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How might three professional contemporary dancers experience communication in choreographic processes?

Master's thesis in Kunstfagdidaktikk

Supervisor: Rosemary Kate Martin

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Abstract

This study investigates how three professional contemporary dancers experience communication in choreographic processes in Norway. The study takes a qualitative approach and explores the methodologies ethnography and autoethnography to develop an understanding of the culture of communication in the choreographic field. The study draws on data from auto narratives and two semi-structured interviews to explore the participants understanding and experiences.

The thesis asks the following research question:

How might three contemporary professional dancers experience communication in choreographic processes?

The main findings from the study offer an understanding of how dancers experience and explore communication both through verbal and non-verbal communication. More specifically by incorporating vocalizations and continuously revisiting the creative idea throughout the choreographic process along with delving into different senses, such as glance and tactile communication. The study has revealed how communication can emerge in choreographic processes with three choreographers and how the dancers' relationships might impact the process. Furthermore, the data provides an understanding of how communication can be supportive in both pedagogical and professional situations. Ultimately, the data gives valuable insight to how consideration of communication skills might be of significance in choreographic education. Communication can contribute to unique improvement of dancers' experience with choreographic processes and the participants personal profit of developing their communication skills. The study aims to create an awareness of how communication can provide dancers, dance pedagogues, choreographers, and dance institutions the ability to develop new-thinking choreography in a considerate, reflective, and efficient way.

Sammendrag

Denne studien ser på hvordan tre profesjonelle dansere opplever kommunikasjon i koreografiske prosesser i Norge. Denne studien har en kvalitativ tilnærming og utforsker metodologiene etnografi og autoetnografi for å utvikle en forståelse for kommunikasjonskulturen i det koreografiske feltet. Studien tar for seg auto-narrativer og to semi-strukturerte intervjuer for å utforske deltakernes oppfatninger og erfaringer.

Studien har følgende forskningsspørsmål:

Hvordan kan kommunikasjon i koreografiske prosesser oppleves av tre profesjonelle dansere innen moderne dans?

Hovedfunnene gir innsikt i hvordan dansere kan oppleve og utforske kommunikasjon gjennom både verbal og ikke-verbal kommunikasjon. Dette skjer gjennom å inkorporere vokalisering og kontinuerlig forfølge den kreative ideen i den koreografiske prosessen, og gjennom å utforske ulike sanser, som blick og taktil kommunikasjon. Studien viser hvordan kommunikasjon i koreografiske prosesser kan erfares med tre koreografer, og hvordan danseres relasjoner kan påvirke prosessen. Videre bidrar datamaterialet til en forståelse av hva støttende kommunikasjon kan være både i pedagogiske og profesjonelle sammenhenger. Empirien gir verdifull innsikt i hvordan en forståelse for kommunikasjonsferdigheter kan være signifikant i koreografisk utdanning. Kommunikasjon kan bidra til unik utvikling av dansernes opplevelse av koreografiske prosesser og deltakernes gevinst gjennom å utvikle sine kommunikasjonsferdigheter. Studiens mål er å skape en bevissthet rundt hvordan kommunikasjon kan gi dansere, dansepedagoger, koreografer og danseinstitusjoner evnen til å utvikle koreografi på en hensynsfull, reflekterende og effektiv måte.

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1 Introduction

The interactive aspect of dance has interested me for several years. I started to question what exactly I find so captivating about this. According to Barsky (2021) dancers never move independently when dancing with others, because they must be attentive of the other dancers in everything they do. Furthermore, Barsky (2021) claims that dancers move in dialogue with each other when performing, and the idea of moving together is regardless of being just close or physically touching. Barsky's thinking led me to wonder how contemporary dancers communicate with each other, and particularly how they communicate in collaborative choreographic processes.

As I have gained experience and maturity as a dance artist, both as a professional dancer and as a dance pedagogue, I have practiced communication in several ways. This research emerges from my experience that professional dancers often create contemporary dance collectively, rather than only having one choreographer leading the process. I therefore started to question what communication can look like in the dance studio, and particularly in processes with multiple choreographers. From being a dance teacher, I have seen how dance students can understand and interpret corrections, explanations and movements. As a dance pedagogue I am always carefully considering how I share information to ensure that I communicate in a clear and supportive way. I enjoy exploring diverse ways to communicate contemporary dance to my students, as it challenges me to further understand the dance genre and individual ways of interpreting it. I remember as a dance student that my dance teachers could explain a movement or share a creative idea, and by simply listening, observing, and physically exploring, I somehow discovered what to do with my body. I have noticed a difference in my awareness of my communication practices in professional choreographic processes compared to my experience working as a dance pedagogue. In this study I therefore investigate how three professional contemporary dancers, myself and two colleagues, experience communication in contemporary choreographic processes. This leads me to the selected research question for the study.

1.1 The research question

This study is motivated by the following main research question: **How might three contemporary professional dancers experience communication in choreographic processes?**

I seek to delve into how professional contemporary dancers explore diverse communication methods, and how they share creative ideas and generate movements collectively. The main research question has facilitated supplementary sub-questions. To provide the study with depth and support, the following sub-questions are shaped to contribute to a focused exploration.

The first sub-question is: **How might non-verbal communication play a crucial role in contemporary choreographic processes?**

This sub-question aims to provide insight to the different non-verbal approaches of communication in contemporary choreographic processes. The question looks at how

non-verbal communication can be of significance when sharing and discussing creative ideas. An understanding of the role of diverse communication methods in choreographic work may potentially also influence the attentiveness towards communication in choreographic education. Consequently, the second sub-question explores the significance of developing dance students' communication skills in choreographic education.

The second sub-question is: **How might communication be of significance in contemporary choreographic education?**

The second sub-question subsidizes the study with an attentiveness towards how communication skills can be of relevance for dance student's future endeavors and potential dance career. It additionally offers an insight to how dance pedagogues can explore communication in choreographic education.

1.2 Three theories on communication

To grasp the relationship between communication and choreographic processes, it is significant to explain the three theories on communication that are explored in this research. These three theories provide the study with different perspectives of how communication can be understood and perceived. The study investigates communication through Craig's (1999) perspective in which communication is a way of interacting and affecting each other. However, Craig (1999) also argues that there are several theories about communication and that there is no agreement on how to define or understand the concept of communication. Therefore, it is especially crucial to explain the three theories on communication that underpin this research. These theories are: social psychology (Craig, 1999) regarding how people interact with others, kinesthetic dialogue (Berg, 2021) concerning the mutual non-verbal communication appearing in the transfer of artistry, and the "Johari window" (Koca & Erigüç, 2020; Graasvold, 2015) which explains different interpersonal communication abilities a person can have.

Social psychology (Craig, 1999) has provided an understanding of how individuals communicate based on mindsets, personalities and emotional circumstances. Berg's (2021) theory about kinesthetic dialogue is valuable in which it enlightens non-verbal communication in dance artistry and communication in choreographic education. Finally, the "Johari window" (Koca & Erigüç, 2020; Graasvold, 2015) provide knowledge about humans' desires, actions, emotions, and preferences. The "Johari window" supports this study through an understanding of how people's behaviors and feelings might affect their ways of communicating with others. Communication is according to Adams (2022) a key when working with others collaboratively. Because communication is a crucial component of collaborative work, it is necessary to explore these communication theories in relation to choreographic processes. The literature review will provide a more detailed explanations of the different communication theories. I will in the next section deliver definitions of choreography because it pertains to the study.

1.3 What is choreography?

As the thesis focuses of choreographic processes, it is helpful to explore the question "what is choreography?". Choreography is in this study understood in line with Pickard's (2018) view that it encompasses a creation, design, and structure of movements. Klien (2007) claims that choreography is a way of creating and manipulating diverse rules in

an open way. Pickard and Kilen's understanding might mean that creating choreography is about challenging and exploring structures with an embodied approach. Klien (2007) additionally states that choreography is a way of understanding the world in which it is full of interactions, relations and arrangements. This study therefore considers choreography as a process that enables diverse communication methods to occur through interactional and collaborative approaches. The next section will delve into the meaning of contemporary dance.

1.4 Contemporary dance

Given that the thesis focuses on choreographic processes in contemporary dance and that my own background is within this dance practice, it is of relevance to explain what contemporary dance means in the context of this research. Contemporary dance has a multitude of understandings. According to Kwan (2017) contemporary dance is apparent in several dance genres, and contemporary dance does not necessarily mean the same for everyone engaging with the term. A definition of contemporary dance might hence be challenging to uncover, and it is consequently significant to consider what contemporary dance means for this study. Stevens and McKechnie (2005) suggests that contemporary dance consist of the idea of movement for the movement's sake, and that the aim is to create a new work of art. This study correspondingly understands contemporary dance as a broad term for numerous ways of moving, that is constantly open for new interpretations.

The ideas for new movement material in contemporary dance often comes from objects or from visualizations and experiences that are previously seen, articulated, or heard (Stevens & McKechnie, 2005). The idea of Stevens and McKechnie supports the study's understanding of contemporary dance as a broad movement genre as it can be built on individual's experiences, which will be dissimilar to one another. Nevertheless, contemporary dance is a dance "together with time" in which it can be driven by different trends and political, cultural or intellectual significances of that time (Kwan, 2017). So, the descriptions of contemporary dance can change according to the time we are in, and dancers' communication methods within contemporary dance might likewise vary. Kwan (2017) proposes three ways to recognize and understand contemporary dance: contemporary concert dance, contemporary commercial dance and contemporary world dance. Contemporary concert dance can contain release technique, contact improvisation, floor work, ballet, and several modern dance techniques such as Graham, Limon and Cunningham (Kwan, 2017). Given that my higher education in contemporary dance emphasized release technique and modern dance techniques like Graham and Cunningham, contemporary concert dance is of relevance for the study. Kwan (2017) also mentions that contemporary concert dance is often collaboratively choreographed. Most of the choreographic processes I have been in have explored western contemporary dance including contact improvisation and collaborative explorations. Accordingly, this study looks at communication in choreographic processes in relation to Kwan's (2017) suggestion of contemporary concert dance, and Stevens and McKechnie (2005) understanding of the dance genre.

I have now explained theories and terms that are relevant to understand at the outset of this thesis. I will now explain the study's significance to discuss why knowledge about communication in contemporary choreographic processes is valuable, both for the professional contemporary dance field and for choreographic education.

1.5 The study's significance

This study involves several areas of significance. An understanding of different communication methods can help professional dancers appreciate and explore new ways of making choreography. It might also help dancers understand how to communicate in efficient and valuable ways. An awareness towards communication in choreographic education can help dance students develop understandings of how to collaborate. It can mature students' considerate and supportive communication towards each other, and consequently help them discover the benefits of being open to new ideas and contributions. Dance students might then develop an understanding of how communication skills from choreographic processes can be valuable for their future career, even if they chose to have a different career than dance. Moreover, the study can provide dance pedagogues with considerations of how they can discover innovative and useful teaching strategies. Dance pedagogues educate future dancers and choreographers and have consequently a responsibility to develop teaching approaches that prioritize the student's development of communication skills.

The study can additionally be valuable for choreographers, dance schools and other dance institutions that guide dancers and dance pedagogues through curriculums, tasks and courses. Dance schools and institutions can play a crucial role in, for instance, educating dance pedagogues, dancers and choreographers about careful considerations when it comes to the use of physical touch. Finally, this thesis might open the possibility for further research concerning communication in choreographic processes, such as 1) how the dance pedagogues understanding of communication might influence the students communication skills, 2) how dance students understand and explore communication in choreographic processes, 3) communication between the choreographer and the dancer, and 4) how communication skills from choreographic work might enhance the dancers and students everyday life, including how it may benefit society, and social and cultural contexts.

1.6 Overview of the thesis

Following on from this introduction chapter, the second chapter of this thesis provides a literature review, where I discuss relevant literature and theories that have been significant in my understanding of the main research question. The literature review contextualizes the research within today's contemporary choreographic field. The literature review presents three theories on communication: social psychology (Craig, 1999), the "Johari window" (Koca & Erigüç, 2020; Graasvold, 2015) and kinesthetic dialogue (Berg, 2021). These communication theories provide definitions of communication and how it can be understood and perceived in diverse settings. The chapter shares relevant research about communication in relation to dance and contemporary choreographic processes and also explores communication in other areas, such as choreographic education, collaborative work, and art practices like design.

Chapter three delivers the methodology of this thesis. The chapter outlines that the thesis is situated in a qualitative framework, with an ethnographic and an autoethnographic methodological approach. I discuss my position as an insider-outsider researcher and how the use of semi-structured interviews and auto narratives have been used as methods to explore communication in contemporary choreographic processes. The chapter continues with a framework of how the data was analyzed, looking at the

step-by-step guide by Braun and Clarke (2006) on how to conduct a thematic analysis of the material. At the end of the chapter, I reflect on the ethical considerations of the study as well as the challenges and limitations that emerged.

Following the methodology, I provide the results, analysis, and discussion chapter. The two participants contributions and my own auto narratives are reflected upon and are explored in relation to each other, together with relevant literature and theory. The results, analysis and discussion chapter present communication in contemporary choreographic processes with a particular attention towards the dancer-dancer relation. The chapter further offers an understanding of how communication methods within contemporary choreographic processes can emerge and develop. Significant communication approaches such as verbal communication and non-verbal communication in diverse forms are studied in this chapter. At the end of the chapter, I draw attention to communication in choreographic education. This section suggests how an attentiveness towards communication can facilitate robust and considerate dancers and individuals.

The last chapter in this thesis is the conclusion, which gives an overview of the key findings and their potential meanings and significance for the contemporary choreographic field in Norway. The conclusion provides a clear articulation of the discoveries, and how they have contributed to an increased understanding of communication as a unique feature within contemporary choreographic processes and choreographic education. This chapter additionally presents new questions and curiosities regarding the role of communication in contemporary choreographic work, as well as suggestions for future research which emerged from this study and its potential.

2 Literature review

The literature review is outlined to support the exploration of the main research question: How might three contemporary professional dancers experience communication in choreographic processes? The literature review explores relevant literature and theories that subsidises the study with an understanding of how communication in choreographic processes can be experienced. It provides the study with valuable information regarding what research has previously been carried out within comparable areas. Furthermore, the literature review clarifies theoretical terms and aspects that are being explored in the study.

Communication is described as when people interact and influence each other (Craig, 1999). According to Craig (1999) is communication as a term though complicated to understand as there are several theories reflecting different approaches to communication. Communication is therefore in this study explored through three different communication theories: social psychology (Craig, 1999), kinesthetic dialogue (Berg, 2021) and the "Johari Window" (Koca & Erigüç, 2020; Graasvold, 2015). Furthermore, the literature review explores literature in relation to generating movements in choreographic processes. Giguere (2011) claims that experiences and values from different parts of life will be incorporated and together produce a choreography. The process of generating movements can be profoundly influenced by the individuals' experiences. Consequently, this section has offered ideas to how the research question can be investigated to enrich the study with new perspectives on communication in contemporary choreographic processes. Choreographic education is another relevant term to address. Both Berg (2021) and Chappell (2007) argues that a combination of physical demonstrations and the use of verbal communication gives dance students an improved understanding of dance movements and technique. Literature about choreographic education offers valuable insights to the study as it provides an indication of how communication can be identified within choreographic education.

The literature review further explores other relevant key terms of communication literature on "communication theory", "communication in choreographic processes", "communication in the dance studio", "contemporary choreographic processes" and "collaboration and communication in choreographic processes". I have found several articles and books that have presented interesting ideas to support and enrich the study. By searching in Oria, Google Scholar, Idunn, Jased and the NTNU library, I have found useful and varied literature to discuss and explore the research question. The literature review helps the study to truly consider and understanding communication in contemporary choreographic processes.

2.1 Communication

Given that this study explores communication in professional contemporary choreographic processes, it is of relevance to explore perspectives on communication in diverse circumstances. This can help discover innovative and distinctive ways of communication in contemporary choreographic processes. It is of significance to explore literature on communication in diverse areas where it has been extensively researched, such as in collaborative work. Literature from areas within other art forms gives an understanding of communication of artistic and embodied knowledge. In this study I aim

to investigate what is underneath the surface of communication in contemporary choreographic processes, and to understand how dancers truly communicate.

Section 2.1.1 presents different theories about communication that provides a broad understanding of how communication can be recognized and perceived. The section particularly reflects upon social psychology (Craig, 1999), kinesthetic dialogue (Berg, 2021) and the "Johari window" (Koca & Erigüç, 2020; Graasvold, 2015). Section 2.1.2 brings the study further to communication in creative processes which refers to communication in the arts. I reflect upon alternative ways of communication, such as multimodal communication through demonstration, sounds, embodied knowledge, and non-verbal communication. The next section, section 2.1.3, explores how communication emerges in the dance studio, like through facial expressions, humor, and gestures. This section reflects on how the dancers' cognitive states, feelings and attitudes can affect how the communication practice develops in the dance studio. This relates to the "Johari window" that is elaborated in the next section along with the two other communication theories mentioned above, to offer an understanding of what communication means.

2.1.1 Communication theory

There are many theories on communication which emphasize and value different aspects and approaches of communication (Craig, 1999). The wide range of communication theories may contribute to an understanding of communication as a broad term. Communication is often understood as when individuals interconnect and affect each other, which can happen face to face or in other forms, such as through technological media (Craig, 1999). Craig's statement about communication is applicable for communication in choreographic processes as it emphasizes interaction in different forms. Craig (1999) additionally states that all communication theories are applicable as communication as a term is already significant and expressive. Nonetheless, Craig (1999) mentions that there are several theories in communication theory, but that there is no agreement on communication theory as a distinct field. Communication theories provide different information about how and why individuals might act and respond in the manner they do. In the next paragraphs these theories will be explained: social psychology, the "Johari window" and kinesthetic dialogue.

In social psychology, communication is mediated in interaction with others based on individuals' attitudes, emotional states, personalities, and unconscious conflicts (Craig, 1999). This can suggest that an individual's attitude or approach towards a choreographic process might affect how that person reacts to different situations. A dancer's personality might influence the communication practice within the choreographic process and potentially affect what communication methods are being explored further. Craig (1999) argues that an individual's mindset, assumptions, and emotional states will influence the person's reactions in social contexts, and that these social interactions will affect the group's outcome. Craig's statement might propose that the outcome of a choreographic process will be disturbed or altered based on the participants responses. The theory of social psychology can contribute to appreciation of individual's needs in a supportive way.

The "Johari window" is another way of understanding communication, and it consists of four area quadrants that represent a person's needs, behaviors, emotions, and preferences (Koca & Erigüç, 2020). This might indicate that the "Johari window" can give deep knowledge about dancer's needs and provide communication skills that are

encouraging and understanding in choreographic processes. Graasvold (2015) explains the “Johari window” as a description of interpersonal communication and describes how communication can be experienced as more open and including if we are authentic to one another. Graasvold (2015) additionally mentions that mutual feedback in collaborative situations and our ability to listen to each other is an essential element in understanding how other people perceive us. So, by being true and honest to the people involved in the choreographic process, the participants can develop a more open dialogue and an including environment. Knowledge about the “Johari window” in relation to how people behave might hence be beneficial for dancers’ communication practice in choreographic processes. However, Koca and Erigüç (2020) claims that these areas are not permanent and can change according to emotions and experiences in life that can help ensure communication and decision-making efficiency. Recognizing the impact of dancers’ constant change of behaviors might thus contribute to improved communication skills. These skills might teach dancers to acknowledge and appreciate people’s different cognitive states both within choreographic processes and outside of the dance studio.

The model below presents the four areas of the “Johari window”.

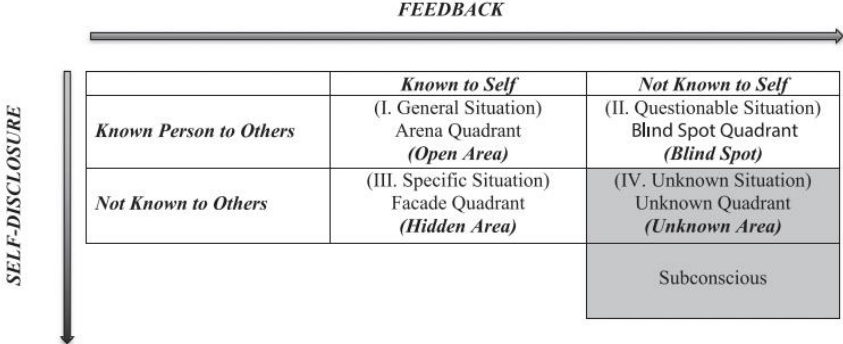


Figure. The Johari window model (Koca & Erigüç, 2020, p. 435).

The four quadrants of the “Johari window” represent different ways of interpersonal communication abilities an individual can have (Koca & Erigüç, 2020). Koca and Erigüç (2020) mentions that it also investigates the self-disclosure actions in which it is a way of understanding ourselves in relation to others. The “Johari window” might help dancers understand themselves and how they communicate in different situations in collaborative processes. This might facilitate deeper exploration opportunities and attentiveness towards the importance of communication in choreographic processes. Graasvold and Koca and Erigüç’s understanding of the “Johari window” have given the study an extensive perception of communication with others in choreographic processes.

Berg (2021) explores kinesthetic dialogue, and claims that kinesthetic dialogue is a mutual non-verbal way of communicating that produces movement quality where teacher and student are dancing together with a transfer of artistry between them. Kinesthetic dialogue is essential for this study as it contributes to an understanding of artistic and expressive communication, through non-verbal communication particularly. For Berg (2021), kinesthetic dialogue in ballet pedagogy is when there is a kinesthetic communication from the teacher that the student offers a kinesthetic response to. A non-verbal way of communication can therefore allow the teacher and the student to have a conversation through movement. This can additionally relate to communication in professional contemporary choreographic processes. It might mean that communication between the teacher and the student, or between several dancers, involves a shared

motion of sensation and passion through movement. Gaining an understanding of the effects of kinesthetic dialogue can foster an awareness of the meaning and value of non-verbal communication in choreographic processes. The next section will delve into communication in creative processes, aiming to get insight into how communication can occur in processes exploring creativity, correspondingly to choreographic processes.

2.1.2 Communication in creative processes

Communication in choreographic processes might transpire in different ways. To get an overview of different communication approaches in creative processes, this section is exploring literature regarding communication within diverse context, such as in design and dance. An understanding of how communication appears in several creative processes can offer an idea of how to communicate in choreography making. It can provide an awareness of how artists explore and utilize communication in creative and practical tasks. It can consequently relate to communication in choreographic processes because of the bodily and creative aspects of collaboration and communication within these fields. Perhaps there are some comparable communication methods within diverse creative processes? Budge (2016) claims that artists implicitly convey their art experiences and knowledge in numerous of ways by, for example, drawing on easels, showing the students different objects, physically demonstrating and through communicating tacit knowledge. Budge's study clearly indicates that art can be conveyed in multimodal and explorative ways.

In a typical collaborative design session, multimodal communication methods are utilized with inventive, emotional, and investigative aspects of the art (Vyas et al., 2013). This can relate to choreography in which dancers can share creative ideas and movement materials in several ways to foster a mutual understanding. Alaoui et al. (2015) suggests that approaches to describe creative ideas in contemporary dance can be, for instance, by using different sounds to explain the dynamics of the movements or by visualizing through metaphors that can explain the quality of the movements. Exploring sound as a valuable tool for communication in choreographic processes might offer an idea that dance can involve embodied communication. Budge (2016) has researched how artists at universities teach and communicate creative processes. Budge (2016) adds that embodied information can be better offered through performance rather than only utilizing words. Her research does not cover or give an answer to how to communicate art in education specifically. However, it presents how it can be explored through examples from Australian higher education contexts. Budge (2016) proposes that embodied knowledge is communicated through, for instance, demonstrating practices and communication about the art. This perhaps suggests that communication in and about art can be a challenging process as the knowledge might be embodied and tacit. Nevertheless, Roche (2018) proposes that the process of making dance is often based on non-linguistic modes of communication. This statement might indicate that dancers often communicate in ways that are non-verbal and might therefore open for interesting, alternative, and embodied approaches to communication. Not only do artists embody their practice, but there is often a developed culture and specific linguistics that are used by the practitioners within that culture (Budge, 2016). Even though a specific culture shares similar understandings of communication of ideas and perceptions, communication within different creative processes can involve comparable approaches to exploration of art.

In contrast to the ideas described above, Coleman (2018) mentions a challenge of collective art processes, such as the difficulty retaining and establishing a creative process due to the styles of leadership. In a collective choreographic process where all dancers are both choreographers and performers, it can be demanding to make decisions in which conclusions must be made, and everyone may certainly not agree on them. Furthermore, Coleman (2018) argues that individuals in collaborative art processes often enter the process with diverse tacit expectations, which provides confusions and disagreement. The participants' expectations of the choreographic process might affect how they communicate and act in the process. Concepts, ideas, and intentions can be understood in different ways, that might foster a feeling of uncertainty. However, arguments may contribute to a more reflective and engaged choreographic process where the individuals involved can challenge their initial opinions and understanding of the collaborative process. Besides, different understandings and perspectives might contribute to several unique ways of communicating and implementing an idea. In the next section, communication in the dance studio will be discussed as a way of exploring how communication can arise in the dance studio, and to offer an understanding of communication in dance particularly.

2.1.3 Communication in the dance studio

Communication of art can, as mentioned above, unfold in several ways, which might be applicable to how communication also occurs in the dance studio. Laguna and Shifres (2022) mentions that there are different roles to fulfill in the dance studio, such as the teacher, dancer, choreographer, and the musician. However, a consequence of this can be that there are communication failures if their language is used in contrasting ways and their value and focus on dance can be different (Laguna & Shifres, 2022). I acknowledged in section 2.1.2 that the different art forms create their own culture of linguistics. This might provide difficulties when it comes to collaboration across different art forms, however misunderstandings and other complications might also occur between individuals within the same art form. So, how can dancers prevent communication failures in the dance studio? It can be possible to consider Stock's idea of exploring humor in the choreographic process. According to Stock (2012), the use of humor released tension and fatigue during the rehearsals and the pressure of producing a successful piece. Visual jokes and laughter were therefore essential aspects of communication and social relationships in the dance work that Stock (2012) was investigating. It can be vital to apply humor in the dance studio because it might offer a more relaxed and efficient communication practice. The use of humor should though not produce an unproductive choreographic process, but rather contribute to a light and manageable atmosphere where everyone can feel calm and included.

According to Berg (2021), her ballet students respond to her bodily communication in class, such as her facial expression and other bodily reactions. So, when the teacher or the choreographer conveys information or is giving feedback, their facial expressions and other physical responses can influence how the information is interpreted. Berg (2021) also mentions that by communicating with arm gestures and by utilizing her torso and head as a way of conveying information, the students alter their movements. Nonetheless, Laguna and Shifres (2022) argue that it is essential to pay attention to what the teacher is saying in advance of demonstrating the first movement of an exercise as it may provide an indication of the "what, how and when". It can be understood that numerous of communication methods are used in the dance studio to share information that collectively contribute to an improved understanding of the

movements. Some of the communication methods might even be implied without an underlying awareness of its intention. Berg's (2021) statement about facial expressions, for instance, might indicate one of the implicit communication methods in the dance studio.

Movements and our cognitive abilities are not separate experiences, they both are rather essential elements in our physical kinesthetic intellectual which communicates with a world in constant change (Østern & Dahl, 2019). As people are situated in a world in constant change, the dancers' mentalities may adapt and their appreciation of creative ideas or movements in the dance studio may accordingly change. This can be seen in the context of the four quadrants of the "Johari window" (Koca & Erigüç, 2020; Graasvold, 2015). It might be significant to provide dancers with awareness and knowledge about how people's performance and attitude potentially affect their communication methods, and that it might constantly change. It may therefore be essential to recognize dancers' moods and needs throughout the process to attain an adaptable and tolerant atmosphere in the dance studio. As communication in the dance studio can be affected by the dancers' values and desires, it is interesting to explore how communication in contemporary dance particularly emerges and grows in a choreographic process. Therefore, section 2.2 discusses relevant literature and theory in relation to choreographic processes in contemporary dance.

2.2 Contemporary choreographic processes

As the research question explores communication in contemporary choreographic processes, it is relevant to consider literature and theory about choreographic processes in contemporary dance. Literature about contemporary choreographic processes is specifically significant in which it looks at the accurate dance genre relevant for the study. First, this section will explore literature about contemporary choreographic processes where features such as improvisation, creativity and critical thinking is discussed. This section moreover questions how contemporary dance in choreographic processes is created collaboratively. The following section, section 2.2.1, goes deeper into communication and collaborative aspects of contemporary choreographic processes. The section looks at how people can communicate in collaborative processes. It investigates communication through sharing of creative ideas and giving feedback, through non-verbal communication in collaborative processes. Furthermore, section 2.2.2 studies how movements are generated in choreographic processes. The literature presents different ways of exploring individuality within the movement material and in what way the movements are selected by looking at how the participants experiences and knowledges can affect this process.

Creativity is potentially an inherent component of contemporary dance, and it is expected and accepted that the dancer is contributing with individual interpretations of the movement material (Clements & Redding, 2020). However, Clements and Redding (2020) found that five dance teachers of contemporary dance considered it to be a connection between being confident and being creative, in which decision making and independence are essential elements to be creative. To move freely and to play with the set movement material or the task that is given, it might be essential to be confident. This might foster an openness to new-thinking and spontaneous exploration. A choreography is seen to be authentic when it distinctly conveys the choreographer's intention and purpose, and when the movement material is innovative and inspirational

(Sagiv et al., 2020). This makes me wonder how this process can go from an idea to an authentic and innovative choreography? Are movements created by simply doing different actions and putting them together as a choreographic piece? Sagiv et al. (2020) claims that choreographers of contemporary dance often start a choreographic process by utilizing improvisation to explore emotions and memories which later become set movement sequences. Sagiv et al. (2020) also mentions that in the composition stage of the choreographic process, the choreographers translate the abstract ideas into arranged sections. Predock-Linnell and Predock-Linnell (2001) argues that movements from the improvisation phase are later being selected and formed to be part of the choreography. There are clearly several phases in a contemporary choreographic process, and communication might be utilized in distinctive ways in the different stages. This makes me wonder how the choreographer communicates an improvisation task, how the sections develop into the set segments, and how the choreographer selects movements for the piece? By delving into how communication can be explored in contemporary choreographic processes, a more profound understanding of communication between dancers may be achieved.

Stock (2012) states that the dancers involved in the Phoenix project, which has explored intercultural communication issues with 16 experienced dancers, had to find alternative ways of communicating considering the language barriers. Movement language was therefore a fundamental component in understanding each other's ideas (Stock, 2012). Ehrenberg (2019) suggests that movements are a combination of what we perceive and how we explore the space, and choreography lets us discover, and to be with and a part of something. The process of making contemporary choreography might allow the dancers to explore something together in which they get to experience being a part of a unity and a collective, regardless of language and cultural differences. Coleman (2018) mentions that the choreographer must be involved with several intelligences in dance making, such as verbal, kinesthetic, aural, and interactive. The process of creating contemporary choreography might consist of several communication methods that together can generate innovative and new-thinking projects. Furthermore, critical thinking in contemporary choreographic processes might encourage communication and dialogue in a different way than simply creating set movements. By utilizing non-verbal communication, such as body language, dancers can have the unique ability to communicate despite verbal challenges. Communication in contemporary choreographic processes might therefore encompass more than just sharing movement materials. Communication can also be required to reflect upon and to understand each other's perception of a creative idea. Ehrenberg (2019) argues that choreographic thinking consists of exploring choreography and applying choreographic abilities such as questioning, considering and to "think through" a space. In addition, Ehrenberg (2019) argues that dancer's passion for movement encourages them to engage critically with questions as it can acknowledge critical thinking. Stock mentions that the dancer's professional expertise made them understand each other despite their verbal difficulties (Stock, 2012). Non-verbal communication contributes therefore to a variation of power within a group in which the artistic and the professional balance changes (Stock, 2012).

Ørbæk (2021) has found that body memories will affect how a student is understanding their own bodies and how to create dance. What we know and what we have already embodied can affect how we interact with new movement material and choreographic concepts. So, to communicate in a process where the dancers have different origins or prerequisite, different communication approaches might be needed to attain an including,

functional and productive process. However, in relation to Stock's research above, this might also mean that by including skilled dancers in a contemporary choreographic process, the participants can communicate non-verbally by exploring communication through their mutual embodied knowledge from dance. McKenzie (2017) mentions that a choreographic process constantly changes, such as the change of emphasis on physical movement, dramaturgy, sound, and the space. However, the brain and the physical actions of the body can still be in a creative dialogue (McKenzie, 2017). This might resonate with Ørbæk's argument that a dancer's body memory will influence the understanding of movements. Even though this simply relates to embodied knowledge it can be understood as a constant connection between the intellect and the body. This section has demonstrated how diverse communication methods are needed in contemporary choreographic processes to develop movement materials and to foster a collective understanding of the creative idea. The next section will explore the practice of communication and collaboration in choreographic processes, aiming to develop an understanding of its significance in relation to contemporary choreographic processes.

2.2.1 Communication and collaboration in choreographic processes

Looking at contemporary choreographic processes and how they evolve, it can now be significant to further explore how communication and collaboration might occur. This section will hence explore what communication and collaboration can be and to what extent these characteristics are necessary to understand the meanings of contemporary choreographic processes.

Foster-Sproull (2021) mentions that arts-based practices can encourage diversity, innovation, moral commitment, and hands-on involvements. Considering that art-based practices can contribute to these central elements, it is relevant to question why that might be. It can also be of relevance to ask how communication in choreographic processes can be applied to attain the components Foster-Sproull mentions above. Wittek (2012) argues that it is considered essential to give feedback in a constructive and appropriate way in collaboration. So, collaboration and communication are associated with each other in which they might be dependent on the other, either it is in a verbal or a non-verbal way. Craig (1999) states in his theory about social psychology that communication is a social and interactive aspect. This might indicate that collaboration is fundamental in choreographic processes. Communication and collaboration in choreography making are relevant and valued characteristics for the exploration of this study. It might provide further understandings of the role of collaboration and communication in collective choreographic work. Buck-Pavlick (2022) argues that it is essential to encourage communication, to provide understanding, and to sustain choreographic processes and artistic work. A consideration of how to communicate creative ideas might be vital to ensure understanding. In relation to Wittek's suggestion, communication should perhaps be continuously explored to understand its dynamics and consequence.

Ravn and Høffding (2021) mentions that an applicable situation when it comes to communication and collaboration is in musical concerts, where communication is happening between the musicians. By being in the space together, the musicians might engage both communicative and collaborative skills to play the music with precision. In a choreographic process which includes several people, whether it is just dancers alone or a collective with dancers, designers and musicians, the participants must 'read' each

other. This can enable them to navigate the space and to stay connected to one another. Although the dancers may be moving on the other side of the stage, or the musician is in another room, they need to stay in a constant interaction with each other. As Østern and Hovik (2017) explain that everything we do in life happens “with” something or someone. In relation to communication and collaboration, this statement might mean that it is essential to consider how to collaborate with different artists as everything we do happens in interaction with others. A dancer in Ravn and Høffding’s (2021) study interacts with both the musician and the light designer when dancing on stage even though it is not through a physical connection. They simultaneously affect each other's next action. Ravn and Høffding (2021) argue that musicians must collectively find out who is doing what whilst they play, which is based on an interactive motion where the participants decide their next action in that moment. To create with, requires dialogue and interaction towards whom or what you are working alongside (Østern & Hovik, 2017). Sometimes it might be needed to find solutions whilst dancing with someone. To do so, unique communicative and collaborative approaches might be explored to collectively discover efficient, applicable, and interacted ways to proceed.

Similarly, to Østern and Hovik, Coleman (2018) argues that the exploration of movements and choreographic ideas in dance can encourage different communication methods. Including the aspect of creating dance with others (Coleman, 2018). Østern and Hovik, and Coleman’s statements might indicate that different communication approaches should be explored in collaborative process to ensure considerate communication where everyone’s voice is heard and valued. Furthermore, Coleman (2018) adds that movements are created by all the participants, leading to a collective learning and new knowledge. Movements created by the different dancers might subsidize the choreographic process with innovative movement material as everyone’s contributions are being incorporated. This strengthens the idea that everyone’s voices should be appreciated in collaborative processes to maintain an including process and to develop original choreographic ideas. Buck-Pavlick (2022) has correspondingly to Østern, Hovik and Coleman, explored how communication methods can be affected by working in collaborative processes. Buck-Pavlick (2022) found in her research project regarding metacognition through dance writing and collaborative dance making that the students would adjust their choice of words, language and tone depending on the topic of exploration. Bringing awareness towards how dancers verbally communicate can be of relevance in which chose of phrasings can affect how others interpret and experience it.

The upcoming section explore movement generation as communication, to investigate different communication methods applied in the process of creating movements.

2.2.2 Movement generation as communication

From exploring communication and collaboration as a vital element of choreographic processes, this section will delve into how movements might be designated and how this development transpires. The selection of movements in a contemporary choreographic process can be seen as a way of communicating. Dancers are communicating when sharing and creating movements. It is therefore valuable to consider how the selection of movements emerges. Movement generation might be the primary communication practice in contemporary choreography making.

In the process of generating movement, a creative idea or a concept might be required as a foundation for creation and communication. Foster-Sproull (2021) claims that the

movements in choreographies are selected on behalf of the development of choreographic concepts. The dancers' individual perceptions of the creative idea and the choreographic tasks can influence the generation of movements. The process of generating movements might also be influenced by the dancers' previous experience with the creative idea and their motivation for the choreographic process. Furthermore, Foster-Sproull (2021) argues that dancers' experiences of choreographic work depend on the approaches that are used to create movements, and that their experience will vary considering their individual preferences of each part of the choreography. It is conceivable that the dancers in a choreographic process will influence diverse parts of the choreography differently. Perhaps one dancer appreciates the phase of generating movements whilst another dancer values the dynamic explorations of the existing movements. The dancers might consequently be particularly determined to their desired part of the choreographic process.

According to Laguna and Shifres (2022) dancers often make individual marks by, for instance, doing the movements with less power or by reducing the extensions of the limbs, which can signify the authentic movements. Moreover, marking movements might be common when integrating new information to get an embodied understanding of it. The marking of movements can also be a way of memorizing or demonstrating what movement is coming, both for the dancer and the choreographer. A dancer in Stock's (2012) Phoenix project states that he does not try to imitate someone else's movements, he is rather exploring the idea of them and are therefore implementing them in his own way. The way this participant translates another dancers' movements into his body with a personal touch can signify that a clear conveying of movements is essential so that the dancers can share the same intention or message. Moreover, Lam et al. (2019) claim that conveying movement information will increase the likelihoods that the ideas will be understood and integrated. This may indicate that by being straight forward the other dancers can integrate the information into their bodies efficiently as the information was strongly communicated the initial time. Moreover, this may be significant in choreographic education in which well-defined and clear feedback might be needed to avoid confusions.

Stanton (2011) suggests that the aesthetic purpose for dance is not achieved by mechanical repetition, and a dancer normally motivates the body to action by having an outside visual reminder. The dancers in a collective choreographic process can be external motivators for each other to further exploration of the movements. Laguna and Shifres (2022) explain that the teacher may give a clear indication about what will happen; however, the dancers will comprehend the message in their own ways. In addition, Calvo-Marino et al. (2006) argues that how we understand and interpret movement material into our own bodies depends on our visual experiences and knowledge, however it is also affected by our previous motor experiences. So, not only will the dancers' experiences in life affect how they incorporate choreography into their own bodies, but the teachers' or choreographers' capabilities to communicate the movements can also affect how the dancers interpret them.

Furthermore, Stanton (2011) claims that by giving the dancer the opportunity to process and de-emphasize the external movements of, for instance, a teacher, the dancer can get the opportunity to discover and explore a personal identity in dance. Besides, Stanton (2011) states that the repetition of movements in dance is not to generate an imitation of the movements of the teacher in which there are individual dancers working

with the same material, and the movements will therefore not feel or look the same in every dancer's body. Giguere (2011) mentions that knowledge and values from different areas of life will be integrated and combined in which it together creates a choreography. Gipson and DiDomenico (2022) argue that perception is one of the most fundamental aspects for communication, and that perception of art provides experiences on how to respond to actions and contributes to more effective communication. Choreography will hence be influenced by the dancers' personal backgrounds in which every dancer will connect and interact with tasks and movements in their own way based on previous knowledge and experiences. This might support the idea that dancers' perceptions of movement material will vary and therefore look and feel differently in everyone's bodies.

Given that generation of movements can be communicated in numerous of ways, I am curious about how dance pedagogues' communication of movements can be seen in choreographic education. The next section will therefore investigate choreographic education and how communication plays a crucial role within this context.

2.3 Choreographic education

In relation to exploring the main research question of: How might three contemporary professional dancers experience communication in choreographic processes? It is relevant to explore literature on choreographic education to provide the study with deeper knowledge about communication in and through dance. The exploration of choreographic education might offer an attentiveness towards different communication methods in choreographic processes. Moreover, it can contribute to understanding the impact of establishing valuable communication skills already from the beginning of a dancer's career.

Berg (2021) has found that communication between teacher and student in her ballet class consist of vertical supervising which subsidizes a dedicated and focused atmosphere in the studio. Many examples of kinesthetic conversations occurred in Berg's (2021) study in which the teacher demonstrated a movement, or a gesture and the students applied their body memory to implement it. Furthermore, Berg (2021) states that a kinesthetic dialogue between the teacher and the student contributes to individualized alterations of the movement material which provides an increased understanding of the students' motor repertoire knowledges. Chappell (2007) argues that teaching creativity or creative dance can both be conveyed in a physical and embodied way, but also with a language-based approach. The research of both Berg (2021) and Chappell (2007) suggest that a combination of bodily teaching demonstration and the use of linguistics will contribute to an increased understanding of dance. Bannerman (2014) mentions that if someone refers to the word "cat", people will visualize or think about the animal. Consequently, if a choreographer or a teacher relate movements to origins people know about, it may be easier to describe the quality of the movement or the movement's expression.

Berg (2021) has additionally found that an effective way of communicating knowledge to the students in ballet class is by giving individual corrections rather than giving verbal feedback for the whole group. Tactile communication can be essential and relevant in dance to support students' understanding of, for instance, directions or drive and to contribute to a physical sensation of the movements. Østern and Dahl (2019) states that relations, emotions and communication between the teacher and the student will occur

by applying a physical and bodily style of education, which will influence the students learning. Ørbæk (2021) has researched bodily learning in creating dance in Norwegian physical education teacher education, and she mentions that one of her participants explores her ways of moving more when dancing with someone she knows well, compared to moving according to the class's norms. The same participant also states that by being confident and by being in a safe space, she can move freely and exploratory with movement patterns she normally would do by herself behind closed doors (Ørbæk, 2021).

Given that Ørbæk's study explores communication in choreographic education in Norway, I find it relevant to consider Ørbæk's work. Furthermore, it is relevant to mention that other researchers, such as Østern and Dahl and Østern and Hovik as cited above, are also situated in Norway and therefore worth considering for this study. Considering that this research explores communication in contemporary choreographic processes in Norway particularly, it is significant to investigate Norwegian literature within the field. It seems like within the existing literature that choreographic education has the potential to activate and consider communication in choreographic process. Literature about communication in choreographic education can therefore be supportive and valuable to deliberate in the exploration of communication in choreographic processes. "

2.4 Summary

Literature regarding communication in different aspects of creative practices and choreographic processes have given a deeper understanding of how communication in choreography making can be recognised. The chosen literature and theories have opened for exploration about what is relevant and interesting for communication between professional dancers in choreographic processes and has allowed the study to consider what can be engaging for further exploration. Several previous articles have emphasised the communication between the choreographer and the dancer, or the teacher and the student. And some articles have even studied the language of dance and a particular choreographic or collaborative process, or intercultural communication in choreographic processes. All these aspects are significant and valuable for this study in which they offer viewpoints and perceptions of communication in choreographic processes. However, to my knowledge there is little research on the communication amongst the dancers that are working as both dancers and choreographers. I therefore find this study significant, and together with the already existing literature I believe that this research can discover enriched and different characteristics of communication in contemporary choreographic processes.

3 Methodology

This chapter shares the methodology and methods used in the research on communication in contemporary choreographic processes. The first section reflects on qualitative research as an approach to this study and continues by explaining ethnography and autoethnography as the chosen methodologies. Subsequently, my position as the researcher is shared and discussed. The following section will delve deeper into interviews and auto narratives that were used to collect the data. Data analysis, ethical considerations and challenges and limitations are finally deliberated in relation to the selected methodologies and methods.

3.1 Research framework

In this section, qualitative research as an approach is considered. Its relevance and significance in relation to the research question will be explained. After reflecting on the use of qualitative research, ethnography as the methodology will be considered and explained. I aim to be a participant on a comparable extent as the two other participants. Therefore, autoethnography will also be discussed as an applicable and required methodology for this research. Finally, my position as the researcher will be deliberated to consider the role as an insider-outsider researcher.

3.1.1 Qualitative research

Brinkmann and Tanggaard (2012) argue that there is no common definition of what qualitative research is or what the diverse approaches to qualitative research are. Denzin and Lincoln (2017) also argue that qualitative research is complicated to define. However, qualitative research often means that the researcher is interested in how something is done, understood, experienced, or developed (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2012). Denzin and Lincoln (2017) mention that qualitative research additionally can be understood as a way of accepting disagreements and perceptions, and obtaining the directions that occurs when it comes to findings. This study explores qualitative research as a way of discovering the participants and my own experiences, understandings and interpretations of contemporary choreographic processes in Norway. The study aims to grasp the participants original and spontaneous perspectives on communication within the Norwegian choreographic field. I therefore find qualitative research relevant and significant for this thesis.

Wertz et al. (2011) states, similarly to Brinkmann and Tanggaard, that qualitative knowledge can provide an understanding of the context, the product, and the importance of what is being studied. Qualitative research provides the study with unique and advanced knowledge about communication and its significance within a choreographic context. Qualitative research is questioning the "what?" of the phenomenon, and this "what?" can also give an indication of the practice of the "how?" (Wertz et al., 2011). As qualitative research considers the "what" and "how" of an issue, the participants can subsidise the study with a detailed and distinct perception of communication in choreographic processes. Hence, the research can foster an in-depth understanding of the topic in which the participants get to share their individual experiences with communication in choreographic work. In addition, Denzin and Lincoln (2017) state that there are several ways to do qualitative research, such as through ethnography and interviews. By utilizing ethnography, autoethnography, interviews and auto narratives in this study, I aim to explore and discover different experiences on communication in

Norwegian choreographic processes to contribute to further understandings of how choreography can emerge. The upcoming section will discuss the role of ethnography for the study.

3.1.2 Ethnography

Ethnography is the chosen methodology for this study, and together with autoethnography the purpose is to explore essential features of communication in contemporary choreographic processes in Norway. Not only is this study exploring choreography making in Norway, but it is also investigating contemporary dance and looks at communication methods within one group of dancers. Below, I will discuss what ethnography is and deliberate why ethnography can provide this study with meaningful knowledge and valuable viewpoints.

Johannessen et al. (2010) state that ethnography is a description of a group's actions, occurrences and interactions. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2017), ethnography is a methodology in which the researcher "is there" and is researching the whole of a culture, such as a bounded neighbourhood or a workplace. The two participants and I have a contextual understanding of communication in choreographic processes in Norway from engaging with diverse choreographers, pedagogues, and dancers. In addition, the three of us are frequently working collaboratively and the study enlightens our understandings and interactions within diverse communication practices. An ethnographic approach in this study might therefore provide an attentiveness towards the social and cultural factors that shapes communication in choreographic processes. Hammersley (2018) mentions that there is a definition problem in the ethnographic field in which researchers look at the term in different ways. Nevertheless, Hammersley (2018) has made a list of diverse definitions of ethnography. Hammersley (2018) states on this list that ethnography is taking place in intuitively occurring settings, it is concentrating on the value of people and their attentiveness towards an activity or a culture. Given that the study investigates individuals' actions, interactions and understandings within a particular dance field and as the individuals' experiences within this field is the attention of the research, I find ethnography to be a valuable methodology.

My own experiences from choreographic processes in Norway are also relevant for this study in which my previous involvements and understandings of communication are equally important to the other participants perspectives. Therefore, I do not only utilize ethnography, but I also explore autoethnography in this study. Hence, through an ethnographic and an autoethnographic approach I can investigate social and cultural aspects that can influence how dancers communicate in contemporary choreographic processes.

3.1.3 Autoethnography

As my engagement and curiosity for the inquiry descend from a fascination of my previous processes of communication in choreographic work, I find it reasonable and noteworthy to take part in this research as a participant. Autoethnography is when the researchers involve themselves in their inquiry (Butz & Besio, 2009). Butz and Besio (2009) indicates that autoethnography as reflexive ethnography is a way of studying and considering the researchers life, understandings, and feelings. Autoethnography have provided the research with an insight to my reflective perspectives on communication in choreographic processes in the Norwegian context. However, there are some critics

towards autoethnography as a methodology in which it remains dedicated to traditional principles of impartiality and proof (Adams et al., 2021). Bochner and Ellis (2016) witness that some find autoethnography too artistic and not accurate, viewing autoethnographers as second-rate writers or poets. Nevertheless, I consider data from autoethnographic studies as unique and as a changed way to explore research topics as it can offer the participants realities.

According to Adams et al. (2021), autoethnography consist of three characteristics, such as "auto", "ethno" and "graphy", where "auto" is the self, "ethno" is the culture and "graphy" is the story. Adams et al. (2021) argues that the "auto" in autoethnography constitutes the researcher's personal experiences and mentions that researchers of autoethnography often engage with other participants through interviews. This can provide vulnerable and emotional reflections to make sense of a phenomenon through interaction with others (Adams et al., 2021). By interacting and engaging with two other participants with experience from Norwegian choreographic processes, the study aims to achieve informed research where several voices are offered. Given that I will be a contributor alongside the two other participants, it is essential to now discuss my position as the researcher.

3.1.4 My position as the researcher

This study is an investigation of communication between dancers within contemporary choreographic processes in Norway of which I am also a part of. My position as the researcher is therefore based on my role as both a moderator as a researcher, and a research participant at the same time. According to Butz and Besio (2009) an insider role is the same as being a complete member, in which the researcher study's a group of people or a circumstance they are already a part of. Butz and Besio (2009) additionally claims that this "insiderness" is being used as a methodological device for the study. As a contributor through the interviews, my auto narratives and through my research, I hold both an insider and an outsider role. My unique perspective as both an insider and an outsider in coherence with the two other participants professional experience, contributes to extensive information about different characteristics of communication in choreographic processes.

Merriam et al. (2001) state that the outsider role is seen as someone who is non-aligned with the culture and can be explained as someone who is genuinely curious about unfamiliar topics. By simply reflecting upon problematic or taboo questions the outsider can receive and collect a lot of new material (Merriam et al., 2001). By being the researcher and by guiding the interviews, I will have an outsider role in which I will never be only an insider in my own study. The topic examined is at the same time not unfamiliar to me as a researcher, as I had knowledge about the topic before the interviews started through my own education and prior experiences. I therefore only initiated the interviews and guided the participants through when needed. Whenever the conversation was flowing, I reflected on the questions together with my participants. By doing so, the interview setting allowed me to be an equal participant. I could then consider the questions in relation to my own previous experiences with communication within the contemporary choreographic field.

From my personal experiences as a dance student for 11 years and as a professional contemporary dancer for four years, I have gained knowledge from diverse choreographic processes as well as establishing a career within the Norwegian dance

field. I have experience from dance-making processes both in Norway and in England, and I therefore value my own perspectives and experiences for this study. Dwyer and Buckle (2009) argues that by being an insider there is an expected mutual understanding, and the participants may therefore be more open to share their experiences. I consequently find the insider role meaningful for my research, to attain an authentic and consistent study. Moreover, stimulating interaction between me and the informants provides information through synergy effects that occur when we react and build responses on each other's viewpoints. This provides extensive data relevant to explore and answer the research question, and consequently make the study valid.

There are some strengths having an insider-outsider role in the study. By participating in the same field, I can relate and authentically understand the different perceptions of communication in contemporary choreographic processes. Merriam et al. (2001) mentions that having an insider-outsider role, both as a contributor and as a researcher, means that I will be able to ask meaningful questions and project a more honest understanding. On the other hand, it can be challenging to have an insider role. It was challenging in terms of making the interviews as similar as possible without having influenced one interview more than the other. As a moderator, I should perhaps ideally take a secluded position. Furthermore, it is my role as a moderator to encourage everyone to speak freely, while guiding the conversation based on the interview guide and the research question. It is challenging to be sufficiently objective in the interview situation. However, to ensure reliability I tried to balance my role between being a co-creator in the production of data and not affect or dominate the informants too much.

Together, the participants and I, could acquire knowledge about communication in contemporary choreographic processes, and at a later stage improve our practice. I believe that my position as an insider-outsider has been beneficial for the study. It contributed to nuanced information and new-thinking results in which we together found the words to express ourselves. This also facilitated a more relaxed interview atmosphere where we together could question our own statements and thoughts, as well as exploring other relevant issues that came up throughout the interviews. Dwyer and Buckle (2009) states that people will always be closer to an insider or an outsider position as the researcher. Nevertheless, by being the researcher who has read literature on the field, I can not only be an insider or an outsider. Having an insider-outsider role is the most reasonable and advantageous position of me as the researcher in this study. I will now explain the methods utilized in the research.

3.2 Methods

This section will discuss the choice of methods for the study in relation to my main research question: **How might three contemporary professional dancers experience communication in choreographic processes?**

Two professional dancers have been interviewed regarding their experiences with communication in professional contemporary choreographic processes. Two of the participants are anonymous, however, the third participant is me, the researcher. I therefore have conducted two interviews, one with each participant. I was participating in both interviews as a contributor. Both interviews were conducted in the same day, in two different cafes. The café atmosphere was an intentional choice in which it is not too formal, and I wanted the participants to experience the interview as relaxed and

comfortable. The interviews lasted for approximately 50 minutes, and the whole interview was recorded to create a confident and fluent dialogue. Furthermore, this section discusses in detail how and why semi-structured interviews and auto narratives are used in this research to provide the study with understandings of communication in contemporary choreographic processes. The section will also contemplate how the data was analyzed, what the ethical considerations are, and what the challenges and limitations of the research have been.

3.2.1 Interviews

In this research, interviews are one of the main methods used. Two professional contemporary dancers with diverse experiences within choreographic processes were asked to participate in the research. Interviews are the most common approach to qualitative research, and in some subject, it has become one of the most essential empirical methods (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2012). Interviews allowed me to explore the participants perceptions and patterns of communication in choreographic processes in contemporary dance. I could understand their communication approaches in relation to their experiences from choreographic education and the professional dance field in Norway. Brinkmann and Tanggaard (2012) mention that as interviews are happening in a relational situation, the interaction with the participant is crucial when it comes to the potential outcome of the interview. Doing the interviews as a qualitative study face to face, provides a more authentic experience and understanding of the phenomenon compared to writing (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2012). I conducted both interviews face to face. I experienced that as useful as it was interactional and a more personal way of communicating with the participants. This gave me as the researcher a clearer picture of their experiences in which the participants could spontaneously share their viewpoints, as well as they got the opportunity to ponder upon the interview questions together with me. Interviews face to face also allowed me to ask questions whilst observing the participants reactions and body language while talking. Moreover, Wertz et al. (2011) mentions that in qualitative interviews it is essential to ask suitable questions and to use analytical, careful, and systematic practices to respond to them, as it is vital to achieve additional knowledge and science. I made sure the questions were clear and well formulated, and I repeated myself if necessary. I also made sure that my response to the participant answers were respectable so that they experienced me as open for further dialogue. Johannessen et al. (2010) argues that qualitative interviews are suitable as it gives the participants more freedom to express themselves, and that the participants experiences can be shared in an enriched way if they get to actively anticipate what is being discussed. By letting the participants see the interview guide throughout the interview and by allowing additional questions to arise and be discussed, the interview felt natural and effortless.

Johannessen et al. (2010) mentions that interviews are used to understand and describe something, and that interviews are structured more as a dialogue rather than just question being answered. Interviews are a way of communicating with the participants about their experiences, attitudes, and life stories (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2012). For this master thesis, interviews have therefore been conducted and chosen as an efficient method to discover data. Denzin and Lincoln (2017) mention that no method can be privileged over the others. However, to discover the participants experiences and understandings of communication within the contemporary choreographic field, I believe that interviews have provided the study with an in-depth outline of the participants

familiarities. Brinkmann and Tanggaard (2012) argues that interviews will provide an increased understanding of the participants involvements in the world and can therefore contribute to the development of new theories. Denzin and Lincoln (2017) additionally argue that the researcher will adopt views and comprehensions of the individuals being studied. Considering the research question and my curiosity for this study, I find interviews significant as it allows the participants to share their experiences and perspectives from the choreographic field in an articulated way. Interviews can thus be a way of discovering authentic stories and in-depth knowledges from professionals in the field. By utilizing interviews, I have embraced several new perspectives and attitudes on communication within professional contemporary choreographic processes. I find this valuable for my research because it corresponds with the study's research inquiry. I will now delve into the use of semi-structured interviews for the study.

3.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

For this master thesis, semi-structured interviews were conducted. Semi-structured interviews have been the principal approach to interviews within modern interview research and ethnographic research (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2012). A semi-structured interview will contain a list of topics to discuss or ask general questions regarding the issue, and the interviewer can choose to go back to questions and go further into what is being deliberated (Johannessen et al., 2010). In this study the list contained issues such as verbal and non-verbal approaches to communication, efficient communication, communication in pedagogical situations and communication whilst physically moving. Similarly, Brinkmann and Tanggaard (2012) states that the interview should be structured and have a specific purpose; however, it should feel like a natural conversation. Through semi-structured interviews I aimed to encourage a cooperative and unrestricted dialogue that facilitated a spontaneous atmosphere where the participants allowed themselves to express and deliberate personal experiences. The semi-structured interviews allowed me to investigate and challenge the participants and my own experiences with the dynamics of collaboration and communication amongst dancers in choreographic processes within contemporary dance in Norway.

I planned for me and the other participants to alternate and ask two questions each to emphasise that I was not the strict and traditional interviewer. However, taking turns on asking questions from the interview guide did not work the way I imagined. This was simply because I asked a lot of the question I wanted to ask as follow-up questions, and the next question on the list had therefore already been discussed. Regardless of this, the other participants managed to ask a few questions and they could see the interview guide the whole way though in which I did not just have the laptop in front of me as a panel between us. According to Brinkmann and Tanggaard (2012) and Johannessen et al. (2010), semi-structured interviews consist of an interaction between the interviewer's questions and the interviewees response to them, and it is specified that semi-structured interviews are often recorded digitally or on a sound tape. The voice recordings allowed me to interact with the participants as well as it allowed me to be a participant in that moment. This interaction provided a more natural dialogue and we managed to discuss the questions in an elegant and fluent way. Brinkmann and Tanggaard (2012) state that the interviewer can deviate from the interview guide to go further into what the interviewees share. The interaction in between the interviewer and the interviewee can therefore contribute to a more open dialogue and hopefully a more joyful experience for all participants. Consequently, the researcher can ask additional questions to get an

increased understanding of the interviewee's experiences with the topic and achieve valuable insights for the development of the study. As this study is also exploring the researchers auto narratives, I will in the next section explain the significance of this in relation to this research.

3.2.3 Auto narrative

Narratives are "a look at a story of self" (Hamilton et al., 2008, p. 17). I have integrated my own perspectives on communication in choreographic processes to capture my own interest and relation to the research question. In autoethnographic study's narratives focuses on the authors circumstances and experiences to understand a social or cultural phenomenon (Butz & Besio, 2009). The phenomenon is investigated through the experiences and understandings of the two participants, as well as my own auto narratives. As the two participants and I have collaborated choreographically in several dance projects within the Norwegian contemporary dance field, it is particularly captivating to outline our different experiences with communication in choreographic processes. The semi-structured interviews allowed the participants and me to explore the questions together. Both the participants and me responded to the questions which offered both contrasting and similar understandings, as well as it provided additional questions and new reflections concerning the research question. Butz and Besio (2009) state that ethnographic studies frequently explore personal narratives as an approach to include affect and emotion into the analyses. My own experiences seen in relation to relevant literature and theory, and the two other participants contributions, have given this study personal yet enlightening information regarding several characteristics of communication in choreographic processes in Norway. From analysing the interview data from the two semi-structured interviews I have uncovered and achieved an increased understanding of my own viewpoints on communication. The thesis therefore highlights different features of communication through three professional dancer's views on its potential meaning and functionality. The auto narratives have hence been a powerful approach to apprehend subjective experiences and allowed me to challenge both my own and the two participants perceptions of communication in choreographic processes within contemporary dance, with the opportunity to unwrap supplementary perspectives. The next section elaborates on how the above data was analysed.

3.2.4 Data analysis

The data from the interviews and my auto narratives have been analysed in an attentive way. Through applying the step-by-step guide from Braun and Clarke (2006), I used a thematic analysis to study the data in a reflective and valuable way. Underneath the data analysis is explain with more complexity.

Johannessen et al. (2010) argues that analysis of qualitative data includes processing text that needs to be studied. In the beginning of the process, I was considering taking notes throughout the interviews to write down personal thoughts that came up to deeper understand the participants reflections. However, I realised that it could disturb the natural flow of the conversation, and particularly the concept of me being an insider and an equivalent contributor. Therefore, the process of administering text in this research, is the analysis of the recorded and transcribed interviews and my written auto narratives in relation to the other participants ideas. Brinkmann and Tanggaard (2012) states that the transcription of the interviews is a way of putting the verbal interviews into a written transcript. The interviews were transcribed in a word document which made it more

manageable to examine. The interviews were translated whilst transcribed in which the interviews were conducted in Norwegian. The two interviews were later transcribed and organised into two separate documents to better recognise and interpret who said what and when. In addition, I colour coded the interviews to keep track of what the interviewees said and what I said, as both a researcher and a participant, in relation to their contributions.

Brinkmann and Tanggaard (2012) claims that transcription of a verbal interview can be difficult in which the written text can lose dynamics and other essential elements that helps the interviewer understand the participants opinions. Body language, irony, and full stops, for instance, will be more problematical to acknowledge and recognise from a verbal recording (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2012). Subsequently, the transcription phase is complicated, and the researcher must do the work in a concentrated and dedicated way to make sure that the participants contributions will be conveyed in their intentional way. The transcription stage was carefully planned in which I knew how to do the transcriptions in a way that could be beneficial for my data. For example, I made sure that the translations were correct so that the participants contributions would be accurate to the Norwegian version. To ensure consistency, I transcribed both interviews in the same way so that I operated with the same approach on both.

Johannessen et al. (2010) mentions that in an ethnographic analysis, the interpretation of the data is essential. However, Johannessen et al. (2010) also claim that the researcher must look beyond the data material and try to understand how the inquiry essentially appears and investigate how the meaning-making process transpires within a culture. By exploring the two interviews and seeing them next to each other I managed to notice where the participants agreed and disagreed, as well as reflecting upon the underlying causes for their answers. Seen in relation to theory and literature I investigated and unpacked how their responses and my auto narratives could be understood and perceived. This provided a sense of how dancers communicate in contemporary choreographic processes in Norway. Incorporating my auto narratives was a reflective process that required me to delve into my previous experiences of communication in contemporary choreographic processes. Given that I took part in the interviews, several narratives had already emerged. However, I considered how previous situations have shaped my understanding of communication and explored them in relation to the two other participants perspectives. I looked for themes within my own stories to truly comprehend my own understandings and started writing it as narratives. I later explored the transcribed interviews to gain a detailed understanding of what was essentially said by the participants, and to discover how my auto narratives could be interpreted in the study together with their experiences. However, including my auto narratives have been a continuous exploration throughout the process as I have remembered new experiences that have provided the study with valuable insights.

Brinkmann and Tanggaard (2012) introduces the analysis process as a way of breaking the features down to reduced fragments and then putting them together as a whole to discover new fundamentals of the study. Brinkmann and Tanggaard (2012) add that the researcher often wants to put elements into different categories depending on their areas of interests. I consequently conducted a thematic analysis to structure and categorise the data from the two interviews and my auto narratives. Thematic analysis is, according to Scharp and Sanders (2019), a qualitative method to identify and examine designs within the data collection. In thematic analysis the researcher needs to emphasise if and how a

set of information answers the research question in a significant way, rather than concentrating on the amount of data (Scharp & Sanders, 2019). Braun and Clarke (2006) have made a step-by-step guide on how to conduct thematic analysis that I chose to follow in my analysis phase. The step-by-step guide claims that the researcher should 1) get familiar with the collected data, 2) generate codes, 3) search for themes, 4) evaluation of the themes, 5) describe and label the themes and 6) produce a report and create a write-up (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). I found it challenging to follow the guide mechanically. Therefore, I explored the guide in an adapted and appropriate way so that I could discover key findings from the two semi-structured interviews and my auto narratives. Further elaboration on my use of the step-by-step guide is explained underneath.

After doing the interviews I transcribed them, as mentioned above, so that I could thematize the data to obtain a better overview of the material. I broke down the interviews into smaller pieces, by structuring aspects of communication into themes of language-based dialogue and kinesthetic dialogue that I found significant for this research. I looked at how verbal and non-verbal communication is seen from both the participants and my own's perspective by looking at our collective choreographic processes. Belotto (2018) mentions that by coding the data with labels, he manages to discover patterns that directs his data into groups of categories. Similarly, to what Belotto mentions here, I made one category for each new feature that I discovered. I had one word document for each interview to always remember who each statement came from. I kept repeating this process until I could no longer uncover any new data that was interesting for this research regarding communication in contemporary choreographic processes. I likewise analyzed the auto narratives that occurred from studying the interviews. I deliberated how my experiences companion the two other participants understandings of communication in addition to my own responses from the interviews. By investigating the data from the interviews several times, I ascertained additional in-depth information regarding the research question. The ethnographic and autoethnographic approach have given the study a nuanced understanding of how dancers in choreographic processes in the Norwegian contemporary dance field communicate. The methodologies also enlighten cultural and social characteristics of communication that shape and support the developments of contemporary choreographic processes. The following section looks at the ethical considerations that was reflected upon to enable a safe research project.

3.2.5 Ethical considerations

The research project was approved by the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) and NSD. This approval was gained before the interviews were arranged and conducted.

Several ethical concerns were considered in advance and throughout the entire process of the research. The participants were asked to be a part of the study through a written consent form. Their participation was entirely voluntary, and they could withdraw from the study when the research was still in progress without a particular reason to do so. The questions and topics discussed in the interviews allowed the participants to share experiences in a way that was open and conversational. Nevertheless, the interview questions were made to reflect and to share personal perspectives on communication in choreographic processes. The questions required an open dialogue in which the participants could also be critical to the questions raised, and their individual and honest

opinions was vital for the study. The questions could, however, potentially provoke the participants to reflect and distribute experiences they were not comfortable with sharing. It was therefore essential with a voluntarily contribute and to allow the participants to affect the directions of the interviews through the semi-structured interviews.

The participants identities are anonymous, and I am avoiding using their real names and qualifications. It is only the participants career experiences from choreographic processes in Norway that are being shared, yet in a respectable and confidential way. The participants have pseudonyms which will keep their identities concealed yet guide the reader with a continuity in their reading of the text.

The two participants were given the opportunity to read and comment on the transcribed interviews before I started the analysis phase of my research. I did so to make sure that there was no misunderstandings or statements that the participants did not agree with. It was vital in which their accurate experiences were preferred for this thesis to get a clear understanding of the material. Besides, the participants viewpoints could have changed during the process, and it was essential to allow them to go through it before it potentially would be used in my analysis part of the study.

The data material is stored safely. I used the app "Diktafon" to record the interviews which sent the tape to my NTNU student account, where a password is needed for access. The written interview transcripts are securely saved on my laptop, which also require a personal password to enter. The consent forms are stored separately from the data on the same laptop. The material is saved for as long as the master project is ongoing and will be deleted when the research process finishes. The next section explains the challenges and limitations that occurred during this research period.

3.2.6 Challenges and limitations

Some challenges and limitations did occur in this research project. Prior to the research process I was aware of some challenges and limitations, such as the ones mentioned in the section of ethical considerations. However, some additional difficulties did emerge during the process. A challenge for this study was the participants relationship to me as the researcher. While this did not seem to be a particular problem, it was indeed an issue that deserved attention. Given that the participants have known about my interest in communication in choreographic processes in advance of the research, their answers might have been affected to some extent. Therefore, the participants might have responded with what they consider useful information rather than their true opinions. However, I additionally experience their relationship to me as the researcher as advantageous in which their trust in me gave them an opportunity to share their authentic viewpoints. My objectivity as a friend, colleague and researcher was hence challenging to differentiate.

Coleman's (2018) arguments regarding challenges within collective processes when it comes to styles of leadership, as mentioned previously in the literature review, was another challenge with this study. I believe that the participants did not want to assault anyone, and especially not their friends or colleagues, and that it therefore possibly could be challenging to always remain truthful and straightforward in the interview. Perhaps especially if the participants or my own opinions were critical or less approving towards the person attending the interview at that time. I was afraid that the participants found it problematic or awkward to discuss certain situations or aspects of our collective

choreographic processes as they could be afraid to appear negative towards someone else within the group. To respect the participants boundaries and urge to share opinions of our close friendship and collaborative choreographic work, it was sometimes difficult to challenge their responses in a meaningful way. I was clear with the participants that they could be honest in the interviews, but that it also was up to them in what extent they wanted to share their perspectives.

Another possible challenge was my role as an insider-outsider researcher. I was worried that the participants would perceive me as only the researcher rather than an equal participant. It was crucial to contribute to an inclusive atmosphere where the participants got a sensation of being active contributors with me, rather than only being interviewed by an outsider researcher. However, it was additionally challenging for me to separate my own role as the researcher and a participant. Given my experience and interest for communication in choreographic processes, it was challenging to avoid leading the interviews. I had to make sure that I created space for the participants to freely reflect and consider their own perspectives on communication in contemporary choreographic processes.

By researching communication with an ethnographic and an autoethnographic perspective, a limitation might be how the two participants and myself are representing the approaches to communication within contemporary choreographic processes in Norway. How can three contemporary dancers with experience from similar professional choreographic processes contribute to a collective understanding of communication? Denny and Weckesser (2022) argue that qualitative research is about an interest in the participants perspective and experiences, and that semi-structured interviews cover few issues in great depth. Denny and Weckesser (2022) also state that the study sample size of qualitative research tends to be little, and that qualitative data is not fixed or quantifiable. I believe that the two participants and my own experiences are of great value and that our contributions have provided useful knowledge about alternative ways of communication in choreographic processes. Because of the scope of a master thesis, I cannot include many contemporary dancers in the field to achieve a more comprehensive overview of communication. The complexity and depth of the semi-structured interviews can clearly provide sufficient information to be able to explore communication in choreographic processes in an advanced way.

Finally, another limitation might be the country the study is conducted in. Given that the research is emerging in Norway, I can only assume that the findings apply to Norwegian choreographic processes. Even though one participant and I have studied abroad, this does not count as professional experience in this study considering the participants was still dance students.

3.3 Summary

This chapter has offered an outline of the methodology and methods explored in the study. The qualitative approach can give the research valuable insight to understandings and perceptions of contemporary choreographic processes in Norway. I have conducted semi-structured interviews with an interview guide that allowed me to ask follow-up questions whenever needed. This informal structure of an interview contributed to an open and inclusive dialogue that allowed both the participants and me as the researcher to actively contribute. The two participants reflections and my auto narratives have been

considered in the light of communication in choreographic processes within the Norwegian dance field. Furthermore, this chapter has discussed the methodological approach of ethnography and autoethnography. Ethnography has been explored as a way of understanding a groups actions and interactions and refers to the researcher being present and attendant whilst investigating a culture (Johannessen et al., 2010; Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). The ethnographic approach contributes to an understanding of communication forms that evolves in contemporary choreographic processes, and particularly in the processes of three professional contemporary dancers located in Norway. The chapter has additionally discussed autoethnography in which it can capture a vision of my personal understandings and experiences of communication in choreographic processes.

The chapter reflects on my role as an insider-outsider researcher, where I am both a participant and a researcher. With experience as a professional dancer like the other participants I can connect with their understandings and respond to the inquiries raised together with them. Furthermore, I am an outsider as I am the researcher that guides the interviews and the study. The analysis of the data has also been considered in this chapter. The data is transcribed into two separate word documents, one for each interview. The interviews were translated to English in the transcription phase. By following the step-by-step guide of Braun and Clarke (2006), the data has been familiarised and categorised to be evaluated, understood and generated in relation to communication within choreographic processes. Additionally, the ethical considerations have been carefully contemplated to make sure that the research is done in a protected and harmless way. Challenges and limitations of the study have been shared, including expressing the participants relationship to me. Through these considerations I have achieved an awareness of how to conduct a reflective and safe study for all individuals involved.

4 Results, analysis, and discussion

This chapter offers the results, analysis and discussion of the work related to the main research question: How might three contemporary professional dancers experience communication in choreographic processes? In this chapter I present the results, analysis, and discussion in an incorporated way, drawing on interviews with two participants and my auto narratives, along with relevant theory and literature. Craig (1999), as cited in the literature review, claims that communication is about interaction between individuals who subsequently influence each other. I have consequently looked at how dancers communicate with each other, and how they convey creative ideas and movements in a contemporary choreographic process. From following Braun and Clarke's (2006) step-by-step guide on how to conduct thematic analysis, the chapter explores the results that emerged from this. By incorporating and understanding the findings primarily in relation to the communication theories explained in the literature review: social psychology, kinesthetic dialogue and the "Johari window", this chapter grasps several meanings of communication in choreographic processes.

Within this chapter, I first explore communication as an ongoing practice. Within this section I look at vocalization to communicate movement material and the purpose of revisiting the creative ideas throughout the choreographic process. Secondly, I investigate embodied feelings of communication and what can be seen as interactive and non-verbal communication, such as the application of senses, like a glance and tactile communication. Thirdly, I explore what can be perceived as supportive communication in choreographic processes by looking at it from both a dancer's view and a pedagogue's perspective. Furthermore, the same section explores aspects that might affect the communication practices within a dance-making process, such as through the dancers' relations and choreographic work with not just one leader. Finally, this chapter reflects on communication as a term in choreographic education in connection to the above sections. This is to explore how these concepts and ideas might be facilitated and valued in choreographic education.

4.1 Communication as an ongoing practice

Communication appears every day in interaction with others and is an ongoing practice that is needed to connect with someone (Østern & Hovik, 2017). To communicate with others in a choreographic process can be fundamental in the collaborative development of choreography. As communication is an everyday ongoing practice, it raises a question about professional dancer's communication practices, and likewise the role of communication in choreographic education. Feldman (1999) suggests that conversation appears amongst or between people, and that some exchange of words in the form of dialogue is required to relate with someone. Feldman's proposal might indicate that words are needed to interact with someone, so to collectively make choreography it might be fundamental to utilize verbal communication. This suggestion can be seen in relation to Craig (1999) understanding of social psychology, in which it looks at individuals' ability to connect and interact with others. It also holds significance in relation to Koca and Erigüç (2020) and Graasvold's (2015) description of the "Johari window". An awareness of social psychology and the "Johari window" can contribute to understanding different peoples' behaviors. This understanding can provide a more fluent and accepting communication practice in which the participants can adapt to the other's needs. Particularly considering that communication is an ongoing practice, this knowledge remains valuable. Furthermore, Raman (2009) mentions that collaboration

processes can shape dancers' understandings of movements and can contribute to improved knowledge in which dancers can explore movements verbally. Raman and Feldman's suggestions might propose that verbal communication is necessary to collaborate choreographically with others.

Leah experiences that dancers "get forced to use language" as she thinks words are needed to communicate creative ideas. From Leah's statement it could be suggested that even though dancers explore several methods to communicate in choreographic processes beyond talking, words can nevertheless be required. Verbal communication might help formulate creative ideas to be understood through a clear and well-defined description. A focused understanding of the creative idea might consequently provide a rich understanding of the choreographic intention and the movement material. Feldman (1999) claims that people taking part in conversations share knowledge, interpretations, understandings, and emotions connected to the chosen topic. Feldman's indication might identify the significance of conversation in collaborative processes and might designate that language contributes to meaning-making, and therefore new-thinking and individuality. Extending on such ideas, Leah mentions that she thinks it is useful to "know where the movements are coming from" and "the thought behind it" when learning a new movement phrase. This might help her engage with the movements in a more emotional and personal way, and to clearly understand the directions and pathways of the movements. Leah also mentions that by knowing what a movement is supposed to express, such as a "painful" experience, it can contribute to a richer understanding of how to achieve that movement. Gaining a sense of how to express a movement might offer distinctiveness and the opportunity to delve into the personal sensation of the movements.

Verbal communication in contemporary dance seems to be useful for idea sharing and for understanding movements. Offering further information than just the right counts of the movements can allow dancers to explore their own versions of the material. Sometimes a movement phrase might simply be communicated as set movement material with no further exploration, however other times it can be based on an embodied experience like Leah mentioned above. Both versions can though be explained through verbal communication. My auto narrative below suggests how movements can be conveyed verbally with an emphasis on the independent interpretation of the movements.

I remember one time when I was learning a choreography in my foundation course. The dance pedagogue chose to make a story out of teaching the dance, where our first meeting with someone new was the origin of the movements. I remember I struggled to memorize all the movements, probably because I was not used to that way of working. However, I remember that the story gave a collective understanding of the choreography, and the intention came more natural to me. The dance pedagogue managed to integrate intention, quality, and movements in the same explanation.

My experience of learning choreography can be considered as comparable to what Leah shared regarding the use of language in choreographic processes. A collective understanding of the choreography's intention might contribute to a shared interest and enthusiasm towards the creative idea and the generated movements. Even though my experience above might indicate a less regulated description of how to do the movements, utilizing storytelling might encourage a changed and refreshing reaction.

The storytelling practice might consequently provide an understanding of the choreography's purpose and dynamics, simultaneously as recognizing the actual movements. The dancer's previous life experiences might affect how they embody a sensation and how they explore the feeling of, for instance, "painful" that was previously mentioned by Leah. How dancers' individual experiences from life can affect how they understand something resonates with Giguere's (2011) claim, in which knowledges from diverse areas in life will together create a choreography. Moreover, Calvo-Merino et al. (2006), cited in the literature review, discuss how individuals' understanding of movements will be affected by our previous visual and motor experiences. Subsequently, the dancers' prior experiences of different life situations related to the creative idea can affect how they interact with movements and communicate with each other. It could therefore be understood that the way dancers express themselves through verbal communication in a choreographic process will be affected by the creative idea. This might also influence how others then incorporate the movements into their bodies.

Leah and my own example above, might anticipate that the use of language supports dancers in remembering movements. A verbal exploration of pictures and metaphors to explain movements can provide the dancers with an experience of ownership to the movement material. Only focusing on the same shape of the arm or the direction of the head might be efficient, however, it might not specify how to perform the movements beyond that. Although, some movements might require a straightforward explanation. The next example from Lisa offers a perspective of how verbal communication can be meaningful and advantageous in choreographic education. "There are some things I must say when I teach in choreographic education. Make sure you keep your toes above your knees, for example. Typical technique elements. When you teach students, you must make sure everyone gets it". Verbal communication might be required in choreographic education in which it can support the students' understanding of movements and dance technique. Utilizing verbal communication may provide the students with additional information so that the movements can be experienced as realistic and achievable. Nevertheless, Lisa suggests that dancers "communicate with their bodies in addition to verbal interaction". Harbonnier-Topin and Barbier (2012) support this by arguing that a dance teacher's combination of movement and talking will influence the learners' feeling of integration. Moreover, Lord (1981) states that pedagogues in physical education tend to have approximately the same amount of verbal and non-verbal actions when teaching. Lisa's opinion and Lord's statement might raise the question whether there is a counterbalance between verbal and non-verbal communication in contemporary choreographic processes and contemporary choreographic education as they seem to be supported by each other to express movements and creative ideas in functional and constructive ways.

4.1.1 Revisiting the creative idea

The last section shows how verbal communication is central in choreographic processes. It is therefore relevant to explore how verbally revisiting the creative idea throughout the process might contribute to supportive communication, such as collectively understanding the creative idea. The dancers might then experience a more joint involvement in which the movements are explored through a consistent meaning of the chosen issue. In the context of nursing, Binnewies et al. (2007) argue that the different ideas are being shaped and cultivated during creative processes, and that idea communication is a shown practice during the whole creative process. This might suggest that the creative idea can change and shape throughout the process and is not

essentially established from the beginning. As a choreography might develop from joint reflections and idea-sharing, it could be significant to continuously discuss and define what the topic means and explore how that can unfold into movements. Collective knowledge can be a beneficial source when working on a creative idea, and communication about topics is vital for engagement in the creative practice and idea originality (Binnewies et al., 2007). Binnewies et al. (2007) have studied how taking personal initiative and communicating about ideas can be important for the creative process and for idea creativity. Binnewies et al. (2007) found that the more they communicated about their viewpoints, the more they engaged in the work. So, discussing the creative idea frequently is not only noteworthy to understand the intention of the choreography, but it is fundamental for the dancer's commitment and motivation in which they might get an opportunity to develop innovative and advanced perspectives. Leah reflects on why she finds continuous reflections about the creative idea useful in a choreographic process. She argues that "sometimes we can discuss the topic verbally again to refresh our memories and reflect together. She continues by saying that "you might lose the meaning of the choreography when you get deep into it".

In a longer process of making choreography the intention might get a bit lost in which the idea develops and can accordingly change due to new insights and familiarities regarding the topic. It might therefore be advantageous to revisit the choreographic idea to make sure that everybody has the same understanding of the piece's purpose and to discover other meaningful perspectives about the idea. Leah mentions that the movements can "change their intention" depending on what part of the choreography the dancers chose to use it in. Leah moreover thinks that the verbal reflections are "just words" in which you can "load them with whatever works for you". It could be understood that dancers will interpret the movements in individual ways according to what they believe suit the different parts of the piece, and to distinguish what the intention means to them. Feldman (1999) suggests that conversations between participants can provide answers to questions that are not asked and lead the conversation in new directions. Furthermore, Feldman (1999) has written about the role of conversation in collaborative action research among three groups of teachers. He establishes that the teachers listen to each other and consider what is being said in relation to their own histories, aims and associations (Feldman, 1999). Regular communication considering the creative idea may provide additional inspiration that might contribute to new insights and perspectives of how to perceive the movements. Lisa reflects on the process of decision-making. She highlights her understanding of why exploration of the choreographic idea, through sharing and listening, can be of significance:

We get inspired by each other physically and in the ideas we share. For example, I have this idea or thought, but I think that your idea makes a lot of sense compared to the others. Simply because that person had the best argument in relation to the choreographic topic. But when it comes to the physical part, the part where we move together, we explore more. We can try like this, when you do that, it makes me think about this. We get affected by each other.

Lisa's understanding of decision-making in choreographic processes might propose that by exploring different ideas and thoughts, the dancers can get inspired by each other to uncover advanced and new movements. Consequently, by considering every idea as advantageous or constructive, the participants can exploit the group's potential in the

best imaginable way. Binnewies et al. (2007) claim that people in creative processes might discuss ideas that are already confirmed, but that they might also communicate about an unclear idea and find out more about it by discovering other's ideas to develop a solution. Accordingly, by exploring each other's viewpoints the dancers might discover distinctive and applicable understandings of the creative ideas. Feldman (1999) claims that conversation goes beyond chatting in which a conversation has direction that is reliant on the understandings that emerges among the individuals as they converse. The dancers might experience a feeling of engagement and contribution when speaking about the creative idea with others. So, by discussing and reflecting together, original ideas and perceptions can transpire. The process of producing choreography can then grasp new levels of knowledge and expertise. Leah highlights how she experiences conversations throughout the choreographic process. She mentions that it allows her to discover her individual voice in the piece:

To interpret movements is what I really like about contemporary dance because I can put my own value into whatever I am doing. Or my language into what I learn of movement material. I don't like it when it is very set, like this movement is on this count and this arm is supposed to be completely straight. Sometimes I feel like I am losing my voice when we perform a piece especially if it is a choreography of only set and structured movements.

Leah's statement could suggest that the dancer's autonomy must be valued. Systematic discussions about the creative idea should be prioritized to constantly develop and uncover the topic's significance. In accordance with Deci and Ryan's (1985) autonomy orientation, the experience of choice fosters a feeling of autonomy, which can provide inspiration to find a creative solution. If the dancers experience autonomy in the choreographic process, the piece might be valued in a different way as both the purpose and the movements may be more cherished and natural to the dancers' bodies. Another approach to allow personal interpretation of the movements is the exploration of vocalization to communicate movements. Vocalization might give an indication of the movement's purpose and character and might therefore be a vital tool in explaining movements to others. Therefore, I will now discuss how vocalizations can supplement communication with words in choreographic processes.

4.1.2 The feeling of "blah" – Exploring vocalization

The exploration of vocalization to communicate may be an important aspect of communication in choreographic processes in which it might offer new ways of describing and understanding both movements and creative ideas. Keevallik (2021) indicates that vocalization in a dance class is applied to teach movements. Vocalization might, for instance, signify the experiences of embodied sensations and offer tools on how to provide and receive new information. Therefore, it is interesting to uncover examples on how dancers in choreographic processes communicate through vocalizations, in which it appears important and functional in providing understanding of movement materials. Keevallik (2021) found in his study regarding vocalizations in relation to teaching dance that the teachers were expressing a sound during a longer hold of a movement to amplify its length of duration. The use of sound can help the students understand the tempo of the movements, and then possibly memorize it in a better way. Keevallik (2021) confirms this in stating that sounds are used to accompany the students with remembering movements, by which vocalizations can be a useful mnemonic tool. The use of vocalization seems to be a significant tool to communicate structured movements that

are yet open for interpretation. Vocalizations can encourage a feeling of the movements rather than conveying the correct way of doing it. In my auto narrative below, I reflect on my experience of the use of vocalization in hip-hop class. Although my example is situated in hip-hop class, it might resonate with contemporary choreographic processes. This might be because vocalizations can be used to explain movement dynamics and other characteristics, as well as assisting the dancer to memorize the movements. This is applicable in contemporary choreographic processes as well.

In hip-hop class, for example, I often feel a bit lost, simply because it is not the style I am trained to do and because I sometimes find it challenging when it comes to the use of the music. However, I do appreciate how the pedagogues utilize sound to explain the quality and length of the movements. For instance, the teacher can make five sounds in which one of them indicates a full stop. I can sometimes do that when I teach as well. I can hold a sound for a longer or shorter period so that the students understand my use of the music. And especially if the counts are very challenging or fast. This helps me explain the movement and the timing, as well as giving me another way to remember the movements dynamics when I do class myself.

The use of sound supports me in connecting my bodily movements to my intellectual activities through an internal dialogue. Not only because it supports a specific feeling of what the movement is communicating, but as it can suggest a physical action of the body. Keevallik (2013) mentions that embodied demonstrations are frequently supplemented with vocalizations in dance classes, such as singing, clapping, counting rhythms to demonstrate timing, accents, and characters of the movements. In collaborative choreographic work this might transfer to another dancer by means of offering an embodied experience. The use of vocalization may generate a more embodied feeling of the movements as it can give an improved sensation of what, for example, the power and characteristic of the movement is. This can essentially relate to Keevallik's (2021) understanding of the use of onomatopoeia.

Onomatopoeia can be a way of explaining movements, such as a shish sound when sliding on the floor, referring to the authentic sound a slide creates when in contact with the ground (Keevallik, 2021). How the slide is described can affect the movements dynamics and control, and the use of voice volume might give an indication of how energetically the movement should be accomplished. The dancers might then also discover new movement patterns in their bodies from simply sharing and responding to different approaches of conveying bodily actions. Personally, I sometimes explore the use of sound when teaching dance, to explain a movement in a different way than only using words. This can provide the others with useful and needed information to understand the movements and to be able to explore individuality within the set frames. Keevallik (2021) argues that teaching someone else to feel or experience the same through verbal communication often dissatisfies and does not work as desired. Explaining a movement or telling someone how to express a movement through talking might contribute to confusion in which the dancers' experiences of a sensation can be different. Teaching dancers to feel the same way might therefore not be optimal. Hence, by communicating dance with the use of vocalization together with other communication approaches, instead of only applying speaking, understanding and originality of the movements might appear from allowing individual interpretations.

I once explained a movement to my dance students as a “blah” and showed them a movement “simultaneously as making that sound”. I told them that it is not about exactly where you place your arm, but rather the feeling of “blah” and what that feels like to you. This does not only resonate with Keevallik’s understanding of onomatopoeia in dance, but it also correlates with Yasui (2023) who claims that an instructor for Japanese classical dance synchronized her body movements with sound stretches, tone, volume adjustment and quality of voice. The students found my explanation hard to understand, and I struggled to find the right words to explain this movement because the movements were truly not meant to be clean or symmetrical. Onomatopoeia can provide information that verbal descriptions are unable to manage unaccompanied (Yasui, 2023). Furthermore, I explained the other movements in the phrase in different ways but decided to explore the use of vocalization in the “blah” movement to offer independence and an additional way of interpreting the movements. Lisa responded to my reflection by suggesting that “a dancer can understand a lot of new information from simply hearing the sounds supporting the movements”. This might mean that by using sounds to explain movements, the dancers can discover how to understand information in new and different ways that can possibly benefit their learning of making other’s movements their own.

Lisa imagines vocalizations to be very “typical in dance”, and she argues that “the body just understands it in a strange way”. How a dancer explains a movement to another dancer might be fundamental to how the other person embodies that movement. From a pedagogical perspective onomatopoeia will help students concentrate on the symbolic and aesthetic characteristics rather than just moving their bodies (Yasui, 2023). This can relate to the embodied feelings of communication. For instance, if someone is pushing you from the side, you might fall into a position with that feeling in the body, in which it can provide a more realistic sensation rather than a fixed shape. What happens then? What response do the dancers get in their bodies? I will now discuss physical responses within non-verbal communication and explore how the embodied feelings of communication can be understood and experienced within contemporary choreographic processes.

4.2 The embodied feeling of communication

An embodied feeling of communication can include both verbal and non-verbal communication, however it is a way of communicating through physical understandings of movements and what is happening in the space. This chapter though mainly explores the use of non-verbal communication as embodied communication to grasp how dancers can communicate beyond using words in choreographic processes. As mentioned previously, Roche (2018) suggests that non-verbal communication is frequently used in the process of making choreography. From this I understand embodied communication as an exploration of diverse approaches towards recognizing the use bodily senses. Dancers know what is expected of them when it comes to meeting, cooperating, and dancing with somebody non-verbally (Rustad, 2020). Instead of communicating in a literal way, embodied communication might be perceived from the dancers trained social skills and hence their bodily understandings of what others communicate. Berg’s (2021) communication theory regarding kinesthetic dialogue have provided an understanding of embodied communication by examining how individuals can respond to each other through non-verbal communication. The communication theory about kinesthetic dialogue have truly given this section an attentiveness towards the transfer of skills and

artistry that can arise through non-verbal communication in choreography making. Rustad (2020) argues that due to the socialization of contact improvisation movers, they are able to connect through physical touch because of similar knowledge and experiences from dance. In the auto narrative below, I reflect on my experience of how dancers can communicate through physical contact in contemporary choreographic processes without using verbal communication to do so:

In lifts, you meet someone, and you must communicate. Ok, I have got you now, or I don't. And you need to identify that without talking. I can feel it in my body when we are in the right position for the lift or not.

The embodied feeling of communication can be a way of collaborating with others. It might include responding to others by understanding their use of, for instance, physical touch or glance. Davies and Leach (2022) claim that dance making is a process of exploring concepts, feelings, space, and time, and consequently undertake that sharing of dance knowledge is happening through non-verbal communication. How do dancers share expertise and information if it is happening through a non-verbal approach? Leah though reflects on embodied communication, where she refers to the use of images to provide a collective understanding, such as stating "we are in space" or "there is cotton between us". Yasui (2023) suggests that it is significant to provide the dancers with features of the movements driven by emotions or images. Although Leah's suggestion and Yasui's (2023) claim does not necessarily relate to non-verbal communication, images might provide an embodied understanding of the movements. Enabling dancers to visualize a sensation associated with a previous experience, can facilitate embodied communication. Embodied communication is explored in this thesis as a way of understanding communication between dancers in choreographic processes beyond just talking about movements and creative ideas. Below the research goes deeper into discussing embodied communication by exploring senses such as glance and tactile communication. The first sub-section is exploring the use of senses as non-verbal communication and discusses the embodied ways of understanding communication in contemporary choreographic processes in relation to that.

4.2.1 [An exploration of sensory communication](#)

To communicate in choreographic processes, other communication forms than just verbal dialogue may be required to define, understand, and respond to creative ideas. When learning a new movement phrase, dancers might apply several senses to interpret it accurately in their bodies. To be conscious about spacing, physical touch, timing, and impulsive changes, can be examples of why all human senses might be vital when it comes to communication in contemporary dance. The skin is, for instance, one of the most central intelligences of the human's sense organ, and it is often taken for granted (Lafrance, 2018). So, how can the skin help dancers communicate? Vionnet (2021) refers to her experiences of contact improvisation and mentions that she learned to expand her attentiveness between the front and the back to notice where other dancers were in the space. Dancers might have the unique ability of bring attention towards the space and subsequently perceiving what is happening anywhere the eye cannot grasp. As a professional dancer, I have often explored how I can connect with the other dancers without physically seeing them, to notice what the other dancers in the room are doing. I have then recognized that I must apply supplementary methods of attention, such as sensing with my skin.

Contact improvisation dancers can recognize what is happening and adjust themselves even when being upside down, as well as sensing the others and still stay aligned (Rustad, 2020). This statement might evidence the importance of understanding embodied communication in contemporary choreographic processes to enable an awareness of the other dancers when required. I have reflected on being connected to myself as an important aspect to how I connect and respond to the other dancers:

What you do affects everyone. And I think in relation to the beginning of a process, that being in contact with myself also affects how I can connect with you. Because if I am not able to breathe, especially when you two (Lisa and Leah) do your lift and I pull out for a moment and I after a while approach Lisa, I need to be attached to myself to do that. If not, it doesn't make sense for me to approach her, and I will not meet her physically in the same way. Then it will only be choreographic, and nothing more to it.

My auto narrative might propose the significance of being in communication with ourselves whilst moving. By being connected to our own understandings of the creative idea, dancers can explore the different senses of the body to connect with others both supportively and authentically. This can be understood from the perspective of social psychology (Craig, 1999) and the "Johari window" (Koca & Erigüç, 2020; Graasvold, 2015). A situation like the one described above might encourage the dancers to understand each other's dynamics and interpersonal connections to communicate in an efficient and understandable way. Vionnet (2021) claims that she has learned how to accomplish several fundamentals of dance simultaneously in which she, for instance, manages to listen whilst moving and receiving while giving. To communicate with others in a choreographic process it can be vital to cognitively recognize what the group needs in that moment, which might mean that dancers apply respective senses to communicate as a group. Rustad (2020) argues that bodily knowledge is required to do a lift in dance. This makes me think that a dancer with embodied understandings of dance will most likely sense when the partner has found a suitable position to accomplish the move without losing valued bodily contact. Previous experience from tactile communication in dance and competence to explore physical touch might have contributed to enhanced embodied expertise.

Dancers might read each other's purposes before the movement itself unfolds in which the dancers need to apply a constant attentiveness towards listening with tactile communication (Rustad, 2020). The use of tactile actions may be an important element in recognizing each other whilst moving and moreover understand the meaning of a touch to respond in a functional way. Leah reflects on her understanding of tactile communication in dance and how she experiences the impact of a physical touch:

I think it is a tension we get, in which our bodies lock if something is not right. I am thinking particularly about that rehearsal for Olivia's choreography, where we were lifting each other across the floor...it was a lot of communication. You could feel when you got a heavy hand on your shoulder, and you knew that you needed to be steady. Because something might be wrong behind me, and it is important that I am as secure as possible. But if you receive a hand that is completely controlled, I think you can be more flowy and approaching in your body.

Leah's suggestion that the weight of the touch can influence how another dancer responds might resonate with my auto narrative above. The way a dancer approaches another dancer can affect the physical responses emerging. A physical touch can provide a lot of information, as the weight of the touch can indicate what role the dancer wants to take (Vionnet, 2021). Perhaps a heavy touch can signify a manipulative approach whereas a calm touch can be more inviting? The tension in the body may indicate if the dancer is ready to do a lift or not, in which people may tend to get inflexible or rigid in the body if they are not physically prepared. Receiving a calm response from another dancer might signify a more approaching and cooperative understanding of the collaborative movements. The load of the touch that Leah is talking about can be a suitable example of why sensing with the skin can be significant in contemporary choreographic processes, particularly to enable valid and helpful non-verbal communication. Furthermore, in choreographic education the physical touch might signify what the student needs to adjust or what the student is doing well, possibly depending on the weight or accent of the touch. As much as contemporary choreographic processes might involve physical explorations to discover new movement material, the development of a choreography may not always develop from that. In the auto narrative I share below, I reflect on a contemporary dance practice that I was previously in, where the process of generating movement material was different to how I am used to working:

I have also been in a process where I simply received all the movements, and I feel like that is unusual in creative processes. This process was a bit different to how the three of us work. We create everything together and reflect as a group, and we do creative tasks. Such as, what do you need from me here, and what if we do or think like this? I think that we also communicate physically in a lift, in which we must consider what works and not, and adapt to the other person's body. Without saying anything, you just do it. But when you just receive movements like I did in this process it becomes a completely different way of working together. It is more like copying.

Copying of movements may often be seen in choreographic education, however copying can also be explored in professional choreographic processes where the dancers are, for instance, teaching each other new movement material. Copying movements might contribute to a more efficient process in which movements are simply being taught. Dimitrakopoulou (2022) claims that copying is noticeable in the arts, where it in dance is seen as a way of copying the "demonstrative body" to produce highly skilled dancers. This might indicate the importance of copying in choreographic education, in which dance students are still learning techniques and might need to use their glance to understand it in their own bodies. However, the practice of copying may decrease the feeling of autonomy and the opportunity to experience exploration of movements. Besides, the movements might appear differently in everyone's bodies and therefore provide a reduced sense of achievement. However, like Dimitrakopoulou, Raman (2009) essentially argues that demonstration and copying is a frequently applied method in teaching dance technique. Further, Raman (2009) suggests that demonstration and copying is found to be successful and efficient in novice dancers in which it offers a lot of information about a movement. It also generates an intellectual understanding of the movement that can be explored when the dancer is self-regulating the achievement of that skill (Raman, 2019). Similarly, Berg (2021) mentions that the utilization of demonstration can be a way of emphasizing musicality and quality of the movement material. Dancers might need to pay attention to different features and details of the movements to be able to understand

them and interpret them in their own bodies. My auto narrative below gives an example of how to demonstrate and copy movements in choreographic processes.

I can show on my own knees and indicate the turned-out movement. Last time I was teaching, I did a warm-up where I did different movements across the floor, and they had to follow. They just had to pick it up. I demonstrated, they acted.

Comparably to me, Leah shared one of her experiences from the dance studio where she was demonstrating a handstand to the students in two different ways so that they could observe and understand how to accomplish the movement in an efficient way.

I can occasionally, when we move across the floor, stop the music, and demonstrate what they do and what I want them to do. So, they can see the difference. For instance, a handstand across the floor. How they are not supposed to lead the arms from over the head to the floor, but that they are supposed to come from below and along the floor. I stop the music to demonstrate and then they are like, "I get it".

The practice of demonstrating the handstand might be a way of forcing the students to reflect on their own embodied knowledge. Both my own and Leah's example of how to explore demonstration and copying, might indicate how copying can offer exploration and individuality. Through demonstration without simultaneously using verbal communication, the dancers might find their own ways of doing the movements. However, this way of exploring demonstration and copying in choreographic processes might still lack the physical explorations of formations, timing, lifts, and other interactional work, and perhaps focus more on doing identical movements. This section has explored the use of senses as communication in choreographic processes. The next section will discuss tactile communication as a way of interacting in contemporary choreographic processes. This section particularly investigates how sensing with the skin can be used to communicate information that can contribute to understanding and recognition in collaborative work with physical contact.

4.2.2 Tactile communication

The use of tactile communication can potentially provide dancers with a different kind of understanding of the movement material. It is interesting how a dancer can push another dancer's hip or pull someone's arm and receive a bodily reaction from that. The dancer might also communicate back by responding to that push, and the dancers are subsequently in constant communication. Berg's (2021) communication theory about kinesthetic dialogue highlights the unique opportunity to dialogue through movement, fostering an interesting perspective on tactile communication. Tactile communication can be useful in dance education to make the students, for example, understand where to place the head, but it can also be applicable in many ways in choreographic processes, like exemplified above. In contemporary choreographic processes, tactile communication can be used to collectively figure out how to do movements and to explore tasks where physical contact is a suitable tool. This ability to collaborate can contribute to a unique presence and consideration of how to move and interact with others. Giguere (2019) argues that working tactilely with colleagues can strengthen the connection between the dancers. Tactile communication can make individuals familiar with each other and perhaps contribute to building trust in the choreographic process.

There are several ways of exploring tactile communication both in professional choreographic processes and in choreographic education. Tactile feedback for dance students will help dance pedagogues transfer and receive useful information, to make students conscious of their alignment and to support students when learning something new (Giguere, 2019). Even though professional dancers are not mainly supposed to learn elements like these from each other, tactile communication can provide a deeper understanding of physical contact in relation new movement materials and collaborative work. Based on direct observations and interviews in a project regarding embodied knowledge through silent dance pedagogy, Berg (2021) states that the teacher's use of tactile correction originate from the teachers own dance training. So, how a dancer or dance pedagogue explores tactile communication can be influenced by their experiences as former dance students. From experiencing and learning that tactile adjustments are common in choreographic education, a dance pedagogue might pass this on to both teaching and professional choreographic processes. Keevallik (2021) states that teachers describe, simplify and correct movements, however temporalities and power of the muscles can not only be described in words. Feedback through bodily corrections might include communication in dance in the same sense as speaking, although perhaps in a more artistic way. Below, I have shared how physical touch in choreographic education, from my experience, contribute to the students understanding of how to do a movement with the accurate intention and sensation:

Students can do the movement, but then it doesn't work for them, simply because they don't understand what I am trying to accomplish with the movement. So sometimes I can do it with one of them just so that they can physically sense how the movement is supposed to feel. Or I can lift or push, or whatever it is. For instance, if they do a leg swing exercise, I can give their knees a little push so that they get a feeling of collapse. I can also talk to them while I do it, however the intention is the sensation of the movement.

Giving the students the opportunity to physically experience a movement with a touch, such as an impulse or an elongation, might provide an increased understanding of how the movement should feel and consequently how the movement should be accomplished. Tactile communication in education might also be seen as a simple touch of, for example the back, to emphasize where a movement is coming from. Rustad (2020) suggests that sensation is close to communication, however sensation in bodily connections is based on kinesthetic perception and has therefore a changed kind of approach compared to verbal dialogues. So, by exploring tactile communication through offering the dance students or dance colleagues a sensation to work with, such as the push I mentioned in my auto narrative above, the movements might be interpreted and understood in a different way. However, Berg (2021) has found that several students experienced being forced into positions through these tactile corrections, and that the teacher expected the students to have the ideal physicality. Nevertheless, Berg's article refers to ballet pedagogy and the use of tactile communication in contemporary choreographic education and creative work might be experienced differently.

I must admit that I have experienced being forced into positions in contemporary dance technique class as well. Though that may not contemplate with a choreographic process where there might be an emphasis on the more exploratory aspects of dance, such as through collaboration and interpretation of ideas. Berg (2021) also states that some

students found tactile corrections effective in which the teacher assisted their understanding of how to do the movements, and that some students found physical adjustments less applicable as they struggled to comprehend and interpret the movements by themselves. The dance pedagogue should not touch students if they do not want to and for several reasons rather not force the students into positions. Giguere (2019) claims that forceful tactile feedback can give an idea that the pedagogue oversees the student's bodily actions, and it will decrease the students feeling of independence. The dance pedagogue might need to explore what is functional for each student and discover ways to approach them with tactile feedback, in which tactile communication might sometimes be essential to explain and illustrate movements. However, this exploration must be carefully considered so that no harm is done. It is essential to be aware of the use of tactile communication, both in professional choreographic processes and in choreographic education, in which it should be an approving and constructive experience rather than providing a feeling of worry and stress. In addition, regardless of age and experience, dancers should be offered a feeling of autonomy and acceptance, and an opportunity to have an opinion and say no on behalf of themselves. Without this, the choreographic process may be rigid, damaging and have reduced efficiency.

As a professional dancer operating close with other performers, and especially as a dance pedagogue, I find it relevant to discuss the use of tactile communication in dance. I find it essential to ask students if it is fine that I physically touch them to help them understand, and my experience is that this often is accepted by the student. Nevertheless, people are different and tactile communication might potentially be problematic for someone. A gentle touch can even be triggering for some students if they previously have experienced trauma, and a dance pedagogue should therefore always ask themselves "why am I touching?" (Giguere, 2019). Being attentive towards why a touch is utilized might prevent unnecessary tactile communication and hence contribute to trust and confidence in the dance class. If tactile feedback occurs under considerate and skilled conditions, it can contribute to reduced anxiety and strengthened empathy (Giguere, 2019). This might mean that tactile communication can be beneficial for dancers if it is explored with sensitivity and done because it truly will supply the choreographic process with valuable information. Vionnet (2021) mentions that hair, hands, and neck often are considered more private areas of the body than the back, shoulders, and legs. However, Vionnet (2021) adds that dancing with someone on a regular basis where a trustful correlation is established, she tolerates more tactile communication as she distinguishes the authentic intentions for every bodily touch.

A trustful relationship can be crucial both as a professional dancer and as a dance pedagogue in which it can provide a calmer atmosphere where everyone is conscious of every individual's limitation and aims. In choreographic processes dancers might operate close to each other, and several intimate movements might be investigated for the choreography. Not everyone might be comfortable with this, and it can be essential to always ask for consent to make sure that no one is experiencing stress. Feeling stressed and being uncomfortable in the choreographic process because of tactile communication can potentially provide a tension in the body and perhaps a reduced feeling of creativity. Dancers should appreciate and respect other dancers' expectations and understandings of physical contact in contemporary dance. By doing so, the choreographic process might be experienced as more effective and nourishing for every individual. Leah refers to her experience of the instinctive aspect of tactile communication as a collaborator. She also

reflects on how she can contribute to the most managing and best achievable experience for everyone:

Yes, and I think you as a dancer experience that early when working with physical contact. Like last time, when I did that lift with Lisa when we were filming the piece. I could feel that, no, she is not in the accurate place. So, I decided to not let go of her hand when I was supposed to. Even though I probably could have let her go and it could have worked out fine, I just felt like there was something a little off. And I experience that I notice this more and more, as the more we have worked together, I can sort of feel what the group needs. Does the group need stillness or energy? What do we need so that we can land what we are doing together.

Leah's reflection regarding not being in the right place in a lift, may resonate with Vionnet's (2021) statement about how contact improvisation is based on non-verbal communication where dancers sensitive and attentive sides are the only channels of communication. Leah chose to stay in the lift, possibly to get into the correct position, which was communicated to Lisa only through physical touch. Perhaps Lisa was listening with embodied knowledge and noticed an extension in her arm from being held or from precipitously being in a stable position. This exclusive way of communication relates to Berg's (2021) understanding of kinesthetic dialogue and how to give and receive response without using words to do so. Tactile communication can accordingly facilitate different and original ways of understanding new embodied information. A dancer adapts to a partner's shape, and this experience provides information regarding grounding, support, individuality, and intention (Vionnet, 2021). Tactile communication can provide information about other's invitations and intentions with the movements. Dancers might regulate and change their movement shapes to be able to physically collaborate with other dancers. Rustad (2020), similarly to Vionnet (2021), mentions that the dancers interactionally reply to the alterations appearing in the other's body and adds that this shared understanding often transpires simultaneously as the changes evolves. So, dancers must always be attentive and prepared to acclimatize their movements in correlation with others, in which the movements change and develop in that moment. Being attentive to the other dancer's shapes and structures might thus challenge the dancers' own habits and expected ways of moving, and subsequently mature their movement patterns. My auto narrative below shares my experience of adapting to other dancers' movements. I discuss how I consider and reflect upon going into a physical interaction with another dancer:

I'm trying to approach someone when I feel like it is a good moment to do so, and I feel like I need to hurry before the other person moves on to something else. Or I feel like I am always alert, I am always attentive. Not to get the correct response, but so that whatever I am trying to communicate is noticed somehow. Because if I approach you and you move before I get there, I have tried to accomplish something that didn't work. I am always asking myself, is this the right time to do it? What does the choreography need? Because that is often what we do in different exercises.

My auto narrative may indicate how timing and response is meaningful when it comes to physically engaging with other dancers. It can be challenging to understand someone else's actions before they occur. Dancers may gather a lot of useful information by

sensing what is about to happen through tactile communication. The dancers can consequently provide physical impulses to each other. However, the segment before physical contact arises, like I am discussing in my auto narrative, can offer challenges such as solely predicting what is about to happen. In the next section I am therefore curious about the exploration of glance in contemporary dance as an additional characteristic of non-verbal dialogue in choreographic processes.

4.3 Glance as communication

Leveraging off the ideas of what the embodied and tactile communication might offer in contemporary choreographic processes, the use of glance is perhaps also important to consider and emerged as a theme within the process of analysis. Glance may signify a unique attentiveness in which the dancers can remain connected and present as one unity. Drawing upon the "Johari window" (Koca & Erigüç, 2020; Graasvold, 2015) and its perspective on understanding individuals' emotions and needs, it can enable useful knowledge when it comes to interpreting someone else's meaning and communication through glance. Glance might be an approach to listening and being responsive to each other in a choreographic process. Glance directions and eye contact are examples of socially significant information sharing in which it can provide information regarding warnings, combined attention, and the capability to understand and calculate someone's actions (Evola & Skubisz, 2019). Accordingly, glance can be a vital element when it comes to interactional work. Glance might provide information that can be required when communicating without using words. Consequently, the use of glance can be significant when learning a new movement phrase, and especially when dancers must spontaneously synchronize their timing and actions whilst moving. Leah revealed one of her experiences from performing on a dance festival with me where we forgot the choreography and had to find solutions together on stage without being able to discuss them verbally:

As a dancer you can sort of not say anything unless it is choreographed. During that dance festival, and the communication that occurred with our eyes has burned into my memory. I understood the moment we came towards each other, and I saw you, that we had messed up. We just had to deal with it.

Leah reflects on how verbal communication might not be used in a choreography unless it is choreographed, and therefore suggests that glance can be a meaningful communication tool. Personally, I remember that the way we looked at each other indicated that we made a mistake in the dance, and I could similarly to Leah realize our mistake by just making eye contact with her. How we utilized our glance as a communicational device was fundamental for how we understood each other. From seeing each other and realizing what was wrong, we collectively explored our glance to communicate and then together found a solution of how to get back to the original choreography. From knowing Leah well, I immediately recognized the choreographic mistake we had just made. This might propose that from having a deep familiarity with one another, it can be easier to understand each other's communication through glance. From the experience of working collaboratively together over time, we might have developed an ability to read and understand each other's glances. Evola and Skubisz (2019) have found that professional performers intend to transpire into "performance mode" when doing an improvisation task in which they have embodied social cognitive

skills to communicate in silence. Dancers might have social cognitive skills that contribute to the understanding of what is happening in a space without using verbal communication. This might indicate that by being experienced in choreography as a non-verbal practice, Leah and I managed to find our way through the choreography together, using glance in this case.

Evola and Skubisz (2019) state that movements of the eyes or around the eyes can communicate information to another individual, both intentionally and inferentially. It can be challenging to describe what contributes to a dancer's understanding of glance. However, a glance may be an indicator of the embodied skills that have developed over years of dance training and experience, as seen from the examples above. Leah shares a narrative from another performance she was a part of, where she explored glance several times during the choreography to communicate with the other dancers:

I can link it to a performance I was just in because there was a lot of communication on stage that was non-verbal because we included performers that had never been on a stage before. I communicated a lot with eye contact, like across the stage, such as "are you ready?". And I did this so many times that it became a cue because when I look at you and I get up, you are joining me. When I do not look at you anymore, you are not walking with me. But it was like a score, so even if you had tasks to do in the choreography you could improvise a lot within those frames. We could, for example, look at each other to indicate what was coming.

Leah's narrative might amplify how contemporary dance consists of several communication forms that might essentially offer another layer to the movements and the dancers' interactions. Leah's example might additionally signify how the use of glance can be more than just a choreographic expression or a way of understanding each other's messages. It makes me reflect on how one dancer's choices might affect the others involved. This can relate to Rustad's (2020) argument that dancers in physical contact may experience making decisions together, as they are being attentive and responsive to each other's choices and actions. Even though Rustad refers to tactile communication, the use of glance might similarly be an approach towards making collective decisions in choreography. For instance, the way I apply glance and choose to move with my dance partner will most likely affect how that person responds, which will hence influence my next action.

Dancers may need to be cautious about how they choose to communicate with their glance to make sure they communicate clear and meaningful messages. Evola and Skubisz (2019) argues that professional dancers prevent unnecessary movements in a collaborative setting to avoid distracting the other dancers, which can contribute to a less noisy body. It might be important to avoid needless movements and expressions in non-verbal communication to connect with the other dancers in a neat way. In this way the choreographic process might be experienced as more established. Skilled decision-making is mentioned by Evola and Skubisz (2019) as an essential aspect of silent communication in improvised dance as dancers can understand how their own actions will affect the development of others' movements and the entire performance. Being able to convey useful information through glance might not only be essential for the dancer receiving the information, however it can also be vital for the choreography's outcome. Glance may therefore acquire consideration in which it may be more significant for the

choreographic process than many dancers realize. The following section will explore how supportive communication can be experienced in choreographic processes and offers examples of how this can be facilitated.

4.4 Supportive communication

I asked the two participants about previous experiences of choreographic processes and if they felt that some of the communication practices was more encouraging and supportive than others. For Leah it seemed that it was fundamental to experience communication as honest and well-defined when it comes to feelings. Leah proceeded to mention a situation in a previous choreographic process where honesty was fundamental for the collaborative process:

I am thinking about that process we had with Caroline, with that lifting phrase across the diagonal. I think someone at one point said that we must move on a little bit. We cannot work with this now because I feel that I can't do it. It is too much criticism, it hurts. I can't do this anymore. If we continue, there will be injuries. And I think that is super important, to say something when that's how you feel.

Leah's suggestion about being truthful about how dancers experience a situation may contribute to clearer communication amongst the dancers, and therefore provide an efficient choreographic process. This could be understood in relation to Graasvold's (2015) understanding of the "Johari window", concerning interpersonal communication. Graasvold (2015) suggests that loyalty and genuineness is fundamental for functional communication in collaboration settings. As the "Johari window" is enlightening an individual's reactions and necessities in a way that it can help dancers understand themselves in relation to other people (Koca & Erigüç, 2020), maintaining an authentic process might contribute to individual growth. Buber (1947) suggests the term 'genuine dialogue' that refers to interpersonal experiences that are recognized by collective openness. Buber (1947) further argues that genuine dialogue is a way of having others in mind, as well as aiming to establish a living mutual connection to them. Buber's understanding of genuine dialogue could support the idea that being honest towards each other in a choreographic process can provide a more supportive and understanding experience. Genuine dialogue may add an additional layer of openness and tolerance, and therefore perhaps a more workable choreographic process. Being authentic requires vulnerability in which the participants present their "real self" and they must be open to change (O'Neal & Hastings, 2019). The ability to authentically communicate may be vital to meaningfully connect with others, and thus to accept alterations and opinions from others.

Leah furthermore states that she thinks it is easy to feel discomfort in choreographic processes but that dancers might want to "please others". Consequently, dancers might continue to do movements that do not feel sufficient to their bodies. When it may feel like the development of the process stops, it might be more efficient to retreat from the problematic sections for a while to provide new motivation and energy. Besides, if a dancer gets hurt there will most likely be a pause in the creative process, even if it is only for a few minutes. Recognizing and accepting everyone's needs resonate with Buber (1947), who states that the most important action in dialogical meetings is to be attentive and responsive towards the other participants This might indicate that a dancer

in a professional choreographic process must acknowledge everyone's needs and listen carefully to their own feelings towards doing the more challenging parts of the choreography.

The pedagogical aspect of contemporary dance may be seen as communication of knowledge and skills. In my opinion, sharing ideas and movements in a professional contemporary dance process is relatable to the way people communicate ideas and movements in choreographic education. Effective communication depends on the mutual knowledge among the dancers and the audience (Hanna, 2008). Dancers in a professional choreographic process may share knowledge regarding the creative idea, and even on how to do a jump or a lift. Sharing different movement materials can be a way of conveying knowledge and inspiration. Barr (2004) however argues that shared knowledge is not necessary to establish worthy communication methods. Shared knowledge in a creative process may though contribute to a more stable and continuous process in which every dancer constantly revises their understanding of the practice, and their communication might therefore be more efficient. There are clearly some disagreements in the literature about the efficiency of mutual knowledge in teamwork settings in diverse fields, though I would think that the dancers shared knowledge can be fundamental for a coordinated and well-established process. Mutual knowledge may help the dancers to better understand what is being discussed and can possibly contribute to explore the different dance sections of the choreography at a deeper level. A professional dance process and choreographic education may include a lot of the similar communication methods as sharing knowledge can be equally significant in both, and I therefore want to look further into how supportive communication can be experienced in choreographic pedagogy.

4.4.1 Supportive communication in choreographic education

This section explores what is experienced as supportive communication in contemporary choreographic education by the participants and in my own experiences. Referring to Buber's (1947) understanding of genuine dialogue from the above section, it might likewise indicate that a dance pedagogue should also reflect on how to attain a realistic and efficient teaching practice by seeing the students' necessities for pauses, such as water breaks or to just allow them to breathe. Seen in relation to Buber's statement, being attentive towards the dance students' needs can be essential to maintain supportive communication in which the teacher have acknowledged the students. Without an engaged dance teacher, communication might not remain resourceful or enlightening. However, what is a 'determined' dance teacher and how can this be seen in choreographic education? Lisa gives an example of how she understands supportive communication in choreographic education. "In dance education it is more like, this is what you are doing, off you go. Rather than, can you try to do this? In dance education you are prepared in a different way than in a professional process".

Lisa's example may suggest that a dance teacher need to be systematized and clear in a different way so that the students can receive relevant and required information rather than spending a lot of time asking questions. Even though asking questions may be a useful experience for dance students, there can often be many students involved in dance education, which hence can influence how the pedagogue will communicate to attain efficiency in the class. However, Lisa's experience with teaching dance might reduce the students feeling of autonomy and the opportunity to explore movements on their own. It might offer an efficient dance class in which she can tell the students what

to do at what time, but it might also be problematic in the sense that the teacher might express and experience a feeling of overseeing the students learning. Lisa's understanding makes me question how a dance pedagogue can be structured and efficient yet offer the students an opportunity to explore and discover how to do movements and technique. In my auto narrative below, I took Lisa's comments as a prompt and reflected on how I work in choreographic education associated to my work as a dance artist alongside other professional dancers:

With you (Lisa and Leah) I reflect a lot more. A lot deeper, on a different level than with my students, which makes sense because of the different aims. With my students it is more like, this is what you do. And I talk more about technical elements in dance. With my students it is like, you stand here, and you do this. It is a completely different way of being clear and my language therefore changes a bit.

Lisa's experience and my auto narrative might suggest that effective communication can be experienced differently in pedagogical settings and in professional processes, and that teaching in choreographic education might simply require a changed level of reflection and attention. Our suggestions might also indicate that this way of working might be efficient for the pedagogue, however less supportive for the students learning. The process of providing supportive communication within both choreographic education and professional choreographic processes might hence not be different, but rather involve different ways of manifesting movements and knowledge.

In choreographic education the students are there to learn dance and the pedagogue might then need to have an intentional and organized plan for the class. This groundwork may contribute to a more resolute way of communicating as the teacher might make decisions without having two or more colleagues to contemplate them with, which dancers in choreographic processes often have. Teaching may require a richer and precise language. A dance teacher might therefore need to be structured and clear, and able to communicate creative ideas and movements successfully by being prepared, comparable to what Lisa indicated. According to Sööt and Viskus (2014) dance teachers tend to mirror what their former dance teachers did. This might suggest that the dancers' experiences from their previous dance training can affect how they teach. It may also indicate that the way a dance teacher communicates with the students may not only affect their learning in that movement, but also how they might end up communicating dance to others in the future. This might also resonate with Lisa's experience with choreographic work in education, as mentioned above, in which she teaches the students what to do rather than exploring movements with them. The students might have diverse desires and requirements, and different approaches to teaching dance might consequently be needed. Besides, telling the student what to do might be how Lisa herself was taught in her dance training. Therefore, she might have continued to work like this with her own students, and they might later do the same. I further asked Lisa how she would have explained a movement phrase to me as I was interested in her practice of "this is what you are doing". Lisa then responded by adding some additional layers to her previous explanation.

I would have gone through the whole thing from beginning to end. By demonstrating the movements and by talking at the same time. Explained what I

am doing and what I think about in each movement. And use some pictures, like metaphors.

Lisa might want to provide her learners with some more information than just the actual movements. Maybe this can be understood as a more supportive way of teaching and learning, in which the dancers can understand the movements in a more advanced way. According to Alaoui et al. (2015) dancers often explore metaphors as a way of explaining movement qualities and dynamics in which, for example, the metaphor of "expanding" suggests an extension of a movement. I can explain movements by saying, for example, "imagine someone is pulling your arm" or "it is like your whole body is filled with water", and by doing so I can see a change in my students' exploration of the movements. By providing dancers with images for their actions, the movements might already be clearer for the dancers, and perhaps easier to physically connect with. This can mean that by contributing to an improved understanding of the movements to begin with, the process of learning choreography can be more efficient. Furthermore, Leah refers to one of her ways of explaining movements in choreographic education and argues that she finds this method useful towards creating a collective understanding of the movements.

I think I have become very aware of; I mean, I have a language to my movements that I bring into both teaching and creative processes. It is the same movements that pop up and I have different set ways to explain the movements in which I know it works. I have a movement that I call "snake", I have no idea where it comes from, but I say it's a "snake". So now everyone knows what a "snake" is.

By describing a movement with a specific name every time might help the students memorize it, and the pedagogue can possibly spend more time emphasizing other noteworthy features in the choreography. Sööt and Viskus (2014) state that the teacher should provide the students with movements that can originate from their bodies and their individualities, and that the movements should only consist of a beginning, an end, or an impact. In relation to Leah's offering this might indicate that by naming a movement, the students may get the opportunity to explore how to do the movement in their bodies with their personal characteristics rather than just receiving a set movement. After some time, the students might recognize the term and then quicker interpret the movements into their bodies. Stevens and McKechnie (2005) claim that ideas for fresh movement phrases come from objects and visualizations that are seen, heard, imagined, said, or felt. This can mean that by using the word "snake", Leah imagines how a snake would move and the students can interpret the movement with deeper understanding as she has selected the name of an acknowledged animal that people can picture in their minds as a prompt. Leah also mentions that her professional experience contributes to how she explains movement, and that she therefore feels like she has achieved stronger communication skills.

You get a confidence after a while when you have experience. You can make decisions in the moment. If you want to explain a clump or a mass formation, you know what to say to achieve that and to receive what you imagine it to be.

By having experience in dance, the dancer may know what to say to attain a preferred action. I can sometimes find it challenging to describe what I imagine the choreography to look like in my head. However, Leah's suggestion about how confidence might

develop from experience may signify that it takes time to develop strong communication where the pedagogue might need to discover what works in that class. This likewise relates to my own perspective of how my professional experience have contributed to how to articulate myself and communicate movements in choreographic education.

I think my ability to reflect upon what I am doing and putting ideas into words has improved. So, just when they ask what the thought behind the choreography is, or why we do the things we do I can answer clearer. To put my thoughts into words is something I have gotten from our contemporary choreographic processes. Because we do a lot of verbal work, not necessarily when we dance but we spend a lot of time discussing and reflecting upon the intention of the dance.

By having experience from being a professional dancer and a dance pedagogue, it might be experienced as easier and more efficient to explain movements and creative ideas. So, from being experienced the dancer might discover specific words that work in the explanations of different movements. Stevens and McKechnie (2005) argue that doing dance involves labeling of movement phrases in rehearsals. This might support the experience Leah and I share about feeling more able to reflect on what we are doing and that we feel it is in turn easier to describe our creative ideas in choreographic education. I have now looked at how supportive communication can be experienced in choreographic education, and I am now curious about how the dancers' relationships can influence the choreographic process.

4.4.2 "Just say it, it's not a big deal" – The impact of dancers relationships

Within the exploration of communication in choreographic processes it has emerged that relationships are significant. The following section will hence explore relationships from the participants' view and my own experiences with it. I am particularly curious about the participants' and my own perspectives of working with friends who are also colleagues. It can be difficult to distinguish the role as a friend and the role as a colleague (Fasbender et al., 2023). As the participants are three friends working together in choreographic processes with no leader, I find it relevant to explore this context, and how this might affect the choreographic process. Pettinger (2005) states that work is vital when it comes to the establishment of some relationships and that friendships within business are fundamental when it comes to outlining work. Pettinger (2005) continues by mentioning that friendships at work can be vital for significant social maintenance and social identity. Although Pettinger is not specifically talking about dancers, I find her suggestions applicable to a dance context. Engaging socially at work can clearly be an encouraging and positive experience for non-dancers and may also be meaningful for dancers in which we use tactile communication and generally operate very close in the dance studio. However, there are some contrasting attitudes towards friendships at work. Pahl (2000, cited in Pettinger, 2005) mentions that friendships at work are simply for convenience and that most friendships end if one of the parties leaves the job. In the context that this research is situated within the participants were friends before becoming colleagues. Besides, because choreographic processes often include tactile communication, as previously mentioned, dancers may achieve close relationships. The more intimate actions of tactile communication might force dancers to get to know each other at a different level. This might resonate with what Vionnet (2021) mentioned about how dancing with someone on a regular basis can establish trust. This can indicate that the relationships between the dancers are essential in initiating a genuine communication practice, and valuable relationships between the participants.

Colleagues who are also friends might discuss creative ideas in unique ways in which the process can involve a more open and authentic communication built on the trust between the participants. For example, if the creative idea is relating to mental health issues, the dancers might be able to have a more honest conversation with friends because they trust each other. In addition, friends might dare to challenge each other more because they know each other's boundaries. Leah debates about how she feels there might be a different approach and tone to the conversations in the choreographic process pendent on the discussion's content. Leah offers the following suggestion.

Try to separate the subject from the person. And be clear about what you want to say. Instead of asking your partner if they can push more. What does that really mean? Are you asking if I can use my arms more to lift myself up so that I can push your hip? If that's what you are trying to say, say it clearly. Or this lift is not working for me. I don't know what is not working, but we need to look at it. And don't be afraid to throw away things that doesn't really work.

Leah's understanding of working with friends can imply that it sometimes can be difficult to be straightforward with each other as friends may be more worried to insult the others. However, Feldman (1999) claims that conversations can bring people closer to each other, as they require the participants to share personal insights, intelligences, desires, and moral attitudes. Feldman's statement might designate that by tolerating conversations about the dancer's necessities or their disagreements, the creative process might essentially achieve increased consideration and attentiveness towards each participant. However, Leah proposes the idea of separating the subject from the person. Is it possible to separate the subject from the person? Considering that the participants are all friends, and have known each other for an extended period, it could be difficult to separate personal perspectives and emotions from work. In collaborative choreographic processes, everyone's individual needs are equally important which might make it problematic to prioritize the subject rather than the people involved. Nevertheless, an awareness towards attempting to separate the subject from the person might contribute to a direct and open communication practice.

Leah additionally mentions that from being colleagues over a long period, she now feels like she can tell Lisa and me when something is wrong. She says that she does not need to "wrap it in" and that the dancers should "practice not being offended by things". Leah continues by stating that she prefers to tell the other dancers what count a movement is on, rather than asking the others what count it is on, as it is more efficient to "just say it, it's not a big deal". So, by being direct Leah thinks that the choreographic process can be more operative and might raise the level of the choreographic process, and subsequently the choreographic result. Lam et al. (2019) refers to employees and managers, but resonates with Leah's experience, and mentions that if the employee is expressing an idea with a direct tone, the information is shared adequately and clearly.

Similarly, to knowing dance colleagues well as mentioned above, knowing the dance students well might contribute to more efficient and supportive dance classes, in which the pedagogue can be able to distinguish what the students are able to accomplish simply by being experienced with the group and trusting the students' skills. Galeet (2012) claims that supportive communication in ballet pedagogy is important to contribute to improved self-awareness and trust in the students' own abilities, and by

acknowledging students, this can be achievable. Although Galeet's views concern ballet pedagogy, the pedagogical aspect of supportive communication can be considered just as important in contemporary dance. Hence, if the dance pedagogue knows the students well it might be easier to help the students develop improved self-awareness. Galeet (2012) argues that the use of language, verbal tones and body language will affect the outcome of the student's confidence and self-esteem. This can indicate that by applying the correct words and other communication forms in pedagogical settings, the pedagogue might get to know the students better, in which they can get an increased trust in the teacher. And from trusting the teacher's comments, the students' confidence and self-esteem may mature. Leah is considering how being a professional dancer can be beneficial for both herself and her students as she knows what a dance career demands. Leah is particularly emphasizing that the dance pedagogue cannot always "hold the student's hand". Leah reflects on how knowing students well can establish a more direct, experimental, and honest communication:

I notice with the oldest students, that by knowing them better I am much more explorative in my classes. That I am more direct and exploratory in my communication to them because we are done with me just teaching them movements. Even though there are still some students I need to do that with, simply because I don't feel like we know each other well enough yet. With some students I can tell them if something is wrong just like that because I know they can do it correctly.

Leah's idea of choreographic work in education could propose that her style of teaching changes as her relationship to the students is enhanced. However, it may be challenging to differentiate her position as a dance pedagogue and the role as a collaborator when working choreographically together with them. Leah's understanding might additionally suggest that direct communication is not only about telling the student what is right and what is wrong, however it might also be a way of being clear of what is expected of them as dancers which might develop their teacher-student relationship. O'Connor (2008) argues that there cannot be a professional growth without a personal development. This may indicate that by developing a well-established relationship to the dance students, the pedagogues teaching practice and therefore communication skills will develop.

Coleman (2018) explains the challenges of establishing leadership in cooperative processes and how the participant's expectations of doing a practice can provide different disagreements. This leads me to wonder how the dancers' relationships might shape a collective choreographic process. Knowing the dancers that I work with contributes to a more relaxed atmosphere in which I experience being calm and self-confident in the choreographic process. I experience that my relationship with my colleagues can affect how I communicate with them. I have experienced being stricter with people I do not know in which I am not afraid to insult them in the same way I am with my friends, however I have also been more careful in how I communicate with others simply because I did not know them and their boundaries. This might suggest that the relationship between the dancers might affect how they articulate themselves and how they manage to communicate with each other, both verbally and physically.

The two participants and myself claim that a leader has not been needed when the three of us work together in choreographic processes, although it is stated by Leah and me that it can be demanding to "separate social activities from work". Pillemer and Rothbard

(2018) claims that having friendships at work will include challenges such as distraction from work related tasks. I recognize that we rapidly can end up talking about yesterday's happenings during a rehearsal, plus discussing choreographic elements at a social gathering, such as in a café. According to Pillemer and Rothbard (2018) challenges as mentioned above can encompass as friends prioritize to preserve a friendship and therefore tend to discuss personal topics that involves giving advice and support at work if needed. This might signify that friends will more often discuss personal inquires at work if necessary to maintain a friendship. Pillemer and Rothbard's claim may also indicate that the transition from personal talk to work discussions can be challenging for friends, in which they must guarantee an appropriate conclusion to their talks. It can though be a suggestion to consider how to devote time conveniently to advantage from the process, both as coworkers and friends.

Leah mentions that if something "feels strange" before a performance, it is needed to talk about it before going on stage. She claims that it "affects how we perform" in which we are "not managing to do everything full out as a group". Continuous communication might be significant to avoid pointless disagreements and tension in the group. There are hence some advantageous of working with friends. Zajac and Hartup (1997) mentions that working with friends supports intellectual functioning. Though Zajac and Hartup's study primary examines children working with friends, the study is relevant as it enlightens benefits of working alongside people we know well. Zajac and Hartup (1997) have, for instance, discovered that friends explored broader, were more task orientated and was more involved in orientated discussions. There might be a difference of children's and adults' behaviors when it comes to working with friends and non-friends. However, Zajac and Hartup's findings might mean that working with friends contributes to more engaged, efficient and motivated work. After exploring the dancers' relationships in collaborative work, the next section will discuss the impact of choreographic processes with not only one choreographer leading the process. This is relevant within the context of me and the two other participants' choreographic work.

4.4.3 Communication between multiple choreographers

Having one choreographer or one person leading the process might be useful as it may allow for a clear leadership hierarchy, and for decisions to be ultimately made by one person. Barsky (2021) argues that the dance maker has the position of authority and that the dancers does the movements the choreographer requests them to do in which there is a respect towards the dance creator. A choreographer can be seen as an observer who apply the movements produced by the dancers, such as considering if the dancer should remain doing that movement or not (Fonseca et al., 2021). The choreographer may make significant decisions and at the same time allow the dancers to explore bodily movements that might later be organized into more arranged phrases by the choreographer. However, by not having one choreographer, but rather a collective choreographic process, the dancers might work in a different way in which their ability to reflect on what is happening may be explored in a new way, such as also considering artistic elements including intention and purposes. A choreographer can also allow the dancers to explore choreographic elements like these. However, in a choreographic process with no leader the dancers are not dependent on the choreographer's decisions on when they might be allowed to explore like this.

Leah mentions that she finds it "easier to work with one choreographer" as the choreographer has some kind of "veto power". She also suggests that the dancers can

then explore more practical aspects, such as finding solutions to do a lift correctly. Another way of working with a choreographer is how the dancers collaboratively understand a creative task, rather than making the artistic choices regarding “why” we do what we do. Leah’s experience might mean that by having one choreographer the dancers can focus on how to do the movements rather than considering the deeper layers of why these movements are included. Having one choreographer does not necessarily mean that the dancers should not reflect on what they are doing, however it might just be a different kind of approach towards emphasizing what the bodies are doing. In these situations, the choreographer might make the final decision of what and why. Dancers face numerous of decision-making situations while creating artwork (Fonseca et al., 2021), and sometimes it might be difficult to make decisions, and especially if every dancer’s opinion must be considered. Leah further says that with our collaborative choreographic processes, it is “not decided who should make the final decisions”. The unique opportunity to engage several dancers’ viewpoints can provide the process with innovative concepts. Lisa offers the following perspective.

For example, when you go into a project where there is someone else leading it, like a choreographer, there must be a communication that goes both ways. That everyone shares individual experiences regarding the topic, or personal thoughts, and you will then get ownership to what you are doing. So, I feel like communication is important for everyone to have ownership over both the process and the choreographic outcome. And I think it is important to clarify the roles of everyone. Like, we have all three been choreographers and dancers, and we have discussed that and what that implies.

Lisa’s experience might mean that the dancers’ opinions should be respected in choreographic processes with one leader, and that this can lead to a feeling of contribution. Lisa also mentions that we have agreed on the roles of being both choreographers and dancers, and this might moreover show that talking about this in advance can be central to attain an effective and advantageous process. Collaboration is a part of dance and dancers contribute to the choreographic processes with their understanding and expertise (Davies & Leach, 2022). By allowing the dancers to create dance collectively might offer an outcome with a distinctive expression than if it was only the choreographer creating the movement material. Different individuals’ ideas and movement patterns might together open for ideas that was not explored before. A collaboration project may contribute to an improved feeling of ownership to the work in which every dancer’s individual ways of moving are implemented and everyone’s knowledge appear to be valued. This resonates with the Deci and Ryan’s (1985) autonomy orientation as mentioned previously in this chapter where the dancers feeling of value from getting to opportunity to make decisions was mentioned. The dancers may consequently develop increased motivation and perhaps advanced bodily physique by the opportunity to challenge what their bodies can do.

Davies and Leach (2022) mention a curiosity about eliminating continuous leadership, and instead benefit from every dancer’s competence. If the dancers get to experience a feeling of value and independence, the group may benefit from everyone’s knowledge and creative minds. So, by not having one choreographer leading the process the dancers may get this opportunity regularly. Davies and Leach (2022) continue with a reflection from their interviews with choreographer Siobhan Davies, where they explain that if somebody is lacking energy or their knowledge is not present in a collaboration

project, another dancer can take the lead for a moment to bring their ideas to the choreography. I understand this as an exceptional way of communicating in a contemporary choreographic process in which the dancers can bring their ideas to the space when it is required, and it might then be desired to realize what the choreography needs and what each dancer can contribute with. Understanding social psychology (Craig, 1999) might contribute to improved recognition of every dancer's individual contribution. It can provide knowledge about how to efficiently interact and understand other people in the collaborative process. Subsequently, without necessarily needing to speak, the dancers might communicate through an understanding of when their and others support is required. I think this is an essential ability to learn already in choreographic education. This can provide an understanding of that everyone's knowledge is required and appreciated in a collaborative process. Therefore, the next section will discuss the significance of communication in choreographic education. The section will offer an investigation of how considerations of communication in choreographic education might be needed to develop future dancers and reflective humans for society.

4.5 Put your ego away – Emerging communication skills

Communication in contemporary choreographic processes can appear in numerous of ways. I have previously reflected upon supportive communication in choreographic education to delve into dance pedagogue's ways of exploring helpful and encouraging communication. However, this section explores the role of communication in choreographic education and why an attention towards communication might be beneficial for dance students in Norway today. I am curious about how dance pedagogues are implementing communication as an aspect of choreography in their classes. Attention towards communication in choreographic education might perhaps provide the students with an improved understanding of the central communication theories for this study: social psychology (Craig, 1999), kinesthetic dialogue (Berg, 2021) and the "Johari window" (Koca & Erigüç, 2020; Graasvold, 2015). An understanding of these communication theories can significantly develop dance students' choreographic processes and their ability to collaborate and communicate with others.

Østern and Dahl (2019), as stated in the literature review, mentions that connections, emotions and communication between the dance student and the dance pedagogue will emerge from a bodily education style and that it will improve the students learning. Even though Østern and Dahl emphasize the teacher-student relation, it might relate to the learning benefits of communication between students as well. By looking at Berg's (2021) exploration of kinesthetic dialogue as a way of understanding non-verbal communication in ballet pedagogy, Østern and Dahl's suggestion can contribute to an understanding of how communication through bodily actions can provide learning. I can only imagine how many ways this can be explored in dance class, by for instance applying partnering both with and without physical contact and by exploring and creating movement materials as a group. Is a consideration about communication ever discussed or reflected upon as a fundamental and dynamic skill for dancers in choreographic education? I am questioning these significant qualities of choreographic education to discover how an awareness of communication can contribute to improved teamwork and communication skills already at a pre-professional level.

According to Østern and Hovik (2017), as mentioned in the literature review, to create with someone else requires interaction between the participants. Buck-Pavlick (2022), also cited in the literature review, mentions that it is vital to inspire to communication to explore choreographic ideas. Buck-Pavlick's view might indicate that communication is significant and useful in choreographic education, and it leads me to this question: Can communication be explored in choreographic education to provide awareness of its significance in collaborative choreographic processes? Schupp (2015) states that dance students are often asked to work and learn together in which collaboration is vital in several choreographic processes. I therefore aim to comprehend how choreographic education can provide students with supportive and efficient communication skills.

Salmon and Young (2011) claim that "communication skills" are an established module in medical curriculums, because it relates to the care about other people and how important messages are delivered by being carefully considered. Even though this might involve another level of strong communication skills, there might be reason to consider it relevant for choreographic education as well - because choreographic education often is about working with other people. Salmon and Young (2011) argue that communication is holistic. This strengthens the idea that communication skills can be significant in choreographic education, in which dancers are working with individuals that come with different experiences, vulnerabilities, and qualities. Besides, in the framework for the curriculum LK20 for the Norwegian upper secondary education within "Danseteknikker" it is stated that dance as a subject is supposed to give the students the opportunity to express themselves and explore dance through practice, improvisation, interaction, and reflection (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). It is also argued in the curriculum LK20 that the students will have the opportunity to discover collaborative and reflective aspects of dance (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). This might provide useful tools not only to create choreography but also to bring attentiveness to the importance of communication and collaboration skills in dance. In my auto narrative below, I have reflected upon how my communication skills developed in choreographic education.

I remember that the teachers in other subjects talked about communication in advance of collaborative works. Even though they did not talk a lot about how to communicate and the benefits of it, I feel like it was still considered as an important aspect of collaboration. In dance, however, I feel like I learnt the importance of communication by attending different choreographic processes. The pedagogues did teach us choreographic tools, such as contact improvisation and the use of negative space, but I cannot remember that communication was discussed as a fundamental feature of choreographic processes. I had to explore this on my own.

My auto narrative might suggest that communication should be discussed in choreographic education and taken into consideration by future dance pedagogues to develop the student's communication skills sooner. Nonetheless, examples of tacit knowledge learnt in collaborative processes in dance education are empathy, leadership, and communication skills (Schupp, 2015). This statement can suggest that communication skills can be developed from simply attending choreographic processes alone. However, it might also strengthen my opinion regarding how an awareness of communication is needed in choreographic education. An incorporation of different

communication approaches might allow the students to explore these skills at a deeper level rather than only discovering them.

Through idea-related communication the student will get access to responses from peers, they can explore their knowledge and expertise, and gain new perceptions (Binnewies et al., 2007). By getting the opportunity to exchange ideas with others, the dance students might discover significant skills that can develop their dance-making abilities. Subsequently, the students might understand and appreciate their own abilities as well as value other perspectives and creative ideas. Communication as a term should accordingly be considered as vital in choreographic education in which it can help students understand the essence of choreographic work. Schupp (2015) claims that dance pedagogues can contribute to improved communication skills by valuing class discussions, providing methods to give choreographic feedback and help them engage in discussions. These methods towards communication can develop the student's verbalization of their own thoughts, help them relate their viewpoints to others' ideas and to listen (Schupp, 2015). Even though these elements might contribute to better verbal communication, it may still indicate the teacher's role when it comes to developing the student's communication skills in choreographic education. Dance pedagogues could, for instance, invite to a seminar about communication in choreographic processes or simply discuss the term's meaning in advance of collaborative choreographic work. This could provide the students with proper insight of how their communication abilities can influence both their own actions and other individuals' perceptions. I have underneath added Leah's thoughts about what communication is, and how it can be beneficial in a choreographic process:

It is about how we respond to each other's suggestions. For me it is a way of expressing my opinions, and a reflection of how I can express that without offending anyone and stay open towards the others' ideas. It is about having respect for others' opinions and beliefs, and to put my ego away. And how to achieve a constructive yet objective dialogue.

Leah mentions several abilities that may contribute to the student's personal growth and their collaboration skills in dance. An awareness of communication as a skill might support the students' understanding of how to treat other people with consideration and likewise how to approach others in an acknowledged and committed way. This is seen in the framework for the curriculum LK20 for the Norwegian upper secondary education in "Danseteknikker" which aims to provide students with physical, communicative, and aesthetical competence which is a resource for the society and for their working lives (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). This is supported by Schupp (2015) who argues that by teaching dance students' collaborative skills, they will be better equipped for a life outside of school, regardless of their career alternatives. Expression about dance, for instance, might involve articulation of new ideas and discussing elements such as technique, history, anatomy, and creative tasks. This can allow the students to actively reflect and express thoughts about and through dance.

4.6 Summary

From reflecting on contemporary dance as a way of communicating with both words and an embodied approach, this chapter has illustrated that there can be several ways of exploring communication in contemporary choreographic processes. From interviewing

two professional contemporary dancers and exploring my own auto narratives I have an increased understanding of how communication can occur in choreographic processes and choreographic education. Communication methods such as embodied communication through senses, glance and tactile interaction, and different characteristics of verbal communication have been discussed. The use of supportive communication in choreographic processes and choreographic education have also been reflected upon. From these ideas this chapter additionally contributes to a greater awareness of how the use of communication can be of significance in processes of generating movements. Finally, it has unpacked how the dancers' relationships within a group can impact the choreographic process and discovered diverse teaching approaches within choreographic education.

5 Conclusion

This thesis gives insight to different communication methods in contemporary choreographic processes by exploring the main research question: **How might three contemporary professional dancers experience communication in choreographic processes?** The study has taken a qualitative approach and utilized ethnography and autoethnography as methodologies. The study has gathered material from two semi-structured interviews and my own auto narratives. I have explored how the two participants and I experience different communication methods in our contemporary choreographic processes by looking at how we share creative ideas and respond to each other's impulses and suggestions, both verbally and non-verbally. The literature and theory explored in the study have been carefully considered in relation to the research question. The study has discovered central characteristics of communication in choreographic processes; communication as an ongoing practice through revisiting the creative idea verbally and utilizing vocalization to communicate, the embodied feeling of communication such as tactile communication, the use of glance and applying senses as silent communication. Furthermore, I have explored how supportive communication can be experienced in different ways and how supportive communication in choreographic education can be seen and considered. I have additionally looked at how dancers' relationships can influence the choreographic process and how choreographic processes with no leader can be experienced. Lastly, I have explored how an attention towards communication in choreographic education can be valuable for students, dancers, choreographers, pedagogues, and dance schools and institutions, as well as the society. I will now discuss the main findings of the study through the above features of communication in contemporary choreographic processes in Norway.

5.1 Main findings

From this research several crucial findings have emerged. In the paragraphs below the main findings of the study are addressed and unpacked.

Communication as an ongoing practice

Communication as an ongoing practice highlight how communication appears in daily interactions and how it is a key to connect with others (Østern & Hovik, 2017). According to Feldman (1999), conversations contribute to sharing knowledge and understandings, which can indicate the importance of conversation in choreographic processes. Through unpacking the participants and my own experiences, this research shows how the use of voice in different ways can provide clear expressions and understandings of movements and creative ideas. By investigating communication as an ongoing practice in contemporary dance in the light of vocalization, such as sound making, and revisiting the creative idea throughout the choreographic process, the study has investigated the verbal aspect of communication. The following paragraph will unpack the findings of exploring speaking and the use of sound within verbal communication in more depth.

Revisiting the creative idea

Revisiting creative ideas through exploring verbal communication can provide the choreographic process with a clear direction (Feldman, 1999) and an improved indication to what is essentially being physically explored for the choreography. I have discovered that regularly revisiting the creative idea helps the dancers maintain an understanding of the choreography's intention. From this study I have discovered that the creative idea

may not be forgotten, but rather that it can change as the choreography develops. In relation to Deci and Ryan's (1985) understanding of autonomy, revisiting the creative idea throughout the process can additionally increase the dancers feeling of individuality and independence as their voices and views are valued. Verbal communication can accordingly improve the group dynamics and the participants overall experience with the choreographic process.

Vocalization

In relation to the theme of vocalization, I have found how the voice can be explored in different ways to convey information helpfully. Vocalization is a way of communication where the person is utilizing singing, clapping or other relevant sounds to support the delivering of movements and help the dancers memorize it (Keevallik, 2021).

Vocalization can provide the dancers with new and different information that helps individuals to understand the movements in their own way which can then contribute to an embodied understanding of the choreography. Another interesting feature of vocalization is the use of onomatopoeia (Keevallik, 2021) which is a way of recreating an authentic sound that can provide an understanding of the sensation of the movement. Utilizing vocalization can accordingly be a way of explaining dynamics and qualities of each movement, that can give a different perception of how to move the body.

The embodied feeling of communication

The embodied feeling of communication is an approach to non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication is often explored in choreographic processes (Roche, 2018), and this study reflects on different ways of communicating without using words. It can be viewed that choreographic processes within contemporary dance consist of continuous communication through an application of diverse senses, such as physical touch and glance. Communication with the use of senses in contemporary dance is about being attentive towards everything happening in the space (Vionnet, 2021), regardless of where your body might be positioned. Sensing is about applying various intelligences at once, and Vionnet (2021) mentions that this can be experienced through, for example, actively listening whilst moving. This section has given the study a deeper understanding of non-verbal communication in which it indicates what the body can achieve. An awareness of the embodied feeling of communication rationalizes how the body's senses are required to communicate non-verbally in choreographic processes.

Tactile communication

Tactile communication is another way of communicating without words in contemporary choreographic processes. Tactile communication is about interacting and adapting own movements to another person's created shapes and forms of the body (Rustad, 2020; Vionnet, 2021), and can provide the dancers with a new and different understanding of movements. Tactile communication enables a collective understanding of how to support each other, especially in movements like lifts or leans. Tactile communication can also be beneficial in choreographic education to explain movements and to make understandable corrections. However, there are challenges with tactile communications as well. Dancers should be considerate of each other to avoid making the choreographic process problematic for someone who is not comfortable with physical touch. The hands, the hair and the neck are areas of the body that can be experienced more vulnerable (Vionnet, 2021). As a professional dancer and a dance pedagogue it will be essential to consider this in the dance studio in which every dancer is different, and it will be vital to prevent destructive communication. The study hence discovered the importance of trust and that

working together over a longer period can provide the group with knowledge about each other's intentions and limits. Leah mentioned that the more she has worked with someone, the more she can feel what the group needs. This exemplifies how being familiar with someone can contribute to a more reliable and open process of tactile communication.

Glance

Glance is a significant feature highlighted in this study. Exploring glance in choreographic processes is a way of bringing awareness to the space and the participants which helps the dancers to always stay connected to each other. Glance can be a useful tool in several situations of contemporary choreographic process, such as when collectively creating dance, whilst moving together or as a teaching method in choreographic education. It does though require social cognitive skills that dancers have developed over their years of dance training. These social cognitive skills help the dancers to understand someone else's next movement as well as providing mutual attention to what emerges in the process (Evola & Skubisz, 2019). The study has discovered that glance is a unique approach to non-verbal communication in contemporary choreographic processes.

Supportive communication in choreographic processes

The study discusses how supportive communication can be experienced in different ways for everyone. In this section I connected with Buber's (1947) idea about genuine dialogue, which is about being attentive to the others as well as it relates to interpersonal understandings that is noticeable through collective openness. Supportive communication is understood in this study as a way of being clear and structured when sharing information to contribute to a more efficient choreographic process. Clear communication is needed to be authentic and honest, to avoid injuries, misunderstandings, and other deviations. It is additionally essential to be honest if something feels strange or painful to improve the group's mutual knowledge, instead of always trying to please the other participants.

Supportive communication in choreographic education

In choreographic education the teacher must be prepared in a different way than in professional choreographic processes in which there are often several dance students with individual needs involved. Teaching may, comparably to communication in professional choreographic processes, require a communication method that is clear, structured, and informal, yet easy to understand and to physically achieve. Examples of clear language include providing the dance students with images and metaphors that can help them identify the sensations of the movements with their personal experiences. Furthermore, from getting more experienced, dance pedagogues can develop ways for explaining movements, such as always using the same word to explain an action. Dance pedagogues can consequently through their expertise explore and discover what communication methods or terminology resonates with the students.

The dancers' relationship's impact on the choreographic process

As O'Connor (2008) mentions there cannot be professional growth without a personal development. I have in this study discovered different ways dancers can connect personally with choreographic work. I have looked at the relationship between friends and colleagues in choreographic processes and how these relations can be both encouraging and destructive for the process. Clarity and reliability were suggested in this section as valuable components, just like in the sections regarding supportive

communication. However, when it comes to relationships it is more connected to being straightforward and not being afraid of insulting anyone regardless of their relationship. From being familiar with each other's boundaries and potentials, dancers might have developed an increased understanding of everyone's needs and therefore productive and constructive choreographic processes.

Multiple choreographers

Working choreographically with multiple choreographers can be challenging in which everyone's voices need to be heard so that everybody's ideas are valued in the same way. Nevertheless, working as both dancers and choreographers opens for creativity and innovative ideas in which several intellects are being integrated. In this study I have discovered that the dancers' contributions should be acknowledged so that they can experience motivation and individuality in the choreographic work. A choreographic process with no leader can additionally provide the dancers with a higher level of reflection regarding artistic choices beyond the movement itself. Choreographic processes with multiple choreographers can also contribute to an understanding of when each dancer's expertise and contributions are advantageous for the group.

Communication skills in choreographic education

I have discovered how a consideration of communication in choreographic education can provide dance students with increased collaboration and communication skills. Dance students can mature as individuals, companions, and colleagues. An awareness of how communication emerges can support students' understanding of how to treat other people with respect and to recognize others' ideas and opinions. The section additionally offers suggestions to how communication can be considered and explored in choreographic education, such as through exploration of movements with a partner using tactile communication or simply reflecting and discussing the meaning of communication skills in collaborative processes.

5.2 Recommendations

Within this section I share the recommendations that emerged from this study. One of the first recommendations that I offer is that knowing the dancers well resonates with both professional processes and choreographic work in education. It might not only be essential for dancers to know each other well, but also to have an appropriate and helpful relationship with the choreographer or the dance pedagogue. By knowing the students well, the educator can understand the students' dancing abilities and can communicate information clear and in more depth, just like Leah suggested: "with some students I can tell them if something is wrong just like that because I know they can do it correctly" and "I am more direct in my communication to them because we are done with me just teaching them movements". Furthermore, the significance of dancers' relationships in choreographic processes can suggest that dancers, choreographers and pedagogues should allow time to get to know one another better to be able to explore and challenge each other, and to prevent unnecessary disagreements or confusions from not understanding each other's limits.

Choreographic processes with not just one leader can cultivate stronger and more reflected dancers, where the dancers get the opportunity to take on multiple roles. Having one choreographer leading the process can be experienced as pleasant, as the dancers might get to focus on their personal exploration of the movements and the

choreographer gets to work on aspects that are engaging within that role. A choreographer can though allow and acknowledge the dancers' perspectives to be equally important, yet it is the choreographer's choice to facilitate an open environment like this or not. A recommendation that emerges from this research is to invite the dancers into the process at a deeper level and allow them to discover what they can offer. This can additionally provide the choreographer with new insights and ideas. By exploring communication in choreographic processes in new ways, the contemporary choreographic field can uncover advanced and different communication methods towards investigating innovative creative ideas.

If the dance pedagogue values class discussions and utilizes this in their teaching, the dance students get the opportunity to improve their communication skills. Even if class discussions mainly initiate verbal communication, it is an example of how educators can engage and develop the student's understanding of communication also in choreographic processes. The study has discovered that communication abilities in dance students at a high level can support students collaborative work and consequently develop reflected and considerate individuals for the society, regardless of their career choices. Therefore, should a recognition of communication's significance in choreographic education be considered just as essential as dance technique and the movement itself.

5.3 Directions for future research

Several additional questions emerged during this research, where I discovered new curiosities within the topic of communication in choreographic processes. Three new research questions have transpired. It could be interesting to explore dancers and dance pedagogues' communication methods in relation to their own dance training, looking at how their dance teachers have influenced their ways of communicating and understanding contemporary dance today. A potential research question for this inquiry could be: How might professional contemporary dancers' prior dance training influence their current communication practices? Considering Sööt and Viskus's (2014) claim that dance teachers often reflect or imitate what their teachers did, makes me curious about the dance teachers impact on the contemporary choreographic field and their consideration of communication.

Furthermore, exploring international studies regarding communication in choreographic processes could be valuable to investigate because it might provide new perspectives on the significance of communication. The differences or parallels between the national and international findings could hence contribute to an understanding of how communication in choreographic processes might foster resourceful and supportive communication dynamics. A future research question could therefore be: How can an understanding of communication methods within international contemporary choreographic processes support the growth of communication approaches in Norwegian choreographic processes?

Finally, another interesting inquiry to explore further can be how the pandemic of COVID-19 perhaps affected the way dancers explored or currently explore communication in choreographic processes. It could be interesting to investigate the communication practices of professional dancers and dance pedagogues both during covid and post-pandemic. Given the impossibility of tactile communication during COVID-19, it would be interesting to investigate if any new modes of communication developed. Therefore, I find the following research question relevant for future studies: How did the COVID-19

pandemic affect the communication practices in contemporary choreographic processes, and what influence has it had on today's communication approaches?

5.4 Final reflections

During my time writing this thesis, I have carefully considered how I communicate as a dance pedagogue. From simply bringing awareness to how I communicate, I have developed a greater understanding of my own dance practice and achieved an improved appreciation towards my job as a dance educator. Additionally, an awareness of the numerous communication approaches within contemporary choreographic processes have given me insight to how to be a more considerate and open communicator. I have hence reflected upon how I express my creative ideas and explored new ways to physically share movements. Communication has therefore become a more flexible and versatile term for me because I have discovered how and what communication can look like in contemporary choreographic processes, and its impact on the participants and the choreographic outcome.

6 References

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7 Appendix

7.1 Interview guide

Communication

Tell me what you think of when I say, «communication in choreographic processes”.

Tell me about your experience with communication in choreographic work.

What are your thoughts on communication in choreographic processes? Can you give some examples on how this can transpire?

Choreographic Process

What do you experience as efficient communication between dancers in a choreographic process? Can you give some examples from your own experiences?

How do you think your previous experiences from choreographic processes have influenced your communication abilities?

Can you give some examples on how you communicate creative ideas and movements in choreographic processes?

How do you experience the balance between verbal and non-verbal communication in choreographic processes?

Say something about how you communicate if you are not utilizing verbal communication in choreographic processes. Do you have any specific examples on this?

Choreography

Communication within the choreography itself:

1) How do you communicate to the others if you forget the next move in a choreography?

2) How do you communicate if someone else forgets the choreography?

Choreographic education

Say something about your pedagogical communication practices in contemporary choreographic processes.

How might these relate to your communication methods in a professional choreographic process?

How do you think your experiences from education impacts your communication approaches in choreographic processes?

How do you think your experiences from professional processes impact your communication methods in choreographic education?



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