ABSTRACT

Research on *dance literacy* has advanced in the 21st century, with researchers arguing that emphasis on students' dance literacy can illuminate bodily learning in school. Nevertheless, the concept is often left undefined, and there seems to be no clear consensus on what dance literacy means for bodily learning in school contexts. This article examines previous literature to provide a conceptual overview of dance literacy, and discusses dance literacy in school through a critical theoretical lens. Discussing and reviewing the previous literature on dance literacy from an emancipatory approach, the article proposes a *Dance Literacy Model for Schools* within primary and secondary education settings that do not teach dance as a school subject. The model comprises three dimensions of dance literacy: dance as an art form and form of expression, dance combined with other literacies, and learning through dance in different curricular areas. The article concludes that education in dance literacy can contribute to students' literacy education by accentuating bodily learning in and through dance while simultaneously highlighting and appreciating the value of dance itself.

Key words: dance literacy, bodily learning, literacy education, emancipation, Dance Literacy Model for Schools

SAMMANDRAG

Under 2000-talet har användningen av begreppet *danslitteracitet* (dance literacy) ökat och forskare argumenterar att fokus på att utveckla elevers danslitteracitet kan belysa kroppsligt lärande i skolan. Däremot används begreppet ofta utan definition och det verkar inte finnas någon entydighet i vad danslitteracitet innebär för kroppsligt lärande i skolsammanhang. Med utgångspunkt i tidigare forskningslitteratur syftar denna artikel till att utreda begreppet danslitteracitet, samt att genom en kritisk teoretisk lins diskutera danslitteracitet i en skolkontext. Diskussionen präglas av ett emancipatoriskt perspektiv på danslitteracitet och resulterar i en föreslagen *Modell för danslitteracitet i skolan* i en undervisningskontext utan dans som skolämne. Modellen består av tre dimensioner: dans som konstform och uttrycksform, dans kombinerat med andra uttrycksformer, samt lärande genom dans i olika ämnen. I artikeln konstateras att undervisning med fokus på danslitteracitet kan erbjuda elever möjligheter till kroppsligt lärande i och genom dans, samtidigt som dansens värde i sig själv betonas och värdesätts.

Nyckelord: danslitteracitet, kroppsligt lärande, litteracitet, emancipation, dans i skolan

CONCEPTUALIZING DANCE LITERACY:
A CRITICAL THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE ON DANCE IN SCHOOL

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INTRODUCTION

This article presents a conceptual overview of dance literacy and proposes a model for dance literacy in school contexts. Several researchers advocate the relatively new concept of *dance literacy* by arguing that emphasis on students' dance literacy can illuminate bodily learning in school and help educators recognize that dance is connected to bodily knowledge (Dils, 2007b; Hong, 2000; Jones, 2014; Riggs Leyva, 2015). However, the meaning of the concept is often left undefined (Curran, Gingrasso, Megill & Heiland, 2011). *Bodily learning* refers to learning in the whole body, in the whole person, and between humans in social and material realities (Anttila, 2013). Dance can contribute to students' learning in several ways; for example, by developing students' academic, collaborative, creative, motor and social skills and multiple literacies (Anttila, 2013; Keinänen, Hetland & Winner, 2000; Leandro, Monteiro & Melo, 2018; Leonard, 2012;

Leonard, Hall & Herro, 2016; Lobo & Winsler, 2006; McMahon, Rose & Parks, 2003; Moore & Linder, 2012; Svendler Nielsen, 2009). However, there is a dearth of research on dance in school (Anttila, 2013; Anttila & Svendler Nielsen, 2019; Bonbright, Bradley & Dooling, 2013; Bond & Richard, 2005; Dils, 2007b; Hanna, 2008; Leonard, 2012; Leonard & McShane-Hellenbrand, 2012), and there seems to be no clear consensus on what dance literacy means for bodily learning, especially in primary and secondary education, where dance does not feature in the curriculum. In attempting to fill the research gap, the article approaches dance literacy in school contexts through a critical theoretical lens and contributes with knowledge about what dance literacy entails for bodily learning in school.

Aim and theoretical framework

The aim of this article is to examine previous literature to provide a conceptual overview of dance literacy and to discuss dance literacy in school through a critical theoretical lens. Given that curricula in many countries lack emphasis on dance and its artistic, creative and aesthetic aspects, the overarching research question guiding this article is how dance literacy can be defined so as to have value for schools that do not teach dance as a school subject. The present article is by no means a systematic literature review. Instead, it is a conceptual analysis in search of a definition of dance literacy with relevance for primary and secondary education. The literature review is based on different combinations and inflections of the concepts of *dance* and *literacy*. The recovered references are reviewed, and citation tracking is used to identify further relevant literature. The main focus lies on research literature from the 21st century, as dance literacy is mostly concentrated in, and has gained increased visibility, during this era. Consequently, this article encompasses research literature that covers the differences in how dance literacy has been defined so as to offer a comprehensive overview of the concept in primary and secondary education settings. Examples are mainly drawn from empirical research in primary and secondary education, but due to the lack of extant sources, examples are also drawn from dance education and anecdotal reports in books and journals.

In the conceptual overview, a critical theoretical lens inspired by Paulo Freire's (1970/2018) critical pedagogy is employed to problematize dance literacy. A critical theoretical approach to dance literacy enables us to rethink literacy education as an emancipatory praxis whereby students gain and create knowledge in and through different forms of expression. The concepts of *ideology*, *power* and *marginalization* are used to critically discuss dance literacy. These concepts draw attention to the hegemonic ways in which schools are governed by ideologies and power structures, which can engender marginalization of both students and curricular areas and act as obstacles to emancipation. Here, *emancipation* is defined as the enactment of freeing oneself from constraints that prevent the construction of knowledge, realities, and identities. The assumption in the present article is that some students need opportunities to engage in bodily forms of expression to reach emancipation. The concept of ideology opens up for widely shared but skewed perceptions of dance and bodily learning and, consequently, relates to legitimated discourses of power that determine what forms of expression are

more highly valued for students' learning. Ultimately, the critical theoretical lens guides the discussion of dance literacy, which forms the basis for developing a model for dance literacy in school contexts.

In what follows, *school* refers to primary and secondary education, whereas *dance education* refers to the teaching of dance in public and private institutions. Before presenting the conceptual overview, background information about bodily modes of meaning in contemporary literacy education is provided, and an epistemological take on dance as bodily knowledge, which lays the foundation for the conceptual overview, is presented.

Bodily modes of meaning in literacy education

Literacy has evolved from reading and writing alphabetic text, often referred to as old or traditional literacy (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009), to meaning-making in different forms of expression that acknowledge the multiple uses and understandings of literacy (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, 2015; Eisner, 1998b). In fact, people use several different *literacies* that demand and apply different modes of meaning that serve as resources for making meaning (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). The evolvement to multiple literacies has resulted in new definitions and conceptualizations, and specific orientations: for example, digital literacy, visual literacy, and dance literacy.

Contemporary literacy education often emphasizes the development of multiple literacies, which include written and oral language, visual, audio, tactile, gestural, and spatial modes of meaning, and multimodal combinations of these (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). This view is advanced by The New London Group (1996), a group of literacy scholars, who coined the concept of *multiliteracies* as a response to communicative changes in society in the mid-nineties. The New London Group proposed a literacy pedagogy to account for the multiplicity of communication channels and increasing linguistic and cultural diversity in society. The original multiliteracies manifesto has been revisited several times (e.g., Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, 2015), with updates reflecting subsequent developments occurring since the 1990s and with scholars alluding to the continuing currency and relevance of the multiliteracies approach.

Embracing the idea of multiple literacies, Elliot Eisner (1998b) expanded the concept of literacy to include the arts. Highlighting that the core of literacy is *meaning*, he argues that all forms of representation that convey meaning can be seen as literacy. Conveying a broad perspective on literacy, Eisner (1998b) asserts that «becoming literate, in the broad sense, means learning how to access in a meaningful way the forms of life that these meaning systems make possible» (p. 12). As such, delimiting literacy teaching to one segregated mode favors some students over others and excludes those who do not fit the norm (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). Therefore, researchers have argued that all modes of meaning should count and be valued as knowledge in school (Cowan & Albers, 2006; Eisner, 1998b; Jewitt, 2008; Thwaites, 2008). Knowledge is not bound to mental cognition and includes meaning-making in different modes of meaning (Eisner, 1998b).

Nevertheless, it is important to remember that traditional literacies are not replaced, but instead complemented, by expanding the literacy repertoire (Leonard et al., 2016).

Even though multiliteracies scholars refer broadly and metaphorically to *gestural* «as a physical act of signing (…) rather than the narrower literal meaning of hand and arm movement» (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, p. 178), the term gestural conveys an unnecessarily constricted and limited view on movement and the body. Instead of referring to gestural, some researchers (see Hong, 2000; Riggs Leyva, 2015) use the term *kinesthetic*, which expresses a broader view of movement than the term gestural. The present article refers to *bodily* modes of meaning, which are more suitable for acknowledging communication through the body, since that concept recognizes that mind and body work together and that the creation of movement itself is seen as knowledge. The same applies to Eisner's (1998b) use of *form of representation*, as the word representation points to a dualism between mind and movement. Movements do not *re-present* something that is first created in the mind. In what follows, *form of expression* will be used when referring to different ways to express oneself; here, expression recognizes movements as creation of knowledge.

Bodily modes of meaning are emphasized as part of students' comprehensive literacy education (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; Cowan & Albers, 2006; Thwaites, 2008), but they have not received equal attention in research in comparison to, for example, verbal and visual modes. According to Bill Cope and Mary Kalantzis (2009), bodily modes of meaning in literacy education can include, for example, hand and arm movements, facial expressions, eye movements, gaze, clothing, fashion, hairstyle and dance. In the present article, bodily modes of meaning are perceived as meaning-making processes in, through, and with the body in different ways. Consequently, the assumption in this article is not that dance is the only way to highlight bodily modes of meaning in literacy education, but one way among many. Ultimately, people learn when engaging in movements, and when people engage in dancing, they not only use several modes of meaning (Dils, 2007b; Hanna, 2008; Notér Hooshidar, 2014; Riggs Leyva, 2015), but also engage in bodily learning practices in which body and mind work together to create bodily knowledge.

Bodily knowledge in dance

Researchers have repeatedly stressed the importance of bodily learning in educational contexts (Bresler, 2004; Parviainen, 2002; Snowber, 2012). A phenomenological view on bodily learning (see Anttila, 2013) rejects the Cartesian duality of mind and body and takes a holistic view of the person; mind and body are the same. Recognizing the existence and importance of bodily learning in school can influence theoretical understandings of learning and pedagogical practices (Anttila, 2013), as it opens up a holistic perspective on contemporary learners. People acquire *bodily knowledge* when engaging in bodily learning. Jaana Parviainen (2002) defines bodily knowledge as the bodily actions and interactions constructed when doing things with and through the body. It is important to acknowledge the distinction between bodily knowledge and bodily skills. For example, aging or injured dancers possess bodily knowledge, even though they cannot perform the same movements as before.

According to Jacqueline M. Smith-Autard (2002), knowledge in dance includes different abilities that fall under the umbrella of *dance appreciation*. Dance appreciation includes the processes of performing, creating and viewing dance, which together result in a product that is an outcome of students' learning in dance. Bodily knowledge in dance is cognitive and intuitive and develops the ability to remember, reproduce and create movements (Hämäläinen, 2007). Movements are sometimes used when knowledge is difficult, or even impossible, to verbalize. Thus, dance is, as Judith Lynne Hanna (2008) argues, nonverbal communication. Knowledge *about* dance is not, however, the same as knowledge *in* dance, as pointed out by Parviainen (2002). One can have articulated knowledge about dance, for example, knowledge about the origin of a dance style, but not necessarily bodily knowledge as in being able to dance it. However, as Parviainen emphasizes, articulated and bodily knowledge are usually interwoven.

All learning is not valued and accepted as knowledge in school due to different cultures of recognition (see Selander & Kress, 2010). In educational settings, what teachers and teacher educators count as knowledge often determines the forms of expression used in school (Gadsden, 2008). In addition to being an epistemological matter, what forms of expression are accepted as knowledge in school and society are largely determined politically (Eisner, 1998a). When dancing, students' dance experiences are often seen as the only knowledge gained, and dance educators are continually forced to motivate dance in relation to other ways of acquiring knowledge in school (Leonard & McShane-Hellenbrand, 2012; Stinson, 2001). Often overlooked is that dance can be integrated in all subjects in school (Cowan & Albers, 2006; Dils, 2007b; Gilbert, 2005; Hanna, 2008; Jones, 2014; Lussier, 2010; Snowber, 2012). Students are enabled to reach a deeper understanding of concepts and ideas if the curriculum is embodied – regardless of the subject being taught (Snowber, 2012). Finally, the benefits of bodily learning through dance are not necessarily known to all teachers, but the concept of literacy is familiar to teachers, at least in English speaking countries. Thus, combining dance with literacy can, according to Tina Hong (2000), help teachers see dance as a contribution to developing the skills and competencies that students need.

DANCE LITERACY IN PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Dance literacy as a concept has spread during the 21st century and has close similarities with other literacies that sometimes overlap, such as aesthetic literacy (Buck, 2003; Lussier, 2010), movement literacy (Kentel & Dobson, 2007), and physical literacy (Edwards, Bryant, Keegan, Morgan & Jones, 2017). The distinction is, however, that movement and physical literacies do not necessarily emphasize aesthetic perception, as does aesthetic literacy, which means that dance literacy is positioned across these literacies, with its emphasis on aesthetic movement. A recently conducted literature-based study (Fountzoulas, Koutsouba & Nikolaki, 2018) refers to the multiliteracies of dance when viewing dance literacy as a synthesis of other literacies (e.g., movement literacy and art literacy).

In recognizing dance as a literacy, Hong (2000) draws on Eisner's (1998b) view on

literacy and connects the limited research field of dance literacy to the more established literature on the pedagogy of multiliteracies (The New London Group, 1996) to argue that, in school, students ought to develop multiple literacies that provide them with access to diverse forms of meaning-making. Drawing on postmodern theory, Hong (2000) proposes a dance literacy model for K-12 education in New Zealand, where dance features in the curriculum. According to Hong, dance literacy serves two essential and complementary purposes: the development of literacy in and about dance and the development of learning in other curriculum areas through dance.

Hong (2000) claims that dance literacy is developed in three domains: the kinesthetic, the choreographic and the critical. The kinesthetic domain refers to engagement in dance experiences when exploring movements and the development of the vocabulary, structures and syntax needed to understand various dance languages. Development in the choreographic domain involves the ability to create dances. The critical domain refers to the active meaning-making, from the perspectives of both performer and viewer, that is needed to interpret dances. Smith-Autard's (2002) definition of dance appreciation (to perform, create and view dance) resembles Hong's (2000) view on dance literacy, and Ann Dils (2007a) has redefined dance appreciation as dance literacy. However, Smith-Authard (2002) places greater emphasis on performance than Hong (2000), and does not refer to dance literacy. Furthermore, Rachael Riggs Leyva (2014) defines reading and writing in dance literacy broadly as interpretative means of interacting with both movement texts and other types of texts.

Previous research reveals ambiguities regarding the requirements for becoming dance literate. Some researchers claim that dance literacy is dependent on the body and being able to move in dance (Heiland, 2009; Jones, 2014), while others argue that dance literacy is achieved through reading and writing about dance and being able to describe and discuss movements (Dils, 2007a; Heiland, 2009). Some make a distinction between being a literate dancer and a literate viewer of dance (Dils, 2007a). Others argue that being dance literate is connected to achieving technical perfection in dance, and that while anyone can develop dance literacy, not all bodies are suitable for achieving it (Jones, 2014). Still, there seems to be a consensus that dance literacy can be taught. Furthermore, Dils (2007a) maintains that being literate in dance involves an understanding of experiences and education, reading and writing dancing in multiple ways, contemplating individually, and conversing with others.

It must also be noted that the concept of dance literacy has encountered criticism for its combining of dance with the literacy metaphor. When delivering a conference paper, Dils (2007b) was met with curiosity that dance literacy, perhaps somewhat inappropriately, is too close to language and reading. However, her intention in using the literacy metaphor was to broaden the understanding of dance and not to undermine dance as an art form. Some researchers also critique learning through dance, claiming that using dance to learn in other curriculum areas diminishes its value as art and simply acts as support to other subjects (Sjöstedt Edelholm, 2015). Additionally, Janet Mansfield (2010) argues that «the 'literacy' metaphor is quite inadequate for understanding the arts in education, and the naturalization

of this concept allows it to perform as an agent that restrictively defines the arts as educational endeavours» (p. 107). A possible explanation for this criticism may be the lack of a clear consensus about what dance literacy means for bodily learning and the arts in general.

In addition to development and learning in and about dance, previous research has revealed different uses and characterizations of dance literacy, which form four patterns in the reviewed literature: (1) dance and other literacies, where dance is consciously combined with other literacies; (2) learning through dance, which utilizes dance as a vehicle for learning in other curriculum areas; (3) multimodal dance literacy, which highlights dance in itself from a multimodal perspective; and (4) notational dance literacy, which includes a symbolic language used to document dance. These patterns most often include elements of each other. As Hong (2000) claims, «dance literacy is therefore, neither a singular, uniform or homogenous concept; rather it is pluralistic and involves the development of overlapping and integrated domains.» In what follows, the four patterns are outlined, with examples from previous research.

Dance and other literacies

Due to its complexity as a form of expression, dance inherently includes multiple literacies. However, there is a difference between dance in itself including other literacies and dance that is consciously combined with another literacy. Previous research has revealed that when dance is consciously taught with other literacies, it is often combined with traditional literacy.

The combination of writing and dance is prominent in teaching methods such as *embodied writing, dance writing* and *scripting the body*. With reference to her own teaching practice on a university level, in which she combines dance with writing assignments, Betsy Cooper (2011) asserts that dancing and writing include similar processes, such as inspiration, revision and reflection, and states that embodied writing tries to capture bodily sensations through writing. She suggests that embodied writing can enhance students' learning. Dance writing resembles embodied writing, but the main difference is that embodied writing can revolve around bodily sensations in any movement, whereas dance writing specifically refers to writing about dance. Dils (2007a) refers to the work of Candace Feck and her teaching technique, which includes university students, both dance majors and non-dance majors, viewing live dancing, which they are then asked to write about. Feck implies that dance writing demands a heightened level of engagement and that it acts as a gateway to developing dance literacy for students in school. Another example of combining dance and traditional literacies is scripting the body, advanced by Arianne MacBean (2001), whereby writing assignments are given prior to dance assignments. Finally, another use of dance and other literacies is combining dance with, for example, visual literacies. To name one example among many, symbols can be used with young children who have not yet learned to write (see Adams, 2016; Deans & Wright, 2018; Logue, Robie, Brown & Waite, 2009).

Learning through dance

Learning through dance is automatically situated in a school context, and is, according to Hong (2000), one of the two essential purposes of dance literacy. Dance highlights the importance of bodily experience as an integrative agent in all learning (Dils, 2007b), regardless of the subject taught (Hanna, 2008). Several dance educators and researchers have emphasized that different subject areas, for example, mathematics and languages, can be taught through dance (Anttila, 2013; Anttila & Svendler Nielsen, 2019; Birch, 2000; Bonbright et al., 2013; Dils, 2007b; Hanna, 2008; Leandro et al., 2018; McMahon et al., 2003; Moore & Linder, 2012). However, not all scholars refer to dance as a literacy in this scenario; instead, it is viewed as a way of acquiring knowledge in a diverse, aesthetic and motivating manner. Hanna (2008) observes that when dance is integrated in different subjects in school, the emphasis lies on creating dances, not on performance, product or technique.

Learning through dance can benefit students in several ways. In her doctoral dissertation on students' experiences of meaning-making through dance, Alison Leonard (2012) conducted a whole-school case study in the United States, where students from kindergarten to grade five explored curricular content through dance. A dance teacher integrated creative dance in different subjects, and the study focused on what students' experiences revealed about knowledge, dance, movement and the body in school. The results showed that students used dance to transform knowledge, and that dance could express what was impossible to express with traditional literacies. Leonard (2012) does not refer to dance literacy in her dissertation, though she does do so in another study based partially on the same data. Leonard and her colleagues Anna H. Hall and Danielle Herro (2016) investigated kindergarteners' literacy practices, and three themes emerged: artistic autonomy, embodied knowledge and multimodality. The students autonomously embodied the content they learned and used their bodies to explore, read, write and speak their own stories.

Multimodal dance literacy

Dance includes different modes of meaning that contribute differently to the dance itself as well as the dance-making processes (Leonard et al., 2016; Notér Hooshidar, 2014). From the four patterns of dance literacy, the multimodality of dance literacy has attracted the least attention in previous research. Existing research applying a multimodal perspective on dance has investigated how dance combines bodily modes of meaning with verbal, visual, audio, spatial and tactile modes. Annika Notér Hooshidar (2014), who did not refer to dance literacy, researched dance as a multimodal embodied practice in her licentiate thesis, and found that adult dance teachers and students in dance education use different modes of meaning in certain ways when dancing. Her findings highlight the body in communication and interactions and show that teachers' instructions and feedback, combining oral language and bodily modes of meaning, appeared to be more important than verbal language alone. In her dissertation on dance literacy in dance studio practices, Riggs Leyva (2015) reviewed how different modes are

used in dance, and discussed visual, kinesthetic/tactile, language/verbal, aural/musical and alphabetic/notational modes in dance literacy practices. She argues that dancers «read movement and write choreography through multimodal transmissions» (p. 31), and that a multimodal perspective on dance opens up for analyses of ideologies, functions and roles in dance literacy. Multimodality was also found as one of the results in the study by Leonard et al. (2016) on kindergarteners' dance literacy practices.

In a multimodal approach to dance literacy, the body is the medium, and the dance is the text. This is one of the unique realities of dance literacy, according to Leonard et al. (2016). The body acts simultaneously as subject and object; a dancing body is both the writer and the written. The roles of reader and writer are permeable (Riggs Leyva, 2014). Perceiving dance literacy from a multimodal perspective acknowledges the bodily aspect of dance knowledge (Riggs Leyva, 2015). Dance literacy is developed when transforming dance ideas into dance works (Hong, 2000), which has been described as multimodal transmediation (Kress, 2010). If a dance idea is inspired by, for example, a poem, a transmediation process takes place when verbal modes of meaning are transformed into bodily modes of meaning.

Notational dance literacy

Since the fifteenth century, anthropologists have attempted to document movements, similar to scores for documenting music (Farnell, 2012). The earliest known attempt dates back to the second half of the fifteenth century in Cervera, Spain (Hutchinson Guest, 2005). Numerous written notation systems have since emerged, with a primary focus on analyzing, exploring and documenting choreographic processes and movement concepts (Lehoux, 2013; Munjee, 2015). However, generalized systems first emerged in the 20th century with, for example, Labanotation in the 1920s, and Benesh movement notation and Eshkol-Wachman's movement notation in the 1950s (see Hutchinson Guest, 2005). Teresa Heiland (2009) argues that dance could gain acceptance and understanding by a larger community if it was employed together with dance's written symbol system.

Some researchers argue that dance literacy is notational (Curran et al., 2011; Heiland, 2009, 2015; Warburton, 2000) and that notational dance literacy can raise the status of dance (Ashley, 2013; Heiland, 2009). Riggs Leyva (2015) states that dance literacy has typically been associated with multimodal processes of dance-making or the use of a notational dance language. She argues that dance literacy is both. The symbol language is a tool for promoting dance content knowledge (Bucek, 1998). With support from empirical studies (Heiland, 2009; Warburton, 2000), Linda Ashley (2013) argues that dance notation facilitates the integration of dance in schools and that a symbol language can help classroom teachers to teach dance. Edward Warburton (2000) investigated the effect of notation on learning and development in dance and found differences between a children's group (8 to 9-year-olds) that used dance notation in dance education and one that did not. Dance notation helped the children to analyze, recognize and understand dance to a greater extent than a control group which did not have dance notation. Heiland

(2009) investigated how non-dance majors facilitated understanding of dance concepts through dance notation in one course. She found that notation enhanced the students' understanding and that they expected to remember the concepts after the course ended. Heiland (2015) further argues that dance notation can counteract the marginalization of dance in school and suggests that it could favorably be taught to children early on.

According to Smith-Autard (2002), notation can help students learn choreographies and enhance the learning process, but many dance teachers do not have sufficient knowledge of notation. Specific training in dance notation is needed to master the language. Riggs Leyva (2015) asserts that when dance literacy includes notation, a clear majority of dancers are excluded. In Riggs Leyva's dissertation on dance literacy in dance studio practices, the participating dance teachers admitted that they did not see notation as a crucial part of dance literacy. Moreover, Riggs Leyva found that dancers and dance teachers perceived the symbol language as outdated, and Heiland (2009, 2015) encountered disinterest from some dance students in learning dance notation because they do not see it as essential. Dance notation is like a symbolic meta-language about dance, and a major distinction between multimodal dance literacy and notational dance literacy is that the text is in the body in the former, while the text is outside the body in the latter. Tara Munjee (2015) questions the use of notation when contemporary technology affords much faster and easier ways to document dance through video filming. However, dance notation pioneer Ann Hutchinson Guest (2005) stresses that filming and notation cannot replace each other. Video and film capture the performance, whereas notation records the dance work graphically. Overall, dance notation contributes to preserving and archiving historical dance works and creates a richer cultural heritage (Lehoux, 2013).

DISCUSSION

The following discussion is in three parts. First, dance literacy is discussed through a critical theoretical lens to problematize issues of ideology, power and marginalization concerning dance in school. Second, the discussion and conceptual overview form the basis of a proposed model for dance literacy in school. Finally, implications for educational practice and suggestions for further research are discussed.

Dance literacy from a critical theoretical perspective

First, perhaps one of the greatest obstacles to dance in school is what society counts as useful knowledge. Dance and the arts as knowledge have historically been undervalued due to verbal and mathematical orientations towards knowledge and intelligence, a bias criticized strongly by, among others, Eisner (1998b). He argues that we need schools where knowledge creation is not limited to language and mathematics; schools should also embrace the arts. Eisner stresses that different forms of expression enable different types of knowledge. However, what is recognized as useful knowledge is affected by educational level and context, ranging from national educational policy to the individual teacher in the classroom (see Eisner, 1998a; Gadsden, 2008). The language of dance is

incomparable to other kinds of knowledge, and in dance, body and mind are uniquely connected. From a critical theoretical perspective, this phenomenological view on bodily knowledge can be perceived as value-laden, as it differs from the societal norm that values traditional definitions of knowledge as mental cognition. Negative ideological assumptions about dance can undermine dance literacy, making it important to advocate the potential of dance as a form of learning as well as an artistic and aesthetic modality.

Second, ideological assumptions about dance relate to issues of power. One might argue that legitimated power discourses undermine dance in schools, which is instantiated through its marginalized position in curricula worldwide; thus, for policymakers and stakeholders to realize the pedagogical potential of dance, more research is required. In school, focus could be on students creating dances, which is clearly a cognitive activity (Giguere, 2011; Hanna, 2008). Considering this focus, a suitable form for learning through dance is creative dance, which is used in studies that apply a learning-through-dance approach (Anttila, 2013; Anttila & Svendler Nielsen, 2019; Leandro et al., 2018; Leonard, 2012). In creative dance, no «correct answers» are owned by teachers. There is no direct knowledge transmission from teacher to student, which aligns with Freire's (1970/2018) critique of «banking education», which prevents emancipation. Banking education refers to one-way teaching processes where teachers have the knowledge and transfer it to the students, and this is prevented when using creative dance. Instead, students create their knowledge by dancing. Creative dance is a way of «reading the world», in Freire's (1970/2018) words, as it goes beyond movements and connects students to emotions, culture, communication, themselves, and others.

In addition, the debate about who can teach dance in school is prevalent in the reviewed literature. In contemporary society, where schools are affected by economic factors, it can be problematic to find the resources to hire an external dance teacher, especially if dance is not supported in the curriculum. However, it is important to distinguish between teaching *in* dance and teaching *through* dance. For example, Gilbert (2005) discusses that dance as a subject should be taught by trained dance specialists, whereas dance and movement to teach other subjects can be utilized by teachers without training in dance.

Third, dance is marginalized on many educational levels worldwide. Policymakers who determine the fate of dance in curricula are possibly influenced by ideological views on whether or not dance counts as useful knowledge. In turn, this creates a vicious circle on an educational policy level, whereby ideologies about dance influence policymakers, who decide what should be included in curricula, with the effect that the marginalization of dance in curricula does not change society's negative ideological view on dance as useful knowledge. Hanna (2008) states that insufficient knowledge and dismissive views about dance might explain the marginalized and neglected position of dance in schools.

Some researchers (Ashley, 2013; Heiland, 2009, 2015) argue that notational dance literacy can raise the status of dance in school and help classroom teachers teach dance. Nevertheless, since the ability to read and write dance notation is limited to a minority of the world's dancers, with many dancers claiming that notation is outdated (Riggs

Leyva, 2015; Smith-Autard, 2002), delimiting dance literacy in school to notation risks marginalizing dance in school even further. Also, the argument that combining the words *dance* and *literacy* can help enforce and secure the place of dance in school (Dils, 2007b; Hong, 2000; Jones, 2014; Riggs Leyva, 2015) is not always valid outside English speaking contexts. The concept of literacy can be difficult to translate into other languages. If teachers are not familiar with the concept of literacy in their first language, then the combination of the words *dance* and *literacy* will not necessarily help.

A dance literacy model for schools

Based on the previous discussion and the reviewed literature, and with much inspiration from Hong (2000), this article proposes a *Dance Literacy Model for Schools* (DLMS) for primary and secondary education settings whose curriculum does not incorporate dance. The DLMS further develops Hong's model, which is situated in a school context where dance is recognized in the curriculum, by taking into account an emancipatory perspective on education and the developments of dance literacy in previous research, further emphasizing the many possible ways of combining dance with other forms of expression. Thus, the DLMS, as visualized in Figure 1, involves three related dimensions: dance as an art form and form of expression, dance combined with other literacies, and learning through dance in different curricular areas. These dimensions overlap; even when the focus is on one of the dimensions, the other dimensions are more or less included. For the DLMS to be applicable in schools, the teaching ought to be based on dance *and* curricular learning goals and objectives. Additionally, all dance literacy is multimodal, as it includes multiple modes of meaning.
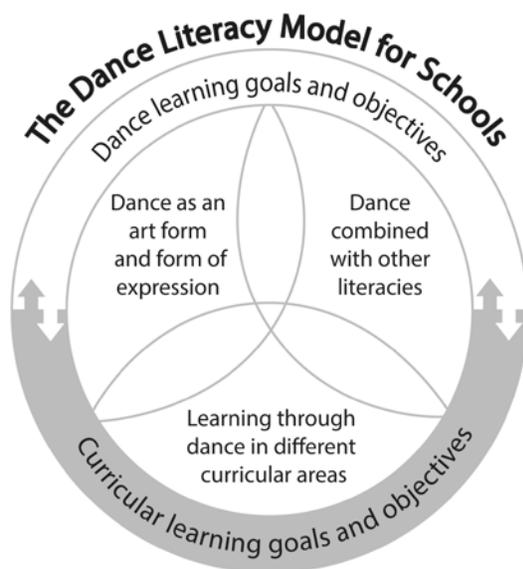

Figure 1. The Dance Literacy Model for Schools

As previously noted, the DLMS builds on both curricular and dance learning goals and objectives, but how dance literacy is connected to curricular goals depends on which dimension is in focus. As indicated in Figure 1, the dimensions of dance as an art form and form of expression, and dance combined with other literacies, are more strongly governed by goals and objectives in dance, whereas the dimension of learning through dance in different curricular areas is governed primarily by curricular goals and objectives. When emphasis lies on dance as an art form and form of expression, the artistic and aesthetic value of dance is highlighted. Here, the focus is on learning in and about dance and appreciating dance by both creating and viewing dances, preferably both on and off stage. Further, combining dance with other literacies enables multimodal transmediation processes (Kress, 2010). Although most examples in the conceptual overview involve traditional writing activities (Cooper, 2011; Dils, 2007a; MacBean, 2001), dance can be combined with any form of expression, be it film, music or architecture. The other literacies can act as inspiration for the dance, or the other way around. Thus, in this dimension, the focus lies on development in dance as well as in the other literacies. Finally, when using dance as a vehicle for learning in other curricular areas, a clear curricular learning goal should be reached and facilitated through dance. Dance can be used to interpret poems, understand grammar, visualize the atomic structure, learn new words in different languages, portray geometric shapes, and explore different cultures. The possibilities are endless.

In the DLMS, dance literacy education strives to develop students' abilities to comprehend and use dance languages, both verbally and bodily, express themselves through creating dances, and interpret meaning-making in and through dance. More specifically, students create and view dances and reflect on their experiences of creating and viewing dance. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that although notational dance literacy is left out of the DLMS, it is still a form of dance literacy. Dance notation was omitted due to the general lack of teachers' notational literateness and the risk of further marginalizing dance in schools. Taken together, rather than referring to a singular dance literacy, we can, in agreement with Riggs Leyva (2014), consider them as different *dance literacies*.

A prerequisite for a functioning teaching concept in schools where the curriculum does not include dance is that dance literacy is not limited to teaching and learning dance technique. This would enable dance literacy to become an emancipatory praxis, whereby students have the opportunity to create their own knowledge without being constrained by the teachers' knowledge and movement repertoire. Meanwhile, dance literacy can be used by non-dance teachers when the focus is on learning *through* dance. Accordingly, dance literacy is not exclusive to professional dancers. Becoming dance literate is not limited to bodily skills and acquiring technical perfection in dance; instead, it involves acquiring bodily knowledge in and through dance, with an emphasis on being able to both move and verbalize movement. Consequently, to provide students with the best opportunities for a comprehensive literacy education, bodily modes of meaning need to be emphasized in school (Buck, 2003; Cowan & Albers, 2006), and dance literacy is one means of achieving that.

Conclusion

This article has addressed the emerging research field of dance literacy, with implications for educational practice and further research. After Freire (1970/2018), a critical theoretical lens enabled discussion of how dance literacy can have value in schools where the curriculum does not include dance, which resulted in the main contribution of this article: the Dance Literacy Model for Schools. The DLMS provides a conceptual understanding of what dance literacy can entail in educational practice, and can be considered a prototype for dance literacy education that needs now to be tested in practice and researched. In education, the DLMS can lay the foundation for implementing dance literacy in primary and secondary education. In further research, dance literacy can be subject to studies that focus on all three dimensions of the DLMS from student-, teacher-, and curriculum-based perspectives. As further knowledge about dance literacy is gained through empirical research, the DLMS will likely be developed, expanded and adjusted. In summary, dance literacy contributes to students' literacy education by providing them with opportunities to engage in bodily learning in diverse meaning-making practices, while simultaneously highlighting and appreciating the value of dance itself.

Finally, it is possible that this article has been influenced by a general educational perspective on dance literacy in school. Coming from a dance pedagogical perspective, a dance teacher might perceive dance literacy differently. However, for dance literacy to gain recognition in school, it is precisely non-dance teachers who should learn to recognize the value of dance literacy in their own teaching practice. It is then that dance literacy can have emancipatory value in school.

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