

Cardiff School of Sport
DISSERTATION ASSESSMENT PROFORMA:
 Empirical ¹

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Prifysgol Fetropolitan Caerdydd
CARDIFF SCHOOL OF SPORT
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STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN DANCE TECHNIQUE
CLASSES – USING SECOND YEAR UNIVERSITY DANCE
STUDENTS IN THE UK

(Dissertation submitted under the discipline of DANCE)

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TITLE:

**HOW CAN PEER LEARNING HAVE AN IMPACT ON STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN
DANCE TECHNIQUE CLASSES – USING SECOND YEAR UNIVERSITY DANCE
STUDENTS IN THE UK**

DECLARATION FORM

Cardiff Metropolitan University
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research study is to investigate how peer learning can have an impact on students' engagement in the dance technique class, using second year dance students from a university in the UK. The research design aimed to investigate how the Dance Buddy Scheme used at this university manifested itself in the students' learning experience in the technique class, and qualitative research methods were used to gather and interpret the data collected. The findings indicate a positive effect on students' engagement in the dance technique class shedding light on the importance of collaborative learning and the development of critical thinking in Higher Education.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Peer learning is considered a fundamental part of the learning process within higher education and the purpose of this investigation is to explore the impact peer learning had on students' engagement within a dance technique class. The university used for this study is based in the UK and holds specific aims for its second year Core Performance Techniques module that the students have to complete, and it is important to consider these along with the approach used to teach technique in order to gain relevant contextual information for this study. The university's Core Performance Techniques module aims to consolidate and further develop skills, knowledge and understanding of the fundamental movement principles that underpin the practice of core performance techniques. By the end of the module students should be able to analyse and apply comprehensive skills, knowledge and understanding of the fundamental movement principles demonstrating a higher level of understanding of movement and body awareness in the practice of core performance techniques. Students should also be able to demonstrate and apply consistently sound performance skills associated with the core performance techniques while having an awareness of a personal performance style, displaying professionalism in their practice while working collaboratively to enhance learning (taken from the module handbook).

It is also important to note the approach through which technique is taught to the students at this university. The dance teachers embrace a facilitative role in the dance studio through which students are encouraged to think for themselves and enter into dialogue with the teacher and their peers throughout the technique class, and although didactic teaching is also used, the students are always encouraged to make the movement their own through exploring how it sits on their body and discovering something new with the movement. Thus it is clear that the individualism of the students is highly regarded at this university and this can be seen clearly through the way in which teachers nurture and challenge their students in the technique class.

This study specifically looks at the Dance Buddy Scheme aspect of the Core Performance Techniques module, through which students are enabled to create a long-term working relationship with their peer (dance buddy) in order to work collaboratively during term one, contributing to each other's professional development through observations and providing constructive feedback in the dance technique classes. Peer learning is intrinsic to students' learning development in Higher Education but the Buddy Scheme used at this university makes the use of peer learning explicit through providing a clear process which the students have to follow, enabling them to engage in critical discussion, observe their

peers and provide constructive feedback to each other, emphasising the value of the Buddy Scheme within higher education. This study investigates students partaking in the Buddy Scheme, in order to establish the impact peer learning has on the students' engagement within their technique class.

This dissertation is organised in a number of sections. Chapter Two presents a review of literature, considering what other researchers have found regarding the subject of peer learning and evaluating any gaps in this area. Chapter Three describes the research design that was used to conduct this investigation highlighting validity and reliability issues as well as any ethical concerns. Chapter Four presents the results from the data collection offering an analysis for the different types of data. Chapter Five evaluates the findings and develops the analysis through discussing the impact peer learning had on the students' engagement in the dance technique class, and the last chapter draws conclusions from the whole study in order to establish the findings and point towards areas of future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an in-depth review of literature that gives the wider context to the research question, providing a considered framework in which to place the data collection with its subsequent analysis and discussion.

2.1 What is Understood by Collaborative Learning?

The subject of dance has been continually challenged to justify its academic status within higher education, but despite this, dance has accomplished much through establishing itself as a valuable subject of study (Smith-Autard, 2002). Due to the rise of student numbers within higher education, class sizes have frequently expanded which has led teachers to re-examine the nature of their pedagogy (Griffiths, 2003). Collaborative learning has therefore become increasingly popular within the higher education classroom, involving student to student communication and problem-solving through peer learning, while the teacher takes a more facilitative role, nurturing the student-focused learning environment and guiding students' analytical reflection (Prior, 2000). Balchin (2006) suggests that students are expected to be increasingly independent in their learning within higher education as opposed to teacher-led learning in school and Smith-Autard (2002, p.180) supports this proposing that "students in tertiary education should progressively develop into independent, autonomous learners. They need in-depth information from lecturers some of the time, but need them mostly to guide, inspire and provide feedback for their own learning". Collaborative learning allows for the responsibility of learning to be shifted towards the student role, rather than solely resting with the teacher.

Black et al (2007) analysed the King's Medway Oxfordshire Formative Assessment Project (KMOFAP) which set out to support teachers in changing the way formative assessments were achieved by taking research ideas and using them practically within the classroom. They found that the use of collaborative learning involved the students more in their own development, and built a strong support system between the students rather than a constant dependence on the teacher (Black et al, 2007). It was also discovered that "the learners began to see that collaboration had rewards and uses that competition did not" (Black et al, 2007, p.60). Competition in the classroom supports achievement motivation which encourages students to take rival positions between each other in order to achieve the end goal. This hinders collaborative learning as students become rivals as opposed to colleagues, and will try to obstruct each other rather than supporting each other (Biggs and Tang, 2011). Dineen (2006) similarly investigated lecturers' and students' perspectives on

the development of creativity within art and design in two higher education institutions. She found that collaboration was supported not only within student-teacher relationships but also across the student unit. The honest statements from the lecturers reflected their views on collaborative learning; “We can teach them about 65 percent if we’re lucky – the rest comes from each other: testing things out on each other is absolutely fundamental. It’s about collective energy” (Dineen, 2006, p.113). This reveals the value that collaborative learning methods have within higher education, as they provide opportunities for students to pool their energy and knowledge together, resulting in a deeper understanding gained through using the differences and similarities that are shared by fellow peers.

Kolb and Kolb (2005, p.207) suggest that “human beings naturally make meaning from their experiences through conversation”. Unlike the traditional silent, teacher-centred classrooms, collaborative learning allows students to have meaningful conversations with each other, providing opportunities for reflection and experimentation, thus furthering their own learning and knowledge (Keeton et al, 2002). For quieter and more withdrawn students, collaborative learning can provide a safe, open and relaxed environment in which they can share their thoughts and feelings with their fellow peers, without feeling vulnerable or exposed, encouraging more reluctant students to participate in the class (Davis, 2009). Research has also indicated that peer learning encourages student achievement and positive thinking towards learning when students collaborate with fellow peers of similar academic level (Swarat et al, 2004). Collaborative learning provides opportunities for students to observe each other enhancing their ability to give constructive feedback and reflect on their learning (Light et al, 2009), all of which are essential skills to have when entering the world of employment. Therefore, it is clear that the use of collaborative learning within the higher education classroom is vastly significant, as it supports the different needs of the students that are involved, preparing them for the world outside college and university:

Young people, and mature students, too, want to feel they are in a community of adults who relate to them as adults and not as parents or a remote intellectual elite that can undermine their own identity as adults or as developing professionals. Creating the conditions for them to engage in the variety of roles that are the context of adult life today is itself important for the role of the lecturer. Group work has the potential to enrich the different roles that stimulate engagement and learning

Light et al, 2009, p.152.

2.2 How Peer Learning Contributes to the Development of the Critical Thinker

This study focuses on the use of peer-learning in higher education and how it affects students' engagement in the class they participate. Although non-traditional teaching methods are growing increasingly popular due to the rise of higher education students in Wales (Higher Education Statistics Agency, 2013, online), peer learning is by no means a managing strategy to cope with student-teacher ratios in the classroom. Rather, it can often be a worthier approach, ensuring real progress and development with the students through exercising critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Black et al, 2007). Buckroyd (2000) explored the use of small group work within the dance classroom suggesting that students who fully engaged in group work had more opportunities to learn from others, gaining a better education.

Small group work means that it is more difficult for students to become passive within the class and offers opportunity for learning the skills of observation and feedback which will assist their own development as well as that of their classmates

Buckroyd, 2000.

Peer learning encourages students to discuss, negotiate and compromise with each other, allowing critical thinking to take place, which the teacher can then guide and facilitate, as opposed to following a traditional didactic teaching style. Warburton (2004) highlighted the need of experiential learning when he investigated the beliefs of practicing dance teachers about the use of critical thinking activities with high-advantage and low-advantage learners. The findings pointed to an advantage effect in teachers' beliefs; the higher the learner advantage the more likely teachers are to favour critical thinking activities, despite there being evidence that shows critical thinking activities are effective with low-advantage learners (Warburton, 2004).

It is important at this point to establish what is meant by critical thinking. Like Raman noted (2009), there does not appear to be an established definition of critical thinking that is widely agreed. Cottrell (2011, p.2) suggests that "critical thinking is a complex process of deliberation which involves a wide range of skills and attitudes". Some of these skills and attitudes include "identifying other people's positions", "being able to read between the lines" and "reflecting on issues" (Cottrell, 2011, p.2). This cognitive view of critical thinking

is supported by Black et al (2008) who suggest it is having an awareness of the thinking of others as well as one's own thinking, which provides a strong foundation for interactive negotiation, developing insight and knowledge. Conversely, Harrison (2004) proposes that critical thinking is more than just a cognitive attribute, but rather it is an ongoing working practice that establishes itself through many different ways in the classroom. Based on these definitions, the view will be taken for this study that critical thinking involves reasoning processes as well as practical engagement in order to establish meaning and understanding in different contexts.

As this study focuses on peer learning within the dance technique class, it is significant to look at previous research in this regard, with the backdrop of critical thinking. Raman (2009) noted the need for change in the dance classroom regarding critical thinking activities when investigating the development of critical thinking and learning through pair-work. Raman found that all interviewed students across a range of technical levels and year groups responded positively to pair-work, noting that it was a beneficial way of learning, enhancing their movement quality and performance. However these findings pointed to a further need to develop collaborative tasks more specific to the technique class focusing on the students' ability to transfer their knowledge of key movement principles from one class to another (Raman, 2009). Barr (2009) also addressed this issue when she examined the nature of the technique class by re-examining the meaning of feedback among dancers. She found that although the student dancer was concerned with receiving 'how to' feedback from the teacher, they found their own kinaesthetic feedback was more important in their development as a dancer. Black et al (2007, p.77) suggests that "feedback from peers is less emotionally 'loaded' than feedback from those in authority and is more easily accepted", allowing students to focus on their own improvement rather than being concerned about receiving praise or criticism from the teacher. Buckroyd (2000) indicates the lack of communication involved between students in traditional didactic taught dance classes, suggesting that the result of this is "an exhausted teacher and passive, non-thinking students". Providing enhanced learning opportunities through the use of experiential based activities such as peer learning, helps develop critical thinking skills by encouraging students to consider and reflect on their movement, encouraging relevant communication and problem-solving among the students. It is clear that there is a need for further incorporation of peer learning and experiential based activities within the dance technique classroom, and dance teachers should be encouraged to embrace a more facilitative role in helping future dancers become critical thinkers, developing their sense of self and kinaesthetic awareness.

Brockbank and McGill (2007) summarise the importance of peer learning in regard to critical thinking, indicating its promotion of reflective learning while setting an environment for integration of knowledge and engagement with self and others. Buckroyd (2000) also encourages peer learning through having a group dynamic:

The students who become more like group members and less like individuals, have more of an opportunity to learn from each other and a better education in taking responsibility for their own learning. Dance class can then help the development and maturity of its members.

Peer learning has an important role to play in the dance technique class, as it develops students' ability to critically consider their own actions as well the actions of others, enabling them to reflect, provide feedback and actively respond to their understanding, sharing their experiences with their fellow peers. This study looks at the use of peer-learning within the dance technique class, focusing on how it can either help or hinder the students' engagement within the class.

2.3 Locating Dance Technique Within a Learning Environment

As this study involves observing second year undergraduate students participating in their regular dance technique classes, it is important to consider what is understood by technique within a learning environment. Glasstone (1999, p.951) suggests that having "good technique is to be in control of whatever it is one is doing" and that it is this control of movement within dance that enables the dancer to have the ability to alter the style of movement when needed. Schrader (2005) also takes quite a traditionalist approach and suggests that imitative or familiar movement constructs a dancer's technique and practice. Smith-Autard (2002) offers quite a different interpretation of technique saying that it is far more than just the mastery of a particular movement vocabulary, but that it is rather the assembly of personal merits and skill for an artistic purpose. Beavers (2008, p.129) looks at technique within a wider practice and concludes that it means "the principles of organisation which underlie mind/body response" and it is having a store of appropriate responses to draw from when needed. Even though these definitions offer useful explanations and descriptions of what technique is, further study needs to be conducted

into how teachers aim to develop students' technique and into the learning environment in which technique is taught.

Kenneth Tharp OBE (2005), a dance artist and chief executive of The Place, proposes that technique and creativity are not separate skills that exist on their own in the classroom, but that they are connected and complement each other within the subject of dance:

The definition of success for me as teacher irrespective of whether I am working with other professionals or beginners is measured less by sheer technical or physical accomplishment (however compelling that may be) but by the level of ownership, autonomy, clarity, and confidence evidenced by the dancers

Tharp, 2005.

This concept of ownership and autonomous learning within the development of dance technique connects with the use of collaborative learning within higher education, enabling the students to consider, reflect and problem-solve in order to progress in their own practice. H'Doubler (1998) supports this view suggesting that physical technique within the dance class is more about motor intelligence and purpose rather than systematic skill, suggesting that movement becomes a distinctive manifestation of the individual performing it when it is surrendered to the emotion and intelligence of that person. H'Doubler (1998, p.97) recognises that the student must firstly have the genuine desire to progress and again supports autonomous learning of students suggesting "a student should be taught to teach himself. It is only as he is able, through his own effort to apply, to assimilate, and to ponder what he has learned that he is truly benefited". This suggests that there needs to be both physical and emotional intelligence, in order for students to train mindfully, being able to reflect on their practice and allow for ideas to be shifted and explored, resulting in a deeper understanding and progression in dance technique (Beavers, 2008). Thus the ability to think critically in the dance technique class is vital to the development of students' knowledge and skill, as while performing is at the heart of the dancer's experience the role of understanding and cognitive flexibility must not be overlooked (Warburton, 2004).

These views suggest that there needs to be a conscious involvement of the student within the dance studio for learning within technique to be effective. Clarke (2003) suggests that there needs to be shift within dance pedagogy, so the focus is taken away from the traditional didactic method of teaching, and brought towards teaching as a facilitative and guiding process:

If we can develop in our students a movement intelligence based on an embodied understanding and attentive consciousness of themselves in motion we prepare them to encounter new and unfamiliar situations and to apply themselves creatively to the explorations which will move the artform forwards

Clarke, 2003.

The emphasis is placed on the student's conscious engagement with the principles that underlie movement practices, and how they can then analyse and apply this knowledge themselves, applying it to different situations. This study looks at how second year dance students at a university within the UK engage with the development of their technique in contemporary dance classes, and how the use of peer-learning either helps or hinders this process.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Question

The question that informs this research is:

“How can peer learning have an impact on students’ engagement in dance technique classes”.

3.1 Research Design

The intention of this research study was to investigate how the use of peer learning has an impact on students’ engagement in dance technique class, using Kolb’s Learning Cycle (1984) as a framework to place the different stages of learning. This study was qualitative in design as it aimed to find out about non-quantifiable qualities such as thoughts, feelings and experiences of the participants (Gratton and Jones, 2010). This method of data collection was appropriate to the research question as the concepts involved could not be meaningfully converted into numbers, thus the information gathered in the form of words was interpreted by the researcher and “unlike quantitative research, the issue of ‘how many’ was not relevant” (Gratton and Jones, 2010, p.30).

The research design adopted the following procedure:

1. All students in the second year dance class were given pre Buddy Scheme questionnaires to complete along with consent forms and information sheets, which enabled the researcher to select four participants based on their responses to the questions.
2. Observations then took place over a five week period where the researcher observed the four participants experiencing the Buddy Scheme in their contemporary dance technique class, taking notes using Kolb’s Learning Cycle (1984) as a framework.
3. After the observations a semi-structured focus group discussion took place in which the participants were able to share their thoughts and experiences of the Buddy Scheme.

The use of questionnaires in research studies are very common and the researcher must consider certain questions when considering its use such as, can the researcher get all the necessary information from the data collected on the questionnaire? And, are other methods more appropriate to gather the data? (Gratton and Jones, 2010). In this study the use of questionnaires were appropriate as they enabled the researcher to collect the relevant information needed to gain an understanding of the expectations the participants

had of the Buddy Scheme so that an informed decision could be made on who to observe. Observation notes were then taken over five sessions to note any visual progress or changes in the participants' learning approach and engagement during this period of time. The advantages of using complete observation in research studies is its directness, the possible identification of behaviours that may not be apparent to the participant or that they are unwilling to disclose, and also that it takes place in a 'natural setting' allowing the researcher to watch the behaviour within the context it takes place (Gratton and Jones, 2010). One disadvantage of using observational methods is its difficulty in data recording, making sure nothing is missed that could be important to the research findings (Gratton and Jones, 2010). The possibility of this occurring was significantly reduced due to using Kolb's Learning Cycle (1984) as a framework when observing, making it easier to record certain behaviours and experiences observed and keeping the main theme of the students' engagement and learning at the forefront. After observations had taken place, the four participants then took part in a semi-structured focus group discussion in which the researcher used questions to prompt and aid conversation. The main concept behind focus groups is that through group interaction and contribution participants can share, explore and clarify their thoughts and experiences in ways that would not be as easily possible in a one-to-one interview (Kitzinger, 1995). Through this process the researcher can gain valuable understanding into not only what people think but also how and why they think it (Kitzinger, 1995).

This research study used a sample of four female second year students in a university in the UK studying a BA (Hons) Dance degree. These were selected using a convenience sample, as the participants were an existing group that were available to use (Lunenburg and Irby, 2008). This was due to the fact that these students took part in a Buddy Scheme which formed part of their Core Performance Techniques module. The scheme enabled the students to create long-term working relationships with their peer (dance buddy allocated by tutor) who they then worked with throughout term one, working collaboratively and contributing to each other's development through observations and providing constructive feedback. These four students were selected through a process of reading through the questionnaires that were given to the whole class, which then led to selecting four participants that revealed differentiation in thoughts and opinions regarding the Buddy Scheme.

3.2 Ethical Issues

Due to the in-depth nature of qualitative research, ethical issues are inescapable and ongoing throughout the progression of a study, from the types of questions being asked to the way the research is ultimately conveyed (Sparkes and Smith, 2014). In this investigation the participants were given an information sheet prior to the start of the study, detailing what would be involved and what would be asked of them as participants. Once they had read this and had any questions answered by the researcher, the participants were then required to fill in a consent form essentially agreeing to be part of the research study. All data gathered throughout the research study remained anonymous. During observations the participants may have experienced minor feelings of self-consciousness due to the researcher watching them dance in the classroom, but these feelings should have been no more than the everyday stress experienced by students.

3.3 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are essential to maintain a sense of accuracy and truthfulness throughout the research process (Gratton and Jones, 2010). The relevance of these considerations may vary in qualitative research as variables are unlikely to be controlled in order to reproduce the same data as opposed to quantitative research (Sparks and Smith, 2014). An example of this would be whether the participants would answer truthfully to the questions being asked in a questionnaire (Walliman, 2004). To increase the validity of the research the pre-buddy scheme questionnaires were piloted with other dance students of a different year group in order to establish that the questions were coherent and appropriate for the participants involved. The participants were allowed to complete the questionnaires in their own time in their own environment, which decreased any expectation that they might have felt from the researcher, thus increasing validity. A pilot observation was undertaken to note any difficulties that emerged in watching the dancers in their technique class, while also allowing the researcher to get accustomed to using Kolb's Learning Cycle (1984) as a framework to observe the participants. The reliability of the study was also increased by using a contemporary dance technique class for all observations, ensuring the data obtained came from the same learning environment.

It must be noted that informed bias may have occurred during the study due to the researcher having already experienced the Buddy Scheme from being a student of the

same degree at the same university. However due to this issue being recognised by the researcher, it's potential to interfere with the data has been greatly reduced.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0

In this chapter, the data is divided into three sections comprising of the questionnaire responses, observation notes and the focus group discussion, in which the results will be analysed as an ongoing process after each presentation of data.

4.1 Findings From the pre-Buddy Scheme Questionnaires

The questionnaires contained five questions regarding the students' knowledge of technique and their expectations of the Buddy Scheme that forms part of the student learning experience within technique.

Question 1: What does the term 'technique' mean to you?

The participants' responses ranged from defining technique as:

1. Codified movement of the body in space.
2. Alignment and placement of the body within a categorised style.
3. The clarity and precision of movement.
4. Individual movement style to use in performance.

Analysis:

The first two responses sit within a codified understanding of what dance technique is in that it involves mastering a codified style of movement within different dance styles. The latter two responses reflect a more current view of technique in that it can be evidenced differently in individuals and that it is more about body awareness and control, which sits comfortably within the teaching at the university showing understanding of the technique module's learning aims and outcomes.

Question 2: What are your expectations of the Buddy Scheme?

The participants' responses ranged from the Buddy Scheme being there:

1. To improve taking feedback on board and use constructive criticism.
2. To improve understanding and aid progress in technique by working with someone familiar and from the same position in the class.
3. To use own strengths and weaknesses to help another peer in technique without assessing them.

4. To learn from the buddy's strengths and to share own strengths also.

Analysis:

The first two responses propose the purpose of the Buddy Scheme is to get feedback and constructive comments from a peer as opposed to someone in a higher position in the class (the teacher), expecting it will help improve technical understanding in the class. The latter two responses emphasise the Buddy Scheme as a process of sharing individual strengths in order to improve individual difficulties within a dance technique class.

Question 3: How do you think peer learning will help you?

The participants' responses ranged from peer learning being helpful by:

1. Receiving feedback in simpler terms.
2. Helping physical development of own movement technique through applying buddy's feedback as well as own.
3. Shedding light on individual strengths and weaknesses so improvement can be made.
4. Receiving feedback from someone from same level of learning will be less intimidating and as a result will help students feel more open to suggestion.

Analysis:

The first and last response to this question emphasise the difference of relationship of student to student, rather than teacher to student, and suggest that this difference will enable feedback to be more easily accepted and taken on board to then apply to dance technique. The second and third response emphasise the advantage of gaining more than one point of view and opinion in order to physically improve in dance technique.

Question 4: What skills do you have to offer your buddy?

Participants' responses ranged from:

1. Being positive when giving feedback.
2. Creating logical ideas to help the buddy improve with certain movement.
3. Through feeling and exploring movement new discoveries can be shared.

4. Through being observant constructive criticism will be given without being negative.

Analysis:

These responses all share a common theme of being positive when giving feedback and sharing imagery and feelings with the buddy. It is interesting to note that not one of the participants responded to this question by stating any physical or movement related skills they had to offer their buddy.

Question 5: What value is there in giving and receiving feedback from peers?

Participants' responses ranged from:

1. Helping students take on criticism and creating a shared value of feedback.
2. Having critique from a like-minded person results in self-application.
3. Increase store of different ideas to help individual movement.
4. As a peer can be a column of support and friendship their opinions are trusted and valued.

Analysis:

Again, most responses emphasised the difference in connection of student to student relationships as opposed to student-teacher relationships, suggesting that feedback is easily accepted and valued from their peers.

4.2 Observation Notes

Complete observations took place over five weeks in which the researcher observed the four participants in their contemporary dance technique class. As previously mentioned, the framework used for the observations was Kolb's Learning Cycle (1984) which is a popular theory regarding experiential learning. The cycle involves four different learning capabilities which are necessary if learning is to be effective. The cycle flows in the following order: Concrete Experience (CE), Reflective Observation (RO), Abstract Conceptualisation (AC), and Active Experimentation (AE). Concrete Experience involves the learner having and feeling a new experience, which in this study was provided by the buddy scheme for the participants. Reflective Observation is when the learner reviews and reflects on their experience, watching others and considering how something is done.

Abstract Conceptualisation involves the learner forming and reforming new ideas, applying feedback to own practice and taking ownership of learning. Lastly Active Experimentation is when the learner uses their enhanced understanding and knowledge to continually explore and apply their own skills, making decisions and problem-solving in new situations. This framework was used as a backdrop to the observations and the tables below show the stages of learning that each participant displayed predominantly during the five week period.

Participant One

Abstract Conceptualisation	Active Experimentation
<p>When working individually this participant showed strong internal focus, and closed eyes frequently when performing movement. When working with her buddy there was much more consideration of external factors such as the use of space, and as the participant applied the feedback given from her buddy there was more clarity and energy in her movement. When practising movement with her buddy, the participant applied her own feedback to herself while also allowing her buddy's contrast in energy levels to form new ways of performing movement.</p>	<p>When the participant worked with her buddy, she communicated clearly how the movement felt, articulating particular considerations and difficulties. The participant increasingly encouraged problem-solving by using imagery for challenging phrases and progressively began to explore new ideas and feedback when working on her own, thinking of the use of breath, energy and lengthening and extension in movement. The participant also approached her buddy on numerous occasions for support with decisions and problem-solving without being instructed to by the teacher showing her own held value in the buddy scheme.</p>

Analysis:

This participant clearly showed Abstract Conceptualisation and Active Experimentation in her learning during the Buddy Scheme, as working with her buddy increased her own consideration of movement in the contemporary dance technique class. As she explored new ideas in movement and took more risks, she began to problem-solve and make her own informed decisions on how to apply shared understanding to her own performance.

Participant Two

Concrete Experience	Reflective Observation
When working individually this participant struggled to stay engaged in the technique class and was quite distracted at times. Despite having an evident physical ability to perform movements, the participant rarely performed movement phrases to her full potential almost holding back in the class. Her intention and focus did increase when she worked with her buddy, physically working through movement phrases together helped improve her concentration, clarity and attention to movement. This participant was very quiet in class at times, and seemed quite shy when speaking to her buddy, although through experiencing working with a peer the participant was encouraged to talk about any difficulties she found with the movement, and had time to physically work through challenging movement phrases together.	As the buddy scheme progressed the participant seemed to gain a much better rapport with her buddy, and seemed to be more confident in giving constructive feedback as opposed to giving polite but unhelpful responses such as “Yes, that was good”. The participant showed much more consideration in her movement when performing in front of her buddy, and watched others a lot in the class implying that reflection was taking place and considering how the movement is executed. When performing the same time as her buddy, there was an evident increase in the participant’s energy, focus, clarity and fluency.

Analysis:

The Buddy Scheme was an obvious help to this participant in that it increased her focus and engagement in class, allowing her to watch others and consider the factors involved in each movement. Performing and working with others seemed to have a vast impact on the participant's clarity in movement and energy levels, however, this participant did not seem to take the learning any further to apply it to her own practice and explore new ideas in her own development.

Participant Three

Reflective Observation	Abstract Conceptualisation
When working individually this participant had a strong external focus and showed a high concentration in class. From working with her buddy the participant began to consider the movement more, considering things like fluency and clarity in her movement which did improve after the participant observed her buddy. Through observing her buddy the participant began to consider how the movement felt and communicated these sensations to her buddy. At times the participant seemed to consider and discuss too much, and needed to physically apply her shared thoughts and feedback to her movement.	After the participant observed her buddy perform a movement phrase, the participant's own clarity and use of space improved and had greater intention when dancing. After working with her buddy, the participant seemed to have better control in her movement when working individually and showed a higher consideration behind her movement, as opposed to just doing a phrase. The participant seemed to practice movement phrases much more when working with her buddy but could hold back from exploring new challenging movement, preferring to observe her buddy rather than physically exploring herself.

Analysis:

For this participant the Buddy Scheme encouraged deeper reflection and consideration in the dance technique class, and increased a sense of internal fluency and connection rather than just an external focus and concentration. The further application of exploring

and experimenting in her physical movement did not seem to be quite evident at the end of the observations despite consideration and reflection taking place.

Participant Four

Concrete Experience	Reflective Observation	Abstract Conceptualisation
<p>When working individually at the start of the buddy scheme this participant seemed to be going through the motions with no consideration, and although she had a high ability in getting the 'correct' positions there was a clear lack of fluency and internal connection with the movement. Working with a buddy encouraged this participant to actually sense and feel each movement, in order to verbalise how the movement felt.</p>	<p>Through observing her buddy, the participant was able to give practical feedback, such as "ribs popping out" which she then applied to her own movement also. Through observing and moving with her buddy, the participant gained a greater connection and fluency in her movement, showing a consideration of her own body and movement in the space. The participant began to increasingly observe her buddy in class, even when not instructed to do so by the teacher, giving feedback on a regular basis and applying this knowledge to herself, such as considering her use of energy levels and the relationship between each extremity in her body.</p>	<p>Towards the end of the buddy scheme, this participant showed greater consideration and application of feedback in her own movement when worked individually. She began to close her eyes more in class, allowing herself to sense the movement kinaesthetically improving her connection and embodiment.</p>

Analysis:

This participant showed much progress through the course of the Buddy Scheme and began to form new ideas, applying them to her own movement showing responsibility for learning. The challenge for this participant would be to progressively explore and take risks in movement, experimenting with those new ideas to discover more.

4.3 Focus Group Discussion

The purpose of having a focus group discussion at the end of the Buddy Scheme was to see if the participants' thoughts and opinions matched their doing and what was evidenced in the observations during the application of the Buddy Scheme. Through talking and sharing their thoughts with others, the participants used their evaluative skills by reflecting on a shared experience. The discussion was approached by a series of prompt questions which are presented below with the participants' responses followed by analysis.

Question 1 - How do you feel the Buddy Scheme has gone so far?

Participant one responded saying she felt that the Buddy Scheme had informed her practice through being able to problem-solve with her buddy, and through asking questions, observing her buddy and being observed, she was able to gain a deeper understanding of the movements.

Analysis:

This response was reflective of the observed learning stages of participant one during the Buddy Scheme, which was abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation, showing problem-solving skills in order to make decisions and actively experiment with the movement.

Question 2 - How do you find getting feedback from your buddy as opposed to the teacher?

Participant four responded to this by saying that she had more feedback from her buddy as they had more time to elaborate on things and give more detail, whereas the teacher

has limited time when giving feedback to the whole class, but found that it could be quite difficult to give constructive feedback. She found that as the Buddy Scheme progressed it was easier to discuss strengths as well as areas for improvement.

Participant two also reiterated this by saying that her buddy could be too nice at times, whereas the teacher will be straight and to the point in feedback.

Participant three also agreed with this saying that her buddy tended to say all the good things from her performance, which she found frustrating as she wanted to know what to improve.

Participant one responded saying that students tend to be self-criticising but don't offer critical feedback to other peers, but as the buddy relationships grew and rapport increased it became easier to give constructive, balanced feedback.

Analysis:

There was an obvious shared opinion of having difficulty in giving and receiving critical feedback from peers in the beginning of the Buddy Scheme, but became easier as the scheme progressed, having more time to go into detail and articulate issues.

Question 3 - How would you describe the experience of the Buddy Scheme?

Participant two responded by saying she felt it was an experience of self-discovery, as from watching the same person you gain specific insight into what they need to improve which you then apply to your own practice and use internally also.

Analysis:

Compared to the observations of participant two this response was quite unexpected implying that application of learning to her own practice had taken place, despite not being clearly evident in class.

Question 4 - Would you consider that the Buddy Scheme has been a valuable experience?

Participant three commented that she didn't have a reliable buddy so had ended up working with different peers throughout the Buddy Scheme, which she found difficult at first

but on reflection she can see how through this she has been able to get feedback from different people, and has noticed similar factors in all her feedback which has enabled her to continually work on these considerations.

Participant one found the Buddy Scheme valuable as she always used the feedback, even if it was her own feedback to her buddy, she still applied it to herself and used it to explore in movement.

Participant four agreed with this, saying that some teachers have commented on how the students have adopted some of their buddy's style in their movement, saying the Buddy Scheme was a sharing between peers where each person can offer something to the other.

Analysis:

There seems to be a shared view on the value of feedback through the Buddy Scheme, with the importance placed on applying the feedback offered and received to own practice to further develop movement skills and technique.

Question 5 - When you observe your buddy, what are you looking for?

Participant four responded saying that sometimes she watched in a general way looking for any obvious areas of improvement or factors that stood out in a positive way, but at other times the teacher would give something specific to look out for such as weight placement.

Participant one said that she thinks about her buddy's movement principles when observing and looks out for other things they can improve upon.

Analysis:

The students seem to be instructed on what to observe in their buddies on some occasions, but are also left to their own observation skills, deepening critical thinking and awareness of movement principles when watching their buddy.

Question 6 - Do your observations affect your movement in any way?

Participant two responded saying that if she notices her buddy having an area of difficulty or notices a movement that they are struggling with, she will make sure she puts more effort in when doing the same movement, and also if her buddy is doing a good job she will want to work well also. She commented that they are all there to help and push each other.

Analysis:

This confirms the Buddy Scheme being a shared learning experience, as what is observed in the participant's buddy will have a subsequent effect on the participant themselves, through applying the knowledge and understanding to their own movement.

Question 7 - How do you feel when you are being observed by your buddy?

Participant two commented that her buddy is new in class, and can be a bit timid when observing and being observed, whereas the rest of the class are all friends and relaxed with each other.

Participant three commented that if the Buddy Scheme was during their first year at university she doesn't think it would have been as successful and would have been too intimidating, but because they are all comfortable with each other by the second year, they worked well together as they were more comfortable being watched by fellow peers.

Participant one agreed with this saying the feedback would not be constructive if the Buddy Scheme took place in the first year of the degree.

Analysis:

These responses suggest that the Buddy Scheme would not be as beneficial to a new class of students, as there needs to be a connection and rapport amongst the students in order for feedback and observations to be helpful and constructive.

Question 8 - How do you feel when you are being observed by the teacher as opposed to your buddy?

Participant two said that she performs the movement material the same whoever she is performing to.

Participant four said that if she knows the teacher is looking for something specific, she will make sure she takes that into account when performing to the teacher. She also admitted that she could be a bit lazy at times saying that if it's a big class, she won't do certain movement if she thinks the teacher isn't watching her.

Analysis:

The second response confirms the difference between student-to-student relationships and teacher-to-student relationships, suggesting that there can sometimes be an expectation to please the teacher, rather than having the desire to progress in own learning and understanding despite being watched by the teacher or not.

Question 9 - How has the Buddy Scheme affected your own learning within the dance technique class?

Participant two said it has developed her critique in that she can deconstruct movement and performances.

Participant one said that it has taught her to be positive about her herself when dancing, instead of focusing on all the negatives, saying it was nice to hear positive feedback from her buddy which encouraged positive thinking.

Analysis:

The first response confirms the development of critical thinking skills within the Buddy Scheme, while the second response reveals the students' acceptance of encouraging feedback from another peer.

Question 10 - Has the Buddy Scheme affected your engagement in technique class?

Participant three responded by saying that the Buddy Scheme has made her more aware of what she is doing, saying that she thinks and considers more as opposed to just mindlessly going through the movements.

Participant one agreed with this, also saying that by applying own feedback and buddy's feedback to movement, it really helps improve technique.

Analysis:

These two responses support Kolb's Learning Cycle in that they reflect the abstract conceptualisation stage of learning where ideas are formed and reformed, applying own and buddy feedback to practice and also the active experimentation stage, where there is exploration and progress made through continual application and experimentation.

Question 11 - What will you take from the Buddy Scheme to inform your future development as a dancer?

Participant two responded saying that it has helped with other skills that she will take into dance classes.

Participant four agreed with this saying it will help her engage with others in new classes and feel confident in giving feedback to peers.

Participant three also commented saying that having critical feedback from a variety of people has helped her get used to receiving feedback and has given her a range of things to consider in movement and apply to future practice.

Analysis:

These responses share a common theme in that the Buddy Scheme has enabled students to have the ability to critically consider and reflect on movement, while actively engaging with other peers in class in order to progress and improve in their own dance technique.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.0

The purpose of the discussion is to examine the effect peer learning had on the participants' engagement within the technique class through the learning experience of the Buddy Scheme.

5.1 Realising the Value of Collaborative Learning

All participants involved in this study showed a positive impact from experiencing peer learning through the Buddy Scheme. The participants' understanding of collaborative learning prior to the Buddy Scheme revealed a common perception of gaining feedback from a peer as opposed to a teacher. Although peer feedback is a significant factor within collaborative learning, it is evident that far more was understood and appreciated by the participants as a result of experiencing the Buddy Scheme. Beavers (2008) suggests that dance training needs to involve physical exploration of the body through sensing and perceiving and Brodie and Lobel (2012, p.26) indicate the "importance of student driven learning, taking responsibility for enacting one's own changes and finding one's own way of moving". When the participants were asked to define their understanding of technique prior to the Buddy Scheme, many responses reflected a codified understanding of technique, describing it as codified movement of the body in space and alignment and placement of the body within a categorised style. Buckroyd (2000) suggests that the emphasis on technique in dance training can sometimes be no different to that of a gymnastic class and stresses the importance of collaborative learning as a way of nurturing the imaginative and creative ability of students.

Despite the participants' prior understanding of technique, the observations of their experience of the Buddy Scheme signified a shift in their understanding. Through observing and reflecting on their peer's movement as well as their own in the dance class, the participants began to explore movement phrases further, sensing their own bodies moving in the space, considering different principles such as energy and breath that could change and affect the movement. Some of the participants began to take further risks after observing their peers, experimenting with their own body and seeing how far movements could be maximised which would sometimes cause a decrease in clarity but ultimately led to greater intention and consideration when moving. Participant three commented on the value of experiencing peer learning through the Buddy Scheme, saying that it has made her aware of what she is doing in class, commenting that she thinks and considers more rather than just mindlessly going through the movements. This shows

deeper engagement of the students in the dance technique class through collaborative learning, as the participants displayed a deeper understanding and consideration for each task, showing independent learning and development as opposed to mindless copying from the teacher. Participant two showed a reluctance to engage in the technique class and seemed to struggle with concentration. Buckroyd (2000) draws attention to the role of the student in the dance technique class, suggesting students need to come to class with willingness and a curiosity to motivate their own learning. For participant two, collaborative learning focused her attention through observing her peer and reflecting on her movement, suggesting that collaborative learning helps engage students who are less-enthusiastic or motivated in the technique class. This participant also commented on the impact of the Buddy Scheme in the focus group discussion, commenting that the Buddy Scheme was an experience of self-discovery, gaining specific insight into her buddy which she then applied internally to her own practice. This response confirms the impact collaborative learning had for this student. Furthermore, the observations highlighted a change that took place in the participants' own movement after they had observed their peer and given feedback. Many participants adopted their buddy's use of energy and space after they had observed them, suggesting a subconscious influence collaborative learning had on the participants.

The findings also highlighted the difference between student-to-student relationships and teacher-to-student relationships. In the focus group discussion when being asked about being observed by the teacher, participant four commented on the need to please the teacher if she knows she is being watched, and openly admitted that she could sometimes be a bit lazy if it is a big class and thinks the teacher cannot see her. Barr (2009) suggests that when students merely seek teacher's approval, their movements can easily become about achieving this goal rather than experiencing the process of embodying the movement. The participant's response implies it is easier for students to become passive learners when whole group teaching is taking place, and collaborative learning can help change passive students to active learners who take responsibility for their own learning and development (Black and Wiliam, 2008). The questionnaires and observations also indicated a difference in the use of language used between students. Black et al (2007, p.77) comments on this difference when investigating the role of peer learning in schools:

Observations of peers explaining things to each other revealed important insights about why this is such a powerful process. Students often communicated complex ideas in a language that was different from what the teacher would have used, but appeared to be more easily assimilated by other students. When explaining things

to each other, students often interrupted the peer's explanation asking them to repeat something, which the teachers told us never happened when it was the teacher doing the explaining.

This difference in the use of language between students was evident when observing the participants discussing and problem-solving with their peers. The participants were confident in talking to each other making sure any issues and ideas were fully understood, not being afraid to question and challenge their peers at times. Participant two noted that she did struggle to talk to her peer at first, but as the Buddy Scheme progressed so did their rapport with each other and they found it easier to discuss and give feedback. It is clear from the findings that collaborative learning helps students become active learners in the dance class, developing support and a reliance on each other rather than solely on the teacher (Black et al, 2007).

5.2 Has the Buddy Scheme Contributed to the Development of the Critical Thinker?

Collaborative learning also encourages the use of critical thinking skills in students, as reasoning processes and problem-solving skills are being used to understand and appreciate peer viewpoints, while forming own ideas and perspectives (Joyce et al, 1997). Participant one showed clear problem-solving skills when working with her peer, clearly communicating how the movement felt articulating particular considerations and difficulties. The participant went on to use her own imagery, sharing this with her buddy when performing challenging movement phrases and progressively began to explore new ideas and feedback when working individually. This participant also approached her buddy on a number of occasions for support with decisions and understanding without being instructed to by the teacher. In the focus group discussion this participant commented on the value of peer learning saying that it had informed her practice through being able to problem-solve with her buddy, and through observing her buddy and asking questions she was able to gain a deeper understanding of the movements. This clearly indicates the way in which peer learning encourages critical thinking, and this participant certainly developed as a critical thinker throughout the Buddy Scheme realising her own value in the learning experience.

The use of peer feedback in the Buddy Scheme was significant in encouraging the students to think critically and share their thoughts by partaking in constructive dialogue

with their peers. In the focus group discussion many participants expressed initial difficulty in giving constructive feedback, commenting that solely positive aspects were communicated to their peer at the start of the scheme. However, as the Buddy Scheme progressed and the participants got familiar with the different processes involved in peer learning, their feedback became more constructive suggesting areas to improve as well as highlighting positive aspects to their peer. Buckroyd (2000) talks about the need to be aware of the choice of words used when giving feedback in order to be supportive as opposed to fault-finding, and the participants showed this sensitivity in their approach to giving feedback. Raman (2009) found initial negativity amongst her participants when investigating collaborative learning in university dance students across three years, commenting that “it was very unlikely that all students were able to provide meaningful and accurate verbal/tactile feedback to one another, particularly in the beginning of the study”. Raman (2009) reflected that this could have been due to the students feeling inadequate in giving constructive feedback to each other, which highlights the importance of the teacher’s facilitative role in these circumstances, guiding and encouraging the students to critically consider the underlying principles behind the movement helping students have confidence in their thoughts and contribution to the class.

In the focus group discussion participant one commented that the experience of peer learning through the Buddy Scheme taught her to be positive about herself when dancing in the technique class, saying it was nice to get positive feedback from her buddy which encouraged positive thinking. Black et al (2007) suggests that peer feedback helps improve self-assessment in students. Through the processes involved in collaborative learning students are helped to acquire objectivity needed for valuable self-assessment, helping them to relate quality to specific contexts and giving them the motivation to seek self-improvement (Black et al, 2007). Buckroyd (2000, p.126) supports the importance of self-assessment skills in students:

If trainees are to take responsibility for their own learning, they must develop the capacity for self-assessment. This capacity is closely related to the development of the ability to feel from the inside how the movement is performed, and to a conscious, active knowledge of what the teacher is asking for. It means the student must be able to identify targets and goals for herself and so have some means of measuring her progress.

In this study the participants identified their own targets in relation to the movement principles, in order to measure their own progress as well as the progress of their buddy.

During the Buddy Scheme it was increasingly observed that the participants began to close their eyes more in class when working individually, sensing the movement and developing their own kinaesthetic feedback. Barr (2009) suggests that it is going through this process of the student listening to their own body that they find ownership in the movement and become true dancers. This study shows the value collaborative learning had on the participants in developing their critical thinking skills, in order to problem-solve, reflect and form new ideas in order to continually self-assess throughout their experience as dancers, helping them take movement and make it their own, bringing it to life through considering peer feedback as well as their own kinaesthetic feedback.

5.3 As a Result of the Buddy Scheme has the Participants' Practice of Technique Shifted?

This study used Kolb's Learning Cycle (1984) as an experiential learning framework to structure the observations of the participants, showing the different stages of learning that took place during the five week period. Stinson (2005) put forward a Four Step Model for dance teaching suggesting its use in a technique class as well as in a creative choreography class. The Four Step Model flows in the order of Explore, Form, Perform and Evaluate. Throughout the study it was evident that this model linked with the different stages of learning found in Kolb's Learning Cycle. The first stage, Explore, involves experiencing something for the first time, which in the case of the participants would be the experience of the Buddy Scheme in the technique class. This stage links with the first part of Kolb's Learning Cycle of Concrete Experience (CE) which involves the learner having and feeling a new experience. The second stage of Stinson's model, Form, involves reflecting on an experience to form new ideas and connections with the movement. This links with the Reflective Observation (RO) part of Kolb's Learning Cycle which is when the learner reviews and reflects on their experience, watching others and considering how something is done. This was done regularly by the participants through observing their peers to critically consider the underlying principles behind the movements. The third stage of Stinson's model, Perform, involves the learner applying these new ideas in performance, and this opportunity was given to the participants when they had to perform a movement phrase in front of their peer after time was given to problem-solve and discuss ideas and difficulties together. This stage links with the Abstract Conceptualisation (AC) part of Kolb's Learning Cycle as it involves the learner forming new ideas and applying them with feedback to their own practice, taking ownership of learning.

The last stage of Stinson's model, Evaluate, involves critical consideration, reflecting on the experience to re-form ideas and concepts to take forward into future practice. This links with the Active Experimentation (AE) part of Kolb's Learning Cycle which is when the learner uses their enhanced understanding and knowledge to continually explore and apply their own skills, making decisions and problem-solving in new situations. Only participant one evidenced these latter skills during the observations, although most participants reached the third stage during the experience of the Buddy Scheme.

Kolb's Learning Cycle and Stinson's Four Step Model for teaching helps evidence the shift that took place in the participant's understanding and practice in the technique class. Beavers (2008, p.127) describes the journey of dance technical training as "a process of uncovering, of undoing, and not of doing", and highlights the importance of having a variety of mind/body responses to use in the technique class. All participants showed a significant shift in their practice of technique through their engagement in critically considering the movements they were performing, going through a process of uncovering and undoing to find new and individual ways of moving, and it is clear that collaborative learning helped focus their minds in order to do this. Participant two reflected this learning development in the focus group discussion when she commented on the effect peer learning had on developing her critique and improving her ability to deconstruct movement and performances. Buckroyd (2000, p.121) supports the need for cognitive engagement in the technique class:

The dance teacher is no different from any other teacher in her hope that her students will take what she has to offer and make it their own, that they will internalise what they get from her, use it, enlarge it and transform it into whatever they need. It is probably the teacher's greatest satisfaction to see what she has taught not slavishly copied but used as the basis for something that is the student's own.

Collaborative learning in the technique class helps focus on the individuality of each student, placing importance on the internal experience rather than the outer image of getting movements "right" (Brodie and Lobel, 2012). McFee (1992, p.211) highlights the importance of the thinking dancer stating that "the difference between a technical and a non-technical performance lies in what the dancer thinks, rather than in what he does" and this cognitive engagement was evidenced in the observations of the participants practice as well as their responses in the focus group discussion, revealing the value and place for peer learning in the dance technique class.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.0

This study has explored how peer learning can have an impact on student's engagement in dance technique classes using second year university dance students in the UK. Revisiting the hypothesis presented at the start of this study, it is now possible to conclude that peer learning can have a positive and beneficial impact on students' engagement in the dance technique class.

6.1 Summary of Findings

The findings of this study have revealed the valuable aspects involved in peer learning and how they can be useful in a dance technique class. A significant finding has been the way in which peer learning helps develop critical thinking skills in students by encouraging the learner to observe others, reflect on their experiences, problem-solve and form new ideas to share with their peers and apply to their own practice in dance training. Another significant finding has been the student's own recognised value in the experience of peer learning through the Buddy Scheme, highlighting the difference in student-to-student relationships as opposed to teacher-to-student.

This evidence suggests that peer learning can be a valuable tool in higher education and teachers should be encouraged to take a more facilitative role allowing their students to take responsibility for their own learning and development through actively engaging in the different aspects of dance training.

6.2 Limitations

It is important to note that due to the small sample size of participants in this study, the findings cannot be generalised to all students who take part in dance training in higher education. Furthermore, due to the Buddy Scheme being a possible unique method to the university used in this study, attention must be drawn to the fact that the use of peer learning may take place in various forms in other universities which may generate different responses from the students. Lastly this study only observed the students taking part in their contemporary dance technique classes during the five week period, and so the results cannot be generalised to other dance technique classes such as ballet and jazz.

6.3 Future Research

This study has brought up many areas in need of further exploration and future investigations could be carried out using the same experimental set up of the Buddy Scheme at the same university. It would be valuable to see if the Buddy Scheme has the same effect and response in the students when being used in other technique classes, such as ballet which tends to use didactic structures in the teaching approach. Another interesting exploration would be to investigate the ongoing effect the experience of the Buddy Scheme has on the participants, observing them in their third year of university to see how their own practice and use of collaborative learning develops. Lastly, as mentioned in chapter 2.3, further study needs to be conducted into how teachers aim to develop students' technique and into the learning environment in which technique is taught.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
INFORMATION SHEET



Participant Information Sheet

Project Title: How can peer learning have an impact on students' engagement in dance technique classes – using second year university dance students in the UK.

INVITATION

You are being asked to take part in a qualitative/empirical research study on the effects of peer learning within a dance technique class, to see whether peer learning has a positive effect on the development of technique with second year BA (Hons) Dance students. The researcher's name is Samantha Sandry and is currently in her third year of the BA (Hons) Dance degree and is undertaking this research study for her dissertation. Sally Varral, course leader of the BA (Hons) Dance degree will be supervising this project. This research study is affiliated with Cardiff Metropolitan University and has received ethical approval.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN

In this study, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire before your buddy scheme starts (part of your core performance techniques module), with questions regarding your perceived expectations of what the buddy scheme will involve and what you think you might get out of the scheme with regards to technique development. You will be observed by the researcher once a week while in Sally Varral's contemporary technique class during your first term while participating in the buddy scheme. You will then be asked to take part in a focus group discussion at the end of the buddy scheme, reflecting on your experience and sharing any developments with regards to your technique and body awareness.

TIME COMMITMENT

This study will last for 9 weeks during your first term of your second year on the BA (Hons) Dance course.

PARTICIPANTS' RIGHTS

You may decide to stop being part of the research study at any time without explanation. You have the right to ask that any data you have supplied to that point be withdrawn/destroyed and without penalty.

You have the right to omit or refuse to answer or respond to any question that is asked of you as appropriate, and without penalty.

You have the right to have your questions about the procedures answered (unless answering these questions would interfere with the study's outcome). If you have any questions as a result of reading this information sheet, you should ask the researcher before the study begins.

BENEFITS AND RISKS

There are no known benefits or risks for you in this study.

COST, REIMBURSEMENT AND COMPENSATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary.

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

The data that will be collected will not contain any personal information about you except your name on your first questionnaire to link observations accordingly. However when using the data for the written dissertation, the information you supplied will be anonymous with no names given, so no-one will link the data you provided to the identifying information you supplied (name).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any further questions before or during this study please contact the researcher Samantha Sandry directly or via email – st20011834@outlook.uwic.ac.uk. Alternatively you may contact the study supervisor Sally Varrall via email – SVarrall@cardiffmet.ac.uk or telephone – 02920 417079.

If you want to find out about the final results of this study, you should contact the researcher at the end of the dissertation period (before Easter break).

APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM



PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: How can peer learning have an impact on students' engagement in dance technique classes – using second year university dance students in the UK.

Name of Researcher: Samantha Sandry

Participant to complete this section:

Please initial each box.

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated for this research study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that it is possible to stop taking part at any time, without giving a reason.

3. I also understand that if this happens, my relationship with Cardiff Metropolitan University, or my legal rights, will not be affected.

4. I understand that information from the study may be used for reporting purposes, but that I will not be identified.

5. I agree to take part in this research study of peer learning.

Name of participant _____

Signature of participant _____ Date _____

Name of person taking consent _____

Signature of person taking consent _____ Date _____

* When completed, one copy for participant and one copy for researcher's files.

APPENDIX C
QUESTIONNAIRES

Name:

Date:

Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions:

1. What does the term 'technique' mean to you?

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2. What are your expectations of the Buddy Scheme?

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3. How do you think peer learning will help you?

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4. What skills do you have to offer your buddy?

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5. What value is there in giving and receiving feedback from peers?

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APPENDIX D

OBSERVATION FRAMEWORK

Date of class:

	Concrete Experience (CE)	Reflective Observation (RO)	Abstract Conceptualisation (AC)	Active Experimentation (AE)
Participant 1				
Participant 2				
Participant 3				
Participant 4				

:

APPENDIX E

FOCUS GROUP PROMPT QUESTIONS

1. How do you feel the Buddy Scheme has gone so far?
2. How do you find getting feedback from your buddy as opposed to the teacher?
3. How would you describe the experience of the Buddy Scheme?
4. Would you consider that the Buddy Scheme has been a valuable experience?
5. When you observe your buddy, what are you looking for?
6. Do your observations affect your movement in any way?
7. How do you feel when you are being observed by your buddy?
8. How do you feel when you are being observed by the teacher as opposed to your buddy?
9. How has the Buddy Scheme affected your own learning within the dance technique class?
10. Has the Buddy Scheme affected your engagement in technique class?
11. What will you take from the Buddy Scheme to inform your future development as a dancer?

APPENDIX F

ETHICS STATUS



Cardiff
Metropolitan
University

Prifysgol
Metropolitan
Caerdydd

Date: 12.03.2014

To: Samantha Sandry (st20011834)

Project reference number: 13/05/337U

Your project was recommended for approval by myself as supervisor and formally approved at the Cardiff School of Sport Research Ethics Committee meeting of 26th June 2013.

Yours sincerely

Sally Varrall

Supervisor