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THE POTENTIAL OF DANCE EDUCATION TO PROMOTE SOCIAL COHESION IN A POST-CONFLICT SOCIETY: PERSPECTIVES OF SOUTH AFRICAN PRE-SERVICE STUDENT TEACHERS

By

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for

the degree of PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR in the Faculty of Education at

the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

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Declaration

I, Margaretha Elizabeth Marx, with student number 194416080, hereby declare that this treatise for a Ph. D in Education, titled THE POTENTIAL OF DANCE EDUCATION TO PROMOTE SOCIAL COHESION IN A POST-CONFLICT SOCIETY: PERSPECTIVES OF SOUTH AFRICAN PRE-SERVICE STUDENT TEACHERS, is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment to another University or for another qualification.

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I dedicate this research project to my parents, Prof Frans and Margita Marx

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Acronyms

AIC	African Indigenous Church
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statement
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CPRN	Canadian Policy Research Networks
DAC	Department of Arts and Culture
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
EU	European Union
GET	General Education and Training
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
NDP	National Development Plan
NMF	Nelson Mandela Forum
NMMU	Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
PST	Pre-service Student Teachers
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SAGNA	South African Government News Agency
SLP	Short Learning Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UFS	University of the Free State

The potential of dance education to promote social cohesion in a post-conflict society: Perspectives of South African pre-service student teachers

Abstract

This study constitutes a theoretical and qualitative investigation into the meanings and locations of social cohesion in dance education. Theoretical connections between culture, dance education and social cohesion are explored. The empirical investigation is designed as a qualitative case study interrogating pre-service student teachers' experiences and perceptions of a particular dance education course in a culturally and politically diverse university classroom in post-apartheid South Africa. Open-ended questionnaires, reflective journals and focus group interviews were employed to generate data. Findings indicate that involvement in creative movement and ethno-cultural dances raised awareness of the Self and the Other, engendering perspective and personal transformation, important requisites for social transformation and subsequently social cohesion in a formerly divided society, such as South Africa. In addition, these dance education experiences provided participants with unique encounters with the Other's culture. These occurred through embodied experiences of the culture of the Other, as well as through bodily negotiations with the Other. These findings lead me to argue that dance education, as pertaining to this particular course, can facilitate spaces conducive to cohesion amongst culturally and politically diverse participants in post-apartheid South Africa.

Keywords: South Africa; social cohesion; ubuntu; dance education; creative movement; ethno-cultural dances; multicultural society; personal transformation; perspective transformation

CHAPTER ONE

Orientation to the study

"The ability to reach unity in diversity will be the beauty and test of our civilization"
(Mahatma Gandhi, cited in Nkomo, Weber & Amsterdam, 2009:331)

1.1 Introduction

For the past ten years I have been teaching a seven-week general dance education course to first year student teachers enrolled for an undergraduate Bachelor in Education (B Ed) programme. Class groups are culturally diverse, with young South African students entering university from all walks of life. Over a period of time, I could not help but observe how the students' initial reservations and apprehensions about each other transform as they enter each other's spaces, physically, creatively and socially, finally 'moving together in harmony'. Something was happening in the dance education classroom, as boundaries were crossed and a sense of community developed amidst these groups of diverse young South African people.

As a South African citizen, I feel committed to contributing to the transformation of society so that justice, equality and dignity for all South African citizens can be restored and maintained. The potential of dance education to promote social cohesion in my country as experienced during my teaching intrigued me to the point where I decided to embark on this enriching and illuminating project.

1.2 Background

The current South African population comprises many diverse ethno-cultural groups (SSA, 2013). The Black African population consists of Nguni (which include Zulu, Xhosa, Ndebele and Swazi people), Sotho-Tswana (Tswana people from Northern, Southern and Western Sotho), Tsonga, and Venda groups which comprise 79.8 percent of the total population. The Coloured people of South Africa represent 9 percent of the total population and stem from either indigenous Khoi or San, or from Mauritian, Indonesian, Mozambican or Madagascan heritage. Consequently, the

Coloured population are often referred to as 'the mixed race', also including people from 'mixed origin' (Bruinders, 2012). The majority of Coloured people are Afrikaans-speaking, hence communicating in the same language as white Afrikaners from Dutch descent. Amongst the 8.7 percent white population are Afrikaners from Dutch, German and French Huguenot descent, whilst the white English population are from British origin. In addition, South African Indian[1] and Chinese populations comprise 2.5 percent of the total South African population (SSA, 2013). South African statistics are unclear as to how many of the 2.5 percent are indeed South African Indian. In this regard, Dickinson (2014) argues that this figure represents the totality of South African Indians, who are now approximately 1.3 million (Dickinson, 2014). Nevertheless, it is clear that both South African Indian and Chinese populations are indeed marginalised. Most South African Indians have embraced English as their home language.

In South Africa, 1994 marked the official demise of apartheid, a political system which enforced racial segregation and discrimination against so-called 'non-whites' with regard to rights, mobility, education, housing, land and work opportunities (Struwig Davids, Roberts, Sithole, Tilley, Weir-Smith & Mokhele, 2012). The country's new *Constitution* (Republic of South Africa, 1996) heralded the beginning of a new era where all South African citizens would be regarded as equal. There is general consensus that apartheid left behind a scarred and divided nation, and twenty years later, pain and humiliation still mark the life stories of the many wounded, who transmit these to the next generation. Both the formerly 'oppressed' and the 'oppressors' are still struggling to deal with feelings of anger, shame, guilt, injustice, inferiority, superiority, anxiety and fear (Johnson, 1982; Bell, 2002; Delport, 2009; Bloch, 2009; Nkomo, Weber & Amsterdam, 2009; Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010; Soudien, 2012; Adams, Van de Vijver, De Bruin & Bueno Torres, 2014; Costandius & Bitzer, 2014). Social justice has not yet been restored as South African society is still stained by stark divisions in terms of race and class. Former segregation policies also contributed to the germination of disrupted family

[1] South African discourse uses the term South African Indian, instead of Asian, since migrants were from ancient villages and regions that are located within the post-colonial nation of India (Dickinson, 2014).

structures, absence of parents and authority figures, increased domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse, high crime rates and general violence – the “social ills” which further fuel distrust, stereotyping and fear of the Other (Barolsky, 2012; Struwig et al, 2012:12). These existing divides are widened by affirmative action policies and numerous incidents of gender oppression and xenophobia, escalating division in an already segregated society (Alexander, 2003, 2007; Barolsky & Pillay, 2009; NMF,2010; Khumalo, 2011; SAGNA, 2012; Adams et al, 2014; Costandius & Bitzer, 2014; Hickel, 2014).

After two decades, South Africa can indeed still be described as a ‘post-conflict’ and divided society (Jansen, 2009). This being so, South Africa is in dire need of more effective strategies to “heal the divisions of the past” (RSA, 1996:1243), restore the dignity of all citizens and ensure equality and social justice so that formerly separated groups can live together in “harmony” (Mandela, 1964; Mandela 2002:ix) as one united nation, celebrating and embracing its rich cultural diversity (HSRC, 2004; Oloyede, 2009).

Social transformation that will bring about cohesion between all South African citizens from diverse backgrounds therefore remains a challenge. In this regard, Delport (2009:158) emphasises that social transformation should be conceived as a complex, profound and double-layered process, constituting transformation at two reciprocal levels, namely the “infrastructural” and the “superstructural”. The superstructure denotes the political sphere, evident in structural societal transformations, including legislations. The infrastructure, on the other hand, refers to the personal sphere, involving the pre-political dispositions of each individual citizen. Delport (2009:158) further explains:

> At the core of the infrastructure are individuals’ needs and happiness, their relationships and their ideas about life and development. At the core of infrastructural transformation are the conversions pertaining to these aspects. The infrastructure is more fundamental to social transformation than the superstructure, because to a large extent, the legitimacy and maintenance of the superstructure depends on the infrastructure.

Delport’s views correspond with those of Friedkin (2004) and Oloyede (2009) who also argue that the transformation of a country does not depend merely on changes

in policies and legislation. In essence, it implies transformation of the Self, evident in attitudinal and behavioural adjustments, which then lead to enhanced intercultural interactions between diverse people. Such inner transformation, however, cannot be enforced from outside, but needs to be nurtured and cultivated within each individual (Delport, 2009). Education is a key factor in the enhancement of social transformation in South Africa, therefore strategies to cultivate socially conscious young South Africans who have a non-discriminatory worldview, need to be developed and implemented (James, 2001; DoE, 2002b; Mandela, 2002; Nkomo, Weber & Amsterdam, 2009).

Education institutions are indeed primary sites where difference can be embraced and appreciation and respect for diversity cultivated (NDP, 2011). Although the majority of South African learners and students[2] who attend schools and universities today did not experience apartheid first-hand, acute awareness of these injustices prevails in current society. Jansen refers to this as,

> [K]nowledge embedded in the emotional, psychic, spiritual, social, economic, political, and psychological lives of a community... Knowledge in the blood is habitual, a knowledge that has long been routinized in how a second generation see the world and themselves, and how they understand others (Jansen, 2009: 171).

Unfortunately, the aftermath of apartheid remains evident in South African schools and universities today. Racial tensions are still prevalent (Tabane & Human-Vogel, 2010; Soudien, 2012; Costandius & Bitzer, 2014) and many learners and students still grapple with feelings of resentment or guilt. The educational space in South Africa is indeed characterised by continuous paradoxes, “especially the contradiction of ideas of self, other and community” (Soudien, 2012:19). Discrimination and a distorted understanding of the individual’s place, rights and privilege within society remain evident in South African universities (Soudien, 2008). In addition, apartheid education policies left substantial educational imbalances in the multicultural classroom that often paralyse both individuals and society (Bloch, 2009; Nkomo, Weber & Amsterdam, 2009). This being so, many South African learners and students are confronted with feelings of inferiority, inadequacy and failure which

[2] In this study the term ‘learner’ will be used to refer to children who attend both primary and secondary school. The term ‘student’ will be used for young adults studying at tertiary institutions.

affects their view of Self in relation to the Other, consequently weakening their experience of equality. Many South African learners and students also come from dysfunctional families and are potentially traumatised (Van Niekerk, 2008). Such experiences often result in a sub-standard view of the Self, affecting self-esteem, self-worth and self-confidence (Anderson & Taylor, 2004; Grantham-McGregor, Cheung, Cueto, Glewwe, Richter, Strupp & The International Child Development Steering Group, 2007). In addition, South African schools and universities are increasingly becoming the primary sites where learners and students need to acquire the essential skills to cope with life (Wood, 2009). Academic unpreparedness, lack of mother tongue tuition, and often illiterate parents, however, impede learners' and students' learning abilities (Fischer & Scott, 2011; Bozalek & Boughey, 2012). These constantly serve as reminders of an unjust past. South African classrooms at both school and tertiary level are indeed complex, multifaceted sites characterised by numerous paradoxes and challenges. The problem is therefore that culturally and politically diverse South African students remain divided, and that the healing of the 'divisions of the past', as envisaged in the preamble of the South African *Constitution* (RSA, 1996), has not yet materialised.

1.3 Rationale for the study

There is general consensus that education provides a primary artery for social transformation, as it can nurture inner, personal transformation. This is the space where ideas of the Self, the Other and the world are nurtured and interpersonal relations developed (James, 2001; DoE, 2002b; Mandela, 2002; Delport, 2009; Jansen, 2009; Nkomo *et al.*, 2009; Soudien, 2012). In this regard, several scholars, for example Dewey (1934), Lowenfeld (1957), Eisner (2002) and Gardner (2006), promote the inclusion of arts education in any general education curriculum, as they believe arts can develop the kind of consciousness and sense-making that will generate personal transformation. Arts education has the potential to develop and transform a person's view of the Self, and subsequent interactions with the Other in order to adjust socially to the world (Lowenfeld, 1957; Gardner, 2006). Arts education in a multicultural context, according to Best (1996), also facilitates encounters with the Other, enabling comparisons of recognisable components

across diverse ethno-cultural groups. These encounters are transformative in nature, as it concerns thoughts and feelings about the Self and the Other (Best, 1996). In this regard, dance, due to its embodied nature, provides a unique channel for closer encounters with the Other and the Other's culture (Adinku, 2004; Oliveira, Naveda, Gouyon, Reis, Sousa, & Leman, 2012; Bond & Gerdes, 2012).

Durkheim (1968, cited in Smith & Riley, 2009) furthermore emphasises that the purpose of ancient rituals such as dance and music was not merely to worship the gods, but to strengthen the collective by developing a sense of belonging and solidarity amongst community members (Smith & Riley, 2009). This is a common need evident across societies:

> There can be no society which does not feel the need of upholding and reaffirming at regular intervals the collective sentiments and the collective ideas which makes its unity and its personality (Durkheim, 1968:427, cited in Smith & Riley, 2009:11)

In South Africa, arts education is a compulsory learning area in national school curricula from Reception year (Grade R) till Grade Nine. Arts education encompasses dance, drama, visual arts and music education and is introduced to all Foundation[3], Intermediate[4] and Senior[5] Phase learners (DoE, 2002a; DoE 2002b). Until recently, arts education was referred to as *Arts and Culture* - a learning area exclusively dedicated to the teaching of the arts, whilst also fostering appreciation for 'culture'[6] (DoE, 2000; DoE, 2002a; DoE, 2002b). The aim was to, through *Arts and Culture,* reconcile South African learners by providing opportunities for exposure to diverse South African cultures (DoE, 2000). In this regard, the arts uniquely depict both the similarities and the differences of the diverse South African ethno-cultural groups. In addition, the *Arts and Culture* syllabi promoted knowledge of the Other in order to transfrom the "attitudes and values" of individuals (DoE, 2000:139). The aim was to develop young South African learners who are "anti-discriminatory in their worldview" (DoE, 2002b:6, 9).

[3] Foundation Phase learners: Grades R to 3 (usually ages 5 – 8)
[4] Intermediate Phase learners: Grades 4 to 6 (usually ages 9 - 11)
[5] Senior Phase learners: grades 7 to 9 (usually ages 12-14)
[6] Culture here refers to both culture as a form of popular or high culture, as well as an appreciation for various cultural groups (For further discussion, see Chapter 2).

The most recent national school curriculum, referred to as CAPS[7] (DBE, 2011a; DBE, 2011b – implemented in 2013), has recently integrated the former *Arts and Culture* learning area with a broader learning area, called Life Skills[8]. This learning area is divided into three sub-areas, namely, Creative Arts (which include music, visual arts, drama and dance education), Physical Education, and Personal and Social Wellbeing (DBE, 2011b). The aim of Creative Arts in the current curriculum involves the holistic development of individuals with regard to their creative, cognitive, emotional and social development (DBE, 2011a; DBE, 2011b). The Foundation Phase and Senior Phase curriculum allocates two hours per week to the teaching of Creative Arts, whereas Intermediate Phase learners have one and a half hours of arts education per week. The total number of hours to be dedicated to the Creative Arts is approximately 60 hours per annum (DBE, 2011a; DBE, 2011b, DBE, 2011c).

This study concerns dance education. In this regard, the Foundation Phase curriculum (Grades R to Three) categorises the Creative Arts into smaller sub-sections called, “creative games and skills” and “improvise and interpret” (DBE, 2011a:23). The former include, *inter alia*, participation in “indigenous songs using appropriate movements” (DBE, 2011a:34). Both sections refer to the exploration of “creative movement” with regard to “space”, “levels” and “locomotor movements” (DBE, 2011a:23). The Life Skills curriculum for Intermediate Phase learners (Grades Four to Six) divides the Creative Arts (including dance) into four broad areas:

- Warm-up and games
- Improvise and create
- Read, interpret and perform
- Appreciate and reflect on (DBE, 2011b:47, 48).

[7] CAPS: Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (2011)

[8] Although this name change suggests developing learners’ skills, values and attitudes ‘to cope with life’, this policy document does not explicitly refer to strengthening learners’ cultural awareness, sensitivity and intercultural communication. Indeed, no mention is made as to the rationale for assimilating the former *Arts and Culture* learning area. This being so, the value of arts education as a vehicle to teach skills, values and attitudes required in order to cope with life, is omitted. Critiquing new policy is however not the purpose of this study.

The first component addresses safe practice of dance, such as teaching correct technique and warm-up exercises. "Improvise and create" refers to exploration of creative movement concepts. "Read, interpret and perform" focuses on the interpretation and performance of South African cultural dances, and "Appreciate and reflect on" focus on the social contexts of current cultural dances of South Africa. References to learning "cultural dances" (DBE, 2011b:18, 47) are made, alongside examples of both traditional and current dances associated with particular ethno-cultural groups (DBE, 2011b:47).

The Senior Phase curriculum[9] presents dance as part of "Creative Arts" (DBE, 2011c) and focuses mainly on African dance, ballet and contemporary dance forms. The dance curriculum comprises of three sections. "Performance" focuses on dance technique, whereas "Improvisation and composition" regard the design of dances guided by specific dance elements, partner work, or external stimuli. "Dance theory" encompasses dance vocabulary, analysis of choreography, and the comparisons of different South African dance forms.

Dance education is thus introduced to all Foundation[10], Intermediate[11] and Senior[12] Phase learners (DoE, 2002; DBE, 2011a; DBE, 2011b; DBE, 2011c). Due to the integrated nature of education in these phases, the arts are normally taught by non-arts specialist generalist teachers (Herbst, De Wet & Rijsdijk, 2005; Vermeulen, 2009; Browne, 2011; Delport & Browne, 2015). As a result, initial teacher education institutions need to equip generalist pre-service student teachers (PSTs) with the necessary knowledge and skills to facilitate meaningful arts education experiences for learners. With regard to dance education, this means that PSTs need to learn how to enable young learners to explore creative movement concepts and perform a range of South African and other ethno-cultural dances, as stipulated in the national school curriculum. They are also required to learn how to implement warm-up exercises and appropriate techniques for the safe execution of movements.

[9] This dance education course did not cater for the Senior Phase curriculum.
[10] Foundation Phase learners: Grades R to 3 (usually ages 5 – 8)
[11] Intermediate Phase learners: Grades 4 to 6 (usually ages 9 - 11)
[12] Senior Phase learners: Grades 7 to 9 (usually ages 12-14)

This study is based on a particular dance education course presented to first year student teachers, specialising in either Foundation or Intermediate Phase, as part of their general education training, at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. This particular dance education course aims to equip the student teacher to:

- Describe and identify the basic elements in dance whilst observing dance movements.
- Experience and apply the basic elements of dance during involvement in practical activities.
- Design and present dance activities to Foundation/Intermediate Phase learners.
- Implement teaching strategies and classroom activities appropriate for Foundation/Intermediate Phase learners.

In essence, this dance education course aims to prepare generalist PSTs to facilitate dance education in primary schools. As such, this dance education course focuses predominantly on practical and pedagogical aspects associated with the execution of 'creative movement activities' and 'ethno-cultural dances' in the classroom. Creative movement activities comprise 90 percent of each dance education session, whereas the other 10 percent involves the teaching of ethno-cultural dances. This is, therefore, essentially a *practical* course that involves students' active, bodily participation in creative movement activities and ethno-cultural dances in order to cultivate embodied experiences of these. During creative movement activities, students are, for example, encouraged to explore the elements of dance whilst simultaneously experiencing particular dance teaching strategies. In addition, students are exposed to a specific set of aesthetic criteria which facilitates 'good' dance practice in the general education classroom.

This particular dance education course comprises a total of seven lectures. Each lecture lasts 75 minutes, resulting in approximately nine contact hours in total. Inadequate time unfortunately impacts on skill, aesthetic, technique and pedagogic training, allowing only a brief overview of subject content material. Due to time constraints, strategic decisions thus need to be made in terms of focus and pedagogy.

Students attend the dance lectures in groups of approximately 30 students each. As alluded to earlier, the student composition is diverse in terms of culture, political orientation, dance background, class and gender. In this study, the Foundation Phase group included predominantly white and Coloured female students, whereas the Intermediate Phase group was more diverse, including male and female, as well as African and Indian students. The vast majority of students had limited or no dance background.

The diversity of students and the limited time allocated to this dance education course compelled me to structure lectures in such a way that students' conceptualisation of the basic elements of movement is optimised. During the lectures I also aim to cultivate an understanding of the basic aesthetic criteria for movement evaluation in the classroom (thus cultivating an aesthetic paradigm for the teaching of dance education). A further aim is to develop basic dance skills and demonstrate appropriate teaching strategies. As such, each lecture focuses on a specific element of dance. After the component has been explained, the students are provided with a set of specific objectives (which usually include the 'new' and 'previously taught' elements) and asked to create a dance. Approximately 15-20 minutes are allocated to this group activity. Thereafter, each group is expected to demonstrate their dance to the class. I then verbally reflect on the nature of the performance and formative feedback is provided to the particular groups. Formative assessment also includes a written assignment, whereby students are required to design a dance education lesson for either Foundation or Intermediate Phase learners. Again, students are provided with written feedback regarding the appropriateness of the envisaged activity. Towards the end of the academic year, students are assessed in the form of a written summative examination which focuses on all the arts.

This study focused on the experiences of first year generalist PSTs as they engaged in this particular seven session dance education programme described above.

1.4 Research question

This study set out to explore the proposition: *Dance education, as it pertains to this study, may have the potential to promote social cohesion in post-apartheid South Africa*. Subsequently, this study aimed to interrogate meanings and locations of social cohesion in the students' experiences of this particular dance education course. The theoretical section explored connections between culture, social cohesion and dance education, whereas the empirical section investigated the following research question: *What was the impact of this first year dance education course on a culturally and politically diverse group of students in post-apartheid South Africa?* The following sub-questions directed my quest for answers to the above question:

- **Sub-question 1:** *What meanings did the students take from their participation in this dance education course?*
- **Sub-question 2:** *How did this dance education course influence the students' sense of Self and of Other*?
- **Sub-question 3:** *How did this dance education course facilitate spaces for cohesion?*

These guiding questions determined the trajectory of the study and will be further explored in the respective chapters of this thesis.

1.5 Contextualising this study

The NMMU Faculty of Education, where I am employed on a part-time basis as a music education and dance education lecturer, came into being in 2005 as a result of the merger between three former higher education institutions (HEI) in the Nelson Mandela Metropole, namely the University of Port Elizabeth (UPE), Vista University and Port Elizabeth Technikon. The merger, a complex process which involved ideological, epistemological and pedagogical renegotiations and transformations, was the result of a national restructuring of the higher education landscape in post-apartheid South Africa.

Many academics employed in the faculty, for example, attended school and university during the apartheid era when the vast majority of state-funded higher education institutions and teacher training colleges were merely complying with the status quo. The vast majority of staff went "through the mill of fundamental pedagogics" (Morrow, 2007:135), with educational philosophies grounded in positivist certainty and rationality, and reality assumed to be stable and predictable (Cullen & Hill, 2013). Fundamental pedagogics propagated *inter alia* the idea that the child is a non-adult *en-route* to adulthood, which, in essence, required a "proper adult" to ensure a meaningful process of this gradual conquest (Landman, Kilian, Swanepoel & Bodenstein, 1982:3). Since fundamental pedagogics adopted Christianity as the 'only' philosophy of life, all forms of 'isms', such as pragmatism, liberalism, Marxism, existentialism and humanism were seen as undermining Christianity and thus, rejected. Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1975) and other progressive educational texts propagating critical pedagogy were banned as it was regarded as promoting 'liberal, communist' ideology. In general, educational discourse at most state-controlled teacher education institutions during these years disregarded the impact of poverty, racism, and cultural struggles on the education of the vast majority of South African children, producing an "epistemological veil" (Apple, 2011: 223).

Thoughtful engagement with profound transformation was thus needed. As teacher educators, we had to revisit and interrogate our individual ideologies, philosophies, epistemologies, pedagogies and ontologies in a post-colonial, post-apartheid, post-merger faculty of education (Zinn, Geduld, Delport & Jordaan, 2014). We had to redefine who we were, not only as a collective, but also as individuals. In May 2011, a new Vision and Mission for the faculty was defined, which indicated a clear commitment to cultivating a "vibrant, socially just and democratic society" (NMMU: Online):

> We are committed to cultivating passionate, engaged, knowledgeable, effective and compassionate teachers, researchers and leaders into critical thinkers, and agents of hope, change and social justice through practising humanising pedagogies.

In addition, the faculty adopted *humanising pedagogies* and a *culture of critical reflection and inquiry* as the two 'golden threads' that permeate our education of future teachers (Rodgers, 2002; Dewey, 1938). This means that as a faculty, we see the existence and expansion of our students' humanity, as at the heart of our pedagogy (Salazar, 2013; Bartolome, 1994; Freire 1973). All students and all teachers are human beings and equal in their humanity. We are all in the process of 'becoming' and the purposes of education is to extend this humanity through opportunities for creativity, imagination, and interaction with others and the world (Zinn *et al*, 2014).

Thoughtful engagement with our conceptualisation of an envisaged 'South African educator', both at tertiary as well as school level, was also necessary. In this regard, the faculty views South African educators as 'transformative intellectuals' (Giroux, 1988) that merge scholarly reflection and practice as they strive to educate their students and learners in becoming active citizens. As such, in addition to the 'training of practical skills', lecturers are committed to the nurturing of student teachers who are engaged, public intellectuals, able and willing to contribute to the development of a democratic, liberated society. However, since universities and schools are contested and biased spaces that are economically, culturally and socially linked to politics, power and control (Giroux, 1988), our task is not to cast our students into predetermined moulds, but rather, to inspire and provoke human agency, enabling our students to become self-determining critical agents, striving for an autonomous and democratic society. As such, we aim to problematise knowledge, granting our students an active voice in their learning experiences (Giroux, 1988).

My approach to dance education is rooted in a critical pedagogical teaching framework (Freire, 1975). I aim to teach in a manner that prompts the students to learn and discover knowledge for themselves through thought-provoking questions, dialogic engagement and problem-solving activities, rather than through a 'banking method' (Freire, 1975; Adams, 2007).

1.6 Theoretical framework

This study is rooted in 'symbolic interactionism', as proposed by George Herbert Mead (1863-1931), Herbert Blumer (1900-1987) and Norman Kent Denzin (1941-) (see Blumer, 1969, 1980; Fine, 1993; Atkinson & Housley, 2003; Plummer, 2004; David, 2010). Symbolic interactionism, as existing working theory, constituted the philosophical "blueprint" of the overall inquiry (Grant & Osanloo, 2014:13) and provided the lens through which I approached this study.

Symbolic interactionism is premised on the assumption that human beings hold the capacity to produce symbols of meaning, which in turn enables the production of history, culture and communication (Plummer, 2004). Meaning is consequently viewed as "social products", formed through social interaction. In other words, meaning is created "in and through the defining activities of people as they interact" (Blumer, 1969:3). Human beings' reactions towards 'objects' (which include people) depend on the meanings these 'objects' hold for each individual (Blumer, 1969).

Cooley (1907) reminds us that a person's cognitive processes are connected to the thoughts of predecessors, companions and the collective. An individual's interpretation of meaning is consequently related to these. Interpretation, however, requires more than mere application of conventional meanings, it requires a process by which meanings are re-evaluated and adjusted as instruments for the generation of action (Blumer, 1969). As such, meanings can be transformed in order to adjust reaction and social conduct towards 'objects', including people (Atkinson & Housley, 2003). The revision of meaning occurs within the individual during an inner dialogue through which a person communicates and interacts with the Self (Mead, 1912, 1913; Blumer, 1986; Atkinson & Housley, 2003). It is through these interactions with the Self that individuals are able to construct conscious action towards the Other and the world, rather than respond through mere automation (Blumer, 1969). Meanings thus evolve and are often ambiguous. Human beings, situations and society also evolve, adapt, and develop. This implies that interactions with objects, the Other and the Self change over time and circumstance (Plummer, 2004). Symbolic interactionism, therefore, sees society as "people engaged in living" (Blumer, 1986:20). Life consists of interactions with others, during which persons both

designate and interpret meaning in order to develop and adapt to others and society. In other words, reciprocal interactions with others cause acts through which life and society are organised. Symbolic interactionism thus focuses on ideas of the Self, how the Self adapts to others, how the Self constructs order, as well as how the Self constructs civilisation (Plummer, 2004).

Since the Self is social, hence inseparable from social life, the focus is not only on the Self, but also on "collective behaviour" and "how people do things together" (Becker, 1986 cited in Plummer, 2004:1105, 1106; Atkinson & Housley, 2003). Denzin (1969) accordingly sees symbolic interactionism as predicated on the following methodological principles:

- Meaning is informed by a social construct, which necessitates an investigation into both the meaning-making system of individuals, and the implications of interactions between meaning-making systems.
- Certain interpretations of meaning are implicit and others are negotiated.
- Meaning fluctuates during interaction, as interpretation of meaning is negotiated.
- The locality of interactions affects behaviour. These include particular persons involved, the environment of the interaction, associated meanings during interaction, and the amount of time used for the interaction.
- Since interactions regard both fixed and altered assumptions, research strategies are required to inquire into both. Triangulation processes are thus necessary (Denzin, 1969).

This study focuses on interactions between students in a culturally and politically diverse dance education classroom as they make sense of the Self in relation to the Other, and as they alter meanings and conduct during interaction. As such, culture is viewed as a social system which influences both the production and interpretation of meaning. This theoretical framework was therefore applied to the empirical data to determine to what extent, during dance education experiences, interactions with the Other may prompt the revisiting, redefining and amendment of previously held perspectives and dispositions of the Self and the Other, potentially transforming the manner in which these students construct their view of society.

1.7 Relevance and significance of this study

It is my contention that active involvement in this dance education course can provide spaces where culturally and politically diverse individuals can renegotiate ideas of Self, Other and society, and in so doing, transform perspectives and dispositions towards each other. Such personal transformations can potentially alter the interpersonal behaviour of diverse individuals during intercultural encounters in a manner that can facilitate experiences of cohesion and community amongst diverse citizens. This study therefore presents a strategy to cultivate social cohesion amongst culturally and politically diverse persons in a post-apartheid South African society. In this study I thus argue that this dance education course could be considered as a potential space where social cohesion amongst diverse South African students can be nurtured. Hence, this study provides South Africa with a vehicle through which the bridging of 'the divisions of the past' can be nurtured at intrapersonal as well as interpersonal level, as it facilitates a form of community building, 'united in its diversity'.

1.8 Concept clarification

The key concepts implicit in this study are c*ulture*, *social cohesion, dance* and *dance education*, which will be briefly clarified below, and discussed in more detail in the forthcoming chapters.

1.8.1 Culture

The term 'culture*'* is viewed as one of the most difficult and complex concepts in the English language as it has had a remarkable number of diverse definitions recorded in scholarly literature (Spillman, 2002; Edles, 2002; Inglis, 2005; Smith & Riley, 2009; Bauman, 2010). In this study, the term 'culture' will refer to a communal way of life, in other words, a life shared with other people (Edles, 2002; Anderson & Taylor, 2004). In addition, culture is also viewed as a meaning-making system that influences a person's interpretation of the world, a person's relation to the world, and

a person's reactions to the world (Swidler, 1986; Edles, 2002; Spillman, 2002; Alexander, J. 2003; Inglis, 2005; Smith & Riley, 2009).

However, both these definitions encompass ethnic culture, popular culture and social culture. As such, this study will use the term *ethno-culture* when reference is made to culture in the context of ethnicity. 'Ethnic groups*'* is defined by Max Weber as "human groups (other than kinship groups) which cherish a belief in their common origins of such a kind that it provides the basis for the creation of a community" [insertion in the original] (Weber, 1922, cited in Stone & Piya, 2007:n.p.). Ethnic groups consequently have a strong shared belief with regard to their origin, which can include a shared religion, language, traditions and culture (Stone & Piya, 2007). In this thesis, the term 'ethno-culture' will therefore be used to refer to a communal way of life of a particular ethnic group, as they share a particular meaning-making system. Accordingly, the term 'ethno-cultural dances' will refer to dances associated with particular ethno-cultural groups. In addition, the term 'culturally diverse society' will be used to refer to a multicultural society, that is, a society that encompasses diverse ethno-cultural groups.

1.8.2 Social cohesion

Green, Janmaat and Han (2009:1) describe social cohesion as "the forces that bind society together". In South Africa, citizens are seen to be 'united' through a shared commitment to the values of the *Constitution* that promote social justice, diversity, equality, human dignity, as well as freedom of expression, thought, religion, belief and association (RSA, 1996; Chipkin & Ngqulunga, 2008; Zuma, 2012). *Ubuntu*, which stems from a complex African philosophy, has also been adopted as an official core Constitutional value (Teffo, 1996; Keevy, 2011). The Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) consequently describes social cohesion as

> … the degree of social integration and inclusion in communities and society at large, and the extent to which mutual solidarity finds expression among individuals and communities .... [A] community or society is cohesive to the extent that the inequalities, exclusions and disparities based on ethnicity, gender, class, nationality, age, disability or any other distinctions which engender divisions, distrust and conflict are reduced and/or eliminated in a planned sustained manner. This, with community members and citizens as

> active participants, working together for the attainment of shared goals, designed and agreed upon to improve the living conditions for all (DAC, 2013:1).

Social cohesion therefore regards the extent to which all South African citizens interact, participate and are valued, both within smaller communities, as well as within the broader South African society. Jordan (2005, n.p.) refers to “the degree of harmony, cooperation and mutual confidence that exists within any given society”, whereas Chipkin and Ngqulunga (2008:61) highlight the “affective bond between citizens” as key indicators of social cohesion. In this regard, one needs to note that social cohesion in the South African society is distinctive, as it entails maintaining a delicate balance between celebrating the uniqueness of each ethno-cultural group, whilst also establishing sustainable unity and harmony within the multicultural community (RSA, 1996; Jordan, 2005; Fleetwood, 2012). Cohesion is not predicated on notions of assimilation, thus, promoting conformity to the ruling culture. Neither does it envisage a ‘melting pot’ which endorses a common national homogeneity by ‘stripping others of their otherness’, thus, devaluing distinctive ethno-cultural identities (Van den Berghe, 1981, cited in Cohen, 1985; Bauman, 2001: 91-93). On the contrary, the South African *Constitution* (RSA, 1996) encourages diverse ethno-cultural groups to embrace and celebrate their respective ethno-cultural groups. Social cohesion in South Africa is therefore grounded in the country’s motto, “united in our diversity” (RSA, 1996:1249). This study has been informed by the above conceptualisations of social cohesion.

1.8.3 Dance

Although defining dance is a complex matter, dance is generally described as the movement of the body through space, over time and with effort, in order to express an idea or emotion (Royce, 1977; Hanna, 1979, 2008; Kealiinohomoku, 2001). It refers to a combination of bodily movements, purposefully patterned together in a specific predetermined sequence (Hanna, 2008). Dance movements are intentionally selected, controlled and rhythmical and the structure and style are usually pre-described (Kealiinohomoku, 2001; Vissicaro, 2004). In this regard, Kealiinohomoku (2001:38) defines dance as “a transient mode of expression,

performed in a given form and style by the human body moving in space". Both Royce (1977) and Hanna (1979, 1999, 2008) regard dance as predicated on the physical, emotional and rhythmic behaviour of human beings, and therefore a common feature of human behaviour. In this regard, Hanna (2008:492) holds that dance is

> … human behaviour composed of purposeful, intentionally rhythmical, and culturally influenced sequences of nonverbal body movements and stillness in time and space and with effort.

Dance is distinguished from other forms of human behaviour as it is planned, composed and purposeful, although it may at times resemble movements of everyday activities. A dance movement which represents the washing of laundry, for example, may not be an exact replication of routine actions and motions executed on a daily basis as part of everyday human activity (Hanna, 2008). Moreover, these bodily movements, which include actions and gestures, vary across diverse ethno-cultural groups, dance cultures and environments (Hanna, 2008; Vogeley & Roepstorff, 2009; Kringelbach & Skinner, 2012).

1.8.4 Dance education

In this study, the term 'dance education' will be used to refer to dance teaching strategies particularly aimed at fostering the general holistic development of an individual (Koff, 2000; Eddy, 2009). In this regard, Koff (2000) distinguishes between 'dance training' and 'dance education'. The aim of 'dance training' is understood to ultimately equip a dancer with the necessary skills, control and technique towards mastering a performance, therefore applied in relation to dance-as-performance art. The aim of 'dance education', on the other hand, is to enable all individuals to develop requisite skills for personal expression through bodily movement in a nonverbal manner (Koff, 2000). Whereas 'dance training' is end product-orientated, 'dance education' foregrounds the creative processes involved in the dance-making process (Karkou & Sanderson, 2001).

1.8.5 Pre-service student teachers (PSTs)

Pre-service student teachers (PSTs) refer to undergraduate students enrolled at teacher education institutions for courses that prepare them for their future role as teachers in either Foundation Phase (Grades R-3), Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-6), Senior Phase (Grades 5-7) or Further Education and Training (Grades 10-12). In this study the focus was on PSTs learning to teach in the Foundation and Intermediate Phase.

1.9 Research methodology and design

This study focuses primarily on human behaviour and is situated in the interpretive paradigm. Epistemologically, all human communication and expression is grounded within particular cultural and societal structures which influence human behaviour. Culture is thus recognised as a meaning-making system that shapes interpretation and action. In addition, this study subscribes to Bourdieu's notion of *habitus,* to explain those structures that generate action (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984 as cited in Lizardo, 2009). Since social and cultural structures affect interpretation, subjectivity in research is acknowledged. Ontologically, an interpretation merely provides one particular perspective of reality, without proclamations of absolute truth, or the only possible interpretation. An interpretation is simply an interpretation aimed at understanding a phenomenon. Although this study is situated in the interpretive paradigm, notions of experiential knowledge and knowledge creation, as suggested by Heron and Reason (1997), are also adopted from the participatory paradigm.

This was a qualitative case study. The convenient sampling method was employed (Daniel, 2012). Participants included 80 pre-service student teachers (PSTs) enrolled in a first year Bachelor's degree in Education (B Ed) at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. All students registered for a general dance education course, facilitated by myself as dance education lecturer. Data were generated through open-ended questionnaires, students' reflective journals and focus group interviews. An open coding approach was used to analyse the data. In other words, once recorded, data were organised into codes, categories and themes in a manner that would provide insight into the research question (Punch, 2009; De Vos,

Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2011; Waring, 2012). The three data sets were analysed separately. The categories and themes of the three data sets corresponded with each other, which enabled amalgamation for presentation and discussion. Two independent coders validated the findings.

This study complied with the ethical measures stipulated by the Belmont Report (DoHEW, 1979) as well as the Ethics Committee of Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, which granted permission for the execution of the study. Participation was voluntary, and no students were compelled to participate in the study. The nature of the study was explained to the participants and anonymity guaranteed. Students provided written consent to the use and re-use of the data for research purposes. During the execution of the empirical investigation, each participant was respected at all times as a self-governing agent. As such, I hold that this study has been conducted ethically.

1.10 Delimitations and limitations of this case study

As mentioned earlier, this study confined itself to first-year student teachers enrolled for a Bachelor's degree in either Foundation Phase or Intermediate Phase studies in the Faculty of Education at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, one of 25 universities in South Africa. The students' experiences of a particular dance education course was the primary focus of the investigation. Although segregation in society is also caused by divides associated with class, economy, gender, disability, sexual and religious orientations, this study focused primarily on segregation caused by race and ethnicity. Similarly, it is acknowledged that the potential of dance education to promote social cohesion in South Africa constitutes only one of several other strategies to be considered.

1.10.1 Further considerations

Dance education, and in particular, arts education, does not occur in isolation. First year student teachers are also engaged in other modules that introduce them to theories of child development, learning styles, values in education and general

communication practices. Students are also continuously encouraged to reflect on and integrate their learning with knowledge gained via other components of their programme.

1.10.2 Limitations of this study

This study aimed to investigate the meanings and localities of social cohesion in dance education. It is acknowledged that physical disabilities as well as other moral, cultural or religious convictions might have prevented some individuals from participating. Such instances of non-participation consequently limited the inclusivity of the dance education programme.

Further limitations of this study will be discussed throughout the study. These include limitations of the literature review, which regard the absence of marginalised voices in the construction of social cohesion as it pertains to South African discourse. In addition, limitations of the research design and execution thereof regard the absence of negative voices in the data, as a result of employing a positively loaded question for the empirical inquiry. The absence of an inquiry into the subtle power relationships between participants also posed a limitation to the data analysis. In addition, reflections of the teaching praxis of this study highlighted the focus on a particular set of aesthetic criteria, as a potential limitation of this study.

1.11 Overview of chapters

This chapter provided an orientation to this study. The historical context and background was explained. This provided the rationale for the study, culminating in the formulation of the research question. Key concepts to be applied in the study have been clarified and will be explored in more detail in subsequent chapters. Symbolic interactionism as a grounding theoretical framework was also discussed. I also provided a brief overview of the research methodology employed.

It is my contention that a study aimed at addressing social challenges associated with a post-conflict multicultural society such as South Africa requires investigation

into the meaning of 'culture', and its significance within a culturally diverse society. Furthermore, demarcation of 'social cohesion' pertaining to South African discourse is also necessary, since diverse societies foreground distinctive applications. **Chapter Two** thus discusses the notion of culture and social cohesion, as informed by Western literature, African and Asian philosophy and South African discourse. In **Chapter Three**, the concepts of dance and dance education are explored with particular focus on multiculture, drawing on the views of various seminal scholars. This chapter concludes with an exploratory inquiry into theoretical connections between culture, South African social cohesion discourse and dance. **Chapter Four** explains the research process, and in **Chapter Five** the data that emerged from the empirical investigation are presented and discussed. **Chapter Six** concludes the study with an explication of the outcomes of the investigation, as I aimed to answer the fundamental research question, namely: *What was the impact of this first year dance education course on a culturally and politically diverse group of students in post-apartheid South Africa?*

1.12 Conclusion of this chapter

Twenty years after the official demise of apartheid, South African society is still characterised by schisms, indicating that legislative changes are inadequate in bringing about the kind of social transformation required to establish social cohesion. Strategies to eliminate division, exclusion, non-participation and inequality in a planned and sustained way are required. More specifically, strategies aimed at prompting and enabling personal transformation need to be refined and implemented. This study set out to contribute to such strategies by exploring the meanings and localities of social cohesion in a dance education course.

CHAPTER TWO

Culture and social cohesion

2.1 Introduction

This study seeks to explore the proposition: *Dance education, as it pertains to this study, may have the potential to promote social cohesion in post-apartheid South Africa.* Thus, it seeks to interrogate meanings and locations of social cohesion in dance education, in particular, amongst a politically and culturally diverse group of students in post-apartheid South Africa. As such, this chapter constitutes an in-depth theoretical discussion of the concept of 'social cohesion'. However, given the predicaments associated with cohesion in a *culturally diverse* society such as South Africa, these discussions also require deeper explorations into the notion of 'culture'. This chapter thus consists of two distinct parts:

- **Part One** commences with a preliminary study of 'culture' as concept, followed by a discussion of the predicaments of culture in a post-conflict multicultural society, specifically as it pertains to South Africa.
- **Part Two** discusses various meanings and conceptualisations of social cohesion as they manifest within three distinct spheres. These are Western literature, African and Asian philosophy and South African discourse.

2.2 Part One: Culture

2.2.1 What is 'culture'?

'Culture' is an ambiguous and complex term, commonly used to refer to a group of people sharing communal norms, values, beliefs, attitudes and symbols, for example the Xhosa culture (Edles, 2002; Spillman, 2002; Inglis, 2005; Smith & Riley, 2009; Bauman, 2010; Griswold, 2013). However, 'culture' can also be used to refer to an ethnically diverse group of people who share common norms, beliefs, values, attitudes and symbols, with regard to age, affinities, or occupation, for example, a 'student culture' or a 'hip-hop culture' (Inglis, 2005). The concept of 'culture' is

furthermore often applied in relation to the arts, for example music, visual art, dance, theatre and literature (Bauman, 2011; Griswold, 2013). In this regard, it is also often used to depict a 'cultured person', who is familiar with so-called elitist art forms associated with Western art (Edles, 2002; Inglis, 2005; Smith & Riley, 2009; Bauman, 2011).

Further ambiguity exists since the above terms often intersect. Cultural activities such as music and dance are often viewed as the cultural products, artefacts or expression of the ideas, values and beliefs of a particular way of life. This being so, the "ideas, values and beliefs of a group are embodied in symbols and artefacts" (Inglis, 2005:7). In this regard, artefacts such as dances become cultural resources and heritage[13] as they serve as embodied artistic and symbolic representations of a particular way of life passed down to each generation, to "each culture" and "the whole of humankind" (UNESCO, 1989, 2003, cited in Axelsson, Angelstam, Degerman, Teitelbaum, Andersson, Elbakidze & Drotz, 2013:217). Cultural artefacts and forms of expression, such as dance and music, whilst articulating a particular culture, also serve to distinguish one cultural group from another (Edles, 2002; Spillman, 2002; Inglis, 2005; Smith & Riley, 2009; Bauman, 2010).

Although Johnson and Christensen (2012:389) distinguish between 'material' and 'non-material' culture[14] to avoid ambiguity, Bauman (2010) promotes a more fluid and liquid conceptualisation of 'culture', as it allows for different impacts, interplays, intentions and actions.

2.2.1.1 Culture is a way of life

As mentioned above, the term culture is commonly used to refer to a communal way of life associated with a particular group of people (Edles, 2002; Anderson & Taylor, 2004). From birth, culture is transferred by relatives and caregivers via dialogue, habits and behaviour, as it is uncritically acquired and adopted by the newcomer

[13] Cultural heritage encompasses both tangible heritage, such as monuments, paintings and architecture, and intangible heritage such as "practices, representations, expressions, knowledge [and] skills" (UNESCO, 2003 cited in Axelsson, 2013:217)

[14] These authors regard arts, artefacts and cultural activities, such as dance, as constituting 'material' culture, whereas a particular way of life is seen as 'non-material' culture.

(Geertz, 1993; Taylor, 1994; Anderson & Taylor, 2004; Inglis, 2005; Johnson & Christensen, 2012). In this regard, culture is seen as learnt behaviour. In addition, culture unifies members of a particular cultural group, generating an imagined sense of belonging to a particular community, irrespective of space and time (Cohen, 1985; Anderson, 1991; Geertz, 1993; Eisner, 2002; Kidd, 2002; Jenkins, 2004; Andrews, 2007).

Inherent in the distinctions between cultures are the notions of *sameness* and *difference*, giving rise to the formation of boundaries between cultural groups. Although these boundaries are imaginary (Cohen, 1985; Anderson, 1991; Spillman, 2002; Jenkins, 2004; Andrews, 2007), they tend to both include and exclude as they distinguish insiders from outsiders. Culture is therefore both inclusive and exclusive, and although it unifies people, it also causes separation (Edles, 2002; Spillman, 2002; Inglis, 2005).

The term culture stems from the Latin word *cultura* which means to grow or cultivate (Oxford Dictionaries, 2014: Online). Culture is thus not static, but continuously evolving and nurtured by members of the particular community. Cultures evolve *inter alia* due to encounters with other cultures, or due to new ideas which continuously emerge from within the cultural group. Contemporary cultural beliefs and practices therefore often deviate from the original culture's values and traditions, although these maintain a strong coherence with its past (Gutman, 1994; Rockefeller, 1994; Nussbaum, 1997; Smith & Riley, 2009; Bauman, 2010). Any attempt to define a particular culture in essentialist ways therefore contradicts its very essence, namely its dynamic nature.

South African population, as mentioned in Chapter One, consists of a variety of different ethno-cultural groups. These ethno-cultural groups are in a continuous state of evolve, as they encounter other ethno-cultural groups within South African society, modernity and diverse localities. This is evident with regards to South African Indians whose migration to South Africa commenced as early as 500 BC, intensifying towards the 19th century, between the years 1860-1911 (Dickinson, 2014). Over the years, South African Indians have cultivated their own way of life, which focuses primarily on living in South Africa than on maintaining ties with India.

Although they continue to celebrate their ‘Indianness’ through food, clothing and performing arts programmes[15], they “have little interest in claims that they belong to an Indian diaspora”[16] (Dickinson, 2014:34). Hence, English has been adopted as means of communication. In addition, the diverse Coloured population have little connection to the cultural identity and heritage of their countries of origin. The white Afrikaner identity is also mostly detached from their Dutch descendants. The reality is that, all be it complex, each ethno-cultural group represented in South Africa has cultivated their own, unique ethno-cultural way of life, traditions and identity.

2.2.1.2 Culture is a meaning-making system

Culture essentially functions as a meaning-making system. It signifies a combination of codes, symbols, social imagery, attitudes and beliefs which form the foundation of meaning-making within a particular community (Swidler, 1986; Edles, 2002; Spillman, 2002; Alexander, J. 2003; Inglis, 2005; Smith & Riley, 2009). Culture thus serves as communal structure enabling people to explain and interpret the world around them. Both Geertz (1993:4) and Edles (2002:4) cite Tylor (1958:1871) who describes culture as

> … that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.

Culture thus constitutes an intricate amalgam of specific knowledges, values, beliefs and customs, associated with a particular society. It organises meaning and behaviour, defining the manner in which a particular group of people or society live (Geertz, 1993; Anderson & Taylor, 2004). In this regard, Geertz (1993:14) sees culture as “a context”, and “the webs of significance he himself [man himself] has spun”. These webs consist of “analytic dimensions of meaning and value”, including “artefacts, norms, customs, habits, practices, rituals, symbols, categories, codes, ideas, values, discourse, worldviews, ideologies, or principles” (Spillman, 2002:4). However, since meaning and interpretation are active and fluid processes, these

[15] Indian dance forms remain an essential part of South African Indian culture and heritage.
[16] South African Indians have considered South Africa their home for longer than 150 years. In addition, India placed sanctions on South Africa for thirty years during the apartheid era, which disconnected the bonds between South African Indians and India.

dimensions remain incomplete. Culture thus becomes a complex system of intrinsic meaning-making structures, informing and influencing continuous individual and collective interpretations of the world (Geertz, 1993; Spillman, 2002; Inglis, 2005).

2.2.1.2.1 Culture and reality

Ethno-culture in particular, influences individual and collective interpretation of symbols (such as dance), behaviour, actions and circumstances, generating a particular perspective of the world. Individuals inadvertently view reality through the lenses of their own particular ethno-cultural orientation. Geertz (1975:216-217, cited in Smith & Riley, 2009:189) thus describes culture as the "blueprints" used to make both cognitive and emotional meaning of a lived world.

> People cannot strip themselves from their cultural equipment to step socially naked into neutral space. Rather, they view it [reality], interpret it, from their own cultural perspectives (Cohen, 1985:98).

Since people view reality through the lens of culture, people from various ethno-cultural groups have different perspectives of the world (Young, 2010). Culture

> … cannot altogether be brought to consciousness; and the culture of which we are wholly conscious is never the whole of culture (Elliot, 1948:94, 107, cited in Edles, 2002:223)

Reality is thus not neutral and always influenced, mostly subconsciously, by one's cultural orientation. Each individual interprets and views their reality, that is, the world, the Self, the Self in relation to world, and the Self in relation to the Other, through their meaning-making system. Therefore, since culture as a meaning-making system is inherent in the individual, individuals often fail to recognise their own interpretations and perspectives of the world, as influenced by their culturally informed ways of thinking. Moreover, in a culturally diverse society such as South Africa, multiple realities are required to co-exist. Intercultural encounters are therefore complicated and obscured when diverse cultural lenses produce diverse interpretations of the same encounter, often causing misunderstanding, miscommunication and confusion.

2.2.1.2.2 Culture and identity

Culture as a meaning-making system thus influences the way the Self sees itself as individual, as well as in relation to society (Kidd, 2002; Leary & Tangney, 2003; Giessen, 2011). One's sense of Self is however continuously affected by dialogical associations and close relationships with significant Others, which influence and shape one's identity from birth (Gutman, 1994; Taylor, 1994; Swartz, 2010; Giessen, 2011). In this regard, Gardner (1993:243) holds that sense of Self is a result of the "balance struck by every individual – and every culture – between the promptings of 'inner feelings' and the pressures of 'other persons' [original emphasis]". Thus, identity becomes a negotiated equilibrium between intrapersonal perspectives and interpersonal encounters (Gardner, 1993; Jenkins, 2004). As such identity is never static, but always in a state of flux (Gutman, 1994; Taylor, 1994; Bell, 2007; Swartz, 2010).

A person's sense of Self is constructed through interpersonal communication and social interaction, and can be concomitantly cultural, historical, social and personal (Kidd, 2002; Gill & Goodson, 2011). As such, an individual's perception of Self as a member of the collective is informed by his or her ethno-cultural identity, which is predicated on those values, traditions, attitudes, beliefs and way of life imparted, socialised and acquired from birth and to which the individual subscribes (Geertz, 1993; Kidd, 2002; Leary & Tangney, 2003; Anderson & Taylor, 2004; Inglis, 2005; Johnson & Christensen, 2012). In this regard, Castells (2006) defines ethno-cultural identity as the manner in which one makes meaning of one's cultural or historical heritage. He describes ethno-cultural identity as a construction, arguing that all cultural events are founded on experience and influenced by historical and cultural backgrounds, as well as linguistic and geographic settings. Ethno-cultural identity thus involves both personal as well as collective orientation (Giessen, 2011).

Gardner (1993) sees an ethno-cultural group's identity also as a negotiated equilibrium, since it distinguishes the particular group's values, attitudes, beliefs, and morals from those of the Other. Since each ethno-cultural group has its own history, its sense of Self and Other will necessarily be unique, manifesting a unique balance between the intrapersonal and the interpersonal (Gardner, 1993; Lash &

Featherstone, 2001; Mead, 1934, cited in Anderson & Taylor, 2004). Certain ethno-cultural groups, for example, believe that personal emotions should not be revealed. This is in direct contrast to other ethno-cultural groups, where public expression of emotions characterises their unique ethno-cultural identity. Subsequently, when diverse ethno-cultural identities encounter each other, it often leads to miscommunication, misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the group's unique goals and ideals (Gardner, 1993; Hofstede *et al*, 2010).

2.2.1.2.3 Culture and behaviour

Culture as a meaning-making system also influences behaviour, reactions and responses towards situations and Others during interpersonal encounters (Swidler, 1986; Geertz, 1993; Inglis, 2005; Smith & Riley, 2009). It motivates people to act in particular ways, as it evokes cognitive and emotional reactions to the world (Inglis, 2005). In this regard, Swidler (1980:273) sees culture as a "toolkit of habits, skills and styles" from where the individual constructs "strategies of action". This poses a challenge during intercultural interactions, which occur on a daily basis in South Africa, since diverse meaning-making systems govern interpretations of and motivations for behaviour towards the Other.

Bourdieu's (1930-2002) concept of *habitus* further expounds culture as a meaning-making system affecting behaviour (Lizardo, 2009). *Habitus* is constructed by the practices, attitudes and beliefs taught to each individual during childhood and acquired through education (Edles, 2002). It constitutes "the cognitive structures which social agents implement in their practical knowledge of the world [and which] are internalized" (Bourdieu, 1984:468, cited in Edles, 2002:226). Each person has an inherent *habitus* applied during interaction with the world. As such, a person's behavioural patterns are subjected to and constructed by the particular culturally and socially informed environment:

> [T]he structures constitutive of a particular environment [which] produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations... [T]he practices produced by the habitus [are] the strategy-generating principle enabling

> agents to cope with unforeseen and ever-changing situations (Bourdieu, 1977:72, cited in Lizardo, 2009:7)

An individual's *habitus* thus consists of complex structures (including social and cultural structures), which influence decision-making, practice, behaviour, creativity and attitude, in essence providing "a generative structure for practical action" (Kidd, 2002; Lizardo, 2009:8; Olick, 2010).

In this regard, Bourdieu argues that each person has a "bodily *habitus*" which generates certain "habits" of bodily movement (Edles, 2002:225; Lizardo, 2009:21). Inglis (2005) refers to the particular 'way of life' as instilled in the minds and the bodies of a group, as 'cultural embodiment'. Body and mind are both culturally shaped by particular cultural norms, in other words, "how you think and how you act physically are both expressions of the cultural norms, the habitus" (Inglis, 2005:21). Since the manner in which an individual behaves is influenced by his or her *habitus*, the behaviour constitutes a unique combination of *inter alia* environmental, cultural, social and socio-economical elements. All behaviour, including bodily movements, is thus influenced by *habitus,* namely the surrounding social and cultural constructions embedded within the individual (Kidd, 2002).

2.2.1.3 Summary

This project aimed to explore meanings and localities of social cohesion in dance education, in particular, amongst a culturally and politically diverse group of students in a post-apartheid, post-conflict South Africa. Hall, Grindstaff and Lo (2010) however remind us that key to social order in a society is the particular interpretations and reactions of diverse ethno-cultural groups. This reality poses particular challenges to any project aimed at promoting cohesion amongst culturally diverse participants. As highlighted above, each individual's ethno-culture (as meaning-making system) underpins his or her particular way of being, sense of Self-identity, relation to the world, and perspective of the Other (Cohen, 1985; Lash & Featherstone, 2001; Castells, 2006; Young, 2010; Giessen, 2011). It also informs interactions with Others, affecting notions of appropriate behaviour, and interpretation of the behaviour and actions of Others (Sewell, 1992; Inglis, 2005).

Furthermore, in contemporary South Africa, an individual's cultural context often consists of a multiple set of overlapping cultural systems or schemas. A male Xhosa student, who adopts Christian faith, with a sophisticated understanding of arts, embraces a specific complex set of cultural meaning-making systems. He acts and interprets the world and others around him using a particular amalgam of meaning-making systems. Every person thus has a unique set of meaning-making systems influencing personal interpretations of the world (Sewell, 1992; Inglis, 2005).

In the light of the above, it is necessary to state that in this study, I as researcher have applied my own meaning-making system in order to interpret terminology, philosophy and reason, also when engaging with literature. This study therefore reflects the manner in which I see the world through my unique set of meaning-making systems which constitute my cultural lens. In addition, my lens was also used to interpret dialogue and comments from students who subscribe to different meaning-making systems than myself. Although my intentions were to interpret the data in a reliable and trustworthy manner, my interpretations remained subjected to my personal meaning-making system. The fact that the data were interpreted through a specific cultural lens can be considered as a limitation to this study.

2.3.2 Predicaments of a culturally diverse society

South Africa is a post-conflict multicultural society. The following section addresses some challenges associated with a culturally diverse society, particularly regarding the notion of ethno-culture. These challenges include potential misunderstandings between ethno-cultural groups, a struggle for recognition, and the dilemma of identity (Geertz, 1993; Foucault, 1994; Smith & Riley, 2009; Soudien, 2012).

Cohen (1982:2, 3, cited in Jenkins, 2004:111) explains that, when people "stand at [the] boundaries" of their ethno-cultural group, a "sense of difference" manifests itself. In a culturally diverse society, a sense of difference relates to views of Self, identities, appropriate behaviours, interpretations of and reactions to the world, and the reasoning behind decision-making. These differences can generate possible

incorrect interpretation of the behaviour of the Other, and potential miscommunication.

2.3.2.1 Ethnocentrism

As discussed earlier, phenomena can only be interpreted accurately through application of an appropriate meaning-making system. Ethnocentrism implies the application of a person's own ethno-cultural norms, values and belief systems when interpreting or making sense of the Other's ethno-culture (Zerubavel, 2002; Anderson & Taylor, 2004; Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Ethnocentrism thus prohibits people from comprehending the behaviours and meaning-making systems of other ethno-cultural groups, causing misinterpretation and misunderstanding between diverse individuals, and subsequently, corroding community amongst culturally diverse groups of people (Geertz, 1993; Smith & Riley, 2009).

In their daily lives, South African citizens are regularly required to interpret behaviours and attitudes of the Other. In this regard, Edles (2002) as well as Anderson and Taylor (2004) remind us that problems arise when a person attempts to interpret the behaviour of the Other through one's own meaning-making system. Consequently, Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010:387) recommend that in a culturally diverse society such as South Africa, ethnocentrism should be replaced by "polycentrism", namely the recognition that people are different and require different interpretations.

2.3.2.2 Morality

Since the evaluation of behaviour within an ethno-cultural group is based upon the shared values and the "standards of morality and excellence" within the particular group (Barth, 1969:14, cited in Jenkins, 2004:98), perceptions of morality and subsequent evaluation of people and behaviour also differ between ethno-cultural groups (Royce, 1977[17]; Jenkins, 2004; Hofstede *et al*, 2010). Ignorance about moral differences and priorities can thus cause misunderstandings between ethno-cultural

[17] Royce (1977:210) gives a good example of such a misconception. See Chapter Three for this account.

groups and individuals, leading to conflict and impeding cohesion (Royce, 1977; Hofstede *et al,* 2010).

2.2.2.3 Recognition

Another predicament associated with a culturally diverse society that deserves exploration is the notion of 'recognition'. In a multicultural society such as South Africa, diverse ethno-cultural groups often compete for their "struggle for recognition, authority, and voice" (Smith & Riley, 2009:191). Several authors concur that recognition, closely linked to notions of dignity and authenticity, sameness and difference, is essential in any cohesive, democratic society (Rockefeller, 1994; Taylor, 1994; Lash & Featherstone, 2001; Luong & Nieke, 2014).

2.2.2.3.1. Recognition of dignity and authenticity

Taylor (1994) identifies the two poles of the 'recognition continuum' as *dignity* and *authenticity* (Lash & Featherstone, 2001). Dignity, in the context of recognition, highlights the universal human potential of each person (Taylor, 1994:41), regarding all individuals as "self-directing rational agents" who deserve equal rights, equal respect and equal dignity (Lash & Featherstone, 2001:12). It focuses on sameness, in other words, on that which is universal in all individuals. All human beings are dignified members of the same human race, sharing a common human identity which is primary to our existence, and of more importance than a person's ethno-cultural identity (Rockefeller 1994; Taylor, 1994). Recognition of dignity thus refers to the right to be treated in a dignified manner, and the right to participate equally within society (Bauman, 2001:78).

The same applies to cultural groups. In a culturally diverse society, all ethno-cultural groups have the need to be recognised as dignified by other ethno-cultural communities (Taylor, 1994). Recognition, in this context therefore implies that society recognises a specific ethno-cultural group as having equal value or worth, and of equal importance to the functions of society (Taylor, 1994). This ideal however poses problems to societies (such as South Africa) where certain ethno-cultural or gender groups historically perceived themselves as superior or inferior to

other groups (Gutman, 1994; Taylor, 1994). Similarly, the right to "equal participation in social interaction" (Bauman, 2001:78) poses challenges, since it corrodes authentic beliefs of some ethno-cultural groups. Some ethno-cultural groups for example prescribe a different set of rights to females, than to males. The ideal of a society where all citizens are treated as equal is thus potentially more complicated than mere enforcement of equality by law (Gutman, 1994; Taylor, 1994). Nevertheless, recognition of dignity relates to issues of social justice and citizenship as it recognises all citizens as equally dignified (Lash & Featherstone, 2001).

From the above it is clear that recognition of dignity cannot be legislated or enforced, since it is premised on an acknowledgement of the dignity of the Other, implying reciprocity of equal dignity and mutual dependence amongst diverse people. Moreover, society cannot mandate preference for a particular ethno-cultural group as a prerequisite for inclusion, as this would be inauthentic and patronising. Taylor (1994) thus believes that individuals should be granted space to form their own perceptions of the Other. Wolf (1994) however disagrees, arguing that recognition and respect for previously disadvantaged societies need to be publically promoted and reinforced, for example, through the media and education. The above descriptions regard an emphasis on sameness, which represent the dignity pole of recognition.

Whereas the dignity pole of the recognition continuum highlights the notion of equality, the *authenticity* pole focuses on uniqueness. All individuals have the desire to be recognised as unique individuals by other persons, institutions and policies (Gutman, 1994; Lash & Featherstone, 2001). Each individual should thus be seen and treated as an authentic, unique culture-bearing person with a particular, authentic identity. In this context, recognition is based on the "affective needs and the reciprocation of social esteem from concrete others" (Honneth, 1995, cited in Lash & Featherstone, 2001:4). In addition, all individuals need to be enabled to recognise their own sense of self-worth and value (Taylor, 1994). The recognition of one's own potential and value as a human being relies on one's sense of Self, as well as receiving recognition from others (Taylor, 1994). Focusing on the former, factors which influence a person's sense of Self similarly influence the manner in which a person recognises his or her personal value as a human being (Taylor,

1994). Likewise, the *authenticity* pole also includes the recognition of ethno-cultural identities as unique, exhibiting distinctive characteristics (Lash & Featherstone, 2001).

In this regard, Luong and Nieke (2014) emphasise predicaments of misrecognition or non-recognition, arguing that non-recognition and misrecognition translate into disrespect, devaluing the Self and inhibiting the Self from acting freely. This may lead to potential oppression (Honneth, 1995, cited in Luong & Nieke, 2014). In the case of misrecognised ethno-cultural groups, the potential further exists that unjust images get internalised by individual members of the group, hampering individuals' sense of Self and identity. Misrecognition or non-recognition of an ethno-cultural group therefore also impairs the development of individual members (Luong & Nieke, 2014). One could argue that notions of misrecognition and non-recognition occur frequently in a post-conflict society such as South Africa, since normative associations of the Other remain influenced by the apartheid past.

2.2.2.3.2 Recognition of difference and sameness

Whereas Taylor (1994) sees the two poles of the recognition continuum as dignity and authenticity, Lash and Featherstone (2001) highlight the *recognition of sameness* and *recognition of difference* as constituting the two extremes, arguing that dignity and authenticity ultimately relate to sameness and difference. They further hold that the paradigm of recognition has evolved from an emphasis on *sameness*, as presented by Rousseau, to an emphasis on *difference*. Whereas *recognition of sameness* refers to notions of dignity, equality, active participation and societal membership, *recognition of difference* promotes perceptions of the individual and the ethno-cultural identity of the Other as unique, and valuable to society. In this regard, Bauman (2001) cautions that, although recognition can promote equality, and subsequently cohesion, it can also become a catalyst for social separation and division. Moreover, recognition of worth can generate preference, which in turn, can lead to division, impeding social cohesion. *Recognition of difference* can therefore also reinforce group association, reinstating boundaries between diverse people.

In a multicultural democratic society, both poles of recognition are however essential to uphold, since all individuals and ethno-cultural groups have the desire to be recognised as both equal and unique. Recognition, however, will always be in a state of negotiation. Since culture is viewed as a process, recognition will always be fluid, mobile and constantly becoming (Lash & Featherstone, 2001).

2.2.2.4 The Self and the Other

In a post-conflict multicultural society such as South Africa, various challenges with regard to negotiations and renegotiations of both personal and collective identities continue to present itself. The history of conflict affects the nature of identities with regard to the Self, the Other and the collective in an ongoing manner. In South Africa in particular, identity politics has become "a matter of life and death for South African citizens" (Alexander, N. 2003:7). Apartheid left the identities of many ethno-cultural groups and individuals in turmoil. Inequality affected the beliefs of ethno-cultural groups with regard to their perspectives of themselves and Others. Particular ethno-cultural groups were made to believe that they were superior or inferior to others (Teffo, 1996; Soudien, 2008; Hofstede *et al*, 2010; Soudien, 2012). In addition, unequal opportunities led to unequal education, which further either demeaned or elevated the self-esteem of particular ethno-cultural groups.

Although apartheid was officially demised more than twenty years ago, its scars still mark the identities of many South Africans (Swartz, 2010). Both Jansen (2009) and Taylor (1994) remind us that the knowledge of conflict 'lives on in the blood' of the next generation, since it is passed down through life stories as heritage. Although new generations emerge on an ongoing basis, they still carry some perspectives and 'altered or injured identities' brought on by the political history of the South African nation. In this regard, Bourdieu uses the notion of *habitus* to investigate the reproduction of inequality (Edles, 2002:225). A person's *habitus* also includes social dispositions of disadvantage and inferiority. If a member of the previously disadvantaged group competes for status with a person of advantage, "the differences in *habitus* make for an unequal fight" (Edles, 2002:225). *Habitus* can thus reproduce inequality, impeding identity construction in a post-conflict society.

In addition, in post-conflict societies such as South Africa, individuals wrestle with their own view of Self, as they are continuously aware of public generalisations and stereotypes of their own collective identities. Du Bois[18] (1903:9) refers to this as a "double consciousness". This kind of consciousness often renders individuals vulnerable, since hatred is often internalised as "self-disgust" (Smith & Riley, 2009:24) – a phenomenon not uncommon in South Africa with many citizens still wrestling with guilt, anger, inferiority and shame (Johnson, 1982; Delport, 2009; Bloch, 2009; Nkomo *et al*, 2009; Hofstede *et al*, 2010; Soudien, 2012; Adams *et al*, 2014; Costandius & Bitzer, 2014). Such fragile identities can easily result in a diminished self-esteem, or a reluctance to identify the Self with a particular ethno-cultural collective. In this regard, Soudien (2008:14) and Bell (2007) argue that continued discriminatory practices deprive individuals of reaching their full potential, since it prohibits them to believe in themselves, cultivate agency within their Selves, have aspirations for themselves and have Self-determination.

A further challenge associated with multicultural societies relates to an essentialist[19] perception of the Other, reducing a particular ethno-cultural group, to "what are thought to be its essential properties" (Soudien, 2012:12). Soudien (2012) however also argues that essentialism remains useful in South Africa, affording stronger identification with and voice to the marginalised. Individuals who assert their essentialised black identity in order to oppose whiteness, is an example of this. However, in the South African education arena, essentialism is undesirable, since it causes "impoverished understandings of difference" (Soudien, 2012:20). Social difference should thus not be essentialised, since it results in poor and often incorrect generalisations of the Other, which, in turn, affect the identities of the Other in the manner explicated above.

Another potential challenge relates to default associations of the Other. A person's ethno-cultural identity is adopted as well as assigned by exterior influences such as policies, legislation and prejudices. This happens without consent. An individual is thus often categorised by Others as belonging to a particular group, assuming that

[18] Du Bois refers to the African-American identity during the time of slavery.
[19] Essentialism is presented here as predicament, although a debate exists whether it is indeed detrimental or not. See for example Soudien, 2012.

he or she subscribes to all the beliefs, values and attitudes of that particular group. The assumption that every member of a group agrees with everything the group stands for, is however incorrect. It disregards personal choice and preferences. A group identity is not representative of each distinct individual, as members of a group are inherently heterogeneous. Ultimately, the individual is thus disregarded (Appiah, 1994, 2006; Foucault, 1994; Jenkins, 2004; Swartz, 2010; Blum, 2014). Categorising individuals according to ethno-culture, nationality, gender or sexuality is thus not an ideal approach to distinguish between diverse individuals. Over-emphasis of ethno-cultural identity prioritises the collective and disregards the individual (Appiah, 2006). On the other hand, over-emphasising the right to be different, according to Foucault (1994), is also not desirable, as it

> … separates the individual, breaks his links with others, splits up community life, forces the individual back on himself, and ties him to his own identity in a constraining way (Foucault, 1994:330).

Since over-emphasis on difference discourages community and cohesion, the individual is compelled to resort to his or her collective identity in order to experience a sense of belonging to a group. The person is therefore compelled to take on his or her group identity, regardless of whether the individual concurs with the beliefs of the group. In this regard, the identity becomes a prison:

> Collective identities are not 'internally' homogeneous or consensual. They can and do change; they can and do vary from context to context; they can and do vary from person to person; and yet they can and do persist [original emphasis] (Jenkins, 2004:116).

A group identity, such as an ethno-cultural identity, does however not imply that all group members will behave in a similar manner (Jenkins, 2004). Although a group identity is based on the ethno-cultural group's historic and cultural background, individuals' sense of who they are is not static. It can be influenced by specific circumstances or environments, individual agency and reflection on past experiences. It is therefore necessary to remember that all members of an ethno-cultural group are individuals in their own right.

In addition, an ethno-cultural identity is not static. It changes over time and in response to the immediate environment. The nature of a person's decisions during

interaction, that is, their actions and reactions towards the Other, reflects the restrictions and motivations of the particular situation. Behaviour is thus influenced by the environment or situation to which a person is exposed (Gutman, 1994; Jenkins, 2004).

A further conundrum associated with a post-conflict multicultural society relates to people who change or combine identities. An individual who simultaneously subscribes to more than one contrasting identity is often perceived as a "hybrid creature" (Dekel, 2009:184)[20], manipulating behaviour according to the predominant ethno-culture of the particular environment. Dekel (2009:184) refers to a "hybrid creature" as someone who is "inhabited" by more than one, and often dissimilar, ethno-cultures. Hybridity thus indicates possible alternation between two ethno-cultural identities, causing conflicting behaviour. This oscillation is governed by the environment, as well as other people encountered during the interaction. Fluctuations of behaviour occur on a daily basis and are predetermined by the nature of each interaction. This type of behaviour consists of continuous "cover-up" and "exposure" moments, where each appearance highlights "a different aspect of identity" (Dekel, 2009:185). Hybrid identities, common also in South Africa (Soudien, 2012; NDP, 2011), affect perceptions of the Self and the world, and challenge the idea of an authentic Self (Giessen, 2011). Hybridity gives access to two often conflicting meaning-making systems to influence interpretation of and reactions to the world. It therefore often leads to the construction of a third identity, or "third space", from where the individual can make and interpret meaning (Bhabha, 1994:37,218, cited in Dekel, 2009:185; Giessen, 2011:793). Since hybridity causes fluctuating behaviour, the individual is viewed as unpredictable and experienced as threatening by society, becoming a significant divisive factor (Dekel, 2009; Hofstede *et al*, 2010; Barolsky, 2012; Struwig *et al*, 2012).

2.2.2.5 Summary

In sum, in a post-conflict society, characterised by an array of distinctive yet diverse ethno-cultural groups such as South Africa, predicaments of culture regard

[20] The notion of hybridity stems from migration and immigration studies (Dekel 2009:184).

misinterpretations between ethno-cultural groups, a struggle for recognition of sameness and difference, and negotiations of identity. These predicaments are particularly significant for this study, since they represent foundational or 'entry level' challenges with regard to social cohesion in a post-conflict multicultural society. Blum (2014) however argues that such predicaments can be overcome by promoting recognition of difference, national cohesion and equality in education. Luong and Nieke (2014) however prioritise self-realisation as essential to overcoming these disparities.

This project aimed to investigate how and to what extent students can take meaning from their dance education experiences with regard to recognition of sameness *as well as* difference, cultivating "polycentrism", and negotiating meanings of Self and Other, in a manner that would alter intercultural interactions, and in so doing, promote social cohesion.

2.2.3 Conclusion to Part One

Culture as meaning-making system influences a person's interpretation of the world. Consequently, a person's identity, behaviour, beliefs, actions, reactions and interpretation of the Other and society are influenced by his or her meaning-making system. In a culturally diverse society such as South Africa, diverse interpretations of particular interactions, beliefs, concepts or conversations can cause tension, misunderstanding and offense. Consequently, different interpretations of meaning can reinforce boundaries, causing 'Othering' and impeding the ideal of social cohesion amongst diverse individuals and groups.

Culture as meaning-making system thus influences individuals' understanding of the Self, the Other and society. In addition, it also influences interpretations of key constructs of this study, namely community, cohesion, dance and dance education. Mindful of diverse meaning-making systems, and some of the complexities attributed to a culturally diverse society, we continue with a critical discussion of distinct conceptualisations of 'social cohesion' relevant to this study.

2.3. Part Two: Social cohesion

The aim of this chapter is to construct a conceptualisation of social cohesion as it pertains to South African discourse, a project mostly neglected in South African scholarly literature. This conceptualisation is however complex, since diverse ethno-cultural groups within South Africa subscribe to diverse heritages of thought which result in diverse meanings and interpretations of social cohesion and community within South African society. An attempt to address all these meanings through existing 'broad' categorisations of African, Coloured, Western and Asian are further complex, since Coloured, and Asian (which include the South African Indian and Chinese population) no longer subscribe to their associated heritage of thought in contemporary South Africa. In addition, the boundaries between these racial categories are often fluid and unclear. During the apartheid years, for example, Indian and Coloured racial groups allied, identified and adopted an African identity in order to strengthen the voice of the oppressed (Van Niekerk & Joseph, 2007; Bruinders, 2012; Dickinson, 2014). At present, this is no longer the case since post-apartheid South Africa recognises the identity of each ethno-cultural group. Hence, the Coloured population associate themselves either as assimilated with other racial groups, or as an independent ethno-cultural group (Dickinson, 2014). In addition, Asian philosophies are highly diverse, and whilst the inclusion of Hindu thought could be appropriate, because 68 percent of South African Indians have been socialised accordingly, the voice of the other 32 percent of the South African Indian population is omitted. Also, scholarly texts on "Coloured philosophies" for example, barely exist, because the Coloured population are diverse and do not subscribe to the associated heritages of thought from Khoi, San, Mauritian, Madagascan, Indonesian or Mozambican heritage (Bruinders, 2012). In addition, the small Chinese population as well as the Greek, Italian, German and Portuguese populations currently residing in South Africa, remain excluded, which, in essence means that the voice of the marginalised remains absent. One could thus argue that attempts to construct meanings of social cohesion according to racial categories are not ideal, since many voices would remain excluded. Also, it additionally affirms and ties people back to their racial categories, which many scholars view as a social construction and an aftermath of apartheid (Fleetwood, 2012; Soudien, 2012). South African diversity thus creates a complex tapestry of people, philosophies, thoughts and perspectives,

which makes a conceptualisation of social cohesion in a post-conflict South African society, problematic. Thus, I am mindful that any attempt to construct the meaning of social cohesion as it pertains to a culturally and politically diverse post-conflict South Africa, would contain crevices and be incomplete.

That being said, it is my contention that South African scholars should begin to interrogate and conceptualise social cohesion as it pertains to South African society rigorously, in order to aid strategies that aim to facilitate it. Thus, cautious and conscious of the crevices, this study commences with such a conceptualisation, albeit complex and incomplete, in order to pave the way for further research. The following section therefore discusses associated meanings and strategies of social cohesion as these manifest within three distinct spheres, namely, Western literature, African philosophy (which include comparisons to Asian philosophy) and South African discourse.

2.3.1 The idea of social cohesion in Western literature

The concept of 'social cohesion' carries a variety of connotations and interpretations and its applications are diverse and context-related (Jenson, 1998; Bernard, 1999; Green, *et al*, 2009; Struwig *et al*, 2012). Current Western conceptualisations of 'social cohesion' have been influenced by various and diverse viewpoints and philosophies. As such, contemporary theorists consider the concept as complex, vague, abstract, ambiguous, flexible and problematic (Jenson, 1998; Bernard, 1999; Green *et al*, 2009; Struwig *et al*, 2012). Bernard (1999:2) for example describes social cohesion as a "quasi-concept" constituted by "hybrid mental construction(s)". It is conceptualised in diverse ways across countries, cultures, policies and disciplines. The concept of social cohesion is also often used arbitrarily by politicians in relation to legislation, economic influence, and as a desired end state in the form of a cohesive society. It is also applied in relation to collaboration within a particular specific community, nation or between various countries, for example the European Union (Combat Poverty Agency, 2002; Victorian Coastal Strategy, 2008; Green *et al*, 2009). Certain accounts of social cohesion are policy-orientated. In Ireland, for example, the term social cohesion is used in relation to "bringing

together, in an integrated way, economic, social, health and educational policies to facilitate the participation of citizens in societal life" (Combat Poverty Agency, 2002:42*).* In this regard, the concept of social cohesion relates to policies aimed at promoting active involvement of citizens in society. Other conceptualisations of social cohesion are people-orientated. The Australian national government, for example, describes social cohesion as "the degree to which participants in social systems feel committed to the system and the wellbeing of other participants" (Victorian Coastal Council, 2008: Glossary: n.p). The extent of cohesiveness in society is thus determined by citizens' loyalty towards the political system and their concern for fellow citizens.

In order to understand Western conceptualisations of social cohesion, it is important to note that social cohesion discourse in Western society developed alongside the sociological debate on social order (Jenson, 1998). Alexis de Tocqueville (1805 - 1859), French historian and political thinker, argued that cohesion amongst members of society is determined by individual behaviour. He believed that a profound form of connectedness between members of society is brought about by individual agency and in particular, voluntary action, as this affects an individual at a deep, profound level, inspiring him or her to support others (Jenson, 1998; Hochschild, 2006). De Toqueville's stance highlights the importance of personal transformation as a critical requisite for enhancing social cooperation.

Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), French sociologist, social psychologist and philosopher, is seen as one of the 'fathers' of the concept of social cohesion (Jenson, 1998; Giddens, 1972). In his seminal text, *The Division of Labour and Society* (1893), Durkheim identified the existence of a 'conscience collective' which refers to a communal belief in a shared value system which affects and influences normative behaviour, evident in all traditional societies as a cohesive force that binds society together as a unit (Giddens, 1972). The 'conscience collective' of a particular community is thus determined by the extent to which individual perspectives and attitudes, that is, the *individual consciousness*, is identical to the prescribed norms of the conscience collective. In addition, it also implies the extent to which the beliefs and values of the 'conscience collective' holds autonomy over the affective and cognitive perspectives of the individual (Giddens, 1972:5, 6). In Foucaultean terms

this would translate to the degree of power the conscience collective holds over individual agency.

In this regard, Durkheim distinguished between 'mechanic' and 'organic' cohesion (Giddens, 1972). 'Mechanical solidarity'[21] represents societies where the 'conscience collective' holds authority over all individuals, and all individuals are perceived as small identical units of a whole. It subsequently disregards each individual as a unique member of society. One could thus argue that the power position of the conscious collective oppresses individuals and prohibits them from realising their full potential. 'Organic solidarity'[22] on the other hand occurs when each individual is considered as essential to forge relational ties with other individuals. The 'collective consciousness' subsequently evolves as a natural process from relational interdependency between various members. As such, organic solidarity includes a moral dimension, due to the conscience collective's mutual consensus. It is precisely the moral dimension that distinguishes organic solidarity from mechanical solidarity (Giddens, 1972). Thus, rather than oppressing community members, individual agency is recognised and valued. Durkheim's contribution to social cohesion discourse is significant for this study, especially since he believed that interdependency between diverse individuals could be fostered by upholding a shared value system and shared expectations. Public social and political institutions such as the state, justice systems, financial markets and education provide platforms where these shared values and expectations could be cultivated (Jenson, 1998).

Interdependency also marks the essence of *Solidarisme,* put forward by Bourgeois in 1896 in his treatise *Solidarité.* However, rather than acknowledging members of society as unique individuals, *Solidarisme* conceives society as a collection of communal entities (Jenson, 1998). Families, for example, are viewed as the basic social units comprising societies. Jenson (1998) argues that *Solidarisme* disregards equality, since the head of a family has authority over family members. Accordingly, *Solidarisme* in the broader society is determined by a shared allegiance and loyalty

[21] 'Mechanical solidarity' offers only restrained and controlled opportunities to develop distinct personality traits, subjective and consistent with the norms of the whole (Giddens, 1972).
[22] The term 'organic' in this sense relates society to an advanced organism, such as the human body.

to the state, where citizens are bound to each other through their interdependency and the “ties of solidarity” (Jenson, 1998:9; Vincent, 2001:415). Durkheim’s notion of interdependency however considers a natural process and moral dimension which nurtures an organic solidarity, and not an obligatory one.

Talcott Parsons (1902-1979), well-known American sociologist, also referred to the notion of interdependency, conceiving society as a ‘system’ consisting of symbiotic and co-dependent subsystems in causal and reciprocal relationship with each other (Parsons, 2007). Interdependency is reproduced by socialisation with its causal relationships emphasising usefulness, ultimately nurturing functionalism (Parsons, 2007; Jenson, 1998; Honderich, 1995). One could thus argue that functionalism cultivates power relations between individuals, since their very existence depend on another. Parsonian functionalism also views a society with conflict as dysfunctional, promoting only strategies that would engender and maintain social consensus. As such, Jenson (1998) holds that Parsonian functionalism prioritises social stability, rather than social transformation. Consequently, although a society without conflict may seem cohesive, inherent disparities and tension may exist.

In Western societies, social cohesion discourse further evolved with the rise of liberalism and the promotion of social and political rights of individuals (Jenson, 1998; Honderich, 1995). During the 1960s, sociologists and politicians became aware of the value of conflict as a positive force to generate change. This generated critique of properties of social order. Social units of society, repercussions of conflict, and elements assumed to be holding societies together at that particular point in time, were questioned and explored (Jenson, 1998). Financial market-driven proponents for example argued that society consists of individuals, which in turn, suggests that combined individual responses shape the collective action of institutions and society. Thus, it recognises that individuals have the capacity to hold power over institutions through collective action. Accordingly, liberalism promotes the rights of individuals to own property, liberty and life. Mutual respect for individual rights is assured through justice systems. Social order is thus ultimately determined by individuals and individual behaviour (Jenson, 1998). In this regard, Maxwell’s (1996:13) definition provides a succinct conceptualisation of social cohesion prominent in Western discourse:

> Social cohesion involves building shared values and communities of interpretation, reducing disparities in wealth and income, and generally enabling people to have a sense that they are engaged in a common enterprise, facing shared challenges, and that they are members of the same community.

Maxwell's stance is supported by the French *Commisariat General du Plan* (Plan, 1997) which also describes social cohesion as

> … a set of social processes that help instil in individuals the sense of belonging to the same community and the feeling that they are recognized as members of that community (Plan, 1997, cited in The Presidency, 2007:iv).

Plan (1997) highlights the significance of the individual as a member of the community. Social cohesion is thus seen as a series of social actions and developments aimed at fostering a sense of communal belonging among individuals who are all acknowledged as respected participants in society. Green *et al* (2009:1) also refer to the notion of community, arguing that, in most Western societies, social cohesion refers to "the forces that bind society together". These authors thus describe social cohesion as

> … the property by which whole societies, and the individuals within them, are bound together through the action of specific attitudes, behaviours, rules and institutions which rely on consensus rather than pure coercion (Green *et al*, 2009: 19).

In this regard, cohesion is not seen as the result of enforced intimidation, manipulation, oppression or action under duress, but rather, a *state of being* with individuals subscribing to shared attitudes, behaviours and rules. Each individual assumes the role of active participant, acting according to the mutual norms and standards of the particular community.

Social cohesion discourse, as evident in Western literature, is further characterised by contradicting references to the notions of 'bridging' or 'bonding' (Putnam, 2007:143; Struwig *et al*, 2012:5). Putnam (2007) uses the term 'bonding' when referring to cohesion amongst people from similar backgrounds, in other words connections within a homogeneous community. 'Bridging' on the other hand, is used to refer to cohesion amongst people from diverse ethno-cultural backgrounds, in

other words, cohesion amongst heterogeneous communities. In this regard, Struwig *et al* (2012) warn that 'bonding cohesion' may lead to the isolation of a particular community, disconnecting it from the larger society. 'Bridging cohesion' consequently connects the larger society.

Contradictions with regard to conceptualisations of social cohesion as 'process' or 'end-product' are also evident in Western ideologies. The Canadian Community Services Council (2003: n.p.) for example uses Jenson's (1998:v) definition, describing social cohesion as an "ongoing process of developing a community of shared values, shared challenges and equal opportunities based on a sense of trust, hope and reciprocity" among citizens. Plan (1997:16, cited in The Presidency, 2007:iv) also describes social cohesion as "a set of social processes" cultivating a growing, living community. Such a community continuously strives to build trust and create equal opportunities. It fosters relational interdependency with each other through shared commitment to the values of the particular community and "a desire to live together in some harmony" (Jenson, 1998:v). Since the desire to nurture community according to these norms is shared, disputes and "rising tides of negativity" potentially threatening the wellbeing of the society, become a communal responsibility (Jenson, 1998:v).

The Local Government Association of the United Kingdom however foregrounds the notion of social cohesion as a fixed end-state, describing a "cohesive community" as a community where:

- There is a shared conceptualisation of the future where all sub-communities experience a sense of belonging.
- The diverse history, heritage and conditions of different people are appreciated and viewed as an asset to society.
- Diverse people have equal opportunities.
- Positive healthy relationships evolve between people from diverse backgrounds in businesses, educational institutions, and within the immediate community (House of Commons, 2004: n.p.)

The above account provides indicators of social cohesion within a particular community, emphasising the notion of cohesiveness brought about by a shared vision and shared norms of the particular society. The assumption is that if these indicators are evident, the particular society can be regarded as 'cohesive'.

2.3.1.1 Promoting social cohesion in culturally diverse societies: approaches and strategies implemented in Western societies

The vast majority of present-day societies, including South Africa, are culturally diverse, challenging social cohesion projects in unique ways. As such, an array of approaches and political models are applied to engender cohesion amongst individuals from diverse ethno-cultural backgrounds. These include for example assimilation, acculturation, integration, melting pot, pluralism and the politics of equal dignity or difference.

2.3.1.1.1 Assimilation, acculturation and integration

Assimilation, as political model, encourages ethno-cultural groups to adapt their cultural and religious behaviour to conform to the dominant culture. This approach is premised on the ideal of solidarity and nation building (Bauman, 2001; Anderson & Taylor, 2004). As diverse ethno-cultural groups merge socially, difference is reduced and cohesion strengthened (Healey, 2010). Since the dominant culture maintains political, financial and occupational power, minority ethno-cultures are required to adapt their behaviour in order to conform and be assimilated into the dominant culture (Anderson & Taylor, 2004; Green *et al*, 2009; Bell, 2007). In these societies, minority ethno-cultures are thus required to live according to the dominant culture's values, practices and beliefs to ensure acknowledgement by the government and significant Other. Consequently, assimilation is often also referred to as *acculturation* (Healey, 2010).

The concept of *integration* is also used in social cohesion discourse, especially with reference to the process when 'outsiders' become 'insiders'. Internationally, the term is often used in relation to the integration of immigrants within the local community. In this regard, Healey (2010) sees integration as merely another mode of assimilation. Trondman (2011) however believes that integration implies the acquisition by outsiders of similar social and decision-making rights as the local insiders.

2.3.1.1.2.1 Melting pot

Social cohesion is also often associated with the metaphor of a *melting pot*, referring to a particular mode of assimilation, merging ethno-cultural traits of diverse groups to form a communal, amalgamated culture (Van den Berghe 1981:4, cited in Cohen 1985:105; Bauman, 2001:91, 92; Green *et al*, 2009:13; Healey, 2010:44). The 'melting' of diverse ethno-cultures however often presumes the loss of specific ethno-cultural identities in order to merge with a national homogeneity (Bauman, 2001). Although the notion of a *melting pot* may include assimilation practices, it is not limited to these.

2.3.1.1.2.2 Pluralism

The term 'social cohesion' is also often associated with the promotion of *pluralism* in multicultural societies. Pluralism as political model endorses emphasis on difference, advocating cultural segregation in order to preserve authentic ethno-cultural identities and maintain each ethno-culture's unique ways of life. In pluralist societies, each ethno-cultural group normally has its own churches, banks and businesses (Anderson & Taylor, 2004; Healey, 2010). Although social cohesion policies exist in pluralist democracies, these tend to focus on the notions of solidarity and liberty. Solidarity, in this context, refers to relational interdependency, shared identity and communal norms adopted *within* each respective ethno-cultural group, whereas liberty denotes the freedom of each group to maintain its unique ethno-cultural identity in the multicultural society. In this context, social cohesion discourse thus relates to the notion of 'bonding', in other words, creating unity within each respective ethno-cultural group (Green *et al*, 2009).

2.3.1.1.3 The politics of equal dignity

Further expressions associated with social cohesion discourse are the notions of the *politics of equal dignity* and the *politics of difference*. The *politics of equal dignity* foregrounds the equality of all people, negating the significance of diverse ethno-cultural identities. Since all people have equal value and deserve equal respect, categorisation according to ethnicity is deemed unnecessary. The politics of equal

dignity therefore promotes the establishment of a difference-blind society, grounded in the principles of non-discrimination[23] (Morrow, 2007; Young, 2010). However, even though a difference-blind society claims to have a 'neutral' homogeneous identity, minority groups still need to alter their way of life according to a so-called 'neutral' identity. The homogeneous identity then becomes hegemonic, as it ultimately requires minority groups to conform to a majority culture, leading Taylor (1994) to argue that the *politics of equal dignity* corresponds with assimilation practices.

The *politics of difference*, on the other hand, regards each distinctive ethno-cultural identity as valuable and significant. It promotes the preservation of all diverse ethno-cultures constituting a particular multicultural society (Taylor, 1994). A social cohesion model predicated on the *politics of difference* thus acknowledges each ethno-cultural identity as a significant component of societal structure. Cohesion in society is therefore built on a shared belief in the importance of each ethno-cultural group, regarding each ethno-culture as an invaluable resource required for the construction of a cohesive society.

Several authors (Gutman, 1994; Taylor, 1994; Bauman, 2001) however warn that inherent in the *politics of difference* is the potential to deprive individuals of the freedom to question or reject certain traditions or norms. Although an individual may have been born into a particular ethno-cultural group, it cannot be assumed that he or she automatically subscribes to its values, norms and practices, yet, a specific ethno-cultural identity is often assigned to him or her. Several authors (Taylor, 1994; Morrow, 2007; Swartz, 2010) also warn that societies adopting *the politics of difference* bar social cohesion by employing policies and practices that lead to inverse discrimination. This happens when strategies such as 'affirmative action', 'employment equity' and 'black economic empowerment' are implemented to provide previously disadvantaged groups with a competitive advantage, for example in South Africa (RSA, 1996; Jordan, 2005; The Presidency, 2011; NDP, 2011). Corrective measures such as these emphasise and re-instate boundaries between ethnic

[23] Taylor (1994:43) however contests the denial of difference, arguing that it in actual fact "violates the principle of non-discrimination", since a "neutral" identity remains influenced by the meaning-making systems of policy makers.

communities, reinforcing group identities and complicating boundary crossings (Delport, 2009; Swartz, 2010). Although *the politics of difference* has the potential to enhance 'bonding' towards intra-group cohesion, it can thus obstruct 'bridging' required for inter-group cohesion.

2.3.1.1.4 Summary

From the above it is clear that, according to Western discourse, diverse political models and strategies can be applied to facilitate social cohesion. Each of these models, however, requires both the marginalised and authority groups to renegotiate their identity. Inspired by Cohen (1982, cited in Jenkins, 2004:111), one could thus argue that a renegotiation of identity is inevitable when one stands at the boundary, facing the Other. Inherent in the process of identity renegotiation are also potential subtle reinforcements of power and inequality. Although evident in assimilation practices, it is often masked in the politics of equal dignity, since citizens are required to remove themselves from their ethno-cultural identity (thus, a form of oppression) in order to view the Other as similar to the Self. On the other hand, in societies such as South Africa, where citizens are encouraged to maintain their ethno-cultural identity, reverse discrimination often occur, potentially tipping the scale of inequality and oppression towards the 'previously advantaged'. Fostering a cohesive society in a culturally diverse society such as South Africa is therefore complex, since renegotiations of identity, recognition and power continue to manifest in diverse ways.

2.3.1.2 Indicators of social cohesion in Western societies

Various indicators of social cohesion within a society, as either *process* or *end-state*, can be identified in Western social cohesion discourse. Maxwell (1996:1) for example focuses on the notion of *end-state* when describing a cohesive society,

> … that accepts diversity and manages conflicts before they become fights … where workplaces are fair, where the voice of workers is respected, [and] where people can express their views without fear of acrimony or reprisal.

Social cohesion, according to Maxwell, is thus evident when a society constitutes a safe space for self-expression, where difference is accepted, all people respected and treated justly, and where dissonance is negotiated and resolved in a peaceful manner. As such, Jenson (1998:15, 16) identifies belonging, inclusion, participation, recognition, recognition of difference and legitimacy as indicators of social cohesion. In the table below, these indicators are juxtaposed to related threats to social cohesion. In order to promote the process of social cohesion, these threats need to be reduced and eliminated:

Indicator	**Threat**
Feeling of belonging	Isolation from the community
Inclusion	Exclusion
Participation	Non-involvement
Recognition	Rejection
Legitimacy	Illegitimacy

Jenson (1998) further distinguishes between the indicators above, arguing that 'inclusion' and 'legitimacy' have relevance for institutions and policies. 'Inclusion' in this sense primarily implies that all citizens have equal access to economic markets and institutions. 'Legitimacy' refers to the maintenance of public and private institutions that may serve as mediators in the management of conflict. The other indicators, namely a sense of belonging, participation and recognition relate to an individual state of being, characterised for example by a person's willingness to recognise diverse Others as equal. Bernard (1999) concurs, identifying equality in society as an additional significant indicator of a cohesive society. Inequality, rejection and intolerance therefore hamper social cohesion.

Several authors (King, Samii & Snilstveit, 2010; Struwig *et al*, 2012; DAC, 2011a; DAC, 2011b) emphasise the *behaviours* and *attitudes* of individuals as discernible signifiers of social cohesion, particularly in terms of inter-personal and inter-group

cooperation. *Behaviour* manifesting as participation and cooperation amongst individuals is conducive to social cohesion (King *et al*, 2010). *Attitudes* indicating cohesion amongst members of society include feelings of trust, harmony and solidarity. In this regard, Bernard (1999, cited in Struwig *et al*, 2012:4) refers to people's *behaviour* as "active" relationships, whereas their *attitudes* are viewed as "passive" relationships. King *et al* (2010) however warn that indicators such as *behaviour* and *attitudes* are always context-specific and based on interpretations of abstract concepts. Accordingly, conclusions cannot be generalised. These authors thus question the use of a universal set of social cohesion indicators across different contexts. Bernard (1999, cited in Struwig *et al*, 2012) agrees, arguing that social cohesion encompasses civic, economic and socio-cultural domains. Context-specific indicators for diverse contexts need to be applied. In a similar vein, Putnam (2007) and Green *et al* (2009) highlight interpersonal and reciprocal relationships of trust and social connections within a community as important indicators of social cohesion.

Culturally diverse societies, such as South Africa, are often characterised by high levels of inter-racial suspicion, distrust, despair and isolation (Putnam, 2007). This leads to unwillingness to participate in society and subsequent withdrawal, ultimately hampering social cohesion. In sum, social cohesion indicators can broadly be categorised as, first, evidence that relate to the individual's sense of Self in relation to the larger whole (for example, inclusion, participation and belonging), and second, the individual's sense of Self with regards to the Other (for example, attitude and behaviour towards the Other).

2.3.2. The idea of social cohesion in African and Asian philosophy

The concept of 'social cohesion' is however not restricted to modernity and the West. Social cohesion discourse is found in ancient African and Asian philosophies that describe community, the individual's place and role within community, and the well-being of society.

Prominent in these philosophies are descriptions of the individual as an inherently 'communal being'. Individuals are viewed as *inseparable* from the community since they are *inherently connected* to others who share the same values, aims, beliefs and interests (Chatterjee, 1998; Gyekye, 1998:320; p'Bitek, 1998; Masolo, 2006). This idea is also referred to as 'communitarianism', a term emerging in Western discourse during the 20th century and at times equated with Durkheim's 'conscience collective', yet a concept fundamentally rooted in ancient African and Asian philosophy of 'a community-centred Self', in existence for ages. Communitarianists believe that the community provides 'moral meaning' to the individual's life. The community is thus more important than the individual (Chatterjee, 1998:277; Gyekye, 1998, Masolo, 2006; Ghosh & Chaudhuri, 2009). The wellbeing of the community therefore depends on a strong interdependency between community members, as they rely on the active participation of each other to ensure their wellbeing (David, 1979; Teffo, 1996; Gyekye, 1997; Prinsloo, 1998; Bell, 2002; Masolo, 2006; Swanson, 2007). Consequently, individuals are seen to not only have an embedded instinct to take care of other individuals and their community, but have an inherent social obligation towards the wellbeing of others (David, 1979; Chatterjee, 1998). Cohesion and wellbeing in society are therefore inherently linked to the nature of social relationships within the community (Bell, 2002; Swanson, 2007; Mokgoro, 2011), a notion comparable to Durkheim's idea of organic solidarity.

Since South Africa is a post-apartheid, post-conflict multicultural society on the continent of Africa, and since most South African citizens (79.8 percent, according to SSA, 2013) have been socialised according to African philosophy, the notion of 'community cohesion' as it pertains to African philosophy, has particular reference and now requires further discussion.

2.3.2.1 *Ubuntu*

In African philosophy, notions of community, community building and cohesion are generally associated with the term *ubuntu*. Although *ubuntu* is regarded by various scholars as vague, ambiguous and problematic to define and conceptualise (Tutu, 2004; Swanson, 2007; Diedrich, 2011; Mabovula, 2011; Mokgoro, 2011; Barolsky, 2012)[24], it is indeed a living African philosophy, applied by many people on a daily basis, and commonly associated with the promotion of wellbeing of a particular community, solidarity and cohesion (Gbadegesin, 1998; Kaphagawani, 1998; Swanson, 2007; Ramose, 2014). During my journey towards an understanding of *ubuntu*, I have come to realise that *ubuntu* does not represent a single concept, but an entire way of thinking, hence, diverse explications of the term merely highlight different aspects of the same philosophy (Mabovula, 2011). In this regard, various authors (Anderson & Taylor, 2004; Venter, 2004; Swanson, 2007; Barolsky, 2012) warn against naïve and simplistic explications and applications of *ubuntu*, especially by non-African outsiders – such as myself. It is thus with humble caution that I, as Westerner, present the following overview of this complex philosophy.

Ubuntu is often referred to in conjunction with other similar concepts. Since many authors see *ubuntu* as a representation of the collective consciousness of African people, terms such as communalism, communitarianism[25], collectivism and African humanism are often associated with the concept of *ubuntu* (Mbiti, 1969; Teffo, 1996; Gyekye, 1997, Gbadegesin, 1998; Gyekye, 1998; Prinsloo, 1998; Tempels, 1998; Wiredu, 1998; Bell, 2002; Venter, 2004; Swanson, 2007, Mabovula, 2011; Biney, 2014; Praeg, 2014). Associations such as these, according to Praeg (2014) and Mokgoro (2011) however result merely in a partial understanding of the philosophy. Whereas communitarianism for example prioritises the community, often compromising the freedom of the individual (Gyekye, 1998; Masolo, 2006), *ubuntu* additionally values the uniqueness of individuals in relation to their community (Gbadegesin, 1998; Gyekye, 1998; Kaphagawani, 1998; Mokgoro, 2011). In this regard, Gyekye (1997, 1998) and Bell (2002:62) refer to *ubuntu* as 'moderate

[24] Various scholars provide reasons for this, for example, some argue an understanding of *ubuntu* requires knowledge of an African language (Tutu, 1999, Mabovula, 2011; Barolsky, 2012; Gordon, 2014), whereas others blame oral transmission (Swanson, 2007; Bennett, 2011), and others ascribe this to its mystical origin (Keevy, 2011).
[25] Communalism and communitarianism are often viewed as synonymous (Gyekye, 1998).

communitarianism', since a person is partly established by the community, and partly constituted by creative individual action in order to attain personhood (Gyekye, 1997, 1998; Bell, 2002). As a result, the individual remains self-directed despite the individual's socialised community (Gyekye, 1997, 1998; Bell, 2002). This leads Praeg (2014) to negate the study of *ubuntu* through semi-comparisons to Western terminology, since these imply certain assumptions which may unjustly influence interpretation. According to Praeg (2014:100), a study of *ubuntu* should thus start from "inside" the philosophy. This section therefore continues with caution as it aims to describe *ubuntu* from 'within' African thought.

Ubuntu promotes the idea that an individual owes his or her existence to the existence of others: "I am, because we are, and since we are, therefore I am" (Mbiti, 1969:108-109; Teffo, 1996; Gbadegesin, 1998; Gyekye, 1998; Kaphagawani, 1998; Bell, 2002; Venter, 2004; Menkiti, 2006; Barolsky, 2012; Oppenheim, 2012; Praeg, 2012). Human beings are therefore seen as essentially human through relationships with other people. Human fellowship is thus regarded as a basic human need (Wiredu, 1998). An individual is not a separate entity, but part of the whole, in other words, the community. Since the individual's existence depends on belonging to the community, the community is more important than the individual (Wiredu, 1998; Praeg, 2014). This does not mean that the individual is not recognised, but merely that the community is always placed first (Teffo, 1996; Gyekye, 1998; Venter, 2004). Therefore, a person's actions are influenced by a desire to benefit the community before the Self, in order to sustain one's place within the community (Teffo, 1996; Gyekye, 1997; Wiredu, 1998; Bell, 2002; Venter, 2004; Biney, 2014).

Each individual is also connected with other human beings of the past, the present and the future, and constitutes an important link in the lineage of human kind (Teffo, 1996; Kaphagawani, 1998; Venter, 2004; Menkiti, 2006). In this regard, Tempels (1998) explains that each individual is seen as a force connected with other individuals or forces - which include the living and the unborn - that tie the community together (Mbiti, 1969; Tempels, 1998; Kaphagawani, 1998). Consequently, "whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole group, and whatever happens to the group happens to the individual" (Mbiti, 1969:108; Kaphagawani, 1998:172). The larger whole (or community) is therefore affected

when for example individuals are mistreated, oppressed, humiliated and devalued (Tutu, 1999; Bell, 2002; Swanson, 2007).

The meaning of the word *ubuntu* directly translates to "humaneness", and as such, is often used as descriptions of African humanism (Venter, 2004:150; Golooba-Mutebi, 2005; Swanson, 2007; Mabovula, 2011; Mokgoro, 2011; Biney, 2014). According to African philosophy, human beings or *umuntu*[26] consist of eight essential elements. These are *umzimba* (body), *umoya* (breath and life), *umphefumela* (soul and spirit), *amandla* (vitality and strength), *inhliziyo* (emotions and heart), *umqondo* (intellect), *ulwimi* (language) and *ubuntu* (humaneness). The combination of these elements distinguishes human beings from other life forms and objects (Venter, 2004). Of these, *ubuntu* is valued as the most vital quality of being human. Consequently, personhood is only recognised when a person treats another person with humaneness. In other words, without showing humaneness towards others, a person is not viewed as being human (Gyekye, 1998; Wiredu, 1998; Bell, 2002). Personhood is therefore not assumed because of a biological relation to human parents, but is acquired through the cultivation of moral and ethical maturity towards the other (Bell, 2002).

Ubuntu therefore foregrounds human relationships, manifesting as a moral and spiritual consciousness of what it means to be human towards another (Wiredu, 1998; Menkiti, 2006; Swanson, 2007; Mokgoro, 2011). In this regard, morality represents "the observance of rules for the harmonious adjustment of the interests of the individual to those of others in society" (Wiredu, 1998:306). *Ubuntu* therefore signifies a "web of values" that informs social conduct and interpersonal interactions as it cultivates unity and harmony within a community (Venter, 2004; Broodryk, 2006; Broodryk, 2010; Mokgoro, 2011:1; Biney, 2014). In this regard, several authors (Gyekye, 1998; Wiredu, 1998, Bell, 2002; Swanson, 2007) concur that *ubuntu* can only be attained through the cultivation of a consciousness of social responsibility towards the wellbeing of others and the community. Such a consciousness further sustains and strengthens a person's belonging to the community (Praeg, 2014). *Ubuntu* therefore promotes sensitivity towards the needs of others, often placing

[26] Discrepancies however exist with regards to this interpretation. For example, Tempels argues that *munthu* represents personhood rather than the human being (Kaphagawani, 1998).

these above the needs of the Self (Gyekye, 1998; Wiredu, 1998; Venter, 2004; Mabovula, 2011). *Ubuntu* is thus commonly seen as placing oneself "in the skin of the other" during interpersonal encounters, imagining the consequences of one's own actions as if on oneself (Wiredu, 1998:310). Subsequently authors such as Prinsloo (1998), Venter (2004), Masolo (2006), Bennett (2011) and Mabovula (2011) hold that *ubuntu* is recognisable in its most fundamental form during interpersonal encounters. A person 'has' *ubuntu* when he or she is "caring, humble, thoughtful, considerate, understanding, wise, generous, hospitable, socially mature, socially sensitive, virtuous and blessed" (Le Roux, 2000 cited in Venter, 2004:150; Mabovula, 2011:38). *Ubuntu* therefore concomitantly represents a set of moral values, a consciousness of responsibility towards others, good character and socially moral interpersonal conduct (Gyekye, 1997; Wiredu, 1998; Bell, 2002).

Ubuntu additionally promotes a sense of "human worth" that manifests in a communal context. It is the community that defines the person, and not specific individual accomplishments, characteristic of Western societies that promote individualism (Teffo, 1996; Venter, 2004:151; Mabovula, 2011). The community "must make, create, or produce the individual" (Mbiti, 1969: 108; Kaphagawani, 1998:172), implying that the community is responsible for the continuous development of individual members through cultivating cultural, esoteric, social and moral knowledge within each individual (Menkiti, 2006).

A person is not born with *ubuntu. Ubuntu* needs to be cultivated and matured within each individual (Prinsloo, 1998; Bell, 2002; Venter, 2004; Masolo, 2006; Menkiti, 2006). This happens through socialisation. The individual is dependent, as Mbiti (1969) implies, on the community to 'make' or cultivate an *ubuntu* character within the person (Gyekye, 1998; Menkiti, 2006). Hence, "a person is a person only through other persons… Each one of us matters and we need each other in the spirit of *ubuntu*" (Tutu, 2004:5). In other words, a person can only attain personhood (or become human) through interaction. In this regard, Gyekye (1997), Wiredu (1998) and Bell (2002) argue that attaining the status of *ubuntu* or *personhood* requires continuous practice of socially moral attitudes and behaviour towards another. As such, it requires engagement and practise during interpersonal encounters. *Ubuntu* therefore implies a community that is dependent on a continuous process of

intrapersonal development shaped through socialisation, since each person continuously strives towards acquiring a higher status of *ubuntu* (Gyekye, 1998; Menkiti, 2006). In addition, it represents the individual's endeavours towards a heightened connectedness with the whole.

Community wellbeing and cohesion thus depend on the nature of social relationships within the community. Interdependency is therefore central to African philosophy, since it requires active participation of each individual to ensure the wellbeing of another (Teffo, 1996; Prinsloo, 1998; Masolo, 2006). *Ubuntu* in other words foregrounds social responsibility and social obligations towards the community as paramount to the wellbeing of a society (Gyekye, 1997; Bell, 2002; Swanson, 2007). Hence, Tutu (1999:31, cited in Swanson, 2007:54) describes *ubuntu* as "I am human because I belong. I participate, I share". In this regard, it is also evident that the identity of the community is predicated on the character of the individuals within the community (Kaphagawani, 1998).

In sum, *ubuntu* represents the key elements required for the survival of a community (Bennett, 2011; Mabovula, 2011). It is a "philosophy of life" (Mokgoro, 2011:1) that concomitantly represents a way of being (that is, being human), the connection between the individual and the community, the interconnectedness between individuals and other individuals, and a morality, in other words, values, attitudes and behaviour by treating others with humaneness. *Ubuntu* therefore promotes care and sensitivity towards others, good social conduct, respect for human dignity, respect for the rights of others, and the cultivation of social harmony and cohesion within a community (Venter, 2004; Bennett, 2011). In the context of this study it is necessary to state that *ubuntu* represents a cultural praxis which inherently focuses on the wellbeing of *African* community and strengthening of *African* identity (Swanson, 2007; Keevy, 2011; Barolsky, 2014; Praeg, 2014; Ramose[27], 2014).

Ubuntu also resonates with Hindu philosophy, since it promotes an inherent reverence for others and the notion of mutual respect between humans (David,

[27] For example, Ramose stated:

> *That Ubuntu philosophy is the lived and living experience of human beings means that the human dignity of Bantu speaking peoples demands recognition, protection, promotion and respect on the basis of equality with all other human beings* (Ramose, 2014:121)

1979; Hacker, 2006). This is relevant to the current discourse, since many South African Indians[28] have been socialised according to Hindu philosophy. Hindu philosophy, for example, also views the individual as inherently connected to other individuals from the past, the present and the future. As such, they believe that an individual's sense of unity and cohesion with the universe is dependent on the individual's love and compassion for others (David, 1979). An individual therefore also comes into being and 'fulfils his personality' (similar to attaining personhood) through active good works and selfless service towards another (David, 1979; Meena, 2005). Hindu philosophy thus regards every person to be "his brother's keeper" (David, 1979:183), since it promotes an inherent obligation towards the active participation in the wellbeing of others (Meena, 2005; Hacker, 2006). In this regard, the notion of *dharma* in particular represents a "model of behavior" towards others (Hacker, 2006:490; Meena, 2005), although it can also be interpreted as that which holds society together (Creel, 1975). The promotion of cohesion amongst people by attaining personhood through active kindness and support towards others is thus also inherent to the South African Indian population. In this regard, one could also argue that both African and Hindu philosophies promote social cohesion as a process, since they rely on the continuous actions of individuals to realise care and a connectedness for the Other (see also Teffo, 1996).

An attempt to describe the differences and similarities between Western literature and African and Asian philosophy, as if these were binary oppositions, poses multiple challenges, mainly because these cannot rightfully be compared. A comparison would potentially result in essentialist views, reducing the inherent meaning of an entire life philosophy to a mere strategy employed to cultivate social order. A comparison between community allegiances associated with African and Asian philosophies versus the promotion of individual rights, associated with Western thought are for example complex, since many African philosophers (Gbadegesin, 1998; Gyekye, 1998; Kaphagawani, 1998; Mokgoro, 2011) argue that the individual is not disregarded in the social organisation of society. Similarly, some Western authors (see for example, Bell, 2007), argue that Western communities are innately conscious of their inherent connection to their ethno-cultural group.

[28] In 1994 it was recorded that 68% percent of the South African Indian population subscribe to Hindu philosophy (Van Niekerk & Joseph, 2007).

Nevertheless, liberalists are for example regularly criticised for cultivating selfish individuals that lack concern for the wellbeing of others and community, whereas communitarianists are often accused of the neglect of individuality and the rights of individuals (Gyekye, 1997; Chatterjee, 1998; Srikanth, 2005). However, despite diverse conceptualisations and meanings of social cohesion as described above, Western literature, African philosophy and Asian philosophy emphasise the wellbeing of society.

2.3.2.2 Conclusion

African philosophy views community cohesion as of primary importance to the very existence of man. In this regard, *ubuntu* represents a distinctive way of thinking about life, the Self, the Other and society. It clearly foregrounds the Self's moral responsibility towards the wellbeing of the Other rather than focusing primarily on the wellbeing of the Self, a disposition normally associated with Western thought. In a culturally diverse society such as South Africa, diverse conceptualisations of community and cohesion thus manifest itself. Co-existence of these philosophies can cause tension in the form of misinterpretation, offense, Othering and incorrect judgements of the Other, ultimately corroding cohesion.

In this regard, it is necessary to unpack current social cohesion discourse as it pertains to post-apartheid South Africa. Since 1994, South African citizens from diverse ethno-cultural groups have been afforded multiple opportunities to co-exist and learn from and with each other. As a result, individual and political ideals have been fused, assimilated and acculturated (or de-culturated) to serve diverse individual and political agenda. This leads me to argue that current social cohesion discourse in South Africa can be regarded as a hybrid amalgamation of African, Indian and Western philosophies of community and cohesion. It is further necessary to point out that representations of the Coloured population are absent from the above descriptions, since a distinctive heritage of thought has not been addressed in scholarly literature. That being said, many of the current South African scholars (see for example Alexander, 2007; Soudien, 2008, 2012; Keet, Zinn & Porteus, 2009; Swartz, 2010) who write about social cohesion, social justice and race can indeed be categorised as Coloured persons. However, if asked, these scholars may be

unwilling to classify themselves according to any racial category, since they see racial classification as a social construction and a remnant of apartheid (Soudien, 2012). Thus, albeit controversial, one could argue that some voices from the Coloured population have additionally been incorporated in the following description, thus forming part of the hybrid amalgamation of social cohesion.

In this regard, the extent to which social cohesion discourse in South Africa is dominated by African, Western, Indian or Coloured thought is difficult to determine. Delineating distinctions between these are however not the purpose of the following section, nor is it to conceptualise a 'new' way of what a culturally inclusive view of social cohesion should be. In the context of this study, the following section merely aims to expose the current understanding of social cohesion in South Africa, by means of South African public and academic discourse.

2.3.3 Contextualising social cohesion in South Africa

South Africa is a post-colonial, post-apartheid young democracy. Its *Constitution* subscribes to the *politics of difference,* promoting the idea that each distinctive ethno-cultural identity is valuable, significant and acknowledged in societal structure (Taylor, 1994).

2.3.3.1 United through the *Constitution*

The Nelson Mandela Foundation Social Cohesion Programme, launched in 2010, depicts social cohesion as

> … that which galvanises a collective or a group of people around a common set of values, based on mutual respect, tolerance, freedom from fear, social solidarity and respect for human dignity (NMF, 2010:5).

Unlike other mono-cultural nations, South African citizens are not primarily united by a distinctive ethnicity, culture, language or geography, but by a mutual commitment to shared Constitutional values, namely social justice, respect, diversity, equality, human dignity, non-discrimination, as well as freedom of expression, thought, religion, belief and association for all citizens (RSA, 1996; James, 2001; Chipkin & Ngqulunga, 2008; NDP, 2011; Fleetwood, 2012). The late Nelson Mandela, when

signing the country's *Constitution* in 1996, urged all South Africans to "nurture our national unity by recognising, with respect and joy, the languages, cultures and religions of South Africa in all their diversity" (DoE, 2006:15).

2.3.3.2 Unity in diversity

South African social cohesion thus endorses diversity. Cultural, religious and linguistic diversities are not regarded as impeding the establishment of a national identity (DAC, 2013). All citizens, irrespective of their cultural origin, are acknowledged as South African citizens and have the right to freedom of expression, belief, association and thought. Consequently, all citizens have the right to express not only the Self, but the Self as a culture-bearing human being. As such, each ethno-cultural group should be acknowledged and respected (RSA, 1996). Moreover, cultural sustainability is encouraged, since each ethno-cultural group is equally entitled to "inter- and intra-generational access to cultural resources" (WCCD: 1995, cited in Axelsson *et al*, 2013:217). In South Africa, the *Bill of Rights*[29] (RSA, 1996:1257) thus encourages ethno-cultural groups to celebrate their uniqueness and maintain their specific ethno-cultural identity, as they have the right to "enjoy their culture".

Social cohesion according to the South African *Constitution* is thus conceived as the unification of distinctly diverse groups of people, all living together in harmony, without compromising their unique and distinctive identities. In this regard, South African legislation does not endorse assimilation and melting pot orientations, since these disintegrate distinctive ethno-cultural identities and disregard intra-cultural sustainability of diverse ethno-cultural groups (WCCD, 1996; Axelsson, 2013). Citizens from diverse backgrounds, orientations, and ethno-cultural groups are encouraged to work together towards building a common national identity, whilst still celebrating their unique ethno-cultural identities (RSA, 1996). Thus, the sustainability of diverse ethno-cultural groups is indeed integral to the process of social cohesion in South African society (RSA, 1996; Jordan, 2005; The Presidency, 2011; NDP, 2011; Fleetwood, 2012). Consequently, current president Jacob Zuma

[29] The *Bill of Rights* forms part of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996.

(2012) calls for the acknowledgement, preservation, application and development of the vast array of indigenous knowledge systems. These knowledge systems should be incorporated into the national South African curricula, at school as well as tertiary level, not only as a rich and unique resource, but also as a means to validate diverse ethno-cultural identities.

In this regard, the South African Coat of Arms for example represents the nation sharing a sense of belonging and national pride (DoE, 2006:20; NDP, 2011:472). The motto, written in the language of the */Xam* culture *"!Ke e: /Karra //Ke",* means 'diverse people unite'. Unity is furthermore equated with beauty through a replica of the indigenous Protea flower representing the "aesthetic harmony of our cultures" (Mbeki, cited in DoE, 2006:18). Similarly, the South African flag symbolises the notion of unification in diversity (DoE, 2006; Fleetwood, 2012). The "Y" figure represents the convergence of all the diverse elements within South African society, progressing towards unity. Although the colours have no particular symbolic meaning, it has distinctive historical roots. The black, yellow and green colours represent the ANC party that led the liberation struggle. The red, white and blue colours denote both the flags of the European colonists as well as the former *Afrikaner Boererepublieke*[30] (DoE, 2006).

Soudien (2012:3) accordingly believes that South African citizens have the opportunity to demonstrate

> … how we might take real joy in the endless differences which make us human and of showing that we realize that our differences are the resource upon which the survival of the human race is asserted.

This idea is reinforced in the country's *Constitution*: "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity" (RSA, 1996:1243). Social cohesion discourse in South Africa is thus not predicated on the uniform adoption of a single set of cultural values, beliefs, norms and attitudes in order to build a nation with a strong sense of solidarity (RSA, 1996; Castells, 2006). Neither does it aim "to strip the 'others' of their 'otherness'" [emphasis in original] (Bauman, 2001:93). The ultimate aim of social cohesion within the South African context is to allow individuals to maintain

[30] Boer republics

and take pride in their own ethno-cultural identity, whilst also respecting other ethno-cultural communities (RSA, 1996; DoE, 2002b; Mandela, 2002; The Presidency, 2011; Fleetwood, 2012).

In post-apartheid democratic South Africa, the concept of cohesion is also strongly associated with notions of unity, belonging and identification (Fine & Weiss, 2005). In this regard, former South African president, Thabo Mbeki (2000, cited in DoE, 2006:21) sees the establishment of cohesion amongst diverse South Africans towards the formation of a national identity as follows:

> We say in the heart of every individual resides an inner necessity, an essential humanity that compels each person, each people, to unite with another. This impulse and this conscious action make us who we are and tell us where we as a South African people want to go.

Mbeki's statement resonates with African philosophy which considers each individual as a 'force', connected with other individuals or 'forces', in a manner that ultimately enables individuals to become human - 'I am, because we are' (Mbiti, 1969; Tempels, 1998; Kaphagawani, 1998). All South African citizens are thereby requested to adopt a national identity as a means to assert their very existence. As such, the establishment of a national South African identity as inherent to the social cohesion project is predicated on individual and group commitment to connection with others, including those from other groups. These connections are facilitated by national identity campaigns, promoting cohesion and belonging, emphasising the notion of 'unity in diversity' (DoE, 2006).

The culturally diverse composition of South African society should accordingly be seen as an asset and valuable resource, enriching the lives of all. This idea has also been advocated by Nobel Prize winner, Archbishop Desmond Tutu who promoted the notion of a 'rainbow' nation when envisaging a South African society

> … where all belong; where all are insiders, none is an outsider, where all are members of this remarkable, this crazy, country, they belong in the rainbow nation (Tutu, 2004:6, 7).

Conceptualisations of social cohesion, in particular those prominent in public South African discourse, thus focus on the sharing of "common interests that transcend

heterogeneous differences of ethnicity, religion and socio-economic status" in order to 'bridge' the connection between diverse social groups (Putnam, 2007; Fleetwood, 2012; Struwig *et al*, 2012:5). However, by promoting the sustainability of each distinct group, 'bonding cohesion' within each group is also encouraged, since cultural practices and heritages are to be celebrated by and within particular communities. The notion of a cohesive South African society is thus not predicated on assimilation practices, but essentially rooted in a shared commitment to the *Constitution* (Fleetwood, 2012; Zuma, 2012).

2.3.3.3 Cooperation, harmony and fellow-feeling

The term 'harmony' often emerges in African philosophy and South African social cohesion discourse. The popular phrase, 'living together in harmony' is regularly used in relation to a congenial connection between individuals, based on friendship, fellowship, solidarity and cooperation. Jenson (1998:v) describes a cohesive society as sharing a collective "desire to live together in some harmony". Similarly, Jordan (2005: n.p.) believes that social cohesion in contemporary South Africa is determined by "the degree of harmony, cooperation and mutual confidence that exists within any given society". Former South African president, Nelson Mandela during the Rivonia Trial in 1964 also stated:

> I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities.

Within the context of ethnic diversity, Mandela (2002:ix) urges South African citizens to "rise above differences" and strive towards "inter-racial harmony". Social cohesion is thus founded on the relationships and connections between diverse people (The Presidency, 2007). This is also evident in emotive language associated with social cohesion discourse (Green *et al*, 2009), when regular references to the "affective bond between citizens" are made (Chipkin & Ngqulunga, 2008:61). In cohesive societies, citizens "share feelings of solidarity ... and act on the basis of these feelings" (Chipkin & Ngqulunga, 2008:61). Rapport between culturally diverse individuals enhances their sense of belonging to a community (Tabane & Human-Vogel, 2010). These notions of harmony, affection, "brotherhood" (Prinsloo, 1998:42) and "fellow-feeling" (Gbadegesin, 1998: 295) resonate with ideas of

community in African philosophy. Hence, it is important to shift our gaze back to African philosophy, where cohesion is inherently linked to the nature of social relationships within the community (Bell, 2002; Swanson, 2007; Mokgoro, 2011).

2.3.3.2 *Ubuntu* as trans-cultural South African concept and Constitutional value

As mentioned earlier, *ubuntu* as cultural praxis aims to strengthen *African* community and identity. Various South African politicians (including the late Nelson Mandela) and scholars have however argued that *ubuntu* can also be applied *trans*-culturally, to connect diverse cultural communities with each other (Teffo, 1996; Tutu, 2004; Venter, 2004; Broodryk, 2010; Mabovula, 2011; Oppenheim, 2012; Praeg, 2014). Accordingly, *ubuntu* was adopted in South African state law discourse in 1993: the post-amble of the *South African Interim Constitution* includes an appeal to *ubuntu* to promote the healing, harmony and integration of a diverse nation (Bell, 2002; Diedrich, 2011; Bennett, 2011; Keevy, 2011; Mabovula, 2011; Mokgoro, 2011; Rautenbach, 2012):

> There is a need for understanding but not for vengeance, a need for reparations but not for retaliation, a need for ubuntu but not for victimisation (RSA *Interim Constitution*, 1993).

In 2006*, ubuntu* was then officially adopted and legislated as a core Constitutional value of South African society (Teffo, 1996; Keevy, 2011). *Ubuntu* has thus been “de-territorialised” from cultural praxis and “re-territorialised” as an abstract philosophy intended to benefit *all* South Africans[31] (Praeg, 2014:101). As such, the ‘we’ in ‘I am because we are’ no longer refers to African people exclusively, but is inclusive of the totality of the human race, which in this context, is regarded as an “integrated whole” (Wiredu, 1998). Accordingly, racial prejudice can be overcome (Teffo, 1996:101; Praeg, 2014). In this regard, Wiredu (1998) and Venter (2004) see *ubuntu* as representing the connection that binds human beings together, merely because they are human, irrespective of ethno-cultural origin. Consequently, Teffo (1996), Venter (2004) and Praeg (2014) urge South African citizens to embrace *ubuntu* as a means to support nation building and promote cohesion.

[31] Praeg (2014) subsequently refers to the former philosophy as *ubuntu*, and the latter as *Ubuntu.*

Ubuntu also endorses forgiveness and healing, since it promotes the belief that people can change in order to promote the harmonious wellbeing of the community (Bell, 2002; Swanson, 2007; Bennett, 2011; Keevy, 2011; Mabovula, 2011; Praeg, 2014). In this regard, several authors (Bell, 2002; Swanson, 2007; Bennett, 2011; Diedrich, 2011; Mabovula, 2011) highlight application of the concept of *ubuntu* during the course of the trials of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC) in an attempt to prevent retribution and promote reconciliation amongst post-apartheid South African citizens.

Authors such as Broodryk (2006) and Mabovula (2011) propose that the South African *Bill of Rights* be viewed as a manifestation of the desire to uphold the values of *ubuntu (*Broodryk, 2006; Mabovula, 2011; Ramose, 2014). Murithi (2004:15, cited in Swanson, 2007; Broodryk, 2006) subsequently argues that *ubuntu* "adds value to the human rights movement" as it provides aspirations of realising human rights in a multicultural society such as South Africa. *Ubuntu,* however, does not only promote human rights. Its primary concern regards a moral virtue that upholds compassion, generosity, love, mutual responsibility and solidarity. Therefore, claims of justice and human rights are secondary and of less importance (Gyekye, 1997, 1998; Bell, 2002). In this regard, Praeg (2014) argues that the glocal description of *ubuntu* is unique, since it balances the interplay between individual rights and obligations towards the community.

2.3.3.4 *Ubuntu* as contested concept in South Africa

Ubuntu is also a contested concept in South African social cohesion discourse (see for example Bell, 2002; Bennett, 2011; Keevy, 2011; Barolsky, 2012; Biney, 2014). *Ubuntu* as a trans-cultural philosophy clearly challenges traditional Western thought on various levels. These include for example, that community is given precedence over the individual; that community includes the living, the dead and the unborn; and that a person is not human until full personhood and moral maturity have been achieved (Praeg, 2014). These discrepancies can cause tension in societies that promote equality. Whereas Western philosophers may for example assume that the latter belief regards young children (who have not yet reached maturity) as of lesser

value, Gyekye (1998) and Kaphagawani (1998) explain that such a stance merely involves an epistemological and not ontological view, and that the value of children is not negated. Children remain potential bearers of personhood, and are therefore valued as such (Gyekye, 1998).

Ubuntu is furthermore contested since it is regarded as an ancient indigenous philosophy that can be viewed as out-dated, hence regarded as not suitable for a developing 21st century society. Bennett (2011) however disagrees with this viewpoint, pointing out that the concept of *ubuntu* is not static but constantly evolving, as it is nowadays entering other spaces such as legal courts, academia, linguistics, modernity and political discourse.

Similarly, the opaque conceptualisation of *ubuntu* is often seen as problematic. However, in this regard, Keevy (2011) and Barolsky (2012) believe that it is indeed its vagueness that emphasises its usefulness for political discourse. Biney (2014) agrees, promoting a non-essentialist view of *ubuntu*, so that it can be "defined by communities of human beings who constantly give it relevance and meaning in relation to their own lives" (Biney, 2014:30). Whilst Bell (2002) calls for a re-evaluation of the concept in the context of the current South African society (Bell, 2002), Bennett (2011:15) cautions against hastened definitions which can potentially limit *ubuntu's* unique and evolving function in present-day South African society prematurely.

Wiredu (1998) and Gyekye (1998) furthermore highlight potential abuse of the concept, arguing that the *ubuntu* notion of interdependency can easily be misinterpreted as 'entitlement'. All too often individuals expect or demand certain behaviour and responses from others in the name of *ubuntu*, whilst neglecting their own humane responsibility towards others. Both Wiredu (1998) and Gyekye (1998) argue that although *ubuntu* is characterised by interdependency, self-realisation and responsibility are also promoted. In this regard, Barolsky (2012) note both conservative as well as transformative interpretations of *ubuntu* in South African discourse. Whereas a conservative interpretation emphasises notions of assistance and traditional spiritual obligation towards society in order to prevent harm and promote a peaceful society, a transformative application of *ubuntu* urges members of

society towards action by actively caring for each other. Barolsky (2012:149) thus believes that *ubuntu* as applied in current South African social cohesion discourse, often deviates from its original meaning, although it still reinforces a "homogenized, romanticized, transcendental value that signifies a 'traditional', caring and cohesive African past [emphasis in original]".

Reflecting on present-day ills in South African society, Biney (2014) raises scepticism about *ubuntu* as current lived philosophy in a society characterised by daily incidences of xenophobia, corruption, and misconduct by governmental officials for the purpose of self-gain. These discrepancies lead Biney (2014) to argue that *ubuntu* should be viewed as an 'idyllic philosophy' of how persons, life and interactions *should* be, rather than claiming it as 'the current lived philosophy'.

Adversaries also question *ubuntu's* close relationship with cultural and religious praxis. Keevy (2011) for example asserts that *ubuntu* cannot exist "without the inspiration of the ancestors or living dead" (Ramose, 2002, cited in Keevy, 2011:35). Subsequently, it cannot exist outside African religion. This means that non-African people do not have access to the particular divine inspiration which enables *ubuntu*. As such, *ubuntu* could be seen as the exclusive property of the African community. It cannot be extended to other cultures and cannot be implemented trans-culturally. Its primary purpose is to promote cohesion *within*, and sustain African community (Keevy, 2011; Praeg, 2014). This leads Praeg (2014) to argue that *ubuntu* has been and can be used to insult non-African people, excluding them from the African community and subsequently, humanity. Marx (2002 cited in Swanson, 2007), Bennett (2011) and Ramose (2014) thus warn that active promotion of *ubuntu* can further reinforce segregation, since it tends to strengthen African identity as well as community allegiance, subsequently excluding other ethno-cultural groups.

In this regard, tension often arises when *ubuntu* is associated with South African social cohesion discourse, since intentions and particular meanings for its inclusion are often not clarified (Barolsky, 2013). Political discourse, for example, often lacks clarification as to whether it is used as cultural praxis to support African identity, or whether it aims to promote sameness as a trans-cultural philosophy. Moreover, if it is the latter, *ubuntu* excludes notions of diversity, recognition of difference and

cultural sustainability. In this regard one could also argue that *ubuntu* promotes recognition of difference, since it promotes an African identity as dissimilar to other identities. However, if it is true that *ubuntu* as trans-cultural philosophy promotes a common humanity (as so many authors argue), there is little evidence of references to difference and the importance of the sustainability of all ethno-cultural groups. Politicians thus often exploit its vagueness to boost their own agenda, which one could argue, ultimately limits *ubuntu*'s potential contribution to the fostering of a cohesive South African society.

Therefore, although the absorption of *ubuntu* into South African social cohesion discourse is commendable, some appropriations thereof remain questionable. The adversarial views mentioned above clearly indicate that *ubuntu* cannot be naively reduced to a philosophy only generating positive outcomes. Such a simplistic view will be impartial and unrealistic (Keevy, 2011; Barolsky, 2013). Although "kindness, compassion, respect, hospitality, honesty, sharing, caring, forgiveness, sympathy, tolerance, love, appreciation and consideration" emphasise the constructive elements of *ubuntu*, malice, jealousy, fear, discrimination, gender inequality, and "the violation of human dignity and death" are also potentially embedded in this philosophy (Golooba-Mutebi, 2005; Keevy, 2011:37-39; Barolsky, 2013).

2.3.3.5 Specific values promoted by South African social cohesion discourse

As mentioned earlier, social cohesion discourse in South Africa foregrounds a shared commitment to distinct, yet interrelated Constitutional values, such as respect, human dignity, equality, and non-discrimination (RSA, 1996; James, 2001; Chipkin & Ngqulunga, 2008; Soudien, 2008; NDP, 2011; Fleetwood, 2012; Zuma, 2012). As such, it is clear that South African social cohesion discourse includes an emphasis on the fostering of particular Constitutional values, as these ultimately impact interpersonal behaviour (Fleetwood, 2012; DAC, 2013). In this regard, the following section conceptualises *human dignity, equality, commitment to active participation, care* and *ubuntu,* as those values predominantly associated with South African social cohesion discourse. The general assumption is that the cultivation of these values would enable the wellbeing of the Other, and ultimately, the wellbeing

of society, subsequently facilitating processes of social cohesion in a culturally and politically diverse, post-apartheid South African society.

2.3.3.5.1 Human dignity

All people, regardless of their ethno-cultural affiliation deserve to be treated with dignity and respect and be afforded equal access to basic human needs in order to live a humane life (Rockefeller, 1994; Taylor, 1994; RSA, 1996; Nussbaum, 1997; Mandela, 2002; Soudien, 2008). This view is supported by the trans-cultural application of *ubuntu*, which recognises a common humanity (Taylor, 1994; Teffo, 1996; Tutu, 2004; Venter, 2004; Broodryk, 2010; Mabovula, 2011; Oppenheim, 2012). The *Bill of Rights* accordingly acknowledges the inherent dignity of all South African citizens and endorses "the right to have their dignity respected and protected" (RSA, 1996:1247). Dignity here implies to be "worthy of honour and respect" (Oxford Dictionaries, 2014: Online). Although dignity is inherent to a person's intrapersonal sense of Self, it is also strongly influenced by interpersonal experiences of the Other. Receiving respect from another increases a person's sense of dignity. As such, dignity is dependent on the conscious act of another to treat a person with respect. In this regard, Soudien (2012:2, 3) highlights the notion of interdependency amongst individuals in society, since they have the "unspeakably difficult task of gifting that right [the right to experience respect and dignity] to others" [insertion added]. Therefore, although all human beings have to be recognised as worthy and honourable because they are human, such recognition and respect are not necessarily granted to all. Realising human dignity for all citizens requires that each member of society assumes social responsibility to treat the Other in an equally humane way. Herein manifests the philosophy of *ubuntu*. It is necessary to cultivate individuals that would realise their social obligations towards the wellbeing of the Other, and in so doing, realise experiences of humaneness for them (Gyekye, 1998; Wiredu, 1998, Bell, 2002; Swanson, 2007).

The South African Presidency (2007) thus highlights respect for human dignity in its *Social Cohesion and Social Justice* report as essential for and characteristic of cohesion amongst South African citizens (DAC, 2011a; DAC, 2011b; NDP, 2011).

Similarly, a consciousness of "what it means to be human" is integral to cohesion discourse (Soudien, 2012:2; Biney, 2014: 50).

2.3.3.5.2 Equality

All human beings have a "passion for equality" and the desire for "equality of conditions" such as living environments, education and vocational work opportunities (De Tocqueville, 1966:473-476, cited in Hochschild, 2006:n.p). Social cohesion, as it pertains to South Africa, is thus also predicated upon the values of equality and non-discrimination, presuming that all individuals from diverse backgrounds have similar capacity. This being so, nobody should be discriminated against or be exposed to "the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people" (Oxford Dictionaries, 2014: Online). In this regard, the South African *Constitution* states that,

> [n]o person may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds ... including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth (RSA, 1996:1247)

Prejudice, unfair treatment or the assumption that the Other is of lesser worth lead to discriminatory practices, which deny equality, and hamper social cohesion (Soudien, 2008; DAC, 2013). As such, the Department of Arts and Culture (2013) holds that

> [a] community or society is cohesive to the extent that the inequalities, exclusions and disparities based on ethnicity, gender, class, nationality, age, disability or any other distinctions which engender divisions, distrust and conflict are reduced and/or eliminated in a planned sustained manner (DAC, 2013:1).

Any strategy aimed at promoting social cohesion amongst citizens would thus involve the deliberate eradication of inequality and discriminatory practices in society. Abolition of inequality in a culturally and politically diverse post-conflict society such as South Africa, is however complex, since inequality does not merely manifest as racism, but is often hidden in subtle negotiations of power during interpersonal interactions, hegemony, praxis and unequal opportunities due to historical disadvantages and discrimination, to name but a few (Rowe, 2008; Soudien, 2008). Thus, although the promotion of social cohesion should include

strategies aimed at the transformation of behaviour, attitudes and perceptions of South African citizens (NDP, 2011), it also requires the cultivation of a conscious awareness of power and potential hegemonic practices.

2.3.3.5.3 Commitment to active participation

The national Department of Arts and Culture describes social cohesion in South Africa as

> … the degree of social integration and inclusion in communities and society at large, and the extent to which mutual solidarity finds expression among individuals and communities .... This, with community members and citizens as active participants, working together for the attainment of shared goals, designed and agreed upon to improve the living conditions for all (DAC, 2013:1).

Social cohesion thus involves the extent to which all South African people interact, participate and are valued. All South African citizens have the right to feel respected, acknowledged, and that they belong to South African society. Such personal perceptions are however primarily informed by experiences and *inter alia* expressed through interpersonal encounters. In this regard, Nelson Mandela, the first president of the democratic South Africa, highlights the need for active participation and interdependency when he argues that it is “not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others” (Mandela, 1995: chapter 11). Cohesion amongst South African citizens depends primarily on the manner in which individuals commit themselves to contributing to the wellbeing of others. Mandela urges every South African citizen to liberate him or herself by abandoning imprisoning thoughts, recognising and celebrating the Self as valuable and equal to Others, whilst not doing so at the expense of the Other[32]. Rather, Others should be treated with the kind of dignity and respect that will enhance their freedom - a perspective grounded in the principles of *ubuntu*.

In his *State of the Nation Address* (2009), President Jacob Zuma thus urges all South African citizens to uphold the values of the *Constitution* and participate as active citizens in the transformation of society. In this regard, the *Bill of*

[32] This notion also resonates with Hindu thought.

Responsibilities (NDP, 2011:461), a codicil to the *Bill of Rights,* emphasises the reciprocal link between human rights and social responsibilities. To expect that one's dignity is respected, one needs to respect the dignity of the Other (NDP, 2011). The *Bill of Responsibilities* thus emphasises the active participation and responsibility of each individual citizen to actualise each human right stated in the *Bill of Rights*, for the Other (NDP, 2011). Social cohesion in South Africa consequently depends on individual agency and a personal commitment to uphold and realise the values associated with social cohesion (NDP, 2011).

In addition, mutual cooperation and interdependency are also central to cohesion amongst South African citizens. Mutual cooperation implies reciprocal faith in and respect for each other's commitment and ability to contribute to the enhancement of society (Bernard, 1999; Jordan, 2006; NDP, 2011). Social cohesion thus depends on each individual to take up the social responsibility to realise experiences of cohesion for others, thus, a form of interdependency which resembles Durkheim's 'moral dimension' of organic solidarity, principles also grounded in African philosophy.

2.3.3.5.4 Care

The Presidency (2011) states that values such as trust, faith, care, harmony, unity, equality, acceptance and non-discrimination between diverse individuals, requires cultivation in order to foster social cohesion in South Africa. 'Caring' is therefore also prominent in South African social cohesion discourse (Tutu, 2004; The Presidency, 2011; Soudien, 2012; Zuma, 2012). Soudien (2012) however reminds us that care depends on the Other's ability to demonstrate humaneness. An individual can only experience care when another person shows concern for his or her wellbeing. The notion of a 'caring society' assigns a social responsibility to the individual to care actively for others. As such, caring surpasses mere tolerance. The South African Department of Social Cohesion, for example, in recent years launched a campaign called "South African @ heart: working together to build a caring nation" (DAC, 2011b:n.p.). The campaign aims to nurture a caring society, urging South African individuals to care for each other.

2.3.3.5.5 *Ubuntu*

As mentioned before, *ubuntu* has also been adopted as a Constitutional value in South African legal and political discourse. Scholars such as Prinsloo (1998), Venter (2004) and Broodryk (2006, 2010) - alongside politicians such as Mbeki, Zuma and Mandela - suggest that South African citizens should strive towards attaining the values of *ubuntu* within individuals, in order to cultivate a more harmonious and cohesive multicultural society. The reality is however that most non-African citizens have a partial understanding of *ubuntu,* since its meaning is often simplified and merely equated with human dignity or 'love thy neighbour' (Rautenbach, 2012). This study has revealed that an authentic interpretation of the term implies additional meanings and applications. As such, when Africans such as Tutu, Mbeki, Zuma and Mandela allude to *ubuntu* in South African social cohesion discourse, the meaning extends beyond dignity. *Ubuntu* also represents community as it includes the nurturing of togetherness, brotherhood, cooperation, harmony, sharing, compassion, sympathy, empathy, respect, tolerance, benevolence, love, and humanness (Broodryk, 2006; 2010). In addition, *ubuntu* implies the cultivation of personhood, that is, a particular attitude that is happy, friendly, kind, generous, humble and supportive towards the needs of others (Broodryk, 2006; 2010). In this regard, only through actualisation of courteous behaviour towards others, is *ubuntu* established within a person. In other words, only once this attitude has manifested as regular habits of behaviour, can one claim to 'have' *ubuntu*. The inclusion of *ubuntu* in South African social cohesion discourse thus also implies that each individual cultivates courteous, warm and friendly dispositions towards the Other, in a manner that would manifest in peoples' behaviour during daily intercultural interactions. Thus, individuals should be pro-active about building community as they act and behave in a manner that would promote the "welfare of others" (Gyekye, 1998:324).

Ultimately, cohesion amongst members of the South African society is dependent upon each citizen's commitment to and active participation towards a shared goal of a diverse, yet united nation. Constitutional values need to be internalised and embodied by each individual. This implies individual commitment to respecting the dignity of fellow citizens, enabling experiences of equality for others, active

participation in facilitating a caring society, and aspiring to cultivate an "*ubuntu* personality" (Broodryk, 2006; 2010).

2.3.3.6 South African social cohesion discourse: A critique

Social cohesion discourse in South Africa is also marked by regular critique. Barolsky (2012), Green *et al* (2009) and Golooba-Mutebi (2005) for example warn against the establishment of 'imagined communities' (Anderson, 1991) and overly cohesive and dense communities, arguing that intimate cohesion can give rise to social narrow-mindedness, archaic or traditionalist mind-sets, excessive resistance to economic change, and an ignorance or avoidance of strategies to redress injustices in society. Green *et al* (2009) thus caution that extreme cohesiveness can hamper the economic and social growth and development of a particular community. In addition, Barolsky (2012:134-136) and Golooba-Mutebi (2005) argue that the ideals of social cohesion may be deemed "utopian" in a poverty-stricken society such as South Africa, since the realities of the majority who live in poverty and who are confronted with crime and violence on a daily basis, are ignored. Thus, social cohesion discourse can commit "epistemological violence" (Barolsky, 2012:136) towards the deprived, since it promises a 'better future' to both the poor and the wealthy. In essence, the question thus needs to be asked whether ardent ideals of social cohesion can indeed improve the social conditions of disadvantaged citizens (Barolsky, 2012).

Similarly, Green *et al* (2009) and Soudien (2012) question the extent to which a culturally diverse society, such as South Africa, can merge into a cohesive society, particularly when the assumption is that a cohesive society will be sharing a mutual value system. Moreover, Soudien (2012:15) regards emphasis on the recognition of *ethno-cultural diversity* in social cohesion discourse as limiting, as it reinforces racial and cultural distinctions:

> Blackness, whiteness, and their derivatives of Zuluness, Indianness, Germanness, Britishness, and so on, are all taken on by those who have been seduced by this logic as features of who they are and for which they will lay down their lives.

Adherence to notions of race and ethno-culture superimposes particular identities and reinforces boundaries. These ways of identification limit the ways in which individuals see the world. Soudien (2012:15) thus calls for the "unlearning [of] this logic [as it] opens one up to seeing the world in entirely new ways".

Further challenges regard the amalgamation of African, Asian and Western philosophy in South African social cohesion discourse, since certain ambiguities such as the hierarchical order of the community and the Self remain a point of deliberation. In this regard, the co-existence of individualist and collectivist mind-sets within the same multicultural environment causes a variety of problems. In schools, universities, the workplace and society, for example, Western-oriented individuals may strive to display unique qualities that promote personal gain, whereas African individuals may strive to maintain harmony with others (Ghosh & Chaudhuri, 2009). In other words, even though many African individuals have the potential to be creative and unique, they may not reveal their true individual potential if it would disrupt the harmony within the particular environment. Consequently, African people can be perceived by Westerners as inferior, whereas their behaviour according to African terms, actually shows their strength of character and their acquired status of *ubuntu*. This misperception is significant, since it reinforces existing power relations within society, and prohibits recognition of potential, capability, creativity and ultimately, equality, within society. Hegemony thus occurs incidentally, due to ignorance with regard to the philosophy that underpins the way of life of the Other. Moreover, during the very same encounter, African people can perceive Westerners as displaying a weak, immature and selfish character, fuelling preference, stereotyping and discrimination.

Questions also arise with regard to the exact meaning of interdependency as applied in South African social cohesion discourse. Whereas African philosophy views interdependency as integral to existence, social obligations towards the Other and the notion of sharing, Western philosophy tends to perceive interdependency as enabling all citizens to interact with each other in a democratic way, conscious of social responsibility towards society and the world (Bell, 2007:1). Although these conceptualisations may seem similar, complexities arise with the extent to which sharing (for example with regard to land, possessions and money) is promoted. In

addition, Western thinking may reduce the notion of interdependency (to for example, voting rights for all) and subsequently neglect the importance of a moral consciousness to realise the wellbeing of the Other.

A further point of conflict between Western and African beliefs in South African social cohesion discourse is caused by the innate belief that existence depends on social relationships. In a multicultural society, Western onlookers often observe and criticise Africans for devoting ample energy and time to the building of social relationships. It is often misinterpreted as a means to avoid work, rather than an active attempt to express concern about the wellbeing of the Other, enhancing community building and cohesion. The amalgamation of Western and African philosophies, although well intended, can thus reinforce hegemony, inequality, favouritism and discrimination, corroding cohesion, rather than promoting it.

The meanings of social cohesion as it is understood in a culturally diverse South Africa, are therefore complex. In South Africa, general consensus has however been reached with regard to a shared commitment to uphold the values of the *Constitution*, the notion of 'unity in diversity' as national identity, and an attempt to live in harmony with ethno-cultural Others. Moreover, Western literature, African and Asian philosophy as well as current South African discourse regard the individual's attitude and behaviour towards another as indicators of community cohesion. African, Western and Asian thought correspond, holding that a study of the degree of cohesion, unity and interdependency within a particular community should focus on the extent and nature of interaction between individuals and communities (Creel, 1975; David, 1979; Teffo, 1996; Gyekye, 1997; Prinsloo, 1998; Meena, 2005; Hacker, 2006; Masolo, 2006; Putnam, 2007; Green *et al*, 2009; King *et al*, 2010; DAC, 2011a, DAC, 2011b; Struwig *et al*, 2012).

2.3.4. Social cohesion in a transforming South African society

The social cohesion project in South Africa is inevitably linked to the social and political transformation of the country. Several authors however highlight the complexities involved, warning that social and political transformation cannot be brought about by mere changes in policies and legislation. In reality, it requires transformation of intercultural and interpersonal interactions, prompted by inner, personal transformation of individual citizens (Friedkin, 2004; Delport 2009; Oloyede 2009; NDP, 2011). Social and political transformation is therefore a complex double-layered process. In this regard, Anderson and Taylor (2004) as well as Delport (2009) distinguish between two levels of transformations. Macro or superstructural changes imply large scale transformations, affecting society as a whole. Such transformations would, for example include changes brought about by new national policies and legislations. Micro or infrastructural transformations refer to transformations at the inner, personal level and include changes in people's dispositions, behaviour, interpersonal interactions, and so forth. Delport (2009:158) explains:

> At the core of the infrastructure are individuals' needs and happiness, their relationships and their ideas about life and development. At the core of infrastructural transformation are the conversions pertaining to these aspects.

Although the superstructural (macro) and infrastructural (micro) levels are in reciprocal relationship, the sustainability of social and political transformation depends on transformations at inner, personal level (Delport, 2009). This also correlates with African philosophy where community cohesion depends on the cultivation of personhood within individuals, which requires deep, personal transformation (Gyekye, 1998; Menkiti, 2006). Ultimately, South African citizens need to transform their way of seeing the Self, the Other and society.

2.3.4.1 Personal transformation

Wright (2010:10) refers to personal transformation as "changing the inner life" of a person. Personal transformation thus involves a process through which an individual becomes critically aware of both old and new views of the Self, and then reconstructs an altered sense of the Self. A transformed person sees the world in a

neoteric way. This implies a metamorphosis of consciousness, potentially generating transformed worldviews and perceptions of both Self and the world (Taylor 1994; Wade, 1998; Anderson & Taylor, 2004). Personal transformation thus requires refinement or espousal of personal identities, a personal task often prompted by inner discomfort and dis-ease about previously held beliefs and assumptions which prove fallacious (Anderson & Taylor, 2004; Jenkins 2004).

Due to the segregated nature of South African society during the previous political dispensation, perceptions of the Self and Other were mostly constructed in generalised and stereotypical ways. Hence, in order to promote social cohesion through inner transformation by unlearning misgivings about the Other, exposure to the Other has become essential. Gutman (1994:7) has faith in such a transformation process:

> Part of the uniqueness of individuals results from the ways in which they integrate, reflect upon, and modify their own cultural heritage and that of other people with whom they come into contact.

Personal transformation thus engenders revision of personal perspectives. It is a unique process through which an individual applies reflexivity in order to confront established viewpoints, reformulate these, and construct a new way of thinking (Mezirow, 1990; Wade, 1998; O'Hara, 2003). O'Hara (2003:74) describes this process as "unfreezing" the old ways of thinking in order to reformulate and replace these with new ways of thinking. Both Wade (1998) and Delport (2009) argue that personal transformation requires not only cognitive rethinking, but also affective re-evaluation. During the process of re-evaluation, the individual is prompted to release certain preconceived beliefs, assumptions, and generalised and stereotypical ideas of both the Self and the Other, transforming or replacing these with new ones. Personal transformation is therefore predicated upon the individual's ability to be reflexive and to be critically aware of the Self's perspectives in the context of alternative perspectives. In this regard, Rogers (1980, cited in O'Hara, 2003:68) and Newman (1990, cited in Wade, 1998:713) refer to the notion of "changing or expanding consciousness". Similarly, Mezirow (1990:5) sees personal transformation as "perspective transformation", a process during which an individual becomes critically aware of his or her own perceptions, interpretations,

comprehension and feelings of the surrounding world, and alters them. By recognising that a personal perspective is merely based on a particular viewpoint and founded on pre-learnt assumptions, the individual comes to the realisation that other perspectives also exist. This realisation facilitates the reformulation of a more discerning, fluid and integrated viewpoint, which ultimately determines subsequent dispositions, decisions and behaviour. Such a transformation of consciousness can provide a person with a new and altered perspective of the Self, the Other, and the Self in relation to the Other and the world. Distorted assumptions, for example about other racial groups, can thus be corrected by means of perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1990; O'Hara, 2003; O'Brien & Sygna, 2013). These viewpoints are commensurate with African views of personal transformation, which prioritise the notion of social interaction and community involvement as catalysts for inner transformation. I am - that is, I have attained a level of personhood – only because the community has 'made' me a person. Hence, without interactions with the community, I would not have known how to become a person.

Alteration of pre-conceived perspectives of the Self, Other and society, is however no easy task in a post-conflict society such as South Africa where citizens' perceptions of the Other are still informed by their "knowledge in the blood … a defensive knowledge that reacts against and resists rival knowledge", grounded in the political history of the country (Jansen, 2009:171). Any project that therefore aims to nurture social cohesion in South Africa needs to be cognisant of the need to engender inner, personal transformation. In this regard, Delport (2009) emphasises that personal transformation cannot be enforced but needs to be nurtured and cultivated 'from within'. This requires particular strategies.

2.3.4.1.1 Engendering personal transformation through interaction

Although personal transformation is an individual task which can be provoked in various ways, it cannot happen atomistically and in isolation. Engagement with community is crucial. This is also evident in African philosophy which argues that one can only attain personhood through social interaction. In this regard, Tropp (2011) and Struwig *et al* (2012) believe that regular intergroup contact, marked by equality and cooperation is critical, as it enables people to revisit and allay

antagonistic feelings towards the Other. Intergroup contact enhances knowledge of the Other, deepens empathy and understanding of the Other, and reduces prejudice, fear and suspicion of the Other, not only towards fellow group members, but also to the broader society. In turn, intergroup contact often generates joy, trust, respect and harmony (Tabane & Human-Vogel, 2010), which enables a sense of belonging to a broader culturally diverse group, subsequently nurturing cohesion amongst members of society (Tabane & Human-Vogel, 2010; Tropp 2011). Tropp (2011) thus promotes informal and spontaneous contact between members of diverse ethno-cultural groups, arguing that intercultural friendships reduce the degree of prejudice and discrimination in society, as they ultimately generate personal transformation. In addition, not only do intercultural friendships affect those directly involved, they also disrupt prejudice for those observing such friendships (Tropp, 2011).

These views reflect the core tenets of symbolic interactionism as proposed by Mead (1912, 1913), Blumer (1969), Denzin (1969) as well as Atkinson and Housley (2003) who argue that meaning (including perspectives of the Self, the Other and society) is altered during social interactions. This happens as a result of inner dialogue with the Self, ultimately leading to the transformation of an individual's reactions and social conduct towards the Other.

2.3.4.1.2 Engendering personal transformation through experience

Mezirow (1990), Wade (1998), O'Hara (2003) and Tropp (2011) furthermore believe that personal transformation can be nurtured through critical reflection brought about by personal experiences. In this regard, Wade (1998) proposes the use of literature, art (including dance) and discussions to disrupt previously held beliefs. Such transformation will however depend on the individual's ability to make meaning of a particular experience, because individual meaning-making systems and personal experiences are applied as frames of reference for interpretation, influencing and enabling the sense-making process of the particular experience. Transformation therefore occurs through experience and self-discovery, in other words, when a person comprehends and frames new insights to reformulate an altered perspective (Mezirow, 1990; Foucault, 1994; Wade, 1998).

2.3.5 Summary

Social cohesion, as conceptualised in this study, is thus essentially rooted in transformation of the Self as a critical prerequisite. In post-segregated and post-conflict South African society, personal transformation is initiated by experiences of and interactions with the Other. These experiences disrupt preconceived ideas and stereotypes regarding the Other, which ultimately nurture the transformation of individual consciousness.

There is general consensus that education provides a primary platform for personal transformation (Wade, 1998; Venter, 2004; Delport, 2009). This stance has also been adopted in national education policies in South Africa (DoE, 2002b; Nkomo, Weber & Amsterdam, 2009; Mandela, 2002). South African educators can facilitate the development of individuals with non-discriminatory world-views, and cultivate respect for the Other as equal citizens. In this study, it is argued that involvement in this particular dance education course afforded students opportunities for personal transformation prompted by interactions and experiences of the Other.

2.4 Conclusion

Society is never static, since human beings evolve constantly as they continue to make sense of the world and adjust their individual behaviour and responses accordingly. For the purpose of this study, social cohesion as it pertains to South African society is predicated on a shared commitment to the *Constitution* which endorses the ideal of a society 'united in its diversity'. In this study, these Constitutional values have been conceptualised as human dignity, equality, commitment, care and *ubuntu*. Social cohesion is further premised on interdependency between diverse individuals in order to enable the realisation of these values. It is thus viewed as a dynamic process that needs to be nurtured and continuously managed in order to be sustained.

Social cohesion in a post-conflict, culturally diverse society therefore in essence depends on the individual. This study argues that experiences of this particular dance education course can potentially prompt persons to revisit and transform

ideas of Self, Other and society, in a manner that can alter the attitudes and behaviours of individuals towards each other, and in so doing, promote social cohesion in a culturally and politically diverse South African university classroom.

CHAPTER THREE

Dance, culture and social cohesion

3.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of three main parts. The first section provides an orientation to dance as it relates to culture and multiculture. Diverse cultural conceptualisations of dance are examined through current anthropological debates. Thereafter, diverse purposes of dance in society are discussed, particularly as these relate to the political sphere. Since this study is situated within multicultural South Africa, a discussion of the challenges of dance in a culturally diverse environment conclude this section.

The second section delineates the field of 'dance education' and then contextualises it to South African dance education, and ultimately, to this study, which foregrounds creative movement and the teaching of ethno-cultural dances. An overview of each component culminates in explicit examples of practice, as these occurred within this study.

The final section examines connections between culture, dance and social cohesion, exploring dance education's potential to contribute to social cohesion in South Africa.

3.2 Part One: Dance, culture and multiculture

This section relates dance to culture and multiculture through a study of current scholarly literature. As an introduction to this discussion, an orientation to the human body as it pertains to this study is necessary, as experiences of dance, Self, Other and the world occur through the body (Merleau-Ponty, 1945; Parviainen, 2002; Smith, 2002; Kauffman & Ellis, 2007).

3.2.1 Prologue: The human body

The human body enables human beings to experience and make sense of the surrounding world. A baby's first confrontation with the world is the experience of the physical body in the world (Merleau-Ponty, 1945; Kauffman & Ellis, 2007). Bodily experiences are thus intertwined with experiences of the Self, and are uniquely personal. As such, the body forms an integral component of the Self. Bodily knowledge, in the form of personal experiences and memories, is based upon that which is felt in, by and through the body (Parviainen, 2002). The human body, subsequently contains a particular perspective of the world (Ropo & Parviainen, 2001). In this regard, Hawkins (1991, cited in Hamalainen, 2007:56) regards the human body as "a vehicle for feeling, a fundamental way of knowing". Several authors concur, referring to bodily knowledge as a form of inner, intuitive knowing (Cohen, 2003, cited in Hamalainen, 2007; Hamalainen, 2007). The mind's reflections on what surrounds the physical body are thus secondary to the body being in the world.

The body and mind therefore respond to the world as an integrated entity, hence the concept of 'embodiment' (Smith, 2002:126). This body-mind unit serves as an "epistemological gateway" (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999:253, cited in Parviainen, 2002:14) through which individuals discover and comprehend the Self and the world through bodily movement. The body-mind unit therefore becomes a "generating centre of experience" (Smith, 2002:126), retrieving and conveying information about and to the world through sensory exploration and bodily movement. The human body is a receptive as well as expressive instrument.

> The body experiencing deeply is recognized as that which makes possible the reconnection to our own lives, and others; that which makes possible the recovery of our humanity from its apathetic condition. It is the body that carries knowledge of a life (Shapiro, 1999:100).

The human body also connects the individual to other people, and is integral to his or her negotiations with the world. In this regard, the body serves as an exploratory vehicle to make sense of and negotiate relationships with other bodies with whom it interacts. These negotiated relationships may be welcoming, antagonistic, responsive, or prejudiced, depending on specific bodily interactions.

Bodily knowledge, according to Parviainen (2002), is predicated upon personal, cultural, social, historical, temporal, spatial and kinaesthetic contexts. Present bodily knowledge comprises memories of past experiences, which include individual and collective values and attitudes that are socially and culturally influenced by heritage and environment. Bodily knowledge therefore conveys and reveals particular information about the 'knower' to the 'onlooker' (Parviainen, 2002; Ropo & Parviainen, 2001; Hamalainen, 2007; Kaupilla, 2007). As such, an individual's bodily movements contain, reflect and convey specific features of his or her culture, environment and personality. In other words, the manner in which a person moves, contains and conveys particular information about that person to the onlooker (Farnell, 1999; Karkou & Sanderson, 2001; Ropo & Parviainen, 2001; Parviainen, 2002; Vissicaro, 2004; Ashley, 2006; Hamalainen, 2007; Kaupilla, 2007; Smith, 2008). Bodily movements are therefore uniquely personal and based upon personal history, lived experiences, cultural heritage and habits of expression (Rank, 2009).

In this regard, Smith (2002:127) advises researchers to study human movement according to its situatedness within a particular cultural and societal structure, arguing that movement is always influenced by the individual's *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1977, cited in Lizardo, 2009). The manner in which an individual dances and moves, as influenced by his or her *habitus,* constitutes a unique combination of *inter alia* environmental, cultural, social and socio-economic elements which generate unique habits of moving. The bodily movements of an individual are therefore always informed by an affiliated meaning-making system and convey a particular culture (Royce, 1977; Smith, 2002; Hanna, 2008). In this regard, Royce (1977:18) states that bodily movements are "colored by" the individual's "cultural biases for movement". In other words, a person's way of moving is influenced by his or her *habitus.*

3.2.2 Dance and culture

Dance anthropologists problematise the use of the term 'dance' to categorise, define or delineate a specific human activity. Many ethno-cultural communities for example view dance as intrinsically interlinked with music, or as inherently integrated with the

attire or the event itself (Royce, 1977; Williams, 2000; Bakare & Mans, 2003; Adinku, 2004; Amegago, 2009; Kringelbach & Skinner, 2012).

Essentially, an individual's conceptualisation of dance is influenced by his or her meaning-making system (Hanna, 1979). Hence, insider and outsider perspectives on what constitutes a 'dance' may differ from culture to culture (Royce, 1977; Hanna, 1979; Williams, 2000; Rowe, 2008; Glasser, 2000; Kringelbach & Skinner, 2012; Khoury, Martin & Rowe, 2013). For instance, in certain Australian aborigine communities, the word *bongol* comprises both music and dance. However, *bongol* excludes specific patterned steps found in aborigine sacred events, as well as in certain aborigine children's play movements. These movements could mistakenly be viewed by the outsider as 'a dance', when indeed it is not (Royce, 1977; Williams, 2000; Vissicaro, 2004). In turn, dances that do not conform to the aesthetic paradigm of ballet have been unjustifiably categorised by proponents of Eurocentric art as "primitive" and "non-primitive" dances (Hanna, 1979:8; McClary & Walser, 1994:75; Williams, 2004:89; Doumbia, 2013). This being so, misinterpretations have for example resulted in descriptions of "primitive dances" as resembling "imitative fornication" in the past (Hanna, 1979:8). Consequently, scholars warn against ethnocentric classifications of 'dance' and its meaning (Royce, 1977; Snipe, 1996; Best, 1996; Williams, 2000; 2004). A person's own meaning-making system is insufficient when interpreting another culture's activities, resulting in incorrect assumptions (Hanna, 1979; Kealiinohomoku, 2001; Zerubavel, 2002; Anderson & Taylor, 2004; Williams, 2000; Williams, 2004; Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Dance can only be regarded as 'dance' when both performers and observers within a particular community regard the activity as 'dance' (Kealiinohomoku, 2001; Vissicaro, 2004). In this regard, Williams (2000:126) opposes the use of a sole definition for 'dance', arguing that it promotes the notion of a single interpretation of the term. Consequently, dance scholars have ceased to construct a singular definition for dance (Kringelbach & Skinner, 2012).

Oliveira *et al* (2012:1) regard dance as "a complex class of human behaviour which conveys forms of non-verbal and subjective communication that are performed as cultural vocabularies in all human cultures". Dance, as a complex assortment of human behaviour transfers non-verbal messages constructed according to a

particular meaning-making system. Successful transfer of the message depends on interpretation by the observers. Messages conveyed through dance are thus based on the assumption that dancers and audience subscribe to the same meaning-making system (Hanna, 1999; Oliveira *et al*, 2012).

Consequently, dance is also described by several authors as a multi-sensory communicator (Royce, 1977; Hanna, 1999) in which kinaesthetic, visual, aural, tactile and olfactory senses are employed to express and communicate a particular message. Dance however does not express concepts in the same way as a language[33]. Whereas in language words are the medium of expression, dance communicates concepts by providing a multi-sensory experience for both the audience and the participants (Royce, 1977; Hanna, 1999). The impact of this message is intensified when the same message is transmitted through more than one channel. Royce (1977:200) suggests that the communicative impact of a dance may at times be "multiplied by a factor of five", as it holds the potential to engage all five senses. However, multiple channels of communication may also cause ambiguity. While the observer may anticipate a particular message, diverse messages via different senses can be communicated. Ambiguous messages may be intentional and choreographed, or the result of deficient shared knowledge between performer and observer (Royce, 1977).

Dance movements which contain non-verbal messages become the "cultural vocabulary" of the meaning-making system (Smith, 2008; Oliveira *et al*, 2012:1). Particular dance movements hold specific symbolic and expressive qualities for the affiliated meaning-making system, and over time, these movements become the symbolic expressions and representations of the particular meaning-making system. In this regard, Mans (1994:66) holds that dance is "probably the clearest visual expression of a culture". Subsequently, Merriam (1974:17, cited in Royce, 1977:13) concludes that "dance is culture, and culture is dance". Since the particular set of bodily movements is distinctive of the particular meaning-making system, dance

[33] Both Hanna (1999) and Royce (1977) hold that a comparison of dance to language leaves dance as inferior to language. By regarding dance as a 'language', the inherent expressive potential of dance is restricted.

serves as a form of cultural expression and as an expression of the collective, which can be a particular ethno-cultural group, or a dance culture[34], such as ballet.

Ethno-cultural dances, for example, serve as a form of cultural expression as these represent the collective values of the meaning-making system through symbolic bodily movements, providing the community with a collective form of expression. The dance movements used to communicate become the symbolic representation of the particular ethno-cultural group. Dance thus serves as a vehicle through which the collective and distinctive values and qualities of the affiliated community are expressed, communicated and re-established (Behrens, 2000; Bakare & Mans, 2003; Smith, 2006; Oliveira *et al*, 2012; Wanyami & Shitubi, 2012). Some African dances, for example, certain Ghanaian dances, portray “collective individualism”, where both the individual, and the individual’s affiliation with the larger group, are emphasised through dance practices (Behrens, 2000:10).

As mentioned before, all bodily movements of the individual, regardless of whether these are associated with ethno-cultural dances, are intrinsically linked to the bodily movement vocabulary of the particular ethno-culture or dance culture, becoming what Hanna (1999:11) calls “culturally influenced sequences”. Accordingly, when dance movements are transferred between persons, it occurs through the process of “cultural imitation” (Rowe, 2008:4). In other words, when learning a bodily movement, the learner copies the teacher’s[35] movements and movement style in order to master and execute the movement according to the aesthetic principles of the teacher’s particular meaning-making system. Consequently, the cultural knowledge of the dance-maker or teacher is transferred to the learner (Rowe, 2008).

3.2.2.1 Aesthetics and dance

Dance has a deeply rooted aesthetic value (Hanna, 1999). Aesthetics however is an elusive and subjective concept, originating from Greek *aisthetikos,* which refers to

[34] Whereas the term culture normally refers to a group of people sharing communal values, beliefs and attitudes, in the context of dance, it can also refer to a group of people sharing communal values, beliefs and attitudes, with regard to a preferred dance form, for example ballet (Vogeley & Roepstorff, 2009).

[35] In this context the word ‘teacher’ is used to describe ‘the teacher of a movement’. As such, it represents any person who demonstrates and teaches a movement to another person.

perception through the senses (Honderich, 1995; Amegago, 2009; Oxford, 2010). Today, the term is generally used to refer to the perception and appreciation of the value or the beauty of an object. Such perception and appreciation is, however, influenced and informed by a particular meaning-making system (Inglis, 2005). Continuous rigorous debate is generated by philosophers of aesthetics regarding whether aesthetic value lies in the object itself, or in the individual's evaluative perception of the object. Further debates concern distinctions between *aesthetic value* and *aesthetic experience* (Honderich, 1995; Amegago, 2009). In this regard, Amegago (2009:161) sees an *aesthetic experience* as "a mental state we undergo in seeing things in a certain frame of mind". This implies evaluation according to an individual's own perspective. *Aesthetic value*, on the other hand, implies that specific evaluative tools, informed by a particular meaning-making system, are applied to make particular judgements about aesthetics (Amegago, 2009). For the purpose of this study, the aesthetic value of dance is seen as refering to specific evaluative components as depicted by the particular meaning-making system. Collectively, these components constitute the dance's *aesthetic paradigm* which Guattari (1995:98,101,102) describes as "the affect of territorialised subjectivity". In a similar vein, Bourdieu (1984:2, cited in Edles, 2002:225) argues that a work of art,

> … has meaning and interest only for someone who possesses the cultural competence, that is, the code, into which it is encoded. The conscious or unconscious implementation of explicit or implicit schemes of perception and appreciation which constitutes pictorial or musical culture is the hidden condition for recognizing the styles ... more generally, the familiarity with the internal logic works that aesthetic enjoyment presupposes. A beholder who lacks the specific code feels lost.

An aesthetic paradigm is never static, but always in a state of evolve (Guattari, 1995). Although Rowe (2008:13) describes an *aesthetic paradigm* as residing within the dancer, in this study the concept will also be used in relation to the broader philosophical framework which constitutes the aesthetics of dance in a particular community. This includes particular movement styles (ways of moving), movement vocabulary and consensual aesthetic criteria, associated with the affiliated community. As such one could argue that both ethno-cultural and dance communities subscribe to a particular aesthetic paradigm. The aesthetic paradigm is intrinsically interlinked with the 'ways of being and thinking' of the particular

community. Dancers and dance-makers thus continuously strive to adhere to the standards and norms customary of the particular meaning-making system (Bakare & Mans, 2003).

Kealiinohomoku's (2001:38) description of dance as bodily movements "performed in a given form and style" situates the style of a dance characterised by distinctive ways of moving, movement vocabulary, and aesthetic criteria within its unique aesthetic paradigm. In this regard, one can conclude that aesthetic paradigms of, for example, Flamenco dance, Xhosa dance, ballet and modern dance will vary. Consequently, application of the elements of movements such as space, time and effort, holds different significance in diverse aesthetic paradigms (Bakare & Mans, 2003; Vissicaro, 2004; Ashley, 2006; Wanyama & Shitubi, 2012). This study acknowledges and appreciates various dance aesthetic paradigms, including paradigms of ethno-cultural communities, as well as other dance forms such as ballet or modern dance.

The aesthetic paradigm of a particular community is therefore a philosophical construction, imprinted within the *habitus* of the individual. Each individual has thus been socialised according to a particular aesthetic paradigm and educated to choose appropriate movements, execute movements in a customary way, and evaluate movements according to particular criteria. The aesthetic paradigm of a community therefore also influences the habits of movement of the individual.

3.2.2.2 Categorisation of dance

From the above it is clear that a person's view and experience of dance is inherently interlinked with a person's culture. Thus, an individual's perception of dance is coloured by his or her personal expectations of what dance should be. Consequently, various ambiguities regarding dance categorisation in scholarly literature are evident (Rowe, 2009; Khoury *et al*, 2013).

Distinctions between 'dance as folklore' and 'dance as art' for example, are complicated, since no dance has a purely aesthetic purpose (Glasser, 2000; Ashley, 2014). Moreover, 'art' is generally viewed as a "separate level of reality", whereas

dance is most often an integral part of reality (Glasser, 2000:23; Williams, 2000:123). In an attempt to appraise the artistic qualities of African dance, Nicholls (1996:46) uses the term “functional art”, which is also problematic, since most arts performances and objects fulfil a particular function. In this regard, Glasser (2000:21) proposes the concept of ‘dance as cultural expression’ as opposed to ‘dance as art’, arguing that it is “less exclusive”. On the other hand, categorising dances according to their purpose, for example, performance, participation or ritual (McCutchen, 2006), is also ambiguous since almost all dances serve a communicative function and express an idea or emotion which holds particular meaning and value for the particular dance community (Royce, 1977; Rowe, 2009). Moreover, the conceptualisation of ‘performance’ may differ between diverse ethno-cultural groups (Khoury *et al*, 2013). Whereas scholars such as Glasser (2000), Williams (2000), McCutchen (2006) and Khoury *et al* (2013) regard dance categorisation as an ongoing challenge, others deem such endeavours as irrelevant, arguing that dance should merely be seen as expressions of people’s behaviour (Royce, 1977; Hanna, 1979, 1999, 2008).

Dance classifications relating to ethno-cultural and traditional communities pose further challenges. The term ‘world dances’ is for example often used to refer to dances associated with particular cultural communities. This term includes indigenous dances used for ceremonies and rituals, as well as community social dances such as folk dances (Schrader, 2005). In 1969, Kraus described dances which belong to a particular cultural community as either ‘ethnic’ or ‘folk’. The distinction, according to Kraus (1969:6), depended on focus. Whereas ‘ethnic’ dances focus on “spectacular entertainment” for the audience, ‘folk’ dances aim to provide pleasure for participants. Buckland (2000) further subdivides the ‘ethnic’ category into dances used for social purposes, and dances used for ceremonial purposes. Williams (2000) however contests the term ‘ethnic’ dances, arguing that it is inevitably associated with dances of the Other, and not a description fit for one’s own ethno-cultural group. ‘Ethnic’ often implies a less evolved and less civilised community, and no individual would describe their own community as such. Kealiinohomoku (2001) also contests the category of ‘ethnic’, arguing that ballet should also be seen as an ‘ethnic dance’, since it maintains coherence with a particular cultural history.

The term 'cultural dances' is used in the national South African school curriculum (DBE, 2011b:18, 47). This concept is however also contested, as all dances should be regarded as 'cultural' (Royce, 1977; Hanna, 1999; Williams, 2000; Kealiinohomoku, 2001; Williams, 2004; Rank, 2009; Ashley, 2014). All styles of dance have "genetic, linguistic, and cultural ties, with special emphasis on cultural tradition" (Williams, 2000; Kealiinohomoku, 2001:39; McCutchen, 2006).

Welsh Asante (1985:382) uses the term "traditional" dances to refer to dances that are passed down from generation to generation within a particular ethno-cultural group. This term is also often applied in South African dance discourse. Traditional indigenous dances are understood as being embedded in the history and traditions of the particular ethno-cultural group (Kealiinohomoku, 1979; Welsh-Asante, 1985; Glasser, 2000; Williams, 2000; Bakare & Mans, 2003; Hunt, 2004; Rani, 2008; Rowe, 2009; Wanyama & Shitubi, 2012). These traditions are dynamic and influenced by continuous changes in living environments and society and evolve over time. Consequently, over time, traditional dances evolve in meaning, context and function, but also in movements. This, then, ultimately results in new dance styles (Glasser, 2000; Rani, 2008:124). Subsequently, there is a tendency to distinguish between dances that are traditional and those that have evolved. Glasser (2000) and Rowe (2009) argue that such a distinction poses further challenges. Classifying dances as 'traditional' disregards the notion that it can evolve, which is inaccurate, since ethno-cultural dances have an "inherently evolving nature" (Rowe, 2009:48). Moreover, classifying a dance as 'traditional' portrays the associated ethno-cultural group as static and incapable of creating something new, and thus fails to recognise the potential of an ethno-cultural dance as a 'contemporary art' form (Glasser, 2000; Rowe, 2009). The classification of 'evolved' dances also poses challenges as the very notion of 'evolving' has connotations of a progressive change – a change from 'worse' to 'better' – which can potentially demean the value of ethno-cultural traditions (Williams, 2000; Rowe, 2009).

In this regard, Glasser (2000), Williams (2000) and Rowe (2009) argue that an additional underlying challenge in the conceptualisation and categorisation of dance is the unilinear philosophy of the anthropology of dance, influenced by Darwin's

evolution theory. 'Primitive' or 'tribal' dances are viewed by many scholars as the origins of dance, which, as it evolved over the years, became more 'civilised' and 'Western'. Such a philosophy stigmatises 'traditional' dances as being less 'evolved', and results in an ethnocentric view of dance forms, which re-establishes racial superiority and hegemony (Glasser, 2000; Meiners & Garrett, 2012).

Contemporary debates in dance literature thus regard the delineation, conceptualisation, definition, aesthetics and categorisations of dance, as these are embedded within a particular cultural context. Culture permeates the understanding of what constitutes a dance as it determines the what, why and how of dance within a particular meaning-making system (Royce, 1977; Hanna, 1979; Williams, 2000; Rowe, 2008; Glasser, 2000; Kringelbach & Skinner, 2012; Meiners & Garrett, 2012; Khoury *et al*, 2013). Kringelbach and Skinner (2012:2) remind us that both the terms 'dance' and 'culture' have a "lack of concreteness" in common. They exist, but they also remain in a state of becoming, through actions. As such, neither dance nor culture should be portrayed as static, since they are ever evolving (Kringelbach & Skinner, 2012). Moreover, since cultural groups are not homogenous, associations with dance and culture should be done with caution (Kringelbach & Skinner, 2012). In this regard, it is necessary to grasp the complexities surrounding the relationship between dance and culture in order to prevent ethnocentrism within this study, especially since the aim is to enhance a kind of social cohesion that promotes equality, cultural sustainability and non-assimilation practices in a culturally diverse society.

3.2.3 Dance and its purposes in society

The relationship between dance and culture also affects the purposes of dance in society. There may, however, be multiple purposes for dance which, at times, overlap (Schrader, 2005). As an example, a dance may serve simultaneously as an expression of art, culture and the Self. In certain communities, dance may serve as a communicator transmitting intrinsic emotions, ideas or social issues. In other communities, dance may be used as an aesthetic vehicle for artistic design, as therapy, as recreation, or simply as a form of kinaesthetic enjoyment (Royce, 1977;

Hanna, 1979, 1999; Schrader, 2005; Kurath, 2008; Wanyama & Shitubu, 2012). Considering that the meaning and purpose of a dance performance is always linked to community, time and space, the function(s) of dance should always be contextualised. In context, a dance may concomitantly have more than one function - ambiguous functions, concealed functions, or functions that change over time (Royce, 1977; Hanna, 1979). The functions of dance should thus be viewed as “fluid” (Welsh Asante, 1996:204).

In addition to the above, dance has an “affective function” and a unique communicative capacity to provoke an emotional response within the onlooker (Hanna, 1975:10, cited in Royce, 1977:196). In this regard, Kealiinohomoku (1979:47) sees dance as an “affective culture”, as it concerns the feelings and intuitions of a culture. Waterman (1962:49-50, cited in Royce, 1977:195) sees this quality as unique to dance, arguing that “it is the establishment of emphatic subliminal communication that dance does better than any other human social activity”. Ethno-cultural dances, for instance, often intentionally provoke emotional responses in order to strengthen group identity (Kealiinohomoku, 1979). For example, among most Greek communities dance serves to unite people during important festive events (Hunt, 2004; Kahlich, 2011); for Native Americans, dance is used as an expression of loyalty to the community, and as an expression of power (Kahlich, 2011) and in many African communities, dance is also used for social sanctions, and as a form of protest against immoral or unjust behaviour (Onyeji, 2004; Edwards, 2010). In addition, dance often fulfils a mentoring function, educating a community according to its norms and values (Hanna, 1979; Onyeji, 2004; Smith, 2006). In Nigeria for example, song and dance is used to teach younger Igbo women how to be a good wife and mother (Onyeji, 2004).

3.2.3.1 Dance and community

Significant to this study are the functions of dance in traditional societies which often relate to the promotion of social cohesion. These include integration, socialisation of members into the community, the nurturing of a sense of unity, the communicating and reinforcing of specific ethno-cultural values, the education of youth as well as the provision of social commentary. Of particular significance for this study are several

authors' postulations that dance has the potential to build community and enhance a sense of unity among participants as well as audience (Bakare & Mans, 2003; Onyeji, 2004; Williams, 2004; Smith, 2006; Smith & Riley, 2009), emphasising a "connectedness with others and the external world" (Edwards, 2010:132). The Igbo women from Nigeria, for example, celebrate childbirth through dance. These dances create communal bonding and unity among the women (Onyeji, 2004). Additionally, members of the African Indigenous Church (AIC) perform circle dances in order to reinforce communal spirituality (Edwards, 2010). In these cases, dance provides communities with a common sense of purpose and unity (Onyeji, 2004; Smith & Riley, 2009). In this regard, Durkheim (1915) regards religion and rites such as traditional dances as strengthening the sense of belonging to community, arguing that,

> … the rite serves and can serve only to sustain the vitality of these beliefs, to keep them from being effaced from memory and, in sum, to revivify the most essential elements of the collective consciousness (Durkheim, 1915:375).

Rites, including dances, reinforce the particular culture's beliefs and traditions, encouraging community members to uphold the values of the collective consciousness. Hence, Durkheim (1915:226, 381, 382) believes that dance creates a spiritual transpersonal transcendence of the collective, which he refers to as "collective effervescence". "Collective effervescence" stems from both the need for connectivity within a society, and the desire to re-create a sense of solidarity (Durkheim, 1915:400). Dances in ancient cultures symbolised the collective in order to receive favour from the gods or higher spiritual power. It was believed that individual favour did not exist, and that the spiritual powers would only respond to a collective plea (Durkheim, 1972).

Edwards (2010:132) also refers to a heightened communal spirituality and a "shared transpersonal consciousness" observed during the healing dances of the AIC as well as other community healing dances practised in South Africa. The indigenous *!Kung* from Southern Africa Kalahari use the term *!Kia*, to refer to the transcendent state of "enhanced consciousness" emerging during a dance performance (Edwards, 2010:132). These dances, often practised in circular format to symbolise community, are used to invoke collective spirituality. The circle serves to include

those belonging to the community, as well as to exclude those who threaten the community (Edwards, 2010). Bakare and Mans (2003) also allude to the spiritual nature of certain Namibian cultural dances where participants go into a trance in order to restore or maintain a good relationship with the ancestors. Similarly, during Igbo funerals in Nigeria, the bodies of the dancers fulfil a spiritual role, serving as a link between the living and the dead (Ajayi, 1996; Onyeji, 2004).

Dance is also utilised for traditional healing purposes (Primus, 1996; Bakare & Mans, 2003; Onyeji, 2004; Edwards, 2010). Swazi warrior dances are intended to keep the king alive and enhance his good health (Hanna, 1979). The AIC, for example, perform healing rituals during which the dancers surround a sick person. The purpose of this dance is to capture the consciousness of the sick person. The *!Kung* perform healing dances not only to heal a sick person, but also to advance the health and environmental, mental, emotional, social and spiritual prosperity of the community. Spiritual and community healing dance performances are still prevalent in South Africa, and especially practised among members of the AIC. These dances often occur in a circle to invoke *umoya,* or collective spirituality. The circle symbolises community as an enclosed entity with the centre perceived as the locality of the spirit. The concept of the healing power of bodily movement is also rooted in indigenous South African Nguni philosophy of *umoya,* which links breath, soul and spirit, conveying joy in life and communal healing. *Umoya* is closely related to *ubuntu*, ultimately focusing on becoming more truly and fully human and preventing illness and promoting good health through good interpersonal relationships (Edwards, 2010).

Ethno-cultural dances clearly promote a sense of cultural unity. Intra-cultural cohesion is continuously reinforced during each performance, cultivating a sense of belonging to the particular cultural community (Bakare & Mans, 2003). This cohesion however positions those who do not belong to the particular community as outsiders. Subsequently, ethno-cultural dance performances also demarcate boundaries, defining and re-defining ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’, thus serving as forms of inclusion and exclusion (Cohen, 1985; Anderson, 1991; Bakare & Mans, 2003; Jenkins, 2004; Andrews, 2007).

For the insider, dance thus reinstates the individual as member of the affiliated ethno-cultural group, strengthening his or her sense of belonging to the group, thereby re-affirming the individual's ethno-cultural identity. In this regard, one can argue that dance, due to its centrality to cultural heritage, reinforces ethno-cultural identity. This is particularly evident in many indigenous African communities, as well as in a multi-regional country such as Greece where dances are identified with particular groups of people (Hunt, 2004; Wanyama & Shitubi, 2012). In China, the minority *Uyghur* group also use ethno-cultural dances to reinforce their ethno-cultural identity (Smith, 2006). The dances of *Uyghur* women instil a sense of pride in and connectedness to their ethno-cultural community. Their dances serve to distinguish themselves from the Chinese *Han.* Moreover, since the political views of the *Uyghur* women are not permitted, dance presents a vehicle through which they can express their values, norms and beliefs. *Uyghur* women thus use their ethno-cultural dances as a form of self-empowerment through which they negotiate power within society (Smith, 2006).

Similarly, Indian dances, such as the *Bharatanatyam*, have been used to establish an Indian identity among Indian migrants in the United States of America and South Africa. Accordingly, Indian diplomats value Indian dances as a "soft power" which establishes the Indian presence in a global society (Kothari, 2006: 262). In this regard, Dickinson (2014) provides an example of how an Indian dance based on Hindu texts, the *Kathak*, became a collective symbol for both Hindu and Islam Gujarati in South Africa. Similarly, the Islamic festival of Muharram in South Africa often incorporates Hindu rituals in order to cultivate a larger unified South African Indian identity (Dickinson, 2014).

From the above it is clear that dance fulfils various roles in society. These can be of social, educational, political, spiritual, recreational, health or religious nature (Schrader, 2005; Kahlich, 2011). Above all, dance has a unique communicative potential, especially in relation to its ability to evoke the emotional response of both dancers and the audience (Hanna, 1979; Kealiinohomoku, 1979; Bakare & Mans, 2003; Amegago, 2009). As such, dance can also be used to serve political agendas, as per the intention of this study.

3.2.3.2 Dance as political

Since ancient times, dance has been used to promote social and political ideals (Hanna, 1979; Snipe, 1996; Glasser, 2000). This is also evident in contemporary society. Hanna (1979) for example refers to American choreographers Jane Dudley (1912-2001), Sophie Maslow (1911-2006) and British choreographer, Anthony Tudor (1908-1987) who propagated anti-Nazism through their choreography. American choreographer Anna Sokolow (1910-2000) used her choreographed dances for social protests, whereas Alvin Ailey (1931-1989), Tally Beauty (1918-1995), and Columbian-American choreographer, Eleo Pomare (1937-2008), choreographed dances to communicate black ethnic experiences (Hanna, 1979). In South Africa, Sylvia Glasser choreographed dances to raise awareness and appreciation of 'other' cultures. One such example was *Tranceformations* (1991) depicting the trance state of Khoisan dances (Glasser, 1996). Vincent Mantsoe's choreography addresses identity issues in South Africa, while Jeanette Ginslov, Robin Orlin and Alfred Hinkel, through their choreography, provoked critical political thought with regard to South African issues (Friedman, 2012).

The use of dance to influence political thought and instil a sense of social cohesion within the community is not a new idea. Rudolph von Laban, perceived by some authors as a supporter of the *Third Reich*[36], employed amateur mass dance groups to propagate a sense of unity and a feeling of cohesion within society in Germany in the 1920s (Dorr, 2006; Davies, 2006). Laban's concern about German society's "moral and cultural decline" urged him to use dance as society's transformative vehicle towards promoting harmony and a "true humanity" (Dorr, 2006:11; 18). Dorr (2006) however believes that these changes were rooted in the ideologies of the *Third Reich*. Laban's amateur mass dance groups, during which more than 1000 dancers participated, were particularly designed to cultivate a "mystical collective" (Dorr, 2006:19), creating a sense of desire for togetherness, community and belonging to a larger society. Subsequently, Laban's amateur dance choir became the symbol of a communal ideology, propagating the notion of masses following the leader (Dorr, 2006).

[36] There are contested narratives regarding Laban's loyalties: Dorr (2006) indicates that Laban had a definite loyalty towards the Third Reich, whereas Davies (2006) regards Laban's actions as supporting his own agenda.

Various other dance teachers have adjusted their teaching practices to promote political agendas. Dance programmes have been purposed to promote social justice, enable 'development' interventions, promote intercultural understanding and restore community.

3.2.3.2.1 Dance programmes promoting social justice

Miscellaneous dance teaching strategies have been implemented to raise awareness of social justice. These include the use of controversial topics for dance education practices, the viewing of choreographed dances as prompts for class discussions, and the use of choreographed dances to demonstrate social injustices. Controversial societal dilemmas, such as those related to violence and gender, are also often addressed through dance (Risner & Stinson, 2010).

Marques' (2007) context-based dance education, for example, consists of dance activities particularly designed to transform behaviour, attitudes, and understanding of the Other. Accordingly, it combines Laban-style movement orientation, improvisation, choreographic principles and history in a manner that enables young dancers to learn about social injustices by, in, and through dancing (Marques, 2007). Stinson, on the other hand, addresses social justice issues through the critical and reflective viewing of particular choreographed dances (Risner & Stinson, 2010). Stinson's approach was influenced by Maxine Greene's (1917-2014) postulation that arts education should not simply be regarded as a vehicle of sensory perceptions or emotional expression, but should additionally advocate critical consciousness, a sense of agency with regard to justice, and active engagement in society (Greene, 1978, cited in Risner & Stinson, 2010). Consequently, Stinson selects specific social themes such as national identity and the meaning of aesthetics for her dance classes. These topics form the basis of discussions of societal concerns. Discussions are then combined with dance creation, dance experiences and writing about dance performances (Risner & Stinson, 2010).

Sherry Shapiro (2013:15-32), choreographer and researcher, also believes that social justice issues can and should be addressed through dance performances. As

such, she choreographs modern dance pieces aimed at highlighting various social issues. Significant to this study is Shapiro's liberatory pedagogy, focusing on dancers' emotional, bodily and interpersonal experience in order to promote transformative processes (Shapiro, 2002). She views oppression, resistance and liberation as physically experienced through bodily sensations:

> It is the body that carries knowledge of a life ... It is the material foundation upon which desire for human liberation and social transformation rests (Shapiro, 1999:100).

Shapiro employed her liberatory dance pedagogy during her tenure as Fulbright Scholar in South Africa during 2009, whilst studying female identities in post-apartheid South Africa. The topic of 'hair' was used as a platform for discussions and explorations of gender, culture, social class and democracy. Shapiro's choreography[37] was informed by the participants' personal stories and experiences.

The use of dance to promote a political agenda is also employed in university courses such as *Embodying Pluralism*[38], an undergraduate general education dance studio course founded by Edrie Ferdun at Temple University, Philadelphia, in the early 1990s (Bond & Gerdes, 2012:1-9). This programme requires students to research a particular topic such as stereotyping, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, violence or social injustice, by consulting literature, films, media and photographs, and by engaging in in-class discussions. Presentations of these research projects have to include movement, requiring both dance-making and dance-presentation processes. A pre-requisite for this course regards two ethical expectations from the students: a willingness to question their own assumptions, perspectives and beliefs; and a willingness to tolerate and respect different perspectives (Bond & Etwaroo, 2005; Bond & Gerdes, 2012). These ethical expectations are made explicit in the syllabus. Bond and Gerdes (2012) believe that they could observe personal transformation among their students with regard to, for example, evoking empathy for the historically oppressed through embodied explorations of the Other. Ultimately, these teaching approaches combine discussions of controversial political issues with

[37] Shapiro refers to these dances as 'collaborative choreography', since her choreography is based on the stories of the participants.
[38] Karen Bond and Ellen Gerdes further developed this course as it is implemented today.

movement, in order to raise political consciousness and facilitate transformative behaviour beyond the classroom (Risner & Stinson, 2010).

3.2.3.2.2 Dance programme interventions promoting 'development'

Dance (in particular, Western dance practices) has also been used as political intervention to transform particular indigenous ethno-cultural groups, evident during the period when Africa was colonised. Western dance teachers discarded African ethno-cultural dances, replacing these with Eurocentric dance forms (Farnell, 1999; Bakare & Mans, 2003; Rowe, 2008; Friedman, 2012). These interventions however caused confusion within communities, since the indigenous audience did not share the same meaning-making system as the dance-makers. Consequently, performances were mostly misinterpreted, leading to miscommunication between dance-makers and community, and subsequently disrupting the wellbeing of the particular society (Bakare & Mans, 2003; Rowe, 2008).

Rowe (2008) argues that communities are often disrupted when foreign dances are introduced. Aesthetic paradigms differ, causing confusion and division as suggested above. In addition, a focus on one particular aesthetic paradigm potentially undermines other aesthetic paradigms as it causes depreciation of indigenous aesthetic paradigms. The depreciation of indigenous knowledge systems may lead to the fragmentation of formerly cohesive ethno-cultural communities, ultimately weakening their sustainability. Rowe (2008, 2015) thus warns that ethno-cultural communities with fragile ethno-cultural identities may be further dismembered through constant exposure to foreign dance forms. Intercultural interventions through dance therefore often impair the esteem of a particular community, demeaning their assumed capacity to produce quality dance artefacts.

A further problem with regard to extensive training in foreign dance forms relates to potential adjustment of the participants' aesthetic paradigm. In essence, a shift in the dancer's aesthetic paradigm alters the way the dancer participates in his or her own ethno-cultural dance. This has extensive repercussions in the larger ethno-cultural community (Rowe, 2008; 2015). Ethno-cultural dances are authentic symbols representing a particular ethno-cultural identity (Oliveira *et al*, 2012).

Foreign aesthetic influences on these symbols disrupt communication between community members (Bakare & Mans, 2003), since the properties of the dance with which the audience identifies, are undermined. Affinities associated with ethno-cultural dances, such as a sense of home and a feeling of belonging, are therefore impeded. This is also a potential threat in South Africa. Extensive exposure to 'foreign' aesthetic paradigms (such as hip-hop) may for example disable Xhosa community members to participate in their own ethno-cultural dances, which devalues not only the purpose of the dance within the Xhosa community, but also deprives the Xhosa community of the force that re-establishes it. Intercultural interventions, and more specifically, extensive teaching of foreign aesthetic paradigms, can therefore potentially corrode cohesion within societies (Rowe, 2008; 2015).

A further issue of concern regards interventionists' aspirations to aid the 'development' of so called 'traditional' communities (Rowe, 2009). Such aspirations are not only Eurocentric, but also patronising, suggesting that the 'traditional' communities are not capable of their own development. The consequence of such aspirations can potentially devalue the existing ethno-cultural traditions of the particular community, and result in de-culturation (Rowe, 2009). Hence, dance interventionists should seek to support the development and sustainability of both a particular community's aesthetic paradigm as well as their cultural knowledge (Rowe, 2009).

3.2.3.2.3 Dance programmes promoting intercultural understanding

Dance teachers have also employed the teaching of ethno-cultural dances to promote political agendas. Particularly significant are attempts to enhance intercultural understanding through the teaching of ethno-cultural dances, as these portray the cultural traditions, values and norms, history and politics, religion, rites, and working circumstances specific to a particular ethno-cultural group (Behrens, 2000; Adinku, 2004). Valuable insights into the emotions, hopes, desires and ambitions of for example a specific indigenous African group can be gained through the study of their dance. Adinku (2004) for example believes that

> The study of dances reveals the experiences, sensations, meanings, and movement activity that lead to an understanding and appreciation of the behaviour and attitudes of the people and their societies (Adinku, 2004:60).

Ethno-cultural dances therefore have the potential of unveiling the cultural norms and meaning-making system of a particular ethno-cultural group to outsider participants, as they experience the emotions and bodily sensations of the Other through the dance.

In this regard, Behrens (2000) explored the potential of ethno-cultural dances to bridge ethno-cultural difference, aiming to, through ethno-cultural dance experiences, reduce and disintegrate ethno-cultural barriers. In her study, she introduced a group of American participants to two Ghanaian dances, chosen according to their specific aesthetic qualities, which corresponded mostly with the American aesthetic paradigm. However, she found that the American participants struggled to understand and accept the dance's aesthetic paradigm. During observation as well as during active participation in the dance, the American participants displayed an inability to comprehend the rationale for selection of movements, way of movement, and aesthetic criteria of the dance. They also struggled with the physicality of the movements and were restricted by their own inhibitions and cultural conceptualisations of dance movements. Behrens (2000) concluded that, according to the American aesthetic paradigm, certain movements associated with Ghanaian culture, were deemed 'inappropriate'.

This account highlights the complexity when using ethno-cultural dances for intercultural interventions. Since dance is experienced and interpreted through a cultural lens, the potential exist that it may indeed lead to a heightened awareness of difference as it causes misinterpretation, judgment, offense (for both parties), preference and Othering. Thus, the potential exists that intercultural dance interventions can indeed strengthen already existing barriers between diverse ethno-cultural groups, rather than overcome them.

3.2.3.2.4 Dance programmes to restore and sustain community

Dance programmes have also been implemented to restore and sustain community. Rowe (2015) for example critically reflects on a recent dance project in the Occupied Palestinian Territories aimed at ensuring the sustainability of community culture by enhancing communication, connectivity and cohesion amongst participants. During the duration of the initial project, outsider professional dancers and dance teachers engaged in intervention and relief work by means of dance workshops. However, since they used Eurocentric dance pedagogies, local participants were isolated from their community, rather than connecting with it. Moreover, since these dance programmes relied upon 'foreigners' as facilitators, it was unsustainable. Since this specific dance programme was furthermore implemented during a period of continuous local conflict, collective empathy and a sense of unity with those who were suffering inhibited free dance engagement. This resulted in a self-obliged abstinence from cultural celebrations and activities that would normally enhance a sense of community. Consequently, the community was at risk of becoming dismembered. Critical reflection led to the design of a new dance programme. The focus of the new dance programme shifted towards sustainable ways of using movement to enrich the community, rather than developing performance artists with perfect dance techniques. The dance activities were structured as games and focused on creativity rather than technique. It created spaces for communication, cooperation, shared goals and an awareness of the benefits of collective action. Social interactions were paramount as it cultivated sensitivity towards others, rather than dwelling on intrapersonal feelings, which according to Rowe (2015), was necessary during the time. The revised dance programme was also sustainable within the community, as it enabled community members to facilitate their own dance experiences, rather than rely on external cultural interventionists (Rowe, 2015).

From the above it is clear that dance programmes have been and can be implemented effectively for political and social purposes. Such dance programmes can promote social justice, sustain traditional communities, enhance intercultural understanding and restore traumatised communities. It should however be noted that the programmes referred to above were implemented in culturally diverse settings. Although well intentioned, many of these programmes also lead to

misunderstanding, misrecognition, acculturation, Westernisation and the devaluation of indigenous knowledge systems, disrupting intra-cultural cohesion and reinforcing hegemony, ultimately corroding cohesion. A study such as this one therefore requires severe caution, since the above mentioned sensitivities are difficult to identify and overcome in an environment where more than one ethno-cultural group is present (Rowe, 2008; 2015).

Yet, the programmes alluded to above, also provide evidence that dance programmes have the potential to impact communities positively and constructively. Accordingly, the potential of community dance projects to nurture social cohesion within specific communities was identified as a recurring theme at the 2013 *New Meanings and Pathways Symposium* in Beijing (Rowe, Buck & Martin, 2014). In my study, I attempted to investigate such a premonition in the context of South Africa. However, cultivating a sense of community in a post-conflict culturally diverse South Africa is particularly complex, since an anti-hegemonic dance programme would have to nurture both bridging and bonding cohesion.

3.2.4 Dance and the challenges of a culturally diverse environment

This study regards the potential of dance (in particular, dance education) to promote social cohesion in a culturally diverse society. Hence, dance praxis during this study occured in a multicultural environment. As mentioned before, diverse ethno-cultural groups imply the presence of diverse meaning-making systems, which ultimately affect meaning and normative praxis. In the next section, I will discuss five potential areas where diverse constructions of dance may cause ambiguity, misunderstanding or conflict within the multicultural dance classroom. These are conceptualisations of dance, modes of communication and interpretation, dance evaluation, dance-making and dance teaching and learning, as these differ vastly between different ethno-cultural groups (Hanna, 1999; Vissicaro, 2004; Ashley, 2006; Rowe, 2009; Wanyama & Shitubi, 2012).

In my discussions, references to African, Western and Indian dance practices will be made. Cultural dance praxis of the Coloured population is however omitted in this

section, since these are fairly recent and diverse manifestations (Bruinders, 2012). In addition, perspectives and praxis of the Coloured people are often assimilated with different aspects of each of the abovementioned ethnic groups (Bruinders, 2012). That being said, specific sub-groups of the Coloured population do however have characteristic ways of moving. The Cape Malay (a collective term for the Coloured Muslims in the Cape), for example, perform the "Kaapse Klopse", also known as the Cape Minstrels, during New Year celebrations and parades (Van Niekerk & Joseph, 2007; Bruinders, 2012). In addition, particularly in the Northern Cape, the *rieldans*, which stems from indigenous Khoi and San heritage, and further influenced by the Scottish reel, has a sixty year tradition (Van Niekerk & Joseph, 2007; Bruinders, 2012; Van Wyk, 2012, 2013). Scholarly research on these traditions have however been neglected, resulting in limited inclusion in this literature study (Bruinders 2012; Van Wyk, 2012, 2013). It is thus necessary to declare that this section does not aim to represent all the ethnic and ethno-cultural groups in South Africa, as it is not possible to do so. In addition, it is also necessary to declare that this study does not assume that each ethnic group thinks, dances, teaches, learns and reasons in a homogeneous manner, since such an assumption would be incomplete and incorrect. The following section merely aims to highlight some critical points of deliberation to consider when diverse ethno-cultural groups are present in the same dance classroom, as is the case in South Africa.

3.2.4.1 Conceptualisations and expectations of dance

In the multicultural dance education classroom, role players' diverse conceptualisations of dance inadvertently lead to diverse expectations of dance. These affect *inter alia* the individual's role within the dance, that which the individual expects from the Other, and ultimately, the individual's evaluation and satisfaction of the dance experience. If not articulated, these differences can cause misunderstandings and subsequent tension between diverse individuals.

In this regard, one could argue that notions of individualism versus communitarianism also manifests in dance praxis. African dance performances are viewed as inclusive activities where everybody participates and the community is prioritised (Mans, 2000; Adinku, 2004; Amegago, 2009; Ward, 2013). The purpose

of dance is most often to connect the physical with the spiritual, in other words, the dancer with other individuals, society, life-forces, ancestors, the future and the spiritual world (McClary & Walser, 1994; Mans, 2000). Ultimately, the function of an African dance performance is to include and benefit the community, and therefore extends beyond the individual's needs (Welsh Asante, 1985; Primus, 1996; Mans, 2000). As such, the group's cohesive synergy is more important than individual skill. According to African philosophy, dance performers need to "function in an interactive environment in harmony with other individuals" (Mans, 2000:10). An individual performer should not aim to outshine fellow performers, but should aim to draw other participants into the performance circle.

This practice and approach contrasts Eurocentric dance practices where the predominant focus is on the individual's skill and the attainment of excellence in an appropriate genre. In Eurocentric dance practices, dance is thus most often viewed as an exclusive activity (Glasser, 2000; Mans, 2000; Rowe, Buck & Martin, 2014), since those who do not achieve the appropriate standard of excellence are excluded (Rowe *et al*, 2014). The implication is that those who are accustomed to viewing dance as exclusive and only accessible to 'the talented few', may have difficulty altering their view of dance as an activity for all to participate in.

In addition, whereas European dance practices view outer appearance, presentation of skill and aesthetic pleasure as main concerns (Nicholls, 1996), African dance practices regard connectivity with fellow dancers and audience as its core focus. Students accustomed to particular dance practices will inevitably have specific expectations aligned with their conceptualisation of dance. Some students may for example focus on perfecting outer appearance, whereas others aim to connect with their peers. These diverse expectations can cause tension, frustration and disappointment between diverse students, if not met. Accordingly, the individual's conceptualisation and expectations of dance may influence their attitudes and behaviour during dance-making, dance performance and dance evaluation.

3.2.4.2 Communication and interpretation

Diverse ethno-cultural groups additionally appropriate diverse movement symbols and subsequent interpretations of these, which can cause conflict, misunderstanding and exclusion in a culturally diverse classroom.

Dance transfers messages in a non-verbal manner (Oliveira *et al*, 2012). As mentioned earlier, all dance patterns convey meaning, transmitting messages through bodily movement (Waterman, 1962, cited in Royce, 1977; Kringelbach & Skinner, 2012). However, accurate interpretation of bodily movements implies the application of a communal meaning-making system shared by the dance-maker, dancer and audience. Yet, even within a shared meaning-making system, distortions of interpretation remain possible (Hanna, 1999; Vissicaro, 2004). Some indigenous African dances for example communicate and express culture-specific messages exclusively accessible to the affiliated ethno-cultural audience, since only they are able to understand the hidden meanings of symbols, movements and messages represented through these dances (Adinku, 2004).

Consequently, it goes without saying that, if dancers and audience do not share the same meaning-making system, miscommunications often occur (Bakare & Mans, 2003; Oliveira *et al*, 2012; Doumbia, 2013). An example is evident in Monica Wilson's[39] explanation of the shaking and trembling movements of Xhosa dancers. During the third decade of the previous century shaking movements were misinterpreted as immoral by the white South African government and prohibited by law. Similarly, Nguni people regarded Western ballroom dance as 'inappropriate' due to the way in which partners held each other (Wilson in La Fontaine, 1972, cited in Royce, 1977; Welsh Asante, 1985). In a similar vein, misconceptions can transpire between diverse students in the multicultural classroom, which can cause misjudgement, misrecognition, exclusion and division. These can occur as diverse

[39] Monica Wilson, an anthropologist and sociologist, studied a variety of central African cultures. Among other cultures such as the Nyakyusa from Tanganyika (Tanzania), the Bhemba culture from Northern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) she also did fieldwork among the Pondo (Xhosa) in Pondoland, South Africa (Wilson & Wilson, 1945:2). Wilson's *Reaction to Conquest. Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa* was first published in 1936, under her maiden name, Monica Hunter. In 1945 she, together with her husband, Godfrey Wilson, published *The Analysis of Social Change based on observations in central Africa.* Thereafter, in 1951, she gave account of a comparative study of the witch beliefs in the Pondo culture and the Nyakyusa people from Tanganyika (Tanzania).

students 'make' meaning during dance-making, and 'make sense of' meaning during dance viewing. Meaning-making is thus complex in the multicultural dance classroom, since different expressions can be misinterpreted or incorrectly evaluated and valued.

3.2.4.3 Dance evaluation

As mentioned earlier, diverse ethno-cultural groups also subscribe to diverse aesthetic paradigms, which can cause diverse opinions with regard to what constitutes 'good' dance practice in the multicultural classroom. A brief overview of specific aesthetic paradigms follows in order to emphasise this potential dilemma.

- **Ballet**

  In classical ballet, movements originate from five basic foot positions characterised by a turned-out positioning of the feet. The legs are subsequently always rotated outwards from the hips to maintain the strong turn-out during the execution of all movements (Ballet Austin, 2009). The dancer's elegant carriage of the torso further marks the characteristic posture found in ballet movement. The raised upper body frees the legs in order to maximise the range of leg movements. Female ballerinas often wear *pointe*[40] shoes to extend their body lines (Schrader, 2005; Smith, 2008). Aesthetic criteria *inter alia* focus on the precise execution of each movement, the extent to which an outward rotation of the hips, legs and feet is evident, elegant use of the arms, and the degree of gracefulness presented during the flow of movements.

- **Modern dance**

  Modern dance originated as a reaction against the rigid dance technique of ballet (Kraus, 1969; Duncan, 1983; Schrader, 2005; Hamalainen, 2007; Eddy, 2009). Modern dancers critiqued the ballet community for promoting 'unnaturally turned-out' bodily movements, arguing that the insistence on

[40] The pointe shoe was designed in the 1920s. It is a ballet pump with a flat hard surface at the toe end of the shoe, to allow ballet dancers to rise onto the tip of their toes.

extreme outward rotations of hips, legs and feet limits the dancer's bodily expressions (Duncan, 1983; Schrader, 2005). Thus, the aesthetic paradigm of modern dance disregards a prescribed set of movements, but promotes free experimentation with different ways of self-expression through bodily movements (Kraus, 1969; Schrader, 2005). All modern dance movements originate from the solar plexus (Duncan, 1983). Bodily movements are designed to express personal emotions and disclose the inner Self. Modern dancers subsequently continuously experiment with new ways to express the social and political world through expressive movement (Kraus, 1969; Schrader, 2005). Although modern dance is less restricted than ballet, precise execution of movement and particular movement control with the execution of tension and release constitute current aesthetic criteria within this paradigm.

- **Classical Indian dance forms**

Aesthetic criteria of the *Kathak*[41], a dance that originated in North India, include refined, rhythmic and precise footwork, fast turns, strong poses and subtle *hastaks*. *Hastaks* refer to specific prescribed hand and finger positions. These hand and finger positions can be linear and strong, or curved and graceful. The hand positions are either held throughout a section of the dance, or altered during the course of progressive movements in a flowing manner. The *Kathak* also includes a particular manner of storytelling (Morelli, 2010).

In classical Indian dances particular shapes such as circles, half circles, diamonds, arcs, lines and triangles, are usually represented by the dancer's body. These body shapes are usually accompanied by strong rhythms. In this regard, Banerjee (2010) argues that the element of 'time' is more important than that of 'space' for the classical Indian dancer, since the space is always measured by the pace of the movements (Banerjee, 2010).

[41] The *Kathak* is generally referred to as the one classical Indian dance that contain elements of both Hindu and Muslim cultures (Morelli, 2010). Although this dance was originally associated with the Indian courtesans, it is currently viewed as "a representation of national pride" (Morelli, 2010:78).

- **African dance**

Although the concept of 'indigenous African dance' is commonly used as a collective, it should not be seen as a single homogeneous phenomenon. Despite large category similarities with regard to aesthetic indicators and functions, indigenous African dances are indeed heterogeneous in terms of ethno-cultural specific movement vocabulary and aesthetic nuances (Kealiinohomoku, 1979; Amegago, 2009; Doumbia, 2013; Ward, 2013).

African communities mostly experience dance as intrinsically integrated with music. As such, the term 'African performance' is often used in reference to African dance and music (Bakare & Mans, 2003; Adinku, 2004; Amegago, 2009). Although the movement vocabulary of each ethno-cultural African community in Africa is unique, some common characteristics can be identified. For example, the movement of the body through space is often less important than the intrinsic experience of the dancer (Wanyama & Shitubi, 2012). Dancers' movements are therefore physical manifestations of intrinsic experiences of their ethno-cultural identity, music and character (Wanyama & Shitubi, 2012). As a result, movements originate from intrinsic feelings and connections between the soul, spirit, nature and community (Welsh Asante, 1985, 1996; Adinku, 2004; Amegago, 2009; Edwards, 2010). These purposes contrast with Western dance practices where the primary concern regards outer appearance. In addition, repetition often occurs during African performances, as it reinforces the symbolic content of the dance, allowing internalisation by both performer and audience (Welsh Asante, 1985; Amegago, 2009; Wanyama & Shitubi, 2012).

Aesthetic criteria associated with African aesthetic paradigms and associate questions applied to evaluate performances are the following (Amagego, 2009; Mans, 2012):

i) Function and purpose

Did the performance achieve its purpose? In other words, did the performance honour the deceased in an appropriate manner, educate the youth, or integrate members of the community successfully?

ii) Involvement

Were the audience drawn in to participate in the performance? In most African dances participatory responses of the audience, such as clapping, singing, playing instruments and commenting in support of the dancers are seen as indicative of a successful dance performance (Nicholls, 1996; Bakare & Mans, 2003; Amegago, 2009). For example, among the Ewe, comments from the local audience such as "today the spectators have not entered the performance circle", indicate an unsatisfactory performance (Amegago, 2009:170). Other comments such as "it is the *delicious soup* that draws seats closer" implies a successful performance. These comments specifically refer to the affective qualities of the dance as significant indicators of a good performance (Adinku, 2004; Amegago, 2009).

iii) The dancers

Did the dancers immerse themselves in the feeling and the character of the dance? Were they synchronised with the drumming? Did they, demonstrate appropriate posture and physical flexibility?

In African dance, knowledge of the particular aesthetic paradigm is shared only by affiliated community members. Consequently, only community members have the capacity to evaluate the performance. Evaluation of these dances thus also reinforces a 'sense of home', affirming identification with the particular community (Amegago, 2009; Mans, 2012).

In the South African multicultural classroom, students have been socialised according to particular yet diverse aesthetic paradigms. Some students are for example more accustomed to observe, evaluate, or participate in ballet or modern dance, whereas other students are accustomed to hip hop, African or Indian dance forms. In addition, some students may also subscribe to more than one aesthetic paradigm. In the multicultural classroom, diverse aesthetic paradigms can complicate peer evaluation, as well as the choice of movements assumed to constitute 'good' dance-making. An example of this has been documented by Glasser (2000), reporting that some South African white students view African dance as 'boring' and repetitive. This is because white students most often subscribe to a

Western dance tradition, and lack the capacity to understand the meaning and purpose of repetition in African dances. In addition, African dance evaluation criteria do not focus on precision and control of the body during the execution of movements criteria associated with Western aesthetic paradigms. Diverse aesthetic paradigms within the same dance classroom can thus corrode community, causing misjudgement, misrecognition, misunderstanding, exclusion, preference and division.

3.2.4.4 Dance-making

The culturally diverse dance classroom also poses challenges with regard to the individual's conceptualisation of dance-making. Dance-making occurs differently within diverse dance traditions.

Dance-making, according to Hanna (2008), is intentional and pre-designed human movement, conceived within the constructs of a particular aesthetic paradigm. The movements are selected (by the dance-maker, choreographer or collective group) and influenced by their associated aesthetic paradigm. The dance-maker(s) usually designs the movements to express and communicate a specific emotion or thought (Kealiinohomoku, 2001). The dance design therefore requires creative decision-making by the dance-maker(s). As discussed earlier, an individual's creative ability to make conscious and unconscious decisions is however not neutral but influenced by *habitus,* which stimulates human agency and provides the "generative structure for practical action" (Kidd, 2002; Lizardo, 2009:8, 10). The design of a dance is subsequently influenced by the dance-maker's *habitus* with regard to choice of movements, aesthetic paradigm, and creative decisions.

In most Eurocentric and Indian dance forms, the dancers are merely the 'instrument' executing and performing the teacher's choreography. Many Indian dance forms however rely on descriptions of dances as they occur in ancient texts, although these are often reworked and shaped by the choreographer or dance master (Prickett, 2007; Banerjee, 2010, Morelli, 2010). In both Eurocentric and Indian dance cultures, the dance teacher occupies a particular status and position of power over the dancers, as he or she dictates the dancers' movements and stylistic nuances. Dancers are expected to follow the instructions of the teacher, and are generally not

required nor considered to design their own choreography (Williams, 2000; Prickett, 2007). In contrast, dance-making in the African tradition is usually a collaborative process. Although it starts with an individual's creative idea, similar to Western traditions, the idea is shared with the elders prior to a creative rehearsal where the creative leader and a small group of people (including musicians) conceptualise the idea collaboratively (Amegago, 2009). In addition, elders[42] and veteran creative leaders attend several rehearsals in order to advise the group with regards to their movements, performance and songs (Amegago, 2009:173). Although the dance-making process stems from an individual idea, the dance-making process unfolds collaboratively as it involves musicians, community leaders, creative leaders and spiritual leaders in creative processes (Amegago, 2009; Mans, 2012). Even though one could argue that collaborations such as these minimise power relations during the dance-making process, they are still present in the form of veteran creative leaders, elders, community and spiritual leaders, as they advise the dancers.

The multicultural South African learner and student population encompasses individuals subscribing to diverse dance-making traditions. Some students may be accustomed to execute instructions from text, master or sole choreographer uncritically, whereas others may be used to dance-making as a collaborative process. These diverse approaches generate diverse expectations of both the Self and the Other, and diverse assumptions with regards to power, which can ultimately cause tension and corrode cohesion amongst students.

3.2.4.5 Dance pedagogy and culture

Diverse South African students may also be accustomed to diverse dance teaching and learning modes. In this regard, Vissicaro (2004) distinguishes between informal, formal and technical dance learning. These three learning modes may occur in isolation or in combination however, one mode usually dominates the learning process (Vissicaro, 2004).

[42] Elders also encourage participants with regard to perseverance, commitment and punctuality. In addition, a diviner or spiritual leader is also consulted to perform rituals that would benefit both the dance making and rehearsal processes, ease conflict amongst participants, and enable the dancers and musicians to "perform in harmony" (Amegago, 2009:173).

- *Informal* learning comprises the natural imitation of movements, for example, those which occur during early childhood. Examples of informal learning can also be seen during community festivities. Rules with regard to movement execution are not verbally articulated, and learning occurs unconsciously.
- *Formal* teaching and learning is governed by conventions of specific movement practices. The teacher responds to the movements executed by the learner, for example by identifying incorrect or inappropriate movements, and cautions the learner to adjust the movements in a particular manner. Learning is therefore a "two-way process" (Vissicaro, 2004:128).
- *Technical* teaching and learning happens when a knowledgeable teacher provides the learners with detailed explanations of the rationale for each movement, bodily nuance, technique and style. Technical learning is often used in dance practices where uniformity is required and specific techniques upheld.

In African societies, dance learning occurs both *informally* and *formally*, since there is a distinct difference between persons who "just dance[s]" and actual "trained dancers" (Primus, 1996:7). Those who 'just dance' represent all community members who learn community dances from early childhood, through *informal* imitation. Children learn these community dances through attending community ceremonies and festivals, as they imitate their parents, elders and peers (Nicholls, 1996; Primus, 1996; Makoye, 2001). Community dances are also learnt during initiation processes such as the rite of passage (Welsh Asante, 1985; Makoye, 2001). Learning occurs through observation, whereby aural (for example, sounds), tactile and kinaesthetic senses are used to learn dances from other community members by means of imitation (Mans, 2001). Verbal analyses of the movements are mostly not used as teaching and learning strategies.

In addition, in African communities, *formal* dance training also occurs. In this regard, the term 'trained dancer' is used to refer to a good dancer whose potential has been identified during childhood, and who has been provided with a dance master (Welsh Asante, 1985; Primus, 1996). Dance masters are the gatekeepers of tradition. It is their task to meticulously instruct the dancers to honour the values and traditions of

the community (Welsh Asante, 1985; Primus, 1996). The dance master's methods and instructions are however always adhered to, and not questioned. Instructions regard a focus on dance movements, responsibility to represent the community and the preservation of tradition. The dance master also trains the mind and spirit of the dancer, thus providing a holistic education (Primus, 1996). The dancer is required to learn the movements with precision in order to sustain traditional values (Primus, 1996).

Formal teaching and learning is also evident in South Asian and Indian dance traditions, where dance movements and skills are usually transferred through the *guru-shishya* or teacher-disciple model (Prickett, 2007; Banerjee, 2010; Morelli, 2010). The learner spends extensive time at the house of the *guru* to acquire technique, aesthetic and cultural knowledge on a one-to-one basis. The *guru* requires unconditional surrender and commitment from the disciple (Prickett, 2007). Students (or disciples) are not permitted to question the chosen movements, style, meaning, or appropriate tension of particular muscles. Verbal analyses of dance movements, typical of *technical* dance teaching, are uncommon to the *guru-shishya* model. Technique is mastered through daily rehearsals, extensive hours dedicated to intense training and rote repetition in order to perfect exact imitation (Prickett, 2007). The *guru-shishya* relationship promotes servant-hood from the disciple, also in tasks unrelated to artistic dance training. Learning occurs through 'blind following' (Banerjee, 2010, Morelli, 2010). An advantage of the *guru-shishya* model is that it provides the disciple with one-to-one tutoring. As such, the disciple can be trained according to his or her strengths and pace of learning. Moreover, the *guru* can personalise the ancient dances to expose the dancer's character and performance strengths (Prickett, 2007; Morelli, 2010). This model of teaching is also seen to promote holistic education, as it encompasses acquisition of technique, the spirit of dance, the spirit of life, and the way of life of the dancer (Prickett, 2007). However, the unbalanced hierarchical power relation between *guru* and disciple is evident and always persists. Current society also questions the unconditional submission of the disciple (Prickett, 2007).

In traditional Western 'dance training' classes, teaching and learning occur according to the *technical* approach (Vissicaro, 2004). Teachers teach in a didactic

authoritarian manner and the learners are required to imitate each movement executed by the teacher (Rowe, 2008; Mainwaring & Krasnow, 2010). In addition, the teacher provides continuous verbal analyses of movements, technique and posture, in order to enable perfection of the dance. These would include for example, which muscles to use, focus points, weight replacement, energy manipulation and a focus on the centre of the body (Prickett, 2007).

The reality in culturally diverse South Africa is that in a single classroom, learner or student populations may be representative of all the above-mentioned teaching and learning modes. A problem therefore arises with the teacher's pedagogy of choice since the chosen teaching method may privilege certain ethno-cultural groups, and leave others at a disadvantage (Vissicaro, 2004). Dancers from certain communities may for example experience the "command style" of Western dance practices as humiliating, since they are accustomed to participation in creative and training processes (Rowe, 2008:14). Incompatible teaching and learning modes can thus generate inequalities and misrecognition, causing further divides between diverse ethno-cultural groups, ultimately also reinforcing hegemony.

The issue of diverse teaching and learning modes are however further complicated by potential over-generalisations of particular teaching strategies and their associated ethno-cultural groups, since many students in present-day multicultural societies are familiar with pedagogical strategies of the Other (McCarthy-Brown, 2009). For example, many of the students in my particular multicultural classroom have received their primary and secondary education in culturally diverse environments. For these students, the above categorisation can be experienced as condescending, since it promotes their particular ethno-cultural group as static, incapable of developing and adjusting with the times and with the Other.

Further predicaments associated with the implementation of diverse teaching and learning modes regard the generally held assumption that Western pedagogical styles are more effective than other pedagogies (Meiners & Garrett, 2012; Khoury *et al*, 2013). Mans (2000) for example believes that *informal* imitation, associated with certain styles of African pedagogy, is too time consuming for effective use in the multicultural classroom (Welsh Asante, 1985; Mans, 2000), and subsequently

promotes a combination of imitation and other modes of learning, such as exploration and discovery. In this regard, Rowe (2008) suggests a collaborative dance approach for the multicultural environment. Although Rowe's (2008) argument refers to cross-cultural dance teaching, that is, teaching dance to an ethno-cultural group other than one's own, his suggestion has relevance for the multicultural dance classroom. Rowe (2008) argues that a collaborative approach will provide students with opportunities to become co-owners and interpreters of the dance, as opposed to merely performing and reproducing 'foreign' or 'Westernised' choreography. In the multicultural classroom, a collaborative approach to dance will create opportunities where dance vocabularies and talents of the participating individuals are incorporated. The dances and movements will be less dependent and influenced by the class teacher's ethno-cultural affiliation, and therefore, less Euro- (or Afro-) centric (Rowe, 2008). Such a teaching approach would also assist dance teachers in breaking down the hierarchical divide between dance teacher or choreographer, and dancer, and in so doing, promote a more student-centred approach to teaching and learning (Rowe, 2008).

3.2.4.6 Conclusion

From the above it is clear that any exploration of dance needs to take cognisance of its cultural context as dance and culture are intimately and inseparably connected. In essence, *dance is complex*, since it is

> … human behaviour composed (from the dancer's perspective, which is usually shared by the audience members of the dancer's culture) of purposeful (individual choice and social learning play a role), intentionally rhythmical, and culturally influenced sequences of nonverbal body movements mostly other than those performed in everyday motor activities. The motion (in time, space, and with effort) has an inherent and aesthetic value (the notion of appropriateness and competency as viewed by the dancer's culture) and symbolic potential [Bracketed phrases as in original] (Hanna, 1999:11)

Culture, as a meaning-making system, further influences a person's conceptualisations and expectations of dance. Thus, in a culturally diverse classroom, diverse notions of dance and teaching dance pose challenges with regard to participation, communication and interpretation, aesthetics, evaluation,

dance-making and dance pedagogy. A variety of movement *habitus* further complicates dance-making, sense-making, evaluation and imitation in the multicultural classroom.

In the context of this study, the challenges described above are particularly significant. Ignorance, insensitivity, naïve assumptions and generalisations exhibited in the multicultural dance education classroom have the potential to strengthen hegemony, inequality and discrimination – remnants of the past political dispensation which require eradication, in our endeavours to promote cohesion in the South African society.

3.3. Part Two: Dance education

The purpose of this section is to orientate the reader to the field of dance education, and in particular, to the sub-fields of creative movement and the teaching of ethno-cultural dances, as implemented in this study.

3.3.1. What is 'dance education'?

In this study, the term 'dance education' is used to refer to dance pedagogy particularly aimed to foster the general holistic development of an individual (Koff, 2000; McCutchen, 2006; Eddy, 2009). Koff (2000) thus distinguishes between 'dance training' and 'dance education', as alluded to earlier. According to this author, the aim of 'dance training' is ultimately to equip a dancer with the necessary skills, control and technique towards mastering a performance, and is therefore applied in relation to dance-as-performance art. The aim of 'dance education', on the other hand, is to enable *all* individuals (not only the 'talented few') to develop the skills to express themselves through bodily movement in a nonverbal manner. Ultimately, the aim of 'dance education' is to enable the student "to explore and incorporate the physical self as a functioning part of the whole social being" (Koff, 2000:27). Consequently, the focus of 'dance education' is to enhance self-knowledge through the development of self-expression and interpretation by means of movement explorations. The primary distinctions between these two dance pedagogies thus relate to the desired outcome and subsequent teaching strategies implemented. Whereas 'dance training' necessitates teaching strategies required for professional dance practices, for example, perfecting technique, precision in the execution of movements, and acquiring detailed stylistic nuances, 'dance education', involves teaching strategies which afford individuals opportunities and skills to explore their own creative Selves through experiences such as creative movement activities. As such, McCutchen (2004) also refers to 'dance education' as 'educational dance'. Whereas 'dance training' is end product-oriented, 'dance education' promotes active involvement in the creative processes as the primary focus (Karkou & Sanderson, 2001). In this study, the focus is on 'dance education' as mentioned above.

3.3.1.1 Contextualising 'dance education' to the field of education

'Dance education' emerged from scholars of music and movement such as Delsarte (1811-1871), Dalcroze (1865-1950) and Laban (1879-1958). Modern dancers such as Isadora Duncan (1878-1927), Mary Wigman (1886-1973) and Martha Graham (1894-1991) were influenced by these scholars and focused on the exploration of expressive dance practices (Duncan, 1983; Ragona, 1994; Davies, 2006; Ballet Austin, 2009:4; Pope, 2010; Albright, 2012). Concomitantly, philosophies of education foregrounded practical learning through experience. In other words, the significance of acquisition of knowledge through self-discovery, and making meaning through bodily sensations, were promoted during the first half of the twentieth century. John Dewey (1912) for example propagated the educational value of 'experience', and promoted the incorporation of play-like physical activities with curriculum subjects, in order to allow learners to learn through experience. Others, such as Merleau-Ponty (1945), recognised that sensations and the body are meaning-making mechanisms, which in turn, shape perception. Whitehead (1929) also argued that children should learn in a manner that would enable them to experience the joy of discovery, suggesting that education should provide children with opportunities to discover and explore truths and ideas, whilst experiencing a sense of freedom in their education. He considered applied practices for the practical application of knowledge, the process of learning, and knowledge acquisition, as essential to good education.

These philosophies prompted dance educators to consider dance as a general, holistic learning experience. In 1921, H'Doubler (1889-1982) began to propagate dance education as an essential component of any child's general education, highlighting the creative processes involved in the act of dancing (Gilbert, 2005; Ross, 2012).

3.3.1.2 Emergent teaching strategies for 'dance education'

During the 20th century, dance teaching methods were strongly influenced by the rise of child-centred education. Since the emphasis in education shifted to experiential processes, dance educators became aware of the value that expression and

creativity activities hold for learners. As early as 1913, Gertrude Colby designed "natural dance" as a physical education programme aimed at promoting learners' self-expressive abilities. Colby, one of the first dance educators experimenting with creative movement, used music as stimulus for bodily expression, promoting the use of free and natural movements (Kraus, 1969).

Laban's *Modern Educational Dance* (1948) further influenced teaching strategies for dance education with its promotion of processes of movements which hold intuitive and emotional experiences, contributing to holistic development of the Self as a "moving/feeling being" (Smith-Autard, 2002:4). Laban's approach promoted bodily movements not constricted by the limitations of a predetermined aesthetic paradigm. Laban's 'free dance technique' is thus described as the mastery of space, time, weight, and flow, without a predetermined style (Fortin & Sientop, 1995).

Additionally, H'Doubler's (1998) dance teaching strategies were particularly significant for 'dance education', since it focused on the holistic development of the individual. She believed in the educational potential of the creative processes of dance. Hence, a particular feature of her teaching approach was incorporation of creative problem-solving activities for learners, rather than mere teaching of regular movement patterns (Gilbert, 2005). H'Doubler (1998: xi; 60) associated these creative processes with the "function of the mind, upon its capacity to know, will, imagine, create, and execute", arguing that the aesthetic quality of the performance emerges from the creativity of the dancer and not the teacher. Accordingly, Gilbert (1992:3) describes creative movement as "the mastery of movement with the artistry of expression". Expressive movement, technique, improvisation, composition, anatomy and kinesiology were thus all regarded as core components of dance education (Gilbert, 2005). Although H'Doubler's teaching approaches were not performance-focused, the aesthetic value of the dance creations remained important, and she continued to regard dance education as a form of artistic expression (H'Doubler, 1998, 2002). Dance education, as conceived above, therefore promotes the experience of the dancers as they participate in the creative processes and make their own creative decisions, contributing to their holistic development (H'Doubler, 1998, 2002; McCutchen, 2006; Mainwaring & Krasnow, 2010).

In contemporary society, a variety of teaching and learning strategies are implemented in 'dance education' classrooms. Whereas some strategies relate to free movement, collaborative and creative work, as mentioned above, other strategies focus on the teaching of modern dance, whilst also attending to dance creation, dance performance and dance appreciation (Karkou & Sanderson, 2001; Cote, 2004; Hanna, 2008). In this regard, Smith-Autard's *The Art of Dance Model* (2002) views 'dance education' as promoting both process and end product, emphasising the nurturing of individual creativity and imagination, coupled with acquisition of the skills and technique required for theatre dance practices. In addition, dance education has become part of the K-12 curriculum in the United States, where creative movement, dance inquiry, aesthetic education, technique training, cultural perspectives, ethno-cultural dances, performance analysis and ultimately, performance training, feature in American dance education syllabi and text books (McCutchen, 2006). This study is however situated in South Africa, and dance education, as conceptualised in this context, will now be further discussed.

3.3.2 Delineating dance education to this study

This study was conducted within the context of a seven week dance education course presented to first year generalist non-arts specialist primary school student teachers, specialising in either Foundation Phase (Grades R to three) or Intermediate Phase (Grades four to six). The dance education course forms part of a year module called *Curriculum Studies: Arts*. The module is presented over 28 weeks, of which seven weeks are devoted to dance, drama, music and visual arts education, respectively. In essence, the module aims to equip the student teacher with the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to implement the national school curriculum successfully[43]. Due to time constraints, the national school curriculum (CAPS) is used as a point of departure, informing the dance education curriculum's selected content and pedagogy.

As mentioned previously, dance education as presented in CAPS is broadly categorised into two components, namely *creative movement* and *ethno-cultural*

[43] See appendix for a broad course outline, as well as relevant extracts from the national school curriculum.

dances. Since my dance education philosophy is rooted in Dewey's notion (1912) of experiential learning, emphasis during this seven week course is on 'learning by doing'. In essence, students are encouraged to actively participate in *creative movement* (which comprises the main component of the syllabus), as well as *ethno-cultural dances,* affording them embodied experiences. Students are provided with course notes, but limited time is devoted to theoretical engagement. These two components, *creative movement activities* and *ethno-cultural dances,* will now be conceptualised and discussed as they are implemented in my dance education classroom.

3.3.2.1 Component 1: Creative movement

Creative movement is founded upon the principle that bodily learning occurs from an early age, enabling the development of a person's perception of the world around him or her. Creative movement is rooted in the natural movements that occur during a young child's spontaneous play (Kaufman & Ellis, 2007). Unlike other styles of dance, creative movement activities do not require the individuals' movements to conform to those of a particular, pre-determined aesthetic paradigm. It is precisely because of its "naturalness" that several educationists promote the inclusion of creative movement activities in any general school curriculum (Friedman, 2009:134). A creative movement approach is thus ultimately inclusive, as all individuals, regardless of culture, talent or dance experience can relate to its naturalness. Creative movement activities furthermore afford learners opportunities to explore and expand their repertoire of natural play movements in creative ways (Kauffman & Ellis, 2007). Each young individual's spontaneous play movements, such as crawling, jumping and skipping, are acknowledged by the dance educator as creative and unique, even in their raw form. General actions such as leaping, spinning, running or hopping, to name but a few, therefore constitute the basic repertoire of creative movement activities. However, although creative movement as a natural style of movement may not require conformity with a particular aesthetic paradigm, it still stems from a person's particular *habitus* (Royce, 1977; Smith, 2002). The concept of 'natural movements' is therefore contested by Stinson (2006, cited in Friedman, 2009) who argues that an observer's perception of 'natural' movements is always informed by the observer's knowledge construction of what 'natural' implies,

which is influenced by a particular meaning-making system. The assumption, for example, that 'skipping' is a 'natural' movement for all individuals regardless of their ethno-cultural affiliation or background, can therefore be contested.

In my dance education classroom creative movement activities normally imply explorations of five basic elements of bodily movement, which Rudolph von Laban (1879-1958), well-known Slovak dance artist, theorist and choreographer, identified as *shape*, *level, space, time* and *energy* (Hanna, 2008:498). Laban's analysis has been further expounded by two of his students, Warren Lamb and Ingrid Bartenieff, who developed Laban Movement Analysis and pronounced the elements of movement as *effort*, *body* and *shape* (Davies, 2006). Today, the basic elements of movement as per Laban Movement Analysis are seen as *space*, *time* and *effort* (Hanna, 1999; Hanna, 2008), as explained below:

- The element of *space* refers to the area through which a person moves. It incorporates aspects such as direction, level, amplitude, grouping and shape.
- The element of *time* refers to the rhythms of the actions, duration of each movement, tempo, accents and meter.
- The element of *effort* refers to the force or energy used to execute each movement. *Effort* also refers to the flow of movements and the interplay between tension and relaxation in movements (Hanna, 1999; Hanna, 2008).

These elements of movement are additionally combined with conceptualisations of *body*, *movement* and *form* to represent collectively the elements of dance (Gilbert, 1992):

- The concept of the *body* implies the use of body parts, for example, knees, head, arms, and ankles. It also refers to particular body shapes such as symmetrical, asymmetrical, angular or curved shapes, executed during movements. In addition, reference to the body shape includes the relationship between various body parts, between body parts and dancers, and between individual dancers and groups. A focus on the weight displacement of each movement, such as being off balance with an off-axis movement, is also included here.

- The concept of *movement* distinguishes between locomotor and non-locomotor movements. Locomotor movements involve travelling movements, such as running, walking, skipping or sliding, which move the dancer's body from one area to another (Hanna, 1999). Non-locomotor movements are executed in the dancer's self-space, and do not involve any travelling.
- The concept of *form* refers to the structure of the dance, such as theme and variation[44], canon[45] or rondo[46]. The concept of form is also used to distinguish between abstract[47] and narrative[48] dances (Gilbert, 1992).

In 1994, the *America's National Standards for Dance Education* (1994, cited in Hanna, 2008) specified space, time and effort as the core elements to be explored during creative movement practices. In current practice, however, the body and relationship are viewed as incorporated with these elements (McCutchen, 2006; NCAS, 2014). The element of the *body* thus includes how the body moves and its actions, travel, and balance, whereas *relationship* promotes awareness of the persons or objects that share the space (McCutchen, 2006; Hanna, 2008:498; NCAS, 2014).

Although the above elements of dance are not explicitly highlighted in CAPS, it underpins the syllabus. Learners are for example expected to experience and explore space, pathways, relationship as well as locomotor and non-locomotor movements. Basic dance techniques ensuring correct and safe movement practice such as jumping and landing, spotted turns and safe warm-up practices should also be addressed during creative movement sessions (Hanna, 2008; DBE, 2011a; DBE, 2011b).

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[44] Theme and variation in dance refer to the structure of a movement sequence. The movement sequence starts with an original movement pattern, which re-occurs progressively with different variations in the particular movement pattern.
[45] A canon also refers to the structure of a movement sequence. During the execution of the original movement sequence, the exact movement sequence is initiated at different times by different dancers.
[46] Rondo refers to sequences of repetition and contrast. Normally, the original movement pattern re-curs every time after a new movement pattern is introduced.
[47] Abstract dance refers to a dance where the choreographer has abstracted an idea, and expressed it in different ways through movement. The dance does not depict a story, for example, a dance which focuses on depicting different combinations of rhythms, through movement (Reeves, 2009).
[48] A narrative dance communicates a story. The different sections of the dance flow in a logical order to develop a narrative (Reeves, 2009).

In the seven week dance education course that I present, creative movement is conceptualised as a vehicle through which *all* students, regardless of ethno-cultural affiliation or prior dance experience, can explore their natural play movements, as they experiment with new ways of expression, whilst also acquiring experiential understanding of the basic dance elements. In order to promote active and collaborative learning, creative movement activities occur in small groups of approximately five students each. Groups are constituted to ensure ethno-cultural diversity, and reconstituted after each activity. At the onset of each activity, the groups are provided with specific requirements to design a dance. They are then expected to collaborate their efforts as they design a dance according to the prompts provided. Prompts to stimulate their creative thinking can for example include observations of how objects (cars, animals, water, wind, production lines) move, or experimentation with words and movement (such as exploring different interpretations of 'sway' in movement). Prompts can also be problem-based, for example: "*Design six movements which occupy three levels simultaneously. Structure these movements to enable continuous flow of movement".* These activities are structured to concomitantly involve analytical thinking and imagination, in other words, to engage both left and right brain functions (McCutchen, 2006). Creative movement activities in my classroom are thus activity-based, involving group work and requiring active participation from each group member. Approximately 15 minutes are allocated to the students for both collaborative dance-making and rehearsal, after which opportunities are presented to perform each dance to the rest of the class. Evaluation occurs both informally and formally. Informal, formative assessment takes place after each group's performance via verbal aesthetic analysis of the dance. The aim is to, through constructive feedback, cultivate a sense of what is 'good' dance practice, thus providing students with a specific set of aesthetic criteria for evaluation of dance creations in the dance education classroom. In addition, the feedback nurtures the students' growing awareness of and belief in their own creative movement abilities and in doing so, enables them to implement dance activities in their future classrooms confidently and successfully. Formal assessment involves a written assignment, whereby each student is expected to design a focussed and coherent dance education lesson aligned with CAPS.

The primary aim of this particular study was to investigate the potential of the abovementioned creative movement activities, actively experienced by students in combination with ethno-cultural dances, to promote social cohesion in a culturally diverse South African classroom. Thus, it is necessary to emphasise that this dance education course was not taught with the intentional aim to promote social justice or facilitate social cohesion. The purpose of this course was to equip non-dancers to become dance education facilitators in South African primary schools. The time constraints resulted in a course solely focused on dance and classroom practice. Thus, the students' dance experiences were solely based on the elements of movement. Contemporary social issues such as social cohesion, social justice and Othering were not explored as part of the dance education course. Themes connected to their movement explorations were 'animals', 'emotions' (such as happy, sad, angry, frustrated), 'sport', 'actions' (such as kicking, boxing, jumping) and 'objects' (such as DIY equipment). None of these related to political or social issues within society, and none of these required sense-making other than through the body. Also, this dance education course did not provide the students with additional reading material on the above mentioned social issues.

3.3.2.2.1 The benefits of creative movement activities

Creative movement activities benefit learners and students in various ways, ultimately enhancing the individual's creative thinking and problem-solving skills (Cote, 2004; Keun & Hunt, 2006; Hanna, 2008). Participants are also prompted to apply their imagination in order to express themselves (Kauffman & Ellis, 2007). Involvement in the dance-making process enables them to negotiate their personal identities as they explore their intellectual, emotional, social and physical Selves (Hanna, 2008; Geršak, 2012). In this regard, Klemola (1990, cited in Kauppila, 2007) argues that creative movement activities potentially enable an individual to discover the authentic Self, also nurturing an awareness of the potential of the Self, and in so doing, enhancing self-knowledge (Smith, 2002:125). Research has thus shown that creative movement activities develop individuality, self-esteem and self-worth, liberating individuals from the desire to conform to others (Mans, 1994; Smith, 2002; Kauffman & Ellis 2007). In essence, these experiences promote their sense of individuality and uniqueness (Kauffman & Ellis, 2007).

These intrapersonal attributes are indeed transferable to the individual's educational and personal life, and as such, facilitate discovery of the Self in relation to the Other (Kauppila, 2007). Creative movement can thus potentially transform an individual's perceptions of the Self and the world (Klemola, 2004). Stinson (1997) furthermore believes that creative movement experiences can prompt a kind of transcendence which ushers individuals across time and space. It subsequently acts as stress release, allowing participants an experience of freedom (Stinson, 1997). Creative movement experiences thus provide individuals with opportunities to have fun, be creative, express themselves and socialise (Stinson, 1997).

This study, in particular, investigated the potential of creative movement activities, in combination with ethno-cultural dances, to promote social cohesion in a culturally diverse South African university classroom. Social cohesion as it pertains to South Africa includes notions of equality, recognition and intra-cultural sustainability. This provides a complex and critical lens through which the following section will reflect on creative movement practices in the culturally diverse classroom.

3.3.2.2.2 Creative movement, cultural diversity and challenges of equality

In Part One of this chapter I argued that dance pedagogy in a culturally diverse environment requires a collaborative approach, since it provides opportunities to accommodate the creativity, perspectives, dance vocabulary and strengths of all ethno-cultural groups, thus, reducing hegemony (Rowe, 2008). It is my contention that the genre of creative movement promotes such an approach, ideal for the culturally diverse South African classroom, although, subtle elements of hegemony may still persist.

It needs to be noted that creative movement remains a Western construction which can have consequences in the multicultural dance education classroom, in particular with regard to the expectation that all individuals should contribute to the creative process (Ashley, 2014). This expectation may not resonate with all ethno-cultural groups. Different ethno-cultural groups ascribe to diverse social values, which can impact both interactions and dance-making processes (Ashley, 2014). For example,

an individual accustomed to the *guru-shishya* custom of Indian dance may be hesitant to voice opinion with regards to dance-making. Moreover, collaborative dance-making requires movement negotiations, and not all students are accustomed to such pedagogical practices.

In this regard, the collaborative approach to creative movement activities resembles African dance pedagogy, but contrasts with both Western and Indian dance praxis which focus on individual skill and meticulous imitation. As such, the idea of collaboration may leave some students uncomfortable and cause tension within the multicultural group. For example, individuals who are accustomed to 'blind following' may not participate in the creative processes and unwittingly appear disinterested and unwilling to contribute to the creation of the dance. Moreover, Western orientated students may also decide to take the lead and expect 'blind following' from their peers, who, in the case of African students, are accustomed to collaboration. Creative movement activities can thus generate tension within the multicultural group, in particular with regards to misinterpretation of the actions of the Other. These can potentially result in (potentially incorrect) assumptions of superiority and inferiority and subsequently facilitate experiences of inequality for these students, whilst promoting hegemony, ultimately corroding the ideals of social cohesion as it pertains to South African society.

Collaborative dance-making in the multicultural classroom presents further challenges with regard to the application of diverse movement *habitus*. As mentioned before, the individual's *habitus* influences the individual's sense of 'good' dance movements. As such, in a multicultural classroom diverse students will have diverse movement ideas influenced by their *habitus*. During collaborative dance-making, culturally diverse students, with their diverse movement *habitus*, must reach consensus on a final sequence of movements that meet the requirements of the dance. Although this process in itself is a challenging negotiation, existing power relations within the multicultural groups can further affect negotiations of movement and decision-making during the dance-making process, subsequently causing experiences of preference and inequality.

A further point of deliberation relates to the aesthetic paradigm of the dance educator. The aesthetic paradigm familiar to the dance educator by necessity will underpin dance activity in the class. For example, in the context of this study, my grounding in the Western aesthetic paradigm inevitably and inherently influenced the way I approached my task as dance educator. Assessment criteria such as innovation, creative use of space, attention to detail, the neat execution of movements, synchronisation and non-repetition were emphasised. These however stand in contrast with the aesthetic criteria associated with many African dances (Amegago, 2009). The dance educator's aesthetic paradigm (whether Western or African) therefore provides an on-going dilemma of power, since it inevitably influences dance teaching practice in the multicultural classroom.

In addition, an emphasis on one particular set of aesthetic criteria, as it occurred in this study, can cause individuals who do not subscribe to the associated aesthetic paradigm, to question the aesthetic value of their own paradigm. Thus, such teaching practices may indeed demean the value of another individual's aesthetic paradigm (as suggested by Rowe, 2008). This, in turn, can potentially also lead to demeaning the value of cultural practices, hinder cultural sustainability and disrupt intra-cultural cohesion (Rowe, 2008). This area deserves further interrogation in order to facilitate the design of curricula that would promote culturally responsive teaching practices.

Moreover, Rowe's (2008) concerns with regard to a potential shift in the students' aesthetic paradigm, as mentioned earlier, are also relevant to this study. In the culturally diverse South African dance education classroom, some students will always be confronted with a 'foreign' aesthetic paradigm, be it from their peers, their teacher, or the most popular contemporary culture. Consequently, the extent to which the individual's own aesthetic paradigm is influenced by continuous exposure to other aesthetic paradigms within the multicultural classroom may indeed be a point of concern. In addition, interrogations into the manifestation of a dominant aesthetic paradigm within the multicultural classroom would be insightful, specifically, with regard to existing power relations within the multicultural classroom that determine the most 'sought after' aesthetic paradigm during dance-making. Also, the extent to which the most popular aesthetic paradigm influences the students'

participation in the classroom would further prove a worthy investigation. Accordingly, the degree to which the most popular aesthetic paradigm influences community dance practices at home, also requires further exploration. Ultimately, these concerns culminate in an important question: To what extent will exposure to diverse aesthetic paradigms be conducive to a conception of social cohesion that promotes both bridging and bonding cohesion? This question was not addressed in this study, and requires further investigation.

In sum, creative movement in a culturally diverse classroom remains contentious with regard to potential reinforcement of subtle notions of inequality. However, creative movement still proves to be more participative and less hierarchical than other dance teaching practices, and subsequently, more appropriate for dance education programmes in South African classrooms.

3.3.2.2 Component 2: Active participation in ethno-cultural dances

As mentioned earlier, CAPS highlights the teaching and learning of specific ethno-cultural dances when outlining dance education. In doing so, it aims to promote cultural sustainability and an appreciation for diversity amongst learners (DoE, 2000; DoE, 2002b; DBE, 2011a; DBE, 2011b). In this study the term 'ethno-cultural dance' refers to dances affiliated with particular ethno-cultural communities. These include 'traditional' indigenous dances of particular ethno-cultural communities, as well as social dances associated with particular ethno-cultural communities which have originated more recently.

Several scholars however highlight complications, controversies and challenges with regard to the teaching of ethno-cultural dances, both in mono- and multicultural classrooms. These concerns relate to the teacher, teaching material and teaching methods.

3.3.2.2.1 The teacher of ethno-cultural dances

Almost forty years ago, Royce (1977) questioned the authentic teaching of ethno-cultural dances of the Other, arguing that teachers often subconsciously impose their own cultural biases upon the ethno-cultural dance of the Other, hence contaminating its original authentic aesthetic paradigm. More recently, Kerr-Berry (2004) alludes to prevailing debates regarding ownership of and access to cultural material. By attempting to teach ethno-cultural dances of ethno-cultures other than the dance teacher's own, the dance teacher may easily be regarded as an intruder, pilfering a significant belonging of the original ethno-cultural group (Hanna, 1999). Caucasian dance educators are for example often criticised for teaching 'inappropriate material' when teaching African dance content (Kerr-Berry, 2004). The underlying assumption is that, whilst a dance educator is familiar with his or her own ethno-cultural dance practices, this does not apply to dance practices of other ethno-cultural groups (Kerr-Berry, 2004). In other words, a conceptualisation of the particular aesthetic paradigm is often lost when a 'foreign' dance is taught (McCutchen, 2006). Consequently, in Southern African countries, most teachers do not feel equipped to teach their learners about another's ethno-culture (Mans, 2000).

3.3.2.2.2 Ethno-cultural dance teaching material

Ethical concerns also regard the teaching of 'inappropriate' ethno-cultural dances (Behrens, 2000; Makoye, 2001; Doumbia, 2013). Not all cultural dance material is regarded as suitable for use in the culturally diverse classroom. The *Tora*, a Ghanaian dance, is for example regarded as inappropriate for intercultural teaching due to its sacred meaning and origin. Many dances are also revered for its secrecy, and therefore not suitable for public viewing or performance outside the ethno-cultural community (Doumbia, 2013). The *Abissa dance* of the N'zima of the Ivory Coast may, as an example, not be performed by outsiders, since it would insult the N'zima people (Doumbia, 2013). In a similar vein, the presentation of ethno-cultural dances as stage performances are also questioned by authors such as McCutchen (2006) and Doumbia (2013), who argue that such practices can potentially compromise the integrity of, for example, religious dances.

The above reservations do not, however, apply to all ethno-cultural dances. Traditional ethno-cultural dances are often both performed in their original authentic setting, as well as for tourism practice as entertainment. Although tourism practices have the potential to denigrate ethno-cultural practices[49] (McCutchen, 2006; Smith, 2006; Rowe, Buck & Martin, 2014), dancers often view these performances as strengthening or reaffirming their ethno-cultural identity in a multicultural society, rather than demeaning it (Behrens, 2000; Smith, 2006). The choice of ethno-cultural dances for the multicultural classroom should therefore be done with caution, since these can potentially demean or strengthen ethno-cultural identities.

A further challenge that relates to teaching material is appropriate contextualisation of the dance. In this regard, Risner and Stinson (2010) and Ashley (2014) promote the additional focus on historical and cultural context when teaching and discussing ethno-cultural dances. These authors warn that the teaching of a variety of ethno-cultural dances in schools easily leads to simplistic and superficial perceptions of other ethno-cultural groups. Such teaching practices disregard the aesthetic value that the particular dance has for its members, potentially compromising the specific meaning that the dance holds for the particular ethno-cultural group (Risner & Stinson, 2010). Bond (2010:129) therefore questions the "integrity" with which a variety of "dance cultures" can be taught in a multicultural curriculum. Similarly, Ashley (2014) argues that the lack of contextualisation devalues both the meaning of the dance and the worldview of the represented ethno-cultural group.

In addition, teaching material that associates ethno-cultural dances with social justice issues poses further challenges with regards to the application of appropriate sensitivity and sincerity in addressing these. In this regard, Risner and Stinson (2010) argue that issues of social injustice should be emphasised, but without an artificial display of compassion for 'victims'. Dance educators should strive towards cultivating empathy through their teaching methods. It is the "learning 'about' the exotic other, rather than learning 'from and with' those unlike us, or those whose

[49] Smith (2006:12) argues that the ethno-cultural dances of the Uyghur women are often presented as tourist attractions to show the dances of the exotic Other, and of a lesser civilized society than the Chinese Han majority of The Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, North-western China. The Uyghur women state that instead of being used for affirmation of culture, that is, for "*us*", our dances are being misused to "be consumed by *them*" (Smith, 2006:13).

dancing is different from ours" (Risner & Stinson, 2010:9), that is an integral problem in current multicultural dance teaching practice. Too often students are confronted with observations of the 'exotic Other', rather than an in-depth realisation of a common humanity.

Hanna (1999) raises another concern particularly pertinent to multicultural environments, warning against potential humiliation, isolation and singling out of those students whose dances are being taught. In addition to the above challenges, the choice of teaching strategies can pose further challenges.

3.3.2.2.3 Strategies for teaching ethno-cultural dances

Teaching strategies employed to teach ethno-cultural dances pose further challenges. Ethno-cultural dances may be taught to uphold ancient traditions or to promote the development of a growing art form (Nicholls, 1997; Bakare & Mans, 2003; Kringelbach & Skinner, 2012; Ashley, 2013; Rowe *et al*, 2014). Bakare and Mans (2003) for example note the influence of colonial education on the manner in which indigenous ethno-cultural dances were taught in Africa. They argue that ethno-cultural dances were taught as ethno-cultural artefacts in order to "fossilise" these dances in history, disregarding these dances as cultural expressions of growing and ever-changing ethno-cultural communities (Ashley, 2006:39). In this regard, Nicholls (1996:57) distinguishes between the preservation and conservation of cultural practices through dance. This author believes that the teaching of ethno-cultural dances should be aimed at "conservation" rather than "preservation" in order to recognise the dance as a dynamic and evolving, rather than fixed, tradition (see also Kringelbach & Skinner, 2012). The 'preservation' of dance teaching practices can indeed cause misrecognition, since it unjustly portrays the people of the associated ethno-cultural group as static and incapable of creativity, evolve and the generation of their own new artefacts (Rowe *et al*, 2014).

Another challenge associated with strategies employed to teach ethno-cultural dances relates to potential "distortion" of traditional and authentic movements and structure (Nicholls, 1996; Wanyama & Shitubi, 2012:435). Insiders of a particular indigenous community may be insulted by 'modernised' ethno-cultural dances, as it

can be viewed as rejection of the traditional values it represents (Rowe, 2009). Consequently, the extent to which specific cultural movements should be replicated when ethno-cultural dances are taught, is questioned by Nicholls (1996) and Ashley[50] (2006; 2014).

In this regard, Bakare and Mans (2003) and Rowe (2008) propose teaching strategies of ethno-cultural dances which focus on the creative processes involved in the particular ethno-culture's dance-making tradition. Bakare and Mans (2003) suggest an additional focus on creative elements comprising the specific ethno-cultural dance. Rowe (2008), on the other hand, argues for the inclusion of specific evaluation criteria applicable to the particular ethno-cultural dance. Such teaching strategies would enable the realignment of perceptions on different creative processes, maintaining the "essence of dance traditions" (Bakare & Mans, 2003:215, 216). These approaches would further promote the sustainability of ethno-cultural traditions and allow for further development. In addition, these would assist the outsider with a systematic manner in which to comprehend the different aspects, aesthetic indicators, value and meaning of the particular dance (Bakare & Mans, 2003; Rowe, 2008).

From the above it is clear that the teaching of ethno-cultural dances in a culturally diverse classroom is indeed a complex matter, in particular, as it raises ethical concerns with regards to the orientations of the dance teachers, choice of teaching material and teaching strategies employed.

3.3.2.2.4 This study

'Ethno-cultural dances' as it pertains to this study, include 'traditional' South African ethno-cultural dances associated with Zulu, Afrikaner, and Xhosa cultures, as well as more recent dances associated with particular ethno-cultural communities, such as the *Kaapse Klopse* - an integrated dance and music style associated with the Cape

[50] Linda Ashley, a dance educationist, works within a multicultural setting in New Zealand. Ashley relates these concerns to the teaching of the Maori dances.

Malay (Bruinders, 2012), and the township jive[51], a social dance which originated in Soweto, spreading to other South African townships in the 1950s[52]. Additionally, students were also actively involved in learning ethno-cultural dances from other countries, such as Greece and Spain.

Due to limited time, the teaching of diverse ethno-cultural dances was basic and rudimentary, comprising approximately ten minutes of each lecture. The remainder of the 75 minute lecture was devoted to creative movement. Students were encouraged to imitate and master the movements demonstrated by myself, as lecturer. The primary focus was not on deepening the students' understanding of the contexts and meanings of various dances and dance movements, but rather on demonstration and mastering the most basic steps of each ethno-cultural dance. The original dance environment of the particular ethno-cultural dance was briefly mentioned (in one or two sentences) to provide context. No additional information about the particular ethno-cultural dances or ethno-cultural groups was relayed to students through readings, discussions or media footage. The students were therefore merely provided with an embodied experience of the actual physical movements of these ethno-cultural dances.

Such a teaching approach however had particular limitations. Firstly, it can be regarded as hierarchical, reinforcing unequal power relations in the classroom. It also lacked authenticity, since my demonstration of movements was necessarily influenced by my own, internalised cultural and social orientations. It is however my contention that, given the need to promote social cohesion in a formerly segregated society, much work needs to be done to familiarise citizens with the cultural practices of the Other, hence the need to include ethno-cultural dances in the general dance education curriculum at both school and tertiary level.

[51] Particularly in South Africa, so-called 'traditional' dances have evolved (and are still evolving) into new dance forms. Dances such as the 'township jive' developed during times of political oppression as a protest for change (Glasser, 2000).

[52] The township jive is a style of social dance that originated in the South African townships during the 1950s. It was danced in canteens and at social events, and originated from the swing. Swing music usually accompanied the township jive.

3.3.3 Conclusion

This study investigated the potential of dance education, in particular creative movement and ethno-cultural dances, to promote social cohesion in a culturally diverse South African classroom. Creative movement as conceptualised in this study is based on the natural movements of individuals, which are influenced by the individual's movement *habitus* and their accustomed aesthetic paradigm. In essence, creative movement activities explore the natural movements, creativity and expression of diverse individuals through collaborative dance-making. However, in the context of the multicultural classroom, creative movement activities also present subtle notions of hegemony and inequality, alongside its potential benefits to cultivate social cohesion. The same reservations apply to the teaching of ethno-cultural dances, as explained above.

This dance education course differed from other dance programmes aimed at promoting political agendas as discussed earlier in this chapter (see Marques, 2007; Risner & Stinson, 2010, Bond & Gerdes,2012; Shapiro, 2013), in that the primary aim was not to facilitate intercultural understanding and cohesion. Whereas the dance programmes mentioned above were designed to promote issues of social justice, this course in essence aimed to equip non-dance specialist generalist teachers with the required skills and knowledge to implement the national school curriculum by facilitating dance education in their future classrooms. It is thus the 'incidental' effect of the dance education activities that social justice and social cohesion was promoted. The above mentioned dance educators also complement their dance activities with discussions to cultivate awareness of social justice issues, whereas this course does not. It however goes without saying that seven weeks of exposure to the Other through collaborative, practical embodied engagement in creative movement activities and ethno-cultural dance experiences will inevitably have an impact on the students' orientation and disposition towards the Other. This is in essence what is being explored in this study.

3.4 Part Three: The intersection between culture, dance and social cohesion

In contemporary South Africa, dance regularly accompanies public and official events. The current South African president Jacob Zuma often precedes his public addresses with song and dance. In addition, public protests in South Africa are also often accompanied by the *ukutoyiza*, commonly known as the *toyi-toyi,* a communal dance symbolising solidarity (Glasser, 2000; Edwards, 2010). Dance in South African society therefore has public and political connotations; hence, the decision to explore the proposition: *Dance education, as it pertains to this study, may have the potential to promote social cohesion in post-apartheid South Africa.* This section concludes this chapter, as it examines theoretical connections between culture, dance and social cohesion as it pertains to a culturally diverse South African society.

3.4.1 Dance as embodiment

The human body is a key feature distinguishing humans from animals, ultimately binding all human beings together as belonging to a universal human race. This leads Shapiro (2008:260) to argue that it is indeed through the universality of the human body that "biological, emotional and expressive human characteristics necessary for a more humane world", including compassion, are cultivated. One can thus argue that, since dance movements are executed through the body, dance emphasises our common humanity, challenging segregation and inequality between human beings (Shapiro, 2002).

As mentioned earlier, the human body "experiences deeply" (Shapiro, 1999:100) and holds memories of past experiences of a lived life. It also contains collective values and behaviours of both social and cultural experiences related to heritage and environment (Teffo, 1996; Parviainen, 1998, cited in Kaupilla, 2007; Ashley, 2006). This leads Soudien (2012:25) to argue that in South Africa, "apartheid is in the bodies of many" as embodied experiences of either domination or oppression. The particular manner in which "habituated bodies give expression" in South Africa, is thus influenced by specific power relations and environments. As such, the body

can also become "the material foundation upon which desire for human liberation and social transformation rests" (Shapiro, 1999:100). Hence, the human body can also serve as reminder of the meaning of a free and positive life, fuelling the desire for liberation and social transformation. In addition, the body can be viewed as "a means through which experience can lead to transformation" (Teffo, 1996:103).

The body is also integral to an individual's discovery of the world. It is the vehicle through which a person can connect with the Self and the Other, as well as with the outside world (Shapiro, 1999; Smith, 2008). The body, as an epistemological gateway, makes sense of the world, and negotiates a person's position in the world (Parviainen, 2002). In this regard, the body also becomes a vehicle to discover, make sense of, and negotiate relationships with other bodies during dance education interactions. These relationships may, for example, be negotiated as friendly, antagonistic, open-minded or prejudiced. Bodily interactions further negotiate relationship between the inter-actors and their position in the world, since bodily interactions automatically separate the participants from the rest of the world (Parviainen, 2002). The inter-actors can subsequently redefine their world, because of their newly negotiated relationship.

In the dance education classroom, creative movement activities provide opportunities for participants from diverse groups to interact with each other via bodily movement. Collective involvement in creative movement tasks provides students with multiple opportunities to negotiate and re-negotiate relationships with the Other and the Self as they position themselves in the world. Bodily interactions during creative movement activities consequently provide participants with multiple opportunities not only to reflect on the kind of person they desire to be (Soudien, 2012), but also to practise becoming that person. Previously held perceptions of the Self and the Other are challenged, prompting participants to transform their personal perspectives. In a post-conflict multicultural society, personal transformations with regard to the Self and Other are necessary to cultivate particular dispositions within individuals that would transform the interactions between diverse citizens (NDP, 2011).

3.4.2 Dance as cultural artefact

Culture, in the context of this study, is described as the shared values, beliefs and attitudes of a particular way of life of a particular group of people. These are conveyed through culture-specific practices, artefacts, symbols and traditions that define the cultural identity of the particular group (Inglis, 2005; Axelsson *et al*, 2013). Cultural practices, such as dance and music, express, represent and preserve the unique identity of a particular cultural group (Spillman, 2002; Oliveira *et al*, 2012; Axelsson *et al*, 2013). Ethno-cultural dances in particular, constitute bodily representations of a particular ethno-cultural group, as it establishes and re-affirms the unique culture. It also re-affirms the Self's membership of the particular culture (Smith, 2006; Wanyama & Shitubi, 2012). In this regard, Nicholls (1996:42) argues that ethno-cultural dances are more than an artefact, in other words, "an end in itself". Ethno-cultural dances should be viewed as processes, that is, "a means to an end". Ethno-cultural dances therefore promote a particular ethno-culture's sustainability, a fundamental requisite for social cohesion (RSA, 1996; Zuma, 2012). In addition, in a multicultural society, an ethno-cultural dance can establish and re-affirm its associated ethno-cultural group as recognised and legitimate participators within the multicultural society (Smith, 2006).

This study is also premised on active participation in a range of ethno-cultural dances representative of South African society, in other words, the bodily enactment of the cultural artefacts of the Other. Experiences of ethno-cultural dances of the Other transfer culture through the human body, providing 'outsiders' with embodied ethno-cultural experiences to obtain a glimpse into the life world of the 'insider' (Frankham & MacRae, 2011). Hence, it provides instantaneous knowledge transfer with regard to heritage, history, customs and everyday life of a particular culture, through bodily experiences (Hanna, 1999; Parviainen, 2002; Adinku, 2004). Dance thus serves as a "window to a person's worldview" (Hanna, 1999:148). This is particularly significant in a culturally diverse society such as South Africa, as it invites participants "into the sentiments and aspirations of the various ethnic groups within the country" (Adinku, 2004:60). Consciousness of and familiarity with other meaning-making systems counter misperceptions and misinterpretations which often lead to division, social preference, exclusion and discrimination (Geertz, 1993;

Bauman, 2001; Zerubavel, 2002; Anderson & Taylor, 2004; Smith & Riley, 2009; Johnson & Christensen, 2012). As such, it enhances understanding of the Other, prompting perspective transformation.

However, active participation in the ethno-cultural dance of the Other also serves to highlight distinctive differences between ethno-cultural groups, emphasising distinctions between the Other's meaning-making system and a person's own (Bakare & Mans, 2003; Smith, 2008). Such "sense of difference" manifests itself when people "stand at [the] boundaries" of their ethnic group (Cohen, 1982:2, 3, cited in Jenkins, 2004:111). Consequently, confrontation with the meaning-making system of the Other conscientises one to particularities, assumptions and perspectives of one's own meaning-making system, an important requisite for perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1990). Participation in the ethno-cultural dances of the Other can therefore provoke consciousness of culturally-informed personal perspectives and assumptions, prompting critical reflection and re-evaluation of existing assumptions and perspectives.

Embodiment of the ethno-cultural dance of the Other also provides a kinaesthetic sensation of how it 'feels' to be the Other, stimulating imaginary association with the Other, a key component of empathy and compassion (Greene, 1995; Nussbaum, 1997; Eisner, 2002; Trotman, 2006). As such, embodied experiences of the ethno-cultural dance of the Other prompt the dancer to "look and feel from the vantage point of the person whose world it is" (Greene, 1995:4), engendering understanding, appreciation and caring, key requisites for a cohesive society (Costandius & Bitzer, 2014).

Embodying the culture of the Other by means of active participation in dance also enhances intercultural communication. Hofstede *et al* (2010) describe awareness of one's own cultural perspective, knowledge of the culture of the Other, and practise in and application of the symbols of the culture of the Other, as the processes required to develop intercultural communication. Active participation in the ethno-cultural dances of the Other promotes all of these, and subsequently enhances intercultural communication. Intercultural communication in turn decreases misunderstanding

between diverse groups, promoting healthy socialisation, harmony and cohesion within a multicultural society (Hofstede *et al*, 2010).

3.4.3 Dance and *habitus*

As mentioned earlier, the natural way of moving and movements of an individual are embedded in and influenced by cultural or social habits of movement (Ropo & Parviainen, 2001; Karkou & Sanderson, 2001; Parviainen, 2002; Smith, 2002; Hamalainen, 2007; Kaupilla, 2007; Hanna, 2008). Bourdieu (1977:72, cited in Lizardo, 2009) describes such cultural and social structures embedded within each individual as the person's *habitus*, as it often generates a person's social and bodily habits. As such, a person's *habitus* affects his or her actions, reactions, interactions and behaviour (Edles 2002; Kidd, 2002). In addition, it also influences the culturally embedded manner in which an individual moves (Karkou & Sanderson, 2001; Ropo & Parviainen, 2001; Parviainen, 2002; Smith, 2002; Hamalainen, 2007; Kaupilla, 2007; Hanna, 2008). Bodily knowledge and bodily movements consequently convey particular ethno-cultural, environmental and social information about the particular individual (Ropo & Parviainen, 2001; Parviainen, 2002; Hamalainen, 2007; Kaupilla, 2007). Smith (2008:80) describes such an "embodiment of culture" as a "historical artefact" which "reproduce[s] bodily character". In short, an ethno-culture cultivates the body to move and act in a particular manner (Smith, 2008:81).

During a creative movement activity, movements are suggested, shared and imitated among diverse participants who have different habits of movement. Once the group accepts and adopts a proposed movement, the demonstrator teaches the movement to the group, who, in the South African context, has a culturally diverse composition. Hence, dance participants are often afforded opportunities to learn movements generated by and representative of the *habitus* of the Other. Assent to the movement, often noticeably informed by the Other's *habitus,* implies acceptance of the Other and their *habitus*. As such, whilst expressing his or her ethno-cultural affiliation, the Other is accepted into the multicultural group as recognised, approved and valuable members. This is significant in a post-conflict multicultural society since it restores the dignity of both the individual and the associated collective ethno-

cultural group. In sum, the *habitus* exchange enables experiences of dignity, equality, recognition and inclusion for the movement presenters, as it enables the imitators to embrace difference. It also nurtures a transformative awareness of the value of the Other, as they are able to make significant contributions to the multicultural group. These are key processes that cultivate cohesion amongst diverse individuals.

Furthermore, through such "cultural imitation" (Rowe, 2008:4,5) particular cultural knowledge is transmitted to participants who are afforded opportunities, through bodily involvement, to experience movement *habitus* associated with another meaning-making system. As such, creative movement activities provide participants with opportunities for cultural exchange in the form of movement *habitus.* Such embodied exchanges expand knowledge of the Other, reducing unfamiliarity and often unjustified fear of the Other and as a result enhancing familiarity with and openness to the Other. As bodily movements are shared, connections between the Self and the Other, despite cultural differences, are established, promoting a sense of togetherness among diverse participants.

3.4.4 Dance as collective identity

In certain communities, ethno-cultural dances are used to cultivate and instil a sense of cohesion, unity, togetherness and belonging to the community (Jenson, 1998; Bakare & Mans, 2003; Onyeji 2004; Smith, 2006; Smith & Riley, 2009; Edwards, 2010). In this regard, Durkheim (1968:427, cited in Smith & Riley, 2009:11) holds that,

> … there can be no society which does not feel the need of upholding and reaffirming at regular intervals the collective sentiments and the collective ideas which makes its unity and its personality.

In certain societies dance is thus used to uphold the 'conscience collective' (Durkheim, 1893), nurturing, maintaining and reinforcing collective identity (Hunt, 2004; Kothari, 2006; Smith, 2006; Wanyama & Shitubi, 2012). The potential of dance to reinforce a unique national South African identity should thus not be overlooked. As mentioned earlier, South African social cohesion discourse promotes

the idea of ‘unity in diversity’ (DoE, 2006; Fleetwood, 2012). Joint participation in dance activities affords all participants, irrespective of ethno-cultural origin, collective experiences of togetherness and belonging to a single multicultural group, which is diverse but also united. Embodied experiences of unity notwithstanding diversity, nurture relationships towards the Other as fellow members of the same society. Dance therefore has the potential to engender experiences, aspirations, realisations and presentations of unity in diversity, and in so doing, promote the construction of a collective South African identity.

3.4.5 Dance as healing

Several traditional communities, including indigenous South African communities, apply dance for communal healing purposes, ultimately aimed at the restoration and maintenance of healthy relationships between members of society. These healing dances promote the values of *ubuntu,* prompting individuals to become “more truly and fully human” as participants connect with their Selves and Others (Edwards, 2010:132). This characteristic of dance is particularly significant as it constitutes one of “the forces that bind society together” (Green et al., 2009:1). Dance’s capacity to restore and re-establish relationships and connections between members of a diverse community, whilst affirming connection to a conscience collective, holds significant value for the healing of a post-conflict South African society. The facilitation of such connections can restore dignity, promote equality and strengthen and ameliorate identity formation among South African citizens.

3.4.6 Dance as representing the Self and the collective

Dance is an expression of both the individual and the collective. It can be seen as a “book … written by the body”, symbolising the manner in which a person experiences and interprets the world (Shapiro, 2008:12). As such, dance enables individuals to recognise personal perspectives and identify the specific boundaries that limit it (Shapiro, 2008). Once the boundaries are identified, they can be crossed. This awareness enables a person to explore “new ways to live”, developing and broadening a sense of being, as new relationships with other human beings who live

in the same world, are cultivated. Dance thus enables the cultivation of a new meaning-making system that recognises one's personal perspective as one of many in the world (Shapiro, 2008). Since bodily encounters in the form of dance movements with diverse individuals intensify awareness of difference (Jenkins, 2004), these also nurture consciousness of diverse perspectives, behaviour and interpretations when perceiving the world and the Other. As such, it promotes the kind of "polycentrism" Hofstede *et al* (2010:387) suggest as a required disposition in a multicultural society. In addition, such consciousness generates a re-evaluation and renewal of perspectives of the Self and the Other towards inner, personal transformation of the Self, an important requisite for cohesion (Mezirow, 1990; Wade, 1998; O'Hara, 2003).

3.4.7 Dance as social interaction

From an early age, human beings are socialised within a particular culture by rehearsing social interactions with other individuals (Bourdieu, 1990, 1993, cited in Kidd, 2002; Mandela, 2002). Social habits of interaction are thus constructed by a particular ethno-cultural orientation. In order to become integrated within a community other than one's own, a person has to obtain the skills necessary to facilitate good social interaction. In this regard, Giddens (1991:7) believes that people have to "reskill" the Self, acquiring the necessary abilities to adapt to a particular situation. The cultivation of skills for social interaction, however, is only possible through the practising of interactions (Bourdieu, 1990, cited in Kidd, 2002).

Creative movement activities in the multicultural classroom provide the ideal context for individuals from diverse backgrounds to engage in such intercultural interactions. The dance-making process provides opportunities for diverse individuals to practise active participation, cooperation and collaboration as they collectively endeavour to solve a movement problem through interactive negotiations. Ultimately, the activity's success depends on openness towards the Other and a willingness to participate actively and constructively. Creative movement contexts consequently provide simulations of society, where participants learn to practise active participation, cooperation and collaboration in a constructive space where regular multicultural

interactions disrupt preconceived group prejudices, consequently promoting non-discrimination and social cohesion (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Tropp, 2011).

3.4.8 Conclusion

In this section, connections between culture, dance and social cohesion have been explored. It has been argued that embodied dance experiences through the human body emphasise sameness, reminding participants of a common humanity. The body is also the vehicle through which a person makes sense of and negotiates relationships with the Self, the Other and the world. It has also been argued that dance as an embodied cultural artefact establishes and reinforces cultural identity. It provides opportunities for embodied experience of the culture and movement *habitus* of the Other, thus facilitating cultural exchange between diverse participants. As such, dance also strengthens collective identity as it nurtures community, belonging, unity and communal healing. In addition, dance represents the Self and the collective as it conscientises participants to their personal boundaries, as well as those of the Other, thereby provoking potential personal transformation. Lastly, it was argued that dance education provides a platform for embodied social interaction, enabling participants to practise their interactions with the Other, and in so doing, nurture skills required for the promotion of social cohesion. The theoretical connections between culture, dance and social cohesion invite further empirical investigation into the actual experiences of culturally and politically diverse students, of this particular dance education course. The empirical investigation and findings will be discussed in the next two chapters.

CHAPTER FOUR

Research design and methodology

4.1 Introduction

A study of human science requires an explication of the philosophical stance of the researcher, the intended approach, the method of data generation, and the method of data analysis. Since this study concerns human beings and their interactions with the Self, the Other and society, a true account of the above as employed in this study is necessary.

This study aimed to explore the proposition: *Dance education, as it pertains to this study, may have the potential to promote social cohesion in post-apartheid South Africa.* Hence, it aimed to interrogate meanings and locations of social cohesion in the students' experiences of this particular dance education course module.

This chapter presents the research paradigm, approach and design of this study. This study was conducted as a case study, whereby descriptions of the participants, the role of the researcher, data generation strategies and method of data analysis, are provided. Thereafter, notions of trustworthiness and rigour are addressed. This chapter concludes with a reflective discussion on the limitations of the design and execution of this study.

4.2 Research paradigm

Any social science research study is informed and directed by an underlying research paradigm, a philosophy of thought that governs the choice of design and decisions made during the research process (Usher, 1996; Willis, 2007; Brennan, Voros & Brady, 2011). This philosophy of thought underlies beliefs and assumptions of a particular research perspective, and promotes certain metaphysical declarations with regard to the ontology (the nature of reality), epistemology (what we can know

about reality), axiology (the value of knowledge) and methodology[53] (how the knowledge of the reality is acquired) (Usher, 1996; Heron & Reason, 1997; Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Willis, 2007; Doucet, Letourneau & Stoppard, 2010; Somekh & Lewin, 2010; Brennan, Voros & Brady, 2011). In social science research the dominant distinctive paradigms include positivism, interpretivism and the critical paradigm[54]. This study was situated within the interpretive paradigm and included elements from the participatory paradigm.

The positivist paradigm[55] aims to prove an absolute truth, either by means of scientific experimentation, mathematical equation, or deductive logic (Higgs & Smith, 2002; Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004). Positivist research focuses on the careful calculations of cause and effect, or methods and outcomes, thus it requires quantitative methods and seeks objective results (Usher, 1996). Whereas the positivist paradigm involves careful calculations, obtaining 'evidence' to 'prove one truth', this study recognises that multiple realities exist and that these are influenced by context, culture and human agency. Since this study was interested in human behaviour, which cannot be studied through a positivist lens, because all human beings do not exist and react in the same predictable manner, the positivist paradigm was not adopted.

4.2.1 The interpretive paradigm

This study was therefore situated in the interpretive paradigm, also known as the 'hermeneutic', 'phenomenological' or 'constructivist'[56] paradigm, particularly designed to understand human behaviour, human communication or human creations (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:28; Higgs & Smith, 2002:21; Doucet *et al*,

[53] In this study, the term methodology will be used to refer to the framework which underpins the acquisition of knowledge. The term 'method' will be used to refer to the actual processes of data collection and data analysis (Doucet, Letourneau & Stoppard, 2010:299).
[54] Although alternative paradigms such as pragmatism, phenomenology, ethnomethodology, cultural studies and postmodernism have also been identified (see Doucet *et al*, 2010: 308; Willis, 2007:17; and Usher, 1996:25), they fall beyond the scope of this study and will not be discussed.
[55] Locke (1632-1704) and Hume (1711-1776) are viewed as the initiators of positivism (Higgs & Smith, 2002).
[56] Doucet *et al* (2010) uses the term constructivist paradigm, since it focuses on the understanding of a particular reality, which implies that it "reconstructs" the manner in which people perceive this reality.

2010:302). The objective of the interpretive paradigm[57] is to find and interpret meaning (Higgs & Smith, 2002).

Epistemologically, this paradigm acknowledges all human communication and expression as grounded within and influenced by particular cultural and societal structures (Higgs & Smith, 2002; Usher, 1996; Henning *et al*, 2004). The interpretive paradigm is interested in a human being's subjective perspective of the environment. Thus, ontologically, it views an interpretation as 'simply an interpretation', constituting one particular perspective of a particular reality. As such, this paradigm acknowledges that many different interpretations of the same reality exist. Methodologically, inquiry into a human being's subjective perspective of the world would require a qualitative approach, such as interviews, journals and observation (Willis, 2007).

This study makes use of a "double hermeneutic" (Usher, 1996:19, 20), since the students' interpretations of their dance education experiences (the data) are in turn interpreted by the researcher. All interpretation occurs through the application of a particular set of meaning-making systems, or "knowledge systems", appropriated by the interpreter (student or researcher) in order to make meaning (Henning *et al*, 2004:20). These include, for example, beliefs, intentions, previous experiences, ethno-cultural meaning-making systems, and social and historical pre-conceptions - in essence, anything that may influence interpretation (Higgs & Smith, 2002; Henning *et al*, 2004:20). Ideally, a research study such as this one should include explicit accounts of potential assumptions that underpin each interpretation. However, since both the interpreted and the interpreter are often unaware of these assumptions, any statement regarding the underlying assumptions affecting interpretations and meaning becomes problematic (Usher, 1996; Henning *et al*, 2004). Yet, awareness and analysis of these knowledge systems can lead to an improved understanding of the manner in which the investigated makes sense of the particular action.

[57] Schleiermacher (1768-1834) is regarded as the founder of this paradigm, Dilthey (1833-1911) contributed "the humanistic theory of education" (Higgs & Smith, 2002:22), and Heidegger (1889-1976) and Gadamer (1900-2002) insisted on the relevance and importance of ethno-culture and value systems in the interpretation of human expression or communication (Higgs & Smith, 2002:24, 25).

In this study, I attempted to shed light on these knowledge systems through an emphasis on ethno-culture as a meaning-making system, South African history and power relations within the literature review. These knowledge systems, however, are highly complex, as this study regards a multicultural classroom in post-apartheid South Africa. Ethno-cultural groups for example are not internally homogeneous and are ever evolving, which implies that the assumptions which underlie these remain fluid. In addition, besides ethno-culture, age, personal history and prior socialisation are further aspects which impact diverse knowledge systems. In this study, the ages of the first year students ranged from 18 to 32 years. This means that their level of social maturity would vary, but more significantly, the extent to which they were directly or indirectly exposed to the apartheid political system and its consequences, also varied. Subsequently, the degree and nature of emotional response towards the Other, and the nature and extent of the individual's pre-conceived ideas about the Other, would vary amongst participants, further influencing their sense-making.

In addition, prior socialisation also constituted a variable within these knowledge systems. Students were socialised for example in both conservative and liberal educational spheres. Also, whereas some students had mono-cultural school education, other students were exposed to multicultural educational contexts. Thus, some students may have experienced the Other, positively or negatively, prior to their first year at university, whereas others may not have had such experiences. The knowledge systems which informed each interpretation were therefore uniquely personal, as it also included past and present experiences of the particular individual. This complicated the identification of these knowledge systems. Consequently, I cannot claim to identify all the knowledge systems which influence the students' interpretations. This study can merely state that I, as researcher, attempted a fluid consciousness of these potential knowledge systems, when interpreting the data.

This study can, however, endeavour to propose a declaration of the knowledge systems which underpinned the interpretations of this researcher. In turn, a consciousness of these, during interpretation, could be adhered to. As researcher, my personal and social identities locate me in a particular social context. I am a

white Afrikaans-speaking female with significant expertise as a dancer[58], dance teacher,[59] choreographer[60] and dance educator. Hence, as a culture-bearing human being, I acknowledge that my interpretations may have been influenced by my personal assumptions and perceptions with regards to this study. It is thus possible that other researchers from diverse ethno-cultural groups with different expertise may interpret or perceive this study differently (Finlay, 2002). As such, I do not assume that a single proclamation of my own perceptions and biases render this research study as sincere and credible (Watt, 2007; Tracy, 2010).

In the light of the above, it is clear that the interpretive paradigm acknowledges subjectivity in research without compromising the search for understanding of the possible meanings as it is transferred (Higgs & Smith, 2002). In addition, it promotes sense-making through the application of the "hermeneutic circle" (Usher, 1996; Smith & Higgs, 2002:29). That means that in this study I continuously refered back to my prior knowledge (experiential and theoretical) in order to make sense of new information (from the data), whilst I reflected on how the new information influenced or affected the prior information, and vice versa. Thus, my interpretation of a small piece of action was constantly being considered as part of a larger picture (Usher, 1996). Each smaller component (for example, a perceived attribute of dance education) was also considered against the possibility of the larger whole, which in this case, constituted the potential connection to social cohesion. Moreover, due to the spiral nature of these interpretations, an understanding of the transformative potential of dance education with regard to the promotion of social cohesion in South Africa evolved throughout the research process.

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[58] Prior to this study, I specialised in modern dance, although I also have training in ballet, tap dance and Spanish dance.

[59] I hold two Teacher Associate certificates in modern dance, afforded to me by the International Dance Teachers Association (IDTA), currently known as the Association for International Dance Teachers (AIDT). I taught modern dance at my private studio for 12 years. I also taught dance as community work in Kleinskool Township, a poverty stricken area in Port Elizabeth. In 2005 I started my current occupation as dance educator, lecturing pre-service student teachers at my current tertiary institution. During this time, I was also involved in in-service teacher training and the compilation of two dance education textbooks (unpublished) to be used by students enrolled for the course.

[60] Besides the choreography of numerous stage shows, I am also the choreographer of the well-known multicultural NMMU choir, highly acclaimed for their vibrant African movements, and for being ambassadors of a 'united in diversity' South Africa.

Although this study was fundamentally concerned with issues of social change, it was not situated within the critical[61], 'transformative', or 'critical-ideological' paradigm. The aim of the critical paradigm is usually to expose misrepresented truths by critiquing ideologies and providing voice to the silenced, as it encourages social transformation, empowerment and action by means of the research process (Usher, 1996; Henning et al, 2004; Doucet *et al*, 2010). This research process did not aim to bring forth social change. The aim of this study was merely to understand a particular phenomenon, and not to critique it. The potential transformative power should be ascribed to the dance education programme and not to the research process. In other words, should this study not have been conducted, the students' participation in dance education activities during lectures could still have generated empowerment and emancipation. Hence, this particular research process in itself does not claim to be emancipatory (Usher, 1996).

4.2.2 The participatory paradigm

Although this study was situated within the interpretive paradigm, it also adopted specific features from the participatory paradigm[62] (Heron & Reason, 1997; Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Brennan *et al*, 2011). The participatory paradigm's epistemological stance is that knowledge is not only constructed by a cognitive process in the mind - such as propositional knowledge - but adopts the notion that other constructions of knowledge exist (Heron & Reason, 1997; Brennan *et al*, 2011). The participatory paradigm views propositional knowledge as constituting one of four constructions of knowledge, namely propositional, experiential, presentational and the knowledge of practical knowing. Brennan *et al* (2011) and Heron and Reason (1997) argue that experiential knowledge in particular should be regarded as a form of knowledge in its own right, even without any theoretical knowledge to sustain it. Experiential knowing is described by Heron and Reason (1997: 281) as "feeling and imaging the presence of some energy, entity, person, place, process or thing". Moreover, they argue that experiential knowing "articulates reality through inner resonance with that there is"

[61] Horkheimer (1895-1973), Habermas (1929-), Karl Marx (1818-1883), Paulo Freire (1921-1997) along with the Frankfurter Schule, influenced the views of the critical paradigm.
[62] Participatory research, usually associated with the critical paradigm (Henning *et al*, 2004; Doucet *et al*, 2010), is also regarded as a paradigm in its own right.

(Heron & Reason, 1997:281). Presentational knowledge refers to the aesthetic presentation of that which we know. It "clothes our experiential knowing of the world in metaphors of aesthetic creation" (Heron & Reason, 1997:281). Practical knowledge, or the knowledge of practical knowing, on the other hand, relates to specific competencies and skills, and the knowledge of how to do something[63].

For the purpose of this study, I adopted an ontology that endorses both propositional and experiential knowledge. Brennan *et al* (2011) explain such a stance as follows: An experience, such as a first-hand experience of the rain on one's face, can be a complete experience in itself without knowledge of rainfall or other theories within one's knowledge constructions in the brain. However, in order to understand the value of such an experience, reflection, in other words, cognitive engagement, is necessary to identify and analyse various aspects of the experience. The experience by itself has value, hence the notion of experiential knowledge. However, reflection on the experience may reveal more propositional knowledge. This implies a deeper understanding, not necessarily of the experience itself, but also of the value of the experience (Brennan *et al*, 2011). Moreover, if this experience and the reflection on the experience are combined with the observations of someone observing the effect of such an experience, the observer may cognitively suggest further analytical questions in order to understand the value of such an experience. In such a case, there would thus be three perspectives on the experience, namely

- the participant's experiential knowledge,
- the participant's reflections on the experience in order to gain propositional knowledge of the value of the experience, as well as
- the propositional inquiry into the value of such an experience by the observer (Brennan *et al*, 2011:105).

Triangulating these perspectives can further enhance insight into the value of the experience.

[63] Ontologically, the knowledge of practical knowing is the most important of these knowledge constructions (Guba & Lincoln, 2005).

In this study, experiential knowledge, as viewed by the participatory paradigm, is particularly relevant since the aim was to explore the impact of dance education through the participants' actual experiences of specific dance education activities. The participants actively participated in the activities and experienced these activities first-hand before they were asked to reflect on their experience. Concomitantly, due to the multicultural nature of the environment in which the dance activities were executed, the participants gained additional experiential knowledge of culturally diverse persons, their ways of moving, dance-making, negotiating and participating. These experiences, in turn, contributed to their experiential knowledge of a multicultural environment, the Other, ethno-cultural differences, interactions with the Other, intercultural communication, inclusion or exclusion and potentially, social cohesion.

Similarly, one could argue that my experience as a dance teacher for twenty two years, including lecturing dance education to pre-service student teachers during the last 10 years, constitutes experiential knowledge. However, since these experiences were unrecorded, it was not utilised as concrete data for this particular research project. For the purpose of this study, new data for the sake of trustworthiness were generated. My own experiential knowledge as explained above however enabled reflexivity which, according to Brennan *et al* (2011), constitutes an essential part of the participatory paradigm's knowledge creation process.

4.2.3 Summary

This study was situated in the interpretive paradigm, whilst also adopting the notion of experiential knowledge and knowledge creation of the participatory paradigm in order to better understand, interpret, analyse, reflect and gain insight into the value of dance education with regard to the promotion of social cohesion in South Africa. The interpretive paradigm was regarded as appropriate for this study due to its focus on the understanding of human behaviour, embedded and influenced by the historical, cultural and societal context of the individuals who participated in the study. Although this study in essence sought to explore how dance education can promote social cohesion in a post-conflict society such as post-apartheid South

Africa, it relied on the reflections of the students, who were socialised according to particular historical and ethno-cultural structures. In order to understand the value these students attributed to their dance experiences, it was important to recognise the knowledge systems underlying their thought processes, reactions, experiences and reflections. Furthermore, in order to understand these knowledge systems, consideration of the current South African social and political context and the possible impact of apartheid on the education, morale, values and perspectives of various ethno-cultural groups were of the essence. Only once these knowledge systems were clearly laid out, could an interpretation of the reflections on their experiences in the dance education classroom be initiated, and could attempts be made to understand their personal accounts of the transformative potential of such experiences. These dance education experiences therefore constructed experiential knowledge of the Self in relation to the Other and society.

4.3 Research approach

This study is qualitative in nature. This implies that I regarded 'words' as data, as opposed to focusing on numbers and statistics, typical of a quantitative approach (De Vos, 1998; Creswell & Plano Clarke, 2007; Willis, 2007). Qualitative research, according to Tracy (2010) and De Vos (1998), can be regarded as more philosophical than quantitative research. Essentially, it sets out to 'do something different' than a quantitative study, since qualitative researchers are interested in a human being's experience or perspective, rather than scientific 'cause and effect'. Small (1988, cited in De Vos, 1998:16) thus describes a qualitative approach as a "humanist alternative" to a quantitative approach.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005) view qualitative research as a study of a particular phenomenon in its natural habitat, whilst considering and acknowledging all the complexities of the phenomenon. They encourage qualitative researchers to "dig deep" and to "examine" data from different perspectives in order to "construct a rich and meaningful picture of a complex, multifaceted situation" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:133). Qualitative research thus produces a multi-dimensional depiction of a particular phenomenon, with researchers applying a diverse range of designs, of

which narrative inquiries, phenomenological inquiries, ethnographic studies, case studies, and grounded theory are most prominent (Punch, 2009; Cresswell, 2013).

4.4. Research design: Case study

A case study is an in-depth inquiry into a particular case (a programme or phenomenon) as it is situated in a particular real-life environment (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2009). This study focuses on the students' experiences of a particular dance education course module, within a particular location, that is, my first year university classroom at the Faculty of Education, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Africa. Hence, this study can broadly be viewed as a case study, although some generic differences exist. Chadderton and Torrence (2011) describe a case study as an investigation into the social construction of meaning during specific social interaction. Accordingly, this investigation's interest lies in the perspectives of the students as they make meaning of both Self and Other, during this particular dance education experience.

A case study, according to Yin (1993), requires the researcher to state a proposition, a suggestion of something worthy of investigation, at the onset of the study (Dictionary.com; Yin, 1993). As mentioned earlier, my particular interest in this case was prompted by the following proposition:

> *Dance education, as it pertains to this study, may have the potential to promote social cohesion in post-apartheid South Africa.*

Thus, in essence, this case study sought to interrogate meanings and locations of social cohesion in the students' experiences of this particular dance education course.

The *orientation* of this case study was both *psychological* and *sociological*, since the inquiry emphasised both the behaviour of people and sociological constructions such as social relationships, power relationships, ethno-culture, identity and society which influence these (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011). The *intent* of this case study was to investigate the experiences of diverse students in the dance education classroom,

which classifies it as a *collective* or *multiple* case study[64] (Creswell, 2007). This study can further be described as *exploratory,* since it was driven by the curiosity of the researcher with regard to understanding 'what is actually going on' in this particular dance education classroom (Stake, 2000; Babbie, 2004; Chadderton & Torrence, 2011).

Flyvbjerg (2013) highlights four prominent features of a case study. The first regards the boundaries of the particular case, since these are usually vague and require articulation (Stake, 2000; Yin, 2009; Flyvbjerg, 2013). Scholars however suggest different ways to determine these boundaries. Flyvbjerg (2013) for example argues that the boundaries are determined by the researcher, whereas Yin (2003) believes that these emerge from the theory. Chadderton and Torrence (2011) hold that these arise from the data. Delineating the boundaries around a particular case is therefore complex, since these do not only concern the particular locality and programme, but also other aspects such as history, context and hierarchy which influence the locality and curriculum (Silverman, 2010; Chadderton & Torrence, 2011). Contrary to other research designs, that which occurs within these boundaries determines what the case is about, and not the hypothesis constructed by the researcher (Stake, 2000).

In this case study, the boundaries were established in various ways. The participants consisted of a particular group of students who were homogenous in the sense that they were all enrolled for a teacher education programme that prepares them to teach in South African schools. These students furthermore participated in a generic compulsory seven week dance education course. This course involved specific teaching material conveyed through specific teaching strategies, implemented by myself as dance education facilitator. A further set of boundaries of this case study related to its specific focus on localities and meanings of social cohesion. In this regard, both the literature review and the data determined what constitutes social cohesion as it further delineated the boundaries of this particular case study.

[64] As opposed to an instrumental or intrinsic case study (Creswell, 2007).

The second feature of a case study regards its inherent focus on context (Flyvbjerg, 2013). A case study investigates particular social interactions as they are situated within a historical and social context (Chadderton & Torrence, 2011). Once the researcher cordons off the boundaries of the particular case, the case is distinguished from its context, and the context is identified (Flyvbjerg, 2013). The specific locality of this study, that is, a multicultural university classroom in post-apartheid South Africa, determined the context of this study. Social, historical and political context was therefore provided through the literature review.

Thirdly, a case study is intensive, which implies that depth is more important than coverage (Creswell, 2007; Chadderton & Torrence, 2011; Flyvbjerg, 2013). In this case study, depth was created through explorations of the meanings of culture, cohesion and dance, and how these related to the students' experiences of this particular dance education course. In addition, hidden notions of power, inequality and hegemony have been interrogated both through the literature review and during the data discussions.

The fourth feature of a case study, according to Flyvjberg (2013), is that it usually emphasises developmental factors, in other words, it usually investigates events that occur over time (Flyvbjerg, 2013). Since this particular dance education course happened over a period of seven weeks, it adhered to the developmental focus. In this regard, the use of reflexive journals provided evidence of particular progressions that transpired over time. In addition, many responses involved comparisons between the first and the last dance education experience.

Yin (2003, 2009) and Creswell (2007) add a reliance on multiple sources of evidence as a further feature of a case study. In this regard, this study used open-ended questionnaires, personal journals and focus group interviews as methods of inquiry into the experiences of the students. This case study thus deviated from the generic case study, since data collection did not include observations (Yin, 2009; Hancock & Algozzine, 2011; Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). All be it not conventional, one could argue that the students' observations of each other were integrated into the data sets. The absence of formal observations by the researcher, is however a limitation of this study.

4.4.1 Case study concerns

The case study as research design is however also critiqued in scholarly literature with regard to its 'validity' and 'reliability', generalisability, credibility, trustworthiness and prejudice. The case study is for example often viewed as a mere pilot study, to explore a topic for consequent future research. Many authors (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Stake, 2000; Yin, 2009; Silverman, 2010; Chadderton & Torrence, 2011; Hancock & Algozzine, 2011; Flyvjberg, 2013) however disagree, arguing that the case study should be regarded as a stand-alone independent method of inquiry.

Other critique of the case study as research design refers to its generalisability, that is, the manner in which a person can re-work the findings of a study into laws of prediction and control applicable to situations everywhere (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). In this regard, case studies are mostly viewed as unreliable and non-relatable to broader contexts. Flyvbjerg (2013) however points out that this problem applies to social science research in general, and not merely to case studies. All social science research studies are concerned with context-specific human behaviour, therefore true predictability in all social science studies is questionable. Moreover, Lincoln and Guba (2000) and Stake (2000) point out that law-like generalisations are not necessarily desirable, since these often lead to reductionist assumptions, thus neglecting the complexities that exist within. This, in turn, limits a search for the complex, which potentially causes problems, damage and misinterpretation. Subsequently, Stake (2000) finds the desire to construct generalisable findings, especially in the fields of education and social science, pedantic. Nevertheless, many authors (Stake, 2000; Silverman, 2010; Chadderton & Torrence, 2011; Flyvjberg, 2013) argue that case studies can be representative of a broader context. Silverman (2010) further believes that the generalisability of a case study can be improved through constructing purposive and representative sampling, as was the case in this study. Ultimately, however, the generalisability of a study depends on the actual case study, and also on how the reader makes sense of it (Silverman, 2010; Chadderton & Torrence, 2011).

A further critique of the case study flows from the above. If the study cannot be generalised, the value and significance of one particular incident (case) as a

contribution to scientific knowledge, is questioned (Flyvbjerg, 2013). In this regard, Stake (2000:22) argues that "particularisation" is more helpful than generalisation. The meaningfulness of particularisation to the individual nevertheless depends on the individual's ability to recognise and apply particular knowledge to potentially similar contexts. Stake (2000) refers to the identification of diverse applications of particular knowledge as 'naturalistic generalisation', which he considers to be intuitive, as it often guides action. Similarly, Silverman (2010) and Chadderton and Torrence (2011) argue that case studies, in particular, can prove useful for scientific development, because it can illuminate specific points of interest with regard to the particular phenomenon. Flyvbjerg (2013) also reminds us that if a person aims to become an expert in any particular field, knowledge of a collection of diverse cases is necessary. As such, knowledge of many singular case studies enables researchers in becoming experts in the field (Flyvbjerg, 2013).

With regards to the notion of generalisation, it is important to note that Stake (2000) distinguishes between two types of generalisation. These are formalistic or logical generalisations (which relate to, for example, population and sample) and naturalistic generalisations which are psychological constructions and relate to "cognition", "abstraction" and "comprehension" (Hamilton, 1979, cited in Lincoln and Guba, 2000:36, 37). Alasuutari's proposal (1995, cited in Silverman, 2010), namely that qualitative researchers replace generalisation with "extrapolation", is significant. Similarly, Lincoln and Guba (2000:40) and Schofield (2000) argue rather for the assessment of transferability or "fittingness" of the particular case study to other contexts, than assessment with regard to generalisations. Such assessment can however only be done when both the contexts of the inquiry and the application site are known (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Accordingly, this case study seeks to enable the reader to appropriate its fittingness for similar contexts, rather than to formulate a generalisation. As such, a detailed description of the participants, data generation methods and methods of data analysis follow.

4.4.2 The participants

Since the study aimed to ascertain the impact of a dance education course module on a culturally and politically diverse group of students, it was important to select participants representative of the multicultural composition of South African society. In this study, the population consisted of pre-service student teachers enrolled for an undergraduate programme at the higher education institution where I am employed as dance education lecturer. Silverman (2010), Tymms (2012) and Daniel (2012) advise researchers to select a representative sample of a population. The sample was thus drawn from two groups of first year student teachers, registered for either a B Ed in Foundation Phase Studies (B Ed FP) or a B Ed in Intermediate Phase Studies (B Ed IP) programme. The students were all enrolled for *the same* compulsory arts education module, which included a seven-week dance education component. The sample, although it is typical (Silverman, 2010), can thus also be regarded as convenient, due to the participants' availability and accessibility (Daniel, 2012:81).

In total, 80 students participated in the research, although 240 students attended this course module. Each dance education class group consisted of approximately 35 individuals, which in most cases included African, Coloured, Indian, white Afrikaans and white English speaking students. One could therefore argue that the site was typical of a first year university classroom in the Eastern Cape, which increases notions of transferability (Silverman, 2010). Thus, the participants represented all the above mentioned ethno-cultural groups. Although the Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) at the institution is English and the study was subsequently conducted in English, it was not the home language of many participants.

All students doing the module were informed of the study and invited to participate. Eighty students volunteered. They were then randomly divided into three groups of more or less equal size. These groups represented the three methods of data generation.

- Group A consisted of 30 students who completed questionnaires.
- Group B included 20 students who kept reflective journals.

- Group C consisted of 30 students who participated in focus group interviews.

In order to ensure that the research was conducted ethically, students were reminded that their participation was voluntary and anonymous since pseudonyms would be used during discussions of data (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). At no point were the students pressurised, intimidated, bribed or any coercive strategies employed that could compromise the trustworthiness of the responses. The information required was not sensitive in any manner and, according to the requirements of the Belmont report (DoHEW, 1979), could not bring the respondents any harm by disclosing the information.

4.4.3 The role of the researcher

It needs to be acknowledged that my dual role as researcher and dance education facilitator during this study poses various concerns with regards to ethics, bias, trustworthiness and reliability (Dahlberg & McCaig, 2010). First, since I have a teacher-student relationship with the participants, I am responsible for their final grade for this module. This places me in a particular position of power through which I could potentially suggest specific responses from the students, in order to support this research project. This problem did however not manifest, since the grading of this particular dance education course module occurred prior to the elicitation of their responses. I do however admit that the particular rapport I have with my students might have encouraged them to respond favourably, which I consider a limitation of this study.

Secondly, as teacher, the way I expressed myself verbally and non-verbally in the dance education classes could potentially have interfered with the neutrality and reliability of the data. My personal assumptions and premonitions with regard to the impact of this particular dance education course might have influenced the students' responses. As teacher, I was able to control and avoid verbal expressions, suggestions and discussions regarding particular attributes of dance education that could promote the proposition of this study. Although I was always meticulously cautious not to contaminate the data generation processes, it is possible that my

non-verbal communication (bodily or emotional) might have affected the students' responses.

Thirdly, I concede that my personal interactions with the students might have been a catalyst for their cohesive experiences. In other words, it is possible that the findings of this study do not solely represent the impact of this particular dance education course, but rather, that it also reflects my personal involvement with the students as dance education facilitator during this particular dance education course. This poses another limitation to this study. It also raises questions with regard to transferability (Babbie, 2004), thus, whether this study can be applied elsewhere, with a different dance education facilitator, tendering the same results. In this regard, I recommend future replications of this study, by other dance education facilitators, in order to not only strengthen the findings of this study, but also contribute to both dance education and social cohesion research.

Fourthly, my personal interest in this research project could have caused a bias during the interpretation of the data. I attempted to overcome this through a conscious application of the hermeneutic circle. I interpreted the data whilst simultaneously teaching the same dance education course to other groups of students. This enabled me to reflect on and continuously question my own interpretation of each response, meticulously, in order to make sense of the students' experiences of the dance education course. In addition, I attempted to avoid bias during data interpretation by using two other independent coders who also analysed the data. Final themes were identified during a consensus meeting. Exclusion of my personal, subjective observations from this study, was another attempt to prevent bias. However, the absence of formal observational accounts remains a limitation to this study. Should a similar study be conducted in the future, observation by neutral outsiders would be recommended.

From the above it is clear that conducting research into one's own practice poses serious problems. Notwithstanding these restrictions, it was important to continue the study, given the limited number of dance education facilitators and researchers in South Africa.

4.4.4 Data generation strategies

In order to avoid contamination, the participants were not informed of the proposition of this study, as I aimed to generate authentic reflections on their dance education experiences. As such, I aimed to prompt their reflections through open and general questions, purposefully avoiding potential leading questions related to social cohesion (for example, references to the Other, notions of inclusion, belonging, culture and togetherness).

As alluded to earlier, three primary data generation methods were employed. These were semi-structured open-ended questionnaires, reflective journals and focus group interviews.

4.4.4.1 Questionnaires

Although questionnaires are usually used to generate quantitative data, Cohen *et al* (2007) recommend the inclusion of open-ended questionnaires in qualitative research studies that are exploratory in nature, such as this one. These particular questionnaires were appropriate to generate qualitative data, since they contained only two open-ended questions, and since they were used in combination with personal journals and focus group interviews. The semi-structured questionnaires were designed according to the description of Cohen *et al* (2007) in order to generate data that would enable me to answer the primary research question that guided the empirical study, namely *What was the impact of this particular dance education course module on a culturally and politically diverse group of students in post-apartheid South Africa*? Participants were prompted to reflect and comment freely, sharing personal perspectives (Cohen *et al*, 2007).

Questionnaires comprising open-ended questions however pose challenges. Cohen *et al* (2007) warn that analyses of personal responses are more complex than analyses of responses generated via structured questionnaires. Another challenge when administering open-ended questionnaires relates to time, since an open-ended questionnaire often demands more completion time than a structured questionnaire. In addition, questions are often misinterpreted, as respondents are distracted by the

fact that they have to use their own words to answer the questions. In this regard, Flick (2011) advises researchers to design open-ended questions in a user-friendly manner, ensuring that respondents can relate to the questions. For this particular study, questions were thus phrased in colloquial language and the respondents were given ample time to complete the questionnaires. This allowed honest, considered and reflexive responses (Cohen *et al*, 2007). In this study, the participants of Group A were prompted to respond to the following questions:

1. *Reflect on the past seven weeks of dance education lectures, and describe a meaningful experience you had. (You may describe more than one experience or event if you like.)*
2. *Why was the experience meaningful?*

Upon reflection, I have come to realise that these questions were positively loaded. Questions prompted participants to reflect on 'meaningful' experiences, thus potentially discounting considerations of 'non-meaningful', negative or challenging experiences. I acknowledge that this is indeed a limitation to this study. Should a similar study be conducted, opportunity for deeper and more comprehensive reflections needs to be provided.

4.4.4.2 Reflective journals

Babbie and Mouton (2001) are of the opinion that personal documents such as journals provide a space where the authors express themselves through personal notes, recording what they deem significant in a specific context. A particular advantage of reflective journals is that these represent an immediate account of experience or feelings, uninfluenced by lapse of time or memory (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Holly & Altrichter, 2011). According to Allport (1942, cited in Babbie & Mouton, 2001), such personal accounts are less influenced by the researcher's requirements, enhancing the legitimacy of the data.

All the participants of Group B were asked to keep a personal journal, reflecting on their weekly experiences in the dance education classroom. This particular method of inquiry gave me access to and insight into personal narratives of their dance education experiences. All the students were provided with a blank notebook to be

used as a personal journal over the seven week period. They were asked to record their feelings or thoughts about their experiences during dance education lectures. In this regard, Oppenheim (1992, cited in Cohen *et al*Cohen et al, 2007) also recommends the use of open-ended prompts to stimulate required responses. In this study, the participants were thus prompted to reflect, through journaling, by responding in narrative form to the following open-ended phrases:

Today I felt...

Today I thought...

Today I noticed that...

These phrases were specifically formulated to encourage the students to reflect on their dance education experiences. Again, the prompts were purposefully generic and open-ended in order not to influence the students' responses with regard to the Other and experiences of cohesion. The journals, similar to the open-ended questionnaires, were anonymous, and participation was voluntary. Upon reflection, I admit that the prompts could be experienced as vague and generic, generating ambiguities and confusion amongst the participants about the purpose of the activity.

4.4.4.3 Focus group interviews

A focus group is a small group of participants discussing a particular topic of interest in an informal, but semi-structured manner (Litosseliti, 2003; Mansell, Bennett, Northway, Mead & Moseley, 2004; De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2011). Several authors (Litosseliti, 2003; Wilkinson, 2004; Flick, 2011; Gibbs, 2012) promote this type of interview as participants experience it as less intimidating than a personal individual interview.

Puchta and Potter (2004) see focus group interviews as a valuable method to generate phenomenological (interpretive) data, since it enables researchers to gain insight into the experiences of the participants and facilitate participants' exploration of their perceptions (Asbury, 1995, cited in Webb & Kevern, 2001; Mansell *et al*, 2004). Focus group interviews thus allow the researcher to gain access to the "Perceptions, Opinions, Beliefs and Attitudes" (POBA) of the participants, providing the researcher with a dynamic variety of perspectives (Puchta & Potter, 2004:66). Hence, focus groups enable the researcher to generate a focussed set of data from

a large number of participants in a short period of time (De Vos *et al*, 2011; Wilkinson, 2004; Gibbs, 2012).

With reference to Foucault's (1994) concerns about unequal power relations often experienced during individual interviews, Wilkinson (2004) holds that focus group interviews lessen the power divide, by equalising power relations between the researcher and the researched. Focus group interviews also have emancipatory potential since the interactional nature of the discussions often leads to individual participant revelation (Wilkinson, 2004). Participant groups can be selected according to various classifications. In this study, the focus groups can be classified as 'natural groups', since the participants were all student teachers enrolled for a compulsory module[65]. The groups can also be seen as 'real groups', since they shared a common experience, namely active participation in dance education activities (See Wilkinson, 2004; Flick, 2011).

In essence, the success of a focus group interview depends on the quality of interaction amongst participants. Their collaboration, elaboration and responses to individual viewpoints normally generates rich data for interpretation (Litosseliti, 2003; Wilkinson, 2004; Punch, 2009). It is thus important that the context in which the discussion takes place is favourable, hence the need to ensure a relaxed and informal setting where participants feel safe to speak freely about certain experiences. The group discussion is normally facilitated by a moderator, who is usually the researcher, with an observer taking field notes. The discussions are recorded, with permission of the participants, for further transcription and analysis..

In this study, 30 students comprising Group C participated in focus group interviews. Each interview group constituted five students. At the onset of each interview, I explained the purpose of the study as *an inquiry into their dance education experiences*. The particular interest in the localities and meanings of social cohesion, was not revealed. Accordingly, leading questions that would relate to

[65] Other classifications are the 'real' group which relate to a group of participants who have a common experience, or the 'artificial group', where the researcher strategically allocates specific groups (Wilkinson, 2004:178, 179; Flick, 2011:118).

these were avoided throughout the interviews. The participants were encouraged to respond to prompting questions that allowed for the expression of individual views, but also created a possible platform for dialogue (Flick, 2011). The same open-ended questions posed in the questionnaire, were asked, namely:

> *Reflecting on the past seven weeks of dance education lectures, describe a meaningful experience you had, and explain why you regard the experience as meaningful.*

The question prompted the students to reflect on their experiences as dance education students by tapping into their experiential knowledge. The participants were also provided with hard copies of the prompt, and allowed a couple of minutes to reflect in preparation for the discussion. During the discussions, I only asked clarifying questions when needed. I also tried to ensure equal opportunity for participation and expression of views and continued to conduct focus group interviews until the data became saturated, in other words, no new ideas emerged (De Vos *et al,* 2011). Eventually, six interviews were conducted.

Upon reflection, I acknowledge that the guiding reference to 'meaningful' activities provided insufficient space for the participants to reflect critically, questioning my assumptions that the dance education experiences generated positive outcomes. This potential omission of negative responses in the data poses a limitation to this study. Should a similar study be conducted in future, prompts would be rephrased to ensure veritable reflection and better alignment with the main research question and sub-questions.

4.4.5. Data analysis

Participant responses generated by means of the open-ended questionnaires and personal journals were recorded by an independent typist. The transcriptions were verified to ensure accurate documenting. Audio recordings of the focus group interviews were also transcribed verbatim by an independent scribe. These were also verified to confirm accuracy.

De Vos *et al* (2011) describe data analysis as the transformation of data into results or findings. Qualitative data analyses processes are often unstructured and tend to blend certain aspects of theory, empirical data and the interpretation of words, in order to develop new insights or concepts. As such, qualitative data analyses processes are often experienced as "unstructured", "messy" or "ambiguous" (De Vos *et al*, 2011:399, 400). De Vos *et al* (2011) however argue that it is precisely the lack of structure that enables qualitative researchers to derive creative connections from the data, and obtain insight into the reality of human perspective or behaviour. Consequently, these authors describe the process of qualitative data analysis as "both a science and an art" (De Vos *et al*, 2011:399).

This study applied content analysis, as opposed to ethnographic analysis, to analyse the data (Wilkinson, 2004). Content analysis is utilised to examine recurring moments in the data sets, which are systematically grouped together according to themes and sub-themes, also known as a coding system. Various aspects of the data set can be analysed according to this method. These include the entire group as one unit, the group dynamics, a participant as an individual, or the actual verbal discussion. In this regard, Flick (2011) identifies three techniques often used when doing content analysis:

- **Summarising content analysis**: This technique requires researchers to paraphrase data to reduce the data load. This is known as the first reduction. Thereafter, the reductions are further categorised, hence the notion of a second reduction.
- **Explicative content analysis**: Researchers who apply this technique utilise additional explicating sources such as dictionaries or context theories in order to gain a better understanding of the data. A narrow context analysis would involve utilising additional concepts within the text in order to interpret the message, whilst a wide context analysis would involve exploring information outside the text. This normally happens when the researcher needs to gain a better understanding regarding the social, economic or cultural context of the participant, or additional theories in literature, which may be relevant in the analysis. The consideration of these factors results in the construction of an

"explicating paraphrase" which is assessed during the analysis (Flick, 2011:137).

- **Structuring content analysis**: This technique means that researchers identify structures within the data, for example, themes, literary structure of the content, various degrees of a particular statement, or epitomising structures (Flick, 2011).

This study used a combination of the analyses practices described above. Summarising content analysis regarded the first reduction, thereafter, structuring content analysis occurred, as specific themes were identified and structured according to the literature. Tenets of explicative content analysis were evident where some interpretations required a consciousness of ethno-cultural affiliations or associated aesthetic paradigms.

Morgan (1997, cited in Wilkinson, 2004) furthermore describes three conventional ways to code data generated through focus group interviews, one of the data generation methods employed in this study:

- The codes are identified within the data set of a particular group.
- The codes are identified as a code from each participant.
- The codes are identified as a combination of these two approaches, utilising all codes across the groups and individual participants.

Wilkinson (2004) however argues that any systematic analysis of recurring moments in focus group data sets can be considered as content analysis, whether the conventional coding systems are utilised, or not. In this study, the data were coded and repeated instances identified and collated according to themes, categories and sub-categories. In this regard, Webb and Kevern (2001), Wilkinson (2004) as well as De Vos *et al* (2011) advise researchers to also analyse the interactions between participants, as these may contribute to the final analysis. In this study, the data were coded through a combination of these two approaches.

Due to the qualitative nature of this study, data generated via the interviews, journals and open-ended questionnaires were analysed according to procedures as proposed by De Vos *et al* (2011) and Flick (2011). The first task was to select those parts of

the data that could inform the research question, thus cordoning off the boundaries with regards to a particular focus on social cohesion. Thereafter, the material had to be considered, stating whether, or to what degree the data were affected by the editing or transcription processes. Finally, I had to explain what I intended to achieve by means of the analyses of the selected material. This implied that I defined the focus or the direction of the analysis for text selection. It also required a theoretical explanation of the specific research question. In this study, the analysis process thus unfolded as follows:

- The first step entailed the identification of the **coding unit**, in other words, the smallest constituent that could be analysed.
- Thereafter, the **contextual unit** was identified. A contextual unit refers to the largest component that could be categorised.
- Finally, the **analytical unit**, in other words, the organisation of the coding units into structured cohorts for analysis was identified.

In this study, the coders and I also chose open coding as an analytic system for data analysis (Punch, 2009; Waring, 2012). Strauss (1987, cited in Waring, 2012:301) describes open coding as a process during which the "inquiring mind" of the researcher "vigorously and imaginatively engages" with the data. Open coding literally means that the data are 'broken open' (Punch, 2009).

The first step in the coding process then was to identify and code concepts, issues and phenomena that emerged from the data and could contribute to analysis. In this regard, De Vos *et al* (2011) advise researchers to use codes that are descriptive, explanatory and distinctive. According to Strauss (1978, cited in Waring, 2012), the primary focus is on connections *in* the content, rather than on the content itself. During the open coding process, the researcher constantly compares codes and categories in order to detect differences and similarities between the various units and sub-units. In addition, De Vos *et al* (2011) argue that further engagement with endorsing or contending codes improves the credibility of the findings. Once the codes have been identified, they are grouped under distinctive umbrella concepts, known as categories. In this regard, De Vos *et al* (2011) again advise researchers to provide the category with a suitably descriptive code to reflect the relevance and

value of the specific category. It is also important to ensure that the meaning and relevance of the particular codes and categories relate to the research question.

Once categorisation had been completed, the coders and I engaged in axial coding**.** This implied re-connecting the codes and categories in a new manner in order to gain new insight into the combined data (De Vos *et al*, 2011). The term 'axial coding' is based on the notion of placing an axis through the codes and categories in order to join them together again in "conceptually different ways" (Punch, 2009:186). Axial coding is thus the process of re-relating the codes and categories with each other (Punch, 2009). The coders and I thereafter identified the core issues, relating other categories in order to refine possible findings (Punch, 2009; De Vos *et al*, 2011). This step of the process is known as selective coding. Selective coding aims to align the data presentation by focusing on a central focus point or a core theme that is usually more abstract than the codes and categories (Punch, 2009).

In this study, these four steps, namely open coding, categorisation, axial coding and selective coding, also referred to as "operations" by Punch (2009:169-206), did not occur in a linear manner. De Vos *et al* (2011) advise researchers to implement any of these procedures during any stage of the analysis. In this regard, Strauss and Corbin (1990, cited in De Vos *et al*, 2011) propose the inclusion of code notes, theoretical notes and observational notes in the recollection of the coding process:

- **Code notes** describe the actual codes and the meanings as intended by the researcher.
- **Theoretical notes** constitute careful recollections of the coders' reflections during the sense-making process whilst consciously experiencing the analysis process and relaying the coders' general feelings.
- **Operational notes** involve detailed descriptions of the actual process, in other words, with whom, how and what happened during the coding process. Operational notes are not interpreted and often unstructured in nature (De Vos *et al*, 2011).

In this study, open coding was used. The coders and I identified the codes in the three data sets, after which we organised these codes into categories. The three

data sets were categorised separately, in order to avoid assumptions and misinterpretation. Thereafter, axial coding occurred as the categories were re-arranged in a manner that would aid sense-making and interpretation in relation to this particular study.

During this process, the core themes were identified. Since the three data sets were analysed separately, it was possible to triangulate the categories and themes in a manner that contributed to the trustworthiness of this research (Flick, 2011). The categories and themes of the three data sets corresponded with each other, which enabled amalgamation for data presentation and discussion purposes.

4.5. The trustworthiness of this case study

Various authors (Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Creswell, 2007; Tracy, 2010, Creswell, 2013) address the notion of trustworthiness in qualitative studies. Trustworthiness, according to Joshi (2011) and Bazeley (2013) generally relates to the 'validity' and 'reliability' of the research project. In case study research, such as this one, validity is a pressing issue as it lends itself to biased confirmation of the researcher's preconceived notions. This, Flyvbjerg (2013) argues, is however problematic in all research designs and not particular to case studies, leading this author to argue that qualitative case studies provide ample opportunities for participants to expose new information to the researcher (unlike quantitative methods, which enable many researchers to alter their hypothesis after the inquiry, thus proving the contrary).

Validity and reliability are key issues in both quantitative and qualitative research. Whereas quantitative studies address issues of internal validity, external validity, generalisabiity and objectivity, contemporary qualitative studies address *trustworthiness* through notions of *credibility, transferability, dependability* and *confirmability* (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, 2001; Lewis, 2009; Fielding, 2010; Joshi, 2011; Watkins, 2012; Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2013; Morse, 2015)[66].

[66] Although most contemporary scholars agree on these validity and reliability criteria, Fielding (2010) and Morse (2015) disagree, believing that qualitative researchers should return to the validity and reliability criteria required by quantitative research methods,in order to improve the quality of the research.

4.5.1 Credibility

Credibility is the qualitative parallel for the quantitative measure of internal validity (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, 2001; Lewis, 2009; Watkins, 2012; Morse, 2015), since it relates to the accuracy with which the participants, context, data analysis and findings are described (Guba & Lincol, 2005; Joshi, 2011; Watkins, 2012). Credibility thus regards the truthfulness of the researcher's report on the entire research process (Lewis, 2009), that is, the course content, data generation methods and data analysis. In essence, those who have shared in the specific experience should be able to recognise the descriptions of the experience as true (Morse, 2015). Therefore, in order to ensure credibility in this study, it was important to describe this particular dance education course, the site, the participants, data generation methods, data analysis and findings in such detail.

My dual role as researcher and dance educator afforded me meticulous control of the course content. As sole dance education facilitator, I could determine activities and discussions in class, ensuring that students' responses were not influenced and contaminated by means of deliberate discussions related to notions of social cohesion, such as 'togetherness', cultural diversity in the group, awareness of Self, or of an ethno-cultural Other, interpersonal and intrapersonal development, and so forth. Although these issues were discussed in other first year course modules focussing on 'Values in Education' and 'Child Development', it did not feature in my dance education classrooms.

I also attempted to ensure credibility with regard to the data generation methods was, since these did not explicitly allude to the objective of this study. Students were merely informed that the investigation regarded their dance education experiences, hence the decision to phrase prompts in an open-ended manner. The students' thought processes were therefore not guided towards any of the above mentioned topics, although deeper reflection after the generation of data revealed some shortcomings, as indicated above. In addition, my prolonged engagement with participants enabled me to build trust relationships with the participants, which potentially lead to more truthful responses from participants (Lewis, 2009; Joshi, 2011; Morse, 2015).

Credibility also considers the truthfulness of the findings with regards to their logical relationship with each other, their consistency with the data, and whether these are indeed evidenced by sufficient and rich data (Watkins, 2012). In this study, I aimed to ensure credibility by allowing the units of analysis to arise from the data (Yin, 2003; Babbie, 2004). The units of analysis regarded the individual: the individual's transformative awareness of Self, the individual's transformative awareness of Other, and the individual's transformative experiences of cohesion in the multicultural dance education classroom. These units of analysis were both broad and specific enough to identify and investigate sub-requirements of social cohesion, as articulated in the literature review. These units of analysis also enabled insight into the behaviour and attitudes of students as they interacted with each other, integral to social cohesion in this study. Thus, it is my contention that the relationships between categories were appropriate for this study, as these related both to the students' experiences of dance education, and to their experiences of social cohesion. I furthermore believe that these categories have been well evidenced with sufficient rich data to support the findings.

Many authors, for example Guba and Lincoln (1989, 2001), Lewis (2009), Joshi (2011) and Baseley (2013), argue that member checking is integral for ensuring credibility. Member checking affords participants opportunities to evaluate whether the researcher's interpretations of their responses are true. In addition, it affords participants opportunities to alter their statements. Member checking, as described above, is however not recommended by Morse (2015), since potential disagreement of the researcher's interpretation firstly places the researcher in an awkward position, and secondly, negates the researcher's interpretive capacity. In this regard, Morse (2015) recommends that member checking should occur during data generation. Informal focus group interviews such as those used in this study provide ample opportunities for member checking during the interviews. Researchers should, according to Morse (2015), use these opportunities to prompt questions that require further explanation and clarification, in order to ensure correct interpretation of the participants' responses. In this regard, one could argue that member checking occurred during the focus group interviews of this study, although it did not occur conventionally.

Credibility can also be strengthened by including the negative voice in the findings (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, 2001; Lewis, 2009; Baseley, 2013; Morse, 2015). In this study, a re-analysis of the data, aimed at identifying the negative voice, revealed limited incidents, which were mostly resolved constructively. This can be ascribed to the absence of a strategic inquiry into these challenges, a serious limitation of this study, affecting its credibility.

Guba and Lincoln (1989, 2001), Lewis, (2009), Baseley (2013) and Morse (2015) also encourage peer reviewing and debriefing to enhance the credibility of a study. In this study, debriefing occurred through regular conversations with my supervisor who is an expert in the field of Teacher Education, Educational Transformation and Arts Education. In addition, I had regular debriefing sessions with a critical friend (an Occupational Therapist), who provided a different lens through which to view behaviour, meaning, culture, interpretation and appropriate methodology. Also, regular academic conversations regarding this study occurred with researchers in the field of Sociology and Psychotherapy which further enabled researcher reflexivity with regard to interpretation processes.

The credibility of a study can further be strengthened through triangulation methods (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, 2001; Lewis, 2009; Joshi, 2011; Baseley, 2013; Lincoln *et al*, 2013; Morse, 2015). In this study, three methods of data generation were used. These data sets were analysed separately in order to triangulate the findings, and confirm the main categories which arose from the data. Guba and Lincoln (2005) further urge researchers to apply rigour during interpretations of the data. Independent individuals should verify data as true and accurate, and confirm analysis, meanings and interpretations as a reasonable representation of the data (Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Pölkki, Utriainen & Kyngäs, 2014). In this study, the full data sets were coded by three independent coders, who triangulated their interpretations and findings, and reached consensus with regard to the main categories and sub-categories which arose from the data. These independent coders also verified the data as being truthful representations of the students' experiences of this dance education course strengthening the credibility of this study. Morse (2015:6) refers to this as "inter-rater reliability" a quantitative term applied to

qualitative research, in order to ensure consensus between different coders, which enhances the credibility and reliability of the findings.

Although some authors (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, 2001) are in favour of a credibility audit to strengthen the credibility of a study, Morse (2015) recommends an audit only when the findings raise suspicion or seem untruthful. This study did not employ a credibility audit.

4.5.2 Transferability

The second guideline to ensure trustworthiness relates to factors which may enhance the transferability of the findings, for example, delineating a domain in which the study may 'fit' (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Yin, 2009; Fielding, 2010; Hancock & Algozzine, 2011; Joshi, 2011; Watkins, 2012; Morse, 2015). Whereas quantitative researchers value external validity or generalisability, qualitative researchers value the transferability of the study as a validity criterion (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, 2001; Lewis, 2009; Watkins, 2012; Morse, 2015).

This study proposes that this particular dance education course can enhance experiences of social cohesion in a multicultural university classroom. Other domains that may prove suitable for similar outcomes would thus require a similar dance education programme (one which includes 90 percent creative movement and 10 percent ethno-cultural dances), comprising similar dance teaching strategies and activities, over a similar period of time (seven weeks), in a multicultural environment, with participants aged between 18 and 32 years.

The intended locality of transfer may however cause inconsistency with regard to the transferability of this study. If the multicultural environment for example constitutes a society other than South Africa, the particular ethno-cultural dances of that particular multicultural environment would be incorporated. In addition, it is important to note that this study has been conducted 20 years after apartheid was abolished, hence the receptiveness of the particular community for such a programme, may thus also influence the fittingness of this study.

4.5.3 Dependability

The third guideline to ensure trustworthiness relates to the dependability of the study, for example, specifications of the conditions required to lead to similar results (Schofield, 2000; Yin, 2009; Hancock & Algozzine, 2011). Dependability can thus be compared to reliability in quantitative research (Guba & Lincoln, 2001; Lewis, 2009; Watkins, 2012; Morse, 2015). In this regard, Lincoln and Guba (2000) and Schofield (2000) advise that precise replication should not be regarded as a criterion for generalisation in qualitative studies. It should rather seek a 'fittingness'. A thick description of the case is subsequently required (Schofield, 2000).

Moreover, according to Schofield (2000) and Morse (2015) a qualitative inquiry should not aim to design a study that is replicable in other situations, but should aim to design a study that will illuminate certain points of interest regarding a particular situation, as it is viewed from the perspective of the researcher. Potential replication of this study would imply implementation of the same dance education programme (encompassing 90 percent creative movement and 10 percent ethno-cultural dances), similar dance teaching strategies and activities and similar selection of ethno-cultural dances, executed over a period of seven weeks, in a South African multicultural environment, with participants aged between 18 and 32 years – as mentioned above. In addition, the particular findings of this study relate to a dance environment where no mention of cultural exchange, social cohesion, social justice, or any other related social themes was made. It is furthermore possible that these findings are unique and specific, precisely because it enabled the participants to make their own meanings, without inducing these views through literature or discussions in the classroom.

In addition, the dependability of a study can be increased by keeping an audit trail (Lewis, 2009; Joshi, 2011; Baseley, 2013; Morse, 2015), that is, preserving a record of the data, data analysis and coding processes, as well as of interpretations and findings. In this study, I have kept audio and video recordings of the focus group interviews. I have transcripts of the 'raw' data sets generated by the open-ended questionnaires, reflective journals and focus group interviews. In addition, the

coding process had been notated and is available. The coding files of all three independent coders are further available for scrutiny.

4.5.4 Confirmability

Confirmability regards the neutrality of the researcher and can be equated with objectivity in quantitative methods. Confirmability refers to the extent to which the research, procedures and results are free from bias (Guba & Lincoln, 2001; Lewis, 2009; Watkins, 2012; Morse, 2015).

Morse (2015) asserts that the researcher's bias towards the desired outcome of the research can influence the neutrality of the researcher (Morse, 2015). Such bias can result in misinterpretation and discredit the findings of the study. Subsequently, the researcher requires reflexivity with regard to assumptions which appropriate specific values to specific contexts (Watkins, 2012; Morse, 2015). In this study, the researcher's bias with regards to the outcome of this study has been declared as a proposition at the onset of this chapter. In addition, independent coders were employed to code, categorise and interpret the data, reducing the potential threat of this particular bias. These were discussed amongst the three coders, and consensus was reached. In this regard, the confirmability of a study also refers to whether another researcher can confirm the findings.

The confirmability of this study was also enhanced by the continuous reflexivity of the researcher with regard to meaning-making, research decisions, processes and analysis. My own interpretations of the students' interpretations (conscious of the double hermeneutic), questioning my personal ethno-cultural lens, my personal research lens, and most importantly, whether the research really truthfully represented the experiences and meanings of the students as they participated in the dance education course, enhances the confirmability of this study. During this study, I had a continuous "moral dialogue" with myself in order to cultivate a "critical consciousness" that assisted me in researching ethically and truthfully, reducing bias (Canella & Lincoln, 2013:170). Reflexivity was further enhanced by my continued teaching of this particular dance education course to other groups of students, after

the data for this particular study were gathered. In this regard, I applied the hermeneutic circle to make sense of my interpretations of the data, but also of informal interactions and observations during the teaching of other dance education courses, to examine 'what is actually going on here', and assess whether my interpretations of the participants' experiences were indeed true. The hermeneutic circle was also applied to not only address diverse meanings and connections between theory and practice, but also to discover diverse meanings and connections between culture, social cohesion, power, equality, dignity, diversity, dance and the students' experiences.

In the light of the above, it is clear that particular measures and procedures can enhance a qualitative study's trustworthiness. Creswell (2012, cited in Morse, 2015) believes that in a qualitative study trustworthiness is ensured if the study meets any two of the four abovementioned criteria.

4.6 Ensuring rigour

Tracy (2010) suggests eight criteria to ensure rigour and quality in a qualitative study. One criterion is trustworthiness, which has already been discussed above. The additional seven criteria are discussed below in relation to this study.

4.6.1 Choosing a worthy topic

In order to ensure that the topic is worthy of research, researchers need to ask themselves whether the topic is relevant, timely, significant and interesting. In this study I explored localities and meanings of social cohesion in a particular dance education course by focusing on the reflections of pre-service student teachers enrolled at a South African university. It is my contention that the topic was not only worthy of research, but also highly relevant and necessary in a post-conflict society such as post-apartheid South Africa.

4.6.2 Making a significant contribution

Two decades after the demise of apartheid much still needs to be done to restore past social imbalances and unify South African citizens of diverse ethno-cultural groups. This challenge is common to most post-conflict societies. I believe that, in general, the findings of this study are substantial as it explicates and describes the transformative potential of this dance education course. The implementation of this dance education course is sustainable and transferable to other post-conflict societies. Therefore, it is my contention that this study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on the restoration of social cohesion, especially in post-conflict societies.

4.6.3 Applying rich rigour

In order to ensure that this study is rigorous, I studied seminal literature and consulted recent research conducted by scholars in the fields of culture, social cohesion, transformation and dance education. I familiarised myself with scholarly literature on research methodology and applied the methods in a disciplined and rigorous manner. It is further my contention that this study provided enough data to support its claims. The findings could also be triangulated, since the data were obtained from three different sample groups and generated via open-ended questionnaires, personal journals and focus group interviews. Additionally, the findings have been presented alongside a dense interdisciplinary theoretical argument in order to comprehend the transformative potential of dance education with regard to the promotion of social cohesion in South Africa.

4.6.4 Maintaining resonance

A good quality research project should be presented in an evocative manner. In this regard, Tracy (2010) encourages researchers to maintain a sense of aesthetics during the representation of research. In this study, I presented my research findings alongside theories from related scholarly disciplines. It is my contention that this practice not only adds rigour to the arguments, but also to the aesthetic and evocative qualities of the study (Tracy, 2010). It is furthermore my contention that

the findings are indeed transferable to similar contexts, and as such, this study has the potential to resonate with other social communities or countries.

4.6.5 Researching ethically

I obtained permission and ethical clearance[67] to conduct this study. The responses required were not sensitive in nature, and were in accordance with the requirements of the Belmont Report (DoHEW, 1979) and those proposed by Smith (2010) and Strydom (2011). The study did not bring the participants any physical or emotional harm as a result of information disclosure. Smith (2010) and Strydom (2011) provide a set of guidelines for conducting ethical research, thus, I will address these as they manifest within this study.

This particular study did not inform participants of the specific area of investigation, that is, meanings of Self, Other and social cohesion. This intended omission was not to deceive students into participation, since that would be a serious ethical concern (Strydom, 2011). It was, however, a necessary measure to ensure that the responses were not influenced by the stated research topic. Thus it was an issue of validity. As such, the participants were merely informed that the research was an inquiry into their experiences of dance education. In addition, participants were informed of the expectations of their participation and of the estimated time it would require from them.

The questionnaires and reflexive journals were anonymous. Anonymity and confidentiality was however not possible during the focus group interviews, since these interviews were conducted by myself (Dahlberg & McCaig, 2010; Joshi, 2011). However, participants were assured that their identities would not be disclosed to any other parties, for example, my supervisor, colleagues, their peers, other researchers and the public. Accordingly, identities of participants were not disclosed to any other parties, including the scribe who documented the interviews.

[67] The ethics clearance number allocated by the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University to this study is **H12-EDU-CPD-023**

Prior to their participation, participants were provided with a consent document which I explained meticulously, in order to ensure their understanding. During this time, students were afforded opportunities to ask questions with regard to the research process. Students were also provided with sufficient time to read, engage with, understand and complete the consent form. Moreover, students were made aware that they could withdraw their consent from the study at any particular time (Smith, 2010; Piper & Simons, 2011; Strydom, 2011). At no point were the student teachers compelled to participate in the study. They were informed that their participation was voluntary, and that non-participation would not affect their final assessments, or their rapport with me, in any way. The anonymity of the questionnaires and reflective journals aided this statement, although the participants' identities were naturally disclosed to me as I conducted the focus group interviews. During the execution of the empirical investigation, I respected each participant at all times as a self-governing agent.

The participants of group A and B were not compensated for their participation. However, since the focus group interviews occurred during the students' lunch hour, light snacks were provided to Group C participants. According to Strydom (2011), such practices do not impede the ethics of a study.

Strydom (2011) argues that ethics also include notions of plagiarism and falsifying data. I hereby declare that the content of this study is my own, and that no material was plagiarised during the course of this study. I also declare that no data were falsified or adjusted to meet the needs of this study. As such, I hold that this study has been conducted ethically.

4.6.6 Ensuring meaningful coherence

Meaningful coherence implies that the research study investigates exactly what it sets out to investigate. Rooted in the underlying exploration of the potential of dance education to enhance social cohesion, the specific purpose of this case study was to investigate the impact of this particular dance education course module on a culturally and politically diverse group of students in post-apartheid South Africa. In

order to do so, I used symbolic interactionism as the underpinning theoretical framework. Symbolic interactionism promotes interactions as a platform for the adjustment of meaning of the Self, the Other and society (Plummer, 2004). Symbolic interactionism consequently provided the working theory which underpinned the research study, facilitating meaningful coherence (Leshem & Trafford, 2007).

Bansal and Corley (2011:235) argue that a rigorous qualitative research project exceeds mere understanding of a particular phenomenon by engaging other scholars in “an intellectual conversation”. It is my contention that, by adhering to the criteria described above, this case study generated in-depth interdisciplinary theoretical arguments regarding the potential contribution of dance education to social cohesion in South Africa that could be regarded as an “intellectual conversation” (Bansal & Corley, 2011:235).

4.7 Limitations of the design and its execution

Many limitations of the chosen design and its execution have been highlighted during the course of this chapter. These regard the particular questions used for data generation, the absence of personal observation, and my dual role as researcher and dance education facilitator. In addition to these, Chadderton and Torrence (2011:58-59) remind us that

> a researcher should acknowledge her own participation in the construction of the subject position of others, and unless the power relations involved are deconstructed, she runs risk of reinforcing inequalities rather than challenging them.

Although this particular research design required students to provide their biographic data with regard to their affiliated ethno-cultural groups, it neglected to consider the implications and significance of finer nuances of difference (Weber, Nkomo & Amsterdam, 2009). There are, for example, distinct differences between a Xhosa student from a deeply rural community in the Transkei, as opposed to a Xhosa student born and raised in a multicultural urban township in the Eastern Cape. I would consider this as a limitation of this study, as these simplistic classifications

may tend to reinforce generalisations and notions of homogeneity within ethno-cultural groups.

4.8 Conclusion

This study was situated in the interpretive paradigm, although notions of experiential knowledge and knowledge creation were adopted from the participatory paradigm. As a multiple case study it came into being in response to the proposition: *Dance education, as it pertains to this study, may have the potential to promote social cohesion in post-apartheid South Africa.* Therefore, this study focused on students' experiences of a particular dance education course module, within a particular location, that is, my first year university classroom at the Faculty of Education, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Africa. Open-ended questionnaires, reflective journals and focus group interviews were employed as qualitative methods of data generation. Open coding was used to analyse the data, which resulted in the organisation of codes, categories and themes in a manner that would provide insight into the research question, namely: *What was the impact of this particular dance education course module on a culturally and politically diverse group of students in post-apartheid South Africa?* In the next chapter (Chapter Five) I will present and discuss the findings of the investigation.

CHAPTER FIVE

Data presentation and discussion

5.1 Introduction

This study sought to explore meanings and localities of social cohesion in dance education. The main research question of the empirical investigation was: *What was the impact of this first year dance education course on a culturally and politically diverse group of students in post-apartheid South Africa?* In the previous chapter, I discussed the three methods of data generation employed, namely open-ended questionnaires, personal reflective journals and focus group interviews. I also explicated the data analysis process, acknowledging the contribution of two additional independent coders who validated the findings.

The analysis process, as stated before, consisted of firstly identifying the coding units; secondly, creating the umbrella categories; and thirdly, re-aligning and sorting these categories in order to make sense of the categories in a new manner (axial coding). Thereafter, the core categories were selected in order to present the findings in a logical manner (selective coding).

The focus group interviews and the questionnaires prompted the participants to respond to two broad questions by reflecting on their experiences in the dance education[68] classroom. As mentioned in the previous chapter, these questions were:

1. *Reflect on the dance education lectures and describe a meaningful experience you had. (You may describe more than one experience or event if you like.)*
2. *Why was the experience meaningful?*

[68] The dance education programme employed in this particular study, as mentioned earlier, entailed creative movement activities and active involvement in ethno-cultural dances. Consequently, participants' references to 'dance' are interpreted as encompassing creative movement activities, ethno-cultural dances, or a combination of both. When participants mention 'groups' or 'group work', it is assumed that they are referring to small group involvement in creative movement activities.

In their reflective journals students were prompted to reflect as follows:

Today I felt...
Today I thought...
Today I noticed that...

The over-arching, generic theme that emerged from the data revealed that active bodily involvement in dance education as it pertained to this study, provided constructive spaces where students' awareness of themselves and of other participants was sharpened. The heightened awareness conscientised them towards fellow students and prompted them to revisit and transform their perspectives of the Self and the Other.

It is my contention that this particular dance education course provided interactive spaces conducive to transformation. These interactive spaces, in accordance with symbolic interactionism, enabled the alteration of perspectives with regard to the Self, the Other, as well as community building (Plummer, 2004). In this regard, three sub-themes with categories and in certain cases, sub-categories could be identified.

- **Sub-theme 1**: Dance education provides spaces conducive to promoting transformative awareness of the Self.
- **Sub-theme 2**: Dance education provides spaces conducive to promoting transformative awareness of the Other.
- **Sub-theme 3**: Dance education provides transformative spaces for cohesion.

For the purpose of categorisation, all references to dance education in this chapter will represent this specific dance education course module, as outlined earlier in this thesis. In addition, it is necessary to acknowledge that the particular categorisation and chronological order of Self, followed by Other, is a Western construction. A trans-cultural application of *ubuntu*, for example, would support a different categorisation. *Ubuntu,* in essence, promotes personal transformation rooted in involvement and interaction with the community, similar to symbolic interactionism. It promotes transformation of the Self*, because of,* or *as a result of* the Other. According to African philosophy, a person will attain virtuous social conduct towards the Other, prior to the Self's transformation to personhood. As such, interpersonal

development precedes personal transformation. In this chapter, the findings will not be presented according to the perspective of African philosophy. This is in an attempt to prevent a one-sided focus on *sameness*, at the expense of a balance between sameness and difference, neglecting the critical notion of ethno-cultural sustainability and *unity in diversity*, as it pertains to South African social cohesion discourse.

The data generated and analysed will now be discussed according to these broad themes, with categories and sub-categories[69].

5.2 Generic theme: Dance education provides interactive spaces conducive to transformation

The students' responses suggested that dance education experiences provide spaces conducive to positive social interaction. Student J18 for example wrote in his journal that the '*whole class was involved'* and that dance was '*a really nice way to interact and [to] get to know peers*'. Another student held that '*dance can be so much fun and a great way to get to know people*' (Student Q9). Student Q13 also observed that '*through this experience I had the opportunity to get to know my fellow students',* whilst Student FG5:2 noted that '*you get to know different people'*. Student Q14 was surprised by '*how much fun it could be to work in groups and learn to know others*'. The environment was conducive to meet people across social boundaries, and cultivate new friendships. Student J1, for example, wrote in her journal: '*It gave us a chance to mingle with others that we wouldn't mingle with otherwise'.* Similarly, Student Q29 observed that '*it was a fun way to interact with class members we usually wouldn't interact with*.' Student Q26 stated that she '*connected to people I never talked to before*'.

Active involvement in dance activities prompted some of the students to revise previously held apprehensions, contemplating the courageous bridging of

[69] Participants will be referred to as 'students'. The acronym used for each student is informed by the respondent's number, as well as the particular method of data collection, and where relevant, their ethnicity indicated: 'Q' indicates data obtained via questionnaires; 'J' indicates data obtained via journals; 'FG' indicates data obtained via focus group interviews.

boundaries towards the Other: '*Through dancing in different groups I also got to meet different people and make new friends with other people in my course*' (Student Q17) and a person becomes *'closer to the people within your group*' (FG1:3). '*You express yourself and find out how other people are. I made friends doing that* (FG1:3).' Responses[70] thus indicated that friendships were made during the creative movement activities, since the students could '*bond*' (FG3:10) and '*connect'* (FG1:4; Student Q26; FG4:2) with each other as they '*got to know'* (Student Q9, Student Q13, Student Q14; Student Q17) each other. They experienced a sense of togetherness with a different '*kind*' (FG3:10) of person: '*I connected to people I never talked to before*' (Student Q26). The data showed that the students engaged socially and emotionally with others to *'form that relationship'* (FG4:1) and to discover '*who they can connect with'* (FG1:3). Similarly, student FG6:1 noted that '*you make relationships with people you have never spoken to',* specifically referring to ethno-cultural Others in a '*multicultural inclusive environment'* (FG6:1).

References to the ethno-cultural Other have become a sensitive issue in post-apartheid South Africa. Subsequently, participants' specific mentioning of '*people we would not normally speak to*', '*different people'*, '*different social classes'* and *'different backgrounds'* are interpreted as references to the ethno-cultural Other (FG3:10; FG4:2; FG4:5; FG4:11; FG6:1; Q26). Such references however raise other questions not addressed via this study, namely whether these newly formed friendships were indeed cross-cultural, and whether these friendships were sustained beyond their shared dance education course.

Dance education experiences however clearly afforded the students regular opportunities to interact and bond with each other - across social boundaries. One could thus argue that involvement in this course cultivated an "affective bond between citizens" (Chipkin & Ngqulunga, 2008:61), key indicators of social cohesion. This also resonates with African philosophy, since a sense of community wellbeing depends on "fellow-feeling" (Gbadegesin, 1998:295), in other words, the nature of social relationships within the community (Teffo, 1996; Prinsloo, 1998; Masolo, 2006). Green *et al* (2009) highlight social connections, friendships and reciprocal

[70] For example, Student Q26, Student Q17, Student Q29; FG:1:4

relationships within a multicultural community as important gauges of social cohesion. Moreover, if these friendships were indeed formed across social and ethno-cultural boundaries, one could argue that they diminished fear of the Other. Knowledge of the Other potentially eliminates fear of the Other (Tropp, 2011), a major cause of division amongst people, especially in South African society, where the apartheid ideology was rooted in justifications of fear of the Other (Soudien, 2008; Jansen, 2009; Barolsky, 2012: Struwig *et al*, 2012). When fear of the Other is reduced, social division is also eroded. Once fear is eliminated, perspective transformation and the decline of racial prejudice are enabled. In this regard, Tropp (2011) argues that the mere observation of intercultural friendships reduces racial prejudice. Interactions where intercultural friendships are cultivated therefore promotes social cohesion (NDP, 2011:478). One can therefore construe that the students' experiences in the dance education classroom cultivated personal transformations through the nurturing of relationships across social groups. This ultimately reduced prejudice and promoted the adoption of a non-discriminatory, culturally inclusive stance.

Blum (2014:336) holds that the cultivation of connections and friendships across social and ethno-cultural boundaries can enable individuals to recognise their duties towards the Other as members of the same nation. This resonates with African philosophy in that the realisation of obligations towards the Other provides evidence of community, thus, evidence of the existence of *ubuntu* (Gyekye, 1998; Wiredu, 1998, Bell, 2002; Swanson, 2007). Such interactions therefore promote inclusion, but also mutual responsibility, which, according to scholars such as Jenson (1998), Blum (2014), Gyekye, (1998), Wiredu (1998), Bell (2002) and Swanson (2007), promotes social cohesion. Ultimately, social cohesion is predicated on interdependency where citizens are obligated to realise experiences of dignity, equality, respect and care for the Other (Soudien, 2012; NDP, 2011). The responses thus indicate that the dance experiences associated with this particular course cultivated friendships across social and cultural boundaries, and in so doing, enabled social cohesion amongst these students.

5.2.1 Sub-theme 1: Dance education provides spaces conducive to transformative awareness of the Self.

The students' responses suggested that dance education experiences enabled self-awareness that prompted students to engage with the Self, also contemplating inner transformation of the Self. A female student for example stated that '... *you learn a lot about yourself, just how to conduct yourself'* (FG3:9). Similarly, Student Q25 wrote in her questionnaire: '*I learned from my fellow students and I even learned from myself'*. With regard to personal awareness and subsequent transformation of the Self, the following categories could accordingly be identified:

- Category 1.1: Self-expression
- Category 1.2: Self-confidence and self-esteem
- Category 1.3: Ethno-cultural identity
- Category 1.4: Emancipation
- Category 1.5: Intellectual development

5.2.1.1 Category 1.1: Self-expression

Many students[71] expressed belief that dance education enables self-expression, making '*it easier for us to be open and express ourselves'* (FG4:3). Student Q23 for example, expressed the belief *'… that dance is just one of the many ways in which we express ourselves'.* During a focus group interview, another student commented:

> '*I suppose like learning to express yourself through 'dance' … like your emotions because obviously if you're a young adult, you still don't fully know basically how to express yourself. You don't always have the best way expressing yourself ... So, it's an interesting thing to see for yourself, look here, if I do this movement I can express if I'm angry or if I'm happy, whatever …'* (FG5:2)

Student Q18 held that '*dance is an individual's way of expressing themselves, their thoughts, their emotions and represent their culture*'. Similarly, Student FG6:13 experienced dance encounters as '*some form of expression and some sort of reflection of who we are*'. In this regard, the responses also revealed that the

[71] For example Student Q1, Student Q8, Student Q13, Student Q15, Student Q17, Student Q20, Student Q23, Student Q25, Student Q27

students were able to make themselves vulnerable as they expressed their authentic Selves in a safe and secure environment provided by the dance education classroom[72]. Dance education encounters made '*it easier for us to be open and express ourselves'* (FG4:3) so that '*people will really see what type of person you are'* (FG3:10). The students thus saw dance education as a vehicle for self-expression, providing an opportunity and a means to express the Self in the presence of the Other.

Student J15's (a white English speaking student) personal journal however provides insight into challenges faced during creative movement activities. The first week's entry read as follows: '*I did not really enjoy the second activity… My group members did not really listen to me*'. Similarly, the third week's entry stated that '*Today, I felt uncomfortable and unhappy with the second activity … There was much difficulty in communicating with people in my group… It did not go well!'* By week five, she stated that *'I felt that my group members communicated a lot better than usual and I was pleased when my suggestions were heard'.* Although this student experienced self-expression and communication within these smaller groups as challenging, it appears that continuous involvement in creative movement activities enabled her to overcome these challenges. Thus, even though dance education experiences ultimately enabled students to express the Self, the process of attaining this skill and acquiring the freedom to do so, was challenging, and required continuous involvement and practise in a multicultural environment.

Active participation in dance activities also enabled affirmation of the Self. Student FG1:8 for example mentioned that, since creative movement activities compelled him to apply his imagination, it also enabled him to transcend the ordinary and mundane, escaping into an imaginary, '*different world*'. This enabled him to engage more profoundly with himself as an autonomous human being, re-evaluating the impact of others' opinions on his sense of Self: '*It took me out of my world, into some other reality. So, why care what people think...'.* The students were not inhibited by fellow students' potential judgement as they were '*without the fear of being judged'* (Student Q29). Dance education experiences *'allowed everyone to let*

[72] FG1:9; FG3:9; FG3:10; FG4:6; FG5:3; FG5:6

go of their fear and social awkwardness and to be in the moment of something new and exciting (Student J19)'. Similarly, Student Q12 believed that '*because of dance we all began to loosen up and become less afraid of what others thought of us'.* They could '*forget about the others'* (Student J1).

The data suggests that many students experienced dance education as providing a non-judgemental and non-conforming space that enables freedom of expression. This allowed and empowered them to reveal their Selves to the outside world as active participants in a multicultural society, irrespective of individual differences, and without fear of condemnation or rejection. '*Everyone's ideas are relevant'* (FG3:3). As such, everybody experienced their personal contribution as unique and valuable, and accepted by the Other. Such acceptance reduces negative perceptions about the Other and transforms perceptions of difference as threatening and divisive into perceptions of difference as enriching and cohering (Barolsky, 2012; Struwig *et al*, 2012).

5.2.1.2 Category 1.2: Self-confidence and self-esteem

Many students alluded to initial feelings of shyness and insecurity during the first dance education session (FG4:6; J2; J3; J4; J12; J15; Q17; Q22; Q27). Student J17 (a white English speaking student) held that she was '*a little self-conscious (in the beginning)'*, a Xhosa student (FG2:10) explained that she felt '*scared at first, and little bit fat and a little bit old*', whilst a Coloured student (J4) held that she was '*afraid that they will judge me and laugh at me'*. Similarly, the first dance education session was experienced as '*nerve-wrecking'* by Student FG4:6 (Coloured). Student J3 (white Afrikaans) wrote in her journal: '*I felt like sticking my head in the ground when we did our dance. It was terrible*'. Similarly student J12 (a white English speaking student) explained: '*At first I felt a bit insecure to dance in front of everyone but then I realised that I'm sure most of the class felt the same'.* These expressions of insecurity were, however, all supplemented by explanations of how these feelings faded during the course of the dance education course. Accordingly, a significant

number of responses alluded to enhanced self-confidence[73] of the Self and of observed Others. The respondents described how they managed to overcome personal reservations, inhibitions and reticence through involvement in the dance education activities. A male student (J10) for example, recorded in his personal journal:

> Week 1
> *'Today I felt bad when I was on stage dancing with a partner... which made me to be interested to know dancing.'*
>
> Week 2
> *'Today I thought I did pretty well and ... to improve. Today's performance has lifted me up and made me believe that I can be a good dancer.'*
>
> Week 3
> *'Today I noticed that that I'm more comfortable and able to express myself when working in groups. I'm starting to be creative in my own dancing.'*
>
> Week 4
> *'I felt like I'm growing in confidence as I was in the first few days in the class very shy.'*
>
> Week 5
> *'My confidence grew more and more and I think this will eventually help me in the classroom as well as in church. Before these dance lessons I could not express myself the way I would. Many times I thought about something but was unable to say it. These dance lessons have increased my confidence.'*
>
> Week 6
> *'Today we were given an opportunity to teach our dance movements, which has added and increased my sense of belief that I can stand in front of many people.'*
>
> Week 7
> *'Group work has increased my communication skills. Also the ability to interact with others. My overall impression of the lesson is that: It was exciting, morale boosting, also playing a major role in building up my self-esteem.'*

This student noticed how his self-confidence increased, not only in the lecture hall, but also beyond (at church). It enhanced his ability to interact in the lived world. Engagement in the dance education classroom enabled him to develop voice and unearth his own potential as a human being. This awareness empowered him to

[73] For example, FG2:10; FG 3:9; FG4:6; FG4:12; J1, J4, J8, J12, J15, J16, J17; Student Q2, Student Q25

transcend feelings of insecurity, inferiority and incompetence, subsequently prompting inner transformation of the Self. Free expression of the Self further boosted his self-confidence. During one of the interviews, Student FG2:6 also reflected on the notion of enahnced self-confidence during the dance education encounters:

> '*It might be hard for me to do something or to say something to you in front of the whole class, but when I get a chance to work with my classmates [during creative movement] it kinda like becomes easier* (FG2:6)'.

Similarly, another student (Student J4) wrote in her journal that dance education '*made me relaxed and I wasn't afraid to give my opinion* [within the creative movement group]*... Now I'm confident*'. Another female student mentioned that creative movement activities,

> *'brings you out of your shell type of thing… I'm a very shy person and for me to get up there and dance in front of people, is a big thing for me'* (FG5:1).

This is also evident in Student J15's journal:

> Week one and two:
> '*I am also very shy to perform in front of my classmates. I felt uncomfortable and unhappy with the second activity when we had to make a dance in groups... There was much difficulty in communicating with people in my group'.*
>
> Week three:
> *'Even though I am very shy... The group activities went well today. I felt that my group members communicated a lot better than usual and I was pleased when my suggestions were heard.'*
>
> Week four:
> *'I also feel that I can participate in a group dance with more confidence…I feel confident that I will be able to teach dancing to Intermediate Phase learners.'*
>
> Week five:
> '*I had so much fun and I felt confident'.*

Other students held that during the dance education activities, they were at ease expressing themselves in the presence of their peers: '*As each lesson passed I became more comfortable in front of my fellow classmates'* (Student Q16). Another student reiterated in her questionnaire: '*Dance helped us as a group to feel more comfortable in front of each other'* (Student Q27). Improved self-confidence further

enhanced self-esteem. Student FG3:10 for example mentioned that '*I feel worthy and useful during the creative movement activities'*. Similarly, Student FG3:3 experienced that '*everyone's ideas were relevant, and everyone could add* [contribute]'. In her journal, Student J4 wrote, *'Today I felt that I mattered in dance class'*. Student J2 believed that '*it makes each individual feel special'*.

The data indicate that participants experienced enhanced self-confidence and self-esteem brought about by involvement in creative movement activities in the classroom. They felt enabled and empowered to contribute and participate actively. Enhanced self-confidence consequently also increased their sense of self-worth, confirming Mans's (1994) argument that dance can increase self-worth and empower individuals. Dance education experiences made the students feel '*worthy*', valuable ('*I mattered*') and '*useful*', thus nurturing their inherent sense of human dignity, in other words, cherishing their own potential and value as a unique human being (Taylor, 1994).

This is particularly significant in post-conflict and post-apartheid South Africa where the majority of citizens were brought up in a political dispensation which reinforced the idea that some groups are of lesser value than others (Johnson, 1982; Bloch, 2009; Jansen, 2009; Hofstede *et al*, 2010; Soudien, 2012). The responses indicate that these students' involvement in dance education improved their sense of self-worth and restored their sense of dignity (Taylor, 1994), a cornerstone of social cohesion in South Africa (NMF, 2010; RSA, 1996; DAC, 2013). Dance education experiences furthermore enabled the students to recognise their own potential, contributing to the renegotiation of their personal identities (Taylor, 1994). This enabled them to regard themselves as equal to others, a critical requisite for cohesion in society (Jenson, 1998; Bernard, 1999; Community Services Council, 2003; House of Commons, 2004; Green *et al*, 2009).

5.2.1.3 Category 1.3: Ethno-cultural identity

In addition, participation in ethno-cultural dances seemed to reinforce the ethno-cultural identities of those students whose ethno-cultural groups were represented through particular ethno-cultural dances:

> *'Ja... and we also did the gumboots one. That was fun because that one I'm familiar with. In my culture we do it. So... it was kind of like my culture also came in. I was not only being exposed to different cultures ... also something that I know, that I know, I got to express myself in it, so for me it was fun'* (FG2:2: Zulu).

Participation in their own ethno-cultural dances afforded students a sense of belonging, reaffirming the validity of their ethno-cultural identities. An Afrikaner student (J8) reflected that it '*meant a lot*' that all her classmates participated in *Afrikaners is plesierig*, a *volkspele* dance associated with the Afrikaner culture. She explained that '*it was so much fun because I am Afrikaans*'. Another Afrikaner student concurred, admitting that it reinforced her own sense of affiliation, identification with and pride in her own ethno-culture:

> '*I really loved to do that ... it was meaningful because I'm Afrikaans and I didn't know how to dance it and thought it was a thing that grew out [sic], that did not exist anymore, but I was wrong. I really learnt something about my culture...*' (Student Q3).

This Afrikaner student appreciated the acknowledgement of her ethno-cultural identity, even though she thought the particular dance was 'out of fashion'. However, the student's assumption, namely that Afrikaner folk dances were 'out of fashion', needs further discussion. In contemporary South Africa, reinforcement of Afrikaner identity within a multicultural environment is often frowned upon and interpreted as hegemonic, reinforcing unequal power relations associated with the previous regime. The dance education classroom however provided this student with opportunities to celebrate her own ethno-cultural identity alongside those of ethno-cultural Others. These experiences therefore potentially restored internalised feelings of White Afrikaner guilt, since ethno-cultural Others participated in the (dance) celebration. Although one could however argue that this participation was mandated by an Afrikaner dance education facilitator, thus, possibly hegemonic and neo-colonialist, students were also required to participate in other dances such as the gumboot dance (associated with Zulu heritage), a Cape Malay dance (associated with a particular group of Coloured people), and a Greek dance. Student J17 contemplated the significance of ethno-cultural dances restoring dignity amongst diverse ethnic groups: '*I thought that the traditional dancing was fun and I felt it added value to any race group*'.

Awareness and acceptance of the Self as an authentic member of society are ultimately embedded in and influenced by one's ethno-cultural heritage and environment, in other words, one's ethno-cultural identity (Gardner, 1993; Kidd, 2002; Leary & Tangney 2003). Embodied rituals, such as ethno-cultural dances, enable such meaning-making as it upholds and re-establishes the collective values of a particular culture (Durkheim, 1915). Participation in a person's own ethno-cultural dance therefore reinforces the values of one's own ethno-culture, and in so doing, facilitates cultural sustainability (Behrens, 2000; Bakare & Mans, 2003; Smith, 2006; Oliveira *et al*, 2012; Wanyami & Shitubi, 2012; Axelsson *et al*, 2013).

Ethno-cultural identity is also informed by the manner in which one makes meaning of one's ethno-cultural heritage (Castells, 2006). The data suggest that participation in ethno-cultural dances encouraged the students to engage with and embrace their respective ethno-cultural identities, regardless of the particular ethno-cultural group's association with the political history of the country. This is significant for cohesion in a society formerly segregated on grounds of ethnicity, as it indicates the possibility for restoration of dignity for both the former 'oppressors' and 'oppressed' (RSA, 1996). The students' responses therefore confirm that dance education has the potential to heal and restore dignity for all South African citizens, irrespective of ethno-cultural association (NDP, 2011). The restoration of dignity is a cornerstone of social cohesion discourse as it overcomes feelings of guilt and inferiority, and in so doing, restores equality.

In addition, the data confirm that collective participation in ethno-cultural dances also re-establishes ethno-cultural identity when fellow dancers do not share the same ethno-culture. In the multicultural classroom, it is the co-participation of diverse individuals that realises the re-establishment of particular ethno-cultural identities. It is therefore the Other who, through co-participation in the ethno-cultural dance, enables a particular individual to re-affirm and take pride in his or her own ethno-cultural identity. As such, it is the Other who assists the individual to restore the dignity of both the individual and the associated collective. This is significant in a post-conflict multicultural society, since the Other enables the restoration process, thus offering reconciliation between the associated ethno-cultural groups, promoting

social cohesion. Moreover, this is particularly significant through the lens of *ubuntu*, since 'I am' – my dignity has been restored – because of the Other's co-participation in my dance. The Other enabled me to 'become human'.

5.2.1.4 Category 1.4: Emancipation

The data also indicate that the students experienced dance education positively[74], describing it as '*fun*' and '*enjoyable'*. Engagement in dance experiences made them feel good: '*you're in a better mood, you are more free'* (FG3:5) and '*you generally feel better, it's a release'* (FG6:10), *'like therapy*' (FG5:5). '*I felt alive all the time'* (Student J4).

In this regard, numerous participants alluded to a sense of release and liberation experienced during engagement in dance education (Stinson, 1997). Student J4, for example, recorded in her journal: '*When we did the traditional dances I felt great and free*'. Another student observed during a focus group interview: '*You're in a better mood, you are more free*' (FG3:5). This view was confirmed by another student who mentioned that '*it helped me just to free myself*' (FG5:3). In her questionnaire, Student Q25 wrote that dance "*gives one freedom of expression and let one relax*'. Dance experiences clearly enabled the students to '*just … let go and just try things, even if it doesn't work* '(FG3:3). The sense of freedom was articulated by Student FG4:8, expressing his sense of liberation as '*everything sort of let go'*.

The identification of the emancipation of the individual as a sub-category in a study aimed at the promotion of connectivity and cohesion seems ironic, a reminder of the dichotomy between the Rousseauian view that man has been born 'free' as opposed to inherent social connection through the proverbial umbilical cord (p'Bitek, 1998). This brings the following question to the fore: Does connectivity and belonging make us secure enough to feel free?, affirming a statement by Partha Chatterji (cited in Joseph, 1997:2520) who regards community as a sense of freedom experienced

[74] For example, Student Q1, Student Q2, Student Q4, Student Q7, Student Q8, Student Q9, Student Q11, Student Q14, Student Q15, Student Q20, Student Q24, Student Q27, Student J1, Student J2,Student J4, Student J5, Student J6, Student J8, Student J11, Student J13, Student J15 Student, J16, Student J17, Student J18, FG1:7; FG2:2; FG2:7; FG5:1; FG5:6; FG6:6, and so forth.

through the articulation of love, relational affinity, kinship and obligation. These questions provide an interesting area for further investigation.

Responses also indicated that the dance education experiences released emotional tension, enhancing a sense of liberation. Student FG6:11 for example mentioned '*I don't have to worry about what others expect of me ... I can just go and give whatever I have ... it's like a sense of relief'.* Student FG2:2 felt that dance education experiences cleared and revitalised her mind: '*It like freshens up our minds and our thoughts*'. In this regard, several students highlighted warm-up exercises that '*made me relax and I felt good the whole day'* (Student J8). Student FG2:5 held that dance education experiences enabled her to '*free her mind'* from her emotional stresses at home, which enabled her to '*think clearly'* in order to make important decisions.

These responses are particularly significant in post-apartheid South Africa, a post-conflict society still dealing with social injustices such as discrimination, disadvantage, and internalised feelings of inferiority and shame. South African society is furthermore confronted with serious social challenges, such as abject poverty (DoE, 2002a), crime, domestic violence, child abuse, dysfunctional families (Van Niekerk, 2008) and the rapidly spreading HIV and AIDS pandemic (Amnesty International, 2011; Wood, 2009). The data indicate that active participation in dance provided the participants with a channel for tension release. It also provided a mental space where they could escape the stark realities of everyday life, confirming the therapeutic value dance provides for all (Mans, 1994; Karkou & Sanderson, 2001). In this space, all participants, irrespective of personal stories and biographies, were able to heal collectively. Such collective healing during dance education practices resonates with the notion of dance used for communal restorative purposes (Edwards, 2010), thus also healing the scars of apartheid.

5.2.1.5 Category 1.5 Intellectual development

Various responses[75] indicated that involvement in creative movement activities prompted students to engage in cognitive thought processes, developing for example problem-solving[76], decision-making and time management skills (Keun & Hunt, 2006). Student J7 wrote in his journal that '*we had to use our creativity to figure out how to dance*'. Student J4 also noted that '*I realised that it just taught me to think fast and to respond quickly*'. Similarly, Student FG6:9 observed that creative movement activities encouraged them to '*think on their feet*', while Student FG4:4 felt that '*it puts you on the spot'*. In this regard, several students[77] also mentioned that creative movement activities encouraged them to '*think out of the box'*. They had to apply problem-solving skills as they were expected to explore and negotiate creative ways to design a dance in a collective manner, also realising that '*you can take inspiration from the most random places'* (FG5:3). Diverse opinions and suggestions were consequently considered as valuable resources, providing innovative alternatives to normative ways of thinking.

The ability to think '*out of the box'* (Student J2, Student J4, FG5:3), allows a person to be more receptive to alternative ideas, suggesting non-conformity to normative ways of thinking. Mezirow (1990) believes that an awareness of alternative perspectives enables personal transformation. In South Africa, normative ways of thinking with regard to the Other and the Self are still affected and informed by apartheid ideologies (Hofstede *et al*, 2010; Soudien 2012). The data suggest that dance education has the potential to disrupt such thinking, affecting perspective transformation and ultimately, personal transformation. As such, it provides individuals with opportunities for liberation and revisiting and renegotiating personal identities. A male student (FG2:3) for example confessed:

> '*I had this stereotype idea in my mind that dancing is for gays ... But immediately when I came into dance, that stereotype in my mind faded and that stereotype just moved away. Then I started to see that okay, dancing is all about expressing yourself'.*

[75] For example, Student Q10, Student Q25, Student, Student Q26, Student J2, Student J7, Student J10, FG2:5, FG4:15; FG4:4.
[76] For example, Student J7; Student Q17; FG6:10.
[77] For example, Student J2, Student J4, FG5:3.

This student's pre-conceived assumptions were challenged during the dance education lectures, as he revised associations of '*dance*' and '*gay*' during an inner dialogue with himself (Mead, 1912, 1913; Blumer, 1986; Atkinson & Housley, 2003). Such revisions, according to Blumer (1969) and Atkinson and Housley (2003) prompt adjustments in a person's behaviour, disposition and orientation towards the world. Consequently, these alterations in perspective enabled the student to express the Self freely. In the context of this study, the potential of dance education to induce perspective transformation is significant, as it can "unfreeze" old ways of thinking (O'Hara, 2003:74).

Responses further suggest that creative movement activities developed the students' decision-making abilities. Students had to '*think on their feet*' (FG6:9) with regard to creative processes, but also with regard to negotiations and dialogue (Student J4). Creative movement activities subsequently provided students with opportunities to solve movement and dance problems, but also challenged them to navigate through spaces of cooperation, encouraging active participation and managing diverse views and opinions in a multicultural environment.

The participants were ultimately rewarded by '*a sense of achievement when you realise you're quite clever at thinking out these interesting ways*' (FG5:3). This realisation transformed perceptions of themselves as dance makers: '*We did not know how we were going to do it but we ended up with something in the end'* (FG5:3). In her reflective journal, Student J2 observed that '*when given the chance* [we] *can be far more creative than we think'*. Success experienced during creative movement activities thus enhanced confidence in personal creativity and problem-solving abilities. This awareness concomitantly enhanced faith in their own dance skills, creativity, and problem-solving skills, ultimately encouraging them to "*become more involved'* (FG1:5) in subsequent dance activities.

The students were thus provided with opportunities to revisit and transform their perspectives of themselves as creative problem-solvers and decision-makers, as they learnt how to think and reason in a culturally and politically diverse group. The success experienced affirmed their sense of dignity and equality. Moreover, the data

indicates that students were liberated from pre-conceived and self-imposed limitations with regards to their own potential as creative participants, confirming Keun and Hunt's (2006) argument that each person has an innate capacity to be creative. In essence, the creative movement experiences restored their sense of equality and dignity, as these unleashed their potential as active participants in a multicultural group (Taylor, 1994; RSA, 1996; Bernard, 1999; Soudien, 2012).

5.2.1.6 Conclusion: Sub-theme one

The data indicate that dance education cultivated an awareness of Self, to the degree where personal transformations transpired. Dance education enhanced the participants' expression of Self in that participants felt comfortable to reveal the Self in the presence of the Other. Involvement in dance activities developed and rebuilt self-confidence and self-esteem in a manner that restored personal dignity and sense of equality. The participants' involvement in dance education cultivated transformative awareness of ethno-cultural identity, as it re-established connections between the Self and the collective. It also provided participants with avenues for tension release, liberating the Self from both internal and external stress, enabling them to '*relax*' and '*just let go*'. Dance education developed the participants' cognitive skills in a manner that raised awareness of both personal and alternative ways of thinking. It increased belief in the Self as a valuable and capable active participant in the creative process. Dance education therefore provided spaces for a transformative awareness of the Self in a manner that restored dignity and enhanced experiences of equality. As such, it can be argued that this dance education course became a catalyst for the processes required for cohesion in a culturally and politically diverse classroom (Taylor, 1994; RSA, 1996; Bernard, 1999; Soudien, 2012).

5.2.2 Sub-theme two: Dance education provides spaces conducive to promoting transformative awareness of the Other

The data also suggests that dance education provided spaces where students' awareness of the Other was heightened, prompting them to revisit and transform perceptions and pre-conceived ideas. In this regard, the following categories and sub-categories emerged:

- **Category 2.1 Dance education provides spaces conducive to transformative awareness of sameness**
    - Sub-category 2.1.1 Common humanity
    - Sub-category 2.1.2 Common identity
- **Category 2.2 Dance education provides spaces conducive to transformative awareness of difference**
    - Sub-category 2.2.1 Different ideas
    - Sub-category 2.2.2 Different cultural practices
    - Sub-category 2.2.3 Different movement *habitus*
- **Category 2.3 Dance education provides spaces conducive to transformative awareness of the culture of the Other**
    - Sub-category 2.3.1 Appreciation and respect
    - Sub-category 2.3.2 Insight and understanding
- **Category 2.4 Dance education provides spaces conducive to transformative awareness of tacit beliefs about the Other**
    - Sub-category 2.4.1 Pre-conceived assumptions
- **Category 2.5. Dance education provides spaces conducive to transformative awareness of social conduct towards the Other**

5.2.2.1 Category 2.1: Dance education provides spaces conducive to transformative awareness of sameness

Responses indicated that the participants' active involvement in dance education experiences nurtured an awareness of sameness, particularly with regards to common humanity and a shared identity amongst the students.

- **Sub-category 2.1.1: Common humanity**

The participants perceived dance as a natural and universal human activity. During a focus group interview, a female student explained,

> *'We dance before we speak ... I think there's an innate human need or want to express yourself through movement, and it happens so soon ... We learn it before language'* (FG6:13).

All people indeed have an inborn capacity for and desire to move. In this regard, it was clear that the students saw movement as a universal, shared form of communication and expression of the Self (Merleau-Ponty, 1945; Kauffman & Ellis 2007:8). One student for example mentioned that,

> *'… because dance is just like those universal languages that everyone … it doesn't matter what culture ... we spoke about multiculturalism … we all can interpret, as some form of expression or some sort of reflection of who we are'* (FG6:13).

Royce (1977), Hanna (1999), Smith (2002), Bakare and Mans (2003) and Oliveira *et al* (2012) however problematise the common assumption that 'dance is a universal language'. Dance movements are intrinsically linked to ethno-cultural movement vocabularies and the meaning-making systems of the dance-maker (Oliveira *et al*, 2012). Creative and interpretive meaning-making systems may differ, leading to miscommunication and misinterpretation. Royce (1977) and Hanna (1999) thus contest this simplistic analogy, arguing that such a stance limits the communicative properties of dance. Ultimately, dance, unlike language, also communicates through multi-sensory experiences.

Nevertheless, the data indicate that movement was experienced as a common denominator shared by human beings. Student Q22 for example observed that *'It*

was so amazing to see and made me realise that everyone is just human'. Student Q12 also stated: '*I believe these dance lessons made us all realise that we are all similar in one way or another'*. These students therefore experienced a common humanity and connectivity, which also resonates with a trans-cultural application of *ubuntu* (Wiredu, 1998). Students felt that creative movement activities provided '*a common ground'* (FG1:13) where '*the playing field is levelled'* (FG6:5), and where '*everybody is exactly the same*' (FG6:5). Dance education experiences consequently raised transformative awareness of sameness, which, according to Taylor (1994) constitutes the foundation for human dignity, a key value and cornerstone of social cohesion.

- **Sub-category 2.1.2: Common identity**

Responses also indicated that students became aware that they are sharing a common national identity that transcends ethno-cultural borders. The dance experiences prompted a sense of pride in their identity as South African citizens. Student J15 for example wrote in her journal '*I felt truly and proudly South African'*. A white student regarded African dances such as the gumboot dance as representative of her own identity, mentioning her pride when '*people overseas talk about African dancing',* since it represents '*our identity*' (FG1:4). Another white student (FG3:11) also shared that,

> *'… it's learning stuff that you would never otherwise have the opportunity to learn and experience. Like even just the gumboot dancing … I loved the gumboot dancing. It's part of … it's not necessarily my culture, but its South African culture … I mean, I don't normally get to gumboot dance. You get to experience a part of your culture in a way, which is cool*' (FG3:11).

In this regard, another student observed that dance experiences nurtured awareness of a collective identity, as it emphasised the interconnectedness between the individual and society: '*You also form part of a South African identity, and an African identity*, *and so you form part of the whole world'* (FG1:4). The data thus confirmed that dance education experiences enhanced the students' sense of 'South Africanness', promoting pride in a collective national identity, irrespective of diverse ethno-cultural and social identities (Mbeki speech, 2000 as cited in DoE, 2006; NDP, 2011). The students expressed a willingness to adopt a multicultural collective

identity and belong to a cohesive nation. This confirms Mbeki's (2000, as cited in DoE, 2006) belief that each person innately desires to connect with others. Khoury *et al* (2013:189) however warn that attempts to promote community through the teaching of a particular ethno-cultural dance can also restrain "diversity and innovation". Hence, it is necessary to clarify that the above does not imply that a particular ethno-cultural dance should be used to construct an 'imagined' national identity (Anderson, 1991) in South Africa, since such a process would disenfranchise minority ethno-cultural groups and their previously associated dance practices (Rowe, Buck & Martin, 2014). In this study, however, participation in the ethno-cultural dances of the Other seemed to promote social cohesion by cultivating identification with a national identity, as such experiences nurtured a sense of belonging to a multicultural South African society. They also afforded students opportunities to identify with the Other as members of the same broader society, disrupting the notion of 'othering' as it emphasises sameness (Rockefeller, 1994; Taylor, 1994). The students' experiences in the dance education classroom consequently enabled transformative awareness of sameness, as it emphasised a common humanity and a shared identity amongst the diverse students. As such, it enabled bridging diversity towards building a cohesive nation.

5.2.2.2 Category 2.2: Dance education provides spaces conducive to transformative awareness of difference

The data also indicate, however, that the dance education experiences prompted awareness of difference. Student Q18 for example saw dance as '*an individual's way of expressing themselves, their thoughts, their emotions and [how they] represent their culture*'.

- **Sub-category 2.2.1: Different ideas and emotions**

Students became aware of different ideas and perspectives through their dance education experiences. During a focus group interview, Student FG4:5 observed:

> *'That was really interesting ... to see different people make these different shapes ... all these different ideas coming through … it gave you such a good idea, to see that these people can have such different ideas'.*

Some students were intrigued by fellow students' diverse portrayal and expressions of emotions: '*I find it very interesting … the way everyone had their different view what the emotion would be*' (FG1:9). Another student noted that,

> '*You could see all responded differently and everybody would have responded differently because of an experience that they had, that related maybe to that sound, made them think of a memory*' (FG:4:1).

Awareness of diverse emotional responses further stimulated awareness of varied perspectives, emotional connotations, experiences and life stories. The data suggested that students experienced the diversity of ideas - which emerged predominantly during creative movement activities - as intriguing and valuable, rather than intimidating. Positive and non-threatening experiences of difference are particularly significant in post-apartheid South African society, where appreciation and acceptance of difference still require further cultivation (Soudien, 2012).

- **Sub-category 2.2.2: Different ethno-cultural practices**

Several students in their responses alluded to the fact that bodily involvement in ethno-cultural dances of the Other in particular, provided opportunities '*to do things that they haven't done before*' (FG4:3). In this regard, Student FG3:11 saw this as an opportunity to '*experience something that's not yours, it's not what you usually do'*. A white student concurred: *'I like the gumboot dancing … I learnt to do that in a different situation*' (FG1:2). Awareness of different ethno-cultural dances through active participation and bodily experiences expanded students' boundaries: '*You don't always know what other cultures do, because you are used to your own'* (FG5:7). Another student articulated her experience in more colloquial terms: '*It's so cool because you've got sort of that knowledge of this thing'* (FG4:3).

Active participation in ethno-cultural dances of the Other also invoked consciousness of diverse aesthetic paradigms. Student FG6:8, an Indian female, for example reflected as follows:

> *'You can't really judge the other person with regards to their dance … you seriously can't. It's just their culture ... this is what they do for dancing. These are some of their cultural artefacts, and also you can see similarities between things. I am not able to do ballet but I know how to do Indian dancing and you*

can't say that ballet is more technical than Bharatanatyam and vice-versa. It's just both are beautiful in their own way. And that's the whole multicultural thing…'

Awareness and appreciation of difference are essential elements of social cohesion in a multicultural society. Without these, individuals may easily resent difference, which, according to Barolsky (2012) and Struwig *et al* (2012) causes division in society. Difference, particularly in South Africa, should be reconceptualised as non-threatening and subsequently embraced as enriching (DoE, 2006). Active, embodied involvement in dance education prompted students to acknowledge and embrace ethno-cultural differences as an asset and form of enrichment, subsequently eroding the divisive force of difference, and promoting cohesion.

- **Sub-category 2.2.3: Different movement *habitus***

The students also realised that movements and dance styles are associated with ethno-culture (Bourdieu, 1977, cited in Lizardo, 2009; Royce, 1977; Smith, 2002; Hanna, 2008). The following discussion occurred in focus group four (FG4:5):

Student FG4:5 (white):
'We had the one girl showing us this move, and this 'Coloured' girl is like, 'do this', and we're like, why, we can't do that, we 'Whities' we can't move like that. And it's just cool with these different personalities'.

Interviewer:
'Did you do it?'

Student FG4:5:
'No, we cut it from the dance … there are parts of me that don't shake.'

Interviewer:
'How did she respond?'

Student FG4:5:
'She just laughed because she thought it's so funny. She watched us [Implying that they tried to execute the movement while she watched and evaluated their performance] *and said, we don't have to worry about it, it's okay. It was just nice to see the different personalities … so how they interpret a piece of music, how they interpret a move, will be different'.*

The students were aware that certain movement styles and movement vocabulary are associated with particular ethno-cultural groups. Different groups of people move in different ways. In this regard, Student Q21 for example observed that '*You learn about different people and their ways of dancing*'. People from different ethno-cultural groups have different ways of movement and different movement vocabularies, generated by particular cultural and social structures which inform their *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1968, 1977 as cited in Lizardo, 2009; Smith, 2002; Hanna, 2008). Therefore, apart from learning various ethno-cultural dances, participants experienced an additional cultural exchange, which can be described as an exchange of movement *habitus*. The creative movement activities required all individuals in each group to participate and contribute ideas towards the creative design of a dance. Each individual's contribution was predicated upon his or her *habitus* of movement. By accepting and embodying different movements stemming from different *habitus,* participants were able to experiment with and experience the different ways of moving associated with the culture of the Other.

Further analysis of the above-mentioned response highlights the participant's awareness of and caution during references to diverse ethno-cultural groups. Initial references to 'Coloured girl' and 'Whities' were followed by more generic references to 'personalities'. This raises some questions with regard to her adjustment from comfort to caution in her references to the Other. Initially she had no qualms associating movement with ethnicity; her caution only manifested when she continued her discussion on difference. Could it be that she found it easier to discuss ethnicity in relation to movement, since it was more tangible – she already felt the sensations of the movement of the Other in her body – and considered it less sensitive or less frightening? The rationale for articulations such as these indeed poses interesting avenues for further investigation. In addition, questions with regard to how and why the stereotypes such as 'Whities' and 'Coloureds' were maintained can be asked. Although the student for example referred to herself as a 'whity', she also spoke of herself as incapable, thus diminishing herself and her ethno-cultural group in the presence of the 'Coloured' Other. Her reasons for doing so may be another interesting inquiry. One could, for example, investigate whether white guilt, peer pressure or intra-group power relations may have prompted her to insult her own ethno-cultural affiliation. It is also possible that her response was intentionally

rueful, thus, a conscious attempt to prevent the Other from experiencing offense and rejection as a result of her unwillingness to engage with the movements of the Other. It is also possible that she deliberately reached out to the Other student in a conscious attempt to boost the latter's self-esteem. The student's response also brought issues of stereotyping to the fore, and in particular whether stereotyping in this particular context should be viewed negatively or positively. Such stereotyping can affirm ethno-cultural identity since it represents 'who I am' and 'how I enjoy moving' in the presence of the Other, or, it can reinforce boundaries, corroding inter-cultural cohesion. These are however mere speculations of embedded deeper meanings, worthy of further investigation. An inquiry into the deeper meanings at play in such a statement would be worthy of investigation. Additionally, questions with regard to existing power relations between the two participants, but also within the small group, arise. In this regard, my own role as dance educator, holding a position of power in this context, needs to be problematised. One can rightfully ask whether and to what extent the fact that I, as dance educator, am from Western descent may have impacted the choice of movements students incorporated.

A similar discussion occurred during another focus group interview when student FG1:11 referred to the movement style of the Other as a '*Michael Jackson*' style: *'It's his style. You can see it's his style, he's comfortable doing that. I'm sorry I won't do it, but probably I will when I get taught how to do it...*'. He redefines his own style of movement, '*it's not my style',* as he initially sets himself apart from the Other. However, after proclamation of difference, he reveals a willingness and an openness to learn the movement, even though it stems from the *habitus* of the Other. This raises questions with regard to how the willingness to experiment with and learn from the *habitus* of the Other can be utilised. Should one pro-actively construct activities where students become aware of *habitus*, or does the impact lie in the fact that the exchange occurs organically?

Although the responses cited above raise unanswered questions to be further explored, one can conclude that it indicates that diversity was embraced and accommodated. Dance education experiences enabled the students to tap into and celebrate their own *habitus*, whilst also accepting the *habitus* of Others, allowing

them the space to express theirs. The students exhibited a positive and open attitude towards difference.

In another focus group interview, a Xhosa student (FG2:2) referred to an activity where each student had to suggest four movements to create a 16-movement dance. She enjoyed it because '*you learn my style and I learn your style*'. In this regard, Rowe (2008:4) argues that learning a movement involves the process of "cultural imitation". The process of learning a movement embedded in the *habitus* of the Other, involves the transference of cultural knowledge from the presenter of the movement to those who learn it (Rowe, 2008). Embodying the movement *habitus* of the Other consequently provides the students with further opportunities to embody the culture of the Other, which, according to Frankham and MacRae (2011) provide the outsider with an insider experience of the culture of the Other. Active experience of diverse movement *habitus* consequently transmits culture in a unique, embodied way. As such, it can contribute to the individual's knowledge of the Other, which according to Tropp (2011), can disrupt division and discrimination, thus facilitating social cohesion.

In addition, one can argue that a willingness to represent one's own movement *habitus* in the presence of the Other, indicates a comfort within the Self with regard to one's own ethno-cultural identity, even amongst culturally diverse participants. Exchange of movement *habitus* therefore generates bodily negotiations of identity, as both the boundaries of identity, and the participants' willingness to share, accept and fuse diverse identities, are explored and challenged. Exchange of movement *habitus* consequently provides an additional embodied ethno-cultural exchange, which emphasises sameness through the body (Shapiro, 2008) whilst also emphasising difference of movement *habitus* (Smith, 2002; Hanna, 2008). Dance education in a culturally diverse environment is therefore unique, with embodied experiences of dance concurrently emphasising two extremes of the recognition continuum, that of sameness and difference (Lash & Featherstone, 2001). Recognition of difference is integral to social cohesion, since non-recognition often results in disrespect, devaluation and inhibition of the Self (Luong & Nieke, 2014). Contrarily, recognition of difference instils dignity, liberating the Self to act freely. As such, Blum (2014) promotes recognition of difference as an essential focus in quality

democratic education, an aspect clearly addressed through dance education experiences in culturally diverse settings.

The above discussion however also generates questions to be considered during subsequent dance education teaching practices which aim to build community in a culturally diverse society. The question, for example, whether teachers should encourage students to let go of their movement *habitus* and 'culturally imitate' the movements and subsequent movement *habitus* of the Other, or whether students should be encouraged to adopt the movement of the Other into their own way of moving, making it their own style, remains unanswered. In other words, the extent to which one maintains *habitus* authenticity in a multicultural dance education classroom, is a point of deliberation. This leads to further questions with regard to the ideal length of such a dance education programme. How many dance education sessions will it take to blur the participants' movement *habitus*? This is an important question, since the 'blurred' movement *habitus* of individuals would potentially disrupt notions of social cohesion as it pertains to South Africa, as it holds potential to result in the loss of culture, cultural praxis and cultural sustainability, whilst actually promoting melting pot practices. In this regard, it seems that the number of sessions in which students are involved in creative movement activities can pose a significant variable to the effectiveness of such a study. Although this study concerned a seven week involvement in dance education, future investigations should determine whether an over-exposure to dance education (for example, a three year involvement in this style of dance education), would merely result in melting pot practices and ultimately, hamper intra-cultural cohesion and community sustainability.

5.2.2.3 Category 2.3 Dance education provides spaces conducive to transformative awareness of the culture of the Other

The data furthermore showed that students' active participation in the ethno-cultural dances of the Other nurtured an appreciation of the culture of the Other, and provided insight into the culture of the Other.

- **Sub-category 2.3.1: Appreciation and respect**

Responses indicated that the participants experienced active participation in the ethno-cultural dances of the Other positively. It enabled them to '*get in touch with other cultures and how things are done, how they dance. It was really a good experience for me and I enjoyed it'* (FG2:1: Xhosa). Various students referred to the experience as inspirational and exhilarating. Student Q27 for example wrote, '*I found that the different culture dances were inspiring ... I love learning about other cultures' music and dances*'. Similarly, Student Q21 wrote: '*I really enjoyed the dances of different countries. It really inspired me. I learnt a lot of other traditions and it was very interesting*'. In her journal, Student J4 confessed that,

> *'I never knew that traditional dance was so much fun. It just shows how much I've missed out by being scared. When we did the traditional dances I felt great and free'*.

This student admitted fear of the unknown, a common phenomenon associated with segregated societies, and in particular in South Africa, where the ideology of apartheid was rooted in fear of the Other (Soudien, 2008; Jansen, 2009). Active participation in cultural practices of the Other transformed her awareness of the Other. Moreover, the data also showed that it instilled appreciation and respect for other ethno-cultural groups. An Afrikaner student (Student Q7) admitted that,

> *'I found respect for gumboots dancers because it's rather difficult and they do it so well because they practise so hard. I found it so much fun and interesting that I went to watch video clips of gumboot dances'.*

Another white student (Q9) observed: '*I became aware of all the traditional dances. I really liked the gumboot dance. Dance is so much deeper than we think'*. Similarly, a Xhosa student expressed her excitement as she identified Afrikaner traditional

volkspele dance as her favourite dance. She stated she had seen it on television '*but actually to do it, was wonderful'* (FG2:3). Active involvement in ethno-cultural dances of the Other thus nurtured appreciation and respect for cultural artefacts of the Other, which according to Rockefeller (1994), enables recognition. According to Student J17, '*it added value to any group'.* These responses furthermore indicated tangible willingness to cross boundaries, bridging differences towards social cohesion (Putnam, 2007). Students felt privileged to be allowed into the inner circle of the Other by experiencing a cultural artefact of another (FG6:9). This prompted them to revisit and transform previously held perspectives of the Other. In this regard, Taylor (1994) argues that when the Other acknowledges the Self's particular ethno-cultural group as significant, it restores the particular ethno-cultural group's dignity. It therefore also enables experiences of equality, two core values associated with and required for social cohesion.

- **Sub-category 2.3.2: Insight and understanding**

The data suggest that participation in the ethno-cultural dances of the Other not only introduced participants to the Other, but also provided an opportunity to '*feel that culture'* (FG4:10), that is, to gain an insider experience of the particular ethno-culture. The data consequently confirmed that active participation in ethno-cultural dances indeed served to transfer culture, as it provided the outsider with an embodied cultural experience of the insider's way of being, thereby connecting the outsider to the insider (Frankham & MacRae, 2011). In her journal, a white student (J13) for example reflected as follows:

> *'I really enjoyed today's lesson on gumboot dancing. Although we only learnt the basic steps, I found it interesting and fun! It made me think about what the original mine workers felt like, when they resorted to using gumboot dancing as a means of communicating. I felt truly and proudly South African'*.

The experience enabled the student, through reflection, to imagine 'what it would be like to be in the shoes of the Other' or as Wiredu (1998:310) says "in the skin of the other", cultivating empathy and compassion for the Other (Greene, 1995; Nussbaum, 1997; Eisner, 2002; Trotman, 2006; Tropp, 2011). Empathy and compassion for a fellow community member is also a key aspect of community and cohesion in African

philosophy (Gyekye, 1997, 1998; Prinsloo, 1998; Bell, 2002; Broodryk, 2006, 2010). Her capacity to engage emotionally with the Other through active involvement in a cultural artefact, enabled connectedness that merged into a single collective identity: '*I felt truly and proudly South African*'. This student's response thus confirms Smith's argument (2002) that embodiment of an ethno-cultural dance of the Other conveys the meaning of the particular culture to the body as a form of instantaneous knowledge through experience. Increased knowledge of other ethno-cultural groups through active involvement enhances understanding of these:

> *'Cultural dances bring in cultural understanding because a lot of people, if you're born in a culture, you don't really understand other people's culture but if you can use that dance, we can use it as a link. We can start bridging those gaps between cultures and religions. Bridging the gap is not like you must accept everyone ... In a way that's not forced on you ... You get to feel that culture, and get into it. That's important especially in S.A. in our curriculum, we've got to keep it in mind...*' (FG4:10).

This student shares Adinku's (2004) belief that a study of the ethno-cultural dance of the Other facilitates insight and understanding. Increased intercultural understanding decreases ethnocentrism and misinterpretation between diverse people, thus enhancing spaces for cohesion amongst diverse groups. Active participation in the ethno-cultural dances of the Other during dance education lectures thus cultivated acceptance and knowledge of the Other, reducing unjustified fear of the Other (Tropp, 2011; Barolsky, 2012; Struwig *et al*, 2012), a much-needed requisite for a cohesive society.

5.2.2.4 Category 2.4: Dance education provides spaces conducive to transformative awareness of tacit beliefs about the Other

The data revealed that dance education experiences altered students' preconceived ideas about the Other. Student FG4:2 for example recounted:

> *'You've all got ideas about people, "ah, that's the girl that went to that school". But when you're in this little group and you have to work with them, you can just see that she's just being as silly as I am and it's nice'.*

Dance education experiences enabled her to recognise a common, shared humanity that prompted her to transform her perspectives of her classmate. Reflections and

'inner dialogue with the Self' brought about by interactions such as these, transformed interpretations of the world, ultimately altering behaviour towards others (Mead, 1912, 1913; Blumer, 1986; Atkinson & Housley, 2003). Various students also reported transformed perceptions of peers after joint participation in dance activities. Student Q17 referred to seeing '*a new side*' whereas Student FG3:10 alluded to experiencing a *'different side'* of peers. A male student (FG1:8) furthermore admitted that dance education challenged his previous assumptions, highlighting that he was '*stereotyping'* people. He said, '*from primary school to high school, it's a sexist thing that only women dance and guys get called "gays" for dancing'*. The potential of dance education to disrupt stereotypes is thus particularly valuable in post-conflict South Africa, where division between groups was reinforced through prejudice, stereotyping and generalisations.

5.2.2.5 Category 2.5: Dance education provides spaces conducive to transformative awareness of social conduct towards the Other

The data also showed that the dance education environment provided students with opportunities to interact with their fellow classmates in a constructive and positive manner[78].

Reflecting on their experiences, the students believed that dance education promoted '*good social conduct'* (FG6:3), '*how to treat each other*' (FG6:3) and *'just how to conduct yourself, how to interact with other people' (*FG3:9). During the dance education experiences the students learnt '*what's socially acceptable,* [and] *what's not acceptable'* (FG4:7). One student held that dance education experiences cultivated

> *'… social values, treating people with kindness, with everything ... that is just like good in the world, something like that. It's weird ... it gets you engaged, involved, talking, moving, exercising, dancing. It's an expression that everyone can benefit from'* (FG6:8).

Through the lens of African philosophy the data can be interpreted as indicative of the emergence of 'personhood' within the students (Gyekye, 1998; Wiredu, 1998; Bell, 2002, Le Roux, 2000 cited in Venter, 2004:150; Mabovula, 2011:38). The

[78] For example, FG5:6; FG3:9; FG1:13; Student Q27, Student Q19.

interactions between students enabled them to cultivate kindness, compassion and virtuous social conduct towards the Other, thus nurturing *ubuntu* within persons.

Student FG3:9 also asserted that involvement in the dance education activities taught participants '*how to get along with others and how to consider people*'. Student FG4:12 explained that, '*because you respect yourself, I'm not gonna want to make anybody else feel uncomfortable'* (FG4:12), while student FG4:11 believed that people have '*different points of view, and you've got to learn to work with each other and compromise'*. The data thus suggest that dance education experiences increased awareness of others, as they nurtured kindness, consideration, and compromise towards the Other.

Ignorance of personal and cultural differences often generates misunderstandings (Gardner, 1993). In this regard, the data indicate that the multicultural dance education classroom provided a context where students could develop social skills with regard to *'how to treat each other'* (FG6:3), '*how to interact with other people*' (FG3:9) and '*what's socially acceptable, what's not acceptable'* (FG4:7). Dance education experiences heightened consciousness of diverse meaning-making systems, enabling students to negotiate and interact in constructive and non-offensive ways. So-called profound socialisation, according to Eisner (2002) and Gardner (2006), also implies that people learn how to consider the feelings of peers, colleagues and other individuals. The dance education environment provided a space where mutual consideration and inclusion of the Other, key elements of social cohesion, were brought to the fore.

Responses also indicated that dance education provided spaces where respect for the Other was cultivated. Student Q22 for example observed that '*dance teaches you a lot of things, like respect. You learn about different people and their ways of dancing*'. Student FG4:11 noted that students learnt to '*respect each other, accept each other working in diverse groups, taking that whole point of different points of view'*. The data also revealed that dance education experiences nurtured kindness, transforming perspectives and dispositions towards the Other and the Self. Receiving kindness and compassion from the Other restores dignity for both, as it promotes equality and eliminates discrimination (Mead, 1912; 1913; Blumer, 1969;

Mezirow, 1990; Taylor, 1994; Atkinson & Housley, 2003; O'Hara, 2003). The dance education context thus enabled restoration of mutual dignity, a key value associated with and required for social cohesion. In addition, mutual acts of compassion and kindness promote the generation of a caring society and the cultivation of *ubuntu* (Tutu, 2004; *The Presidency,* 2011; Barolsky, 2012; Zuma, 2012). In this regard, Soudien (2012) reminds us that one's experience of care often depends upon the Other's ability to show 'humaneness'. Participants' responses indicated that dance education experiences nurtured kindness for and towards the Other. Creative movement activities gave '*people an opportunity to help others'*, and provided individuals with experiences of '*being helped'* by others (FG3:10). Student J17 for example wrote: '*During today's lesson it occurred to me that our class is pretty supportive of each other'.* Dance education, according to this student, cultivated a positive, encouraging, reassuring, re-affirming and accommodating disposition among culturally and politically diverse participants.

5.2.2.6 Conclusion: Sub-theme two

Dance education experiences enabled spaces for enhanced transformative experiences of the Other through the conscientisation of sameness and difference. It emphasised sameness by nurturing recognition of a common humanity and a common national identity, irrespective of ethno-cultural difference. Concomitantly, difference was emphasised through embodied experiences of ethno-cultural dances and movement *habitus* of the Other. As such, dance education raised awareness, cultivated appreciation and provided insight into the culture of the Other through bodily experiences. Dance education's capacity to facilitate awareness of sameness as well as difference resonates with the promotion of *unity in diversity* as propagated by South African social cohesion discourse. In addition, dance education conscientised students with regards to potential stereotyping of the Other, which enabled students to transform their perspectives of the Other. In sum, active involvement in dance education experiences raised awareness of the Other to the extent where participants engaged with the transformation of their perspectives about the Other. It is my contention that the discussions above enables one to believe that the students' experiences in the dance education course prompted personal transformation, opening up new possibilities for social cohesion.

5.2.3 Sub-theme three: Dance education provides transformative spaces for cohesion

The students' responses also indicated that dance education experiences provided spaces conducive to community building in a manner that resonates with a trans-cultural application of *ubuntu*, and consequently, with social cohesion as it pertains to South Africa. The following categories and sub-categories could be identified:

- Category 3.1 Interculturalism
- Category 3.2 Active participation and cooperation
- Category 3.3 Cohesion

5.2.3.1 Category 3.1: Interculturalism

In this study, the dance education classroom represented a micro-cosmos of the broader multicultural South African society. One student stated that the dance education class '*becomes a little kind of community'* (FG4:14). This enabled students to rehearse intercultural interactions, experience a sense of togetherness with others who are different to the Self, and practise citizenship in the form of active participation and cooperation. During a focus group interview, Student FG6:1 observed that,

> *'In all the other lectures, all the other modules we have all done all year, all day its multiculturalism uh … inclusivity … and how to attempt to try to teach in that way... and this is the only class where it is actually been practised.... Because of that, it makes this class much more … I don't know … quite rewarding, something like that. You get something out of this class'.*

Dance education also enabled positive experiences of multicultural praxis, where students were afforded embodied experiences of social integration:

> *'We were all holding hands. We had fun in this class in a multicultural, inclusive environment all the time ... and for that ... you make relationships with people you have never spoken to ... even though you are in the same class'* (FG6:1).

Other data (FG6:1) suggested that the dance education activities countered cultural segregation in the classroom. Student FG6:1 for example experienced dance education as a space conducive to practise community:

'*A lot of students struggle with citizenship. I think this class is one of those classes that you can actually practise strategies. You practise ... A lot of people struggle because they can't bridge theory and practice and that's why a lot of students struggle with citizenship'*.

Dance education thus provided an inclusive environment as it facilitated intercultural interactions:

'It helps you with so many other things, like talking to other people, engaging in other people's cultures. So you know what? I'm Muslim, she's Catholic … so maybe we do some sort of dance... whatever, we have to find out things about each other's cultures. Now I know … oh, you weren't a weirdo after all, this is just what you do... because people are scared of things they don't understand. People don't like things they don't understand. It's uncomfortable. If you learn about it, you engage, you work with it, you work with each other and you come past that' (FG6:8).

The student's reflections suggested that the dance education classroom provided a safe space where students could cross boundaries[79], embrace others, and confront preconceived ideas of the Other through active, embodied engagement with the Other. Collaborative participation within the small groups enhanced cohesion as students performed together as a unified entity. They experienced interdependency, cooperation, active participation and inclusion (Jenson, 1998) as they had to rely on each other:

'It's that! How do you work as a society? You figure out very much... that you need to rely on every single person in that group, or you know it's going to be a stuff-up. So, that whole dancing-together-thing ... really does work, in terms of getting them ready for society. What is your role going to be? Can you be dependable? All of those sort of things.... It's a nation-building exercise … that would be a nice way to put it' (FG6:9).

Giddens (1991) and Bourdieu (1990, cited in Kidd, 2002) argue that, in order to become integrated within a particular community one has to obtain the skills required for positive and constructive social interaction. It is possible to acquire these skills through practising social interactions (Giddens, 1991; Kidd, 2002). The data suggested that dance education experiences enabled students to practise interactions with ethno-cultural Others. In so doing, they were able to "re-skill" (Giddens, 1991:7) their Selves to advance successful interaction with the Other in a

[79] This statement does not assume religion to be synonymous with ethno-culture. It merely equates both types of boundaries as causes of Othering.

manner that facilitated cohesion with the Other. Moreover, according to African philosophy, a person attains a certain status of *ubuntu* (personhood) once he or she has fostered virtuous interpersonal skills. *Ubuntu* within individuals (personhood) is essential for the cultivation of *ubuntu* (the feeling of togetherness) within a community. It is my contention that the data suggested that the dance education experiences cultivated noble interpersonal skills (personhood) and a sense of obligation towards the Other (interdependency), key indicators of community and cohesion, according to African philosophy (Praeg, 2014).

5.2.3.2 Category 3.2: Active participation and cooperation

Some students' reluctance to participate fully was experienced as a concern. In this regard Student Q24 (white, Afrikaans) wrote:

> '*The only thing that bothered me, was some of my fellow students' attitude, but this is not just a problem in this particular class but in every class. I guess they were actually just self-conscious or lazy'*.

Student FG5:4 accounted:

> '*We had the one girl… she was so miserable and she made our group look... you know, the whole group needs to make our group look good in the whole movement, but she was so bad, she just didn't want to do it with us and then it turned out that it was okay…. but it was because she was so miserable. I was so disappointed in her because it's about expressing your emotions as well, so she could have just let it go'*

Both Student J14 and Student J2 ascribed reluctant participation to fellow students' shyness and reserve, whereas student FG1:5 (English female) felt that,

> '*a lot of people were acting that they were too cool for it, or whatever at first, and didn't want to take part and stood by the side and laughed at other people, and eventually they realised that they were actually the outsider. Then slowly as the lessons progressed these people started to become involved in the group'.*

Many students mentioned frustration with fellow classmates during the creative movement activities to be performed through group work. This led Student Q6 (Afrikaans), for example, to argue that she '*preferred the traditional dances over the other dances we had to do in groups. I didn't enjoy the other dances'*. Other

participants[80] also preferred set choreography to creative movement activities. Student FG3:1-2 (white English) explained:

> *'I don't like group-work but it's... I don't do group-work, but I know the value of it… But me personally, I don't enjoy it because sometimes you get this one that's not doing it, then it's annoying but um - I did dancing previously, so dancing ... having somebody that choreographs you, or if you showed us a dance … it's the same thing, but it's not the same thing, … someone bringing your idea to the table, like I won't say not good enough'.*

In this regard, Student FG6:4 (Coloured) held that '*There could have been a bit more direction for us, instead of just leaving us to our own devices* [during creative movement activities]*, maybe a bit more guidance'.* This student indicated that he experienced discomfort, having to rely on himself and his peers for active contribution and collaboration, in order to complete the activity. One could argue that this student thus had a lack of faith in himself and distrusted the capacity of his peers, which made the creative movement activities challenging. Responses however also indicated that creative movement experiences enhanced active collaboration, fostering students' cooperative skills. The activities made Student FG5:3 '*feel very involved'*, and provided Student FG2:8 with '*a chance... to get involved and be a part of something*'.

Dance education's capacity to cultivate self-confidence and the willingness to participate actively in a multicultural group, promotes active participation in a multicultural society, which consequently enhances cohesion (Putnam, 2007; DAC, 2013). Unwillingness to engage actively in society results in loss of faith and hope in transforming the society, thus prohibiting constructive transformation (Putnam, 2007). In the context of South Africa in particular, non-participation violates notions of mutual responsibility and interdependency, required to realise dignity, equality, non-discrimination and care for the Other. As such, the *Bill of Responsibilities* (NDP, 2011) is predicated on the promotion of active participation to encourage citizens to be pro-active with regard to realising the values of the *Constitution*. In this regard, African philosophy also promotes active participation and cooperation of members within society, to ensure the wellbeing of Others and community (Teffo, 1996; Prinsloo, 1998; Masolo, 2006). Reluctance to participate in society disregards social

[80] Student FG6:4 (Coloured), Student FG3:1-2 (white English) and Student FG3:3 (white Afrikaans)

responsibility. Dance education's capacity to encourage active participation in a culturally and politically diverse group, an integral requisite for social cohesion in South African society, is thus evident.

The students also observed enhanced cooperation between class members. Student J4 commented: *'I thought the group work was a great way to get fellow students to work together*'. '*Everyone has to do it … teamwork'* (FG1:12). Similarly, Student Q8 held that '*each activity made us work together as a team and [we] got to know each other a little bit better*'. Student FG:1:13 explained '*Everyone has to contribute some idea of what they want to do, how the dance is flowing and then also, they change their movement to accommodate everyone in that group*' (FG1:13). Similarly, student FG6:9 explained: '*Every member has got to participate, every member has got to put a little bit of something in there'* (FG6:9). The data thus indicated that each individual had a role to play during the creative movement activities, either by presenting ideas, or participating in the presentation of the dance.

Responses (for example, FG6:10 and Student J1) also indicated that the creative movement activities cultivated a sense of mutual responsibility: '*You learn to be responsible for yourself and others*' (J16). In this regard, a Xhosa female (FG4:6) held that dance education, unlike other academic subjects, allowed participants to '*feel they're on the same level'*. Similarly, an Indian student stated:

> '*The playing field is levelled when you get told to go into groups and go and stand there. Everybody is exactly the same. Everybody is vulnerable, and everybody is scared … witless*'.

Student FG6:10 explained that '*everybody is level ... because you are being placed in a vulnerable position'* (FG6:5). The predicament of responsibility and participation afforded students a sense of mutual vulnerability, which according to Keet, Zinn and Porteus (2009) is an essential pre-requisite to enhance the process of reconciliation in a post-conflict multicultural society such as South Africa. In this regard, Student FG5:3 (Coloured female) mentioned that the group work during creative movement activities assisted her in overcoming her vulnerability since it provided a '*safety in numbers aspe*ct' (Student FG6:10). Similarly, Student J15 (English female: week 5) expressed her discomfort with individual work. Student J4 (Coloured female) and

Student J11 (Coloured male) similarly relayed their comfort with group work, since it alleviated the pressure of performance.

Successful group work however requires negotiation skills. Responses indicated that these skills were challenged, yet also nurtured, through the creative movement activities. Student J14 (white English) for example expressed his frustrations as follows: '*I just couldn't think of anymore dance moves that the rest of the group didn't complain about'.* Student J20 (white Afrikaans) recalled '*a member of our group today [who] was very annoying and did not want to help at all yet was unhappy with any suggestions from group members'.* It was clear that this '*annoying*' group member suggested pelvic thrusts, to which she exclaimed '*I don't think pelvic thrusts are appropriate!'* Thus, the creative movement activities required negotiations of appropriateness and values amongst culturally diverse persons. Whereas pelvic dance movements are characteristic of certain indigenous cultures' *habitus*, Afrikaners have predominantly been socialised according to conservative Christian values and concepts, in which these are mostly viewed as unacceptable. It is however not clear whether the suggested pelvic thrusts indeed stemmed from the other student's *habitus,* or whether the intention was merely an attempt to be funny. In this regard, an awareness of difference dawned on Student J4, who believed that '*We all think differently so we must all come up with the dance routine we can all agree on'.* In a similar vein, another student noticed:

> *'That was really interesting to see when you've got like… all these different ideas coming through, it gave you such a good idea, to see that these people can have such different ideas and see how groups work so well together. That was really cool, for people who didn't know each other that well'* (FG4:5).

The data thus suggested that dance education experiences enabled students to negotiate and navigate difference, working creatively and effectively in harmony. As such, the students also acquired skills to facilitate cooperation in a culturally and politically diverse group, enhancing cohesion amongst themselves (Jordan, 2005).
The data also showed that students assumed different roles during the creative movement activities in order to cooperate effectively. One student (FG3:1) said that she had to encourage other students to participate: '*You want people's ideas and people are quiet, then you take the lead and be like, "okay guys what do we do*

next?"'. Another student held that creative movement activities taught '*the leaders'* to stand back and *'learn from others … different ideas*'. In this regard she said '... *you need to work with different people to practise being calm'*, as '*it's a good life skill you are learning*', since '*you always have to work with people'.* Similarly, another student (FG3:3) who was *'more of a leader-type person*' also recounted how she was '*more following, which is not what I usually do.*' She recognised the value of creative movement activities since '*that is also learning and you sometimes have to stand back*'. These students had to relinquish their inclination to take the lead by focusing on notions of interdependency, and by consciously providing space for the others to participate. Thus, affording other students opportunities to make a contribution, to experience peer acceptance of their contribution, and, experience active participation. One could argue, that the students who consciously held back, deliberately created a space where the other students could experience a sense of worth, acceptance and equality amongst their peers. In this regard, creative movement activities provided spaces to practise trust and mutual confidence, thus disrupting notions of distrust, a divisive agent evident in South African society (Barolsky, 2012). The data thus indicated that these creative movement experiences provided students with opportunities to experience and exercise active participation, cooperation, interdependency, mutual confidence and trust, cornerstones of both *ubuntu* and social cohesion as it pertains to South Africa.

5.2.3.3 Category 3.3: Cohesion

The data confirmed that embodied participation in ethno-cultural dances cultivated experiences of inclusion, not only for the in-group, but also for the out-group. Student FG3:11 explained that she felt included when she actively participated in the ethno-cultural dance of the Other, stating '*you get the experience and you feel, this is what it's actually like*'. On the other hand, a Zulu student (FG2:2) enjoyed the gumboot dance because '*it was kind of like my culture also came in. I was not only being exposed to different cultures'*. The potential of ethno-cultural dances to afford students a sense of inclusion seemed to facilitate experiences of social cohesion, since it regarded "the degree of social integration and inclusion in communities and society at large" (DAC, 2013:1). In this regard, it is my contention that involvement in dance education activities afforded students a sense of belonging, regarding

themselves as insiders and true members of the multicultural classroom (FG3:10). Tabane and Human-Vogel (2010:491) hold that experiences of belonging to a multicultural classroom are essential in "driving social cohesion". African philosophers further emphasise the importance of belonging as essential to existence, becoming, building community, and unity (Mbiti, 1969:108-109; Teffo, 1996; Gbadegesin, 1998; Gyekye, 1998; Kaphagawani, 1998; Prinsloo, 1998; Wiredu, 1998; Bell, 2002; Venter, 2004; Menkiti, 2006; Barolsky, 2012; Oppenheim, 2012; Praeg, 2014).

Students were clearly aware of the cohesive qualities of dance education. Various students remarked that dance education experiences enhanced togetherness, for example '*dancing brings us together'* (Student Q17), and the dance education lectures '*made me see... how it brings people together'* (Student J1). Student Q27 observed '*It was really interesting to see how dance brought the class together... Everyone got along and some even became friends*' (Student Q27). '*There was a sense of unity amongst the class, when we all danced in a circle together'* (Student J15). Accordingly, a Xhosa female wrote:

> *'It didn't matter if we were born dancers. What mattered was that we learnt something new together and the new knowledge united us as a class'* (Student J19).

Student Q28 also noticed enhanced cohesion among the students: '*Our class became closer. As we were in different groups, each activity made us work together as a team and [we] got to know each other a little bit better*' (Student Q8). Student Q12 held that the creative movement activities were meaningful, as '*they helped to bring all of us, the students together, to create in my opinion a stronger unit'.* Another student held that the dance education class '*becomes a little kind of community'* (FG4:14). During a focus group interview, Student FG4:2 said:

> *'It also made the class come together because you work in a group and you don't know the people in your first year. You all come from different high schools, different backgrounds ... you've all got ideas about people... But when you're in this little group and you have to work with them, you can just see that she's just being as silly as I am and it's nice. The class sort of get together, laugh at each other*' (FG4:2).

As mentioned previously, social cohesion generally regards "the forces that bind society together" (Green et al, 2009:1). People share feelings of togetherness, "and act on the basis of these feelings" (Chipkin & Ngqulunga, 2008:61). Responses indicated that dance education experiences nurtured a sense of togetherness among diverse students in the multicultural classroom. As such, dance education facilitated experiences of a collective identity, 'united in its diversity'.

5.3 Limitations of the data analysis

The absence of negative voices generated by the particular data collection methods, constitutes a significant limitation in this study. The way prompts were phrased (for example, by describing a 'meaningful' experience) tended to stimulate respondents to focus on positive aspects, neglecting negative considerations.

Another limitation of the study relates to notions of power and hegemony. Hierarchical relationships in contemporary South African society are complex, with white supremacy nowadays often replaced by reversed, black supremacy, authority, majority and entitlement (Bell, 2007). In this regard, the manner in which power is maintained, not only through those who oppress, but also through the "voluntary consent" of those who are controlled, holds multiple layers of meaning (Bell, 2007:10). The notion of hegemony when facilitating dance education to first year students is therefore complicated as it relates not only to my own position of power as a white lecturer, but also impacts the intra-group dynamics during each activity. In this regard, Bell (2007) holds that hegemony often occurs unintentionally through persons who mean no harm, in their day to day living.

Consequently, Rowe (2008) promotes an anti-hegemonic approach in projects aiming to foster community in conflict or post-conflict societies, such as South Africa. This requires firstly the identification of underlying assumptions that maintain the power relations of both the oppressed and the oppressor, and secondly, an inquiry into the reasons why the internalised beliefs of the persons involved remain unchanged (Bell, 2007). Within the context of this study, it would have been worthy

to investigate assumptions, experiences and negotiations of power, for these particular groups of students. I consider this a limitation of this study.

5.4 Conclusion

Despite the above-mentioned limitations, analyses of the students' responses resulted in the conclusion that through active involvement in dance education activities, cohesion amongst these diverse participants was promoted, as the course provided interactive spaces conducive for transformation and cohesion. Thus, the analysis provided insight into the underpinning proposition of this study: *Dance education, as it pertains to this study, may have the potential to promote social cohesion in post-apartheid South Africa.* In addition, the main research question, *What was the impact of this first year dance education course on a culturally and politically diverse group of students in post-apartheid South Africa?,* can also be answered. This dance education course afforded students opportunities to engage in transformative experiences of the Self, with regard to self-expression, self-confidence, self-esteem, identity, emancipation, and intellectual development. Dance education nurtured inherent dignity, enabled experiences of equality, instilled pride in ethno-cultural identity, and unleashed the students' potential as human beings. In other words, it enabled liberation of the Self. Dance education experiences further released creative abilities and raised awareness of the resourcefulness of diverse perspectives. This dance education course further provided individuals with opportunities to liberate themselves from the perspectives and the assumptions of Others, enabling individuals to consider renegotiations of their identities.

These dance education experiences further nurtured a transformative awareness of the Other. Awareness of sameness occurred through recognition of a common humanity and a common national identity. This awareness cultivated dignity, promoted equality, and nurtured pride in a collective multicultural South African identity, 'united in its diversity'. Awareness of difference was cultivated through the cultural exchange that occurred via embodied experiences of the cultural artefact of the Other, as well as embodied experiences of the Other's movement *habitus*.

Enhanced knowledge of the Other disrupted preconceived ideas and fear of the Other, and in so doing, promoted cohesion amongst the groups. In this regard, dance education's capacity to conscientise students to notions of sameness and difference as two poles of the recognition continuum can be regarded as unique, since it provides an embodied experience of such awarenesses (Lash & Featherstone, 2001). Thus, the data indicated that dance education experiences cultivated appreciation and insight into the ethno-culture of the Other, as tacit beliefs were challenged.

Dance education experiences also provided transformative spaces for interaction, as they cultivated the building of small communities. The students gained knowledge of their peers and built relationships and friendships across social and racial boundaries. In these interactive spaces students discovered what good social conduct in a multicultural group entails. Dance education afforded students opportunities to experience the nurturing of a multicultural community. Interculturalism was rehearsed, active participation and cooperation were encouraged, cohesion was cultivated, and the multicultural environment was experienced as positive and non-threatening (Tabane & Human-Vogel, 2010):

> *'What I did marvel at the experience was the joy coming from everyone; they all enjoyed it including myself. It didn't matter if we were born dancers. What mattered was that we learnt something new together and the new knowledge united us as a class. The lesson allowed everyone to let go of their fear and social awkwardness and to be in the moment of something new and exciting'* (Student J19).

Such positive experiences of a multicultural environment thus promote aspirations of trust, respect and harmony within a multicultural society, as attainable. These experiences also affirm a sense of belonging to a multicultural group, thus contributing to social cohesion.

It is therefore my contention that, despite certain limitations, the data suggested that the students' active involvement in this dance education course cultivated inter-group cohesion, by enabling transformative awareness of the Self and the Other, and providing transformative spaces in which to experience and rehearse multicultural interactions and community building. Through the lens of African philosophy one

could additionally argue that dance education experiences provided interactional spaces for the cultivation of *ubuntu.* Students fostered a sense of kindness, compassion, virtuous social conduct, and humaneness towards the Other. This contributed to the development of a certain status of personhood within students, that is, the reputation of treating others with kindness. Accordingly, active participation and cooperation were promoted through instilling a sense of social obligation towards the wellbeing of the Other, which enabled a certain level of interdependency, a key indicator of belonging, community, existence, community solidarity and cohesion.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 Introduction

This research journey commenced with a proposition: *Dance education, as it pertains to this study, may have the potential to promote social cohesion in post-apartheid South Africa.* This study thus aimed to interrogate meanings and locations of social cohesion embedded in dance education. The final chapter will commence with a brief overview of the research journey, which encompassed explorations of literature as well as an empirical study. Thereafter, recommendations for implementation of the findings in order to cultivate social cohesion through dance education will be proposed. The chapter concludes with suggestions for further research.

6.2. Review of literature

In this study, the above proposition guided a focused review of relevant scholarly literature. As an initial inquiry, it was crucial to conceptualise the notion of 'culture', a common concept with multiple meanings applied in diverse ways. This was particularly pertinent given associated predicaments in post-apartheid, post-conflict multicultural South Africa. In order to do so, a critical study of prominent literature was done, engaging with the views of seminal scholars in the field. Similarly important was the need to conceptualise diverse meanings of 'social cohesion' as these occur in Western literature, African and Asian philosophy, and South African discourse. The latter, however, omitted marginalised ethno-cultural groups from this conceptualisation, due to complex reasons mentioned in Chapter 2. That being said, social cohesion as it pertains to South African discourse was described as rooted in a shared commitment to the values of the South African *Constitution* which endorses 'unity in diversity'. These values were conceptualised as dignity, equality, commitment to active participation, care and *ubuntu.* Each individual shares a commitment and responsibility to actively realise experiences of these values, for

others. As such, interdependency exists between persons as they rely on each other to uphold the values of the *Constitution*. The literature review revealed that the process of social cohesion in a post-conflict country such as South Africa is reliant upon the inner, personal transformation of all citizens. Ultimately, dispositions and orientations towards the Other need to transform. Such inner transformations are prompted by interpersonal interactions that disrupt preconceived and stereotyped perceptions of the Self and the Other.

This study is characterised by its focus on dance education and therefore a description and delineation of both dance and dance education, as it pertains to this study, was further necessary. The primary component of this particular dance education programme constitutes active involvement in creative movement activities, that is, movements predicated on the natural bodily movements used during child play, often influenced by a movement *habitus.* Another component of the dance education programme involves active participation in ethno-cultural dances. In the context of this study, potential challenges related to notions of disadvantage, hegemony and power, often embedded in culturally diverse dance education praxis, also required consideration. Such challenges related to (in)appropriate teaching strategies, participation, aesthetic paradigms, movement negotiations and identity (re)negotiations within the multicultural dance education classroom.

A study of theories associated with culture, social cohesion and dance prompted additional theoretical explorations of the intersection between these concepts. This evolved into an additional potential contribution of this study, namely, seven dimensions of intersection. These are:

- **Dance as embodiment**, since the body not only emphasises a common humanity, but also serves as the vehicle through which persons negotiate their positions towards the Self, the Other and the world.
- **Dance as cultural artefact**, since dance symbolically represents culture and promotes sustainability. Ethno-cultural dances also affirm affiliated ethno-cultural groups as recognised members of a multicultural society, promoting inclusion. In turn, embodiment of the

ethno-cultural dance of the Other conveys knowledge to the body, enabling insight into and empathy for the ethno-culture of the Other. Consequently, it nurtures personal transformations within participants with regard to the Self and the Other, essential for the transformation of intercultural interactions in a post-conflict society.

- **Dance as *habitus* exchange***,* since exchanges of movement *habitus* provide participants with additional embodied experiences of the Other, promoting insight into and openness towards the Other. In addition, the approval of collective affiliations is experienced within the multicultural group, which enables experiences of inclusion, dignity and equality - key values associated with a cohesive society.
- **Dance as collective identity**, since dance can instil a sense of community and cohesion in certain societies, affirming collective sentiments.
- **Dance as healing**, since dance provides communal healing for certain societies, restoring relationships, care and *ubuntu* among community members, necessary for reconciliation in a post-conflict multicultural society.
- **Dance as representing the Self and the collective**, since it conscientises participants to personal and diverse perspectives, and provokes personal transformations with regard to the Self and the Other - a core pre-requisite for social cohesion.
- **Dance as social interaction**, since it provides ample opportunities for participants to rehearse and enact active participation, cooperation and collaboration in a multicultural group - key features of social cohesion.

This study was furthermore rooted in symbolic interactionism which promotes interactions as a means to adjust meaning with regard to the Self, the Other and society (Mead, 1912, 1913; Blumer, 1986; Atkinson & Housley, 2003; Plummer, 2004). Symbolic interactionism further highlights connection between dance education and social cohesion, in particular with regard to the trans-cultural

application of *ubuntu*: Dance education sessions can provide reflective spaces where interactions with 'the community' (the multicultural classroom) can cultivate courteous social conduct between community members, and aid in the nurturing of an '*ubuntu* personality' within students. This resonates with symbolic interactionism, since interpersonal interactions (through dance education) become the catalyst for individuals to revisit notions of Self and Other, and enable persons to adjust their behaviour towards the Other. This study also incorporated notions of transformative learning through symbolic interactions with the Self, the Other and the ethno-culture of the Other. This enabled me to argue that dance education can provide transformative spaces for interaction with the Other, where personal transformations with regard to the Self, the Other and society are provoked.

6.3 The empirical investigation

This case study set out to interrogate meanings and locations of social cohesion that emerged from the students' experiences of this particular dance education course. The guiding research question that directed the empirical project was: *What was the impact of this first year dance education course on a culturally and politically diverse group of students in post-apartheid South Africa?* The study was conducted at a teacher education institution in South Africa with first-year primary school student teachers, who actively participated as participants in this particular dance education course as part of their general education programme. Data generation strategies in the form of open-ended questionnaires, journal entries as well as focus group interviews were employed to prompt students to reflect on their experiences of dance education. In the next section, the sub-questions will be briefly discussed with short summations of resolutions as these emerged during the course of the study.

6.3.1 Sub-question 1: What meanings did the students take from their participation in this dance education course?

The data indicated that this dance education course afforded students opportunities to interact with each other in the multicultural classroom. Many responses suggested that the students' active involvement in the multicultural dance education

course enabled them to cultivate relationships and friendships across social and ethnic boundaries. The data affirmed the underlying principles of symbolic interactionism, since it indicated that dance education interactions provided students with opportunities to renegotiate their notions of Self and Other. Adversarial voices were however absent from the data, since the questions posed to the students did not prompt an inquiry into negative experiences, for example, experiences of inequality during the dance education sessions. This is a shortcoming of this study.

6.3.2 Sub-question 2: How did this dance education course influence the students' sense of Self and Other?

The data indicated that the dance education experiences provided many students with a heightened awareness of Self. This awareness prompted a renegotiation of personal and social identity. Students furthermore developed self-confidence as the dance experiences afforded them opportunities for self-expression and exploration. Bodily participation in ethno-cultural dances provided students with the opportunity to celebrate and affirm their own ethno-cultural identities. Within the context of a culturally and politically diverse environment, individual students' self-esteem improved, cultivating a sense of dignity and equality, ultimately emancipating the Self.

Of particular significance for this study was the finding that dance education spaces enabled embodied experiences of sameness and difference, two extremes of the recognition continuum (Lash & Featherstone, 2001). Dance education experiences instilled a sense of *sameness,* notwithstanding individual diversity, emphasising a common humanity and collective South African identity. Yet, dance education also cultivated a sense of *difference* through tactile, embodied experiences of the cultural artefacts and movement *habitus* of the Other. It enabled students to *'feel that culture, and get into it'* (FG4:10). It conveyed tangible knowledge of the Other through the body, facilitating insight into and cultivating appreciation and respect for the culture of the Other. Difference was no longer perceived as frightening and intimidating, but rather as intriguing and enriching. Dance education consequently

prompted revised perspectives of the Other, enhancing unrestricted and uninhibited communication, interaction and ultimately cohesion.

6.3.3 Sub-question 3: How did this dance education course facilitate spaces for cohesion?

The participants' responses revealed that this dance education course provided transformative and cohesive spaces where, through active bodily involvement in dance education activities, students' awareness of themselves and of Others were sharpened. The heightened awareness conscientised them towards fellow students and prompted them to revisit and transform their perspectives of the Self and the Other.

Through the lens of African philosophy one could further argue that the data suggested that the dance education experiences cultivated *trans-cultural ubuntu*, since it provided opportunities for interactions within community. It enabled a sense of 'fellow-feeling', considerate social conduct, kindness and care towards the Other, ultimately strengthening cohesion within the multicultural classroom.

The dance education classroom thus became a cohesive and transformative space where students could build community in a multicultural context. Joint involvement in dance activities helped students to bridge schisms caused by cultural segregation. In this regard, involvement in this dance education course prompted active participation in communal projects, with participants developing cooperation and negotiation skills in community with diverse Others. It provided spaces for social integration, instilling a sense of communal belonging and unity, despite the diverse nature of the group. In their diversity, the participants sensed togetherness, unity and cohesion, as the dance education student group became "*a little kind of community'* (Student FG4:14).

6.3.4 Summary

It is my contention that the above findings enable me to offer a response to the primary research question: *What was the impact of this first year dance education course on a culturally and politically diverse group of students in post-apartheid South Africa?* It enables me to argue that active participation in this particular course's dance education activities in the form of creative movement experiences and ethno-cultural dances, provided opportunities for the students involved in this study to engage with and revisit their perspectives of Self, the Other and society. In this study, the multicultural dance education classroom thus became a catalyst for potential inner transformation. The data also indicated that this dance education course cultivated experiences of cohesion amongst the culturally and politically diverse group of students.

6.4 The potential contribution of dance education to social cohesion in South Africa

South African social cohesion discourse foregrounds the notion of 'unity in diversity' (RSA, 1996; DoE, 2006). I believe that the findings of the study indicate that dance education can afford students from diverse backgrounds a sense of togetherness, unity and inclusion – key indicators of social cohesion as put forward by scholars such as Jenson (1998), Chipkin and Ngqulunga (2008) and Green *et al* (2009).

As discussed in Chapter Two, social cohesion in South Africa implies 'bridging' cohesion, in other words, '*inter*-cultural' cohesion. It also implies 'bonding' cohesion, that is, '*intra*-cultural' cohesion (Putnam, 2007: 143; Struwig *et al*, 2012:5). The findings of this study enable me to argue that dance education experiences can provide spaces for both kinds of cohesion. For the students who participated in the study, active involvement in dance education raised an awareness of and pride in a collective South African identity that transcends ethno-cultural borders: '*I felt truly and proudly South African'* (Student J15). The dance education experiences encouraged and enabled the students to 'bridge' social divides towards the collective. In addition, the dance education experiences also raised awareness of

the Self. It affirmed personal and ethno-cultural identities, enabling pride and affirmation of own ethno-cultural artefacts. Students experienced, embraced and 'bonded' with their own ethno-cultural identities, a key requisite for cultural sustainability. As such, the data indicated that South African dance education classrooms have the potential to provide spaces for intra-cultural cohesion as well as inter-cultural cohesion, advancing the notion of 'unity in diversity' (RSA, 1996; DoE, 2006).

In South Africa, social cohesion discourse is furthermore characterised by references to communal, Constitutional values such as dignity, equality, non-discrimination, commitment to active participation, interdependency, cooperation, harmony, care and *ubuntu*[81]. All South African citizens are expected to embody these values to the benefit of society at large. The findings of this study indicate that dance education experiences can cultivate these values, as it enabled embodied experiences of these values. I believe that the students' dignity was restored and enhanced through the nurturing of self-confidence and self-esteem, and through receiving recognition of worth from the Other (Taylor, 1994). In this regard, one could also argue that the dance education experiences, as it pertained to this study, provided opportunities for individuals to become fully human, in other words acquire *ubuntu*, since it afforded them opportunities to cultivate and exhibit humaneness towards Others (Gyekye, 1998; Wiredu, 1998; Bell, 2002; Venter, 2004).

Similarly, one could argue that the students' experiences of an enhanced self-esteem also promoted experiences of equality during this particular dance education course, a key requirement for cohesion in a post-conflict multicultural society (Bernard, 1999). However, experiences of equality do not dismiss experiences of inequality, which also may have occurred during the dance education sessions. The use of a positively loaded question for the data inquiry indeed poses a limitation to this study. The data did however indicate that students made friends across social and racial boundaries. This reduced prejudice (Tropp, 2011). In addition, they experienced care, kindness, support and inclusion from diverse Others. These

[81] See Chapter Two

experiences eroded distrust and ‘fear of the Other’, disrupting division and enhancing cohesion (Jansen, 2009; Barolsky, 2012, Struwig *et al*, 2012).

An equally important indicator of social cohesion is the willingness to participate actively in collective endeavours (King *et al*, 2010). The data suggested that notions of interdependency (David, 1979; Teffo, 1996; Gyekye, 1997; Prinsloo, 1998; Bell, 2002; Masolo, 2006; Swanson, 2007; Soudien, 2012) and cooperation (King *et al*, 2010; DAC, 2011a; DAC, 2011b; Struwig *et al*, 2012) were cultivated during this particular course, as students had to rely on each other’s willingness to participate, their capacity to present ideas, as well as individual creativity in order to complete the dance activity. As such, it necessitated mutual confidence in each other’s abilities to complete the task. In addition, it enabled students to recognise their obligations towards the Other as members of the same group (David, 1979; Chatterjee, 1998; Blum, 2014). The data indicated that this dance education course provided participants with opportunities to negotiate and navigate different personalities, ideas, aesthetic paradigms and ethno-cultural groups, while also cultivating openness to difference and a sense of harmony amongst diverse people, a pre-requisite for social cohesion in a post-conflict society (Mandela, 1964; Jenson, 1998; Broodryk, 2006; D0E, 2006; Broodryk, 2010; King *et al*, 2010; Soudien, 2012).

Ultimately, I argue that dance education, as it pertains to this study, can provide participants with opportunities to familiarise themselves with the Other through bodily experiences of the Other’s cultural artefacts, movement *habitus*, as well as bodily interactions and negotiations with the Other. This is because embodied interactions enable transformation of meaning, behaviour and attitude for these students (Mead, 1912; 1913; Blumer, 1986). The dance education classroom, as it pertained to this study, can thus be seen as an interactive space conducive for personal transformation as it can prompt participants to revisit and redefine perceptions of Self and the Other. As such, I argue that this dance education course can provide spaces for social cohesion as it pertains to South African discourse, as it can cultivate togetherness, inclusion, ‘unity in diversity’ and national identity among participants.

6.5 The significance of the new contribution to the existing body of knowledge

It is my contention that this study contributes to existing knowledge in the fields of dance education, cultural exchange and social cohesion. The main contribution of this study regards *the potential of dance education to provide interactive spaces conducive for the cultivation of cohesion amongst culturally and politically diverse students in the post-apartheid South African university classroom.* This study thus contributes to new knowledge since it recognises that dance education, as it pertains to this study, can provide spaces where diverse individuals can acquaint themselves with the Other. This occurs through embodied interactions which cultivate openness to difference. I thus argue that dance education can create interactive embodied spaces where diverse individuals can renegotiate notions of Self, notions of Other and notions of Self in relation to the Other, whilst new meanings and experiences of cohesion are cultivated.

Another potential contribution of this study lies in its specific conceptualisation of social cohesion as it pertains to South Africa as a culturally and politically diverse post-conflict society. My search for relevant scholarly literature revealed disquieting dearth, as well as ambiguous applications of related concepts, which, according to Soudien (2008) is particularly evident in South African higher education discourse.

I also believe that this study contributes to new knowledge through its conceptualisation of 'movement *habitus*', presenting 'movement *habitus* exchange' as an alternative means of cultural exchange between diverse individuals during collaborative creative movement activities. The conceptualisation of 'aesthetic paradigm' as it occurs in this study is also unique, since it includes the movement vocabulary, way of moving and aesthetic criteria associated with a particular dance form. It is my contention that the term 'aesthetic paradigm' provides a lens through which diverse ways of dancing can be described, discussed and delineated, without promoting unwise assumptions of state-of-evolve, preference, art or function, often associated with different categorisations of dance. It is further my contention that the

use of such a term has the potential to equalise inherent notions of power and preference that often manifest in literature and discussions of diverse dance forms.

In addition, this study's theoretical interrogations of the intersections between culture, dance and social cohesion provide a meaningful platform for further explorations into meanings and locations of social cohesion in dance education.

6.6 Critical reflections on dance education praxis as it pertains to this study

This dance education course encouraged explorations of 'natural movements' during the creative movement activities. However, as dance education facilitator, I approached and evaluated creative movement activities according to a particular set of aesthetic principles, for example meticulous attention to the structure and execution of each movement, attention to detail, synchronisation, flow, creativity and non-repetition. The dominant evaluation criteria thus resonated with a Western aesthetic and in many instances, contrasted with African aesthetics. Thus, one could argue that hegemony, to a certain extent, prevailed. I acknowledge that the dominance of a particular set of aesthetic criteria restricted this study, and that it could have prompted the transformation of students' existing individual aesthetic paradigms (Rowe, 2008). In addition, this particular limitation may have affected the students' freedom to indeed explore *all* kinds of movement, since a particular set of aesthetic foci required them to focus on outer appearance, neglecting intrinsic movement experiences paramount to many African dance experiences. That being said, existing movement vocabulary from aesthetic paradigms such as ballet, modern dance and hip-hop were only regarded as 'good dance practice' if appropriate for expression of the particular music excerpts played in class, or the particular objective of the activity.

Upon reflection, one could rightfully ask whether a culturally responsive creative movement programme aimed at promoting cohesion amongst diverse students should rather deliberately explore diverse sets of aesthetic criteria. This is however a complex question, since equal explorations of diverse sets of aesthetic criteria may

result in the absence of an aesthetic understanding of what is required of them, leaving students confused and unclear as to what constitutes 'good dance practice'. In turn, evaluation in the dance education classroom could become obsolete, since aesthetics may become fluid, losing its inherent artistic logic. Such confusion about the desired outcome of an activity may result in student disinterest. Moreover, such dance praxis may generate dance creations foreign to all aesthetic orientations. A person's aesthetic appreciation and symbolic understanding of a dance is inherently linked to a particular aesthetic paradigm. Extreme fusion of these paradigms during dance-creation may result in dances that are unappreciated and misunderstood, thus gaining little appeal amongst students. In this regard it may be necessary to foreground one distinct set of aesthetic criteria, whilst explicitly acknowledging the existence of other sets of aesthetic criteria. This will enable students to gain insight into a particular set of aesthetic criteria, as they become aware that the particular set of aesthetic criteria is merely one of many. In addition, specific opportunities can be provided where students indeed explore other sets of aesthetic criteria explicitly. A dance education course that has significantly more contact hours should be able to facilitate such an approach.

Although the above relates to one aspect, namely evaluation criteria associated with an aesthetic paradigm, one could additionally argue that students should be confronted with diverse aesthetic paradigms, in other words, associated movement vocabulary, ways of moving and aesthetic criteria, explicitly. In this regard, one could also argue that the particular manner in which I as dance education facilitator approached my creative movement sessions, generated its own aesthetic paradigm. Nevertheless, the potential exists that equal exploration of diverse aesthetic paradigms can lead to preference, as it provides the student with an opportunity to choose a more popular aesthetic paradigm over his/her own aesthetic paradigm. This would again potentially cause division within the individual's intra-cultural community (Rowe, 2008). On the other hand, in the context of this study, one could rightfully ask whether an opportunity to choose a preferred aesthetic paradigm did not promote a sense of freedom from so-called 'expected', 'affiliated' or even 'oppressive' aesthetic paradigms. Moreover, would an opportunity to choose and cultivate a person's preferred aesthetic paradigm not promote equality and equal opportunity? These questions are complex, since extensive emphasis on diverse

aesthetic paradigms has the potential to reinforce boundaries between diverse individuals, strengthening Othering. In the context of social cohesion, these questions need thoughtful interrogation and are worthy of further research, although these should be done with severe caution since the potential disruption of a community remain prevalent. Should these caveats be negated, endeavours to facilitate cohesion amongst culturally and politically diverse individuals through arts-based projects such as dance education can easily rebound, causing further division.

In addition, the limited time allocated to this dance education course caused severe restrictions to the course content, especially with regard to the teaching of ethno-cultural dances, since these could be explored and experienced in more authentic ways. More time could allow authentic teaching by dancers from associated ethno-cultural groups. It could also allow the inclusion of video footage and discussions with regard to different praxis and locations of the dance. Should more time be allocated to this course, space for reading, research and discussion on particular ethno-cultural dances and their purpose, praxis and place within society, could enhance the impact of such a dance education course. Students would then also have time to identify the basic elements of each ethno-cultural dance style, and have opportunities to explore their own applications of these. In other words, after an ethno-cultural dance such as the gumboot dance is learnt, students can create their own version of a gumboot dance within their multicultural creative movement group. In addition, diverse movement gestures and their symbolic meanings in their associated aesthetic paradigms can also be investigated, explored and compared, both through movement and verbal discussions.

More time would have also allowed an explicit study into diverse aesthetic paradigms, and applications of these, in creative movement activities. In addition, the dance performances could be recorded and analysed by the participants to determine the origin of particular movements used within each activity. Such analysis could include discussions on why particular decisions were made to incorporate and exclude particular movements, thus providing insight into the sub-conscious power relations at play during the dance-making processes.

6.7 Recommendations

In this study, I argue that dance education has the potential to erode divisive boundaries and provide spaces for social cohesion. As such, I believe that it can be employed as effective strategy in various spheres of society, including for example education and the workplace.

6.7.1 Recommendations for education in South Africa

It is my contention that dance education deserves improved status as a key component of any individual's general education, at both school and post-school level. Although it is at present incorporated into the mainstream curriculum for the GET (General Education and Training) phase, its location as merely one component of the Life Skills learning area suggests that policy makers regard its importance as peripheral. Several research studies conducted in South Africa (see for example, Herbst *et al*, 2005; Vermeulen, 2009; Browne, 2011; Delport & Browne, 2015) furthermore confirm the disconcerting state of arts education in most schools, with non-arts specialist generalist teachers tasked to teach the arts. This leads to poor implementation and questionable quality dance education, implying that learners do not benefit optimally from dance education.

This predicament can and should be addressed by strengthening pre-service as well as in-service teachers' competences to teach dance education. In-service teacher education workshops and accredited Short Learning Programmes (SLPs) should be presented on a regular basis, equipping generalist as well as specialist teachers to teach dance education effectively. Such programmes can be registered with the South African Council for Educators (SACE) so that teachers can obtain Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points in the process, as required by policy. Advocacy is however required to inform teachers of the benefits of dance education, particularly in terms of its potential to enhance cohesion amongst diverse learners in their classroom. Similarly, dance education should constitute a core component of any pre-service teacher education programme, offered for the full duration (usually

four years) of the programme and integrated into other theoretical and practical courses[82].

In addition, it is my contention that dance education should constitute a key component of a general compulsory module offered across disciplines to all undergraduate students. Universities prepare students for the world of work. If all tertiary students are afforded opportunities to engage in dance activities, it will affect the dispositions and interactions of many South African citizens in a manner that would nurture cohesion amongst citizens at large. Since 2012, the University of the Free State for example implemented a compulsory module for all first-year students, called UFS101. This module *inter alia* addresses issues such as *How do we deal with our violent past?* and *How do we become South Africans?* (UFS101: Online). I believe that dance education should be included in such a compulsory module for all students, in order to provide interactive spaces where embodied intercultural interactions can prompt personal transformations with regard to the Self and the Other, and in so doing, enhance social cohesion.

In a similar vein, in the United States of America, Temple University implemented a dance education programme as part of their general education curriculum. This programme aims to address issues such as ethno-cultural identity, pluralism, prejudice, beliefs, sexuality and gender bias (Bond & Gerdes, 2012). Non-dancers use dance to represent experiences of research, readings, media, observations, discussions and presentations of particular social issues, in order to enhance understanding of identity. Bond and Gerdes (2012:7) found that the incorporation of movement in particular enabled students to explore the culture of the Other, rehearse “ethical pluralism” and provoke aspirations of social transformation. These examples lead me to argue that dance education is unique, since it provides embodied experiences that provoke awareness of sameness, which in turn, evoke empathy for the Other. Embodiment also stimulates awareness of the Other to the extent where personal transformation takes place, and perspectives with regard to the Other are revisited and transformed.

[82] This recommendation is however subject to further research, since the fusion of diverse individuals’ movement *habitus* may indeed disrupt intra-cultural sustainability.

In this regard, Soudien (2008) suggests that academic staff at South African tertiary institutions should also be involved in development programmes that would enable cultural sensitivity towards the Other in the multicultural classroom, and in so doing, facilitate anti-discriminatory teaching practices. I believe that this dance education course could also be considered for academic staff development workshops, in order to raise a consciousness of Self and Other in a manner that can transform preconceived ideas, cultivate personal transformation, and ultimately aid transformative processes towards non-discriminatory teaching practices.

However, the incorporation of dance education into school and tertiary education programmes still excludes the vast majority of South African population. In this regard, community workshops could extend the impact of such programmes.

In addition to recommendations for dance education, I recommend that *ubuntu* should be included as a course in all tertiary education modules. Such a course should include a study of the meanings of *ubuntu* from within African philosophy, but also, from the perspective of a trans-cultural philosophy. It is my contention that the cultivation of a general understanding of *ubuntu* in South African society would enhance its potential to cohere a culturally and politically diverse nation.

6.7.2 Recommendations for the workplace and society in general

Given its potential to enhance social cohesion, dance education can also be introduced in the non-education sector as an effective way to transform organisations and communities and bring about cohesion. Business institutions for example often engage in activities that nurture team-building in order to enhance cooperation amongst employees. This study suggests that collective dance education experiences have the potential to enhance collaboration, community and teamwork. As such, dance education workshops can be considered in the business environment in order to enhance organisational transformation, prompting employees to revisit and transform perspectives of Self and Other.

6.7.3 Recommendations for other post-conflict societies

I also believe that the findings of this study have relevance for other post-conflict societies, especially those characterised by division between ethno-cultural groups. Although conceptualisations and aspirations of social cohesion are unique to respective societies, it is my contention that dance education experiences can be used for related purposes. Dance education programmes can for example be implemented to facilitate transformative awareness of the Self and Other, as it enhances intercultural communication between diverse citizens in pluralist societies. Dance education workshops can also be used to integrate immigrants into societies. In European communities such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, and France, the Roma people are for example often subject to discrimination. Dance workshops can facilitate transformative interactions between the Roma and local citizens in order to raise transformative awareness of the Other. Such interactions can disrupt fear of the Other as it enables acquisition of knowledge of the Other, and in so doing, facilitate intercultural communication and cultivate courteous social conduct towards the Other.

Dance education can also be used to restore dignity in other post-conflict or post-war societies. The capacity of dance education to enable self-realisation can also serve as an advantage in therapy sessions where persons have been exposed to trauma. In addition, dance education can be implemented to facilitate interpersonal interactions in conflict-stricken areas such as Israel and Palestine – societies characterised by the negation of human dignity, discrimination and fear of the Other. In these areas, dance education can be employed to cultivate awareness of sameness and difference, transforming dispositions towards the Other, and in so doing, enhance intercultural communication and cooperation.

I thus believe that educationists, policy makers, interventionists, conflict managers and peace makers who aim to facilitate the bridging of ethno-cultural divides in post-conflict multicultural societies should take cognisance of the findings of this study, albeit affected by limitations as alluded to earlier.

6.7.4 Recommendations for further research

The conceptualisation of social cohesion as it pertains to South African discourse requires further investigation and interrogation. It is my contention that constructions and deconstructions of social cohesion in South African society can ultimately contribute to the understanding of what is required for the wellbeing of a culturally and politically diverse post-conflict South African society. It is also my contention that further (de)constructions can facilitate the design of more effective strategies to promote social cohesion in South Africa. As such, a study that sets out to find ways to include the marginalised voices would be a worthy investigation. Theoretical studies can (de)construct existing literature (including this study) in order to identify notions of power and hegemony within constructions of social cohesion as it pertains to South African discourse, or society. Also, an empirical inquiry into the meaning of social cohesion and community building amongst culturally and politically diverse South African students can be investigated. Moreover, a similar empirical inquiry can focus on a particular age group, for example, culturally and politically diverse people aged between 35 and 45. These can also be compared to the students' constructions of social cohesion as these potentially evolve between generations.

Dance education's potential to contribute to the enhancement of social cohesion in a post-conflict multicultural society such as South Africa opens possibilities for further research. Some recommendations for further research have already been suggested in this thesis. Subsequent studies can investigate whether dance education can be equally effective in other multicultural societies where intercultural tensions or conflict are evident. Further research can also be conducted to determine whether a replication of the dance education programme employed in this study would render the same results when implemented to various age groups. In addition, the question as to whether a dance education programme should be repeated at regular intervals during a person's life, thus whether these inner transformations require continuous renewal, or whether one programme is sufficient to sustain personal transformation would be another worthy investigation.

Moreover, the *impact* of dance education programmes which do not explicitly emphasise ethno-cultural prejudices and injustices (such as this study) in the

multicultural classroom, can be compared to the *impact* of dance education programmes that explicitly incorporate readings, research and discussions on social injustices in the multicultural classroom. It goes without saying that these would have to occur within the same society, including the same ethno-cultural and socio-political community. A comparative study of these two approaches may indicate one method as more conducive to cohesion than the other, or, provide diverse localities of cohesion in dance education, or, highlight different dimensions of these localities. In addition, a dance education programme that includes discussion and social justice content may present different dimensions of power relations, hegemony and entitlement. Discussion may also cause discomfort and generate negative emotions amongst participants since these would address a "defensive knowledge" (Jansen, 2009:171). These, however, may be more conducive to inner transformation, attaining dignity, and dealing with emotional trauma. The use of diverse strategies in dance education leaves room for further investigation into the identification of specific meanings and localities of social cohesion in dance education.

In addition, an investigation into the negative experiences and challenges students faced during this particular dance education course, would provide significant insight into other issues relating to social cohesion, for example, experiences of inequality, oppression, exclusion, personal dynamics and power relations within the smaller multicultural groups, potential inner dialogue that occurred, and how these impacted their world outside the dance education classroom. These may illuminate other dimensions of social cohesion, and may pave the way for the design of future dance education programmes which may better enhance notions of cohesion in a culturally diverse society.

Similarly, a study which focuses particularly on the power relationships and group dynamics within the collaborative creative movement activities, will be an interesting investigation that would provide significant insight into the construction and deconstruction of identities, Self and Otherness within a post-conflict society. Such a study should preferably be done in collaboration with a behavioural scientist, psychologist or psychotherapist, since observations of these interactions would provide critical information with regard to the students' experiences of the Self and the Other in a post-conflict society. Post-analysis of observations and individual

interviews with specific participants can provide students with opportunities to reflect on their behaviour within the group, which can create spaces for further discussion. Such a study would illuminate current challenges of social cohesion as these manifest during intercultural interactions in a post-conflict society. Similarly, the students' journey towards their personal meaning-making of Self and Other can be analysed over time, since participants alter groups for each activity. In addition, this particular journey can be plotted in relation to when and which ethno-cultural dances were taught, to determine the extent to which the ethno-cultural dances indeed contributed to personal meaning-making of Self and Other, within the culturally diverse dance education classroom.

In addition, an impact study on the influence of a dance education programme, outside educational institutions, for example in the world of work, would render important insights, expanding the pool of strategies to bring about cohesion amongst diverse people.

From this study it is also clear that the specific set of aesthetic criteria used in the culturally diverse dance education classroom should be interrogated, especially in the context of culturally responsive teaching praxis that aim to build community. In this regard, a study into the extent to which a dominant set of aesthetic criteria is required to teach dance education, is necessary. In addition, the impact of exposure to a dominant set of aesthetic criteria on the student's own aesthetic paradigm necessitates further investigation. Also, if a culturally responsive dance education course would indeed expose students to diverse sets of aesthetic criteria, the impact of continuous exposure to diverse sets of aesthetic criteria on the student's own aesthetic paradigm, could be an area for further research. I would also recommend an investigation into the reasons why and how one particular aesthetic paradigm becomes popular within the culturally diverse dance education classroom, particularly in the context of existing power relations.

Notions of *habitus* exchange in the culturally diverse dance education classroom also require further investigation. Such studies can determine whether *habitus* exchange is more effective if it occurs explicitly as a result of a conscious objective, or whether it has more impact if it occurs organically. In addition, a study of

movement *habitus* exchanges can investigate the power relations at play during specific exchanges in post-conflict societies. Also, a study that focuses on the extent to which continuous *habitus* exchange impacts the individual's movement *habitus* will also contribute significantly to further insight. In this regard, the nature and extent of *habitus* exchange required (for example, amount of hours, months or years) before the individual's *habitus* is likely to adjust to another's, will be a worthy investigation. I would also recommend investigation into the consequences of an altered movement *habitus,* with regard to its impact on the individual, the individual's associated community and the individual's sense of place in society. Moreover, an inquiry into the individual's perspective on the value of his or her 'transformed' movement *habitus* with regard to his or her place in society and perhaps his or her ability to communicate interculturally, provides spaces for further research.

Further studies can also investigate what happens when creative movement activities occur in mono-cultural groups within the multicultural classroom. Individual interviews can provide significant insight into the choice of movements used. In addition, awareness of the multicultural audience can be explicitly included as an objective of the dance. This may alter the creative decisions of the mono-cultural group during dance-making, and may provide interesting prompts for further investigation with regard to the Other, essentialism and stereotyping. Comparisons between the students' experiences of multicultural and mono-cultural creative work within the multicultural classroom, can also be done. Discussions, personal interviews and peer analysis of these two diverse experiences can provide significant insight into the students' constructions of notions of Self, Other and difference. In addition, how these relate to intra-group power relations, peer pressure, experiences of freedom and oppression both within the mono-cultural and multicultural creative movement groups, can be investigated.

6.8 Limitations of this study

This study had several limitations. The first limitation regards the conceptualisation of social cohesion as it pertains to South African discourse. In an attempt to counter a neo-colonialist interpretation of this discourse, a focus on Western, African, and to a lesser extent Asian philosophy, paved the way towards exposing the meanings which underpin social cohesion in South African discourse. However, this approach had shortcomings, since voices of the marginalised ethno-cultural groups currently residing in South Africa, were excluded. In this regard, one could then argue that this study produced an 'exclusive' conceptualisation of a term that inherently represents inclusivity. This is indeed a limitation of this study.

Further limitations regard the study's design and the executions thereof. In this regard, my dual role as dance educator and researcher posed limitations with regard to the students' responses, data interpretation, and potential bias, thus affecting the trustworthiness of this study. Additionally, the questions used for the empirical study were positively loaded, thereby excluding negative experiences of the students. Also, the absence of an inquiry into the subtle power relationships between participants within their smaller groups, poses another limitation. Reflections of the dance education teaching praxis used during this study posed further potential shortcomings, since the focus on a dominant set of aesthetic criteria in a culturally diverse classroom potentially limited the students' explorations of movement. In addition, the affirmation of a dominant set of aesthetic criteria may have sub-consciously devalued 'Other' aesthetic paradigms, which ultimately can disrupt intra-cultural cohesion within a particular ethno-cultural community.

6.9 Final conclusion

The proposition which guided this study was: *Dance education, as it pertains to this study, may have the potential to promote social cohesion in post-apartheid South Africa.* Therefore, this study aimed to interrogate meanings and locations of social cohesion in dance education, as it pertained to a particular dance education course which formed part of a general teacher education programme offered by a public higher education institution in post-apartheid South Africa. The main research question of the empirical study was: *What was the impact of this first year dance education course on a culturally and politically diverse group of students in post-apartheid South Africa?* It is my contention that the outcomes of this case study suggested that this dance education course impacted the culturally and politically diverse group of students who participated in this study at personal, interpersonal and communal level. It can be concluded from the findings that the specific dance education course provided safe, constructive spaces for embodied interactions, conducive for the transcending of social boundaries and the nurturing of affective bonds between diverse participants. The data suggested that embodied interactions brought about by the dance education experiences, sharpened awareness of Self and Other, as it prompted participants to revisit, transform and redefine perspectives of the Self, the Other and society. The data also suggested that these dance education experiences instilled a sense of unity, inclusion and cohesion amongst participants, irrespective of culturally and politically diverse backgrounds. In response to the proposition, I thus conclude that, despite its shortcomings, this dance education course has the potential to promote cohesion amongst culturally and politically diverse participants in post-apartheid South Africa. However, the use of dance education as a vehicle to cultivate social cohesion in a post-conflict society remains complex, since potential experiences of inequality due to teaching praxis, power relations, also within the smaller groups or the dominance of a particular set of aesthetic criteria remain a concern. Hence, dance educators that aim to teach dance education to a culturally diverse classroom should cultivate a consciousness and reflexivity to identify potential hegemonic practices with the aim of preventing these.

In conclusion, it is my contention that this study contributes meaningfully to contemporary strategies aimed at bridging social divides, building community and promoting social cohesion in post-conflict multicultural societies such as South Africa.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Module outcomes
Appendix 2: Sample questionnaire
Appendix 3: Ethics clearance

Module outcomes

PFCA303/PICA203 Curriculum Studies: Arts 10 CREDITS

Purpose

To help students develop appropriate understandings of the basic elements of music, dance, drama and visual arts. This module furthermore aims to provide opportunities for students to develop the skills required in order to play a meaningful role in the classroom with respect to developing Foundation /Intermediate Phase learners' music, artistic, acting and movement competences.

Specific Outcomes

On completion of the module, students will be able to

- Describe and identify the basic elements of music when listening to or making music
- Describe and identify the basic elements of visual art while observing artworks or making artworks
- Describe and identify the basic elements in dance whilst observing dance movements
- Describe and identify the basic elements of drama whilst observing dramatic acts
- Apply the basic elements of music, dance, drama and visual art during involvement in practical activities
- Design and present music, dance, drama and visual art activities to Foundation/Intermediate Phase learners.

Core content

- The basic elements of music
- The basic elements of dance
- The basic elements of visual art
- The basic elements of drama
- Teaching strategies and classroom activities appropriate for Foundation/Intermediate Phase learners, relating to each of the arts disciplines.

Dance education research

Age:	Gender:
Culture:	**Programme**:
Previous dance experience?	

1. Reflect on the past seven weeks of dance education lectures, and describe a meaningful experience you had. (You may describe more than one experience or event if you like.)

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2. Why was the experience meaningful?

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