

Learning bodies: What do teachers learn from embodied practice?

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In this article, we reflect on ways that young adolescents learn through embodied practice, which we define as moments when the body is 'caught up' in learning activities. Our observations draw from two workshops conducted as part of the *IMC Sky High!* program which annually involves over 150 Year 7 and 8 students from schools in low socioeconomic areas of south-west Sydney, Australia. The program is delivered on and off campus by a team at the University of Technology Sydney. In addition to building confidence and skill in curriculum areas, the program aims to introduce young high school students to a tertiary environment and motivate them to engage more actively at school. Paying close attention to a classical music encounter and a trip to a museum, we use ethnographic strategies to consider how looking, doing, listening and proximity facilitate feelings of connection and motivation towards learning. We discuss how an educators' sensitivity to the listening and speaking body, and the learning and caring body can enhance learning design and opportunities for engagement. Greater awareness of embodiment can enable educators to facilitate rich, sensory learning encounters that are empowering and transformative.

Introduction

Teachers and researchers are interested in identifying what constitutes engaging educational experiences as they strive to deliver effective teaching and learning to diverse young adolescent learners in a multitude of settings (Carneiro & Draxler, 2008). The *IMC Sky High!* program is a project of the International Research Centre for Youth Futures at the University of Technology Sydney that focuses on increasing student aspiration and engagement. The program offers a series of out-of-school, curriculum-based workshops to disengaged learners and learners with low confidence, to generate experiences of success and further stimulate students' learning at school. Some students find the program motivates them to consider tertiary study but for others the more immediate focus is on the benefits of attendance at and engagement with secondary school.

Of particular interest to us are observations of the role physical involvement plays in making learning activities engaging for students identified by their teachers as disengaged from school and learning. The themes we consider are that of the listening and speaking body, the disrupted and the caring body. This cluster of themes was selected following observations of two *Sky High* events attended by students in the Year 7 2015 cohort. We employ ethnographic principles to notice how students become caught up or physically involved in the activities. We record and reflect on our observations to promote empathetic understanding and increased sensitivity to participating students' learning needs. This method enables us to consider practice from a phenomenological view which depicts the body as a vibrant site of communication, of being and of knowing (Grosz, 1994). This stance has the potential to help practitioners become more open to and aware

of the body's possibilities to enhance learning engagement. We conclude by suggesting how educators can respond more intentionally and attentively to the significance of the body to create meaningful encounters for learners.

Socioeconomic context of the *IMC Sky High!* program

The *Sky High* program endeavours to play a part in increasing, in the critical middle years phase (Bahr, 2005), students' motivation to engage in school by encouraging students to strive towards further study and desired future employment. One day workshops which connect with Year 7-8 curriculum (e.g. science, history, PDHPE, the arts) and tertiary pathways (e.g. science, law, health, communications) are arranged in a yearly program which runs for two consecutive years. On a practical level, the program plays a role in making trips from the suburbs to the city, to the university campus and nearby cultural institutions a more familiar experience so students feel more confident about considering bolder futures in terms of employment and study. The program is funded by a private organisation with philanthropic goals to build stronger communities. It has worked with over 250 Year 7 and 8 (age 12-14) students since 2012. In 2015, nine participating state high schools each selected twelve students to attend workshops held approximately once a month during the school day. The students selected were those teachers felt would benefit from moving beyond their classroom and school, beyond their physical locale and beyond their daily expectations and experiences of curriculum and pedagogy. In making their selection, teachers recognised factors which compromise success at school including challenging home lives, lack of opportunities due to poverty, poor community experiences, difficulties adjusting to secondary school, and high but untapped academic potential. Students may also be disadvantaged due to where they are growing up, including areas geographically isolated from public transport.

The participating schools' overall linguistic and cultural profiles are notably diverse; this point is reflected in the identities of the students involved. Of the nine participating high schools in 2015, on average 74% of students at these schools speak languages other than English (LOTE) at home (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2015). Two schools report LOTE backgrounds as high as 96%. Most of the schools have small percentages of indigenous students (e.g. 1% to 6%) but one school celebrates 12% of their population coming from an indigenous background. The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) for these schools range from 870 to 939, with the average at 912. The average national value is 1000, which places the participating schools below the national average value. Representative of the demography of south-western Sydney, there are many students from Arabic speaking backgrounds and of the Muslim faith. There are also students from refugee backgrounds whose teachers feel will benefit from 'viable connections between classroom learning and outside uses of literacy' (Naidoo, 2010, pp. 53-54); a feature of *Sky High* events. In the current social context, some elements of culture and religion can make engagement in public, community life and schooling more difficult for some students. One of the participating teachers reported that her female Muslim students were reluctant to leave the school's suburb as girls had experienced abuse when wearing the hijab in public. Teachers accompany their students

to each workshop and become an important bridge as students physically and metaphorically transfer learning between school and *Sky High*.

Futures, career choices and aspirations

Exploring engagement through embodiment in this multicultural, multilingual and low socioeconomic context is spurred by the commitment to develop a program that makes an early difference to students' effective engagement in secondary schooling. At the end of their second year of high school, students have the opportunity to select electives that personalise their course of study and, in Year 11, assuming they remain at school, students will select again. Recognising these important phases, the *Sky High* program aims to raise students' expectations of themselves by offering rigorous and creative intellectual and social experiences which continually broach new and more challenging topic areas in an out-of-school setting.

Research in the career education field around the development of occupational aspirations (Gottfredson, 1981) suggests value in making an impact when young adolescents are refining perceptions of their ability and aligning these with perceived status levels of occupations. The Smith Family's *Learning for Life* program, another program that supports children from low socioeconomic families and communities, stresses the importance of making an early impact on students' self-perceptions of their ability in order to raise students' expectations of what they can achieve in life. The *Learning for Life* research indicates respondents (Year 8 and 9 students, aged 13-15) had largely already decided on key elements of their future pathways, based on an intersection of perceived ability and gender, and that low perceptions of one's ability to achieve at school were more likely to contribute to plans not involving post-school education, apprenticeships or traineeships (Beavis, Curtis & Curtis, 2005). This finding is suggestive of experiences of students from more marginal cultural and economic groups. Lingard and Keddie (2013, p. 427) consider that opportunities to maximise the impact of school through high levels of intellectual rigour can contribute to more 'equitable outcomes for marginalised students', which is a goal of *Sky High*.

By approaching a commitment to equity through research into embodied practice, our paper positions disadvantaged, middle years students as successful learners, and learners and leaders of great potential. This stance contributes to Nancy Fraser's (1997, p. 16) 'redistribution-recognition dilemma', which is concerned with recognising the contributions and potential of people 'subject to both cultural injustice and economic injustice'. The vast majority of children participating in *Sky High* experience elements of cultural exclusion and economic deprivation owing to backgrounds outlined above. Programs such as *Sky High* have important roles to play in 'mobilising spaces of possibility and hope' (Keddie, 2012, p. 2) through translation of theory into practice.

The educational body in literature

The following section considers literature on how the body becomes 'caught up' in learning activities. The body can provide important insights into how students relate to their learning contexts and how educators can effectively design learning to engage diverse learners. The body, however, has been devalued as it is considered by some approaches to be a less reliable and tangible means of knowing. This perception is derived from Cartesian dualism, which views the body as being separate from and inferior to the intellect. Tangenberg and Kemp (2002, p.11) relayed this view of the body as, '... [being too] personal, immediate and messy' to be considered a site of 'acceptable knowledge'. While the mind is conferred a superior status due to its capacity to reason, the body has been discredited as a limiting, unruly or a distracting factor that needs to be overcome or tamed by the mind (Bordo, 1998; Freedman & Holmes, 2012; McWilliam, 1995). In reaction to this negative and limiting view, phenomenologists have argued that the body is the most accurate basis for knowing, as individuals use their bodily senses to participate in and know about the world. Using phenomenological approaches, writers (see Campbell, 2009; Steihaug & Malterud, 2008; Palmer, 1989) assert that bodily knowing is free from the interference of the mind's filtering process and acts as the source of all other forms of knowing, as logical reasoning and conceptualisations are derived from our bodily experiences. Lakoff and Johnson (1999, p.17) similarly conclude that 'our sense of what is real begins with and depends crucially on our bodies'. Observing embodied practice consequently acknowledges that we come to know through the body as our experience and subsequent emotions are interpreted through the body (Matthews, 1998; Michelson, 1998).

Bodily knowing is believed to lie at the heart of the aesthetic experience, which provides a point of connection for the events described in this paper. We think 'with and through' the body in our practice as bodily knowing is a 'primary mode of being and becoming' (Green & Hopwood, 2015, p.18). Such knowing is demonstrated through the ways that the body listens and responds to its context. This is particularly evident during out of school, excursion type experiences, which typically have been seen to evoke high levels of bodily engagement, where a fusion of the whole being can cultivate a 'refined and intensified form of experience' (Hubard, 2007, p.3). Grosz (1994) describes this intensified experience through the 'lived' and 'inscribed' body. The lived body alludes to the body as it is physically experienced or the way in which it interacts with the world on an everyday level through our bodily senses, such as taste, touch, smell and sight (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). This aligns with the phenomenologist view described above. Following our observations of students engaged in learning activities, we gain insights into students' intentionality through how they listen to and communicate with the world by rising up to meet it rather than passively inhabiting it. The focus of this article is on the lived body of the participants rather than the inscribed body, which conveys how the body delivers specific messages of power and culture through identifying with a particular culture, gender or social status. Although we acknowledge the ways disadvantage can be 'written on' and 'read from' bodies to constrict young people's learning experiences, our objective is to see how bodies engage with these experiences.

One very accessible means of exploring embodiment and engagement is through observing bodily movement. Farnell and Varela (2008) refer to the 'moving body, the doing itself' and the primacy of embodied meaning making by describing how we make sense of experiences, by being engaged through the 'modalities of taste, hearing, touch, pain, smell, sight and kinesthesia' (p.216). Deleuze (1988) similarly highlights this connection by explaining how the process of becoming lies in the body's ability to affect and be affected. The physical extension of bodies is considered to be 'matter-energy' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.408). Bodily movement is closely related to the affective body or engagement as the body is perceived as something that moves and feels (Massumi, 2002). Coffey (2012) explains the Deleuzian concepts of affect by describing how bodies in motion are positive and affirmative and, 'defined by their relations and affects, opening up or closing down possibilities ... in continuous movement and negotiation' (p. 16). As bodies are considered to be feeling, interacting, becoming and moving in practice or performance, they can be understood as 'intensities, rather than entities' (Coffey, 2012, p. 7). As we focus on the body, we observe the ways that deep levels of immersion, of being lost in the movement of one's body, can become an affective and aesthetic process. This is where individuals lose self-consciousness and experience positive emotion as they become engaged through their bodies. Our responses to observations of the students illustrates how bodies can become 'caught up' in an activity through voice, eyes, proximity and movement.

The literature also indicates how practitioners can use their bodies to demonstrate care by actively involving students in learning. In our program we are interested to see how facilitators manipulate their bodies to dynamically engage students. Positions of caring have been commonly associated with responsiveness, as individuals actively respond to the needs of others to form 'encounters' with the ones cared for (Noddings, 1992). These gestures are believed to establish intimacy as the individual is present with his or her body (Uitto & Syrjälä, 2008). For instance, gestures that embody physical closeness, such as crouching next to a child, have been construed as more ethical and non-intimidating gestures of care, as teachers speak to students on their level (Vick & Martinez, 2011). Unethical presentations of teachers' bodily positions, however, include physical positions that mark out distinction and distance, such as standing away from students and using a loud authoritative voice to command attention (Estola & Elbaz-Luwisch, 2003; Vick & Martinez, 2011). Through our events we aim to be attentive to how facilitators use their bodies to engage students in powerful and meaningful learning encounters.

Researching music and museum workshops

The workshops which produced the observations for this paper include a visit to the Australian National Maritime Museum and a classical music workshop. These were selected for analysis due to the highly sensory nature of the learning experiences provided. Each workshop involved the participation of around seventy Year 7 (age 13) students. The music workshop was one of the first workshops held during the year, when students had been newly introduced to the program. The museum visit took place midway through, when students felt more at ease with the program and one another.

The ethnographic method of collecting data through observing and recording helped us note the emotions and understandings of which students may have been unaware had they been given a survey or interviewed. This was both an important and useful strategy as prior experiences of conducting written surveys and face to face interviews appeared limited by students' self-consciousness in articulating their views. Utilising an observational method is affirmed by others who research children and young adolescents as observation may free up alternate modes of understanding (Tisdall, Davis & Gallagher, 2009). The ethnographic method was used to observe the body as 'the active and intentional reaching out from its physical existence' (Estola & Elbaz-Luwisch, 2003, p. 697). In using this approach, we were also conscious of the embodied nature of our observations, which Dixon and Senior (2011) allude to by defining seeing as, 'the involvement of reading with body and emotion' (p.475). Our descriptions of student and facilitators' bodies provides glimpses of the engaged body, which are not always easily noticed or visible within the multitude of encounters within events.

The music workshop was facilitated by a music education lecturer from the university and two professional classical musicians, a cellist and viola player. It was held over three hours in a media studio with tiered seating, a lighting rig and a large black curtain, denoting audience and stage areas. In preparing the workshop, the music lecturer created a range of music-making and movement opportunities and provided students with a large collection of percussion instruments, including many Asian and Middle Eastern instruments. These were organised in small boxes and arranged along one wall of the stage area. The professional musicians brought their glossy and impressive instruments, which were tuned and waiting in a side room before being brought out for the concert after the lunch break. Although classical music was noted as a largely unfamiliar experience for these students by their teachers, the event addressed syllabus requirements of listening experiences and opportunities to recognise Australia's musical culture (Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW, 2007). Music provides an ideal context for investigation of the concerns of this paper as it creates a multi-sensory experience of hearing sound, seeing movement and encouraging kinaesthetic responses to a variety of stimuli (Custodero, 2002).

The one day museum visit promoted a similarly sensory learning experience as students physically encountered a collection of artefacts representative of Australia's maritime heritage. A small number of students indicated that they had visited the museum in primary school but few had attended since that time. Students were divided into two groups and were taken on tour by museum guides through a recently decommissioned warship and submarine, a replica of explorer James Cook's boat, *The Endeavour*, and through the indoor galleries with stories of immigration and Antarctic exploration. The two of us wrote observations of these events in our notebooks. We positioned ourselves on the periphery of the event, such as in the darkened audience seats in the music studio and on the edge of the group when touring the museum. We separately noted what we felt to be the most salient, interesting or curious observations.

The events under examination had not been nominated in advance as there was no intentional plan to research or write about the body. Presentations of the body became

increasingly evident, however, when field notes were shared in post-workshop debriefing sessions with the larger team. Our notes made frequent and detailed mention of the movement of bodies through the spaces and how students' bodies were positioned in relation to the learning activity and to each other. We recognised a mutual sensitivity to embodied practice and became more alert to the recording of interactions which may have previously passed unremarked had we not paused to share and reflect on our observations. This allowed us to draw on Taylor's (2013, p. 698) recognition of 'that which is resolutely mundane within everyday pedagogic practice' by giving attention to what could otherwise have been recorded as inattention, chatting with friends, ignoring the tutor, being shy etc. We concur with Taylor (2013, p. 698) that giving attention to what may pass as unremarkable classroom interactions can heighten educators' awareness of the potent 'constellation of human-nonhuman agencies, forces and events'.

Our investigations take an ethnographic approach revolving around the act of being, seeing and writing (Delamont & Atkinson, 1995). As observers who are also part of the program's organising team, we aim to identify factors of our program that are efficacious and potentially transferable to other programs, as well as to school. An ethnographic approach also allows for insights revealing the researchers' perspectives and experiences, which can result in more educators raising their voices to make sense of the complexities of student engagement (Harris, 2011).

Findings from observations

The following sections share insights into two workshops generated from our observation journals. Selections, which we consider to be the most insightful into the theme of embodiment, have been organised into three sections around the sub-headings: the embodiment of listening and speaking, learning as the disrupted body, and the caring body. The first two sections, the embodiment of listening and speaking, and learning as the disrupted body, seek to convey the complex nature of embodied nature that characterises authentic learning and student engagement. The third section, the caring body, highlights the significance of learning relationships.

The embodiment of listening and speaking

The body, in its many differing forms and expressions, plays a crucial role in enabling individuals to experience the world. The aforementioned literature has described the body as an active entity that rises up to interact with the world. Grosz (1994, p.xi) draws attention to this active body, stating 'bodies are not inert, they function interactively and productively. They act and react'. The students' bodies in *Sky High* interact by 'speaking to' other bodies through listening, observing and responding; however, it becomes apparent that students are not always at ease in or compliant with requests in these areas. The music event tutor frequently drew students' attention to the communicating body. In one instance she asked students to carefully watch the two musicians communicate as they played:

The tutor shared a secret that the musicians are in fact talking to us as they play. She tells us to watch for it and indeed we are able to see them looking at each other as they play, moving their bodies rhythmically and in tune with each other. (Joanne, music event, April 2015)

The tutor drew our attention to the musicians' physical dialogue, where their communication appeared instinctive as they moved harmoniously to the music and each other's bodies. The viola player began dancing while the cellist replied with equally quick and agile responses on his instrument:

Smil[ing] and jump[ing] as the last note vibrated from his bow and the cellist, although seated, used his fingertips, arms, back and head, in smooth movement, to achieve momentum and make his instrument sing. (Sarah, music event, April 2015)

Echoing the musicians, the facilitator challenged students to communicate through their bodies by modelling embodied practice (Uitto & Syrjälä, 2008). She demonstrated ways to inhabit the body as she led students through an exercise involving tapping out rhythms using different body parts. The students were shy about creating music in this way, but as they progressed through the activities, they exuded greater physical alertness, presence and authenticity by spontaneously generating creative music patterns. The group was encouraged to act quickly and instinctively by not being given time to think about their moves. Like the musicians, they were shown how to watch one another before speaking through their bodies. This approach appeared to build a sense of openness and receptivity within the group. Students laughed as they realised they could move and position their bodies more freely around the room in novel and surprising ways:

I focus on the students and their humming and their streamers - they are being taken out of themselves. (Sarah, music event, April 2015)

Some students found the open-ended experiences more difficult. Those standing nearest the tiered seating appeared particularly hesitant at the beginning of each new activity and often looked to each other before copying the facilitator's gestures:

Clicking, stamping, calling – one girl is laughing and smiling as she does it. A boy looks concerned. He twists his hands together. Perhaps he can't click? He's watching the tutor. He stretches and looks up at the lighting rig. (Sarah, music event, April 2015)

With multiple repetitions, however, most students eased into the process of making music. As more and more students began physically moving their bodies to different patterns, the energy in the room increased. This appeared to be washing over the entire group and Sarah noted the reaction in her own body:

But as I wrote, my body hummed. In that darkened space in the front row of the studio I remembered where I was and what we were doing there together. Like the students, lost in sound, I also began to listen. (Sarah, music event, April 2015)

The facilitator insisted that students listen deeply to one another, which resulted in students receiving focused attention from their peers, as well as the adults in the room. In

one activity, students went around in a circle and played their instrument under the condition that they wait for the previous person's sound to finish. This meant listening until all reverberations had ceased. Some students were unable to resist jumping in and prematurely ending another person's sound by striking their own instrument. When successful, and it became more so, this example of careful listening led to a seamless flow of sound which was very hypnotic. A sense of unity had developed within the group:

A flow of continuous sound in the air is thick with intense concentration on the music/sound, of where it ends and where the silence begins. (Joanne, music event, April 2015)

Learning as the engaged body

Learning as an embodied process was recognised at times when bodies spoke and responded to their physical contexts and to each other. This could be triggered by students repositioning themselves to engage in the different physical spaces, such as touring exhibits in the museum. Some felt very uneasy as they were unaccustomed to bodily positions that required a highly sensory level of engagement; but, high levels of engagement also elicited spontaneous physical actions of joy and friendship.

An example was when students were invited to enter the confined spaces of the warship and submarine at the museum. We needed to climb backwards down a ladder to enter the submarine; an unfamiliar action for many. The novelty and challenge, however, created some excitement as those standing near the staircase noted how people managed the task in different ways. Students at the base of the staircase offered advice to those climbing down. The excitement prompted one teacher to comment on how the inability to see where we were going helped to lift inhibitions. Another teacher mentioned the brain was learning through making new connections and by breaking free of old bodily routines and patterns:

We are excited as we enter the submarine. Nervous chatter and giggling erupts. We have to go into the submarine backwards. My feet feel uncertain and I am worried I will fall. I surprise myself when I make it safely to the bottom. (Joanne, museum event April 2015)

The physical orientation of learning spaces also appears to trigger opportunities for deep sensory engagement of the type that characterises embodied practice. The museum had an exhibit that required students to re-position themselves to view huge rowing sculls attached by their hulls to a very high wall. To take in the full display, visitors must lean back and lift their eyes to the ceiling or even lie down so that the positioning of the boats can convey the size of the waves the rowers encountered. This upward perspective, looming high above the viewer, enhances the visual experience of the exhibit. It also represents the enormity of the achievement of the sailors who had rowed the boats. This was one way the museum engaged the body in an innovative way and it elicited responses from the students:

One student was seen lying down and staring mesmerised at the wall ... the whole exhibit seems to lend itself to seeing things from different perspectives, as items are hung and positioned in strange irregular angles. (Joanne, museum event, April 2015)

A boy asks why the boats are just up on a wall and not being used. The guide explains why we keep things in a museum. (Sarah, museum event, April 2015)

Learning is also intensified through the mutual joys experienced in an embodied learning encounter. After a long segment through which some students lost attention, boys from two different schools spontaneously came together to play an enormous snakes and ladder game in one of the exhibits. Students engaged in this activity and with each other on a highly physical level. Their loud laughter, periodic high fives and cheers filled the exhibition space, contravening the unspoken public rule of remaining quiet in a museum, but signifying a shift from disengagement to engagement. The boys' joint physicality became apparent through their vocal projection and the performance of a series of secret handshakes to express their new friendship. Through their bodies they were publicly acknowledging their friendships and expressing openness to one another and new learning. Up until this point most schools had not interacted with each other and the students had moved around the museum in school-based groups. After this experience, the small group of boys who had participated in this interactive game left the museum together with their bodies jostling through playful bonding.

The caring body

The final theme considers the caring body, which illustrates how individuals show concern by being present for and connected to one another. We have noticed that the success of *Sky High* events is often strongly reliant on a facilitator's skill in making learning accessible. Expert facilitators make learning more engaging through high levels of enthusiasm, interest and care, which they often demonstrate through their bodies. They can enhance or diminish student motivation through elements of their voice, openness to respond to the groups' interests and ability to manage behaviour, such as attention and distraction in order to create memorable and exciting learning encounters. At the museum, one tour guide utilised an effective technique to communicate caringly with his group. He drew students close to him to create a discussion 'that [felt] like a fireside chat' (Sarah, museum visit, June, 2015). An intimate positioning of bodies was also evident in the calm, darkened space of the music workshop, where students demonstrated a growing sense of intimacy, trust and engagement by standing closer and closer to the facilitator on the stage area as the workshop progressed:

After the first activity I am immediately aware of the space. The students are positioned closer to [the facilitator]. There is a ring of boys less than a metre around forming a circle around her. I feel how they are drawn to her. (Joanne, music event, June 2015)

The teacher [from the student's school] is talking to the boy who is erratically moving the streamer. [The teacher's] body language is comfortable and he stands close, leaning in to hear what the child is saying. The boy obviously respects him and looks to him when he

feels anxious. The teacher knows this and stands close behind his student. (Joanne, music event, April 2015)

At the museum, guides altered their voices and used vibrant bodily gestures to help students listen and remain attentive:

Inside the submarine exhibit. The guide has an increasing voice, like a sonar ... The guide has a good 'wait time', the kids are alive and alert. They stand very close to the guide. (Sarah, museum, June 2015)

The opposite was also noted. In one instance, a guide's inability to read the students' bodies exacerbated student disengagement. This guide struggled to get his students to engage in the exhibits. He appeared uncomfortable with recognising students' disinterest as a sign to change his methods and continued to speak despite students moving away from him. He sometimes responded harshly to students' questions and appeared frustrated at not being listened to. This encounter became difficult to observe as learners began losing trust in their guide. Unfortunately, it was impossible for another adult to completely fill his role as the school teachers were not from the museum and not knowledgeable of its content. The teachers took on a disciplinary stance which appeared to decrease students' motivation.

He urges us to go to see the items salvaged from a wreckage of a ship, Australia's worst maritime disaster. The students are not getting up. They are tired. He makes a sharp comment. He does not understand how they tire easily. He does not understand their disinterest. (Joanne, museum event, June 2015)

The significance of visible demonstrations of care is discussed by Noddings (1984) who points to ways that teachers undertake caring actions of paying attention through touch, gaze, supporting words, physical closeness or by using an encouraging, caring and inspiring tone of voice. The comparison between the two tour guides at the museum illustrates how the body can perform in different ways to impact student engagement.

Conclusion

By observing how individuals meaningfully engage in their environment through the placement and movement of their bodies, we raise awareness of how educators can make sense of and utilise the power of embodiment. The events discussed in this paper highlight the importance of observing embodied practice. We believe that observations of how bodies orientate themselves have potential to assist educators with techniques that can be transferred to a variety of learning environments. At the conclusion of this section, we offer suggestions to encourage educators to consider their attentiveness to the significance of the body.

The themes of this paper are the listening and speaking body, the learning and caring body. The use of ethnographic principles allows us to 'sit with' the students as we record and reflect on the things that 'catch them up' in engagement. These observations promote empathetic understanding towards the student participants and an increased sensitivity to

what can easily be overlooked as educators focus on complex loads of delivering, monitoring and assessing learning to perform bodily as teachers. Our observations and reflections connect us with literature on embodied practice that asserts the body to be a very accurate form of knowing (Estola & Elbaz-Luwisch, 2003). It also provides examples of how learners can engage in meaningful encounters by being deeply immersed through their senses (Grosz, 1994).

The body is shown to occupy a central and constantly changing role as people, environments and emotions shift. In the music event, the facilitator took great care to create an experience where students were involved; 'seeing the performance of sound, feeling through their own bodies these musical ideas, developing understanding engendered through these integrated, sensorial experiences' (Facilitator, music event, April 2015). The museum engaged students on a highly sensory and physical level through the use of sound, images, the positioning of artefacts and the design of space. This experience was heavily mediated through the skill of the guides, including one who created a memorable learning experience through his own ease and enjoyment of being in the space, expressions of his own interest and curiosity, and the pleasure he demonstrated being in the students' company.

Making space and time for bodily exploration is important. Listening and responding with one's body appears a valuable skill that is increasingly less utilised due to pressures in education to accumulate knowledge and be accountable. A multisensory learning experience, such as music, is vital in giving students reasons to main a high level of concentration. But educators must build safe spaces for students to slow down and learn to listen mindfully to their own bodies and build awareness of the bodies around them.

In terms of engagement, bodies give good clues as to levels of motivation, inspiration and disengagement. Students who are engaged in their learning tend to lean in and stand or sit closer, feel confident to move and experiment, and use their hands to touch their surroundings. Facilitators are also observed as being engaged when they use their bodies and voices dynamically and share their experiences with the students. Engagement can be construed as a mutual process, as often the pleasure of watching students lose themselves in an experience can enhance the engagement of facilitators and other students. Observation of embodied practice carries an added level of importance as this dimension can increase the intellectual and emotional presence of curriculum. Educators can use bodily awareness as a more dynamic method of asking students to listen attentively by encouraging the whole group to respond to all participants' input. Efforts to empower children, particularly those who are vulnerable, have potential to help teachers understand more than just what is spoken out loud. Finally, through embracing the body as a rich and diverse knowledge source, educators may be better able to encourage trust in the body and encourage learners to immerse themselves in opportunities which appear foreign and frightening, but which lead to valuable experiences and continual learning.

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