between, for example, students, forms of expression, environments, and memories. This re-thinking can account for not only what inspiration is or how it is defined but also what it might produce and set in motion in arts-integrated teaching approaches.

This article presents a re-thinking of inspiration, particularly combining writing and creative dance through the non-representational apparatuses proposed by Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2013) and Barad (2007). Their theories enable a re-thinking

* Correspondence to: Faculty of Education and Welfare Studies, Åbo Akademi University, Po Box 311, Vaasa FI-65101, Finland.

E-mail address: sofia.jusslin@abo.fi

of inspiration in broader and more generative ways, moving beyond representational and anthropocentric (human-centered) ontologies to challenge and disrupt the notion of dance as a mere stimulus to and representation of texts, and vice versa. Such an exploration can promote an understanding of the complexity and roles of various art forms in arts-integrated teaching approaches in the literacy classroom. The study draws on data from a research project that sought to develop and investigate teaching pedagogies that integrate creative dance into fifth graders' reading and writing processes (Jusslin, 2020). The article constitutes an in-depth, diffractive exploration of events that set inspiration in motion when integrating creative dance¹ into the writing of detective stories. I zoom in on fifth-grade student Oliver, whose writing became inspired by elements he and his classmates danced, resulting in a proposed understanding of inspiration as in-betweeners that blur the boundaries between, for example, dancing/writing, languages/bodies, and student/environment. More specifically, this article explored the following analytic questions: 1) How can inspiration be understood using a non-representational approach, and 2) What does such an understanding produce when integrating creative dance into students' writing processes in the literacy classroom?

In what follows, I review previous research on arts integration and combining dance and writing, discuss conceptualizations of inspiration, and introduce the non-representational framework. Then, I present the study context, the data, and the analytical approach. In the analysis, I explore events that set the emergence of inspiration in motion when Oliver worked with dancing and writing. Ultimately, I propose a re-thinking of inspiration and discuss its implications for arts-integrated literacy practices.

2. Literature review

2.1. Arts integration

Arts integration encompasses innovative arts-based pedagogies that promote the understanding and transformation of various disciplinary concepts into artistic mediums (Koff & Warner, 2001; Marshall, 2014). Wiebe et al. (2007) proposed a rhizomatic approach to arts integration that can enable embodied and living integrative practices that are less prescriptive of the arts; they maintained that integration needs to be understood as more than thematic overlaps in different disciplines. Similarly, Marshall (2014) argued for a transdisciplinary approach to arts integration to understand how different disciplines can fit together as a whole, stressing that transdisciplinarity enables deep integration.

During the last few decades, arts integration has been debated by both adversaries and advocates. Advocates have emphasized that arts integration can provide valuable learning opportunities, whereas adversaries have maintained that the arts do not need to be servants for other subjects to have pedagogical value. A prominent argument resonating with the "art for art's sake" argument against using dance as a learning strategy is that dance risks losing its intrinsic value and disciplinary contributions (e.g., Giguere, 2011; Koff & Warner, 2001; Winner et al., 2013). This can be understood as instrumentalizing the arts.

Advocates have emphasized the value of integration. Creative dance in school is a relatively young research field, which has the potential to have societal significance since it can contribute to knowledge on bodily meanings, movements, and creative processes in people's learning (Ørbæk & Engelsrud, 2019). Dance can

be integrated into various curricular areas, but its capabilities can extend beyond curricular areas and the school community (Anttila, 2013). Studies have indicated that dance can contribute to developing, for example, students' academic, creative, cognitive, and socio-emotional learning and multiple literacies (e.g., Anttila, 2013; Jusslin, 2020; Leonard et al., 2016; Makopoulou et al., 2021; Payne & Costas, 2021).

In the debate about arts integration, aspects of learning *in* and *through* the arts are often included. Although arguments have been raised against using creative dance and other forms of dance as learning strategies in other disciplines, scholars have departed from this perspective, arguing that learning through dance cannot be separated from learning in dance (Anttila, 2013; Hanna, 2015; Jusslin, 2019). Echoing the importance of this perspective, Buck (2003) found that a narrow understanding of dance has a paradoxical position, creating both barriers (e.g., being pedagogically threatening and inaccessible for "non-dancers") and opportunities (e.g., integration across the curriculum and diversity of ideas, bodies, and movement) for itself in the classroom.

Against this background, the current project strived for a transdisciplinary, balanced approach that valued dance and writing equally, thus not using dance in an instrumentalizing manner. The outset was that learning *through* dance is not separated from learning *in* dance. This is emphasized in the Dance Literacy Model for Schools (Jusslin, 2019, 2020), which was used to understand how the project worked with dance literacy in arts-integrated teaching. The model defines dance literacy as students' abilities to understand and use dance vocabulary, interpret meaning-making in and through dance, and express themselves by creating dances.

2.2. Combining dancing and writing

In this article, literacy is understood through a non-representational approach, which will be explained in detail later. Dance can be understood as an independent, unique literacy, and a meaning-making process across different literacies, for example, across reading, writing, and dancing. Integrating dance with literacy can be perceived as breaking and expanding the traditional curricular boundaries of literacy education, which is suggested as a valuable complement that can fit into the preexisting literacy curriculum without replacing other curricular content (Jusslin, 2020; Leonard et al., 2016).

This study focuses particularly on the combination of writing and dancing in a fifth-grade classroom. Several scholars have touched on the similarities between dance and writing and the benefits of combining them. Cooper (2011) stated that dancing and writing share similar aspects, such as brainstorming, first drafts, revision processes, and periods of reflection and inspiration. Investigating a co-composition approach to dancing words/writing dance, Root-Bernstein (2001) concluded that the participating teenagers referred "word and gesture to the imaginative thinking tools that precede both forms of expression" (p. 140). Combining writing and dancing is further suggested to enhance development and learning in both forms of expression (Midgelow, 2013). It requires active straddling and dismantling of the forms of expression's borders (Pollitt, 2019), suggesting that dancing and writing can break down the boundaries between them. Scholars have also suggested that writing contributes to a choreographic investigation (Collard-Stokes, 2012), that dance enriches and challenges writing processes (Perry, 2007), and that dance can promote children's early literacy skills (Logue et al., 2009).

Studies in the current research project have indicated that dance can contribute to literacy education by requiring fifth graders to deepen and broaden their reading and writing processes (Jusslin, 2020; Jusslin & Höglund, 2021). Additionally, the fifth graders experienced that dancing inspired their writing pro-

¹ In the remainder of the article, when referring to *dance* in the current research project, I refer to creative dance.

cesses and gave them ideas to shape and develop their writings (Jusslin & Forsberg, 2021). These experiences led to the present inquiry to re-think how inspiration can be understood in arts-integrated literacy practices.

In summary, previous research has demonstrated the potential contributions of combining dancing and writing, especially highlighting this combination as a boundary-crossing practice in which different forms of expression feed into each other. However, the concept of inspiration has not received conceptual attention in this context, thereby warranting attention to understand what inspiration can set in motion when combining dancing and writing.

2.3. Inspired by and inspired to

The concept of *inspiration* is prominent in various disciplines (e.g., literary studies, psychology, art, and education; for a review, see, e.g., Thrash & Elliot 2003). Inspiration is frequently used in everyday speech, but it has often been left undefined without a clear theoretical or conceptual underpinning (Brace & Johns-Putra, 2010; Oleynick et al., 2014; Thrash et al., 2014).

Recognizing the need for a sound, integrated definition of inspiration, Thrash and Elliot (2003) drew upon commonalities across various disciplines (i.e., psychology, anthropology, theology, education, art and literature, management, and engineering) to develop a domain-general conceptualization that includes three core processes: evocation, transcendence, and motivation. Evocation emphasizes that a trigger stimulus (e.g., a person, idea, or work of art) evokes inspiration rather than being willingly initiated or something one is responsible for, and transcendence refers to the individual learning of new or better possibilities. Thrash et al. (2014) asserted that “transcendence and evocation are complementary in the sense that one cannot awaken oneself to better possibilities; one must be awoken” (pp. 496–497). Motivation, then, encompasses the will to fulfill, express, or actualize what is newly apprehended. As I will discuss further in the next section, the idea of transcendence is a representational positioning that stands in ontological contrast with the Deleuzo–Guattarian (1987/2013) non-representational idea of immanence. Moreover, in the conceptualization of Thrash and Elliot (2003), inspiration is not restricted to human agency but also includes environmental aspects, which bears resemblances with Barad’s (2007) movement beyond an anthropocentric stance. Inspiration can come from inside and outside the individual (Thrash & Elliot, 2003; Thrash et al., 2014). For example, when dancing, ideas can come from one’s own body and mind, other’s bodies and minds, and from the environment and different objects (Payne & Costas, 2021).

Thrash and Elliot (2004) stressed that inspiration involves two processes: being inspired *by*, which they described as a relatively passive process of being awoken by something, and being inspired *to*, which is a relatively active process of becoming motivated to actualize the inspiring qualities that have been awoken. Accordingly, being inspired *by* includes the characteristics of evocation and transcendence, and being inspired *to* includes the characteristics of motivation. These component processes mark an episode of inspiration and articulate how it unfolds across time (Thrash et al., 2014). Oleynick et al. (2014) presented an example of component processes: “One might be inspired by a breathtaking sunrise, or by the elegance of a new idea that arrives during an insight or ‘aha’ moment. Thereafter, one might be inspired to paint or undertake a new research project” (p. 2). Accordingly, being inspired *by* encompasses the emergence of creative ideas, whereas being inspired *to* motivates action. For example, An and Youn (2018) demonstrated that inspiration from artwork can facilitate creation in other creative domains (e.g., writing or business).

Inspiration is sometimes used interchangeably with creativity (Oleynick et al., 2014), and the distinction between

inspiration and creativity is crucial for the current study. Payne and Costas (2021) defined creativity as using imagination or original ideas when creating something new, while Oleynick et al. (2014) stated that inspiration, in contrast, constitutes a motivational state. Hence, creative insights are theorized to inspire because inspiration is not the source of creative ideas, but rather a response to creative ideas (Thrash et al., 2014). Ishiguro and Okada (2021) reviewed the literature on art viewing and creativity and argued for focusing on the relationships between being inspired *by* and being inspired *to*; they demonstrated that a dual focus, which centers on evaluating artworks and reflecting on the individual artistic activity, would integrate the two processes of inspiration.

As mentioned, dance and writing share similar aspects, such as periods of inspiration (Cooper, 2011). My previous critique of perceiving dance as only a stimulus for writing processes in dance integration (Jusslin, 2020) is supported by the fact that inspiration is difficult to elicit; inspiration tends to happen spontaneously and is, consequently, not a result of deliberate effort (Thrash et al., 2014). The rationale is that integrating dance and writing is more complex and multifaceted than using one form of expression as a stimulus for the other. To explore this further, I contextualize the above-presented conceptualization of inspiration within the context of integrating dancing and writing to re-think inspiration with a non-representational approach.

3. The non-representational apparatus

3.1. Unfolding the non-representational theories

This article’s founding premise is that representational logic cannot account for all entanglements that matter when integrating dance in the literacy classroom. Therefore, I re-think the conceptualizations of being inspired *by* and being inspired *to* by plugging-in with the non-representational apparatuses proposed by Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2013) and Barad (2007).²

These non-representational theories decenter the human in different ways and move beyond representational assumptions that mere language can represent preexisting things. Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2013) and Barad (2007) critiqued representationalist thinking and the notion that the world would exist independent of the researcher. According to Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2013), the world’s humans, objects, and languages exist on an immanent plane, interacting to create new relations that are always in becoming. This relationality is prominent in Brace and Johns-Putra’s (2010) fusing of representational and non-representational theories when arguing that inspiration needs to be understood as:

...a process comprised of the (possibly) pre-cognitive moment of creation, realised in part through a set of embodied practices in space and structured around the things writers need to proceed; the assemblage of spaces, objects, materials, technologies, skills and institutional structures that enable the work. (pp. 399–400)

Following this line of thought, I think with the Deleuzo–Guattarian (1987/2013) philosophy of immanence, which suggests immanence to include complex relations of affects and rhizomes. I argue that the concepts of affect and rhizome can provide new ways of acknowledging inspiration as embodied, affective, multiple, and always unpredictable.

Affect refers to how bodies affect and are affected by other bodies. Yet, in a Deleuzo–Guattarian understanding, affect is different

² I do not submit that a non-representational approach is the only way to re-think inspiration; rather, it is a possible apparatus to think with (cf. Nichols & Campano, 2017; Østern et al., 2021).

from emotions. Rather than being understood as expressed emotions or emotional reactions that can be put into words, affect constitutes prepersonal, nonconscious, and volatile intensities that can be perceived as diverse, embodied, and experienced materialities (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987/2013). Affect is understood as a force that focuses on what bodies can do rather than what they are. Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari, Zembylas (2007) explained that affect is both a process and a product: “a process in which a body acts upon another, and a product as the capacity of a body to affect and to be affected” (p. 26). McCormack (2013) maintained that the human body is central to affects, but it should not be understood as a “container” (p. 3). Affects circulate within the body but also move beyond and around bodies, indicating that bodies do not exist in a vacuum, isolated from each other and the environment (Hickey-Moody et al., 2016; McCormack, 2013). The body is relational, affective, multiple, and always in becoming. Similarly, Barad (2007) stated that discursive practices are not human-based; the discursive and the material are not separated from each other.

I think with the concept of rhizome to explore the connections, multiplicity, and unpredictability in the relations between dance and writing. Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2013) explained a *rhizome* as a root system, spreading in irregular and infinite directions with various non-hierarchical entry and exit points. Rhizomes create new connections by linking together different elements, and if broken, the rhizome can live on, as it always tries to find a way to develop. Wiebe et al. (2007) suggested that “[t]he rhizomatic relation is a way to understand the tension of multiple complexities in the classroom” (p. 268). A rhizomatic approach to dance and writing posits that they can be connected in various ways, moving the dancing and writing processes in multiple possible but unpredictable directions. For example, integrating dance into students’ writing processes is not a linear process that always moves from dancing to writing; both forms of expression are connected in an ongoing flow of bodies, texts, and movements.

The Deleuzo–Guattarian concepts offer a complex re-thinking of inspiration through emphasizing an immanent perspective, yet Barad’s (2007) agential realism, especially the concepts of intra-action and entanglement, provides another way to approach inspiration from beyond an anthropocentric perspective. A founding premise for Barad is that knowledge is created in relations between human and nonhuman bodies, thus rejecting a dichotomization of discourse and matter. Barad (2007) proposed that the discursive and the material are mutually implicated in intra-active processes. Hence, both human and nonhuman bodies can become agentic, with agency understood as making something happen or as the ability to act. The concept of intra-action provides ways to re-think inspiration concerning its coming from inside and outside the individual (cf. Thrash & Elliot, 2003). When referring to *intra-action*, Barad (2007) disrupted a dichotomizing view of the world, acknowledging its profoundly relational and entangled nature and understanding intra-action to signify “the mutual constitution of entangled agencies” (p. 33). For example, knowing/be(com)ing, mind/body, theory/practice, and discourse/matter are not separate entities. Intra-action focuses on the relations that happen in the midst and does not refer to separate subjects and objects. Similarly, *entanglements* are not intertwinements of separate subjects and objects; rather, their distinctions are undone and disrupted (Barad, 2007). For example, reaching depth in both integrated forms of expression—such as dance and writing—can be enabled when and if the forms of expression become entangled (Jusslin, 2020).

The theories that I think with differ ontologically to varying degrees, especially when it comes to the conceptualization of inspiration presented by Thrash and colleagues and Deleuze and Guattari’s and Barad’s apparatuses, as well as between Deleuze and Guattari and Barad (see Hein, 2016). The Deleuzo–Guattarian

and Baradian apparatuses are both non-representational, but Hein (2016) stated that Barad’s agential realism is a philosophy of transcendence, whereas Deleuze and Guattari present a philosophy of immanence. Still, the Baradian apparatus offers a re-thinking of inspiration beyond an anthropocentric, ontological stance. I argue that despite their ontological variances, reading these theories together can offer new and ontologically different perspectives on the concept of inspiration (i.e., the Deleuzo–Guattarian understanding of immanence and the Baradian move beyond anthropocentrism) and produce new understandings of inspiration for arts-integrated teaching approaches in literacy practices.

3.2. Literacies and embodied learning

Theoretical approaches that perceive literacies as affective, rhizomatic, entangled, and intra-active have recently seen considerable growth in literacy research and pedagogy. Grounded in such theories, a main premise in the current article is that literacy activities are not projected toward textual endpoints; instead, literacies live in relations across the ongoing flow of bodies, texts, and movements that can move rhizomatically in different, unknown, unpredictable directions (Leander & Boldt, 2012). This premise resembles the conceptualization of literacy-as-events. Burnett and Merchant (2020) stated that *literacy-as-events* are generated in relations between human and nonhuman bodies, always exceeding what can be conceived and perceived to the point that “combining an affective engagement with the tracing of multiple relations can never catch everything that is going on” (p. 51). Literacy-as-events travel in unexpected ways, implicitly encompassing multiple potentialities. Thus, a non-representational understanding of literacies recognizes that they are not bound to human subjects but are created in intra-active relations between human and non-human bodies (Kuby, 2017; Lenters, 2016; Zapata et al., 2018).

In literacy research and pedagogy, studies addressing the body and embodied literacies are relatively new, albeit growing in number (Leander & Boldt, 2012; Schmidt & Beucher, 2018; Thiele, 2015; Woodard et al., 2020; Zapata et al., 2018). In comparison, the body’s role is inevitable to acknowledge in dance education. Embodied literacies turn attention toward the processes and changes inherent in bodies (Schmidt & Beucher, 2018; Thiele, 2015). Literacies are produced by many bodies and live through the entanglement of bodies, human and nonhuman alike (Zapata et al., 2018). Similarly, Thiele (2015) maintained that “literacies are leaky, seeping deep into our bodies and unfurling through our movements, perceptions, and reactions to other bodies” (p. 46). Literate bodies are thus not limited to reading and writing at desks; they are active, moving within and between peoples, practices, and objects (Lenters & Smith, 2018). Therefore, consideration of the body and its affective responses can offer new and important ways to understand literacy development (Lenters, 2016).

Although non-representational theories are gaining momentum in literacy research, with researchers highlighting potentials (e.g., Burnett & Merchant, 2020; Jusslin, 2020; Kuby, 2017; Leander & Boldt, 2012; Zapata et al., 2018), scholars also discuss critiques of this perspective. Nichols and Campano (2017) noted that “tracing material objects’ trajectory around the classroom may provide new ways to see and think about schooling, but it does not, by itself, lead to transformation” (p. 249). I acknowledge that consideration of intra-actions between humans/nonhumans provide new understandings when re-thinking inspiration, but it cannot alone transform literacy practices. Furthermore, Beucher et al. (2019) cautioned not to ignore how discourses shape embodied experiences because they matter in relation to power and agency. This is important, considering that previous and current embodied experiences in dancing and writing processes may be affected by various discursive reasons when moving between the two forms of expres-

sion. Nevertheless, I understand discourse to be entangled with the material, indicating that neither has privilege over the other (Barad, 2007).

In the current study, learning is understood as embodied, with embodiment concerning more than the human body (Barad, 2007; Østern et al., 2019). Embodied learning can be understood as holistic, relational, material, and affective: happening in the human body and intra-actions between human and nonhuman bodies (Jusslin, 2020). When turning the focus toward the arts, the effect of art extends beyond the creations and products of humans; a dance piece is created by humans but in relation to the material world and prompts affective responses (Hickey-Moody, 2016). Similarly, Anttila (2013) stressed that embodied learning in dance highlights affective processes, stating that “when embodied sensations and affects are brought into the realm of conscious consideration, they become the content of consciousness, or knowledge” (p. 33, my translation). Embodied learning then creates and utilizes embodied knowing, which is personal and experiential, since it is created through sensations, experiences, and emotions (Anttila, 2013). Embodied knowing is relevant to account for in the current study because previous research has found that embodied knowing can inspire writing topics (Woodard et al., 2020).

Against this background, I maintain that our embodiment and being in the world as writers, dancers, and learners means that we know more than we can tell and convey with written language. Importantly, dance does not bring embodiment to literacy education; literacies are already embodied.

4. Study context

This study drew on data from an educational design research (EDR) project (McKenney & Reeves, 2019).³ Aiming to improve educational practices in naturalistic and authentic settings in collaboration among researchers and practitioners, EDR produces both theoretical and practical knowledge. The project developed and investigated teaching pedagogies that integrate dance into students' reading and writing processes in Swedish (L1) and literature education in two grade-five classrooms in Finland, with 41 students aged 1011 (14 girls and 27 boys). The guardians gave informed consent for the students to participate in the research. The research was conducted by a team comprising author Sofia (teacher educator and researcher in L1 education), dance teaching artist Lotta Kaarla, and primary school teachers Tom Lithén and Ann-Charlotte Nyman at Norra Korsholms skola.⁴ The project was initiated by Sofia as part of their doctoral project (Jusslin, 2020) and supported by the school administration, which enabled the recruitment of teachers who were interested in participating. Finnish primary school teachers are certified to teach all subjects in grades 1–6, indicating that they have undergone teacher training in literacy education.

The team collaboratively planned, implemented, and evaluated various teaching designs, which are described in detail by Jusslin (2020). The investigated teaching design in the current study, *DancingDetectives*, integrated dance into the writing of detective stories. The teachers suggested this genre, as they had implemented detective story projects several times before, with guidance from a teaching manual written by Widmark (2003), children's book author of *The Whodunit Detective Agency*.

³ Design-based research is closely related to EDR. McKenzie & Reeves (2019) asserted that EDR specifies its implementation in educational contexts and that design-based research can lead to misconceptions of being equated with research-informed design that under-represents the theoretical contributions.

⁴ The principal and the team provided informed consent to publish real names. They accepted the article prior to publication. The student names are pseudonyms.

The teams' positionality was characterized by active involvement in the research. The research would not exist without the team's intentions to explore teaching pedagogies that integrate creative dance into literacy education. It could not be kept at arm's length because knowledge creation did not happen at a distance (cf. Barad, 2007). We inevitably became part of the knowledge-creation and the pedagogical realities, and our artist/researcher/teacher bodies were understood as resources in the research (Jusslin & Østern, 2020; Østern et al., 2021).

4.1. *DancingDetectives* and the promenade dances

In *DancingDetectives*, the students wrote their own detective stories for 15 weeks. Dance integration was implemented over nine weeks. *DancingDetectives* integrated dancing and writing to simultaneously develop and support each other, indicating that the detective stories, as work-in-progress, fueled the dancing, while the exploration and creation of movement materials fueled the writing.

This study took an in-depth exploratory look at literacy-as-events during the fourth dance lesson; zooming in on Oliver as inspiration was evoked in his dancing and writing processes. As literacy-as-events are not bound in time and space but instead focus on how multiple times and places are folded (Burnett & Merchand, 2020), what happened before and after the fourth dance lesson presumably influenced the dancing and writing processes in the investigated dance lesson. Fig. 1 presents an overview of *DancingDetectives*, both before and after the fourth dance lesson. In the planning phase, the students planned their detective stories in notebooks.

The fourth dance lesson (90 min) emphasized expressing and highlighting environmental details when creating stories and dances, which was done by choreographing promenade dances amid the schoolyard. The students had previously done a similar verbal exercise and thus had experience with the promenade idea.

The lesson started with a warm-up dance composed collaboratively by the students and Lotta during the previous lessons. Then, working in two groups, the students negotiated and chose a season, weather, and time of day and composed a promenade dance that created and expressed these aspects. The students planned their dances by taking notes on a small portable whiteboard. The promenade dance moved from point A to point B in the schoolyard, and the students created a path by marking points A and B in the gravel and drawing a curvy path. One student would move along the path, and the other students would dance what that student experienced, saw, heard, and felt (e.g., coldness and snowflakes) using different movement qualities (e.g., body, effort, shape, and space; Gilbert, 2015) of their own choosing. Lotta prepared four songs that the students could choose from. The student groups performed their dances for each other, which the teacher filmed; the audience offered each other feedback on the performances. The final 25 min were held in the classroom. The students discussed the lesson's content with the teachers, filled in evaluation notes, and watched the dance films of each other's promenade dances. During this lesson, Lotta and the teachers were involved in dancing, supporting, and challenging the students when exploring and creating movement materials. I followed Oliver's group with a handheld camera while discussing the creation of the promenade dance with the students.

The study concentrated on the student group in which Oliver collaborated with six students: Diana, Ellen, Emilia, Kim, Patrick, and Samuel. All students, except Oliver and Kim, danced in their spare time, and at the beginning of the project, they reported their enjoyment of dancing. The analysis zoomed in on Oliver because when focusing on the notion of inspiration, something noticeably happened in his dancing and writing processes during

	DETECTIVE STORY CONTENT AND STRUCTURE	THEME OF DANCE LESSONS	
PLANNING	Plan the city where the story takes place, create characters (detectives and suspects), set up the crime to be solved, and determine narrator perspective.	<p>Dance lesson 1: Introduction to creative dance. Improvisational exercises, exploration of movement qualities, and creation of movement material.</p> <p>Dance lesson 2: Continue developing the detectives through exploring internal (e.g., curious, shy, brave) and external (e.g., tall, young, long hair) character traits through exploration and creation of movement material.</p> <p>Dance lesson 3: Continue developing the suspects focusing on professions (e.g., janitor, teacher, banker) and hobbies (e.g., golf, bodybuilding, horseback riding) through exploration and creation of movement material.</p> <p>Dance lesson 4: Expressing and highlighting environmental details through Promenade dances, expressing a particular season, weather, and time of day through dance. Exploration and creation of movement material that resulted in Promenade dances.</p>	WEEKS 1-6
WRITING AND EDITING	Read <i>The Diamond Mystery</i> , write five chapters for the individual detective stories, and provide and receive constructive feedback from peers and teachers.	<p>Dance lesson 5: Deepen the understanding of developing sentences to provide more information and convey internal pictures through the writing, focusing on exploring nouns, adjectives, and verbs through dance.</p> <p>Dance lesson 6: Deepen the understanding of feedback through providing constructive feedback on peers' movement materials in response to the detective stories.</p> <p>Dance lesson 7: In collaboration with the dance teacher as the choreographer, create a choreography based on the movement materials developed during previous lessons.</p> <p>Dance lesson 8: Dress rehearsal</p>	WEEKS 7-15
PUBLISHING	Book release and dance show for the students' families.	Book release and dance show for the students' families. The students performed dances from <i>DancingDetectives</i> and other teaching sequences in the project.	WEEK 16

Fig. 1. Overview of *DancingDetectives*.

the fourth dance lesson. The team sensed that Oliver's literacy-as-events stood out when combining dance and writing; they mattered during the dance lesson, caught our attention, and remained in our memories. When commenting on that lesson, Oliver expressed a feeling of inspiration when combining dancing and writing (Jusslin & Forsberg, 2021). Before participating in the project, Oliver reported that he sometimes enjoyed writing, sometimes not, and that he had no experience with dance or dance integration. He liked different movement exercises but had no personal interest in dancing. Initially, Oliver openly expressed skepticism about dance integration, both bodily and verbally. For example, in an interview, he expressed that dance was foolish.

4.2. Data and Analytical Approach

This study analyzed several types of data. I followed Oliver's group with a handheld video camera throughout *DancingDetectives* and made notes based on my bodily participation, experi-

ences, and observations. The team discussed the lesson during the evaluation meetings. Oliver, along with three other students—Diana, Emilia, and Isabelle—participated in five group interviews, which I transcribed before the analysis. He filled in evaluation notes after each dance lesson. His texts and dances were also included as data.

These data were analyzed diffractively (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). *Diffraction* can be explained as waves rolling, bending, transforming, and spreading in new ways when encountering obstructions (Barad, 2007). The analysis epitomized the non-representational theoretical premises, as it focused on how differences make a difference, rather than focusing on sameness in identifying patterns or categories. The focus was on identifying differences and exploring their effects (Barad, 2007). I read the concepts of inspired by and inspired to through the non-representational apparatus and put them to work in the data. This can be understood as a process that produces something new in constant and continuous making and unmaking (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Consequently, reading

concepts of inspiration through the non-representational approach created diffractive waves that produced new ways to understand inspiration.

To re-think how inspiration can be understood and what such an understanding produces, I made agential cuts in Oliver's dancing and writing processes. An *agential cut* enables the investigation of different phenomena by freezing entanglements; a cut can bring things together and take them apart (Barad, 2007). I identified literacy-as-events that, in different ways, glowed and glimmered in Oliver's dancing and writing processes—they invoked something that made a difference when reading the data (cf. MacLure, 2013)—and made agential cuts in them. Within these literacy-as-events, different aspects of Oliver's dancing and writing processes mattered in terms of inspiration. I transcribed the cuts in the video data into three layers, focusing on the dialogues, movements, and intra-actions of humans/nonhumans, which were ultimately merged in the analysis. I (re)presented the video data with awareness of the limitations and difficulties of verbally describing dance and movements (Manning & Massumi, 2013). Seeking guidance from scholars using non-representational theories analytically (Kuby, 2017, 2019; Lemieux & Rowsell, 2020), I used different fonts, indents, and typographical elements when enacting agential cuts in the video data:

Intra-actions of humans/nonhumans (e.g., materials, space)

Movements (locomotion, dance movements)

Dialogue (students, teachers)

With these analytical elements, I enacted agential cuts in the analyzed literacy-as-events, which affected how time was folded

into the analysis (cf. Burnett & Merchant, 2020) and what human and nonhuman agents were (re)presented in the analysis; some parts are consciously included, whereas some are excluded, depending on the focus on Oliver's dancing and writing processes. Still, the human and nonhuman influences on Oliver's dancing and writing processes were not limited to the 90-min-lesson; the present was affected by the past (e.g., Oliver's previous experiences) and by the future (the future work with the detective story). Consequently, the boundaries of each event were chosen to (re)present the most arresting data in relation to Oliver and his dancing and writing processes.

The intention of this analytical (re)presentation was to think, feel, and move with the data and theories, which was enabled by using different fonts and indents. I used hyphens to (re)present a situated and entangled togetherness of concepts and/or bodies and slashes to (re)present intra-actions between human/nonhuman bodies, while I (re)presented what was produced in the intra-actions in the body text. For example, "Oliver-becoming-the-ski-lift" indicates that Oliver and the ski lift cannot be separated but are relational together as a whole (cf. Kuby, 2019). I split some "sentences" in the analysis into several lines to show how events included intra-actions, movements, and dialogue. However, the line between the intra-actions and movements is thin and fluid, yet I chose to (re)present the analysis in this manner to provide justice to the data's liveliness. The intra-actions, movements, and dialogue constituted a way to (re)present the material-discursive relations in the data. I partly disrupted the linearity of the analysis to account for the rhizomatic nature of the events by mixing the different data in-and-across-and-between-each-other. All data presented in the analysis were translated into English.

5. Analysis

5.1. Oliver-becoming-the-ski-lift

Schoolyard/September morning/students/chilly whether/research team/guidelines for promenade dance.

Oliver, Ellen, Kim, Emilia, Patrick, Samuel, and Diana gather in a circle.

Ellen: "Can we choose winter, because then we can dance as snowflakes and do cartwheels and other stuff?"

Kim: "Yes, then I will do the snow."

Kim jumps around, makes twirly snow-movements with his arms, a dancing-snowstorm.

Lotta/whiteboard/marker pen.

Lotta approaches the student and hands them a whiteboard and a marker pen,

initiating a discussion about who should write.

Emilia takes the whiteboard and marker pen as they decide she will take notes.

Emilia/whiteboard/marker pen.

Emilia: "Okay, which season and weather?"

Everyone agrees on winter and snow.

Emilia/whiteboard/marker pen.

Emilia writes winter and snow (Image A in Figure 2).⁵

The students discuss different times and finally agree on 3 PM. They discuss aspects related to winter, snow, and 3 PM.

Emilia/whiteboard/marker pen.

Emilia writes 3 PM, clock, snow, snowflakes, bunny, slippery, and icicle.

Oliver watches what Emilia writes and says:

"I can be an icicle that is still."

⁵ For the remainder of this article, when referencing images A–H, I refer to Fig. 2.



Image A. The students plan the dance using the whiteboard.

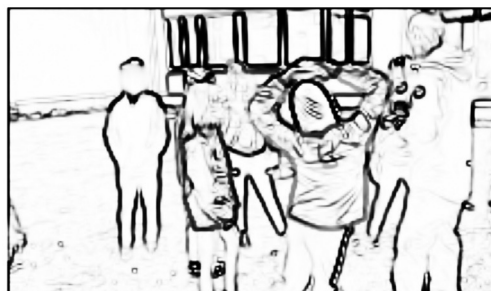


Image B. Emilia poses as a ski lift, with Oliver standing in front of her.



Image C. Oliver stands as a ski lift upside down.



Image D. The students improvise ski lift movements.



Image E. The promenade dance. From the left: Emilia, Oliver, Ellen, Patrick, and Kim.



Image F. The promenade dance. From the left: Ellen, Kim, Patrick, Samuel, Emilia, and Oliver.



Image G. DanceTeacher and Oliver look at Oliver's drawing.



Image H. Oliver's drawing with the text "There was a mountain with big ski slopes in the neighboring city."

Fig. 2. The process of creating the promenade dance 'On the way home' and Oliver's writing in the classroom. The students discuss different times and finally agree on 3 PM. They discuss aspects related to winter, snow, and 3 PM.

Oliver's suggestion to dance a nonmoving icicle could be interpreted as an attempt to avoid participation in movement creation. His resistance to the promenade dance was expressed in relation to the nonmoving icicle, as he was seemingly not enthusiastic about creating the promenade dance. His skepticism was expressed and produced in relation to the icicle.

The teacher and Lotta join the group.

Lotta: "What other things can be found during the winter?"

Oliver: "Snowmobiles and snowboards."

Diana, pointing at Oliver:

"You can be a snowmobile!"

Oliver: "I should not have said that."

Ellen: "Or someone skiing?"

Diana supports the suggestions.

Lotta leaves. The teacher stays.

Emilia/whiteboard/marker pen.

Emilia writes snowmobiles, skiing, and snowmobile.

Oliver starts to smile.

Oliver: "Like in the ski slopes, I can be a ski lift."

Oliver's suggestion to dance a ski lift was related to the context the students created—winter, snowing, and 3 PM—and to his affective intensities, moving from one affective stage to another, awoken in intra-active relations to the chilly weather.

Later in an interview, Oliver recalled:

The ski slopes, I actually came up with that idea when we were outside. I was thinking like, I started getting flashbacks because it was so cold. And in the flashback, I was wearing a jacket that I wore up in the mountains when I was skiing, so that's why I came up with the idea of a ski lift, and when I was the ski lift, I realized that I should include it in my detective story.

Oliver's skepticism about the promenade dance seemed to subside when he found the ski lift and/or the ski lift found him. He expressed that he became inspired by the different materialities and events in-the-dancing. These events included intra-actions between multiple human/nonhuman bodies, entangling Oliver with the weather, the gloves he wore because it was chilly, and his part in planning the promenade dance that included a narrative located in the social and material fictional realities of a snowy winter day. The events seemingly inspired Oliver to suggest that he could dance a ski lift. He had also decided that his detective story would occur during the winter, which points to rhizomatic relations to his planning of the detective story before the promenade dance.

Teacher/whiteboard/3 PM.

Teacher: "What is typical at 3 PM? What happens in your lives at that time?"

Emilia quickly turns around and looks at the teacher:

"The school day ends!"

Oliver: "Who should do the promenade?"

The students look around in the group.

Emilia says she can do it if nobody else wants to.

Patrick wants to.

Samuel: "But Oliver, he really wants to do it."

Oliver: "No, I am a ski lift."

They decide their focuses in the dance.

Diana/clock-Patrick/promenade dancer-Kim/snow-Samuel/icicle-Ellen/snowflakes-
Emilia/skiing-Oliver/ski lift.

The teacher leaves.

Oliver: "But what does a ski lift look like?"

Oliver tries to strike a ski-lift-pose, bending his knees inward and stretching up his arms.

Emilia: "No, do like this; you must do like this."

Emilia bends her knees inwards to help Oliver find the ski lift in his body, posing almost exactly as Oliver.

Emilia laughs at her pose.

Oliver copies her pose.

There were different backgrounds for choosing personal focuses in the dance. Ellen and Kim's dance movements—as snowflakes-doing-cartwheels and twirly-snowstorm-movements—chose them and became entangled with the season and weather suggestions. Ellen asked if the group could choose winter so that they could dance as snowflakes and do cartwheels. Ellen and Kim were seemingly entangled with their movement suggestions prior to the group's collaborative choice of a snowy winter's day. In contrast,

Oliver's entanglement with the ski lift was built on his embodied knowledge rather than on some prepared and intentional dance movements. His becoming-a-ski-lift emerged without predetermined movements, pointing to dance-making's unpredictability and affectivity. Emilia tried to help Oliver find inspiration in her movements—even though she did the same pose that Oliver initially did.

The teacher joins the group,

asking what the students' plan is.

The students tell him about the plan,

showing movement suggestions to their focus in the dance.

Oliver: "I don't know how I will; what does a ski

lift look like if a human would?"

Oliver/struggle/ski lift.

Oliver looks irritated. Emilia strikes the same pose as before (Image B).

Emilia: "But like this!"

Oliver copies.

Oliver: "But if I do it like this, I look like a frog."

The other students laugh.

The teacher turns to Diana:

"Can you dance a clock in any other way?"

Students/clock.

Emilia, Kim, and Oliver improvise various clock movements, arms stretched out, moving in sequences like a ticking clock.

Oliver's struggle to create movements was affected by the ski lift. He quickly created dynamic movements when dancing a clock.

Accordingly, the struggle was more with ski lift as a concept than generally with the composition of dance movements.

Emilia. "Okay, where should the promenade be?"

The students draw a path.

Students/gravel/schoolyard.

They drag and push their feet.

Students/gravel/curvy path.

Oliver looks at the teacher

and exclaims: "But a ski lift upside-down is easy!"

Diana: "But do that, then."

Oliver turns the ski-lift-pose upside-down, creating the letter T, stretching out his arms (Image C).

Oliver/upside-down-ski-lift.

Lotta asks the students to tell her about their ideas.

The students present and show their ideas and continue to plan the dance, creating a narrative about Patrick walking home from school.

Students/narrative/path-in-gravel.

Oliver turns to Emilia and Diana:

"Once when I was at the ski slopes, I held on to a ski lift like this,

Oliver's arms hug an invisible ski lift,

Oliver/ski slopes/ski lift,

and then it moved away."

Despite Oliver's bodily struggle with the ski-lift-movements, the literacy-as-events awakened Oliver's embodied knowledge about winter, skiing, and ski lifts and created rhizomatic relations between his previous experiences and the promenade

dance in-becoming. Interestingly, Oliver turned only to the teacher, not to Lotta, with his struggles regarding the ski lift movements. He created and upheld a relational distance from Lotta.

Kim, Ellen, and Patrick compose their promenade dance movements.

Kim-twirly-spinning-jumping-snowstorm.

Ellen-snowflakes-as-cartwheels-in-circles.

Patrick-plodding-along-the-path.

Emilia: "Okay, the ski lift can start from here."

Emilia/starting-point-on-the-path.

Oliver and Emilia move to that point.

The students go through their dance in relation to the narrative.

Students/dance/narrative.

Oliver stands completely still, not participating in the walk through.

Emilia: "Okay, let's do this."

Oliver exclaims: "But I don't know how to do it!"

The teacher joins the group.

Teacher: "Are you still a ski lift? How does a ski lift move?"

Oliver (re)turns to his ski-lift-pose. Kim tries out a ski-lift-dance of his own, knees bent, jumping around. Emilia, Patrick, and Diana also make their ski-lift-movements, arms stretched out and knees bent (Image D). Oliver chooses the starting position suggested by Emilia.

Emilia/ski lift-Oliver/ski lift.

Teacher: "How about if you move and go in some direction?"

Oliver moves forward, knees bent, crouched down, hands stretched out.

Oliver: "But a ski lift moves upwards."

The students take their starting positions in the dance to try it for the first time.

Students/promenade dance.

Oliver starts with his knees bent, moving forward, and Emilia, as the dancing-skier, moves-with-him in the dance. As Oliver moves forward, he gradually rises. He stops his movements before the others finish theirs.

Oliver was unsure of how to finish his part of the dance. Noticing Oliver's problems with the ski-lift-movements—as if his body resisted the ski lift as a concept—the other students became engaged in helping Oliver create his movement material. He tried becoming-the-ski-lift, but there was a force of resistance between various human/nonhuman bodies in the process of becoming. Emilia, in her intra-actions with her version of the ski-lift-pose, became agentic in Oliver's dance-making process. The pose could be seen as a fixed position, a gateway to movement (cf. Manning & Massumi, 2013). The teacher, however, emphasized trying to move Oliver's bodily movements away from the visuality of posing-as-a-ski-lift to instead focus on the movements' dynamics, thus opening the gateway. The teacher tried to disrupt Oliver's

initial entanglement with the ski lift, which was stuck at a visual level. Hence, Oliver's embodied knowledge helped and disrupted his dancing. It produced ideas for the dance—rhizomatically and profoundly entangled with the groups' planning as a whole—and it disrupted his dance-making because he locked-himself-in-the-ski-lift and became stuck at a visual and pantomimic level.

However, something happened when the students started rehearsing their promenade dance to their chosen music. Oliver's shift toward developing the ski-lift-movements and making them more dynamic, flowing, and undulating was produced in intra-action with the music.

Students/music.

The students listen to the songs and choose the soundtrack to The Snowman,⁶

collaboratively stating that it is the best fit.

Students/promenade dance/music.

Oliver starts with his knees bent (Image E) and brings Emilia along with him in the ski-lift-movements, giving the-dancing-skier a lift. He lets her go and gradually rises with his arms stretched out (Image F), turns around in a half-circle, and moves forward while gradually bending his knees more and more. He creates a circular route for his dance, making wavy and flowing movements.

Oliver/ski-lift-movements/music.

Oliver was affected by different materialities in his dance-making. His struggles with being inspired by came from within his embodied knowledge, although he struggled to (re)make his embodied knowledge into movements. It also came from outside when Oliver received help from his classmates and the teacher. His dancing was affected by nonhuman materialities, such as the space he danced in, the ski lift as a phenomenon, and especially the intra-action with the music that made something let go in Oliver's ski-lift-movements. The music became agentic in

Oliver's becoming-the-ski-lift. Movements to the music unfolded relations in which Oliver's embodied knowledge, the ski lift concept, time, space, students, and teacher became entangled. The movements were neither produced nor evoked from the inside nor the outside, but rhizomatically and simultaneously from-inside-and-outside. The emergent intra-active material relations of human/nonhuman bodies produced ideas for his writing, which will be (re)presented in what follows.

5.2. Oliver-inspired-to-write

Classroom/students/desk.

Lotta: "Was anything difficult when creating the dance?"

Emilia and Oliver, as well as students from the other group, raise their hands.

Emilia: "I thought it was difficult; we were skiing, and Oliver was the ski lift, and it was difficult to create the ski lift."

Oliver's hand is still raised, waiting for his turn to speak.

Oliver/lid of the desk.

He opens the desk and looks inside it, closes it.

A student from the other group, shares difficulties with their movements.

When it is Oliver's turn, he says: "It was difficult to look like a ski lift."

⁶ Composed by Howard Blake, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5erF-Gr7Cg>.

The difficulties regarding the ski-lift-movements affected not only Oliver but also Emilia, who acknowledged her/their joint struggle. Composing the ski-lift-movements was a collaborative undertaking. In the schoolyard, Emilia did not express her difficulties like Oliver because she focused on suggesting ideas that could help him become-the-ski-lift. Although Oliver and Emilia acknowledged the difficulties with the ski-lift-movements, they both wrote

in their evaluation notes that it was easy and fun to create the movements. The difficulties experienced were produced by focusing on the ski lift's visuality and making it come alive through movements. The movements did not come to the students right away, but they had to be composed, improvised, and developed in their bodies.

Sofia: "How can you use what we have done today when you start writing the detective stories later on?"

Edward and Kim raise their hands.

Edward: "We can add the small story into our detective story, like when someone walks home."

Edward gestures grabbing something out of thin air and then puts it in another place.

Edward/promenade dance/detective story.

Patrick: "You can imagine that, you can think as we did today."

Kim's hand is still raised, and he searches for eye contact with the team.

Kim: "At least now we know what to do if they [the detectives] are walking somewhere."

Sofia: "And how should you do then?"

Kim: "Many small details."

It is possible that this whole-class-literacy-as-event affected Oliver when it comes to what happened next regarding his writing. Even though he shared nothing himself, the others' statements,

intra-acting with the promenade dances, might have contributed to setting something in motion for Oliver.

Oliver, Emilia, and Samuel take out their notebooks.

Students/notebooks.

The teacher asks questions about participating in the dance project.

Samuel/notebook/pencil.

Samuel writes in his notebook and puts it away.

Emilia/notebook/pencil:

When you walk, you should have more things happening. For example, it's a storm, and the bell rings. Remember not to add too much big stuff! But add more details.

Nevertheless, Emilia still participates in the discussion.

Oliver/notebook/pencil.

Oliver writes intensively, head bowed down.

The others discuss that they have had dance integration in literacy education for three weeks now and have started to like creative dancing.

Oliver/notebook/pencil,

seemingly not paying much attention to what the others are doing.

The teacher announces that

they will watch the films of the promenade dances.

Teacher/iPad/computer.

Oliver starts to draw.

Oliver/notebook/pencil.

Lotta moves to the back of the classroom and sits down close to Oliver.

Oliver looks at Lotta

and says, "Lotta, I decided that I will have a ski slope—"

and gets interrupted by Emilia, who catches Lotta's attention.

Emilia (re)turns her attention to the teacher.

Oliver/notebook/pencil.

Oliver picks up his notebook and points at it:

"Lotta, come here, look, look!"

Lotta: "Do you want me to read it?"

Oliver: "Yes."

There were differences in Oliver's writing that made a difference in this lesson; his writing stood out compared to the takeaway messages of Emilia, Edward, Patrick, and Kim. The ski lift became agentic in Oliver's writing. The various entanglements in Oliver-becoming-the-ski-lift produced Oliver-inspired-to-write, and in his notebook, he wrote:

It is the middle of the day. It is 2 PM, and it is not snowing a lot but a little. I was at the grill, and I walked to the kiosk because packages you order arrive there. When I went down the stairs, it was slippery, and I had to hold on, but when I was on my way, the snow glimmered on the trees, and I heard a snowmobile when I looked towards the sea. But now I was halfway there. When I arrived at the kiosk, I got my package. The package was large. I started thinking about what I had ordered but I could not remember.

Lotta smiles and turns to Oliver.

Lotta/notebook/Oliver's desk:

“Oliver, you can perhaps come up with what it looks like and more, if you want details, but this was great! You have written a lot about the winter.”

Oliver/notebook.

Oliver reads, head bowed down, focusing on the text.

The teacher gathers the students' attention.

Student/screen/Oliver's group's dance film.

Oliver watches, seemingly with enthusiasm.

Lagging film/annoyed students.

They watch it again.

Lagging film/annoyed students.

Oliver returns to his notebook, sometimes glimpsing at the screen.

Oliver/notebook-Oliver/screen-Oliver/notebook-Oliver/screen.

Students/screen/the other group's dance film.

Oliver continues drawing, occasionally looking up.

Oliver/notebook/pencil.

In the middle of the second showing, Oliver picks up the notebook to show his drawing to Lotta.

Oliver/notebook/Lotta.

Lotta leans in to look at the drawing (Image G).

Oliver points at the drawing (Image H).

Oliver/notebook/pointing with pencil.

Oliver: "In the ski slopes, so here you go up with the lift, and you go down like this."

He makes a circular movement with his pencil.

Oliver/notebook/drawing/pencil.

Lotta: "There are many trees where there could be detours,"

and she draws a circular movement with her finger on Oliver's desk, creating detours with her finger.

Lotta/desk/drawing/detours.

Oliver points,

Oliver/drawing/trees.

Oliver: "Mm, here."

Lotta looks up and makes eye contact with Sofia.

In making eye contact with Lotta during that particular event, I felt that something happened between them. I sensed that something had happened for Oliver, indicated by how he invited Lotta to participate in his writing. When discussing this lesson later, Lotta said, "My heart melted when Oliver said, 'Lotta, come here, I got a new idea from what we just did.'" From this point on, Oliver opened up to Lotta.

Oliver created something new and different from what they had created in their promenade dance. He intra-acted with the promenade dance, (re)shaping and (re)experiencing it to fit into the context of his detective story. However, this text is not included in its entirety in his detective story. He wrote in the first person, not as any of the characters he had already created for his detective story, and he wrote in the third person in the final detective story. This difference could be produced by his embodied knowledge of ski slopes, ski lifts, and snowmobiles. Something came from his body and his embodied experienced materialities. He had an affective relation to the new and different story he had created.

Still, parts of this text were included in the detective story. In the opening paragraph, Oliver wrote, *Suddenly, they heard a snowmobile crossing the ice*. He also included the grill, kiosk, and package in various chapters. Something became evoked in Oliver during this lesson, and entanglements between dancing/writing/drawing produced the text he wrote.

What was produced in Oliver's dancing and writing processes can be understood as something between embodied and affective matter and linguistic matter. The ski lift became agentic in different human/nonhuman bodies, such as his classmates, the teachers, the chilly weather, and the detective story. In Oliver-becoming-the-ski-lift, he realized that he could include the ski lift—and other dance movements—in his writing. The dance added something new

to the writing. He became inspired to write this text, producing entanglements of intra-active becomings between the promenade dance and the detective story he was planning. His dancing and writing processes were rhizomatic, as it was impossible to determine where his inspiration began or ended, where the inspiration became dancing, or where the inspiration became writing. The inspiration happened here-and-now in the intra-action and entanglements between Oliver and the other human (e.g., students and teachers) and nonhuman bodies (e.g., schoolyard and weather).

6. Inspiration as in-betweens producing new-ness and other-ness

In this article, I entered a re-thinking of the notion of inspiration through a non-representational approach to understand the complexity and roles of various art forms when using arts-integrated teaching approaches in the literacy classroom. After taking an in-depth look at the analyzed literacy-as-events, it is noticeable how the intra-actions, affects, and entanglements in the dancing and writing processes are much more multifaceted than the dance acting merely as stimuli for the writing or vice versa.

A non-representational understanding challenges and disrupts perceiving dance or texts as mere stimuli, which is also relevant to integration with other art forms. Dance is an independent, unique literacy that also acts as meaning-making across different literacies (Jusslin, 2019; Leonard et al., 2016)—not least when dancing and writing are combined. Based on this current analysis, I argue that such an integrative process is a complex phenomenon in which inspiration needs to be understood as different *in-betweens* (e.g., between dancing/writing, languages/bodies,

student/student, student/teacher, and student/environment). In the tension in these in-betweens, something makes a difference; something takes the dancing and writing in unpredictable directions. This study showed that dance integration in the literacy classroom is not about hierarchically representing meaning or experiences; instead, inspiration in-between dancing/writing is about emergent ideas, feelings, thoughts, movements, narratives, and languages produced in the entangled relations between dancing/writing.

The analysis demonstrates that the agential forces that evoke inspiration are not limited to verbal language but are highly intra-active with embodied and nonhuman matter. This points to an in-between embodied/linguaged matter when combining dancing and writing. The analysis indicates that inspiration is neither strictly from the inside (e.g., Oliver's memories and embodied knowledge) nor from the outside (e.g., other students or the weather), but simultaneously from-inside-and-outside in intra-active becomings with the students and their surroundings. Embodied knowledge inspired both dancing and writing, agreeing with the results of previous research (Woodard et al., 2020).

Therefore, dancing and writing are not positioned on a one-way street because one does not hierarchically or intentionally inspire the other. Instead, the entanglements in-between can produce new-ness and other-ness in the students' integrated dancing and writing processes. Oliver-becoming-the-ski-lift and Oliver-inspired-to-write seemingly constitute a rhizomatic relationship where Oliver moved in different directions in-between dancing/writing, which could not be predicted ahead of time (cf. Burnett & Merchant, 2020). This non-representational understanding, in turn, produces opportunities for students to set in motion something new and different in the two forms of expression. New-ness and other-ness are created in intra-active becomings with human/nonhuman bodies, positioning inspiration on a plane of immanence. Newness was also emphasized by Thrash and Elliot (2004) from a transcendental perspective: "inspiration implies an awakening or accommodation to something new, better, or more important" (p. 958). The notion of immanence disrupts the accommodation of something better or more important. Instead, this proposed non-representational understanding of inspiration produces new-ness and other-ness with no intention to value if it evokes something better or more important. Being inspired by dance and then being inspired to write something does not indicate that the writing could be deemed better. In this understanding, inspiration sets something new and different in motion, depending on the intra-active becomings between, for example, the students, the integrated art forms, and the environment. Inspiration as in-betweens is immanently intra-active and rhizomatic and does not necessarily produce anything better in a transcendental manner. Different in-betweens can produce the opportunities needed to proceed in creative processes (cf. Brace & Johns-Putra, 2010).

Although this article offers a re-thinking of the notion of inspiration in arts-integrated literacy practices, the intention is not to equate this proposed understanding of inspiration as a validated construct (cf. Thrash & Elliot, 2003, 2004; Thrash et al., 2010), but rather to build on and diffractively (re)read previous conceptualizations. In re-thinking inspiration through a non-representational approach, I propose an understanding of inspiration as intra-active and rhizomatic in-betweens that produce new-ness and other-ness—in this case, simultaneously in dancing and writing. Such an understanding produces rich and diverse opportunities that non-hierarchically value and cherish all forms of expression. In an equally integrated teaching process, both dancing and writing have pedagogical value, with neither acting as a servant of the other.

7. Conclusion

This article conceptualized inspiration as intra-active and rhizomatic in-betweens that produce new-ness and other-ness. Although widely used in everyday speech, inspiration is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that combines various forms of expression and is produced by different human/nonhuman bodies. With arts-integrated teaching approaches, it is essential to recognize this complexity and the pedagogical value of disciplines. Otherwise, there is a risk that one discipline will be used naively for stimulative purposes instead of for learning purposes in teaching.

Thus far, dance is relatively unknown and unexplored in literacy education. Although previous research has suggested positive contributions of integrating dance into the literacy classroom, the question of to what extent literacy education is prepared to take dance seriously remains highly relevant. Potential responses to this question include personal knowledge, attitudes, and experiences of dance and literacy. On the other hand, this question also revolves around perceptions and understandings of the roles and values of dance in literacy education and, more generally, in school. Therefore, to reach full learning potential when it comes to arts-integrated teaching approaches, to take dance seriously in literacy education, and to value dance's intrinsic value, dance needs to be considered not as a stimulus but in its full right as a valuable arts-integrated teaching approach with versatile potentialities that can contribute to students' literacy education.

Declaration of Competing Interest

I have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

Acknowledgments

The doctoral project (2017–2020) was conducted in collaboration with the Regional Dance Center in Ostrobothnia and funded by Svensk-Österbottensiska Samfundet and the Swedish Cultural Foundation in Finland. The author had research grants from Kone Foundation and Högskolestiftelsen i Österbotten, working as a postdoctoral researcher in the research project *Embodied Language Learning through the Arts* (2021–2024). Special thanks to the anonymous reviewers for insightful and constructive comments that helped improve the article.

References

- An, D., & Youn, N. (2018). The inspirational power of arts on creativity. *Journal of Business Research*, 85, 467–475. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.10.025>.
- Anttila, E. (2013). *Koko koulu tanssii! Kehollisen oppimisen mahdollisuuksia kouluyhteisössä [The entire school dances! The opportunities of embodied learning in a school community]*. *Theatre Academy*. https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/42322/Acta_Scenica_37.pdf.
- Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the universe halfway: Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning*.
- Beucher, R., Handsfield, L., & Hunt, C. (2019). What matter matters? Retaining the critical in new materialist literacy research. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 51(4), 444–479. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X19876971>.
- Brace, C., & Johns-Putra, A. (2010). Recovering inspiration in the spaces of creative writing. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 35(3), 399–413. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-5661.2010.00390.x>.
- Buck, R. (2003). *Teachers and dance in the classroom: "So, do I need my tutu?" Doctoral dissertation*. University of Otago.
- Burnett, C., & Merchant, G. (2020). Literacy-as-event: Accounting for relationality in literacy research. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 41(1), 45–56. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2018.1460318>.
- Collard-Stokes, G. (2012). Finding common ground through language and movement: Examining the role of the writer in Rosemary Lee's *The Suchness of Heni and Eddie*. *Research in Dance Education*, 13(2), 215–234. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14647893.2012.687370>.
- Cooper, B. (2011). Embodied writing: A tool for teaching and learning in dance. *Journal of Dance Education*, 11(2), 53–59. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15290824.2010.540527>.
- Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (2013). *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*. Bloomsbury Academic (Original work published 1987).

- Giguere, M. (2011). Dancing thoughts: An examination of children's cognition and creative process in dance. *Research in Dance Education*, 12(1), 5–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14647893.2011.554975>.
- Gilbert, A. G. (2015). *Creative dance for all ages. A conceptual approach* (2nd ed.). Human Kinetics.
- Hanna, J. L. (2015). *Dancing to learn: The brain's cognition, emotion & movement*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Hein, S. F. (2016). The new materialism in qualitative inquiry: How compatible are the philosophies of Barad and Deleuze? *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 16(2), 132–140. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708616634732>.
- Hickey-Moody, A. (2016). A femifesta for posthuman art education: Visions and becomings. In C. Taylor, & C. Hughes (Eds.), *Posthuman research practices in education* (pp. 258–266). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hickey-Moody, A., Palmer, H., & Sayers, E. (2016). Diffractive pedagogies: Dancing across new materialist imaginaries. *Gender and Education*, 28(2), 213–229. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2016.1140723>.
- Ishiguro, C., & Okada, T. (2021). How does art viewing inspires creativity? *The Journal of Creative Behavior*, 55(2), 489–500. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jobc.469>.
- Jackson, A. Y., & Mazzei, L. A. (2012). *Thinking with theory in qualitative research: Viewing data across multiple perspectives*.
- Jusslin, S. (2019). Conceptualizing dance literacy: A critical theoretical perspective on dance in school. *Dance articulated*, 5(1), 24–42. <https://doi.org/10.18862/ps.2019.501.3>.
- Jusslin, S. Dancing/reading/writing: Performative potentials of intra-active teaching pedagogies expanding literacy education [Doctoral dissertation, Åbo Akademi University]. Doria. <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-12-3998-4>.
- Jusslin, S., & Forsberg, L. (2021). Kroppslig læring i dansende, lesende og skrivende kroppe [Embodied learning in dancing, reading, and writing bodies]. In T. P. Østern, Ø. Bjerke, A. G. Sørsum, & G. Engelsrud (Eds.), *Kroppslig læring – perspektiver og praksiser [Bodily learning – perspectives and practices]* (pp. 181–192). Universitetsforlaget.
- Jusslin, S., & Höglund, H. (2021). Entanglements of dance/poetry: Creative dance in students' poetry reading and writing. *Research in Dance Education*, 22(3), 250–268. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14647893.2020.1789088>.
- Jusslin, S., & Østern, T. P. (2020). Entanglements of teachers, artists, and researchers in pedagogical environments: A new materialist and arts-based approach to an educational design research team. *International Journal of Education and the Arts*, 21(26), 1–28. <http://doi.org/10.26209/ijea21n26>.
- Koff, S. R., & Warner, M. J. (2001). Curriculum integration: Teaching in, through, and about dance in primary and secondary education. *Journal of Dance Education*, 1(4), 142–147. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15290824.2001.10387195>.
- Kuby, C. R. (2017). Why a paradigm shift of 'more than human ontologies' is needed: Putting to work poststructural and posthuman theories in writers' studio. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 30(9), 877–896. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2017.1336803>.
- Kuby, C. R. (2019). Re)thinking and (re)imagining social(ing) with a more-than-human ontology given the limits of (re)(con)straining language. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 19(2), 126–143. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708618807258>.
- Leander, K., & Boldt, G. (2012). Rereading "a pedagogy of multiliteracies:" Bodies, texts, and emergence. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 45(1), 22–46. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X12468587>.
- Lemieux, A., & Rowsell, J. (2020). This documentary actually makes welland look good." Exploring posthumanism in a high school documentary film project. In K. Toohey, S. Smythe, D. Dagenais, & M. Forte (Eds.), *Transforming language and literacy education: New materialism, posthumanism, and ontoethics. Pedagogies with new materialities* (pp. 120–136). Routledge.
- Lenters, K. (2016). Telling "a story of somebody" through digital scrapbooking: A fourth grade multiliteracies project takes an affective turn. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, 55(3), 262–283. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19388071.2016.1162234>.
- Lenters, K., & Smith, C. (2018). Assembling improv and collaborative story building in language arts class. *The Reading Teacher*, 72(2), 179–189. <https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1689>.
- Leonard, A. E., Hall, A. H., & Herro, D. (2016). Dancing literacy: Expanding children's and teachers' literacy repertoires through embodied knowing. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 16(3), 338–360. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798415588985>.
- Logue, M. E., Robie, M., Brown, M., & Waite, K. (2009). Read my dance: Promoting early writing through dance. *Childhood Education*, 85(4), 216–222. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00094056.2009.10523084>.
- MacLure, M. (2013). Researching without representation? Language and materiality in post-qualitative methodology. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 26(6), 658–667. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2013.788755>.
- Makopoulou, K., Neville, R., & McLaughlin, K. (2021). Does a dance-based physical education (DBPE) intervention improve year 4 pupils' reading comprehension attainment? Results from a pilot study in England. *Research in Dance Education*, 22(3), 269–286. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14647893.2020.1754779>.
- Manning, E., & Massumi, B. (2013). Just like that. William Forsythe – Between movement and language. In G. Brandstetter, G. Ekert, & S. Zubarik (Eds.), *Touching and being touched: Kinesthesia and empathy in dance and movement* (pp. 35–62). De Gruyter.
- Marshall, J. (2014). Transdisciplinarity and art integration: Toward a new understanding of art-based learning across the curriculum. *Studies in Art Education*, 55(2), 104–127. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00393541.2014.11518922>.
- McCormack, D. (2013). *Refrains for moving bodies. Experience and experiment in affective spaces*. Duke University Press.
- McKenney, S., & Reeves, T. C. (2019). *Conducting educational design research* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Midgelow, V. L. (2013). Sensualities: Experiencing/dancing/writing. *New Writing: The International Journal of the Practice and Theory of Creative Writing*, 10(1), 3–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14790726.2012.693098>.
- Nichols, T. P., & Campano, G. (2017). Post-humanism and literacy studies. *Language Arts*, 94(4), 245–251. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1871424392?accountid=8166>.
- Oleynick, V. C., Thrash, T. M., LeFew, M. C., Moldovan, E. G., & Kieffaber, P. D. (2014). The scientific study of inspiration in the creative process: Challenges and opportunities. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 8, 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnhum.2014.00436>.
- Ørbæk, T., & Engelsrud, G. (2019). Skapende dans i en skolekontekst – et forskningsfelt? [Creative dance in a school context – a research field?]. *På Spissen forskning/Dance Articulated*, 5(2), 4–26. <https://doi.org/10.18862/ps.2019.502.2>.
- Østern, T. P., Dahl, T., Strømme, A., Petersen, J. A., Østern, A.-L., & Selander, S. (2019). Dybde/læring – en flerfaglig, relasjonell og skapende tilnærming [Deep education – a cross-curricular, relational and artful approach]. Universitetsforlaget.
- Payne, H., & Costas, B. (2021). Creative dance as experiential learning in state primary education: The potential benefits for children. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 44(3), 277–292. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1053825920968587>.
- Perry, G. (2007). This story wants to be danced: Creative writing, dance, convergence and confluence. *New Writing: The International Journal of the Practice and Theory of Creative Writing*, 4(2), 135–140. <https://doi.org/10.2167/new468.0>.
- Pollitt, J. (2019). The state of dancingness: Staying with leaving. *PARTake: The Journal of Performance as Research*, 2(2), 1–17. <https://journals.colorado.edu/index.php/partake/article/view/419/399>.
- Østern, T.P., Jusslin, S., Knudsen, K.N., Maapalo, P., & Bjørkøy, I. (2021). A performative paradigm for post-qualitative inquiry. *Qualitative Research*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14687941211027444>
- Root-Bernstein, M. (2001). Abstracting bulls: A dancing words/writing dance workshop. *Journal of Dance Education*, 1(4), 134–141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15290824.2001.10387194>.
- Schmidt, K. M., & Beucher, B. (2018). Embodied literacies and the art of meaning making. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 13(2), 119–132. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1554480X.2018.1471999>.
- Sharma, G., Nikolai, J., Duncan, S., & Stewart, T. (2021). *Impact of a curriculum-integrated dance program on literacy and numeracy: A mixed methods study on primary school children*. Journal of dance education. Advance Online Publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15290824.2020.1864379>.
- Thiele, J. J. (2015). Bumblebee's in trouble!" Embodied literacies during imaginative superhero play. *Language Arts*, 93(1), 38–49.
- Thrash, T. M., & Elliot, A. J. (2003). Inspiration as a psychological construct. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84(4), 871–889. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.84.4.871>.
- Thrash, T. M., & Elliot, A. J. (2004). Inspiration: Core characteristics, component processes, antecedents, and function. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 87(6), 957–973. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.87.6.957>.
- Thrash, T. M., Maruskin, L. A., Cassidy, S. E., Fryer, J. W., & Ryan, R. M. (2010). Mediating between the muse and the masses: Inspiration and the actualization of creative ideas. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 98(3), 469–487. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0017907>.
- Thrash, T. M., Moldovan, E. G., Oleynick, V. C., & Maruskin, L. A. (2014). The psychology of inspiration: Inspiration. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 8(9), 495–510. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12127>.
- Widmark, M. (2003). *Lärohandledning till Diamantmysteriet [Teacher's manual to The Diamond Mystery]*. Bonniers förlag.
- Wiebe, S., Sameshima, P., Irwin, R. L., Leggo, C., Guozuoasis, P., & Grauer, K. (2007). Re-imagining arts integration: Rhizomatic relations of the everyday. *The Journal of Educational Thought*, 41(3), 263–280.
- Winner, E., Goldstein, T. R., & Vincent-Lancrin, S. (2013). *Art for art's sake? The impact of arts education*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264180789-en>.
- Woodard, R., Vaughan, A., & Coppola, R. (2020). Writing beyond "the four corners": Adolescent girls writing by, in, from, and for bodies in school. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 52(1), 6–31. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X19896496>.
- Zapata, A., Kuby, C. R., & Thiel, J. J. (2018). Encounters with writing: Becoming-with posthumanist ethics. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 50(4), 478–501. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X18803707>.
- Zembylas, M. (2007). The specters of bodies and affects in the classroom: A rhizomathological approach. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 15(1), 19–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681360601162030>.