

# Pedagogical conceptions of Finnish teachers of transnational dances.

## Cases: African dance, Oriental dance and Flamenco

*Mariana Siljamäki, Eeva Anttila & Arja Sääkslahti*

### Introduction

Cross-culturalism and multiculturalism have been characteristics of contemporary global culture since the 1990s (e.g., Wolz 2003). It is obvious that strengthened multiculturalism and cultural globalization are also reflected in dance (Shapiro 2008), and different dance cultures migrate from one country and continent to another, influencing each other (Rowell 2000). While the dialogue between different cultures is strengthened, dance study in new cultural contexts also becomes necessary and topical.

Up until just a few decades ago Finland was a relatively homogenous society. This has been evident in our dance culture too. When comparing the role of multiculturalism in dance pedagogy in Finland to that in the other Nordic countries, our experiences in taking multiculturalism into account are still quite limited. Multiculturalism has been a part of everyday life for longer in the other Scandinavian countries, for example, through immigrants introducing their own dance forms. Through increased international activities, the field of Finnish dance has broadened and new dance forms have appeared alongside the traditional ones, such as African dance, Oriental dance and flamenco.

Since the 1980s, the availability of African dance and Oriental dance lessons has increased, providing more opportunities for Finns to attend such lessons (Laukkanen 2003b; Siljamäki 2006). The first flamenco dance professionals started their careers in Finland in the 1960-1970s, but it was not until the 1980s that the films of Carlos Saura generated greater enthusiasm for flamenco in Finland (Lindroos 1999). The approximate similarity in the length of the history and teaching of these three dance forms in Finland was one significant reason for choosing them as the focus of this study. Another reason was that all of them are mainly performed by solo dancers.

Our interest in multiculturalism in dance education is mutual and has been present for years (see e.g., Anttila 2003). How could we also take into account the new challenges of multiculturalism in teacher education? So far we have little Nordic research on multicultural dance pedagogy and physical education. The aim of this study is to highlight the kind of pedagogy that flourishes in the lived context of teaching and learning transnational dances in Finnish dance pedagogy. In this report, when referring to the main author, her first name “Mariana” is used. “We” is used when referring to all the authors.

### Transnational dances in the context of the study

Finding a common concept that describes the three dances of this study was a challenge. African dance, Oriental dance and flamenco are all versatile dances with rich cultural backgrounds and many different tasks. Studying these dances as part of Finnish dance pedagogy, as taught by Finnish dance teachers, made finding a common term even more complex. In the context of the Finnish curriculum for art and dance schools, the term “ethnic dances” is generally used (<http://www.oph.fi/>). Pietrobruno (2006) points out that the ability to dance has often been attributed to groups broadly defined by a specific race or ethnicity. This tendency to essentialize dance in terms of a particular ethnic identity can be overcome through the conceptualization that dance exists outside the lived circumstances

of the dancer. This study concentrates on African dance, Oriental dance and flamenco in the Finnish context and the main focus is on Finnish dance teachers. Through our process of mutual dialogue, we found the term “transnational dances” useful. It refers to these dances as a changing and active part of the culture (see Hoppu 2003). However, adopting this viewpoint does not diminish our appreciation of the roots and the cultural background of African dance, Oriental dance and flamenco.

When culture is seen as a transnational phenomenon, it is understood as something that transcends national borders (Ryan, Ingram & Musiol 2010, 170). Vissicaro (2004, 5) points out that dance creates a bridge for traversing cultural borders because it involves the human body, and that is common to all people. However, the notion of dance or movement as a universal language needs to be critically examined. Shapiro (2008, 253-254) points out that this is a romantic idea that may lead to one overlooking various cultural differences. We use the term “transnational” when referring to multiple locations in respect of nations and cultures. Transnational dances are thus dances that have ethnic or culturally specific origins, but that have been influenced by the diversity of dance, music styles and other cultural effects at multiple locations (see Laukkanen 2003b). For example, Shay & Sellers-Young (2003) remind us of the geographical, social and cultural complexities that researchers need to take into account in order to understand Oriental dance. Ayoma (2007), for example, also highlights the character of cultural fusion of flamenco and Adewole (2004) writes how the term African dance can also refer to the dances that are performed outside the African continent.

In this study, the term *African dance* is used, although it is general and, according to many scholars, also controversial. Africa is a large continent with several ethnic groups and rich dance cultures (e.g., Gore 1994; Green 1996). Adewole (2004, 15) suggests that the term African dance could be used as an umbrella term for many kinds of dances that possess particular aesthetics. The term African dance would thus not only refer to dances from the African continent or any particular African society, but also to dances outside the African continent which have formed or fused from the dances from Africa. The teachers of this study teach African dance based on the West African dance tradition which consists of the mixed dance cultures of several ethnic groups from the southern part of the Sahara (cf. Mouflet 2001, 28-30; Mills 1996).

*Oriental dance*, also known as Raqs Sharqi (dances from the East), refers to women’s improvisational solo dances which are traditionally danced in North Africa and the Middle East. Oriental dance encompasses a variety of styles and genres depending on the country and region (Danielson 1996, 300.) The teachers of Oriental dance participating in this study teach different kinds of dance styles that have originated mostly from Egypt.

The third dance of the study, *flamenco*, typically involves dancing, a particular form of music, singing and hand clapping. Dancers, singers, guitarists and percussionists are an essential part of flamenco (Manuel 1989). Flamenco originated from the Romani communities in the cities of Andalusia, Cadiz, Granada, Seville and Jerez de la Frontera, and it is a blending of Andalusian, North African, Latin American and Indian influences (Hall 1998, 605; Lindroos & Bööck 1999). The participants in this study teach many styles of flamenco (palos) and their own choreographies in their lessons.

## **Methodology of the study**

### **Dance teachers participating in the study**

The research methodology of this study is based on a phenomenographic approach (see Marton 1981, 1986). The study explores the conceptions of seven Finnish female teachers of transnational dances who have specialized in teaching African dance, flamenco and Oriental dance. They teach dance in private schools and adult education centres in different parts of Finland and their students are people of all ages who are actively engaged in dance as a hobby. In this article, the term “dance student” refers to these dancers. The term “dancer” refers more extensively to all people who dance transnational dances, and it includes both professional and non-professional dancers. All the

teachers have extensive experience, from 13 to 26 years, in teaching, performing and choreographing in their own dance fields. Their ages vary from 31 to 49 years. Four of the teachers work as full-time dance teachers and three have other jobs besides teaching dance. One point worthy of note is that none of the teachers in the study have formal dance teacher education. In Finland it is not possible to study transnational dances as a main subject, although some of them are included in dance teacher education. However, all teachers in this study have studied their own dance fields extensively, both in Finland and abroad and since the childhood they have also acquired wide experience of many other dance forms. Because of the lack of higher level pedagogical education, the teachers of African dance, Oriental dance and flamenco are mostly non-professional dancers who do a lot of exploratory work in respect of their dance forms and their pedagogy.

### **Research questions**

The following research questions are addressed in this article:

*What is the nature of transnational dances for Finnish dance teachers?*

*What are the conceptions of teaching and learning transnational dances for Finnish teachers of transnational dances?*

### **Phenomenographic methodology**

The phenomenography used in this study focuses on identifying and describing the qualitatively different conceptions of a particular phenomenon (see Marton 1986). As Marton (1981) states, in the phenomenographic approach the researcher is interested in the second-order perspective of a phenomenon in which something is experienced by someone. According to this approach, there is a fundamental distinction between the first-order and the second-order perspective. The first-order perspective aims to describe various aspects of the world (Marton 1981). The second-order perspective, as in this article, aims to describe phenomena in the world as others see them, the focus being on the variations in the ways of experiencing the phenomenon of interest (Marton & Booth, 1997, 111).

Phenomenography and phenomenology are both based on human experience and they have some common features in their philosophical roots. However, the main focus of interpretative phenomenology is the essence of the phenomenon, whereas the focus of phenomenography is on the perceptions and conceptions that follow human experiences (Uljens 1992). In a phenomenographic study, the most important result is a set of categories of description. Phenomenographic categories are logically related to one another and the variations between the different categories of description are known as 'dimensions of variation' (Marton 1986; Åkerlind 2003). One of the most common ways of collecting data in phenomenographic research is the interview method (Marton 1994), which was also used in this study. The data contained in this study consists of semi-structured interviews with seven Finnish teachers of transnational dances. In autumn 2008, Mariana tested the interview questions by interviewing one experienced flamenco teacher. The aim of the pilot interview was twofold. First, she wanted to test how the interviewee experienced the questions, and second, she wanted to test her interviewing technique. Based on the feedback of the interviewee and Mariana's reflections, no changes were required in respect of the main study questions.

In spring 2009, Mariana continued by interviewing a further six dance teachers. The interviews of all seven teachers, including the pilot interview, were used in the main study. The interviews lasted about 76 minutes on average. With the help of an interview guide (Table 1, Appendix 1), Mariana made sure that all the important themes were addressed equally with each interviewee. During the interviews she also used follow-up questions to gain a more profound understanding of the opinions highlighted by the teachers. Mariana recorded the interviews digitally and afterwards they were transcribed verbatim. The written data consisted of 216 pages.

In the first phase of the analysis, Mariana read all the interviews several times. The focus during reading was on both the similarities and the differences in relation to how a phenomenon is perceived, experienced, interpreted

or understood by the dance teachers (cf. Marton & Booth 1997, 124). Mariana was looking for key relationships which related them to and distinguished them from each other. As she started to constitute key meanings, dimensions of variation, structural relationships in the data and group meaningful expressions, she alternated the focus between the outcomes and the original data, aiming to confirm the meanings and relationships. The transcriptions of the interviews formed what Marton and Booth (1997, 133) define as a pool of meaning, which was a list of many possible different variations in the conception of the experience of the nature and pedagogy of the transnational dances. She continued with an intensive and iterative process in which the categories were reduced and eventually three categories of description were defined (see Marton 1994). The qualitatively different ways of experiencing a particular phenomenon can be defined in many ways, such as hierarchically according to a certain criterion. However, contrary to many other phenomenographic studies, in this study the conceptions of the teachers are not defined in a hierarchical structure. The purpose of this study is to describe and interpret the conceptions of the teachers, not to define their conceptions, for example, in terms of the complexity of understanding the phenomenon of teaching transnational dances. Our purpose is not to evaluate some conceptions as being more highly developed than others.

As regards issues of reliability, it is possible for two different researchers to work with the same data and discover how to see the categories of description (Järvinen & Järvinen 2004, 85; Marton 1986). In addition to Mariana, the other co-writer of this study, Arja, read the interviews and made notes and observations. Then Arja compared her perceptions with the category of description defined by Mariana suggesting minor changes to Mariana's verbal formulations of the description categories. During the writing process, the categories of description have been further elaborated collaboratively by all three authors.

In the phenomenographic research, the collective meanings of interviewees are typically more in focus than the individual ones (e.g., Åkerlind 2005). In this study, the individuals' voices are also audible through the special features of the dance forms studied. It is also essential to bring out the particular character of the dances because otherwise there would be a risk of losing something important from the data. For this article, the original Finnish samples of the written data were translated into English by a professional translator who has been a dancer for many years. Her body experiences may have helped in translating the samples of the interviews.

## Findings

In this study, three qualitatively different ways of understanding the nature and pedagogy of transnational dances were identified:

Dance is art.

Dance is culture open to all people and simultaneously art and physical education.

Dance is a part of well-being.

Through a process of comparing and contrasting the themes emerging from the transcriptions, the teachers' conceptions could be divided into three categories. The categories are not structured hierarchically. The teachers' conception of the nature of transnational dances is at the top of the category and it is reflected in many ways in the following themes: teaching and learning including the atmosphere, the role of the teacher and the way of highlighting the characteristic features of the dance forms. The categories are described in detail below using illustrative examples from the data and by comparing them to and confronting them with the theory.

### Category 1. Dance is art.

It is noteworthy that the three flamenco teachers share this view. In this category dance is understood essentially as art, although the teachers recognize that for some dance students, the social dimensions and physical exercise are also significant reasons for participating in their dance lessons. However, the ways in which the teachers described the nature of flamenco indicate that they basically perceive flamenco as an art form, and this is essentially reflected

	CATEGORY		
	1	2	3
	Dance is art	Dance is culture open to all people and simultaneously art and physical education	Dance is a part of well-being
<b>Themes</b>			
Teaching and learning	Dancer's own thinking is important; learning is a common process involving learners and teachers	Encouraging every learner's overall development; a dancer can find own resources from himself/herself with the help of teacher's support	Considering different kinds of learners and their subjective starting points; focus on the dancer's welfare
Focus during teaching	Teaching exact dance technique from the beginning	Holistic idea of teaching	Encouraging dancers to listen to their bodies in a kinaesthetic way
Atmosphere	Respect for dancers	Supportive; joy and energy; importance of humour	Respect for individuals; feeling of "us"
Teacher's role	Awareness of teacher's pedagogical responsibility; respect for dancers by giving them space to experience dance in their own way; mostly teacher-oriented methods	Supporting dancers to cope with life by making learning as attractive as possible; mostly teacher-oriented methods	Feeling of togetherness with dancers; mostly teacher-oriented methods
Characteristic features emphasized by teacher	Realistic understanding of essence of dance	Collectiveness and empowerment	Womanhood and femininity
<b>Teachers allocated to this category of conception</b>	3 flamenco teachers	2 teachers of African dance and 1 teacher of Oriental dance	1 teacher of Oriental dance

Table 2. Categories of understanding the nature and pedagogy of transnational dances described in terms of themes.

in their pedagogy in many ways. The appreciation and intermediation of the culture heritage of flamenco culture is seen in teaching an exact dance technique and the characteristic expression of flamenco from the beginning.

*Researcher: What name are you using for flamenco? Interviewee: Artistic dance. Absolutely. Although it has in a certain way this social dimension in some situations. But primarily it is artistic dance. Well, some of the students probably classify it as fitness training, but I wish that I were teaching something else than fitness dance.*

While the teachers of Category 2 focus on a low threshold of starting dance, the teachers of this category want to bring out a realistic impression of a demanding flamenco dance technique, highlighting that it takes years to acquire good skills.

### Teacher-oriented methods combined with constructivism

The teachers of this category use a lot of teacher-oriented teaching methods (see e.g., Mosston & Ashworth 2008) as do the teachers of the other two categories. According to the teachers, the reason for using a teacher-oriented method is mainly attributable to the demanding flamenco dance techniques and the best way to learn such difficult techniques is to follow the teacher and together perform many repetitions of the movements. In addition, the

interviewees point out that teacher-oriented methods are also traditionally used when learning flamenco dance in Spain. However, the teachers' intentions to offer tools to the dance students so that they can learn in their own way are worth noticing.

The teachers' conceptions of teaching are related to the theory of constructivism. The common idea concerning different kinds of constructivist orientation is that the nature of the knowledge is always developed by the individuals or community. Learning is seen as a participant's active and cognitive action where somebody interprets new knowledge and their perceptions based on their earlier knowledge and experiences (Tynjälä 2002, 37-38; Tynjälä, Heikkinen & Huttunen 2006). The teachers emphasize that the learning should go "through the dancers' body and mind" and the responsibility for learning is shared by both the teacher and the students. Even though the teachers use a lot of teacher-oriented methods, at the same time they stress the importance of the students' own thinking when learning flamenco dance. Finnish scholars Tynjälä et al. (2006) remind us that there are many erroneous assumptions concerning the nature of constructivist orientation. For example, using a teacher oriented method does not mean that the teacher could not be constructivist-oriented. Constructivism is sometimes seen as abandoning teaching while the students are supposed to discover everything by themselves. It seems evident here that the flamenco teachers combine the traditional teacher-oriented method with the constructivist approach in a way that implies an awareness of contemporary learning theories and, at the same time, preserves the traditions of flamenco.

### **Body memory in learning**

In this category, in addition to stressing the importance of the students' own thinking processes, learning dance skills is also understood as being based on earlier body experiences, or body memories. According to Reiners (2001, 241), the roots of a memory technique based on bodily memories are deeply entrenched in French culture. Margalit (2002), Casey (1987) and Merleau-Ponty (1962/1989), for example, have brought up the idea of body memories when referring to the process of remembering (see also Anttila 2004). Our interpretation of the teachers' conception is supported by the phenomenological orientation. Phenomenology is a philosophical approach to studying the nature of experience. The experience of movement, its primacy and practice, for example, are of keen interest when seen from a phenomenological perspective (Merleau-Ponty 1962; Sheets-Johnstone 1999). From a phenomenological perspective, we can understand the complex learning process in which our stratified body knowledge and skills influence learning. Teachers in this category described the learning situations where different types of body memories suddenly reveal themselves. The theory of body memory of the phenomenologist Edward Casey (1987, 147-167) gives us the tools to understand, analyze and interpret the data. According to Casey, there are three different kinds of body memories: habitual, erotic and traumatic. The habitual body memory means the capable body and it records our skills so that, for example, standing and walking are easy for us without having to learn them every time from the start. The experiences of pleasure are built on the erotic body memory. One example is the pleasure of dancing which can strengthen our erotic body memory all over again. The third type of body memory, the traumatic body memory, consists of unpleasant and painful experiences. One teacher describes her experience of a situation in which the dance student's body is blocked and learning is strongly linked to the student's earlier body memories making learning almost impossible.

*But then of course, while dancing the body comes up very intensely, it is not separate from the rest, but I mean that in some way the person is as if heavily loaded, the body is loaded with a huge amount of things, and sometimes, like when teaching dancing, you come up against the thought that now. That now it is no more a question of how I teach and it is no more a question of what happens in this situation but that the body of this person has something, or that the body is like... , the body kind of does not receive, or the body blocks out some things. This happens often when one should start using the centre*

*of the body, and then you notice that some people just find it and some people don't.*  
(Flamenco dance teacher)

The dance teacher seems to think that the student's body memories were hidden in her body and suddenly emerged when she was trying to use the centre of her body during a class. In this situation the teacher accepted that learning did not depend on her expertise. Otherwise the teachers in this category are very aware of their pedagogical responsibilities. They also have a deep respect for the dancers in that they give them space to experience dance in their own way. The teachers express that they can encourage the dancers in order to guide them, but that the insight comes from the dancer herself/himself.

## **Category 2. Dance is culture open to all people and simultaneously art and physical education.**

Two teachers of African dance and one teacher of Oriental dance represent this category of description. While African dance is danced in West Africa by both women and men, it is more popular among women in Finland. Oriental dance is performed by women in our country like in the Middle East and North Africa.

Within this conception, the teachers' focus is on a "low threshold" of starting dancing. The idea of "the culture open to all people" also relates to the dances' cultural background. The teachers want to offer an opportunity to dance to all kinds of persons regardless of their dance skills, age and appearance.

*Our dance interests people, it has been originally made as a low-threshold dance genre. One does not need to be worried about a fat stomach or anything else, not about the age, not in such a way; such a thing as a standard dancer does not exist. (teacher of Oriental dance)*

The Oriental dance teacher's accepting attitude towards many kinds of dancers is linked to the heritage in which dance is performed in North Africa and the Middle East in lived contexts, such as in families and communities, where formal instructions are not essential. In this context, the dance is performed for pleasure and social purposes (see Seppänen 1993, 18). The understanding of the conception of "dance is culture open to all people" by the teachers of African dance is also based on the cultural context of the West African dances. One of the most important roles of dance is to be an essential part of various social events and dance is performed collectively, expressing the life of the community in West Africa (Begho 1996; Hallström 2000; Sunkett 1995, 21).

*A dance of a whole village is just the idea that all can join in and all know how to dance and even if they don't know a thing, all can join in. It has as if in-built the idea that one can dance fully according to one's own expression and state of mind. (teacher of African dance)*

On the other hand, the dance teachers highlight that the standards of performing dancers are different, stricter than those of the social dancers in Egypt and West Africa.

### **Holistic pedagogy**

Within this conception, learning by doing and a holistic understanding of teaching are important guidelines for the teachers (see e.g., Anttila 2008). Here, the term "holistic" has many meanings. It is intertwined with the nature of the dance forms as experienced by the teachers and also with the concrete way of teaching dance. African dance and Oriental dance are described as holistic dance forms by the teachers. This is also mirrored in the teachers' attempts to construct their lessons in a holistic way: every lesson has its own life span, a story of some kind. At the beginning of the lesson, they try to lead the dance students straight into the atmosphere of the dance, for example, through the music or a typical posture relevant to the dance form.

The aim of the teachers is to offer the dance students positive energy and a harmonious and balanced experience of dance throughout the lessons. An approving atmosphere and a non-judgemental approach indicate the teachers' willingness to take part in the pedagogical process openly. Also, one of the main features of the teachers' pedagogical conception is the ability to take a dancer's individual perspective into account while emphasizing the significance of collective experience.

### **Learning dance as a whole**

Here, the way of teaching dance skills has much in common with the understanding of the constraints-led approach (see Davids, Button & Bennett 2008). This teaching conception takes into account the learners' different skills and experiences. Creating a motivating atmosphere is also at the heart of the conception. The feeling of competence and individually appropriate motor challenges increase motivation, which simultaneously improves learning. Gaining intrinsic motivation demands an experience of competence and a feeling of togetherness in the social environment, as in this case in a dance class (Deci & Ryan 1985; 2000).

In the conception of the constraints-led approach, learning is based on the whole performance of the movement. At the beginning this means practising a "stripped-down model" of the movement. In the framework of motor learning, practising the whole performance is meaningful learning for the participants. This is based on the idea that the level of requirement is not too demanding at the beginning so that everybody can succeed while performing the movement. In these kinds of classes it is possible to see a lot of variations in skills (Davids et al. 2008).

In this category in particular the teachers of African dance try to teach the movements as a whole at the beginning of the learning process. Later, when the teachers have succeeded in leading the students to the core of the dance form, they start to analyze, cut up the movements and go deeper into the dance techniques and expression.

*It is wonderful that quite at the beginning people catch the movement in African dance, one wants to give something pleasant and a freedom so that they can find the pleasure of it, but as people advance, I want to gradually bring forth what actually should happen here. And then we start going into this expressive content and rhythm and accentuation, and these can then be infinitely fine-tuned. But during the dance lessons, however, I try to make sure that people feel good regardless of the level of skill each of them has in dancing. (teacher of African dance)*

Within this conception, the holistic understanding of teaching dance also includes elements of physical education. The teachers wish that through their dance classes and expression of joy they could offer a contact to physicality to the dancers. However, the teachers approach to teaching is clearly more educational than just one of physical exercise (see e.g., Laakso 2007).

African dance and Oriental dance are taught within the framework of the dances' cultural background by the teachers, highlighting also the elements of art. In addition to their important role in social events, these dances are also performing dance forms in the context of West Africa, the Middle East and North Africa (e.g., Hallström 2000; Seppänen 1993, 18-21). On the other hand, the definition of art in our culture occupies the teachers' minds.

*...in my view, this fulfils the so-called criteria of artistic dance. I think that it is not commonly considered an artistic dance in Finland now, it can be such after twenty years. (teacher of Oriental dance)*

### **Collectiveness and personal empowerment**

The teachers of this category emphasize both collectiveness and personal empowerment. Considering the dance students as individuals and emphasizing a collective approach at the same time seem to be present in the classes. According to the teachers, collectiveness is significant even while dancing improvisational solo dances. The teachers



want to create the same kind of collective spirit in their classes as in the social dance events in Guinea and Egypt, for example.

Furthermore, the teacher of Oriental dance in this category stresses femininity and empowerment in her teaching. Empowerment can be defined either as an individual's power to achieve his or her own goals or as transforming the social world in order to serve the interests of all its members better (Sleeter 1991, 3). Interestingly, individual and collective needs intertwine with the notion of empowerment. Empowerment is also related to personal freedom. It means freedom *to* act, whereas emancipation could be seen as breaking free from limitations, or freedom *from* something (Szkudlarek 1993).

As in Category 1, the teachers holding this conception mainly prefer teacher-oriented methods. However, while using teacher-oriented methods (see e.g., Mosston & Ashworth, 2008), these teachers base their teaching differently compared to the teachers of Category 1. While the flamenco teachers use a teacher-oriented method in teaching a dance technique as precisely as possible, in this category the use of teacher-oriented methods is an important base in the context of dance lessons. The students attend dance lessons voluntarily and the teachers experience that they have a responsibility to offer their knowledge and skills to the students attending lessons after a long day at work or school. The teachers want to offer cognitive relaxation and help the students relax through movement, avoiding the use of more learner-centred teaching styles.

The teachers of this category emphasize an atmosphere of support, joy and energy in their lessons. They have experienced that their dance forms and teaching have many positive influences on their students. For some students, the energy and joy of dancing reflecting on their whole life is more important than learning an exact dance technique. The teachers in this category experience that the importance of encouraging humour is also one way to add a sense of approval of the teaching. The teachers' aims are to support the students in coping with life by making learning as attractive as possible.

*The stream of dance that starts to flow from there is so strong that one can feel: "My goodness, I didn't remember a moment that I have my child sick with his ear at home". And it is as if a huge prize if you can do this kind of everyday salvation. (teacher of Oriental dance)*

### **Category 3. Dance is a part of well-being.**

#### **Somatic orientation**

This category includes only one teacher, representing Oriental dance, yet it is important and interesting to us. In this category, well-being is strongly emphasized in the teacher's dance conception. This teacher stresses such content as enjoyable dancing, health of the body and physical condition. She encourages the dance students to listen to their bodies in a kinaesthetic way. The importance of dancers' subjective experiences and integration of the body and mind are united in the teacher's way of teaching. Encouraging the students to feel the movement and music and express in their own way are essential guidelines for the teacher. Features of somatic orientation can be perceived in this conception of dance. Richard Shusterman (2009), an experienced scholar of somatics, uses the term *soma* to refer to the living, sensing, dynamic, perceptive body. Somatics is a large area of research on embodiment and somatic practices, including body techniques, such as the Alexander Technique, Feldenkrais and Pilates methods (e.g., Rouhiainen 2006, 2008; Shusterman 2009). Rouhiainen (2008) points out that somatic orientation is often understood particularly to be a practical realm that aims to enhance well-being through these kinds of disciplines. A somatic approach can also be seen more broadly as a field that consists of and combines dance, a variety of body-mind techniques, alternative health care practices and psycho-physically oriented psychology. In addition, somatic approaches can also refer to other approaches, such as phenomenology or cognitive science.

## First-person perspective

Somatic practitioners are interested in a first-person perspective on enhancing bodily awareness (e.g., Shusterman 2004), like the teacher of this category. According to the somatic orientation, enhanced bodily awareness supports bodily functioning as well as self-understanding. This teacher of Oriental dance works with many kinds of groups and individuals and an approach which supports everyone's subjective way of dancing is an important guideline for her when teaching. An interesting point is that this teacher keeps a diary where she records after each lesson her own reflections on her teaching and how she feels about the dance students' way of dancing as well as her own kinaesthetic feelings about the movements. The reflection and analysis of her own kinaesthetic experiences and feelings also help the teacher to better understand the dance students.

*I write exactly about it that if I do movements wrong in the bodily sense, I will feel the following day that some part of my body is sore, so that I wonder what I have done wrong: if this is only muscular stress or if this is that the line of one of my movements has been such that I have not maintained enough control. This helps tremendously also in teaching. (teacher of Oriental dance)*

In this category the teacher points out how mothers, for example in Egypt, teach their daughters appropriate dance movements at home that provide well-being. This feature is different from the understanding of Category 2, where the idea of "the culture open to all people" relates to the cultural background of African dance and Oriental dance underlining more the aspects of social events.

*I put emphasis on how the student herself feels it. In other words, the same movement can be done with a slightly different technique if a certain technique feels bad in one's own body. The back group is a good example of this; they have had their back operated and it may be that they cannot do it. Then after some lessons I will say that now you did it, but you only used more the muscles of the stomach side, you didn't use that part of the body which was badly sore. (teacher of Oriental dance)*

## Respectable femininity and womanhood

As Susan Stinson (2004) writes, internal sensing is highly significant for how one learns and performs dance. Sensing oneself from the inside is a private experience and we cannot know whether everybody perceives an experience in the same way. The teacher of Oriental dance in this category uses mostly teacher-oriented methods for the same reason as the teachers in the category 2 trying to offer cognitive relaxation to the students. However, she asks the dancers a lot of questions about feeling the movements. According to Wright (2000), the teacher's way of using the language has a great influence on the development of one's relationship with one's own body. The teacher's language also has an influence on how one perceives one's body and the knowledge gained from the body through such perceptions. It is possible that the teacher's language can influence the participants' experiences. Questions posed by the teacher can play an important role in approaching the body in a holistic way. Sometimes the teacher notices that the students cannot enjoy dancing because of a technical problem. In these situations she might try to ask a student, for example: "Do you feel differently if you change your technique in this way?" Through these kinds of questions the teacher tries to focus on the dancers' perceptions of movement and thereby improve their quality of dancing. This teacher of Oriental dance also uses a lot of visualization in her lessons. By encouraging the dancers to perceive their bodies through visualization, it is possible to support the change experienced in the body in a kinaesthetic way (Appleton 2007).

In many reports and studies concerning Oriental dance, femininity has been a popular discussion topic (see e.g., Jai-Morincome 2005; Keft-Kennedy 2005; Laukkanen 2003a, 2003b), including a greater acceptance of one's

own body and an increased sense of femininity through the dance form. This offers empowering experiences related to femininity for the participants engaged in Oriental dance. The Oriental dance teacher of this category also brings out the meaning of respectable womanhood and femininity during her dance classes. In her teaching, these features are essentially related to the consideration of different kinds of dancers and a first-person perspective.

*Many women who are overweight experience that they can still dance beautifully and in a feminine way and they have the courage to make feminine, even sexy-looking movements, so that one does not need to be scared at least in the groups. (teacher of Oriental dance)*

At the same time as the teacher emphasizes every dancer's subjective starting point in dancing, "the feeling of us" is one goal of teaching. According to her, this can be demanding in groups in which the youngest student is seven and the oldest is 82. The teacher feels that she has succeeded in creating a feeling of togetherness in her lessons.

Rouhiainen (2008) writes how in dance, especially in contemporary dance, an increasing appreciation towards somatics, subjective experience and embodiment, is evident in the artistic and pedagogical practices of dance. Somatics is today an integral part of dance pedagogy while earlier it was understood more as a supportive method for a dance technique and as body conditioning. It seems that the teacher of Oriental dance has integrated somatic orientation into her teaching and thus her conception suggests an awareness of the contemporary developments in the dance pedagogy and dance research.

## Discussion

In this article we have focused on the pedagogical conceptions of Finnish teachers of transnational dances who teach and represent African dance, Oriental dance and flamenco in Finland. The three categories of conception reveal the differences existing between the seven experienced teachers interviewed in this study in conceptualizing these dances and their teaching. Unlike many other phenomenographic studies, we have not structured the categories hierarchically (see Åkerlind 2005) as we do not have specific criteria for comparing the conceptions of the teachers, nor have we evaluated them in any way.

Our aim was not to explore the teachers' conceptions of the meaning of the dances' cultural background in teaching, which will be a theme of a future article. However, we could not completely ignore the cultural aspects in the present article. Through the data analysis, we found that the teachers' knowledge of the cultural background of the dances reverberates strongly in their conceptualizing and pedagogical practice in the Finnish context. Transnational dance classes are dialogues between cultures.

**The similarities** between the teachers' conceptions can be defined as an appreciation of the importance of the dances' cultural backgrounds and a consideration for different learners. A characteristic feature of transnational dances is the remarkably wide variation of non-professional dancers' backgrounds, skills and ages. The teachers' aims are to mediate the heritage of the dance forms to different individuals in an interesting way, adopting their knowledge of various pedagogical approaches. It seems that exactly for that reason, developing teaching with consideration being paid towards the dance students as individuals has become important for the teachers. The teachers try to take into account the students' subjective starting points as well as any physical limitations. They strive to encourage individual aspects while creating a collective experience for the dancers.

**The differences** between the teachers' conceptions are present in the concrete teaching approaches. The features of constructivism (e.g., Tynjälä et al. 2006) and also the phenomenology of the body (e.g., Parviainen 1994) can be seen in the teaching of the flamenco teachers of Category 1. These teachers stress the students' own thinking processes and the earlier experiences of each learner. The teachers of Category 2 highlight a holistic way of teaching, which refers to the idea of dance being "culture open to all people", but also the aspects of art and physical education. Embodiment is more emphasized in their teaching than cognitive processes as in Category 1 or an approach of

well-being as in Category 3. Within Category 3, the Oriental dance teacher's way to teach involves features of somatic orientation (see e.g., Rouhiainen 2006, 2008; Shusterman 2004). This teacher emphasizes an approach involving a first-person perspective in which listening to one's own body is important.

Finally, we return to the question posed at the beginning of this article: How could we take into account the strengthened multiculturalism in the dance pedagogy and increase the cultural consciousness of dance teachers and physical educators? Although the data in this study is limited, the findings draw a picture of the pedagogical approach of experienced teachers of transnational dances in Finland. Readers of this article who teach dances from different cultures can define their own way of teaching by utilizing these findings and perhaps gain some new perspectives. The findings can also be used in the planning of dance and physical teacher education. This research project continues by exploring the conception of the teachers of transnational dances concerning the importance of dances' cultural background in teaching, dance students' experiences in dancing transnational dances, and by comparing the relationship between the students' experiences to the teachers' approach of teaching.

### **Acknowledgements**

We wish to thank the Ministry of Education and Culture for funding this work. We are also grateful to Auli Karppinen, who also practises dance, for proofreading the article.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Table 1**

#### **FRAMEWORK FOR THEME INTERVIEWS WITH DANCE TEACHERS**

Mariana Siljamäki

Autumn 2008

#### Background information

1. Teacher's name:
2. Teacher's age:
3. What is your dance background? (dance classes/studies)
4. When did you start practicing/studying the dance form you teach?
5. When did you start teaching your dance form?
6. How and where have you learnt the dance form? (In Finland, abroad, at a dance school, etc.)
7. Have you studied your dance form in the "native cultural environment" of the dance? What kind of dance studies did you pursue there?

#### Themes of the interview:

1. *Do you classify the dance form you teach under a larger category? What do you call this category?*
2. *In your opinion, where does the dance form you teach fit into the Finnish field of dance? In your opinion, what kind of position does it have in relation to other dance forms?*
3. *In your opinion, how is your dance form placed in relation to other so-called ethnic dance forms? How is it placed in relation to oriental dance/flamenco/African dance? (i.e. the other two dance forms which I am studying)*
4. *What kinds of dance students do you teach? In your opinion, what are your dance students like in comparison to those learning the other two dance forms which I am studying?*
5. *How do you experience the fact that the dance form you teach originates from another culture? What is the significance of this to you? (tasks and meanings of dance, background of dances/*

*movements, etc.)*

6. *Do you feel it is important that the cultural background of the dance form you teach should be perceivable in your teaching?*
7. *If you present the cultural background of the dance form you teach, how do you do this and in which specific situations? (verbally, through bodily expression, through your own dancing, etc.)*
8. *In your opinion, are your students interested in the cultural background of dance? How have has this interest/disinterest manifested itself specifically?*
9. *What kind of differences you feel there are in the dance form you teach when it is danced in West Africa (question to African dance teachers), in the Middle East/North Africa (question to oriental dance teachers) or in Spain (question to flamenco teachers) compared to when it is danced/learnt in Finland?*
10. *In your opinion, does the dance form you teach have any new meanings or tasks in Finland which it does not have in West Africa/the Middle East and North Africa/Spain? What are these meanings and tasks? What do you think is the reason for this?*
11. *In your opinion, what kind of working methods are best for learning the dance form you teach and how do you use these methods yourself? Why do you specifically use these working methods?*
12. *In your opinion, how is the expression of your dance form best learnt and how do you teach it yourself? Please provide specific examples.*
13. *In what way and for what kind of things do you give feedback about learning to the dancers?*
14. *In your opinion, how much of the dance form you teach is able to include the dancer's own expression?*
15. *In your opinion, what is the significance of the dancer's own expression, way of expression, in the dance form you teach?*
16. *In your opinion, does the dance form you teach have more/less freedom of style and expression compared to other dance forms? What do you think is the reason for this?*
17. *Do you feel flamenco has more/less freedom of expression than the two other dance forms which I am studying?*
18. *Please describe what kind of starting points you use in your teaching. (For example, do you teach accurate techniques or do you let the dancers first find their own expression/style; how do you guide them to develop a certain type of expression?)*
19. *Please describe your own learning conception?*
20. *Could you please describe your conception of man?*
21. *Would you like to add anything else?*

Thank you for taking part in this interview

## References

- Adewole, F. 2004. *Dance Heritage: Crossing Academia and Physicality*. In I. Björnsdóttir (Ed.) Proceedings 7th NOFOD Conference. Reykjavik, April 15-18 2004, 12-26.
- Anttila, E. (2003). *A dream journey to the unknown: Searching for dialogue in dance education*. Theatre Academy, Finland: Acta Scenica 14.
- Anttila, E. (2004). *Dance learning as practice of freedom*. In L. Rouhiainen, E. Anttila, S. Hämäläinen & T. Löytönen (Eds.), *The same difference? Ethical and political perspectives in dance*. Theatre Academy, Finland: Acta Scenica 17.
- Anttila, E. (2008). *Dialogical pedagogy, embodied knowledge, and meaningful learning*. In S. Shapiro (Ed.), *Dance in a world of change: Examining globalization and cultural differences*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 159-179.
- Appleton, J. 2007. *Illustrations and mental imagery of archetypal forms of early organisms. A new approach to exposing and releasing habitual and dysfunctional posture*. Journal of Bodywork and Movement Therapies 11 (1), 25-36.
- Ayoma, Y. 2007. *The role of consumption and globalization in a cultural industry: The case of Flamenco*. Georum 38 (1), 103-113.
- Begho, F. 1996. *Traditional African Dance in Context*. In K. W. Asante (Ed.) *African Dance. An Artistic, Historical and Philosophical Inquiry*. Trenton: Africa World Press, 163-182.
- Casey, E. 1987. *Remembering: A phenomenological study*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Danielson, V. 1996. *New Nightingales of the Nile: popular music in Egypt since the 1970s*. Popular Music 15 (3), 299-312.
- Davids, K., Button, C. & Bennett, S. 2008. *Dynamics of Skill Acquisition. A Constraint-Led Approach*. Champaign: Human Kinetics.
- Deci, E.L. & Ryan, R.M. 1985. *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behaviour*. New York: Plenum Press.
- Deci, E.L. & Ryan, R.M. 2000. *The "what" and "why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behaviour*. Psychological Inquiry 11, 227-268.
- Gore, G. 1994. *Traditional dance in West Africa*. In J. Adshead-Lansdale & J. Layson (Ed.) *Dance History. An Introduction*. London: Routledge, 59-80.
- Green, D. 1996. *Traditional Dance in Africa*. In K. W. Asante (Ed.) *African Dance. An Artistic, Historical and Philosophical Inquiry*. Trenton: Africa World Press, 13-38.
- Hall, P. 1998. *Cities in Civilization*. London: Pantheon.
- Hallström, 2000. *African Drum Rhythms for Djembes, Bass Drums and Bells*. Kil, Sweden: Lennart Hallström.
- Hoppu, P. 2003. *Tanssintutkimus tienhaarassa [Dance research at a crossroads]*. In H. Saarikoski (Ed.) *Tanssi, tanssi. Kulttuureja, tulkintoja [Dance, dance. Cultures, interpretations]*. Helsinki: SKS, 19-51.
- Jai-Morinkome, M. 2005. *A Dance Without Borders: interpretations and representations of belly dance through the eyes of non-Arabic woman dancers in the ACT region*. [Referenced 1.07.2010]. Available in pdf format: <http://expressivearts.com.au/doc/Dissertation.pdf>
- Järvinen, P. & Järvinen, A. 2004. *Tutkimustyön metodeista [On methods of research work]*. Tampere: Opinpaja.
- Keft-Kennedy, V. 2005. *Representing the belly dancing body: feminism, orientalism, and the grotesque*. University of Wollongong Thesis Collections. [Referenced 22.7.2010]. Available in pdf format: <http://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1843&context=theses>
- Laakso, L. 2007. *Johdatus liikuntapedagogiikkaan ja liikuntakasvatukseen [Introduction to sports pedagogics and physical education]*. In P. Heikinaro-Johansson & T. Huovinen (Eds.) *Näkökulmia liikuntapedagogiikkaan [Viewpoints to sports pedagogics]*. Helsinki: WSOY, 16-24.
- Laukkanen, A. 2003a. *Luonnollista liikettä, epäsovivia asentoja [Natural movement, unsuitable postures]*. In H. Saarikoski (Ed.) *Tanssi, tanssi. Kulttuureja, tulkintoja [Dance, dance. Cultures, interpretations]*. Helsinki: The Finnish Literature Society, 191- 223.
- Laukkanen, A. 2003b. *Stranger Fetishism and Cultural Responsibility in Transnational Dance Forms: Case: Oriental Dance in Finland*. Presented at Gender and Power in the New Europe, the 5th European Feminist Research Conference. August 20-24, 2003 Lund University, Sweden.
- Lindroos, K. 1999. *Maan ääressä [On the edge of the earth]*. In K. Lindroos, M. Helariutta, O. Böök, M. Huotari & A. Niinimäki (Eds.) *Flamenco*. Helsinki: Like, 179-180.
- Lindroos, K. & Böök, O. 1999. *Flamencot [Flamencos]*. In K. Lindroos, M. Helariutta, O. Böök, M. Huotari & A. Niinimäki (Eds.) *Flamenco*. Helsinki: Like, 32-53.
- Manuel, P. 1989. *Andalucian, gypsy, and class identity in the contemporary Flamenco complex*. Ethnomusicology 33 (1), 47-65.
- Margalit, A. 2002. *The Ethics of Memory*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Marton, F. 1981. *Phenomenography – describing conceptions of the world around us*. Instructional Science 10, 177-200.

- Marton, F. 1986. *Phenomenography – a research approach to investigating different understandings of reality*. *Journal of Thought* 21 (3), 28–49.
- Marton, F. 1994. In *The International Encyclopedia of Education*. Second edition, Volume 8. Eds. Torsten Husén & T. Neville Postlethwaite. Pergamon, 4424 - 4429. [Referenced 1.06.2010]. Available at the website: <URL: <http://www.ped.gu.se/biorn/phgraph/civil/main/2res.appr.html>
- Marton, F. & Booth, S. 1997. *Learning and awareness*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. 1962/1989. *Phenomenology of Perception*. Translated by Colin Smith. London: Routledge.
- Mills, G. Y. 1996. *A Bibliographic Essay and Selected Bibliography of African Dance*. In K. W. Asante (Ed.) *African Dance. An Artistic, Historical and Philosophical Inquiry*. Trenton: Africa World Press, 221–250.
- Mosston, M. & Ashworth, S. 2008. *Teaching physical education*. First online edition. [Referenced 1.05.2010]. Available in pdf format: <http://www.spectrumofteachingstyles.org/ebook>
- Mouflet, D. 2001. *Joneeba!* New York, NY: Hatherleigh Press.
- Parviainen, J. 1994. *Tanssi ihmisen eksistenssissa. Filosofinen tutkielma tanssista [Dance as human existence. A philosophical study on dance]*. Tampere: FITTY 51.
- Pietrobruno, S. 2006. *Salsa and its Transnational Moves*. Champaign: Lexington Books.
- Reiners, I. 2001. *Taiteen muisti: Tutkielma Adornosta ja Shoaista [Memory of Art: A Study of Adorno and Shoah]*. Helsinki: tutkijaliitto [Finnish Researchers' Association].
- Rouhiainen, L. 2006. *Mitä somatiikka on? Huomioita somaattisen liikkeen historiasta ja luonteesta [What is somatics? Observations about the history and character of somatics]*. In P. Houni, J. Laakkonen, H. Reitala ja L. Rouhiainen (Eds.) *Liikkeitä näyttämöllä [Movements on stage]*. Helsinki: The Finnish Theatre Research Society, 10–34.
- Rouhiainen, L. 2008. *Somatic dance as a means of cultivating ethically embodied subjects*. *Research in Dance Education*, 9 (3), 241–256.
- Rowell, B. 2000. *An Expanding Map*. In A. Grau & S. Jordan (Eds.) *Europe dancing. Perspectives on theatre dance and cultural identity*. London: Routledge, 188–212.
- Ryan, M., Ingram, B., & Musiol, H. 2010. *Cultural Studies. A Practical Introduction*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell
- Seppänen, S. 1993. *Itämainen tanssi. [Oriental dance]* Helsinki: Tammi.
- Shapiro, S.B. 2008. (Ed.) *Dance in a World of Change. Reflections on Globalization and Cultural Difference*. Champaign: Human Kinetics.
- Shay, A. & Sellers-Young, B. 2003. *Belly Dance: Orientalism-Exoticism-Self-Exoticism*. *Dance Research Journal*, 35 (1), 13–37.
- Sheets-Johnstone, M. 1999. *The Primacy of Movement*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Shusterman, R. 2004. *Somaesthetics and Education. Exploring The Terrain*. In L. Bresler (Ed.) *Knowing Bodies, Moving Minds. Towards Embodied Teaching and Learning*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 51–60.
- Shusterman, R. 2009. *Body Consciousness and Performance: Somaesthetics East and West*. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 67 (2), 133–145.
- Siljamäki, M. 2006. *Why are Finnish non-professional dancers involved in African dance?* In P.K. Pakkanen & A. Sarje (Eds.) *Finnish Dance Research at the Crossroads: Practical and Theoretical Challenges*. Helsinki: The Arts Council of Finland.
- Sleeter, C. E. 1991. *Empowerment through multicultural education*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Stinson, S.W. 2004. *My Body/Myself: Lessons from Dance Education*. In L. Bresler (Ed.) *Knowing Bodies, Moving Minds. Towards Embodied Teaching and Learning*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 153–167.
- Sunkett, M. 1995. *Mandiani Drum and Dance. Djimbe Performance and Black Aesthetics from Africa to the New World*. Tempe: White Cliffs Media.
- Szkudlarek, T. 1993. *The Problem of Freedom in Postmodern Education*. Westport: Bergin & Garvey.
- Taiteen perusopetuksen yleisen oppimäärän opetussuunnitelman perusteet 2005 [Curriculum basics for general syllabus in basic education in the arts]*. [Referenced 30.5.2010]. Available in pdf format: <URL: [http://www.oph.fi/download/123012\\_taideyl\\_ops.pdf](http://www.oph.fi/download/123012_taideyl_ops.pdf)
- Tynjälä, P. 2002. *Oppiminen tiedon rakentamisena. Konstruktivistisen oppimiskäsityksen perusteita. [Learning as construction of knowledge. Basics of constructivist learning conception]*. Helsinki: Tammi.
- Tynjälä, P., Heikkinen, L.T. & Huttunen, R. 2006. *Konstruktivistinen oppimiskäsitys oppimisen ohjaamisen perustana [Constructivist learning conception as a base for guiding learning]*. In P. Kalli & A. Malinen (Eds.) *Konstruktivismi ja realismi [Constructivism and realism]*. The 45th Annals of Adult Education. Vantaa: Kansanvalistusseura ja Aikuiskasvatuksen Tutkimusseura, 20–48.

- Uljens, M. 1992. *Phenomenological features of phenomenography* (Report 1992:03). Göteborg: University of Göteborg, Department of Education.
- Vissicaro, P. 2004. *Studying Dance Cultures around the World. An Introduction to Multicultural Dance Education*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.
- Wolz, C. 2003. *Appreciating the World of Dance*. In M.H.Nadel & M.R. Strauss (Eds.) *The Dance Experience. Insight into History, Culture and Creativity*. Hightstown: Princeton Book Company.
- Wright, J. 2000. *Bodies, meanings and movement. A comparison of the language of a physical education lesson and a Feldenkrais Movement class*. *Sport, Education and Society* 5 (1), 35–49.
- Åkerlind, G. 2003. *Growing and Developing as a University Teacher – Variation in Meaning*. *Studies in Higher Education* 28 (4), 375-390.



## BIOGRAPHIES

**Mariana Siljamäki**, PhLic, has been working in the dance field since the early 1990s. She works as a lecturer in dance at the Department of Sport Sciences, University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Currently she is preparing her dissertation on cultural awareness in teaching and learning transnational dances in Finland. She also works as a dance teacher in a private dance school and as a choreographer in a multicultural dance company, Mami Wata. The performances of the company are mainly based on the West-African dance and music culture, combined with elements of theatre. The mission of the company is to generate an appreciation of cultural diversity by giving performances and holding workshops.

**Eeva Anttila** gained her Master's degree in dance from the UCLA in 1992, and completed her Doctor of Arts in Dance degree at the Theatre Academy, Finland in 2003. She also has an Ed. Lic. degree (University of Helsinki). Currently she works as a professor of dance pedagogy at the Theatre Academy, Finland. She has been involved in dance and the Child international (daCi) since 1988, and currently serves as the Chair of daCi. Her research interests include dialogical and critical dance pedagogy, holistic learning, body memories, embodied knowledge and practice-based/artistic research methods.

**Arja Sääkslahti**, PhD, is a head of pedagogical development and works as a senior departmental researcher in the Department of Sport Sciences at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Her research topics are motor skill learning, physical activity and physical education as well as teachers' professional development. Her publications include articles in scientific journals, numerous chapters in different books and physical education curriculum books. She is also a reviewer of scientific journals on sport sciences and sport pedagogy.

Corresponding author:

**Mariana Siljamäki**, [mariana.siljamaki@jyu.fi](mailto:mariana.siljamaki@jyu.fi)

## KIRJOITTAJAT

**Mariana Siljamäki**, LitL, on työskennellyt tanssin parissa 1990-luvun alusta lähtien. Hän toimii Jyväskylän yliopiston liikuntatieteiden laitoksen tanssipedagogiikan lehtorina. Valmistella olevassa väitöskirjatutkimuksessaan hän tarkastelee, millaisen merkityksen suomalaiset, eri kulttuureista lähtöisin olevia tansseja opettavat tanssinopettajat ja –harrastajat antavat kulttuuriselle tietoisuudelle. Mariana työskentelee myös yksityisessä tanssikoulussa sekä tanssiteatteri Mami Watan koreografina. Mami Watan esiintyjät ovat suomalaisia, länsi- ja keskiafrikkalaisia tanssijoita ja muusikoita. Ryhmän esitykset pohjautuvat pääasiassa länsiafrikkalaiseen tanssi- ja musiikkikulttuuriin, joihin yhdistetään teatterinomaisia lähestymistapoja. Esitysten ja opetuksen keinoin ryhmän tavoitteena on lisätä kulttuurisen monimuotoisuuden arvostusta.

**Eeva Anttila**, Tanssitaiteen Tri, KL, työskentelee tanssipedagogiikan professorina Teatterikorkeakoulun tanssi- ja teatteripedagogiikan laitoksella. Hän on laajasti mukana kansallisessa ja kansainvälisessä tanssipedagogiikan tutkimus- ja järjestötoiminnassa. Eeva on dance and the Child international -järjestön puheenjohtaja, ja hänen kiinnostuksen kohteitaan ovat mm. dialoginen tanssipedagogiikka, kriittinen pedagogiikka sekä kokonaisvaltainen ja kehollinen oppiminen.

**Arja Sääkslahti**, LitT, on Jyväskylän yliopiston liikuntatieteiden laitoksen pedagoginen johtaja ja työskentelee laitoksella liikuntapedagogiikan yliassistenttina. Arjan tutkimusaiheet liittyvät motoriseen kehitykseen, fyysiseen aktiivisuuteen ja liikuntaa opettavien opettajien ammatilliseen kehittymiseen. Pääopetusalueena hänellä on liikunnan pedagogiikka ja didaktiikka. Arja on julkaissut mm. useita kansainvälisiä tutkimusartikkeleita, liikunnan opetus suunnitelmakirjoja sekä toimint arvioitsijana kansainvälisissä sekä kansallisissa tiedeartikkeleissa.

Vastaava kirjoittajat:

**Mariana Siljamäki**, [mariana.siljamaki@jyu.fi](mailto:mariana.siljamaki@jyu.fi)