



PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLE

BETTER TOGETHER: TOWARD A JOINT PEDAGOGY IN FOLK DANCE AND MUSIC

BY: Petri Kauppinen¹, Aale Luusua², Niina Susan Sassali¹, Osmo Hakosalo¹ and Petri Hoppu¹

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EDITORS FOR THIS ARTICLE: Dr. Tone Pernille Østern, NTNU Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Dr. Kristine Høeg Karlsen, Østfold University College and Gunhild Brænne Bjørnstad, Østfold University College. CORRESPONDENCE TO: petri.kauppinen@folkjam.fi

PROOF-READER: John Shepherd DESIGN: Trine + Kim Designstudio, Oslo, Norway.

¹ Oulu University of Applied Sciences, ² University of Oulu

ABSTRACT

The pedagogy and practices of folk music and folk dance are firmly separate in Finland. Furthermore, the expertise in these fields focuses heavily on folk music and dance as performing arts rather than communal activities. The situation has led to the differentiation and fragmentation of professional and amateur activities. To address this gap in knowledge and practice, the KanTaMus project intends to present a pedagogical model for a joint participatory folk dance and music pedagogy devised through practice-based development work. This article explains the basic premises of the model under development. We first discuss the legacy issues crucial in Finnish folk dance and music and its pedagogy. Secondly,

we outline the values, pedagogical principles, and prior development work we see as fundamental to our work. Martin Seligman's PERMA theory serves as an overall canvas for our development work. The basic elements of the theory, i.e., *positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment*, work as a basis for our model, which emphasises *embodied presence, inclusion, and interaction* as crucial features of a shared learning situation in dance and music. Finally, we present the *pairing process* as a specific example of the application of the model.

Keywords: Folk dance, folk music, pedagogy, inclusion, interaction.

AUTHOR BIOS

Petri Kauppinen (MFA) has been a professional in dance and performance art for over 25 years. In addition to his work as a dance teacher, choreographer, and dancer, Kauppinen writes dance journalism and scripts and acts as a director of various productions. Kauppinen has worked as a senior lecturer in Oamk's dance department since 2016, teaching subjects such as folk dance, couple dances, improvisation, choreography, and Limón-technique. His artistic out-put comprises a total of 191 works, of which 78 are full-length works. Currently, he is an ex-pert in the KanTaMus project and chairs the Finnish Art Promotion Centre's performing arts committee.

Aale Luusua (Doctor of Science) is a university lecturer at the University of Oulu, Finland. With extensive experience in design, pedagogy and folk music, Dr. Luusua's work bridges several disciplines through the research and development of user-centered and participatory methods and theory – and fiddle playing. Within the realm of music, the main locus of the work has been on the practices and pedagogy of participatory and social music through the European Social Fund project “KanTaMus: The digital pedagogy of folk music and dance”.

Niina Susan Sassali (MA) is a dance teacher and study counsellor. She is an interaction enthusiast, whose main principle is that world can be changed one dialogue at a time. She works as a senior lecturer in the School of Media and Performing Arts at Oulu University of Applied Sciences (Oamk). Her teaching subjects are pedagogy, interaction skills, dance pedagogy, and creative projects to both dance teacher and music pedagogy students in bachelor of arts education. She is a “multiplayer” in the field of arts: dance, folk music, and theatre.

Osmo Hakosalo (BA) is a folk musician, communal musician, and music pedagogue. His main instrument is the fiddle. As a researcher and pedagogue, his main interests are in communal music pedagogies and he has mainly worked with topics such as communication between music and dance or how to create safe and inclusive spaces for creating music and dance. As an artist, his main project is being part of a Finnish folk music group, Rällä.

Petri Hoppu (Doctor of Philosophy) is a principal lecturer of dance at Oamk and docent in dance studies at Tampere University. During 2007–2012 he was the leader of the project Dance in Nordic Spaces, which was a part of the international research programme Nordic Spaces. His areas of expertise include theory and methodology in cultural dance studies, as well as research of Finnish, Karelian, and Saami vernacular dances and Nordic folk dance revitalisation. Currently, he is the project manager of the KanTaMus project.

Introduction

Finland is one of the Nordic countries situated in Northern Europe. Unlike most Nordic languages, Finnish does not belong to the Indo-European language family, but to Uralic languages, together with, for example, Estonian, Hungarian, and Saami languages. Like other Nordic countries, Finland has invested heavily in education, the basis of which is to offer everyone equal opportunities to develop in life (Ministry of Education and Culture, n.d.).

The Finnish basic education in arts, aimed mainly at children and young people, is a part of the formal education system, and it includes nine art forms, including dance and music (Köngäs et al., 2022). Folk music often belongs to the repertoire of basic education in music, but it seldom has any prominent position. As late as 2008, 90 % of the education provided by Finnish music schools, institutes, and conservatories was classical and 3 % folk music (Muukkonen et al., 2011).

The situation is even worse for folk dance since it belongs to hardly any dance schools' repertoire. Instead, folk dance teachers work mainly in youth associations or civic colleges (Hiukka, 2018), which only occasionally provide basic education in arts. In vocational or higher education, folk dance is only permanent at the Santasport Education Centre in Rovaniemi and Oulu University of Applied Sciences (Oamk), both in North Finland. In contrast, folk music is offered at the Central Ostrobothnia Conservatory (Kokkola), Centria University of Applied Sciences (Kokkola), and the University of Arts (Helsinki).

Following the primary trend in Finnish performing arts, the education and practices of folk music and dance are firmly separate in Finland, both in amateur activities and in professional education. There is no institution where their programmes exist together in vocational or higher education. As a result, folk dance and music are seen as two distinct art forms. Furthermore, expertise in these fields focuses heavily on performing arts rather than participatory activities.

However, in this article, we adopt the viewpoint of an American ethnomusicologist Thomas Turino, who understands folk music and dance as fundamentally social and emerging from the social life of communities (Turino, 2008). Turino views music-making as a participatory event or performance rather than a presentational performance or studio art. By participatory performance, he means a situation where the roles of the artists and the audience are not clearly separated, but are seen as participants having different roles. The purpose is to involve as many people as possible in the performance.

Ultimately, the social nature of folk music and folk dance is why they support people's wellbeing through movement, expression, and social belonging at all stages and situations in life (Sironi & Riva, 2015). However, this unique, wellbeing-enhancing character is lost when folk dance and music are separated, and their potential to support embodied experiences and social significance is forgotten.

To address this gap in knowledge and practice, the authors of this article started a joint re-search and development project of folk dance and music, KanTaMus (Hoppu et al., 2021) in March 2021, based on the idea that wellbeing can be increased through inclusion, expression, and movement in communal dance and music practices. Situated at Oamk and the University of Oulu, the project's name comes from the Finnish words for folk dance (*KansanTanssi*) and folk music (*kansanMusiikki*). The project aims to

- › develop a joint pedagogical model for folk music and dance, including embodied and communal teaching methods, which will be expressed and disseminated digitally. The fundamental questions of the project are: What are the main pedagogical principles that connect folk music and dance? What methodology is needed to create education combining folk music and dance at all levels?

This article analyses the project's activities from several pedagogical perspectives. We have different backgrounds in dance and music pedagogies, artistic practice, cultural studies, participatory design, and technology research. Petri Kauppinen is a dance pedagogue and choreographer, who has developed the Finnish folk dance field for nearly three decades. Aale Luusua is a doctor of technology, an expert in participatory design, a folk musician, and a folk music pedagogy student. Niina Sassali is a dance pedagogue and pedagogical developer in dance studies. Osmo Hakosalo is a folk music pedagogue, community musician, and developer of dance music interplay. Finally, Petri Hoppu is a dance scholar and pedagogue investigating folk dances in the Nordic countries and among the Skolt Saami.

Our approach

Our endeavours can be defined as heuristic, which means that our approach emerges from the practical experiences of our collaboration with trial and error, joint explorations, reflections, and dialogue over many years (see Sultan, 2019). The KanTaMus project enables us to make our approach explicit and applicable. The project has mainly consisted of workshops for different groups: dance and music professionals and students, folk music and dance enthusiasts, professionals and students of other art fields, and instructors working with people with special needs. The documented observations, feedback, and reflections from these workshops provided the basic pedagogical development material.

This article outlines the basic premises of the KanTaMus model that is under development. First, we discuss the knowledge gaps and legacy issues we see as crucial in Finnish folk dance and music and its pedagogy. Second, we outline our theoretical framework and the basis for the joint pedagogies. Third, we draft a model for a joint participatory folk dance and music pedagogy and present pair work as a specific example of the application of the model.

Martin Seligman's (2011) PERMA model serves as an overall canvas and analytical tool for our development work. PERMA includes five building blocks of human wellbeing: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment. Figure 1 explains our thoughts about how folk music and folk dance and the PERMA model connect.

▶ **Figure 1**

PERMA as a canvas for pedagogical development.

| | |
|----------|---|
| P | Positive emotions Folk music and dance engender positive emotions from their embodied and social activities. Positive emotions affect our behavior and performance and fertilize flourishing cooperation. |
| E | Engagement Making music, dancing, and learning together allows participants to experience something beyond their everyday lives. Engagement happens when everything flows as smoothly as a water creek. |
| R | Relationships Being in relation to others, playing or dancing in unison, is solid ground for collaborating. Interacting and sharing experiences push everyone toward meaningful experiences. |
| M | Meaning Activating embodied knowledge by collaboration in playing music and dancing – making it all happen together – is profoundly involving and meaningful. |
| A | Accomplishment / Achievement Accomplishments or achievements in flourishing collaboration are not necessarily artifacts like composition or choreography, which are common in art education environments. A collaborating group may prepare a performance together, which can be highly motivating. Accomplishments can be seen more likely through shared experiences. |
| + | Vitality When all the previous PERMA building blocks are in interaction, vitality appears. |

Seligman sees the five elements of the PERMA model as something that people pursue because they are motivating and thus contribute to their wellbeing. They are pursued for their own sake, and no performance anxiety is involved. The PERMA theory's achievement aspect is not just about short-term success but about developing an optimistic attitude that generates optimism to achieve goals and perseverance to overcome the adversity that lies ahead (Norrish, 2015). We regard the principles of the PERMA model as the main cornerstone of folk music and dance. They have intrinsic value as activities in themselves, and they create wellbeing, vitality, and a sense of communality that we see as belonging to everyone in society.

- Before we go deeper into our theoretical approach, we will review the development of views on folk dance and folk music, as well as their relation to education in Finland.

Background and motivation

Common all over Europe for most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, research on folk music and dance was characterised by national interests and the quest for preserving vanishing oral traditions. Nevertheless, European research took a different direction later on, following trends in late-twentieth-century cultural studies.

Historical fallacies and reconsiderations

One of the most prominent Finnish folk music researchers of the twentieth century, Erkki Ala-Könni (1961), defined folk music as a tradition learned and preserved by auditory memory. He had learned the ideal of an orally transmitted tradition during his studies. Consequently, for a long time, the collectors of traditions regarded illiteracy as a guarantee of authenticity. Nevertheless, simultaneously, the musical activities and products under investigation were seen as unsophisticated and not attaining genuine artistry (Valo, 2022).

However, late twentieth and twenty-first century research has shown that many common views concerning folk music and dance have been myths and misconceptions. Hoppu (2011) argues that what was regarded as 'traditional folk dance' during the twentieth century was actually a canonised collection of established dances. Ethnomusicologist Heikki Laitinen (2003) states that although folk music is often defined as an oral tradition, folk music in Finland has not been a purely oral tradition for a long time. Moreover, current research has addressed the inseparable character of music and dance outside the Western art scene. The connections between music and dance are not simply defined, but the interplay is complicated and occurs on several levels simultaneously (Felföldi, 2001; Kallio, 2013; Seye, 2014; Stepputat & Seye, 2020).

Regarding the relation between dance and music, folk music and dance education institutions in Finland, despite recent research, still stick to the old attitudes and structures that have characterised them since the emergence of their formal pedagogy during the twentieth century. The hegemony of Western performing arts has created a situation where music and dance stand apart (see Drummond, 2010). Hip-hop culture can be seen as a notable exception, with music and dance interconnected. Nevertheless, hip-hop pedagogy (e.g., Banks, 2015) is far from the mainstream of performing arts education.

Current pedagogies and alternative approaches

Folk music and dance have often chosen conventional paths in their pedagogy, following their separation in the hegemonic culture, preferring performance-focused artistic practices to social and communal ones. Although the resulting contemporary folk music and dance education have extended the expressive potential of their respective fields, emphasising individual expression, improvisation, creativity, and co-learning (e.g., Hill, 2009a; Parttiet. al, 2015), it has not seriously challenged the fundamental values and aims of the art establishment (Hill, 2009b; Hoppu, 2008).

There are exceptions to education emphasising alternative views of folk music

and dance in Finland. One of the best-known is the Näppäri method, developed by musicians from Kaustinen, the centre of Finnish folk music (Järvelä, 2014). The Näppäri method emphasises tradition, communality, personality, and equality. Pupils have private lessons, like classical music education, which is dominant in Finnish music institutes and conservatories (Safari, 2021). Still, the most prominent feature is playing and singing together in ensembles that do not follow classical music's performance canon. The pedagogues guide participants in playing folk music arrangements presented on sheet music in these ensembles. Singing also plays an important role, and pupils with various backgrounds and technical skills can play together.

The Näppäri method offers an alternative to classical music education, but does not fundamentally challenge it. It extends the educational repertoire to folk music and provides a more relaxed attitude toward music learning. However, classical education is still appreciated with its fixed ensembles and degrees (see Järvelä, 2014). Moreover, dance does not play any part in the method, although instrumental folk music tunes are predominantly dance music.

Another contemporary method is the Orivesi All Stars band (OAS), which uses a "band-as-method" approach as the core of its participatory music pedagogy (OAS, 2023). The method primarily consists of weekend camps and jams across Finland, led by a teacher or teachers. The goal is to create a comfortable setting for participants to play music together. Usually, participants also prepare a repertoire to play at a concert as a result of the camp. Additionally, the repertoire incorporates various styles of old popular music, although traditional tunes from Finland and other Nordic countries comprise the core of the repertoire.

Conventional pedagogical methods and outright separation of music and dance in the dominant culture have also prevailed in teaching dance in Finland. Oamk's dance teacher's degree programme has trained folk dance teachers since 1991. Initially, the pedagogical teaching models were absorbed from the canon of artistic dance forms with codified methods such as ballet, jazz, and contemporary dance. Here, the teacher is an expert who shows and explains the contents while the students watch (see Lakes, 2005). Next, the dancers repeat the dance sequence according to the instructions, and the teacher gives them comments on how to improve their performance. Fortunately, at that time, the Hungarian dance master Béla Gazdag offered future dance teachers an alternative Táncház-perspective (dance house model), where the teacher does not place himself outside the students but is involved in dancing as a peer (see Felföldi, 2001).

In 2010, Oamk's dance teacher programme launched a new dance exercise format called FolkJam (FolkJam, n.d.). It was based on a progressive model of dance teaching, which later became an established concept in dance pedagogical use at Oamk. The progressive model refers to dance teaching where music goes on, and movement is learned according to the teacher's example on top of it. Here movement is unstoppable and progresses from simple to more challenging material (Ahonen, 2019). This model of teaching in motion, familiar to group exercise classes, is easily approachable for the learner.

► *Previous method development by the KantaMus team*

A more recent folk music pedagogy method, called Jam Workshop (JWS; in Finnish, Jamipaja), was developed by Hakosalo and Luusua (Hakosalo & Luusua, 2020). JWS is continuing where it was first developed at Centria University of Applied Sciences in Kokkola. Inspired by Turino's perspectives, JWS sees music as participatory, i.e., a cultural phenomenon that has social significance for those participating in its production. This means that the weekly dance and music jams and the skills associated with social music-making and dancing are the practice's goals.

Equally importantly, JWS views music and pedagogy as fundamentally embodied activities (Hakosalo & Luusua, 2020), while three fundamental elements of Seligman's PERMA model are realised here: engagement, relationships, and meaning. To pass on the tradition, practitioners produce personal, embodied knowledge through music and dance. Auditory learning is the main method of passing on musical repertoire. The rhythm and danceability of the music are emphasised, whereas the production of arrangements is not. Similarly, dances are learned through direct visual-kinesthetic means. Dance and music are seen as one singular entity: music is learned through dance, and dance through music. All participants are dancers and musicians, switching between and mixing activities.

Finally, JWS utilises peer learning as its third foundational concept and practice. Peer learning refers to acquiring knowledge and skills through active help and support among equal partners (Topping, 2005). It is considered a central learning mode within communities revolving around participatory music. In JWS, this means that all participants teach other participants and learn from them, passing on tunes, songs, dance steps, and games. To organise this also, outside of the weekly jams, JWS uses private social media platforms. However, complete online publicity is deemed undesirable, as the videos contain practice material. Thus, the central element of JWS is the tight interweaving of dance and music in a participatory context.

The JWS and Näppäri methods have many similarities: they emphasise participatory aspects, passing on tradition and repertoire, and the participants' equality and personality. The significant differences between them are their relationship to dance and peer learning. While the Näppäri method focuses on music, the central point of departure in JWS is the inclusion of dance and the view that dance and music are one. Furthermore, peer learning is essential to JWS, whilst private lessons are not used.

The JWS and the OAS methods also contain both similarities and differences. OAS emphasises communality, such as regular concert performances and group-led jamming. The weekend workshops are teacher-led and use written sheet music and ready-made arrangements. While the participants of JWS may self-produce improvisatory accompaniment, JWS does not use arrangements, focusing instead on the rhythm and melody of traditional tunes and their relationship to dance. OAS uses what we have termed here a "band-as-a-method," while JWS uses a "jam-as-a-method" approach.

Despite its roots in social dancing, Finnish folk dance has been subordinated to the stage performance situation for decades. However, for teaching folk couple dances and disseminating knowledge, the Couple Dance Ambassadors *Paritanssilähettiläät* project was created in 2020. The Finnish Youth Association coordinated the project, and Kauppinen was one of its main initiators. Eleven Couple Dance Ambassadors (CDA)

- were selected among professional dance teachers to teach in cooperation with folk musicians. The aim was to form a working couple of a dance teacher and a musician so that both perspectives would be presented equally in the teaching. In addition, live music at the project's workshops supported the efforts to teach dancers freestyle dance formulas and structures.

The CDA-project highlighted the practical need for creating a common set of concepts and vocabulary between dance and music. One of the principles is that the tempo of music played with dance must not be fixed or pre-set. As the interaction develops, the tempo is determined by the interaction between the dancer and the musician, and it changes and lives according to the situation. Another question that arose through practical experience concerned the possibilities of music variation in a dance-playing situation. In this context, dancers are often freer to improvise, modifying steps, parts of the dance, and pair roles. In the framework of folk dance and music, improvisation arises primarily from the need to deepen the interaction of the participants (Kauppinen, 2022).

The experts in the KanTaMus project continue to work on the approaches and issues developed in the CDA project and JWS. Importantly, these separate projects highlighted the need to develop these approaches into a singular pedagogical entity.

Toward the Pedagogy of Collaborative Flourishing

The theoretical outline of our project has gradually taken shape through our collaboration before and during the KanTaMus project. It is a synthesis of our different pedagogical, artistic, and academic backgrounds linked by Turino's ideas about the participatory character of folk music and dance and the building blocks of the PERMA model: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment.

The starting point of the ideology behind the KanTaMus project is the recognition that an educational system is always, whether in performing arts or elsewhere, a repeater and mediator of social power relations and structures (Croizet et al., 2019). Because of this, arts education efficiently produces inequality, as it justifies social privileges and defines disadvantage as an individual failure (see Bourdieu, 1986). The pedagogical ideal behind performing arts education is still commonly based on the pedagogy of perfection: searching for correct technique or expression within one's art form, following explicit or implicit aesthetic values of the arts community, and internalising artistic discourse on what is preferred or not (Bakka, 2020; Bakka, 2021; Horrigan, 2020; Lakes, 2005; Mabingo, 2015; McCarthy-Brown, 2009). However, it must be added that alternative views have emerged in recent years, and in Finland, for example, the ArtsEqual project has strongly emphasised a more inclusive attitude in art education (Ilmola-Sheppard et al., 2021).

In our common understanding, we see that humanity always requires imperfection to emerge, and also in teaching (see Bali, 2017). The learning process cannot be defined perfectly in advance, but is constructed through imperfection in a new way every time, through the inter-action between a teacher and learners. Consequently, even from a teacher's perspective, the process is seen as co-learning rather than unilateral teaching. A teacher provides tools but does not set the final goal (Beetham & Sharpe, 2007; Malik et al., 2011; Vighnarajah & Abu Bakar, 2008).

Following the social activist and pedagogue bell hooks's (2003) ideas about engaged pedagogy, we see this kind of learning as a deliberately risky endeavour, whose ultimate goal is not virtuosity but communalism. Education is neither success nor failure, but a process with multiple options for developing oneself and gaining collective positive experiences (Hill, 2009a; Naughton & Cole, 2017).

Etienne Wenger (1998), a scholar of social learning, describes learning environments as communities of practice. In these communities, participation means belonging to something and acting and doing. According to Wenger, it is typical for communities of practice that people's participation is recognised as competence. A community of practice's core is the commitment to action, relationships between people, shared knowledge, and negotiation of joint endeavours and efforts. Communities of practice enable their members to experience meaningfulness.

The first step for introducing an open space for collective experiences with risks and failures in the KanTaMus project is to break the wall between dance and music learning. The constant and intimate interplay between folk dance and music is the pedagogical core of the project, which implies an acceptance of pedagogical imperfection and risk-taking in everyday learning situations, emphasising their collaborative and positive mode and sense of equality. The participants in learning situations are not strictly dancers or musicians; they have different roles that may change during a situation. This creates something new and innovative, while simultaneously including a return to the roots of the tradition.

In the frame of pedagogical imperfection, social sharing, individual curiosity, and learners' wellbeing, and using PERMA building blocks, we can define our theoretical model: the Pedagogy of Collaborative Flourishing. Its basic idea is that communal approaches and positive emotions in education make individuals learn and achieve more together than they could without the group's support. The Pedagogy of Collaborative Flourishing is rooted in human embodiment and situatedness, which are always seen in a social context. Its basic concepts are 1) presence, 2) inclusion, and 3) interaction, which will be analysed next.

First, reflecting the holistic and situational concept of learning, participants need to have the opportunity to focus on their feelings, thoughts, and embodiment. They have a sense of agency and self-determination in the learning situation, promoting personal presence. Eckhart Tolle emphasises the fading of thinking and mind when pursuing presence (Tolle, 1997). Focusing attention on the body firmly makes it possible to fixate on the present moment. Through this, the mind is strongly present in all activities, and although thoughts, feelings, fears, and wishes are still a part of it, they do not cause it to wander or get lost. A fundamental observation related to presence skills is the emphasis on kinesthetic listening and bodily functions: for example, breathing (Klemola & Talvio, 2017). Listening to the body means directing attention to one's body, bodily sensations, the changes that occur in them, and the meanings arising from bodily experiences (Anttila, 2004).

Second, all activities need to be communal and equal, promoting inclusion. Inclusion is an umbrella concept that brings together perspectives and approaches from different educational, social, health, and behavioural theories, each responding to its own and partly overlapping interests in promoting a good life (Isola et al., 2017).

- › Understanding the factors that support inclusion is central to forming functioning communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). Participation essentially includes the activity of the individual as part of the community. A structured own status as a member of the community creates a feeling of togetherness and increases the individual's human dignity considerably. Inclusion is realised when everyone can influence and live equally and respectfully, and no one is left alone (Kivimäki & Koivu, 2012).

Third, all information produced in each unique situation should be considered valuable and shared by articulating experience immediately after what happened with peers, promoting **interaction**, including peer learning and reflection. If participation is a broader communal experience, the strengthening of which requires emotional and interaction skills, then the interaction is a practice of reciprocity. Here, both parties to the interaction bring something to the common situation that affects both (Klemola & Talvio, 2017). Interaction involves skills everyone can learn and develop, which pave the way for empathy and increase understanding of another person's experiences. It is the ability to give the other person the peace to tell their story in the way they want to express it. When the message's sender feels he is the main character, he experiences agency, participation, and responsibility in the conversation. Similarly, following Jaana Parviainen (2006), kinesthetic empathy enables us to perceive the movements of another body with the help of a map of our own body. Through it, we notice differences and similarities in the body's topography and, as it were, 'feel' the movements of other bodies in the topography of our body, even though we are not moving.

Finally, the Pedagogy of Collaborative Flourishing finds support from Martin Buber's (1947) dialogical philosophy. Buber sees becoming aware of a person in front of us or encountering any object as the most profound relationship in human reality. The object of becoming aware can be animate or inanimate, an external or internal figure. In such an encounter, the object enters one's life, shows its message directly to the observer, and ceases to be a separate object from them. Buber's ideas about open dialogue between individuals nurture creativity and build the understanding that holds a community together. This is the basis for flourishing collaboration in folk dance and music.

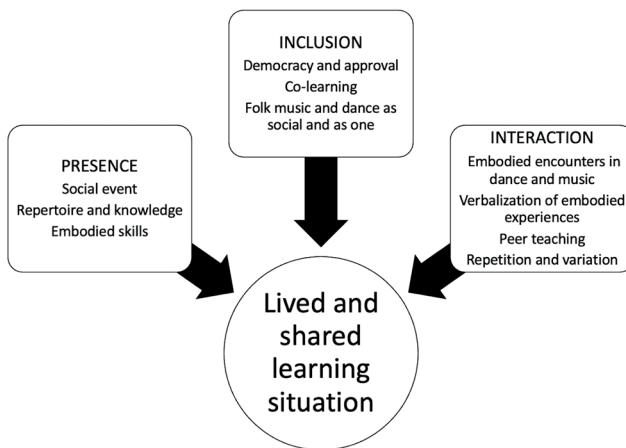
Features of folk music and dance as collaborative action in communities of practice

The seamless interplay of folk dance and music is the core idea and lifeblood of the Kan-TaMus Pedagogy of Collaborative Flourishing. Contact in the shared space is created by playing the same game, i.e., playing and dancing to a common tune with changing roles. All the participants' extensive psychophysical and social involvement is at the heart of the connection. In the frame of reference of folk dance and music, learning is collective, whereby insights are sparked by cooperation between the participants of the respective community. Establishing contact is a craft skill that contributes to the experience of meaning and wellbeing.

In the following, experiences and results from the KanTaMus project are reflected in the frame of the afore-mentioned core concepts: presence, inclusion, and interaction (figure 2).

► **Figure 2**

Folk music and dance as collaborative action. Design by the authors.



In the KanTaMus context, presence includes the elements of a social event, shared repertoire, and participants' bodily skills in dance and music. Inclusion means an overall approval of participation in dance and music activities seen as co-learning processes. Finally, interaction is the social core of dancing and making music, and it covers the constant negotiations between defining, doing, and experiencing.

Presence

How are presence and concentration related? For example, a child behaving restlessly in a situation is often told to 'concentrate', thereby drawing attention to the direction of his thoughts. In KanTaMus workshops, we see that activating awareness by getting to know your own body, for example through simple singing or moving exercises, promotes the experience of a holistic presence. This, in turn, strengthens social interaction with the rest of the dance-music community of which an individual body becomes a part.

The workshop exercises do not appear out of nowhere but are connected to the knowledge of particular repertoires based on folk dance and music traditions. The repertoire is not merely learned but is internalised and embodied, functioning as a frame for collective experiences and creativity. The KanTaMus workshops have a fundamentally social character, and traditions serve as the force that holds their participants together. Traditions, practice, and narratives come together, and dancers and musicians feel they belong to a community and a chain of generations.

Inclusion

The KanTaMus project emphasises that folk dance and music activities are well characterised by the striving for democracy, active interaction, and honest expression of matters perceived as significant. Participation requires active dialogue from group members and leaders, and in this context, it is also essential to understand the individual's responsibility for their thoughts, feelings, and actions.

- In this context, it is crucial to identify those means that contribute to the seamless fusion of folk dance and music. In KanTaMus workshops, dance and music are peers, allowing participants to act in both roles. Here, too, the key is the acceptance of imperfection. After all, the values of the activity include engagement in the familiar with the PERMA model. Furthermore, each factor is relevant in the form of expression based on sociability and peerage, and therefore holistic inclusion must be supported by all actions.

Interaction

Interaction in folk dance and music takes place in different forms and contacts. A situation with music and dance can be seen as a web of multiple embodied encounters between participants. In KanTaMus workshops, musicians are typically situated in the middle of the space so that they can be in constant contact with dancers around them, and vice versa. However, at its most fundamental level, interaction occurs between two people as a pair contact, which we will discuss in the following section.

In the interaction between dance and music, verbalising bodily experiences is important to enable peer learning. The KanTaMus workshops have revealed that the dance-music vocabulary can be very different between dancers and musicians, which is why discussing often opens interesting and alternative ways of approaching the perspectives of interaction.

Repetition is a fundamental factor in the practical examination of the means of interaction in folk music and dance. Repeating established dance formulas and musical melodies is a familiar and approachable starting point for interaction. The variation and change discussed in the next section are organic in keeping the communication alive.

Process of pair connection

Pair or couple dancing is a salient but not exclusive feature of folk dance. The process of this kind of intensive connection between two persons provides a particular example of collaborative flourishing leading to a more subtle and intimate interaction than previously presented. Although it is typically connected to dancing, it can also be applied to the interaction between two musicians or a musician and a dancer. At its best, as stated above, these roles change in various ways during a particular event: the situation may start with two people playing music, change to one playing music and the other one dancing, and end with two people dancing.

Hoppu writes about the connection in couple dances: the partners move together to be seen as one dancing body. The sensitive interaction of the dancers and the intimate dance position enable an intense and flowing experience that cannot be achieved by dancing alone (Hoppu, 2013; see also DeMers, 2012; Karoblis, 2007). In the KanTaMus project, pedagogical thinking aims to expand the pair connection to mean mutual bodily interaction between two participants. In this context, participants can be both dancers and musicians. A functional connection creates opportunities to expand the interaction between dance and music so that the whole environment is involved in the event. The complementary relationship between the partners is a mutual effort toward a dialogue that is as comprehensive as possible in a relationship. Participants become alive to the experiences of another's body through their own experiences. Buber's

- description of becoming aware is the ideal of couple dance, music duo, or dancer-musician communication.

In a performance situation including dance and music, movement and sound come under each other's sphere of influence, making the meeting as unique as the participants are (Sutela, 2022). Like all dancing, couple dancing also lives on constantly changing processes, which can be structured by controlling communication motives. For example, the same can be said about two musicians playing as a duo. A functioning relationship becomes possible when a person realises his ways of physical encounter.

The formation of contact between pairs and how to become aware of it is presented next through three motives guiding bodily activity: *adaptation*, *moulding*, and *change*. Adaptation is the level that initiates action and stimulates interaction, which is intertwined with the invitation to dance and/or music and the resulting democratically formed ways of agreeing. In moulding, the contact deepens, and the participants begin to function organically as one body or unit. Finally, at the level of change, the participants are ready to play and challenge each other and explore and stretch the boundary conditions of the connection.

Adaptation

The couple dance primarily tries to utilise the starting point of the lived body, whereby the dancers answer the question: how does the body feel? The object body is the examination of the body as an object. It has a specific structure: bones, muscles, and circulatory organs. This is the body that physiology studies and whose structure we can study from anatomy books. Our internal experience of the body does not treat body parts like objects, but we live the actual being of our body parts and the body. Therefore, our experience of the body is always the experience of a lived body (Parviainen, 1994). The formation of a relationship starts by adapting to the other's body. To be realised best, the phase involves activities stimulating presence and settling into the situation. Here, we aim to build an understanding of our fellow dancer's and musician's lived bodies through our own lived bodies, which contributes to the realisation of the first two elements of the PERMA theory: the realisation of positive emotions and engagement.

Adaptation is the phase of bodily questions, where the participant's main goal is to map a fellow participant's body. Adaptation is about observing and listening, and it starts already in intending to play and dance a certain tune. KanTaMus workshops confirmed that all actions before the collective notes or steps, such as reminiscing a tune or invitation to a dance, are part of adaptation. The adaptation becomes tangible during the first beats played when the dancers get into tactile contact with each other and begin to attach their movements to the music. Musicians, in turn, find here a common tempo and intensity, which opens communication in the direction of dancers. In our experience, adaptation is supported not only by exercises that strengthen the bodily presence of individuals, but also by various communal contact games. In this context, it is important to look and be seen, to listen, and be heard.

Moulding

Hoppu (2019) characterises the human body in the pair dance as continuous with the other, creating a whole greater than the sum of its parts, and thus forming

- › a new, independent unit of the pair dance. One of the main goals of the pair dance is achieved if the moulding is successful and the two become one. When two bodies meet, and adaptation has produced an understanding of the couple's body, the effort to understand the kinesthetics of the fellow subject begins. We start to mould into a common body.

A similar level can be reached by two musicians improvising together or through a dancer's and musician's interaction. From the perspective of PERMA theory, moulding strengthens the interpersonal relationships of the community and supports the experience of meaningfulness. Relating to positive education, relevance is defined as a commitment to activities aimed at serving something greater than oneself (Norrish, 2015). A meaningful life connects a person to something beyond himself – the broader the connection, the more meaning life acquires (Seligman, 2007). In KanTaMus workshops, adaptation is achieved by repeating the melody and step themes sufficiently long. Repetition is enlivened by changing roles and orientation, which in turn deepens the adaptation to other participants.

Change

The adaptation phase is short for dancers and musicians with advanced bodily communication skills, and moulding occurs relatively quickly. In this way, the opportunities the change offers can still strengthen the pair connection. At this most advanced level of communication between couples, the partners try to bring about subtle changes with their actions and thus keep the interaction alive. We recognise that in any conversation, arguments, changes in content, and objections keep the flame of interaction alive. A similar process of striving for change is also at the heart of the relationship. Still, we are in a continuous process of change projected into the future. The decisions and choices we make in life shape us. We become who we are through the choices we make. Therefore, the process of changing the body includes biological and all the changes in the lived body.

Entering the stage of change requires the participants' experiences of accomplishment, which can manifest themselves on many levels. For one, it is a functional pairing or seamless interaction between music and dance. For another, it may perceive communality as an empowering and important channel for emotional expression in dance situations. Change is needed to maintain the creativity of the activities so that new and curious perspectives are opened for the participants' interests. In KanTaMus workshops, change is supported by simple improvisation-based tasks, for example, in which participants are encouraged to change the timing, quality, or direction of steps and notes. Through this, the participants experience ownership, being the creators and executors of dance and music.

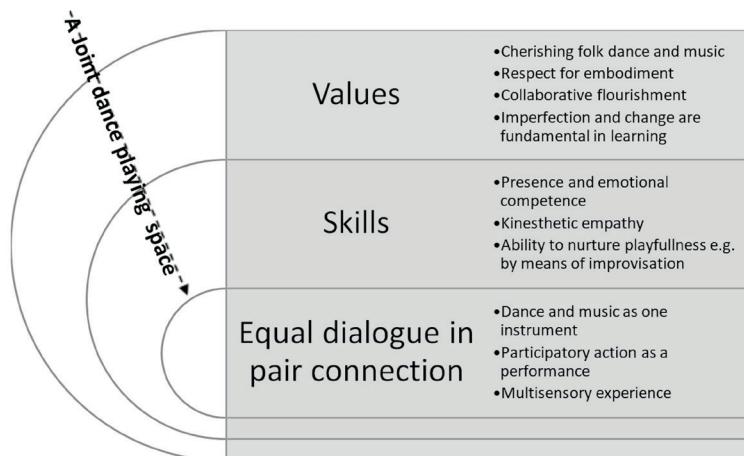
Concluding remarks

The KanTaMus project aims to combine dance and music in the same joint concept and develop common pedagogical practices. We hope that folk dance and music will be practiced in parallel in the future. We need to establish environments that live from interactivity and where each participant contributes significantly. This enables an equal dialogue, where music and dance can be seen as one. Everyone can

influence and be influenced in these communities by doing and experiencing. This game has the same elements as a kindling agent that appeals to dancers and musicians in a traditional performer-audience performance situation. In a joint event, reflecting Turino's viewpoints, the performance is within the situation, the performance in the performance. One's movement or sound impulse is responded to with an immediate reaction that appears as an action. At the heart of it, everything is in contact with others, which starts from feeling, reacting, and conscious bodies, and expands through collective and communicative actions into a multisensory experience. The dancers and musicians participating in the joint event give rise to a collective space, which, in this context, expands into a *joint dance playing space* (figure 3).

Figure 3

Joint dance playing space. Design by the authors.



At its best, the collaboration of dancers and musicians creates a circle of positivity, which at the same time preserves valuable bodily traditions and allows participants to create new things. In this positive dependency, both sides feed each other, and the means of learning allows for mistakes, coincidences, and imperfection. Live music makes dance three-dimensional, reactive and sensitises dance to changes. Conversely, dance frees up the musicians' embodiment, gives purpose to the tunes, and encourages grooving, an embodied experience and feeling of rhythm. The bodily presence of dancers and players is one instrument in this multidimensional whole.

We see a joint dance-playing event as a natural form of cherishing folk dance and music. A joint dance playing continues vividly and creatively the craftsmanship that has passed down from generation to generation as a bodily legacy. The elements of Seligman's PERMA model of wellbeing are a natural part of the core values of this kind of activity. Therefore, such events can contribute to the individual's overall wellbeing, while strengthening the relevance of the folk dance and music community.

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