

A Study Concerning Commensurability of Language for Academic Communication in Dance Studies

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I. Introduction

This study discusses roles of language in academic communication of dance studies.¹⁾ This study stems from my recognition of discordance between commensurability of knowledge, upon which the academic communication is constructed, and particularity of dance experience, which is often said to be ineffable. By commensurability of knowledge, I mean the possibility of information to be understood identically by all men. My previous article A Study of the Seventeenth-century Universal Language Projects in Western Europe as a Contextual Background of the Feuillet Notation System(2010) discusses that modern science and philosophy²⁾ theorizes the conception of universal reason of all men and universal understanding of the world.³⁾ The said article suggests that the idea of universal understanding influences a dance writing of the time, i.e. Feuillet notation system, to selectively emphasize certain aspects of dance phenomena and certain ways of inscribing the aspects. However, the partial emphasis is considered by dance scholars of later periods as neglecting many

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- 1) An earlier version of parts of this paper was presented at the 2014 SDHS-CORD Conference, under the title of “You Know What I am Saying?”
- 2) This paper refers to modern science and modern philosophy, which are traced back to the scientific revolution that took place in 16th- and 17th-century Europe. The historical period of modern science and philosophy differs from that of modernism in art history.
- 3) Sue In Kim(2010), A Study of the Seventeenth-century Universal Language Projects in Western Europe as a Contextual Background of the Feuillet Notation System, *The Korean Journal of Dance Studies* 30, pp.1-25.

other aspects of dance phenomena, especially what phenomenologists call the ‘lived experience’ of dance.

As views of knowledge in general have changed over time, especially with postmodernism, the views of roles of language in regards to dance knowledge have changed. While dance as a discipline begins to establish its position in universities during the 20th century, dance scholars pay attention to the relationship between dance and language in order to delve into academic possibility of dance. Many scholars point out ineffability of dance knowledge as the culprit for dance to be neglected in academic discourse. For example, Mark Franko examines western dance literatures throughout history, discussing the relationship between text and performance. According to Franko, dance eludes a universal professional literacy, which is crucial to a academic discipline.⁴⁾ Unlike musical score, dance notations could not be rested in consensus.

To achieve academic rigorousness, dance scholars with modernist perspective strive to achieve scientific languages or writing systems, which can be agreed by everyone. Dance writings with modernist perspective describe what one sees in order to provide empirical evidence of his/her arguments in the clearest language possible.

However, many other scholars recognize that so many other important elements of dance are left out in such dance writing. With the rise of postmodernism, dance studies and dance writings illuminate the political nature of so-called objective and scientific representations of dance knowledge. Studies baptized with postmodernism challenge the modernist ways of yielding and disseminating knowledge. Franko diagnoses that “in postmodern dance, notation has tended toward personalized note taking.”⁵⁾ Such personal and private mode of inscribing dance knowledge defies commensurability of knowledge. This becomes problematic when such inscribing mode is drawn into the realm of academic communication.

From the modernist perspectives, postmodern ways of researching and writing are not scientific enough, not intelligently rigorous enough, and not academically worthy enough. They are hardly possible to be assessed fairly, because they evade a common ground of knowledge or, if you prefer, commensurability of knowledge. Recognizing the conflict between the modernist system and postmodern innovations, I come to wonder how they can reconcile. In particular, I focus on roles of language in dance studies of the modern perspective and postmodern perspective. I pay attention to language, since I acknowledge “the pivotal role played by a verbal, written commentary in academic communication.”⁶⁾ I believe that ambivalent nature of language, which is public and private at the

4) Mark Franko(2011), Writing for the Body: Notation, Reconstruction, and Reinvention in Dance, *Common Knowledge* 17(2), pp.321-334.

5) *Ibid.*, p.331.

6) Anna Pakes(2003), Original Embodied Knowledge: the Epistemology of the New in Dance Practice as Research. *Research in Dance Education* 4(2), p.133.

same time, is at the core of this research theme.

To investigate the role of language and writing in dance studies, I first explore the landscape of the modern academic writing that pursue universality or commensurability. Then I move on to postmodern ways of challenging the commensurability. Among several modes of research with postmodern paradigms, I limit this study's scope to a kind of qualitative research, practice as/based/led research(PaR).⁷⁾ Finally, I introduce three recent PaR writings that attempt reconciliations between the commensurability of knowledge and ineffability of dance experience.

PaR significantly expands the ideas of dance knowledge by regarding performing experience itself as a mode of research and a mode of representing the research. While the modern academia relies primarily on written documents, PaR radically modifies the representational modes by embracing performance and other representational modes such as photos, video, and multimodal media. However, PaR also confronts the need to meet systematic requirements without losing its integrity as a postmodern writing. To achieve institutional recognition(e.g. Master's and Ph.D degrees), a PaR research needs to prove that it satisfies the required amount of academic rigorousness. Then how the quality of private and personal knowledge and language could be and would be fitted into commensurability?

I investigate the ways these representational modes are dealt within academic systems, making conflicts and seeking reconciliations. By academic systems, I mean the systematic ways of circulating academic ideas, which are usually operated by institutions such as universities, journals, and conferences. I explore questions regarding how the current academia, which still relies greatly on commensurability of knowledge, could and would embrace private and/or transcendental writing styles about dance experience.

Through this exploration, this study suggests that representational modes are significant as much as contents. It is because representational modes themselves embed epistemological legacies. For its practical implication, this study suggests that dance writers and scholars pay attention to representational modes in order to deliver intended contents more effectively in accordance with the content's epistemological legacies about dance knowledge.

7) I discussed other kinds of alternative dance writing in my earlier article. See Sue In Kim(2012), A Study Concerning Objective Writing Formalities and Alternative Narrative Styles in Dance Studies, *Dance Research Journal of Korea* 70(2), pp.17-38. Although I know fine differences among practice as/based/led research, I collectively call them PaR for the sake of this paper, focusing on the role of language in them. Ki-Sook Cho(2013) distinguishes and explains each of practice as/based/led (A Study of 'Practise based Research' in Dance: Focusing on the Concepts and Process, *The Korean Research Journal of Dance Documentation* 31, p.237).

II. The Landscape of Modern Academic Communication

The landscape of modern academic communication have shaped around commensurability of knowledge, which depends primarily on language explanation of things.⁸⁾ This section discusses historical and cultural contexts that frame the language practice of modern academic communication in order to fathom its epistemological legacies, which make conflicts with postmodern dance writings.

Refusing the medieval ways of knowing such as revelation or belief, the modern academia constructed knowledge with evidence and verification. Modern scientists and philosophers theorized the idea of indubitable truth, which was evident to all men with reason. In this way, indubitable knowledge was conceived as being independent from particular contexts and subjective judgements.

One of the factors that contributed such conception was a new technology of representing and disseminating knowledge: the printing press. It was commonly used around the 15th century Europe. It is said that the scientific revolution grew from the Renaissance and spreaded because of the printing press. From this study's perspective, the role played by the printing press within the modern academic landscape is significant, because it contributes a particular kind of relationship between academic knowledge and its (linguistic) representation.

I point out three characteristics of the modern academic landscape relating to the printing press. First, the printing press made knowledge less sacred more secular with especially profound results in science. Previously, books and manuscripts were produced and copied by monks. The printing press reduced the reliance on monks, without whose authority scientists had to verify their findings through scientific method and representation. Second, the printing press enabled widely disseminate scholarly journals. Third, the printing press amplified accuracy of information. The printing press allowed the exact citing of references, because one copy was exactly identical to another. Moreover, the printing process ensured that the same information fell on the same pages. Interlaced with scientific skepticism, citing of references provided evidence that readers could check, test, and verify. This characteristic role of the printing press in intellectual communication framed written language as the primary representational mode of academic knowledge. Such practice reflected and amplified the concept of commensurability of knowledge and language. By the 1600's, this process would lead to the Scientific Revolution of the Enlightenment, which would radically alter how Europeans viewed the world and knowledge.

To represent commensurable knowledge, linguistic rendering of knowledge should correspond the commensurability. In what Michel Foucault calls classical episteme, there is no problem to communicate objective knowledge through language explanation of things, because the representation

8) Sally Gardner(2012), Practising Research, *Researching Practice: Thinking through Contemporary Dance*, Cultural Studies Review 18(1) March, p.141; Anna Pakes(2003), Original Embodied Knowledge: the Epistemology of the New in Dance Practice as Research, *Research in Dance Education* 4(2), p.134.

of reality corresponds point for point with reality itself.⁹⁾ However, language has been viewed as an unruly medium by modern scientists. For example, John Locke's famous *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) points out unavoidably doubtful and uncertain nature of language to communicate "certain and undoubted truth."¹⁰⁾ In addition, people's abuse of words intensifies the existing imperfection of words. People use words without distinct ideas, without consistency, and without clear definition. They mistakenly take words for things and assume that the speaker and hearer necessarily have the same precise ideas. This imperfection of language directs towards vagueness occurred when a word signifies multiple referents. Especially when scholars try to communicate precise notions of things and true knowledge, this unruliness of language is problematic. As a solution to this problem, Locke upholds mathematics and words referring to sense data. From Locke's *Essay*, I find a correlation among commensurability, indubitable truth, and clear language.

With this idea of scientific representation of knowledge theorized by modern scholars including Locke, modern academic communication comes to pursue particular characteristics. One of the characteristics is the use of objective third person voice. The third person voice is presumed to be appropriate because academic knowledge must not be waved by the subjective first person point of view. For example, a 90° turn means a 90° turn no matter who, when, where, and how measures it. The third person voice seems conveying information unwaved by subjective and situational factors.

Dance writings with the modernist perspective hold the same adherence to commensurability of knowledge and language. These dance writings stress depersonalized descriptions of observation in order to provide empirical evidence of his/her arguments in the clearest language possible. As an illustration, Noa Eshkol, one of the inventors of Eshkol-Wachmann Movement Notation, expresses her belief on what and how a dance writing should record.

Qualities are by the nature of things predominantly subjective impressions. The whole point of a notation is to convert impression (qualities) into entities which can be agreed about by everyone—that is, measurable quantities...If the qualities are not definable, then what is it that we are talking about? If anything at all, then perhaps something for which poetry is the proper vehicle.¹¹⁾

In this quotation, Eshkol contends that dance movement can, or rather should, be converted into measurable quantities, which are definable, and about which everyone can agree. Within such a writing system, dance becomes something quantifiable and measurable; something plain, distinct, and

9) M. Franko(2011), p.324.

10) John Locke(1947), *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* [1690], ed. A. S. Pringle-Pattison (Oxford: Clarendon Press), III, ix,1.

11) Seymour Kleinman(1975), "Movement Notation Systems: An Introduction," *Quest* 23, p.53.

clear; something objective and therefore presumably universal.

However, postmodern critics on the modernist way of yielding knowledge lead critical discourses about the ways knowledge is represented. These critics reproach the scientific language as an extreme reduction of the reality, even to the degree of distortion. There also are critics pointing out that even the scientific language is not entirely free from nuanced implication unintentionally embedded in language practices. For example, John Christopher discusses culture-language bound truths, contending that a highly systematized discipline like quantum electrodynamics (QED) is to some extent understood through the metaphors and myths of a framing language.¹²⁾

Instead of the clearest and the most distinct language, postmodern writings try to embrace nuanced meaning and implicitness in order to grasp holistic experience. Dance studies with postmodern agenda suggests that experiential knowledge of dance should not be eliminated from dance writing for the sake of academic rigorousness. Instead, dance writing needs to broaden its scope in order to grasp dance phenomena more adequately and holistically. For example, postmodern writings promote the first person voice that brings out personal realization of things within a specific setting of time and place. In this way, postmodern writings intentionally reveal context-dependency of linguistic information.

Yet, there exists tension between postmodern writing styles and modernist academic writing. Scholars who believe in modernist academic writing regard postmodern writing styles as too experimental, not academic enough. Reliability and validity of postmodernist writing are still under dispute.

III. Tension between Commensurable Language and Ineffable Dance Experience

As discussed above, the modern academia considers language and writing as the prime mode of knowing and representing knowledge. Language and writing in modern academia promote commensurability, i.e. dissemination of knowledge with accuracy, consistency, and tangibility. Language and writing provide some kind of materiality to abstract knowledge so that scholars can refer to, analyze, and transfer.¹³⁾ In this way, language and writing provide visual evidence of mental content. When knowledge communication depends on printing and publication, visual images are conveniently used as evidence and analytic facility.

Dance has been notorious for its ephemerality and ineffability. Matthew Reason articulates how the

12) John Christopher Foster(2010), A Methodology of Edges: Culture and Science in Japanese and English, *The International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences* 5 (7), pp.61-72.

13) Sue In Kim(2011), A Study of Dance Literature Reflecting Contextual Presuppositions about Dance as an Academic Field of Study, *The Korean Journal of Dance* 67, p.4.

nature of art in general and dance in particular escapes a coarse grasp of language.¹⁴⁾ Reason cites Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, who concludes that “the lived experience of dance is ineffable.”¹⁵⁾ Reason also draws from Roland Barthes’ observation about the relationship between language and an art form, music.

Language, according to Benveniste, is the only semiotic system capable of interpreting another semiotic system [. . .]. How, then, does language manage when it has to interpret music? Alas, badly – very badly, it seems.¹⁶⁾

Reason agrees with Sheets-Johnstone and Barthes that our experience of non-verbal art forms engages something beyond that could be said with language. Similarly, Ki-Sook Cho points out that articulation of embodied experience is a difficult and ambiguous process.¹⁷⁾ Cho also acknowledges that there are pessimistic opinions about whether writing is always the optimum medium for interpreting dance phenomena.¹⁸⁾

As a kind of dance writing within the academic system, PaR locates at an interesting position. It is because PaR need to write down the first person’s embodied experience in a way that it can be approved by academic standard and regulation. While dance experience transcends verbal rendering and therefore reduces the possibility of commensurability, the modern academic system requires commensurable form of knowledge, which is achieved primarily through language and writing.

PaR radically breaks from tradition of modern academia, proclaiming that language and writing are not the only mode of research. There are artifacts, performance, and/or recording of the progress submitted along with a thesis or dissertation. In dance studies, a dance performance can be presented with a written paper. The diverse modes of presenting research result are supported by digital technology. One can submit videos and CD-roms of a performance and/or its progress.

Another innovation can be found in the kind of language they use. PaR writings characteristically record the 1st person experience of dance. Not only objective observation but also subjective inner experience goes into a PaR writing.¹⁹⁾

However, to claim academic rigorousness, a PaR writing still subject to commensurability of

14) Matthew Reason(2010), Watching Dance, Drawing the Experience and Visual Knowledge, *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 40(4) September, pp.391-393.

15) Maxine Sheets-Johnstone(1979), *The Phenomenology of Dance* (London: Dance Books), p.65.

16) Roland Barthes(1986), *The Grain of the Voice, The Responsibility of Forms*, trans. R. Howard (Oxford: Blackwell), p.267 (quoted in Reason,(2010), p.392.)

17) Cho(2013). p.241.

18) Ibid., p.250.

19) Ibid., p.235; Zachary Dunbar(2014), Practice as Research in Musical Theatre Reviewing the Situation, *Studies in Musical Theatre* 8(1), pp.57-75; Graeme Sullivan(2005), *Art Practice as Research: Inquiry the Visual Arts* (London: Sage Publications).

knowledge and language. It is because the researchers still need to “clearly articulate” their research for “a shared discourse for other practitioner-academics.”²⁰⁾ Also, Ki-Sook Cho argues that PaR should be defined and conducted in a way that is universally indorsed in order to achieve productive result in knowledge. She also argues that PaR produces a result similar to commensurability of knowledge which is the crucial factor of research.²¹⁾ Similarly, Reason acknowledges that language has been “our primary mode of knowing.”²²⁾ He quotes Baz Kershaw who notes language as “the medium of theory, philosophy, books, libraries, archives.”²³⁾ According to Reason, the challenge is “to know or speak about dance in these circumstances where language might be considered at worst a hindrance or at best a medium that conceals its limitations behind its status as our primary mode of knowing.”²⁴⁾ Speaking about ineffability of embodied knowledge, Zachary Dunbar also poses a similar question: “what formal language could articulate the ‘subjective’ experience of composing and writing?”²⁵⁾

Phenomenological language, which gave a great impact on conceiving qualitative research in general and PaR in particular, might propose an answer to this question. While phenomenology underscores the subjectivity of understanding and the uniqueness of experience, researches still use language to represent their findings to communicate one another. If language is social and collective entity in its nature, how can it crystallize unique and private qualities of inner experience? It is like trying to hold a moonbeam in your hand. A couple of answers might be possible: one is to use lifeworld-sensitive texts, the other is intersubjectivity²⁶⁾, and yet another is phenomenological reduction, i.e. bracketing.²⁷⁾

As an illustration of a phenomenological writing, I review Nigel Stewart’s article about phenomenological description of dance. Stewart, in his article *Re-Languaging the Body: Phenomenological Description and the Dance Image*²⁸⁾ explains three cases of phenomenological description of dance. He presents the poetic language and expressive figures as phenomenological

20) Dunbar(2014), pp.63-65.

21) Cho(2013), p.238.

22) Reason(2010), p.393.

23) Ibid., pp.391-393.

24) Ibid., p.392.

25) Dunbar(2014), p.65.

26) Intersubjectivity is a pivotal concept of phenomenology. While we know the world by our private experience, it is possible to reach to some kinds of common understandings. Intersubjectivity emphasizes that shared cognition and consensus is essential in shaping our ideas and relations. Intersubjectivity also helps to constitute objectivity: in the experience of the world as available not only to oneself, but also to the Other, there is a bridge between the personal and the shared, the self and the Others. Regarding to the theme of this paper, intersubjectivity suggests common understandings of private experience.

27) Sullivan(2005).

28) Nigel Stewart(1998), *Re-Languaging the Body: Phenomenological Description and the Dance Image*, *Performance Research* 3(2), pp.42-53.

descriptions. Such modes of writing “keeps the live experience alive,” because it is not a process of systematic signification and mentalization abstracted from the body.²⁹⁾ They are a kind of private languages. Stewart uses a structuralist sign theory term, nonce symbols, to refer to the phenomenological descriptions. Nonce symbols mean “one-off symbols, such as appear in dreams or in poetry, which convey no public information until they are provided with an additional gloss.”³⁰⁾ Briefly going back to Locke, I point out that he theorizes that language used just for the speaker cannot fail of having his meaning understood. It is the language used to communicate with others is the problem. If phenomenological writing promotes private languages, then how can such language communicate with a common ground of understanding?

One interesting thing about Stewart’s discussion is a juxtaposition of private writings and commensurable writings. While he designates that the phenomenological writings convey no public information, he uses Laban Motif Writing to explicate the poetic language. I point out his use of Laban Motif Writing as an act of translation. It translates the poetic languages of individuals to another writing system that is shared by a large community of dance scholarship. Stewart’s discussion of PaR and phenomenological writing seems to suggest that language might be able to transfer dance experience, however to speak in scholarly communication you have to return to commensurability of knowledge and language. It seems inevitable since it is the heart of the modern academic communication.

Max van Manen(1997) explains phenomenologists’ understanding of language that “experience is always more immediate, more enigmatic, more complex, more ambiguous than any description can do justice to.”³¹⁾ Still, it is recommended that one has faith in the power of language to make intelligible and understandable what always seems to be embraced by language.³²⁾ In the realm of theory, phenomenology informs scholars to use language with caution. In the realm of practice, PaR writings attempt several ways of cautious using of representing dance knowledge. Next section explores strategies taken up in the realm of PaR writing in order to discuss how the tension between commensurable language and ineffable dance experience is surfaced and sometimes resolved.

29) Ibid., p.52.

30) Edmund Leach(1976), *Culture and Communication: the Logic by which Symbols are Connected. An Introduction to the Use of Structuralist Analysis in Social Anthropology*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p.15(quoted in Stewart(1998), p.52).

31) Max van Manen(1997), *Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy* (Ontario: Althouse Press), p.xvii(quoted in Eva Johansson and E. Jayne White(eds.)(2011), *Educational Research with Our Youngest: Voices of Infants and Toddlers* (Springer Netherlands), p.169).

32) Ibid., p.xiii.

IV. Dance Writings around PaR

1. Moths, Candles and Fires: Examining Dance as Creative Practice Research in a Master's Degree³³⁾

Nicholas Rowe and Ralph Buck(2013) propose an evaluation rubric for dance as creative practice research of Master's degree. Their discussion and the proposed evaluation rubric show an interesting combination of quantitative measuring and dance as a mode of researching. From my perspective, the adoption of quantitative measuring responses academic necessity of commensurable language, while the consideration of uniqueness of dance practice responses postmodern awareness of ineffable experience. They address dance practice research as a realm both of an ambiguous artistic interpretation and a clear academic engagement.³⁴⁾

Informed by post-colonial and post-Cartesian concerns, Rowe and Buck articulate their rationale of embracing actual dance both as the research process and a research output.³⁵⁾ In other words, dance performance is presented for Master's examination. Master candidates are not only informed by dance and produce a written text about it but also present dance as research itself. Rowe and Buck refer to this innovation as an important shift within academia.

Their perspective about academia is also informed by post-positions. Rowe and Buck point out cultural hegemony resided within academia, which is predominantly Western culture.³⁶⁾ They diagnose that currently dominant methods of valuing knowledge are logocentric. They suggest that judgement principles carry the subjectivity and cultural bias of those making the judgements. To reflect pluralistic and postcolonial environment, judging principles need a modification.

However, Rowe and Ralph want to make the modification within the current system of academia. They attempt to translate creative and artistic practice into a commensurable language. According to Rowe and Ralph, Master's grading necessitates quantifiable measuring and evaluation "in order to maintain its value as an institutional currency."³⁷⁾ They point out that Master's degree is unlike a doctoral degree which "is generally not graded but simply passed, failed or sent for specific revisions."³⁸⁾ Master's degree requires more quantitative approach. They adopt criterion-referenced assessment in order to identify the level of competence a student has achieved.

The proposed evaluation grid is a five-column rubric. The five criteria are 'creative presentation

33) Nicholas Rowe & Ralph Buck(2013), Moths, Candles and Fires: Examining Dance as Creative Practice Research in a Master's Degree, *Higher Education Research & Development* 32(6), pp.1022-1036.

34) Ibid., p.1034.

35) Ibid., p.1027.

36) Ibid., p.1023.

37) Ibid., p.1022.

38) Ibid., p.1030.

relevant to artistic and cultural contexts/sites/technologies,' 'comprehension of field: techniques/genres/histories,' 'significance, interrogation, critical reflection, interpretation,' 'Research foci, questions and methods,' and 'Written expression and structure of dissertation.'³⁹⁾ Each criterion is divided by the percentage of achievement. A-, A, and A+ are of 80-100% achievement; B+ is of 73-79%; B-and B are of 65-72%; C-, C, and C+ are of 50-64%; and D is of 0-49%. With this quantitative measuring system, they accommodate a commensurable language.

However, concluding their article, Rowe and Buck pose an important notice, saying that they have not sought to establish "a universal and permanent set of criteria for the evaluation."⁴⁰⁾ The rubric should be regarded as "a sort of discussion board, a way of continuing to build upon understandings of what is valued in creative practice research."⁴¹⁾ While using quantitative measuring as a commensurable language of academic communication, Rowe and Buck argue to use the measuring not as an absolute and abstract regulation but as a guide or reference where more understanding can be developed.

2. Watching Dance, Drawing the Experience and Visual Knowledge⁴²⁾

Matthew Reason asserts that language and the arts manifest different forms of communication. In particular, "unspoken knowledge of dance" is incompatible to the traditionally established kind of knowledge, which resides in "language, theory, philosophy, books, libraries, archives."⁴³⁾ Focusing on audiences' expressions about dance performances, Reason acknowledges the difficulties of accounting dance using language. He emphasizes that audiences' verbal responses may not be able to reveal their true attitudes or deepest feelings.

Instead of language, he incorporates visual arts, which he expects to provide different ways of knowing. The adoption of visual arts suggests that Reason's research schema is based on the belief that visual images "represent the inner psychological realities and the subjective experiences of the person."⁴⁴⁾ However, he also recognizes the ambiguity of visual representations. Interpreting visual images is "considerably more risky" than interpreting verbal statements.⁴⁵⁾ More recent trends do not have an expert of the field but the producer of a visual image to verbalize the meanings of the images.

Reason applies these acknowledgements to what he calls creative and arts-based research methodologies. The research process consists of audiences' appreciation of a live performance, their

39) Ibid., p.1026.

40) Ibid., p.1034.

41) Ibid., p.1034.

42) Reason(2010), pp.391-414.

43) Ibid., p.392.

44) Ibid., p.394.

45) Ibid., p.395.

drawing of their experience of the performance, and their talking about their drawing. Then, the researcher analyzes the drawings and the verbal expressions. Reason goes back and forth from drawings to verbal responses in order to analyze the audiences' experience with a performance and the dynamics of yielding two types of responses.

Quoting Eisner, Reason contends that knowledge expressed through arts is "logically incommensurate."⁴⁶ Explaining this quotation, Reason equates commensurability with verbal conversation. In this way, Reason implies that language is primordially commensurable while the artistic expressions are not.

To convey both the commensurable and ineffable responses of the audiences, Reason juxtaposes visual images and verbal conversations. The readers of Reason's article can check the images and excerpts of transcribed conversations to figure out what the audiences and Reason refer to.

The importance implication of Reason's article for this study is that while he underlies ineffable and incommensurable kinds of knowledge, he relies primarily on visual and linguistic means to communicate his research result. His research is published and circulated through an academic communication system, a scholarly journal. Reason presents transcribed conversations and visual images as evidence of his argument, so that the readers can have a common understanding. Visual images are particularly convenient to be reproduced on paper so that the researcher and the readers can refer to, check, and verify. The images, like verbal responses, give some kind of materiality to the audiences' ineffable and transient experience of a live performance. In this way, Reason represents his research on incommensurable experience through a commensurable means of scholarly communication.

3. Dancing on the Grid: Using e-Science Tools to Extend Choreographic Research⁴⁷

Helen Bailey, Michelle Bachler, Simon Buckingham Shum, Anja Le Blanc, Sita Papat, Andrew Rowley, and Martin Turner examine e-Science tools on practice-led research in dance. The authors offer several significant implications relating to my investigation about commensurable language and ineffable dance knowledge. The authors refer to choreographic knowledge as a type of knowledge, which departs from traditional linguistic representation. The authors point out prelinguistic aspects of the arts, which are tantalizingly "beyond our linguistic grasp."⁴⁸ To accommodate this prelinguistic choreographic knowledge, they estimate the possibility of hypermedia presentations rather than conventional research communications such as a prose paper. The proposed hypermedia documentation

46) Ibid., p.401.

47) Helen Bailey, Michelle Bachler, Simon Buckingham Shum, Anja Le Blanc, Sita Papat, Andrew Rowley, and Martin Turner (2009), *Dancing on the Grid: Using e-Science Tools to Extend Choreographic Research. Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society: Mathematical, Physical and Engineering Sciences* 367(1898), pp.2793-2806.

48) Ibid., p.2803.

provide nonlinear and multi-layered montages of visual scores and spatio-temporal commentaries. This representational mode is devised to get aligned with the characteristics of the creative process. Decentralization of language dependency in knowledge communication is also found in their way of using Access Grid(AG), which is a form of teleconference. While addressing how their project furthers existing teleconference technology, the authors observe that the existing teleconference focuses on verbal discussion and gives movement little importance.⁴⁹⁾ Adopting the technology for dance practice, the author find their way out of linguistic dominance.

However, their hypermedia presentations feature commensurable aspects as well. I observe that visual nature of the presentation and verbal annotations enable commensurability. The e-Science documentation tools are essentially visualization of spatio-temporal structures. Users and spectators see computer screens showing various information of choreographic process and final product. The authors precisely note that their project focuses on the Gird's "visual communicational capacity."⁵⁰⁾ I suggest that the visualization, as it does in Reason's article, offers some kind of materiality to knowledge. One can physically point out what he or she is referring to. This materiality promotes the possibility of commensurability. Not only visualization but also verbal annotations play a role for commensurability. Users are able to add verbal annotations to video recordings and visual representation, allowing scholarly discourse. Although the annotations often depart from a linear and prose form of narrative, which dominates scholarly communication, the verbalization facilitates dialogue and argumentation.⁵¹⁾ The authors emphasize the ways their project extends previous modes of dance research practice, however it is also possible to recognize the basis of commensurability of knowledge and language. By the basis, I refer to visual and/or linguistic representation that "make it possible to capture, reflect on and disseminate...data."⁵²⁾

While negotiating ineffability with commensurability, the authors stress the role of technology in our understanding of knowledge. They argue for the formative effect of technology: "e-Science is moving beyond the purely instrumental function of merely making traditional research processes more efficient, into a new critically engaged territory of fundamentally shaping the form and content of research processes and products."⁵³⁾ The technology is more than a mere tool. Its limitations and possibilities affect kinds of knowledge that can be communicated and how they are communicated. I suggest that it was also true to the case of aforementioned printing press, whose technology impacted on the conception of scientific knowledge.

The authors note that their project provides hypermediacy, that is "a style of visual representation

49) Ibid., p.2798.

50) Ibid., p.2795.

51) Ibid., p.2803.

52) Ibid., p.2805.

53) Ibid., p.2795.

whose goal is to remind the viewer of the medium.”⁵⁴) In other words, participants are led to be aware of the presence and influence of medium and technology. What is significant about this statement for my study is that the medium of communication is closely related to communicated content. Being aware of the presence and influence of communication medium, one perceives the content as mediated information rather than purely abstract knowledge. This observation can be applied to other representational media such as printed scholarly journals, commensurable language, quantitative measuring, and visualization.

V. Towards a Conclusion

Dance writings around PaR are sites where various and conflicting conceptions of writing, language, and knowledge meet and negotiate the position of advantage. Three PaR writings examined in this study show diverse ways how the negotiations are concluded. Rowe and Buck’s article shows an integration of a quantitative measuring system with creative practice researches. Reason’s article demonstrates ambivalence of visual images, which elude the tyranny grasp of language, but at the same time grant materiality to ineffable dance experience. Bailey et al.’s article emphasizes multi-layered and nonlinear montage of information while still relying on visualization and verbal commentaries. Although traditional representational modes of modern academic communication have relied on writing, printing, and publication, dance writings around PaR seek alternative passages for communication.

The examination of the three kinds of dance writing around PaR illuminates the formative effect of communicative or representational medium. Whether it is verbalization, measurement, visualization, or hypermedia documents, the representational medium affects the kinds of knowledge that can be communicated and commensurated. Stressing the formative effect, this study helps readers to pay attention to the ways dance knowledge is represented and communicated.

Since PaR is a still developing research area, more experiments are expected. Hence, the findings of this study is provisional. A possible direction for future studies is around the concept of intersubjectivity. Especially, I am interested in the role of the reader, and how authors and texts can form intersubjectivity with the readers. Also, development in digital technology might open new possibilities for academic communication, bringing in two-way or multi-way communication in scholarly journals.

I become interested in the peculiarity of the modern academic writing through my doctoral research on Korean court dance documents.⁵⁵) I learned that the requirements of academic writing embed a

54) Ibid., p.2802.

particular worldview about knowledge, language, and reality. I also learned that the modernist conception of knowledge were developed from a specific cultural and historical contexts. Knowing the peculiarity, I come to see the pros and cons of the modern academic writing rather than accepting the requirements as inviolable authorities. I wish this study help readers understanding the peculiarity of the modern academic writing, so that they prudentially use the requirements to further their researches rather than being enslaved by them. I also would like to help readers understanding the epistemological ground of qualitative research in general and PaR in particular, so that they incorporate adequate writing modes or representational media that correspond the epistemological ground of research contents. Consequently, I hope this study provides a small step to polish dance studies to achieve both academic rigorousness and experiential meaningfulness unique to dance field.

55) Sue In Kim(2011), Naming Movement: Nonmenclature and Ways of Knowing Dance in French and Korean Court Dances, Ph.D. diss., Temple University.

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A Study Concerning Commensurability of Language for Academic Communication in Dance Studies

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This study investigates the roles of language in dance studies in general and in practice as/based/led research(PaR) in particular. This investigation illuminates discordance between commensurability of knowledge, upon which the academic communication is constructed, and particularity of dance experience, which is often said to be ineffable. Although traditional representational modes of modern academic communication have relied on writing, printing, and publication, dance writings around PaR seek alternative passages for communication. Three dance writings around PaR exemplify how various and conflicting conceptions of writing, language, and knowledge meet and negotiate the position of advantage. The three dance writings incorporate verbalization, measurement, visualization, or hypermedia documentation to represent dance knowledge. Suggesting that the representational medium affects the kinds of knowledge that can be communicated and commensurate, this study pays attention to the ways dance knowledge is represented and communicated. Consequently, this study excavates the epistemological grounds of academic communication of dance knowledge.

Keywords: Practice as/based/led research(PaR)(연구로서의 실기), Academic language(학문적 언어), Commensurability of knowledge(지식의 공유가능성), Ineffable dance knowledge(형언할 수 없는 무용 지식), Epistemological ground of representation(재현의 인식론적 배경)