

Bringing the Physical into Self-Study Research

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Introduction

With the passing of time, self-study has continued to gather momentum and to garner acceptance within the academic community as a legitimate form of research. But it continues to be dominated by explorations of personal professional practice undertaken through largely logical-rational, discursive research approaches. In daily life, embodied forms of self-reflexive activity such as meditation and yoga now flourish alongside more discursive ones. So what about the spheres of higher education and self-study of teacher education practices (S-STEP) research? Is the time ripe for non-discursive, embodied approaches to self-reflexivity to enter the methodological landscape? What contribution might sensitivity to embodiment offer to the field of S-STEP research? Which aspects of our practice, our self-understanding, and our identities as teacher educators might be revealed through embodied reflective processes? And what might such processes look like in the context of conducting and disseminating rigorous research? This chapter provides a consideration of what embodiment and physical culture might bring to S-STEP as a field already rich with teacher education conversations.

Context

I am a drama teacher educator so a PETE audience is just about the last I ever expected to be writing for. My sense of disconnection from physical education stems back to my school days when my refusal to participate in team sports was almost a thing of legend, with 'kinaesthetic illiteracy' my favoured excuse. As a secondary

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school drama teacher, I felt the battle lines were strongly drawn between us too. Just as kids were often forced to choose between their jock and diva tendencies for after-school nurturance, so too was there a constant tussle over the physical spaces in which we might 'practice and compete' or 'rehearse and perform' depending on the rhetoric of our respective disciplines. Somehow, throughout my career as a student and then as a teacher, I remained blind to the common denominator shared by drama and physical education. And this essence that binds us is a thing that is missing in large part from the scholarship of teacher education, a thing that can offer new insight, and a new focus for S-STEP inquiry: the body.

Disembodied

Despite the focus on 'the self' in S-STEP, the physical body and the wisdom that it holds have not really been given much attention. And I suppose this isn't surprising given the banishment of the body from much intellectual enterprise. Perhaps none are more attuned to its absence than those of us who work in the kinaesthetic disciplines: physical education, dance, and drama; those of us whose work values the body and therefore sits on the margins of what are accepted as valid forms of knowing and learning. The dismissal of the body in academia is perhaps captured best by Ken Robinson's wry throw away that most academics today 'look upon their body as a form of transport for their heads. It's a way of getting their head to meetings' (2006).

Body/mind dualism can be traced through the history of Western philosophical thought at least as far back as Plato's separation of the body and soul. It was an idea enthusiastically taken up by Rene Descartes among others. Cartesian dualism is particularly noteworthy since Descartes not only proclaimed that mind and body were separate entities, but that our very agency as modern, knowing subjects was dependent on this separation of our thoughts from our passions, desires, and proclivities which were all housed in the physical body (Michelson 1998). And this contempt for the body as that which problematically anchors the otherwise objective knower in the subjectivity of a particular physical context has continued on through centuries of Western thought. The objective and universal truths of positivism rely in many ways on overcoming context – physical, historical, cultural – and our physical bodies are obstacles to such metaphysical transcendence.

Jordi (2010) reminds us that: 'human consciousness and the mind are processes that are contingent on the existence and functioning of the human brain. And the brain is firmly embodied' (p. 191). Nevertheless, emotion and bodily feeling have tended to be dismissed as obstacles to reason and logic, which are privileged as the most reliable, if not the only, legitimate forms of knowledge. And this dismissal of the body as a legitimate form and way of knowing is not limited to positivist scientific inquiry. Even in the humanities and social sciences, in reflective practice, and in a range of approaches to the exploration of self, rationality and verbal language are habitually valued over feeling and bodily held sensation as legitimate ways and

forms of self-knowledge. Pagis (2009) observed that this bias extends even to studies in ‘self-reflexivity’. According to Pagis, the privileging of a verbal-linguistic approach is evident in the common framing of self-reflexivity as a kind of ‘internal dialogue’ in which ‘language is assumed to be the main channel through which individuals can relate to themselves’ (p. 265).

Pondering the lack of embodied practices amongst adult educators, Lawrence (2010) wondered whether it is because ‘they are fearful of the body, or perhaps they just have not been exposed to other ways of knowing’ (p. 2). But among physical education teacher educators, I doubt that a lack of exposure or fear is an issue. Much more likely, I suspect, is that just as you observed the gradual ‘academicisation and scientisation of senior physical education’ (Brown and Penney 2013, p. 42), so too did you take to heart the need to be dismembered and disembodied in order to find a place and a voice within academic discourse. If that is so, then this is an invitation to re-member (Michelson 1998), to rediscover the possibility of the body as epistemology and to pioneer a movement towards embodied reflection as an avenue to S-STEP research.

The Body as Epistemology

Despite my fighting words, I confess I commonly experience intense discomfort when I first tell people about my research interest in knowing with and through the body. So pervasive is the hierarchical privileging of logical-verbal forms of knowledge and knowledge production that I admit it is often with a self-deprecating timidity that I propose the body as an alternate form and way of knowing. I remember the first time I shared my budding research interest with my mother (a mathematics education scholar) and how she cringed at the phrase *The Wisdom of the Body*.

‘Wisdom of the body?’ she scoffed, all haughty and dismissive. ‘There is no wisdom of the body. The body just reacts, has physiological responses to sensation. There is no wisdom or knowledge there; it’s a response without consciousness’.

‘But the body’s response to particular situations can be a clue, an indication to our understanding of what is going on in a given moment’, I explained. ‘And if we pay attention to those clues, we can choose our next action from a place of greater intent and awareness’. I reminded her of our earlier conversation about how she had sweated and how her heart had raced in the moments before she was interviewed for a promotion. *‘That was your body telling you something, wasn’t it?’*

‘It was my body reacting to something. That’s just the body’s primal reaction to fear’, she retorted.

‘But you had nothing to fear in a survival sense; you weren’t in any physical danger in that moment. That physiological response was your body’s way of telling you something about how you were feeling in that moment’.

‘But if I learn anything from that, then that’s my wisdom in interpreting my body’s reactions, not the wisdom of the body itself’.

Getting to this point was enough for me. I experienced it as a big win; at least I got her to acknowledge that the body’s responses might be connected to our feelings and experiential understanding of what is happening in a given moment.

Whether the 'wisdom' is attributed to the bodily response itself or to our intellectual capacity to interpret that response could wait.

Without knowing it, my mother and I were discussing the differences between what neuroscientist Antonio Damasio (1999) describes as the body's first and second order sensations. First order sensations are the body's intake of sensory information from the world; second order sensations are the body's reactions to that information. As Pagis (2009) explains, the body 'reacts to the world by producing sensations – pain, heat, itchiness, change of heart rate, electricity, muscle tension – of the second order, outcomes of the first-order sensory information that the individual receives from the world' (p. 267). These second order sensations are meaningful indicators, signs of how we are feeling in relation to what we are experiencing, even if we are not aware of those feeling responses in a fully languaged, reasoned or logical way.

Part of the problem with a response like my mother's to the idea of embodied knowing is captured by her claim that: *'If I learn anything from that, then that's my wisdom in interpreting my body's reactions, not the wisdom of the body itself'*. In her singular association of her selfhood with her cognitive-interpretive capacity (*my* wisdom) is the simultaneous disassociation of her sense of self from her physical being (*the* body). In this construction of her selfhood, she denies the undeniable fact of the embodied nature of her existence in, and her experience of the world.

But in an embodied view, the body is understood to be a knowing and knowledgeable entity with its own lived experience of a given situation. In this sense it 'knows' or 'understands' in ways as potent as any thinking process. And just as our logical-rational thought processes are communicated to us in symbols and words, so too does the body communicate its experience to us through the second-order sensations that are its own language. Sometimes embodied knowledge forms complement our logical-rational-interpretative knowledges; sometimes they contradict each other. Either way, the point is that our bodily knowing is just as viable and valid as other forms and ways of knowing.

Listening to what the body is saying of what it knows and taking that wisdom into account in deciding our next action is the basis of my conception of drawing on the body as epistemology. It's not such a foreign concept really, is it? After all, despite our obsession with logically reasoned explanations, we are still given to feeling things in our bones, and to knowing them in our gut. This, I propose, is knowing with our bodies, the body as epistemology.

It is a kind of knowing connected to Polanyi's (1958) tacit knowing, the concept upon which Donald Schön (1983) drew in his conception of knowing-in-action. Both these notions account for the prelanguage, intuitive dimensions of our experiential knowing and understanding. But I am proposing the reframing of what they designate as tacit – implied, silent, unspoken – as knowledge that is merely speaking in a different language: body language. If we accept this proposition, then the notion of making the tacit explicit is disrupted too because our tacit knowledge is

already speaking explicitly, and sometimes very loudly. We just need to tune in to our bodies and hear what they are saying.

Drawing on the work of psychotherapist, Eugene Gendlin Jordi (2010) refers to this bodily knowing as the ‘felt sense’. Neither a sensory perception of something external nor an emotion, the felt-sense is ‘an implicitly intricate bodily felt interaction with a specific situation that invokes a constellation of associations, past and present, self and others’ (p. 193). According to Jordi (2010), this bodily expression contains elements of ‘feeling, memory, tacit knowledge, thought, emotion, [and] opinion – all of which cross, govern, and give relevance to one another’ (p. 193). While we initially experience the felt-sense as an:

... unclear bodily felt sensation that often occurs in the throat, chest, stomach, or abdomen, and hovers just on the edge of our thinking... what emerges as the felt-sense is made explicit, is a unique “crossing” of particular elements so that the thought, word, or action has a meaning that is specific to that situation. (pp. 192–193)

To achieve this, Jordi suggests Gendlin’s psychotherapeutic process of ‘focusing’ to achieve the ‘felt-shift’ that makes explicit and conscious the bodily held knowing that is contained in the felt-sense.

If the body is epistemology, is part of *how* we know-in-action, then Jordi’s (2010) notion of reflecting *on* the body offers a methodological approach by which we might research the nature of what it is that our bodies know. Reflection on the body may well be an approach to enable access to our knowing-in-action that we cannot achieve through cognitive reflection alone. A rare example of a self-study that includes this kind of focused reflection on the body can be found in the work of Canadian sport psychologist, Chantale Lussier-Ley (2010). A former dancer, Lussier-Ley embarked on a self-study of the role of the body (her own body and those of others) in her consulting practice, using autobiographical narrative analysis to explore her problematic relationship with her body which, she claims, ‘was desperately trying to speak to me, but it took some time for me to be ready to truly listen’ (p. 199).

Reflecting on the Body

I teach a reflective practice unit within an adult learning and development course. In it, students explore a range of approaches to reflection, including embodied reflection. For their final assignment, they are invited to apply a range of reflective processes to the case of a workplace dilemma.

Here I present the cases of Gareth and Jodie who both applied Jordi’s (2010) embodied reflection by recalling and considering their experience of a felt-sense within their nominated workplace dilemma. As illustrated by these cases, focused attention on the felt-sense as a dimension of reflective inquiry offers great promise as part of an embodied methodology for S-STEP research.

Gareth

Gareth wanted to explore a class about which he remembered feeling uneasy right from the start. He hadn't prepared very well so he was feeling anxious and defensive about teaching it before the class had even begun. He asked his apprentices to form their own groups and get on with a set task. Gareth experienced a heightened sense of frustration when they needed guidance forming groups since he had deliberately given them the freedom to choose as a way of acknowledging the autonomy that adult learners supposedly expect and desire. Later, when the groups began to adapt the task he had set for them, Gareth grew intensely angry with them. In the end, he could not reconcile this anger since, in other (small) ways, he was encouraging of the students' autonomy and initiative. He ended the class feeling frustrated, angry, and confused.

Gareth began his reflection in earnest by focusing on the bodily held feeling he recalled having at the start of the class. He described a nauseous, unsettled feeling in his stomach. As he focused on this felt-sense, it took him back to his days as a student when he was often not prepared for class. When he focused on the specific details of his childhood experience of this same felt sense, what stood out for Gareth was his fear of being 'found out,' humiliated, and shown up by the teacher.

Armed with a clearer understanding of his felt-sense, Gareth returned to his exploration of his teaching that day. He had already ascertained that he was predisposed to feeling frustrated as a defensive response to his lack of preparation. But by focusing on the particular memories evoked by the felt-sense that had remained with him throughout the class, Gareth came to a new kind of self-understanding. It wasn't so much lack of preparedness that had been worrying him that day, as it was his fear of being found out by his students. It was this same lack of confidence in his own expertise that led him to panic when his students deviated from the set task. In his fear of being found out he was unable to really allow the students to take genuine initiative and ownership of their learning; he could only pay it lip-service by allowing them to form their own groups.

Jodie

Jodie remembered a planning meeting during which she and her team had determined the unmet needs of their clients (long term unemployed jobseekers). Based on those needs, and drawing on her understanding of adult education principles and processes, she and her team planned a new job skills training program, including details of the human resources needed to successfully deliver the training. As the section manager, Jodie knew that the required resources were simply unavailable. She worked with her team to revise the delivery schedule so that it would be financially viable. At this point, Jodie remembered experiencing a felt-sense, which she described as '*sickness within the stomach and feelings of anxiety within the chest*'.

As a consequence of focusing her reflection on the bodily held sensation she experienced at the time, Jodie remembered having experienced the same sensation on another – seemingly unrelated – occasion. Jodie remembered attending a government forum during which the outcomes for a new training package were being described. In her assignment, she explained: *‘as the presentation continued, and the speaker began to talk about the funding that would be attached to the new package, I experienced that same sick and anxious feeling within my stomach’*.

Reflecting on the similarities between the two scenarios, Jodie came to the realisation that:

... when the opposing values between what it means to be a manager and what it means to be an adult educator come into conflict, I experience a felt-sense expressed as a feeling of sickness within the stomach and feelings of anxiety within the chest...[In both scenarios] the cognitive dissonance between the two competing sets of values elicited the felt-sense within me, as I instinctively knew that I would not be able to successfully meet the requirements of both sets of values, and that ultimately one would have to be selected over the other.

Recognising a pattern in her experience of a particular felt-sense, Jodie developed a heightened awareness of the tendency for two dimensions of her job to come into conflict: the manager (concerned with the bottom line) versus the adult educator (concerned with the educational outcomes for clients). Jodie did not seek to resolve the dilemma; this was not the purpose for her reflection. But now she was primed to pay attention to the times when she faced this conflict, to note through her own felt-sense the tensions she faced when working as a manager in the field of adult education.

Reflecting Through the Body

Whereas Jordi (2010) focuses on the value of reflecting *on* the body as a site of wisdom and insight, Pagis (2009) recommends reflecting *through* the body to achieve greater self-awareness and self-understanding. She refers to ‘embodied self-reflexivity’, a process ‘based predominantly on feeling the body, in which the relation with oneself unfolds through a corporeal medium’ (p. 266). She draws specifically on the example of Vipassana meditation in which meditators remain silent for prolonged periods, focusing only on their bodily experiences. Pagis (2009) explains that unlike discursive forms of self-reflexivity (such as journal writing, reflective conversations, and story telling) ‘in meditation, in order to know oneself, one does not speak either with another or with oneself. Instead, self-knowledge is anchored in bodily sensations’ (p. 265).

Other forms of embodied self-reflexivity are akin to what Pirkko Markula (2004) calls ‘mindful exercise’, those fitness modalities that are characterised by a focus on proprioceptive awareness, breathing, body alignment, and the generation and use of intrinsic energy. Including Eastern modalities such as Yoga and Tai Chi, Western Pilates, and a host of hybrid forms such as yagalates and yogaerobics, mindful

exercise is a means by which ‘an integrated self is discovered in a physical activity’ (Markula 2004, p. 72).

Another form of embodied self-reflexivity is found in *The walk of the drum*, a form of moving meditation developed by Melbourne DJ and producer, Simon Slieker. Drawing on notions of trance dance found in both ancient indigenous cultural practices and the contemporary electronic music scene, Slieker (2011) proposes that ‘when you allow your body to respond to rhythm and sound over time, you are liberating your mind and giving your body a voice’. In *The walk of the drum*, participants are invited to respond in bodily ways (such as movement and dance) to an integrated sound journey of music and guided meditation. Slieker’s conception of the role of music in enabling embodied self-reflexivity is eloquently expressed in the introductory meditation of *The walk of the drum*:

Embrace the structure of the rhythm.
It is not about confining your creativity,
it is providing a rhythmic boundary
to anchor your physical body
so you can journey deeply internally.
External anchoring enables inner venturing,
inner visioning.
The rhythm can take you there,
the beats can bring you back.
The repetition is a roadmap.

Knowing Through the Performing Body

As in the various physical education disciplines, the body is also central to the process of inquiry within the performing arts disciplines of dance, drama, and music. Liora Bresler (2004) explains that this makes the performing arts an ideal area for exploring the potential of embodiment for educational research. In the case of drama, embodied and discursive forms often come together; for example, in the live performance of scripted theatrical work. This positions dramatic performance as a powerful reflective practice approach with the potential to engage participants simultaneously in discursive and embodied reflexive activity.

In the aesthetic space of the theatrical stage, we can enact (or re-enact) particular performances, reflecting ourselves to ourselves through the imaginary mirror of theatre. In doing so, we can become the audience in the present moment to our own actions past, present, or future. In doing so, we experience metaxis; that is, ‘the state of belonging completely and simultaneously to two different autonomous worlds’ (Boal 1995, p. 43). In this sense we take on simultaneously the roles of actor and spectator, a collapsing of roles which brings about the subsequent emergence of what Boal (1995) calls the ‘spect-actor’:

[The spect-actor] is not only an object; he is a subject because he can also act on the actor – the spect-actor is the actor, he can guide him, change him. A spect-actor acting on the actor who acts. (p. 13)

Within this description of the spect-actor is the very image of the reflective practitioner, engaged in the constant reflexive flow of acting, observing action and, through that observation, learning, and determining new action for observation, and so on and on.

In Boal's image of the spect-actor, the mode of reflexive communication is embodied performance. In both *Games for actors and non-actors* (2002) and *The rainbow of desire* (1995), Boal outlines a range of drama-based exercises that engage participants in what are essentially forms of embodied reflection. Each one offers the intriguing possibility of unearthing through an embodied perspective alternative understanding of our actions, practices, and values.

Colombian Hypnosis

On a recent trip to the United States, I worked with a group of undergraduate students taking a course on urban schooling. They had only met one time previous and for many of them, that one session was their first introduction to the intellectual ideas around equity and social justice thrown up by the nature and state of contemporary urban schooling. For my session, I decided to engage the group in the embodied experience of Boal's 'Colombian Hypnosis' (described in his *Games for actors and non-actors*, 2002).

In the first phase, students paired up with A as the leader and B following. B imagined a 10 cm string connecting their nose to A's open palm. In this way A led B around the space, experimenting with height, pace, and movement forwards and back. At the end of a few minutes, A and B swapped roles so that B had a turn to lead. The group reconvened to discuss their experience. They were asked who liked to lead and who liked to follow. Some nominated their preference to lead, citing their enjoyment of the power, the creative possibilities, the idea of pushing their partner to their limits. Others did not enjoy leading; they could not think of imaginative things to do, some did not like the responsibility, and preferred to follow. Others preferred to follow because they enjoyed the challenge set by their partner.

In the second phase, students made groups of three. In the first instance, A led with B and C attached by an imaginary string to each of A's open palms. In this way, A led with two followers. The trios swapped roles until each had a turn to lead. Again, the group reconvened and experiences were shared. Some continued to enjoy leading; they felt as though they were choreographing a dance, but others found the responsibility too much this time since there was the added danger of the pair of followers colliding. Likewise, some who enjoyed following the first time liked it even less since they were now competing for the attention of the leader. Others enjoyed following with a fellow follower in tow since they felt part of a collective and less exposed.

In the final phase, a single volunteer took centre stage and held out two open palms. Volunteers positioned themselves attached to each palm by an imaginary string. Then each of these volunteers held out two palms and a further two volunteers attached themselves before holding up their palms and leading two more volunteers.

The configuration continued to grow until there were only followers on the very ends with no one to lead. Once the whole group was part of the configuration, the leader began to move, with most of the group acting simultaneously as both leaders and followers. It did not take long for the group to descend into chaos, with the outlying followers on the ends flung this way and that with the slightest movement from the centre. Unable to see anything other than the few followers immediately around him, the central leader very quickly got the group stuck in a corner with nowhere to go. The configuration folded in on itself before coming to a complete standstill.

We reconvened to discuss the experience, beginning by sharing the experiences of those who were both leaders and followers. Most said they found it difficult to focus equally on leading and following and admitted that when forced to choose, they privileged following over leading with care. For the most part, the outliers on the ends said they did not feel that anyone was really looking out for them and they could feel their leader's focus on following those in front rather than investing in leading. One outlier said they quite enjoyed this since it meant they felt no responsibility for anyone else. But most felt unsafe and uncared about. The central leader began by focusing on the two followers at his palms. He did not realise the ripple effect of his movements on the whole until it was too late to untangle the group. After some time, he got bored and could not think of new movements but feeling the pressure to continue to lead, he went on moving without really thinking about what he was doing.

After some time sharing purely at the level of their personal, bodily experience, one student offered that it reminded her of her job at Walmart. I asked her to explain what she meant. 'Well', she said, *'there are so many managers and deputy managers and assistant managers telling each other what to do and then the sales staff just obeying without really understanding what's going on'*. Another student added *'it's a bit like a dysfunctional government'* and a third said, *'it's kind of like the school system'*.

We continued to discuss this idea: that they had just created an embodied metaphor for the school system. They shared their various understandings of that metaphor, taking as a starting point their bodily positions within it. The outliers had a felt experience of being neglected by the system that is purportedly designed to support them, experiencing the bodily equivalent of being a student in an education system so focused on rules and regulations that it fails to take account of the negative impacts on the students themselves. The bodily experience of trying to simultaneously lead and follow enabled some students a more empathetic appreciation of the difficulties faced by teachers in urban schools who are charged simultaneously with the responsibility to cater to the needs of their students and to ensure that they achieve at acceptable levels on high stakes tests. They empathised with the double bind that many teachers face in having to follow bureaucratic demands in order to keep their jobs despite feeling that such a focus is not in the best interests of their students.

These students had already begun an intellectual exploration of ideas around the systemic oppression of the school system. This session enabled them to have a *felt* experience of systemic oppression, enabling them to know the experience with their

bodies, through the embodied metaphor of Colombian Hypnosis. As one student wrote to me after the class, *'today I will walk away knowing how it feels to be oppressed while oppressing others, and how much of an impact I will have on my students as a future teacher'*.

According to Brookfield (1995), one of the greatest challenges of reflective practice is overcoming the limitations of our own perspective. We view the world within the frame of our assumptions, which we tend to misrecognise as truths. Reflection depends on our ability to expose our assumptions (Brookfield 1995) and to 'reframe' our experiences (Schön 1983). For these students, embodiment enabled just such a reframing of the concept of systemic oppression so that they came to understand it from an embodied, emotional perspective. Their experience points to the methodological potential for 'framing and reframing' that embodied processes might offer within S-STEP research.

Communicating Bodily Knowing

The irony in encouraging bodily knowing as a starting point for research is that if it is to be shared with others via traditional dissemination formats, ultimately that bodily knowing must somehow be translated into a more conventional, linguistic form. This is what Pagis (2009) refers to as the 'methodological obstacle' (p. 268) of communicating embodied self-reflexivity to others. According to Pagis, as Vipassana meditators develop their expertise in the modality, they become less reliant on talk and social integration and more autonomous in their reflective capacities, thereby reducing the need or desire to share their findings with others. But I remain unconvinced by this notion and am more inclined to see embodiment as another vehicle for reflexive inquiry, which is at its most powerful, dynamic, and revealing when shared. Certainly, in the context of S-STEP research, the act of 'going public' is a fundamental methodological concern (Samaras 2011, p. 81).

Nevertheless, it has certainly been my experience that there is something ephemeral in bodily knowing, something that cannot quite be expressed in words and so some of the experience and the understanding of it is lost when shared in verbal-linguistic forms. This is pertinent not only to the dissemination of embodied research findings, but even in research participants' attempts to make sense of their embodied experiences. I discovered this dilemma when first reporting the findings of a research project for which data collection was conducted through embodied reflection workshops. While at the time I felt confident that powerful learning had happened and the group's experience seemed to be one of profound transformation, later when I went back to write up the experience, I found no verbal evidence of it. Despite having audio and video recordings of the session, I had not captured tangible data as evidence of all that had taken place. The workshop transcripts were characterised by half sentences finished with gestures, grunts of affirmation, exclamations of appreciation, surprise, and agreement.

Weber and Mitchell (2002) addressed the problem of conveying their embodied, performance-based S-STEP research by presenting the theatrical performance of a

play script, as well as disseminating their research in the form of a scholarly article. As they explained, 'it's one thing to write about yourself, but quite another to publicly embody what you've written' (p. 122). Lussier-Ley sought to overcome the 'methodological obstacle' of embodied self-reflexive research in her self-study writing through the creative solution of anthropomorphizing her body. Her self-study work is punctuated by dialogical exchanges between her 'self' and her 'body', which speaks back to her throughout.

Recently, I too looked to an arts-based approach to disseminate research and experimented with dissemination of embodied research findings via an interactive exhibition (Patrizio and Forgasz 2013). In the exhibition, free standing, life-size photographic images of physical poses adopted as part of an embodied reflection workshop were exhibited. A mirror accompanied each one. An invitation was extended to exhibition participants:

Near each image is a mirror. Use its reflection to guide you as you physically adopt the image. Pause. Breathe into it. What emotion does your body's positioning evoke in you? Do you recognise this emotion? When (and why) have you felt it?

After having their own bodily experience of an embodied emotion, participants were invited to reveal a hidden text panel containing an explanation from the original workshop participant about the emotion they were trying to convey through the image. In this way, I attempted to present the data speaking in the language of the body before being translated into the spoken/written word. Just as significant in this approach was the opportunity it created for audiences to have a bodily experience (engaging with the data through an embodied process) as well as engaging with a logical-rational interpretation of the data and subsequent findings.

All these examples draw on arts-based research forms of dissemination. Theatre-based inquiry approaches such as performance ethnography and verbatim theatre also hold particular promise as embodied approaches to data collection and dissemination of research. But I suspect that arts-based approaches alone will not suffice and that even as they are adopted, they will also be adapted to shift the emphasis away from *artful* ways of knowing and being (Finley 2008), instead shining a light on knowing through the experience and language of the body.

At any rate, if embodied reflection is to enter the vernacular of S-STEP research methods, then it will be incumbent upon those who work with it to continue to develop convincing and authentically representative modes for capturing and presenting data from such research. In doing so, we will very likely have to challenge the boundaries of what are considered valid forms of research dissemination.

Conclusion

The decision to engage in S-STEP research requires a willingness to look vulnerably at oneself; to unravel the complex network of thoughts, emotions, assumptions, histories, and aspirations that motivate pedagogic action and reaction. This self to be

cracked open for exploration is housed in a physical body so it follows that the body should 'count' in S-STEP research.

In this chapter, I have proposed that the body is more than just a physical anchoring of our context and our subjectivity. The body is, but the body also does, it speaks, and it knows. We can know *with* the body and *through* the body; both provide exciting avenues for bodily S-STEP research. Self-study of what we know *with* our bodies means paying heed to our bodily held responses and including them as a legitimate focus for self-reflexive activity. Self-study of what we know *through* the body, means engaging in bodily processes to arrive at self-understanding, just as we might come to know something through an intellectual process of thinking about it.

Given our pre-existing relationships with our bodies, and the central role of the body within our kinaesthetic disciplines, we teacher educators of physical education, drama, and dance are perhaps best placed to develop bodily approaches to S-STEP research. The development of such approaches would not only benefit our own research but could also open an invitation to the wider S-STEP community into awareness and experience of the body as a site of wisdom, of knowing, and of reflection.

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