

THE VISION OF HUNGARIAN FOLK DANCE IN THE DIASPORA

FOLK DANCE TEACHING METHODOLOGY WORK PLAN FOR THE URUGUAYAN TUNDERKERT FOLK DANCE ENSEMBLE

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Abstract

How can Hungarian folk dance education be implemented in the Hungarian diaspora communities in South America, particularly in Uruguay, with goal-oriented and development-focused results? Following linguistic assimilation, Hungarian folk dance is one of the most important pillars keeping the Hungarian community in Uruguay alive. In order for Hungarian identity to continue to remain thrive in Uruguay, conscious development in the field of dance education is essential. The work plan presented in this study aims to help dance teachers efficiently and accurately organize, plan, and deliver dance classes, thus achieving improved results in regard to dance technique and general knowledge of Hungarian folklore.

Keywords: folk dance instruction, Hungarian diaspora, identity, South America, work plan

1. INTRODUCTION

Uruguay is located in the temperate zone of South America on the Atlantic coast. Its area is twice the size of Hungary with a population of three million, as well as favorable conditions for livestock and agriculture. Emigrants from Hungary found abundant land and welcoming conditions here in the early 20th century. The number of Hungarians arriving in Uruguay before the First World War is estimated at 450 to 500. The largest number of Hungarian emigrants arrived between the two world wars and initially did not form a cohesive community. Their presence was concentrated in the capital Montevideo, where they organized themselves into communities along denominational and ideological lines. As the nucleus of Uruguayan emigration took root in the mid-1930s, community and cultural life began to flourish, as well. The *Uruguayan Hungarian Home* (UHH) was founded, as well as a Hungarian-language radio station and newspaper. The impact of the 1956 wave of Hungarian refugees to Uruguay was negligible, which may partly explain why the Hungarian language declined by the 1970s (Anderle, 2008; Arato, 2009).

The UHH and its cultural life have become a central factor in preserving the community; Hungarian culture is alive and well despite the decline in language use and has a positive impact by encouraging community awareness and language learning. At the same time, the institution and community, which has become Spanish-speaking, are opening up to the majority society.

In the Carpathian Basin, the Hungarian language is a determining factor of national and/or ethnic identity. In the diaspora, however, this identity takes on a completely different meaning: in the lives of the new generations, other cultural or kinship ties shape their attitude to their Hungarian heritage instead of language skills. In the third and fourth generations, the Hungarian language no longer plays a primary role in defining identity. Instead, this attachment is expressed in other forms (such as through dress, holidays, food, music, and dance) and is primarily experienced in cultural organizations such as Hungarian houses, Hungarian schools, scouting, and folk dance groups. These organizations are also spaces of socialization through which individuals develop their group identity (Bába, 2015).

Language loss in South American Hungarian communities is a lengthy process. The consequence is that although groups members may dance, sing, and celebrate in Hungarian, not everyone can speak it, leading to new cultural ties taking over the function of the former mother tongue. Folk dancing stands out among these, as it provides an opportunity for socializing even without language skills. Moreover, folk dance groups are well suited to be the central features at events and to representing the Hungarian community. Folk dancing and folk music can also play a linking role between Hungarian culture and the majority society, facilitating contacts with Hungarian communities in other countries. In this way, the role of folk dance is being enhanced; as the Hungarian language is pushed into the background, folk dance is taking on its function of identity formation and representation. Thus, the loss of language in the diaspora does not necessarily entail a loss of identity; rather, other forms of identity have begun to dominate (Brum, 2019).

2. WORK PLAN FOR THE YOUTH GROUP OF THE TÜNDÉRKERT FOLK DANCE ENSEMBLE

Together with the instructors of the Tündérkert Folk Dance Ensemble, we have developed an effective strategy to improve student motivation and a detailed one-year work plan to improve dance instruction. The comprehensive plan, which takes into account local conditions, includes the professional background of the work plan (i.e., a description of the methods, the composition of the professional staff, teaching aids, curriculum, as well as short and long-term goals). Aside from conscious dance training, the overall aim of the work plan is to provide the UHH Tündérkert Folk Dance Ensemble with a supply of new dancers and to introduce Hungarian culture to those interested.

2.1 Preliminary design information

Educators need information about the target group for planning purposes. The methodology program takes into account the following basic conditions:

- Age group: 14 and 16 years
- Number of students: 4 girls and 4 boys
- Objectives:
 - To motivate them to remain part of the dance ensemble
 - To prepare them to join participate in the next level in the following year
 - Improve their technique
 - Engage in rhythm exercises
 - to learn choreography in order to move on to the next level
- Duration: 1 year, on an experimental basis
- Dance material to be taught: “marosszéki forгатós”
- Determining logistical details: this includes rehearsal days, scheduling, holidays, breaks, or dates of scheduled performances (Brum, 2022).

2.2 Planning

Before planning, instructors should be familiarized with the available resources: the planning documents, the syllabus, and the lesson plan, which includes the methods and forms of teaching (Brum, 2022). As they are in control of the group, they should be involved in drawing up a detailed workplan. It is very important that the information, materials, and tools for dance education are available in written form, also in Spanish, and that the group leaders are made aware of their methodological autonomy.

3. LESSON PLAN

Each lesson plan includes warm-up activities, hopscotch, rhythmic exercises, drama pedagogy activities, traditional folk games, and spatial orientation exercises. These activities are listed below, and only the name of the activity is given in the lesson plan. The dance teacher is free to use them according to the class, the needs, and the mood of the students with the exception of folk games due to their vast range. The traditional folk games that are necessary for a particular activity are written directly in the lesson plan. With regard to folklore, my aim is for the dancers to have more or less general folklore knowledge about the region whose dances they are learning.

3.1 Warm-up activities

We can start the warm-up with dances from “Moldva”, which can be used as a warm-up exercise independent from the curriculum. Another method of warming up is through games, one of which is tag. The activity is particularly well-suited as it is well-known, simple, familiar to the students, allows contact and integration, dissolves inhibitions, and can be played by any group. An infinite number of variations can be used depending on the course environment, the characteristics of the group (age, number of people, degree of detachment, etc.), and the spatial conditions. Some examples of different versions of tag:

- *Toxic tag*: based on contact zones; when the tagger touches a specific part of the body, it freezes, and the new tagger has to catch someone by continuously touching that specific body part while chasing them.
- *Song tag*: If the emphasis is on loosening inhibitions then this version of tag can be played, which involves the incorporation of a personal skill. The tagged person must sing a song until a teammate rescues them.
- *Insect tag*: the tagged person must lie on their back on the floor and wave the limbs they want to catch the others with. In this way, they become an ally of the tagger and attempt to catch others (Holowatuck & Astrosky, 2001).

As a warm-up exercise, the well-known folk game known as “pányvázás” (a balancing-jumping game activity) can be used to practice jumping and receiving instructions on which jump to make (i.e., 1-1 jump from one leg to the same leg, 1-1 jump from one leg to the other leg, 1-2 jumps from one leg to two legs, 2-1 jumps from two legs to one leg, and 2-2 jumps from two legs to two legs). This can be performed to music at a slower or faster pace. Hopscotch can be used as a warm-up and for dance preparation. The most important thing in the hopscotch activity is that the dancers are able to cleanly change the supporting leg from the right foot to the left foot and back. In addition to the well-known hopscotch exercises, teachers can also create new hopscotch activities with a little imagination. The key is to be clear about which support leg is next (Lévai, 2010).

3.2 Exercises for cognitive development, with special attention to the development of basic movements and basic motives

Exercises of this kind have numerous benefits, developing students’ cognitive, physical-motor, and affective skills (Lévai, 2019).

Considering the characteristics of the group, it is advisable to explain to the students that these exercises will take place at the beginning of every dance rehearsal. It is also important to emphasize the goal of the exercise:

- developing movement coordination
- perception and recognition of rhythm and meter
- understanding and conscious learning of movement and dance
- learning through positive experiences
- the development of creative and cognitive skills (e.g., memory, attention, perception, or planning)
- improving thought processes
- developing a sense of well-being
- achieving sound mental health and improved quality of movement (Lévai, 2019)

Below are a few examples of activities and exercises to be performed:

(1) A dance area should be delineated on the floor using adhesive strips (*Figure 1*) and the following instructions should be given:

- Step forward between the strips, paying attention to the direction of your feet.
- Repeat the same task, but this time move backward.
- Repeat again, but this time move sideways.
- Step forward with the left foot and touch the left ankle with the right foot, then repeat with the other foot.
- Combine these movements and improvise.

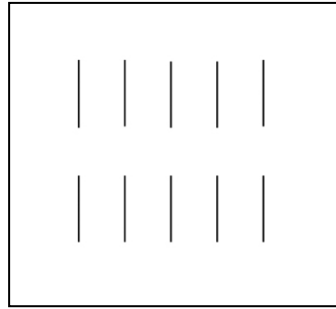


Figure 1. Dance area

The goal of the activity is for the learner to concentrate on multiple tasks while moving and controlling their impulses. This exercise can take various forms and can be further developed with the addition of multiple rules (e.g., by changing which foot to start with, performing the exercise to a chant or music, or modifying the touches).

(2) Bean bags are scattered on the ground (Figure 2). Tasks:

- The participants walk around in a circle while one of them is chanting. At the end of the chant, all of the participants jump onto bean bags. The teacher begins to remove the bean bags, leaving fewer and fewer on the ground. The task remains, but now, in addition to the jump, the participants must also clap their hands.
- As there are fewer bean bags, the dancers meet around them and can clap hands with their peers if another dancer is standing there.
- The entire activity is performed to music (the tempo of the music should match the age-specific characteristics of the dancers).

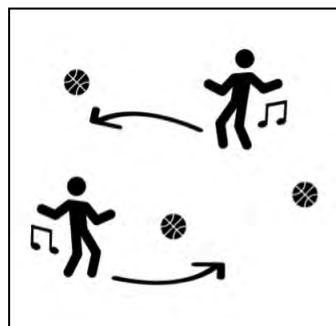


Figure 2. Bean bags scattered on the ground

(3) A cross should be placed on the floor, which will serve as the dance area (*Figure 3*). Tasks:

- While chanting, the dancers can move back and forth, but only in the open spaces, not on the lines.
- The task remains the same, but dancers must step to the beat of the music (the tempo of the music should match the age and skill level of the dancers).
- After the music ends, dancers should count to 7 and then jump to one foot on beat 8.
- The task remains the same, with an extra clap added during the jump.
- Repeat the same task, but use only jumps and finish with a step.

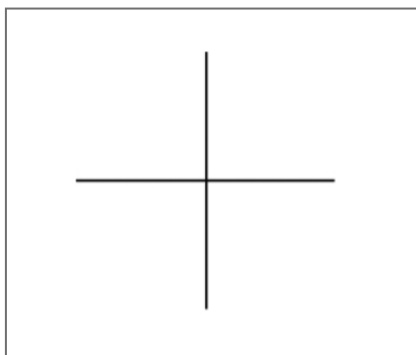


Figure 3. Cross 1.

The exercise can be further varied by hopping on the same foot and can be extended by adding two jumps and clapping at the end. The goal of the task is to practice switching supports. This exercise can be further developed by providing instructions on which front direction to step in at the end of the activity. For example, stepping to the beat of the music (counting to 7), number 1 can be used as a reference front, and on 8, dancers jump to front 3.

(4) The previous exercise provides unlimited possibilities for creating a series of movements. To further develop this area, dancers position their legs on the cross, as shown in *Figure 4*, and perform the following movements:

- Knees are kept stable; only the leg is moved.
- First, the right foot should clearly point in the chosen direction (e.g., forward, side, or back); the left foot should then do the same.
- With the right foot, dancers should touch the ground in front and then return to the center of the cross. The same should be repeated in the other directions, and then the whole sequence of movements should be repeated again with the left foot.
- Dancers move to the music with the same or alternate feet.
- The movements can be performed in all directions.

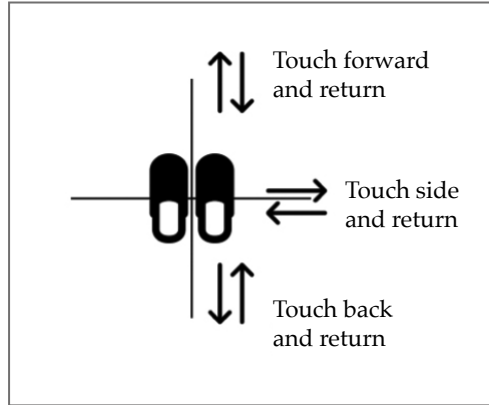


Figure 4. Cross 2.

(5) As a further development of the previous exercise, the dancers can create their own choreography. The work is done individually, and the basis of the exercise is the same as before (Exercise 4). Using the aforementioned cross model, the coordinates are drawn as cardinal points, for example: JE (right front), JO (right side), JM (right behind), BM (left behind), BO (left side), or BE (left front) (Figure 5).

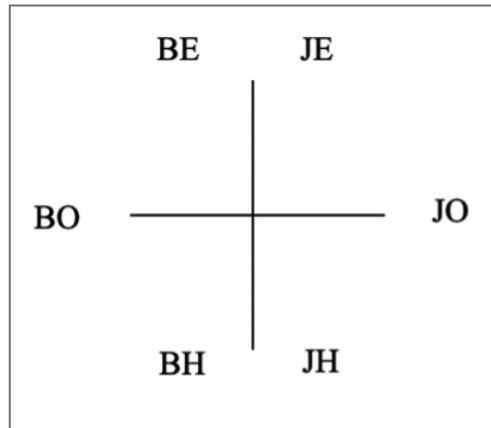


Figure 5. Cross 3.

Create a relatively large square divided into a 2 x 3 grid. Each dancer draws their own sequence in their designated section of the grid, which they perform as they wish. It is important to follow the movement sequence as described, which can also be performed in reverse (Figure 6).

JH	BH	BE
JE	JO	BO

Figure 6. Example to represent a chosen movement sequence

The task can initially be performed with steps and then with jumps, and movement can be varied by changing the front directions. Other movements can be added to make the exercise more difficult (e.g., clapping or touching), and the exercise can be enriched with folk music or any other music the group likes. The next step is to exchange boards so that partners can also dance the choreography of others.

Below, I present some ways to further develop these types of exercises. These include *basic motif exercises* (Figure 7) and variations on the breakdown of the movement sequence based on basic motifs (Figure 8) (Lévai, 2019).

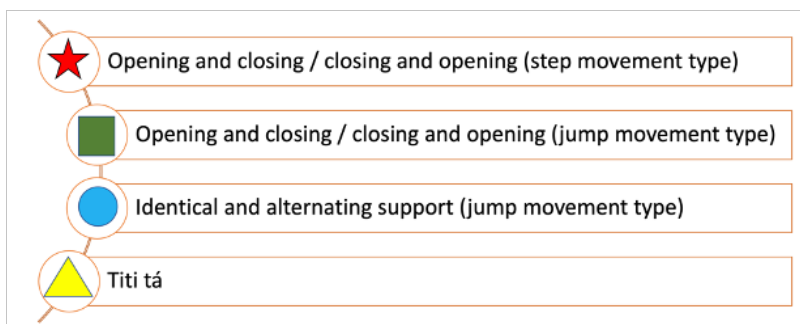


Figure 7. Basic motif exercises 1.

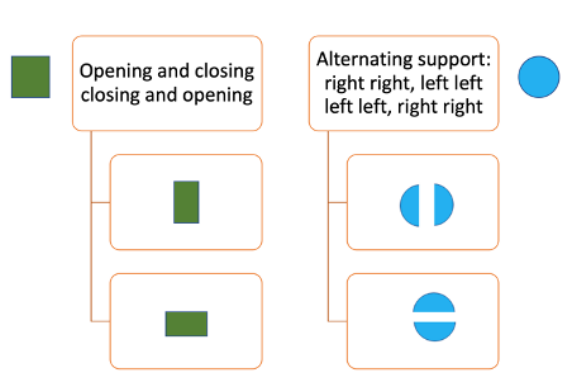


Figure 8. Basic motif exercises 2.

(1) Once the symbols have been clearly identified by the dancers, exercises can be performed with the teacher initially leading. The group has to reproduce the movements corresponding to the symbols presented, and then one of the dancers takes the lead. The difficulty can be increased by showing the dancers a sequence of symbols and giving them precise instructions on when to move to the next symbol based on the accompanying music in 4/4. The tempo can then be increased and front directions as well as gestures can be added.

(2) The symbols are placed in different front directions (i.e., 1, 3, 5, and 7) in the dance hall or in the space predefined by the teacher. The order is given in regard to which direction to turn to, and the dancers reproduce the movement of the symbol there. Two groups can be formed, and they will be able to change the symbols. First, one group performs the activity while the other group sequentially changes the symbols, and then they switch roles.

(3) Each dancer creates their own sequence of movements using the basic motifs (i.e., symbols) and then shows them to the others.

(4) These symbols can then be added to the hop-scotch activity. At these points, teachers are given free rein to further expand and develop these types of exercises, as they are the ones who are able to track the group's progress.

3.3 Rhythmic exercises

For the vertical-horizontal clapping exercise, the dancers work in pairs. In the starting position, the girl holds her arms vertically while the boy holds his horizontally. It is important that the partners are close enough to each other that the arm movements required for the claps overlap. On the main musical note, the girl claps with a large vertical arm movement, the boy holds the starting position horizontally and then claps on the next quarter between the girl's arms extended to the starting position. The rhythm of the arm movements of the two dancers is illustrated in *Figure 9* (Farkas, 2015).

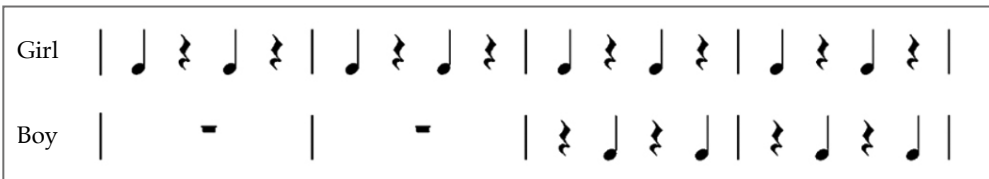


Figure 9. Rhythmic exercises 1. (Farkas, 2015)

After four introductory claps by the girl, the boy claps to the rhythms that she provides; this is followed by an exchange of role and partner. After adopting the tempo determined by the teacher, the boy claps eight times on the primary and secondary musical accents, while the girl claps eight times in between these accents (Farkas, 2015).

The rhythmically precise sound produced by clapping can be practiced in the following movement sequences by striking the thigh with the palm:

1. The dancer walks in place smoothly.
2. The dancer walks in place while stomping to the beat.
3. The thigh of the non-stepping leg is raised horizontally.
4. When the thigh reaches horizontal, the dancer strikes it with the palm on the same side.

The rhythm of the step and thigh strike is shown in *Figure 10*. The exercise should be performed in a big circle moving from right to left; the whole exercise should then be performed to music. It is important to have musical accompaniment and the basic beat continuously present throughout the exercise (Farkas, 2015).

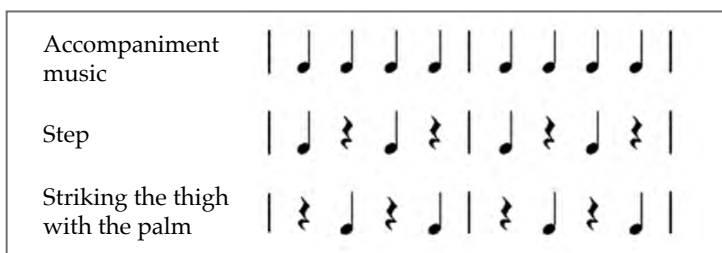


Figure 10. Rhythmic exercises 2. (Farkas, 2015)

The next exercise is technically the same as the previous one, though it features a change of emphasis in the movements. This time, the participants dance to the movements described in points 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the previous exercise with a change of emphasis shown in the rhythm presented in *Figure 11*. Once the exercise has been satisfactorily mastered, the thigh strike can be replaced by a clap (Farkas, 2015).

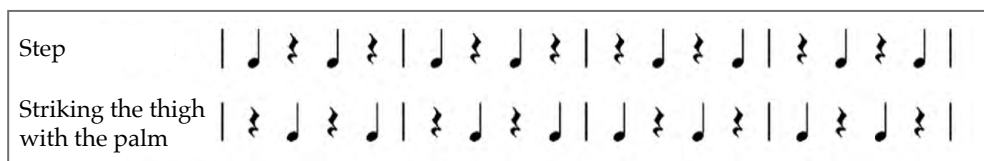


Figure 11. Rhythmic exercises 3. (Farkas, 2015)

Rhythmic halving with tempo changes is an exercise in which one person, initially the teacher, controls the tempo changes. The following exercises are characterized by continuous, slow, but followable tempo acceleration. During these exercises, the dancers should be divided into two groups. The first group claps a steady, continuous 4/4 rhythm at a tempo of $\text{♩} = 60$, while the second group halves the beat units and claps the contrasting rhythm in response to the first group's claps. This exercise can then be practiced in pairs, with role reversals, and with continuous increases or decreases in tempo (Farkas, 2015).

For the next exercise, the dancers form two groups. The first group claps in steady, continuous 4/4 time for four beats at ♩ = 100 tempo. The second group follows according to the rhythms in *Figure 12*:

- Rhythm 1: claps on the last quarter of the first beat;
- Rhythm 2: claps on the last eighth (counter) of the first beat;
- Rhythm 3: claps on the first quarter of the second beat.

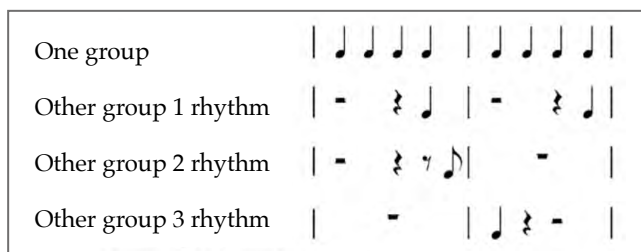


Figure 12. Rhythmic exercises 4. (Farkas, 2015)

The dancers should pause between the three types of clapping rhythms to create a clear distinction between them. When one group, has completed clapping the three rhythms, the other group should repeat the same but with role reversals. (Farkas, 2015).

The next exercise rhythmically and tempo-wise is identical to the previous one, with the difference being that the second group, instead of clapping, jumps in place with both feet and stomps (Farkas, 2015). The stomping exercises are illustrated in *Figure 13*.

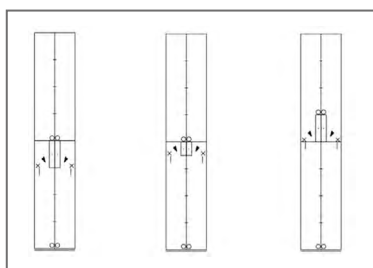


Figure 13. Rhythmic exercises 5. (Farkas, 2015)

A more advanced version of the exercise can be as follows: four groups are formed, and each group stands in a circle. During the exercise, the first group claps steady quarter notes in a four-beat duration, the second group claps only on the last quarter of the first beat, the third group claps only the last eighth (i.e., counterpart) of the first beat, and the 4th group performs the paired-foot jumping stomp only on the first quarter of the second beat. Repeat the exercise continuously four times. After four repetitions, you can switch the tasks of the groups as desired (Farkas, 2015).

Exercises are also available to practice the simultaneous movements of the arms and legs. In these, the aim is to make the movements of the arm and leg independent of each other, first in terms of direction and then in terms of rhythm. The dancers should display strong movement of the arms (*Figure 14*) (Farkas, 2015).

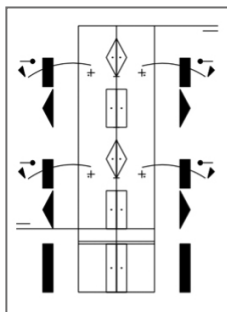


Figure 14. Rhythmic exercises 6. (Farkas, 2015)

The following exercise is formally identical to the previous one, but rhythmically, the parts for the arm and leg are separated (*Figure 15*) (Farkas, 2015).

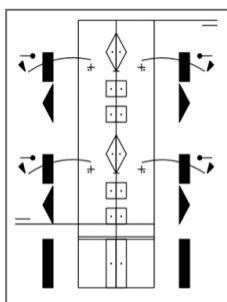


Figure 15. Rhythmic exercises 13. (Farkas, 2015)

3.4 Instruments of drama pedagogy

The exercises can be divided into three groups depending on the phase of the dance class:

- Warm-up (e.g., warm-up exercises and exercises related to breathing, memory, the use of body language, concentration, rhythm, or contact-type).
- Skill and ability development exercises (e.g., rhythm, combinations, coordination, creativity, improvisation, group dynamics, sensory refinement, dexterity, spatial use, and direction development exercises).
- End of the class (e.g., partner and self-awareness, cooperation, relaxation, trust-building, breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, and yoga-based exercises) (Mizerák, 2014).

Warm-up

- *Massage circle*: Dancers stand in a circle and turn to the left so that they can see the back of their left neighbor. After positioning themselves, they close their eyes and try to relax as they massage their neighbor's shoulders and neck. They then do the same in the opposite direction (Mizerák, 2014).
- *Step by step*: The leader guides the group to move around the space while performing various tasks such as walking, running, and jumping. Once the basic movements are mastered, dancers can be instructed to perform different tasks, such as taking shorter or longer steps, changing directions, and altering their speed. Finally, folkdance movements can be incorporated to enrich the session (Holowatuck & Astrosky, 2009).
- *Name Chain*: participants stand in a circle. The dancer to the right of the leader introduces themselves (using only their first name). Their neighbor repeats their name and adds their own. The next person does the same. During the activity, when repeating the name, a movement is also added to help memorize the name. Once the dancers know each other's names well, a variation of the activity can be carried out using last names (Mizerák, 2014).
- *Secret Conductor*: participants form a circle, and the instructor selects one person to be the observer. The observer leaves the room, and the rest of the group quickly decides who will be the 'secret conductor'. When the observer returns, the conductor starts a series of movements that everyone in the group follows, mimicking the conductor's actions. The objective of the game is for the group members not to look conspicuously at the 'secret conductor', while the observer's task is to guess who the conductor is. If successful, they switch roles (Mizerák, 2014).
- In a circle, participants must count from 1 to 15, with the condition that only one person can say a given number, meaning that the same number cannot be said by two participants at the same time. If this happens, and they say the same number simultaneously, they must start counting from the beginning. When they reach the number 15, the group has achieved a level of group dynamic concentration necessary to continue with the next task (Mizerák, 2014).

Skill and ability development exercises

- *Movement Chain*: the dancers stand in a circle. The leader starts by demonstrating a movement, then their right-hand neighbor repeats it and adds a new movement. The next person to the right demonstrates three movements, and so on. It is recommended to start with simple movements, then increase the complexity. Instructors can also request specific folkdance movements. After completing the round, the same sequence can be completed or new movements can be added (Mizerák, 2014).
- *Statue Exercise*: Dancers stand in pairs, which are positioned in different parts of the room. When the leader gives a signal, the dancers must pose to create a 'statue' in a way that the two partners are connected to each other. Participants cannot speak during the activity, and need to pay attention to each other while engaged in spontaneous improvisation. One variation is to create a pose resembling a specific dance motif. Participants should adapt to the given instructions and be creative within those parameters. This exercise can also be done in pairs or larger groups (Gabnai, 1987).
- *Image Composition*: This activity requires the instructor to make five task cards which include different images and scenes from folk culture, such as a custom or dance.

Music is started and the group begins to walk freely, singing and dancing. When the music stops, they gather in groups of five and the leader reads one of the cards. The dancers are tasked with representing this picture (Holowatuck & Astrosky, 2009).

- *Christmas tree decorating competition*: each dancer chooses a partner. The pairs stand at least a meter apart from the other pairs and the partners face each other. One player is given 10 clothespins by the game leader. The goal is for the player to quickly attach all 10 clothespins to the other. Once they finish, they must immediately remove the 10 clothespins attached to the other player's clothing (Mizerák, 2017).

- In a circle, participants start reciting the numbers one by one, from 1 to 4, until each participant has said one number. They then continue to say the numbers together with a head movement to the right (looking into their partner's eyes), and then continue with the same task but change direction (looking to the left side instead). The next step in the activity is to add an action for each number; for example, when saying number 1, clapping is used; with number 2, drumming; with number 3, tapping; and with number 4, rotating (other types of actions can be developed and varied). These actions are practiced several times, and once the moves have been mastered, dancers can compete with one another, and the participants who do not perform the tasks correctly loses the round and are eliminated until only three dancers remain.

End of class

- *I'm the best at...*: participants stand in a circle and are asked to think about what they are best at. Anyone can start. The dancers are tasked with saying 'I'm the best at...' and stepping into the center of the circle while saying it. The others, who also believe they are good at the same thing, step into the circle as well. They stay there for a few seconds and then step back into their places. The activity continues in this way (Mizerák, 2014).

- *Ball of yarn*: The dancers stand in a circle. Holding a ball of yarn, the leader starts the exercise. Wrapping the yarn around their finger, they say a person's name and share a few sentences about a pleasant experience that they shared, then they throw the ball of yarn to another participant.. The game goes on, and each time the ball of yarn is wrapped around the index finger of each dancer's right hand and then passed (Mizerák, 2014).

- *What I like about you the most is...*: participants stand in a circle and are asked to name a few nice things about their neighbor to the left. This should begin with the dancers saying "The thing I like most about you is..." Each participant must give positive feedback about the other. Then the partner who is described should similarly describe their neighbor on the left in a clockwise direction. When everyone has had their turn, the direction is changed, and participants should say a few positive things about the partner in the opposite direction who had previously stated something about them (Mizerák, 2014).

3.5 Spatial orientation

The aim of these exercises is to develop dancers' ability to orientate themselves in space, while at the same time experiencing the possibilities of action and interaction between their own space and the permanent space (Pignitzkyné & Lévai, 2014).

Exercises:

- *Spatial Directions*: in this exercise, dancers are organized into two rows, and the teacher stands in front of them. Everyone starts by facing direction 1. The teacher indicates different directions, and the dancers, identifying these directions, use chalk to draw them on the floor (1-8). When a specific direction is signaled, the dancers must turn accordingly. This exercise is repeated several times by the group to practice spatial orientation.

- *Primary Directions + Spatial Directions*: in this exercise, dancers follow the teacher's instructions to turn in specific directions (e.g., "turn right to 2" or "turn left to 6"). Teachers are free to expand and develop these exercises according to their goals and the group's needs.

4. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORK PLAN

4.1 Compiling the program

The dance rehearsal consists of three parts: the introductory section, the main section, and the concluding section.

In the introduction, activities such as warm-up games, spatial orientation exercises, drama pedagogy activities, rhythmic exercises, exercises for cognitive development, basic movements and motifs, hopscotch, and traditional folk games can be utilized.

Main Part 1: This section includes everything related to the actual teaching of the dance in question.

Main Part 2: This section also includes activities such as teaching songs, ethnographic knowledge, topography, listening to music, and viewing original videos of the material to be learned. The sequence of the elements of the main part can be changed at the discretion of the teacher, taking into account the needs of the group.

The concluding section includes activities such as relaxation, drama pedagogy, and friendly conversations. Evaluation and reflection are crucial both for teachers and students, and focuses on themselves, the practice activities, and the instructors. It is also important to review previous choreographies which the group will practice later at this point.

At the end of the lesson, the instructors should document the results of the rehearsal. Here, they note what they were able to achieve as planned, what they could not, and whether they have any new ideas for improving the activity. It is essential for instructors to assess their performance, as well. Self-reflection is crucial for preparing the work plan for the next period.

4.2. Lesson plan examples

Tündérkert Folk Dance Ensemble – youth group, 8 people (4 girls and 4 boys), aged between 14 and 16.

Instructors: O.K, E.S

Date / time: 17/03/2023 /19:00-20:30

Time frame (minutes)	Class activities (teacher and student activities)	Educational strategy			Highlighted skills
		Methods	Working format	Tools	
5	I. Introduction 1. Greeting the dancers, roll call, conveying relevant information	Guided discussion	Frontal		
25	2. Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm-up activities • Drama pedagogy activities (skill and ability development exercises) • Exercises for cognitive development 	Explanation, demonstration, assign tasks	Frontal, group		Rules knowledge and application Developing rhythm, creativity, improvisation, group dynamics, sensory refinement, and spatial orientation Developing the ability to coordinate movement and balance
25	II. Main 1. Folklore <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizing important places on the map, basic information about the region • Watching and observing 4 original recordings¹ • Listening to music and observing 	Explanation, demonstration	Frontal, group	Music Video Map	Observation and understanding, developing visual and auditory perception Musical knowledge transfer
20	2. Marosszék <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic motif exercises: steps • Basic motif exercises: csárdás 	Explanation, demonstration, assign tasks	Group		Developing the ability to coordinate movement
10	III. Concluding 1. Review of previous choreography 2. Drama pedagogy activities (end of class exercises)	Explanation, assign tasks	Group	Music	Peer and self-awareness, cooperation and collaboration, relaxation, trust-building, self-awareness development
5	3. Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students evaluate the lesson and teachers • Teachers evaluate themselves 	Group discussion	Group		

Table 1. Lesson plan 1. Session type: trial covering new material – „Marosszék”

¹ Ft. 459.6 film; Ft. 459.7 film; Ft. 459.11 film; Ft. 459.12 film. <https://neptanctudastar.abtk.hu/hu/dances?Localities=%5B%22Farkaslaka%22%5D>

THE VISION OF HUNGARIAN FOLK DANCE IN THE DIASPORA

Time frame (minutes)	Class activities (teacher and student activities)	Educational strategy			Highlighted skills
		Methods	Working format	Tools	
5	I. Introduction 1. Greeting the dancers, roll call, conveying relevant information	Guided discussion	Frontal		
25	2. Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm-up activities • Exercises for cognitive development • Rhythmic exercises 	Explanation, demonstration, assign tasks	Frontal, group		Rules knowledge and application Development of movement coordination and rhythmic ability
25	II. Main 1. Folklore <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watching the first recording (Ft. 459.6); while viewing it, the basic movements are explained when they appear. • Listening to music, observation. 	Explanation, demonstration	Frontal, group	Music Video	Observation and understanding, developing visual and auditory perception Musical knowledge transfer
20	2. Marosszék <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic motif exercises: steps • Basic motif exercises: csárdás • The teacher demonstrates the sequence of movements, dancing with the students, highlighting and paying attention to the new movements and motifs learned. 	Explanation, demonstration, assign tasks	Group, pairs		Developing the ability to coordinate movement Practicing the movement sequence
10	III. Concluding 1. Review of previous choreography 2. Traditional folk games: "Hátulsó pár előre fuss" ² (backward pair run forward)	Explanation, assign tasks	Group	Music	Concentration, attention, and speed development
5	3. Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students evaluate the lesson and teachers • Teachers evaluate themselves 	Group discussion	Group		

Table 2. Lesson plan 2. Session type: trial covering new material – Marosszék

²Hátulsó pár előre fuss: „The children stand in pairs, arranged in two rows, one behind the other. A child stands in front of them and shouts, “Hátulsó pár előre fuss!” The last two children in the rows on either side start running forward. When they meet each other, they must go to the front of the rows. The child in front tries to catch one of them. If they fail to catch a child, they shout the command again. If they succeed in catching a child, the caught child becomes the new leader, and they stand at the front while the previous leader shouts the command.” (Foltin & Tarján, 2004).

Time frame (minutes)	Class activities (teacher and student activities)	Educational strategy			Highlighted skills
		Methods	Working format	Tools	
5	I. Introduction 1. Greeting the dancers, roll call, conveying relevant information	Guided discussion	Frontal		
30	2. Training • Warm-up activities • Spatial orientation exercises • Rhythmic exercises • Exercises for cognitive development	Explanation, demonstration, assign tasks	Frontal, group		Rules knowledge and application Developing spatial orientation skills Development of movement coordination and rhythmic ability
40	II. Main 1. Marosszék • Basic motif exercises: steps • Basic motif exercises: csárdás • The teacher demonstrates the sequence of movements, dancing with the students, highlighting and paying attention to the new movements and motifs learned.	Explanation, demonstration, assign tasks	Group	Music Mirror	Developing the ability to coordinate movement Developing movement sequence coordination skills
10	III. Concluding 1. Review of previous choreography 2. Drama pedagogy activities (end of class exercises)	Explanation, assign tasks	Group	Music	Peer and self-awareness, cooperation and collaboration, relaxation, trust-building, self-awareness development
5	3. Evaluation • Students evaluate the lesson and teachers • Teachers evaluate themselves	Group discussion	Group		

Table 3. Lesson plan 3. Session type: practice rehearsal

THE VISION OF HUNGARIAN FOLK DANCE IN THE DIASPORA

Time frame (minutes)	Class activities (teacher and student activities)	Educational strategy			Highlighted skills
		Methods	Working format	Tools	
5	I. Introduction 1. Greeting the dancers, roll call, conveying relevant information	Guided discussion	Frontal		
20	2. Training • Warm-up activities • Spatial orientation exercises • Drama pedagogy activities (skill and ability development exercises)	Explanation, demonstration, assign tasks	Frontal, group		Rules knowledge and application Developing spatial orientation skills Developing rhythm, creativity, improvisation, group dynamics, sensory refinement, and spatial orientation
50	II. Main 1. Marosszék • Basic motif exercises: spin 2. Review of previous choreography • Watching the choreography recording • Practice	Explanation, demonstration, assign tasks	Group	Music Mirror	Developing the ability to coordinate movement
10	III. Concluding 1. Traditional folk games: "pecsenyeforgatás" ³ (spit roasting)	Explanation, assign tasks	Group		Tactical thinking, turn-space development Wrestling, resistance-building game
5	3. Evaluation • Students evaluate the lesson and teachers • Teachers evaluate themselves	Group discussion	Group		

Table 4. Lesson plan 4. Session type: mixed rehearsal

³Pecsenyeforgatás: „The players stand in a circle, and one of them stands in the center, acting as the “cook” (szakács). There is another player outside the circle. The players in the circle chant: “Süülök, süülök, megsüülök!” (Translation: “I’m roasting, I’m roasting, I’m getting roasted!”). Upon hearing this chant, the cook (szakács) runs to someone in the circle and turns them around three times, as if they were turning a roast. The player who was on the outside of the circle must run in and touch either the cook or the “roast” (the person being turned) before the three turns are completed. If they manage to touch either the cook or the roast before the three turns are over, they switch places with the person they touched. If they fail to touch them in time, they remain outside the circle.” (Lázár, 1997)

6. SUMMARY

The possibility of the long-term preservation of Hungarian communities living in the diaspora lies in their connection to Hungarian culture. Within this context, Hungarian folk dance culture and the dance-house movement (*táncházmozgalom*) in Hungary can be particularly strong forces for preservation. This is even the case for fourth and fifth-generation members of the community, as dance can be attractive to those who speak little or no Hungarian thanks to the strong sense of community interethnic involvement that it creates. Through engaging with folk songs and dance, participants also develop a closer connection to the language itself, which can provide motivation for learning the Hungarian language.

For Hungarian folk dance to fulfill this role in the life of Hungarian communities living far from the motherland, it is essential that folk dance education is well-organized. If teaching is stratified based on age groups, with coordination and consideration of professional aspects, this ensures professional development and the continuation of traditions for adult age groups, as well. Maintaining contact with Hungarian institutions and experts and ensuring continuous coordination, documenting the work, describing best practices, and applying them are crucial activities for dance instructors, especially in the initial period. The methodological guide described in this paper aims to provide guidance for beginners, and its further development will be a task for the future.

The Hungarian diaspora communities in South America, although quite distant from each other, maintain a living connection. The main driving force behind this is the biennial South American Hungarian Folk Dance Festival. This large event includes a one-week symposium focused on the learning of dance and music skill development under the guidance of Hungarian experts. It is worth considering the launch of further professional development courses and coordinating efforts across the involved diasporas. If the goal is to make theoretical and professional knowledge as widely accessible as possible, it is essential to translate important publications in Hungarian-language literature into Spanish.

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