VANCOUVER ISLAND UNIVERSITY

Shifting Primary Teachers’ Practice to Include Dance/Creative Movement Strategies

by

Melanie Anne Reid

B. Ed.

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

Faculty of Education

© Melanie Ann Reid, 2019
Vancouver Island University

All rights reserved. This project may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy or other means, without permission of the author.
We accept this Thesis as conforming to the required standard.

Mary Ann Richards, PhD
Faculty Thesis Supervisor
Faculty of Education,
Vancouver Island University

March 26th, 2019

Dr. David Paterson
Dean, Faculty of Education
Vancouver Island University

March 26th, 2019
ABSTRACT

A collaborative action research approach was used in this study to investigate the research questions: What strategies used in professional development build confidence and competence in primary teachers to integrate dance in their teaching practice? How can collaboration build knowledge, skills and comfort to support primary teachers to incorporate more creative movement in their planning and teaching? After collating and analyzing the data gathered, the results of this study and participant feedback indicated that collaborative action research through professional learning workshops helped to build teachers’ confidence and competence in shifting their practice to include creative movement. This study has demonstrated that when teachers are provided with quality professional development, they can make a positive difference to their pedagogy and enrich their curriculum offerings to students. The findings of this collaborative action research study may be transferable to other contexts, particularly for primary teachers wishing to implement creative dance movement strategies to support learning competencies in dance curricula, and to attend to learning needs of students who are less socially, verbally, or literately able. Further research into how to foster creative dance movement strategies in primary classrooms would continue to value and extend the findings of this study.

*Keywords: Collaborative action research (CAR), professional development, Adult Learning, dance, creative movement, confidence, competence, strategies*
TABLE OF CONTENTS
Abstract ..................................................................................................................................................iii
Table of Contents ...................................................................................................................................iv
Chapter 1- Introduction ..........................................................................................................................1
    Dance/Creative Movement .....................................................................................................................2
    Personal Context .....................................................................................................................................4
    Purpose of the Study ...............................................................................................................................5
    Rationale for Study .................................................................................................................................6
Chapter 2- Literature Review ..................................................................................................................10
    Adult Learning .......................................................................................................................................10
    Formal Adult Learning ...........................................................................................................................12
    Informal Adult Learning .........................................................................................................................13
    Knowledge of Learning .........................................................................................................................14
    Communities of Practice .......................................................................................................................15
    Situated Learning .................................................................................................................................17
    The Reflective Practitioner ....................................................................................................................19
    Influences of Adult Learners Participation ............................................................................................20
    Components of Effective Professional Development .............................................................................21
    Collaborative Action Research .............................................................................................................25
    Arts Education .......................................................................................................................................26
    Benefits of Dance/Creative Movement .................................................................................................31
    Movement and Brain Development .......................................................................................................31
    Physical Development ...........................................................................................................................32
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social/Psychological Development</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers to Creative Movement/Art Integration in the Classroom</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3- Methodology and Methods</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Method Approach to Research</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Methodology-Action Research</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Overview of Action Research</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Action Research</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Action Research Model</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Relevance of Action Research to the Study</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher as Researcher</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Criteria</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Consideration</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection Methods and Instruments</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Series/Workshop One/First Action Research Cycle</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Two/Second Action Research Cycle</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Three/Third Action Research Cycle</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis and Interpretation</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential Application of Knowledge Created</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 4 - Findings and Results

Description and Reflections on First, Second and Third Action Research Cycles

Action Cycle One - An Overview

Participants

Aims of Workshop Series

Workshop One

Workshop Two

Workshop Three

Action Research Cycle One - Workshop One

Action Research Cycle Two - Workshop Two

Action Research Cycle - Workshop Three

Chapter 5 - Analysis of Major Themes

Initial Concerns to Dance Professional Development and the Implementation of Creative Movement Learning in the Curriculum

External Factors

Crowded Curriculum

Lack of Resources (including curriculum, space and human expertise)

Music and Video Resources

Human Resources

Space

Teachers’ Experience of Dance Perceptions and Challenges of Integrating Dance into the
Primary Classroom.................................................................73
Impact and Influence of professional Development on Teachers’ Competence and
Confidence........................................................................75
Teachers’ Competence and Confidence to Implement Dance Strategies..............75
The Integration of Dance Experiences to Support other Learning.........................76
The Confidence to Share Ideas Between Staff.......................................................77
Changing Perceptions about the Value of Dance Experiences to Students’ Learning…78
Chapter 6-Discussion.........................................................................80
Collaborative Action Research.................................................................80
Limitations and Value of the Study..............................................................83
Recommendations for Professional Development.............................................83
References.........................................................................................85
Appendix A.....................................................................................95
Appendix B.....................................................................................96
Appendix C.....................................................................................97
Appendix D.....................................................................................99
Chapter 1: Introduction

In today’s inclusive classrooms, it can be challenging for educators to implement teaching strategies to meet the unique needs of all students without knowledge, training and opportunities for teacher collaboration. Research shows that integration of kinesthetic awareness and visual cues facilitated through dance can accommodate children’s learning (Jobling, Virji-Babul & Nichols, 2006). Despite extensive offerings of professional development opportunities for primary teachers, it is rare for these workshops to focus on helping teachers introduce and implement creative movement as a teaching strategy. Most professional development experiences with creative movement and dance have been minimal and many teachers therefore choose not to provide dance learning experiences to their students (Tennant, 2000).

This study investigated the efforts of dance/creative movement workshops for primary teachers in the form of professional development and collaboration to expand their teaching practice. Through the exploration of new teaching strategies, educators had an opportunity to collaborate and gain experience in dance/creative movement techniques. According to Stringer (1996), the ultimate aim of collaborative action research is to develop sophisticated understanding of the problems, issues and practices of teachers in authentic settings, bridging the theory–practice gap. Educational researchers have found that the action research process effectively promotes skills of inquiry, reflection, problem solving, and action (Burnaford, 1999). Additionally, good teachers value the respect of their colleagues, utilizing those supports and resources (Collinson & Sherrill, 1997). “Every teacher needs to feel like they are growing, needs to feel the excitement of new possibilities” (Riley & Roach, 2006). Brockett (2008) identified that most successful adult learning takes place in a collaborative setting, allowing teachers to brainstorm and problem solve in a trusting atmosphere.
DANCE MOVEMENT AS INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE

Dance/Creative Movement

Dance movement has been shown to have many benefits for students. The physical benefits of dance include increased balance, flexibility, muscular tone and strength, endurance and spatial awareness (Levy, 2017). Socially, dance fosters the development of relationships (Behrends, Müller & Dziobek, 2012). From a cognitive perspective, dance contributes to vocabulary development and aids with integration of the sensory-motor systems (American Journal of Dance Therapy, 2014).

Dance movement is a form of creative expression which allows students who have difficulties with expressing themselves or understanding emotions to break out of their shells and express emotions in a non-threatening and safe learning environment (Smith, 1988). Dance provides “layered learning experiences that deepen their repertoire of behaviour and response to the world” (Lorenzo-Lasa et al., 2007, p. 25). Dance movement is used to foster social interactions and expression of feelings (Sandel & Johnson, 1987) as well as to gain a sense of self-control (Erwin-Grabner, Goodill, Hill & Neida, 1999). Dance is not just a physical activity; it is also a form of creative expression. Some children have great difficulty expressing themselves or understanding emotions. Levy (2017) stated that “finding meaning and connection through movement and dance can be a very empowering experience that enables children to feel understood in a profound way” (p. 110).

There are positive outcomes for students with and without disabilities when integrating dance and movement activities to general education lessons. Creative movement allows all children to participate because each child approaches movement in different ways (Dow, 2010). “Dance is important to incorporate into our inclusive classrooms if we want to meet the needs of more diverse groups of students” (Skoning, 2008, pg. 9). Dance also facilitates an
inclusive space because inappropriate behaviours decrease when all students have the ability to move during learning (Skoning, 2008). By introducing learning concepts through dance and movement, students of all abilities can improve their bodily, cognitive, social functions and academic outcomes (Skoning 2010). According to Hannaford (1995), “The more closely we consider the elaborate interplay of brain and body, the more clearly one compelling theme emerges: movement is essential to learning. Movement awakens and activates many of our mental capacities. Movement integrates and anchors new information and experience into our neural networks” (p. 94).

Children love to move and by integrating learning outcomes with movements and music, it serves as another method for children to connect their minds and bodies to their own learning. Students with learning challenges gain immense benefits when interacting with the curriculum through dance integration (Carnahan, Musti-Rao, Bailey, 2009) because they discriminate through all the senses and engage in an artistic experience (Smith, 2010). Dance is the only universal language communicated through bodies and movements. It is universal because we all communicate nonverbally. Movement and dancing are innate means of communication (Koff, 2000), thus provide a nonverbal means of expression for children who have difficulties communicating (Freundlich, Pike & Schwartz, 1989). According to Koff (2000), creative movement “enables every child, regardless of physical capabilities, to be expressive in a nonverbal manner—to explore and incorporate the physical self as a functioning part of the whole social being” (p. 27). Gersak (2012) stated, “Dance has a positive effect on a child's self-esteem, on social and emotional relations in a group, and an easier understanding of the world” (p.8).
**Personal Context**

As a strong supporter of arts learning, and with a background in dance, I was drawn to creative movement as a teaching technique in primary classrooms. I wanted to investigate whether professional development was effective in supporting primary teachers to integrate creative movement in their classroom and decided to research which strategies used in professional development build competence and confidence. From my own experience incorporating dance into the classroom, I believe that creative movement and kinesthetic teaching approaches, in the delivery of curriculum, can help to create a learning environment that is inclusive of all students. I have students in my class diagnosed with ADHD, FASD and defiant behaviour disorder. They enjoy the benefits of dance and movement in class. Positive behaviours follow each creative movement session and my students are more relaxed and ready to learn.

Research shows that integration of kinesthetic awareness and visual cues facilitated through dance can accommodate children’s learning (Jobling, Virji-Babul & Nichols, 2006). Using creative movement in the classroom is a way for primary teachers to help students explore learning outcomes and demonstrate their understanding.

I believe the benefits of dance and creative movement can help students express themselves positively through movement, improving their physical fitness, social and academic outcomes. Hartshorn (2001) stated that dance movement activities were useful for improving diverse bodily, cognitive and social functions in young children. Dance movement is used to foster social interactions and expression of feelings (Sandel & Johnson, 1987) as well as to gain a sense of self-control (Grabner, Goodill, Hill & Neida, 1999). According to Barkley (2004), “children with ADHD benefit the most, more than any other disorder, from regular exercise,
because movement exercises increase dopamine in the human brain, just like the stimulus does” (p. 23).

**Purpose of Study**

Research argues that dance/creative movement has many benefits. The physical benefits of dance include increased balance, flexibility, muscular tone and strength, endurance and spatial awareness (Levy, 2017). Socially, dance fosters the development of relationships and improve social interactions and expression of feelings (Behrend, Muller & Dziobek, 2012). From a cognitive perspective, dance contributes to vocabulary development and aids with integration of the sensory-motor systems (American Journal of Dance Therapy, 2014).

My hope is that the knowledge created in this collaborative action research study will offer insight in the value of facilitating opportunities for teachers to learn and take risks with dance movement together to expand their own teaching practice with confidence.

**Rationale for Study**

Research has found that many teachers feel intimidated or overwhelmed by the idea of using creative movement and dance concepts in their planning and teaching, especially if they are non-dancers (Griss, 1994). When discussing the topic of kinesthetic learning and the use of dance in the delivery of curriculum, several teachers at my school expressed feeling uncomfortable with the idea of teaching creative movement and the lack of professional development opportunities to explore the use of creative movement in the classroom. Of Gardner’s nine intelligences, kinesthetic intelligence remains one of the most difficult for educators to incorporate into their own teaching practice (Skoning, 2010). According to Manske (2006), teachers remain focused on verbal/linguistic and logical/mathematical intelligences and
cater to auditory and visual learners, using inadequate methods to teach children with a variety of challenges.

Teachers need opportunities to collaborate with their peers. According to Ralph Brockett (2008), the most successful adult learning takes place in a collaborative setting. Providing an environment that allows for these teachers, who share similar experiences, to brainstorm and problem solve not only creates solutions, but it also builds a community atmosphere of trust and appreciation. By providing dance/creative movement workshops and opportunities for primary teachers to share and collaborate, the peer learning can continue after the professional development activities are over.

According to Ball and Cohen (1996,) teachers who get help from colleagues who are more expert than they are may also gain important new information from those interactions that extends what they learn from formal professional development experiences. Having multiple participants in professional development from a single school helps to build these kinds of trust and support relationships (Riel, Frank & Krause, in press).

In relation to the arts, many preservice teachers enter with a very limited background in formal dance, drama, music and visual arts education, as well as negative attitudes in regard to arts education (Jacobs 2008; Russell-Bowie 2010). This is often a result of inadequate instruction in their primary school years, as well as a lack of role models, resources or positive experiences in the arts (Gilbert 2005; Mills 1989). Although teachers generally feel positive about having dance in the classroom, when interviewing Canadian elementary school teachers, MacDonald (1991) found that none had ever taught dance, although all indicated that dance should be included in the school curriculum. It was found that generalist teachers avoided teaching dance because of their lack of confidence, motivation, knowledge, resources and lesson ideas as well as
little understanding of what teaching dance would entail (Baum, Owen, and Oreck 1997; Garvis 2009; MacDonald, McKea 1998; Oreck 2004).

As teachers gain more confidence in using creative movement in their classrooms, this unique form of teaching may carry over to other areas of the curriculum, allowing all learners to grasp new concepts using their senses (Skoning, 2010). Tortora (2006) stated that nonverbal expressive methods are an especially effective way to support both social and emotional relationships for children with atypical development.

**Overview of Study**

Dance is a valuable and unique form of kinesthetic learning that can be incorporated into classrooms to reach the needs of all learners, and for students with challenges. A collaborative action study can provide general education teachers with support, experience and strategies for supporting students with creative movement.

This study explored the following research questions: What strategies used in professional development build confidence and competence in primary teachers to integrate dance in their teaching practice? How can collaboration build knowledge, skills and comfort to support primary teachers to incorporate more creative movement in their planning and teaching?

The research method utilized in this study is collaborative action research. Atweh and Kemmis (1998) stated that collaborative action research is an action relationship, which employs a recursive spiral of cycles that focuses on planning, acting, observing, reflecting, re-planning, and re-enacting all within the context of human relationships. Lassonde and Israel (2009) asserted that teacher research is becoming a popular means for educators to improve classroom instruction and students’ learning. “Inviting peers to learn over our shoulders is the most powerful and rewarding part of collaborative action research” (Sagor, 1993, p. 13).
Through collaborative action research, primary teachers had opportunities to gain knowledge and confidence in order to set up experiences, ask questions and to support students to demonstrate a deeper understanding of concepts through music and creative movement, and to put these new skills and knowledge into practice. According to Stringer (1996), the ultimate aim of collaborative action research is to develop sophisticated understanding of the problems, issues and practices of teachers in authentic settings, bridging the theory–practice gap.

By implementing effective teaching strategies and the utilization of creative movement, primary teachers had opportunities to help young students develop their social and emotional learning in a non-traditional approach. According to Gersten and Dimino (2001) traditional approaches for improving teachers’ use of effective practices, such as one-time in-service presentations have not sufficiently addressed the problem of educators implementing new teaching strategies with fidelity and on a regular basis. Collaborative action in this study was found to support teachers’ professional growth while providing opportunities to self-reflect, resulting in teacher participants’ increased confidence in integrating dance movement in their own teaching practices.

McNiff (1996) stated that at the heart of teacher action research or collaborative action research between academics and teachers is a commitment to educational improvement. This study provides insights about teacher attitudes and practices with creative dance movement, and about the value of on-going, collaborative professional development and practice in teaching/methods and new teaching methods/strategies to enhance primary teachers’ own practices. Through professional development workshops, teachers had the opportunity to collaborate, share ideas and explore creative movement techniques to enrich their teaching practice at the primary level. By allowing them to explore their own learning through music and
movement, the educators had opportunities to expand their teaching practice and the potential for deeper knowledge discovery through the body and dance. According to Zededa (2012), teachers want opportunities to learn alongside each other and crave conversations and opportunities to engage in practices that will give them more data to make informed decisions about the work they are doing. Inquiry, reflection, and conversations need to be the staples of professional learning opportunities for teachers (Zededa, 2012).

I believe that this study on creative movements enhanced teaching practices of educators at the primary level, with the potential to benefit students now and in the future by allowing them to explore their own learning through music and movement, with the potential for deeper knowledge discovery through the body and dance. My hope is that the knowledge created in this study will offer unique and useful teaching strategies and techniques for implementing movements with a focus on improving the social and learning needs of students in today’s classroom. The research is important in the provision and facilitation of professional development as it provides insights into primary educators’ needs for professional learning and their thoughts on which strategies make professional development successful.

The experiences of teachers in this collaborative action study provide a single case experience of possibilities. As qualitative research, the findings are not generalizable, but they may be transferable to other teachers with similar questions, or confirmable in similar situations.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter I review the literature in the areas of adult learning, professional development, collaborative action research, and arts education, specifically dance/creative movement in primary school context. This is in direct response to the questions guiding this research study: What strategies used in professional development build confidence and competence in primary teachers to integrate dance in their teaching practice? How can collaboration build knowledge, skills and comfort to support primary teachers to incorporate more creative movement in their planning and teaching in an inclusive classroom?

Topics from the literature can be categorized into two major sections. The first section reviews the literature on adult learning and professional development and the second section reviews arts education and the benefits of integrating creative movement in today’s classroom. Finally, I consider the barriers to dance/creative movements as a form of art integration.

Adult Learning

Andragogy, is the term used to refer to the art and science of helping adults learn. Andragogy has become popular among educators and researchers in many countries, and its research body has been growing (Savicevic, 1991). According to Savicevic, andragogy was adopted by at least ten European countries such as Germany, England, Poland, France, Finland, Netherlands, Czechoslovakia, Russia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia. There are many descriptions of the adult learner. Malcolm Knowles’s description of andragogy is well known. He emphasized that adults come with a variety of experiences that are crucial to their learning; through those experiences, they come with predefined ideas for what they need to learn (Merriam & Brockett, 2007). Merriam summarized Knowles’s five assumptions of the adult learner: as someone who; (1) has an independent self-concept and who can direct his or her own learning, (2) has accumulated a reservoir of life experiences that is a rich resource for learning, (3) has learning
needs closely related to changing social roles, (4) is problem-centered and interested in immediate application of knowledge, and (5) is motivated to learn by internal rather than external factors (2001). Knowles provided many useful approaches for improving educational methodology, especially for understanding and improving teaching and learning practices in vocational education and training and in higher education. This section will review concepts for understanding adult learning followed by key elements as evident in the science and practice of teaching adults.

In 1984, Knowles suggested four principles that are applied to adult learning:

1. Adults need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction.
2. Experience (including mistakes) provides the basis for the learning activities.
3. Adults are most interested in learning subjects that have immediate relevance and impact to their job or personal life.
4. Adult learning is problem-centered rather than content-oriented (Kearsley, 2010).

Educators teaching adult learners need to know the concepts of the adult learning theory and be able to incorporate them into their teaching style. According to Brockett (2008), the same practices that work in a traditional educational setting do not always work for a group of adults, especially a group of well educated, independent teachers. Brockett (2008) stated that adult educators should strive to be viewed not as the instructor, but rather work to serve as a facilitator. The facilitator can then help the adult learner to set and achieve goals and guide them in choosing the subjects and courses needed to fulfill these goals. They need to keep in mind that the adult learner needs to know why the course is important to their learning and life situation. The adult learner brings into the continuing educational arena a rich array of experiences that will affect the learning styles and assimilation of knowledge.
Andragogy can improve communication between teacher participants and facilitator in a collaborative setting. According to Sheridan (2011), Andragogy has served the community of educators of adults well. It is defined as a mutually respectful, informal, collaborative style of teacher/student relationship which uses experiential techniques involving the user. Andragogy and collaboration stresses the importance of common inquiry in learning and is rooted in the belief that knowledge is inherently social in nature (Brockett, 2008). As a result, the principles of andragogy can help to promote trust between the teacher participants and facilitator in this CARS and enhance self-awareness in adult learners.

Formal Adult Learning

According to Marsick and Watkins (1990), formal adult learning is typically institutionally sponsored, classroom-based, and highly structured. This type of adult learning can be defined as “taking place in an organized structured setting. It is clearly identifiable as a learning activity” (OECD, 2003, p. 25). Eraut (2000) proposed that formal learning could be characterized as: a prescribed learning framework; an organized learning event or package; the presence of a designed teacher or trainer; the award of a qualification or credit and the external specification of outcomes. Formal learning for teachers may include the learning which takes place through accredited courses, such as educational programs. It may also include professional development which recognizes a teacher’s attendance in the form of certification. Professional development may include workshops conferences and online learning courses. It may difficult for teachers to undergo extra formal training as their workload is heavy and coursework would have to be completed in their own free time. Edwards, Sieminski and Zeldin (1993) stated that “unless adults can be convinced that learning will give them something back, given that learning can be very demanding in time and effort, they will probably not invest in education or training (p. 18).
Informal Adult Learning

Informal adult learning, a category that includes incidental learning, may occur in institutions, but it is not typically classroom-based or highly structured, and control of learning rests primarily in the hands of the learner (Marsick & Watkins, 1990). Livingstone (2001) stated that informal adult learning “is any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs without the presence of externally imposed curricular criteria” (p.5). This type of learning “includes intentional job-specific and general employment-related learning done on your own, collective learning with colleagues of other employment-related knowledge and skills and tacit learning by doing” (Livingstone, 2001, p. 4). Livingstone (2001) stated that “self-directed or collective informal learning is undertaken alone, and is distinguished from formal learning or training only by the presence of some form of institutionally recognized instructor” (p. 5). The author suggested that this type of informal adult learning has tended to be ignored “or devalued by dominant authorities and researchers either because they are more difficult to measure and certify or because they are grounded in experiential knowledge which is more relevant to subordinate social groups” (Livingstone, 1998, p. 5). Beckett and Hager’s theory of “workplace knowledge” is also supported by Tennant (2000) who described it as knowledge which is generated through workplace experience. Tennant (2000) identified that working life produces valuable knowledge and skill. Professional development learning experiences are often characterized by this type of learning. Informal learning opportunities in school may not result in an institutionally recognized certificate but workshops may enhance a teacher’s skill-base by learning new strategies that can enhance their pedagogy. It is therefore evident that both formal and informal learning opportunities are used in the professional development of teachers. The
powerful learning that occurs every day in numerous situations and through social interactions among teachers is an important part of expanding teacher practice.

**Knowledge and Learning**

As stated by Schommer (1998) “epistemological beliefs are framed around the nature of knowledge and learning but not in a strict philosophical sense” (p. 129). Schommer (1998) hypothesized five epistemological beliefs, including:

1. The source of the knowledge - ranging from knowledge being handed down by authority to knowledge acquired through reason and evidence;
2. Organization or structure of knowledge - ranging from knowledge organized as isolated pieces to knowledge organized as highly interrelated concepts;
3. Stability of knowledge - ranging from learning as unchanging to knowledge as evolving;
4. Speed of learning - ranging from learning as quick or not at all to learning as gradual;
5. Control of learning - ranging from the ability to learn being inherited and unchangeable to the ability to learn as improvable over time (Schommer, 1998).

According to Schommer (1998) each of these aspects has substantial control over an individual adult learner. This is evident in teacher professional development through the various ways teachers approach learning activities during workshops or conferences. A teacher who believes in knowledge as interrelated networks may be able to apply knowledge and integrate and elaborate on key concepts (Schommer, 1998). On the contrary, if a teacher believes that learning occurs in isolated sections, their understanding of “knowing” may be limited to the ability to recall and memorize basic facts. Research also indicates that a “belief in the control of
learning is likely to influence individuals’ interpretation of mistakes and their persistence in the face of difficulty while learning and problem solving” (Schommer, 1998, p. 134).

In research conducted by MacDonald (2001), many of the teachers revealed that they were nervous about attending the (dance) workshops and commented that they had preconceived notions about what they would be like. Despite this, the teachers reported changes in their practices after the workshop series, specifically stating that they had gained more confidence in this art form as a result of the workshop (MacDonald, 2001). “Indeed, their preconceived notions of what creative dance was and what the workshop would entail, created feelings of anxiety and stress before the workshop series itself” (MacDonald, 2001, p. 9). Establishing the prior knowledge of teachers who will be participating in the research and their epistemological beliefs may help to guide professional development and address adult learners’ beliefs in knowledge and learning.

Communities of Practice

Many educational theorists have promoted learning as participation (e.g., Lave and Wenger, 1991, Schon, 1983, Vygotsky, 1978) and communities of practice as an important aspect of adult learning theory. Communities of practice are defined as “relatively tight-knit groups of people who know each other and work together directly” (Ingram & Goody, 2002, p. 348). The learning that occurs is a social process where the conversations and tasks allow teachers to discuss real world applications of the knowledge from a variety of perspectives and opinions.

Authentic learning is embedded in the rich contexts of practice enabling learners to gain implicit and explicit knowledge. Problems are faced in the context of the classroom and a
demand for the teacher (as a learner about teaching) to solve the problem. The performance of
the teacher is based on finding successful solutions (Ingram & Goody, 2002, p. 350).

According to researchers, Ingram and Goody (2002) “studies seeking to understand the
different contexts and adaptations to change within educational improvement settings have found
that supportive professional communities within the institution provided an organizational
context for teachers that made continuous learning possible” (p. 348). These studies have
demonstrated a need for “collaborative structures to reduce the isolation felt by teachers in
contexts of rapid change and to provide a major channel for involving teachers in improving
their practice” (Ingram & Goody, 2002, p. 348).

Quennerstedt and Maiorsdotter (2017) observed that in these situations learning is
assumed to be social and situated, often occurring in informal contexts such as communities
through interaction, communication, taking part, and gaining access to different contexts. In
recent literature, communities of practice represent a promising theme in the professional
stated that it is widely accepted that being part of a community, network, or team offers one of
the most powerful modes of professional development; suggesting that learning between
members is even more powerful than individual learning (Barak, 2010). Participation within a
community provides a space for authentic conversations, where members find reinforcement in
and challenge each other’s experiences and stories (Gallagher, 2011). Further, knowledge
creation is social, produced through meaningful dialogue and conversations that occur within
communities (Barak et al., 2010). Knowledge creation, therefore, is a non-linear process where,
“new ideas and innovations emerge between rather than within people” (Paavola, Lipponen &
Communities of practice serve multiple purposes including professional learning, increased research productivity, enhanced instruction, and promotion of school improvement (MacPhail, 2014). They “seek to break down walls of solo practice” (Byrk, 2016, p. 469), and create spaces where faculty learn from and with each other, promoting professional growth (Hadar & Brody, 2010). This has direct relevance to teachers as educational settings can clearly be identified as communities of practice. Identifying common goals for learning is essential to ensure all teachers understand the purpose of the learning they are engaged in. Angelo (1999) stated that since goals powerfully motivate and direct our behaviour, developing a set of shared learning goals is a logical next step in building a productive learning community. The teachers in this CAR study share the goal of learning about the integration of creative movement into their own teaching practice.

**Situated Learning**

Situated learning is another important aspect of adult learning. In contrast with most classroom learning activities that involve abstract knowledge which is out of context, Lave (1990) argued that learning is situated; that is, as it normally occurs, learning is embedded within activity, context and culture. Social interaction and collaboration are essential components of situated learning — learners become involved in a “community of practice” which embodies certain beliefs and behaviours to be acquired (Pitri, 2004). According to Pitri (2004), “To situate learning means to place thought and action in a specific place and time; to involve other learners, the environment, and activities to create meaning; and to locate in a particular setting the thinking and doing processes used by experts to accomplish knowledge and skill tasks” (p. 2). This concept is embedded in constructivism and in this approach, “knowledge and skills are learned in contexts that reflect how knowledge is obtained and applied in everyday situations”
DANCE MOVEMENT AS INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE

(Pitri, 2004, p.2). The role of the facilitator during situated learning is therefore “to facilitate social interaction, purposeful discussions, constructive conflicts and to offer environmental stimuli to provoke participants’ investigations” (Pitri, 2004, p. 4). This statement is supported by Putnam and Borko (2000):

“The situative perspective helps us see that much of what we do and think is intertwined with the particular contexts in which we act. The classroom is a powerful environment for shaping and constraining how practicing teachers think and act. Many of their patterns of thought and action have become automatic, resistant to reflection or change. Engaging learning experiences away from this setting may be necessary to help teachers “break set” - to experience things in new ways (Putnam & Borko, 2000, p. 321).

A variety of strategies are needed to help teachers “break set.” This suggests that learning should be transferable to new settings, allowing teachers to apply strategies learnt. Lunce (2006) defined situated learning as an approach to instruction whereby students use the process of learning through real-life environments, engaging in practical implementation of the course content. The model also emphasizes 21st century skills such as collaboration, teamwork, leadership, reflection, critical thinking, and authentic application of concepts (Meyers, 1999).

For adult learners, especially those at the graduate level, they are most successful when given opportunities to apply their knowledge to actual situations (Canipe & Decker, 2004). Lave and Wenger (1991) stated that situated learning has the potential advantage of (a) placing learners in realistic settings where socially acquired ways of knowing are often valued, (b) increasing the likelihood of application within similar contexts, and (c) strategically applying the learner’s prior knowledge on a given subject. Professional growth can be pervasive when learning is viewed as a collective enterprise, where teachers share successful experiences.
The Reflective Practitioner

In 1987, Donald Schon introduced the concept of reflective practice as a critical process in refining one’s craft in a specific discipline. As defined by Schon (1996), reflective practice involves thoughtfully considering one’s own experiences in applying knowledge to practice while being coached by professionals in the discipline. Schon (1996) described reflective practice as “a dialogue of thinking and doing through which I become more skillful; (p. 31).

Osterman and Kottkamp (1993) viewed reflective practice “as a means by which practitioners can develop a greater level of self-awareness about the nature and impact of their performance’ (p. 19.

Research conducted by Kinsella (2001) outlined six considerations as a way to think and begin developing reflective practices. These six considerations can be applied in other contexts, including education. The six considerations from Kinsella (2001) include:

1. Learning from our experiences;
2. Acknowledging that there are many ways of knowing;
3. Acknowledging that every individual is situated within unique cultural, social, economic, political and personal contexts;
4. Exploring assumptions in part of reflecting on practice;
5. Understanding different theories of practice.
6. Acknowledging praxis as the place where reflection and action meet within the learner.

These six principles of reflective practice could be applied to the professional development of teachers. By involving teachers in professional development that explores new ways of teaching and learning, educators may be able to apply the six principles to their own
practice, which in turn may enhance staff relationships and teacher-student relationships. Teachers do not often have an opportunity to reflect on their practice. However, using this as a basis for professional development may help to increase teacher understanding and encourage teachers to move towards becoming reflective practitioners. Brookfield believed that critically reflective teaching is a continual process in which teachers question and reflect on what they do, why they do it, what works, and why they believe it is important (Brookfield, 1990).

**Influences of Adult Learners’ Participation**

There are many elements that need to be considered for adult learners, or teachers. Adult learners need to feel that the learning will prove beneficial for their teaching practice if they are to participate and engage in the learning process (Boshier, 1971). Evans (2003) stated that “motivation is the key to all learning” (Evan, 2003, p. 1).

According to Kaser (2004), training and learning should be fun and recognize the prior experience of the learner. Optimal conditions for the transmission of knowledge should be utilized, using face-to-face or communication technologies to enhance delivery and reasonable objectives which are achievable in terms of basic skills should be made clear (OECD, 2003, Kidd, 1997). Edwards, Sieminski and Zeldin (1993) identified the following motivators for adult learners including: desire for knowledge; to meet personal/self-development goals; to meet occupational goals; to meet social community goals; to comply with external expectations/formal requirements/urging of others; to find activity, escape, diversion, stimulation; to meet economic need; to fulfill family responsibilities and launching/role development. Professional development facilitators must therefore ensure they identify the motivation for undertaking learning by participants.
Malcolm Knowles identified key considerations in planning professional adult development which included providing opportunities for adult learners to plan and conduct their own learning experiences and apply what they have learnt (Knowles, 1984; Knowles, 1986; Orlich, 1989, Marczely, 1996). This statement is supported by Wollman-Bonilla (1991) who stated “purpose, ownership, risk-taking, social interaction, and empowerment are interdependent and are all central to successful professional development” (p. 114). “When teachers see themselves primarily as learners, and not simply as teachers, they tend to create the intellectual environment, if not the physical environment, necessary for learning” (Hendricks-Lee, 1995, p. 289). Hutchens (1998) observed that teachers learn best when they are involved as active participants in the professional development experience. Wollman-Bonilla (1991) discussed the need for professional development to recognize the prior learning of participants, therefore respecting what teachers already know and believe.

Teachers develop ownership of new ideas when they connect these ideas to what they know, placing them within the context of their own experience. Further, when teachers are in control of how and when changes are implemented in their classrooms, they develop ownership of the change process itself. Such ownership must exist if changes are to be lasting (Wollman-Bonilla, 1991, p. 115).

**Components of Effective Professional Development**

Trotter (2006) stated that in professional development, teachers’ experiences within the classroom must be respected and utilized, and their practical knowledge cannot be ignored. Schon (1994) describes this as a “knowing-in-practice.” In a study conducted by Oji (2007) looking at adult learning as it applied to teacher professional development, the research found that teachers want to problem-solve with their colleagues and learn things that are applicable to
practices in their classrooms. “Through these interactive situations, adults were able to reflect, grow, and adapt throughout their teaching careers” (Trotter, 2006, p. 12).

According to Kubitskey (2006), teachers need professional development that is interactive with their teaching practice, allowing for multiple cycles of presentation and assimilation of, and reflection on, knowledge. The purpose and benefit for a specific professional development should be made clear and concrete (Trotter, 2006). Because of the internal motivation for learning and resistance attributed to irrelevant topics (Brookfield, 1990), teachers need to see the application for their practice in order to be active participants. The experiential knowledge and insight that comes from teachers of all experience levels can prove to be exceptionally beneficial and educational for professional development. Research conducted by Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman and Yoon (2001), examined the effects of professional development on improving classroom teaching practice. Drawing on longitudinal data from approximately 300 teachers over a three year period, the report discussed the impact of the types of professional development activities supported by the Eisenhower Professional Development Program in the United States. Results indicated that professional development focused on specific, higher order teaching strategies increased teachers' uses of these strategies in the classroom. This effect was even stronger when the professional development activity was a reform type (e.g., teacher network or study group) rather than a traditional workshop or conference; provided opportunities for active learning; was coherent or consistent with teachers' goals and other activities; and involved the participation of teachers from the same subject, grade, or school. According to DuFour (2004), “the best staff development happens in the workplace in a collaborative setting” (p. 63).
Supporting the notion that this would be an effective strategy for teacher learning is a large body of theory and research focused on the importance of teachers’ professional communities (Desimone, 2002). Bryk and Schneider (2002) research suggested that educators that make extensive use of teacher collaboration are particularly successful in promoting implementation. The peer learning can continue after the professional development activities are over. Research conducted by Frank, Zhao and Borman (2004) concluded that efforts to improve teaching quality through collaboration builds relational trust in school buildings, allows teachers more latitude and discretion in making difficult decisions, creates clearer understandings of role obligations and sustains commitment to improving student outcomes. For “growth and improvement of any educational institution, professional development becomes a milestone in teachers’ continuum of life-long learning and career progression” (Hien, 2008, p. 32).

In a case study conducted by Strahan (2003), the researcher examined an elementary school where all of the teachers participated in efforts to improve student achievement in reading. This case study provided interview data from the principal regarding the initially negative attitudes of the teachers toward student learning. As a part of the change process teachers worked collaboratively to develop a shared school mission around four guiding values that included integrity, respect, discipline, and excellence. The author concluded that this led to the development of stronger instructional norms and made the teachers receptive to working with a curriculum facilitator in the areas of changing practices for guided reading, writing, and self-selected reading.

Researchers Goddard, Goddard and Tschannen-Moran (2007) reviewed literature and empirically tested the relationship between a theoretically driven measure of teacher collaboration for school improvement and student achievement. The data for this study was
drawn from students and teachers in a large urban school district located in the mid-western United States. The population for this study came from the elementary schools in one large mid-western school district. Survey data were drawn from a sample of 47 elementary schools with 452 teachers and 2,536 fourth-grade students. Hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) was the primary analytic method. Survey data were collected approximately 2 months before students took the mandatory state assessments, which provided the scale scores that served as dependent variables in this research. Naturally occurring differences in teachers’ levels of collaboration were measured, and statistical controls for school social context were employed. At the student level, the study employed controls for children’s social and academic backgrounds. Data were obtained from teachers and students in the sampled schools. Teacher data were obtained via a survey assessing teacher collaboration. Student data were obtained from the central administrative office of the school district for all students who attended sampled schools during the year in which we surveyed teachers. The results of HLM analyses indicated that fourth-grade students had higher achievement in mathematics and reading when they attended schools characterized by higher levels of teacher collaboration for school improvement. The authors suggested that the results provide preliminary support for efforts to improve student achievement by providing teachers with opportunities to collaborate on issues related to curriculum, instruction, and professional development.

Lieberman (1995) characterized effective professional development as that which is grounded in inquiry, reflection, and participant-driven experimentation, naming the role of teacher-researcher as an appropriate means. According to Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995), professional development today should provide “occasions for teachers to reflect critically on their practice and to fashion new knowledge and beliefs about content, pedagogy
and learners” (p. 597). Teachers must have opportunities to develop themselves as active learners within the classroom, and teacher educators have the responsibility to teach preservice teachers the skills and processes necessary to facilitate continual renewal and growth in professional knowledge, attitudes, and identity (Holmes Group, 1990). Cochran-Smith (1991) recommended that the internship should be arranged so students, in collaboration with experienced teachers, can learn to “teach against the grain.” “Collaborative resonance” is the phrase she used to describe programs that foster critical inquiry within a culture of collaboration so that “novices and experienced professionals alike work to learn from, interpret, and ultimately alter day-to-day life of schools” (p. 284). Cochran-Smith (1991) concluded that “the only way for beginners to learn to be both educators and activists is to struggle over time in the company of experienced teachers who are themselves committed to collaboration and reform in their own classrooms” (p. 307).

**Collaborative Action Research**

Atweh and Kemmis (1998) stated that collaborative action research is an action relationship, which employs a recursive spiral of cycles that focuses on planning, acting, observing, reflecting, re-planning, and re-enacting all within the context of human relationships. Lassonde and Israel (2009) asserted that teacher research is becoming a popular means for educators to improve classroom instruction and students’ learning. According to Stringer (1996), the ultimate aim of collaborative action research is to develop sophisticated understanding of the problems, issues and practices of teachers in authentic settings, bridging the theory–practice gap. Educational researchers have found that the action research process effectively promotes skills of inquiry, reflection, problem solving, and action (Burnaford, 1999). Additionally, good teachers value the respect of their colleagues, utilizing those supports and resources (Collinson & Sherrill,
"Every teacher… needs to feel like they are growing, needs to feel the excitement of new possibilities" (Riley & Roach, 2006). Ralph Brockett (2008) identified that most successful adult learning takes place in a collaborative setting.

Providing an environment that allows for teachers, who share similar experiences, to brainstorm and problem solve not only creates solutions, but it also builds a community atmosphere of trust and appreciation. The peer learning can continue after the professional development activities are over.

Educational researchers claim that teachers who conduct action research are better informed about their field (Bennett, 1993) and, begin to understand themselves better as teachers. Other studies indicate that action research also promotes continuous learning (Boyer, 1990; Rock, 1997), revitalizes teachers’ practice, and motivates teachers by improving their self-confidence as professionals (Lomax, 1995; Rock, 1997).

Collaborative action research is “user friendly” in that the language involved makes sense to teachers. This research method will be highly personalized, and therefore is capable of contextualizing professional development to make it truly meaningful to its participants.

Cochran-Smith (1991) stated that this collective approach to the improvement of practice is the foundation of a creative culture of “shared expertise.” According to Ball and Cohen, (1996), teachers who get help from colleagues who are more expert than they are may also gain important new information from those interactions that extends what they learn from formal professional development experiences. Having multiple participants in professional development from a single school helps to build these kinds of trust and support relationships (Penuel, Riel, Frank & Krause, 2001).

**Arts Education**
In the years between 1950 and 1980, arts education proceeded under the mantle of the aesthetic education movement (Reimer, 1970). According to Reimer (1970), during this period, arts education was justified by solely aesthetic or intrinsic art and not, for enhancing self-esteem or improve reading skills. To conduct research on the non-arts effects of arts education was "out of vogue at best, out of touch at worst" (Cutietta, Hamann, & Walker, 1995, p. 5). This belief led to little research on the non-arts outcomes of arts education in North America in those decades. In the early 1970s, Eisner (1974) began calling for the evaluation of the educational impact of arts programs. He suggested that special arts programs in schools should be evaluated "because it is important to know what educational impact arts initiatives have, and...when public money funds programs, there is an obligation to determine...whether the programs are effective" (p. 21). Consequently, in the following decades many arts programs were evaluated, and there is now a growing body of evidence showing that arts education affects other aspects of life and learning beyond the value of the arts experiences themselves (Bamford, 2006).

Since arts experiences offer other modes and ways of experiencing and learning, children have opportunities to think and feel as they explore, problem solve, express, interpret, and evaluate the process and the results (Skoning, 2008). According to Booth and Hachiya (2004), “to watch a child completely engaged in an arts experience is to recognize that the brain is on, driven by the aesthetic and emotional imperative to make meaning, to say something, to represent what matters” (p. 15). The transfer of learning and cognition between the arts and traditional academic subjects is mutual: learning from each discipline area complements and advances learning in the other (Burton, Horowitz & Abeles, 1999). By introducing learning concepts through dance and movement, students of all abilities can improve their bodily, cognitive, social functions and academic outcomes (Skoning, 2010).
There are many studies that explore the effectiveness and value of dance/creative movement programs as an embodiment approach to improving social and emotional learning, physical well-being and the development of empathy in students. In today’s inclusive classrooms, teachers need to develop teaching strategies to reach the needs of all learners in the classroom. Koch, Mehl, Sobanski, Sieber and Fuchs (2015) hypothesized that dance movement would improve psychological well-being, body awareness, empathy and social competence of individuals with ASD. The hypotheses are similar to the research questions outlined in the article, “Dance/Movement Therapy as an Alternative Treatment for Young Boys Diagnosed as ADHD.” Grönlund, Renck and Weibull (2005) surmised that dance/movement activities would improve the motor function and reduce behavioural and emotional symptoms of boys with ADHD. Koshland, Wilson and Wittaker (2004) hypothesized that dance movement would have a positive effect on how children conducted themselves socially and a decrease in aggressive incidents post dance sessions would be evident.

Mixed research methods were used in the studies to collect and interpret data. Quantitative research methods used in the research conducted by Grönlund, Renck and Weibull (2005) included: an original self-designed socio-demographic questionnaire, the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), a self-administered behavioural scale (parent version) and the Movement ABC Motor Test. Qualitative research methods to collect data included the dance instructors’ participant observations, videotapes of the dance/movement sessions, and interviews with the parents. These qualitative research methods were similar to methods used to collect data in the study by Koch et al., (2015). A mixed methods approach was used to study the influence of dance movement on young adults with ASD in the research study by Koshland, Wilson and Wittaker (2004). Quantitative methods used included ANOVAs, questionnaires and self-report
scales. Qualitative research methods used to collect data included videotapes of dance sessions and the researchers’ participant observations which were similar to methods used in the former research studies.

In the research study conducted by Koch et al. (2015), young adult participants were recruited at hospitals, mental health clinics and rehabilitation institutions through posters outlining the purpose of the study. The young participants were matched by sex, age and symptoms severity of ASD. The participants in the research study by Grönlund, Renck and Weibull (2005) were two young boys diagnosed with ADHD. They were recruited by their doctors and parental consent was given to the researchers, allowing the boys to participate in the study. In the third research study by Koch et al. (2005), the participants were of similar ages to those taking part in the study by Grönlund, Renck and Weibull (2005). For this research study consent was gathered from parents, guardians, and all other procedural formats were arranged with the principal and school district administration once the school and five participating classrooms were identified. The five classrooms included: two first grade classes, one second grade class, and two third grade classes. A total of fifty-four children participated in the study.

When evaluating the main results, the researchers identified areas of improvement and areas that showed little change. Grönlund, Renck and Weibull (2005) stated that the quantitative data collected showed a positive change after dance movement sessions. A positive effect on motor function was evident with both boys. However, the authors’ findings showed that dance movement only partially reduced their behavioural and emotional symptoms. Koshland, Wilson and Wittaker (2004) identified positive results from the research study. Qualitative process data confirmed results indicating that dance movement participants were increasingly aware of the self–other distinction and increasingly enjoyed participation in the dance sessions. The study
results suggested that dance movement classes can be effective and feasible for the treatment of individuals with ASD. Results summarized by Koch et al., (2015) showed that the PEACE program was effective in reducing aggressive behaviours but there was not a significant increase in pro-social behaviours. The classrooms that did not participate in the DMT program had a higher rate of aggressive situations reported compared to the participating classrooms.

The authors concluded that more research on this topic in the future could include a larger participant pool and data and analysis over a longer period of time. Grönlund, Renck, and Weibull (2005) stated a challenge may be that ADHD subjects have life-long difficulties but dance/movement can only reduce and relieve symptoms temporarily. Children with ADHD benefit the most, more than any other disorder, from regular exercise, because movement exercises increase dopamine in the human brain, just like the stimulus does (Barkley, 2004). A strength noted by Koch et al., (2015) was a suggestion that parts of the results were in line with findings of previous studies showing that dance movement activities were useful for improving diverse bodily, cognitive and social functions in ASD (e.g. Hartshorn et al, 2001: Weber, 1999).

The knowledge created through the research studies increases the understanding of the effectiveness of dance/creative movement programs in social, emotional and physical development of individuals with special needs. Suggestions made in each study point to movement and dance as an effective approach to individuals with ADHD, ASD and aggressive behaviour in the improvement of their social skills, emotional and physical development, empathy and psychological well-being. Limitations from each study focused on the need for improved study design and bigger samples.

Benefits of Dance/Creative Movement
More attention on movement education needs to be made to create more opportunities for children to move in the classroom (Burrill, 2011). Creative movement is an innate intelligence that is not being fully utilized (Burrill, 2011). Teachers need to expand their teaching practice to include dance/creative movement in order to encourage students to engage in spontaneous and improvised movement and with time, they will be able to take in sensory information and make learning of it (Burrill, 2011). The following research highlights the positive outcomes of dance/creative movement in the development of the whole child.

**Movement and Brain Development**

The first evidence of a linkage between mind and body was scattered in various proposals over the past century (Schmahmann, 1997). Today, the evidence has become a groundswell, and most neuroscientists agree that movement and cognition are powerfully connected (Jensen, 2005). According to Middleton & Strict (1994) the part of the brain that processes movement is the same part of the brain that processes learning. “Learning, thought, creativity and intelligence are not processes of the brain alone, but of the whole body” (Hannaford, 2015). Movement affects the brain in many ways, and most of the brain is activated during physical activity such as dance (Jensen, 2005). According to Hannaford (1995), “The more closely we consider the elaborate interplay of brain and body, the more clearly one compelling theme emerges: movement is essential to learning. Movement awakens and activates many of our mental capacities. Movement integrates and anchors new information and experience into our neural networks” (p. 94). Cognitive learning is stimulated by dance. “It turns out that moving our muscles produces proteins that travel through the bloodstream and into the brain where they play pivotal roles in the mechanisms of our highest thought processes” (Becker 2016). Also from
a cognitive perspective, dance contributes to vocabulary development and aids with integration of the sensory-motor systems (American Journal of Dance Therapy, 2014).

Physical Development

The physical benefits of dance include increased balance, flexibility, muscular tone and strength, endurance and spatial awareness (Levy, 2017). Dance helps children to learn to control their own bodies, develop awareness of moving in space with other bodies and intrapersonal relationships begin to be developed (Dow, 2010). There are physical benefits of partaking in dance classes as a child. Through dance, children develop a greater range of movement and the ability to work within different spaces. They learn to interpret the effect their movement has on the world around them. Dancing also improves a child’s coordination, especially at a time when they are rapidly developing in an ever-changing and evolving environment (Dow, 2010). Good coordination is vital in developing skills learnt in other parts of life, such as learning to ride a bike and learning how to multitask successfully. According to Skoning (2008) dance and movement patterns develop kinesthetic memory, develops strength and endurance from an early age which creates a solid platform for the child’s physical development and level of fitness.

Social/Psychological Development

Dance is a form of expression and children have a natural inclination to express themselves through movement. According to Ridler (2004), dance can facilitate children in expressing inner emotions more effectively and support them in growing and evolving when they face adverse situations. According to Bender and Wall (1994), experience and research shows that promoting social and emotional development in children is the missing piece in efforts to reach an array of goals associated with improving schooling for all students. Vygotskian theoretical tradition (Vygotsky, 1930/1978) has been placed on the role of language in the
development of children's self-control (Bronson, 2000). According to Vygotsky’s social learning theory, children's behaviour is first regulated by the speech of caregivers but, after speech is internalized by children, they use language in the form of private speech or self-talk as a tool for guiding their own behaviour (Winsler, Diaz & Montero, 1997). Therefore dance, as another system of symbols and meanings, may also be used by children as a mechanism for attaining behavioural self-control, which in turn would lead to improved behaviour and social skills (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1992).

Socially, dance fosters the development of relationships (Behrends, Müller & Dziobek, 2012). Furthermore, they can develop relationships through creative self-expression that allows them to form their own identity (Simmerman, 2010). Dance allows for more instinctual and emotional expression that engages students in creative problem solving and complex social relating (Burrill, 2011). The increased awareness of, and respect for others that comes from dancing in groups, is thought to help children learn about personal space and social space and distance, both of which are important dimensions of effective social interaction (Stinson, 1998). Increased self-esteem might enable children to feel confident enough to make new friends or confront difficult social situations (Hanna, 1998).

Creative movement allows all children to participate because each child approaches movement in different ways (Dow, 2010). “Dance is important to incorporate into our inclusive classrooms if we want to meet the needs of more diverse groups of students” (Skoning, 2008, p. 9). When teachers provide a new methods of learning, students are able to interact with concepts in their own way. According to Skoning (2008), dance also facilitates an inclusive space because inappropriate behaviours decrease when all students have the ability to move during learning in the classroom environment.
Barriers to Creative Movement/ Art Integration in the Classroom

In a research study conducted by Avramidis, Bayliss, and Burden (2000), teachers identified class size, inadequate resources, and inadequate teacher preparation as factors that would affect their ability to incorporate creative movement strategies in their own practice and in their classroom. However, teachers that successfully incorporated dance/creative movement activities in their classroom had positive attitudes about inclusion and teachers who did not participate in inclusive teaching practices had negative feelings (Avramidis et al. 2000). As the pressure for higher test scores increases, teachers are encouraged more and more to use teaching approaches that include drill and repetition, and have no time or autonomy to use creative and student-centred pedagogies or to include the arts in their curriculum (Oerek, 2006). Upitis, Smithrim, Patteson and Meban (2001) stated that this type of teaching ignores the growing body of research which indicates that learning through the arts can be an effective method of increasing language and mathematics scores (Upitis et al., 2001) and that authentically integrating subjects across the curriculum can ensure children’s learning experiences are meaningful and effective (Anderson & Lawrence, 2001). Creative movement integration may carry a preconceived notion that it requires more planning than traditional pedagogy (Skoning, 2008). It may be misunderstood as additional work but in reality, it is simply a different type of work that involves trial and error to see what works best with students of varying abilities.

In many primary curricula, the arts key learning areas include music, dance, drama and visual arts. Within the arts, dance education has often been given the lowest priority. When not part of the arts, dance has been taught as part of physical education or music education, if at all (Gilbert 2005; MacDonald, Stodel, and Farres 2001). In research conducted on dance education, the results confirmed that although there are many benefits for children to be engaged in dance
education, dance was not often taught in the primary school ((Bergmann & Drewe, 1996; Courtney & Park, 1981).

Although teachers generally feel positive about having dance in the classroom, when interviewing Canadian elementary school teachers, MacDonald (1991) found that none had ever taught dance, although all indicated that dance should be included in the school curriculum. It was found that generalist teachers avoided teaching dance because of their lack of confidence, motivation, knowledge, resources and lesson ideas as well as little understanding of what teaching dance would entail (Baum, Owen, and Oreck 1997; Garvis 2009; MacDonald, Stodle, and Farres 2001; McKean 1998; Oreck 2004). Their lack of self-confidence is grounded in their perception of their own level of artistic ability and, once in the classroom, they have little time to remedy this situation (Welch, 1995, p. 1). This is supported by McKean (2001) who stated that the arts are often viewed as specialist areas, requiring skills which do not belong to the average teacher, therefore creating feelings of inadequacy and inaccessibility. Conway (2002) stated that, “with a growing research base suggesting the effective teaching requires competence both in knowledge of content and skills in discrete disciplines…and in teaching knowledge and skills….any one-size-fits-all approach (Conway, 2002, p. 10) will not work.

These teachers noted that it was “lack of confidence, the low priority given to creative dance in the curriculum, lack of time, and their own apathy” that prevented them from integrating creative dance into their teaching. Furthermore, lack of knowledge regarding how to teach creative movement and how to integrate it throughout the curriculum, along with not knowing the rationale for including it, contributed to teachers’ reluctance to teach creative dance. Teachers also expressed a need to have sufficient ideas, resources, and training in order to make this change and noted that this training would have to be
done in such a way to make them feel competent and confident teaching creative
creative movements in the classroom (MacDonald, 2001, p. 4 & 102).

It can be seen that developing competence and confidence in primary teachers is essential
to the successful integration of dance/creative movement in teachers’ own practice and in the
primary classroom. The professional development opportunities in this study will offer unique
and useful teaching strategies and techniques for teachers to expand their own teaching practice
with confidence.

Conclusion

In this literature review I provided an overview of the current research on adult learning
professional development and arts, specifically dance education in the primary classroom. The
literature review provides an overview of teaching the arts in primary grades and the associated
professional development implications. It has also provided an outline of the key characteristics
of effective adult learning and professional development that have formed the basis for the
strategies used in the action research cycles of this research study.

It is noted that the literature on creative dance/movement education is dated. Studies from
the 1990’s and early 2000’s were calling for more research on how to support teachers to
implement dance/movement based strategies at that time, but little research has taken place in the
last ten to twenty years. This emphasizes the need for further attention to this problem,
particularly in BC at this time, as teachers focus on personalizing learning in inclusive
classrooms.

The research questions aim to respond to this gap and provide insight into this area of
research through collaborative research action with educators in primary classrooms.
Collaboration provides teachers with a vehicle for sharing ideas, taking risks in the
classroom and reflecting critically on their classroom practices, all of which help to build a foundation for a common knowledge base and vision that are essential to successfully re-creating and adapting curriculum to include students with disabilities (Pugach & Warger, 1996). Moreover, many professionals view collaborative decision making and problem solving as necessary to create appropriate learning environments in which students with disabilities receive adequate resources and personnel support (Skrtic, 1991). When professionals work alone, they standardize their practices to fit an identified group of students (Skrtic, 1996) and may cease to question the viability of those practices (Hargreaves, 1992). Research has shown that a collaborative culture or community leads to higher levels of trust and respect among colleagues, improved professional satisfaction, improved instructional practices, better outcomes for all students, and school change that is maintained over time (Fisher & Frey, 2003; Friend & Cook, 2007). Thus, collaboration among school professionals is seen as the key ingredient of successful inclusion.

Dance integration leans away from formal structures in the education system. However, formal structure is not the only way to help children succeed. If teachers want to increase their students' involvement and engagement and success, and want to solve classroom-based problems, then teachers must investigate and determine what instructional changes need to take place in order to achieve those goals (Mitchell, Reilly & Logue, 2009).
Chapter 3: Research Methods

Introduction

In this chapter I describe the research methodology I used to conduct this research study. This study explored the following research questions; What strategies used in professional development build confidence and competence in primary teachers to integrate dance in their teaching practice? How can collaboration build knowledge, skills and comfort to support primary teachers to incorporate more creative movement in their planning and teaching? A review of the overall research approach is outlined, explaining the mixed methods approach to action research that was utilized. Following, participants and recruitment are presented with criteria created to guide this aspect of the methodology. I continue by expanding on procedures and data collection instruments. Subsequently, I explain procedures for data analysis as well as ethical considerations that are relevant to my research study. Methodological limitations and strengths are identified. In conclusion, the possible value/significance of the research findings are discussed.

Mixed Method Approach to Research

This study used a mixed method approach to its research design. Mixed methods research is formally defined as the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The goal of mixed methods research is not to replace either of these approaches but rather to draw from the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of both in single research studies and across studies (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The research approach for the most part was qualitative with a quantitative approach being used in questionnaires to obtain important background information from the teachers in planning workshops and the research process. For this reason, the qualitative research model is the focus
of this research study. In qualitative research, the intent is to explore human behaviours within the context of their natural occurrences (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Erickson, 1986). According to Jacob (1988) qualitative studies try to capture the perspectives that participants use as a basis for their actions in specific social settings. The perspectives or voices of participants ought to be prominent in any qualitative report (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Jacob, 1988).

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretative, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recording and memos to the self…. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin, 2000, p. 3).

This research study focused on teachers in their school setting. This research used the action research method allowing the researcher to study phenomena through action, in its location.

**Research Methodology-Action Research**

Action research has been established as an appropriate research model in the field of education as a powerful agent for change (Bourner & Flowers, 1999). The role which action learning and action research can play in both professional development and organizational change has been well documented in the literature (Zuber-Skerritt, 1991; 1992; 1993; 1996; Limerick, Passfield & Cunnington 1994; Bourner & Flowers, 1999). Action research involves "team research by practitioners into their own practice, rather than by specialists on their behalf"
(Zuber-Skerritt, 1991, p. 113). Action research allows the researcher to become actively involved in solving a problem.

**Historical Overview of Action Research**

More than half a century ago, Buckingham (1926) noted the value of teacher research:

The teacher has opportunities for research which, if seized, will not only powerfully and rapidly develop the technique of teaching but will also react to vitalize and dignify the work of the individual teacher (p. 4). Presently, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) define teacher research as the "systematic and intentional inquiry carried out by teachers." They draw a distinction between teacher research and research on teaching, pointing out that the later has been most often undertaken by the academic community, often with disregard to the interests or concerns of actual classroom teachers. Teacher research, on the other hand, is undertaken by teachers (Herr & Anderson, 2005).

**Definition of Action Research**

Various definitions of action research exist depending on the research paradigm being used. Herr and Anderson (2005) stated that, “Action research is oriented to some action or cycle of actions that organizational or community members have taken, or wish to take to address a particular problematic situation. The idea is that changes occur either within the setting and/or within the researchers themselves” (p. 3-4).

Rapoport (1970) viewed action research as a special type of applied research which involves participants experiencing problems directly in the search for a solution and also feeds social science with some theoretical pay-off. Action inquiry is often undertaken to improve social settings, as is evident in Bogdan and Biklen's (1982) definition: “Action research is simply a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to
improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of these practices, and the situations in which the practices are carried out” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 215).

Recently, the term collaborative action research has emerged to describe teams of teachers working together (Frankham and Howes 2006). However, there is more to collaborative action research than teachers working together – it is also understood as collaboration between teachers and researchers (Avgitidou 2009). Whitehead and McNiff (2006) described their researched understanding of the collaborative relationship as follows:

The relationship here was a democratic partnership, in which all participated in a dialogue of equals. The work of higher education personnel was also to study their practice, in collaboration with teachers who were studying theirs, so that all could learn and grow together (p. 21).

One approach to closing the gap between teaching and research includes direct involvement of teachers in research and direct involvement of researchers in teaching. Ross, Rolheiser, and Hogaboam-Gray (1999) defined collaborative action research as, ‘a systematic inquiry into teacher practice that is conducted by a team of teachers and university researchers working as equal partners’ (p. 256). In 2007, Capobianco described the following as the key characteristics of collaborative action research:

(1) Research problems are mutually defined by the teachers and the researcher;
(2) The teachers and researcher collaborate in investigating solutions to classroom-based problems; (3) Teachers develop research competencies associated with data collection, analysis, and interpretation, and the researcher (re) educates herself or himself in research methodologies that are most appropriate to the context; (4) The researcher and teachers share and shape their
ongoing, personal, and critical reflections as an integral part of the research process; (5) Results from the collaborative action research contribute to the collective knowledge of teaching and learning and are shared with others with eye to improving education practices (p. 434).

The Action Research Model

Atweh and Kemmis (1998) stated that collaborative action research is an action relationship, which employs a recursive spiral of cycles that focuses on planning, acting, observing, reflecting, re-planning, and re-enacting all within the context of human relationships. Lassonde and Israel (2009) asserted that teacher research is becoming a popular means for educators to improve classroom instruction and students’ learning. According to Stringer (1996) the ultimate aim of collaborative action research is to develop sophisticated understanding of the problems, issues and practices of teachers in authentic settings, bridging the theory–practice gap. Educational researchers have found that the action research process effectively promotes skills of inquiry, reflection, problem solving, and action (Burnaford, 1999).

Through cycles of collaborative action, teachers will gain knowledge on dance/creative movement, training and teacher support to implement unique teaching strategies to meet the needs of learners with special challenges in the classroom. Collaborative action research is "user friendly" in that the language involved makes sense to teachers. This research method will be highly personalized, and therefore is capable of contextualizing professional development to make it truly meaningful to its participants. Cochran-Smith (1991) stated that this collective approach to the improvement of practice is the foundation of a creative culture of “shared expertise.”

The Relevance of Action Research to this Study
I chose Action Research for my own research project after identifying numerous strengths with this methodology. This commitment to Action Research positioned me as a learner rather than an expert with participants. “Those committed to action research will willingly undertake continued professional development because they believe that there is a gap between the real world of their daily practices and their vision of an ideal one” (Mills, 2003, p. 5).

Action research is a reflective process, but is different from isolated, spontaneous reflection in that it is deliberately and systematically undertaken and generally requires that some form of evidence be presented to support assertions” (Herr & Anderson, 2005, p. 3). This research study required consistent reflection and the gathering of data to enhance my understanding and support my own learning. “The idea is that changes occur either within the setting and/or with the researchers themselves” (Herr & Anderson, 2005, p. 4). This was evident as change was evident in the participants’ competence and confidence levels. However, change was also evident in my knowledge, skills and understanding of successful professional development strategies.

**Teacher as Researcher**

My role as researcher was guided by my prior training and knowledge of dance/creative movement and the positive impact that movement has on all areas of a child’s development. The positive learning outcomes that creative movement activities had on my students provided me with insights into the type of “hands-on” workshops that would benefit primary teachers with little or no prior knowledge of dance. Primary teachers at my school expressed a strong desire for relevant professional development. My goal as the workshop facilitator was to provide workshops that allowed time for collaboration, working with me to determine possible solutions
to my research question. According to O’Leary (2004), the researcher’s role is to “facilitate a sustainable change process that can find the researcher acting as planner, leader, catalyzer, facilitator, teacher, designer, listener, observer, synthesizer, and/or reporter at various points throughout the project” (p. 140).

Herr and Anderson (2005) stated: “As researchers we acknowledge that we enter research with a perspective drawn from our own unique experiences and so we articulate to the best of our ability these perspectives or biases and build a critical reflexivity into the research process. We also articulate these evolving perspectives in our journaling, field notes, and, to some extent, in the dissertation itself. Developing the skills and habits of self-reflexivity is necessary for any action researcher” (p. 60).

To ensure that participants did not view me as the “expert” telling them what to do, I revealed my desire to reflect on my own practice to workshop participants, allowing me to present my role as reflective practitioner and learner.

Participants

Participants in this study were recruited from a cohort of experienced primary educators who teach at my elementary school in Campbell River, British Columbia. The school population is three hundred and twenty. Grades range from kindergarten to grade five. My research proposal was presented to school staff during a monthly meeting. As part of the recruitment plan, primary teachers had the opportunity to sign up to take part in a workshop to learn about creative movement and to gauge their own interest in the research study. Nine primary teachers attended the workshop. After the presentation, potential volunteers had the opportunity to verbalize their interest individually and a list of possible participants was created. Four educators volunteered to
take part in the research. After meeting individually with potential participants, a group meeting was held for all participants who expressed interest in taking part in the study. After this meeting which outlined the research study, teachers volunteering to participate were given consent forms to fill out and return within two days. All volunteers worked together for six weeks. The names of all participants were kept confidential. Participants are represented as Participants A, B, C, D.

**Sampling Criteria**

The following are criteria used to select participants.

1. Teachers need to have worked with children in primary grades (K-3).
2. Teachers need to express interest and willingness to incorporate opportunities for dance/creative movement in their everyday teaching practice.
3. Teachers do not need to have any formal dance training.

The research study focused on primary teachers, therefore the educators recruited needed to have experience with that particular age group. It is important to stress that teachers were not required to have dance experience.

**Ethical Considerations**

Regardless of what approach is chosen in a qualitative study, ethical issues will always arise when it comes to the data collection and dissemination of information (Creswell, 2013). I obtained written consent from each participant, clearly outlining the purpose of the study (Appendix B). All participants in this study were assigned a letter as an identifier to protect their confidentiality. Additionally, the name of the school and students were also excluded. Confidentiality is usually addressed together with informed consent (Doyle 2007) and respect for participants (Mockler, 2014). Participating teachers were given the right to withdraw at any stage of the research study. Following collaborative sessions, participants had an opportunity to review
all transcripts to clarify or retract any statements that they made. This ensured the comfort level of all participants with the data that was used during the data analysis component. Participants consented to the release of data and also the data. They also consented to the focus group nature of the research, understanding that the information provided by other participants as part of the process. I followed all ethical review approval procedures.

Qualitative research is always impacted by researcher bias, and so with the relationships I have with each of the teachers in my study, I had to attend to representing them thoughtfully without the impact of my bias/relationship. Action researchers, like all other researchers must adhere to strong ethical principles. However, some of these ethical principles are specific to the action researcher. According to Zuber-Skerritt (1996), actions are deeply embedded in an existing social organization, and the failure to work within the general procedures of that organization may not only jeopardize the process of improvement but also existing valuable work.

**Data Collection Methods and Instruments**

In action research, the teacher-researcher is led throughout the study by frequently recurring formative evaluations of the process (Rumrill, 2011). According to Rumrill (2011), these approaches are aimed at eliciting better data and orienting the research toward the participants’ interests and perspectives rather than those of the researcher. “Remember that there is no one correct source of data for school-based action research. The best source will be determined by the research question your team is asking” (Sagor, 1992, pg. 31). The following will offer a broad overview of this process and how the study will be carried out.

Various data collection methods were used throughout this research project. The pre-workshop questionnaire served as the starting point for gathering data, giving teacher-participants an opportunity to express their own feelings, ideas and concerns in relation to the
introduction and implementation of creative movement in the classroom. According to Bernard (2006), the primary knowledge aim of many qualitative studies is to explore the views of participants as expressed in their own words. Data collection methods also included: a workshop series that was audio/video recorded, creative movement lessons developed or implemented by the participants throughout the workshop series, meeting notes and reflective group discussions at the end of the workshop series. I used a questionnaire comprised of open-ended questions as a starting point for gathering data, giving teacher-participants an opportunity to express their own feelings, ideas and concerns in relation to the introduction and implementation of creative movement in the classroom. According to Bernard (2006), the primary knowledge aim of many qualitative studies is to explore the views of participants as expressed in their own words.

I also maintained a research journal throughout the action research cycles. My personal journal was used for personal reflections on thematic questions and the process. This information was shared during collaborative discussions for the duration of the study as guidance for the recursive spiral of cycles. This collaborative action research study was an on-going process in which the problem or issue was further refined or clarified.

I recorded observations and thoughts in my own personal journal for the duration of the study. This provided me with a running log of my feelings and impressions of events that took place during the study. This served as a source of documentation for the study as it included all observations also. Geertz (1983) suggested that use of field notes ensure that important information from the researcher’s personal experiences in the study are incorporated into the process of analysis. In addition, field notes provide the qualitative researcher with useful examples and direct quotations from participants.
Triangulation approach was used in this research study as data collected was both quantitative and qualitative in nature. Methodological triangulation required various methods of gathering data through the questionnaires, observations, audio/video recordings, journalling and group discussions.

**Questionnaires**

“A self-administered questionnaire is an instrument used to collect information from people who complete the instrument themselves” (Bourque & Fielder, 1995, p.2). Through the distribution of the questionnaires at the beginning and end of the workshop series, I was assured that all respondents were receiving the information simultaneously. The questionnaires used in my research were completely confidential due to their lack of identifying features, therefore allowing respondents to be honest regarding potentially sensitive questions, such as their current dance knowledge. According to Bourque and Fielder (1995), it is important that the questions stand alone, are understood, instructions clear, the order of questions are appropriate and the objectives of the study are clearly understood by both surveyors and respondents. A cover note was included with both the pre and post-workshop questionnaires which clearly stated the objective of the study and that approval of the Research Ethics Board and Vancouver Island School District had been obtained. The length of the questionnaire was kept to a minimum so that it did not take up much time in the workshop and was not overwhelming for participants to complete. The questions were closed-ended, specific and standalone with each question containing a response category.

**Workshop Series**

**Workshop One/First Action Research Cycle**
The first workshop commenced with an overview of dance movement, focusing on evidence-based research on the impact of dance movement on individuals’ learning. At the first meeting, participants were given a questionnaire (Appendix C) that served as a pre and post questionnaire. Questions guided the meeting with a focus on participants’ own ideas, opinions and attitudes towards the use of creative movement in the classroom. Discussions focused on implementation challenges. As a group, we practiced some creative movement strategies in the meetings.

**Workshop Two/Second Action Research Cycle**

Upon reflection of the data collated from the first cycle (rethinking, reflecting and replanning), the second workshop was adapted to meet the needs expressed in the first workshop. At the second meeting teachers were given the opportunity to learn and explore dance techniques, to practice new dance movement strategies, and brainstorm movement tasks in their own planning.

**Workshop Three/Third Action Research Cycle**

The third meeting was structured to include opportunities for teachers to plan dance experiences and their perspectives of the dance/creative movement workshops. The post-questionnaire was completed by the participants at the end of the workshop. The participants also had an opportunity to share their final thoughts on the workshop series. My own teacher-researcher journal was the main data, focusing on the collaboration and creative movement learning that took place with the teacher-participants. My research journal included teachers’ ideas, feelings, questions and areas of growth throughout the study.

**Data Analysis and Interpretation**
Data collected throughout the three cycles of CAR was transcribed and analyzed. An important source of data in collaborative action research are the group meetings (focus group research). The data collected were by audio/video recording the meetings, as well as data collected on charts. Anecdotal notes and my personal research journal were also be used in data analysis and interpretation. Data information was compared and contrasted to help establish the accuracy of data interpretation (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Triangulation provided a means of cross-referencing interpretations made during data analysis. The participants in this study were involved with coding data and establishing themes. Through collaborative discussions, the meanings and interpretations of research findings were analyzed with all participants “because it is their perceptions that the researcher seeks to understand” (Lieberman, 1995). Categories or themes are discovered from repeated comparisons of the data rather than “overlaid like a template on the participants or their situation” (Hagner & Helm, 1994, p. 291).

Another component of data analysis is interpreting the data which allows the researcher to find the larger meaning of the data by an abstraction process that goes beyond the codes and themes (Creswell, 2013). Data from teachers’ creative movement sessions, teacher-participants personal reflections and observations were analyzed and interpreted to look for trends, differences and noteworthy aspects of the study. Exploration and interpretation of all data helped to support and offer explanations to the research question. These analysis methods helped me to have a discussion of my research findings. When working with the data, I looked for changes in the use of strategies from questionnaires, frequencies of use of strategies, coding of qualitative data for attitude, value and theoretic connections. By using these varied qualitative and quantitative methods, I was able to triangulate the data collected, therefore increasing the validity and reliability of the research data. Triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods or data
sources in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena (Patton, 1999). Triangulation approach was used in this research study as data collected was both quantitative and qualitative in nature. Triangulation is defined as the researcher’s effort to collect information from a diverse range of individuals and settings, using a variety of methods in order to construct appropriate explanations of the phenomena being investigated (Denzin, 1970).

Methodological triangulation required various methods of gathering data through questionnaires, observations, audio/video recordings, journaling and group discussions. Following the post-questionnaire, all data analyzed was reported to participants. The participants were given the opportunity to listen to their own statements, ideas and opinions expressed throughout the action research study, to view written statements and potentially withdraw them.

Categories or themes in this study were discovered from repeated comparisons of the data rather than “overlaid like a template on the participants or their situation” (Hagner & Helm, 1994, p. 291). Another component of data analysis is interpreting the data which allows the researcher to find the larger meaning of the data by an abstraction process that goes beyond the codes and themes (Creswell, 2013, pg. 187). Data from teachers’ creative movement sessions, teacher-participants’ personal reflections and observations were analyzed and interpreted to look for trends, differences and noteworthy aspects of the study. Exploration and interpretation of all data helped to support and offer explanations to the research questions.

**Potential Application of Knowledge Created**

I believe that this collaborative action research study on implementing dance/creative movements in the classroom, contributed to the teaching practices of primary educators. The findings provide information for supporting educators to engage in collaborative action research, and demonstrate the potential for creative dance movement strategies to contribute to primary
teachers’ practices and achievement of BC learning competencies for students. These potential changes in teaching practice can benefit students by allowing them to explore their own learning through music and movement, with the potential for deeper knowledge discovery through the body and dance. Educational researchers claim that teachers who conduct action research are better informed about their field (Bennett, 1993), begin to understand themselves better as teachers, and make better decisions and choices of behaviour as a consequence of their engagement in action research (Ogberg & McCutcheon, 1987). This methodology contributed to my own growth as an educator. Collaborating with participants was an excellent way to share our ideas, opinions and to experiment and develop new teaching strategies in a non-threatening learning environment.

Through collaboration, teachers will gain experience and support to implement unique and effective teaching strategies in the classroom. The utilization of creative/dance movements may help students develop their social and emotional learning in a non-traditional approach. Action research is a way of questioning your own practice and changing it as a result of the study (Noffke & Stevenson, 1995). It is through shared experiences that colleagues can help one another to articulate what they currently do and define what they might like to do (Hiebert, Gallimore & Stigler, 2002). The study will contribute an example of CAR with teachers.

**Limitations**

- The findings may be influenced by subjectivity as the interpretation will be conducted by the researcher. “Because qualitative researchers interact directly with their data sources (i.e., research participants) they must also be aware of how their own experiences and personal characteristics can serve to influence or bias the interpretation of results” (Rumrill, Phillip, et al. 2011, pg. 154).
● It is harder to do because the researcher takes on responsibilities for encouraging change as well as for research.

● Personal over-involvement of the researcher may bias research results. Creswell (2007) stated that qualitative researchers are also responsible for explicitly stating their biases in reporting research results.

● The cyclic nature of action research to achieve its twin outcomes of action (e.g. change) and research (e.g. understanding) is time-consuming and complex to conduct (Lewis, 2018).

● Keeping participants motivated and enthusiastic to complete the study

**Strengths**

This collaborative study may open up opportunities for teachers to engage in conversation with colleagues. Discussions will validate teachers’ voices, provide them with the opportunity to reflect on their own teaching practice, make meaning of their experiences and put into practice what they have learned for the development of all students.

**Conclusion**

This chapter outlined the research methodology, which includes details pertinent to how the research study will be conducted. After a brief introduction, the research approach was determined. Participants and sampling criteria were established. A variety of research procedures were outlined in this collaborative action research study. Subsequently, procedures for data analysis are outlined. Finally, the ethical review procedures were stated and how they influenced the methodological limitations and strengths of the research study. In conclusion, the possible value/significance of the research findings are discussed.
Chapter 4: Findings and Results

Description and Reflections on First, Second and Third Action Research Cycles

This chapter describes the process used for the first, second and third action research cycles. Reflections and findings drawn from this data will be provided in Chapter 5. The first part of the chapter provides an overview of Action Research Cycle One including the planning and implementation and the data gathered from the participants’ questionnaires which help contextualize this cycle. The second part of the chapter includes an overview of Action Cycle Two and modifications. The third part of the chapter includes an overview of Action Cycle Three including the post-questionnaire and final group discussion.

Action Cycle One - An Overview

Planning the action research cycle’s workshop series involved initial discussions to inform the school principal of the design of the workshop series. It featured three workshops. Each workshop was one hour and fifteen minutes durations, held after school and aimed to provide teachers with introductory knowledge and skills for implementing dance/creative movement activities in their classroom. When planning the workshops, consideration was given to the teachers’ prior knowledge and experience to ensure the workshops would be relevant to their own practice.

Participants

The participants completed a pre-workshop questionnaire to provide me with information regarding their knowledge of dance/creative movement, prior dance teaching experience, confidence level when using movement in the classroom and if their use of strategies to facilitate learning through movement. Participant A and C indicated they had little dance experience. Participant D indicated some dance experience through cultural dance at a prior school.
Participant B indicated she had some experience, mainly participating in dance classes as an adult. The questionnaire also asked participants to reflect on their competence and confidence in the area of dance/creative movement. Participants A, C and D indicated a low level of comfort and confidence to teach creative movement because of their own inexperience with dance. Participant B indicated a higher level of comfort and confidence in the delivery of dance in the primary classroom. The questionnaire asked participants to describe teaching strategies used to facilitate learning through movement. Participants A and C stated they rarely used dance strategies in the classroom/gym. Participants B and D stated that they used creative movement techniques in the classroom/gym at least once a month. All participants indicated that they had never attended professional development workshops focused on integrating learning through dance/creative movement.

**Aims of the Workshop Series**

The aims of the three workshops included ensuring the workshops were engaging, fun, relevant, presented a balance between theory and practice, and allowed opportunities for participants to share ideas and contribute to the learning. Workshops were in alignment with the normal staff meeting allocation times.

According to Pitri (2004), “To situate learning means to place thought and action in a specific place and time; to involve other learners, the environment, and activities to create meaning; and to locate in a particular setting the thinking and doing processes used by experts to accomplish knowledge and skill tasks” (p. 2). To encourage situated learning, everyday contexts and themes were used as the stimulus for activities to contextualize knowledge and make the learning applicable to the participants (Putnam & Borko, 2000). Group work was used in
acknowledgement that learning is a social process and collaborative activities or collaboration is a key generic skill in the arts (Lee 1993, Gardner 1992, Smith-Autard 2002).

The Workshop Series

Each of the workshops focused on providing participants with an opportunity to explore the arts/dance curriculum outcomes for primary grades in British Columbia. Teachers participated in creative movement activities focused on performance, choreography and appreciation of dance/creative movement in addition to learning strategies to integrate dance with core content and other dance specific knowledge.

Workshop One

At the first meeting, participants were given a questionnaire (Appendix C) that served as a pre and post questionnaire. Questions guided each meeting with a focus on participants’ own ideas, opinions and attitudes towards the use of creative movement in the classroom. I presented an overview of dance movement, focusing on evidence-based research on the impact of dance movement on individuals’ learning. I also discussed implementation challenges. As a group, we practiced some creative movement strategies in the meetings. Group discussions occurred throughout the workshop.

Workshop Two

At the second meeting teachers were given the opportunity to learn and explore dance techniques, to practice new dance movement strategies, and brainstorm movement tasks in their own planning.

Workshop Three

The third meeting was structured to include opportunities for teachers to plan dance experiences and share their perspectives of the dance/creative movement workshops. The post-questionnaire
was completed by the participants at the end of the workshop. The participants also had an opportunity to share their final thoughts on the workshop series. My own teacher-researcher journal was the main data, focusing on the collaboration and creative movement learning that took place with the teacher-participants. My research journal included teachers’ ideas, feelings, questions and areas of growth throughout the study.

**Action Research Cycle One - Workshop One**

Workshop One outlined the six-week action research study and reviewed the workshop series with participants. I introduced the benefits of creative movement through a summary of research studies that supported the implementation of creative movement activities in the primary classroom. Evidence-based research was also presented to show the impact of dance on social/emotional development of children and to justify the goal of the research study; to shift primary teachers practice to include creative movement strategies. After the presentation, participants had an opportunity to share their own ideas and opinions towards the use of creative movement in the classroom. Participants engaged in discussion around how to set up the primary classroom for dance activities and discussed issues and challenges of their classroom space. Participants voiced concerns that class size impacted their ability to introduce creative movement activities: “My classroom is so tiny. Each time I attempt to incorporate dance and creative movement into a lesson, the students seem to bump into each other which throws off their focus and task at hand;” “I used my gym time to teach the Water Cycle through movement and the space made it much easier and more enjoyable for my students;” Participant A noted that she was “frustrated with space to teach this” and “lack of classroom space to teach dance”.

Classroom space was also raised by Participant B as an issue, reflected in the comment; “I also find it difficult to teach group movement activities in class so I usually focus on
movement in the gym where they can run and get their energy out. They seem to settle down in class and focus after gym class.’ I made sure to note in my journal a lack of suitable space as an inhibitor to implementing dance into the primary classroom.

As a group, we also reviewed the British Columbia curriculum and the dance strand of arts education in the primary grades. Participants were in agreement that it would be great to brainstorm ways to integrate each dance learning outcome into other parts of the curriculum. Participants’ statements included; “I’ve always skipped over the dance component of the curriculum… I just check off the dance outcomes after the hip hop instructor teaches the students in the spring;” “I’ve done the same thing! I feel uncomfortable dancing in front of my students;” “I really don’t know where to start.” The desire to integrate creative movement activities across the curriculum and the lack of confidence and comfort to do so was evident in these statements and needed to be addressed in the research study.

After our group discussion, participants were provided with a variety of ways to warm up students for practical lessons and a variety of stretching exercises which could be adapted to suit the needs of students and the lesson focus. Participant B stated that she uses mindful practices in her classroom to calm her students; “My students like it when I use the chime. They close their eyes and can’t open them until the sound disappears. It’s really helping my energetic students to calm their bodies and minds.” Participant statements also included: “I use a program online sometimes to help my students calm their minds and learn to breathe deeply. One day my computer was down so I skipped it. I didn’t feel comfortable leading the class through stretches without that program;” “I never know where to find good music for stretches and calm activities… sometimes I can find good options on Youtube.” The participants’ statements
showed a low comfort level in leading students through movement activities without the aid of technology. The lack of available music resources was also evident in participants’ statements.

At the end of the workshop I provided sample lesson plans on how to transfer generic movement activities to primary grade contexts to ensure primary teachers would be able to transfer their knowledge successfully (Tennant, 1999). Teachers were asked to read the support materials I had provided them with prior to the next workshop. The materials included a research summary supporting positive outcomes of dance on the development of the whole child, sample dance lessons, basic dance terminology, music resources and ideas for integrating the dance strand of the B.C. curriculum. I also asked teachers to choose and facilitate one of the lessons from the resources provided with their students.

To close the meeting, participants expressed interest in integrating creative movement into primary core content to make it relevant to their everyday teaching practice. Participants were in agreement that creative movement strategies should focus on the seasons, animals and mindfulness for the next workshop. This area of interest guided the structure of Action Research Cycle Two/Workshop Two. This was an example of the need for constant reflection in action as the facilitator to ensure the professional learning met the teacher participants’ needs.

**Action Research Cycle Two-Workshop Two**

The workshop commenced with a reflection on the previous week’s workshop and the strategies introduced over the last two weeks in the classroom. Teachers had an opportunity to discuss their feelings when introducing a new dance movement strategy/technique in class. Materials handed out at the end of the first meeting included creative movement task cards, music resources linked to different ways of moving the body, mindful practices and simple movement strategies that could be adapted and integrated into primary lessons. Participants’
statements included: “My students enjoyed looking at the cards as I read the instructions out loud. The visuals were great and I was able to link the movements to our winter animal stories;” “We are all so busy at this time of the year so it was great to have some music resources that I didn’t have to search for myself;” “I really liked the music resource you gave us. It was easy for me to call out different ways of moving, the music matched the movements! I don’t think I would’ve done that type of lesson without the resource and lesson plan.”

Participant A reflected on a simple movement lesson that was met positively by her students but expressed her frustration when looking for resources at the district board office; “I went to the board office last week and spent two hours looking for resources to support creative movement in the classroom. I really couldn’t find anything except guides on old-fashioned dances like polka and line dances. I know my students would get bored with that.” Participant B added to her statement; “I just read an article on the B.C. Teachers’ Federation warning that schools across the province still don’t have sufficient resources. It’s crazy that as primary teachers we are always spending our own money on classroom resources. We do class fundraisers just to pay for the buses for class trips!” I noted in my research journal teachers’ frustration with the lack of resources available. Time constraints were also noted.

After this discussion, teachers were guided through a process where they created movement material using the syllables of their name; they manipulated the movement to create a short sequence which were performed and reflected on by the group. Originally I wanted the participants to present their sequence individually but two teachers expressed their discomfort with performing alone. Participant A stated; “Is it okay if we do this in pairs? I think I wouldn’t feel so silly!” Participant D expressed the same feeling; “I think once we have more practice we’ll feel better about dancing in front of everyone.” The need for more opportunities for
participants to dance in front of their peers to build confidence was apparent from the
participants’ comments. This process was then repeated with less guidance from me to allow the
teachers the opportunity to apply the creative process using the themes relevant to their
curriculum that were decided upon at the end of Workshop One: seasons and animals.

Participants were given multiple strategies for this activity to ensure all participants were able to consider how learning experiences could be implemented in their classrooms. Time was given for participants to study and decide on which strategy to use in the workshop. Teachers were paired up (request from the participants) and performed their choreographed sequences for the group and reflected on the different ways each pair had applied core content with the integration of the dance outcomes. Teachers also reflected on this choreographic method and its application to the primary classroom. Teachers expressed enjoyment with the hands-on approach to learning and responded well to the practical nature of the learning experiences. Statements included; “I wish we had more professional development opportunities like this;” “It’s so great to collaborate and share ideas; we never have time to do this.” It was evident that the participants enjoyed the hands-on experiences by their active engagement in the learning process.

Participants verbalized their own lack of understanding or experience of how to move their bodies to communicate ideas. This emphasized the need for teachers to have a practical experience in the workshops. However, all participants indicated that they preferred learning by doing, and looked forward to designing creative movement lessons together in the next workshop to integrate into their own their classroom. Participants’ statements indicated they preferred learning by doing: “I liked actually doing and not just sitting and listening to someone talk. I liked that everyone was involved and moving.” “I think the “hands on” sort of learning when you’re doing dances helps instead of just sitting there in front of someone speaking.”
Throughout the workshop series it became clear that, as the facilitator of the professional learning, I needed to continually reflect in action, modifying the workshop series to reflect the needs of the group. Using informal feedback from participants and the completed questionnaires, I was able to modify the learning to ensure the needs of the group were being met. One example of this was during the group discussion where participants were asked to discuss three things they had enjoyed about the workshop and how they might be able to implement this into their classroom. It was interesting that Participant A commented that she enjoyed watching fellow teachers create shapes and formations with their bodies. I had not specifically discussed shape as a core content element with participants but this provided me with an opportunity to discuss the connections that can be made between the B.C. Curriculum’s math Core Competencies and the dance outcomes. This numeracy outcome is “objects and shapes have attributes that can be described, measured and compared.” Participants began brainstorming ways to use creative movement to teach shapes in the classroom. This led one participant to research other primary math outcomes: repeating patterns and comparing large and small numbers. Participants were in agreement to stay an extra half hour, “to keep the creative ideas flowing,” according to Participant D. Participants wrote down their ideas for creating simple movement lessons and integrating dance movements with patterns and numbers. After this spontaneous brainstorming session, we practiced their lessons as a group. Participants’ statements included; “Wow, that was so much fun! I wish we could collaborate more often;” “It’s great to share our own ideas with each other. Integration is always discussed but to actually do it is another thing.” I noted the difficulty expressed by participants to confidently integrate dance across the curriculum, contrasted with the enthusiasm exhibited when we collaborated on ideas and strategies for integration.
This was an example of the need for constant reflection in action as the facilitator to ensure the professional learning met the teacher participants’ needs. Similar to Schon’s (1983) notion of the reflective practitioner, I needed to consistently modify the workshop design in response to informal feedback from the participants’ questionnaires and workshop experiences. It became clear that facilitators of professional development need to be able to reflect in action.

**Action Research Cycle Three- Workshop Three**

Workshop Three was structured to include opportunities for participants to plan dance experiences for their existing units of work, to discuss their perspective of embedded dance learning in their classroom and to reflect on their perspectives of the professional development series. Prior to commencing the “hands-on” component of the workshop, participants were first given the opportunity to discuss dance strategies they incorporated into their practice since the last workshop. Participant B’s statements included; “I used the sample dance lesson you gave us and used it for winter weather. I had the students act out being storm clouds, wind blowing, snow falling, snow accumulating on the ground, shoveling snow, snowball fights and building snowmen. They students loved acting and moving! It did take me awhile to find music to go with the lesson. I know the kindergarten teachers get together to make literacy and science-themed bins. Why can’t we do something like that for creative movement activities?”

Participant A stated that she had too many other areas to focus on in class including; preparations for the Christmas concert, benchmarking for reading, report cards and parent meetings to prepare for. “I just found it too difficult to fit it in. There’s not enough time in the day to cover everything.” Although I had provided many examples of how to transfer generic activities to primary contexts to ensure that the participants would be able to integrate creative movement
into their teaching practice, it was evident that some teachers were feeling overwhelmed with their workload and the crowded curriculum.

Workshop Three focused on the performance outcome of the Dance strand in Arts Education of the British Columbia curriculum. Teachers were taught a simple funk and contemporary sequence as in Action Cycle Two, however more explicit reference to the core content used in these sequences was made. The simple contemporary dance sequence focused on the topic of emotions, decided upon by participants in Workshop Two. Both sequences used a whole group formation to provide teachers with an opportunity to explore how to facilitate the creation of whole class movement routines. Participants used this sequence to consider possible appreciation tasks that could be completed and then their ideas were shared with the group. To extend this activity, participants then began discussing how reflection activities could be integrated into different types of dance lessons. Participants’ comments at the end of the movement activity included: “I think if I introduced the theme of emotions this way, my students would be more engaged with the lesson;” “I’ve played different types of music for my “Five Senses” unit and the students really enjoyed it. They liked the “Jaws” music for feeling scared and started to move around like sharks!”

Participants worked together to create a list of dance experiences that could be incorporated into their units of work. Participants discussed the positive aspects of collaboration and the need for relevant professional development workshops. At the end of the workshop, participants agreed to meet the following day for the final group discussion and post-questionnaire. This provided an opportunity for teachers to give me feedback regarding aspects of the workshops.
Participants discussed the need for relevant professional development workshops and the need for administration to tap into their own staff’s areas of expertise. Participants’ statements included: “This is the type of professional development we need. We sit through so many workshops without using anything in our own classrooms;” “So many of us just stay inside our classroom because the day is so busy. I would love more time to collaborate and share ideas and expertise.”

Participants’ feedback supported the need for follow-up workshops. Participant A commented, “In-service needs to be over a longer time. Everyone enjoyed the actual dancing, making up moves and putting them together to make a dance in a group… I would’ve enjoyed more sessions along these lines gradually incorporating more core content.” This statement indicated that although the strategies seemed effective, I noted that some teachers had not had enough time to consolidate this knowledge and embed it into their practice.

Participant D commented that she appreciated how easy and adaptable the process was and how she was going to integrate creative movement into her next unit in class. “I think most of us were really stuck on the dance outcomes and didn’t know what to do so we were just winging it or waiting for the hip hop instructor. Since coming to the workshops it has opened up my eyes to the fact that it is not such a hard task. You can make it simple by making it fun and as you said, animal movement, things like that make it so much easier as you have somewhere to start with the students.”

The post-workshop questionnaire provided data on the key changes evident in participants as a result of the workshop series. The data analyzed provided evidence of increased confidence and competence among the teachers. Despite three participants initially indicating they had minimal to no subject competence to teach dance, the post-workshop questionnaire
indicated that all participants felt more confident to incorporate creative movement into their lessons.

Increases in competence were also evident in areas such as their understanding of dance movements; ability to motivate students to engage actively in movement lessons; making connections between dance and other areas of learning; seeing ways to implement dance into their curriculum; and motivating students.

This section has focused on describing the three action research cycles that were completed as part of this research study. The major themes arising from the data collected from these action research cycles will be analyzed to reveal common themes in the data in Chapter 5.
Chapter 5: Analysis of Major Themes

Through the analysis of data sources including participants’ discussions and my research notes, a number of themes emerged that have implications for the design and implementation of creative movement school-based workshops for primary teachers. This chapter will provide an analysis of these significant themes including: the initial resistance factors to dance/creative movement professional development; the integration of dance learning in the curriculum; and the impact and influence of the professional development on teachers’ competence and confidence.

Initial Concerns to Dance Professional Development and the Integration of Creative Movement Learning in the Curriculum

Through the analysis of the data, resistance factors to dance professional development were revealed. These included external factors, school experts delivering professional development, teachers’ experience of dance/creative movement and the perceptions and challenges of integrating new teaching techniques in to their own practice. Although the research study originally set out to examine workshop activities and strategies that create confidence and competence in primary teachers, the data revealed resistance factors for integrating dance movement in the classroom. This resistance needed to be reflected upon and considered in the provision of the professional development. The barriers to implementation identified by Proudford (1999) are similar to the findings in this study and include: the feeling of being deskilled; having insufficient resources and support materials; having insufficient time to develop understanding; and having a lack of confidence. Similar resistance factors were identified in studies conducted by Van Niekkir (1997) and Russell-Bowie (1997). These factors indicated that teachers perceived that they did not have the confidence, competence, resources, skills, time or priority to implement an effective arts program.
External Factors

This research identified external factors that impacted on the participants’ ability to engage in the school-based workshops. These factors included: the crowded curriculum; lack of resources and school district support; the challenges of integrating dance into different areas of the curriculum; and the perceptions and challenges of integrating dance into the primary classroom.

Crowded Curriculum

Participants from this study clearly indicated that one of the challenges they face in integrating dance into the primary classroom is their experience of crowded curriculum. Participants noted that due to the crowded curriculum, time to deliver dance/creative movement lessons in the primary classroom was a challenge. This was due to the number of outcomes required to be covered by primary teachers. This was evident in participants’ comments: “I really liked the lessons we created. I’m sure I’ll try a few with my students but again it’s the same thing, it’s finding the time;” “We are encouraged to include it but it goes back to the idea that when you have so many areas to cover, it does make it that bit more difficult to fit in.”

This notion of the crowded curriculum may also extend to the inability of some teachers to participate in workshops on their own time after school. Participant C stated, “I’d love to attend workshops on weekends but my family commitments won’t allow it.” According to Edwards, Sieminski and Zeldin (1993), time is the obstacle most frequently mentioned by adults as an inhibitor to participating in professional learning. The data also indicated that the feeling of being overwhelmed by a curriculum and school commitments which required so much of a teacher’s time. Participant B arrived later for the second workshop and stated: “Sorry I’m late for the workshop. I’m on two committees and I’m always rushing from one thing to the next! I
couldn’t leave the math workshop early this afternoon.” I noted that this comment may show a priority for numeracy above the arts. This is in agreement with the findings of Stephens, Redman and Hempenstall (2005) which indicated that one of the problems with outcomes-based education is the excessive number of curriculum outcomes, especially at the primary school level, that overwhelm teachers. This data is similar to the findings from the study conducted by the ACT Department of Education, Youth and Family Services in 2004, who found that teachers were feeling overwhelmed with the amount of core content they have to cover (Stephens, Redman & Hempenstall, 2005).

The length and timing of workshops was also commented on by participants. Participants’ feedback supported the need for follow-up workshops. Participants’ comments included: “I really liked that we had time to practice some of the movement strategies in our own classroom. I just wish we could extend it because I could use more time to feel comfortable with everything you’ve shown us;” “I really enjoyed the time we had to share ideas, and collaborate. It was fun to create dance lessons together. More time to collaborate for hands-on learning opportunities like this should be part of all professional development.” This indicated that although the strategies seemed effective some teachers highlighted the need for more time to consolidate new knowledge and embed it into their own teaching practice. Hutchens (1998) stated that sustained integration of professional learning is required rather than once-a-year experiences to help teachers embed creative movement strategies into their teaching practice.

**Lack of Resources (including curriculum resources, space and human expertise)**

Participants discussed the lack of resources as a challenge to successfully implementing creative movement into the primary classroom. This is reflected in Participant D’s comment who stated, “The research is there to show how movement helps young children develop in so many
areas but where are the resources to support this? There’s nothing at the board office! It’s not just in the arts but in the other areas as well.” Participant A stated, “The kindergarten teachers in this district rotate bins containing materials according to themes like space, farm and oceans. It’s so great to have extra materials available to us. Maybe we could put together creative movement theme kits with lots of resources that could also be rotated to primary teachers. I really think teachers would put more effort in to adding dance to their day if the resources were readily available.” Participant C commented on British Columbia’s new curriculum and the focus on Indigenous teachings. “We don’t even have funding for resources to teach Indigenous content even though it is a huge part of the curriculum now. How can we expect the school board to fund more arts-related resources? I think it comes down to chronic underfunding of resources for schools across the board. When you create a new content area, you need to back it up and money always seems to be an issue.” I noted in my research journal that all participants were in agreement that the lack of resources was a major hindrance to providing dance learning experiences in the classroom.

**Music and Video Resources**

Participants indicated that a lack of music resources in the school presented a challenge in implementing dance in the primary classroom. Participants’ statements included: “Every time I tried searching for music to use for my lesson, I found it frustrating because there are so many options;” “It was great when you gave us a list of music resources. We spend so much time prepping that taking that part out of lesson planning really helped.”

Participants discussed the idea of having a collection of dance/creative movement lessons, including music options that could be integrated into a variety of topics/themes within the classroom and would enable teachers to identify how dance/creative movement can easily be
implemented into their current units of work. The participants’ ideas and opinions helped to
guide the planning/replanning of each workshop to suit the teachers’ needs.

**Human Resources**

The participants indicated the need for human resources to draw on expertise to assist
them with their professional learning. Participants’ statements included: “I have a friend who
teaches elementary students in Ontario and the Arts are a big part of the curriculum. She said that
they have resources to help teachers to integrate dance, guest dance teachers and a music/dance
specialist with their district. That would be amazing if we had the same support here;” “I think
schools should tap into their own staff and expertise. I know teachers in our district who are
musically inclined so maybe administration should focus on school-based collaboration with
these teachers.” According to Coburn and Woulfin (2012), many districts hire instructional
coaches of the school faculty to support teacher learning in specific domains such as reading or
mathematics. These coaches are often called upon to share their expertise with teachers in a
school not only through formal workshops but also through informal collegial interactions, with
the effect of changing other teachers’ instructional practice to align with a district or school’s
vision for high-quality instruction (Cobb & Jackson, 2011). I noted in my research journal that
administration at schools could help identify teachers who might make effective coaches because
of their expertise in the subject area and skills in sharing expertise.

According to McRel (2003) faculty involvement in decision making is essential because
“collective decision making results in increased morale, ownership, understanding about the
direction and processes of change, shared responsibility for student learning, and a sense of
professionalism, all of which help to sustain improvement efforts” (McRel, 2003, p. 1).
Space

Participants in this research study discussed a lack of suitable space as an inhibitor to implementing dance/creative movement in the primary classroom. This was evident in the statements from participants; “It’s frustrating sometimes to incorporate movement into my classroom space. My room is so small. I have been moving furniture around to figure out the best way to give students space to move and learn;” “I know we have a new school and it looks great, I think we’re all in agreement that the design just doesn’t work for group learning.” The physical barrier to integrating dance in schools is similar to findings by Wohlwill and Van Vliet (1985); “A crowded school, ignoring personal and social distance, has a negative influence on student outcomes. Thus, it appears as though the consequences of high-density conditions that involve either too many children or too little space are: excess levels of stimulation; stress and arousal; a drain on resources available; considerable interference; reductions in desired privacy levels; and loss of control” (Wohlwill & van Vliet, 1985, p. 108). Space in a room delivers a silent message to students, where the flow and shift of distance between people is a large part of the communication process (Duncanson, 2003; Hall, 1959). Putnam and Borko (2000) stated that providing professional development focused on experiences situated in a teacher’s own classroom showed the best promise for changing teachers’ thinking and practices. The need for physical space in the delivery of creative movement lessons was noted in my research journal.

Teachers’ Experience of Dance

The data revealed that teachers had varying levels of experience in dance, as discussed in the previous chapter. An analysis of the data revealed that if teachers had little experience in dance they may not be able to recognize the potential benefit of dance to learning. This need for learning to be active and fun is supported in the literature and is one of the factors that can
motivate teachers to participate in creative movement workshops. Research conducted by Hunzicker (2010) indicated that effective professional development is collaborative, engaging teachers in both active and interactive learning. This is supported by participants’ statements: “I wasn’t sure about participating in these workshops but I’m so glad that I did. It ended up being fun to learn new strategies for my classroom;” “Having the opportunity to move to music with my fellow teachers, design lessons and share our ideas was great.” Professional development is active when teachers engage physically, cognitively and emotionally through activities such as problem solving, discussion, simulations, role-play and application (Hunzicker, 2010). In addition to providing built-in support, collaborative professional development is often more enjoyable for teachers than working alone. This is consistent with Wollman-Bonilla (1991) who stated that teachers learn best when they are active participants in professional learning.

**Perceptions and Challenges of Integrating Dance into the Primary Classroom**

Participants expressed feeling more confident to integrate dance into their classroom lessons at the end of the workshop series. However, the educators commented that more collaborative teaching/learning opportunities were needed to develop further competence in making movement part of daily lessons. Participants’ comments included: “I do feel better about incorporating creative movement into my lessons but I think it would be great if lessons and music were planned for primary teachers to make it easier;” “If I had a set of instructions and some music I would… I could do that.” This is supported by Welch (1995) who noted that primary teachers do not feel competent in teaching art education as they associate teaching the arts with high levels of artistic ability which cannot be achieved amidst other professional learning needs. Research found that generalist teachers avoided teaching dance because of their
lack of confidence, motivation, knowledge, resources and lesson ideas as well as little understanding of what teaching dance would entail (McKean 1998; Oreck 2004). In contrast participant D stated, ‘I found the choreography sessions very helpful and easy to remember. I really think many of us already use creative movement a lot in our classrooms. We need to take what we’ve learned and make it fun for our students. I tried “syllables” and “movement” of “names” and this worked well.” I noted that by providing opportunities for teachers to complete small choreographic tasks using different core content, teachers were able to participate in the creative experience and understand how the might provide opportunities to do this in their classroom. As noted in my research journal, hands-on strategies helped participants to discover that the process was not as difficult as they had first imagined and they could encourage others to try it with their students.

In many countries, generalist elementary-school teachers have been expected to not only teach English, science, mathematics, social studies, physical education and many cross-curricular perspectives, but also to have the expertise and confidence to teach music, visual arts, dance and drama (Mills, 1989). This is despite the fact that many of them have not been adequately trained in any or some of these arts subjects. According to Van Niekirk (1997), many elementary schools across a variety of countries, have less than adequate music and other arts education programs. Some of the problems identified include teachers’ perceptions that they did not have the confidence, competence, resources, skills, time or priority to implement an effective arts program (Mills 1989; Russell-Bowie 1997; Van Niekirk 1997).

This section has provided an analysis of the numerous external factors which impact teachers’ professional learning. These elements are in addition to the need for professional learning to focus on building competent and confident educators.
Impact and Influence of Professional Development on Teachers’ Competence and Confidence

An analysis of the data revealed the impact and influence of professional development strategies on teachers’ competence and confidence. This section will outline: the teachers’ competence and confidence to work with the B.C. dance outcomes (Arts) and implement dance strategies in the classroom; the ability of the teachers to integrate dance experiences to support other learning; the confidence to share ideas between staff; and the perceptions about the value of dance experiences to students’ learning.

Teachers’ Competence and Confidence to Implement Dance Strategies in the Classroom

A clear link between confidence and competence was indicated in participants’ comments: “Gaining knowledge was the biggest thing to raise my confidence;” “Without a dance background I think I’ve always avoided the dance outcomes….anything to do with dance actually! I’m definitely feeling more confident to explore creative movement with my students.” These statements are supported by Housego (1990) who stated that one of the most important prerequisites of successful teaching is confidence in one’s own ability.

Participants commented on their increasing confidence to use dance strategies in their own classrooms: “I used some of the simple movement activities from the second workshop and adapted it for a math lesson. The students were so excited and I really think moving and learning helped them to solidify the numeracy concept I was teaching. The students moved the desks back and it worked!” As participants were given more opportunities to practice new strategies and techniques it became evident that their confidence grew no matter what their prior level of dance knowledge. Burgess, Connor et al. (1993) and Morrison and Newton (1993) stated that it is imperative that the professional development provider build up the confidence in the
participating teachers, as evident with each action research cycle. The correlation between confidence and competence, as described by Angelo and Cross (1993), MacDonald (2001) and McKean (2001) is also evident in my research study with teachers indicating that “self-confidence reflects recognition of one’s own competence” (Angelo & Cross, 1993, p. 275).

The Integration of Dance Experiences to Support Other Learning

The data revealed that most participants had the confidence to be able to adapt ideas from the workshops and integrate them into their own teaching practice. Participant C commented on how she was able to take her new knowledge on creative movement and revisit the Indigenous curriculum to include music and movement. This teacher stated: “I have an Indigenous language teacher who teaches in my classroom each week. I asked her if it was possible to incorporate Indigenous music and movements into the classroom. We are working together to do this. We are using drums; an elder has been to my class to show customs through dance. The students love it and I can see the learning happening through movement.” Participant A’s statements reflected the need for more professional learning opportunities to shift her teaching practice to include more creative movement lessons and raise her confidence level: “I’ve enjoyed the workshops and working together with everyone. I’m sure I’ll use some of the dance lessons in my class...I wish we had more opportunities to collaborate to keep learning ways of integrating dance. I just feel that I may go back to the way I always teach.” It was interesting to note that although participants felt more confident overall after the workshops, it was evident that continued professional learning opportunities were needed to keep confidence levels high. According to Danielson (1996), learning to teach is a lifelong pursuit and indicates that “continuing development is the mark of a true professional, an ongoing effort that is never completed.
Educators committed to attaining and remaining at the top of their profession invest much energy in staying informed and increasing their skills” (p. 115).

**The Confidence to Share Ideas Between Staff**

The data revealed that participants’ confidence level increased with workshop opportunities to share ideas, opinions and design lessons through collaboration. Participants’ comments included: “I think one of the best parts of the workshop series was the chance to collaborate. It was fun to get up and dance together… I felt a little shy at first, I think we all did, but by the last workshop I felt more confident;” “I wish we had more collaboration time during school hours… I know next year that’s the goal when our prep time is increased;” “Yes I agree. I liked having the chance to design lessons together and share our ideas.”

This need to bounce ideas off each other and share is consistent with Sparks and Hirsh (1997) who indicated that as a result of the learning from constructivism, professional development should provide opportunities for peers to reflect on their practices, whereby learning from their experiences (Kinsella, 2001). According to Zepeda (2010), effective professional development is learning at the site from the work teachers do. More importantly, however, effective professional development occurs in the company of others who support, encourage, and learn along in partnership, which I observed several times during the workshop series.

The community of practice established at the school encouraged authentic learning as teachers participated in substantive conversation with their peers throughout the learning journey (Ingram & Goody, 2000). Duguid (2000) stated that communities of practice are tight-knit groups of people who know one another and work together directly and also by Angelo (1999) who stated that learning communities are characterized by feelings of trust where participants
feel safe to share their ideas. Tennant (2000) stated that communities of practice feature a community engaged in a common set of tasks, such as the teachers involved in this dance professional development.

The Changing Perceptions about the Value of Dance Experiences to Students’ Learning

At the end of the action research cycles I was interested to see if the strategies introduced in the workshops were making a difference in their classrooms. Participant C stated: “I remember during the first workshop you gave an overview of the benefits of creative movement with young children. I really see some of these benefits now in my students. I have learnt that creative movement is important for personal development and self-esteem. I’ve even seen the breakdown of some social barriers in my classroom.” I noted that the literature supports this statement. According to Smith (1988), creative movement is a form of creative expression which allows students who have difficulties with expressing themselves or understanding emotions to break out of their shells and express emotions in a non-threatening and safe learning environment. Movement activities provide “layered learning experiences that deepen their repertoire of behaviour and response to the world” (Lorenzo-Lasa et al., 2007, p. 25). Creative movement is used to foster social interactions and expression of feelings (Sandel & Johnson, 1987) as well as to gain a sense of self-control (Erwin-Grabner, Goodill, Hill & Neida, 1999).

Participants’ statements also included: “Thank you for an introduction and hands-on experience with dance. I was skeptical at the start of the workshops but I now realize that it really isn’t that difficult to incorporate creative movement into my lessons;” “I introduced movements to music to teach my students the math concept of “larger than” and “smaller than. To my surprise they really loved it and I do believe that moving helped to solidify their learning;” “I know that I will use dance strategies in my class. I think it will be a fun way for
students to use their critical and creative skills, an important part of the core competencies.”

According to Cote (2004), designing dance lessons requires creative and critical thinking skills; group creations challenge communication and collaboration skills, cultivate respect of others and the performing skills enhance physical skills as well as confidence.

These statements showed me that participants were willing to continue to incorporate creative movements in their teaching practice and their classroom after witnessing their students’ positive reactions to this new way of learning. This section has outlined the impact and influence of the professional development on the ability of primary teachers to integrate dance learning into the classroom.

This chapter has provided an analysis of the major themes evident in the data. Chapter 6 will provide a discussion of implications for future professional development facilitators and school-based workshops.
Chapter 6-Discussion

The goal of this study was to explore the research questions: What strategies used in professional development build confidence and competence in primary teachers to integrate dance in their teaching practice? How can collaboration build knowledge, skills and comfort to support primary teachers to incorporate more creative movement in their planning and teaching? This inquiry offers valuable insights into both the value of collaborative action research, and teacher implementation of creative movement through dance in primary classrooms.

Collaborative Action Research

The results of this study and participant feedback indicate that collaborative action research through professional learning workshops helped to build teachers’ confidence and competence in shifting their practice to include creative movement. This study has demonstrated that when teachers are provided with quality professional development, they can make a positive difference to their pedagogy and enrich their curriculum offerings to students. Collaborative action research is a flexible process that allowed primary teachers to examine the topic of kinesthetic learning, develop knowledge about creative movement benefits, practice new teaching techniques and strategies through “hands-on collaborative activities, and take action to modify and improve their practice for the benefit of their students. Lieberman (1995) asserts that if teachers are given opportunities to discuss, think about, try out, and hone new practices, their new role as a teacher action researcher will become not just a professional development activity with a life span of one or two days, but a part of their role and vision of what they do as a professional.

The research indicated that one of the strongest benefits of CAR is the power and voice given to the teachers to inform their practice. Participants indicated that the professional learning
was effective because of the opportunities to collaborate with colleagues, which engaged teachers in both active and interactive learning. Teacher-participants valued the opportunities to learn from and with one another around the common goal of shifting their practice to include creative movement strategies. In addition to providing built-in support, the participants viewed the collaborative professional development as more enjoyable than working alone. Costa (1993), stated that although some teacher-researchers work alone, collaboration may strengthen both the quality and the quantity of school-related research by increasing collegiality, by opening channels of communication, by building a common body of knowledge about research and about specific school situations, and by providing multiple view-points for recursive evaluation of the research project.

This study demonstrated that professional development is the most effective when it is fun, based in the curriculum, kept as close to the classroom as possible, and delivered by people who teachers can relate to. According to Burke (2000), professional development is active when teachers engage physically, cognitively and emotionally through activities such as problem solving, discussion, simulations, role-play and application. It becomes interactive when teachers share problems, viewpoints and ideas, working together toward solutions.

Challenges of collaborative action research for professional development were identified in the study. Primary teachers indicated that lack of time throughout the work week was a factor in participating in professional learning. During this study, some participants were late for workshops or left early because of prior work/family obligations. School-based workshop facilitators need to work closely with schools to ensure professional learning occurs at the most suitable times. Focus also needs to be given to the amount of professional learning required for
new strategies and techniques to ensure teachers do have the time to try and re-try and therefore embed their learning into their own teaching practice.

Primary teachers need to have confidence, experience and resources to be able to introduce their students to dance and to be able to integrate this with other subjects, ensuring outcomes are achieved across all subject areas. Research shows that integration of kinesthetic awareness and visual cues facilitated through dance can accommodate children’s learning (Jobling, Virji Babul, Nichols, 2006). This claim was supported by the comments of the teachers in this study. Dance is a valuable and unique form of kinesthetic learning that can be incorporated into classrooms to reach the needs of all learners. As teachers gain more confidence in using creative movement in their classrooms, this unique form of teaching may carry over to other areas of the curriculum, allowing all learners to grasp new concepts using their senses (Skoning, 2010). Participants in this study found that by incorporating creative movement across the curriculum, students were able to engage in the learning process. Integration across learning environments connected students to the content through movement, reflection, or discussion, making students the center of the learning process. Tortora (2006) stated that nonverbal expressive methods are an especially effective way to support both social and emotional relationships for children with atypical development. The participants in this study found that students were able to make connections to their learning through classroom movement activities, reinforcing the potential value of non-verbal creative movement as part of learning for all students in inclusive classrooms.

It is through shared experiences that colleagues can help one another to articulate what they currently do and define what they might like to do (Hiebert, Gallimore & Stigler, 2002). It is also the means whereby taken-for-granted assumptions about particular groups of students can be
subjected to mutual critique. If teachers want to increase their students' involvement and engagement and success, and want to solve classroom-based problems, then teachers must investigate and determine what instructional changes need to take place in order to achieve those goals (Mitchell, Reilly & Logue, 2009). This study found that through regular meetings and application of strategies across a period of time, teachers were both able to consider the value of new strategies in their own practice, and dialogue with colleagues to solve problems, support one another, and persevere in making instructional changes.

**Limitations and Value of Study**

This study was limited given there were only four participants and lack of inferential sampling strategies. Therefore, the findings of this study cannot be generalized beyond this group of participants. However, there is potential for the processes and findings of this collaborative action research study to be transferable to other contexts, particularly for primary teachers wishing to implement creative dance movement strategies to support learning competencies in dance curricula, and to attend to learning needs of students who are less socially, verbally, or literately able. Further research into how to foster creative dance movement strategies in primary classrooms would continue to value and extend the findings of this study.

**Recommendations for Professional Development**

Although research shows the benefits of integrating creative movement in the primary classroom, the lack of professional learning opportunities for teachers suggests the need for further investigation of kinesthetic teaching approaches in inclusive classrooms and the potential benefits to all students. Creative movement enhances learning for all students. As a teaching tool, dance allows for differentiation for many students who struggle with traditional methods of teaching and learning. Future professional development needs to focus on increasing both the
confidence and competence levels of primary teachers to shift their practice to include dance/creative movement activities successfully. We need to push ourselves further to think of creative ways to meet the needs of all students in the primary classroom and to create opportunities for the many ways that children demonstrate their intelligence and understanding. Dance is important to incorporate into our inclusive classrooms if we want to meet the needs of more diverse groups of students.
References


doi:10.3102/00028312038004915


doi:10.1016/j.tate.2008.06.008


Recruitment Script for Colleagues at Staff Meeting
Shifting Primary Teachers’ Practice to Include Dance/Creative Movement Strategies

Dear Colleagues,

I am a graduate student in the Master of Education in Special Education program at Vancouver Island University (VIU). My study, entitled “Shifting Primary Teachers’ Practice to Include Dance/Creative Movement Strategies” is for my graduate research. This research study aims to provide fellow teachers with the opportunity to collaborate, share ideas and to learn new teaching techniques and strategies through a series of dance/creative movement workshops. Through collaborative action research, my hope is for primary teachers to gain knowledge and confidence when incorporating concepts through music and creative movement in their own teaching practice.

I would like to ask if you would be willing to participate in this collaborative action research study to learn about dance/creative movement. Through collaboration, participants will learn strategies for incorporating creative movement in the classroom, overcoming discomfort and helping teachers plan lessons that support learning through dance/creative movement. The study will occur over a six-week time period. We will meet as a focus group three times during the study. If you become a participant, you will be asked to attend collaborative sessions with teacher participants to learn about dance movement and evidence-based research on the impact of dance/creative movement on individuals’ learning. As a group, we will practice movement strategies in the meetings, share ideas and design dance lessons to align with grade level curriculum.

If you are interested in participating in this research study, please contact me via email.

Thank you,
Melanie Anne Reid

Student Researcher
Master of Education
Vancouver Island University
250 619-6852
theteacherinc@gmail.com
Appendix B

Recruitment Letter

Dear Colleagues,

I am a graduate student in the Master of Education in Special Education program at Vancouver Island University (VIU). My study, entitled “Shifting Primary Teachers’ Practice to Include Dance/Creative Movement Strategies” is for my graduate research. This research study aims to provide fellow teachers with the opportunity to collaborate, share ideas and to learn new teaching techniques and strategies through a series of dance/creative movement workshops. Through collaborative action research, my hope is for primary teachers to gain knowledge and confidence to create lessons that incorporate concepts through music and creative movement.

I would like to ask if you would be willing to participate in this collaborative action research study to learn about dance/creative movement. Through collaboration, participants will learn strategies for incorporating creative movement in the classroom, overcoming discomfort and helping teachers plan lessons that support learning through dance/creative movement. The study will occur over a six-week time period. We will meet as a focus group three times during the study. If you become a participant, you will be asked to attend collaborative sessions with teacher participants to learn about dance movement and evidence-based research on the impact of dance/creative movement on individuals’ learning. As a group, we will practice movement strategies in the meetings, share ideas and design dance lessons to align with grade level curriculum.

If you are interested in participating in this research study, please contact me via email.

Thank you,
Melanie Anne Reid

Student Researcher
Master of Education
Vancouver Island University
250 619-6852
theteacherinc@gmail.com
Appendix C-Consent Form

Principal Investigator
Melanie Anne Reid, Student Researcher
Master of Education
Vancouver Island University
theteacherinc@gmail.com

Faculty Supervisor
Mary Ann Richards, PhD.
Department of Psychology
Vancouver Island University
MaryAnn.Richards@viu.ca

Shifting Primary Teachers’ Practice to Include Dance/Creative Movement Strategies
I am a student in the Master of Education in Special Education at Vancouver Island University (VIU). My research, entitled “Shifting Primary Teachers’ Practice to Include Dance/Creative Movement Strategies” aims to provide fellow teachers with new skills and strategies through a series of dance/creative movement workshops. My hope is that my research will contribute to knowledge about professional development processes and teacher practice change that incorporates creative movement.

You are invited to participate in a collaborative action research study to learn about creative movement and incorporating new teaching techniques into your teaching practice. The study will occur over a six-week time period. We will meet as a focus group three times during the study. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Although we have a professional relationship through work, I ask you not to feel unduly influenced to consent. There will be no negative consequences if you decide not to consent to participate.

Collaborative sessions with teacher participants will take place every two weeks. At the first meeting, participants will be given a short questionnaire that will serve as a pre and post questionnaire. The questions will focus on their own ideas, opinions and attitudes towards the use of creative movement in their own teaching practice. The questionnaire will be included with data collected throughout the study. I will present an overview of dance movement and evidence-based research on the impact of creative movement on individuals’ learning. I will also discuss implementation challenges. As a group, we will practice movement strategies in the meetings and design dance lessons to align with grade level curriculum. I will also use a research journal throughout the action research cycles. The data collected will include teacher feedback, meeting notes and pre and post questionnaires. My own teacher-researcher journal will be the main data, focusing on the collaboration and creative movement learning that takes place with the teacher-participants. With your consent, meetings will be audio and/or video recorded.

Depending on the information you provide, there may be a risk that the information you provide might cause loss of social status and/or embarrassment and or privacy. To mitigate this risk, participants will be identified by pseudonyms in the products of the research and will have an opportunity to provide or deny consent to be quoted. Nonetheless, because the discussion would be conducted as a group, of course the other participants would know your identity. All participants are asked to treat all information from the study, our meetings, and our shared practice confidential. However, there is a risk that information you share may be disclosed by others.

With the permission of all participants, the group discussion will be video and/or audio taped, and later transcribed. I will provide all participants with a draft of my write up including journal entries and transcriptions. All participants will have the opportunity to change or withdraw any statements made, within two weeks of receiving the final draft of the study. Electronic data will be stored on a password-protected computer. Signed consent forms and paper copies of interview transcripts will be stored in a locked file cabinet in my home. Data will be deleted and shredded at the end of the project, approximately May 31st, 2020.

The results of this study will be published in my Master’s thesis, and may also be used for conference publications, presentations, and published in peer-reviewed journals. Your participation is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time up until two weeks after you have received a copy of the report for
any reason and without explanation. If you choose to withdraw from the study, all information you provided during the group discussion would be withdrawn from the study and destroyed.

I have read and understand the information provided above, and hereby consent to participate in this research under the following conditions:

I consent to the group discussion being audio and/or video recorded. □ Yes □ No

I consent to being referred to by a pseudonym □ Yes □ No

I consent to being quoted in the products of the research. □ Yes □ No

Choice of pseudonym _________________________

Participant Name ________________________ Participant Signature __________________________

I, Melanie Anne Reid, promise to adhere to the procedures described in this consent form.

Principal Investigator Signature __________________________ Date ________________

If you have any concerns about your treatment as a research participant in this study, please contact the VIU Research Ethics Board by telephone at 250-740-6631 or by email at reb@viu.ca.

Participants should be provided a copy of the signed consent form.
**Questionnaire**

Please circle yes or no for the following questions on dance/creative movement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you think that calming music may help individuals to relax and focus?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you use dance/creative movement in your classroom or during gym?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you comfortable/confident with your own level of experience with dance/creative movement?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you had opportunities to collaborate with colleagues to examine the dance component of the province’s arts curriculum?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you attended professional development courses on integrating learning through creative movement strategies at the primary level?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you incorporate dance/creative movements in your classroom if you felt comfortable with this type of teaching strategy?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you view the arts (music and dance) as an important/meaningful part of education today?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please use the space provided to answer the following questions:

1. What strategies do you currently use to facilitate learning through movement?
2. What questions and concerns do you have about implementing creative
movement strategies into your own teaching practice?