

# Applying Mosston's Spectrum of teaching styles in dance education

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## Abstract

The purpose of this article is to provide dance teachers with a pedagogical rationale for designing case-appropriate learning activities by using Mosston's Spectrum of teaching styles (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002) as the underlying theoretical framework. Ranging from reproductive to productive teaching styles, the Spectrum can provide dance practice a comprehensive array of alternative teaching approaches, offering thus a range of options for teachers to accommodate students' diverse interests and needs. In the present case, various dance genres are selected and exemplary unit plans are prepared under the concept of each teaching style. In all examples, practical guidelines are given concerning teacher and student roles, unit structure and organization, lesson focus and expected learning outcomes.

## 1. Introduction

Dance learning is a process and product determined by the quality of the teacher-student interaction. Within the realms of classroom practice, the effectiveness of this interaction will foremost depend on the teacher's ability to translate content knowledge to pedagogical action according to students' developmental needs and abilities. Amongst others, professional knowledge updating, and familiarization with a variety of teaching styles are basic duties for the dance teacher, who wishes to optimize conditions of dance learning and practice.

Relevant literature supports that the content of any dance learning activity, no matter how innovative, cannot guarantee the effectiveness of dance teaching (Bond & Stinson, 2007; Dania, Tyrovola & Koutsouba, 2017; You, 2009). Instead, it is students' kinesthetic and cognitive engagement with the curriculum (both taught and enacted) that will ultimately render the multidimensionality of dance learning (Dania, *in press*; Oreck & Nicoll, 2010).

However, there is evidence to support the view that, even nowadays, the majority of dance classrooms fall "under the canopy" of direct instruction, with teachers focusing on skill practice and technique empowerment (Dania, Tyrovola & Koutsouba, 2017). Student-centered or productive teaching practices are not employed as evenly across the typical dance curriculum, and when implemented they focus exclusively on the end-products of teaching (You, 2009). It seems that the linking of practice with pedagogy remains mainly at the level of "didactology" rather than being enacted as "applied dance didactics" (Dania, 2013).

Therefore, the purpose of this article is to provide dance teachers with an “applied dance didactics” paradigm by using Mosston’s Spectrum of teaching styles (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002) as the underlying theoretical framework for the design of case appropriate learning activities. Mosston’s Spectrum of styles has up to nowadays served as a viable guiding tool for the delivery of movement instruction (Goldberg, Ashworth & Byra, 2012). Ranging from reproductive to productive teaching styles, the Spectrum provides a comprehensive array of alternative approaches from which to select while teaching, offering thus a range of options for teachers to accommodate diverse student preferences and needs. In the present case, the Spectrum is not supposed to be presented as a straightjacket for dance teachers or as a prescriptive tool regarding curriculum design. Instead, it is recommended as a flexible framework for lesson organization, one that allows objectives, behaviors and outcomes to be dealt with effectivity and creativity according to contextual lesson circumstances.

## **2. Dance Didactique**

Learning dance only by observing and reproducing the teacher's model, even though appropriate for reinforcing skill acquisition and deliberate practice, weakens students' ability to reflect and critically evaluate already learned motor patterns and thus develop kinesthetically (Oreck & Nicoll, 2010). Students’ former background in dance together with their experiences of participation in dance classes, all will determine the perceptions, motives and attitudes that they will adopt, either as amateurs or as professionals of the genre. Creating on and not for his/her students, the teacher has to plan dance experiences that address bodily, cognitive, emotional and social aspects of their self, while promoting their active engagement with the dance material. The exceptional ease or difficulty of the taught skills, the students’ uncomfot of performing before others, or their sense of hard and unsuccessful effort, are obstacles and challenges in the process of dance learning that need to be dealt with effectively.

Research has shown that dance teaching methods should balance between students’ skill level and interest, linking their achievement goals with individual improvement (Bond & Stinson, 2007). The use of cognitive tools for content analysis, together with students’ involvement in decision-making processes, can maximize dance literacy and help develop positive attitudes and accurate understandings (Dania, 2013). Therefore, the dance teacher’s “mobility-ability” or otherwise his/her skill of moving from one teaching style to another according to the classroom circumstances, is a prerequisite for fostering students’ individuality while achieving lesson goals (Goldberg, Ashworth & Byra, 2012). The use of a variety of teaching styles seems to encourage students’ active participation, as well as their ability to manipulate and communicate the structure and style of dance movement in kinesthetic terms (Dania, Tyrovola & Koutsouba, 2017).

The determination of the case-appropriate teaching methods is the subject of Dance Didactique. By focusing on the dynamics of the triadic relationship "Teacher -

Learner - Content", the scope of Dance Didactique is to propose practices, strategies and models for lesson organization and design, based on the structure of this interaction (Amade-Escot, 2006; Buck, 2006). The direction of this logical and causative relationship will ultimately depend on the teacher's comfort and easiness to select those styles that best highlight the intend of the lesson content and serve the desired teaching objectives. Therefore, the study of Dance Didactique should be approached with congruence and specificity to the teaching context, and not as a set of specific principles or procedures that limit teachers' fantasy and subjectivity.

### **3. Using Mosston's Spectrum of styles in dance teaching**

Mosston's Spectrum of styles has universally been acknowledged as a comprehensive framework for understanding the teaching-learning relationship and facilitating teachers' competence in using a variety of pedagogical approaches during movement instruction (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002). Ranging from the command (A) to the self-teaching (K) style, the Spectrum presents the teaching-learning process as an encounter placed along a decision-making continuum (Goldberg, Ashworth & Byra, 2012). Lesson intend, impact, actions and assessment, are decisions that are taken during the process, for which the teacher, the student or both can be held accountable. Therefore, teaching styles are nothing more than behaviors identified by "*who makes which decisions*". If all decisions are made by the teacher the teaching style is labelled as "command style", while when all decisions are made by the student then the teaching style is labelled as "self-teaching style".

In the following paragraphs, Mosston's Spectrum is used as a guiding tool for presenting practical classroom examples from different dance genres, which are designed under the logic of selected teaching styles. Within each example, information is given regarding the expected objectives, behaviors and outcomes, and lesson organization is presented in the form of task cards. The ultimate purpose of every example is to provide dance teachers with practice-referenced resources that use the Spectrum as a point of reference for bridging lesson goals with student abilities and performance in pedagogical terms.

#### ***3.1. The Command Style (A): Practicing in unison according to the teacher's cues***

According to Mosston and Ashworth (2002), the Command style is an appropriate style for practicing with safety and at a choreographed pace, either on fundamental skills (which are probably unfamiliar to the students), or on complex sequences and difficult techniques that require a great degree of concentration and accuracy. In this style, the teacher takes all decisions about lesson content, time of practice and assessment and gives continuous, real-time feedback that directs students' attention to basic terminology, postures and qualities of movement. The students perform at the teacher's directions following in a "*do-as-I-do*" manner. Teacher's enthusiasm to act in this manner will determine lesson success, since an overemphasis on this style may detriment students' critical thinking. The teacher's explanations about the usefulness

of this style is a good solution to avoid such an instance. The task card presented in Table 1 is a characteristic example of the use of the Command style with novice primary school dancers.

**Table 1.** *The Command teaching style (A)*

Teaching Style: Command style (A)		
Dance Genre:	<b>Country Dance</b>	Context: <b>Primary School Dance Classroom (Grades 6 – 7)</b>
Lesson focus:	<b>Motor skill learning</b> and performance	
Expected learning outcomes:	At the end of this activity students will be able to <b>perform</b> alone and in couples <b>the Step-Swing step</b>	
Teacher's Directions	After putting students in pairs (two parallel lines, one student facing the other), the teacher might begin the following exchange with the class: <i>Teacher: "Good morning students. Today we will learn the step-swing step by using the command style. You will repeat the steps after me, following my cues, since this will save us time to learn to perform quickly and enjoy dancing with our partners".</i>	The teacher explains the usefulness of the style.
	<i>Teacher: "Stand exactly opposite to your partner, as I am standing. Your arms must be to the side, your feet close and no touching".</i> (Students follow). <i>Teacher: "When I say 'Step' do a step to the right on your right foot...and 'Step'...now on my signal swing the left foot in front of the right, bouncing slightly on the right foot...and 'Swing'...that's right...now let's do it to the other side....."</i> (Students follow). <i>Teacher: "Repeat with me 'Step and Swing...Step and Swing' okay?"</i>	The teacher's partner is usually a student that can perform without difficulty.  At the beginning without music and afterwards with music, the teacher cues the students until they can perform the step correctly.  Use of timing and immediate feedback.

**3.2. The Practice Style (B): Practicing independently and receiving personalized feedback**

The Practice style is one of the most widely used teaching styles in dance (Gibbons, 2007), due to its potential to maximize active learning time and thus set the circumstances for managing successfully possible inappropriate or undesirable behaviors (Goldberg, Ashworth & Byra, 2012). According to this style, the teacher

decides on the subject matter of teaching and the students practice independently or in small groups deciding about the order of tasks, the starting and finishing time of practice, their pace, rhythm and intervals (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002).

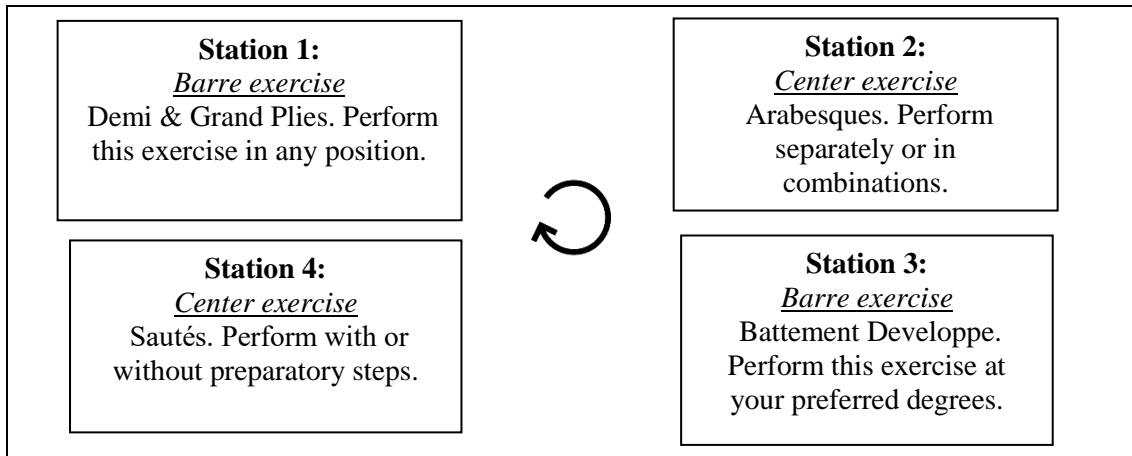
During practice, the teacher walks around the class giving directions when needed. With this style, students' independence of decision making is a factor that promotes personal initiative and self-trust for reaching performance standards that are set by the teacher. A possible disadvantage may be the low frequency of feedback given to some students who are not able to remember or understand clearly all instructions. In order to address this challenge, the teacher must spend more time in those working-stations that need extra feedback on practice related issues. In Table 2, the Practice teaching style is presented within the context of a ballet class for intermediate Middle school students.

**Table 2.** *The Practice teaching style (B)*

<b>Teaching Style: Practice style (B)</b>		
Dance Genre:	<b>Ballet</b>	Context: <b>Middle School Intermediate dance lesson</b>
Lesson focus:	<b>Barre and Center practice</b> in Ballet technique (locomotor and non-locomotor movements)	
Expected learning outcomes:	At the end of this activity students will be able to perform: <b>demi and grand plies, Battement developpe, Arabesques (1, 2, 3), and Sautés (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> positions)</b>	
Lesson Organization	A typical format of lesson organization with this style is the division of the practice space in working-stations (Figure 1). Each station is a different exercise or activity for which the teacher can prepare a task-card with instructions for practice. The content and style of practice at each station is determined by students' decisions about: <i>location and order of tasks, starting time, pace and rhythm, stopping time and practice intervals, initiation of questions, attire, and posture</i> (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002). Students work privately and independently, while the teacher is offering face-to-face feedback.	

### **3.3. The Reciprocal Style (C). Criteria referenced reciprocation and interaction**

In the Reciprocal style, the students work in pairs or small groups (one is the performer and the other/s the observer/s) giving and receiving immediate feedback according to teacher-determined practice criteria. The basic strength of this style is the analysis and evaluation of others' performance, which gives students the chance to think critically, compare and identify relationships between skills and concepts.



**Figure 1.** Working stations in the Practice teaching style

Observers and performers switch roles periodically and no communication is made between the students and the teacher. In this manner, performers learn to concentrate on the form of the practiced tasks, while observers learn to focus on the content and quality of their feedback. The teacher's role is rather facilitative, with the main duty being the preparation of task cards with instructions to performers and observers and the designation of the most important evaluation criteria for every practiced task (Table 3).

During the lesson, the teacher circulates among groups, reinforcing and giving feedback. In the following example, the same Ballet class of the Practice teaching style is used for the presentation of the task-card that would be used in the case of the Reciprocal style.

### **3.4. The Self-Check Style (D). Self-assessment of performance**

The basic focus of the Self-Check style is the development of students' kinesthetic awareness, as well as their ability to rely on intrinsic sources of feedback concerning their performance (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002). This type of feedback raises the chances for the development of their capacity to set and seek personal achievement goals. Self-regulation is an important skill learned in this fashion, one that increases on-task behaviors, as well as students' understanding about their strengths and weaknesses.

The teacher's role in this process is both to determine developmentally appropriate tasks or activities and establish performance criteria for their assessment. Task cards are prepared for each student separately with skill cues, performance instructions and observation landmarks that facilitate students in their self-checking process. Students use the cues to perform each task and check quantitative or qualitative aspects of their performance (i.e. whether or not a dance motif was performed according to the desired standard, whether more practice is needed in technical or stylistic dance elements, what is the total score in a skill or ability test, etc.).

**Table 3.** *The Reciprocal teaching style (C)*

<b>Teaching Style: Reciprocal style (C)</b>		
Dance Genre:	<b>Ballet</b>	Context: <b>Middle School Intermediate dance lesson</b>
Lesson focus:	<b>Barre and Center practice</b> in Ballet technique	
Expected learning outcomes:	At the end of this activity students will be able to <b>perform fundamental Ballet techniques according to predefined criteria, while giving and receiving feedback from peers.</b>	
Directions to the performer	<i>“Perform each task below four times and if you have any questions ask your partner. Switch roles at the completion of the tasks”.</i>	
Directions to the observer	<i>“Watch your partner perform four times each task, observing one criterion at a time. Use the criteria below to offer positive and accurate feedback after every try. Always use corrective comments and give quantitative and qualitative guidance (i.e. “Well done, 3 out of 5 times you performed the plie correctly, try keeping your weight equally distributed throughout”)”.</i>	
<b>Task</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Common errors</b>
<b>Grand Plie</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stand in 1<sup>st</sup> position with weight distributed equally on both feet.</li> <li>Perform a complete bend of the legs, with your heels releasing the floor after the demi-plie.</li> <li>Continue until the thighs are parallel to the floor.</li> <li>Ascent first with returning your feet to the floor and then with straightening your knees.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unequal weight distribution</li> <li>Movement that is not continuous and smooth (leg bouncing)</li> </ul>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Arabesque</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stand on the supporting leg (right), with your left leg extended behind the body.</li> <li>Stretch your left arm forward (forehand height) and your right arm behind the body.</li> <li>Tilt your head to the left (eyes gazing over the fingertips).</li> <li>Keep your chest lifted and your spine long.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Back leg not straight</li> <li>Standing leg not perpendicular to the floor</li> </ul>

Therefore, the clarity and coherence of teacher’s task-card instructions will determine the lesson’s outcomes. Students’ ability to concentrate on practice without the teacher’s continuous presence and feedback is a prerequisite for lesson success with this style. A Self-Check task-card of a Modern dance unit is presented in Table 4, as an example of lesson materials prepared for intermediate-level dance students.

**Table 4.** *The Self-Check teaching style (D)*

<b>Teaching Style: Self-Check style (D)</b>			
Dance Genre:	<b>Modern Dance</b>	Context:	<b>Primary School Intermediate dance lesson</b>
Lesson focus:	<b>Changing levels</b> in Modern Dance		
Expected learning outcomes:	At the end of this activity students will be able to <b>make smooth transitions from standing to sitting, while self-checking and assessing their performance technique</b>		
Directions to students	Perform each task below 4 times concentrating on one skill cue at a time. At the end of each try <b>check-out</b> whether or not your performance complied with the corresponding cue. <b>Write feedback comments</b> for every technical performance aspect that you deem necessary.		
<b>Order of skills for changing levels</b>	<b>Skill cues</b>	<b>I can do it</b>	<b>More practice</b>
- Step to the side with the right leg and cross the left leg behind the right (foot raised off floor)	- The weight is kept over the right leg for better control of weight	YES/NO	YES/NO
- Lower your body to the left leg into the kneeling position	- Place your left leg directly behind the right	YES/NO	YES/NO
- Counterpull in the kneeling position as the body lowers to the sitting position	- Right leg flexes at hip, knee, ankle (full foot resting on floor) and left leg out-rotated and flexing at the knee	YES/NO	YES/NO
- Arms are extended in second position for balance	- During the sit the body remains aligned, while moving vertically	YES/NO	YES/NO

### **3.5. The Inclusion Style (E). Content adjustment for increased participation**

Within dance education, the design and implementation of curriculum content according to students' developmental needs and abilities remains a major concern (Dania *in press*). As a teaching style used for this purpose, the Inclusion style gives students the opportunity to participate in the learning tasks at their own preferred difficulty level, since varying content entry points are designed for all students. The teacher's role is to decide about the possible levels of difficulty for each task and make necessary adjustments, when appropriate. The students select their preferred



level of difficulty and make their own decisions concerning the time, space and material requirements of practice. In this manner, students' on-task behaviors are enhanced, together with their feelings of self-confidence, efficacy and knowledge (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002).

This personalization of instruction offers opportunities for effective class management, since the lesson focus is redirected from "how to teach" to "how students learn". The implementation of this style is facilitated when discrete levels of difficulty can be assigned to learning tasks (i.e. in a modern dance unit, when students practice with different types of jumps, their level of difficulty can be determined according to the jump height or distance).

However, when the level of difficulty depends on context relative factors (i.e. students' previous experiences), then the different entry points should be determined according to expected learning goals and outcomes. In every case, no emphasis should be paid on between-student competitive goals (i.e. who will practice more, or, who will perform better). In Table 5, an example from Greek traditional dance teaching is presented through the use of the Inclusion style.

**Table 5.** *The Inclusion teaching style (E)*

<b>Teaching Style: Inclusion style (E)</b>	
Dance Genre:	<b>Greek traditional dance</b> Context: <b>Beginner level adult classroom</b>
Lesson focus:	Practice with <b>basic Greek dance forms</b>
Expected learning outcomes:	At the end of this activity students will be able to <b>perform basic Greek dance forms, with variations in time, space and quality of movements</b>
Directions to the performer	Practice on the basic Greek two-motif dance form $[(\delta+\alpha+\delta) + (\alpha+\delta+\alpha)]^1$ as many times as you want, by choosing your own preferred task from the tasks given below. Try to choose more than two tasks.
<b>A. Use of Time task</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Perform the above dance form with the first locomotor movement of every motif being longer than the other two: <math>[(\delta^{3/8} + (\alpha^{2/8}-\delta^{2/8})) + [(\alpha^{3/8} + (\delta^{2/8}-\alpha^{2/8}))]</math> (musical meter: 7/8)</li> <li>2. Perform the above dance form with the last locomotor movement of every motif being longer than the other two: <math>[(\delta^{1/8}-\alpha^{1/8}) + \delta^{2/8}] + [(\alpha^{1/8}-\delta^{1/8}) + \alpha^{2/8}]</math> (musical meter: 2/4)</li> </ol>	
<b>B. Use of Space task</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Perform the above dance form in place.</li> <li>2. Perform the above dance form travelling forward, backward, side to side.</li> </ol>	

<sup>1</sup>  $[(\delta+\alpha+\delta) + (\alpha+\delta+\alpha)]$  is a basic structural locomotor scheme met in a variety of Greek traditional dances [(locomotor steps performed as: (right + left + right) + (left + right +left)]. This scheme is performed with structural and stylistic variations that are typical of each dance's geographic origin.

**C. Quality of movement task**

1. Perform the above dance form with steady and continuous movement.
2. Perform the above dance form with light and free movement.
3. Perform the above dance form with strong and sudden movement.

**3.6. The Guided Discovery Style (F). Logical and sequential thinking**

Being a modern version of the Socratic method (known as maieutics), the Guided-Discovery style introduces dance students to a process of critical thought enactment, practiced within the context of logical and sequential dialogues that lead to the discovery of predetermined concepts and relationships (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002). Within this style, dance practice becomes a self-activated process of knowledge and skill empowerment, one that bridges students' experiences and potential with threshold meanings such as embodiment, aesthetics, expression, creativity, etc.

The teacher's role is rather pivotal within this style, entailing duties such as the selection of lesson specific concepts and the determination of those questions that will lead students to the discovery of new content. This discovery is a step-by-step process, the effectiveness of which will be judged both by the teacher's pedagogical content knowledge (i.e. question selection and accuracy, patience with students' unexpected reactions, anticipation of possible answers, etc.) and students' cognitive maturity and freedom of expression.

However, the major problem encountered by the majority of dance teachers is the determination and phrasing of specific questions that will enact students' problem solving ability and skills. In the following example (Table 6), guidelines are given concerning the design of a ballet learning task with the Guided-Discovery style.

**3.7. The Convergent-Discovery (G) and Divergent-Production (H) Styles. Cognitive operations enacted to produce motor responses**

With students' cognitive and emotional development being in the foreground, these two teaching styles emphasize on the connection between already acquired and new knowledge. Their most important educational outcomes are the activation of students' critical thinking and problem solving skills, as well as their engagement in processes of idea sharing and active learning (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002).

Within the Convergent-Discovery style, students engage in processes of reasoning, questioning and practicing in order to discover the one and only solution to a problem set by the teacher. The teacher gives feedback, when judged necessary, without however giving the answer/solution to the problem. Within dance education, such a process enables students to think logically and search for those forms, patterns or sequences that optimally support the performance of the desired skills or tasks.

**Table 6.** *The Guided-Discovery teaching style (F)*

<b>Teaching Style: Guided-Discovery style (F)</b>		
Dance Genre:	<b>Ballet</b>	Context: <b>Intermediate level high-school classroom</b>
Lesson focus:	<b>Grand Jete technique</b>	
Expected learning outcomes:	<b>At the end of this activity students will have understood the basic principles of the grand jete technique and will be able to perform it without difficulty</b>	
<b>Guidelines that the teacher would give if style (A) was used</b>	<b>Determination of relevant questions that would be used with style (F)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start on the left foot with both legs turned out, the right leg bent at knee, the tip of right great toe touching the floor behind left ankle</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the left leg need to be bend?</li> <li>What is the relationship between the two legs and why?</li> </ol>	<p>The students answer these questions depending either on relevant dance experiences or on logical thought. In the second case, the teacher has to provide continuous feedback questions for students to reach the desired answer.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perform a grand battement devant (right leg brushing) and push off the left leg with a forward move in the air</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can we reach the major push-off in the air?</li> </ol>	<p>Here the teacher must be ready to use more relevant questions that concern the biomechanics of the skill.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land on the right leg on demi plie</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why are we landing in demi-plie?</li> <li>Which part of the foot should first touch the floor?</li> </ol>	<p>In many cases students' answers and understanding may be facilitated by performing the activity or by watching their classmates performance.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Counterbalance your back and extend your back leg throughout the aerial phase. Move your arms in opposition to the legs</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which is the optimal position of the arms and torso and why?</li> <li>How far should the back leg extend?</li> </ol>	<p>Students build on their previous experiences with other types of jumps to answer such questions and refine their technique and style.</p>

Students practice individually or in small groups, in order to conceptualize, analyze, synthesize and apply the given information into a final movement response. A sample task-card for the Convergent-Discovery style appears in Table 7.

**Table 7.** *The Convergent-Discovery teaching style (G)*

<b>Teaching Style: Convergent-Discovery Style (G)</b>		
Dance Genre:	<b>Contemporary dance</b>	Context: <b>Advanced level high school classroom</b>
Lesson focus:	Practice with <b>Laban Effort Actions</b>	
Expected learning outcomes:	At the end of this activity students will be able to <b>analyze Laban’s effort actions and relate each to choreographic elements (phrases or themes)</b>	
Directions to the performer	After reading the choreography themes below, perform one dance phrase for each by using the appropriate effort elements. Explain the reasons for your choice ( <b>Important:</b> Students are already familiar with Laban’s Effort Actions: <i>Wring, Press, Flick, Dab, Glide, Float, Punch, Slash</i> ).	
<b>Choreography theme</b>	<b>Effort Action</b>	<b>Effort elements</b>
<i>Using a bubble wand</i>		
<i>Pushing a child on a swing</i>		
<i>Playing with a hula-hoop</i>		
<b>The problem:</b> <i>What Action did you use in each case? Which are the most appropriate effort elements for each case?</i>		

Within the Divergent-Production style, students have the opportunity to create their own preferred multiple responses to a problem or task set by the teacher and thus experience the cognitive, social and psychomotor outcomes of experimenting with alternative ideas.

Beyond the known and expected, these ideas are the basic foundations for the development of their creativity, the latter being a landmark concept in dance education. The teacher determines the problem to be solved and allows students to produce a variety of responses (either individually or in groups), which they will finally share with their classmates.

Basic skills are combined and refined, within authentic scenarios that extend beyond the limits of decontextualized skill practice. As a result social-emotional lesson goals are also achieved, since students develop a tolerance for others and gain an insight about the many possible paths that one can follow to produce the same

outcome (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002). An example of the Divergent-Production teaching style is presented in Table 8.

**Table 8.** *The Divergent-Production teaching style (H)*

<b>Teaching Style: Divergent-Production Style (H)</b>		
Dance Genre:	<b>Contemporary dance</b>	Context: <b>Advanced level high school classroom</b>
Lesson focus:	Practice with <b>Laban Effort Actions</b>	
Expected learning outcomes:	At the end of this activity students will be able <b>to perform a variety of dance phrases for each one of the eight Laban's effort actions</b>	
Directions to the performer	After reading the choreography themes below, perform a variety of dance phrases for each by using the appropriate effort elements. Explain the reasons for your choice ( <b>Important:</b> Students are already familiar with Laban's Effort Actions: <i>Wring, Press, Flick, Dab, Glide, Float, Punch, Slash</i> ).	
<b>Effort Action</b>	<b>Effort elements</b>	<b>Dance Phrases</b>
Float	Indirect, Light, Sustained	
Glide	Direct, Light, Sustained	
Press	Direct, Heavy, Sustained	
<b>The problem:</b> <i>How many dance phrases could you prepare and perform for each one of the above Effort Actions?</i>		

The learning focus of the Spectrum's three most productive teaching styles: Learner-Designed individual program (I), Learner Initiated (J) and Self-Teaching (K), is to launch students' desire to design their own preferred program of learning and practice, after taking into account personal interests, motives and levels of psychomotor and cognitive maturity.

The practice of these styles within dance education implies readiness from the part of the teacher to encourage students' interaction, engagement and inquiry, while leveraging their different views and experiences. Without lacking lesson organization principles or being on-the-spot pedagogical decisions, these styles build on students' emergent learning, the latter being distributed, relational and unpredictable.

Therefore, all lessons designed with these styles should foster *content diversity* (i.e. giving student opportunities to express their own perspectives), *content redundancy* (i.e. communication and presentation of skills and concepts in ways that similarities are made explicit) and student *deep interaction with the lesson material* (i.e. engagement with dance themes and ideas across time and context). The materialization of the above outcomes is closely related with the robustness of

teacher's pedagogical content knowledge as well as his/her conformity with a rather decentralized lesson authority.

## Concluding Thoughts

Dance learning is undoubtedly is a process and product highly dependent on the complementarity of the teacher-student-curriculum interactions. The dynamics of this interaction will ultimately determine the features of those teaching styles that best serve lesson outcomes. The delineation of all possible teaching styles along Mosston's Spectrum is a difficult undertaking since their ultimate number is rather indefinite. Furthermore, no developmental continuum can be suggested with the placement of each style on a definite teaching pathway (either reproductive or productive), since under different practice conditions different outcomes are expected. Therefore, the question that arises is: "What is the usefulness of the *Spectrum*?" "Is it worthwhile to use it in practice?"

The present study claims that the Spectrum's usefulness - both theoretical and practical - lies in its offering of a solid framework for designing dance curriculum, instruction and assessment, by taking into account *all possible routes* to effective teaching and learning (i.e. psychomotor, cognitive, social). The pedagogical rationale of each style - as can be seen in the examples presented above - creates case specific circumstances, which foster a discrete aspect of students' dance literacy, while foregrounding skills and concepts that the teacher deems appropriate.

The number of different styles that will be finally put in practice cannot be determined beforehand, since it will depend both on the teacher's working experience and his/her willingness to work and create with a responsiveness to students' interests and response. What remains clear and non-negotiable however, is that no claim can be made about dancers' skills, talent and progress if dance teachers cannot set the circumstances for all students to participate in learning experiences that accommodate in the best possible way their unique strengths, weaknesses and inherent potential.

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