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The body – friend or foe in dance? A critical reflection on the body through the Norwegian national curriculum renewal of the upper secondary school subject Dance Techniques

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Abstract
This article analyses different discursive positionings related to the body that emerged during the process of renewing the curriculum for the subject Dance Techniques, an in-depth study module in year one of the Programme Area for Dance in upper secondary education in Norway. The hearing process of renewing Dance Techniques uncovered deep tensions in how the body is understood and what position it is given within Norwegian dance education. The aim of this article is to locate different discursive positionings related to the concept of body to better understand these tensions. Through a critical discourse analysis, three rounds of consultation drafts and hearing comments are analysed. Theoretical perspectives connected to the bodily turn and the desired body in dance emerge inductively from the analysis. From the analysis it appears that there is a desire to disembody, disengage and desensitize the dancing body in the curriculum renewal process.

Keywords: *curriculum renewal; dance techniques; discourse analysis; bodily turn; desired body in dance*

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In this article we ask: *What different discursive positionings on the body emerged in the renewal process of the upper secondary school subject Dance Techniques in the national curriculum renewal in Norway in 2019–20?* and further how these positionings can be read through a theoretical terrain connected to *the bodily turn* and *the desired dancing body*. Author 1 (Tone) and 2 (Rikke) took part in the expert group appointed by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training to renew the curriculum.

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Author 3 (Rose) was invited into the analysis and writing of this article. All three authors have dance practitioner backgrounds and are now educators and researchers in higher education. The subject curricula for Dance Techniques were finalized during spring 2020 and applied the same autumn (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). From the very outset of this article, we acknowledge that we hold tri-roles within the dance field, as practitioners, researchers, and curriculum writers in various ways and that these positions and our experiences colour what we offer within this text.

This article offers the title of *The body – friend or foe in dance?* which was a question that emerged in light of the analysis of the different discursive positionings. To contextualise the analysis, what follows is an introduction including a short description of dance in upper secondary education in Norway, as well as a description of the hearing process. This is followed by a methods section, before introducing the theoretical perspectives that emerged inductively from the following analysis of the different discursive positionings. Lastly, findings are read through the chosen theoretical perspectives.

The Norwegian curriculum reform in 2017–2021

From 2017 to 2020 the National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion 2006 (NCKP06), underwent a significant process of renewal called *fagfornyelsen,* the Norwegian curriculum reform. The result, NCKP20, was gradually being implemented in schools from August 2020. *Fagfornyelsen* included renewed plans for all subjects from primary to upper secondary school, as well as a renewal of the overarching Core Curriculum. *Fagfornyelsen* sought to reflect social democratic ideology by emphasising equality, solidarity, inclusion, and democratic values (Prøitz & Aasen, 2017). A main goal was to make the curricula more relevant for the future, creating better coherence between different parts of the curricula, as well as facilitating for in-depth learning (Meld. St. 28 (2015–2016)). In the guidelines for revision of the subject curricula, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (in Norwegian; Utdanningsdirektoratet) also emphasised the importance of including indigenous Sami content and/or perspectives in all subjects (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2018). In the renewed Core Curriculum, competence is defined broadly, including knowledge as well as know-how/skills, reflection, and critical thinking in all subjects. The ability to acquire knowledge and skills, as well as problem-solving in unfamiliar contexts is also included in the definition, thus reflecting international research and trends linked to 21st Century Skills (Meld. St. 28 (2015–2016); Ministry of Education, 2017).

Dance in upper secondary education in Norway

Dance was included as a study programme in upper secondary school in Norway for the first time in 1994, and the different dance subjects at this point were characterized

by their emphasis on technical or physical skills, and performance skills (Svee, 2008). In 2006 the national curricula underwent a considerable renewal, including a new structure as well as introducing new subjects (Høst & Hovdhaugen, 2013). The dance subjects were now characterized by emphasising both creative and reflective dimensions of dance, as well as technical skills and performance dimensions (Svee, 2008). Dance Techniques was established as a year one-subject in this revision, consisting of two main areas: performance of skills and reflection. The dance techniques of classical ballet, jazz dance and modern/contemporary dance were mentioned explicitly, reflecting the genres taught in dance programmes in higher education in Norway at the time. Improvisation was also mentioned explicitly, however the concept *body* was not mentioned at all. The subject curricula for Dance Techniques from 2006 formed the backdrop for the 2019–20 revision and functioned as a main point of reference for the respondents during the revision process analysed in this article. The pupils in year one are usually 16–17 years old, and while the programme area has a grade-based admissions system, it also allows admission for up to half of the pupils who demonstrate skills in dance. Auditioning, however, is voluntary. As a result of this admission system, most schools have a diversity of pupils – some with previous dance training experience, as well as pupils who have never taken a dance class in their life.

The hearing process

The hearing process for *fagfornyelsen* was designed as an open, democratic process where all stakeholders, including the professional dance education community, were invited, and encouraged to comment on the consultation drafts three times. As part of the revision, all subject curricula were restructured and now consists of three main parts. The first part describes the subjects' relevance and central values, its core elements, as well as interdisciplinary themes and basic skills central to the subject. The second part describes competence objectives and guidelines for assessment. The third part describes the assessment scheme (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). The core elements can be seen as crucial parts of the curriculum plans, describing the most central concepts, areas of knowledge, ways of thinking, methods, and forms of expressions in the subjects. The core elements are also designed to strengthen the connections between the overarching Core Curriculum and the subject curriculum, between the core elements and the definition of competence, as well as contribute to better coherence in the curriculum in general. The drafts were outlined by expert groups appointed by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, consisting of professional teachers, researchers and in some cases representatives from the business sector or other professional communities.

Method

In this article the process of analysing the responses has been a three phased critical discourse analysis (CDA), striving to understand the phenomenon considering

its historic and cultural context, as well as suggesting a way forward (Fairclough, 2010; Skrede, 2017). The first phase was intuitively driven and took place when author 1 and 2, who were also members of the expert group, read the responses for the first time to adjust the drafts. In this first phase, the dominant discourses were identified and discussed broadly, but not systematically. Reading the hearing responses allowed us to discover the theoretical perspectives that we possessed ourselves. We (author 1 and 2, and the rest of curriculum renewal expert group) had not used outspoken theoretical perspectives when we wrote the first draft, but the critical response we received made us see and clarify our own theoretical positioning. The second phase started when the three hearing rounds and the curriculum plan were finished and involved a re-reading of the responses while systematically organizing the statements into different discursive positionings. Author 3 was invited in at this point, as an outside eye. During the second phase, author 3, who had not been part of the process thus far, read the hearing responses. The theoretical perspectives we finally chose to use to think with in the third phase of the analysis emerged inductively from her analysis. The theoretical perspectives author 3 suggested, and which resonated well with author 1 and 2, include *the bodily turn* (Anttila, 2013/2019; Pfeifer & Bongard, 2007; Sheets-Johnstone, 2009), and *the desired body in dance* (Albright, 2010; Foster, 2004; Green, 1999). In the last phase of the analytical process the most dominant discursive positionings were analysed in depth in collaboration between all three authors, with specific attention to the internal and external intertextuality. Despite the inductive flow of the analytical process, working from research material (the consultation drafts and hearing comments) towards theorizing, we precent the theoretical perspectives before the analysis in this article.

CDA is interdisciplinary, and theory and method are intertwined (Fairclough, 2010). We combine textual analysis with different theories of the body, focusing on the bodily turn and the desired body in dance. A common feature of CDA is analysing how ideology is reproduced through language, including multiple modalities (Skrede, 2017). Ideological discourses, however, can also be viewed as embodied and embedded and passed on by tradition if not questioned or challenged. In this article we look at linguistic ideologies concerning the body in dance in upper secondary school, and how they might reproduce or reflect embodied contemporary ideologies in the professional field of dance education in Norway. Another specific feature in CDA, is the idea of the researcher taking an active approach to the phenomenon (Fairclough, 2010). The researcher is not expected to be neutral and merely describing the phenomenon of analysis, but rather they work towards social change. In discussing our findings, we take an active, conscious stance towards the discourses of body in dance (Fairclough, 2010; Gorski, 2013). It is also acknowledged that as authors who have the tri-roles of practitioner, researcher, and curriculum writer, we perhaps have access or insight to theory, curriculum design, and policy development in ways that are different to the respondents whose comments we analyze. We cannot

change our positionality, but rather we seek to make meaning from the comments that have been made in ways that could shed light on the development of dance education within this specific context.

Stepping into theoretical perspectives

We understand that there are many potential theoretical directions this article could take and we are conscious that our own experiences and understandings of theory informs the choices we have made. With this in mind, we have selected just a small slice of the theoretical terrain connected to *the bodily turn* and *the desired dancing body* to discuss the analysis we have offered.

The bodily turn

The bodily turn implies an epistemological shift (Anttila, 2013/2019; Pfeifer & Bongard, 2007; Sheets-Johnstone, 2009), which sees the human being as a holistic whole. In the bodily turn the body is understood as the center for perception and learning, and therefore also the center for consciousness, the mind, cognition, and language (Anttila, 2013/2019; Merleau-Ponty, 1962/1995; Rouhiainen, 2011). According to the bodily turn, human movement, consciousness, experiences, actions, thoughts, languaging, social collaborations, and surroundings co-exist. Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (2009, pp. 1–2) explains how the bodily turn implies a correction of the mistaken interpretations of embodiment that the cartesian dualism led to (see also Anttila, 2013/2019), where thoughts and consciousness are seen to be independent of the body. The bodily turn revolutionizes this view. According to *embodied cognition* (Thompson, 2007), in lived material, physical materiality, affects and consciousness are inseparably entangled. Neurobiologists Antonio Damasio (1994) and Joseph LeDoux (1996) show how it is the body that makes cognitive processes in the brain possible or said differently; that the brain is completely *bodily*. According to Anttila (2013/2019), bodily learning means that learning takes place in the whole human being and between humans in social and material realities. Bodily learning not only includes gross motor learning with visible movements, but also somatic movements taking place deep inside and between bodies: sensations, experiences, body tunes, intensities, and feelings (Anttila, 2013/2019). Movement, thinking, affects and feelings are parallel activities (Østern, 2017).

The desired body in dance

Coupled with the bodily turn, the desired body in dance is called into question. The desired dancing body has long been framed as malleable, disciplined, silent, and codified (Foster, 2004). There has been substantial dialogue over past decades within dance scholarship that calls the "ideal" dancing body into question (see for example: Albright, 2010; Green, 1999). Over two decades ago Jill Green (1999) reflected on how the dancer's "body is shaped by society and the dance world,

in which performers constantly strive for perfection" (p. 80). While others have explored how western concert dance practices such as ballet might challenge the ideals that they traditionally encourage through more somatic, holistic, and inclusive approaches (Jackson, 2005). However, such reflections tend to avoid stepping into the terrain of calling out the eurocentric expectations and histories of dance curriculums and dance education practices more broadly and the imprint of such practices on dancing bodies.

In line with the bodily turn, there is the potential to disrupt the discourses and practices of western dance and bodies that sit outside such discourses and practices and which suffer invisibility, marginalization, and exclusion. Such ideas connect with Judith Butler's (1988) idea that the body bears meaning. For Butler:

> The body is not merely matter but a continual and incessant *materializing* of possibilities. One is not simply a body, but, in some very key sense, one does one's body and, indeed, one does one's body differently from one's contemporaries. (Butler, 1988, p. 521)

Leveraging off Butler's ideas, it can be argued that dance education is a location for somatic and political identity formation in, on, and through the body. However, different bodies from the norm are not necessarily embraced in such formations. Within such formations, difference to the desired dancing body is often resisted (Ashley, 2012). In relation to the notion of difference, we lean on Gilles Deleuze's (1994) (positive) philosophy of difference that works for the idea of multiplicities and possibilities in life and the world rather than toward (negative) categorical difference that makes a separation or distinction between things. From a Deleuzian point of view, the dancing body is not fixed, singular, or defined by a dominant cultural, political, or historical standpoint, rather it would be a dancing body in constant process of becoming.

Locating discursive positionings regarding the body in the hearing comments

In the following section we engage in the hearing comments with a focus on different discursive understandings of the body. We present our analysis through the three hearing rounds, distinguishing each analytic round with a sub-title. We start each presentation with the core elements suggested by the committee, which then played an essential part in provoking the hearings comments, although the core elements only were part of the curriculum suggestions. All core elements are translated from Norwegian to English by the authors.

Hearing round 1: A bodily provocation

The committee introduced the word "body" into the national curriculum – it was not there in the former curriculum – with an understanding of the body in line with the

bodily turn. What was obvious in hearing round 1, is that there was a clash between the committee's understanding of the body in line with the bodily turn, and the hearing respondents' understanding. Suggested core elements by the committee in the first round are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. *The national renewal committee's suggestions of core elements in the subject Dance Techniques in hearing round 1,*[1] *posted online by The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training for a national hearing 20.03.19.*

Bodily articulation
Bodily articulation in dance techniques implies practical engagement with movement vocabularies from different dance practices.

Contextualization
Contextualization in dance techniques implies to view, experience, and critically reflect around dance in different contexts, as well as knowledge about in which cultural contexts different dance practices have emerged and exist.

Bodily tolerance
Bodily tolerance in dance techniques implies to develop a consciousness about and wellbeing with the own body, as well as understanding and tolerance of other bodies.

Performance sharings
Performance sharings in dance techniques implies participation in dance in different performance situations.

Creative work and improvisation
Creative work and improvisation in dance techniques implies explorative, creative, and democratic processes in dance, as well as play with own movement possibilities, alone and together with others.

In round 1, in total 47 respondents gave comments on the revision.

In the hearing comments, there were strong rejections towards the bodily emphasis, the use of the word "dance practices," the idea of contextualization as part of dance techniques, as well as towards the emphasis on improvisation in this subject. In a cover letter by the committee, explaining the thinking behind the suggested changes, the committee had written the following regarding the subject Dance Techniques as the consultation drafts were sent out for hearing round 1:

[1] See https://hoering-publisering.udir.no/717 (access 06.04.21).

> In the subject dance techniques, we wish to make a substantial shift from a western colonialized understanding of dance techniques though introducing the concept *dance practices*, at the same time as we wish to emphasize bodily differences as a value.

There was severe resistance towards the idea of shifting away from western understandings of dance in the hearing responses, with 13 hearing respondents out of 47 pointing out that they strongly reacted on the idea of moving from western dance canons and urged that an emphasis on the three techniques classical ballet, modern and contemporary dance, and jazz dance was kept intact.

In this analysis, we are only focusing on the discursive positionings regarding views on the body. However, we understand the discursive positionings expressed in the hearing comments to come from a larger dance educational philosophical umbrella where most respondents speak from what can be viewed as a modernist and western position of dance and education. In the understandings of the body in dance that are revealed, we see such positionalities.

From hearing round 1, we distinguish four major discursive positionings. We name and present them under the following sub-titles.

Focus on your own bodily experience and learning is positive

There are very few affirming responses, only six, on the position the body is given in this first curriculum suggestion. An example of hearing comments within this discursive positioning is:

> It is positive to pay attention to your own bodily experiences.

These comments affirming of a focus on the body mainly came from tertiary education, especially from teacher education institutions where arts education is part of a larger educational umbrella.

The remaining three discursive positionings formulated imply different critical nuances connected to the introduction of the bodily focus in the curriculum suggestions. In total, we have located 83 hearing comments that are critical towards to the way the body is emphasized in the curriculum suggestion.

The body is an instrument, a tool, and an object

The main clash between the committee's suggestions, and the critical responses, seems to emerge because of an opposite understanding of the body as phenomenon and concept. We collected 26 different hearing utterances under this discursive positioning. The committee's suggestion was grounded in a view on the body in line with the bodily turn, whereas the responses of the respondents seemed to hold a dualistic view on the body as a physical *thing*, with differentiation between body and mind. However, this focus on bodily *and* mind seems to be understood by the respondents

as holistic, whereas a focus on the body only is understood as partial. In other words; it seems the body is understood merely as a physical object, where mind dimensions need to be added. Examples of hearing comments pointing to this discursive positioning include:

> The subject Dance Techniques is a tool to get to know the body's possibilities for movement, and to become aware of the body as an instrument. The subject teaches the students to take care of and understand their instrument.

> Instead of a repetitive focus on the body, we suggest a language which promotes a holistic body view involving the whole person. Where body, soul, mind and experience make up the basis for meaning, wonder and growth.

The words "body" and "bodily" and "bodily articulation" and "bodily tolerance" were requested to be removed and replaced with other concepts, most of which reflect a dualistic view of the body. The suggested concepts offered were: physical potential, physical skills, strong physicality, physical prerequisites, physical capacity, physical performance and repetition, physical development, physical strength, physical expression, physical development possibilities, physical activity, physical presentation, bodily control, bodily mastery, and bodily consciousness.

Too much focus on the body is harmful

In 33 hearing comments concern was expressed that the focus on bodily dimensions might be harmful, either because it increases the pressure on body image that young people today already encounter, or because it removes the focus on dance as an art form. Examples of utterances under this discursive positioning are:

> The suggestions as it stands now, is against its purpose, since it brings more, not less, focus on the body.

> The suggestion seems to diminish dance as art form. We mean that the suggestion implies a problematic focus on the body and miss emphasis on artistic qualifications and how competence in dance can be communicated and experienced aesthetically.

Even though this is not clearly articulated in the hearing comments in this discursive positioning, we can assume that the opinion that too much focus on the body is harmful, is grounded in an external view on the body; the body as a "thing" slightly different from "me." From this perspective, too much focus on the body then becomes troublesome.

There is no need to emphasize tolerance for different bodies as that is self-evident in dance

There was strong resistance towards the suggestion of focus on tolerance for different bodies that was raised by the committee. The idea of focusing on and thereby inviting in different bodies was new compared with the old curriculum, which did not pay attention to embodiment, different bodies, or different abilities. This focus was not well received, and 24 utterances supported a discursive positioning implying that a focus on tolerance for different bodies is not needed because this tolerance is self-evident in dance. Examples of hearing comments falling under this positioning are:

> Tolerance for other bodies lies in the nature of dance.
>
> We are, after all, anatomically more alike than different.
>
> It seems unnecessary to write about inclusion of different bodies. It can work against its purpose. Different bodies are self-evident when you work with human beings.

The committee also suggested the concept "differently bodied," which was disregarded as an unfamiliar and unnecessary concept. The Norwegian language board was consulted by several respondents, and they confirmed that "differently bodied" is not recognized as a standardized Norwegian word. The concept was removed in hearing round 2.

Hearing round 2: Upholding the body as a foe, and a focus on tolerance and ethics as unnecessary

The revision of national curricula is a democratic process in Norway, with hearing rounds viewed as a dialogue between the field and the curriculum renewal committee. As the first proposal by the committee received substantial critique, revisions were required. Notably, there was critique towards the suggested core concepts "bodily articulation" and "bodily tolerance" as well as towards the concepts "bodily learning" and "differently bodied" that appeared other places in the proposed curriculum text.

The committee closely read and discussed the extensive hearing comments, and this engagement relieved a dedicated field. The comments revealed the experience with and visions for the Dance Techniques by the field, and they were considered in the next revision. The five original suggested core elements were all revised and decreased to four elements. Only the element "conceptualization" was kept as a core element, however with a revised explanation. The suggested core elements that were revised for hearing round 2 are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. *The national renewal committee's suggestions of core elements in the subject dance techniques in hearing round 2,*[2] *posted online by The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training for a national hearing 23.08.19.*

Dance performance: Dance performance in the subject implies practical work with dance technical skills and performance of movement vocabularies in different dance practices. Dance performance also implies participation in stage sharings.

Improvisation: Improvisation in the subject implies explorative and creative approaches to work with dance. Improvisation lies the foundation for democratic processes and play with own movement possibilities, alone and collectively.

Body consciousness: Body consciousness in the subject implies to develop consciousness about, and tolerance for, the own body and others' bodies. Body consciousness also implies to develop presence, work ethics and respect for own and others' boundaries.

Contextualization: Contextualization in the subject implies to see, experience, discuss and critically reflect around dance in different contexts.

In round 2, in total 36 respondents gave comments on the revision.

With revisions of the core elements, as well as revisions of the descriptive texts in other parts of the full curriculum suggestion, in round 2 the committee tried to accommodate the concerns regarding the introduction of the body offered in revision 1. One main concern raised in the round 1 comments was that there was too much focus on the body and too little on dance and art. To accommodate this, the core element "bodily articulation" was changed to "dance performance." In that way, the core element "stage sharings" also could be fused into that element, reducing the total number of core elements. Furthermore, the concept "bodily tolerance" was removed, and replaced with "body consciousness," which does not offer the exact same nuances, but is a more well-known concept in the dance field. Also, the concept "differently bodied" was removed.

However, even though the core elements changed, several of the intended meanings of the first revision were kept in descriptions either of the core elements, or in other parts of the text. The curriculum suggestion 2 still mentioned tolerance for different bodies, although it did not directly use the concept "bodily tolerance." This also brings the idea of tolerance for differently bodied dancers, although not using that concept directly. The idea of bodily articulation was spread around in different core elements, and other parts of the text, not directly using that concept, but implying bodily development within different movement vocabularies. The concept "bodily learning" was kept intact in the text.

[2] See https://hoering-publisering.udir.no/842 (access 06.04.21).

Even though rather large revisions were made between round 1 and 2, round 2 also received large critique in the hearing comments. Of comments regarding the body, 12 affirming comments about the focus on the body were given in round 2, compared to 6 in round 1. There were still 61 critical comments regarding the focus on the body in round 2, compared to 83 in round 1. As we keep tracing the discursive positionings and how they might have changed from hearing round 1 to 2, in hearing round 2 we have distinguished 5 major discursive positionings. The 4 major discursive positionings from round 1 are still there, however, they slightly change in what they emphasize. In addition, we identify one new discursive positioning. We name and present these five discursive positionings in the hearing comments in round 2 in the following.

Focus on own bodily experiences and development of tolerance for different bodies is positive

Again, the affirming comments regarding the bodily emphasis mainly came from teacher education institutions, but this time also from some of the tertiary dance programmes within arts institutions. In addition, there was a change among a few of the upper secondary teachers commenting. Examples of comments in this discursive positioning are:

> Traditionally, there has been a heavy pressure of the body in dance, where only some bodies have been found "suitable" for dance. This is not the case anymore. Today's dance field appreciates different bodies and different dance expressions […] It is therefore positive that tolerance for different bodies is included in the upper secondary dance curriculum. This must then be reflected in the technical training in that the individual student is allowed to explore own solutions, methods and tools in the technical work.

> The focus on the body as creative, reflecting and communicating turns the body as something different than an instrument, which the body traditionally has been understood as in dance.

The authors of these hearing comments seem to understand the body in line with the bodily turn, which again reflects the committee's positioning. The body is understood as subjective, relational, and vulnerable.

The body is an instrument, and the word "bodily" should be replaced with "physical"

In round 2 there were hearing comments that wanted the concept "body" removed altogether from the curriculum, or to fall into the background in favour of different variations of "physical" to be used. Examples of this discursive positioning are:

> We suggest the word "body" is removed from the curriculum. This is self-evident in dance, and when the curriculum emphasizes the body as is suggested, this becomes very negatively loaded.

> The development of the physicality of the body as an instrument should be more emphasized.

Again, the body as instrument metaphor is emphasized, a thinking that clearly deviates from the underlying philosophical understanding of the bodily turn that the curriculum suggestions were given from.

Since the concept "body" only implies the outer looks, too much focus on the body is negative and harmful

A new nuance that appeared in the hearing comments in round 2, was the idea that the concept body only implies to an external aesthetic. Therefore, the introduction of and emphasis on the body was viewed as negative, and harmful, leading to exacerbated pressure on body image. Many of the critical comments from round 2 fall under this. An example of this discursive positioning is:

> This focus on the body is contra-productive in decreasing pressure on body image, which probably is the intention. To only talk about the body is too narrow. We want the human being to be seen as a holistic whole, including both physical and mental aspects.

From this we understand that hearing comment authors and the curriculum committee want to arrive at the same ending: a holistic view of the pupils. However, there is a sharp distinction in how they understand the body as concept. Whereas the committee is affected by the bodily turn, the authors of such hearing comments seem not to. If the body is understood as something outer and instrumental, an emphasis on the body in the curriculum will likely be received negatively.

There is no need to emphasize tolerance for different bodies or focus on ethical dilemmas in dance

As the descriptions of tolerance for one's own and others' bodies changed in the suggestions in round 2, so did the comments. Now, they more clearly seemed to be based on the idea that "the body" only means the looks of the body. Still, there is reaction to the idea that tolerance needs to be highlighted in the first place, as it was argued that it is self-evident that dance teachers have tolerance for different bodies. Finally, the connection between tolerance for different bodies and the development of ethical awareness, is not accepted. Examples of this discursive positioning include:

> We are generally against the phrasing of tolerance for the own body, and other bodies. It is horrible! As if we would not be tolerant? As teachers, we work for tolerance every day, for everything!

> To include work ethics in the core element body consciousness is not well thought through. There is no connection between body consciousness and work ethics in dance.

Again, these comments reveal that there is a stretch between the committee's and the hearing comment authors' discursive understandings of the body. It is also interesting to note that the body is not always understood as an ethical place, although there is overwhelming evidence in research and policy that the body is a site for privilege

or dis-privilege, inclusion, or exclusion, belonging or marginalization, and power (Albright, 2010; Green, 1999).

There is no need to emphasize self-accept and feelings in Dance Techniques

Finally, a new discursive positioning emerged emphasizing that there was no need to focus on self-accept and navigation of feelings in Dance Techniques. The following comment is an example of this positioning:

> Self-accept and dealing with feelings do not need a focus in this subject.

It seems this focus might be valuable, but not in the subject Dance Techniques.

Hearing round 3

Since there were still critical responses to several aspects of the suggestions made by the committee in round 2, revisions were necessary before hearing round 3. In this revision, all bodily oriented suggestions except bodily learning were removed. Being a democratic process, the voices from the field made a strong impact on the final outcome. Also in the textual descriptions, the emphasis on the body in line with the bodily turn, was largely – but not altogether – diminished. The new suggestions of core elements, including the description of them, are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. *The national renewal committee's suggestions of core elements in the subject Dance Techniques in hearing round 3,*[3] *posted online by The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training for a national hearing 25.11.19.*

Dance performance: Dance performance implies practical work with skills, practice, and performance in different dance techniques. Dance performance also implies a focus on nuancing expressive and structural elements in dance, bodily articulation and aesthetic understanding and experience.

Improvisation: Improvisation is about exploratory and creative work with dance techniques. Improvisation is a method to acquire practical knowledge about movement principles and own movement possibilities across genres.

Technical understanding: Technical understanding implies development of how technical skills can be explored and adjusted to the own body, and how technique depends on dance genre. Technical understanding also implies the ability to identify own development areas, take on concrete goals, structure one's own work and understand work ethics. To be able to use own words and established terminology when reflecting around own bodily learning contributes to technical understanding.

Stage sharings: Stage sharings imply participation with dance in different performance situations, with an emphasize on performance, presence, and body consciousness. The core element also implies to experience, reflect about, and discuss dance art.

[3] See https://hoering-publisering.udir.no/842 (access 06.04.21).

In round 3, in total 14 respondents gave comments on the revision.

In hearing round 3 there was a clear decline in hearing comments altogether, especially regarding the body. This is not surprising, since the focus on the body drastically diminished. In hearing round 3, only four comments connected to the body were made. Three of them asked for the body as concept to be replaced with physical, whereas one emphasized that a focus on bodily learning is positive. After this round, the final revision of the curriculum revisions was made and decided by The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training. Figure 4 shows the core elements in the approved revised national curriculum in the subject Dance Techniques, which was implemented in Norwegian upper secondary schools from 01.08.2020.

Figure 4. *The final decided core elements in the subject dance techniques in the final new revised national curriculum for the subject dance techniques,*[4] *approved by The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training and implemented in schools from 01.08.20.*

Dance performance: Dance performance implies practical work with dance technical skills, practice, and performance in different dance techniques. Further, dance performance implies dynamics, phrasing, and rhythm. Improvisation in dance performance is a method to acquire practical knowledge about movement principles and own movement possibilities across genres and cultures.

Technical understanding: Technical understanding implies development of how technical skills can be explored and adjusted to the own body, and how technique depends on dance genre. Technical understanding also implies the ability to identify own development areas, take on concrete goals, structure one's own work and understand work ethics. The pupils should develop their technical understanding in dance techniques through reflecting around own bodily learning with their own words as well as subject concepts.

Stage sharings: Stage sharings imply participation with dance in different performance situations, with an emphasize on performance and presence. Stage sharings also imply to experience, reflect about, and discuss dance art. Through work with stage sharings the pupils get the possibility to develop understanding or collaboration across expressions, artistic ideas and opinions.

Discussing the body as a friend or foe in dance

Stepping from the theoretical positioning and the analysis, we move to a discussion. Table 5 offers a synthesised overview of how the core elements suggested through each round of review shifted. These shifts are discussed and threaded in the following discussion, along with relevant theory and literature, drawing on the theoretical terrain of the bodily turn and the desired dancing body.

[4] See https://www.udir.no/lk20/mdd04-02/om-faget/kjerneelementer (access 06.04.21).

Figure 5. *Table showing how the core elements change and adjust from round to round.*

Core element suggestions, round 1	**Core element suggestions, round 3**	**Core element suggestions, round 3**	**Final core elements**
Bodily articulation	Dance performance	Dance performance	Dance performance
Contextualization	Improvisation	Improvisation	Technical understanding
Bodily tolerance	Body consciousness	Technical understanding	Stage sharings
Stage sharings	Contextualization	Stage sharings	
Creative work and improvisation			

As we start our discussion, we wish to acknowledge and remind that the researcher in critical discourse analysis is not expected to be neutral and merely describing the phenomenon of analysis (Fairclough, 2010). Rather the researcher works towards social change. In discussing our findings, we take an active, conscious stance towards the discourses of body in dance (Fairclough, 2010; Gorski, 2013), informed by the chosen theoretical perspectives of the bodily turn (Anttila, 2013/2019; Pfeifer & Bongard, 2007; Sheets-Johnstone, 2009; Stinson, 2004), and the desired body in dance (Albright, 2010; Blume, 2003; Foster, 2004; Green, 1999).

The bodily turn: The disembodied body

There was a clear and resounding emphasis within the comments that emphasizing the body was problematic for many. This can be observed in comments such as "focus on own and other's bodies is unnecessary", where even the mention of the body was challenging for those who still work *with* the body in and through dance. The body was treated dualistically in several ways in the hearing comments objecting to the suggested different emphasize on the body as lived and subjective, specifically as an instrument for technique and as merely an aesthetical outside (leading to the idea of pressure on body image). This disembodied view of the body highlighted that there was the preference for the body in the context of these documents to be understood primarily as an object, not a subject, delivered in abstract, disembodied language, and for the body to be eliminated as a focal point. Such preferences are not necessarily new within the context of dance or dance education. Dance scholar Susan Stinson (2004) articulates reflections on such encounters, drawing on a substantial pool of work from the late 1990s where dialogue around the dance and body tension was at the core. It seems that decades on, the desire to be distant from the body and unfeeling about the body lingers in the values and perspectives within some dance practitioners' professional language in Norway.

Through removing terms such as "bodily tolerance" and "body consciousness" from the drafts of the core elements, it means that the body becomes invisible or assumed

within the curriculum. By eliminating the body from the curriculum discourse, there is the potential for reproduction of the mind/body split, in turn reinscribing the body as an object within dance education (Blume, 2003) which again might endanger the necessary shift towards dance students' bodies being understood as subjective and vulnerable in dance education. If we return to Butler's (1988) notion of the body carrying meanings and histories inscribed by social and political agendas, we suggest that there is a need for those in the dance education community in Norway to embrace the view that the body is significant in dance education, that the body is lived, subjective, and vulnerable, that the language we use both impacts, reflects, and sustains practice, and that bodily differences are meaning-bearing and meaning-making in political and powerful ways.

The desired body in dance: Minimizing difference and the problem of universality

In the curriculum renewal processes the notion of the desired body in dance has been raised, challenged, and reaffirmed in various ways. Much of what was shared in the responses the committee received reflected a minimization of difference and an attachment to the desired dancing body as it is presented in eurocentric, mainstream discourses. Many of the comments appear to be eliminating that which is different. As noted previously, Deleuze's (1994) (positive) philosophy of difference is helpful to understand how difference can embrace multiplicities and possibilities. However, some of the comments through the curriculum renewal process work against such ideas and push towards (negative) categorical difference that makes a separation or distinction between things. It is apparent that for many offering responses to the draft curriculum, the concept of "differently bodied" was unfamiliar, and there was a clear resistance to dancing bodies that might be on the periphery of the mainstream. Those who sit outside of these norms can be confronting, in the sense that such difference shakes assumptions of who dances and what bodies are valued in dancing spaces. However, the inclusion of differently bodied dancers could be seen as an aesthetic and ethical necessity. At the same time the notion of performing difference through dance education is something that takes work, it requires shifts in dispositions, and those engaging with dance education play an active role in creating or restricting space for difference to occur (Anttila et al., 2019).

Making friends with the dancing body: Concluding remarks

From the analysis of the hearing comments made to the committee in the hearing rounds, read through theoretical perspectives of the bodily turn and the desired body in dance, it appears that there is a desire to disembody, disengage, and desensitize the dancing body. As practitioners, artists, dance educators, and researchers coming from the frame of the bodily turn, this causes us alarm. By examining and discussing how the dialogical process of the curriculum renewal might have adjusted, questioned,

and reflected views of the body, we point out areas that need to be addressed further to develop the role of Dance Techniques as a subject in upper secondary education towards *fagfornyelsen*'s explicit ideals of equality, solidarity and inclusion (Ministry of Education, 2017; Prøitz & Aasen, 2017) by broadening the concept of body in dance. There is the potential for much further work to engage with considerations of how lineages of power in dance can be challenged, and we encourage dance education and dance research in Norway to be explored in relation to the power structures that might permeate the dance landscape. We see that this could be an important step to allow for a more inclusive and diverse experience of dance in the Norwegian education system.

In curriculum, the words used, and the varied understandings carried, can open space for a diversity of dancing bodies, or limit and restrict dancing bodies. In future curriculum renewal processes in Norway of the dance subject Dance Techniques, we suggest that the dancing and learning body in dance education needs to be understood as subjective, relational, emotional, and vulnerable. The philosophical understanding of the body in the curriculum needs to be clearly articulated, as the body otherwise might be taken as neutral, similar for all, and decontextualized. However, how the body is conceived vastly differs from different philosophical perspectives. According to the perspectives offered by the bodily turn, the body as lived physical materiality, affects and consciousness are inseparably entangled (Thompson, 2007). In other words, the body is holistic, complex, and affected – never "only" an object or instrument for something (like dance). Since learning in dance *is* bodily, and the body is an entanglement of physical materiality, affects and consciousness, learning in dance functions as deep learning: dance as bodily learning has powerful impact on not only the body's physical shaping, but also on the creating of body image and self-image (Østern, 2017). This deep learning can be positive, but also the opposite, deeply negative, depending on the teaching.

Furthermore, based in the analysis in this article, for future curriculum renewal processes in Norway of the dance subject Dance Techniques, we argue that body tolerance is encouraged. Again, the body is not in any way a neutral site, and everybody's body is not taken for granted in dance. To embrace tolerance for difference, including bodily differences, there is the potential to disrupt the discourses and practices of western dance, which tend to be "informed by a hetero-normative White male gaze" (Demerson, 2020, p. 95). Bodies that sit outside such discourses and practices often suffer invisibility, marginalization, and exclusion, and need actively to be invited into dance education to break down traditional normative barriers they otherwise might trip on. Body tolerance may lead to acceptance, and even celebration, of different dancing bodies, and for understandings of the desired body in dance to expand in relation to what this might mean, and on which terms, contexts, histories, and beliefs. These inclusions could constitute new pathways to valuing the lived and performative experiences of diverse bodies. They could also help in fulfilling *fagfornyelsen*'s explicit ideals of equality, solidarity, and inclusion, pushing towards

21st Century Skills, also from within the subject Dance Techniques in upper secondary dance education in Norway.

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