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TEACHING DANCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

This article reports findings from a literature review study that aimed to describe the general development trends and challenges of contemporary dance pedagogy and point out currently the essential aims and teaching methods in dance pedagogy. Based on the literature review, we identified seven main themes that are further discussed in this article: holistic dance teacher; self-regulation and reflection; the somatic in dance; the relation of dance pedagogy with dance as an art form; new media, technology and other art forms in dance education; multicultural in dance education; issues of gender and sexuality.

Keywords: Dance pedagogy, dance education, self-regulation, reflection; somatic approach, holistic model

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1. Introduction

The pedagogical practice of dance education has, during the recent decades, changed considerably. Dance pedagogy has traditionally followed a transmission model of teaching, where the students learn by imitating specific movement vocabularies modelled by an expert teacher. This is the way many classroom teachers still feel most comfortable teaching dance, as it is the way they were taught (Bolwell, 1998). It is now widely accepted that transformation of dance content knowledge into knowledge for teaching and learning involves far more than dance technique and control, and that teachers need a wide range of teaching strategies to motivate and engage their students (Chappell, 2007; Shapiro, 1998; Smith-Autard, 2002; Sööt & Leijen, 2012). As Shapiro (1998) points out this shift from disembodied knowing to embodied knowing has changed the relationship between the teacher and the learner.

Dance is an intellectual, physical and sensorial response to experiences of the world as suggested by Bannon (2010). She argues that the integration of our physical, intellectual and emotional selves that can occur in learning in dance has been advocated by many theorists and practitioners as essential to understanding the holistic benefits of education in and through dance.

2. Problem Statement

Although in the last decade the literature on dance pedagogy has substantially diversified (Bannon, 2010; Bond, 2010; Risner, 2010; Smith-Autard, 2002; Stinson, 2005, 2010), it is still lacking a comparative and analytical common overview.

3. Research Questions

In order to identify certain trends of the pedagogical practices of dance education, we formulated the following research questions:

- What are the general development trends and challenges of contemporary dance pedagogy?
- What are currently the essential aims and teaching methods in dance pedagogy?

4. Purpose of the Study

In order to answer the research questions a literature review was conducted. We aimed to analyse recent articles related to dance education and summarize the most important aspects of contemporary dance pedagogy.

5. Research Methods

The literature review study comprises of articles published in academic journals in 2002-2012. The search was conducted in EBSCO database by the keyword “*dance pedagogy*”, selection basis “*academic journal*” and “*full text*”, which resulted in 242 articles. During the first filtering we worked through 143 articles of which 56 were selected as relevant. Current review summarizes the 28 articles that matched research questions but did not focus on excessively specific aspects. In the following section we present our main conclusions that are organized under seven themes.

6. Findings

6.1. Holistic dance teacher

Person is a whole consisting of many interrelated entities and a holistic dance teacher, one of the main trends in teaching dance in the 21st century, must see a person as a whole. It is a conscious activity of compiling learner’s world view. Holistic approach of contemporary fragmented world should be involved with drawing the whole together - uniting personal identity with teaching, the mind with the body, the curriculum to the community, so that they would address the human as a whole. The teacher should take into consideration that the whole is comprised of independent valuable parts, and thus should be able to identify and make constructive use of the real and possible connections between them.

Holism asserts Miller (2000) that *everything* exists in relationship, in a context of connection and meaning. This maxim is of little practical usefulness on a global or universal level; it is very relevant, however, at the level of the whole person. The whole person is composed of layered elements including, but not limited to the intellectual, emotional, physical, social, aesthetic, creative, and spiritual. Holistic dance teacher is like a link between the student and the world. She perceives the individual as a whole and is able to put her competency into use in uniting both of the sides together. Andrzejewski (2009) came “to think of teacher knowledge as the collection and intersection of professional orientation, intellectual capacities, and professional knowledge of teachers” (p. 17). According to Andrzejewski (2009) professional orientation is “the constellation of a teacher’s affective traits that gives aim, direction, and focus to educational decision making and practice. These affective traits include: attitudes, values, beliefs, priorities, preferences, positions, and dispositions” (p. 17). Another important component of professional orientation is by Korthagen (2004) referred to as mission. He identified mission as the innermost level of change and describes it as being concerned with such highly personal questions as to what

end the teacher wants to do his or her work, or even what he or she sees as his or her personal calling. A well-developed sense of mission and a positive professional orientation focused on helping all students learn should be outcomes of teacher preparation (Korthagen, 2004). Teacher preparation should also be designed to facilitate the growth of teachers' intellectual capacities. "Central to these capacities is the ability to evaluate—analyze and make supported judgments about teaching practice in terms of student learning and the outcomes of student learning in the classroom, school, community, and society" (Andrzejewski, 2009, p. 17). Gilbert (2005) stated that dance teachers need to master and apply learning and child development theories, pedagogical knowledge, and classroom management strategies. Teachers need these understandings in addition to dance content including dance techniques, choreographic principles and processes, somatic practices, dance history, cultures, and philosophy (Gilbert, 2005). This is also related to the self-regulation and reflection that is more thoroughly explained in Chapter Three and the skills of a present-day dance teacher.

Teacher preparation should serve to impart and create professional knowledge regarding teaching which is related to students; schools and school systems; the foundations of education; and curriculum, instruction, and assessment that is enacted in the fields of teaching and learning (Andrzejewski, 2009). For positive outcome the dance teachers must actively take part in the curriculum development process originating from the needs of the students. „It is important that dance teachers are responsible for student progress as dancers (technique), as dance- makers (creation), and as appreciators of dance as an art form (understanding of dance in society). These three categories of dance education are echoed by the National Dance Association (NDA) standards for dance education and by the NDEO “*Standards for Learning and Teaching Dance in the Arts: Ages 5-18*” (Andrzejewski, 2009, p. 18). Holistic dance teacher then approaches teaching through human aspect by taking into account the distinctive features of students as human beings, and by relating dance to their personal human plan. Increasingly more attention must be paid to the human being and to the communication with its surrounding environment, understand one's role in the process. Openness and being prepared for change is also noted as a vital component. Holistic dance teacher education exhibits a commitment to holism in all of its facets: program design, curriculum design, course design, lessons, and individual learning activities. Alsup (2005) bring out that holistic teacher education advances the radical notion that teachers are people.

6.2. Self-regulation and reflection

Most of dance education in the previous century was focused on studying dance techniques for the aim of perfect performance. New tendencies of different approaches to dance started to occur from the mid 20th century. The students were not merely trained bodies anymore, as the impact and effect of dancing was also seen regarding the development of the individual. A noteworthy contribution to the mentality was made by M. Joyce (1994) by developing the ideas of Rudolf Laban into a free and child-centred scheme of dance teaching, calling it creative dance. Smith-Autard (2002) as a dance researcher framed dance teaching theoretically by dividing it into three models – the direct teaching on the basis of the old school, the child-centred M. Joyce approach on the basis of problem solution method, and proposed a new midway method on the basis of both of the methods. It is not possible for any dance teacher on any level of teaching to apply their own ideas automatically to the bodies and minds of the learners as the self-consciousness of contemporary learners has constantly increased. It is essential to take people's characteristics and the development process of their whole personalities into account.

The 21st century dance pedagogy shares its challenges with the rest of pedagogy. Many dance researchers (Chappell, 2007; Smith-Autard, 2002; Stinson, 2005; 2010) refer to the need to prepare teachers for the challenges of the 21st century, it is not enough for any of us to teach the kinds of dance we already know to the kinds of students we have taught in the past, in the kinds of schools we used to attend, using only the same methods with which we are acquainted with.

The following questions are of great importance on the background of the general development of individuals. What should dance teaching provide on a larger scale? How to achieve the balance between personal/collective voice and craft/compositional knowledge when teaching in dance education? The role of dance teaching is far broader than merely educating bodies. Stinson (2010) points out that “concentration, focus, self-discipline, working hard to achieve a goal, being your own teacher, being fully alive and present, problem solving, making connections, seeing relationships, collaboration, are more important than any dance content we teach” (p. 142). The increasingly complex requirements of the society expect more and more from dance, both teachers and learners. Seeing the connections between means and results, the creative solving of tasks by taking cognitive risks, and dealing with matters that could be (rather than matters that are), could be seen as the current trend also in dance education. It is also important to consider the development of dance literacy in order for dance education to be up-to-date and considerate of social needs. The question posed by Sims & Erwin (2012) “if students are learning only movements without

the history behind them or the intent and purpose of the movements, is that really quality dance education?" (p. 132).

Dance literacy, which is also mentioned upon in Chapter Four of *Somatic in dance*, is serving two essential and complementary purposes. Buck (2003) brings out that these are the development of literacy in and about dance, and the development of learning through dance, where dance experiences can be used to enhance learning in other areas. By exploring movement concepts within a structured learning environment through guided improvisation, creative problem solving, sharing, responding and critical reflection, shared meanings are constructed within the context of the learning.

With the active role of students, self-regulation and reflection skills become increasingly important in today's dance education (Lavender & Predock-Linnell, 2001; Leijen, Admiraal, Wildschut, & Simons, 2008a). As Leijen, Valtna, Leijen, and Pedaste (2012, p. 204) point out: "Reflection stimulates students' awareness of their body and movement experiences, which is necessary for developing high-quality dance skills. ... reflection is essential for students to learn how the audience may perceive their performance or choreographic work" Green (1999, 2001) and Marques (1998) have brought out that reflection helps to evaluate physical activities and understand the socio - cultural environment. The students learn to communicate with other people and new situations for their professional development (Leijen, Lam, Wildschut, & Simons, 2008b; Stinson, 1995). Despite the high relevance, Leijen, Lam, Wildschut, and Simons (2009a) pointed out that dance students experience several difficulties while carrying out reflection activities. For example, dance students tend to focus on merely negative aspects of their experiences and miss to point out positive aspects; they can have difficulties with questioning comments and suggestions provided by teachers, and they can experience difficulties with expressing themselves in words. In another study Leijen and colleagues (Leijen, Lam, Wildschut, Simons, & Admiraal, 2009b) used video-based learning environment to support tertiary dance students' reflection activities. Their results demonstrate the video-based facilitation as valuable for supporting dance students' reflection activities since this helps teachers guide their students and opens up new possibilities for students to take more responsibility and ownership in their learning process. The latter is related to advocating the use of open-ended problem solving learning methods in addition to the traditional direct teaching method by Smith-Autard (2002). She has pointed out two poles in the aims of dance education – developing dance technical skills on the one hand (such as acquisition/training of the techniques, dance literacy) and developing creativity (individuality, subjectivity and feelings) on the other. Both of these are essential in the study of dance, both support the study of

dance as an undivided phenomenon, as well as self-regulation. Therefore, we wish to highlight viewpoints of Sims and Erwin (2012) who argue that „dance is a creative art form. The type of thinking fostered in a creative environment can be rich and deep, involving a symbiotic relationship between the mind and the body. When dance teachers expect students only to repeat movements, they underestimate the power of creative learning and the thought processes that can take place” (p. 132).

6.3. The Somatic in Dance

The goal of somatic approach is to lead learners to their bodies and to teach them to become aware of their special features. It lacks measurable form and norm that is to be followed. In such a case where the results come from personal perception of where a movement begins or ends or what kind of impact, it has it is not necessary to use external aspects like mirrors in class. Mirrors could then be used only in later stages in case of need. In addition, the development of students might be supported by disciplines like yoga, Pilates, Alexander’s technique, Feldenkrais’ method, etc., that all challenge learners to look inside and to act out on one’s feelings. One very important aspect of the somatic approach is to make sure that a person wouldn’t injure or damage one’s body through movement, both consciously or subconsciously. The aims could be listed as development, reparation and improvement of one’s body. While dance is considered mainly a physical and aesthetic discipline, the somatic approach brings out the cognitive side of the physicality of dance. As dance is definitely a physical and aesthetic discipline, the role of the teacher in the somatic approach in dance could be seen as to encourage learners to originate from their bodies and its special characteristics.

Somatic approach is a key learning component in postsecondary dance education, as well as an important element of postmodern contemporary dance. Several authors (Enghauser, 2007; Stinson, 2004; Schupp & Clemente, 2010) bring out different important aspects of the somatic approach that help to expand upon that concept. The somatic dancing body has the potential to be more sensitive while being a way of perceiving oneself from the inside out, being aware of feelings, movements and intentions. It includes listening to one’s own body and rejecting authoritarian models. Enghauser (2007) asks – “With so much environmental degradation, human isolation, and body-numbing technology in our lives, why not recognize and employ dance as a part of the positive, healing, embodying side of the world’s equation?” (p. 89).

According to Enghauser (2007) an ecosomatic paradigm for dance teaching and learning should emphasize:

- Sensing, from the inside out, rather than relying only on imitational practices.
- Experiential modes of learning, such as improvisation, experiential anatomy, authentic movement, or other strategies.
- Practices that acknowledge and apply a basic cognizance of the sociocultural construction of body.
- A balance of instructional approaches and philosophies, which includes a non-authoritarian, healthy learning environment that challenges each student.
- Fostering the development of each student's creative, artistic voice in dance. Creative problem solving approaches in the learning of technical skills and concepts.
- The discipline of dance as intrinsically motivated mindful practice that stems from empowerment and somatic authority.
- A fervent nurturing of creativity and imagination (pp. 88-89).

The somatic approach has also been described by the concept of embodied knowing. Chapell (2007) explains that “dance teachers are particularly focused on building greater ‘literacy’ regarding an embodied way of knowing. (...)

It is applied to a movement context to articulate the dance teachers' desire for children to be able to interpret and create using their own bodily movement, and that of others (comparable to the notions of reading and writing using verbally-based languages). This movement literacy was grounded in being able to “sense” movement from within; developing to “thinking physically” as part of a “connected thinking body–mind”; to moving with “whole self awareness”. This was coupled with an emphasis on reciprocity” (p. 44).

Chapell (2007) emphasises that “this embodied knowledge is significantly connected to the education of aesthetic experience within dance, and plays a crucial role in teaching for creativity in the discipline. Aesthetic knowledge grounded in embodied knowledge might be said to be the glue that binds the intertwining or the connection between personal/collective voice and craft/compositional knowledge” (p. 51). Somatic approach opens up new possibilities that were not in use with former methodologies of dance education – for example in the case of direct teaching. The midway model of Smith-Autard (2002) has joined the method of direct teaching and problem solution with a somatic aspect. Enghauser (2007) points out that “there is a rich dialogue yet to ensue between those in the various fields of ecopsychology, ecology, dance movement therapy, somatic education modalities, dance education, and performers and choreographers as to how to connect self to world to create beauty, wholeness, healing, and to uncover new dimensions of expressing what it means to be human in the most global and essential way” (p. 89).

6.4. The relation of dance pedagogy with dance as an art form

Elaborating on Stinson's (2010) suggestion for teacher education, graduate dance education needs to keep examining the grand myth of the artist–educator divide. Within the new paradigm the professions of a dance artist and dance educator should move towards each other. Dance institutions of higher education have deliberately chosen to provide dance artists with knowledge of dance teaching. The position of dance students questions the need to teach students how to teach dancing. There seems to be more interest in choreography and self-training, and hope of relying solely on these skills when encountering the need to teach.

Risner (2010) asks, how could it be possible to establish communication between the artist and the educator. In search of these answers the observations of different authors (Andrzejewski, 2009; Bonbright, 1999; Sims & Erwin, 2012) will be brought out. Andrzejewski (2009) presents concepts like professional orientation, intellectual capacities, and professional knowledge that have separately developed on the basis of each individual, and that require more or less extra work in its development. Bonbright (1999) points out that as artists it is important to understand the content, process, and methodology of creating, performing, and responding to dance as an art form. As educators, they have to understand the content, process, and methodology of developing and delivering curricula, syllabi, and assessments; in addition, they are capable of using the creative process in integrated and interdisciplinary education. Sims & Erwin (2012) have brought out that „it is a dangerous practice for experienced and talented dancers to become dance teachers without any pedagogical knowledge. Professional dancers have to learn to transform their content knowledge into pedagogical formats suited to the characteristics of the students and settings in which they teach” (Sims & Erwin, 2012, p. 138). Charismatic personalities as they are, it is likely that they might subconsciously physically or mentally damage the learners while being driven by their art mission. The development of present-day dance teachers is supported by knowledge of dance art as a science in general, and the people involved in dance must be able to research, analyze and synthesize. Bannermann (2009) draws attention to the need to value the teacher as well as the researcher, and continue to strengthen links between teaching and research; that we acknowledge the significance of practice and that we recognize and value the totality of the dance ecology. On the other hand, dance teacher is a researcher also in the sense that he is interested in a person as a whole. The latter relies on the before mentioned holistic and somatic approach in the development of dance. At this point the mission concept of Korthagen (2004) becomes important, or how does a person involved in dance perceive oneself.

Sims & Erwin (2012) point out that all the dance teachers of institutions of higher education who took part in their study mentioned following the teaching patterns and practices of their former teachers. Even after taking courses in pedagogy, the participants mirrored the practices of their former teachers exacerbating the point that dance experience outweighs the influence of pedagogy courses on dance teachers' teaching practices. The key for the dance world is to ensure that dance instructors are universally employing effective and efficient management and teaching strategies so these practices will be passed on from generation to generation.

Guided reflection in higher education pedagogy would provide a possibility to consciously deal with the problems. To analyze the situations through the stages of reflection together with the supervisor by taking, for example, the Korthagen and Vasalos (2005) created five-stage ALACT reflection model as its basis. The model helps students to be aware of the content of their activity and to connect it with their mission (Sööt & Leijen, 2012).

6.5. New media, technology and other art forms in dance education

Due to the dance phenomena's wide applicability, the art of dance has not been seen as merely body-oriented one. Dance education could apply people interested in dance in all accessible and relevant arts (light design, sound design, graphic design, etc.). It enriches the person as well as the art(s). Risner and Anderson (2008) have pointed out that the use of video editing, web and graphic design as computer-mediated innovations enrich students' professional skills and advance their career opportunities while creating opportunities for collaboration with representatives of other disciplines, scholars and artists. Innovative usage of technology in the creative process and performance liven the whole scene. "Like other artistic disciplines, dance now intertwines technological elements in teaching, performance and choreography. By virtue of these technological advances, it has become increasingly important that undergraduate dance students possess and maintain the technological skills and advances currently utilized for creating, producing and documenting creative and scholarly endeavours" (p. 113).

The challenge of the dance teacher relies in coping, accepting and managing these new devices, since new media has accompanied learners in class as well as outside of class. The recurrent mass media brings along new questions and challenges. Very often learners have seen and experienced a lot. Teachers should be open-minded and eager to connect the new means with their existing competencies. Distance education has also become possible in dance education (see e.g. Leijen, Admiraal, Wildschut, & Simons, 2008c; Leijen, 2009).

Oliver (2011) has described situations in which the prevalence of pop culture in the media allows it to permeate and often dominate the consciousness of people in contemporary life (via Internet, Facebook, YouTube, live performances etc.) brings about new challenges for teachers who focus on the teaching of dance as an art form or as a physical discipline. But the availability of dance through media can improve the teaching of dance as well as bring excitement to the classroom where the learners are already acquainted with technology. Dance in the media could serve dance education by acting as a conduit or connection between the known (popular culture) and the unknown (dance as art). “Methodological approach would be:

- (1) give students the tools for creating their own lifelong environment of exploration, discovery, reflection and learning; (2) be responsive to the needs of today’s students and tomorrow’s – not yesterday’s; and (3) enrich student experiences by bringing research, creative activity, and engagement into the curriculum and offer practical opportunities for students to prepare for the world they will enter. From the outset, the key focus has centred on the student – on her/his learning and development, wellbeing and retention, and the ways in which technology programs are delivered demonstrably in the student’s best interests” (Risner & Anderson, 2008, p. 116).

Dance in its phenomenological form is increasingly able to exceed its “limits”. Different art forms form new intriguing combinations by using new media, and means and possibilities of ICT. Interdisciplinarity may no longer be interdisciplinary – it may now be a discipline in its own right (Condee, 2004).

6.6. Multiculturalism in dance education

The general globalization, European Union and other cultural unions have developed the contemporary world into something that is far from mono-cultural. Crossing borders has placed us in multicultural societies and communities that bring along new aspects for every teacher. Learners cultural and national characteristics become evident in their behavior, attitude, as well as work methods. The teacher must be able to consider their special characteristics, at the same time accepting and supporting the student’s cultural roots, and supporting national identity.

Baskerville (2009), Chepyator-Thomson (2009), Melchior (2011) have reached a recognition that multicultural education and the development of culturally relevant pedagogy has increasingly become part of the public discourse on education. “Responding to the diverse needs and interests of students in the classroom is increasingly challenging for

teachers, many of whom have students from cultural and educational backgrounds very different from their own. It is important for them to recognize and understand these differences and find ways to effectively manage them” (Melchior, 2011, p. 119). Baskerville (2009) points out that in order to achieve the best possible learning environment it is important for the teacher to establish a supportive and open classroom culture, in which the cultural and linguistic background of all students is permitted and desired.

In that case it is possible for the dance class to use a study of dance techniques also as a social experiment, a socio-cultural activity. Such programs are widely used in language study, communication, self-study, as well as educating the community and uniting its members.

Learner ability to be aware of and to value their roots enriches the class with each participants knowledge and culture (Bishop & Glynn, 2000). Melchior (2011) brings out that the children who experience dance as participants, creators, viewers and critical inquirers, within contexts that are relevant to their own lives, develop confidence in themselves as learners and as contributing members of a group. Risner (2010), Risner and Stinson (2010) also point to other, i.e. socio-cultural differences, in addition to multicultural ones. Families are of different social layers, different income and different networks of problems thereof. Learners, especially younger ones, bring along their everyday problems also to class, and the teachers possibility to ignore them or find ways to deal with them. Community dance projects seek social inclusion by empowering participants who are perceived as excluded from the mainstream (at-risk children, differently-abled persons etc).

Therefore, dance as an activity may take the role of therapy of an individual as well as a community, but although dance can have a therapeutic effect, the focus of social work cannot be seen essential. Art is not therapy; art is something in itself that may have a therapeutic effect, subconsciously solving different bottlenecks of the society.

6.7. Issues of gender and sexuality

In comparison to the other arts (music, fine arts, etc.), dance is the most physical-bodily one. Hence, physicality is a topic, which is in this discipline inescapable. „In dance, the body is the central issue for creativity, imagination, and curiosity, all posed in a somatic process. Since the body is intimate to both dance and gender, dance education involves gender (and thus sexuality) in its content (the body) and in its process (presentation)” (Kahlich, Shapiro, Davenport, & Evans, 2004, p. 33). Narrative, whether conscious or subconscious, of sexuality and gender are present on stage and in the dance class;

homosexuality is often a relevant topic and mostly in the case of male dancers. It relies on the myth that most male dancers are homosexual and of dance being a feminine discipline.

It seems of norm to see dancing as a part of small girls' not boys' life. Such stereotypes are formed and shaped by media as well as dance teachers themselves. Stinson (2005) points out that even today dance classes expect students to be obedient and silent subordination, which are not characteristic of boys. "The unwritten code of a typical dance class calls for students to maintain silence except for occasional brief questions and to recognize the teacher as sole authority. Students are expected to obediently follow directions, to stay "on task," to avoid chatting with other students or attending to any personal needs except those that are most pressing (p. 53). Free and creative self-expression that is mostly expected from boys is very often not allowed. Therefore, there is a great predominance of girls in dance learning. Or the function of boys in class or on stage is not equal to that of girls. Risner (2002) asks: "In the context of dance education we might ask—knowing what we know about the cultural construction of masculinity— what can we do individually in our daily dance practices to ensure a clear affirmation of gay presence, contribution, and equality in dance education?" (2002, p. 182). The instruments of gender expression are the same as the means of dance expression Kahlich et al. (2004) also consider it the job of dance teachers to clarify the theme of gender through dance. Dance introduces awareness of one's body and its parts and allows for physical expression without necessarily emphasizing sexuality.

Dancers consider the use of their body just as natural as for example talking therefore it is safe to deduce that very often sexuality is brought into the picture by spectators and not by the dancers. Kahlich et al. (2004) brings out a circle of questions in general sexuality and dance as a strongly physical sphere. The cult of hyper sexuality and ideal body image that is being spread by the mass media often also results in young girls' desire to shape themselves according to the ideal by any means necessary. Shapiro sees dance as a possibility to become safely aware of one's body, to reconcile and to develop it wisely without unnecessary damage, which is also the subject of somatic approach.

7. Conclusions

This article reports findings from a literature review study that aimed to identify trends of the pedagogical practices of dance education. The following will bring out the main conclusions of the seven topics presented in the article. Holistic approach presumes the dance teacher to perceive a human as a whole in connection with the learners as well as themselves. The increase in the relative importance of self-regulation and reflection has brought along the fact that nowadays it is not sufficient enough to just teach the steps

through a direct method. Individuality, creativity, and subjective approach towards the learner and the learning process have an essential role to play. Somatic approach continues the same trend by applying the way of thinking also in teaching dance techniques. In addition, the cognitive readiness and receptivity are also supported by somatic body techniques – yoga, Alexander’s technique, etc. A common topic also includes the dance artist’s relation to pedagogy. In addition to very good speciality based skills dance artists also need pedagogical support. The acquired, directed and perceived reflection of one’s studies supports the speciality based development of the teacher. The increasing vagueness of borders between different art forms requires willingness to introduce and to acquire new means and devices. The incursion of new technology and mass media has brought the issue also to dance lessons. The aim of the teacher is to be a catalyst, a filter, and an analyst in bringing the new means into use. Supporting cultural identity in a dance class is a prerequisite of good conduct in a multicultural environment. A teacher who has specialised in dance must also manage socio-cultural problems. Resulting from the particular nature of the dance of art towards body brings about the topics of sexuality on stage and in class, homosexuality, and gender.

In brief we can conclude that the role of the teacher of the 21st century is not merely the teaching of dance steps but rather a conscious guidance in a world of different possibilities with the skills of teaching how to dance. Dance is rather a means of gaining one’s aim and not an aim in itself. Important aims include the training of a reflective and active teacher, dancer or choreographer, and the support of individual’s general development on the background of acquiring dance technical and compositional knowledge and skills. The teaching methods assume a dialogue between teachers and students and openness for the integration of different forms of art.

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