

ANALYSIS OF ARTISTICALY CREATIVE WORK OF STUDENTS IN LATVIAN HIGHER EDUCATION DANCE PROGRAMS

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Abstract. *Often dance teachers do not realize that their professional activity is the creation of an artwork. Teachers are limited to a range of movements in some genres or the requirements of their work place, but above all dance teachers are representatives of art un they have a potential to create new, original artistic value and contribute to the art and cultural space in Latvia. Therefore it is essential to understand the development and level of artistically creative work in the study process. The aim of this article is to analyse the artistically creative work of students in different higher education dance programs. The aim is carried out in the analysis of literature and on its base promoted evaluation indicators and levels of artistically creative work for dance teachers as choreographers. A questionnaire is designed on a basis of these indicators and levels. The respondents are students in higher education dance programs in Latvian Academy of Music and Latvian Academy of Culture. The results promote strong and weak points in the artistically creative work of students as well as the necessary discussable questions in the study process.*

Keywords: *art of dance, artistically creative work, dance pedagogy.*

Introduction

Often dance teachers do not realize that their professional activity is the creation of an artwork. It is hard to avoid making dance pieces in this profession, even if a teacher is limiting his work by teaching specific movement techniques. Of course some teachers are more limited than others concerning an established range of movements in some genres or the requirements of their work place. But above all dance teachers are representatives of art and they have a potential to create new, original artistic value and contribute to the art and cultural space in Latvia.

It is important to understand the development of artistically creative work of student and to comprehend what are the strong points and weaknesses in the study process. Also to understand what problems are taken for granted and need to be discussed with students in their time in the higher education institutions.

The aim of this article is to analyse the artistically creative work of students in different higher education dance programs. The aim is carried out in the

analysis of literature and on its base promoted evaluation indicators and levels of artistically creative work for dance teachers as choreographers. A questionnaire is designed on a basis of these indicators and levels. The respondents are students in higher education dance programs in Latvian Academy of Music and Latvian Academy of Culture.

Literature review

Artistically creative work is a part of dance teacher's professional identity. Based on the research of A. Spona, M. Vidnere and J. Jermolajeva (2016), adding the component of "artistically creative work" and forming the components according to the necessities and daily work of a dance teacher a model of professional identity of a dance teacher is developed. The model contains (components):

- Professional philosophy of a dance teacher includes: professional values and views, traditions of the profession and goals of professional activity/work;
- Professional knowledge and skills (gained in higher education programs);
- Professional roles of a dance teacher can vary from teacher, educator to choreographer and even manager;
- Artistically creative work provides for creativity (new ideas, concepts, choreography), creative approach to dance classes, concert activities and preparation for them, and also a process of creating a work of art (a dance, performance, show);
- Professional attitude towards work – engaging in profession, professional honesty, patience, respect for yourself, students, parents, etc.;
- Professional image – experience, vision of professional and personal development.

In this article the emphasis is put on the artistically creative work of Latvian students in different programs of higher dance education. As the students mostly are studying and the majority of them don't have a job experience then components like "attitude towards work" or "professional philosophy" can be evaluated according to this situation. On the contrary, all of the students are studying choreography/ dance making and are capable of expressing their full point of view on their creative activities.

The awareness of the integrated link between the activity of a personality (in cognition, work, play, sport, etc.) and "entering" the world of values become especially significant if we are truly aware that art includes all the main types of

human activity. On the contrary, in art, in the creative process of art, organically includes - as if "disappears", all the main human activities, in order to create a completely new quality - artistic work (Anspaks, 2006).

By studying artistically creative work, as one of the most important perspectives in the explanation of this concept I. Briska (2011) puts forward the interaction of the artist's personality and art work. Given that art is created by man and is associated with a sensually perceptive form, a subjective component (artist's personality) and an objective component - the work of art itself - are found in artistically creative work. However, the opinions of researchers differ in the formulation of the artistically creative work itself. Some of the most well-known views on artistically creative work: the materialization of artist's creative imagination (Выготский, 1991), the presentation of a particular psychological content in physical or imagined material, intensified by imagination (Spranger, 1928), the allocating an objective form to a subjective structure, i.e., the artists sense, thought, mood (Арнхейм, 1974), objectification of a subjective artist's personality in art forms (Zeile, 1987; Караң, 1997), the incarnation of an idea in a sign system, thus alienating from the author and making it available to others (Борев, 1988), the development of the artist's world of feelings and thoughts under the influence of creative work (Bebre, 1982).

Methodology

The aim is carried out in the analysis of literature and on its base created a model which promoted evaluation indicators and levels of artistically creative work for dance teachers as choreographers. A questionnaire is designed on a basis of these indicators and levels. The respondents are 64 students in higher education dance programs in Latvian Academy of Music ("Choreographer", "Dance and rhythmic teacher"), Latvian Academy of Culture ("Contemporary dance - choreography").

The results showed that there are practically no common points that promote or reduce development of artistically creative work. For example, it can't be said that first year students have lower activity or insight of artistically creative work than the student in the fourth year (see Fig.1). Also the represented dance genre was not the determinant point to make a suggestion about lack of creativity. Neither the work experience nor age of students.

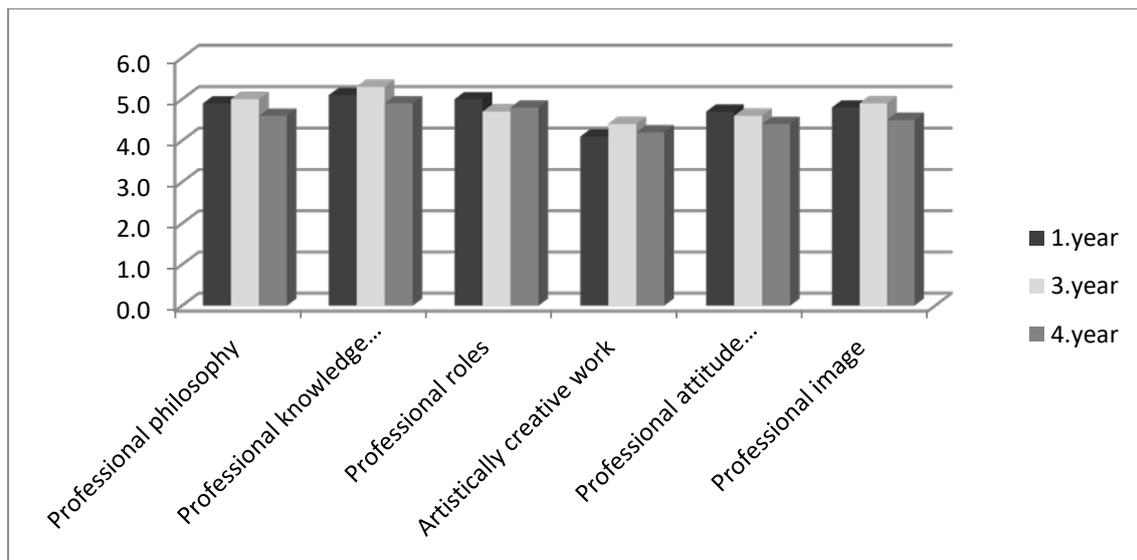


Figure 1 Professional identity components of students in "Dance and rhythmic teacher" program (average answer)

The questionnaire about artistically creative work contains different statements which can be marked as 1 or 2 – totally disagree, 3 or 4 – partly agree, 5 or 6 – totally agree. The student answers are represented jointly not highlighting any program or specific higher education institution. Based on the primary data analysis the author of this article also didn't accent the year in which the students are studying. The answers are shown according to the marked statements i.e., how many students answered 1 or 2 – low level, 3 or 4 – medium level, 5 or 6 – high level of artistically creative work.

The analysis of artistically creative work is done based on the developed indicators:

1. Revealing a story or theme in a dance;
2. Motivation for a dance creation;
3. Innovation.

The development of these indicators is marked by the division into levels with corresponding attitude of the dance teacher.

The most alarming results are concerning the statement in figure 2. It deals with plagiarism.

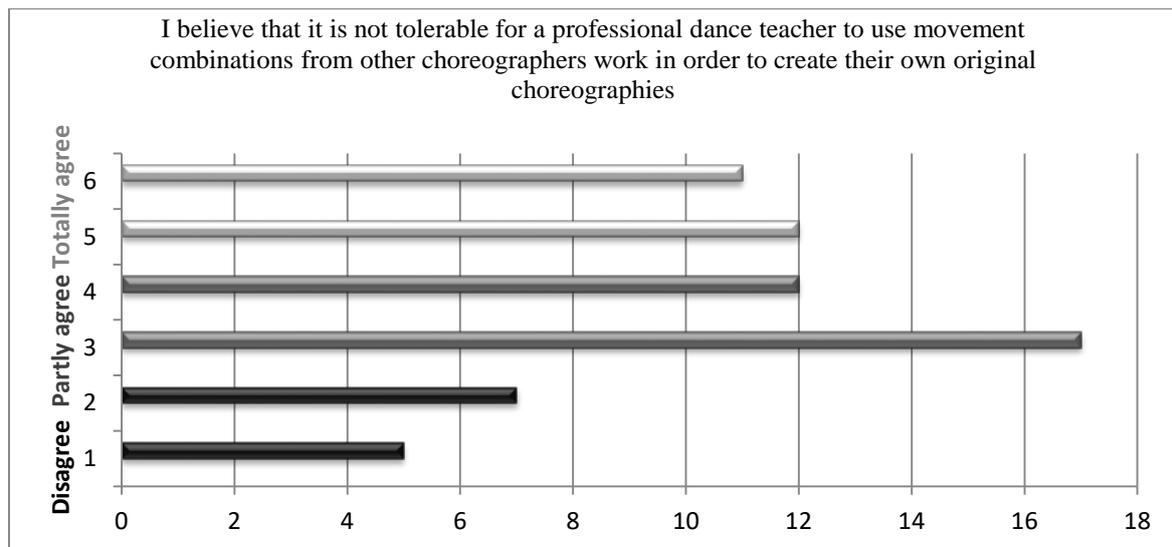


Figure 2 Usage of other choreographer movement combinations

In the wide range of information exchange and long history of dance it is difficult to create something that has never been seen before, nevertheless it is very important to understand such terms as - ethics, cultural behaviour and intellectual property. There are a certain range of already created movements in every genre/style of dance – a basic technique. Choreographers use these movements to develop their own combinations and add their own contribution to their presented genre. Also the chosen themes can be interpreted differently by various choreographers. But through it all the choreographer should take these “instruments” and use them to create his own vision. Again it is alarming that 42% of students partly agree and 19% of students think that it is normal to take something that other professional has created (a whole combination of movements) and use it without permission to make their own original dance pieces.

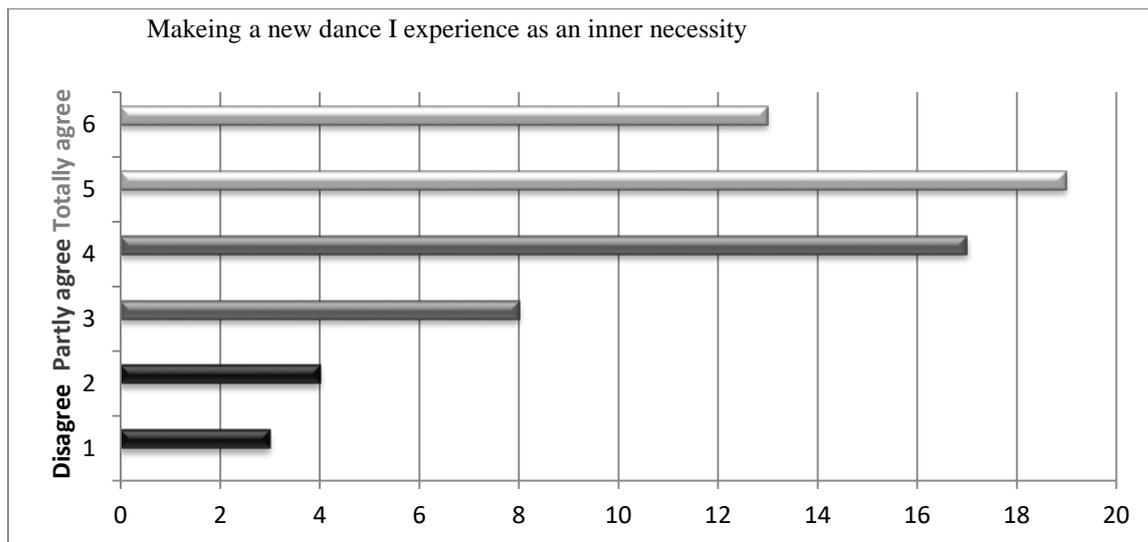


Figure 3 Inner necessity for dance making

As the figure 3 shows 50% of students fully agree to this statement, 39% agree partly and 11% of all students don't feel an inner necessity for making choreographies. That can change in the study process as the professional identity is a constantly changing non fixated process (Kerby, 1991).

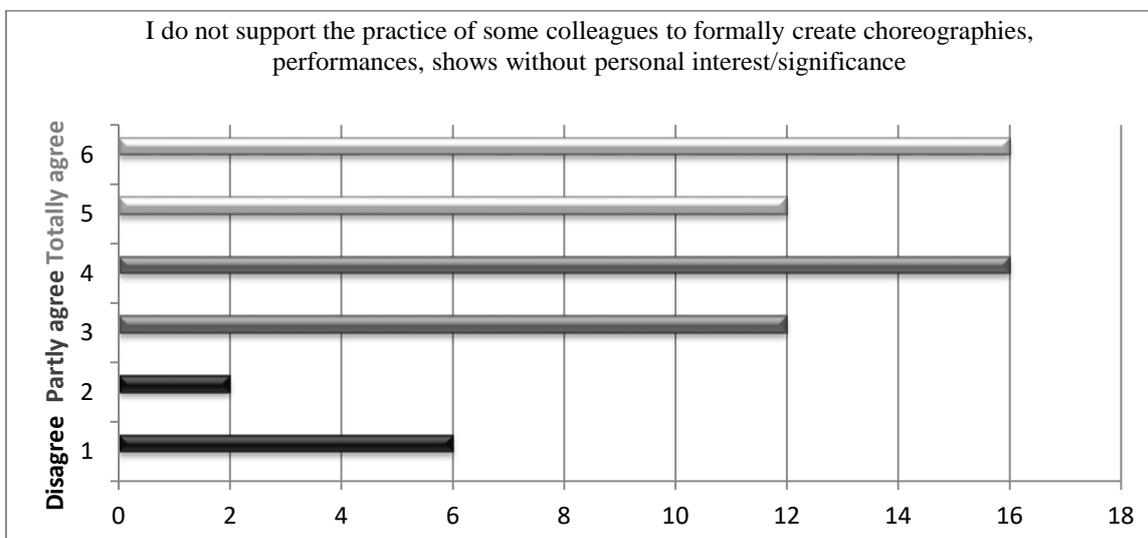


Figure 4 Creating choreographies, performances, shows without personal interest

The statement in figure 4 presents the attitude towards engagement in the artistically creative activities. The new choreographers and dance teachers need to find something important in the projects that they step in or in their own performances. If a dance performance or a show is created by a person who is partly interested or doesn't find anything important to him in his creation, then all

of it loses significance even to the viewers. A professional can make dances under any circumstances but that doesn't mean that the result has an artistic value or a deeper meaning. If dance teachers or choreographers will engage in too many meaningless projects, jobs, performances etc., then it might lead to nonfulfillment in work, burn-out or more serious problems.

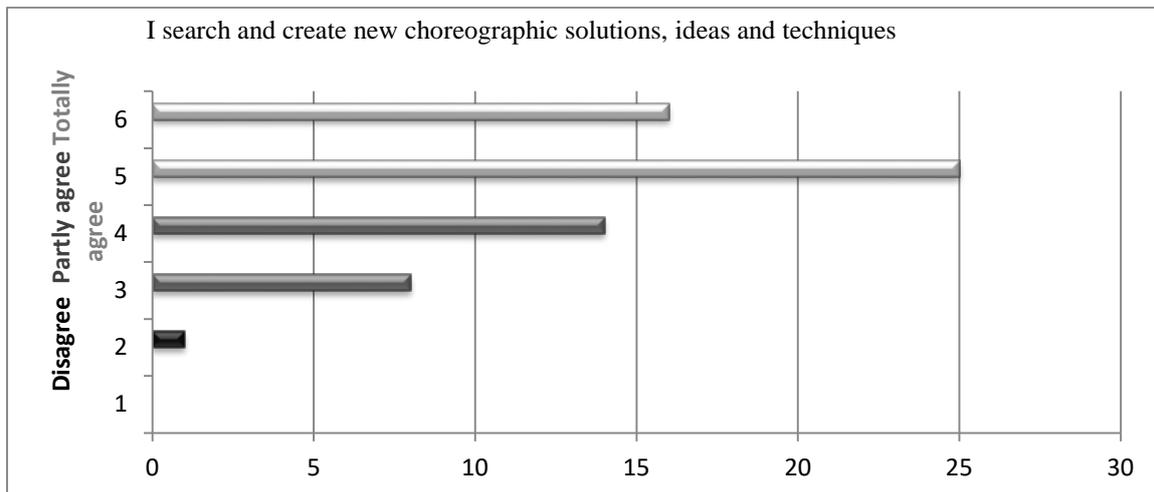


Figure 5 Creation of new choreographic solutions, ideas and techniques

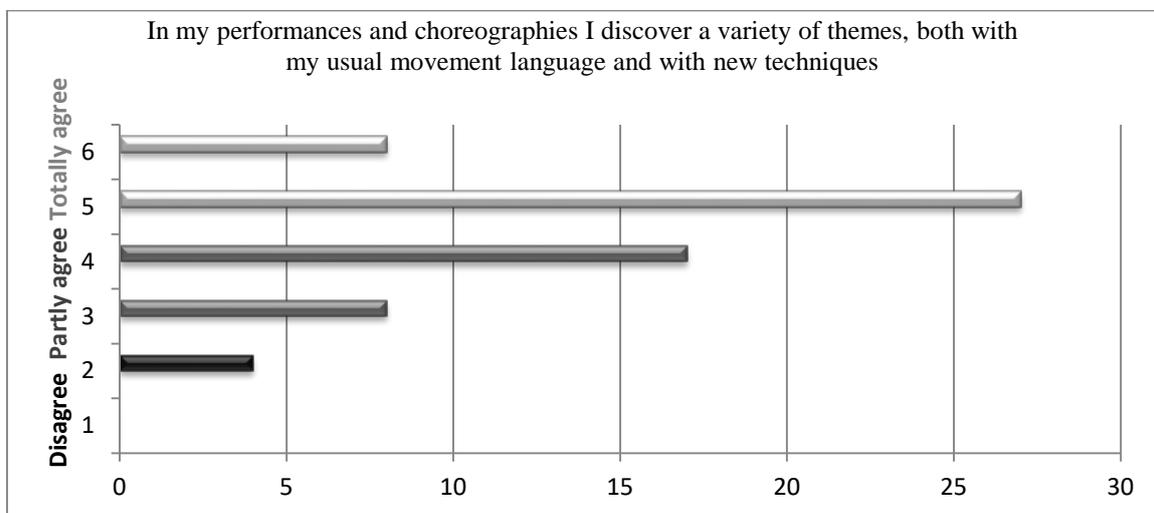


Figure 6 Theme revealing in performances through usual and new movement language

Figure 5 and figure 6 represents innovation in dance composition, movement and storytelling. The results show that 64% of students are searching and creating new choreographic solutions, ideas and techniques and 34% do it partially, also 56% reveal variety of themes in their performances with usual and new movement techniques.

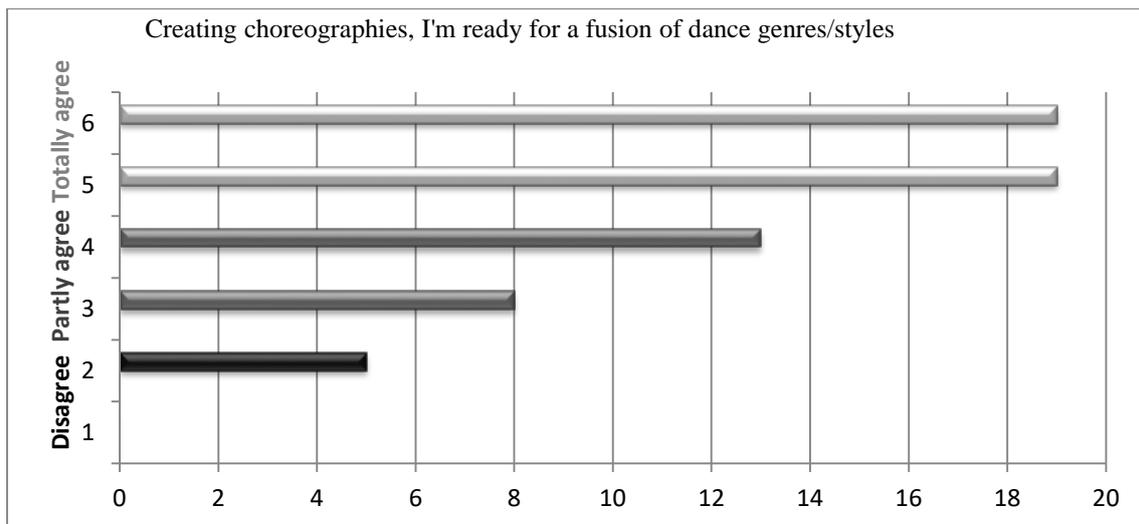


Figure 7 Dance genre and style fusion in choreographies

60% of students are ready for dance genre/style fusion in their artistic creations. It represents courage, creativeness and willingness to open borders and create something new. 33% of students partly agree to this statement and only 4 students are not willing to go over the borders of the selected genre/style. This enthusiasm need to be supported by the academies staff – creating their own projects or concerts, therefore increasing experience of emerging choreographers and teachers.

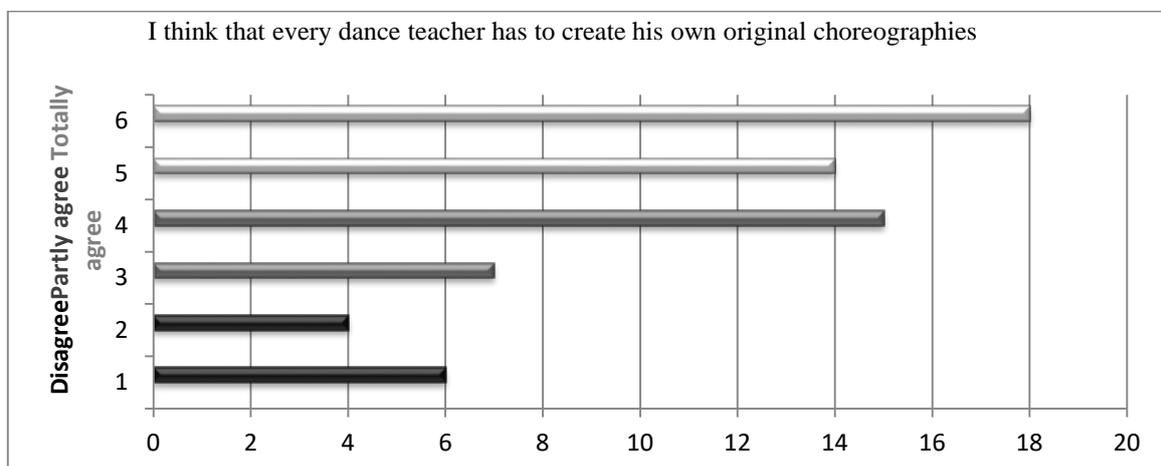


Figure 8 Dance teachers and creation of original choreographies

The statement in figure 8 can lead to discussions, but out of all the students only 10 people think that not every dance teachers should create his/her own original choreographies. Therefore 34% partly agree to this statement and 50% of students think that every dance teacher should make his/her own dance pieces.

Even if the teacher doesn't want to, or doesn't feel the need to create an art work, it is hard to avoid dance making and he must know everything there is to know about dance composition.

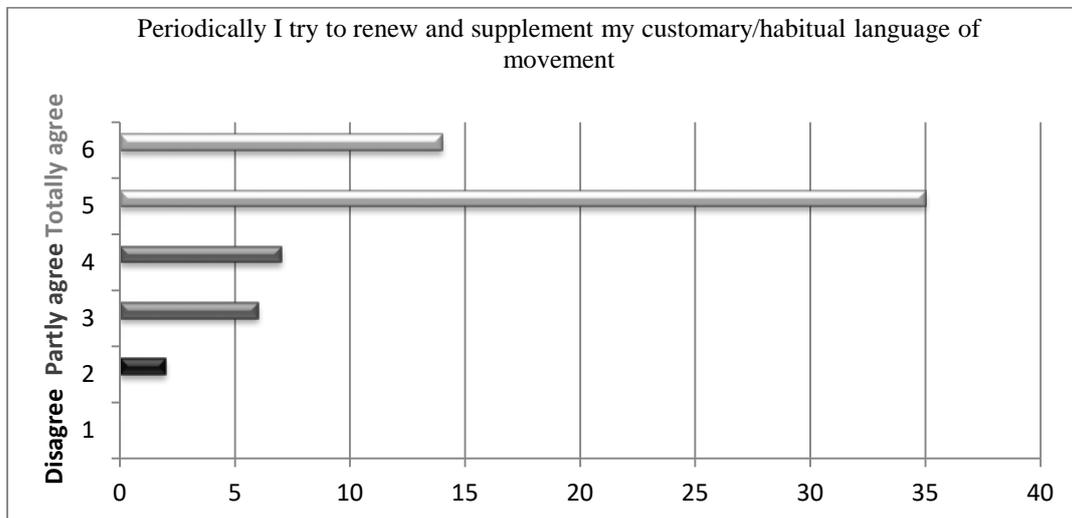


Figure 9 Renewal of habitual language of movement

A very confident majority of students (70%) try to update and supplement their customary/habitual language of movement. That is understandable hence the students are building their movement experience and learning new dance genre and styles. As the dance teachers are gaining experience and establishing their own style or “handwriting” it is getting hard to find new movements and go out of the usual “comfort zone”.

Conclusions and recommendations

- There are practically no common points (age, study year, work experience, represented dance genre) that promote or reduce development of Artistically creative work;
- Development of artistically creative work is individual and should be analysed deeper with phenomenological approaches;
- 50% of students think that every dance teacher should make his/her own dance pieces;
- 60% of students are ready for dance genre/style fusion in their artistic creations. It represents courage, creativeness and willingness to open borders and create something new.

The author of this article recommends:

- That questions dealing with plagiarism should be discussed in the study process from philosophical and practical point of view;
- As a part of students don't feel an inner necessity for making dances – it is recommended that the process of creating choreographies in the study process can gain more spiritual/mental approach and not only technically informative one. The subject of dance composition need to provide both – technical and mental comprehension;
- The questions of health – mental and physical, are important in the study process. Questions of self-evaluation, not only in terms of teaching methods but also self-evaluation concerning work load, artistic fulfilment, engagement in different projects, concert activities and other aspects of profession. Students need to recognise when they are harming themselves (weakness, burn-out, depression) and how to balance all the professional roles;
- Lecturers need to inform students and recommend different ways or actions that can be useful in their professional work and how to deal with – lack of ideas, inspiration, lack of new movements.

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