Metamorphosis in Dance Education

Tradition and change a delicate dilemma

Linda Ashley
AUT University, New Zealand

Introduction

In just under a century, the face of the Western dance education *zeitgeist*[1] has undergone several transformations from modern, Euro-centric expressionist beginnings. I argue that the resulting current dance education prioritises dance-as-art and individual creativity. However, in educational settings of the present day, diverse cultures encounter each other with far greater frequency than in earlier decades and dance educators face a dilemma of balancing Western dance education with dance heritages of 'other' cultures. It is proposed that in order for dance to continue its valuable role as a vibrant educational experience of benefit to many students, development of pedagogy is needed to respond appropriately to the multi-ethnic demographic of classrooms of the present day.

Importantly, the recognition of Western dance education as *one* tradition among many is essential in addressing the dilemma. Pedagogy that would treat culturally diverse dance traditions equitably is envisaged as requiring inclusion of conservation conversations in the classroom. By that I mean, the provision of inclusive opportunities for learners to develop understanding of the cultural meanings and values that dances carry on the movement surfaces. Eisner's warning that: 'Meaning is an elusive term and one way to treat such elusive matters is to neglect them entirely' (Eisner, 1998, p. 35), prompts consideration of how dance and meaning cohabit in dance education theory and practice.

A semiotic perspective is proposed as appropriate when scrutinising meaning in dance. In particular, Peircean *semeiosis* (1960) is a suggested alternative theory from which to launch pedagogical strategies that are emergent from current pedagogy. Peirce's theories on meaning, individual self and cognition are relatively less researched in comparison to other theories that influence dance education, such as multiple intelligences, individual creativity, somatic practices, holism, choreography and formalist dance-as-art appreciation. A more contemplative, reflexive approach to dancing that focuses on semantic readings of dances is proposed here using Peirce's *semeiosis* (1960) as a foundation.

From a semiotic theoretical foundation, I examine how learners make and interpret meaning in relation to dance and also advocate for a reconsideration of the role of notation in dance education, suggesting a new pedagogy that completes not only a semiotic experience of dance, but also the current use of the notion of dance literacy. A matrix of teaching strategies, through which learners develop understanding of dances as analogies of peoples' lives rather than study of dance as individual creativity, a universal language or Western formalist 'art', is presented in the final section of the paper.

A brief overview of the 20th century metamorphosis of pedagogy in dance education

The Western dance education *zeitgeist* began in the early years of the 20th century and rationalised individual and physical experimentation as the yolk of the oeuvre. Modern dance encapsulated Romantic aspirations such as individual expression, corporeal freedom and metaphysical notions of channelling an outer cosmic spirit to balance inner well-being. Notable pioneer dance educators, such as Rudolf Laban (1988) and Margaret H'Doubler (in Hagood, 2000/2001) epitomised such metaphysical beginnings. The two pioneers shared the backdrop of the surge of industrial development, liberalism and fascism in the Western world at that time. Hagood identifies Laban's movement concepts as predating H'Doubler, but settles for describing their works as being of 'simultaneous invention' (2000/01, p. 42). Both Laban and H'Doubler emphasised linking the inner-psychological with the physical benefits of individual participation in expressive dance.

Expressive dance found a timely ally in the form of progressive liberal education. From the 1920s onwards, British dance educators, many of whom were based within the Physical Education Departments of educational institutions, found Laban's pedagogy was highly suited to their educational values. A similar connection may be made with the educational philosophy of John Dewey, (1939) the early somatic therapeutic practice of F. Matthias Alexander (1974) and the work of Margaret H'Doubler in the USA. Thus, modern dance was imbued with educative and generative qualities and fitted well with what is referred to in progressive education as an holistic approach. Indeed, the vision to include the physical, as a means of creative, individual expression that supports learning and the healthy psychological development of children, was a major breakthrough that has subsequently proved to be pivotal for the advocacy of a place for dance in education.

Later in the 20th century, the tried and tested creative modern dance education model continued to emerge as more of an artistic endeavour. Initial stimulation for change came from an unsurprising source that had been gathering momentum in parallel to dance education – modern dance as theatre art. Nowadays internationally there are many successful instances of dance education that are recognisable as being run on such a model. Key to these models is the emphasis on developing appreciation of dance as art, as opposed to the dance technique training model or dance as self-expression.

Two examples of dance-as-art models were formulated by dance educators in the UK and both retained components of Laban's legacy, such as movement analysis and creative aspects that were more pliable as tools to work with the development of dance as a theatre art. At this point in time, the less helpful metaphysical dimensions were abandoned. Adshead-Lansdale's (1981) three-tier framework of creating, performing and appreciating dance for dance-as-art in education and Smith-Autard's 1994 'Midway Model' (2002) both formalised the possibility of combining student creative work with the study and appreciation of professional dance theatre.

Smith-Autard situated the 'Midway Model' within a Piagetian developmental framework. Primary school creative dance progressed to more skill-based learning of composition and technical skills into secondary and tertiary education, correlating with Laban's developmental approach as depicted in his writings (1988). In emphasising dance as process and product Smith-Autard (2002, p. 23) suggested a range of learning experiences, including:

- The importance of physically acquiring skills in genres from a variety of other cultures
- The rich diverse dance cultures brought into schools by students themselves
- The study of socio-historical context and with it the issue of adequate provision of a range of relevant resources

However, in these models and much current dance education literature few clues are provided as to how to appropriately include the understanding of diverse dance traditions *on their own terms*. For example, influential educational philosopher Graham McFee (1994) identifies restrictions to the acquisition of real understanding of the cultural forms of others, arguing while in principle concepts may be mobilised across cultures, (he gives sexism as an example), in practice the incompatibilities between significant cultural values lead to difficulties. Revealingly, in his closing remarks, he states that: 'It must be acknowledged that this chapter represents simply a sketch of a very complex area' (1994, p. 133) and, as is common in much relevant literature, the larger issues are left without further interrogation.

Dance literacy, a later twentieth-century development of the *zeitgeist*, as exemplified in the theoretical background of *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2000), was also diffused internationally.[2] Thwaites (2003), who was part of the New Zealand curriculum writing team, locates such literacy as being mainly derived from The New

London Group's 1996 definition of 'multiliteracies'. In recognising literacy across multiple fields such as science and media, the arts are placed in an equitable position in education and society. The notion of dance literacy also brings with it an accompanying pluralist agenda inclusive of wider cultural diversity in dance. However, as seen in Coté's description of, 'a form of literacy that involves cognitive activities in the search of unique forms of meanings, especially in dance making and appreciation' (Coté, 2006, p. 29), the lingering *zeitgeist* emphasis on creating dance resurfaces, as in much other relevant literature.

The view that culture is both common to and 'what separates people' (Loytonen, 2001, p. 195) highlights the complexity of what dance education is up against in the present day, as diverse cultures interface in classrooms around the globe. The recognition of such a challenge adds to the timeliness and relevance of this topic. Identifying how appropriate inclusion of diverse dance traditions can be implemented in dance education makes up a part of the delicate dilemma explored in this paper, and prompted an ethnographic investigation into the current teaching of dance contextually by some New Zealand teachers.

Teaching dance contextually in New Zealand

The ethnographic investigation with teachers, dance educators and genre-specific experts was conducted between 2004 and 2006 in New Zealand. The detailed findings are not presented here due to lack of space. Data pertaining to the teaching of dance from diverse cultural perspectives in daily teaching (not extra-curricular groups) were collected via participant observation of an in-service teacher dance education course, questionnaire responses and focus groups. The data related to teaching, which focused on the 'Understanding Dance in Context' Learning Strand of the dance component of *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2000).

The method of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1999) was selected in order to develop local theory from field data. Grounded theory involves ongoing identification, analysis and coding of data in a deduction-induction 'tango' (Donmoyer, 2006, p. 20). Although not quantified through research, the statistical population involved in dance education in New Zealand is likely to be small in proportion to other curriculum areas[3], and possibly even in comparison to the three other arts disciplines; music, drama and visual arts. Moreover, this investigation involved a relatively small sample of participants in relation to the national population likely to be involved in dance education. Despite this, the snapshot of teachers' practices and perceptions presented in the findings overall provides some early documentation on how the dance component of *The Arts in New Zealand Curriculum* (2000) is being implemented in the classroom. As such, a springboard for more detailed and broader study is provided.

Findings from the observation of 40 teachers on an in-service dance teacher education course, 29 questionnaires responses from teachers in schools and four focus groups revealed that when teaching emphasised the contextual

study of dance it was often infused with a creative dance approach. Many of the teacher participants showed a preference for creative dance, sometimes at the expense of teaching dance contextually. Often the contextual study of dance was deferred – as one teacher put it in response to the questionnaire, 'because I believe that children learn and work as they develop original work'. Creativity in the guise of 'a familiar and trusted friend' (Chappell, 2001, p. 98) was deeply inscribed into these teachers' dance education classroom practice. The results from the questionnaire responses, as shown in Table 1.2, summarise the main reasons given by teachers for *not* teaching within the Understanding Dance in Context Strand.

Reason given	Number of teachers
UC is too theoretical	8
UC takes too much time	5
Teacher sees self as lacking sufficient dance expertise	9
Lack of money	3
Lack of resources	3
Does not fit into school scheme	4

Table 1.2: Teachers' reasons for not choosing the Understanding Context (UC) Strand from questionnaire responses

As all three sets of data were analysed accumulatively and triangulated a theory/practice split towards the 'Understanding Dance in Context' (UC) Strand was revealed as summarised by this teacher's questionnaire response: 'My students had limited dance experience so I focussed on the 'doing' Strands rather than theoretical investigation of dance…'

In a similarly dichotomous manner, many teacher respondents linked learning *to* dance for performance events and most of this teaching concentrated on rote learning. Performance emerged as a significant part of learning in the UC Strand, as seen in this list of the various titles of performances included in the questionnaires: *Global Fresh Moves Festival; International Assembly; Cultural Festival; Grandparents Day; Showcase; Studio Show.*

To summarise, the extensive findings from the ethnographic investigation, as relevant for this paper, indicated that teachers perceived learning and teaching in the contextual understanding of dance as more problematic than in creative dance or performing because of an underlying theory-practice split.

Tradition and change a delicate dilemma for dance education

Findings from the ethnographic investigation showed that the creative mixing of dance genres was a popular pedagogical strategy. However, as Adorno (1993, p. 223) recognised, once outside of the original context traditional culture is vulnerable, because 'the pretext of improving, [may bring about] barbarically mutilating it.' I contend that when learning about dance as a culturally significant phenomenon, individual creativity is a dangerous ally if regarded as a panacea. Issues of assimilation, appropriation and acculturation are potentially ignited in such pedagogical practice when, '… by domesticating the exotic… we are left not with an accessible exotic, but only

with the domestic' (Fleming, 1995, p. 7). I identify the potential loss of cultural diversity in dance via misappropriation and culturally uninformed innovation part of the dilemma for dance education.

A prerequisite for understanding traditional dance is familiarity with a tradition's cultural memories. Therefore, all the more important to have a sense of authenticity in terms of 'an idea of what something was like before change occurred' (Peterson Royce, 2002, p. 72). Tracing footprints of diverse dance heritages within ethnically diverse school populations of the present day brings together a far greater range of dances and could stimulate conservation conversations from exchanges of dances, identities, values and meanings.

For example, if Bishops' recognition of kaupapa Maori research as 'What makes it Maori is that it is done using Maori metaphors within a Maori context' (1998, p. 208) is applied to dance education, a clue to solving the enigma is realised. I contend that including diverse dance forms and genres in dance education *on their terms* is an emancipatory position for culturally diverse dance traditions. The enigma I pursue, and one that is often unaddressed in much current dance education literature, is how to rationalise for and implement such an approach.

An alternative pedagogical matrix

In this final section of the paper four pedagogical strategies are presented that are inclusive, promote meaning*ful* learning experiences and emancipate culturally diverse dance traditions within the context of Western dance education. Semiotic theory underpins these strategies, which are part of a larger theoretical and pedagogical matrix that appears in my doctoral thesis and are designed to complement current practice. They are:

1. Meaningful physical learning
2. Culturally relevant creative innovation
3. Graphic movement notation as a discovery learning experience
4. Active learners building a sense of cultural identity.

1] Meaningful physical learning

The ethnographic investigation revealed that many teachers linked contextual learning in dance with performances such as school assemblies or special events (usually 'cultural' or celebratory in some way). I propose that perfect replication, performance and competition are unnecessary in nurturing an understanding of the significances of dances.

Moreover, knowing how to perform a dance does not necessarily mean that the dance is understood and perfect replication of dances is unlikely in the time allowed for dance in a school day. Indeed, knowledge reproduction style pedagogy can disaffect some students as revealed in recent research into teaching styles in physical education, in which dance was included. Salvara et al., (2006) found a noticeable increase in the motivation to learn in students

who had been taught using guided-discovery and reciprocally some decrease in interest to learn in the knowledge reproductive group.

Physical learning offers learners enjoyment and health benefits, but it need not be confined to that if the learning is infused with relevant contextual background, values and meanings. In this regard, *semeiosis* examines how humans think with signs and here I apply the triadic thought process that Peirce (1960) identified to learning to perform a dance. All three stages are temporally diffuse and not linear.

In Peircean *firstness*, when learners start to learn a dance, an initial physical, sentient response to a dance can motivate curiosity and even excitement; an experience which many readers may also relate to. This is closely linked to *secondness*, when learners gradually deduce how to perform actions correctly through intentional repetition of physical action as aided by verbal and physical cues from the teacher. Further discursive, linguistic interpretation of the socio-cultural significance of a dance can develop during *secondness* and in *thirdness*, when *interpretants* of signs emerge. Tacit comprehension is integral with linguistic interpretation and induction of meaning about the dance in Peircean *thirdness*. Peirce's depiction that when interpreting meaning the discursive 'elements of *thirdness* cannot entirely be escaped' (1960, vol. 7, p. 653) clarifies how a viewer, performer or composer will respond to physical actions and language simultaneously to interpret dances.

In this way, *thirdness* depicts learners as capable of inducing culturally relevant meanings and values in the shape of *interpretants* as they dance, *if the teaching is designed that way*. Therefore, *semeiosis* explains how culturally diverse meanings and values can be encountered during physical learning experiences that include appropriate contextual annotation. *Semeiosis* also depicts how learning uses both imagination and analysis to interpret and make meaning whilst dancing … thinking and dancing at the same time.

In this manner, *semeiosis* permits thinking in dance when dancing *or* viewing. A view of human thinking in *semeiosis* depicts kinetic signs as simultaneously felt and interpreted with other connotated contextually meaningful sign companions, including spoken language, music, visual design, comestibles, social rank and so forth. Moreover, in overcoming the theory-practice dichotomy that teachers from the ethnographic investigation gave voice to, teaching that focuses on contextual study of dances as depicted here could be physically engaging, more learner-friendly, less time consuming and far more meaning*ful* in comparison to repetition for perfection, thus offering some solution to the delicate dilemma.

The ethnographic investigation also revealed how Indigenous dancers may provide the necessary synthesis of dancing and authentic cultural knowledge via inclusion of their specific cultural ontology in dance education. Such inclusion may be recognised as, 'giving voice to the repressed, marginalised, or ignored' (Buckland, 2006, p. 16). A classroom teacher teaching fragments

of a dance as learnt in a workshop would be unlikely to articulate such a synthesis of dance and meaning.

2] Culturally relevant creative innovation

Findings from the ethnographic investigation and current literature revealed that using a modern dance creative fusion process, was a popular teaching strategy. I argue that even though creative mixing of dance genres is seemingly harmless, potentially it is invasive and can perpetuate dominance by Western contemporary dance **–** inappropriately assimilating other codified dance vocabularies or compositional forms. The findings also indicated that the relative ease, accessibility and enjoyable quality of creative dance was being chosen in preference to contextual study and, interestingly, that when making dances as Western art, no context was acknowledged.

Although culturally appropriate innovation, as a part of contextual dance learning experiences was recognised by teachers in all three sets of data, the dance expert's focus group and questionnaire responses provided important extra data in this regard. Samoan dance expert Keneti Muaiava's description of how change and innovation in *sasa* can only be achieved properly 'once every stone has been turned over' indicated that appropriate innovation is found in the minutiae of the *sasa* dance vocabulary, as known to experienced practitioners in that genre. Muaiava's recognition that, *'there's nooks and crannies all over the place. You've just got to know how to get there…'*[4] was reiterated by dance experts Tongan, Niulala Helu and Maori, Valance Smith. Muaiava's knowledge of the acceptable creative possibilities of *sasa* are not the same as a Western dance educator leading a creative modern dance fusion with *sasa*.

In a clip from a teacher professional development video, *Dancing the long white cloud* (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2002) a primary school class, led by Samoan teacher Mele Nemaia, are shown creating, dancing and verbally articulating meanings of *sasa* gestures to tell a story about everyday actions such as gardening and cooking. Such actions are typical of the way in which *sasa* carries stories of Pacific island life and the cultural significances attached to communal values and relationships. This learning episode, although superficially simple, belies the subtle links made between dancing and developing culturally appropriate understanding and innovation during the children's learning. I contend that recognition of *semeiosis* in learning, explains why the primary school children in the video could so clearly interpret the meaning of the *sasa* gestures *as they danced* in a cultural conservation conversation.

Findings from the fieldwork also showed that when Indigenous dancers, be they students, teachers or visiting experts included creative process, their culturally specific ontology informed and prioritised the local cultural dance vocabulary, meanings and values. The process was no less creative – just differently so. From this perspective, the modern, individual, creative, discovery-learning experience and much praised motivational sense of learner 'ownership' are re-contextualised, shifting from the previous Western profile to

one that is informed by local parameters. Such a model incorporates 'authentic' dance within creative, learner-centred experiences, whilst maintaining ethical, culturally appropriate boundaries and meanings as well as the motivation of the learner via retention of a *relevant* sense of ownership.

3] Graphic movement notation as a discovery learning experience

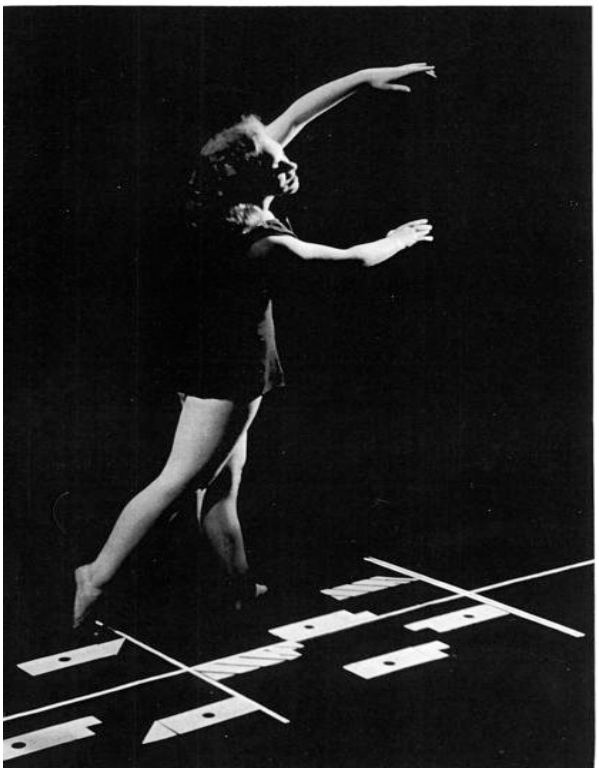
In Peirce's semiotics there are three different types of signs; icon, index and symbol. Icons visually resemble the object that they represent e.g. an Indian *mudra* mimes playing the flute. Indexicals are classed as signs that are physically contiguous with the object and are culturally specific meaningful shapings of time, space and body action. Symbols are classified by their formal, conventional, arbitrary connection e.g. the balletic mime for dance is a rolling arm over arm gesture that progresses through the frontal plane, from hip level to above the head – this does not look like 'dance', but a cultural collective agreement recognises that it connotes 'to dance'. Such a view of kinetic, linguistic, culturally specific meaning is metonymic; significance is made meaningful only within the specific system of meaning and language.

Labanotation is a semiotic symbolic record of the body in motion – an embodied graphic analysis of a dance. As movement is analysed and depicted graphically associated meanings may be induced along a pluralist spectrum including: literal; poetic; learner's own; socio-culturally diverse. The spectrum of possible meanings that dances carry is outside the scope of this paper.

In order to identify meaning, initial analysis of movement as found in Laban's Dance Elements already in use by teachers, facilitates learners to apply some simple analytical terms to their physical learning, as well use simple anatomical terms such as flexion, extension and rotation of the joints of the body in Peirce's *secondness*. From analysis learners can become articulate in the codes of dance cultures and contemplate how dance vocabularies as signs may be meaningful.

In turn, graphic movement symbols can indicate not just the rudiments of movement analysis but also the underlying culturally shaped kinetic actions, meanings and intentions of dancing. I propose that notation can increase understanding of dance because it graphically depicts the meaning of a dance in symbolic translation and consequently assists us with 'discussing with greater meaning, and in someway identifying, precisely what is the dance' (Van Zile, 1985, p. 46).

I argue that experience of the *concept* of graphic movement notation is essential to becoming fully dance literate, much as engaging with the notion of making dances engenders dance literacy. I contend that notation is not theory-driven, and the photo below illustrates the kinaesthetic sentient relationship between dancing and notation.



Art of Movement Studio in 1947. Dancer demonstrates notation in a physical relationship that is contingent with its performance.

Photo: Roland Watkins.

With permission of the Laban Centre and thanks to archivist, Jane Fowler.

In the pedagogical strategy that I am proposing, such pre-requisites of movement analysis can be learnt while dancing by targeting digestible chunks of dance vocabulary. I am not proposing that all teachers and children should necessarily learn Labanotation or even *Motif Writing*, although these are valid options, but I offer a fresh idea for dance education in suggesting the use of discovery learning that is analytical and creative to create graphic notation. Indeed, recognition of Laban's own creative discovery of his notation system highlights the apposite nature of the emergent semiotic pedagogy that I am proposing.

I believe that many learners would enjoy graphically recording their physical learning experiences in the contextual study of dance. Imagine learning a short excerpt of *sasa*, choosing a favourite gesture or motif and drawing the body in motion as colourfully as possible on a large piece of paper – stimulating ideas for students' own discovery of how to graphically record movements they have learnt – a conservation conversation. It is also likely that, with some well-scaffolded teaching, the children learning about *sasa* in the video clip mentioned earlier could have found a way to notate the gestures adding a further dimension to their dance literacy.

Inclusion of graphic movement symbols is also envisaged as increasing inclusiveness of current pedagogy with its dominant emphasis on dance creation in offering a more varied way to learn about dance. For instance, teachers who do not have the physical expertise to demonstrate dance, may find creating simple scores accessible to further facilitate learning about dance taught by others such as visiting experts. Similarly, a broader range of students and teachers could be encouraged to embrace the wider possibilities

of dance into their work. Scientific, technological and mathematical education communities could be encouraged to participate in mutually beneficial cultural exchanges between curriculum areas.

I suggest that developing analytical graphic accounts that engage imagination *and* find solutions to problems of meaning need not detract from the pleasure and value of the 'creative' learning experience, and would be acceptable to many dance educators in terms of a truly holistic education.

4] Active learners building a sense of cultural identity

The final pedagogy that I propose metamorphoses from the notion of the modern free individual in creative process to one that, from semeiosis, supports learners as reflexive thinkers to build a sense of cultural identity.

Reflexivity is a significant theoretical dimension of the emergent pedagogy that I am proposing, in that meanings of dance metamorphose during dance learning activities in relation to each learner's own sense of identity, intentions, actions and interactions. Peirce's principle that reflexive thought is an ever-present condition of what it is to be human, and that all signs are self-reflexive (1960) is key to understanding that learning about dance contextually facilitates individuals to be aware of their own identity, and see themselves reflexively through the eyes of others. Indeed, the mainly Polynesian children in *sasa* learning episode mentioned previously developed an informed and meaningful sense of belonging within a Samoan dance tradition.

Similarly, as learners engage in making sense of the world in dance education a reflexive view, in and of itself, can facilitate the seeing of others, 'as a local example of the forms human life has locally taken' (Geertz, 1983, p. 16). Geertz's identification that ' the concept of culture… is essentially a semiotic one' (p. 4), reveals interpretation of meaning in dance as a search for ubiquitous threads woven into a cultural cloak, of many colours. That is to say, meaning shifts with context, the person 'speaking' and the listener or viewer.

Practically, a class of students is itself a cultural phenomenon, offering a field for the contextual study of dances, transculturally. Interactions between students, teachers and guests form a rich multi-cultural resource – an ethnological field trip. Such pedagogy includes the possibility for acknowledging the students' own dance heritages. A couple of examples of such learning experiences must suffice here:

- Dance autobiographies or biographies of guests or family.
- Family trees could stimulate curiosity, not only about the student's own heritage and cultural identity, but also about dance.

Within such a pedagogical approach, I propose that the meaning of dance may be a sense of identity and belonging in the world that a dance brings with it, rather than a literal message. An ethnographic route maintains a valuable sense of ownership for learners as the learning process shape shifts the current focus from creativity in making dances to creative exploration of the

dance communities and traditions of family, friends, guest teachers and more distant others – whether distanced through space, time or both.

This strategy could also follow commodification of dances and in so doing help to raise awareness of the fragility of dance traditions and protect ownership of cultural property. Contemporary Western dance, kapa haka and media driven images of dance as found on MTV all are scanned with a socio-economic lens. Studying dances as kinetic, socio-economic cultural analogies allows students to contemplate the trafficking of dance heritages.[5] Learners would learn to recognise assimilation, acculturation and appropriation at levels that threaten cultural security.

In conclusion, the semiotic perspective on learning in dance education, as put forward in this paper, promotes equitable, ethical and sustainable dance education that embraces cultural diversity and goes some way to solving the current delicate dilemma faced by dance educators. Importantly, the pedagogical approach proposed in this paper opens up the possibilities for learners to: build a sense of identity and belonging culturally; make sense of cultural diversity; develop a sense of ethical ownership and the traditional in dance; and understand dances in a relevant and meaningful manner and enjoy dancing *at the same time*. Furthermore, it raises the responsibility of dance education to recognise and teach Western creative dance 'art' itself from a contextual perspective.

Notes

[1]The term *zeitgeist*, originating from mid 18th century German philosopher Herder, is a concept representing a dominant set of cultural values over a span of time. The modern *zeitgeist's* characteristics of endless innovation, individual freedom and the icon of the *avant garde* as dominant political and cultural forces are also typical features of twentieth century modern dance and dance education.

[2] Dance was formally acknowledged in New Zealand curriculum policy for the first time as a stand-alone discipline, in The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum (2000). There has been a rapid growth in the numbers of secondary school students sitting the dance Achievement Standards of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) developed in 2002, as shown in Table 1.1. Numbers sitting the internally moderated Achievement Standards would be even greater than the externally examined papers. It is reasonable to assume that growth has also occurred in dance education in primary and intermediate sectors, since the NZ government mandated The Arts Curriculum in 2003.

Year	Achievement Standard: 90004	Achievement Standard: 90005	Achievement Standard: 90297	Achievement Standard: 90298	Achievement Standard: 90597	Achievement Standard: 90598
2002	249	244				
2003	380	329	141	129		
2004	506	434	202	180	47	42
2005	601	516	282	225	72	39
2006	987	883	470	420	199	151

Table 1.1: These figures are 'unofficial', personal communication from National Dance Adviser for Secondary Schools, Patrice O'Brien, 11 June 2007.

[3] Questionnaires were returned from 14 primary, six intermediate and nine secondary schools.

[4] Muaiava, K., personal communication, November 14, 2005, focus group.

[5] Smith draws attention to the fine line between education and trade: 'As practised, formal education is the ultimate human enterprise in its concern for and trafficking in the signs of culture' (2005, p. 201).

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Biographical statement

Linda Ashley (M.A. University of London): Senior Dance Lecturer and Research Stream Leader at Auckland University of Technology (AUT), New Zealand. Linda has extensive academic, choreographic and performing experience in dance. Currently, she is completing doctorate studies at the University of Auckland. Publications since 1996: *Dance Sense* (Northcote House Publishers, 2nd ed., 2005); *Essential Guide to Dance* (3rd ed., Hodder & Stoughton, 2008); and *Dance Theory & Practice for Teachers: Physical and performing skills*, (Essential Resources, 2005). She completed the New Zealand Ministry of Education curriculum materials development contract to produce the video *Dancing the Long White Cloud* (2002).