



Moving faces in a square: motivation and communication encumbrances in online distance teaching group work

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Abstract

In my research I plan to address how keeping *communication and motivational issues* at the forefront of online group work can serve as useful heuristic for noticing potential group drawbacks before they spring up. The concepts of *embodiary and embodied leadership* explore how the moving body can be a key site for individual and collective creative realizations and communications. How we are present or not present shows up in our faces, gaze, voice tone and posture which are communicated firstly to our inner safety awareness system. For the teacher it is especially important to be able to hold both the comfort and unease with equal regard, in the actuality of her or his *embodied experience*. But how do we as teachers manage to achieve this, if the experience in online teaching environments hinders being fully present as the physical environment of every participant gets in the way of bodyful being and doing in the (distant) teaching community? Does it make sense and suffice to address lack of visual insignia related to non-verbal communication in online learning environments? My research draws on general overview of online group work research and goes on to suggest certain possibilities and contextual factors contributing to enhanced teachers' and learners' ability to harbor a *motivated and communicative body* in online teaching settings.

Keywords: *group work, online learning, embodiment, communication, creativity.*