

with body awareness in their teachings and how the awareness of the body can create self awareness and self esteem.

The connection between body and brain has been getting more and more interest in the latest years. Neuroscientists have developed interesting theories about this connection. Antonio Damasio (2006; 2019) has described how all our thoughts, emotions and awareness is connected to our senses and to our feelings and thus defeated the famous saying of Descartes „Cognito ergo sum“ (I think, therefore I am), saying instead: „I feel, therefore I am“. Stephen Porges (2017) has developed his theory of *Polyvagal Theory*, where he outlines how our nervous system is connected to our bodies and minds and thus of primal importance to how we react to the world. A lot of this research points to connection with drama and how we become aware of our bodies and our ability to express ourselves in life. From the findings of this research it seems that the connection to the body and the ability of young people to connect with their bodies in drama can help them to connect to themselves in life.

Keywords: Neuroscience, body awareness, drama education

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**B: Teacher's professional growth and wellbeing in processes of drama and theatre education**      academic paper

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The adaption of drama as part of teaching has attracted criticism in Finnish basic education and teachers' opportunities for training during working hours have decreased for many reasons.

Based on previous research on the wellbeing-promoting possibilities of drama (e.g. McConville, Ludecke 2019; McDonough, Finneran 2017), this study aims to find out the relationship between the use of drama methods and the teacher's work ability, flow and the development of social relationships at work.

In our design-based research, we study the development of a teacher's professional identity using drama methods in different subjects in primary and secondary education. The research explores teachers' preconceptions, perceptions, and experiences of using drama and theatre, and investigates the drama pedagogical skills on the development of the teacher's professional identity and resilience. The aim of the research is to develop needs in the use of drama methods and in the learning processes, their opportunities and challenges in subjects mentioned in the Finnish basic education curriculum and to strengthen art-based methods and art subjects in the future education curricula.

The frame of reference for qualitative research is based on the theories of artistic learning concepts, Dewey's pragmatist philosophy, the theories of professional identity research and Kolb's experiential learning. In an ongoing study the research material is collected through a survey and interviews, as well as learning diaries during the use of drama methods from primary and secondary teachers. The research results are analyzed using the methods of qualitative content analysis.

Keywords: Drama education, professional development, wellbeing

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#### About the presenter:

Heidi-Tuulia Eklund has had a long artistic career as a soprano on the Opera and Lied stage. She is a vocal pedagogue and lecturer in Music and Drama. Her interest in the development of identity and wellbeing research is based on the experiences gained during her artistic and pedagogic career. She has also directed, written manuscripts and process dramas for and with her students. She is a doctoral researcher at the University of Jyväskylä at the Department of Music, Arts and Culture Studies, majoring in Art Education. In her PhD work she studies teacher's professional identity, wellbeing, and resilience.