An Exploration of How Various 'Cultures of Dance' Construct Experiences of Health and Growing Older

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Dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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November 2009

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Carla Willig, for her continued support throughout this research. I would like to thank all my research participants. A big thank you also goes to my husband, Larry Paulson, and to my children, Sarah and Nathan. I dedicate this work to Karen Spärck-Jones, who taught me the wisdom of active ageing and the art of perseverance.

Declaration

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Abstract

This comparative ethnographic and narrative style interview study explored how two Circle dance groups and two Scottish Country dance groups, including a Ladies' Step dance group, constructed experiences of health and growing older for dancers and dance teachers in the 50 plus age range. The dance ethnography provided thick descriptions of each particular 'culture of dance' and the processes of embodying dance for older dancers in the 'here and now'. The 37 narrative style interviews provided an opportunity for individual older dancers to reflect on the meaning of dance in their lives and whether the dance influenced their experiences of health and growing older in terms of embodiment. Four main narratives emerged:- forming a sense of belonging through dance as an older person; learning to dance as an older person; psychological health, sense of belonging and growing older as a dancer and physical health, sense of belonging and growing older as a dancer. An emotional analysis was conducted through listening to interview tapes. These emotional analyses revealed the importance of dance for emotional expression in older individuals' lives. Although the predominant emotion expressed was pleasure and laughter, older dancers expressed a range of emotions, including sorrow, particularly when facing illness and bereavement. Scottish Country dancers enjoyed their dance form so much that they would continue dancing even after having suffered severe injuries from the dance and when the floors were slippery or hard, and some older Scottish Country dancers literally dancing themselves to death. Older dancers positioned the dance as beneficial for their health in terms of physical, psychological and social factors. This study shows that it is important for critical health psychology to consider how such existing dance groups can be supported in the future, as a complement to recent initiatives to promote creative or contemporary dance for older people living in the UK.

Research Proposal: An Exploration of How Various 'Cultures of Dance' Construct Experiences of Health and Growing Older

This research study proposes to explore how various 'cultures of dance' construct the health of the ageing body and mind amongst community-dwelling older people. The term 'ageing body' refers to the body as an object with a separate mind, whereas the term 'ageing embodiment' refers to the subjective experience of living within an ageing body with an embodied mind. Literature searches using electronic databases show that there is a distinct lack of published qualitative and ethnographic research on the ageing body and ageing embodiment, situated in contexts which promote physical and mental fitness through dance. There is a distinct neglect of the ageing body and ageing embodiment in both the mainstream scientific journal, the *British Journal of Health Psychology*, and the more critical journal, the *Journal of Health Psychology*, which seeks to situate both quantitative and qualitative health psychology research within the wider social, political, economic and cultural context. My own discourse-analytic study of older women's everyday talk about the ageing body, published in the *Journal of Health Psychology*, reinforces Cartesian Dualism, with older women separating their mind/sense of self from ageing body parts in order to adjust to the process of growing older (Paulson and Willig, 2008).

An interesting new development within critical health psychology is the focus on the use of creative arts to promote mental and physical well being amongst socially disadvantaged groups of people. The work of Rossiter, Gray, Kontos, Keightley, Colantino and Gilbert (2008) has shown effectively how drama may be used to allow brain-injured patients to communicate about their experiences. Camic (2008) has conducted an extensive review of how the arts and health interventions may be combined in health promotion and illness prevention as well as illness management, considering various models of how individuals are psychologically stimulated by participating in the arts. A complex quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the effects of creative and social activity on the health and well-being of socially isolated older people attending a Healthy Living Centre in the UK found a range of psychosocial and physical health benefits from dance and music (Greaves and Farbus, 2006). I would like to extend this work in critical health psychology by exploring the contribution of existing dance classes and social dance groups to the health and well being of community-dwelling older adults who have not been labelled as physically or mentally ill or socially isolated. Such research will also provide a contrast to the work of dance psychotherapists such as Payne (2006), who has edited a handbook of dance psychotherapy for those labelled as

mentally or physically ill. Indeed, a leaflet published by the *UK Arts Council* (2006) advocates dance as providing health benefits for all ages and a recent study day at *Sadler's Wells Ballet* last year has reviewed initiatives to promote creative dance amongst older people living in the United Kingdom.

It is remarkable that even in the 2006 special issue of the *Journal of Health Psychology* dedicated to body-image, there is not a single article which concentrates on the meaning of the ageing body or ageing embodiment from a quantitative or a qualitative perspective. A similar state of affairs is reflected in the last eight years' editions of the *British Journal of Health Psychology*, where articles focusing on community-dwelling older people, tend to use quantitative measures such as the Life Orientation Test to show how dispositional optimism is associated with healthy ageing (Steptoe, Wright, Kunz-Ebrecht and Iliffe, 2006). Such quantitative measures have the tendency to reinforce Cartesian Dualism by separating mind and body in cognitive tests, rather than striving to understand how the ageing body, which includes the embodied mind, is shaped both by biology and the social and cultural factors of a particular context (Radley, 2000). As mentioned earlier, my own discourse-analytic work on the ageing body has the problem of reinforcing Cartesian Dualism (Paulson et al., 2008).

As Radley (2000) wisely comments, there is a need for critical health psychology to consider the meaning of lived embodiment and the question of vulnerability. The concept of lived embodiment suggests an integration of mind and body through subjective experience, which is missing from the philosophy of Cartesian Dualism. The question of vulnerability suggests the significance of understanding the meaning of physical and psychological frailty within marginalised groups, such as the elderly. With the greying of populations in the Western world and rising levels of obesity, it is important for critical health psychology to consider how the wider culture and local contextual factors influence older people's experience of their ageing embodiment, referring when appropriate to the research literature of sociology and anthropology, besides that of psychology (Egger and Swinburn, 1997; Gannon, 1999; 2000; Hepworth and Featherstone, 1995; Tulle, 2008).

Several researchers within social psychology and health psychology have been arguing for new methods, including ethnography, to explore how the material aspects of life, bodies, the environment, technology, artefacts and institutions, are socially and linguistically mediated. Many of the limitations of previous qualitative research on the body and physical exercise within health psychology relate to the reliance on 'body talk' as research data rather than any kind of observation of 'body materiality'. This is due to a reliance on the phenomenological-discursive model for conducting research (Willig, 2001; Yardley, 1997).

Griffin and Bengry-Howell (2008) and Griffin (2000) have particularly challenged psychology as a discipline to utilise ethnographic methods in order to study the material aspects of culture.

In terms of the debate on the ageing body and ageing embodiment, I take a mid-line position on the realism-relativism arguments, akin to the critical realism advocated by Collier (1998). Critical realism distinguishes the beliefs about social reality from the actual social reality. In a similar vein, the subjective experiences of the body can be distinguished from the actual physicality of the body as a biological entity. Flick (2004) shows how ethnography can capture the similarities and differences between people's experiences and the social processes in a particular context in the here and now, whilst qualitative interviewing shows how the processes of social transformation actually occur in an individual's life-history. In my research study, various 'cultures of dance' construct different experiences of health and growing older, different interpretations of the ageing body and ageing embodiment in the here and now which will be captured in my written notes from the dance ethnography. Through using ethnographic and narrative style interviews as well, I will be able to capture individual's reflections on the meaning of dance, health and growing older in their unique life-histories, highlighting how dance has transformed their individual experiences of health and growing older.

I argue that subjective experiences of the ageing body and ageing embodiment are both real and socially constructed. The ethnographic study which I have published in 2005 focuses on how various 'cultures of fitness' shape subjective experiences of the ageing body and ageing embodiment for ordinary retired people (Paulson, 2005a; 2005b). Using a critical realist approach, which acknowledges that the ageing body is real although constructed in different ways by particular cultural contexts, I demonstrated how two distinctive constructions of fitness, individual health of the ageing body versus the graceful body moving in relation to others, had a profound effect on the experiences of ageing for the older people involved, which filtered through into their daily lives. I would like to develop this interest in 'cultures of fitness' to specifically explore 'cultures of dance,' a term already used by the *Journal of Dance Research* which publishes articles from both an emic perspective, looking at the 'dance culture' of a particular group, and an etic perspective, comparing 'dance cultures' of several different groups. I have not found another ethnographic and qualitative interview study published in the research literature which compares various 'cultures of dance' and associated health benefits in the lives of ordinary older people, apart from several studies on the social and

therapeutic benefits of ballroom dancing for older people in London and Brazil (Cooper and Thomas, 2002; Maristela and Vieira, 2007; Thomas and Cooper, 2002; 2003).

My published research demonstrates how different styles of fitness provide very different though equally beneficial constructions of the ageing body in physical, psychological and social terms, leading to Radley's (2000) and Turner's (1996) concept of lived embodiment, the body as an experiential entity which is shaped by biological and social or cultural factors. I would like to develop my novel use of ethnography and qualitative interviewing in other contexts that promote physical fitness for older people through dancing. I was particularly fascinated by the 'dance exercise' or Laban movement in my earlier published research, which seemed to promote greater psycho-social cohesion amongst the older class members than the individualistic fitness training (Paulson, 2005a; 2005b). My current research can explore the meaning of the ageing body and mind when situated in specific contexts and how belonging to dance groups can transform the subjective experience of ageing embodiment from the individual's perspective. The paradoxical nature of the processes of growing older can be acknowledged in both negative and positive terms, either as processes of decline or as processes of keeping active. The role of dance classes and social dance groups in promoting health and activity in the daily lives of older people through a new relationship to the ageing body and mind can be identified (Cole, 1997; Paulson and Willig, 2008).

Aims of Proposed Research

1) To identify the processes whereby specific 'cultures of dance' construct subjective experiences of the ageing body, that is become embodied, especially in terms of health.
2) To explore the impact of such 'cultures of dance' on community-dwelling older people's everyday lives.
3) To refine a novel approach of combining ethnography with narrative style interviewing as part of the cultural turn within critical health psychology, demonstrating how particular dance forms actually become embodied in the older person.
4) To complement existing initiatives by the *UK Arts Council* (2006) on dance as a community empowerment activity and *Age Concern's* (2007) work on factors which promote mental health and well-being in later life.

Outline of Proposed Research

This research will use post post-modernist dance ethnography in a critical and reflexive manner, to compare the constructions of the ageing body and mind and the subjective experiences of ageing embodiment, created by several different styles of dance class and social dance groups, such as Circle dance and Scottish Country dance, for community-dwelling older people in the 50 plus age-group (Brewer, 2000; Ness, 2004). The discipline of critical health psychology demands a self-reflexive approach on the part of the researcher, in order to be able to give research participants a voice and to recognise when the researcher is influencing the research process (Stam, 2000;Thomas and Ahmed, 2004). As it can be argued that ageing is a process which affects everyone, no matter what their age, this idea of age-limits will be to a certain extent flexible, and any data collected on people younger than 50 will be used as contrast data to the older members of dance classes. This research will refine and develop the novel approach I have already use to explore how 'cultures of fitness' become embodied in the older person, both within the actual fitness classes and within their daily lives (Paulson, 2005a; 2005b).

Open ethnographic observations and notes are to be combined with semi-structured narrative interviews in order to capture the subjective experiences of the actual dance classes and dance social groups in the here and now for older people besides their reflections and stories on the meaning of dance in their lives. The use of open ethnography is to capture naturally occurring experiences of ageing and dance in terms of 'body talk' and 'body materiality' in the different classes. The ethnographic notes and narrative interviews will be analysed in three stages; open coding line-by-line, focused coding for sub-themes and emerging narrative themes. This combination of qualitative methods has the potential to show how various 'cultures of dance' interact with individual ways of talking about subjective experiences of ageing embodiment and living with an ageing body and mind. In terms of critical health psychology, this research will demonstrate the importance of particular cultural contexts in constructing the health of the ageing body in physical, psychological and social terms. It will explore how processes of social transformation occur in the lives of ordinary older people through belonging to such dance classes and social dance groups and make recommendations for future provision (Flick, 2004; Griffin and Bengry-Howell, 2008; Griffin, 2000).

Chapter One: Initial Literature Review

As my research question is "An exploration of how various 'cultures of dance' construct experiences of health and growing older", my literature review focuses on dance, health and the ageing body or subjective experiences of ageing embodiment. Electronic searches with the terms "Dance and the Ageing Body," "Dance and the Aging Body", "Dance and Growing Older", "Dance and Health" and "Dance and Older People" reveal that there are few studies specifically focusing on this area. Recently, an interview study highlighting the social benefits of line dancing for older women has been published (Nadasen, 2008). There is an ethnographic and interview study of the effects of ageing on *Royal Ballet* dancers (Turner and Wainwright, 2003; Wainwright and Turner, 2006; Wainwright, Williams and Turner, 2005). There are several ethnographic and interview studies of ballroom and modern sequence dancing in London and Brazil (Cooper and Thomas, 2002; Maristela and Vieira, 2007; Thomas and Cooper, 2002; 2003). There is an ethnographic study of an African Caribbean quadrille workshop for older people living in London (Thomas, 2004). There is also my own ethnographic and qualitative interview study of 'dance exercise' as taught by the *Keep Fit Association* (Paulson, 2005a; 2005b). There is definitely room for further ethnographic and narrative interview research which considers how different forms of dance, such as Circle dance and Scottish Country dance, become embodied in the older person and how such forms of dance, construct experiences of the health of the ageing body and growing older.

My engagement with the literature has been a continual process throughout the research in the light of the emergent narrative themes I identified from my data, so the research literature mentioned in this chapter provides my rationale for conducting my study. The sociological and anthropological literature reviewed at the end of this chapter on the ageing body, experiences of ageing embodiment and their interaction with culture, especially helped me to define my research question 'An exploration of how various 'cultures of dance' construct experiences of health and growing older'. Further studies that appeared relevant to my research findings have been discussed in subsequent chapters. Since I started my research in October 2006, there has been a growing interest in the use of dance and creative arts to promote the health of older people, both in the special edition of the *Journal of Health Psychology* (2008) and in the outreach work of *Sadler's Wells Ballet* in promoting creative dance for older people through the *Company of Elders* (Ross, 2007). As Murray and Gray (2008) declare in the introduction to the *Journal of Health Psychology (2008) Special Issue:*

Health Psychology and the Arts, the relationship between creative arts and health psychology is under-explored. Rose (2008) is currently engaged in a qualitative research project evaluating a range of creative arts used by people in the 60 plus age range, such as choirs, dancing, amateur dramatics and arts and crafts groups, who are living in the Midlands in England. There is certainly room in the critical health psychology literature for an exploratory in-depth study of the health benefits of specific 'cultures of dance', as proposed in my ethnographic and narrative interview study of community-dwelling older people who attend different dance groups.

Importance of Active Ageing in Promoting Health

According to the *World Health Organisation*, 'active ageing' means increasing opportunities for various forms of social, economic, cultural, spiritual and physical activity as people grow older. This definition of 'healthy ageing' or 'active ageing' is compatible with the aims of critical health psychology, which strives to situate the health of individuals and social groups within a wider social, political and economic context (Marks, 2002; 2004). So the proposed ethnographic and narrative interview study of various 'cultures of dance,' although studying initiatives to promote the health and activity of the ageing body at the micro-level, relates to the definitions of active and healthy ageing at the macro-level. Indeed the *Arts Council* in the UK has recognised the importance of dance for all ages in promoting health with the publication of a leaflet in 2006 'Dance and health: The benefits for people of all ages'. The World Health Organisation has stipulated specific recommendations for exercise for older people in 2009 on their website. At least 30 minutes of moderately intense exercise is recommended on five days a week for older people.

Lack of Health Psychology Research on the Ageing Body

As argued in the introduction, the social and cultural meaning of the ageing body has been largely ignored by both mainstream and critical health psychology and by both quantitative and qualitative researchers within these two approaches to health psychology. Such work has a tendency to problematise the body in broader medical and cultural terms besides being overly cognitivist, referring to the body-image as an individual's perceptions, feelings and thoughts about the body. There is no thorough examination of how local cultural contexts construct very different experiences of the body, in terms of both individual perceptions and the perceptions of others.

In the editorial to a special edition of the Journal of Health Psychology, Grogan (2006) provides some valuable insights into the issues about the body which should be considered by

researchers, such as social factors, gender, weight and appearance and perceptual factors and body malleability, but these are not developed through the use of ethnography and narrative interviews in the subsequent research articles on the body. My own research published in the *Journal of Health Psychology* is a discourse-analytic study which considers how older women used various discursive strategies to distance themselves from ageing body parts in their everyday talk, providing complex interpretations of wider cultural discourses of female beauty and active ageing (Paulson and Willig, 2008). This discourse-analytic study tends to maintain Grogan's (2006) problematisation of the ageing body in broadly medical and cultural terms, besides an overly cognitivist approach of relying on ways of talking about the ageing body. Such approaches tend to reinforce Cartesian Dualism, a separation of mind and body. Both the *Journal of Health Psychology* and the *British Journal of Health Psychology* have no ethnographic and narrative interview work considering the subjective experience of lived ageing embodiment as constructed by particular cultural contexts, such as dance classes and social dance groups.

Quantitative Research on Exercise and Dance-Like Movement

Tulle (2008:14-15) in her book on running as a transformative experience for veteran athletes in terms of ageing embodiment, argues that both the sports science literature and the social science literature position physical activity as beneficial to older adults, whatever their state of health, because of counter-acting some of the effects of physical and social ageing. There is a lot of quantitative work showing the health benefits of exercise in general for older people, such as Loland's (2004) quantitative questionnaire study which demonstrated that exercise at moderate intensity 3-4 days a week is a significant predictor for positive subjective health. Similarly a quantitative study in the *British Journal of Health Psychology* has demonstrated the psychological and motivational benefits of participating in an organised exercise programme for women between the ages of 40 and 65 (Cox, Gorley, Puddey, Burke and Bellin, 2003). There are several quantitative studies within nursing and medicine, showing how dance-like exercises, such as Tai Chi or traditional Korean dance, can improve flexibility and mobility in older people, reducing the risk of falling, Enhanced balance is particularly important for enabling older people to remain independent in their own homes (Frederici, Bellagamba and Rocchi, 2005; Judge, 2003). Dance-like exercise can also improve quality of life for older people if they become more dependent within a nursing home context (Shigematsu, Chang, Yabushita, Sakai, Nakagaichi, Nho and Tanaka, 2002; Song, June, Kim and Jeon, 2004)

Such studies are useful for demonstrating the health benefits of dance-like exercise for older people in very general terms. The limitations of such quantitative studies, as mentioned earlier, are that they tend to be reductionist, focusing on the functional ability of the ageing body rather than exploring in depth how various 'cultures of dance' construct the meaning of health for the ageing body in social and cultural besides physical terms. Quantitative work cannot demonstrate the subtle processes through which various 'cultures of dance' actually become embodied in older people and transform their subjective experiences of health and growing older.

Research on Dance in Psychotherapy and the Medical Model

The health benefits of dance are well documented within psychology but not explored in depth in terms of how specific local 'cultures of dance' construct subjective experiences of health and growing older in ordinary community dwelling adults. There is plenty of material on topics such as dance and psychotherapy or dance and psychology, where the emphasis is on facilitating patients to gain acceptance of a body which may have suffered injury, illness or sexual abuse. Payne (2006) has edited a textbook demonstrating how dance movement therapy may be applied to individual patients, such as those with mental health problems, post-traumatic stress syndrome or refugee status, within the discipline of psychotherapy. The under-pinning theory for such work is psychodynamic, emphasising the role of the unconscious and emotionality in shaping how individuals respond to their bodies, especially in terms of movement. The aim of dance movement therapy is to put the traumatised patient back in touch with their body and its injured parts through bringing unconscious feelings and motives back into consciousness.

Kowarzik (2006) describes the benefits of dance movement therapy in terms of creating a stimulating environment for older people with dementia living in a nursing home. In this context, simple activities with a ball, cloth or scarf enhanced communication and social interaction between the older people and between the older people and their carers. Bunce (2006) describes how dance movement therapy for older patients with Parkinson's disease can increase body-awareness, self-confidence, communication and motor-abilities besides lifting depression. Dance movement therapy is not the same as dance classes or dance groups for community-dwelling older people, because the aim is to provide healing for the sick body and mind rather than simply to enhance the dance techniques of the ageing body and improve health in older peoples' daily lives. Dance movement therapy is used for pathological reasons whilst dance classes and social dance groups are aimed at ordinary people living independently

in community. Older people who belong to such dance groups still have health issues such as chronic illness and bereavement but they have potentially found their own coping mechanisms through participating in various 'cultures of dance'. Payne (2006) emphasises the importance of dance movement therapy interacting with other initiatives that promote the teaching of dance, and highlights the need for more academic research on dance. There is certainly room within the research literature on dance and psychology for further studies that explore constructions of the ageing body through dance and identify the health benefits of different dance forms for ordinary older people who have not been labelled as physically, psychologically or socially needy but still confront problems of growing older.

There are a handful of other studies that evaluate the health benefits of local initiatives to promote dance amongst older people in terms of the medical model. A qualitative Australian study, written from the perspective of an occupational therapist, explored how recreational folk dance provides social, physical, creative, cultural and mental benefits for older people as a gentle form of exercise. This occupational therapist is arguing that folk dance can be used as an activity to rehabilitate a needy older person (Connor, 2000). A quantitative study conducted in nursing in Brazil highlighted the importance of encouraging activities amongst the elderly population in order to maintain independence and autonomy, revealing that dancing was one of the activities used by older people to attain these ends (Caetano and Tavares, 2008). Other studies conducted in the UK have used dance as a health promotion initiative with elderly people who are labelled as socially isolated, physically or mentally ill, or needy in some way (Greaves and Farbus, 2006; Houston, 2005a; 2005b; Jenkins, 2003; Stacey and Stickley, 2008). From the perspective of critical health psychology, it is useful to explore the health benefits of existing dance groups which attract community dwelling older people who have not been defined as needy in terms of a medical model, as proposed in my study of various 'cultures of dance'.

Sociological Work on Dance and the Ageing Body

There is some fascinating sociological work on ballroom and modern sequence dancing for older people, which emphasises the sociological significance of dance in older people's lives and provides some insights into how various styles of dance construct the ageing body. The findings focus on the themes of: - continuity and change, sociability and communities, enjoyment of the dance and re-cycled 'teenager,' looking good on the dance floor, dance as cultural capital, dance and the concept of 'old,' and the fit dancing body and mind (Cooper and Thomas, 2002; Thomas and Cooper, 2002; 2003). Maristela and Vieira, (2007) study of

ballroom dancing in Brazil reaches similar conclusions. Cooper and Thomas's (2002) and Thomas and Cooper's (2002; 2003) research has been conducted as a large-scale comparison between dance communities in the two different geographical areas of Essex and London, focusing on the meaning of ballroom and modern sequence dancing in older people's lives. In contrast, I plan to explore how various 'cultures of dance' construct experiences of health and growing older in specific ways for individuals attending these dance groups. My research plan recognises the validity of Cooper and Thomas's (2002) and Thomas and Cooper's (2002; 2003) study and proposes to build upon this work by identifying the psychological and social processes and mechanisms through which particular dance forms, such as Scottish Country dance and Circle dance, actually become embodied in the older person through the work of dance teachers and social dance groups, besides identifying the health benefits of different forms of dance.

Existing Studies Focus on 'Body Talk' not 'Body Materiality'

There is a need for research within critical health psychology that focuses on both 'body talk' and 'body materiality' besides cultural factors (Flick, 2004; Griffin and Bengry-Howell, 2008; Griffin, 2000; Yardley, 1997). Research that focuses on 'body talk', either through quantitative questionnaires, or through qualitative interviewing, has the tendency to be overly cognitivist and to reinforce the mind-body split inherent in Cartesian Dualism (Paulson and Willig, 2008). When language is used to describe bodily sensations, it inevitably produces an interpretation or construction of physiological processes. The sheer physicality and materiality of the body as a physiological organism is difficult to capture in words. Focusing on language seems to deny the body the actual reality of embodied experience, as it is always a social construction. There is a need to explore the concept of embodiment, how social and cultural processes shape the lived experience of the body as a biological organism (Radley, 2000; Turner, 1992, 1995; 1996).

Even the feminist psychologist, Gannon (1999; 2000), has reinforced this Cartesian Dualism in her book on women and ageing, by highlighting quantitative research which privileges the mind over the body. Gannon (1999; 2000) claims that Cartesian Dualism, the mind-body split, perpetuates Western culture in a variety of forms. She explores the various dualisms that have privileged men over women, such as the 'mind-body' dualism that has associated men with the intellectual abilities of the 'mind' and women with the reproductive capabilities of the 'body'. Gannon (1999) sees the loss of reproductive capabilities at the menopause as explaining the cultural discrimination against older women in both America

and Britain. She highlights the paradoxes of the ageing body in terms of various strengths and weaknesses associated with biology, social context and personal agency. Her work suggests the importance of cultural contexts in shaping the meaning of the ageing body for older women, and highlights the significance of ageism and sexism in causing discrimination in later life. However, she ultimately resorts to reviewing the existing quantitative and scientific research on the ageing body, in chapters such as "Psychological Well-being," "Physical Well-being," "Menopause" and "Cardiovascular Health." There is certainly room within psychology for research on the ageing body that explores how local cultural contexts, such as dance classes and social dance groups, construct the meaning of the ageing body for both women and men.

The tendency of existing research on the ageing body to focus on 'body talk' rather than 'body materiality' is well demonstrated by quantitative questionnaires used within the disciplines of sociology, social gerontology and mainstream health psychology. The findings of quantitative questionnaires on the ageing body provide interesting generalisations about the experience of growing older in terms of the macro-culture, but cannot capture the malleability or flexibility of the body and body-image according to micro-social and cultural contexts (Gleeson and Frith, 2006; Grogan, 2006). Indeed Tiggemann's (2004) conclusions in her literature review of body-image research with older adults, reflect the limitations of Oberg and Tornstam's (1999; 2001) postal surveys on the experience of growing older in the wider consumer culture of Sweden. The nature of quantitative questionnaires means that the researcher has completely determined the agenda and alternative responses available to participants. Thus the findings of Oberg and Tornstam's (1999; 2001) quantitative questionnaires that older people feel young inside despite an ageing outer appearance or that older women worry less about their body-image than younger women, seem overly simplistic and cognitivist, reinforcing the mind-body split inherent in Cartesian Dualism without in-depth consideration of the social and cultural processes involved in growing older.

Grogan (2006), in her editorial for the *Journal of Health Psychology Special Issue: Body-image*, highlighted the importance of appearance, weight and gender, for an individual's thoughts and feelings about his or her body. The gap in theory and qualitative research within critical health psychology on these issues for the ageing body can be partially filled by considering the literature of sociology and anthropology. Both the theoretical and empirical literature within sociology and anthropology offer some interesting insights into the significance of appearance, weight and gender for the ageing body, and refer to the importance of the cultural and historical context in shaping these aspects. This is useful for considering how different local cultural contexts shape the ageing body as a biological entity in different

ways through processes of social transformation (Flick, 2004; Griffin and Bengry-Howell, 2008; Griffin, 2000). Especially important within the sociological literature is the concept of the paradoxical nature of growing older as a process with both strengths and weaknesses. This is exemplified with reference to the sociological literature on the 'mask of ageing' and the 'female beauty hypothesis'.

Paradoxes of the Ageing Body and Ageing Embodiment

The paradoxes of the ageing body provide a vital debate in terms of narrative cultural meanings of the ageing body for men and women. The paradoxes of the ageing body, such as vulnerability versus spiritual transcendence, have a long history. Cole (1997) in his book "The Journey of Life, A Cultural History of Aging in America" identified how even before the Renaissance, the ageing body was represented in terms of both physical decline and spiritual growth as a sense of both vulnerability to and transcendence of the ageing processes. The ageing body is a narrative paradox because it shows our own drive towards death, what Freud has termed "Thanatos" or the death instinct in contrast with "Eros" or the life instinct (Freud, 1917). There have been times when these narrative paradoxes have been compressed into negative and positive stereotypes such as in the Victorian era, and times when these paradoxes represent greater uncertainty such as the search for the meaning of ageing in a post-modern culture.

The most significant narrative paradox of contemporary Western consumer culture seems to be greater awareness of the vulnerability of the ageing body in the Fourth Age versus the potential for the ageing body to resist the effects of ageing during the Third Age through anti-ageing strategies. This paradox of vulnerability and resistance has been heightened due to increased longevity and demographic changes within the Western world and opportunities for leisure pursuits and health promoting activities in retirement (Gilleard and Higgs, 2000; 2005; Hepworth and Featherstone, 1995). However, as Burman (1998) and Andrews (1999) have eloquently argued, there is a danger in emphasising the concept of resistance because this implies a moral obligation to overcome the problems of the ageing body rather than to adjust to them.

Mask of Ageing and Female Beauty Hypothesis

The paradoxical nature of the ageing body is demonstrated in the sociological literature through the concepts of the 'mask of ageing' and the 'female beauty hypothesis'. Tulle (2008) provides a thorough analysis of the social gerontology literature on the ageing body and ageing embodiment as the lived experience of the ageing body. The most pertinent strands of this

extensive literature are reviewed here. Featherstone and Hepworth (1991) identified the 'mask of ageing' as exemplifying the contradictions of the processes of ageing - the outer appearance ages whilst the inner identity remains youthful. Thompson (1992) took a narrative approach to identify that older people feel young inside despite an ageing body. Ballard, Elston and Gabe (2005) challenge this masking theory through their interview work with women in their 50s which suggests that the ageing of their inner bodies provokes them to present a socially acceptable appearance, rather than use age-resisting strategies. Discourse analytic work suggests older women uphold Cartesian Dualism, a separation of mind/sense of self from the ageing body, in order to monitor and control ageing body parts in their everyday talk (Paulson and Willig, 2008). This present research will explore these debates, considering how various 'cultures of dance' influence older people's perceptions of the 'mask of ageing' and the 'female beauty hypothesis'.

As discussed earlier, Oberg and Tornstam (1999; 2001) have provided quantitative evidence through postal questionnaires that older people feel young inside despite an ageing outer appearance but significantly, that older women worry less about their appearance than younger women. Their (1999) study showed how gender is particularly important as women's body image improved with age whilst men's body-image remained static. Younger women worried more about their bodies than younger men, but the oldest women showed a level of satisfaction with their bodies similar to the level of satisfaction experienced by the oldest men. Oberg and Tornstam, (2001) later showed that youthfulness and fitness were important ideals across the ages of twenty to 85. For example, apart from the youngest men, all other respondents wanted to reduce their weight. So these conclusions suggest that the 'mask of ageing' and 'female beauty hypothesis' carry some truth. Older people aspire to 'stay young' despite an ageing outer appearance. However they do so by manipulating their bodies, which suggest a more intimate relationship between self and appearance than suggested by quantitative studies on the 'mask of ageing' or 'female beauty hypothesis'. Indeed Johnston, Reilly and Kremer's (2004) grounded theory study of women of a range of ages from sixteen to 77 found that the relationship between an individual's levels of appearance concern or bodily control was not clear-cut.

Psychodynamic theory can be used to explain the paradoxes inherent in the concept of the 'mask of ageing' and the 'female beauty hypothesis'. Biggs' (1997; 1999) concept of the persona or masquerade represents the outer body which either protects the inner mature self from a potentially hostile social world or provides a bridge to that social world. There are times when the persona/masquerade match the inner mature self and times when they

disagree. Biggs (1997; 1999) has suggested that ageing leads to increasing sophistication in the use of masquerade showing flexible use of self and identity according to the demands of modern society. Such an analysis suggests older people exert personal agency in manipulating the persona or masquerade as they negotiate identities for their ageing bodies in a Western consumer culture. His later work acknowledges how taking masking theory to extremes risks disembodying the individual's sense of self (Biggs, 2004).

So existing research on the 'mask of ageing' and the 'female beauty hypothesis' suggests that the ageing body and ageing body-image has a dynamic nature which is constructed by particular contexts and the personal agency of individual men and women interacting with those contexts. My research will advance these debates by focusing on both 'body talk' and 'body materiality' for individual older men and women who belong to various cultural contexts concerned with dance, rather than looking at men and women's subjective experiences of ageing in the looser historical terms of consumer culture and patriarchal society.

Few Ethnographic Studies on Ageing and Physical Activity

There is a distinct lack of qualitative ethnographic and interview studies on ageing and physical activity as most research in this area is quantitative, such as a comparative study on attitudes towards bodily appearance among men and women of different ages who are active and inactive (Grant and Cousins, 2001; Loland, 2000). There is some qualitative research on the body when situated in aerobics classes or the gym, which uses a loose sense of context rather than exploring how specific dance classes and dance groups construct different types of ageing body and body image in terms of experiences of health and growing older as in my proposed research. Poole's (2001) qualitative in-depth interview study on the ageing body with seventeen women fitness instructors for the over 50s, similarly provides an analysis using a loose sense of context in terms of consumer culture. Consumer culture is defined as reflecting images of slenderness, youth, beauty, health and fitness (Featherstone, 1991). Poole (2001) used some participant observation in fitness classes and a narrative approach in her interviews with the female fitness instructors who were between the ages of 52 and 73. She found the discourses on the body related to body management in terms of shape. And she found the discourses on health related to the feel-good factor and social interactions. The limitations of her approach are that she just focuses on the fitness instructors as individuals rather than exploring how the fitness instructors construct the subjective experience of the ageing body for their clients whilst in the sports centre, as in my own ethnographic study on

various 'cultures of fitness' for older people (Paulson, 2005a; 2005b). Phoenix (2006) explored how younger athletes perceive their own ageing through the use of narrative mapping and Tulle (2008) focuses on veteran athletes and how ageing impacts on their bodily capital through an ethnographic and narrative interview study. Both these studies are with extremely fit members of the population, just as in the study of ageing *Royal Ballet* dancers (Turner and Wainwright, 2003; Wainwright and Turner, 2006; 2005). There is room in the research literature for more ethnographic studies on physical activity and ageing, especially on dance and ageing, which can consider how different "cultures of dance' construct experiences of health, the body and growing older for ordinary community-dwelling older people.

Phenomenology of Embodiment

Recent research on the phenomenology of the body within psychology considers embodiment as the lived experience of the active body. This research on the phenomenology of the body is influenced by the philosophical work of Merleau-Ponty (1962) that focuses on the conscious awareness of the body as a subject besides that of Leder (1990) that focuses on the "dys-appearing body", the idea that the body dis-appears from conscious awareness when it is functioning normally but re-appears in conscious awareness when it is "dys-functioning" due to illness or injury. For Leder (1990) the body is flesh that is both perceived by the world and actively perceives the world. Such philosophy challenges Cartesian dualism, the mind-body split, because it emphasises the mind and body as working together as a thinking, feeling and active entity, interacting with the environment in a purposeful and intentional manner. The phenomenology of embodiment goes beyond the *what* of the body to consider the *what-how*, how intentionality pervades both body and mind. This is the meaning of the phenomenology of embodiment or lived embodiment and corresponds to Heiddegger's (1927/1962) ideas of *ways-of being* in the world. Lived embodiment means actively using the mind and body together so that cognitive processes are also embodied processes (Garza and Fisher Smith, 2009). Critical health psychology particularly strives to access the meaning of the experience of lived embodiment in terms of subjectivity as a contrast to the objectification of the body by medical science and the Cartesian dualism re-inforced by mainstream scientific health psychology (Radley, 2000). Radley (2000) highlights the importance of symbolic acts, such as older people dancing at a day centre, as a way of transforming the subjective experience of the body (Hazan, 1986). Action has the potential to change the subjective experience or the phenomenology of embodiment.

So the body is experienced as active, feeling and intentional in both qualitative, exploratory psychological research and in some quantitative cognitive psychological experimental research. Recent research on dance in cognitive psychology has been limited to brain scans, but there is growing recognition of the need to include bodily measurements (Parsons, 2009, work in progress). Brown, Reavey, Cromby, Harper and Johnson (2009) acknowledge the problem of finding new ways to access embodied experience in both qualitative and experimental methods in psychology. Qualitative methods used in psychology to access experiences of lived embodiment include discourse analysis to explore condom use in sexual relationships (Willig, 1995), memory work (Haug, 1987) that has been used to investigate the experience of sweating and pain (Gillies, Harden, Johnson, Reavey, Strange and Willig, 2004) and visual methods such as painting to explore experiences of the processes of ageing, combined with recorded interviews (Gillies et al., 2005). The problem with all these methods is that although they aim to access the experience of lived embodiment in non-verbal contexts, they ultimately rely on language to interpret those experiences.

Memory work is a particularly useful method for exploring experiences of lived embodiment, focusing on how participants experience a situation and asking participants to focus on the role of the body in forming a sense of self and identity, that is embodied subjectivity (Willig, 2001). Brown et al. (2009) observe that personal writings exploring memories of lived embodiment such as dizziness, although providing very diverse interpretations including positive memories of being held and negative memories of complete loss of control, focus on the functional nature of the feeling body as a body in action according to the particular project. They compare this qualitative finding of the body as an active experiential entity with the original scientific experiments conducted in cognitive psychology by Wundt in the nineteenth century. Such experiments involved observing and documenting the responses of the body to specific stimuli. Brown et al. (2009) conclude that the experience of embodiment is rooted in action complexes, whatever the triggers of the experience in the particular context and whatever the methodology, whether qualitative or quantitative.

Indeed within quantitative cognitive psychological experimental research, some researchers consider the phenomenology of embodiment by moving beyond the definition of an information-processing model of mental states. As Van de Laar and de Regt (2008:291) succinctly declare "embodied embedded cognition and neurophenomenology are slowly invading cognitive (neuro)science." Their theoretical paper distinguishes between "phenomenologically inspired embodied embedded cognition" and "functionalist embodied embedded cognition." They argue that mental states are in fact neural states, challenging the

Cartesian dualist idea of a mind-body split, taking the viewpoint of Merleau-Ponty (1962) that human agency ensures the body is in dynamic interaction with the world, developing habitual coping strategies in a phenomenological manner. The experience of embodiment is located in both phenomenal consciousness and in action-complexes, such as when undertaking goal-directed behaviour using the hand that is nearest to an object to pick that object up. The decision to use a particular hand is not consciously registered, but the embodied nature of cognitive processes in terms of neural activity means the most appropriate hand performs the task automatically (Cox and Smitsman, 2008). This phenomenon of lived embodiment as meaning the ability to respond automatically to stimuli is reflected in Gibson's (1966; 1979) work on visual perception. The concept of visual affordances provides an ecologically valid explanation of how visual processes act together to provide an instant picture for the brain of the scene before the eyes. The brain and body are working together so that visual processes are embodied processes to facilitate instant interaction with the particular environment.

Both quantitative and qualitative research in psychology shows how the phenomenology of embodiment captures the action complexes and intentionality of a mind and body working together. These ideas are relevant to my research study of how older people experience lived embodiment when interacting in the environments of different dance groups.

Culture, Phenomenology and Embodiment

My research relates specifically to existing work on both the psychology and sociology of the body and lived experience of embodiment. The body or the lived experience of embodiment has been studied through various discourses or cultural sources of knowledge such as 'body talk' in order to understand how different social and cultural contexts shape the body and the experience of lived embodiment. These discourses are social constructionist, phenomenological and biological, corresponding to the idea of the bio-psycho-social model as an important basis for health psychology research (Engel, 1977). Empirical research on the body raises philosophical debate about which discourse is given prominence. Each discourse takes a different perspective on the relativism-realism debate. Feminist theory calls for integration of the social constructionist, phenomenological and biological discourses (Witz, 2000). The proposed research assumes that social reality is constructed in groups or institutions. Different groups and institutions highlight phenomenological, social constructionist and biological discourses about the ageing body in distinctly different ways (Flick, 2004; Griffin and Bengry-Howell, 2008; Griffin, 2000; Yardley, 1997).

As shown in the section on the paradoxes of the ageing body, the works of the social constructionist philosopher, Foucault (1977; 1984), demonstrate how cultural discourses, or sources of knowledge and power, operate at both the macro- and the micro-levels, in a diffuse manner. My research will explore how older individuals negotiate their identities in terms of health and growing older through observations of the materiality of the body and the context and the recording of 'body talk.' Though Foucault (1977; 1984) does not elaborate on bodies in terms of gender, ageing or the lived experience of embodiment, his works are useful for demonstrating concepts of vulnerability and resistance in the ageing body. The concept of surveillance in *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1977) shows how bodies are docile under the Panopticon gaze, and this suggests how ageing bodies can be vulnerable when dominated by other people. The concept of technologies of the self in *History of Sexuality* (Foucault, 1984) shows how individual bodies are regulated by the ethical self, and exert a degree of personal agency, which may involve resisting the status quo. His works are useful for thinking about definitions of culture or context at different levels. *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1977) shows both a loose historical sense of context in general terms and localised, institutional contexts such as the Panopticon prison.

Writing from a similar social constructionist position to Foucault, Turner (1996) emphasised the notion of reciprocity between individual and culture with his theory of bodily order. The problem with this theory of bodily order is that the individual body is considered in general terms, rather than in terms of the individual experience of lived embodiment when situated within particular institutions. Turner's (1996) theory focuses on the problems caused to social systems by the body such as the reproduction of populations through time, the restraint of desire as an internal body problem, the regulation of populations through space and the representation of bodies in social space as a task facing the surface or exterior of bodies. My research will provide details of how ageing bodies are represented in social space in terms of specific dance techniques, showing how these dance techniques influence subjective experiences of ageing. Such regulation of the body can be seen as an important part of the 'rationalization' process of modern society, as the visible ageing body is either transformed or transcended. Just as Atkinson (1995) suggests, in the case of doctors observing body images, or Gubrium (1992) suggests in the case of therapists working with problem families, looking, seeing and describing are linguistically organized activities, pertinent to the particular context. In a post-modern culture arising out of a Western consumer culture, the ageing body in terms of the 'mask of ageing' and the 'female beauty hypothesis' assumes different connotations in different local cultural contexts (Biggs, 1997; 1999; Featherstone and Hepworth, 1991).

The problem with social constructionism is that it can fall into extreme relativism by highlighting the discursive aspects of the body. For example, Green (1993) describes social reality for gerontology purely in terms of language rather than substantial things. Chronic ambivalences exist in images of ageing and the colour-coding of grey can be either positive or negative in cultural terms because of the use of language. Green (1993) begins with a purely textual analysis and moves outwards to the context. This contradicts the ideas put forward in my research that a contextual analysis provides a strong analytical framework, interacting with individual body talk and the material display of the body and dance movements. Locating the objectivity of social reality purely in the structures of language echoes the extreme discursive position of Butler (1993) who sees gender purely as performativity, with an individual's cultural beliefs determining gender behaviour. In contrast, my research sees the ageing body as a reality which is modified according to the cultural discourses embedded in the localised context, providing concrete evidence for the diffuse nature of cultural sources of power to which Green (1993) refers in purely discursive terms.

The phenomenological discourse highlights a different perspective on the ageing body from the social constructionist discourse of cultural relativity. Frank (1991) stands out as the key phenomenologist on the individual experience of the body in action and his work relates to the philosopher Merleau-Ponty (1962) and his 'Phenomenology of Perception'. Frank's (1991) four ideal types of body usage are certainly relevant to how women and men may display their ageing bodies in various dance classes or social dance groups, for example, as a 'disciplined body' undergoing step practice, as a 'mirroring body' when learning dance exercises or consuming dance-related products, as a 'dominating body' when working as a dance teacher or social dance leader and applying dance techniques to older women and men, and as a 'communicative body' when displaying shared narratives of dance. The 'mirroring body' can be seen in terms of consumer culture as relating to the narcissistic personality, which promotes an idealised view of the body as youthful, enduring and constitutive of the self. But the body cannot be considered purely as an individual agent - the body both experiences personal agency and is shaped by the social processes in the particular context.

Frank's (1991) phenomenological styles of body usage can be seen as a development of Goffman's (1959; 1963) ideas on the body as a component of action. Although Goffman (1959; 1963) sees the significance of the body as determined by social structures beyond the control of the individual, his work tends to emphasise the individual agency of social actors in control of their bodies. Management of the body is central to the maintenance of encounters, social roles and social relations and the body is seen as the mediator of the relationship

between an individual's self-identity and their social identity. The body is a resource, managed in various ways to construct a particular version of the self - the body is the material property of individuals but the meanings attributed to the body are determined by 'shared vocabularies of body idiom' (Goffman; 1963: 35). Face-work and bodywork are crucial to successful encounters and the maintenance of social roles. So the individual manages the ageing body in different ways with reference to shared vocabularies according to the local context, whether this is a Scottish Country dance group or a Circle dance group as in this study. My study develops the work of Goffman (1959; 1963) by looking at the meaning of lived embodiment through face-work, bodywork and social roles in the specific localised contexts, in terms of dance, health and ageing. Non-verbal communication will be an important part of my ethnographic observations.

Within the discipline of sociology, Bourdieu (1984) offers a convincing argument for combining social constructionist and phenomenological approaches. He defined the body in terms of 'physical capital', a commodification of the body which links identities with the social values given to the sizes, shapes and appearances of bodies. His concept of 'habitus' refers to socially instilled bodily dispositions as reflecting a particular social class. Thus an individual's bodily disposition is a direct reflection of their social class, portrayed by their embodied tastes and styles. Social stratification thus occurs through classification of the body. Working classes have an instrumental relationship with their body whereas the dominant classes have the time and the resources to treat the body as a project. Bourdieu (1984) does note some exceptions to his rigid classification of the body according to social class. He identifies how attributes such as beauty are not class dependent and how these attributes explain why marriages occur between classes. My research looks at the different social values given to the physical capital of the ageing body within groups promoting dance for community dwelling older people.

Turner (1992) goes beyond the limitations of the naturalistic and social constructionist approaches to the body. He sees the body as both a biological organism and an experiential entity contributing towards social relations, with an analysis of the body as a system of representation. So the case of left-handedness has different connotations in different societies, just as ageing bodies have different connotations in different institutional contexts, as recognised in my research. Philosophical anthropology has the potential to demonstrate how the body is filled with social meaning according to the environment, as expressed in ideas of contamination and taboo. Human embodiment is an unfinished state, with an inherent drive to develop, which forces humans to act on themselves, others and the world around them

(Douglas, 1984; Radley, 2000; Turner, 1995). My research shows how the unfinished state of human embodiment encourages older people to attend dance classes in response to their cultural environment, the idea that older people may seek a physical and mental challenge which may be interpreted as taking control of their bodies in order to promote their health.

The 'uncertain' body causes contemporary concern because of some ability to exert control over our bodies and question the meaning of the body. Latimer (2009) has argued that there are times when the body is 'unknowing' in terms of being unaware of biological states and biological changes. Indeed, this means much of the communication between bodies can be interpreted as non-verbal or pre-verbal, what Williams and Bendelow (1996; 1998) have described as the emotional body. In cultural terms, the body has become a 'project' in high modernity, a time of ontological insecurity. The rise of 'second wave' feminism, demographic changes with the ageing of Western populations and the growth of consumer culture, all emphasise the pertinence of studying how community-dwelling older people use dance classes to construct the health of their ageing bodies in different local contexts. Artefacts, such as dance and music, define the relationship of culture to the body. Inanimate objects made by human hands transform the image of the body in culturally recognised ways. Body maintenance techniques such as different 'cultures of dance' mirror the concept of artefacts - their use is a direct application of a particular type of culture to the ageing body within specific local cultural contexts in my proposed research (Burkitt, 1999; Featherstone and Hepworth, 1991; Flick, 2004; Giddens, 1991; Griffin and Bengry-Howell, 2008; Yardley, 1997).

Conclusion

Qualitative research in the form of ethnography and narrative interviews will explore the processes of the ageing body as constructed by the localised cultural discourses of various dance classes and social dance groups. There is a lack of health psychology research on the ageing body. There is quantitative research showing the benefits of exercise and dance-like movement for older people and there is research within dance psychotherapy and the medical model focusing on the benefits of dance for older people who are defined as needy in terms of physical and mental illness or socially isolated. There is some sociological work on ballroom dance and the ageing body. The paradoxical experience of growing old has been documented historically, and the ageing body has become problematised as a result. Thus contradictory discourses on the ageing body have arisen historically. The mask of ageing and the female beauty hypotheses are examples of these contradictions. The debates in the social

gerontological literature highlight whether ageing is a cultural process of decline or active ageing. There are some ethnographic studies looking at the ageing body and subjective experiences of lived ageing embodiment in spaces of active ageing, but there is certainly room for an ethnographic and narrative interview study exploring how various 'cultures of dance' construct experiences of health and growing older. Both 'body talk' and 'body materiality' need to be considered in order to research the meaning of ageing embodiment and question the mind-body split inherent in Cartesian Dualism. The phenomenology of embodiment has been explored in both qualitative psychology and quantitative cognitive psychology, focusing on the action complexes of the thinking and feeling body as a whole. Cultural sources of knowledge are important at both the macro-level and the micro-level as suggested by Foucault (1977;1984) and the role of culture needs to be considered with reference to the phenomenology of the body. Social constructionist, phenomenological and biological discourses on the ageing body and subjective experiences of ageing embodiment need to be explored for their health benefits within localised cultural contexts offering various different dance forms for community dwelling older people. This is compatible with Engel's (1977) idea of a bio-psycho-social model within health psychology.

Chapter Two: Methodological Issues

Introduction

As argued in the outline of my research at the beginning of this thesis, I have used innovative qualitative methods in order to access the meaning of health and growing older as constructed by different dance groups for community-dwelling older people. My review of the research literature has shown how there are few studies exploring the meaning of dance for older people apart from those in the psychotherapeutic tradition that position older people as pathologically needy in terms of social isolation or physical or mental illness (Bunce, 2006) or Greaves and Farbus's (2006) study of a Healthy Living Centre which used dance and music with socially isolated older people. There are studies relating to ballroom dancing for older people but this dance form requires a partner, and many older people are widowed or living alone (Cooper and Thomas, 2002; Thomas and Cooper, 2002; 2003). And there are studies relating to the effects of ageing on professional dancers from the *Royal Ballet* (Turner and Wainwright, 2003; Wainwright and Turner, 2005; 2006). There are no comparative ethnographic and narrative interview studies of the health benefits of Circle dance, Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance for community-dwelling older people in the research literature. From the perspective of critical health psychology, it is useful to explore existing dance groups for community dwelling older people as well as newer initiatives relating particularly to the use of creative or contemporary dance, such as *Sadler's Wells Company of Elders* for ordinary older people living in London (Ross, 2007).

Outline of Chapter Two

This chapter on methodology is divided into three sections:-

1) A discussion of the literature explaining why I chose to combine dance ethnography with narrative interviews and debates about the particular methodological and philosophical approaches used in my study.
2) An outline of my research design, details of conducting the research study and examples of the stages of data analysis.
3) An overview of the bigger stories or main themes emerging from the narrative analysis of my ethnographic notes about the dance sessions and narrative interviews I conducted with older dancers.

1) Discussion of the Literature

The Cultural Turn in Psychology

Griffin and Bengry-Howell (2008) and Griffin (2000) argue that the language we use to describe the self is always situated in particular cultural, historical and political contexts. They both endorse the hermeneutic phenomenological- discursive model and strive to take the 'cultural turn' one step further than Yardley (1997) through the study of the material aspects of culture with the tools of ethnography. The material aspects of culture include the ways in which the human body is constructed through bodily techniques such as specific forms of dance and movement. Written texts are also significant as cultural artefacts, providing the language for talking about issues such as dance and health within a particular local culture. Such written texts influence how dancers construct stories about themselves and the social group in shared narratives (Murray, 2004). Telling stories has long been recognised as an important way for people to make sense of their local cultures and material world (Bruner, 1990; Josselson and Lieblich, 1999).

Flexibility in the field is a key feature of ethnography but just as with quantitative scientific studies, there is a need for an appropriate research design (Brewer, 2000). Ethnography as a research method can triangulate data from documents to observations of both human talk and behaviour besides interviews, thus having the potential to illustrate the processes through which specific local cultures, such as 'cultures of dance,' actually become embodied. The concept of lived embodiment suggests the subjective experience of the body is constructed by psychological and biological factors interacting within a particular social and cultural context (Radley, 2000; Turner, 1992; 1996). Csordas (1994) eloquently explains how documents, observations and interviews provide different perspectives on the body. Dance training curricula and other written texts produced by the dance organisations or older individuals, are semiotic representations of the body. In contrast, observations and interviews can access ways-of-being with the body in terms of both body materiality and body talk.

Flick (2004) demonstrates the 'cultural turn' in critical health psychology research by emphasising the importance of ethnography combined with qualitative interviews as a research method. The concept of social transformation is vital to understanding how specific contexts construct health and illness in terms of both peoples' experiences and social processes. Social transformation means that the social processes in specific contexts are recognised as potentially changing peoples' experiences of health and illness. The operation of such social processes is not always straightforward. Critical health psychology has particularly

drawn attention to the importance of questioning the intentions and power relations of both researchers and the social groups that are being researched. Both the particular research methods used as well as the specific research context influence the findings (Marks; 2002).

As Flick (2004) argues, qualitative critical health psychology research goes beyond interpretations to identify potential social transformations or social changes. He describes how social transformations or social changes can be studied in three different ways through qualitative research according to the intentions of the researcher. The researcher can observe social changes, the researcher can actively participate in the research field and so be more reflexive about the field and their own experiences of social changes, or the researcher can actively stimulate social changes for the research participants and the field. Narratives are sensitive to social transformations or social changes but it is difficult for the researcher to use them to stimulate social transformations or social changes whilst conducting the actual narrative research study because of the length of time required to analyse the stories in a reflective manner.

In my study, I use Flick's (2004) first two ways of studying social transformations or social changes. I both observe the processes of social change through observing the dance groups over the course of one year and I actively participate in the dance groups so that I can be more reflexive about these processes of social change in the dance groups and my own experiences of them. I did not actively intend to stimulate social changes for the research participants, but recognise that my presence in the dance groups could potentially stimulate social changes at the group and individual level whilst my narrative style interviews could potentially stimulate a greater degree of reflexivity in individual research participants on the meaning of dance, health and growing older in their lives. Beck (1992) has described the process of transformation at the level of each person as 'individualisation', whereby the individual strives to maintain health through actively making plans. So the meaning of health for the individual, social groups and professional practices is constantly changing over time. Hence there is a longitudinal aspect to my ethnographic and narrative style interview study of various 'cultures of dance' because it was conducted over the course of one year, rather than comprising case-studies that appear to be snapshots of the life of a social group (Flick, 2004).

Insights from Participatory Action Research

Even though my comparative ethnographic and narrative interview study of 'cultures of dance' is not specifically a participatory action research project, there are some useful insights in the participatory action research literature with regard to the processes of change. Brydon-

Miller (1997; 2004) demonstrates how participatory action research is a collaborative process between the researcher and members of a community to identify an area of concern, generate knowledge and create social change. This emphasis on the processes of social change mirrors Flick's (2004) definition of ethnography as revealing processes of social transformation, with consideration of issues of empowerment and reflexivity.

Brydon-Miller (1997; 2004) shows how participatory action research focuses on groups who are economically or politically marginalized, striving for social justice. It cannot be objective or value neutral because of the active involvement of both the researcher and participants in order to create change. As critical theory suggests, participatory action research shows how many forms of knowledge may be generated in a particular social, political and economic context (Habermas, 1971). For example, Piran (2001) demonstrated how participatory action research can confront dance students over their pre-occupation with body weight and shape through providing opportunities to discuss the characteristics which are really important in a talented dancer.

My ethnographic study of 'cultures of dance' mirrors Flick's (2004) definition of ethnography and narratives as revealing processes of social transformation. It also acknowledges the influence of Brydon-Miller's (1997; 2004) participatory action research because it involves collaborating with dance teachers and dance groups who work with older people to generate knowledge and stimulate reflexivity in individuals about experiences of health and growing older, especially through the narrative style interviews. Older people have often been marginalised by wider society so it is valuable to explore social and cultural contexts promoting a healthy and active old age (Biggs, 1999; Bytheway, 1995; Gilleard and Higgs, 2000; 2005). As dance is an embodied practice, and I danced alongside my research participants, I acknowledge that this research cannot be completely objective and value-free. The use of reflexivity in my ethnographic writing will be invaluable for exploring a variety of perspectives on 'cultures of dance,' the ageing body and health. The active involvement with my research participants has the potential to be empowering for them simply because I am interested in learning about their experiences of dance, health and growing older, particularly during the individual narrative style interviews.

Insights from Dance Anthropology

Thomas (2003) provides a comprehensive survey of a variety of different approaches used by dance ethnographers. Thomas and Ahmed (2004) in *Cultural Bodies: ethnography and theory* develop a more in-depth consideration of the work of specific ethnographers

studying dance. Ahmed (2004) shows how ethnography offers the opportunity of bringing in the body from 'the field' when analysing dance. There is a need to investigate Young's (1990) concept of being-in-the-world through movement in order to understand the meaning of lived embodiment in dance. An embodied perspective on dance seeks to go beyond the Cartesian Dualist belief in a separate mind and body.

Dance anthropologists such as Ness (2004) advocate the importance of culturally focused writing about dance from an embodied perspective, with a subjunctive mood and purposeful or instrumental quality to the language used to describe the dance forms. She believes the contradictions between a phenomenological approach, focusing on subjective experience of the body, and a cultural approach, focusing on the symbolic framework surrounding the body, can be resolved through appropriate textual representation. This culturally focused writing is very different from either choreographic symbols or purely observational writing about dance, with the aim of objectivity in describing the interactions between body parts. The embodied approach illustrates the specific processes through which specific 'cultures of dance' become embodied.

Ness (2004) specifies the key features of an embodied methodology, striving to identify the role of culture in dance. She acknowledges that there can be diverse interpretations of the cultural aspects of body movement, for example, the embodiment of history, of existential givens, of social value systems, of symbolism and of thought.

1) The embodied approach is temporally flexible, sometimes conditionally subjunctive or futuristic rather than declarative in mood, using phrases such as 'as if' and 'supposed to.'
2) The embodied approach is explanatory and the movement is described in relation to its cultural purposes, with a focus on how to perform a certain movement, highlighting the potential difficulties.
3) The embodied approach illustrates the fallibility and uniqueness of individual performers and performance events in relation to shared norms. It is possible to use generic representation of bodies and body parts, but there is no representation of performers as perfect examples of some cultural type.
4) The embodied approach shows how movement integrates relationships between imagination and corporeality or between the dancer and the environment.

I endeavoured to use Ness's (2004) approach in writing my field-notes and I found it useful in helping me to write from a variety of different perspectives, alternating between

focusing on each dance group as a whole and older dancers as individuals, besides reflecting on my own experiences of participating in the dance.

Ethnographic Notes as Thick Description

Just as dance anthropology stresses the importance of writing about dance in depth from an embodied perspective, ethnographic notes providing thick descriptions of human behaviour in the social contexts of the research, are of fundamental importance (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 1995; Geertz, 1975). Ethnographic writing is autobiographical because it describes the research from the perspective of the researcher, but it still has the potential to capture both the behaviour and the voices of the participants in depth (Brewer, 2000). Emerson et al. (1995) give lengthy instructions for the writing of ethnographic notes so as to capture multiple voices and multiple perspectives.

Writing in the first person shows the author's experience as a member of a group and their reflections as an ethnographer, whereas writing in the third person is effective for conveying others' words and actions. Descriptions in field-notes are like a sequence of stories, showing aspects of life in vivid detail. Characterizations move beyond a description of a person's dress and movements to include how a person talks, acts and relates to others. Dialogue may be described as direct quotation, indirect quotation and reported speech, showing the back and forth flow of spoken interaction. Ethnographic interviews are spontaneous 'conversations with a purpose' that occur in the field and are often initiated by research participants who choose to enlighten the researcher about the meaning of a particular cultural practice (Brewer, 2000; Emerson et al., 1995; Spradley, 1979). Field-notes comprise two kinds of narrative entries, episodes and more extended field-note tales, which detail interactions, interventions and events as dynamic actions in an unfolding scene. When writing notes for my ethnographic diary in my research study, I endeavoured to use the principle of 'thick description' and indeed, I found my ability to write about the dance sessions in more detail improved over time as I became more familiar with the different dance forms. I also collected several pieces of written work or poems produced by older dancers either explaining the history and culture of the various dance forms or demonstrating the pleasure of dance.

Insights from Narrative Literature

Telling stories is how communities construct a shared identity and identify potential for change and initiatives to promote health, as shown by Murray (2004). Through the use of stories and drama, Newfoundland fishermen were able to educate each other about the

dangers of their trade. Abma (1999) has particularly captured the powerful nature of the stories of mental health patients in contrast to those of their therapists. Stories are never simply representations of experiences. Stories are interpretations of experiences containing an evaluative or moral framework. There is the potential for social transformation when the standard story about a community or institution is challenged.

Open-ended questions are the characteristic of individual narrative interviews and the researcher encourages the telling of stories through listening with a minimum of interruption and the use of silences. Abma (1999) thus encouraged therapists to tell their stories in individual interviews but recognised that mental health patients would find individual interviews difficult. Through creating a safe environment, a shared picnic away from the hospital premises, Abma (1999) facilitated mental health patients to share their stories of oppression through the behaviour of the therapists. When confronted with this evidence, the therapists were then able to change their behaviour and the mental health patients became more empowered. Group identities can be transformed through telling stories. So the very process of telling their stories can potentially be empowering for the older dancers who participate in my research study, and I recognise the value of recording both individual and group narrative style interviews.

Cortazzi (1993) identifies how telling stories is an important way for teachers to reflect critically on their knowledge and practice. Narratives allow teachers' voices to be heard and provide an understanding of their culture from the inside. Metaphors and images from teachers' stories of experience influence their future practice. So inviting the dance teachers to tell stories about their work will be beneficial for enhancing their work in the future. Cortazzi (1993) demonstrates how the longitudinal aspects of stories relate to the idea of multiple selves, the self in the past, the self in the present and the self in the future. Stories can be regressive, progressive or relate to the biographical present and they act as a way of making the particular form of dance meaningful to class members.

Goffman (1959;1963) provides some useful insights through dramaturgical theory into how people manage the impressions they create for others. Impression management occurs through conversational rituals focusing on presenting the desirable self and preserving face in awkward situations. Multiple selves are constructed through narrative and the teller of a story is a performer for a specific audience. Narratives are organised by frames as socially defined realities. Narratives transform the complex reality of events into the re-playing of strips of activity. Although his work has been criticised for over-emphasising personal agency and

ignoring the role of cultural determinism, it is relevant to how dance teachers demonstrate movement to their classes and how group members conduct themselves during dance sessions.

Telling stories is an important way in which dance groups construct their identity. Each individual may have their own special story to tell, but this individual story becomes part of the shared narrative, as the individual becomes integrated into the dance group. Narrative research shows the importance of stories at both the individual and the community level. Narrative interviews may thus take a very flexible and open format. Individuals may be invited to tell stories about their unique experiences of dance, health and growing older. This can be done at the individual level in a one to one interview with the researcher, or as part of a larger group, whereby one participant telling a story facilitates another participant to tell a story (Abma, 1999). When a joint description and interpretation of a participant's life experience is conducted with the researcher, there is a shift from life stories to life histories, drawing on a wider evidence base of interviews, discussions, texts and contexts to provide interpretations (Cortazzi, 1993). The telling of stories at a variety of levels in my research study will illustrate how various 'cultures of dance' construct experiences of health and growing older.

Realist, Post-modern and Post Post-modern Ethnography

Ethnographic studies may be conducted from a variety of different philosophical perspectives. Realist ethnographies seek to provide objective data through a rigorous approach of testing of emerging hypotheses in the strong form of analytical induction provided by grounded theory (Glasser and Strauss, 1967). Such rigour in building a model of human behaviour from a bottom-up approach mimics the positivism of quantitative and scientific research. Post-modern ethnographies emphasise that there is no one fixed reality and aim to capture a multiplicity of perspectives, just as Foucault (1977; 1984) demonstrated how human behaviour varies according to the historical and cultural time and place. Post-modern ethnography, like feminist ethnography, facilitates the researcher to have a reflexive voice (Thomas and Ahmed, 2004). Brewer (2000) argues that this reflexive voice of the researcher makes the ethnography post post-modern.

A critical realist approach towards ethnography seems to be most appropriate when studying how local cultural contexts construct experiences of health and growing older, as I argued in the introduction to this thesis. There are various forms of critical realism but Bhasker (1989) describes the most useful form for considering the psychological and social reality of the ageing body as a biological organism. Bhasker (1989) explains the dichotomy of social reality. People do not create social reality but the structures which pre-exist people do

not arise without human agency. Indeed these structures may be reproduced and transformed by peoples' actions and everyday activities, so Bhasker (1989) acknowledges the potential of human agency even when some social conditions are pre-determined.

A critical realist approach towards ethnography acknowledges the dichotomy of social reality being real and pre-determined besides socially constructed through human agency. A critical realist approach towards the ageing body acknowledges that the ageing body is both real as a biological organism and at the same time, socially constructed (Collier, 1998). A critical realist approach towards ethnography acknowledges the importance of reflexivity on the part of the researcher, as in feminist, post-modern and post post-modern ethnography (Brewer, 2000). My research study exploring dance groups for community-dwelling older people is conducted from post post-modernist and critical realist perspectives, acknowledging the multiplicity of perspectives, the reflexive voice of myself as a researcher and the potential of human agency in the light of social and biological determinism.

Insights from Critical Gerontology and Foucauldian Theory

According to Katz (1996), critical gerontology is a contemporary disciplinary knowledge disciplining contemporary life in old age through the Foucauldian process of problematization (Foucault, 1977; 1984). Certain practices change human existence into a crisis of thought and then these problematizing practices construct human difficulties so that various interventions are initiated. Thus the problematization of the ageing body corresponds directly to the contradictory cultural discourses or cultural sources of knowledge about the ageing body and the self as both vulnerable and resistant, and in Katz's (1996) words, there are 'undisciplining' forces such as gender and class which cut across age. This means the physiological and cultural decline of the ageing body can be increased or decreased according to additional factors associated with gender and class. His later work discusses the importance of the 'busy body' in old age as narratives of the self reflect the wider discourse of an 'active society' (Katz, 2000). My research study builds on this idea of the paradoxical experiences of growing older in the general historical context by exploring the paradoxical experiences of growing older as constructed by specific 'cultures of dance'.

2) References to Data and Research Design

My research design corresponded directly to the methodological and philosophical issues discussed in the previous section, in order to answer my research question 'An exploration of how various 'cultures of dance' construct experiences of health and growing older'. I chose to compare two different Circle dance groups with two different Scottish

Country dance groups, in order to explore a range of experiences of health and growing older for people above the age of 50 who attended these various dance groups. Such a design deliberately allows for exploration of various 'cultures of dance' and both positive and negative cases, distinguishing older individuals who felt they appreciated a particular dance form and older individuals who disliked a particular dance form.

I chose to record ethnographic notes after each observation because I wanted to be able to observe the dance unobtrusively through actually joining in myself. This also enabled me to experience the ease or difficulty of each dance form. A better rapport was built with research participants through actually dancing myself in each group, and some people approached me directly to record a formal narrative style interview. I tried to select a range of ages and abilities for these interviews in order to get a balanced picture of the experiences of health and growing older as a dancer. In order to maintain confidentiality, I chose not to use photography or video but I have included two DVD's demonstrating the steps and some of the dances from Circle dance and Scottish Country dance with this thesis.

My ethnographic notes, compiled as a diary, and the transcripts of my narrative style interviews, are all included in the appendix of this thesis. References to data from the two Circle dance groups and two Scottish Country dance groups are coded in the following way:

1) The first Circle dance group is C.1 and the second Circle dance group is C.2. The first Scottish Country dance group is S.1 and the second Scottish Country dance group is S.2.
2) References to my ethnographic diary use the code for the dance group followed by the date.
3) References to the narrative interviews use the dance group code followed by the number of the interview. The group code is reversed to 1.C for the first Circle dance group, 2.C for the second Circle dance group, 1.S for the first Scottish Country dance group and 2.S for the second Scottish Country dance group.

Outline of My Research in Two Circle Dance Groups

I set up my research in two different Circle dance groups in order to explore a range of different experiences and interpretations of this dance form. The first Circle dance group was for more experienced Circle dancers, held every Friday morning for several hours in a local village hall, and members paid £5.00 a session. The second Circle dance group was a mixture of beginners and experienced dancers, held on Monday afternoons for several hours in a town church hall during school term, and members paid a fee of £45.00 for two terms of Circle

dancing and a selection of other courses. Both groups attracted mainly retired women and both teachers were retired women. Both groups performed some of the same Circle dances to the same music.

I observed and recorded notes in my ethnographic diary about fifteen sessions of each Circle dance group and tape-recorded nine narrative style interviews with members of the first Circle dance group and eight narrative style interviews with members of the second Circle dance group. I call the interviews narrative style, because whilst some interviewees went easily into lengthy narratives, other interviewees interpreted the interview situation more as a question and answer session, as in informal ethnographic interviews where interviewees explain an aspect of their culture to the interviewer. I interviewed both of the Circle dance teachers as they were important gate-keepers and their support for the research was vital. Both the Circle dance teachers were retired themselves, the teacher of the first Circle dance group being 71 years of age and the teacher of the second Circle dance group being 65 years of age. In order to negotiate ethical approval for the research and arrange to give out the information sheets about the observations and interviews, I attended each group for several weeks before actually starting the research. I attended one Circle dance workshop organised by the first Circle dance teacher and attended by members of her group, although both teachers drew attention to other Circle dance workshops that were available.

Outline of My Research in the Two Scottish Dance Groups

I set up my research in two different Scottish Country dance groups and a Ladies' Step group that was run by the first Scottish Country dance group, in order to explore a range of experiences and interpretations of this dance form. The first Scottish Country dance group also provided beginners'/improvers' lessons which I attended myself over the course of nine months in order to be able to negotiate access to the second Scottish Country dance group and the Ladies' Step group as these were composed of experienced older dancers. The beginners'/improvers' lessons cost £65 for a ten week term of classes on Thursday evenings between 6.00-7.30pm at a sixth form college. These classes attracted a mixture of ages, young adults, middle-aged and the occasional retired person and most members were women, although there were several men.

The Ladies' Step dance group was organised by the first Scottish Country dance group and held sessions once a month on a Sunday afternoon between 2.30-5.00pm at a cost of £4.00 per session in a church hall. The Ladies' Step dance group attracted mainly retired women and one older man who was one of the key organisers. The second Scottish Country

dance group was a social dancing session held on Thursday evening between 8.00-10.30pm in a church hall at the cost of £2.50-£3.00 depending on ability to pay. This group attracted mainly retired women and some older men. The second Scottish Country dance group tended to perform more complex dances than the first Scottish Country dance group, such as those written by the mathematicians Fosse and Drewry. The Ladies' Step dances, which were taught by the first Scottish Country dance group, tended to be very complex and technically difficult as they were very balletic, derived from the Highland tradition of Scottish dance. One of the qualified dance teachers would take it in turns to run the Ladies' Step session whilst ordinary members of the second Scottish Country dance group would take it in turns to design the weekly programme of dances and to quickly call the walk through of each dance as members of this group were expected to know the dances (S.2, 27.3.08; S.2 27.9.07). The first Scottish Country dance group always included a warm-up and practice of footwork whereas the second Scottish Country dance group did not, emphasising the importance of the correct patterns rather than the correct footwork in the dances (S.2, 3.4.08; S.1 and S.2, 20.9.07). When I first spoke to a committee member of the second Scottish Country dance group about setting up the research, he explained that the group danced for 'sheer pleasure, with the dance keeping you fit and the brain active' (S.2, 31.5.07).

I observed and recorded notes in my ethnographic diary about fifteen sessions of each Scottish Country dance group, my beginners'/improvers' class and the second Scottish Country dance group. I also observed and recorded notes in my ethnographic diary about five Ladies' Step sessions and one informal Fosse and Drewry session organised by the older man who was very involved in Ladies' Step dance. Ethics' information sheets about the research were handed out at the start of my observation time with these groups. I attended several Scottish dance social events and kept a record of my own experience of dancing, as in that situation it was impossible to hand out the ethics information sheets to all the people attending. I tape-recorded four narrative style interviews with members of my beginners'/improvers class, ranging from 43 to 56 years in age, and I tape-recorded two narrative style interviews with members of the Ladies' Step group. One of these was with the 71 year old man who organised the Ladies' Step sessions and the informal Fosse and Drewry sessions and the other was with two older women together who were regular members of the group. I tape-recorded two other interviews with older dance teachers involved with the first Scottish Country dance group. I tape-recorded ten narrative style interviews with members of the second Scottish Country dance group. One of these interviewees was an older lady who attended Ladies' Step and the second Circle dance group as well.

Ethics

Ethical approval for my research study was granted by the Psychology Department at City University London and information and consent sheets for the observations of dance sessions and the recording of narrative interviews were designed. Verbal consent was sought for the observations and anyone who did not wish to be included in the study had the right not to be involved. Signed consent was obtained for the narrative style interviews and interviewees were given a transcript of their interview for correction if they wanted to give further feedback. Interviewees were given time to de-brief at the end of the interview and ask any further questions. They were advised to contact their doctor if they felt the interview had highlighted a health problem that required further intervention. Pseudonyms were used for ethnographic notes and interviews and any material stored on computer. Identifying details such as name, address and date of birth were not used. Pseudonyms will be used for any publication resulting from the research (see appendix).

Importance of Reflexivity

Critical health psychology research emphasises the significance of reflexivity on the part of the researcher (Stam, 2000; 2004). Chamberlain (2004) states how the critical health psychology researcher must be reflexive about their role in research for ethical reasons. Not only are there ethical considerations about whose voice is to be heard during the research process and the final report, there are also ethical considerations in terms of the moral implications of the research and the wider social and political implications of the findings. This echoes Flick's (2004) ideas of research creating social transformations or social changes, at the individual level, the group level and the political level. The ethnographic study may be conducted at the micro-level, but the findings can have wider social and political implications at the macro-level. Groups of people who dance together share collective stories about health and growing older, besides stories about individual experiences, so there is the potential to provide new insights for health psychology knowledge and practice through ethnographic studies of dance (Murray, 2004; Thomas and Cooper, 2003). Murray (2000) has shown how stories can be analysed on many different levels:- the personal, the interpersonal, the positional and the ideological or societal. All these different levels are integrated within my study because I explore the culture of each particular dance form, how personal experiences of health and growing older interact with localised cultural and social contexts of dance.

Narrative Style Interview Schedule

I chose to use an episodic style of narrative interviewing, rather than a life-history style, because I was focusing on concrete events and memories of specific experiences concerning dance, health and growing older (Flick, 2004). In designing my narrative style interview schedule, I tried to reflect on the issues that had arisen for me as a participant in the dance groups. My ethnographic diary was invaluable in helping me identify the issues that seemed to be pertinent. Further prompts were added in the light of feedback from interviewees after the first couple of interviews, and also in the light of my knowledge of the particular person from my diary of the dance ethnography. I had to be very careful about confidentiality and boundaries as I was working with tight-knit groups, an issue highlighted by Tulle (2008) in her ethnographic study of veteran long-distance runners. All interviewees were given a copy of the interview schedule to help them think more deeply about the questions. Here is my narrative interview schedule :-

1) How did you first get involved in Circle/Scottish dancing? Any more? Any other forms of dance?
2) How easy do you find it to learn the different dances in Circle/Scottish dancing? Can you give examples? Any more? How important is memory?
3) How does Circle/Scottish dancing make you see yourself ? Any more? What do you wear? Do you perform publicly?
4) How does Circle/Scottish dancing influence experiences of your health? Any more? How about psychological benefits of Circle/Scottish dancing? Any injuries?
5) How does Circle/Scottish dancing influence your experiences of growing older? Any more?
6) How has Circle/Scottish dancing changed your relationship with your body? Any more?
7) Is there anything more you would like to tell me about the meaning of dance in your life? Any more?

These interview questions formed a basis for the narrative style interviews, though as qualitative research is open-ended, I took a flexible approach towards the interview process and tried to listen carefully and respond to the stories and pieces of information that the interviewees chose to tell me (Cortazzi,1993). I call the interviews 'narrative style' because sometimes the interviewees did not go into narrative, but chose to give a more informal ethnographic style interview as a 'conversation with a purpose' (Spradley, 1979). This happened with the retired professional tap-dancer who chose to show me her photograph

album about her dancing career (interview 1.C.7) and the married couple who were Scottish Country dancers and discussed issues such as dressing-up in national costume between themselves (interview 2.S.5).The interviews ranged from 20-80 minutes, according to how easy or difficult the interviewee found it to talk about and reflect on the meaning of dance in their lives. Each interview was transcribed verbatim and I kept a personal diary about the process of each particular interview (see appendix for interview transcripts and my diary about each interview).

Stages of Analysis of Data

I worked through the analysis group by group, moving from the first Circle dance group to the second Circle dance group to the first Scottish Country dance group and finally to the second Scottish Country dance group. I used three stages of coding for content in my ethnographic diary and transcripts of narrative style interviews :- open coding line by line, focused coding for sub-themes and identification of emergent narrative themes. The open coding line by line was a summary of several sentences in terms of content that I recorded in the right hand margin of the interview transcripts and my ethnographic dairy. The focused coding was a summary of the open coding for each paragraph in terms of content that I typed directly into the computer. After doing the focused coding, it became apparent that four main narrative themes were emerging from the data in a bottom-up fashion, through using the method of constant comparison that has been advocated by grounded theory (Emerson et al., 1995; Glasser and Strauss, 1967).

The four main emergent narrative themes were concerned with forming a sense of belonging through dance as an older person, learning to dance as an older person, psychological health and sense of belonging as an older dancer and physical health and sense of belonging as an older dancer. I sorted the focused coding under these four main emergent narrative themes and re-grouped the focused coding under sub-themes on the computer. As both narrative approaches and post post-modern ethnography acknowledge the possibility of multiple interpretations and over-lapping of stories, sub-themes that arose from the focused coding were sometimes allocated to several emergent narrative themes (Brewer, 2000; Cortazzi, 1993). This particularly occurred with the sub-themes concerning psychological and physical health as research participants often, but not always, perceived these as interconnected (see appendix).

Here is an example from my ethnographic diary with the open coding, focused coding and emergent narrative themes listed below the extract

> The footwork in Circle dancing seems much more complex than in Scottish. Even more complex than my Scottish lessons which emphasise the five ballet positions. P., the teacher, demonstrates the steps in the different sections of the dances, such as the one 'Palestine Sunshine' by a modern choreographer. Whereas Scottish seems more concerned with the patterns for the whole body, Circle emphasises the patterns of the feet, and sometimes the hands and arms too. The 'Palestine Flick' in the 'Palestine Sunshine' dance was a special step designed by the modern choreographer. With weight on the right foot, you do Heel-Toe with the left foot then hop onto the left foot and bend the right knee, raising the right lower leg and foot behind the body with a 'flicking movement.' The music for this modern dance was a warbling Palestinian song and it was very difficult to keep time as it was hard to hear the beat and the feet moved in a series of complex patterns whilst hands were held to form a circle. P., the teacher, gave verbal prompts for the movements 'A right Slip-Step, a left Slip-Step, Heel-Toe and Flick, Grapevine to the left to the count of seven, release hands and shuffle feet diagonally to the candle in the centre. Reverse backwards and repeat the pattern.' (C.1, 5.10.07).

Open coding :-

- 'Complexity of footwork in Circle compared with Scottish'
- 'Teacher demonstrates dances'
- 'Scottish concerned with patterns of movements for whole body'
- 'Circle concerned with patterns of feet'
- 'Difficulty of hearing beat in Palestinian song to keep time'
- 'Teacher used demonstration and verbal prompts for movements'

Focused coding :-

- 'Footwork in Circle more complex than in Scottish'
- 'Difficulty hearing beat and keeping time to Palestinian song'
- 'Use of demonstration and verbal prompts by teacher'

Narrative themes :-

- 'Older people forming a sense of belonging through Circle dance'
- 'Learning to dance as an older person'

Here is an example from my narrative interview transcripts of a 63 year old lady who was a Scottish Country dancer, with the open coding, focused coding and emergent narrative themes listed below the extract

I: How did you first get involved in Scottish dancing?

F: ... I think we, that's my husband and I, got involved in about 1966, when we were living in the North of England and we joined a... we wanted to have an international dance group, and there was a Scottish dance group, and neither had enough people. So we combined together to do both, so I did some Scottish dancing then.... But then we didn't take it up again, till we were in, Kenya, because you know there are Scottish dancers all over the world, we were living in Nairobi, we joined a Scottish group in Nairobi. And then when we came back, we joined the second Scottish group, here.

I: Can you tell me a bit more about the Scottish group in Nairobi?

F: ... It was...Very typically in Nairobi there was a Caledonian society, there were a lot of Scots living in Nairobi, Caledonian Society, and this Scottish dance group, it was just a group of ex-patriots plus others... We had a very interesting, display group and in that group, we had... a Ugandan, who was actually married to a Scottish lady, and he was a really wonderful Scottish dancer, really good, and looked very smart in his kilt. And we also had a... Sikh medical student as well who did Scottish dancing, dressed with a, I think he wore, a turban as well... But we did by to-day's standards, actually I realize now we were doing very simple, dances, we had a very small... repertoire. But anyhow, that was enough, when we came back we decided to carry on with ... Scottish dancing. So I've never really formally been to, any classes to learn it. Because we just picked it up as we went along (interview 2.S.8).

Open coding: -

- 'Got involved in international/Scottish dance group with husband'
- 'Joined Scottish dance group when living in Kenya'
- 'Ex-patriots in Scottish group in Kenya'
- 'Small repertoire of dances in Kenya'
- 'When returned to England joined second Scottish group'
- 'Never had formal classes to learn Scottish dance'

Focused Coding: -

- ' Got involved with husband through combined international/Scottish dance group and continued Scottish dance in Kenya'
- 'Never had formal classes, learnt through various groups'

Narrative Themes: -

- ‘Older people forming a sense of belonging through Scottish Country dance’
- ‘Learning to dance as an older person’

In order to capture the emotion expressed by interviewees, I listened to fourteen complete narrative interviews and sections of the remaining 23 interviews. I adapted the narrative method devised by Hiles and Cermak (2008) who listened to the narratives of cancer patients to identify the turning points through changes in how the narratives were spoken. Rather than looking for turning points in illness narratives, because I was exploring the range of meanings that different dance forms provided for experiences of health and growing older, I underlined the emotionally charged words that were strongly emphasised in some of the narrative interview transcripts and commented on the significance of the emotion expressed in the left hand margin. This provided a greater understanding of the range of emotions that older dancers expressed in their interviews and gave insight into the potential meanings of their words. In writing the thesis, I deliberately chose a range of different examples to express the variety of meanings and emotions the older dancers experienced through participating in the particular dance forms.

So in the emotional analysis in the extract of the interview transcript from a 63 year old Scottish Country dancer quoted earlier in this section, all the words that she strongly emphasised are underlined. The comments I wrote in the left hand margin for the emotional analysis are ‘Tells story in a fluent voice with pauses to reflect’, ‘Laughs as she says how there are Scottish dancers all over the world’, ‘Strongly emphasises how a Ugandan was a good dancer’ and ‘Laughter in her voice as talks about the Sikh doing Scottish dancing in a turban’. Such comments were distilled to identify the main emotions, such as ‘Tells story fluently showing her enthusiasm and laughs about the international nature of Scottish Country dance, with people from other countries participating’, for presenting examples in this thesis.

My Reflection on the Experience of Working Ethnographically and with Narratives

Working ethnographically was extremely demanding both physically and mentally, and time-consuming. I had to negotiate access to the field via the dance teachers or organisers who acted as gatekeepers to the dance groups. I had to learn and participate in the dances as well as remember and record written information in my ethnographic diary after each dance session. I then had to type up my ethnographic notes in full on the computer. My ethnographic diary tells my story of participating in the dance groups though it does try to capture the voices and perspectives of my research participants. I enjoyed learning to dance myself and provided a lot

of amusement for the second Scottish Country dance group because I found learning the complex patterns of the more advanced Scottish Country dances so difficult. People just seemed to enjoy the fact that I was genuinely interested in learning the dances from an insider's perspective, and seemed to enjoy chatting to me informally in between the dances. Working ethnographically enabled me to appreciate the sheer pleasure of dance besides the depth of emotional expression that the dance facilitated. I learnt to appreciate the non-verbal communication of dance such as the importance of touch and holding hands for social and psychological support. As Latimer (2009) states, there are times when the body seems to be unknowing as individuals are unaware of bodily processes.

The narrative style interviews provided an opportunity for research participants to tell their stories although this was influenced by the rapport I had built with each participant during the course of fieldwork. Originally I had planned to interview research participants on completion of the ethnographic fieldwork but working with four different dance groups (and their various sub-groups) at once over the course of a year proved to be extremely complex. Research participants began to approach me, offering to be interviewed, and I found participating in the dance groups gave me ample opportunity to invite a range of different dancers to be interviewed. I decided therefore to do some narrative style interviews whilst I was still immersed in the ethnographic fieldwork. This required careful consideration of ethical boundaries and special attention to maintaining confidentiality as I was working with close-knit groups. Tulle (2008) encountered similar ethical issues when working ethnographically with veteran long-distance runners. I was careful to give interviewees space after each interview, and deliberately did not attend the particular dance-group the week after I had conducted an interview with one of the group's members. I found some interviewees spontaneously suggested future directions for the research and I had to deal with these suggestions tactfully and sensitively. The narrative style interviews were conducted in a venue chosen by the research participant, either a coffee shop or their own homes or on one occasion, a park bench.

When I had completed the fieldwork and started the analysis of my ethnographic diary and interview transcripts, I found new problems arose due to a vast quantity of qualitative data. As I had chosen a critical and reflexive approach and was working on an old Apple Macintosh computer for which I could not obtain an *Atlas* software programme for analysing qualitative data, I decided to analyse the data by hand for the content (Stam, 2000; 2004). Analysing the data by hand was time-consuming but invaluable for allowing me the opportunity to really immerse myself in the data and gain new understandings into the inter-

relationships between the focused coding and emergent narrative themes. The emotional analysis required listening to the narrative style interview transcripts so it was impossible to use a software programme for this part of my critical and reflective analysis. It was sometimes difficult to identify the exact meaning of the emotion expressed, for example, there were times when laughter could be interpreted as happiness or nervousness. I also noticed my tendency to underline all the words that were emphasised by the interviewee as I tried to identify the main emotion expressed in the particular section of the interview. Obviously, my own relationship with each interviewee influenced the amount of emotion they felt comfortable expressing with me, and one of the most moving interviews for me as a researcher was when the interviewee cried but wanted to carry on with the recording, as happened in interview 1.C.9 with the 78 year old deaf lady from the first Circle dance group.

The process of writing this thesis produced more problems relating to the potential for multiple interpretations of a vast amount of data. Working with narratives is like walking on shifting sands. Multiple meanings are embedded in narratives and so there is always the possibility of multiple interpretations. I had tried to systematically sort the narratives from my ethnographic diary and narrative style interviews into emergent narrative themes, using the focused coding of each paragraph, which had arisen from my open line-by-line coding. But as I started to write the chapters, the emergent narrative themes overlapped and merged into each other and I began to see multiple interpretations. I had chosen to use ethnography in order to observe and describe older people participating in different dance forms, but my own story of learning to dance as a middle-aged woman became mixed up with my descriptions of older people dancing. I am sharing and living the narratives of the various 'cultures of dance' as an embodied researcher and my very own personality and sense of self facilitates how the narratives unfold. The what of narrative analysis, the details of the content of the narratives, became inextricably linked with the process of conducting the research and the how of narrative analysis. I am both an observer and an analyser of the dance groups and narrative interviews. I move through different positions, being both a storyteller and a story analyser (Phoenix, Smith and Sparkes, in press; Seymour, 2007).

Acknowledging these complexities, I have decided to allow a selection of the stories from my data to be quoted verbatim, both from my ethnographic diary and narrative interviews with older dancers. These are the smaller stories in my ethnographic diary and narrative interviews. I have selected 25 of the 37 narrative interviews, mostly where the interviewees went more easily into a story-telling style, to illustrate the emergent narrative themes. The examples I have selected illustrate the different types of smaller stories connected

with each theme. Further examples of smaller stories and the grouping of smaller stories under emergent narrative themes can be found in the appendix to this dissertation. The bigger stories form the chapter headings of this thesis.

My commentary after each extract from my ethnographic diary demonstrates some of the potential meanings in terms of the 'what' of narrative analysis. My commentary after each extract from my narrative interviews with older dancers demonstrates some of the potential meanings in terms of both the what and the how of narrative analysis. Despite the complexity of the data, the bigger stories demonstrate that dance seems to have be both important and pleasurable in the lives of some older individuals in terms of promoting psychological and physical health. As Flick (2004) argues, qualitative research has the potential to show how processes of social transformation actually occur.

Self-Reflexivity

I was aware throughout the conduct of this ethnographic and narrative interview study that my own interests were shaping not only the definition of the research question but also how the research study developed over the course of fieldwork, analysis and writing up. I have always been interested in dance since taking ballet lessons from the age of three years old and I am currently actively involved in a ballroom dance club. In my professional life, I have worked both as a qualified nurse and a part-time psychology/communication teacher, so I have much experience of working with both older people and learners of a range of ages and social backgrounds. I have further developed my interest in nursing, psychology and older people through involvement in the British Society of Gerontology. I have become involved in social gerontology research and became particularly fascinated by the social constructionist ideas of experiences of growing older varying according to the particular social context. Because of my personal interest in the debates about 'ageing as active' and 'ageing as decline', I have researched and published articles using ethnography and qualitative interviews to explore the meaning of fitness classes and beauty therapy in older peoples' lives, especially in terms of the ageing body and ageing embodiment. When studying for the Msc in Health Psychology, I further developed this interest in the ageing body and ageing embodiment through a discourse-analytic study of older women's everyday talk about the ageing body.

Defining the research question for this PHD felt like a natural progression from my interests, professional life and research experience. My own interest in dance and concern for older people defined the subject matter of this PHD. I recognised the limitations of my Msc discourse-analytic work because it just considered 'body talk', rather than 'body talk' and

'body materiality' as I had considered in my earlier research on fitness and beauty therapy for older people. Although I found the ethnography a very comfortable and effective way of exploring older peoples' experiences of the ageing body as constructed by the contexts of fitness and beauty therapy, I felt my qualitative interviews lacked the depth that could have been provided by a more narrative style, focusing on how a specific activity and related contexts provided meaning in older peoples' lives. I looked to dance ethnography to provide more depth on how to use ethnography and I turned to narrative psychology to provide more depth on how to use qualitative interviews. So my research question "How various 'cultures of dance' construct experiences of health and growing older" and my choice of methodology is a development and I hope an improvement of those earlier interests.

I was conscious that my ethnographic notes were telling my story of participation in the various dance groups, and although I did try to capture the voices and behaviour of other people, I recognise that I was often telling the story of the dance groups from my viewpoint. I had filtered the events to portray the dance groups in the light of my interests in dance, health and growing older. Similarly in the interviews, even though I had listened very carefully and patiently to the interviewees' stories, I had asked questions and used probes in line with my pre-determined research interests. In terms of analysis, I was eager to make my innovative use of ethnography and narrative interviews both thorough and accessible. So for the content analysis, I used the same method for both the interview transcripts and my ethnographic notes. I was aware that how I interacted with both my ethnographic notes and transcripts to produce the analysis was influenced by issues I had used in my interview schedule, even though I endeavoured to produce an analysis thoroughly grounded in my data from the bottom upwards. Similarly the emotional analysis of the interviews was influenced by my particular relationship with each interviewee. I recognise that both my own enthusiasm for dance and the enthusiasm for dance expressed by my interviewees inevitably coloured this research. However this shared enthusiasm for dance between interviewer and interviewees ultimately demonstrates the relevance of the stories recorded about the meaning of dance, health and growing older in certain individuals' lives.

Bigger Stories Emerging from the Narrative Analysis

The bigger stories emerging from the narrative analysis form the next four chapters detailing the findings of the research : -

1) Forming a sense of belonging through dance as an older person
2) Learning to dance as an older person.

3) Psychological health, sense of belonging and growing older as a dancer.
4) Physical health, sense of belonging and growing older as a dancer.

As I explored my findings in relation to the research literature, I found more research articles pertinent to my study than originally anticipated in my chapter reviewing the literature when I planned this study. So my findings are related to some of this new literature. Similarly, I found methodological challenges that I had not anticipated, so these are also discussed in relation to my findings. Many of the narrative sub-themes overlap and intertwine with each other so cross-references are made to several chapters. The importance of dance for emotional expression is a theme running throughout this thesis as highlighted by the emotional content of the narrative interviews, captured through listening to the recorded tapes (Hiles et al., 2008; Rossiter et al., 2008). This means the discussion of the importance of dance for psychological health is evident in all chapters and not just the one with the title 'Psychological Health, Sense of Belonging and Growing Older'. Similarly, the importance of the particular 'culture of dance' or localised interpretation of the dance form, pervaded each dance group in different ways and so the importance of forming a sense of belonging through the particular dance form is acknowledged in each chapter.

Chapter Three: Forming a Sense of Belonging through Dance as an Older Person

Introduction

Some older individuals negotiated an important sense of belonging for themselves through belonging to a particular dance group or 'culture of dance.' This chapter considers the aspects of Circle dance, Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance 'cultures' which had the potential to make older individuals feel empowered or dis-empowered. When an older individual felt very empowered by certain aspects of the particular 'culture of dance', they then identified more strongly with that particular dance form, forming a sense of belonging. When an older individual felt very dis-empowered by certain aspects of the particular 'culture of dance', they then failed to identify with that particular dance form and did not form a sense of belonging. In practice, most of the older individuals in this study found they could feel empowered by enough aspects of the particular 'culture of dance' to counter-balance any aspects which they found dis-empowering. Those older individuals who felt very dis-empowered and failed to identify with the dance form were negative cases, such as the retired professional ballerina who did not like Circle dance. I did not find an ethnographic and narrative interview study exploring the health benefits of Circle dance, Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance for older people in the research literature. After a discussion of some of the literature on critical health psychology and the creative arts, I consider the official definition of each dance form and my findings from each dance group separately and then draw these findings together in the light of the research literature in a summary at the end of the chapter.

Critical Health Psychology and Creative Arts

As discussed in the methodology chapter, the critical 'turn' in social psychology has been a concern with bringing culture into research studies, especially as expressed in terms of language (Griffin and Bengry-Howell, 2008; Griffin, 2000). The critical 'turn' in health psychology has been launched with a call for new methodologies, both quantitative and qualitative, to explore the impact of culture at all levels of peoples' lives (MacLachlan, 2004; Marks, 1996, 2002). Critical health psychology is particularly concerned with the nature of power, which can operate in human society at many different levels (Lyons and Chamberlain, 2006). Marks (2002) has provided a complex typology for the operation of power in terms of critical health psychology at these many different levels of human society. The focus in this study is on individual experiences of health and growing older in relation to a particular

'culture of dance', an exploration of aspects of a 'culture of dance' which older individuals find can either be empowering or dis-empowering. My study takes a midline position on the relativism-realism debate, arguing that subjective experiences of ageing, health, the body and dance are both real and socially constructed at the same time. Different local social and cultural contexts provide a range of interpretations of ageing, health, the body and dance. The particular local context may construct specific interpretations of these factors.

Foucault's (1977) *Discipline and Punish* is useful for thinking about the determining role of culture at the macro-level in individuals' lives. At the same time, individuals within a particular local context may exert personal agency, and negotiate their own particular relationship with the 'culture of dance'. Foucault's (1984) *History of Sexuality* is useful for considering how individuals exert personal agency at the micro-level. Foucault's (1977; 1984) work has been criticised for focusing on discourse, ways of talking about human experience through language, rather than the actual lived experience of the individual, especially in terms of lived embodiment (Kugelmann 2004; Merleau-Ponty, 1962). So my study acknowledges the importance of both culture and phenomenology because human subjective experience and the stories people tell are always situated in a particular social and cultural context, and so human subjective experience is positioned as always interpreted (Flick, 2004; Murray, 2004). Some narratives are shared by a number of the older dancers whereas other narratives are very individual, such as those of the retired professional dancers.

There has been recent interest in the use of creative and performing arts to improve peoples' quality of life. Active involvement in the arts is a process of social transformation that empowers individuals facing serious illness, whether physical or mental. As mentioned earlier, Rossiter et al. (2008) particularly advocated creative theatre as a means of self-expression after traumatic brain injury. Qualitative research has shown that music can enhance quality of life amongst older people in both psychological and physiological terms (Hays, Bright and Minichiello, 2002; Hays and Minichiello, 2005a, 2005b). Music can be enjoyed alone or in a group whereas dance is definitely important for creating a sense of togetherness amongst people. In my own work on older people doing dance-exercise with Laban, I have shown how older people develop a sense of togetherness through movement (Paulson, 2005a; 2005b). Ballroom dancing creates a community feel amongst older people, providing an opportunity to dress up (Cooper and Thomas, 2002; Maristela and Vieira, 2007; Thomas and Cooper, 2002; 2003). Hurd-Clarke, Griffin and Maliha (2009) and Twigg (2007; 2008) have highlighted how clothing is at the intersection of the ageing body and self-expression, a fundamental aspect of the experience of lived embodiment for older people.

Dance involves both physical and emotional expression, which has a transformative effect on both its performers and audience. However, learning to dance as an older person can be both a positive and a negative health behaviour choice, with both benefits and risks (Lyons and Chamberlain, 2006). This provides the rationale for my study of older dancers in order to explore the strengths and weaknesses of forming a sense of belonging through Circle or Scottish dance in later life.

Official Definition of Circle Dance Network

This definition of the Circle Dance Network can be found on their website:-

> Dancing in a circle is an ancient tradition common to many cultures for marking special occasions, strengthening community and encouraging togetherness. Modern circle dance draws on the rich and diverse traditional dances of many countries, including the Balkans, Greece, Israel, Russia and France. There is also a growing repertoire of new dances to classical music and contemporary songs. Circle dances can be energetic and lively or gentle and reflective. The style and mood reflects the group and the interests of the teacher. The aim always is to experience the joy of dancing with others and to create a sense of well-being and community. Anyone of any age or ability can circle dance. Each dance is taught, there is no audience and everyone is welcome. So come on your own or with a friend (you do not need a partner) and join in. Circle dance groups meet regularly all over the United Kingdom and abroad, and hold special events, dance days, weekends and even Circle dance holidays. To find out more about circle dancing and to locate your nearest teacher, or get details of forthcoming workshops, see Grapevine (magazine published by the Circle dance network) March 2007.

Outline of Findings on Circle Dance

I consider aspects of Circle dance culture which could be empowering or dis-empowering for older individuals. These are the smaller stories that arose from the focused coding under the emergent narrative theme or bigger story 'Older people forming a sense of belonging through Circle dance'. These smaller stories are: - 'Circle Dances Facilitate Community', 'Sending the Light and Visualising Sick Members', 'Music, Metaphors and Memories', 'Gender Issues in Circle Dance', 'Dancing in Retirement and Memories of Dancing when Younger', 'Memories of Circle Dancing and Holidays in Greece', and

'Differences between Professional and Social Dancing'. The names of official dance movements and formations are recorded with capital letters at the beginning of each word, such as Pas de Basque Steps or Slip-Step. The names of specific dances are recorded with capital letters at the beginning of each word and in inverted commas, such as 'Donkey-Riding'. Further examples of smaller stories can be found in the focused coding in the appendix, which refers to the interview transcripts and my ethnographic diary. Some of these further examples of smaller stories in my ethnographic diary and narrative style interviews are referenced after each extract directly quoted and discussed in the main text.

Circle Dances Facilitate Community

Here is a description from my ethnographic diary of a typical session of the first Circle dance group, focusing on some of the Circle dances composed by modern choreographers

> As usual we did about fourteen different dances with a ten to fifteen minute break in the middle. There were eighteen older ladies at the group today, in their 60s and 70s.There was a lighted candle in the centre of the floor, with a variegated ivy arrangement. The teacher who was in her 70s taught the dances completely from memory, tapping out the different patterns with her feet in the centre at the beginning of each dance so that we could learn them.... My brain is full of swirling patterns of feet as I try to re-call the particular dances... It is as though the dancers are raised to a higher level, especially in the more reflective dances which involve floating arm movements, raising the arms above the head and then from side to side.
>
> Some of the dances had a humorous element, such as 'River-dance'. The teacher explained how this music was recorded using Irish bag-pipes but because the Irish bag-pipes were louder than any other instrument, the player had to sit out in the toilet playing them during the actual recording session. She used the metaphor of ducks' feet to describe the footwork that involved very small steps bending from the in-step. In contrast, 'Lucky' was a beautiful floating dance to rippling music, with lots of twists and turns in the footwork. At the end of the dance, the teacher said how beautiful it was to see everyone dancing in unison. She explained how she was politically incorrect because she believed in the importance of discipline in Circle dance, with everyone doing the same thing at the same time. She disagreed with the sentiment that there are never mistakes in Circle dancing, only variations (C.2, 2.11.07).

This extract illustrates the charismatic personality of the first Circle dance teacher who highlighted both the humour and the beauty of modern Circle dances and their associated music. Significantly, the dances were performed in a circle around a central candle and arrangement of ivy and I myself found the dances very complex to learn. The teacher's sense of humour is illustrated in her story about the player of the Irish bagpipes sitting in the toilet for the recording because his instrument was so loud, and her use of the metaphor of ducks' feet for the actual footwork of the dance. She stands out as an individual because she believed in the discipline of Circle dance with everyone dancing in time together. The personality of this particular Circle dance teacher besides the inherent beauty and grace of these modern Circle dances seemed to have attracted eighteen older ladies in their 60s and 70s to attend the session, and I did note on other occasions in my ethnographic diary that one or two older men attended sessions (C.1, 4.5.07; C.1, 27.8.07). Indeed, when I first met the teacher and discussed the details of setting up the research, she had explained how she planned the sessions with Circle dances that moved from mind and body to spirit (C.1, 4.5.07).

Many traditional Circle dances are international, coming from countries such as Armenia, Greece, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Russia, Scotland and Serbia (C.1, 4.5.07; C.1, 8.6.07; C.1, 13.7.07). Here is my description of the first Circle dance teacher explaining an Armenian dance

> Next was an Armenian dance, Genhuga. The teacher warned us that this was a vigorous dance done by drunken men. She later told me that she was inventing the drunken bit and explained how the steps of Armenian dances were so stylised that she found them difficult to learn and teach. The movements in Armenian dances were completely different from those in Greek and Israeli dances. The footwork involved a pattern of digging alternate heels into the ground, sometimes once, sometimes twice, as people danced round in a circle holding hands in a W formation. The teacher explained the difference between the W and the V formation. The shoulders were tense and elbows bent when hands were held in the W formation. The shoulders were relaxed when the hands were held low in a V formation. This was an example of the use of letters of the alphabet as metaphors for arm positions (C.1, 2.11.07).

This extract again illustrates the humorous personality of the first Circle dance teacher as she interpreted this Armenian dance as being performed by drunken men. The heel digs

were particularly unusual, but as in many traditional Circle dances, hands were held. The teacher gave a detailed explanation of the different styles of hand-hold, using the letters of the alphabet as metaphors, highlighting when the shoulders are tensed or relaxed. The positions of the body became a metaphor for emotional expression, with the tension in the shoulders in this W hand-hold reflecting the vigour of the heel digs. Togetherness is often expressed in Circle dance by this holding of hands, a feature I comment on regularly in my ethnographic diary of both the first and the second Circle dance groups (C.1, 4.5.07; C.1, 18.5.07; C.1, 8.6.07; C. 2,10.3.08).

The second Circle dance teacher similarly taught a mixture of modern and traditional Circle dances to a group of mainly older women with the occasional older man. Here is the description in my ethnographic diary of the second Circle dance teacher teaching a traditional Rumanian dance

> As usual, we danced in a circle round a centre-piece of a candle and a few leaves. There was the teacher, who was retired herself, fifteen older ladies, one older man and myself. We started with a Rumanian dance that involved holding hands in a circle in a low W. We took seven Slip Steps to the right and then raised the left leg across the right with toes pointing to the ground. We then did the same sequence to the left, this time raising the right leg across the left with toes pointing towards the ground. The teacher walked us through the steps from her position in the circle, rather than demonstrating in the centre as the first Circle dance teacher does. She clutched a note-card with the steps written on and sometimes asked a class member to help her interpret them. Despite the haphazard way in which the steps were taught, there was a real feeling of warmth and community in the group as hands were joined, smiles exchanged and the group danced together to the lilting music. (C.2, 26.11.07).

This extract shows the power of the particular Circle dance to construct a sense of community through the act of holding hands and performing the footwork together, concluding each sequence of steps with a movement of pointing toes (C.1, 15.6.07; C. 2, 21.1.08; C. 2, 28.1.08). The smiling faces of the dancers and the lilting music helped to consolidate this feeling of community even though the teacher was struggling to interpret her notes on the steps and teaching the group in a haphazard manner.

These powerful feelings of belonging to a community of dancers were echoed in both the Circle dance groups, whether the Circle dances taught were modern or traditional and regardless of the ability of the teacher (C.1, 15.6.07; C. 2, 21.1.08; C. 2, 28.1.08). The very nature of the actual Circle dances seemed to construct such feelings, as in this extract from my ethnographic diary about the second Circle dance teacher teaching a modern Circle dance

> One of the catchy folk songs to which we did a dance in two concentric circles, keeps ringing through my head 'Hey ho, away we go, riding on a donkey.' This was an amusing dance that particularly facilitated a sense of community as the dancers in the outer circle moved round after each sequence of steps, so there was the opportunity to dance with many different members of the group. The feeling of belonging was consolidated by the fact that each sequence of steps was performed whilst holding hands with your current partner. The lively steps mirrored the lively song 'Step-stamp-stamp, step-stamp-stamp. Forwards, backwards, forwards, backwards. A right Slip-Step, a left Slip-Step. Walk forward four steps, with the outer circle taking bigger steps so that they moved onto the next person in the inner circle.' People laughed and smiled at each other, enjoying moving their bodies and the opportunity to dance with different members of the group. It was as if the donkey song had become so embodied that people actually seemed to be galloping along like donkeys (C.2, 28.1.08).

The actual physical movements of this Circle dance promoted laughter and feelings of togetherness, as dancers moved round after each sequence of steps. The process of embodying the music and movement gave the dancers the appearance of galloping along like donkeys. These humorous aspects seemed to empower the dancers to feel part of a community.

Sending the Light and Visualising Sick Members

Here is a description in my ethnographic diary of the first Circle dance teacher explaining the importance of visualising sick members and getting the group to send them the light when the group blew out the central candle at the end of the dance session

> The healing power of dance was really emphasised by the teacher. At the end of class, she talked about the importance of visualisation for athletes and professional dancers who were injured. Through mentally rehearsing their routines, these injured athletes and professional dancers could actually stimulate the appropriate muscles and this was supported by research. She

> spoke of the importance of group members visualising their sick members actually dancing with them. This would help those people actually return to the group and dance again. She cited the example of the lean man in his 70s who was now dancing with the group again after having spent a long time in hospital following a stroke. The group had been regularly visualising him dancing among them on the teacher's instructions....
>
> The teacher asked the group to visualise two women in their 70s who were currently unable to attend the group due to illness. One had suffered a series of strokes and one had suffered two fractured ribs after falling off a ladder. The teacher declared these ladies could be restored to health and the Circle dance group through this use of visualisation. As the circle of dancers crowded round the candle at the end of the session to blow it out, the light was sent to those who were sick (C.1, 8.6.07).

The first Circle dance teacher advocated very strongly the healing power of Circle dance and used visualisation of sick members. She was really asserting the power of the mind over the body. The three older people mentioned as sick in this section of my diary all returned to dancing with the group during the time I was there as a researcher, although this is anecdotal rather than scientific evidence of the effectiveness of visualisation. There are a number of references in my ethnographic diary to this use of visualisation and sending out the light (C.1, 4.5.07; C.1, 25.5.07; C. 1, 27.8.07).

Here also is a description from my ethnographic diary of the second Circle dance teacher sending the light to whoever needed it

> There were twenty older women in the class. One of the older ladies had brought a centre-piece, a large brown candle positioned on a white cloth with green holly leaves and whole brown walnuts around the candle. The candle was lit for the whole of the session and at the end, we all grouped round the candle, shoulder to shoulder and sideways to the centre, so that we could all participate in blowing out the candle and sending the light to whoever needed it (C.2, 19.11.07).
>
> The manner of sending out the light was more low key than in the first Circle dance group as there was not the intense build-up of visualisation of sick members during the preceding dances (C. 2, 8.10.07; C. 2,12.11.07; C. 2,14.1.08).

Some individuals however reacted against the whole practice of dancing round a candle and flowers and sending out energies with the light. Here is a 65 year old lady from the first Circle dance group describing her sister's reaction and how she herself adjusted to these ideas

> I brought for instance my sister once five years ago, because she wanted to see what it was all about. She'd never heard of Circle dancing... And she came and she picked it up very quickly because she's very.... she liked it. She said 'Yes, I like some of the dances. Nice woman. But that circle in the middle with the candle, flowers around and sending energies, I find, gosh, yes, that's a lot of hocus-pocus.' And I said 'It doesn't matter. You don't have to accept that. You just take from the morning what, what is right for you. And if you just enjoy a few dances and others you don't, fine. Doesn't matter.' So it's not prescriptive, it's just... you can take what you like from it. And I think I may initially also have had some feelings towards the centre-point. And I thought 'Oh gosh, this is a bit New Age. And is this a ritual? To make a ritual? I think that's part in all of us or not. No I can't say all of us, but in me. I also thought 'Well I have absolutely no problem. I think it's absolutely lovely to have a focal point in the middle.' So you evolve as you're doing it. If you would have asked me, eight years ago, I may have answered things differently from doing it now. And I think that's what's so wonderful, because it's where you're at, really (interview 1.C.4).

This 65 year old lady talks in a very fluent voice about her sister and becomes animated when quoting her sister's actual words to illustrate that her sister actually liked the Circle dancing and the teacher, even though she had reservations about the candle and sending energies. She feels strongly about 'taking what is right for you' as she raises her voice at these words. She defines Circle dancing in terms of a journey of personal growth, and emphasises how this was what was 'so wonderful' and as 'it's where you're at, really.' Her fluency indicates her own passion about Circle dance and her marked pauses after the words 'so wonderful' and 'it's where you're at' indicate that she is reflecting about the personal meaning of Circle dance for her. She personally finds Circle dancing empowering and had grown to accept the candle and sending the light, whereas her sister had found it a dis-empowering aspect.

In contrast to these animated words linking reactions to the candle with personal growth, a 72 year old lady found the whole idea of a candle rather amusing

> I suppose it gives me something to talk about with friends... they always think it's a hoot and I make them laugh... My brother-in-law is a bit worried about the candle and dancing round the candle and, sending out the light... So I say 'I sent out the light for you.' (laughs) It's teasing, so it's quite a good talking point really. I mean they all think it's slightly mad that you should dance round, some flowers and a candle (laughs). They think it's all quite funny so... it's quite a good talking point (interview 1.C.6).

The emotional analysis shows that this 72 year old lady's voice is very flat initially, but becomes more animated as she speaks about the candle. There is laughter in her voice as she talks about sending the light to her brother in law. She feels dancing round flowers and a candle is 'slightly mad'. This 72 year old lady finds the candle and sending the light an empowering activity as it gives her something to laugh about, though her cynicism could have interpreted this as a dis-empowering element.

Clothes for Circle Dance

Some members of the first Circle dance group dressed flamboyantly, with bright flowing clothes and long earrings. Others simply dressed casually in trousers and tops (C.1, 28.9.07). Most members of the second Circle dance group tended to dress casually in trousers and tops (C.2, 28.1.08). People either wore light dancing shoes or kept their feet bare for performing the actual Circle dances (C.1, 8.6.07). The Circle dancers who dressed simply discussed the topic of clothes very quickly in their interviews and did not tell any in depth stories about clothes. Other dancers such as a 72 year old lady from the first Circle dance group, simply regretted having thrown away ethnic style clothes

> Clothes?... Oh I just wear what I wear normally, I don't... it's a pity because I used to have a lot of ethnic type clothing at one time. You chuck it all out, you think 'Oh I'm never going to wear all that again.' And it would have been perfect... for dance... I have recently bought, one skirt which I maybe won't wear out.... I probably will, so I don't actually just have, dance clothes. No, not really. But then my clothes are fairly casual anyway so (laughs) they do all right, I don't mind (interview 1.C.6)

The emotional analysis shows this 72 year old lady spoke fluently about clothes with pauses for reflection, strongly emphasising how she feels 'it's a pity'. 'ethnic type clothing' and 'you chuck it all out' as you think 'oh I'm never going to wear all that again.' She laughs as she

feels the clothes she wears are casual and she feels comfortable with this. She feels empowered by the flexible dress code for Circle dance, as she is not obliged to dress up.

For some Circle dancers, dressing-up in special clothes was all part of the fun of Circle dancing. When the first Circle dance teacher held dance days, such as a Greek day, clothes would be colour co-ordinated according to her instructions, as described in my ethnographic diary

> The clothes were beautiful. One lady had made a silk purple tunic, which she wore with brooches, another lady wore a flowing pink sari and another wore a long purple skirt and straw hat with purple ribbon. One lady in her 70s was busy taking photographs. Many of the ladies wore dangly earrings such as large hoops with purple beads. The teacher wore a purple top with long sleeves, black leggings and Grecian style thong sandals (C.1, 27.8.07).

A 71 year old lady from the first Circle dance group told a story about Circle dance as an opportunity for self-expression, providing a chance to wear silly clothes and beads

> I mean I dig out all my party clothes and wear them. And dance about in them (laughs). After a certain age... you tend not to go many places where you can wear silly clothes, but you can wear silly clothes for Circle dancing (laughs). You can wear anything you like, lots of beads. I mean I've got a box of beads, there was an era, in the 60s, when people wore beads all the time and I used to have lots of, all cheap beads, lots of them..... But once I'd started Circle dancing, I got them all out, I actually wear them again (laughs). Dangle them round my neck and go here, great piles of beads again. And it's good fun. I don't wear them anywhere else, only Circle dancing. Long earrings. All sorts.... it's a morning for dressing up. I think quite a few people do that. Dig out their silly clothes (interview 1.C.3).

The emotional analysis shows that this 71 year old lady laughs about wearing party clothes and the process of getting her beads out and putting them on again, stressing that she only wore them for Circle dance. It is an opportunity for 'dressing up' and she seems to find this empowering.

A 68 year old lady from the second Circle dance group enjoyed dressing up in something sparkly for the sessions, even though most members wore trousers.

K: Well usually, I wear trousers. I have a class in the morning where I'm sitting down a lot, so I tend to wear trousers that are not going to show all the creases as much as.... So it's a practical bit there. But I quite often wear something sparkly on top or... Well to-day I've got my sparkly beads.

I: Yeah.

K: Because I just... well I suppose really I am quite childlike, I've always liked things that sparkle. And I recognise that it's something quite childish. It doesn't have to be real diamonds... (laughs). But it's something I associate with dance, so I like to put something sparkly on ...beads and sequins, things like that. But usually I just wear, I won't put beads and sequins on a top to go to a Circle dance class, but if I have one in the wardrobe, I'll probably wear it. Or wear something sparkly (interview 2.C.3).

The emotional analysis shows that this lady emphasises strongly that she 'usually' wears 'trousers' for Circle dance in order to be 'practical' because of the risk of 'creases' from sitting down in the morning. She likes to wear something 'sparkly' and pauses to reflect before strongly emphasising she is wearing her 'sparkly beads.' The pause after 'Because I just...' indicates she is reflecting on the meaning of choosing sparkly clothes or accessories, and she strongly emphasises this behaviour is connected with being 'quite childlike, I've always liked things that sparkle.' She laughs at the thought that these sparkly things did not have to be 'real diamonds.' She reflects how she associated 'dance' with putting something 'sparkly on... beads and sequins.' The opportunity to dress up for Circle dance seems to make this lady feel very empowered.

Music, Metaphors and Memories

The first Circle dance teacher's love of music seems to be intimately connected with her love of dance. On one occasion she gave members of the group leaflets about a Shostakovich concert as well as using the metaphors of 'icicles' for the beautiful and sad music of a Russian dance. As I recorded in my ethnographic notes

> During the break, the teacher gave out leaflets about a Shostakovich concert. She sang out the praises of various musicians who were going to play in the concert. I reflected how the love of music is intimately connected with the love of dance. The teacher especially facilitates the intertwining of the two as creative expression. We did a Russian dance and the teacher explained, 'There are lots of 'icicles' in the introduction. The music is difficult because it

> is 6/7 time. You want to move your feet to the beat when you are learning the dance but the steps don't quite fit. Once you have learnt the steps, you can appreciate the beauty of the music.' The music was very haunting and the steps seemed to glide along the floor, almost sinking into the ground, a mixture of Grapevine Steps, Slip-Steps and lifting one foot across the other. There is a deep sadness and beauty about this dance that nearly reduced me to tears (C.1, 12.10.07).

The beauty and sadness of this Russian dance and its' associated music, with the difficult timing, show how Circle dance is important for expressing a range of emotions. Music, movements of the Circle dances and the associated metaphors could be empowering for older individuals.

When I interviewed the first Circle dance teacher, she told a story explaining how traditional Circle dance aimed to tell stories about ordinary events through the lyrics rather than the steps, whereas modern choreographers aimed to reproduce the emotional or spiritual experience that the music or lyrics had generated in them

> A lot of the very ... traditional dances... come from early, early folk dance roots, and they, the lyrics that go with them... may be hundreds of years old, and the lyrics will have a story to tell. Frequently.... that story is not necessarily, taken up in the dance steps. It will be in the lyrics....A typical, middle European folk song would be..... Oh, young boy goes in the field to look after his goats and it starts to rain and he goes home as his mother's bucket has got a hole in it. That doesn't seem to you like a lot of a story, nor indeed to me, but this would be fairly, typical folk song fare. The steps that go with it, that would have been danced traditionally, in those villages, would not have been particularly to illustrate the meaning of that story, but to induce group bonding in the villages where it was used.....With more modern dances, modern choreographies... almost always what the choreographer is passing on is an emotional or a spiritual, sense the music or the lyrics have generated in them (interview 1.C.10).

The emotional analysis shows the first Circle dance teacher speaks in a story-telling manner, with plenty of pauses to gather her thoughts and emphasising the underlined words. She is reflecting deeply in a slow voice about the strange nature of stories in the traditional

dances and the lack of stories in the modern dances. She particularly seems to feel the modern dances are about the emotional or spiritual response of the choreographer to a piece of music.

A similar interest in music was shown by the second Circle dance teacher who was a music teacher and like the first Circle dance teacher, she sometimes chose a Circle dance that was off the beat. As I recorded in my ethnographic diary

> The whole atmosphere was relaxing and in many ways, similar to the other Circle dance group.... The teacher herself was retired, but still taught music. Indeed she talked about the importance of beating out the rhythm of each dance with your feet and her feet were bare, like those of some of the class members. The teacher identified that one lady in her 70s was musical as this particular lady noticed that one of the patterns of the Circle dances was off the beat. So music is an important part of this Circle dance group too (C.2, 29.10.07).

One of the 65 year old ladies who attended the second Circle dance group spoke of engaging with Circle dance through music, movement and emotion

> I realise I really like moving in response to a beat or a rhythm that comes from the music that, that timing with the music is actually something I enjoy. I enjoy the measure, of movement that's defined by the rhythm, of the music, I enjoy that, very much, which I wasn't conscious of as being something I thought about... And doing it without actually having to count 'One, two, three. One, two, three.' As you do in ballroom dancing when they're teaching you to do that. It's sort of different. Somehow the steps or the movement sort of, leads you into going in time with the music without sort of having it sort of shouted out at you.... Yes and I think the other discovery is this one of discovering, a big emotional content in dancing to the music which I didn't think about beforehand but realise that it does bring up... quite powerful emotions... some of them are light and happy and others are quite, melancholic... But I actually enjoy, enjoy that experience... responding to the emotional content in the music (interview 2.C.1).

The emotional analysis shows this 65 year old lady speaks with a soft voice, gradually slowing down as she reflects on the meaning of the music. She strongly emphasises how she feels 'I really like' moving to a 'beat' or 'rhythm' and 'music' is something 'I enjoy'. The frequent pauses in the phrase 'I enjoy the measure, of movement that's defined by the rhythm,

of the music, I enjoy that, very much' shows how she is in a deeply reflective mood, identifying the meaning of the rhythm in terms of moving her body, the concept of music as becoming embodied. She emphasises the counting in ballroom 'One, two, three' to show the contrast of having to count as you move compared to the feeling that the 'steps' or 'movement' in Circle dance 'lead' you into going in time with the music without thinking about it. She softens and slows her voice even more as she reflects on how much she enjoys responding to the emotional content in the music. She feels empowered by the Circle dance music.

Older dancers really seemed to enjoy the international nature of Circle dance, which was often facilitated through both the music and dances coming from a range of different countries. Here is a 72 year old lady from the first Circle dance group talking about the pleasure of participating in Circle dances and hearing music from all over the world

> Now when I go to the Circle dance class... because of the music that's chosen and because of the variety, I think it's a lovely, opening up of all the world and that's what I love about it... because... there's dances, there's gypsy dancing, there's Spanish, there's modern, there's jazz type things, there's even classical, some from operas and ballets and then you've got Greek and you've got Israeli dances... that gives me a feeling of being in another place, each time and that's rather lovely. It's journeying without going anywhere which is very enjoyable. Yeah, yeah... (interview 1.C.2)

The emotional analysis shows this 72 year old lady talks in a soft voice, with pauses as she reflects on the meaning of the Circle dances and the music. There is laughter in her voice as she uses the metaphor 'It's journeying without going anywhere which is very enjoyable'. This 72 year old lady feels empowered to travel in her mind to different countries by the music.

One of the 65 year old ladies from the second Circle dance group, who had only belonged to the group for a few months, spoke of enjoying the folk element of Circle dance and memories of her Hungarian mother

> I think one of the things that I really like about it, is the folk element I think... I can't really tell you a story but my mother was Hungarian and I have quite a lot of photographs of her when she was young so I remember her telling me about the, polka and the mazurka, so ...from that point of view, there was the link, and that was quite nice I think. And the fact that quite a lot of the dances are... from... that part of the world, the Balkans and,

> Czechoslovakia. I don't think we've actually done a Hungarian one. We might have done one. And that's quite interesting, I wish she was still alive so I could talk to her about it. But that's quite nice, isn't it? I think the... the getting away from the technological age is quite nice (interview 2.C.2).

The emotional analysis shows this 65 year old lady speaks in a firm and confident voice, with pauses to reflect, very strongly emphasising emotionally charged words such as 'folk element' and the fact her mother was 'Hungarian' and she had seen 'photographs' of her mother when she was young. Her voice speeds up at the words 'I wish she was still alive so I could talk to her about it' as she feels sad about her mother's death. Her use of a rhetorical question 'But that's quite nice, isn't it?' emphasises how she experiences a nice link with her mother through the Circle dance. This 65 year old lady feels empowered by the memories of her Hungarian mother that the Circle dances evoke.

Gender Issues in Circle Dance

There were only a couple of older men involved in Circle dancing. I only managed to interview one older man, who was 67 years old, together with his wife, who was 65 years old. He talked about feeling uncomfortable if he was the only man in the particular dancing session.

> But for me of course there is another dimension which is the fact that I'm, a male, and I love the dance, it does everything my wife says, it does for me. Well for me, I find dancing in that particular group of women, of a similar age to myself, I get, tired of that, particular setting, of those particular people. Now in the beginning also, there was a much more fluid attendance, numbers, new people would join, and some would leave and others would join. So for several years it was a very changing group. So you'd always see new faces. Well that's changed too and that particular group has settled very much into a, set group, which has added to my particular, reaction. And it's my fault, no not fault, it's how it impacts on me that's all (interview 1.C.4).

This man speaks in a very fast and fluent voice, and his strong emphasis on features of the first Circle group shows his dislike of 'women' who were of a 'similar age to myself' and capture how he feels 'tired of that' and those 'particular people'. He feels 'new people' and a 'changing' group with 'new faces' are important for his enjoyment of the dance. He feels dis-empowered in the context of the first Circle dance group. As a result, he and his wife moved to a different Circle dance session taught by the same teacher where there were several men.

The wife was very empathetic with her husband's feelings about gender difficulties. They also discussed whether they would feel comfortable doing Circle dance on their own, without the other partner (interview 1.C.4).

In contrast to her husband's feelings of discomfort with so many women, his wife positioned the very act of connecting non-verbally with others in a Circle dance group as being good for women without partners. This is embedded within a story of feeling there are times when she cannot be bothered to go Circle dancing

> You might think, 'Oh my goodness, I can't be bothered to be there say at ten o'clock... There's lots of things to be done in the house and you may feel a bit, low and negative, or whatever. But without failing, whenever you go or went, afterwards you felt the benefit from it. And so, it was also the connection with others, particularly I think, dancing in a Circle, and you do not need partners. And that I think is very holistic and all inclusive because especially many women.... widowed or on their own, dancing is usually a couple experience and this is one where, ok women pre-dominate but it is an experience where you can connect with others on a level that is very, it flows, it's very natural, it's almost as if you have a connection, because you are doing this dancing together. And you don't need to talk about it (interview 1.C.4).

The wife spoke in a very animated voice, though at times pausing to reflect and speaking more softly. She really slows down her voice and as she feels very strongly 'But without failing, whenever you go or went, afterwards you felt the benefit from it.' She interprets this non-verbal connection with others as empowering for women without partners.

One 72 year old lady spoke of enjoying Circle dance because you did not feel pressured to perform at a particular level which could happen when partners were mis-matched in ballroom dance

> Now about the Circle dancing, another aspect of it is you can dance on your own, and we've just been mentioning ballroom dancing for retired people in London, but you can come across that trouble of not always having a partner, and that can be quite awkward and it can put you off. And then again, people's level or ability to dance is not always matched so you might be quite a skilled dancer, and you might be partnered with someone who isn't and that's.....difficult. Whereas with Circle dancing, on the whole, I mean I know we are holding hands... we have much more scope to do our own thing and I

think that's very liberating for people and I think people need to feel that level and the success they can get when they set their own standards. Because when you are with someone else, you've got a different standard. When you are on your own, a lot of things are on your own, you've got your own standard and then you don't feel put down, really (interview 1.C.2).

The emotional analysis shows this 72 year old lady speaks in a soft, reflective voice. Her pronounced pause before the very strongly emphasised word 'difficult' highlights how she feels very strongly about people's 'level or ability to dance' not always being 'matched'. Her voice rises and lightens once she starts talking about Circle dance, highlighting her more positive feelings about Circle as a dance form. Circle dance is an empowering dance form for this 72 year old lady because of the freedom to dance at the level you wish, whereas she had felt dis-empowered by ballroom dancing because of having to adjust to someone else's standard.

Dancing in Retirement and Memories of Dancing when Younger

Here is the story of a 68 year old lady from the second Circle dance group, who liked to wear something sparkly, who started Circle dance in retirement

When I retired, I knew there were various courses available, because people in the church I attend had actually started them, so I determined that I would do something and then when I got the brochure, I saw Circle dance and I quite fancied it...although I'd never done it and I didn't really know what it was. So I went along to the class and that was the 2001-2002 academic year, and that was my first year at Circle dance. And that's how I started doing it. Subsequently I've joined a class run by the first Circle dance teacher, which is a class I pay for and therefore it's more of a teacher's class. You get quite professional teaching, as opposed to the second Circle dance teacher just being a volunteer. So I do that class as well. So I dance twice a week, Circle dance (interview 2.C.3).

The emotional analysis shows how this lady, who had a pronounced Scottish accent, speaks in a reflective style, slowly and clearly, deliberately pausing after each comma. She feels she wanted 'to do something' and 'I quite fancied it.' She finds Circle dance empowering, as it is an activity she had chosen herself.

When I prompted this lady 'Anything else about getting involved?', she replied with a story about doing Highland dancing as a child and a life-long love of dance

> Well as a Scottish child I did Highland dancing because all Scottish children do Highland dancing and that is not the same as Scottish dancing. We're talking about Highland Flings and Swords and things. I didn't actually like it very much, although I went... I went for, till I was about eleven, from the age of probably about five, like most Scottish children. Then, then in the 70s, I was ill and I went to Scottish Country dancing, and that was in Sussex and I had a brilliant teacher, who was an Italian lady and started every session with making us practise the steps. So you can see that she was determined that that we would dance properly. And I loved it, I really liked it. So I did that for a few years. In-between times I discovered... I also discovered, probably around the 70s, that I liked dancing, what I call free dancing. And I used to make up my own dances. And I would dance a lot, to classical music mostly, but also to rock music. So since then, and that went on right probably until I retired, I would dance at home, just making up my dances, and dancing all the time, to any kind of music that I fancied and I found, it was something I could actually do. There was a chap who saw me dance once who gave me a book on Isadora Duncan, which he had inscribed with 'May you always dance' or something. So it was something that I actually liked and felt I was quite good at in those days (interview 2.C.3).

The emotional analysis shows how this 68 year old lady tells her story very fluently, with only the odd pause for reflection. She feels very strongly 'I did not like it very much' when talking about doing Highland dance as a child. Her enjoyment of free dancing is encouraged by a male friend giving her a book on Isadora Duncan, and she strongly emphasises how he had inscribed 'May you always dance' on this book. Her initial experience of Scottish dancing as a child had been dis-empowering, but as an adult she feels empowered by a good Scottish Country dance teacher and a friend who encouraged her love of free dancing.

A 78 year old lady from the first Circle dance group spoke of getting involved in Circle dance in her retirement through meeting the teacher when swimming, and having done ballroom dancing as a teenager during the Second World War:

> I first got involved in Circle dancing... I do believe it was about the year 2000 but I'm not quite sure...our dance leader, used to go swimming, and I got

> to know her, and several other people. And at the end of the swimming sessions, September, because it's open air, our dance leader said, 'Now swimming's stopped you're coming Circle dancing.' And so we said as one voice 'What is Circle dancing?' (laughs). So our dance leader said 'You'll find out. You can come for two sessions without paying, and then if you like it, you can pay the fee. Which wasn't a lot.... And it's not too difficult to get there, and there's parking. So my friends from swimming and myself, we went as a group and our dance leader gave us our first ever session of Circle dancing. And we loved it (interview 1.C.9).

The emotional analysis shows this 78 year old lady starts telling her story in a hesitant voice, with pauses as she reflects on how she got involved in Circle dance She laughs as she remembers how she and her swimming friends said 'What is Circle dance?' She concludes this little story with a strong emphasis on how the teacher gave them their 'first ever session' and 'we loved it'. Getting involved in Circle dance is an empowering experience for her.

When I asked this 78 year old lady if she had been involved in any other forms of dance, she replied

> Not since I was a young girl (laughs) when I loved dancing, I do love dancing and... my brother, who was two years older than me, he was an excellent dancer, he was so good...I adored my brother and when we danced, because we used to go, I would be about sixteen, he'd be eighteen, it was the end of the war, the Second World War. And we used to go to these dance halls... But there were lots of airmen, there's lots of airbases around, it's a flat area. And we used to have a lot of Americans, Polish, Canadians, all kinds of people. And I used to go to these halls and my brother used to very often come with me, if he was on leave or before he went to the air force himself. And he could dance with me and make me feel I was, the best dancer in the whole world. See I'd just lose it with him because he could turn you and keep you in time and it was always a delight. And I did think, 'It's nice to go a lot.' I used to go three or four times a week to these halls to dance (interview 1.C.9).

The emotional analysis shows this 78 year old lady's voice lightens and she laughs about being a 'young girl', strongly emphasising 'I loved dancing, I do love dancing.' She pauses to reflect about her brother, very strongly emphasising how he was an 'excellent dancer' and how she 'adored' him. She feels that she would 'lose it with him' because he was so in control. She

feels her memories of doing ballroom dancing with her brother are empowering ones. This 78 year old lady continues her story about ballroom dancing during the Second World War, talking about the music and including a humorous anecdote about an RAF black man

> In those days it was jitter-bugging, going back in history, and jiving. And... yeah it was just dance to Perry Goodman and his orchestra, all those famous jazz orchestras. If it wasn't them, sometimes they used to come up, the airmen, and all the forces up there, so we'd have a really good band. But if it wasn't, we'd have just social RAF bands who could do a pretty good Glen Miller... music. And yeah, I think it's good. And I was quite a religious person as well so it, it was... I was very religious. I used to go to everything in the Catholic church, I went to every single organisation there was. And I also went to all these dances (laughs) during all the week. So they used to criticise me... the nuns came out to my mother one day 'Did they know I had this RAF black man who used to pick me up in town?' (interview 1.C.9).

This 78 year old lady continues her story in a quiet and reflective voice, emphasising the words 'jitter-bugging' and 'jiving' and a 'good band' as she feels these were all important aspects. She laughs about going to all these dances and being religious. There is laughter in her voice as she talks about the RAF black man who used to pick her up in town. Her memories of doing ballroom dancing during the war are empowering ones, facilitating her to laugh at herself.

Memories of Circle Dancing and Holidays in Greece

One of the 65 year old ladies from the second Circle dance group, even though she did not have an opportunity to attend Circle dance classes until her retirement, had been drawn into Circle dancing when on holiday in Greece

> Well they just literally came across, took you by the hand, and they took you into the circle to dance, to dance with them. And you just, just went round, following what, they were doing. And they were just completely accepting that you made mistakes and nobody was upset about it. So it was just, literally... literally joining in, listening to music and watching what they were doing. I didn't know the names of the steps, like Grapevine and all the rest of it, just sort of followed how they moved. And I really loved the rhythm of the music, the sound of the music, so I found I picked it up quite easily actually.... (interview 2.C.1).

The emotional analysis shows how this 65 year old lady lightens her voice with quiet laughter as she talks about being drawn into Circle dance when on holiday in Greece. She feels very strongly drawn into the dance as the local Greeks 'took you by the hand'. She hesitates as she reflects slowly on the sensation of doing these Circle dances when she was unsure of the steps. She 'loved' the rhythm of the music, so she feels she just absorbed it all. This 65 year old lady's first experience of Circle dance had been very empowering for her.

A 74 year old lady, a retired professional ballerina, who joined the first Circle dance group and left because she was not enjoying it, had also been drawn into Circle dancing when touring with her ballet company in Greece

> Then I had a wonderful experience in Greece, when I was with the ballet company and, we were dancing there. And we got caught up in a street, Circle dancing, lots of lovely Greek men... and they dragged us in and we just got on with it. And it was difficult because there were lots of sort of hesitations and hovering on one foot, it's not straightforward... But I thought 'This is great...This is something I would like to do again.' (interview 1.C.5).

It is interesting that this retired ballerina, even though she was a negative case as she did not continue Circle dancing in retirement, has positive memories of Circle dancing in Greece with her ballet company. The emotional analysis shows how this 74 year old lady spoke with a strong and confident voice, with plenty of long pauses for reflection. She feels very strongly that 'lots of lovely Greek men', 'dragged us in', and they 'got on with it' despite the 'difficult' aspects, 'hesitations' and 'hovering on one foot.' She feels empowered by the experience so would like to do Circle dance again.

A 71 year old lady from the first Circle dance group told a story of how a Greek Circle dance brought back memories of being in love with a Greek man on holiday in Greece

> Some of the dances, there's one dance... which is Greek... that really puts me right back when I was... after my divorce, when I was separated from my husband... I went to Greece for a whole summer with a friend of mine, who also had small children, and there I fell in love with a very beautiful man and there's this one Greek dance which has got... a Greek voice on it saying 'Agaype Boo' which means 'I love you.' And I can really, whenever I dance that dance, I'm immediately transported back into that period of my life, when I was in love with this Greek man. Beautiful. And that's just the complete transportation by, whether it's the language and the words and the music

because I was completely...I was just completely absorbed in Greece for that whole summer... Staying in Athens and I was just completely absorbed in the Greek world, in the Greek music and Greek everything. Till I came back. Back to reality. So that, that song takes me back to that... (interview 1.C.3)

The emotional analysis shows this 71 year old lady spoke in a slow, soft and reflective voice, with plenty of pauses for gathering her thoughts. She feels very deeply 'there I fell in love with a very beautiful man', emphasising how the 'language,' 'words' and 'music' of 'that song' take her back to Greece when she was dealing with a lot of emotion. She feels empowered by this particular Greek Circle dance because it brings back these memories of being in love with a Greek man when on holiday in Greece.

Differences between Professional and Social Dancing

Two of the Circle dancers I interviewed had worked as professional dancers. One of these was a negative case, and because she had worked as a professional ballerina, she found she did not enjoy social dance such as Circle dancing. I met her, as she was a friend of the retired married couple who introduced me to Circle dance. She gave me an ethnographic interview initially as she did not want to be tape-recorded for fear of having nothing to say about why she left Circle dance (C.1, 4.6.07). However she had plenty to say and so agreed to give me a tape-recorded interview.

So then I met somebody from my church who was doing, belonged to a Circle dance group, and she said 'Come along with me.' So I said 'Oh yes, alright.' And because, she could get me there, I'm not allowed to cycle too far because of my eyes, so I'm reliant on buses and other people to get me, distances. So off we went and I persevered, I suppose I can't really remember whether I went once a week for six months or... I really can't remember... let's say, it was once a fortnight for six months, something like that. Now I was with a group... that already knew each other, I went in a middle of a term, so they all basically knew most of the dances... so I, I wasn't quite up to scratch straight away... it was hard for me to catch up.... (interview 1.C.5).

The emotional analysis shows this 74 year old lady, who was a retired professional ballerina, tells her story in a very slow and reflective voice. Her voice lightens as she talks about her friend inviting her to come Circle dancing and shows her initial feelings of enthusiasm. Her voice speeds up as she talks about her problems with her eyes, an issue which is painful for her, as she very strongly emphasises how she feels it made her 'reliant' on others for getting

'distances'. She feels it was difficult being in a 'group' that already 'knew' each other and who 'basically knew' the 'dances' as she very strongly emphasises these words. Her voice becomes hesitant as she tries to verbalise about her physical difficulties when doing Circle dancing. Trying to join this particular Circle dance group was a dis-empowering experience for this 74 year old retired professional ballerina.

She later talked about not liking having her arms pulled and not enjoying being with a group of all elderly people

> Then another reason was, one session particularly (laughs), I had somebody this side who was pulling on my arm...sort of clutching and grabbing and... pulling me over with her and this is, I think is very discourteous. I mean she had no intention, she didn't realise she was doing it, but it completely destroyed any possible enjoyment for me... This dance group was not full of silly old women but it was the first group I' d been in where everybody was over 50 really. So quite a lot of elderly people, and I thought 'I don't want to be here particularly.' I like being in a mixed group.... of all ages and things. So that was a little bit of it, not wanting to be reminded that I was one of the elderly, because I didn't feel elderly you see (interview 1.C.5).

The emotional analysis shows this 74 year old lady's laughter at the words 'one session particularly' indicates her discomfort at the sensation of someone 'pulling', 'clutching', 'grabbing' her arm and 'pulling me over with her.' She feels very strongly this behaviour is 'very discourteous' and there is laughter in her voice as she very strongly emphasises 'it completely destroyed any possible enjoyment for me'. Her voice flattens at the words 'I don't want to be here particularly' but becomes lively again as she says 'I like being in a mixed group.... of all ages and things' as she does not want to be reminded of being 'elderly'. So this 74 year old lady found having been a professional dancer and liking a mixture of ages makes her feel dis-empowered when dancing with a group of older people.

The other retired professional dancer who was 77 years old, was a regular member of the first Circle dance group, and I often met her on the bus when travelling to attend the sessions. She seemed to enjoy the Circle dancing even though it was a social rather than a professional group, and sometimes chatted about her professional career as a tap dancer on the bus. These reminiscences were obviously pleasurable and she would laugh when sharing them (C.1, 18.5.07; C.1, 25.5.07; C.1, 15.6.07). Like the professional ballerina, she explained how professional dancers develop a lighter touch. As I recorded in my ethnographic diary

> I travelled by bus with the retired professional dancer in her 70s. She talked about her dancing career, especially in tap that had been her favourite style. She had been to stay with her son in London the previous week and saw the musical 'Wicked' that she found disappointing. Details such as the physical yellow brick road were poorly portrayed on stage. She laughed as she talked about her own career, obviously enjoying the reminiscences. She talked about the glamour and glitter of her stage costumes, which were a contrast to the plain beige trousers she often wore for Circle dancing. She complained that these trousers were now too long for her, as she must have shrunk in stature due to ageing. She told me how she had learnt every different style of dance during her training. She had even danced the dance of the cygnets from the ballet Swan Lake and she had done some Scottish dancing. I told her how my shoulders were painful from the Scottish dancing I had done yesterday when some of the male beginners had been pulling too hard. She explained how professional dancers develop a lighter touch, saying she noticed that when you clapped both your hands with someone-else's hands during the Circle dancing, the other person (who was invariably not a professional) would clap too hard against your hands (C.1, 15.6.07).

This entry in my ethnographic diary demonstrates how I had developed a relaxed and easy rapport with this retired professional tap-dancer through using participant observation. I shared about my problems with painful shoulders in Scottish Country dancing in response to her talking about Scottish dancing and this prompted her to talk about the lighter touch of professional dancers. My own body had intruded into the research but through acknowledging my own experiences of lived embodiment when dancing, I had facilitated an interesting finding. When I tape-recorded an interview with this retired professional tap dancer, she showed me her photograph album about her dancing career so the interview took on a more spontaneous ethnographic style rather than a narrative style (interview 1.C.7). Conducting my research with this older lady in an informal, spontaneous and ethnographic manner seemed to be most appropriate. This was how she chose to tell me about her dancing career, whereas the retired professional ballerina had gone into lengthy narratives very easily during her tape-recorded interview (interview 1.C.5).

Official Definition of Scottish Country Dancing

The Royal Scottish Country Dancing Society provides an official definition of Scottish Country dance on their website:

> Scottish Country Dancing is a sociable dance form with roots stretching back for centuries. Participants are grouped into sets, typically of 3,4, or 5 couples arranged either in two lines (men facing ladies) or in a square, and work together to dance a sequence of formations. This will leave them in a new order, and the dance is repeated enough times to bring them back to their starting positions, with everyone dancing each position in turn.
>
> Scottish Country Dancing is mainly danced socially, for the pure pleasure and enjoyment, but many groups also perform, and there are even occasional competitions (which have a mixed response from dancers). Although the basic steps and formations are easy to pick up, the technique is being honed continually so that at its highest levels it is now an extremely athletic, balletic dance form (not that the majority of social dancers take it as seriously as that...).
>
> There can be no dancing without music, and Scottish Country Dancing has attracted some of the most talented musicians to play for it. From the first chord to the final bow or curtsey, dancers are inspired by the driving reels, jaunty jigs, snappy strathspeys or lilting slow airs – leading to the popular expression 'the music will tell you what to do' (now also immortalised in the name of a dance). If you can't afford a live musician or band, there are numerous inspirational CDs – see the shop for more details of those stocked by RSCDS Headquarters.
>
> New dances are being written all the time (Alan Paterson's DanceData database puts the current count at over 13000), and dances vary considerably in complexity and ease of dancing – thus careful selection of dances for a programme can cater for beginners with a couple of months experience, or challenge and interest the most experienced dancers, or (as more usually happens) provide a range over the evening to suit most tastes.
>
> Scottish Country Dance is very sociable – it is standard practice to dance with different partners during a night of dancing – and thanks to the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society is sufficiently popular and uniform

that any Scottish Country Dancer can pack their dance shoes and be welcomed by a local group almost anywhere in the world.

Official Definition of Ladies' Step Dance

This definition of Ladies' Step is available on a website:-

> Ladies' step dancing is generally solo dancing, although some dances are written for couples or, occasionally, more dancers. It uses a number of basic steps – a few more than Scottish country dancing, although some are the same. The influence of both Scottish country dancing and ballet are clear. The dances range in difficulty, from those that need no more than three or four easy steps to those that are considerably more demanding. But that's where the challenge – and the enjoyment – lies.
>
> It originated in Scotland in the 17th and 18th centuries. Dancing masters would travel around the country, visiting both the 'big house' and the village hall to teach step dancing. As a style of dancing, it was more or less lost (or at least dying rapidly) when, in the 1950s, Tibby Cramb was given a manuscript dated 1841 that contained a number of step dances. To say that the instructions were obscure would be putting it mildly, so Tibby set about finding people who had learned these dances and could help her interpret the instructions. Since then, it has been revived as a form of traditional dancing. Like Scottish country dancing, not only are the old dances learned, but also new ones are written – a true living tradition!

Outline of Findings on Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step Dance

After official definitions of Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance, I consider the smaller stories that arose from the focused coding under the emergent narrative theme 'Older people forming a sense of belonging through Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step.' These smaller stories are:-'Scottish Country Dances facilitate Community', 'Physically and Mentally Demanding Scottish Country Dances', 'Ladies' Step Dances as Physically and Mentally Demanding', 'Ladies' Step Dances facilitate Community', 'Clothes for Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step Dance', 'Importance of Music', 'Gender in Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step Dance', 'Dancing in Retirement and Memories of Dancing when Younger', 'Socialising in Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step Dance' and 'Problems of Scottish Country Dance as a Social Dance Form.' The names of official dance movements and

formations are recorded with capital letters at the beginning of each word, such as Pas de Basque Steps or Reels of Three. The names of specific dances are recorded with capital letters at the beginning of each word and in inverted commas, such as 'The Dusty Miller'. Further examples of smaller stories can be found in the focused coding in the appendix that refers to the interview transcripts and my ethnographic diary. Some of these further examples of smaller stories in my ethnographic diary and narrative style interviews are referenced after each extract directly quoted and discussed in the main text.

Scottish Country Dances Facilitate Community

Many modern Scottish dances are international and come from countries such as Japan, America and Australia. Here is my description of the second Scottish Country dance group performing 'Pelorus Jack', a modern dance written about a dolphin surfing the waves off the coast of Australia

> The first dance was 'Pelorus Jack', a dance written in Australia about a dolphin. The patterns of the dance were a metaphor for the dolphin surfing over the waves. Reels of Three were danced back and forth across the set of twelve people in different directions, only one of the positions was danced by two dancers close together, who represented the dolphin surfing the waves. These movements created a community spirit among the dancers. I had to be the dolphin with the 85 year old man who seemed to have a hip injury, and shuffled through the dances limping from side to side, rather than dancing them. He certainly seemed to know the steps of this particular dance and I had a job to keep up with his shuffling pace as he weaved in and out of the various dancers in various different directions across the set. 'Follow him' called out a lady in her 60s with grey hair who has a Down's syndrome daughter with her, who seemed to know the dance moves perfectly (S.2, 10.1.08).

The patterns of movement created a sense of community as various Reels of Three were danced across the set of twelve people. These movements were a metaphor for a dolphin surfing over the waves, with the Reels of Three representing the waves going up and down, and the two dancers dancing close together representing the dolphin. I was impressed by the 85 year old man who led me through the dance even though he could only shuffle, and a lady in her 50s instructed me to follow him, showing how the dancers were very aware of moving in relation to each other. It seems as if the very formations of Scottish Country dance are

designed for community bonding, like the patterns of movements in the Circle dances. This can be empowering for the older people involved.

Here is another example from my ethnographic diary of the sense of community and pleasure older people derived from being involved in Scottish Country dancing, even when the environment was a shabby church hall

> There is such a warm welcoming feeling among this group of mainly retired people who get together just to dance. Eventually there were sixteen people in the small shabby church hall (seventeen including myself). Most of the people were retired. People do not all arrive on time but dribble into the hall one by one. So as I arrived early, there were only eight members of the group performing 'The Hazel Tree'. I put my bag and coat in the adjacent room with chairs and changed into my ballet shoes. Everyone leaves their bags and coats in this room. I went and sat on one of the small plastic chairs lining the sides of the hall. The eight dancers were smiling and laughing and singing as they did 'The Hazel Tree'. I noticed the small round 85 year old lady, walking through the dance with a big smile on her face. She did not falter once in the pattern of the dance. One lady in her 50s was singing away in a high pitched voice to the bouncy Scottish music. The slim older man in his 70s, with wavy grey hair, was grinning as he danced. The pleasure and community spirit amongst these older people seemed immense (S.2, 8.11.07).

The older dancers in this extract were all happy as they danced together, even though my brief description of the surroundings show the environment was run down. The 'bouncy Scottish music' particularly encouraged one older lady in her 50s to sing along and the other older dancers were smiling. Scottish Country dance and music has the potential to empower older individuals, even when the environment is poor.

The sense of community was particularly promoted when the dancers held hands and moved round in a slow Strathspey dance, as I recorded in my ethnographic diary

> I danced the 'Drumlochty Glen' with an older lady with grey hair in her late 50s. She kindly prompted me with single words as we changed formations. It was a slow Strathspey and as a progressive dance, with the leading couple working it's way down the set, the timing was difficult as it often seemed too slow. But with smiles and laughter we got through the complex patterns of the dance. It was lovely to hold the wrinkled hands of all these older people as we

> danced the Setting Step in Lines of Three and then the central person took a Petronella Turn to form a Line of Three at right angles to the first line. These Petronella Turns and Setting Steps were repeated until the two central people had worked their way round all sides of the Square. This constant changing of positions facilitated the dancers to hold hands with every member of the set of six people, and created a real sense of community. There is a heightened awareness of dancing in relation to others in Scottish Country dance (S.2, 14.2.08).

Dancing in small sets of six people holding hands in Lines of Three, consolidated a sense of community. The Petronella Turn is a complex move when a dancer uses Setting Steps to turn round 90 degrees. This movement round the set, giving different groups of three the opportunity to dance in a line together, was what facilitated the sense of community, as dancers got the opportunity to hold each others' hands. The timing was difficult as a slow Strathspey, but an older dancer prompted me when I was struggling and smiles and grins were exchanged during the dance. The movements of this Scottish Country dance seemed to empower individuals in terms of awareness of others.

Here is a detailed description in my ethnographic diary of 'Muriel and Willi', a very complex dance, when other dancers helped an 85 year old man and myself, showing how the very patterns of the dance created an awareness of others and so a sense of community

> After the 'Gay Gordon's', a lively couple dance which I watched, we did 'Muriel and Willi'. This was an incredibly complex dance, which involved the leading couple Setting and Turning and then doing Rights and Lefts so as to move round the Square to find a new partner, turning the new partner, forming a Circle of Four to dance round and then just the women joining up to form a Wheel-Shape, with one hand raised into the centre. Most people seemed to know this dance so I was lucky enough to be pushed into the appropriate position at the right time. My original partner was the 85 year old man who always shuffled through the dances with an awkward jerking movement from his hips. He did not seem to know the dance at all, even though the older man in his 70s who was doing the music, had walked everyone through the dance at the start... Other dancers were very sensitive to this 85 year old man and myself, gently pushing each of us in the right direction or giving one word instructions such as 'Turn,' 'Set' and 'Middle'.

> There was a lovely sense of co-operation and it seemed possible to do the dance adequately in a set of ten people where two people were unsure of the moves (S.2, 3.1.08).

Although the dance was challenging, other dancers supported the 85 year old man and myself so that we could participate. These prompts included a push in the right direction or one word commands such as 'Turn', 'Set' and 'Middle'. It seemed possible to do a very complex dance when two out of ten people in the set did not know the dance, but this seemed to be a critical number. Two people who were unsure of the dance moves could be supported by other dancers and feel empowered to become part of the community of dancers. However, if the number of people struggling in a set was greater than two, those members would feel disempowered and indeed the whole set might collapse, as happened in 'Father Connelly's Jig' which is discussed in the section 'Ladies' Step, Scottish Country Dance, Emotion and Music' in Chapter Five: Psychological health, Sense of Belonging and Growing Older as a Dancer. Scottish Country dance can be both physically and mentally demanding, but has the potential to facilitate a sense of community, an empowering aspect for the older individuals involved.

One of the 77 year old ladies, an experienced dancer from the second Scottish Country dance group, talked about this sense of community in her interview. She preferred Scottish Country dancing as it is more sociable than other dance forms and it is international:

> Scottish Country dancing is so sociable, you are looking at somebody else the whole time. It might not be the partner you are dancing with, it may be somebody else in the set, but you are looking at other people and the... normal pattern is that you do not dance the next dance with the same person. You change partner. Now I danced some years ago in 1998, I did a once only trip round the world to see cousins, relatives, friends and I was in New Zealand for their day-school and the same applies. You do not dance the next dance with the same person. And it was wonderful to do the same dances to the same music (laughs). So that I find is a great way of making friends. So very, very enjoyable, is the social side (interview 2.S.3).

The emotional analysis shows this 77 year old lady emphasises how you are always looking at other people and changing partners after each dance in Scottish Country dance. Her voice is fluent but also soft and reflective, with pauses to collect her thoughts. She emphasises how the same custom of changing partners after each dance still applied at a Scottish Country dance in New Zealand, and laughs because she felt it was wonderful to be

doing the same dances to the same music. She feels the social aspects are what make Scottish Country dance 'very, very enjoyable.' For this 77 year old lady, the social aspects of Scottish Country dancing as a dance form are very empowering.

Physically and Mentally Demanding Scottish Country Dances

The dances composed by Fosse and Drewry are incredibly complex and relatively difficult Scottish Country dances, performed sometimes by the second Scottish Country dance group at their weekly sessions and taught in an informal group by the older man who organised the Ladies' Step dance sessions for the first Scottish Country dance group. Membership of this group was by invitation only, and a mixture of older people and students were involved. As mathematicians, Fosse and Drewry delighted in choreographing particularly complicated Scottish Country dances which were mentally and physically very challenging. I attended one session of this group, which included three older ladies in their 60s and 70s and one 79 year old man besides the 71 year old man who taught the session. This extract from my ethnographic diary captures the complexity

> An older man who was 79, told me he had been Scottish dancing for 53 years but found it was getting more difficult now he was getting older. He only did a couple of dances and although mentally he seemed to have absorbed the complex patterns of the dances, he shuffled along awkwardly in his black Scottish shoes, leaning his whole body to the left. He was a tall thin man, maybe six feet tall if he could stand straight, with a twisted expression across his face, especially his mouth, as he seemed to be concentrating very hard. When he sat down, he told me 'Scottish dance is like bell ringing, my other hobby. You have to think.'
>
> The dances were incredibly complex. I had never seen such complex dances before. There was no warm-up or practice with footwork but the 71 year old man walked through the first dance with us which was called 'Herring Colours' and was about fishermen's' wives selling fish. The energy required to actually dance through such a dance, and indeed all the dances, was enormous in comparison with my improvers' class. The dancers were noticeably out of breath by the end of the session, and despite the fact that I go long distance cycling, I felt out of breath too. The complex patterns are just swirling around my head and it is impossible to remember the precise details of any one dance. Rather than just one leading couple going through the set of eight people, all

couples seemed to be moving in different directions at once, such as Reels of Four across the side, and then Reels of Eight with the two lines of dancers intermingling with each other. Dancers moved in pairs, in circles, in squares, in rectangles, in triangles and in Figures of Eight. There were Star Formations either with four dancers or with four pairs of dancers holding hands with each other and one of each pair would put a hand in the centre to form the hub of the star. Sometimes dancers would split into two groups, with one group forming an inner Star Formation and the other group dancing round in an outer circle, either in a clockwise or an anti-clockwise direction (S.1, 14.10.07).

Even though he shuffled along leaning to one side during the dances, mentally the 79 year old man seemed to have absorbed the patterns of the dances. He emphasised the mental demands of these Scottish Country dances, and my observations confirmed that such dances were physically demanding with dancers becoming noticeably out of breath as they dance through all the complex patterns. Only the 71 year old man who organised the session talked about Fosse and Drewry dances during his interview (interview 1.S.1).

Ladies' Step Dances as Physically and Mentally Demanding

Ladies' Step dances are very balletic and require a lot of concentration to learn the steps and fit them to the music. There was a warm-up and practice of the balletic footwork at the start of each class (S.1, 21.4.07). The balletic style made the class only accessible to the more experienced and skilled older Scottish Country dancers. As I described in my ethnographic diary

> The teacher taught the six sequences of steps in 'The Dusty Miller' one by one. The timing was difficult as it was 6/4. The teacher had to keep slowing down the music, as the steps were so difficult. She said that she could not talk through the steps, think about what she was doing and demonstrate the steps all at the same time, because the brainwork required by Ladies' Step was just too taxing. Most of the older women agreed with her and one said, 'It keeps your brain young!' Another said 'It's really impossible to get your brain to co-ordinate your feet!' And yet everyone seemed to perform well, only the older man and I were clumsy with our feet. The steps were very balletic and disciplined. People were getting quite out of breath with all the hopping and pointing, so the teacher gave us frequent short breaks. By the end of the class,

> the teacher said that her Shuffles had deteriorated to Points. The older man complained that the steps really pulled your calf muscles and several of the older ladies nodded in agreement (S.1, 28.10.07).

This extract shows how Ladies' Step dance could be very mentally and physically demanding, as even this group of experienced older dancers needed the music slowing down in order to be able to co-ordinate their feet in time. Physically these older dancers were getting out of breath and several complained of their calf muscles aching. So although the class seemed to perform well and to be empowered by the dance, at the same time there were aspects of the dance that made individuals feel dis-empowered as they were mentally and physically challenged beyond their capabilities. It was difficult for older individuals to access this particular 'culture of dance'.

The theme of Ladies' Step dance as mentally and physically challenging for both the teacher and older dancers is echoed in my ethnographic dairy on a number of occasions. Here is another example

> The older women seemed to struggle to remember all the six sequences of steps and so did I, because each sequence was a complex variation of the Hop-brush-beat-beat Step or the Shuffles that the teacher had taught at the very beginning of the class. The dance was very balletic and aerobic, with toes pointed, feet turned out and graceful movements, hopping from foot to foot. The discipline was superb as everyone followed the teacher with perfect timing. The teacher laughed when she made a mistake in the Glasgow Highlander Step and ended up on the wrong foot. Her mistake showed just how mentally challenging this dancing can be, as she got confused on this particular step at several points in the dance. Eventually she got the group through all the six sequences of steps, with a lot of demonstration and repetition. She deliberately slowed the piano music down on the tape, as it seemed impossibly fast. We all managed to perform the whole dance from start to finish. I felt relaxed and uplifted by the dance and a little tired (S.1, 16.9.07).

One of the 65 year old ladies, who was a very experienced dancer, belonging to both Scottish groups and the second Circle dance group involved in my study, talked about finding Ladies' Step dance difficult in her interview as she did not have a ballet background. I asked

her 'How do you find Ladies' Step?' and her reply was very short, in contrast to the long stories in the rest of her interview

> D: Hard. Because I haven't really got a ballet background. And it's very much based on ballet, I think. You didn't go to the day school....
>
> I: Yes, I did.
>
> D: Oh yeah. Well, how did you find the second dance?
>
> I: Hard.
>
> D: (Laughs) Well the teacher found it hard too and she's been doing Step-dancing... all her life. And she couldn't cope either. She said she found it hard. Highland is more difficult. A challenge. (interview 2.S.6).

The emotional analysis shows this 65 year old lady speaks in a soft, reflective voice, very strongly emphasising words such as 'hard' and 'well the teacher found it hard too'. The way she quickly passes over talking about Ladies' Step dance suggests she finds it very difficult, whereas she had been able to talk about other forms of dance at great length. She rationalises her feelings by saying that the teacher found it hard as well and emphasising that Highland (the pre-cursor of Ladies' Step dance) is 'a challenge.' The technical difficulty of doing Ladies' Step dances makes this 65 year old lady feel dis-empowered.

Ladies' Step Dances Facilitate Community

Even though Ladies' Step dance was originally a solo style, some of the Ladies' Step dances were performed in formations that constructed the sense of belonging to a community. Here is a description from my ethnographic diary of a Ladies' Step dance performed in a triangle that created a supportive or community feel

> The first dance 'Pas de Trois' was a modern adaptation of a Ladies' Step dance from the Hill manuscript. It was performed in triangular shapes of three dancers. I danced with two older ladies, one in her 50s and the other in her 60s. We moved round the points of the triangle doing the sinking and rising Russian Bourree Steps, two steps to each side. My fellow dancers smiled at me and there was a lovely co-operative feel as we did this dance together. We did forwards and backwards steps in a triangle, before chasing each other round the triangle doing Russian Bourree Steps in the opposite direction. After a Spin Turn, we did various Pas de Basque Steps in front and behind, followed by a Reel of Three in a triangle, Spot Turns and dancing round in a small

> Circle of Three holding hands. The holding of hands really connected the dancers with each other and we exchanged smiles and grins (S.1, 2.1.08).

Togetherness in this Ladies' Step dance was constructed through dancing the same steps at the same time with dancers in a triangular formation, so they could see each other and exchange smiles. Other moves of this particular dance, such as chasing each other round in a triangle, doing a Reel of Three, or dancing in a Circle of Three holding hands, all consolidated this sense of community, even though Ladies' Step dance is technically a solo style. This sense of community was an empowering aspect for the individuals involved.

Other Ladies' Step dances also constructed a community feel through the very formations of the dance, as in the sequence for which the teacher used the metaphor of a collapsing deckchair, described in my ethnographic diary

> Three dancers formed a circle in the collapsing deckchair movement and joined hands to hop backwards and forwards several times before twisting their arms round to form a circle facing outwards rather than inwards. The four groups of three dancers were like cog-wheels in a clock circulating round in various directions, as the dancers twisted from facing centre to facing outwards and vice versa. The teacher took the older man's place (he had a shoulder injury) and demonstrated the movements with myself and another dancer. Although I was wearing a support on my arm and hand, I found the movement was conducted in a gentle manner. The older man came back to our group and tried the movement, letting go of our hands when it became too painful. Next we danced in Lines of Three, doing pointing steps forwards and backwards, and Spot Turns, concluding the dance with a Curtsey. The holding of hands facilitated a sense of community and laughter (S.1, 2.12.07).

This extract again demonstrates how dancing together in a small group of three, twisting arms and holding hands, all facilitated a sense of community. The older man struggled with the movements because of a shoulder injury, but he was able to adapt so that he could still be included in the dance.

Clothes for Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step Dance

Choosing clothes for Scottish Country dancing and Ladies' Step dance seemed to be an empowering activity for older individuals, as they could dress as they liked as long as they had the correct footwear. The correct footwear, ballet shoes or the black soft Scottish shoes, were important for doing Scottish Country dancing and Ladies' Step dance effectively. Some of the

older women wore loose skirts and some of the older men wore kilts as this gave the legs greater freedom to perform the balletic steps properly, besides enjoying the opportunity to dress up. Other older women and men just dressed casually in trousers. Members of the second Scottish Country dance group would dress smartly when there was a special event, such as live music and a party atmosphere (S.2, 3.4.08). Some of the older ladies from both Scottish Country dance groups who were involved in Scottish Country dance displays would wear white dresses and tartan wraps (S.1, 18.4.08; Interviews 2.S.7 and 2.S.8). The flexibility in dress code was an empowering aspect for some of the older dancers I interviewed, but it could be a dis-empowering aspect when some dancers wore inappropriate footwear.

The 65 year old lady who belonged to both Scottish groups and the second Circle dance group, explained how clothes have become more informal in Scottish dance but proper shoes were important to help prevent injury

> Well, you should wear a full skirt... but people nowadays, more and more are wearing trousers.... And I do it myself now, I shouldn't do, it looks much nicer in a skirt and one of the men always wears a kilt and I think it looks nice. I mean heaven knows, the student club on a Monday turn up in Lord knows what. Quite a lot of them don't have proper shoes, I don't know how they dance in trainers. I really don't. When they first come, quite often they dance in walking boots. It's horrendous. You've only got to... jump on somebody else's foot, and they've done real damage..... And of course it's much easier to dance in a proper soft shoe... Much easier (interview 2.S.5).

The emotional analysis shows how this 65 year old lady pauses to reflect on the changes in dress code. She very strongly emphasises 'It's horrendous' and 'jump on somebody else's foot, and they've done real damage' when talking about students dancing in walking boots as she feels this is a serious problem. She feels empowered to dance by wearing the correct footwear, soft shoes, as these make it 'much easier' to dance.

The 60 year old male dance teacher and his 59 year old wife from the first Scottish Country dance group discussed the significance of him getting a kilt to make him feel a proper Scottish dancer and the importance of women wearing skirts to be able to dance properly.

> S: And it was... I can't remember when we both started dancing together.... my wife's father died and he actually let me have his kilt, again that's, if you have a kilt as a man, Scottish Country dancing becomes much more a thing to do....

P: You feel part, it's not the same as trousers.

S: You feel part of it. The dress is part of it, certainly for a man anyway, and if you've got a kilt, then you use it. I find I like dancing in a kilt, I mean I much prefer dancing in a kilt, because ... it's much more comfortable... you can see the legs working, you keep cool and...you feel the part... it's kind of...

P: And you can do the footwork more accurately in a kilt than you can wearing trousers. You can't put your feet in the right positions if you've got trousers round your legs. Same for women. When you see women turn up at classes and they're wearing trousers I think, 'Well they really haven't grasped the concept of what dancing is all about and the fact that you need to have your legs free to be able to do the steps properly.

S: Mm mm (interview 1.S.5).

The emotional analysis shows that the man passes over the death of his father-in-law quickly but feels wearing a kilt is vital for improving his dancing technique by enhancing comfort, movement of the legs, keeping cool and making him feel part of it, as he very strongly emphasises all of these aspects. His wife continues this theme as she feels 'trousers round your legs' hinder technique, an important aspect of Scottish Country dance from her perspective as a dance teacher. She very strongly emphasises the problem of women who had not 'grasped' this inter-relationship between dancing and appropriate dress, with 'legs free'. You can hear her husband saying 'Mm mm' whilst she is talking, showing that they both shared this particular viewpoint as dance teachers with a more expert status than ordinary dancers. Wearing the appropriate clothes for Scottish Country dance, especially kilts for men, can make this dance form a more empowering experience.

The retired married couple, the wife being 58 years old and the husband 71 years old, from the second Scottish Country dance group, who interpreted the interview situation in a very informal manner, chatted at length about the fun of dressing up in Scottish national dress, with all the accessories, for special occasions. There is only room for a couple of short extracts here but these beautifully illustrate how shared narratives about dressing up can be very empowering

H: Well really, the only special item I wear is a silk sash in the same, in the Chisham tartan, generally, if I'm wearing the silk sash it'll be a white dress, a plain white dress, and a silk sash, with a Scottish brooch. Definitely there, preferably with a Cairngorm stone, but I haven't got one with a Cairngorm

stone. And then little brooches to hold the sash at other points. And that's it really for women, most generally speaking..... No, it's the men who are the peacocks in Scottish dance, well in the Scottish world altogether really.

B: Yes, I missed out the Sgiandhu.

I: All right, tell me.

B: Should I spell that for you?

I: Yes.

H: (Laughs)

B: I think 'S-G-I-A-N'

I: Yes.

B: 'D-H-U' ...It means black knife (interview 2.S.5).

The exchange with this retired couple became even more amusing when the sporran was mentioned

H: Your wee baggie, D.

B: Oh the sporran yeah.

H: (Laughs)

B: That... that is in place of pockets because there are no pockets in a kilt. And there are various styles of that. Plain... plain leather one...or going up, more and more fancy.... not really approved nowadays, are real seal skin ones...

H: Or a badger's head.

B: Or a badger's head, or a fox's head.

H: They're a bit more regimental aren't they, the animal heads?

B: Sort of anything that you... that can be functional or decorative.

I: And what do you keep in it?

B: Handkerchief.... Money.

H: Bobbies.

B: Bobbies.

H: Bobbies.

B: Yeah

H: Your crib

B: Yes, your crib. Just things that you keep in your pocket... or a lady would keep in her hand-bag, possibly (interview 2.S.5).

The emotional analysis shows the 58 year old lady starts talking in a very matter of fact voice but as her conversation with her 71 year old husband progresses, laughs a lot about the spelling of the 'Sgiandhu' or 'black knife' and at the mention of the 'Sporran'. There is amusement in her voice when she positions the men as 'the peacocks in Scottish dance'. The man speaks with a pronounced hesitant tone, suggesting that he has a speech impediment. His wife carefully develops his ideas, but he also corrects her on the pronunciation of 'Bobbies'. This extract demonstrates the shared nature of narratives for this married couple as they dance together and the pleasure they derive from telling me about the accessories the man wears for Scottish Country dance. They seem to feel empowered by talking and laughing about the unusual accessories of Scottish national dress.

The 64 year old Indian lady spoke of her concerns about wearing a saree for Scottish Country dance, her preferred choice of clothing, as she did not wish to offend other dancers

> But one thing that sometimes concerns me because I wear, always a saree, do the people object to sarees? But every time I go to any function I ask them they said 'Oh no you're welcome.' You see, so sometimes I find I'm the one and only doing the Scottish dance in the saree. But still I enjoy, and people enjoy watching me. They say 'Oh you've got a lovely saree... the sarees are, lovely dress, isn't it? Lovely colours.' So as long, as it's not objectionable, I think I would like to continue and I'll enjoy doing that (interview 2.S.10).

This 64 year old Indian lady talks in a fast and fluent voice, stating confidently 'I wear always a saree'. She shows her concern about her unusual dress by using a rhetorical question 'do the people object to sarees?' Her voice becomes animated as she talks about the welcome she receives from other dancers besides her own enjoyment and the enjoyment of others because she is wearing a sari. She seems to feel empowered by being able to dress as she likes.

Importance of Music

I made several references to the importance of music for Scottish Country dancing in my ethnographic diary. When there was live music at the second Scottish Country dance group, there was a party atmosphere and dancers dressed up smartly. One of the retired ladies in the band played the fiddle becuase she could no longer dance (S.2, 3.4.08). An interest in music often seemed to go hand in hand with membership of a Scottish Country dance group. At the second Scottish Country dance group, announcements were made at tea-break about

other musical events such as a Ceilidh and an opera (S.2, 22.11.07). Some older Scottish dancers specifically spoke of the importance of an interest in music in getting them involved or maintaining their involvement with Scottish Country dancing. For example, one 65 year old lady told a story about being very involved in music and singing, being an opera singer first and then a dancer.

> Well I suppose I joined an operatic group as soon as I left school. I was at boarding school so I hadn't met anyone and most of my family had been singing in the local operatic at home... I think I have, my father sang and an aunt on either side sang, so I've got all the scores so... what should you do? Someone who doesn't know anybody? Just straight out of school. 'Oh we'll shove you into the local operatic ... and you'll be alright there.' My father sung to me, some of the choruses as a child... and my mother played the piano but she didn't play Scottish, she played Chopin or something classical... So I did that for years... don't know, I suppose I had a free evening. What shall I do on Tuesdays? (interview 2.S.6).

The emotional analysis shows how this 65 year old lady speaks in a soft and reflective voice when talking about joining an operatic group after she left school and the fact that members of her family were musical. She emphasises very strongly that she felt she must have had 'a free evening' as an explanation for how she got involved in Scottish Country dance.

A 69 year old lady who attended the Ladies' Step dance group, played the bass guitar in a folk dance band set up by her husband who played the accordion besides being a Morris dancer

> B: Yes, well I've done English folk since before I started Scottish. And when I met my husband, who was very interested in Scottish, in English dancing and Morris dancing. And when we moved here, we immediately joined the local club. And he joined the Morris-men. And after... about a year, he started a country-dance band, from people who lived, locally and were interested in doing so. And that band is still, is still running... And I'm a part of that now. I wasn't to start with but I am now... So we did the English dancing, to start with, and we still do that so that's another form of dance. Also for a while I did Irish, for about two or three years, before we had our daughter, then we stopped that because we couldn't go out enough (laughs).
>
> I: Sounds as though you've been very involved in dancing.

B: Yes. And playing.

I: What instrument do you play?

B: I play the bass guitar, my husband plays the accordion, and over the years we've had seven other musicians joining us, playing different instruments, and we've got a fiddler at the moment, and we still go out and play for the dances. Barn dances... or club dances, which could involve modern dances or the eighteenth century Playford type dancing. The sort you see in 'Pride and Prejudice.' So that keeps us very busy, at weekends.

I: The music seems to be a very important part of it.

B: Oh it is... there's so many lovely tunes that when you hear them you just want to dance to them.... they're so lovely. Both in the English and the Scottish (interview 1.S.7).

The emotional analysis shows that this 69 year old lady talks in a reflective voice with pauses for time to think as she was telling the story of her husband starting a dance band and being involved in Scottish, English and Morris dancing. She laughs about having to stop Irish dancing after her daughter was born because they were both so busy with dance and music. She concludes by strongly emphasising that the tunes make you want to 'dance.' Music for this 69 year old lady is a very empowering aspect of Scottish Country dance.

A 59 year old lady and her 60 year old husband, who were both dance teachers from the first Scottish Country dance group, elaborated in more detail on this interconnection of dance and music, showing how the music helps people to learn the dances and maintain their interest in Scottish Country dance. Their expert status as dance teachers gave them the ability to talk about the music at length

P: Yes and sometimes the dance has been devised to go to a particular piece of music and sometimes, the dance is there but it needs music and the band will do, compose a piece of music for it so ... there's no hard and fast rule about which comes first, the music or the dance, but ideally they go together and what the music should tell you is what the dance is all about. The music should tell you what you should be doing next, and if there is a particular piece of music for a dance, you should always try to use that correct music for the dance whenever you can because again it will tell you what you should be doing if you get to associate the dance with the music.

T: Yes the dancers tend to associate tunes with the dances that they're doing and there are, again... probably a couple of dozen dances that you could name off the top of your head that have a, particular tune which as soon as it's played, if you're getting up at a dance, and the musicians strike up that tune, you don't even need to think about what you're going to do, you just get up and the music tells you how to do it... they're so well.... intertwined if you like...and that worked very well. I mean that's always one of the nice things I find with a dance, if you've got a good band or even just.... one or two good musicians.... they have an, ability to connect with the dancers. So the band strikes up, the dancers start to dance... there is this inter-relationship between the band, the music and the dance. The whole thing just lifts off, and you feel as though you're actually dancing, two or three feet above the floor.... The set that you're dancing with, everyone's dancing it right, and you get... a real lift from just that particular dance, from the music and from the movement of the dance as well (interview 1.S.5).

The emotional analysis shows the 59 year old lady speaks in a fast and fluent voice, emphasising how sometimes the dance is there first so 'the band will do, compose a piece of music for it' but also the music should 'tell you what you should be doing next.' Her husband continues her story, talking fluently and in an animated manner about the association of tunes with dances. He very strongly emphasises that 'you don't even need to think' as he feels this association of tunes with particular dances becomes automatic over time. He slows his voice down to emphasise how he feels this inter- relationship between the 'band, the music and the dance' makes you feel ' you're dancing, two or three feet above the floor'. The shared nature of their story about the inter-relationship between the music and the dance is further illustrated by the wife giving the example of a competition between a band and a group of Scottish Country dancers to see who would give up first.

P: There's one dance called 'Trip to Bavaria' which came up on a programme at a dance and the band of the day...

T: Oh yes.

P: Said, 'We're going to do this dance and we're going to play it and we're going to see who gives up first.' Now this is a dance where everybody is dancing all of the time, and so you needed to have quite a lot of stamina to keep dancing, and the band says 'We're not going to give up until you stop.' So

> it was a case of 'Who was going to give up first?' The band because they were too tired playing it, or the dancers because they were too exhausted dancing it. And in the end, I think they both crashed out at about the same point. And they couldn't just quite keep... I mean the band was flagging a bit because obviously it's very hard on the fingers to keep playing, constantly for that length of time (interview 1.S.5).

The emotional analysis illustrates the shared nature of this story as the husband speaks at the same time as his wife, interjecting the words 'oh yes' to demonstrate that he remembers this event. His wife speaks in a fluent and animated manner, emphasising significant phrases such as 'Who was going to give up first?' She feels there is a strong inter-relationship between the music and the dance, demonstrated by the onomatopoeic words she uses to describe the end of the music and this particular dance, when both the dancers and the band 'crashed out.' This married couple feel the interconnection between dance and music is empowering.

A 58 year old lady who was a dance teacher from both Scottish Country dance groups told a story about getting involved in music when she could not dance for a while due to a serious accident

> That came because I had a rather serious accident and couldn't dance for some time and there was the thought that maybe if things didn't mend as they should have done, I might not be able to dance again or only for a limited amount of time. And so consequently, I decided one way of keeping in touch was to get involved with the music and start to learn to play an instrument... And I decided I think that the accordion was easier than the fiddle (laughs). But I have to admit, now I'm finding the fiddle might have been better because it's not so heavy and big to carry around! But again, the music has got me into lots and lots of places... into all of the local colleges, playing in a group, that would do things for May Balls or May events, special parties. I've been abroad a few times with the Scottish Country dance band in the winter, on the Scottish Country dance holidays on the Mediterranean. And the band will go out for a whole week (interview 2.S.7).

The emotional analysis shows that this 58 year old lady talks very quickly about the details of her accident as this is a painful memory. However she starts laughing at the words 'I think that the accordion was easier than the fiddle!' as she feels that the fiddle would not be 'heavy and big to carry around!' She feels the 'music' had taken her 'lots and lots of places',

even 'abroad', as she emphasises these words. For her, the music is a very empowering aspect of getting involved in Scottish Country dance.

Gender in Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step Dance

Scottish Country dance and even Ladies' Step dance appealed to both older women and older men, although there were more women than men who danced. Many older women had to dance as men, but the custom of changing partners after every dance, made this dance form accessible to both older women and older men who were widowed or living alone, because you did not have to have a set partner. This description from my ethnographic diary shows how the second Scottish Country dance group welcomed everyone to join the community of dancers, and how women dancing as men would wear tartan bands

> The dancers were all shapes and sizes. There was a very tall man in his 60s, with a very large beer belly and white hair and a short white beard. Yet he jumped around energetically with his Setting Steps and Reels of Four. There was the rather round lady with grey hair and glasses who had rung me up and had been the first person to offer herself for interview in the group. She hopped lightly and confidently through the dances, weaving in and out the intricate patterns without hesitation, smiling all along. Both these dancers were extremely jovial, laughing and smiling with me often. A slim lady in her 50s who had brought her daughter in her 20s who had Down's syndrome smiled broadly at me and gently pushed me in the right direction when I danced with her. There was such a welcoming and supportive atmosphere among these dancers. Anyone who came along late seemed to be immediately incorporated into the dance, whatever their shape, size, age or dancing ability, such as the round lady in her 80s or the slim young girl in her 20s or indeed the girl with Down's syndrome. I noticed people wore tartan bands around one shoulder and across the stomach to indicate that they were dancing a male role. Many of the women had to dance as men because there were only four men in the group, including one university student in his 20s, who belonged to a university Scottish group (S.2, 20.9.07).

Three of my eighteen interviews with Scottish Country dancers were conducted with men. They did not specifically talk about gender issues apart from the fact that they had initially got involved with Scottish Country dancing through their wife or their involvement had been maintained because of their wife. A 71 year old man from the Ladies' Step group

described his involvement in Scottish dance in terms of being a 'team' with his wife, and how he had memory whilst his wife had 'grace', embedded in a story about his wife working to get younger people involved in Scottish Country dancing

> I: So how did you first get involved in Scottish dancing?
>
> R: My wife used to teach dancing of all sorts, and she gave up most of it when we got married and carried on with the Scottish dancing and I was dragged into it.
>
> I: So how many years?
>
> R: Gosh, 45, probably more, 45 or 50 years.
>
> I: So how did you find it?
>
> R: Much to my surprise, I very much enjoyed it .... it was... I suppose it appeals to my geometric instincts, I like the figures.
>
> I: Can you say a little bit more about that?
>
> R: Oh yes... I find that I have a good memory for the dances. I used to say that my wife and I used to make a good team, she had grace and I had memory... But... she was the real expert, I mean she used to give classes for teachers and things of that sort.... she did training for people with the teaching certificate, she was on various committees for Scottish dancing, and she... didn't run, I was going to say she never ran, she was much involved with the student club and was a principal teacher for many years, and I think her heart was always on... trying to encourage young people to join Scottish dancing because the groups are ageing, and if we don't get young people in, it will die fairly soon. So that was her principal interest (interview 1.S.1).

The emotional analysis shows this 71 year old man speaks slowly and thoughtfully with a slight hesitancy in his voice and pauses to reflect. He feels he was 'dragged' into Scottish Country dancing by his 'wife' as he emphasises these words very strongly. He softens his voice at the words 'enjoyed' and 'figures', showing that he feels he likes Scottish Country dancing because of the formations. He emphasises how he feels proud of 'good memory' the words 'my wife and I' were a 'team', she with 'grace' and he with 'memory'. His wife has died but he speaks very fluently about her involvement in teaching Scottish Country dancing, 'trying to encourage young people'. This is a noticeable change from the start of the interview when he speaks hesitantly. He seems to feel empowered by talking about his wife's involvement in Scottish Country dance.

The 65 year old lady who belonged to both Scottish groups and the second Circle dance group, positioned Scottish Country dance as good mental and physical exercise. She believed this is why men could enjoy it as much as women and why men got involved in Highland dance as well.

> D: It's a very good mental exercise as well physical exercise.
>
> I: Yes.
>
> D: To remember them. And that's half the battle. And usually by the time you've walked to the end of the dance, can you remember what the first move was? Because it was so long ago that you've forgotten, is it Set and Cross or Cross and... you've forgotten the first move. Because some of them are quite complicated... that's half the challenge. I think that's why men enjoy doing it as much as women. Because it is a challenge. It really is. And the really difficult, men's Highland is very difficult, it really is a challenge. Have you seen the men do Highland dancing?
>
> I: No. Can you tell me a little?
>
> D: It's very energetic. It's a lot of jumping up and down on one leg. And then it's got arms as well. I mean ladies' don't dance with arms, they wear skirts or whatever and they really don't have to worry about arms. But men do. And it's a lot of very high... with the leg. Ladies always keep their feet quite low... you don't pull your leg up anywhere. It's not discrete. But the men do. Oh yeah. And I couldn't do it. I've never been able to. There's lots of flicks and...backwards and forwards round one leg. I can't do it (interview 2.S.6).

The emotional analysis shows this 65 year old lady uses a soft and reflective voice with pronounced pauses to elaborate on the mental and physical challenge of both Scottish Country dancing and the men's Highland dance. She very strongly emphasises how the movements in Highland are 'very high...with the leg' as she feels this is something she could not do. She perceives Scottish Country dancing as empowering because both men and women could enjoy the challenge, whereas Highland dance makes her feel dis-empowered as a woman because she lacks the physical capability to perform it to the appropriate standard.

The 64 year old Indian lady liked to be invited to participate in a Scottish Country dance but she was concerned about cultural and gender issues getting in the way, and found that older women tended to ask her to dance whereas older men would not

> Psychologically I think, when people ask me to do the dance and all, I feel quite thrilled in a way, because... it's nicer when people ask me... But sometimes you are just sitting and no-body will ask you to dance. That's the time I find 'Am I doing something wrong?' But it can't be that way obviously but... you come across different types of people, as we were discussing, they being English, they feel reserved, I don't know what they think in their mind, but traditionally Scottish dance, a man should ask a lady to dance isn't it? So that is where you get stuck, sometimes I think in that way. But loads of ladies will come and ask me and I feel quite comfortable to come and dance with the ladies, no problem for me. But it's my own thinking I would say, I can't blame anybody! (laughs) (interview 2.S.10).

The emotional analysis shows how this 64 year old Indian lady speaks in a fluent voice with pauses to reflect. She feels 'thrilled' and 'it's nicer when people ask me' as she strongly emphasises these words. Her voice quietens, as she feels worried that she is doing something wrong when people do not ask her to dance. Her voice becomes stronger and faster again as she discusses the problems of a different culture, with most Scottish Country dancers being 'English' and feeling 'reserved". She feels 'a man should ask a lady to dance isn't it?' and explains this is where she gets 'stuck' as she emphasises these words. She talks quickly about ladies asking her to dance, as she feels comfortable with this. She laughs as she feels the problem is her particular way of thinking. So this Indian lady feels empowered when the ladies as her to dance, but dis-empowered when the men do not ask her to dance.

Dancing in Retirement and Memories of Dancing When Younger

Although many of the Scottish Country dancers had been involved for a number of years, some of the Scottish Country dancers did not have the opportunity to get involved until later in life. Here is the story of the 77 year old lady from the second Scottish Country dance group who was not able to get involved fully until after the death of her second husband

> Well some years ago I had a little experience... I'm going back to 1956, when we lived in London, my older daughter was, two I think, and evening classes then, catered for, I expect as now, for all sorts of things. I think there was more opportunity. And I saw an advert for Scottish Country dancing at a school within walking distance. So that's where I went. And, I thought it was wonderful. But it only lasted a short time because the numbers

> declined....without the right numbers, the class cannot continue. So I had to leave. And if you read that little book, there is a prologue which tells you exactly what I've just said. Right? And then my first husband was, not a well man, I didn't have an opportunity to go back to it or do anything like that until after he died and I'd moved to another town with my two daughters and my sister, who was un-married, we bought a little bungalow on the out-skirts of town. And I went back to work part-time and the welfare officer was Scottish, and she told me of the group that met in town. So we used to cycle from the village where we lived, to town. I think it was once a fortnight or something, to the Presbyterian Church. And I went there for a while and then my sister became ill, had to go into hospital, so I had no-one to be at home with the children. And.... so again it fell apart. And then nothing happened until I came to live in this town after I had re-married and, my husband was ill in 1982, with, encephalitis, was left brain-damaged, and I came to this town in 1991 to be nearer my daughter And she told me, as soon as I'd moved actually, that there was a class starting in September for Scottish Country dancing in a nearby village so I went back there but I could only stay for the first hour, of the two because my husband could not be left for too long. And ... Christmas 1993, he died, he had a fall, and... hit his head and within 24 hours he was paralysed. So... after he had gone, then I was able to go back regularly and stay for the two hours and... took it from there. And then ultimately I joined the second Scottish group and that's where we are now. OK? (interview 2.S.3).

The emotional analysis shows this 77 year old lady speaks in a fluent but also a soft reflective voice as she remembers first trying Scottish Country dance. She feels her first experience of Scottish Country dance was 'wonderful' as she strongly emphasises this word and shows me the book of poems she had written that refers to this event. Both her husbands were ill and her voice speeds up as she talks of their deaths, a painful subject. The pronounced pause before she describes the details of her second husband's accident emphasises the very sad circumstances leading to his death. Her voice slows down into a reflective tone as she speaks of how she was then able to take up Scottish Country dancing regularly and joined the second group. Becoming a Scottish Country dancer was an empowering experience for her in the sad circumstances of her life.

The 64 year old Indian lady, who was widowed, got involved in Scottish Country dancing through a friend three years ago, never having tried it before. Her story was much

simpler, but still illustrated that Scottish Country dancing was an empowering experience for her, bringing back memories of doing Indian dance as a child and young adult.

> R: As I say I used to live in a nearby town, and I used to have one of my friends living in the same street where I was. And one day she said, 'I go to Scottish dance. Would you like to come?' I said 'Yeah that would be nice'. Because I'm always interested in the dancing. As you know, I come from India, I did my Indian dance all my life. So I thought 'This will be another way to keep my art going'. And that was my interest to start Scottish dance.
>
> I: So how many years have you been....
>
> R: Well Scottish dancing I do, I think it must be just about three years now. So... but I enjoy it... I like the formations and the, the music, especially when it is with a live band, it's really nice, I like it.... in India, usually they make sure all the girls learn something that is dancing, the music, because these are our more creative arts. And as you know, for centuries there is a good story about the girl doing the performance of the dance, is there not? And my parents were very keen that I should learn some, and even I used to be quite interested so I started learning Indian dance maybe perhaps ever since maybe ten or something like that. And until I got married, I used to do performances, take part in competitions and things like that so I was very keen to learn. In India there are about four different forms of classical dances. But I learnt.... those are the South Indian dances, because I come from the South. The costumes, the dance, everything is very, very.... it's all body language I think, it gives you good expression and...So that's how I think I started doing, various types of dances, obviously, after coming here. The first two times I got to do the Scottish dance.... I hardly believe I am doing it (interview 2.S.10).

The emotional analysis shows this 64 year old Indian lady talks in a fast and fluent voice with lots of expression. Her enthusiasm for dance is reflected in her strong emphasis on the words 'This will be another way to keep my art going'. She talks in a very animated way about her enjoyment of Scottish Country dance. She tells a long story about learning to dance in India as part of the culture for girls. She becomes very animated as she talks about the number of classical dances in India and the importance of body language. There is surprise in her voice as she says, 'I hardly believe I am doing it' when referring to Scottish Country dance. For this Indian lady, learning Scottish Country dance is an empowering experience.

Here is the 58 year old lady, who was a dance teacher, and involved with both groups, talking about getting involved in Scottish Country dance at school

> M: It was at school, and I was in the third form, which would be aged about thirteen. We had just finished a gym class and the gym teacher wanted some volunteers. My friend next door to me grabbed my hand and put it up. We had no idea what we were volunteering for until we had done that, and then apparently it was to go and join the after-school Scottish dancing class.
>
> I: Can you tell me any more about that?
>
> M: ... It was run by one of the girls from the sixth form so she would be about sixteen, and in fact she still comes to the second Scottish group, occasionally, although she goes to English Folk dance now.... And it was for about half an hour or so after class, we did some basic things in the...gym. I think it was one night a week. And I can remember being taught to do the Pas de Basque, which I could not do and I have this lasting memory of being taken behind the piano in the gym by the gym teacher, who was trying to hammer it into me for about three solid weeks. And eventually, I got it (interview 2.S.7).

The emotional analysis shows that this 58 year old lady goes straight into a narrative style, with a reflective voice. She talks in a lively manner about getting involved in Scottish Country dance at school through a friend, emphasising how they did not know what they were volunteering for. She emphasises very strongly her difficulty with the Pas de Basque Step as this was humiliating for her and she speeds her voice up to pass over the painful memory of the gym teacher spending three weeks teaching her this step. Her memories of learning to dance as a child contain both empowering and dis-empowering elements.

In contrast, a 76 year old man from the second Scottish Country dance group had got involved as a young adult and a student and had continued for the rest of his life as he met his wife through Scottish Country dancing

> Well way back in pre-history, between leaving school and going to university, I worked as a, walking holiday secretary for some months. And as a walking holiday secretary, the job was to lead the walks in the day-time but take part in the evening entertainment. And the evening entertainment, when we didn't have beetle drives and such things, was dancing and that was the first time that I ever heard there was such a thing as Scottish Country dancing. And we didn't do very much by the...my standards nowadays, we probably did

> the 'Eighthsome Reel' and the 'Dashing White Sergeant' and that was it. But I...it was just what I wanted to do. So when I subsequently came up to university, the first thing I did was go and track down the student Scottish club and hastily join it. And I wouldn't say I've never looked back but it's been on ever since.... Almost ever since, as a fundamental part of my life (interview 2.S.4).

The emotional analysis shows this 76 year old man speaks in a slow hesitant voice, sounding a little nervous. He very strongly emphasises the two names of dances as he feels his initial exposure to Scottish Country dancing was rather limited, confirmed by the pause before the words 'my standards nowadays'. He feels Scottish Country dancing was what 'I wanted to do' and so got involved in the Scottish club at university. His memories show that Scottish Country dancing has been an activity he has developed throughout his life. It is interesting that he sees himself as a more skilled dancer at the age of 76 than at the age of eighteen. Telling his story of how he got involved demonstrates how he feels empowered by Scottish Country dancing in later life.

Socialising in Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step Dance

Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance sessions seemed to be not just about older and some younger people getting together as a community of dancers. The very nature of Scottish Country dances and even some of the Ladies' Step dances promoted social interaction through the holding of hands, dancing in different formations and emotional expression such as smiles and laughter. But there were other social aspects besides the dancing itself. Belonging to a group of Scottish Country dancers or Ladies' Step dancers was often an excuse for some kind of tea-break and the opportunity to chat. Members of the second Scottish Country dance group would take it in turns to prepare the tea trolley with drinks and biscuits, and the tea-break was an opportunity for announcements about other Scottish Country dancing events. As I recorded in my ethnographic diary,

> There was a tea-break at 8.45pm for 25 minutes. Several of the group members had omitted the last dance before the break so that they could prepare the tea-trolley. Tea and coffee were served in green pottery cups and cold drinks and biscuits were provided too. It gave a real welcoming feel to the session and people chatted in small groups and shared information about Scottish dance events. The lady with black hair in her 50s who was one of the organisers (but she was not calling the dances to-night) was collecting the

> money. Each person paid £2.50 for the session. I paid £3.00 to join the second Scottish group and gave her my card. She was also selling tickets for a second Scottish group dance in a nearby village on Saturday evening. Tickets were priced £3.00 for spectators and £5.00 for dancers (S.2, 20.9.07).

There are several other references to these tea-breaks as an opportunity for socialising and making announcements about other Scottish social events such as a Ceilidh or musical events such as an opera, or even the death of a former member (S.2, 22.11.07; S.2, 14.2.08). For example, on one occasion, members of the second Scottish Country dance group prepared entertainments for their Ceilidh during tea-break such as Indian dancing (S.2, 8.11.07). The New year's Party held by the second Scottish Country dance group provided a particularly good opportunity to socialise, with party finger foods, party games and dancing, besides a demonstration of the Highland Fling, all helping to facilitate a sense of community. As I recorded in my ethnographic diary,

> The sense of fun and community was really promoted by the mixture of games and laughter. The secretary of the society, who was in her 50s, was busy organising everything. The evening started with a quiz, which involved identifying streets in the local town through looking at drawings pinned to the wall. As the secretary said
>
> 'These drawings are 30 years old. So if you were a Scottish dancer 30 years ago, you'll know them all!' Everyone laughed. The drawings were difficult to identify so there was a lot of cheating going on, as people helped each other with the list of eighteen names. The activity really facilitated the feeling of fun and laughter. A small box of chocolates was awarded by the secretary to the person who got sixteen right and this lady immediately shared them with everyone else.
>
> As it was a party evening, people had brought plates of finger foods such as Scotch pancakes with butter, small quiches, sliced hard-boiled eggs, buttered sultana tea-bread and chocolate mint crisps. All this food was laid out on the table in the adjacent room ready for the supper-break. There was a mixture of party games and dancing to-night, as it was a special event. There were about 22 people, mainly over 50, but there was one young girl in her 20s who had come with her mother to Scottish dancing sessions since the age of seven. Just before the supper-break, she demonstrated a little bit of the

> Highland Fling, which involves standing very high on one leg with fast and frantic movements of the other leg, bending at the knee so as to bring the foot in front and behind the knee of the supporting leg. She received a hearty round of applause from the members of the group who were sat on the chairs round the edge of the room (S.2, 3.1.08).

The first Scottish Country dance group similarly organised social events, such as dancing in the gardens of a stately home, dancing in a member's garden and sharing food for a birthday or simply having afternoon tea with home-made cakes half way through a Ladies' Step dance session (S.1, 21.4.07; S.1, 26.4.07; S.1, 10.6.07; S.1, 12.7.07; S.1, 2.12.07). Here is an extract from my ethnographic diary describing a tea-dance organised by the first Scottish Country dance group:

> The friendly feeling of the community of dancers was up-lifting, with the more experienced dancers helping the beginners such as myself. Everyone changed partners after each dance which made the whole occasion very sociable and really promoted a community feeling. Half way through the session, there was afternoon tea for everyone with home-made scones, whipped cream and jam and various home-made cakes such as flap-jack, besides cups of tea, coffee or juice. Our teacher had brought her bowl and electric hand-held whisk for whipping the cream! Afternoon tea lasted half an hour. I sat with a lady in her 40s who was a newcomer to our beginners' class. She was feeling very hot and mentally and physically challenged by all the dancing. She had only attended two beginners' classes (S.1, 12.5.07).

This extract shows how afternoon tea was a very important part of creating a community feeling. It was not just the Scottish Country dances themselves that created feelings of togetherness but also the social context within which those dances occurred. Scottish Country dancing also provided opportunities for extra socialising, for example, when several of the older ladies met up for lunch before the Ladies' Step dance class (S.1, 2.12.07).

The Annual General Meeting of the second Scottish Country dance group particularly highlighted the number of social events and charities that they supported, demonstrating how such dance groups can provide opportunities for older people to engage in social activities beyond the dancing. As I recorded in my ethnographic diary

> It was the format of a typical Annual General Meeting, with committee members sitting on the stage and a secretary's and treasurer's report. This was

followed by a long discussion of planned social events for the next year, such as Burns Night, a walk in the country followed by tea, past and future balls and whether table-cloths should be provided for serving the food, a possible visit to the zoo and a dance event in a garden. There were also suggestions for charities the group could support... (S.2, 8.5.08).

Here is the story of a 58 year old Scottish Country dance teacher who belonged to both Scottish Country dance groups, reflecting on how she got involved in dance workshops, on committees and in taking a teaching certificate:

> You would go off to a day school, you would go to the evening dance and then you would come back. So you would have the social aspect there. You also got to know the members of the club more thoroughly because one person would be driving, the rest would be sitting in the car chatting. Once I got to a certain level of competence, I started going to evening dances, locally, and then started going to them away. Same sort of thing in those days applied. There was a couple who had a big camper van. And they would take about half a dozen of us, and we'd all sit in the back and we'd be chatting going, chatting coming back, stop for coffee if it was a long drive, so there was very much a social aspect.
>
> And you did get to know the people. Then things... sort of evolved, always wanting new young blood on committees, I ended up going onto a committee... did my turn on things and so on...and there was also the summer school in St. Andrew's. And again it was suggested, why not go up there?.... Again, the social aspect was in those days, I was in with a crowd of my own age, university students, but also, older people, so you were learning... to integrate across a whole spectrum of age-groups and cultural, backgrounds.....We did the preliminary teaching certificate....You had to be, quite a competent dancer, and you were also learning teaching skills. So again that's another item that people perhaps don't realise. If you go along that particular teaching route, you are taught to teach. And then I did the full certificate.... And I specialised eventually in teaching children, because that was the only class available (laughter in her voice) (interview 2.S.7).

The emotional analysis shows that this 58 year old lady's voice is very animated through-out most of the interview, suggesting a fascination with Scottish Country dance as

she has expert status as a qualified dance teacher. She feels the social aspects are very important, emphasising how the inter-relationship between competency as a dancer and the social aspects is a dynamic process, with each aspect complimenting the other and leading to her involvement on committees. She slows down her voice as she reflected on the meaning of the social aspects 'you were learning.... to integrate across a whole spectrum of age-groups and cultural, backgrounds...' There is laughter in her voice when she talked about taking the children's class 'because that was the only class available.' For this 58 year old lady, being a good dancer meant being involved in the organisation and the teaching and these are empowering activities for her.

A 76 year old man from the second Scottish Country dance group talked about getting involved on the committee of this group and taking turns with the ordinary members to participate in designing and calling one of the weekly programmes of dances.

> Well now your next question, 'How long have you been involved with the organising committee?', is in a way, a, mis-understanding of how the second Scottish group runs, which is that people who take evenings, are not the organising committee. It may well be of course, but essentially, there is a general appeal for any member of the second Scottish group who feels the urge to take an evening. At one point, we used to try to encourage people to take the evening by inviting them to offer to take one dance or half an evening, but that... rather seems to have gone by the way these days. But essentially, it is for any member of the society to take an evening... Now thinking back, I don't know whether I first took an evening before I was first put on the committee. I would guess that I had done. In fact the first post I had in the second Scottish group, rather incredibly, was not on the dance circle committee but... my first post was chairman of the main society and this took place really in an incredible way. In those days the second Scottish group and the English folk dance group, used to, once a year, have a joint dance. Now this was an absurd thing to happen.... And I happened to do the English folk dancing half of the joint programme on a couple of occasions. And somehow, out of that... when they were desperate, I hadn't realised how hard it was to find a chairman of the second Scottish group in those days. I was rung up, and to my astonishment... 'Would I care to be the chairman?' So shocked, I said, 'Yes.' (laughs) And I can still remember the first committee meeting when I didn't actually quite

> know who was who... Well, yes... from then on I have occasionally been the member of one committee or occasionally been the member of another committee and... (sighs) (interview 2.S.4).

The emotional analysis shows how this 76 year old man fluently explains how the second Scottish group is organised, pausing occasionally to reflect. He feels very strongly that 'any' member could take an evening, even 'one dance' or 'half a dance' as he emphasises these words. There is laughter in his voice as he talks about becoming chairman and he feels the group must have been 'desperate'. His pauses and sighs suggest he now feels a little weary of being involved on the organisational side. His involvement seems to have become dis-empowering, as he has been repeatedly left with responsibility as a committee member.

The 64 year old Indian lady from the second Scottish Country dance group talked about enjoying the opportunity to share Indian dance with other members of the group at social events such as a Ceilidh

> So I said 'How about if I coach you all, we can do one of the folk dances with the sticks... the sticks are rhythmic and I've got the music and I can dress you all up in the saree?' And they really enjoyed it obviously. But they find... it's a little bit different in a way, because... the timings and everything is meticulous, you've got to be because of the postures. With the Scottish dance you can get away just standing and doing most of the dance. Whereas in Indian dance, you've got to be, coming down to the earth... sitting postures and bending your head to touch the ground, which they couldn't do, so I'd got to do some alterations in the dance... So it's not completely Indian folk, I like to make it convenient for everyone to enjoy. But they enjoyed it... and they liked to be dressed up in a saree, and I put some flowers in their hair, put them a little bit of...on their forehead and gave them bracelets... it's all the paraphernalia. I made them quite happy there. It's like children you see. When I dress up the children, they get really happy. So I got the same expressions and return from the grown-ups as well (interview 2.S.10).

The emotional analysis shows this 64 year old lady speaks in a soft and fluent voice as if she is very familiar with telling this particular story. She feels pleasure because Scottish Country dancers enjoyed doing Indian dance. She pauses when trying to verbalise about the difficulties the Scottish dancers experienced when trying to do the Indian folk dance. Her voice becomes very expressive as she explains the complexities of Indian dance. There is

laughter in her voice as she explains about altering the dance. Her voice softens as she says these Scottish Country dancers were 'like children you see' and she feels they were 'really happy' like 'children' as she had dressed them up in Indian clothes and accessories as well. This 64 year old Indian lady made learning another dance form an empowering experience for Scottish Country dancers.

Problems of Scottish Country Dance as a Social Dance Form

I have made several references to the problems of the slippery floor at the church hall where the second Scottish Country dance group held their sessions. As I recorded in my ethnographic diary about the Annual General Meeting of the second Scottish Country dance group

> There was a long discussion about finding a better hall for dancing if nothing could be done to improve the quality of the present hall floor. The committee agreed to look into getting permission from the care-taker to put slip-stop on the floor and sweep it up afterwards. As the chairman said, 'We have liability insurance but if someone fell and injured themselves, we could still be sued for dancing on a slippery floor.' The discussion focused on the lack of good halls for dancing, as all the ones suggested seemed too expensive, with no nearby parking or simply too hard floors. School halls were not always available all year round and the one sixth form college with a sprung wooden floor is due to be demolished within five years (S.2, 8.5.08)

Some members of the group specifically complained about the condition of the floors during the course of my field-work, and several members deliberately scraped the bottoms of their Scottish shoes on the pavement because the group had been banned from using slip-stop (S.2, 27.9.07; S.2, 10.1.08; S.2, 27.3.08). The first Scottish Country dance group also experienced problems with the condition of floors, such as the very hard school hall floor for the Ladies' Step dance workshop with the Japanese teacher (S.1, 2.1.08) or the difficulty of dancing on grass (S.1, 10.6.07). Dancing on hard or slippery floors or grass could aggravate injuries, as discussed in Chapter Six: Sense of Belonging, Growing Older and Physical Health as a Dancer.

Another concern amongst some of the older Scottish Country dancers was that younger people were not getting involved and that Scottish Country dance was in a bit of a decline generally. A 71 year old man from the first Scottish Country dance group spoke of how the

dance is an important part of his life but he got disillusioned over the politics and the lack of young students getting involved

> Well it has become so much part of my life that I couldn't, there'd be a big hole if I gave it up.... Being an irritable person, I get irritated with some of the other dancers, I get particularly irritated with the politics which has, has declined in irritation recently due to the departure of certain people... (sighs) rivalries between groups... fighting over who should do the tuition, teachers do tend to be a set of primadonnas who want to push themselves forward rather than help the system in general but that is just life, anyway, isn't it?... On the whole, it's a great pity it has declined so much. The university club, 50 years ago, had 400 members. Now they get 30 if they're lucky on a Monday (interview 1.S.1).

The emotional analysis shows how this 71 year old man finds Scottish Country dance important in his life and feels sad that it is in decline. He feels his life would have 'a big hole in it if I gave it up' as he strongly emphasises these words. He sighs, as he feels unhappy about the politics of Scottish Country dance. He feels sad, as numbers have gone down in the university club from '400' to '30'.

A 77 year old lady from the second Scottish Country dance group tried to imagine the reasons why younger people do not get involved in Scottish Country dance when I asked her to explain her statement about younger people getting involved in a Ceilidh but not Scottish Country dance

> (Sighs) You could use one of their words, 'these days.' And of course they do have opportunities to do so many more things these days... The leisure centres offer all sorts of things and because a lot of young people, their idea of an evening out is to go to a club... They spend a lot more than we do but... On the other hand, if somebody does come that normally doesn't do it, they enjoy watching but if you say... 'Wouldn't you like to join us?' 'Oh no, no I couldn't do that, couldn't do that.' I think the fact that we know the next move can be a bit off-putting (interview 2.S.3).

The emotional analysis shows that this 77 year old lady feels sad that younger people are not getting involved in Scottish Country dance as she sighs before starting to speak. She believes younger people felt threatened by the older, more experienced dancers and their knowledge of the dances as she emphasises her last few words in this extract.

Discussion of Findings

Feelings of belonging to a community of dancers was an important factor in empowering older people to continue dancing in my study and this finding is backed by related work (Cooper and Thomas, 2003; Maristela and Vieira, 2007; Paulson 2005a; 2005b;Thomas and Cooper, 2002; 2003). This chapter has described how Circle dance, Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance create a community feel amongst older dancers, through a detailed examination of my ethnographic diary about the dance and narrative style interviews with older dancers. The particular formations of Circle dance, Scottish Country dance and some Ladies' Step dances appeared to be helpful in creating a community feel for older dancers, as you did not require a particular partner. And an understanding of the history and cultures associated with the Circle dances, the Scottish Country dances and the Ladies' Step dances provided an immense source of pleasure for some of the older dancers, enabling them to feel a connection with past as well as present communities of dancers.

The mental and physical demands of the particular dance form influenced whether older people found it empowering or dis-empowering. Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance seemed to be more mentally and physically demanding than Circle dance as shown in the dance ethnography and interviews with older Scottish Country dancers and Ladies' Step dancers. This means that Circle dance is potentially a more accessible 'culture of dance' for older dancers because the mental and physical demands of these dances are not so great. For a number of the older Scottish Country dancers and Ladies' Step dancers, the mental and physical challenge, although at times dis-empowering, on the whole could be empowering, especially for men (Foucault, 1977; 1984; MacLachlan, 2004; Marks, 1996; 2002).

Circle dance, Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance facilitated emotional expression. The dance ethnography on community feelings suggests Circle dance facilitated expression of a range of emotions whereas Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance tended to facilitate fun and laughter. The emotional analyses of the narrative style interviews shows dancers expressed a range of emotions and re-actions to the particular 'culture of dance', suggesting the different dance forms acted as a catalyst for emotional expression. The 65 year old lady found Circle dance brought up deep emotions, both happy and melancholic and the 71 year old man found Ladies' Step dance immensely pleasurable, whilst expressing sadness at the lack of younger people getting involved in Scottish Country dance. The opportunity to express a range of emotions through both the dance and the interview process

seemed to be empowering for individual dancers and one of the inherent benefits of dance (Lyons and Chamberlain, 2006).

The flexibility of the dress code in Circle dance, Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance seemed to be an empowering aspect for individuals (Cooper and Thomas, 2002; Hurd-Clarke et al., 2009; Twigg, 2007, 2008). There was the opportunity to dress up in special ethnic clothes or Scottish national dress if you so wished, but it was also acceptable to wear casual clothes. Dressing up for dance could be great fun, as shown by several interviewees. Appropriate footwear, such as ballet shoes or the special Scottish shoes was important for the Scottish Country dance, and particularly the Ladies' Step which was very balletic. The wrong footwear could be very dis-empowering in Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance as this could lead to injury.

Some of the older dancers got involved in Circle dance, Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance because of their love of music (Hays et al., 2002; 2005a; 2005b). Some had primarily been musicians, and came into dance when looking for an activity. Others had been primarily dancers but took up an instrument so that they could remain in touch with the 'culture of dance' if they could no longer physically perform the dances. The music was a very empowering aspect of the 'cultures of dance' explored in my study, and the different rhythms were closely connected with physical movement and emotional expression.

Circle dance seemed to appeal mainly to older women in my study, as you do not need a partner. The one older male Circle dancer I interviewed was not sure whether he would continue with this form of dance if his wife died, and he had felt particularly uncomfortable with one of the groups of older women. Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance seemed to appeal mainly to older women, as you do not need a partner, and there were some older men involved for similar reasons. The custom of changing partners after every dance in Scottish Country dance and also the fact that women could dance as men, made it possible to incorporate whatever mix of men and women were in the group. Circle dance, Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance could be empowering for older people without partners.

Dancing was important as an activity in retirement and also brought back memories and created fantasies of other dancing experiences or important parts of individuals' unique life histories (Maristela and Vieira, 2007). My writing about the dancing sometimes takes on an 'as if' quality in the subjunctive mood in my ethnographic diary because it is facilitating physical and emotional expression which may be both communal to a group of dancers and yet unique to each individual dancer at the same time. This is what Ness (2004) has described

as the embodied approach in anthropological writings about dance. Most of the people who danced in retirement in my study had danced as a child or had participated in other dance forms. Sometimes it was both the music and the particular dance that put them in touch with memories of dancing as a child or as an adult on another occasion, such as on holiday. These narratives show how dancing memories can empower older individuals and transform the meaning of 'cultures of dance' in the here and now (Flick, 2004; Murray, 2004).

Some of the problems of social dancing compared to professional dancing were highlighted by my study. The retired professional ballerina found that Circle dancers pulled on her arms too much and the Scottish Country dancers risked injury by dancing on inappropriate floors. The politics of organising dance sessions could be problematic, as members of the Scottish Country dance committees found. Another concern in Scottish Country dance was that younger people were not getting involved, so this particular 'culture of dance' was in decline. However the social aspects of the 'culture of dance' in Circle dance, Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance often outweighed the risks, with Circle dancers enjoying workshops dancing out of doors on the grass when they could dress-up on a theme and Scottish Country dancers and Ladies' Step dancers enjoying their tea-breaks, parties and numerous social dances when they could dress-up (Hurd-Clarke et al., 2009;Twigg, 2008, 2007).

Inappropriate behaviour when dancing, a physically challenging dance form or an inappropriate environment could make the experience of dance dis-empowering for the older dancer. Most of the older dancers involved in my study seemed to feel empowered by enough features of the particular dance form to negotiate a sense of belonging for themselves and their ageing bodies through the particular 'culture of dance' to which they belonged (Foucault. 1977; 1984; Kugelmann, 2004; Merleau-Ponty, 1962). Factors that could be empowering included :- the community feel and learning about the history and culture of the dances, the mental and physical demands of the dance form, the opportunity for emotional expression, the flexible dress code, the music, the fact that you did not need a partner, the opportunity to dance in retirement and memories of other dancing experiences besides the opportunity for socialising. The health benefits of dancing in terms of forming a sense of belonging, from the perspectives of the older dancers in my study, seemed to outweigh the risks (Lyons and Chamberlain, 2006).

Chapter Four: Learning to Dance as an Older Person

Introduction

I did not find any ethnographic and narrative studies that explored older peoples' experiences of learning Circle dance, Scottish Country dance or Ladies' Step dance. The ease or difficulty of learning a particular dance form is obviously important when considering whether to recommend as a health psychologist that older people take up a particular dance form during their retirement in order to promote both their physical and mental health. Different dance forms will appeal to different personalities. My findings relating to strategies for learning to dance advocated by older people themselves and debates about the ageing body in terms of separate mind and body or experiences of embodiment, were particularly interesting. This chapter considers the research literature first. Methodological issues in trying to research learning experiences of older dancers using dance ethnography and narrative style interviews pertinent to each dance form are discussed before the presentation of findings on each dance form.

Literature on the Ageing Body and Ageing Embodiment

My initial literature review juxtaposed debates about the ageing body as an object, determined by biological, psychological and social factors, with debates about ageing embodiment, the subjective, lived experience of ageing embodiment as socially constructed by the cultural context. The work of quantitative researchers in both psychology and sociology examining the ageing body as an object through statistical questionnaires has an overly cognitive focus (Oberg and Tornstam, 1999; 2001; Tiggemann, 2004) and can be contrasted with the work of qualitative researchers in both psychology and sociology who strive to explore the meaning of lived embodiment and the question of vulnerability (Radley, 2000; Turner, 1992; 1995; 1996). Qualitative and quantitative research on the phenomenology of embodiment shows how subjective experiences of the body are situated in action complexes, so exploring how older people learn to dance is a useful way of exploring subjective experiences of embodiment (Brown et al., 2009; Garza and Fisher Smith, 2009). Frank's (1991) idea of the 'mirroring body' in terms of culture, phenomenology and the body is useful for thinking about how dance teachers demonstrate dances for class members to learn and how individual older dancers use visual cues from other dancers to enable them to dance effectively.

Psychological quantitative researchers such as Gannon (1999; 2000), even though working from a feminist and critical perspective, have highlighted the dualistic thinking that perpetuates Western culture, separating body and mind. Through using the tools of dance ethnography and narrative style interviews with both a content and emotional analysis, I hope to challenge dualistic thinking about the body and to access the subjective, lived experience of ageing embodiment as constructed by various different dance classes and social dance groups (Hiles and Cermak, 2008; Ness, 2004). Schwaiger (2009; 2008) has already argued for a break away from dualistic thinking about the gendered body in dance, calling for an embodied approach. However, when analysing my qualitative data relating to the emerging narrative theme of 'Learning to Dance as an Older Person', it became apparent that the processes of learning and indeed teaching dance, involved a lot of dualistic thinking, a separation of mind and body because of the mental effort required to learn, retain and rehearse various dance forms. Only some of the more expert teachers and expert older dancers experienced dance as something which was so embodied that they could perform without consciously thinking about the various dance moves. Listening to some of the narrative style interviews provided insight into the processes through which individual older people experienced various 'cultures of dance' as gradually becoming embodied as these older dancers gradually moved away from dualistic thinking about a separate mind and body in terms of learning the dances (Rossiter et al., 2008).

Literature on Older People Learning to Dance

Literature searches with electronic resources reveal that research on the processes involved when community dwelling older people learn to dance is sparse. There is plenty of literature acknowledging the value of learning something new in old age and the importance of creativity in promoting health (Bennett, Holden and Postlethwaite 2005; Withnall, 2006). However there is very little published work on teaching dance to community dwelling older people, apart from Borstel's (2006) work on the Liz Lerman Company in America, which uses creative dance to explore existential issues such as death with both older and younger people together. There is also the *Company of Elders*, hosted by *Sadler's Wells Ballet*, which promotes contemporary or creative dance as self-expression amongst retired people living in London (Ross, 2007).

Wainwright and Turner (2006; 2005) and Turner and Wainwright (2003) have explored the effects of ageing on professional ballet dancers in the *Royal Ballet*, using Bourdieu's (1984) concept of the habitus to explain how dance is so embodied in their lives

that it determines their experiences of ageing. As mentioned in the literature review, there is some research on ballroom and modern sequence dancing (Cooper and Thomas, 2002; Maristela and Vieira, 2007; Thomas and Cooper, 2002; 2003), African-Caribbean quadrille (Thomas, 2004) and folk dancing for healthy ageing (Connor, 2000). There are also several articles evaluating health promotion style dance groups for socially isolated older people or older people with physical or mental health problems (Greaves and Farbus, 2006; Houston, 2005a; 2005b; Jenkins, 2003; Stacey and Stickley, 2008). There is also extensive research in dance psychotherapy that uses an illness model, providing dance interventions for those older people defined as physically or mentally ill (Payne, 2006).

Quantitative studies on learning theory and memory within experimental psychology are useful for providing insight into the types of problems older people may face when learning something new, such as the problems of an ageing memory. Quantitative experimental work shows that older adults have lower memory performances and flatter learning curves than young adults, suggesting poorer use of mnemonic strategies (Kessels and de Haan, 2003). Such quantitative studies are useful for defining both learning strategies and the different types of memory that may be involved in learning to dance. For example, a quantitative study on embodying music through matching music and dance in memory, found that younger university students matched both congruent music and dance and incongruent music and dance (Mitchell and Gallaher, 2001). Such results suggest strategies such as jogging memory for a dance through music is not a straightforward process. In physical terms, ageing affects motor control and learning issues related to central nervous system information-processing, resulting in wide variability in motor-performance abilities of older people (Light, 1990). These issues need to be considered from a qualitative perspective, exploring the processes of how older people learn new dances and remember dances learnt on previous occasions.

Methodological Issues: Both Circle Dance Groups

I myself struggled initially to learn the dances and act as a participant observer at the same time. One of the biggest challenges of using ethnography to describe the dances was trying to memorise what was happening whilst I was actually participating in the dances, so that I could write about them at the end of the dance session. I particularly noted in my ethnographic diary how my difficulty remembering all fourteen dances in a session contrasted with the skill of the first Circle dance teacher who taught largely from memory

> We did 14 dances as usual but I can only remember a few.

'Poisedon' – a Greek dance

'Takety, Takety Boom' – an Indonesian dance

'I want to be Seduced' – English jazz

'I say Grace' – Negro Spiritual

'I want to love you till the end of love' – Leonard Cohen

At the end of the session, we did a very prayerful dance in a long line gradually coiling round the candle in a tighter and tighter knot with two steps forward and one step back to 4/4 music like Bach which was very repetitive and spiritual. For this dance, we each rested one hand on the shoulder of the person in front. The other dances this session were done in circles – sometimes holding hands, sometimes individually, sometimes with a partner so there was an inner circle and an outer circle. The teacher demonstrated the steps for the fourteen dances largely from memory. She only occasionally looked something up in her folders when she had a memory lapse (C.1., 22.6.07).

Despite my difficulty remembering the dances, the process of writing about the dances enhanced my understanding of the meaning of the 'cultures of dance' for older individuals, and built a better rapport with potential interviewees because I had become immersed in their worlds as a participant observer. I decided to record notes after the dance sessions, rather than concurrently, because I wanted to participate fully in the dancing and did not want members of the group to feel uncomfortable about my research.

Outline of Findings Relating to Circle Dance

The focused coding under the emergent narrative theme of 'Learning to Dance as an Older Person' raises a number of interesting smaller stories about the processes of learning Circle dance. These smaller stories are 'Complex Footwork and Timing in Circle Dance', 'Experiences of Learning to Circle Dance: Ease and Difficulty', 'Experiences of Learning to Circle Dance: Separate Mind and Body versus Embodiment', 'Strategies for Learning Circle Dance: Modifications for Ageing', 'Professional Dancers' Experiences of Learning Circle Dance', and 'Teachers' Perspectives on Teaching Circle Dance as an Older Person and Teaching Older Learners'. Further examples of these smaller stories can be found in the appendix through the focused coding that refers to the interview transcripts and the ethnographic diary.

Complex Footwork and Timing in Circle Dance

Learning Circle dances as an older person was an activity aggravated by the complex footwork and difficult timing of the music. I noted in my ethnographic diary how the footwork in Circle dance seemed more complex than the footwork in the Ladies' Step dance and the Scottish Country dance

> The footwork in Circle dancing seems much more complex than in Scottish. Even more complex than my Scottish lessons which emphasise the five ballet positions. The teacher demonstrates the steps in the different sections of the dances, such as the one 'Palestine Sunshine' by a modern choreographer. Whereas Scottish seems more concerned with the patterns for the whole body, Circle emphasises the patterns of the feet, and sometimes the hands and arms too. The Palestine Flick in the 'Palestine Sunshine' dance was a special step designed by the modern choreographer. With weight on the right foot, you do heel-toe with the left foot then hop onto the left foot and bend the right knee, raising the right lower leg and foot behind the body with a flicking movement. The music for this modern dance was a warbling Palestinian song and it was very difficult to keep time, as it was hard to hear the beat. The feet moved in a series of complex patterns whilst hands were held to form a circle (C.1., 15.10.07).

The process of embodying Circle dance involved learning a lot of complex movements of the feet, such as this Palestine Flick. The difficulty of performing this movement was aggravated by the difficulty of hearing the beat in the music. Dualistic thinking was required to watch the teacher's demonstration and learn the steps. Similarly the need for dualistic thinking in order to learn the steps was shown in the second Circle dance group, where the teacher used metaphors to describe the sequences of steps in language. These metaphors needed to be translated into physical movements of the feet, suggesting a separation of mind and body was important in the learning process. As I recorded in my ethnographic diary,

> The next dance was Rumanian and incredibly fast and furious. The teacher taught us the two sequences of steps, and then put on the haunting and frantic music for the actual dance. She used the metaphor of 'cutting the cake' and 'a box' to describe the two sequences of steps. The small Italian lady with grey curly hair laughingly said 'It's like a wedding cake and the box that you put it in.' She was greeted by much laughter. The teacher demonstrated the steps for cutting a slice of cake in a triangular shape and then got us all to practise this sequence whilst holding

> hands in the circle. Then she taught us the steps for a box, a square shape. We practised this square shape several times. The teacher warned us 'The timing is very difficult in the music. When you hear the wailing, you should be doing the box shape.' And she mimicked a wail. We danced fast and furiously when she put the music on, and many people were out of breath at the end. Again there was much laughter and chatter at the end of the dance (C.2., 25.2.08).

So both Circle dance teachers challenged their groups with dances that were difficult to perform because of the timing and the music. The second Circle dance teacher used a metaphor to describe the pattern of steps on the floor, like cutting a slice of cake and putting it in a box, to facilitate older dancers to think about the shape of the movements and to enable the steps to be learnt and eventually embodied through a dualistic approach. The timing of the music seemed to aggravate the process of embodying the steps, although the teacher's prompt of listening for the wailing as an indication of when the box shape should be danced, was a useful one. The speed of this dance challenged the subjective experience of ageing embodiment, as many of the older dancers were out of breath at the end, but laughing at the pleasure of having exerted their bodies.

Experiences of Learning to Circle Dance: Ease and Difficulty

Some Circle dancers moved easily, others struggled to co-ordinate their feet. As I recorded in my ethnographic diary

> The teacher's bare-feet glide along the floor as she steps in various patterns in time to the music and the retired professional dancer's black character shoes seem to leap through the movements with great agility. For myself and the 78 year old lady who danced next to me, it is a struggle to hold in our minds what the next steps should be, even though the patterns of the steps are repeated again and again. As the 78 year old lady says 'I have to think and tell my feet what to do.' The retired professional dancer told me (when we were on the bus going home) that she had occasional memory lapses for the steps. She stressed the importance of memory in dance and how before a performance, when she was working as a professional dancer, she would always rehearse the particular sequence in her mind whilst in the dressing room, waiting to go on stage (C.1., 18.5.07).

Some expert dancers, such as the first Circle Dance teacher and the retired professional dancer, seemed to have embodied the steps so that they could perform effortlessly and automatically. In contrast, the 78 year old lady (whose interview is quoted further on in this

section) finds she has to think about the moves all the time. The retired professional dancer does not feel that dance steps are always so embodied that you can dance without thinking. Her subjective experience of lived embodiment as a professional dancer is that memory is very important, as she spoke of rehearsing dance sequences through visualisation before going on stage in her professional career.

A subsequent entry in my ethnographic diary similarly contrasts the skill of the 65 year old experienced Scottish Country dancer with the difficulty of some of the other dancers in the second Circle dance group

> Other dances in the session took on a seasonal flare, such as the 'March Hare'. This was a new dance that we had not done before. The teacher explained how one of the steps was meant to represent a hare kicking as you stepped to the side and kicked into the air with the other foot. The rest of the dance was a series of fast Grape-vine Steps to the right and left, coupled with some Pas de Bourre's on the spot like in Scottish Country dancing and Ladies' Step. I was dancing next to the 65 year old experienced Scottish dancer, whose feet in their soft black shoes flew through the Pas de Bourre Steps with great feeling and expression. Her experience of Scottish dancing gave her a certain fluidity and sense of rhythm in her feet and body which seemed to be lacking from other members of the group, such as the 68 year old lady who was dancing on my left side. This 68 year old lady seemed to be struggling to keep her feet in the correct pattern in time to the music. The physical act of holding hands helped the dancers to keep roughly in time with each other, even if some people had difficulty with the steps (C.2., 3.3.08).

The 65 year old experienced Scottish Country dancer's subjective experience of ageing embodiment seems to be that she is a really skilled dancer, who can perform the steps easily and with a lot of emotional expression. She has embodied a certain fluidity in connecting dance movements, which is lacking from other older dancers in the group. As she explains in her narrative style interview

> Well it's got some nice music… it's all come from the correct, music from the different countries. It's very nice music…. And the lady is very nice and she's very helpful and… it's a nice group. But they're hardly energetic. Perhaps it's restful… after a challenge… We do one slightly energetic dance and <u>everyone's panting and sitting at the side and gasping. And I think 'Oh dear</u>.' But then I dance again in the evening so… Hardly compares with Scottish Country dance at all. They're very

simple dances. Mostly. The music I enjoy. And it's got this slightly kind of... not religious, but... kind of sending the spirits out into the world and... they're kind of invoking environmental green trees or something... we're all hugging a tree or whatever it is.... well OK, I'm not averse to that. It's hardly challenging, is it? (interview 2.S.6)

The emotional analysis shows how this 65 year old lady spoke in a soft, reflective voice about enjoying the music of Circle dance but not finding it very challenging. She feels very strongly that the other older dancers in this Circle dance group have real problems with their ageing bodies, as she emphasises strongly how physically exhausted they are after just one slightly energetic dance. She feels Circle dance is restful in terms of her own subjective experience of ageing embodiment, after the challenge of Scottish Country dance.

One of the 71 year old ladies who danced with the first Circle dance group, offered a more detailed explanation as to why she finds it easy to learn the technical moves of Circle dance in her narrative style interview

I find it very easy. I think it's because when I was little... I went to tap dance classes and I think well what that teaches you, when you're little, is to look at somebody's feet and copy, to take the message from looking at somebody else's feet, into your brain and putting it down into your own feet (laughs). And copying, ... Left foot to right foot and things like that. So I find it very easy if I watch P. doing the demonstration of a dance, then I can usually do it straight away... If not, it takes me about two times to learn it. I can do that. I can't always remember the dances... if we haven't done a dance for about five weeks, I can't necessarily remember all the steps immediately but it comes back very quickly and the music makes a difference, as soon as I hear the music I start to remember it, the steps. So I do find it very easy (interview 1.C.3).

The emotional analysis shows how this 71 year old lady laughs with pleasure at her own ability to watch someone's feet and copy which she acquired as a child when learning tap-dancing. This makes it very easy for her to learn the Circle dances. She is talking about brain and body in dualistic terms when learning how to dance. Her voice becomes more hesitant as she talks about difficulty with memory if the Circle dance group has not practised a particular dance for a few weeks but she feels music is a helpful prompt. Her voice becomes slow and reflective as she concludes that she does find it very easy to learn. Her subjective experience of lived embodiment is that her ageing body finds it easy to learn new dances, as this is a motor

skill of watching someone's feet and copying that she acquired in childhood. A 70 year old lady, who had learnt Irish dancing as a child, similarly spoke of this discipline of the brain being conditioned to learn dance movements and transfer them to the body (interview 1.C.2).

Her experience contrasts sharply with that of the 78 year old deaf lady who found it very difficult to learn Circle dancing due to problems with a poor musical ear and an ageing memory

> I find it very difficult indeed. I...I find it very, very difficult. And I have no memory for... I've always said my musical ear is very poor, perhaps because I'm deaf or perhaps because I've never, I've never actually worked on listening to music. I do love music. I have a friend... a man friend whose not a partner, and he introduced me to classical music and I did learn to listen more and he also introduced me to opera. Now he has a fantastic ear for music and he can tell by a few bars... who the composer is and what it is, and he will try make me remember, say 'What's that? And who wrote that?' And I was completely lost. And I must say, I'm in the same way, lost with a new dance. And when I hear other people who have, who are very keen Circle dancers, and they know all the names of the dances (laughs) and when we last did them. I... my reply always is 'Every session is a new session.' So every time we dance, for me, it's a new experience. (laughs). So I start from scratch every time I come... just the fact that we've danced it before doesn't mean a great deal to me. Or sometimes they come back (interview 1.C.9).

The emotional analysis shows how this 78 year old lady's voice becomes really hesitant as she talks about all the difficulties she has with memory and recognising music. She speeds her voice up to reflect her male friend's confidence in recognising music. Her laughter is a way of emotionally adjusting to her difficulties with memory, particularly as she says, 'So every time we dance, for me it's a new experience.' Her disappointment at her poor memory is reflected in the hesitant voice with which she concludes this story. Her subjective experience of lived embodiment is that her ageing body is letting her down in terms of listening to music and memory for music and dances.

In contrast, an experienced 68 year old dancer, positions Circle dance as easier to learn than Scottish Country dance

> I find Circle dance very easy in that I think anyone who has done Scottish Country dancing would find it easy, because Scottish Country dancing is much harder and it's much faster, much more energetic. So you've got to think on your feet

a lot more. And also because everyone in the set is depending on you to do it right whereas in Circle dance, if you do it wrong... it's not the end of the world. I don't find it difficult, I don't find Circle dance difficult at all. But I like, strangely enough, some of the easiest dances best, like I said earlier, the trance dances (interview 2.C.3)

The emotional analysis shows how this 68 year old lady reflects very deeply on the processes of embodying different styles of dance, highlighting particularly the dualistic elements of learning Scottish Country dance because of having to think on your feet and move in a set of dancers who depend on you performing correctly. With the Circle dance, there is more the sense that she just allows her ageing body to absorb the dances, as she reflects how it does not matter if you get the steps wrong and she likes the easiest dances, such as the trance dances, the best. Her subjective experience of ageing embodiment when learning various forms of dance, highlights how there are times when she needs to think in dualistic terms, and times when she can experience dance in holistic terms, as embodied movement.

Experiences of Learning to Circle Dance: Separate Mind and Body versus Embodiment

Some of the older Circle dancers in the previous two sections, 'Learning to Dance: Ease and Difficulty' and 'Complex Footwork and Timing in Circle Dance' experienced dualistic thinking about mind and body when learning a dance, and a sense of embodiment when they could dance spontaneously. The 65 year old wife, of the one 69 year old male Circle dancer I interviewed, spoke eloquently of this difference between needing to think about the steps when learning them and feeling the steps had become embodied over time so that you could dance without thinking

When I first started, but that's speaking for myself, I wanted to get it all right (laughs). And I was concentrating so much on the steps, and sometimes when it was a fast dance, I thought 'Oh God, I don't get it.' And be competitive with myself almost 'I must get it right. I mustn't foul it up for people on either side.' And when I let that go, because it is really about moving to the music, and ok the steps but there are steps, but if you don't get it all, if you have any sense of rhythm at all you let yourself be carried away with it. Once you've come out of your head, which may be difficult if you are the person whose always done things like, with the head a lot... Once you allow yourself to do that, it's almost as if you relax and let go and say 'Yeah, what the heck!' And you get much more, enjoyment out of the dance. You then, speaking for myself and I'm not a natural dancer, I suddenly feel 'Hey that

> music! I don't even think about the feet.' And I do it and I experience with my whole body, which in the first couple of months, I was thinking 'Oh, do I get it alright? Or I hope I'm...' You know that goes, and I think that is the wonderful thing of it actually (interview 1.C.4).

The emotional analysis highlights how this 65 year old lady laughs at her initial experiences of wanting to get the dances right, and so concentrating very hard as she tries to learn in a dualistic manner, separating mind from body. Her voice becomes lighter as she talks about the subjective experience of letting her body relax, coming out of her head, not worrying about getting the steps right and so experiencing the dance movements as embodied. As with the more experienced dancers, she found there were times when she experienced the dance in dualistic terms, as separate mind and body, and times when she experienced the dance as embodied.

Strategies for Learning Circle Dance: Modifications for Ageing

The older Circle dancers developed a variety of mnemonic strategies to help them to learn and remember specific Circle dances, as well as techniques to modify the dances so that their ageing bodies could cope with them. The Circle dance teachers were also instrumental in designing modifications to the dances so that older dancers could perform them. The importance of memory and the problems of needing to prompt an ageing memory have already been discussed in the sections 'Experiences of Learning to Circle Dance: Ease and Difficulty' and 'Experiences of Learning to Circle Dance: Separate Mind and Body versus Embodiment' (interviews 1.C.3, 1.C.4, and 1.C.9). The strategy of learning to dance through acquiring the skill of looking at someone's feet and copying in childhood, and the music providing a useful prompt, was particularly highlighted in interviews 1.C.3 and 1.C.2.

The use of visualisation and visual cues seemed to be important strategies for learning Circle dances, which were used by older class members and the first Circle dance teacher. One of the 68 year old deaf ladies in the first Circle dance group used visualisation in order to learn the Circle dances as she could not hear the instructions or the music clearly. As I recorded in my ethnographic diary

> One dance, 'The Wanderer" included some complex moves in and out of the Circle. In P.'s words, 'Pretend you are cutting a slice of cake. You are traversing the trajectory. You are going diagonally in, then changing direction, moving back diagonally out. Retrace these steps in the opposite direction.' Throughout the session I used visual cues from the other dancers in order to keep up with the

complex sequence of steps. I danced next to A., the deaf lady, and I noticed that she watched the rhythm of P., the teacher, beating her feet, very closely. She seemed to dance perfectly but missed out some of the repetitive turns, as P., the teacher, said, 'These give you vertigo.' (C.1, 28.9.07).

It is interesting how this 68 year old deaf lady has learnt to cope with her disability through internalising the rhythm of how the teacher moves her feet and through omitting the turns as they cause vertigo. As she says in her interview

> Well last year I was profoundly deaf and there was... no I can't, I don't know the names of the steps, but there was the most intricate, set of movements, that changed, the rhythm had some claps and some turns I thought..... I just went in and did it. And I was so surprised. And P., the teacher, actually came up afterwards and said, 'How on earth did you do that when you can't hear a thing?' So I think it's visual, I think we're using our visual all the time. But that did me an enormous amount of good, as you can imagine. The fact I could seem to pick it up. So I don't know how that happens, but I don't feel too phased out by new difficult dances (interview 1.C.8).

The emotional analysis shows this 68 year old lady's emphasis on being 'profoundly deaf" and amazement in her voice as she says the words 'in and did it.' Her subjective experience of embodying the dance was that she was just able to get on with it. Her voice rises to express the teacher's amazement at her ability to dance. Visual strategies seem to be important in enabling this 68 year old deaf lady to dance, and she also challenged a 78 year old deaf lady to overcome her dizziness on turns, showing that there were occasions when this 68 year old lady did turns herself, even though the extract from my ethnographic diary quoted above records her omitting the turns (C.1, 28.9.07).

> I used to get very dizzy, doing a lot of the circle turns, the turns, and that worried me a lot and so I told the teacher 'I can't turn easily, I always go dizzy.' And she said 'No, just do it on the spot.' So I did that for ages and then someone else who is very deaf, A... she said, 'Why don't you turn?' And I said, 'I go dizzy.' And she said, 'You know, you can overcome that' she said 'If you just do it, whether you feel dizzy or not.' And now I do turns from that suggestion from another Circle dancer that you can overcome it, you just have to go with the dizziness and you're not going to fall, you will turn, you'll gradually lose a lot of the dizziness because your body... sort of re-organises your brain and the tubes at the back of your ears. It re-organises itself

and you can do it. I can now do, turns... I can't do very fast turns, I usually, a lot of its just courage now... to do the fast turns. Because I've now coped, with most turns (interview 1.C.9).

The emotional analysis shows how this 78 year old lady feels strongly that her dizziness was an obstacle to her dancing, but also her satisfaction that she can now do turns as a result of the 68 year old deaf lady challenging her just to do them. It is interesting how she offers a biological explanation for coping with the turns, as the ear tubes re-organise themselves, reflecting the idea that biology can be socially re-constructed through dance. The philosophy of social constructionism suggests the ways in which the biological body is interpreted depend on the particular social and cultural context within which it is situated. The relationship between the social context and the biological body can be dynamic, with the social context challenging the biological body to change and the biological body implementing change so as to fit in with the demands of the social context.

Other strategies used by this 78 year old deaf lady, and by other members of both Circle dance groups, included learning by watching one of the better dancers and using counting to try memorise the steps. As this 78 year old deaf lady said in her interview

> I don't really learn them... I watch people who can do them well... There are certain dancers there who haven't been dancing, I mean I've been doing it a long time, but they, some people are excellent and pick a dance up very quickly. And so I just watch them and ... gradually pick it up from their steps. I mean that's...actually that is the only way I learn, is by watching somebody just along the circle who is doing it perfectly. And... you probably yourself notice, there are just one or two people there who get it. So I just... I'm away, and if they do it wrong, I'll do it wrong (laughs). So I don't really learn them. I have some, bit of memory for them but I do I try, I try to think, now if P. will give us a demonstration, and I'm counting to myself 'She did four that way, three that way.' And I try to remember that... it helps, but I do try to have my own little way of keeping it together, as well as watching. But I must admit, the watching is a lot more important than my trying to put the sequence together (interview 1.C.9).

This 78 year old deaf lady finds watching other dancers more helpful than trying to count out a rhythm from watching the teacher move her feet, although she does try to use counting sometimes. So her experience of trying to learn the dances is very different from that of the 68 year old deaf lady. The emotional analysis highlights how she feels it is important to

watch those who dance 'perfectly' and the pauses and hesitations reflect the uncertainty she feels about her own ability to learn the dances. She does not feel she has reached a stage of embodying the dances as she continually has to learn by watching others, and she laughs as she will do it wrong if those she is watching do it wrong.

The 71 year old lady from the first Circle dance group, who spoke about the strategies of learning to copy someone's feet and using music as a prompt, told a long story about the supportive nature of Circle dance, which meant that a lot of effort would be made to incorporate older people who were struggling with their ageing bodies

> I think most Circle dancing because of the hand-holding and the support and the fact that you dance in couples or with the whole circle, anyone who is not able either to do the steps or to ... go as fast as everybody else, is supported by the group. We don't think 'Oh God, that person's no good. Poke them out.' Have them sit out there because they're no good. We actually try to work-out how they can be joined in, if anybody has a bad hand and they can't grip, I mean the teacher's got a system where they tie a, if they've got arthritis, or once somebody had, you can tie a scarf round and the person next can hold a scarf. So they haven't got to use the hand, if it's not working. And then of course they come back and they try and you can see that people start to be involved. They try and gradually the bit of them that's not working so well gets stronger and stronger and they don't need to have the scarf or lay off it so much, and they find they can spin round again, which is interesting. And I think there are a lot of, a lot of sports which you would give up (interview 1.C.3)

The emotional analysis shows how this 71 year old lady told this story about adapting Circle dance in a lively manner, reflecting her enthusiasm for the supportive nature of Circled dance, as she strongly emphasised all the underlined words. She positions Circle dance as an activity to which people can return after health problems because the dance moves can be adapted and there also is the potential to re-learn these dance moves.

Professional Dancers' Experiences of Learning Circle Dance

One 74 year old lady, who was a retired professional ballerina, left the first Circle dance group because she felt she was not learning the dances to the level of perfection she attained in ballet. This lady is a negative case, as she did not enjoy Circle dance, unlike all the other Circle dancers I interviewed. As this 74 year old retired ballerina said

> I found I wasn't enjoying it. So I had to say 'Why aren't I enjoying it?' And I reckon, one was the reason that I've just given, I was, a lot of the time I was trying to

> catch up. Now unless you know something really well, you can't relax, at least I can't relax and enjoy it, because I've been a professional dancer in ballet. And in ballet and professional dancing, you have to think about what you look like, which you shouldn't do if you're just dancing in a group to enjoy it. Unless you're performing to other people. You should just get on with it. But I have an instinctive, assessment of how I'm looking when I'm dancing. Well that's not much good for Circle dancing or any other kind of natural dancing... also, I thought they were being taught just a little too quickly. I wanted more time on the preparation, and we seemed to get through ten, twelve dances in a session, and I would have rather done three and then know what I was doing. So I don't like not really knowing what I'm doing. I like to be on top of the work (interview 1.C.5).

The emotional analysis shows this retired professional ballet dancer, a 74 year old lady, is pondering in a slow and reflective voice about why she was not enjoying Circle dance. She deliberately slows her voice down to spell out how she is very aware of her appearance, how she looks when she is dancing, which is something that is not important in social dancing. She speeds up her voice to emphasise how she likes to be on top of the work.

Later in the interview, this 74 year old lady talks about ballet as something that has become so embodied in her that her posture is irrevocably altered

> But in the ballet company, we were, we had the ballet mistress teaching us, and she was particularly good on the top of the body. And any of her dancers will have a long neck, shoulders back, and a nice straight back. And you keep that forever really. If you don't, you're aware that you've slipped on something. Now it might be good to be without that experience (laughs). Get on with life and slop around like most people do (interview 1.C.5).

The emotional analysis shows how this 74 year old retired professional ballet dancer alters the speed of her voice to emphasise the words which described her subjective experience of embodying dance. She speeds up her voice to emphasise how the ballet mistress was good for the top of the body and then slows down her voice to describe the body parts that were emphasised. She quietens her voice to express disappointment at the idea of losing this dancer's posture but laughs as her dance training seems to have made her so aware of her posture that it was potentially problematic.

As a professional ballet dancer, this 74 year old lady had developed some sophisticated strategies for learning dance moves, such as learning a ballet on her fingers

> Oh yes, you can dance on a train or anywhere or on a plane... you're actually memorising it in your brain, and your fingers become your feet and they can... do the rhythms and the hands, for Swan Lake (sings tune as she demonstrates with her hands) ... this is what the Corps de ballet are doing... and I can't explain it (laughs), I can do it, but there is a way of dancing without moving your whole body, and it's very useful. I mean you know of course how the pianist does it on the plane, they use a dummy keyboard. That's more obvious. But yes you can dance, certainly the footwork, you can do with your hands... (interview 1.C.5)

The emotional analysis shows how this 74 year old lady really experiences ballet steps as embodied. She talks slowly and reflectively about learning Swan Lake and sings and laughs as she cannot explain the movements in words. She softens and slows her voice as she reflects how you can do the footwork with your hands.

In contrast to the 74 year old retired professional ballerina, the 76 year old retired professional tap dancer and choreographer really enjoyed dancing with the first Circle dance group, even though this was social dancing rather than professional dancing. She was conscious of the problems of an ageing body and memory, finding it harder to learn new dances and that her legs just would not go as fast as they used to

> Well when I first started Circle dancing I found it quite difficult because it was slightly different from what I'd been used to. And also to remember somebody-else's dance. When you're a choreographer, you can remember your own dances. If you're learning somebody-else's dance, that's a different story. But after a few weeks I soon picked it up and now I find it quite easy.....I like the flowing ones 'Winds on the Tor' is one. There's one called 'Mistletoe.' Some of the names of dances are very difficult to say. Consequently they're very difficult to remember. Like the one we did to-day 'Havanobila.' I can remember that one, that's quite easy to say. Some of the faster ones I like but I find now that my legs won't go as fast as they used to, or my feet. And I think 'Oh dear, twenty years ago I could have done this with great ease, going very fast.' Now I find I'm slowing down as you would and I find it quite difficult to go that fast (interview 1.C.7)

The emotional analysis shows how this 76 year old retired professional tap-dancer speaks in a hesitant voice about her initial difficulties learning Circle dance but speeds up her voice to reflect how she re-gained her confidence as a dancer after a few weeks. She slows her voice down again to reflect how dances with difficult names are difficult to remember and she

shows disappointment in her voice, as her legs will not go so fast now. Her subjective experience of ageing embodiment is that she is physically slowing down and challenged by an ageing memory.

Teachers' Perspectives on Teaching Circle Dance as an Older Person and Teaching Older Learners

The first Circle dance teacher, who was 71 years old, used visualisation to mentally rehearse the dances, because of her arthritis, and this seemed to be a very effective way of learning, as she only occasionally had to look up the choreographic instructions. She felt she was 'in her head' when rehearsing Circle dances but 'out of her head' when demonstrating the dances, as she performs with a sense of the dances as embodied. As she said in her interview,

> Friday afternoon I have to sit down (laughs) indeed lie down, and while I'm resting, I block out the programme for next week, because at that moment, the sensation of the group and their joint need is clear to me because I've just been with them and I'm... I'm carrying the impression of the things that we've been doing that they need to explore more and also where the group feels as if it needs to go next. So I write the programme up. If there is a new dance, I'm deciding to put in, sometime during the week, possibly daily if I have enough time, I run that dance for myself. These days, with the arthritis, I don't usually dance it physically..... I have to husband... the joints, to strengthen the joints. But what I do is I put on the music and dance the dance in my head. For example, there is a dance that I'm intending introducing next Friday that is new, I've never taught it, I only learnt it myself two weeks ago, and so yesterday, I suppose I listened to it about, sixteen times and danced it in my head and the, my understanding is that when you, when you move a muscle mentally, it's the same benefit for the body as if you'd moved it physically..... when I'm in front of the group, I'm not in my head, I'm not wanting to be in my head. I'm wanting to ne in my body and in my emotions, in my spirit, to bring something else (interview 1.C.10).

The emotional analysis shows this 71 year old Circle dance teacher speaks in a very slow, soft and reflective voice, laughing about needing a rest and pausing to reflect about her joint problems. She emphasises the value of mentally rehearsing the dances but spells out very thoughtfully and slowly the final words, emphasising she is 'out of her head' and in her 'body, emotions and spirit' when she is demonstrating in front of the group. Her subjective

experience of ageing embodiment is that she is forced to rehearse the dances in a dualistic manner, in her head, but that when she is demonstrating the dances, she experiences the dance as embodied in her body, emotions and spirit.

The first Circle dance teacher was much more authoritative than the second Circle dance teacher, and took a disciplined approach towards teaching Circle dance, as demonstrated in the extract from my ethnographic dairy in Chapter Three 'Forming a Sense of Belonging through Dance as an Older Person' where she says she is politically incorrect because she believed in the discipline of Circle dance (C.1, 12.11.07). She really advocated an embodied method of learning Circle dance, through spirit, body and emotions rather than the brain

> It's my intention when we're learning, we're not learning through the brain. I find that when you dance step by step. .... I personally dislike very much learning Circle dance through the brain. I find it enormously exhausting. For me, this always happens when it's being taught, step by step so...if I'm with a leader who is showing me right foot, left foot, quick-quick-slow, the whole of that has to be memorised step by step. And it goes through the brain and it's agonising. My personal method is to go through the... the spirit, the body and the emotions, simultaneously and hopefully, to bypass the brain, because what I have in mind, when I do the demonstration, is that people's, eyes and ears and emotions receive the imprint and they're not, I'm hoping, having to take it into their brain, step by step. That is my intention and my hope that when we start to dance, because the music hasn't gone through the brain, because it's gone through the... directly into the body and into the emotions and the spirit, that it quickly lifts to another place, it's not tedious and heavy mental work to recapture the steps. It.... I feel very strongly about this one (laughs) because I find it incredibly tedious even to learn the most wonderful dance step by step because then, how do you get to the other place, into the body and directly to the music? If you're in the brain, you're not connected to the music, the music is in the heart and the... when I do that demonstration, it's my wish, my hope, that I'm plugging the dancers directly into the music (interview1.C.10)

The emotional analysis shows the first Circle dance teacher speaks in a slow, soft and reflective voice, emphasising the underlined words. Her voice becomes especially soft and reflective when she emphasises the importance of spirit, body and emotions. Her laughter highlights how she feels it is tedious to learn step by step, because if you are in the brain, you

are not connected to the music. She experiences the process of embodying the dance as an older person as intimately connected to the music rather than the brain.

It is interesting to contrast this first Circle dance teacher's ideal of people learning Circle dance through their bodies, emotions and spirit, directly with the approach of the second Circle dance teacher, who was 65 years old and who felt that she herself learnt the Circle dances very much through her head

> Anyway, then we started having Circle dance regularly once a week,.... one Wednesday a month was a ... a do-it-yourself night when anybody could teach one dance. We had about ten different people, each teaching one dance, that's how I first got practice, of actually teaching as oppose to learning them. And for me, to learn something, I have to teach it so (laughs) that's quite... that's partly why I became a Circle dance teacher, to get them into my head, also because I realised it was a really nice thing to pass on. So I've never done a formal training unlike some of the Circle dance teachers (interview 2.C.9).

The emotional analysis shows this second Circle dance teacher, who was 65 years old, sounds nervous and lacks confidence. She talks quickly, emphasising the under-lined words, but with lots of hesitations. Her laughter about having to teach a dance in order to learn it, particularly illustrates her lack of confidence. Her subjective experience of ageing embodiment, needing to teach Circle dance in order to learn it in her head, contrasted very strongly with the first Circle dance teacher's more embodied approach to learning in terms of the use of visualisation and demonstrating.

This second Circle dance teacher sometimes had difficulty interpreting the instructions for dances, which she had written on cards, so one of the experienced dancers in the group would help her out. Here is a description in my ethnographic diary of a 68 year old lady who was an experienced Circle dancer, taking over the demonstration of 'Circle Tango'

> Then we did 'Circle Tango'. The teacher had difficulty interpreting the instructions from the card and a 68 year old lady took over the demonstration that involved holding hands in a Circle and doing tango steps to the right and then to the left. The teacher could not interpret the word 'swivel'. The 68 year old lady demonstrated how it meant swivelling the hand to the right when dragging the left foot back to join the right foot. This 68 year old lady, as a class member, who gave

me the third interview, seemed to be a more expert dancer than the teacher (C.2, 25.2.08).

The second Circle dance teacher was happy to allow group members to facilitate some of the dances, as shown in the above extract, which all added to the community feel and a sense of being older learners together, rather than an expert teacher who was disciplining a class to follow her particular style. This aspect helped to give a relaxed feeling to the whole process of learning Circle dance as an older person.

Even though she emphasises participation is more important than getting the steps right, the second Circle dance teacher talks about feeling that she is beginning to reach the ideal, where the 'dance dances you', a sense that the Circle dances are actually becoming embodied for her as a dancer

> Whereas with Circle dance it's the participation so... although you try and get the steps right, it's not the be-all and end-all, more the point of it is to feel it together, to experience the dance together. But I think it takes a long time before, many years of dancing, certainly in my case, because I'm not particularly a natural graceful dancer.... or somebody who picks it up terribly quickly but through the years, now I'm just beginning to... to sort of, if you like, perhaps the ideal, I mean some people might not call it their ideal, is to, that the dance dances you. In other words, you just don't have to think about it and you're just, you're carried away by the dance. But that's only just beginning to come now, because I'm always... having to think of the next steps. And memory does come into it quite a lot... if you can't remember the steps, then (laughs), especially if you are a teacher, you have certainly more responsibility than the rest of the group to remember the steps, else you lead them all astray.... But if you are completely familiar with the steps, then you can just let yourself go. If you lose your concentration too much, you've still got to be focused on something, otherwise, even easy dances, as soon as you start thinking 'Alright, this is great, I can do this now' then you suddenly find yourself doing it wrong... and it's.... even a simple dance (interview 2.C.9).

The emotional analysis shows the second Circle dance teacher speaking in a soft nervous voice, with pauses to reflect, emphasising the underlined words. She laughs, as she feels uncomfortable about her own difficulties remembering the steps. Her subjective experience of ageing embodiment is that she feels she is only just beginning to overcome her

memory problems and get to a point where 'the dance dances you', an embodied sense of being a Circle dancer.

Methodological Issues: Both Scottish Country Dance Groups and Ladies' Step Dance

I was faced with similar problems of trying to remember enough details about the dances to record in my ethnographic diary after the Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance sessions, as in the two Circle dance groups. I wanted to build a good rapport with my research participants so I decided against concurrent note taking. I was aware that my writing about Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance improved over time as I became more familiar with the technical language and understood precisely what the names of the various formations meant in terms of physical dance movements. Attending the Beginners' and Improvers' Scottish Country dance classes was invaluable in terms of providing me with the linguistic and physical experience of these particular 'cultures of dance', besides useful contacts for negotiating access to the other Scottish Country dance groups. As I collected a vast amount of data, eighteen narrative interviews and about 70 pages of ethnographic notes on Scottish dance, in this chapter I focus on learning to dance for the older people who were involved in the Ladies' Step dance group, and the Second Scottish Country dance group. My experiences of learning Scottish Country dance with the first group are recorded in my ethnographic diary in the appendix but there is not room to discuss these at length. I also consider the experience of some of the teachers from both Scottish Country dance groups in terms of teaching older people Scottish Country dance.

Outline of Findings Relating to Ladies' Step Dance and Scottish Country Dance

The focused coding, under the emergent narrative theme of 'Learning to Dance as an Older Person', raises a number of interesting smaller stories about the processes of learning Ladies' Step dance and Scottish Country dance. These smaller stories include 'Ladies' Step Dance: Balletic Feet and Brainwork', 'Experiences of Learning Ladies' Step Dance: Ease and Difficulty', 'Experiences of Learning Ladies' Step Dance: Separate Mind and Body versus Embodiment', 'Strategies for Learning Ladies' Step Dance: Modifications for Ageing', 'Teachers Facilitate Older People to Learn Ladies' Step Dance', 'Complex Patterns and Mathematical Brainwork in Second Scottish Country Dance Group', 'Experiences of Learning Scottish Country Dance: Ease and Difficulty', 'Experiences of Learning Scottish

Country Dance: Mind and Body versus Embodiment', 'Experiences of Learning Scottish Country Dance and Growing Older', 'Strategies for Learning Scottish Country Dances', 'Incorporating Beginners with Experienced Dancers in Scottish Country Dance', and 'Teachers' Perspectives on Teaching Scottish Country Dance as an Older Person and their Perspectives on Older Learners'. Further examples of these smaller stories can be found under the focused coding in the appendix that refers to the interview transcripts and ethnographic dairy.

Ladies' Step Dance: Balletic Feet and Brainwork

Learning Scottish Ladies' Step dance with the first Scottish County dance group as an older person was both physically and mentally challenging because of the demands of the balletic footwork and the brainwork required to memorise and to concentrate on the complex patterns of the steps. This is illustrated by the description in my ethnographic diary of the physical and mental challenge of the step practice for the Ladies' Step dance 'The Dusty Miller'.

> K, the teacher who was a friend of my teacher, taught us the 'Dusty Miller.' There were seven older ladies in their 60s and 70s, myself and R., the older man in the group. After the warm-up of walking round the room pointing toes, and bending both knees with feet parallel so as so stretch calf muscles, K., got us to practice the steps of the dance. These were complex and mentally challenging for example the Shuffles, which involved pointing a foot in front and brushing it back to the other foot and out to a point again very quickly. I found this movement very difficult and K. said you could just point your toe instead, changing from foot to foot. She demonstrated how you can practice the Shuffles sitting down and suggested that we all practice when sitting down at breakfast. Shedding was another difficult step which involved hopping on one leg whilst bringing the other foot quickly behind-in front-behind the supporting calf with knee bent and toes pointing towards the ground. It was a very balletic and disciplined movement and all the older ladies seemed able to perform this movement, although R., the older man, and myself were struggling. R. seemed very hot and sweaty though he was smiling as he told us about the Ladies' Step book he was writing in memory of his wife as she had been too ill to write down the dances before she died (S.1, 28.10.07).

It is interesting to note that although the older man and myself were struggling with the steps, the seven older ladies in the group in their 60s and 70s managed to perform them well.

The teacher gave hints on how to modify the step such as the Shuffles, which required very fast movements, to make it easier to perform. Despite his lack of technical skill, the older man was enjoying himself as he tried to dance Ladies' Step, because it was keeping the memory of his wife alive, and he repeated his story of writing a book of the Ladies' Step dances she had taught in her memory that he had told during his narrative style interview (interview 1.S.1).

The teacher of this particular Ladies' Step dance stimulated a discussion of how Ladies' Step is both very demanding brainwork and bodywork, showing how learning to dance involves a dualistic separation of mind and body

> K. taught the six sequences of steps in 'The Dusty Miller' one by one. The timing was difficult as it was 6/4. She had to keep slowing down the music, as the steps were so difficult. She said that she could not talk through the steps, think about what she was doing and demonstrate the steps all at the same time, because the brainwork required by Ladies' Step was just too taxing. Most of the older women agreed with her and one said, 'It keeps your brain young!' Another said 'It's really impossible to get your brain to co-ordinate your feet!' And yet everyone seemed to perform well, apart from myself and R., the older man, who was a little clumsy with his feet. The steps are very balletic and disciplined. People were getting quite out of breath with all the hopping and pointing so K., the teacher, gave us frequent short breaks. By the end of the class, K., the teacher, said that her Shuffles had deteriorated to points. The older man complained that the steps really pulled your calf muscles and several of the older ladies nodded in agreement (S.1, 28.10.07)

Even the qualified Scottish Country dance teacher, who had expert status as a dancer, was finding her brain was overloaded with the mental and physical demands of teaching this particular Ladies' Step dance. She even had to slow down the music because of the difficulties posed by multi-tasking. She simply could not talk through the steps to the class, think about it and demonstrate the steps physically to the class all at the same time. She was talking in dualistic terms about mind and body which were echoed by the older women in the class, who discussed how Ladies' Step dance 'keeps your brain young' and the impossibility of getting 'your brain to co-ordinate your feet'.

Experiences of Learning Ladies' Step: Ease and Difficulty

The quotes from my ethnographic diary in the previous section demonstrate how learning Ladies' Step dance was both mentally and physically demanding, due to the complexity of the Ladies' Step dances and the balletic nature of the footwork. This section

considers the aspects some of the individuals involved in the Ladies' Step dance sessions experienced as easy or difficult, and explores why these aspects were experienced as easy or difficult.

One 65 year old lady, who belonged to both Scottish Country dance groups, found Ladies' Step dance particularly 'hard' because she did not have a ballet background as she very simply stated in her narrative style interview (2.S.6, quoted in section 'Ladies' Step Dances as Physically and Mentally Demanding' in Chapter Three: Forming a Sense of Belonging through Dance as an Older Person). A 67 year old lady, who had previously trained as a Scottish Country dance teacher although she was no longer teaching, spoke of how learning Ladies' Step dance was different from learning Scottish Country dance, because you really needed a ballet background although knowledge of Scottish Country dance was helpful:

> Ladies' Step, Ladies' Step is different. I think it's good to have a background of Scottish Country dancing because you've got the basic moving to music, in phrases of music, already established... I would have found Ladies' Step easier if I'd have done ballet, as a child, which I didn't, because it involves ballet notations and ballet, quite a lot of ballet movements. But that hasn't meant we couldn't learn it. It's just meant we perhaps took a bit longer, I think, to understand the ballet movement, which somebody brought up on ballet, would have understood straight away... And then the more you do, the easier it gets because the same little bits of step, come again and again in different dances.... So it's learning the basics really, but of course Ladies' Step you're involved with one dance so you learn what goes on in that dance but later, in another dance, you think, 'Oh we did that.' And it's not so hard. So it gets easier (laughs) (1.S.7)

The emotional analysis shows this 67 year old lady's expert status as a dancer, as she speaks in a fluent voice about Ladies' Step, with pauses to reflect and strongly emphasising the word 'ballet' as she recognised that a background in ballet was particularly helpful for learning Ladies' Step dance. She feels strongly it is rewarding when you can recognise sequences of steps that are repeated in different Ladies' Step dances and laughs with satisfaction about Ladies' Step dance as getting easier over time. Repetition of physical dance movements is obviously important for learning effectively, and providing a sense of the steps becoming embodied.

This 67 year old lady explored the problems of actually getting someone to teach Ladies' Step dance:

> It's really a matter of whether there's anyone to teach it. And we were lucky that we had somebody who moved to our area who came to our classes, who also had done quite a lot of Highland, this is a gentleman… he'd done a lot of Highland but that involved some of the Ladies' dances as well. And we asked him if he would run a class for us. So once a week, during the summer term for several years, out at one of the village halls, he… ran a… Highland class really, but it had, mostly Ladies' Step dances in, but more Highland type… 'Flora McDonald' and the 'Scottish Lilt' and those sorts of dances. We didn't do the … slower elegant ones that we're learning at the moment. They don't go quite so well with, a man doing them. There are some that will go either way, and there are some that are very much more ladies' ones (interview S.1.7)

The emotional analysis shows how this 67 year old lady felt gender issues were problematic because they had a male teacher for Ladies' Step dance at their local group, who tended to teach the more Highland style of Ladies' Step dance rather than the ones she perceived as 'elegant' which we were learning at our Ladies' Step dance sessions. Her uncertainty about a man teaching Ladies' Step dance is shown by her marked pause before emphasising strongly 'a man doing them'. Her passion for Ladies' Step dances is demonstrated by the way in which she reels off several of their names and the fluency with which she speaks during most of this extract.

Experiences of Learning Ladies' Step: Separate Mind and Body versus Embodiment

Dualistic thinking with a separation of mind and body was very pronounced amongst the older Ladies' Step dancers and in my ethnographic diary, and no-one seemed to reach a stage of feeling these dances had become so embodied that they could be performed automatically without consciously thinking about them. The nearest to a sense of embodiment of some of the sequences of steps was expressed by the 67 year old lady who said in her interview that Ladies' Step dance became easier with practice (interview 1.S.7, quoted in section 'Learning Ladies' Step: Ease and Difficulty'). The importance of memory in order to be able to perform the sequences of movement, even if your footwork was poor, was particularly emphasised by the 71 year old man who was writing a book on Ladies' Step dances in memory of his wife who had taught Ladies' Step dance. As he said at the very beginning of his narrative style interview

> I always had a good memory for dances because I was keeping it, keeping in practice is a good thing. And.... I'm proud to say, that people like K., the teacher, sort of look at me while they're teaching and I occasionally, sort of jerk my head in surprise, and they go back and check they've said something correctly.... Sorry, I'm very conceited about my memory. (interview 1.S.1)

The emotional analysis shows this 71 year old man feels very proud that his memory for the footwork is better than the teacher's. He is fascinated by the various ways of interpreting the steps for 'The Thistle and the Rose' Ladies' Step dance which we had done the day before, as recorded in my ethnographic diary (S.1, 27.5.07). However he concedes that although it is fascinating to engage mentally with the different possible interpretations of the steps, the purpose of doing Ladies' Step dance is for the emotional reward of enjoyment, and it does not really matter if your physical dancing technique is poor. As he says later on in the narrative style interview whilst he was showing me the choreographic notation for 'The Thistle and the Rose'

> As the teacher admitted, she couldn't quite understand some of the things and hence was going from memory. And my memory of what the teacher said and looking at this book, I see there are certain, slight differences... See that ... bit. Was it in the fourth step? Where you Ballooneed away from each other turning? Bourreed away from each other turning. Well, as far as I can understand this rather confused presentation, you did your Bourre away from each other and then turned whereas the teacher had the Bourree away from each other as you were turning.....Really I think we have behind-side-close-turn and step whereas the teacher was teaching us behind-side-close. You see it probably doesn't matter as long as you enjoy doing it. You see this is one of the things I said at the committee meeting. We have this group of twelve ladies, roughly twelve ladies, who come along, and some of them aren't very good dancers. And they don't do it properly. But they thoroughly enjoy themselves. Why shouldn't they do it badly if they enjoy doing it? (interview 1.S.1)

The emotional analysis shows how this 71 year old man is intellectually fascinated by the range of different possible interpretations of the steps, and the problems posed by trying to remember the correct interpretations of the instructions for the Ladies' Step dance 'The Thistle and the Rose'. Ultimately, he feels enjoyment is more important than having a good memory for the correct steps or even the physical capabilities to perform the dances properly. So the emotional pleasures of doing Ladies' Step dance, even if there are physical difficulties,

highlight how as an older dancer he experiences learning Ladies' Step dance in dualistic terms as beneficial for his mental health, even if there are physical difficulties.

Strategies for Learning Ladies' Step: Modifications for Ageing

Older dancers spoke of difficulties learning Ladies' Step due to an ageing memory and ageing body. Whilst the 71 year old man involved in Ladies' Step was very proud of his good memory, a 58 year old lady from the second and first Scottish Country dance groups, who was a qualified Scottish Country dance teacher, spoke of how she had found learning Ladies' Step dances had become more difficult as she grew older because of the particular way her ageing memory worked. Struggling with an ageing memory and ageing body could make learning Ladies' Step dances difficult for the older person, particularly if you tended to learn dances by patterns rather than words, as this 58 year old lady explains in a very long narrative

> As I've got older, I'm finding it not quite so easy to learn new dances.... but also, and this will have a bearing on it, when I first started... dancing and learning dances, there were nowhere near as many, and they were actually much simpler....
>
> The one thing I cannot remember is Ladies' Step dance. I think I, I think it's because I work by pattern, my mind deals with pattern rather than words. When I look at cribs, I prefer to see a diagrammatic form than a whole written page. With a written page, I tend to miss bits out. When I see a pattern, and I say 'It's that followed by that followed by that' and my experience allows me to link the formations together. Ladies' Step dance, which is all work with the feet... linking different steps, that I find very difficult to memorise. Probably because I work on a pattern basis. And I haven't developed a way of converting the steps into a pattern. And it's just a pure slog. But I'm afraid age has caught up with me, I've given up Ladies' Step.... (interview1.S.7)

The emotional analysis shows how this 58 year old lady had expert status as a dance teacher, as she speaks in a very fast, fluent and enthusiastic voice. She feels ageing had made it more difficult for her to learn new dances as she very strongly emphasises these words, although she feels she should qualify these feelings, by explaining that there were actually many more dances to learn now than when she had first started dancing. She raises the issue of the mental and physical challenge of Ladies' Step dance, voiced by other dancers and myself in my ethnographic diary, under the section 'Scottish Ladies' Step Dance: Balletic Feet and Brainwork'. Her particular learning style revolves around learning patterns that she can link

with formations, rather than translating words into physical movements of the feet. She very strongly emphasises how she felt 'age has caught up with me' and she has given up Ladies' Step dance because of the requirement to think in dualistic terms about both body and mind, rather than simply to think about patterns.

Other older people carried on with Ladies' Step dancing, even though they were visibly struggling with ageing bodies. The 71 year old man from the Ladies' Step group told a very long narrative about the history of Ladies' Step, including a story about an elderly teacher of Ladies' Step dance, who even though she was crippled with arthritis, was still able to demonstrate the steps

> So Tibby Cram was intrigued by this and discovered (rustling of paper) that there was a Miss Cruickshank, who had taught Ladies' Step dancing. She was the last person to teach Ladies' Step dancing in Aberdeen. And had given up her dancing school in her early 20s, and was now in her late 80s, looked after by her great niece, I think it was. And Mrs. Cram asked permission of the niece to go and see Miss Cruickshank and she said 'Of course you can come and see Miss Cruickshank but I have to warn you, she's very elderly, crippled with arthritis, and doesn't take much interest in anything.' So they had a rather sort of difficult conversation until Mrs. Cram mentioned 'The Earl of Errol's Reel'. At which Miss Cruickshank suddenly woke up and said 'Ah. 'The Earl of Errol's Reel', that was a wonderful dance.' So Tibby Cram said, 'Can you tell me how to do it?' 'No, but I can show you how to do it.' So she got up from her chair and she held two chairs like that to support her (R. gets up to demonstrate) and went very slowly and faithfully through' The Earl of Errol's Reel', comparing it with the manuscript, told Mrs. Cram what all those words meant (interview 1.S.1)

The emotional analysis shows the immense pleasure which this 71 year old man gets from telling this story, which is obviously well-rehearsed, as he is both showing me the choreographic notation for the Ladies' Step dance 'The Earl of Errol's Reel' and gets up to demonstrate this particular dance very slowly between two chairs, just as this very elderly lady in her 80s who was crippled with arthritis had done. He slowed his speech to mirror how this very elderly lady was demonstrating the Ladies' Step dance very slowly. Indeed, he had stressed how she felt she could not put the dance into words but could only demonstrate it. This was an unusual example of an expert Ladies' Step dance teacher who seemed to have so embodied the particular dance that she had lost the words to describe it.

From the observations I recorded in my ethnographic diary, I noticed several occasions when older people were struggling with their ageing bodies during Ladies' Step dance, and so modified the movements themselves or under the instruction of the teacher. Older people might laugh and make a joke about their ageing bodies when they struggled with particular steps, or sometimes they might have to sit down and rest. As I recorded in my ethnographic dairy about one of the Ladies' Step dance sessions

> K., the teacher, got us to do warm-up exercises in a circle. R., as usual, was wearing his kilt and sporran. K. then taught us the waltz step, dancing round in a circle. This waltz step was used in the first sequence of the dance which involved tracing a diamond pattern on the floor with your feet moving forwards and backwards. There was much laughter as everyone found this shape difficult to master. The laughter was particularly pronounced when D., the 65 year old lady, said, ' I don't know whether I have two or three feet!'
>
> At the end of the diamond, there was a spot turn and then the diamond pattern was repeated with another spot turn. One of the older ladies with white hair felt dizzy and sat on the floor for a few minutes. However she recovered and carried on dancing (S.1, 2.12.07).

Being able to laugh at your own difficulties learning the steps as an older person seemed to be an important form of emotional release. It was also important to recognise when you had pushed your ageing body too far, as in the case of the older lady who felt dizzy and had to sit on the floor for a while until she recovered. She took responsibility for judging her own capabilities as an older dancer, just as the 71 year old man did when he found a particular movement too painful for his arms and shoulders. As I recorded in my ethnographic diary,

> K. taught a sequence she described as a 'collapsing deckchair.' R., the older man, stood out of the dance as he said his shoulders hurt too much to do the twisting arm movements over his head which this 'collapsing deckchair' sequence required. Apparently a young man had pulled on his arms and injured his shoulders seven years ago. Three dancers formed a circle in the 'collapsing deckchair' movement and joined hands to hop forwards and backwards several times before twisting their arms round to form a circle facing outwards rather than inwards. The four groups of three dancers were like cog-wheels in a clock circulating round in various directions, as the dancers twisted from facing centre to facing outwards and vice versa. K., the teacher, took R.'s place and demonstrated the movements with

myself and another dancer. Although I was wearing a support on my arm and hand, I found the movement was conducted in a gentle manner. R. came back to our group and tried the movement, letting go of our hands when it became too painful (S.1, 2.12.07)

Although initially the 71 year old man had felt he could not participate in the 'collapsing deckchair sequence' because it involved twisting arm movements over his head, after watching the teacher take his place in the group of three, he found he was able to join in simply by modifying the movement and letting go of the other people's hands when he felt at risk of hurting himself. He did not talk about these shoulder injuries during his narrative style interview, but it was interesting to see his creativity in modifying a dance in practice in order to cope with them effectively.

Teachers Facilitate Older People to Learn Ladies' Step Dance

Sometimes the Ladies' Step dance teacher would notice that members of the group were struggling with their ageing bodies and so would modify sequences of steps and movements accordingly. In one session, older ladies were struggling with balance and one of the steps, the Shuffles, so the teacher told the group how to modify this particular step as discussed in the section 'Ladies' Step Dance: Balletic Feet and Brainwork' earlier in this chapter. Another Ladies' Step dance teacher suggested slightly different modifications to this particular step the Shuffles because of older people struggling with their balance, as I recorded in my ethnographic diary

> A. kept checking the steps with R. as she was teaching and made modifications to the more difficult steps such as the Shuffles so that the older people in the group could cope with them. She suggested, 'Instead of pivoting round on the spot whilst doing four Shuffle steps, you can do all the Shuffles in one direction or you can even do Spring Points instead. So there are three options.' (S.1, 16.9.07)

The teachers acted as important role-models for older people learning Ladies' Step dance, challenging their ageing bodies to perform to a higher standard, as shown in this extract from my ethnographic diary where the teacher demonstrates the Ladies' Step dance, 'The Village Maid'.

> A. slipped on a loose skirt and blue ballet shoes. A. handed out printed sheets which detailed the stages of each different step in the dance 'The Village Maid' which she was going to teach during the class. She taught by demonstration, providing her own interpretation of the steps which were on the printed sheet. As

she explained, 'Much of step dancing is taught by 'oral tradition.' In the 17th and 18th centuries, travelling dance teachers taught ladies in their own homes and country girls in barns. Rather like the tradition of dancing in Jane Austen's England. Step dancing was a way of showing off your figure, dress and grace and originated in 17th century France ..... Balance can be difficult if you are older but balance is something which can be achieved with practice. I find my own balance deterioirates if I do not practise.' A. demonstrated the steps in a very balletic and disciplined style, and yet at the same time, she performed with ease grace and a smile (S.1, 21.4.07)

It is fascinating that the dance teacher describes Ladies' Step dance as an 'oral tradition' when in fact the way in which it is taught is through physical demonstration of the dance moves. She was highlighting the difficulty in interpreting any choreographic notation about Ladies' Step dance, and also the problem referred to by the 71 year old man in his narrative style interview, that many of these Ladies' Step dances were just not written down (interview 1.S.1 in the section 'Learning Ladies' Step Dance and Growing Older' and the quote from my ethnographic diary below, S.1, 21.4.07). The dance teacher's emphasis on the point of Ladies' Step dance being a 'way of showing off your figure, dress and grace' highlights why she was challenging these older dancers to improve their balance.

The way in which Ladies' Step dance was taught was in a disciplined manner from the teacher to the older dancers, but she still gave older individuals the opportunity to ask questions in order to enable them to improve their technique.

It seems as if the written text for 'The Village Maid' merely gives the names of the steps but does not capture the emotional grace with which they are actually performed. A. stretched her feet to each side in a beautiful point. Her arms were still throughout the dance as she held her skirt. She transferred her weight easily from foot to foot, as if she was as light as a feather, as she moved from first position, stepped to the right and curtsied and into step one, with the Ballonee Composee. The class was disciplined to follow her every move. A. repeated the step sequences again and again to re-enforce learning. It was as if she was teaching to the level of perfection required for a public performance. A. invited questions from the class after she had taught each sequence of steps, so that individuals could improve their technique. A. referred to the one man in the group to clarify technique on some of the steps as she referred to Scottish dancing as an oral tradition rather than a written one. I found this description of dance as an oral tradition fascinating (S.1, 21.4.07).

This dance teacher was striving to teach to a level of perfection, with her emphasis on the balletic nature of the steps, and the importance of repetition of the sequences of steps to facilitate individuals to improve their technique. She clearly respects the 71 year old man's detailed knowledge of the different interpretations of the steps in Ladies' Step dance, as she refers to him for clarification.

The older dancers in the Ladies' Step dance sessions clearly respected the discipline of learning Ladies' Step dance properly, although they often laughed and joked in between learning sequences of steps, showing the pleasure they were deriving from experiencing their ageing bodies being challenged to perform in a balletic manner. As I wrote in my ethnographic diary

> Four of the women had very white hair and appeared to be in their 70s, several others appeared to be in their 60s. My partner appeared to be in her 60s. She was a large lady who struggled with the steps. Laughing, she told me 'I've been doing this many years though it doesn't look like it. I find the social part of Scottish dancing makes me keep coming.' Her whole face wrinkled into a big grin. I held her soft warm hands and together we danced the sequences of steps, often stumbling over the steps and not providing the polished and disciplined performance of our two teachers. It was hard to remember all the sequences of steps correctly. Everyone laughed and smiled at the end of trying each new sequence. Two of the older ladies in their 70s kept asking for clarification of some of the sequences. However their actual performance of the steps in black ballet shoes appeared very disciplined and graceful, with pointing of the toes, hopping from foot to foot and swivelling round on tiptoe. Indeed the whole class was very disciplined, concentrating hard with serious expressions when learning and rehearsing the steps. At the breaks between each sequence of steps, members of the class would laugh and joke in small groups, sharing difficulties and sometimes rehearsing the steps again amongst themselves. Scottish dance seems very disciplined and everyone performs in unison as K., the teacher leading the class, shouts out the French names of the steps (S.1, 27.5.07)

Here the older ladies' laugh at themselves as they struggle to master the sequences of steps, but their dedication to try perform them properly is shown by the way in which some of the older ladies would rehearse the steps even when the teacher had given the class a break. As the older lady at the beginning of the extract from my ethnographic diary emphasises, it is the social aspects of Scottish dancing are just as important as technique. The opportunity to learn

Ladies' Step dance with other older people makes the dance pleasurable. The social aspects of learning to dance with other people and moving in relation to others, such as the physical holding of hands whilst you dance, are just as important as actual physical skill or technique.

Complex Patterns and Mathematical Brainwork in Second Scottish Country Dance Group

The sheer mathematical complexity of some of the Scottish Country dances required a lot of concentration, as this description of myself dancing a Strathspey, or a slow dance, with a 76 year old man, in my ethnographic notes demonstrates

> So I danced Miss Allie Anderson with J. This was a Strathspey. J. is a very kindly older gentleman and there were smiles on his wrinkled face as he used one word prompts or gently pushed me in the right direction. He used a gentle hand hold and his hands were soft and warm to touch. I watched the other dancers closely for non-verbal cues as to the next move. First it was Set to your partner and Cross Over, then Turn your partner and dance down the set in pairs. Then Turn under your partner's arm and dance back up the set. Next there were Setting Steps in lines, then each individual turned their partner and took their partner in Promenade Hold to dance round. J. gently reprimanded me, 'No, we don't cut in there' when we were dancing the Promenade and I tried to move in front of some other dancers. The mathematical complexity of this dance required a lot of concentration (S.2, 10.4.08).

As discussed in the section on 'Incorporating beginners with experienced Scottish Country dancers', this 76 year old man was extremely courteous in helping me with this complex mathematical dance, which required a lot of concentration.

Experiences of Learning Scottish Country Dance: Ease and Difficulty

I recorded in my ethnographic diary how some of the older dancers performed easily whilst others struggled

> There were eighteen people at the session, including three older men. J., the white-haired 85 year old lady told me that she had been doing Scottish dancing since 1970. She is a small, rather round lady in soft black shoes and she justs walk through the steps now rather than dancing them. However mentally she seems to know all the patterns of the dances off by heart. D., the man with white hair who shuffles through the steps of the dances, whistling continually to the dance tunes, is also 85

> years old. E., the lady whom I interviewed on Wednesday and who does the publicity for the second Scottish group, told me 'D. is difficult to dance with as he does not know the dances so well. He used to dance with his wife who died after a coronary bypass. He has carried on coming however.' (2.S, 27.9.07)

This extract shows how older dancers actually modified the steps so that they could still participate in the dances, even if they could only shuffle rather than dance the steps. Even though the 85 year old man was difficult to dance with because he did not know the steps, having been dependent on his wife's knowledge of the dances when she was alive, he was still incorporated into the group now that he was a widower. His difficulty remembering the dances contrasts with the ease with which the 85 year old lady remembered the dances.

The range of abilities amongst the older dancers in this second Scottish Country dance group is shown in the following extract from my ethnographic diary, where one set of older dancers performed a dance perfectly whilst the another set got totally lost

> Father Connelly's Jig was a fast dance done in sets of eight, divided initially into two groups of four. I watched this dance, as it was way beyond my capabilities. People did a series of turns in their groups of four, swopping partners all the time, and then everyone chased round in a square shape.
>
> 'Then you do two Father Connelly's' announced M., the older lady with grey hair who was the caller. There was much laughter as these Father Connelly sequences turned out to be very complex, involving Diagonal Rights and Lefts between the pairs of dancers in the centre of the set of eight, whilst the dancers on the ends of the sets did Pas de Basque Steps and then wove in among the dancers to do Reels on the side. The sequence concluded with the whole set of eight dancing round in a circle. One of the sets of eight older people seemed to perform this dance perfectly, but the other set got completely lost and gave up after a few bars of the music. I noticed E., who did publicity, was in this group. She was standing at the side of the room with the other dancers who had got lost, looking rather disappointed (S.2, 27.3.08).

This extract illustrates how there were times when some of the older dancers could perform a particular dance easily, whilst others were struggling. As Scottish Country dance was perceived as such a sociable form of dance which emphasises the importance of teamwork by the lady who did publicity (interview 2.S.3), it is not surprising that she was the older dancer who looked particularly disappointed when her set of dancers got totally lost.

As members of the second Scottish Country dance group preferred dances with complex patterns and formations in a programme of social dancing, which was designed each week by one of their members, they tended to emphasise the importance of memory rather than balletic footwork in their narrative style interviews. One 63 year old lady said she found it easy to remember dances as her mind can learn strings of instructions

> Luckily, I appear to have the kind of mind that manages to hold strings of instructions, so I've found it reasonably easy. I mean obviously there are times when you go wrong because there are thousands of dances and things like that, but generally speaking... I've found it not too difficult. And I was also able, at the beginning, if somebody gave me some ten seconds warning in a dance, gave me ten seconds ahead of when I was required to do something, then I was able to do it... quickly and pick up. So I was able to keep going in the set without getting in peoples' way and stuff like that. So it was the right medium for me. I've often wondered why my daughter's quite good at ballet and learning strings of ... instructions and it wasn't until I started doing the Scottish dancing that I realised that she must have inherited it from me (laughs) (interview 2.S.1)

This 63 year old lady talks initially in a slow and reflective voice but her voice becomes more animated and she laughs with pleasure as she recognises her daughter's ability at ballet and learning strings of instructions must have been inherited from her. She did not recognise that she herself had this skill until she started Scottish Country dancing.

A 76 year old man explained how dances that fit together are easy to learn, whereas dances that do not fit together are difficult to learn

> How easy to learn the different dances? Well it depends on the dance. Some dances just take, and others don't. I mean I don't think I'm, I don't think I'm often in the... bottom half of the class learning a new dance, but I'm certainly not always at the top. But then some dances just seem right. I mean the one I mentioned that I met for the first time ten days ago, I hadn't met it... we hadn't, yes I think I had managed to download a crib off, off mini-crib before I went so I hope I read it through. But we stood up and we danced it and, I know how to do that dance now. Very easy indeed... Some dances that don't seem to me to fit together... I... I find difficult to learn. Now, whether that's I find them difficult to learn so I think that they don't fit together or they don't fit together and so I find them difficult to learn, I wouldn't like to say... There is a feeling in the second Scottish group certain dances

are, teaching certificate dances, which is to say a dance that really doesn't fit together but which the first Scottish group requires people applying for a teaching certificate, to get a group through. There is a very real sense in which that is a good test. Teaching a dance that flows is straightforward so everyone will pass, so one needs an examination that is difficult. So we try to get people to teach a dance that doesn't fit. Well, that is a charitable view of the first Scottish group... (sighs) (interview 2.S.4).

The emotional analysis shows how this 76 year old man slows down his voice to reflect on his experience of learning, becoming hesitant when he considers why he finds some dances difficult to learn. His cynicism about the first Scottish group's teaching methods is shown when he emphasises how they like to get trainee teachers to teach dances that 'don't fit'. His voice is heavy with a sigh as he senses the rivalry between the two Scottish Country dance groups.

The importance of memory in making Scottish Country dancing easy or difficult was acknowledged by a number of older dancers, such as the 58 year old lady married to a 71 year old man

> Well once you've got the basic, I mean the basic steps are quite... difficult for a lot of people to learn, but I think because of my ballet as a child, I didn't find it difficult.... But, and learning dances is easy, remembering dances is not easy (laughs). So... and it doesn't get any easier the more, I don't think it gets any easier, it does if you're dancing a lot and then you go to places where they're dancing the more popular dances, but there's no way you could recall all the dances you've ever done. It's not possible. There are too, well there are thousands of dances, and more made every week so, no chance. But once you've got the basic idea, if someone said to you 'Oh you do so and so' then you do a Poussette, you can remember it in eight bar chunks, because that's how Scottish dancing works... (Interview 2.S.5)

The emotional analysis shows this 58 year old lady talks in a reflective voice, emphasising the underlined words. She feels her childhood experience of ballet has enabled her to find learning Scottish Country dancing easy. She laughs as she finds it difficult to remember the dances because there are so many. Her subjective experience of ageing embodiment is that it is easy to learn the dances but difficult to remember them.

Even if you were already an experienced dancer because of having learnt other dance forms, learning a new dance style in your old age could be difficult, as expressed by the 64 year old Indian lady

So I'm not completely sure of each dance. Once I know the dance, I'm quite happy... otherwise I feel a little bit, in case I make a mistake, it's always on my mind. So you've got to concentrate, yeah? But perhaps in the next couple of years, if I can continue continuously I will get the hang of the dances then I feel more comfortable. Then maybe one evening I would be able to really be able to take charge of the group if possible... I find it quite easy as I said, because I am already trained as an Indian dancer, which is much more difficult and a much harder form. So Scottish I think as long as you know the formation and can think about how the movements are moving, I find it's quite easy.... So I think people coming to that, you are a very quick learner, because obviously they will know my background, because I did much harder dances than that. So that way I think I find them more... confident too, having more and do it more (Interview 2.S.10).

Initially this 64 year old Indian lady speaks in a soft reflective voice, expressing her fears about making a mistake in a dance because of lack of experience. Her voice becomes more confident when talking about how easy it is for her to learn Scottish Country dances because she is a trained Indian dancer. Her subjective experience of ageing embodiment means she feels it is easy to learn dance because of being a trained Indian dancer but difficult to feel comfortable about all the dances because of lack of experience.

Experiences of Learning Scottish Country Dance: Separate Mind and Body versus Embodiment

My ethnographic diary demonstrates how older dancers tended to perceive learning Scottish Country dances in distinctly dualistic terms, with a lot of emphasis on both brainwork and bodywork as separate entities. As one of the older ladies' in her 50s told me informally at a social dance session

'I started Scottish dancing when I was a child, continued when I did my nursing training, stopped when I had children but I've picked it up again now I have retired.... It is very important to stand still with your feet in first position when you have finished being leading couple. That way you won't confuse the other dancers in the set. The discipline of being able to stand still is very important, you mustn't slouch.'

I felt I was being reprimanded for poor posture. She continued, ' You really need to know what you are doing at an Annual Ball, like the one I went to on Saturday.... I go to the Advanced class on Wednesdays.' She had been to the Annual

> Ball on Saturday that unfortunately I had had to miss due to a cold. All the different patterns of 'Miss Milligan's Strathspey' and 'Broadford Bay' are just a whirl of confusion in my mind;- circles, squares, lines, rectangles, Reels, with three people weaving in and out, Teapots when three people raised one hand in the air and danced round. I watched the last dance, 'Lochalsh Reel' and one of the ladies in her 40s explained to me, 'It's all brainwork... Scottish dancing is very popular abroad. That's how I got involved.' (S.2, 25.10.07).

The 85 year old lady particularly thought about Scottish Country dances in dualistic terms, emphasising the importance of a mathematical brain in an informal interview recorded in my ethnographic diary

> G. the 85 year old lady told me, 'You need a mathematical brain to learn these dances. I always learn the dances by using my book of Piling. I practice the various moves in each bar of the dance by pushing black and white counters around on the table. You see the little black and white circles in each larger black box? The box is a bar of music. Scottish music usually comprises bars of eight but sometimes bars of ten.' I reflected how her rehearsal with counters mirrored the retired professional ballet dancer I had interviewed about Circle dancing who was able to learn a ballet on her fingers (S.2, 3.4.08).

It is interesting how the techniques for memorising dances are shared across different dance forms. This 85 year old lady uses her book of Piling for a visual reminder of the dance moves, but then physically moves black and white counters around in order to memorise them. The retired ballet dancer who tried Circle dance spoke of being taught the moves of a ballet by a choreographer through using her fingers to rehearse the moves, a visual and physical way of stimulating her memory (interview 1.C.5),

In contrast to the above ethnographic diary entries which suggest dualistic thinking about a separate mind and body, there were times when these older dancers seemed to perform the dances in a way which suggested the moves had become so embodied that they were hardly thinking about them

> I noticed all the smiling wrinkled faces as people danced, weaving in and out of each other in Reels of Four or doing Star Formations with the right or left hand only up in the air. The dancing seemed much more mentally challenging than the Improvers' class but the quality of the footwork was very varied – some feet were balletic, some feet were just shuffling or walking, other feet were clumsily hopping

through the steps. Keeping up with the music and the rest of the dance formation seemed to be more important than technique. This was Scottish dancing as social dancing without the disciplined footwork of the first group, even though the actual patterns of the Scottish dances were very complex. The laughter and the smiles on the wrinkled faces suggested this was 'time-out' from hard lives. Older people were dancing for the sheer pleasure of dancing without worrying about their technique. Scottish dancing was something many of them had done for years, and it seemed as if the patterns of the Scottish dances were in-grained within their bodies. They just seemed to know how, when and where to move. For example, the first dance of the evening, 'Spiffin', involved Setting Steps in pairs, Half Reels of Four, a Tea-pot or three people putting one hand up in the centre of a triangle and dancing round, using verbal and non-verbal cues from the other dancers. I attempted this particular dance but kept getting lost in the Reels of Four, even though the other dancers gently pushed me in the right direction. (S.2, 27.9.07)

Perhaps a more realistic view of learning Scottish County dances from the perspective of older people, is to say there are times when they think about the dances in very dualistic terms, as separate mind and body, and times when they seem to perform the dances as embodied, without consciously thinking about the moves.

However in the narrative style interviews, older dancers tended to talk in dualistic terms about a separate mind and body. All of the ten older dancers I interviewed from the second Scottish Country dance group acknowledged the importance of memory, though each individual provided different interpretations of exactly how their memory worked (see appendix). These older dancers were definitely thinking in dualistic terms, about a separate sense of mind and body. For example, the 64 year old Indian lady talked about how memory is important for each group of Scottish Country dancers to function properly in terms of moving in relation to each other

> I think in Scottish dance memory is very important, it's very important to know exactly ... because if everybody knows where they are going to be, the dancing, character timing, and correct positions as well, all you need is a group, say about four, if three of them don't know, you can guarantee after the first formation, it will go hay-wire (laughs). You need to know I think, or the partner should know exactly, or you can just guide your partner, then I think it will work because I think it's very

> important you've got to be in the correct place, depending on the music, otherwise if you are not in your place, that means you are disturbing somebody else to come into your place and you are occupying somebody's place so.... Whole thing will be disrupted and... you just come to a standstill. The dance stops (laughs) (interview 2.S.10).

The emotional analysis shows this 64 year old Indian lady talks very fluently, really emphasising the importance of memory. She laughs at the words 'hay-wire' and 'standstill'. The dance stops' as she seems to feel both amused and uncomfortable that if people forget what they should be doing next, the dance cannot go on.

A 63 year old lady who was very proud of her ability to remember strings of instructions (see section 'Experiences of Learning: Ease and Difficulty') spoke of different ways of using memory. She was very disparaging about people who had been doing Scottish Country dancing for years and still could not remember the dances

> Other people see the dances through patterns. I just do it from memory. I don't think I see the patterns. At least I don't feel as though I do. I feel as though I do it from the instructions.... Memory is quite important. Well it's very important. If you don't see the pattern... well if you see the patterns then probably I don't know how the memory thing comes in. But the way I access my information, it's important. And there are people who've been going longer than I, and they still haven't got a clue. You can tell by their eyes, they get this sort of panic look in their faces. And you know they don't know what they're doing. And they've been going for years! And I'm thinking 'What? What do you think you're playing at? You should give up.... If after all this time, you can't do it, you're just a liability.' If after a couple of years I had found that I wasn't remembering the dances, I'd have given up. Because... it's a team game, it's not an individual thing (interview 2.S.1).

The emotional analysis shows this 63 year old lady emphasises very strongly the importance of memory. Her voice becomes very animated with laughter, rising and falling in tone, when talking about people who have been dancing a long time but still do not know what they are doing. She feels such people are a 'liability'. She echoes the sentiments of the 64 year old Indian lady that Scottish Country dancing is done in a group, and so remembering the dances is important for the group of dancers to function.

Another 63 year old lady spoke of a more embodied sense of Scottish Country dancing, even though she emphasised the importance of memory. She refers to an automatic or

unconscious transfer of knowledge of body movements from the brain to the body amongst the more experienced dancers

> Memory is important... but sometimes it's... memory of movement and patterns. Kinaesthetic memory or something like that (laughs). I think... It's very simple. Just knowing the commands... some say 'Cross and Cast.' Dances either start 'Cross and Cast' or 'Cast and Cross' or 'Turn and Cast' or some variation. That's difficult sometimes to remember. But if you just have the crib there, you can just quickly look it up. 'This one's 'Cross and Cast', that helps you.' So you do need a good memory, but quite a lot of it, as you can see from those older people, it does get quite embedded, in your memory so, they don't have to, consciously, consciously bring it up, they do it automatically. Sometimes, when you get into a dance with... something comes back to you 'Oh yes I have done this before.' This is an automatic, because sometimes you've got certain music on, you think 'Ah well I think I should be doing this now.' It comes (laughs) a bit, quite intuitive, and I think actually it's very good, for retaining memory (interview 2.S.8)

The emotional analysis shows this 63 year old lady's voice becomes hesitant as she considers the type of memory required for dancing and she laughs at trying to remember the special term for memory of movement. She continues in an animated voice, emphasising strongly the underlined words, but also pausing to reflect. She laughs a lot at the idea of dance becoming a 'bit intuitive', suggesting a sense of emotional pleasure from the feeling that the dance has become embodied.

Experiences of Learning Scottish Country Dance and Growing Older

The details of how older dancers showed a range of differing physical and mental abilities in coping with the more complex Scottish Country dances has been captured in the quotes from my ethnographic diary in the section 'Experiences of Learning: Ease and Difficulty'. Older dancers themselves modified the physical aspects of the dance so that their ageing bodies could cope, such as substituting a shuffling style of walk for the balletic footwork or dancing with someone who was familiar with the patterns of the dances.

The importance of the mind controlling the body in Scottish Country dancing and the significance of memory for the complex patterns of steps, explored in the sections 'Experiences of Learning: Ease and Difficulty' and 'Experiences of Learning: Separate Mind and Body versus Embodiment', was connected by some older dancers with the problems of an ageing

memory. The 65 year old lady who belonged to the Scottish Ladies' Step dance group, the second Scottish Country dance group and the second Circle dance group, talked about the problems of an ageing memory in comparison with younger people who could just remember the steps after being told them. In response to my question 'How important is memory?' she says

> Very... I can see when older people, I mean someone like G. or D., although they seem to know the dances, they can't remember them... A dance is called and D. can reel it off. Halfway through the dance he's forgotten where he's got to in the dance. His memory, he doesn't remember it now in the same way that he did. He can stand in the middle and he's forgotten which way he's going. Its just pure age, I'm sure it is. And the young people in the university club, they just remember these things. They don't see there's a problem, they're told what the dance is, they just get up and do it. And it goes later on. The older people can usually remember the original dances that they learnt, but the new ones they simply can't. Anything new they find it difficult. And they are always producing new moves as well.... the Taj and various strange things... They just don't know what it is, they can't begin to understand it (interview 2.S.6).

The emotional analysis shows how this 65 year old lady talks in a soft and reflective voice, strongly emphasising how memory is 'very' important. She feels very strongly that young people do not have a problem with memory, which she contrasts with the memory problems of two 85 year old dancers in the second Scottish Country dance group.

A 77 year old lady talked about younger people not getting involved with older people in the second Scottish Country dance group, partly attributing this to a lack of knowledge of the dances

> (Sighs)...And of course younger people do have opportunities to do so many more things these days... On the other hand, if somebody does come that normally doesn't do it, they enjoy watching but if you say, you know, 'Wouldn't you like to join us?' 'Oh no, no I couldn't do that, couldn't do that.' I think the fact that we know the next move can be a bit off-putting (interview 2.S.3).

The emotional analysis shows how this 77 year old lady expresses sadness as she sighs deeply about younger people not getting involved in Scottish Country dance and emphasises

strongly that younger people feel threatened by the second Scottish Country dance group as the older dancers know the next move.

This 77 year old lady also spoke of the importance of memory and suggests younger people can learn the steps and figures for folk dance very quickly as it is easier to remember when younger. However she also positions younger dancers as lacking precision and the patience for Scottish Country dance:

> Young people pick it up a lot more quickly. We have had young people, there was a folk dance in town, I think they have one every year, and there was a dance, a Scottish Country dance in the evening, and you could go to whatever dance was on in the various halls. And our hall, at one time, was so crowded you couldn't move. A lot of young people came in for the folk dancing and they picked it up very quickly but again, they're a lot more ... sort of, they like to throw each other about and so on... if they're doing a Right Hand Turn, it's all ... energetic, if you see what I mean. Scottish Country dancing is probably too precise for young people. They want something they can do quickly and go on to something else. I think some young people don't have the patience to ...to ... persevere (interview 2.S.3)

The emotional analysis shows how this 77 year old lady feels younger people 'pick it up a lot more quickly' as she very strongly emphasizes these words, pausing to reflect how she feels younger people like an 'energetic' form of dance. She becomes more reflective, as indicated by pauses, as she explains how young people do not have the patience to persevere with Scottish Country dancing. This ties in with a story she told in a earlier part of the interview about younger people liking Ceilidhs because they were more 'rambustuous', a word of her own invention to suggest energy (see appendix).

Later in the interview, this 77 year old lady tells a story about an 80 year old starting Scottish Country dancing and finding it difficult to carry on because of problems with her memory. This story is embedded in a story that uses the metaphor of Scottish Country dance being a mixture of a driving test and an A-level mathematics examination

> We have a lady who has recently had her 80th birthday and she is a wonderful pianist, so she knows about rhythm and timing ... and you can see her face, she is concentrating so hard but she cannot remember what to do next, so you've got to help her through all the time. And she said that she can't remember the sequences. Now again, if you learn when you are younger, you know the various moves, Rights and Lefts and Corners and Reels, things like that, they come natural to you, whereas

it doesn't come natural to people, as they get older. I mean to start on it when you're nearly 80 is a bit late in the day, isn't it? So memory is important.... The chairman, you know in the second Scottish group? He was asked by one of the ladies, who was then the dance circle secretary, she said she'd had a call from... the local radio, they'd seen our advert for the Annual Ball in May... that was taking place the next day so she gave them his telephone number for interview. I think I've got it somewhere, I could find it for you... He was asked, 'Could anybody go along to the dance and join in?' He said 'Some dances, yes, but not to the Annual Ball. You've really got to know what you're doing because they're not walked through.... He said Scottish Country dancing is a bit like a mixture of a driving test and A-Level mathematics exam (laughs).' (interview 2.S.3)

The emotional analysis shows how this 77 year old lady feels memory is very important as she strongly emphasises the difficulty of this 80 year old lady who has started learning Scottish Country dance, 'but she can't remember what to do next'. She becomes more reflective and pauses frequently as she tells a story which explains the importance of memory, strongly emphasising the metaphors of learning Scottish Country dancing being like a mixture of a 'driving test' and 'A-Level mathematics examination. Her laughter shows her personal pleasure at having mastered something so complex as Scottish Country dancing herself.

Strategies for Learning Scottish Country Dances

As there are thousands of Scottish Country dances, even experienced dancers needed to develop strategies for learning new dances. The 63 year old lady who claimed she had an excellent memory for strings of instructions (see section 'Experiences of Learning: Ease and Difficulty') emphasised the importance of being provided with cribs (short hand written instructions) on the tickets, to jog her memory when attending social Scottish Country dances in another area

> One or two you're not sure about, once you start you're ok and there are some which you've never done before because they're sort of localised, groups have their own ones and sometimes when you go to a dance outside the area, they'll put dances on that they know quite well, because they do them regularly, but as an outsider... you're not, you wouldn't be sure about. And that's why I think it's important that they should give you the crib as part of the ticket as oppose to waiting till you get there and then giving you a crib or not giving you one at all and expecting you to have sussed it out yourself (interview 2.S.1).

The emotional analysis shows this 63 year old lady speaks in a matter of fact tone about the difficulty of going to a dance out of your area where you do not know the dances, spelling out the importance of being given the crib for the dances as part of the ticket.

The 76 year old man also explained how he preferred to use written instructions to jog his memory or learn a new dance for various social dances

> Over the years, you go to various balls, and most of the balls come complete with a crib and you register a few names and you say 'Hmm alright, I will remember that dance.' This goes back to the days before one had to switch on a computer every day, or one was out of touch with the modern world. So I have got a vast number of, slips of paper with dances that I rather like on, now in case I've also got a rather large stock on the computer, but essentially they're dances whose, I've... done in the past at some ball, which have, clicked ... I mean I do have a selection of books, but... no, I wouldn't say I have a book as a source of my dances. It's all in the head really, in the sense there's a name in the head and there are some instructions around somewhere (interview 2.S.4)

The emotional analysis shows that this 76 year old man is in a reflective mood as he considers his personal strategies for jogging his memory or learning new dances. The underlined words are the ones he particularly emphasises. For him, it is a mixture of using cribs or written instructions and holding dances he particularly likes in his head, so that he can find the written instructions at some later point.

Earlier in the interview, he spoke of using the Piling diagrams of dances as a useful quick reminder before going to a social dance, but if he was going to be the caller at one of the weekly sessions of social dancing held by the second Scottish Country dance group, he would make a point of trying to learn the written instructions for the dances by repeatedly looking at them and perhaps walk through a dance with which he was not particularly familiar

> I use a book of Piling when I am going to a dance, because the Piling, the description of the dance in diagrams, is indeed a very good way for a quick reminder. If you're almost sure what you're doing, at a glance you can see the whole dance, instead of having to read word by word. But the number of people who are capable of simultaneously translating with the diagrams into instructions to announce, seems to me to be severely limited. I mean even the best of us aren't reliable at that. So I'm afraid I stick very much to the principle that if I'm going to court I will read my briefs through, and... having chosen the programme, I print out a programme for

> my own benefit and I tend to have it around on the table, or at mealtimes or something... Just keep looking at it, and I expect to be able to instruct all those dances without my notes. It doesn't always work, but... that's the ambition and I think that is an important ambition for an instructor. And particularly, if it's a dance you're not quite familiar with, really to walk it by yourself and make sure you see how the figures flow into each other, otherwise something will go wrong on the evening, and that's embarrassing (interview 2.S.4).

The emotional analysis shows how this 76 year old man considers his strategies for learning dances in a slow reflective voice, picking his words carefully, especially the underlined ones. The pauses indicate his reflective narrative style and there is laughter in his voice at the words 'It doesn't always work'.

The 85 year old lady had spoken of the importance of having a mathematical brain and her strategy of learning dances with black and white counters (see section 'Experiences of Learning Scottish Country Dance: Separate Mind and Body versus Embodiment). An example of her using the visual Piling diagrams as a reminder of the moves of the dance is recorded in my ethnographic diary

> 'I like the dance as it makes me happy.' This 85 year old lady got up and went out into the adjacent room to get a little book with the Piling notation for the dances. She sat down with me again and watched the first performance of the next dance 'Scotch Mist.' She opened the book at 'Scotch Mist' and began studying the strange collection of shapes that comprised Diagonal Lines, Squares, Circles and Triangles. It was a dance by Drewry. After a few minutes, she closed the book and said 'I know it.' She stood up and walked through the second performance of 'Scotch Mist.' J., the older man in his 70s who was on the committee, invited me to do this dance. It was amazing to see how the symbols in G.'s book of Piling translated into actual formations:- Circles, Squares, Teapots, Reels of Three Quarters, Half Diagonal Reels of Four and Lines of Four. J. gently steered me through the dance (S.2, 8.11.07)

This extract demonstrates how the visual Piling diagrams of the dance translate directly into the many varied formations of this particular dance.

In contrast to this emphasis on the importance of diagrams or written instructions, the 77 year old lady actually emphasised the importance of doing a dance as being the best way to learn

> But I've got to do it, before I can learn. You know the instructions are really a reminder as far as I'm concerned.... It's nothing like actually doing a dance but watching maybe to start with or actually taking part, when you've been in a set and taken part in a dance that you didn't know, at least that's easier than trying to learn it from a sheet of paper. It's like any skill. You've got to actually engage yourself in it, before you can go away and do it yourself (interview 2.S.3).

The emotional analysis shows how this 77year old lady emphasises the importance of doing a dance in order to learn it by spelling out the underlined words.

Later in the interview she discussed the importance of visual or non-verbal and verbal cues when learning to dance

> 'Well I'd better watch her or her or him... then I'll know where I'm going.' Some people can give verbal help to people that are not sure, that they're dancing with. But I can't. I can't dance and tell somebody. I've got to point (laughs). I can sort of... I usually say 'Come on' and they get the message. Or ... if you want someone to pass you by that or that shoulder, I usually say 'Come this way, come this way.' I can't speak as well but you see some people are good at it. You see the secretary will, she can tell you and dance at the same time (laughs). So can the chairman, he is very, very good. He will organise. But he's been dancing about 50 years you see, so he does know (interview 2.S.3)

The emotional analysis shows how this 77 year old lady is amused at her own inability to dance and give verbal instructions at the same time. She is also amused by those dancers who can multi-task and tell you the next moves at the same time as actually dancing.

Several older dancers spoke of the importance of music as a useful prompt for remembering and learning Scottish Country dances, besides non-verbal and verbal cues. The 76 year old man who had talked about preferring to learn Scottish Country dances from written instructions, spoke of the importance of music in jogging your memory for dances

> Scottish dances of course, the tradition is that the band will play the named dance, the named tune for the dance once and will then go off into half a dozen variations and finally, for the eighth time through, will go back to the original... tune. Which, if you danced a dance often enough, you can still associate a given tune with a given dance. You may remember that we had a quiz, at the Welcome New Year, party, in which we played a few bars of twenty fairly well known dances and

there were one or two, the winner got nineteen out of twenty I think... and other rather good dancers, got hardly any (interview 2.S.4).

The emotional analysis shows how this 76 year old man emphasises the importance of associating the named tune with a particular dance, and shows his surprise that some people are very good at recognising the named tunes for dances whilst other good dancers find this a difficult strategy to use. The married couple, aged 59 years and 60 years, who were dance teachers from the first Scottish Country dance group, had also spoken at length about the importance of the dance music for jogging your memory (see section 'Importance of Music' in Chapter Three: Forming a Sense of Belonging through Dance as an Older Person).

The 64 year old Indian lady who had spoken of the importance of memory for knowing the dance moves in relation to other dancers (see section 'Experiences of Learning Scottish Country Dance: Separate Mind and Body versus Embodiment') spoke of learning the terminology for the dance movements in order to remember them. Once she had learnt the structure of a dance, she used visualisation to enable her to perform it. When I asked if she used any strategies for learning, she replied

> I think so because there are few terminology, isn't there? Use those to get the full meaning of the word, once I know exactly how the dance goes, I try to remember that way. Say for example... like... what do you say? ... You keep moving your position, how we can move so to take over and come round that partner, how you have to do and then crossing your hands things like that. And the Strathspey. Basically I know the basic steps, the different steps, how they do. So after that, I think once I know exactly how it goes, I can form the picture in my mind, so I can follow it, usually, yeah (interview 2.S.10).

The emotional analysis shows this 64 year old Indian lady hesitates as she finds it difficult to remember the names of the steps or describe the sequences of steps in words. She feels it is important to be able to visualise the moves of a dance. Her subjective experience of ageing embodiment means she thinks in dualistic terms about learning the names and visualising the moves of the dance.

Incorporating Beginners with Experienced Dancers in Scottish Country Dance

Although there was a strong expectation that you should know the dances if you belonged to the second Scottish Country dance group, there was a feeling that it was possible

to incorporate several beginners into a set of dancers. As the 63 year old lady who prided herself on being able to remember strings of instructions declared

> I've got a lot of patience for beginners, people who've been doing it a long time and still can't do it... I've no patience what so ever, because I don't think they should be there. They should be doing something else to get the exercise. Because it's, it's alright to mess a set up once in a way, we all do but to do it all the time, I don't think it's on, it's not fair on everybody else... As an experienced dancer, you expect to have new people in and help them along, but people who have done it for years and still haven't got it, I don't think it's very fair. So they annoy me (laughs). Sorry, that's the way it works. New ones, fine, I've no problems with that. Two new ones dancing together is a nightmare ... they just can't do it, because they can't help each other whereas if a new one is dancing with an experienced dancer, if they do what they're told, they should get through it right (interview 2.S.1).

The emotional analysis shows this 63 year old lady softens her voice when talking about beginners, showing she has a lot of patience for them, but hardens her voice when talking about people who having been dancing a long time and continually mess up a set. She laughs, as she is so angry with these people.

The 76 year old man who had discussed the importance of music and written instructions for jogging the memory (see section 'Strategies for Learning Scottish Country Dances') took a much more tolerant view of both beginners and experienced dancers who made mistakes

> The second Scottish group is definitely a society where we're prepared to be helpful. I mean I always try to persuade us to actually publish a motto 'We giggle and we go wrong.'... Now there are societies that don't work like that, and there are definitely some purist societies where anybody going wrong is going to be scowled at and anybody who needs help is really, unless it's officially a beginners' dance, really shouldn't be there. I went on a Scottish dancing walking holiday and ... the instructor explained how important it is, at the end of one figure, to be aware of what the next figure is. But he emphasised that this must be a mental awakening. You don't start putting out your hand to turn somebody half a, half a bar early. You warn yourself that that's what you're about to do. Well, of course he's right, if everybody in the set is perfect. But if you are dancing with people who are not perfect, the last thing you must not do is not anticipate the figure. You must put

> your hand out in good time so that they have the opportunity of working out what it is that they are expected to do. (interview 2.S.4)

The emotional analysis shows that this 76 year old man had laughter in his voice at the idea of a motto for the second Scottish Country dance group 'We giggle and we go wrong'. His voice slows down to a reflective style as he considers the question of anticipation and the importance of using non-verbal cues with people who are not perfect dancers.

One of the older men in his 70s graciously taught me a complex dance that I did not know, as I recorded in my ethnographic diary

> D., the older man in his 70s with gold rimmed glasses and a long grey beard, who was chairman of the society, invited me to dance 'The Same Gang State' with him. When I confessed that I did not know the dance, he graciously offered to help. He gently told me the steps and sequences of moves. The leading couple dance round together, Cast Off for two, dance round together again and then Cast Off above the twos and threes. Reels of Three in various different directions ensued, followed by Setting Steps performed in Lines of Three on various different sides of a Square, with various combinations of three dancers. All the while, D. gently prodded me in the right direction, for example, he indicated with his hand how I was to move round from one Line of Three dancers to form another Line of Three dancers. I feel that I learn more complex dances from this group than the Improvers' class. These older dancers provide me with a physical and mental challenge, to remember the pattern of the dance and the physical movements. The feelings of togetherness are confirmed by the holding of hands in the various Lines of Three (S.2, 8.11.07).

It is interesting how this older man uses a mixture of verbal and non-verbal prompts to steer me through a very complex dance, as discussed in the section on 'Strategies for Learning Scottish Country dances'. Indeed he was the older man the 77 year old lady had described as having this unusual ability to give both verbal and non-verbal prompts whilst he was dancing at the same time (interview 2. S.3).

Teachers' Perspectives on Teaching Scottish Country Dance as an Older Person and their Perspectives on Older Learners

The 59 year old lady and her 60 year old husband, who were both qualified Scottish Country Dance teachers with the first Scottish Country dance group, told stories from an expert perspective about their experiences of teaching Scottish Country dance and especially the needs of older learners. There is only room to quote several of their lengthy and animated

stories here but the rest can be found in the appendix. The 59 year old lady told a story about how she finds it harder to hold her teaching plan in her memory so that she can teach without notes now she is older, and she is a firm believer that the teacher must appear confident before the class

> I: How important is memory?
>
> C: (Laughs). For the teacher or the class or both?
>
> I: For both.
>
> C: From the teacher's point of view, memory is very important. I'm not so good now as I was but I used to try and confine my entire class plan to memory, every time, so although I'd drafted it all out on paper, I would need to remember it in my head so I never had to refer to it through out the whole of the class. I could take a whole two hour class and never once look at my plan..... The pupil in the class does not want to think the teacher does not know what they are doing, they like to feel the teacher at least is on top of it and knows, they should be the foremost authority in the room so they should be on top of it. So that instils confidence in the class. And that's really important. Now because I'm getting older, I find it harder to do that now, so though I still draft out my plan, I try to remember it, quite often I have to read through it again before the class, I might have to refer to it several times through the class (interview 1.S.5).

The emotional analysis shows how this 59 year old teacher is very amused and laughs about my question on memory because she feels memory is so important in Scottish Country dance. She softens her voice to reflect how her memory is not so good now but her voice becomes more animated and confident as she discusses the detailed preparations she makes for teaching a class, spelling out the words firmly 'The pupil in the class does not want to think the teacher does not know what they are doing'. Her voice softens as she reflects on getting older and finding this harder to do.

At the end of this story, she also talked about the importance of memory for class members

> From the class's point of view, memory is important just to get through the dance. You've got a lot of information to absorb, you've got a lot of technical things which get thrown to you, you've got a lot of dances that you're taught, usually three or four dances minimum per class, that you'll learn, then you'll need to retain that if you're going to be able to apply it when you go out to a social function. You've got to

be able to put what you've learnt into practice otherwise, what's the point of the classes? (interview 1.S.5)

The emotional analysis shows how this 59 year old teacher talks in a very confident and animated voice about the importance of memory for people learning Scottish Country dance, emphasising that there really is a lot of information and technical aspects to absorb about the three or four dances taught, besides the mental challenge of retaining this knowledge for a social function.

This emphasis on memory could make learning Scottish Country dance more challenging for older people, and this 59 year old teacher really emphasised the important role of the teacher in ensuring the health and safety of their class members, whatever their age

> But the physical part as well is really important, to have that structure in the class where you have that warm-up at the beginning because you are just as ... conscious as the teacher that any person in your class could slip or pull a muscle, do themselves damage, so you have got to make sure that they have warmed up properly and that you've taken all precautions to make sure that they're not going to hurt themselves. So you need, the floor might be slippery, you've either got to make them aware that they've got to take precautions or provide slip-stop so that they don't slip around on the floor. And you've got to make sure that they've thoroughly warmed-up or if somebody comes into the class late, you've got to tell them 'Make sure you do some stretching and some exercises before you start joining into the dance because to go into it cold, you could do yourself damage.' (interview 1.S.5)

The emotional analysis highlights the animated way in which this 59 year old teacher talks about health and safety issues, showing that she is very familiar with their importance as part of her teaching sessions, though there is the expectation that adult learners are also responsible for their own health and safety.

One 58 year old lady was a Scottish Country dance teacher who belonged to both the first and the second Scottish Country dance groups. Her difficulties with learning longer and more complex dances and Ladies' Step dance due to an ageing memory have been discussed under the section 'Strategies for Learning Ladies' Step: Modifications for Ageing' earlier in this chapter. Her expert knowledge as a dance teacher and the experience of having danced with a deaf partner provided her with a variety of sophisticated strategies to help her remember the dances, such as dancing fractionally slower than other dancers and interpreting

body language besides the more commonly used strategies of a walk through and cribs with written instructions for the dances

> Other people can just say 'Oh it's so and so.' And reel off the whole thing. I could do that, for certain dances. Other ones, I might need to look at my crib and say 'Oh how does it start?' I need perhaps just the first two bars and I can remember the rest. And then another night I can remember the beginning and I have a mental blip, and I can't remember what comes in. ... But my technique is 'Watch what the others are dancing and just be fractionally behind them.' And it looks as if I know it... In my younger days, when there was a new dance, the person who I was dancing with, always wanted to be first couple. If you were lucky and had a walk through, you would walk it through. If not, my attitude was 'Well it's the first couple who are allowed to make the mistake, the others remember it.'... So if I didn't get it right, it didn't matter. But it made me very quick at picking up signals, body language.... But ... the person I was dancing with was actually deaf... And could only hear very, very high frequency, all the normal frequency was just a rumble. And they could pick up, the way they danced was to pick up the vibration through the floor and watch other people dance... And perhaps that's influenced the way that I dance that I am actually very aware of peoples' body language... It would help my memory. I get these little sub-conscious ... prompts, from body language, which just gives the memory time to kick in (interview 2.S.7).

The emotional analysis shows how this lady tells her story in a very lively and fast voice, showing her enthusiasm and expert status as a dance teacher. Her familiarity with using the strategy of watching others and dancing fractionally behind them is particularly highlighted as she speeds her voice up to emphasise these words. She feels body language is important for both herself and her deaf partner.

As a Scottish Country dance teacher, this 58 year old lady taught children rather than adults so her strategies for teaching are different from those of the other teachers, although she acknowledges the importance of praise, whatever the age-group (see appendix). She also tells a long story about the importance of Scottish Country dance as teamwork, dancing in relation to others and respecting their particular style within the particular social context of the dancing. Such an awareness of dancing in relation to others can be seen as an important social aspect for older people living alone and highlights the importance of responding to visual cues from other dancers

> If you're dancing, you're part of a team... if you're doing a display, you have to be very much part of a team, you have to adjust your particular style of dancing to fit in with everybody else. So therefore, it's a co-operative effort. You should not be standing out amongst a team. Now this is for a display, or a competition. If you're dancing, say on a Saturday night, at a social to enjoy yourself, you do what you feel like on the night, if you are feeling a bit tired, you don't dance with quite so much energy. If it's a stonking good band, lots of excitement, you just go through the roof and you dance in a very extravagant style. You respond to what the situation is or what you know you should be doing. The same thing also that is if you go to a dance away from people, not in the same area, I am of the opinion 'See how the others dance.' If it's something like the very strict first Scottish group who follow their style very closely, you should not impose your improvisation or whatever it is, twiddles, on them. Because you're their guest, and you should respect what they want to do... (Interview 2.S.7).

The emotional analysis shows how this 58 year old lady talks in a very fast and fluent voice, as she is so familiar with all the social etiquette of Scottish Country dancing in relation to others. She very strongly emphasises the pertinent points of her story, identifying how and when you should modify your own style of dancing to mirror that of others. Learning Scottish Country dance is not just about learning the technical and physical aspects of the dancing but also about learning to respond to the particular social context within which the dancing takes place.

Discussion of Findings

I found very little research literature considering how ordinary community-dwelling older people learn to dance (Borstel, 2006; Houston, 2005a; 2005b). My comparative ethnographic and narrative interview study of Circle dance, Scottish Ladies' Step dance and Scottish Country dance, has produced some very interesting findings on the processes of ordinary community-dwelling older adults learning to dance. The features of the particular dance form influenced the degree of ease or difficulty older people experienced in learning the dance. Complex footwork and timing made Circle dance difficult to learn. Balletic footwork and demanding brainwork made Scottish Ladies' Step dance difficult to learn. Complex patterns and the requirement for a mathematical brain made Scottish Country dance difficult to learn. These difficulties were aggravated by the problems of an ageing body, such as being deaf, dizziness and arthritis, and problems of an ageing memory. However some experienced

older dancers and those who had learnt the skill of watching someone's feet and copying as a child, tended to find it easier to learn new dances. Other older dancers, even though they had danced for a long time, found it very difficult to learn new dances or even remember old ones. Despite these difficulties, many older dancers persevered because they enjoyed the process of learning to dance in all the various groups I studied. Just as Light (1990) has shown, there is a range of movement capabilities amongst older people.

An interesting finding relates to the importance of dualistic thinking in order to learn the different dance forms, even though I had originally hoped to access the subjective experience of dance as embodied in the older person (Gannon, 1999; 2000; Radley, 2000; Turner, 1992; 1995; 1996). Both Brown et al. (2009) and Garza and Fisher Smith (2009) suggest from qualitative and quantitative psychological research that the phenomenology of embodiment, the lived experience of embodied mind and body as a unified whole, is situated in action complexes. However my study of dance showed that when learning the dance, older individuals consciously distinguished between mind and body, appealing to Cartesian dualism. In some dance forms, the mental concentration required to remember the steps and perform the dances was so great, that even the dance teachers did not feel they had reached a stage of embodying the dances, as in Scottish Ladies' Step dancing. The first Circle dance teacher rebelled against this idea of learning dances through the head, even though she admitted to rehearsing the dances through visualisation. She advocated teaching dance through demonstration, so that older dancers could absorb the dance moves directly through the emotions, body and spirit. In practice, only a few of the older dancers had times when they felt as if they had completely embodied the steps of the dance so that they could move without consciously thinking about the movement. The second Circle dance teacher felt she was beginning to reach this ideal. The retired professional dancer in the first Circle dance group, the two experienced Scottish Country dancers in the second Circle dance group and some members of the second Scottish Country dance group, had times when they danced as if they had completely embodied the steps. These findings are a contrast to the work of Wainwright and Turner (2006; 2005) and Turner and Wainwright (2003), with older professional dancers from the *Royal Ballet*, who demonstrate how the dance was so embodied that it shaped their whole lives in terms of how they perceived themselves, relating to Bourdieu's (1984) concept of habitus. The retired professional ballerina who had left the first Circle dance group was the only research participant to fully demonstrate Bourdieu's (1984) concept of habitus, when she talked about how her whole upper body posture had been shaped by her training in the ballet company. She had left the first Circle dance group because she felt there

was not enough time to learn the steps properly and so achieve a sense of the dance as embodied.

Kessels and de Haan (2003) suggest from their quantitative work on memory that older people have poorer mnemonic strategies than younger people. However my findings illustrate older people using a wide range of mnemonic strategies to learn and remember dances, especially in the Scottish Country dancing. Older Circle dancers used mnemonic strategies such as the skill of looking at someone's feet and copying, using music as a prompt, counting to absorb the rhythm of the steps, visualisation and visual cues from other dancers. Visualisation and visual cues were particularly important for deaf dancers. The disciplined nature of Scottish Ladies' Step dance meant that older dancers simply copied the demonstrations of the dance teachers who acted as role-models, although the choreographic notation for the dances was often available. This relates to Frank's (1991) idea of the 'mirroring body', copying the dance techniques of teachers. The older Scottish Country dancers had the most sophisticated range of mnemonic strategies in comparison with the other dance groups. These strategies included written instructions, cribs (short-hand instructions), Piling diagrams, actually doing a dance, using music as a prompt, learning the terminology of the dance moves in order to remember them and learning how to move appropriately in relation to others in response to visual cues.

The supportive nature of all the dance groups meant a lot of effort was made to support and incorporate those who were struggling with their ageing bodies and ageing memories, or those who were new to the groups. Older dancers themselves and their teachers developed modifications of the dance movements so that older dancers could be involved even if experiencing difficulties with their ageing bodies and ageing memories. For example, the first Circle dance teacher recommended dancing on the spot if an older dancer experienced vertigo, but the two older deaf dancers challenged their ageing bodies and ageing minds to overcome the dizziness by actually doing the Turns on some occasions. Another modification advocated by the first Circle dance teacher was the use of a scarf to link two dancers instead of holding hands, if an older dancer had an arthritic hand. Within the Scottish Ladies' Step dance, the dance teachers sometimes simplified the movements so that older people could perform them more easily, such as changing the Shuffles to points. Older people themselves also modified the moves in Ladies' Step dance, such as avoiding complex movements with the arms that might be painful. In Scottish Country dance, older dancers simply walked through the steps if they could no longer do the balletic footwork or followed a competent dancer if they struggled with remembering the steps. Obviously, if there were too many people

struggling, a dance might fall apart, particularly in the Scottish Country dancing, where it seemed possible to incorporate two people who were struggling into a set but no more.

The dance teachers and instructors at the social sessions, who were often older dancers themselves, facilitated older dancers to learn and enjoy all three dance forms, Circle, Scottish Ladies' Step dance and Scottish Country dance. Even though older dancers expressed a range of emotions about the experience of learning to dance, enjoyment was a predominant emotion. The enjoyment of learning and participating in the dances, as shown in the emotional analyses of many of the narrative interviews and extracts from my ethnographic diary, was more important for older dancers than achieving a sense of the dance form as embodied. Indeed the dualistic thinking required to try learn some of the more complex moves provoked a lot of laughter, such as the 65 year old lady who complained she was not sure whether she had two feet or three when trying to learn a waltz step which was performed in a diamond pattern during a Scottish Ladies' Step dance session. The pleasure of learning to dance as an older person seemed more important for most older dancers, rather than achieving a sense of the dance as completely embodied, an ideal advocated by some social theorists and some experienced dancers (Schwaiger, 2008; 2009; Turner and Wainwright, 2003; Wainwright and Turner, 2006; 2005).

Chapter Five : Psychological Health, Sense of Belonging and Growing Older as a Dancer

Introduction and Methodological Issues

Promoting psychological health through dance as a tool for emotional expression has been a theme running throughout this thesis, particularly as I chose a method of analysing the narrative interviews which involved listening to the narrative interview tapes for their emotional as well as verbal content (Hiles and Cermak, 2008; Rossiter et al., 2008). This chapter uses some of the data from my ethnographic diary to describe the emotional content of the dances, but mainly focuses on the narrative interview data as this involved older people's reflections on how dance influenced their personal psychological health. Most of the dancers were positive about the effects of the dance on their psychological health, although some dancers did not explicitly comment on psychological benefits from the dance. To a certain extent, it seems arbitrary to separate psychological health benefits of dance from the physical health benefits of dance because the two are intertwined, and dancers often spoke in terms of an embodied sense of mind, a subjective experience of ageing embodiment as constructed by the particular 'culture of dance'. In my study, psychological factors seem to interact with biological and social factors to promote psychological health, as suggested by the bio-psycho-social model (Engel, 1977). However, because of the sheer volume of data I collected, I have divided my data between two chapters, one focusing mainly on psychological health and one focusing mainly on physical health, whilst acknowledging the interaction between the two.

Literature Review

The benefits of both exercise and dance for psychological and physical health are well documented in the research literature. There are fewer studies relating to the benefits of both exercise and dance for the psychological and physical health of older people. Most of the existing studies tend to take a quantitative perspective or position the older person as ill or socially isolated and in need of help from a medical or psychotherapeutic perspective, as argued in the literature review in Chapter One of this thesis. Here I consider this debate in terms of several recent studies on the psychological benefits of dance for older people. I argue for more qualitative work in order to explore the processes of dance constructing psychological benefits in community-dwelling older people's daily lives, as explored in my comparative ethnographic and narrative style interview study of Circle dance, Scottish Ladies'

Step dance and Scottish Country dance. An interesting area to consider is how the processes of learning to dance psychologically influence the processes of physically growing older. Featherstone and Hepworth (1991) have written about the 'masks of ageing', a sense of an ageing face but an inner younger self, and how the physical body and embodied mind have a sense of personal agency in interpreting the meaning of growing older.

Two quantitative studies published this year highlight the benefits of dance for older people in both psychological and physical terms. Using both physical outcome measures and a quantitative health questionnaire, significant improvements were found in the group which had 23 dance sessions over twelve weeks compared with the control group (Hui, Chui and Woo, 2009). Similarly, using both physical outcome measures and a quantitative health questionnaire, significant improvements were found in the group of twenty healthy female adults over the age of 65 who were assigned to the Turkish folklore dance compared with the group of twenty healthy female adults over the age of 65 who were assigned to the exercise group (Eyigor, Karapolat, Durmaz, Ibisoglu and Cakir, 2009). So there is some evidence that dance may have a better influence on psychological health than everyday physical activities or planned exercise regimes in the lives of older people.

Qualitative psychological research on dance can be conducted from an unconscious or a conscious perspective. An unconscious perspective places the locus of control for human behaviour in the unconscious mind, and is concerned with the expression of emotional conflicts, particularly from early childhood, which cannot easily be verbalised. Only through bringing these emotional conflicts into the conscious mind can the individual strive for psychological health. A conscious perspective places the locus of control for human behaviour in the conscious mind, and is concerned with the individual actively expressing and interpreting their emotions through words. The research on dance movement therapy within the discipline of dance psychotherapy provides a detailed explanation of how individuals respond to their bodies in terms of the unconscious and emotionality, but focuses on those older individuals defined as sick or socially isolated by the medical profession (Payne, 2006). Kowarzik's (2006) work on dance movement therapy for older adults with dementia and Bunce's (2006) work on dance movement therapy for older patients with Parkinson's disease, are examples of the use of dance psychotherapy. As argued in the literature review in Chapter One, these psychotherapeutic interventions for pathological reasons are very different from dance groups aimed at older people living independently in community. However, many similar issues arise in both this psychotherapeutic work, from an unconscious perspective, and my own ethnographic and narrative style interview study, from a conscious perspective. Both

types of qualitative research show how dance movements enhance social interaction, body-awareness, self-confidence, communication and motor-abilities, besides lifting depression (Bunce, 2006; Kowarzik, 2006; Paulson, 2005a; 2005b). The emphasis on lifting depression shows how dance can promote psychological health.

My findings show how for some Scottish Country dancers, the action of literally dancing to death on the dance floor, was interpreted either as a good death or irresponsible behaviour. I also found examples of dancers across all groups using dance for emotional expression and social and psychological support when going through bereavement or life-threatening illnesses. These findings promoted me to look at the literature on death and dance and on emotional expression.

Borstel (2006) wrote an article about the Liz Lerman Dance Exchange in America that brought younger and older dancers together to tell stories through the expressive physicality of dance. Dance is concerned with creative expression about existential issues such as death. Borstel (2006) describes how these younger and older dancers have explored genocide and human rights from the Nazi Holocaust to more recent events in Bosnia and Rwanda. McGrath and Phillips (2008) explored Aboriginal mortuary ceremonies and found mourning rituals included dance. Flannigan and Wolf (2004) explain that what may appear to be a heart attack on the dance floor, is actually in medical terms an allergic reaction to something that has been eaten before the person starts to dance. There has also been cinematic portrayal of the death dance such as the Scottish dancer in 'Four Weddings and a Funeral' and the Aborigine in 'Ten Canoes'. Heron (1976), writing from a humanistic psychology perspective, has written about the importance of catharsis, or emotional expression, during counselling interactions, as this gives people the opportunity to experience insight into their problems, when they reflect after their emotional outburst.

Outline of Findings on Circle Dance

The focused coding under the emergent narrative theme of 'Psychological Health, Sense of Belonging and Growing Older' raises a number of interesting smaller stories about how Circle dance promotes psychological health. These smaller stories are 'Circle Dance Promotes Well-Being', Circle Dances, Emotion and Music', 'Social Benefits of Circle Dance', 'Psychological benefits of Circle Dance for Growing Older', 'Circle Dance as Therapy and a Healing Process' and 'Circle Dance, Bereavement and Difficult Family Situations'. Further examples of these smaller stories can be found in the appendix through the focused coding that refers to the interview transcripts and the ethnographic diary.

Circle Dance Promotes Well-Being

A 72 year old lady from the first Circle dance group spoke of how Circle dance promoted her psychological and physical health together, a sense of an embodied mind which needed to be stimulated by physical activity as well as mental activity. She interprets the Circle dance as filling her mind, taking her worries away:

> If I'm well and I've got the time then I will dance. And...if I'm feeling a little bit low, if I've had a bit of a hard time, I've got a worry or anything like that, when I do the Circle dancing, I don't think about it. I can make that go away for that length of time. And I think that's a very useful thing to be able to do. Because we all have...problems in our lives and we all have things that we have to deal with and it's lovely to have somewhere where you can forget about them and I can say that does help....I don't know how it works....I suppose it's...adrenaline and stuff like that...because if I just sit down, I'm a great reader as well, so I have these two very very opposite passions, one is to read.... But then I've got this other part of me that's got to move...and the moving makes me feel refreshed. So reading and all that is very relaxing but the dancing is very refreshing, that's how it makes me, it's stimulating and when I've done that, I can then go out and fancy doing , other things, I can tackle my garden..... Because if you sit for a long time everything begins to seize up, joints get a bit more painful and that sort of thing, whereas with the dancing, no, everything flows and then it creates the need...the want, the desire to do more activity which I'm sure...and that makes me feel healthy (interview 1.C.2).

The emotional analysis shows how this 72 year old lady found a sense of well-being through the Circle dance. She slows her voice to reflect her negative experiences of low moods, but speeds up her voice again to show how she can overcome these low moods through Circle dancing. She continues her story in a lively voice about enjoying both reading and moving, emphasising the underlined words and pausing to reflect on the importance of movement for health.

The 78 year old deaf lady who found it difficult to learn Circle dance because of a poor memory and a poor musical ear, similarly spoke of the sense of well-being from going Circle dancing when she had had an emotionally hard week. Like the 72 year old lady, she interprets the Circle dance as filling her mind, taking her worries away:

> When I've had a very hard week, and I do seem to picture myself to have hard weeks, I don't really know why, my daughter says 'Your choice.' I say it must be my

choice. But if I think I'm going on Friday to dancing, I can forget everything, except the odd times where I've had sort of a little breakdown and had tears, on the whole, it's my, it's my time off, it's my time off from the family, the worries and so... really the experience for myself, is that's my little holiday. And I can just enjoy it. So that's the main inference. And I do feel great after I get home. And I really enjoy it. And ... I have this friend and he, he always makes sure 'You must go Circle dancing.' Because he knows it does me good. And we always have a laugh and he says 'Have you made shapes to-day?' (interview 1.C.9)

The emotional analysis shows this 78 year old deaf lady is considering carefully how Circle dance helps her psychological health, shown by the number of pauses and commas, and the large number of key words and phrases which she very strongly emphasises. She feels Circle dance is really important for the psychological health of her embodied mind, and the fact that she is able to laugh about making shapes with her male friend, confirms Circle dance provides time-out from her daily worries. Her psychological health is transformed by the processes of Circle dance.

A 68 year old lady from the second Circle dance group, who used to be a Scottish Country dancer and also currently attended a Circle dance run by the first Circle dance teacher, told a story about Circle dance giving her a sense of well-being and setting you free. She interprets the body movements of particular Circle dances as liberating her mind and sense of self:

There's a dance called 'Alhambra' which consists really of just whirling about, so it has very little form in it, when you dance 'Alhambra', you're just away on your own. If you were dancing something in like, 'Misolou' that we danced this afternoon, there are variations of 'Misolou' but on the whole you're within the circle, you're not moving away, you're staying within the circle, you're finishing the same time as everybody else. But you've still got an element of... it's calming, that somebody described Circle dance as movement to music. And it's got a kind of, calming influence, that I find very... very peaceful, and I like that. What else can I say about it? Dances like 'Alhambra' where you just really flow yourself into the room and into the music, I love, it's very easy, and I can do quite hard dances, and I don't mind hard dances, I like them, a bit of a challenge. But when you do some of those easy dances, they really set you free. They're wonderful just to, to lift you and put you in touch with yourself really.... When we dance with the first Circle dance teacher, indeed

when we dance with the second Circle dance teacher, they both do trance dances but with the first Circle dance teacher I think they are more obvious. She'll say that we'll do this. I mean towards the end of a session she always does very slow dances. Trance dances I find, which are so easy, are probably the most rewarding emotionally, because they do... they make you, they make you think about yourself, they make you feel that you're together with everybody else but you're also an individual.... Somebody I danced with once said to me, she said, 'I dance to heal myself, to heal those I dance with and to heal the earth I dance upon.' (interview 2.C.3)

The emotional analysis highlights the issues about Circle dance that this 68 year old lady felt were very important for her psychological health. The deliberate way in which she chooses her words and repeats them for effect, such as 'Alhambra', 'calming', and the idea of thinking about yourself, 'to lift you' and 'put you in touch with yourself'. She contrasts this emphasis on individual well-being with the togetherness of being with other dancers, and really stresses the healing aspects of dance towards self, others and the earth. This is a very holistic view of how Circle dance promotes psychological health. Like the 78 year old deaf lady, this 68 year old lady feels she is transformed psychologically by the processes of Circle dancing. This emphasis on healing relates to the tradition in Circle dance of dancing round a candle and sending the light or energies at the end of the session to sick members of the group, as discussed in Chapter 3: Forming a Sense of Belonging through Dance as an Older Person.

Circle Dances, Emotion and Music

The first Circle dance teacher emphasised expression of a range of emotions as she taught the dances originating from various different cultural backgrounds. Here is a description in my ethnographic diary of the first Circle dance teacher teaching a Negro spiritual:

> The teacher did a jazz dance in the first half of the session, a Negro spiritual 'I say grace' which was unusual as she usually reserves such dances for the second half of the session when she moves from mind and body to spirit. This was a moving dance, performed individually without holding hands. The dance had a leisurely pace as we glided from foot to foot, pointing each foot in turn, raising our hands upwards and then turning round doing flowing movements with our hands in the direction of our turn. At the end of the dance, the teacher explained to the class ' 'I say grace' means 'I say thank you.' The world would be a better place if we all said 'thank-you' more

> often.' She repeated this dance in the second half. At the very end of the session, when we all crowded round the candle to blow it out, she continued 'Each of you think of something for which you are grateful.' I thought how grateful I am for the support of this dance group and the retired professional dancer told me on the bus how she had been thinking of her gratitude for such a long life (15.6.07).

The first Circle dance teacher interprets the title of this dance as 'I say thank-you', so emphasising that this is the meaning of the body movements. She facilitated the group of older dancers to express the positive emotion of gratitude, both physically through the actual movements of the jazz dance, raising hands upwards, and psychologically, through thinking about something for which each individual was grateful. Her repetition of this dance added to its' lasting effect, such as shown by the retired professional dancer who told me on the way home that she was grateful for such a long life.

The second Circle dance teacher demonstrated the importance of expressing gratitude as a community of dancers when she taught an Italian dance. Here is the description of this Circle dance in my ethnographic notes, showing how the teacher interprets the meaning of the dance as saying 'thank-you' by inviting a translation of the song from the two Italian members of the group:

> The last dance was an Italian one 'Thanks for Life.' By this stage in the session a real sense of community had grown among the dancers. The teacher invited the two Italian ladies to translate the song associated with the dance for everyone else. It was a really moving song about saying thank you for your eyes and ears and all that you perceive through them. The dance was lively, consisting of eight Cha-Cha Steps done anti-clockwise round the circle without holding hands, followed by steps into the centre and out again, opening your hands out to the people on either side of you as you took each step. This was an opportunity to exchange warm smiles with your neighbours, consolidating the sense of community for the final blowing out of the candle (C.2, 19.11.07).

The second Circle dance teacher was good at involving members of the group in the teaching of the Circle dances. The expression of warmth between dancers was consolidated by the physical movements of opening out your hands to your neighbours and exchanging smiles. Circle dance has the potential to empower individuals to experience the positive emotion of gratitude.

Some of the Circle dances were concerned with the emotional expression of resistance, either to a troubling inner psychological state or to an invading army. Here is the description of the first Circle dance teacher talking about the meaning of one of the Aspen flower dances which was a Bach remedy for neurotic fears

> 'This dance involves wiggling the hands in front of the face in order to release fears. You also need to think about strong mental states and say to yourself 'I can challenge the world' or 'I have a safe place inside.' This Aspen flower dance was followed appropriately by the Greek dance about resisting the oppression of the Turks, a dance that had been performed on previous occasions (C.1, 14.9.07).

The first Circle dance teacher interprets the body movements of such Circle dances as enabling individuals to exert personal agency to overcome fear. Here is a description in my ethnographic diary of the first Circle dance teacher talking about a Greek dance where the style of dance and hand-hold become a metaphor for resisting the invading Turks:

> 'Lots of testosterone in this dance, girls. Strong macho steps performed by Greek men with bare chests and lots of medallions' said the teacher... She walked us through the steps of the dance which was associated with the Greeks resisting the oppression of the Turks as shown by the upward W formation of the arms when holding hands in the circle (C.1, 13.7.07; C.1, 27.8.07; C.1, 14.9.07).

The physical movements of this dance, especially the hand-hold, became a metaphor for these women dancers to fantasise that they were acting as men resisting the oppression of an enemy. Circle dance can empower individuals through an emotional display of strength.

Other Circle dances were just about fun and laughter and creating a sense of community, as suggested in my description of the dance ' Donkey-riding' in Chapter 3: Forming a Sense of Belonging through Dance as an Older Person. Here is my description of the French Circle dance 'La Louette' that similarly aroused feelings of fun, laughter and community

> There was a real feeling of community amongst these older ladies that was enhanced by the holding of hands round the candle for the first dance 'La Louette' that was performed to a French song. The simplicity of the sequence of steps meant that the dancers moved very much in time to the music and this really promoted a feeling of togetherness. The teacher called out the steps as she walked us through the dance from her position in the circle:

> 'Two steps to the right, two steps to the left, two steps to the right, two steps to the left. Two steps to the right, one step to the left. Two steps to the right, one step to the left. Then repeat the whole sequence.' The teacher beat out the rhythm with her bare feet on the wooden floor. The members of the group copied her. The circle moved in unison to the lilting French song, creating a feeling of fun and relaxation. At the end of the dance, group members grinned at each other and chatted away. Again there was much laughter (C.2, 25.2.08).

Group members seemed to interpret this dance as fun. This dance showed the importance of holding hands in a circle and moving together in order to create feelings of fun, laughter and community. The repetitive movements facilitated the dancers to welcome each other with grins, chatter and laughter.

The importance of touch for the emotional expression of togetherness is echoed in many other Circle dances. As I reflected in my ethnographic diary,

> Most of the dances were done in a Circle holding hands. This really promoted a sense of community and togetherness through physical touch and the physical sensations of all dancing the same movements at the same time. Some of the dances were performed in concentric circles with partners and those in the inner circle would move forward one space to dance with a new person after each sequence of movement. This was a good opportunity for smiles, as new partners welcomed each other. Sometimes the outer circle of dancers would lift their joined hands over the heads of the inner circle of dancers, forming one circle of dancers with arms weaved closely between each other like straws in a basket... Even when jazz dances, such as 'Raindrops are falling on my head' were performed without holding hands, a sense of belonging to a community of dancers was maintained as people jauntily stepped along in time to the music and turned themselves around on the spot (C.1, 18.5.07)

As a participant observer, I interpret Circle dances as constructing an emotional sense of togetherness because all the dancers were doing the same movements at the same times. Dancers made physical and psychological contact with each other through the variety of different ways of dancing in a circle. Even in modern dances when hands were not held, just the fact of dancing together and keeping time to the music facilitated an emotional sense of community.

Some Circle dancers interpreted Circle dance as facilitating emotional expression during their interviews, often linking this emotional expression to the music as well as the dance. As this 72 year old lady from the first Circle dance group said

> Well sometimes it makes you feel really good and sometimes it makes you feel tearful. There's this one other person in the group I'm quite friendly with and we both have to really try hard not to cry when she does.... 'Down by the Sunny Gardens'. It seems to affect us both. Even talking about it makes me feel a bit ... a bit, yeah it's the music and you're dancing to it just makes you feel quite sad, but that's not necessarily a bad thing, it's something you need to do as well, isn't it? You need to feel your grief as well as your happy bits. Some of the music makes you feel really happy dancing, but I suppose the 'Sunny dance' is quite a reflective dance, it's quiet yeah, it gives you time to think (laughs). You're not so busy concentrating on what you're doing. Yeah I suppose it does affect you emotionally and that's probably, well it is obviously the music which is good, a good thing. So don't ever come when she's doing 'Down by the Sunny Gardens' or you'll be wept over (laughter in voice) ... it's really weird that it affects.... And I heard someone else say that as well ... it's obviously one of those things that can bring out the emotions I think (interview 1.C.6)

The emotional analysis shows how this 72 year old lady interprets this dance as giving her time to think. She emphasises the emotionally charged words, with the pauses indicating how difficult it is to talk about the music and dance which stimulates sad feelings. She speeds up her voice to express the happiness she finds in performing other dances. Nervous laughter in her voice indicates the sadness she feels when she dances 'Down by the Sunny Gardens'. However she does believe it is good to express sadness as well as happiness, and she interprets the Circle dance and music as facilitating this process, which she perceives as good for her psychological health. Other examples of the music and dance as facilitating emotional expression can be found in the appendix and Chapter Three: Forming a Sense of Belonging through Dance as an Older Person, especially from interview 1.C. 4, where the 69 year old man talks about the music as reducing him to tears.

A 71 year old lady from the first Circle dance group interprets different body movements in Circle dance as expressing different emotions in response to the music and providing the opportunity to fantasise about being someone else:

> I enjoy it. And I like all the different styles. And I like to try to ... to, to glide along in the Russian one and to bob up and down in the bobbing up and down ones.

> To try do the ones, the tango in a different way. All different styles of dancing. And even the Scottish ones that we do. When we do Scottish circle dancing you feel you sort of want to, point your toes and hop a lot more, do it in that style. So it's not just a question of moving your feet in the right places....I think it involves your whole person. It involves, your arms and your body, you have to move around. But you also get swept up with the, emotion, coming out in the music. So it can be very, happy, and bouncy ... like there's a song about Spring, a French one, a French dance about Spring and it's all bouncy. Or you can do a Russian glide... Or you can do a South American salsa where you're wiggling your bottom. So it's all different emotions. And I think that's really enjoyable, it's like going, it's like being another person isn't it? For the, the length of the dance.....It's a form of expression. You can express different sides of yourself, while you're dancing... I mean it's really a game that you're playing all the time ... It's fun, it's just fun, it's like being back in childhood, and pretending to be a big bogeyman or, or a fairy or whatever.... just pretending to be something else. And it ... just makes me feel happy. It's difficult to describe isn't it? It's just a game I'm playing. But I really enjoy it (interview 1.C.3)

The emotional analysis shows how this 71 year old lady puts a lot of expression into all the underlined words and her voice seems to mimic the different dance moves such as 'glide', 'bob up and down', 'point your toes' and 'hop a lot more'. She interprets the moves of the different styles of Circle dance as enabling her to express a range of emotions. She becomes more reflective, with pauses, when she talks about herself and how the dance is an opportunity for fantasising about being other people which she interprets as a fun activity (see extract from her interview in Chapter Three: Forming a Sense of Belonging as an Older Person through Dance, where she talks about doing a Greek dance and fantasising about being on holiday in Greece, when she was in love with a Greek man).

The second Circle dance teacher interpreted physical touch as more comfortable for people in psychological terms than actually talking about problems:

> Yeah definitely there are psychological benefits to, Circle dance... it becomes, if you do it regularly, I mean almost like a group therapy without sort of talking. I find Circle dance is communication, without speech.... you become ever so sensitive to like, you're holding hands on either side of you and... you find this person's hands are cold and clammy, and this person's hands are very warm, this person's gripping me a bit too tightly.... But this is all sort of at a non-verbal level and ... hopefully ... if

somebody has got a thing like they've had a bereavement, or ... they've been ill or something.... it can sort of help, help in some way, when perhaps they don't want to talk about their personal problems....

I think, especially if you do a day of dancing, a really long session... it can get quite emotional, and some people perhaps don't want to let it do that, they don't want to ... shed tears in front of everybody else or perhaps... perhaps they don't mind. I think it partly depends... how it's prepared and how well you know the rest of the group.... But ... no, it could bring up quite deep things.... Also the hand-hold sort of effects, I remember once going on a workshop, and, we did something in a back basket weave, and somebody said 'Oh we feel so held, cared for.' Because you're all sort of like in a basket... Feeling of protection (interview 2.C.9).

The emotional analysis shows that this 65 year old teacher form the second Circle dance group, spoke in a slow hesitant voice, with pauses to reflect, and emphasising the underlined words. She spells out words very clearly when she feels very confident about their significance, such as those relating to the idea that communication 'is all sort of at a non-verbal level' and the idea that this non-verbal communication can 'help in some way, when perhaps they don't want to talk about their personal problems'. This second Circle dance teacher interprets non-verbal support as less threatening to people than emotional expression of 'deep things'. The way in which she deliberately softens her voice at the words 'Oh we feel so held, cared for' confirms her feelings that providing support through non-verbal communication in Circle dance is a protective factor, whereas the expression of deep emotions in public may not be.

Social Benefits of Circle Dance

The previous example shows the social benefits of Circle dance in terms of being together with other people that were emphasised by a number of older dancers. A 72 year old lady from the first Circle dance group spoke of wishing for a Circle dance group when she was visiting her daughter who was having treatment for cancer. She interprets the social aspects of Circle dance as important and the first Circle dance teacher as very supportive

I wish there were more, groups because when I was staying with my daughter for a while, when she was ill... I couldn't find a group that I could go to. It was only once a month and in a different village hall all the time, so it just wasn't practical. But ... if I could have gone dancing, that's where it makes the difference, because it was a very traumatic time because my daughter had cancer, and ... if I could have

gone dancing twice a week, that would have been great for me because I could have got away and danced .... I mean I couldn't go to the first Circle dance group, for a couple of months or more but everyone was really supportive, when I went back. ... You make a lot of friends, at Circle dancing. Because they're really nice people....It's a social thing as well, isn't it? Because twice a week you go and see the same people and you chat and you know about their families...we are good friends, although we don't necessarily go to each others' houses... we give each other lifts. Socially I think it's very good and very supportive.... I think the teacher's quite a lead in that, actually (interview 1.C.6).

The emotional analysis shows this 72 year old lady spoke in a very slow and reflective voice, suggesting it was difficult for her to talk about her daughter's illness, but emphasising the words relating to the social support created by dancing with a group of people. She interpreted the first Circle dance teacher as an important facilitator of social support.

As a participant observer, I interpret the Circle dance as constructing a sense of community in my ethnographic diary, even though only a few of the Circle dancers specifically spoke about the social benefits of the dance directly in their interviews. For example, I wrote about the friendly atmosphere of the first Circle dance group

> The friendships among group members seem to spread across the whole group. A., the lady in her 70s with gold-rimmed glasses, brought a spare curly green lettuce from her vegetable delivery that she said anyone could take. Someone else brought green apples from their garden to share. There was a real sense of community among the smiling, laughing, wrinkled faces. This sense of community was particularly enhanced by the holding of hands in a circle for most of the dances. Some hands were warm, some cold, some rough, some smooth, but all hands clutched each other in a sense of unity (C.1, 5.10.07).

The sharing of vegetables and the holding of hands, all construct a sense of community. This friendly atmosphere was echoed in the second Circle dance group, such as when I wrote about the ladies' supporting each other when suffering health problems

> The teacher has arranged to be interviewed to-morrow. She told me how her mother, who is in her 90s, is really ill in hospital but she finds it really important to keep doing things such as Circle dancing. She sees the interview as a good distraction for her. Several other older ladies have also offered to be interviewed. The circle dance group really seems to facilitate older people to support one another, as one

older lady told me and another older lady who is a retired nurse, the long story of her sister's husband undergoing treatment for leukaemia (C.2, 7.1.08).

Circle dancing seems to provide both social support and distraction from the problems of every day life as an older person. Dancers often enjoyed chatting amongst themselves at the start of class, as I recorded in my ethnographic diary

> There were 18 older ladies and the teacher. One of the ladies had made a particularly beautiful arrangement, a green headscarf with a glass vase of colourful flowers, branches of evergreen and a large candle. The 18 older ladies smiled and laughed and chatted with each other as they waited for the session to begin. I noticed that M., the lady who had given me an interview and had said she had not done much exercise before, was wearing a new pair of sparkly blue character shoes. This seemed to be a real sign that she was enjoying the dance and intended to continue. A small lady with short grey hair and wire-rimmed glasses, who was slightly overweight and wore trainers for the dance, said to me
>
> 'How is your research going?'
>
> 'Fine' I replied.
>
> 'I'm not keen to be interviewed myself, but I can tell you a little bit about dance for your research. I used to do ballroom and line dancing with my husband. Line dancing is like circle dancing only much faster. Now my husband's dead, it's nice that I can do circle dancing on my own.' She smiled as we linked elbows to form a snake-like line for the first dance, involving two steps forward, then rocking forward and back, repeating the pattern again and again (C.2, 17.3.08).

The opportunity to talk to other dancers seemed to be an important part of the Circle dance sessions, and buying dance shoes seemed to be a social symbol of belonging to the group. Even ladies who did not wish to be interviewed, enjoyed the social aspect of chatting to me casually to help with my research, such as the lady who told me she had moved to Circle dancing after her husband's death because she wanted a style of dancing which she could do without a partner. The socially inclusive aspects of Circle dancing constructed it as a psychologically beneficial dance form for older people. Other social benefits included attending dance workshops for Circle dancing when people would dress up according to a theme such as Greek or Egyptian as described by a 71 year old lady (interview 1.C.3) in Chapter 3: Forming a Sense of Belonging as an Older Person through Dance.

Psychological Benefits of Circle Dance for Growing Older

A few of the Circle dancers spoke of Circle dance as transforming the experience of growing older. The first Circle dance teacher interprets the Circle dance as making her feel young and beautiful

> Miraculously, I would say, miraculously, totally..... I have not a very.....how can I say it? What I have is advanced osteoarthritis; it's in the joints, and... when first diagnosed, it seemed fairly likely that I would be more incapacitated than I am. I find that the dance...when I dance... the pains in the joints that stiffen... that prevents me moving... goes away. It's like somebody waves a wand. I start to dance and the music lifts the spirit, it moves the emotion and the body goes with it. And the body dances then as a young body not as the age that it is.... To move, dance the way I do, given that I'm... I weigh over fifteen stone, and I have advanced degeneration in so many joints, is a total miracle. A total miracle. I ... I can't doubt that and I can't doubt that if I hadn't been dancing, my current situation would be very different. It also affects the way I feel about myself. When I dance, I'm connected to... to core issues.... Dance puts me in touch with my own spirit, and enables me to... to grow. If during the week, I've experienced something... bad, that leaves me, emotionally, mentally, spiritually, wobbly in some way, when I'm thinking about the dance, I will include a dance that I need personally to stabilise myself in this place and this means that I'm immensely blessed, because every week I've five groups in which I can.... work through anything that is troubling me. So I don't need to go out and have, a therapist because, because the dance for me is, a therapy.....So, how do I feel about myself? Because every week I stand in front of people and move my body, I feel young and beautiful. This is of enormous value to me (interview 1.C.10)

The emotional analysis shows how this 71 year old Circle dance teacher interprets her own ability to dance as a miracle. Her voice is very strong and confident as she repeats the words 'miraculously'. She struggles to find the words to describe her osteo-arthritis and her voice shakes, as she pauses frequently. Her osteo-arthritis seems to be an emotionally painful issue for her as it physically and psychologically threatens her whole dancing career. Her voice becomes slow and reflective as she considers the psychological benefits of the Circle dance as a 'therapy'. She spells out the final words very slowly and clearly about how she feels psychologically transformed by the Circle dance 'I feel young and beautiful'.

The 68 year old lady from the second Circle dance group, who also attended one of the first Circle dance teacher's groups, interprets Circle dance as transforming her experience of growing older, embedded within a story of how retirement had provided opportunities for self-discovery

> I think it probably makes me aware that... I don't feel I'm growing older at all. I know I'm growing older, but I don't feel it. And in many ways I feel much more fulfilled perhaps than I did when I was working. Because I have, I have discovered myself again, and that's been just since retirement, that's since looking at age. I mean one thing about being retired is you have all this time now to look at yourself. You really look at yourself when you're doing a management course of some sort, and you're told things that really you know but.... you don't kind of think about, so it's quite nice.... On the whole, you don't sit down and think about yourself, and how things can benefit you. You tend to think how things can benefit the office or something, your job. I mean ultimately, that benefits you too, but that's not how you look at it. When you retire, you think how you want to feel and what you can do to feel good about you. Undeniably, if you're feeling good about you, you're much more likely to feel good about other people.... It's a question of starting off with I'm OK, you're OK (interview 2.C.3).

The emotional analysis shows how this 68 year old lady uses a reflective voice with pauses to consider the meaning of growing older, contrasting retirement with her working life. She firmly announces that she does not 'feel I'm growing older at all' and how when she was working 'you don't sit down and think about yourself'. Circle dance is something she does for herself, but she implies that feeling good about herself enables her to feel good about other people. She experiences retirement as a transformative process, with opportunities for activities for herself, such as Circle dance.

Circle Dance as Therapy and a Healing Process

The first Circle dance teacher interprets Circle dance as having healing properties. She encourages visualisation of sick members dancing amongst the group and sending the light or energies when blowing out the candle to those in need (section 'Sending the Light and Visualising Sick Members' in Chapter 3: Forming a Sense of Belonging through Dance as an Older Person). Just as the first Circle dance teacher found that doing the Circle dance transformed her body and took away the pain of osteoarthritis, so some members of the first Circle dance group interpret Circle dance as a healing process. The 65 year old wife of the 69

year old man who did Circle dance, interprets Circle dance holidays as important places for healing, though larger groups are better able to absorb mental distress:

> But I have seen, having been on Circle dance holidays, three now, and on two occasions for a week dancing with big groups like 38, 40 people, that within such groups, there are people who come on their own, or with another woman friend and they've either recently been bereaved or... a relationship has gone wrong, or a divorce or a child with... mental handicap. People come sometimes from a very dark place. ...Now in a large group, the dance.... you can sort of diffuse that and people don't become cliquey. You talk to each other, you dance, it breaks down barriers, you get connected with each other, you have meals together. And people confide in you and talk about their problems. And in that sense, the dance, and being in a lovely spot, for a week with swimming pool and walks, good food and wine, people unburden and I think the dance teachers too are very aware, without calling them therapists, they pick up, because they build community, and so they enable people through workshops, like non-violent communication or whatever label you put on the workshops, we've had several, people can come and express if they so wish, their anger at a husband who has walked out or anything else. And I think through a very, supportive group, and teachers who enable that, and individuals, we had GP's, we had nurses, we had people from all different professions in such a group, people are able to off-load and the dancing in such, helps, is extremely therapeutic (interview 1.C.4)

The emotional analysis shows how this 65 year old lady talks about the psychological benefits of Circle dance in terms of healing mental distress in a very animated and enthusiastic manner, particularly emphasising the underlined words. She interprets Circle dance as therapeutic in the context of a holiday with a large group, although she later tells a story about small holiday groups not being able to absorb such mental distress (see interview1.C.4 in appendix).

The 76 year old retired professional tap dancer explained about the 'Bach Flower Remedy dances', which I had seen both Circle dance teachers teach their groups

> Well because ... I think it's very helpful, also because it has a spiritual side and there are dances for certain aspects, like she does the dances that relate to the 'Bach, the Flower Remedies'. I don't think we've done any since you came but there's different, remedies in little containers, made of flowers and herbs and you can get

them for all sorts of thing, like I have a ... my sister-in-law gave me 'Bach's Rescue Remedy' and I keep it in the fridge (nervous laughter), I haven't used it much, fortunately. You put a little drop in some water and drink it and it's meant to make you feel much better altogether. The whole body. But that's about ... that's the only one I've ever tried. And there are dances relating to these remedies, and some of it's to do with water, when you're sort of rippling your hands and arms about, and earth, when you're bending down to the earth, and the sky when you put your hands up and all that sort of thing. Relating to the elements as well, some of the dances (interview 1.C.7)

The emotional analysis shows how this retired professional tap dancer talks in a slow reflective voice about the meaning of the 'Bach's Flower Remedies', especially emphasising the underlined words. She laughs nervously about keeping 'Bach's Rescue Remedy' in the fridge, and it is only when she spoke to me informally on another occasion that I discovered she had taken this before her husband's funeral, as I recorded in my ethnographic diary (C.1, 14.9.07).

Circle Dance, Bereavement and Difficult Family Situations

The second Circle dance teacher carried on teaching the group after the death of her mother as she found it helpful emotionally. The older members of the second Circle dance group supported her, and sent her the light when blowing out the candle at the end of the Circle dance session. As I recorded in my ethnographic diary,

> The teacher arrived looking bright and cheerful despite the loss of her mother. She had told me that her mother was in her 90s and had been very frail and ill and in hospital. The teacher seemed to focus well on teaching the dances, although she used prompt cards to remind her of the patterns of the steps. We did about seven or eight different dances, a mixture of Greek, Israeli and Celtic styles. The teacher seemed to have tremendous energy as she crossed her feet over one another, only occasionally falling out of time. Everyone was holding hands and there was a nice supportive atmosphere among the group of 18 dancers who were all retired women. All the dances involved holding hands, which promoted togetherness. At the final huddle round the candle, one of the dancers sent the light to the teacher's mother
>
> 'Remember all the Circle dances we used to have in her garden?' she said. Many members of the group hugged the teacher. She said her mind was clear and she felt full of energy. She thanked me for the card with a smile, as I hugged her (C.2, 14.1.08).

This 65 year old teacher interprets teaching a Circle dance session as a welcome distraction from the emotional stress of coping with an elderly sick mother who had died very recently. The importance of touch in Circle dance is shown by the hand- holds and the way in which dancers physically hugged the teacher.

The 78 year old deaf lady from the first Circle dance group found the dancing very cathartic when she had had a very hard phone call from one of her daughters. Earlier in her interview, she had spoken of starting Circle dance when she was going through multiple bereavements.

> As I was dancing, this phone call stayed in my head and I started to cry because I cry very easily...(gets tissues out) I was splashing the floor with tears and had to go out. I said to the teacher 'I'm sorry about having to go out and being upset.' 'No' she said 'It was a very good thing because you will have helped a lot of other people through being able to cry and being able to cope with it. If we asked a lot of people round the circle, a lot of people would like to cry. And they have really bad experiences. But the fact that you were able to cry will have helped other people. And that made me feel a lot better. (interview 1.C.9).

The emotional analysis shows this 78 year old lady getting very upset and I offered to switch the tape off which I did briefly. She said it was important for my research to continue the interview, so when she was ready, I switched the tape on again. Her voice is shaking as talking about these issues is obviously painful but she felt relieved by the words of the first Circle dance teacher, who told her that many people in the circle wanted to cry and would have found it helpful to see her cry. As discussed earlier in the section on 'Circle Dances, Emotion and Music', one of the aspects of Circle dance which both the teachers and dancers found beneficial for psychological health was the expression of a variety of emotions through participating in the dance, such as gratitude, happiness and sadness.

Outline of Findings on Ladies' Step and Scottish Country Dance

The focused coding under the emergent narrative theme of 'Psychological Health, Sense of Belonging and Growing Older' raises a number of interesting smaller stories about how Ladies' Step dance and Scottish Country dance promote psychological health. These smaller stories are 'Ladies' Step and Scottish Country Dance Promote Well-Being', 'Ladies' Step, Scottish Country Dance, Emotion and Music', 'Social Benefits of Ladies' Step and Scottish Country Dance', 'Scottish Country Dance and Growing Older', 'Scottish Country

Dance as Therapy', 'Creative Aspects of Ladies' Step and Scottish Country Dance' and 'Death in Ladies' Step and Scottish Country Dance.' Further examples of these smaller stories can be found in the appendix through the focused coding, which refers to the interview transcripts and the ethnographic diary.

Ladies' Step and Scottish Country Dance Promote Well-Being

Most of the older Ladies' Step and Scottish Country dancers tended to talk about the sense of well-being constructed by dancing in terms of psychological and physical health together. The extracts from my ethnographic dairy about Ladies' Step, quoted in Chapter 4: Learning to Dance as an Older Person, demonstrate how Ladies' Step was both mentally and physically demanding, but with the potential to be enjoyable too.

As the 71 year old man who belonged to the Ladies' Step dance group said

> Enjoyment's the only part of it... (laughs) I mean if you're laying on a display, then you want to get all of your ladies doing it exactly the same, if you're charging for it. But if you're just doing it for your own entertainment, on a Sunday afternoon, does it matter what you do? And particularly as they're solo dances, it doesn't matter if you're hopelessly wrong. Whereas of course in the Country dances, if you're hopelessly wrong, you might upset the other people which of course is a different matter altogether. So this is one of the reasons why the Country dancers are much keener on getting the figures done, in the agreed way. I was going to say properly because I don't believe in properly, in the agreed way because if you don't do it, the other people are inconvenienced. But if you close, don't point your feet, turn your feet out, you may look inelegant but you don't upset anyone (interview 1.S.1).

The emotional analysis shows this 71 year old man is telling most of this story in an amused tone of voice, to affirm his feelings that Ladies' Step dances can be done for sheer enjoyment as it is a solo style whereas in Scottish Country dancing, you have to be able to dance in relation to others and so have a responsibility not to mess up a set.

Due to the requirement to dance as an individual in relation to others in Scottish Country dance, there were times when the sense of well-being constructed by performing the dance required a lot of mental and physical effort. The 77 year old lady from the second Scottish Country dance group emphasised the intense mental and physical exercise provided by attending a social dance, which she interprets as more demanding than the weekly Scottish Country dance sessions

> I think it helps to keep you alert, certainly, because it's a mental and physical exercise... And by so doing, it affects your mental and physical health.... You can't sort of stand there and go to sleep as you've got to keep your eye on and your ear on what's going on. Not only that... but at Thursday dancing, we walk everything through. But at a dance, we have 20 dances on the programme, we have an interval for supper, but there are 20 dances, and unless you're going to sit a lot of them out, you've really got to be prepared to do the next one, even if you've got the instructions in front of you. So you've got to be alert, physically and mentally to ... the next one on the programme (interview 2.S.3)

The emotional analysis shows that this 77 year old lady feels very strongly that Scottish Country dance is both mental and physical exercise, and she particularly feels you have to be alert physically and mentally so that you can do the next dance. She feels you really need to know what you are doing, even if you have the written instructions.

The 58 year old lady who was a Scottish Country dance teacher and belonged to the first and second Scottish Country dance groups, gave a much more detailed story about how the dance is very good mental and physical exercise, and how endorphin release in the brain constructs the 'feel good factor'

> The other thing that you have there, from the physical point of view... is due to an endorphin release in the brain, which is the feel good factor. Now you get that feel good factor, and you can get it in a variety of ways. The music will contribute towards it a lot, but the music will drive the way you dance. And if the music's boring, you don't dance very well, so therefore you don't get the same degree of exercise. If the music is very good, you are spurred on to dance and to dance... a lot more enthusiastically, and abundantly, whatever. Just go over the top. And that's where you get an, endorphin release. And often people after a good night will say 'I got home last night, having driven for an hour, I got home last night, I still couldn't go to sleep!' And that's the endorphin release. And the other thing is, if you have, problems, you go to a dance, and because of the way that it's done quite quickly, and there's not much gap between the dances, and you've got all this mental work going on in your brain, about remembering the dances, working with other people. If you have problems at home, or in your work, you go out to a dance and after a good night, you get the endorphin release, the feel good factor, but also you forget about your problems, they take a back stand. So consequently from that point of view, the

psychological point of view, it's very good... you get a very good physical work out but you also get a mental work out and you get a stress buster effect (interview 2.S.7)

The emotional analysis shows this 58 year old teacher talks in a very fast and fluent voice, which shows her passion for Scottish Country dance. She emphasises all the underlined words, offering a biological explanation for the 'feel good factor', which demonstrates her expert knowledge as a dance teacher. She interprets subjective experiences of the body and embodied mind as constructed by an interaction between physical activity and biology. She significantly concludes by emphasising the importance of a 'mental work out' which she consciously interprets as helping to bust stress. The psychological feeling of well-being is constructed through the interaction of physical activity and biology.

Ladies' Step, Scottish Country Dance, Emotion and Music

The idea of dancing for sheer pleasure was evident in both Scottish Country dance groups and the Ladies' Step dance group. The 71 year old man's feelings of Ladies' Step dance as being for enjoyment has been discussed in the previous section. The very nature of the Scottish Country dances also had the potential to promote fun and laughter because of dancing with other people in a variety of complex formations. Dances such as 'Father Connelly's Jig' promoted a sense of community in the second Scottish Country dance group, through fast movements, fun and laughter, although some older dancers struggled with it. As I described in my ethnographic notes

> 'Father Connelly's Jig' was a fast dance done in sets of eight people, divided initially into two groups of four. I watched this dance as it was way beyond my capabilities. People did a series of Turns in their groups of four, swopping partners all the time, and then everyone chased round in a square shape.
>
> 'Then you do two Father Connelly's' announced the older lady with grey hair who was the caller. There was much laughter as these Father Connelly sequences turned out to be very complex, involving Diagonal Rights and Lefts between the pairs of dancers in the centre of the set of eight, whilst the dancers on the ends of the set did Pas de Basque steps and then wove in among the dancers to do Reels on the side. The sequence concluded with the whole set of eight dancers dancing round in a circle. One of the sets of older people seemed to perform this dance perfectly, but the other set got completely lost and gave up after a few bars of the music. I noticed the lady who did publicity was in this set that had struggled. She was standing at the side

of the room with the other dancers who had got lost, looking rather disappointed (S. 2, 27.3.08).

This example highlighted the potential for Scottish Country dance to be very fast, complex and physically demanding. The one set of eight dancers who managed to engage successfully with this dance were enabled to experience the emotions of fun and laughter. On the contrary, the other set of eight dancers got lost and gave up. As discussed in the section on 'Scottish Country dance as promoting community' in Chapter 3: Forming a Sense of Belonging through Dance as an Older Person, when there were too many dancers who did not know what they were doing, the other dancers would not be able to support them. Sometimes dancers would feel disappointed if mentally challenged too much.

One of the men from the second Scottish Country dance group, when he was master of ceremonies organising the programme of dances for the evening, chose a special one for Valentine's day which provoked much laughter. As I wrote in my ethnographic diary

> The retired man with grey hair and a grey beard was master of ceremonies so had chosen the dances on the programme. The first one was a special one for Valentine's day 'Kiss under the Stair' and everyone laughed when he announced it. Indeed, I sat and watched the dancers as they did this one, laughing and smiling as they wove in and out of each other. Some people were doing balletic footwork, pointing their toes carefully in their black Scottish shoes, whilst others, such as the 85 year old woman and the 85 year old man, were simply walking or shuffling through the steps. There were about 20 people at the dance session this evening, mainly older women in their 50s and 60s but about six older men (S.2,14.2.08).

These dancers, who were mainly women, were facilitated to laugh and smile as they did a Valentine's day dance. This example shows how these dancers were able to create a sense of fun and community even though there were differing standards in the footwork, with some people dancing balletically and others simply walking or shuffling through the steps.

The 64 year old Indian lady particularly explained that a 'nice smiling face' was the predominant emotional expression in Scottish Country dance when she described the complexity of body language in Indian dance in her interview

> Indian dancing, I used to do solo, the dances are solo so everything you've got to do, character timing and expression, we have quite a lot of hand signals, everything has got a meaning.... You've got to put a lot of effort and time to do... One of the difficult things I would say.... But Scottish dance, I think the timings and

things are good, but obviously you can just give a nice, smiling face and there is reciprocation when someone asks you to do the dance and things like that.. But, apart from that I think you don't have many hand gestures or facial expression, except you can show you are enjoying and you are co-operating with the, movements too (interview 2.S.10).

The emotional analysis shows how this 64 year old Indian lady spoke in a soft, fluent voice with a pronounced accent, pausing to reflect. She very strongly emphasises the importance of body language in Indian dance with the words 'you've got to do, character timing' and 'expression' and 'meaning' and 'time'. She feels the 'timings' were 'good' in Scottish dance but there is only a 'nice, smiling face' and 'reciprocation'. Her voice quietens as she feels there are not many gestures in Scottish Country dance though she very strongly emphasises the importance of 'enjoying'. She interprets Scottish Country dance as being concerned with enjoyment, an emotion shared by many Scottish Country dancers and Ladies' Step dancers.

Perhaps the most moving example, from the second Scottish Country dance group, of someone who found the dance pleasurable, was the man who was losing his sight. As I recorded in my ethnographic diary

> An older man who could no longer dance as he was losing his sight, came and sat on the outside of the hall, just to be with the group, as we were dancing 'Hamilton House'. He was given a warm welcome by the Down's syndrome girl who eagerly clutched his hand saying 'my friend'. The older man smiled. At tea-break, I explained to him about my research and he clutched my hand eagerly, telling me about the pleasure of Scottish Country dancing and the history of some of his favourite dances (S.2,10.4.08).

This man's instant enthusiasm for my research highlighted the importance of Scottish Country dance for sheer pleasure as a physical activity that was shared with other people. He simply enjoyed sitting with a Scottish Country dance group for the atmosphere, even though he could no longer physically dance.

And the 77 year old lady from the second Scottish Country dance group interprets how the emotional expression constructed through dance and music surpasses words

> The whole sphere of dance is international, isn't it? You're expressing emotions and feelings and everything that the body, needs to express. I know that there are modern forms of exercise such as yoga and all this, that and the other, to

music, things they used to have at school called music and movement for children. After I'd finished school this is... so it really... is important in your life, as is music. Music is also international as is sport. It surpasses language.... it is important. I would have liked to have gone into ballroom dancing, but both the husbands that I married were not dancers so that did not happen (laughs) (interview 2.S.3).

The emotional analysis shows how this 77 year old lady finds it difficult to express the emotionality of dance in words. She seems to imply a role for the unconscious mind as she cannot verbalise these emotions. She juxtaposes her own love of dance and music with the fact that neither of her husbands danced. The emotional expression provided by dance and music is something which she feels surpasses language and provides her with an interest which is completely her own as she laughs about both her husbands not being dancers. Her enjoyment of Scottish Country dance seems to have enabled her to emotionally adjust to having been widowed twice.

Social Benefits of Ladies' Step and Scottish Country Dance

As discussed in Chapter 3: Forming a Sense of Belonging through Dance as an Older Person, both the Scottish Country dance groups and the Ladies' Step dance group arranged social activities which provided support for dancers. The first Scottish Country dance group and Ladies' Step dance group seemed to excel at organising afternoon teas and the occasional social dance. The second Scottish Country dance group would have a simple tea-break at weekly dance sessions but organised a lot of social events, such as a New Year's party, Annual Ball and Beginners' dance, Ceilidh and Burns' night (see my ethnographic diary in appendix). This section considers how individuals interpreted the social benefits of Ladies' Step dance and Scottish Country dance during their narrative style interviews.

The 65 year old lady who belonged to the Ladies' Step group, the second Scottish Country dance group and the second Circle dance group, interprets the social aspects of Scottish Country dancing in comparison with ballroom dancing as being a reason why she got involved

> Well I've always enjoyed dancing. I enjoy music. I used to be a singer. An amateur singer. And then I thought I wanted some exercise and I found a class. I joined ballroom to start with. Disaster. Because although I went to see the lady who taught it, she never said a word and when I got there, she said 'Oh my ladies don't like their men dancing with other ladies.' So I sat at the side. I wasted my money. And I thought 'Oh Lord.' And then I got to Scottish dancing, so you dance either

way round, everybody dances every thing, you don't have a set partner. Much better. It's much more social (interview 2.S.6)

The emotional analysis shows this 65 year old lady talks in a fast and fluent voice, with a lot of expression, as she is a very experienced dancer, but as she does not have a male partner, she feels upset by the way ladies in her ballroom class would not share their male partners. There is disappointment in her voice as she says 'So I sat at the side. I wasted my money.' Her voice speeds up to reflect her pleasure in the social aspects of Scottish Country dance.

The 58 year old Scottish Country dance teacher who belonged to both the first and second Scottish Country dance groups, provides more detail, in contrast with this 65 year old lady, on the interaction between the social, physical and psychological aspects of Scottish Country dancing to create a feeling of enjoyment

> It takes up an awful lot of my life, believe it or not.... I mean I specialise in Scottish, I do a little bit of other things, I do have an interest, I'm probably more inclined for group dancing rather than couple dancing such as ballroom and all the various tango, salsa, that sort of thing. I'm much more into a more social aspect of it... that seems to be what appeals to me more.... I have to admit I would find life rather boring and dull without it. And that's perhaps why, because of the social aspect... But I do enjoy, as I've said, the physical side of it, having a good work-out but also having a thoroughly enjoyable time... and again, what often we say amongst our own groups is 'We wish there was a little bit more, time between the dances on a Saturday night social to talk to people' (interview 2.S.7).

The emotional analysis shows how this 58 year old lady tells her story in a very fast and fluent voice, with pauses for reflection. Her fluency reflects her enthusiasm for and expertise in Scottish Country dancing, as she emphasises what she feels are the key words in her story, relating to the social, physical and psychological aspects. Earlier in the interview she had talked about how the social aspects of attending dance workshops and getting involved on the dance committees had maintained her involvement, enabling her to feel a confident and competent dancer who can liaise with others

> I started going off to day schools and... that meant travelling, so it was sort of two or three people maybe would club together in a car. You would go off to a day school, you would go to the evening dance and then you would come back. So you would have the social aspect there. You also got to know members of the club more thoroughly because one person would be driving, the rest would be sitting in the car

chatting. Once I got to a certain level of competence, I started going to evening dances, locally, and then started going to them away. Same sort of thing in those days applied. There was a couple who had a big camper van. And they would take about half a dozen of us, and we'd all sit in the back, and we'd be chatting going, chatting coming back, stop for coffee if it was a long drive, so there was very much a social aspect. And you did get to know the people. Then things... sort of evolved, always wanting new young blood on committees, I ended up going onto a committee... did my turn on things and so on... and there was also the Summer school in Scotland (interview 2.S.7)

The emotional analysis shows this 58 year old dance teacher's voice really speeds up and becomes very excited when talking about travelling in a camper van to dance workshops or evening dances, as she interprets the social aspect of Scottish Country dance as very important in her life.

Two of the Ladies' Step dancers, who were also Scottish Country dancers, aged 67 and 69 years, spoke of how the social and psychological support provided by the dancing helped them to cope with traumatic life-events, such as treatment for cancer and becoming a widow

I: So how does Scottish dancing influence experiences of your health?

B: Well it does help to keep you healthy, obviously, the more you do, the better.... But I had... a scare a few years ago, four and a half years ago, when I developed bowel cancer and had to have an operation... And it, the dancing was vital, and all the friends associated with it

I: Mm.

B: And it also made me determined, I'd got a goal in view, I wanted to do a solo, with my friend, at a function a few months later. And that was my goal, to do it. And I did. And things like that ... all help to get you going and it can help get you over these things.

A: Yes I completely agree with that. I found the same. I was widowed a few years ago.

I: Mm.

A: And keeping going with the activities I really liked, although I didn't enjoy them the same for a long time, I do now... that kept me going, both the social side of it and the fact that I was doing something I'd always loved doing, and I didn't get the same love for it for quite a few years, but when I got it back, it was a relief, to feel happy

doing it again. It made me happy and, when I could fell happy doing it again, I knew that… I'd made progress, mentally, during that time.

B: It's all the people you're involved with help you as well.

A: Yes

B: Your dancing friends. Keep you going, it's very important.

I: A community of dancers?

B: They're like your extended family really… I mean that lady we met in the car park is one of our English dancers. And she's been doing, she was a member of the English club before I joined it. She was not a founder member, but not far off (laughs). So she's probably been going about 50… 55 years. She still comes (interview 1.S.7).

This interview was interesting as these two ladies chose to interpret the interview situation in a more informal, ethnographic sense of a 'conversation with a purpose' rather than telling long stories. The emotional analysis shows how both ladies interpret the meaning of the Ladies' Step dance and Scottish Country dance in terms of providing social and psychological support during times of life-threatening illness and loss. These two ladies use a strong tone of voice to emphasise the benefits of dance, such as 'keeping you healthy' and enabling you to 'mentally' make progress in the case of bereavement. In contrast, they both soften their voices, taking frequent pauses for reflection, when talking about difficult and emotionally charged issues such as 'bowel cancer' or 'I didn't enjoy them (the dances) the same for a long time.' The lady who had had treatment for bowel cancer later speaks in a fluent voice and laughs about her friend who was an English dancer, again showing the importance of the social support of dancing friends.

The opportunity to dress up for formal dance events was an activity these two women of 67 and 69 years valued, and more details on the fun of dressing up for social occasions in Ladies' Step dance and Scottish Country dance is discussed in Chapter 3: Forming a Sense of Belonging through Dance as an Older Person.

Scottish Country Dance and Growing Older

Although many of the Scottish Country dancers recognised the psychological benefits of dancing, some talked about not being aware of growing older, such as this 76 year old man from the second Scottish Country dance group

I think the real answer to that is that I haven't any experience of growing older. It's just that other people are getting younger… But I'm sure this essentially is

what almost all old people think, they are still the same. Sometimes it's less obvious. You have to look very hard to see that it is the same face that it used to be. But people don't do that for themselves, we know we're the same face. No, we don't get older (interview 2.S.4).

The emotional analysis shows how this 76 year old man feels that he is not getting any older, it is just other people who are getting younger, as shown by the words he strongly emphasises. It is interesting that he talks about the 'mask of ageing', a separation of sense of a younger inner self from an outer ageing face, and a way of talking about growing older in dualistic terms. This is a common experience of growing older, feeling young inside so not recognising your own reflection in the mirror because the outer appearance of your body is growing older.

Only one lady specifically talked about the psychological benefits of going Scottish Country dancing in terms of enabling her to be positive about growing older. This 77 year old lady from the second Scottish Country dance group interprets herself as trying to be positive about going dancing as an older person, in contrast with her retired friend who worries about her health. She tells a story about this friend managing to drive all the way back from Scotland after a dancing holiday, but feeling ill several days later

E: She did a lot of driving, she didn't complain once of her back hurting. And she drove all the way home from Scotland... where we went to see some friends who were dancers. She drove all the way home in one day. She dropped me off here, at quarter past eleven. She still had to then retrace her steps and go back to another village. She's a good eight to ten miles from here. I rang the next day at lunch-time. I thought I'd give her time to recover. And I said 'Fine. How's your back?' 'Oh no problem.' So that proves my point that I think psychologically ... you have to feel positive to enjoy good health.

I: So it's keeping active.

E: Keeping active, yes. Physically and mentally. You have to keep active and then your health is better. I mean that proved a point. And that was ... Wednesday when I spoke to her and she said she was fine. Come Friday we had our last evening's dancing for the summer, in the local group, and she rang me Friday morning and she said 'I'll come this evening but I don't know that I'm going to do much dancing because I don't feel very well. I've made an emergency appointment at the doctor's.' I thought 'Here we go again.' She went to the doctor and he said there was nothing

wrong with her (laughs). She thought she might have picked up something. She'd got a bad throat and she was hot. I said 'Well I woke up hot this morning, it was a hot night.' It's a question of being positive about life. I think, there are people that suffer interminably with physical things and mental problems that they can do nothing about but... in the general run of things, people enjoy a reasonable state of health, if they stay positive about things and stop worrying about their health, I think they come out better (interview 2.S.3).

The emotional analysis shows this 77 year old lady tells her story in a soft voice, emphasising the underlined words, to show how her friend coped well with driving back from Scotland and had no problems with her back, because she was busy and had had an enjoyable time. She very strongly feels it is important to be 'physically and mentally' active and 'positive' about life to enjoy reasonable health. Her laughter about her friend going to the doctor's when there was nothing wrong with her confirms these feelings that your attitude to growing older is very important.

Scottish Country Dance as Therapy

The 59 year old lady and her 60 year old husband, who were both Scottish Country dance teachers from the first Scottish Country dance group, discussed the idea of Scottish Country dance as therapy when they were teaching it, providing distraction from all your worries

T: If you've got a two-hour class, you spend two hours prior to that doing the lesson plan, working out the ... teaching moves you are going to make and sorting out the music. And then you all get the kit together and it doesn't matter whether you've had a bad day at the office, whether it's chucking it down with rain, whether you get a puncture on the way there ..... it just needs one person or whatever to come up to you at the end of the class and say 'Well thank you, that was very worthwhile.' And all of the agro, all of the work that you've put into it, is well worth it.

C : Well worth it. It does actually take your mind off everything else that's going on in your life because you can't think of anything else when you're teaching it, you have to concentrate so totally on it. So it is in ... a way, a form of escapism, if you like ... you've just got to have your brain, cleared of everything else.

T: Yeah, that's true it's a good therapy in that regard. It can be, yes, because you have to switch off to everything else. And ... as I think we've said before, teaching a class you're actually 110% committed while you're doing it so you can't ... think about

anything else … So it does take you away from … the things which might otherwise be bothering you or whatever … it is a therapy in that regard (interview 1.S.5).

The emotional analysis shows how this married couple emphasise all of the underlined words as important when teaching Scottish Country dance, with the man deliberately slowing down his voice to very strongly show how he feels when one class member says thank you for the session 'And all of the agro, all of the work that you've put into it, is well worth it.' The shared nature of narrative is demonstrated as his wife echoes his words 'Well worth it' and spells out in a firm voice how teaching Scottish Country dance requires so much concentration that she feels it is a form of 'escapism', taking your mind off everything else. Her husband then re-defines this 'escapism' as 'good therapy'. These teachers interpret Scottish Country dance as therapeutic. So much mental concentration is required that there is not time to think about your personal problems.

The 76 year old man from the second Scottish group talked about the importance of holding people's hands in dancing as therapeutic after the death of his wife, but he was not able to verbalise about this at length

> I mean, since my wife died, I'm sure it is extremely good for me to go out and hold people's hands. Staying at home would be appalling. And I'm not sure that going to the local historical society is quite, getting in touch people in the same way as dancing with them. So yes, I should think there are psychological benefits but I don't know (interview 2.S.4).

The emotional analysis highlights the words that were emotionally charged for this 76 year old man, as he particularly emphasises them. For much of the interview, he spoke in a slow reflective manner, telling long stories about Scottish Country dance, but when I asked about the psychological benefits, he seemed lost for words, and gave this very short answer. It seemed painful for him to talk about his feelings explicitly and he found it hard to interpret them.

In contrast to this 76 year old man who found it difficult to talk about his feelings, the 58 year old dance teacher who belonged to both Scottish Country dance groups, told a long story about still trying to dance even though she is unwell, because dance is pure enjoyment

> Though I have to admit, I was seriously ill some years ago, and I did actually go to a dance, although I didn't do any… days before I was taken into hospital as an ambulance case. I still went along, but I wasn't feeling well so I didn't dance. And the same sort of thing, I've not been well recently but I'm still trying to dance… again,

because it's something that's ... my character, and ... you do get so much ... enjoyment from it... all the other things. I've not really said anything actually about pure enjoyment. But it is, it's great, and the enjoyment is working with other people, and simple things like ... just keeping in time with other people. And getting to the right place at, I'm a logical person, getting to the right place at the right time but I also have a degree of, I can't think of the word now, independence, shall I say? I can also improvise and do some additional small movements, but still be at the right place at the right time. And it's that sort of thing, and also linking all this in with the music... is a whole big sort of melting pot... (interview 2.S.7).

The emotional analysis shows how this 58 year old lady initially tells her story in a soft and reflective voice, emphasising all the under-lined words. She interprets just attending a social dance as beneficial, even if she is unable to dance due to ill health. At the words 'pure enjoyment', her voice becomes fast and fluent again, as in earlier parts of the interview. This verbal fluency reflects her feelings of enthusiasm for Scottish Country dance, as it is something she feels she enjoys and celebrates by adding her own improvisations. Her interpretation of Scottish Country dance really emphasises the therapeutic aspects.

Creative Aspects of Ladies' Step and Scottish Country Dance

The narrative style interview I did with the 71 year old man, who was involved in the Ladies' Step dance group and the first Scottish Country dance group, demonstrated the intellectual fascination he found in learning and writing about the history of Ladies' Step

I can talk to you about step dancing if you like which is... I've got two things for you (rustles paper). I think the top page... that one, which is a, you can keep that, that is a speech given by Lesley Martin, more or less as a dictation of ... Tibby Cram , and... So then we begin at the beginning... Ladies Step dancing, flourished in the late eighteenth century and disappeared completely. In 1940, let us say, Mrs. Cram, who was interested in every sort of dancing, was given a note-book which was written by Hill, what was his first name? Anyway, it's in there.... Dated 1840 something in which he had made a rough note of the daces he had learnt. And there were Country dances and there were Highland daces and there were Ballroom dances and Ladies' Step dances. And he learnt Ladies' Step dances so they obviously weren't entirely Ladies' Step dances. And what he had written down was incomprehensible, let me get you... This is Cram's transcript of Hill's manuscript... it goes something like this 'Beat in with the R. and balance once, beat with the heel and toe to R. side,

close and shuffle three.' Now can you imagine doing a dance from those instructions? (laughs) (interview 1.S.1).

The emotional analysis shows this 71 year old man uses a slow and reflective style as he tells this story. He brings in cultural artefacts or written documents about Ladies' Step. This fascination with the history and culture of Ladies' Step, researching and reading about it seems to bring this 71 year old widow immense emotional satisfaction. His laughter is particularly pronounced as he talks about the difficulty of interpreting the dance instructions, and he is emotionally confirming the justification for his own writing about Ladies' Step dances using his wife's teaching notes and books. He is interpreting his pre-occupation with Ladies' Step as a worthwhile project.

Later in the interview he explains how he is writing about the history of Ladies' Step in memory of his wife who had died. He gives me some of his writing illustrating his personal fascination and pleasure at immersing himself in the history and culture of Ladies' Step and at the opportunity to tell his story. He is keeping his relationship with his wife alive by this intellectual and creative interest.

> My wife fell in love with Ladies' Step dancing, that was her main interest. And she collected all sorts of notes and things of that sort and... Mrs. Cram published four of these dances and Mrs. Cram was a beautiful dancer but didn't have the gift of expressing herself clearly in writing. So those are almost as bad as the old manuscript. Various notes have been given out by teachers on duplicated notes from time to time, and my wife collected them... and the chairman of the first organisation, who is married to a Japanese lady, who is a beautiful dancer, tried to persuade my wife to publish her collection and my wife died before she could. So I started to try and publish the collection and this is a first draft of the preface to my collection that you can have (interview 1.S.1).

The emotional analysis shows how this 71 year old man felt his wife 'fell in love with Ladies' Step dancing' and collected 'notes' as he very strongly emphasises these words. He very quickly passes over the fact that his wife died before she could publish her collection of dances, as this is obviously painful for him to talk about. He slows his voice down again to emphasise how he has taken control of the situation, and is trying to publish her collection himself. He gives me a copy of the preface he has written which I felt was a real acknowledgement of my role as a researcher.

The 77 year old lady from the second Scottish Country dance group, who did their publicity, also acknowledged how belonging to Scottish Country dance groups had inspired her to compose poems and dances. She had been widowed twice and was living alone, so her dancing friends meant a lot to her. She has given me a copy of her book of poems that she produced on her home computer and written permission to quote from one of her poems. She has requested to be cited as author by name. So here is an extract from one of her poems she wrote for a friend's 65th birthday:

> 'A Jig for Jack'
>
> Jack is ever the gentleman,
> When dancing with the lasses oh,
> I've called this one 'A Jig for Jack',
> Had a problem choosing the music track,
> So take your pick,
> Dance it slow or quick,
> Whatever takes your fancy oh,
> That brisk young lad of 65,
> He loves to dance with the lasses oh
>
> Eileen Sayer (quoted with permission)

She explained how she felt this older man's social etiquette at a social dance was immaculate

> So that was, having met this couple, and I was invited to the man's 65th birthday party and I made him a card and I wrote him a poem to go with the dance that I created for him. Now he is a wonderful... he's a lovely man and at a dance, he will go find the lady he's promised the next dance to, he'll escort her to the floor, and at the end of the dance, he will take her arm and he will take her back to where he found her. Now not all men do this, but I think it's absolutely delightful (interview 2.S.3).

The emotional analysis shows the immense pleasure that this 77 year old lady found in using her creative skills to acknowledge her friends, as she strongly emphasises her actions of making this male friend a birthday card, creating a dance for him and writing a poem to accompany the dance. She interprets the way in which this older man escorts a lady to and from the dancing floor as 'absolutely delightful'.

Earlier in the interview, she describes a Scottish Country dance that she has composed about the sea

> The first one I did is called 'At Water's Edge' and it's meant to depict the waves as they come in and then, they ever flow. So you are standing at the water's edge, and the water comes in and it ripples around the stones and rocks and it goes out. But as it goes out, it tends to go side-ways. You have four couples and you make little circles each end, half way. Those that are now in the middle, who were not in the middle to start with, make a circle the other way. That's the water going round... like that. Then you have two Reels, the centre couples go to their right, the two in the middle go that way and those two go that way. The water's swirling at the water's edge and there are four Half Reels along the side. And the two couples who are then in the middle, who are not the same two at all, come back and everybody Turns right hand. So it's meant to be the water when you're standing, looking at the sea, coming towards you. And to get in the mood, it's got to be... a calm sea (interview 2.S.3).

The emotional analysis shows this 77 year old lady talks in a fluent voice as she feels confident about writing a Scottish Country dance. She feels strongly she has tried to capture the movement of the sea in the dance moves, as she interprets the sea as seeming to go side-ways as it goes out and the fact that this is a 'calm sea' that is swirling around.

Although this 77 year old lady seemed very confident about composing a Scottish Country dance, other Scottish Country dancers were not so confident about their composition skills. The 76 year old man from the second Scottish Country dance group felt very upset as the two dances he composed were rejected for publication in the group's Diamond Jubilee book

> My basic instinct is that there are... ten thousand Scottish dances and this is at least nine and a half thousand too many, and that it is almost a crime to write a new Scottish dance. But for the 60th, 60th year of the, yes, our Diamond Jubilee, the second Scottish group decided that it ought to publish a book of dances, so all members of the society were invited to try and compose dances for this. And then they were tried out on at various meetings ... I think there were twenty dances... submitted. The committee went through these, deciding that the book was going to be twelve dances and my two were both rejected, and I have always been furious about this, but... well that was the decision. Now the one that you mention, 'Hobson's Conduit', was one of the two. I thought it was a good dance and it wasn't in the book so too bad. But... in the days before the final decision was made... it

> seemed to me to be a rather good idea to do my 'Hobson's Conduit.' And I thought it went down well. And indeed... one or two people said 'That was a good dance, I liked that.'... Now the trouble, and I'm sure this was the reason the committee rejected both of them, was that there was a real sense in which they were not new dances. They were improvements, removing what I regarded as unsatisfactory features of existing dances. And 'Hobson's Conduit' was set out to be, an improvement of the 'Flowers of Edinburgh' and I was brought up to believe the 'Flowers of Edinburgh' were really the 'Flowers of Edinburgh', sewers, and 'Hobson's Conduit' was therefore the appropriate equivalent (interview 2.S.4).

The emotional analysis shows how this 76 year old man deeply feels it is a 'crime' to write another Scottish Country dance because there are so many, and there is laughter in his voice. This is a contrast to the fury he feels about the two Scottish Country dances he composed that were rejected for the group's Diamond Jubilee publication, as he very strongly emphasises this fact. There is laughter in his voice again when he talks about some people actually liking one of his dances. He interprets his dances as good dances, even though they were rejected for publication.

Death in Ladies' Step and Scottish Country Dance

Some of the older Scottish Country dancers I interviewed spoke about dancing to death at a social event. The 71 year old man who was involved in the Ladies' Step group, spoke of wanting to die on the dance floor rather than in an old people's home, embedded in a story about the dance being good exercise.

> Oh I'm sure the exercise is good for me... whether it will wear out the hip joints, the knee joints, early, I don't know. I think this is one of the things you do notice, one lady, her hips and knees are going, probably from doing too much dancing... I do worry a little about my left hip... my knees are all right... and I'm sure it's good exercise, well it is good exercise, so it is healthy. Mind you, I know of two people who died of heart attacks on the dance-floor. So perhaps it's not all that healthy. But I'd rather die of a heart-attack on the dance- floor than die of boredom in an old people's home (interview 1.S.1).

The emotional analysis shows this 71 year old man just plainly states that he would rather die on the dance floor than die of boredom in an old people's home. He did not elaborate on this in any depth. He confidently interprets death on the dance floor as a good

death, a real contrast to the uncertainty in his voice when he talks about the problems with his hip and knee joints from doing too much dancing.

The 59 year old lady who was a Scottish Country dance teacher from the first group, spoke of her step-father dancing himself to death in a public house, after eating a heavy meal and drinking a few beers:

> My step-father died dancing. He was actually over-weight, well he was a dancing teacher. He... liked his beer on a Sunday after his Sunday lunch and he also liked showing off his dancing when he was a little bit over ... he'd had a few too many drinks. And he got up and he tried to do the, Highland Fling in a pub, after he'd eaten a heavy meal and had a few beers, and he literally dropped dead on the spot. So ... yes it happens, but then it was a foolish thing to do and really he was asking for trouble. And he was only in his early 50s at the time. So yes, these things do happen, you do know of people who, die doing that. But then you could die running a marathon, you could die doing any other kind of sport, so I mean ...I don't think it is any more dangerous in that way if you are sensible and you take precaution and you realise you are putting your body through a certain amount of strain and stress, which is good for it in moderation, you should all have a bit of exercise everyday. But if you don't take the ... see the warning signs ... take the precautions that you need to take, then you're going to be asking for trouble (interview 1.S.5).

The emotional analysis shows how this 59 year old lady tells the story of her step-father's death whilst dancing in a very calm and matter of fact voice, strongly emphasising the underlined words. It is interesting that she interprets Scottish Country dancing as no more risky than other sports. She emphasises the importance of the individual taking responsibility for their own health and appropriate precautions when necessary, and her voice shakes at the words 'warning signs', showing how she feels her stepfather did not heed the 'warning signs' in his own body.

The 58 year old lady who was a Scottish Country dance teacher and belonged to both groups, told stories about seeing two deaths occur on the dance floor, talking in depth about one of the deaths

> There was a person ... they actually had a heart attack while they were putting their shoes on ... But certainly, I was actually at a dance one year, when somebody had a heart attack actually on the dance floor in the middle of a dance, and there were two people there who had just done a... resuscitation course two days before...

> but I mean they had immediate, that person had immediate attention, but they couldn't do anything. And I mean, yes, it's a good way, if you really are a keen dancer. It's a shock for everybody else.... But I have been there and I have seen that happen and then it's a question of 'What do you do?' after that... 'Do you stop the dance? Do you send everybody home?' or 'Do you carry on?' And I think probably the general opinion would be that that person danced, liked their dancing so much that they wouldn't want their tragedy to upset the others. They would probably want them to carry on dancing in their honour ... in respect of them. And I think that's what we did actually do, after quite a long gap ... because obviously the treatment of the person came first (interview 2.S.7).

The emotional analysis shows how this 58 year old lady's voice is soft and reflective, with long pauses as she considers the impact of her words. This is a real contrast to her fast, fluent and enthusiastic speech that has pre-dominated this interview so far. The underlined words are particularly emotionally charged as she ponders the details of this sudden death on the dance floor. She interprets the death as a good death for the person concerned, though obviously shocking for everyone else. Her use of a rhetorical question 'What do you do?' is extremely emotionally charged. She concludes in a soft and reflective voice that people decided to carry on dancing in respect of the person who had died.

Dying on the dance floor was not the only way in which death was discussed by some of the older Scottish Country dancers. Many of the Scottish Country dancers were widowed, so Scottish Country dancing was important for helping them to express emotions and provide social support when going through bereavement or life-threatening illnesses. The 67 and 69 year old ladies from the Ladies' Step dance group, spoke of the social support of Scottish Country dancing when one of them was going through cancer and when the other was widowed (see section 'Social Benefits of Ladies' Step and Scottish Country Dance'). The Scottish Country dance helped some older people find creative ways of dealing with the loss of a partner, such as the 71 year old man from the first group who was writing a book on Ladies' Step dance in memory of his wife and the 77 year old lady from the second group who had been widowed twice and wrote poems about her Scottish Country dancing friends (see section 'Creative Aspects of Ladies' Step and Scottish Country Dance').

The 76 year old man from the second Scottish Country dance group spoke of wanting to keep active after his wife's death a couple of years ago through carrying on dancing, rather than sitting at home in mourning

> Well I say we, I met my wife Scottish dancing as an undergraduate, sadly she died a couple of years ago so now it's me... most of the time it was we....Yes... well... what do you do when your wife dies? Sit at home and mourn. And clearly the old, Victorian idea was that you, put on black and stayed at home. I do think the home was probably rather, the home was a family, you weren't staying at home alone, you were staying at home with a family of half a dozen people. You weren't just sitting and moping. Well my daughters, our daughters, my daughters are now married and off so it would have been sitting at home so I vowed never to spend a Saturday night at home if I can (laughs) (interview 2.S.4).

The emotional analysis shows how this 76 year old man's voice shakes as he tells me about his wife's death. His voice sounds sad and slows down to a deeply reflective style, in comparison with his stories earlier in the interview. Emotionally he seems to have found some strategies for coping with his loss, as his voice speeds up and he laughs about his vow never to spend a Saturday night at home. He interprets his loss as a need to get away from the Victorian idea of formal mourning because of not having family living with him to support him through such a time.

Discussion of Findings

There are two quantitative research studies published this year that demonstrate how dance can improve the psychological and physical health of older people (Hui et al., 2009; Eyigor et al., 2009). Such research does not provide an in-depth analysis of how the actual processes of dancing construct this improvement in psychological health. My comparative ethnographic and narrative style interview study provides some unique insights into how specific dance forms construct psychological health for older people in different ways. Engel (1977) has advocated a bio-psycho-social model for researching health issues and my findings certainly confirm the interaction of biological, psychological and social factors for older dancers. Due to the vast amount of data, the discussion focuses mainly on the psychological and social elements in this chapter and the biological in the next chapter, although the interaction between all three is acknowledged.

All dance forms in my qualitative study tended to construct feelings of well-being and a love of dance. In terms of the phenomenology of embodiment, these feelings of well being relate to mind and body, an example of how the activity of dancing can relate to an embodied mind and body working together to promote health (Brown et al., 2009; Garza and Fisher Smith., 2009). Circle dance constructed psychological health for older people in terms of

expression of a range of emotions through various body movements, dancing to a wide range of international music. Scottish Ladies' Step and Scottish Country dance tended to construct psychological health for older people in terms of fun and laughter, as individuals struggled with balletic footwork or complex dance formations to the bouncy Scottish music. In all groups, this expression of emotion was often actively interpreted although at times difficult to talk about in words, as individuals regulated their personal psychological health according to the particular 'culture of dance'. The problem of trying to access the feeling and emotional experiences of embodiment is acknowledged in both qualitative and quantitative psychological research on the phenomenology of embodiment (Brown et al., 2009; Garza and Fisher Smith, 2009). My study demonstrates some conscious interpretations of bodily emotions and contrasts with the dance psychotherapy literature that emphasises the role of the unconscious in determining body movements as creative expression of emotion (Bunce, 2006; Korwazik, 2006; Payne, 2006). The narrative style interviews show that many of the older dancers in my study were able to interpret the meaning of the dance for their psychological health, as well as expressing a range of emotions (Rossiter et al., 2008). For these older community dwelling adults, it was not simply a case of an unconscious mind totally determining their emotional expression in dance, though there were times when the emotions seemed to surpass words. These older people were exerting personal agency in order to improve their psychological health by choosing dance forms, 'cultures of dance', which appealed to their individual personalities.

An interesting finding is how much dancers across all groups used their conscious minds to interpret the meaning of the dance forms for their personal psychological health. Dancing could provide a conscious distraction from all your worries and could be constructed as a therapy in a conscious and humanistic perspective (Heron, 1976). The 72 year old and 78 year old ladies from the first Circle dance group, spoke of how Circle dance could distract you from all your worries. The 72 year old lady from the first Circle dance group spoke about feeling both sadness and happiness when dancing, and there were mixed emotions in her voice as she explored these feelings. The 65 year old lady from the first Circle dance group spoke of Circle dance holidays as potentially healing places if the holiday group was big enough to absorb all the psychological distress. The 76 year old retired professional tap dancer from the first Circle dance group, explained about the 'Bach Flower Remedy dances' that they sometimes performed for their healing powers.

The first Circle dance teacher, a 71 year old lady, spoke of specifically teaching some dances as therapy for her own psychological health because it gave her the opportunity to

work through troubling emotions, an experience echoed by the second Circle dance teacher, especially after her mother's death. The second Circle dance group did not place such an emphasis on the therapeutic or healing power of dance as the first Circle dance group, and the second Circle dance teacher spoke of some people wanting to express emotion in a low key manner such as through holding hands in a dance rather than displaying emotions in public. In sharp contrast, the 78 year old lady from the first Circle dance group, who had started Circle dancing when going through multiple bereavements, spoke of how the teacher re-assured her of the benefits of crying in public when she had felt embarrassed about doing so. This 78 year old lady was enabled to actively re-interpret her emotions, hinting at a conscious mind taking control of an unconscious mind.

Older Scottish dancers also actively interpreted the meaning of the dance for their personal psychological health. The 71 year old man from the Scottish Ladies' Step group spoke about dancing for enjoyment with amusement in his voice as he expressed pleasure in just talking about the dancing. My ethnographic diary highlighted this element of enjoyment, emotional expression of fun and laughter, in Scottish Country dance, such as when the second Scottish Country dance group performed a special dance about kissing under the stairs for Valentine's Day. A 77 year old lady from the second Scottish Country dance group interpreted the emotional expression constructed through dance and music as surpassing words, suggesting a role for the unconscious mind.

Dance was constructed as therapy by the older Scottish Country dancers, but without the emotional intensity of the first Circle dance group. The 59 year old lady and her 60 year old husband, who were both Scottish Country dance teachers from the first group, spoke of teaching dance as therapeutic for their own psychological health because it provided a distraction from all your worries. And one class member saying 'thank-you' would be enough reward for all the effort. The 76 year old man from the second Scottish Country dance group spoke about holding people's hands in dancing as therapeutic after the death of his wife. And the 58 year old dance teacher from both Scottish Country dance groups spoke of how she was still trying to dance, or at least watch social dances, even though she was unwell, because dance is pure enjoyment.

The social benefits of belonging to dance groups also provided psychological support for older people. In the Circle dance, social support was provided when problems were shared with other group members, or hands held when dancing. Circle dance workshops were also available, and these often provided an opportunity to dress up. The social benefits of Scottish Ladies' Step and Scottish Country dancing were more sophisticated, often including

afternoon tea at the actual dance sessions, and a number of social dances were available in the evenings. These events also provided the opportunity to dress up, often in traditional Scottish dress.

The psychological opportunity to challenge the physical processes of growing older was discussed a few of the older dancers. The first Circle dance teacher, who was 71 years old, felt transformed into a young and beautiful person by the process of Circle dancing, and the pain from her chronic osteoarthritis disappeared when she demonstrated dances in front of the group. A 68 year old lady who attended the second Circle dance group and another group run by the first Circle dance teacher, spoke of how Circle dance had transformed her experience of growing older, embedded within a story of how retirement had provided opportunities for self-discovery. A 76 year old man from the second Scottish Country dance group referred to the 'mask of ageing', when he spoke of not feeling old but having difficulty recognising his ageing face in the mirror (Featherstone and Hepworth, 1991).

The creative aspects of dance were particularly apparent amongst some of the older Scottish Country dancers who produced cultural artefacts relating to the dance form. This could be a particularly beneficial way of expressing emotion, such as after bereavement. The 71 year old man, who was writing a book on Scottish Ladies' Step in memory of his wife, seemed to be totally absorbed in the subject, telling lengthy narratives about the history of Ladies' Step in an amused tone of voice, that showed his immense pleasure in engaging in this creative activity. A 77 year old lady from the second Scottish Country dance group wrote poems, composed dances and made cards for her dancing friends. She had been widowed twice and Scottish Country dance was something she had made her personal interest after the death of her second husband. The emotional analysis of her interview shows the immense pleasure she feels from using these creative skills to acknowledge her friends. However creativity could have a downside. The 76 year old man from the second Scottish Country dance group had two dances he had composed rejected for publication by the group, although several people enjoyed dancing them.

Using dance as a strategy for coping with the emotional effects of bereavement and life-threatening illness has been important for older Circle dancers, older Scottish Ladies' Step dancers and older Scottish Country dancers as shown through out this chapter. A 76 year old man from the second Scottish Country dance group talked of wanting to remain active after his wife's death rather than sit at home and mourn, though his voice was shaking as he spoke about these issues. An unexpected finding was that some older male Scottish Country dancers were literally dancing themselves to death. Dance has always been linked with creative

expression about existential issues such as death (Borstel, 2006). The 71 year old man who was a Ladies' Step dancer, spoke of wanting to die on the dance floor rather than in an old people's home. The 59 year old lady who was a Scottish Country dance teacher, spoke of her step-father dancing to death after eating a heavy meal and drinking a few beers (Flannigan and Wolf, 2004). The 58 year old lady who was a Scottish Country dance teacher spoke in depth about wondering what to do after a sudden death on the dance floor and how eventually, all the dancers decided to carry on dancing as that is what the person who had died would have wanted. This reverberates with the Aborigines' practice of using dance in mourning rituals (McGrath and Phillips, 2008).

My findings suggest that Circle dance, Ladies' Step and Scottish Country dance can be extremely beneficial in terms of promoting the psychological health of some older people. Feelings of well-being are constructed. Dance provides an opportunity for emotional expression and dancing can be a therapeutic process, challenging the physical and psychological processes of growing older. Dance provides social support and stimulates creativity. Dance can provide coping strategies for bereavement, sudden death on the dance floor and life-threatening illnesses. Older dancers across all groups were able to interpret all these psychological benefits of dance in their narrative style interviews. These older dancers were improving their psychological health as an interaction between psychological, social and biological factors occurred (Engel, 1977). Sometimes these improvements in psychological health were experienced in a holistic sense of embodiment, as the activity of dancing stimulated both mind and body to work together, as shown in psychological research on the phenomenology of embodiment (Brown et al., 2009; Garza and Fisher Smith, 2009).

Chapter Six: Sense of Belonging, Growing Older and Physical Health as a Dancer

Introduction and Methodological Issues

Older dancers seemed to find it difficult to verbalise about their physically ageing bodies, as they seemed only to be aware of the body in terms of a problematic part or injury. Latimer (2009) has written about this pre-verbal state of the body, the idea that subjective experiences of the body cannot easily be verbalised because there are times when the body is unaware of bodily processes. The difficulty of verbalising about the body is reflected in Leder's (1990) philosophy of the 'dys-appearing body', the idea that individuals only become aware of their bodies in terms of a part that has become dysfunctional through illness, injury or age. He suggests people are unaware of their bodies in their daily lives until a problematic part 're-appears'. I found it was difficult to disentangle sometimes whether the dance or ageing was the cause of the particular problem with the ageing body that was verbalised by research participants. I have tried to distinguish physical health problems from actual injuries sustained whilst dancing, but this division is not always clear-cut. The phenomenology of embodiment shows the subjective experiences of embodiment are situated in action complexes of the body and mind working together whatever the triggers of those experiences (Brown et al., 2009; Garza and Fisher Smith, 2009).

Dance teachers spoke more easily about the physical body than any of the other dancers, probably because of their expert knowledge. Part of their training involved attention to health and safety issues as well as the performance of the actual dance movements, so their ability to verbalise more easily about the ageing physical body was not unexpected. In line with Leder's (1990) philosophy of the 'dys-appearing body', many research participants talked about their ageing bodies in terms of a specific physical health problem, such as deafness, or an injury, such as a pulled muscle. Otherwise, research participants tended to talk about their ageing physical bodies simply as gaining exercise and improving mobility through the dance movements, often in connection with improving their psychological or emotional health. This relates to the idea that the phenomenology of embodiment is situated in action complexes, as shown by both qualitative and quantitative psychological research (Brown et al., 2009). Despite the difficulties of verbalising about the physical health benefits of the dance, the way in which older individuals persevered with the dance even when struggling with their ageing bodies due to health problems or injury, shows how they perceived the dance as promoting their personal health in physical, psychological and social terms. Engel's (1977) bio-psycho-

social model seems correct in suggesting there is an interaction between physical, psychological and social factors in promoting the health of older people.

Literature Review

The *World Health Organisation* (2009) has advocated the physical health benefits of exercise for older people in terms of preventing disease and maintaining activities of daily living. At least 30 minutes of moderately intense exercise is recommended on five days a week for older people. Exercise is important for calorie expenditure, and different forms of modern aerobic dance have been shown to be as effective as jogging in terms of caloric expenditure (Rixon, Rehor and Bemben, 2006). However the numbers of older people who exercise regularly are low and the vast majority are sedentary, just as the vast majority of younger people are sedentary. For example, physical inactivity has recently been identified as an important contributor to disease amongst older Australians from culturally diverse communities (Bird, Radermacher, Feldman, Sims, Kurowski, Browning and Thomas, 2009). Maintaining or losing weight may be an important factor in motivating older people to exercise and Hurd Clarke et al. (2002; 2009) have explored the concerns of older women about weight and appearance in terms of body shape and using clothes to mask or enhance bodily appearance. The debates in the research literature juxtapose the physical health benefits of exercise against the problems of injuries acquired amongst people who exercise regularly.

Recent quantitative research literature relating to dance and dance-like exercise has specifically demonstrated the physical health benefits of dance movements for older adults. Inevitably, these physical health benefits are closely connected with psychological health benefits, as in Engel's (1977) bio-psycho-social model and the qualitative and quantitative psychological research on the phenomenology of embodiment as being situated in action complexes (Brown et al., 2009; Garza and Fisher Smith, 2009). One quantitative study has shown the physical and psychological health benefits of both Tai Chi and Low Impact Exercise over the course of twelve weeks in terms of upper body strength, balance, cardiovascular endurance, lower body strength, sleep disturbances and reduced anxiety (Frye, 2007). The quantitative study with older women participating in Turkish folklore dance, cited in the previous chapter on psychological health, demonstrated an improvement in physical performance and balance besides quality of life (Eyigor et al., 2009). Another quantitative study on older adults participating in dance, cited in the previous chapter on psychological health, demonstrated improvement in measurements relating to resting heart

rate, a timed walking test, a timed up and go test besides general health and body domains in a quality of life questionnaire (Hui et al., 2009).

Another quantitative study has shown that whilst prescribing exercise for women aged 40-74 actually increased physical activity, falls and injuries also increased (Lawton, Rose, Raina, Dowell, Fenton and Moyes, 2007). My own qualitative research on older people participating in various 'cultures of fitness' has demonstrated that some older people continued exercising, once they were involved with an exercise group, even when they were struggling with their ageing bodies, such as the pain of arthritis. Members of the 'dance-exercise' group sometimes took painkillers before attending class because they perceived the physical, psychological and social benefits as important (Paulson, 2005a; 2005b). Wainwright and Turner (2006) have explored in their qualitative study of older professional ballet dancers the problems of injuries as they grew older, and the pressure to perform even when their bodies were severely injured.

Despite physical health problems or the risk of injury, older people have the ability to be immensely creative and emotionally expressive in the physical movements of dance. The *Company of Elders* established by *Sadler's Wells Ballet Company* is an example of how older people put their life-experience and emotionality into the physical movements of dance (Ross, 2007). So it is valuable to explore how the physical health benefits of Circle dance, Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance, complement the psychological benefits of these dance forms (Engel, 1977). An exploration of the physical health problems and risks that face community-dwelling older dancers is useful for identifying how health promotion initiatives on dance for older people can be improved at the local level in the future.

Outline of Findings on Circle Dance

The bigger story of 'Sense of belonging, growing older and physical health as an older dancer' is explored in relation to the smaller stories of 'Physical Health and Circle Dance', 'Circle Dance and Physical Healing', 'Experiences of Growing Older as a Circle Dancer', 'Experiences of the Ageing Body in Circle Dance', 'Modifications of Circle Dance for the Ageing Body', 'Risks of Injury from Circle Dance', 'Physical Health: Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step', 'Growing Older: Scottish Country Dance, Ladies' Step', 'The Ageing Body: Scottish Country Dance, Ladies' Step', and 'Risks of Injury in Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step'.

Physical Health and Circle Dance

Many of the older Circle dancers across both dance groups talked about Circle dance being good exercise either in general terms of physical health and sometimes in terms of specific physical health problems. The 71 year old lady from the first Circle dance group told a lengthy story about Circle dance both as good exercise and as an activity that could be adapted through modifying the steps if you had health problems, such as when she had a bad knee

> Health wise, yeah.... well I think it's extremely good exercise... You can adapt. I had a bad knee for a little while... and you could just not put so much pressure on it... you could do smaller steps, you could adapt a little bit if you can't do it very well. And the teacher is very good because she... when the man who had had the stroke came back last week, she carefully said 'Now if you don't want to spin around at this point, you just do four steps.' And he was doing that so he didn't spin all over. And everybody was catching him if he tried ... so you can adapt the dance. Just because you're not so healthy one week, or somebody isn't so healthy one week, they don't have to stay at home, they can still go. And they can do most of the dances, even if they have to sit some out, they can adapt. So, in a way, it's an ideal dance for people who are getting a dancing system. I mean you couldn't do that with tap-dancing, I don't think you could do it with Scottish dancing either.... if you're growing older and you're likely to have, I mean I haven't had any serious health problems, but I've seen people who have, and it makes me feel quite cheerful because I see (laughs) I see them coming back and I see them, slowly getting back into the dancing and adapting, and then gradually not having to adapt any more because their health is improving and improving and improving (interview 1.C.3).

The emotional analysis shows this 71 year old lady talks about her health in a soft, reflective voice with pauses, clearly emphasising the underlined words, particularly those relating to how the teacher adapts dances for those with physical health problems. She really slows down her words as if thinking very deeply about how Circle dance is 'an ideal dance for people who are getting a dancing system', a way of dancing despite physical problems. She laughs with pleasure as she talks about seeing people who have been ill coming back and dancing again (see section 'Strategies for Learning Circle Dance: Modifications for Ageing' in Chapter Four: Learning to Dance as an Older Person).

Other older Circle dancers told stories of how the dance helped a specific aspect of their health or body part, as well as being good exercise for overall health. A 72 year old lady from

the first Circle dance group spoke of how she had been advised to exercise because of a heart by-pass, embedded within a story of finding Keep-Fit boring and preferring other forms of exercise.

> A: ... I had a really big by-pass, and when you go to the rehab they tell you to and I did do the rehab Keep Fit which I found boring, to be honest ... But they do say exercise, which I do in other ways as well ... but obviously dancing is a good one for me to do because I like it whereas Keep Fit I find a bit boring. I've done a bit of Yoga in the past, and what else did I do? Oh aerobics ... when I was younger. But so, I've always been used to exercising. But this is just ideal I think for our age group... when you're knocking on, seventy (laughs). You can't do everything can you? (laughs).
>
> I: So what other forms of exercise are you doing at the moment?
>
> A: Well ... walking which they count as exercise, gardening which they count as exercise, housework which I don't count as exercise because I hate it (laughs)... I might go back to Keep Fit with my friend who doesn't like the dancing but she likes the Keep Fit but I'm not very keen about that. Because I think when you're older they give you these awful things like, sitting on chairs and pulling up bits of elastic, and that's not for me ... I need the movement and the music really (interview 1.C.6).

The emotional analysis shows this 72 year old lady in a slow, reflective voice initially, which becomes onomatopoeic, showing her boredom with keep-fit. She really becomes animated and speeds up her voice when talking about dancing, showing the pleasure she derives from the dance, positioning Circle dance as ideal for her age-group. She laughs about growing older and hating housework, reverting to a slower, reflective voice when she explains why she does not like Keep Fit.

Several other older Circle dancers told stories of how the dance helped their mobility. Here is the 68 year old lady who belonged to both Circle dance groups, talking about how Circle dance could be good for you physically, embedded within a story of Circle dance as good for your emotional health, dancing when she had a heel spur and the possibility of adapting Circle dance for older dancers.

> I mean physically, when I did Scottish dancing, it was incredibly good for you because it's so energetic, it's a real work-out... But... and it's also nice to do. Circle dance is not energetic in the same way, although it can be quite, more so than the second Circle dance teacher's class is. Physically... I just think it's good for you. I think it's good for my emotional health, and I think it's probably good for my

> physical health. The only thing is I hurt, I have this... heel spur... these things that you get on your heels, and that's why I couldn't, I dropped out of one of the second teacher's dances last term, I think it was, which I'd never done before, because really I shouldn't have been dancing at all. But I just couldn't bear not to so I was carrying on dancing although, my foot was hurting me a bit. But generally speaking, I would say it's just very good for me, physically. It's very good also, because if you put a lot of yourself into the dance, you will in fact give yourself more of a work-out, if you use your arms for example, that you don't have to do, but if you do, you will give yourself more of a physical work-out than perhaps you are aware of. Even in a class that's generally for an older category of person, like the second teacher's class is. Because on the whole, although she's got a lot of younger people this year, she's had some very old people in the past and in their 80s, some of them, and they can still dance. But they obviously can't dance as fast and as furious and do as many Turns, as some of the younger people can. I'm 68 and I don't think of myself as being old at all (laughs) (interview 2.C. 3).

The emotional analysis shows how this 68 year old lady feels very strongly that Circle dance is good for her physical and emotional health as she emphasises the underlined words. Her voice becomes hesitant when she talks about her heel spur, as this injury was impeding her Circle dancing but she loves Circle dancing so much that she carried on when she should have been resting. She slows down her voice to emphasise how you can make Circle dance even more physically beneficial by adding arm movements. She laughs loudly as she does not think of herself as old at the age of 68 years, but she appreciates seeing people in their 80s doing Circle dancing with some adaptations.

The 78 year old deaf lady from the first Circle dance group told a story about Circle dance just being part of an active life, using both body and mind. Her story is another good example of how physical aspects of health interact with psychological aspects of health and the social benefits of belonging to a Circle dance group.

> Well, it's very good exercise anyway and I do like movement, I can't sit still, I can't not do things and so that fits in with the fact that I'm doing something and, I'm moving and doing things. And that is... that is me and that helps my health.... if I wasn't doing Circle dancing, I do Keep-Fit but I also do walks, or I clean the house or I can't sit down for very long... I've had to do with the studies but that is really part of the reason I study I think because, I have to be engaged... all the time. So

> Circle dancing helps my health because it fits in with my... psychological benefits as well. It suits me. Just the activity. Meeting... And I like people a lot so that covers two things, we have all the friends there who are not intrusive but you know they're all friends. And... so you feel, I like the company and that's psychologically good for me because I need company, because I do like people, although I've got this family as I've told you about, I'm not ever really short of company. I do like it. And... and also the physical activity. So... both ways. I can't think of anything, I can't think of anything as attractive as Circle dancing. And it all happened just by chance going swimming, as I'd never have known there was such a thing as Circle dancing (laughs). Yeah, I might have taken something else (interview 1.C.9).

The emotional analysis shows this 78 year old deaf lady strongly feels she has to engage both her body and mind in activities all the time, as shown by the words she particularly emphasises. The pauses indicate that she is talking in a reflective voice. She feels very deeply that Circle dancing is very attractive and laughs, as she only got involved in Circle dance by chance.

An unusual response to my question 'How has dancing influenced experiences of your health?' was given by the 74 year old retired professional ballerina, who had left the first Circle dance group. She really did not seem to make any connection between dancing and physical health, and talked very briefly about the problems of growing older in terms of functionality.

> Right... how has dancing... it's a good question and I can't think of an answer to that one... I don't know whether it has... because I'm lucky at the moment, I can still move. I'm terribly aware that I've got very bad balance... I can't run far, things like that. But that's just getting older, it doesn't relate particularly to the dance thing.... I can't really answer that one... it doesn't really quite tie up for me (interview 1.C.5).

The emotional analysis shows this 74 year old retired professional ballerina varied her tone of voice, sounding quiet and reflective when thinking about the question and loud and affirmative when talking about her capabilities or difficulties, such as feeling pleased she can still move but aware of her bad balance and difficulty running. She speaks in a soft, reflective voice again as she explains her difficulties 'But that's just getting older'.

Circle Dance and Physical Healing

The first Circle dance teacher emphasised the healing power of Circle dance both in physical and psychological terms more strongly than the second Circle dance teacher, who had

especially spoken about older people not necessarily wanting an emotional display in public about personal issues and did not emphasise the healing power of Circle dance as much (see section 'Circle Dances, Emotion and Music' in Chapter Five: Psychological Health, Sense of Belonging and Growing Older). The first Circle dance teacher's personal experience of the pain of osteoarthritis being taken away by dance, so that she felt her body was transformed into a young and beautiful body, has been discussed in the section 'Psychological Benefits of Circle Dance for Growing Older', Chapter Five: Psychological Health, Sense of Belonging and Growing Older. Here she talks about Circle dance and sending the energy at the end of a session, as healing the bodies of those older people who have had major illness, embedded in a story about the role of the candle and visualisation as discussed in the section 'Sending the Light and Visualising Sick members' in Chapter Three: Forming a Sense of Belonging as an Older Person through Dance.

> The... the flame itself is symbolic, yes, of so much of life, spirit, but it is also... a repository for the energy that we are generating..... So when we come to the end, we move that energy. Now usually, the group's first thought will be for it's own members, members who have, current health or mental or physical or spiritual or practical problems ...This exercise, is particularly useful for those members who are sick. If we... know that a member is sick, then... we send them energy at that moment. In one of my groups there is, a very brave lady, who is just going through a second lot of very severe chemotherapy.... and ... it was... distressing, as these things always are, when the disease returned and it was obvious that she had to undergo more treatment. We knew that the dance was important to her, and I suggested to her that... mentally, she danced with us the last dance, every day that she normally would have been in class... I gave her the time that we would normally be dancing that dance and said 'What we will do during that dance, every week, once a week, during the whole time you are undergoing this treatment, we will visualise you dancing with us in that dance. And you at home, visualise being with us, be with us and then at the end we'll send you the energy. And we did this.... to her great joy. Her treatment has not been easy, her kidneys and liver were both, not in good condition but she bore this further treatment. But... she did this exercise every week to join us in the dance... and so did we. We visualised her dancing amongst us with her body whole. And she felt the energy move at that time. Last week, she came and danced with us. She has a whole load more chemo to do but she'd asked for a gap of

one week before she did the next lot of chemo, so that she could come and dance with us on that day to be with us, really with us. So because she felt the strength that the dancing and that energy gave us, that we were doing could give her at home..... (interview 1.C.10)

The emotional analysis shows this 71 year old Circle dance teacher speaks in an incredibly slow and reflective voice, considering the healing potential of the energy generated through the dance very carefully. She speeds up her voice to show the physical and psychological improvement the lady undergoing chemotherapy seemed to feel as a result of the visualisation and being sent the energy, affirming the importance of social support in physical recovery too. Her voice particularly speeds up to affirm positively how this lady had actually come and danced with the group one week in order to really feel the physical and psychological benefit of the dance.

Several of the older Circle dancers from the first group also spoke about the healing power of dance and seeing class members bounce back from illness such as a stroke (see interview 1.C.3 in section 'Strategies for Learning Circle Dance: Modifications for Ageing' in Chapter Four: Learning to Dance as an Older Person). The social support of the Circle dance, as commented on by the first Circle dance teacher, was an important factor in this physical healing. Here are two Circle dancers, one a 68 year old deaf lady and one a 74 year old lady, talking about both the social and psychological support besides the physical healing which seems to occur amongst members of the first Circle dance group

A: I didn't anticipate I'd be dancing until, it was introduced to me. So it has become very, very important to me. I look forward to the company, seeing the friends I've made there, ... exchanging, bits of news. I think it's a total group.... I've seen people that have strokes, and come back. It has been very, very important to us as an example, you have a set back, but you can bounce back.... and dancing, is part of that.... No I just thoroughly enjoy it and hope I can continue.... it's very important to me ...yes.

P: Yes I agree with this wonderful, thing where people really have been very ill, and have come back. Not just the stroke people, other people, like falling off ladders and all sorts of things. ... And that they are having support from us, being part of that support group as well. That's what's very lovely.... through the dance, and that it's there to be experienced ... I think one feels very privileged in a way.... that it's there

and it's such a lovely way to exercise and it's communication, it's communication, yes... (interview 1.C.8)

The emotional analysis shows how the 68 year old deaf lady starts the discussion in a very slow and reflective voice, carefully considering each word. She really slows her voice even more to state how it is a very good example to the rest of the dance group to see people recovering from physical illness and returning to the dance group. The 74 year old lady agrees, talking in a fast and fluent manner as she feels that it is wonderful that people who have been very ill return to the dance group. Her voice then becomes slow and reflective as she analyses the meaning of the social and psychological support provided by this first Circle dance group.

Experiences of Growing Older as a Circle Dancer

A 71 year old lady from the first Circle dance group talked about retirement as providing more opportunities to exercise than she had experienced during her working life, embedded in a story of feeling younger since she retired even though she is confronted with her actual age on her bus pass. Her story is a good example of how physical and psychological aspects of health and ageing intertwine.

> And ... basically, the last year, two years I was at work ... I was sitting still a lot of the time, counselling, I mean I hardly moved a muscle, you can imagine, just sitting, sitting, sitting. And so I put on quite a bit of weight when I was working ... so I drove every night, to come home in the rain and the fog and the nastiness, and by the time I got home, I was just knackered. So I just used to sit and watch television in a sort of blank fashion... Since I've retired, I've actually felt better because (laughs) I'm doing twice as much activity and I've got thinner, I mean I was kind of like twelve stone, which is not, which for my height, is far too big... when I retired. And ... so basically I actually feel younger since I retired, which sounds a bit funny because people say 'How does dancing influenced my feeling of getting older?' But ... I suppose on the other hand, mentally I know I'm getting older, I mean mentally the thing ... I mean I know that the figure, I've got a free bus pass, and ... the figure, the figure on my... on where it says 'age' keeps on increasing and it looks old.... It's quite nice to be getting old because you can go and do Circle dancing in the day-time when younger people are at work (laughs), being unhealthy and sitting around (interview 1.C.3)

The emotional analysis shows this 71 year old lady speaks in a hesitant but soft reflective voice as she considers her unhealthy lifestyle when working. She laughs with

pleasure, as she has 'felt better' since she has retired due to more exercise and losing weight. She spells out the words describing how she was 'far too big' and emphasises strongly how she feels younger. Psychologically, she knows she is getting older but she is able to laugh about retirement being an opportunity to do Circle dancing whilst younger people are sat at work being unhealthy. Her feelings of being physically transformed into a younger person by retirement, with Circle dancing contributing to these feelings, echo the feelings of the first Circle dance teacher when she was demonstrating dances to the group (section 'Psychological Benefits of Circle Dance for Growing Older' in Chapter Five: Psychological Health, Sense of Belonging and Growing Older).

This 71 year old lady continues her story, talking about the number of older people who are still able to enjoy Circle dance as a good example of how dance can be a protective factor against physical and psychological degeneration, embedded in a story of her feelings about her own ageing. A similar story from a 68 year old and 74 year old Circle dancers. Whom I interviewed together, can be found in the previous section 'Circle Dance and Healing'. These stories show how the physical and psychological benefits of dance interact.

> I think it lessens, your fear of getting old, because I ... remember one lady... she absolutely twinkled, when she was dancing and I mean she was in her 80s... There is the feeling that if you're still dancing, then you're not really needing to be frightened of getting older particularly because I suppose one is only frightened of having some, well not exactly frightened but I suppose, the down side of getting older is you feel you might have more of a chance of getting ill ... I don't sit in fear of getting arthritis or in fear of, pulling a muscle... and I don't actually see because I am a year older than I was last year, that that would necessarily happen. I must say that I'm not so frightened of getting old when you see older people enjoying themselves (laughs) (interview 1.C.3).

The emotional analysis shows that this 71 year old lady feels the 80 year old lady who was still Circle dancing 'absolutely twinkled' as she very strongly emphasised these words. Her voice becomes more slow and reflective, with lots of pauses, as she considers her feelings about the uncertainty of her own ageing in the future. She laughs as she feels the fear of ageing is taken away by seeing older people enjoying themselves doing the physical activity of Circle dance.

The 65 year old Circle dance teacher from the second Circle dance group talked about being aware of her body slowing down as she got older, an idea mentioned by several other

dancers in the following section 'Experiences of the Ageing Body', embedded in a story of possibly doing Circle dancing at a great age, perhaps modifying the steps.

> Getting older..... I don't think my stamina is quite as much, I do get tireder if I have to do a long session. I mean one and a half hours is OK but... most sessions are longer than one and a half hours, I mean one is three hours, with a break for tea in the middle... and I feel I like to sit one or two dances out, I think I'm a bit arthritic. But I think the good thing about Circle dance is you can do it at a great age, we've had people as old as 90 doing it. And, I think especially if they learn it younger. If they start learning it when they were 90, then maybe they wouldn't find it so easy. If you start when you're 60 or 70, keep doing it regularly, then you can perhaps as you get a bit stiffer or whatever, maybe you even have an injury... you can still do it, you can adapt the steps. Make the steps smaller, don't do your hops so high, hardly do your hops at all... there's always a way of doing it... to suit your own body, physically (interview 2.C.9).

The emotional analysis shows this 65 year old teacher talks in a lively and at the same time reflective style, with pauses when she is considering the issues. She especially emphasises how she feels 'tireder' herself due to age, having difficulty with long sessions and needing to sit several dances out due to arthritis. She feels strongly that people as old as '90' can do Circle dance, and that the steps can be modified for older people. In terms of growing older, this second Circle dance teacher does not seem to feel the healing power of Circle dance transforming her body, as the first Circle dance teacher did (see section 'Psychological Benefits of Circle Dance for Growing Older' in Chapter Five: Psychological Health, Sense of Belonging and Growing Older as a Dancer).

Experiences of the Ageing Body in Circle Dance

Older Circle dancers tended to talk about Circle dance in terms of improving the functionality of the ageing body, whilst also recognising their physical limitations. The second Circle dance teacher, quoted in the previous section 'Experiences of Growing Older', talked about her ageing body as slowing down. Similarly, the 65 year old lady from the first Circle dance group, quoted in the following section 'Risk of Injuries from Circle Dance', felt she had had to change dance forms because of her ageing body slowing down. The 78 year old deaf lady from the first Circle dance group who modified Turns due to dizziness, spoke of how the Circle dance challenged her to focus on the functionality of the whole body, including posture and actions such as putting your hands up in the air, embedded in a story about how she

overcame her dizziness that was quoted in the section 'Strategies for Learning Circle Dance: Modifications for Ageing' in Chapter Four: Learning to Dance as an Older Person).

> I think with all the different movements which we use all the body Circle dancing. I think it does help me to focus on... the whole body and the, and the posture (laughs), and the movement. It does make you focus more on, on the body when we're having to put our arms in the air (laughs). And you think 'I can still do that.' I think to myself sometimes 'I'm glad I can still do that.' (interview 1.C.9)

The emotional analysis shows that this 78 year old deaf lady feels great pleasure at being able to improve her posture and put her arms up in the air. She strongly feels the Circle dance makes her focus on the functionality of the whole body.

This idea of Circle dance challenging the body as a whole, especially in terms of flexibility and mobility as aspects of functionality, was echoed by a number of the other older Circle dancers. The 71 year old lady from the first Circle dance group spoke about Circle dancing as making her move her body, including parts that she did not usually move, embedded in a story of how the process of embodying Circle dance had made it easier for her to learn and embody tap-dancing.

> I think I probably move more than I used to. Well more than I did when I was at work. I probably move my hips and move all over, move much more all over my body.... I go swimming a lot as well so ... that probably helps.... I started Circle dancing, six years ago, joined a tap dance class when it started a year ago and I mean I think because of Circle dancing, because I got used to looking at feet, I just looked at the tap dance teacher's feet and just copied it and did tap dancing and everyone said 'My God, you're good at that!' ... all the other people in the class (laughs). 'So how did you do that? How did you pick that up?' ... They thought I'd got some, clever system, and they said 'Well you've obviously been tap dancing all your life.' I said 'No, no. I stopped when I was seven.' (laughs). I'm now 71. ... But I did say 'Well I do do Circle dancing and ... it's the same, sort of skill. You look at somebody's feet and they demonstrate. And you copy. So it's a similar thing'... The Circle dance teacher wants us to wiggle our hips and ... be like belly dancers ... bits that you haven't been wiggling for a long time... Any other reason, you wouldn't be doing that, you wouldn't be doing, needless movements. And I suppose too, you do find, because you are moving with the music, you can do, you come across really fast dances and you find that after doing them...several weeks running, you're not out of breath

anymore when you were maybe out of breath the first time you did them. But you find that your breathing has improved (interview 1.C.3).

The emotional analysis shows the enthusiasm this 71 year old lady feels for Circle dance as she emphasises all of the underlined words, illustrating how both the Circle dance and her experience of having done tap dancing as a child, have enabled her to improve her mobility during retirement. Initially she speaks in a soft, reflective voice but she speeds up her voice to be very lively when talking about how she learnt tap dancing, laughing with pleasure as other people in the class were impressed.

The 77 year old retired professional dancer spoke of Circle dancing as giving her the opportunity to move and so maintain functionality, embedded in a story of putting on weight due to growing older:

> I've had a wonderful career.... I've been so lucky I can't believe how lucky I've been. It's been so interesting which is why I sort of keep on being interested in, which is why I find Circle dance so interesting because I move my body about which I think.... to keep fit you have to keep moving. No good sitting down and letting your muscles go. And when I sort of gave up dancing as such, I put on weight. Dancers always do this, as your muscles relax and because you're not working out all the time, you're... you go to fat. So ... anyway I've tried to lose some but in middle-age you normally put on weight, most people do, unless you're very... thin... light-boned. But anyway, I'm very pleased to keep on dancing (interview 1.C.7).

The emotional analysis shows this retired professional dancer feels very happy about her dancing career as she puts lots of animated expression into her words. She spells out in an authoritative fashion how she feels 'to keep fit you have to keep moving'. She softens her voice as she reflects about putting on weight herself as she has got older, and there is a hint of sadness in her voice.

Later in her interview, this retired professional dancer talks in greater depth about how the Circle dancing helps keep her physically healthy in comparison with other older people:

> I think it's keeping me healthy, because it's keeping me moving about and ... moving my muscles and my bones, whereas as you get older, a lot of people do not do any exercise. Consequently, they're not, I don't think they're very well. I have friends who do not do any exercise at all and they're always ill. I keep saying to them 'Why don't you come to Circle? Or Keep-Fit or Pilates?' and they always say 'Oh I must do that.' But they never do. And they ring me up and tell me that they've been coughing

for five weeks or they've got, aching hips or shoulders and I can't tell them any more to do something useful. I think I've got a sympathetic ear because ... they ring me up and tell me what's wrong with them. Occasionally they say 'And how are you?' I feel awful because I normally say 'Very well thank you.' And they're not. Isn't that a shame? That's terrible really. But that's why I think dancing is keeping me fit (interview 1.C.7).

The emotional analysis shows how this retired professional dancer feels it is important to take control of your ageing body and keep moving, as she considers the importance of keeping moving in a slow reflective voice, spelling out that people who 'do not do' any exercise become physically ill. Her voice becomes animated when she invites her friends to activities as she feels these are enjoyable. There is laughter in her voice as she talks about these friends ignoring her advice and complaining about their physical health problems when she is really well. She seems to feel her friends are not taking responsibility for their own ageing bodies.

Functionality of the ageing body included an awareness of posture for some of these older Circle dancers, as well as enhancing mobility through the dance. The second Circle dance teacher spoke of how Circle dance made her aware of bodily symmetry, both in herself and in other dancers, embedded in a story about most Circle dances being done in an anti-clockwise direction.

I broke my ankle a few years ago, and so obviously for a time, I was limping but the, symmetry is important to me, and I've got this, just my own sort of feeling about health, that if you can be symmetrical... Uncross my legs because that's an asymmetrical posture... I look round the Circle and I think 'Oh yeah, she's got, she's got a stiff shoulder there, her right shoulder's sort of up more than her left...' You can see people, I've become very aware of other peoples' bodies, yes I am aware of my own body as well and what it's feeling like, especially when I'm dancing because that's a time when you can... well you are focused on your body, to an extent, and especially as a teacher, you feel you've got to do the movements perhaps a bit, more gracefully, or you attempt to do them more gracefully as you're being an example.... I mean I see lots of people who are much more natural dancers than I am.... dance with much more grace and poise, but this symmetry I think is a key thing for me. In fact I think it is for other dance teachers, because somebody who's been teaching for years and years and does it professionally.... as most of our dances go to anti-clockwise... and we always hold hands in this way, he felt that he's getting a bit lop-

sided from doing so many dances, very few dances go the other way. So he's started teaching the ones that traditionally go to the right, he's started teaching them to the left with the reversed hand-hold. There's a really funny feeling when you go to one of his workshops, but I do see his point (interview 2.C.9).

The emotional analysis shows this 65 year old Circle dance teacher talks in a lively voice, with pauses to reflect, about the importance of bodily symmetry or posture. There is laughter in her voice as she talks about the need to uncross her legs. Her voice really speeds up to emphasise her awareness of her own and other people's bodies. She laughs about the Circle dance teacher who feels he is getting lop-sided from doing Circle dances all in an anti-clockwise direction. She feels very amused about his workshops that teach dances in a clockwise direction as there is more laughter in her voice. Circle dance has enabled her to laugh about the problems of maintaining good posture in the ageing body and at the same time, endeavour to improve posture both in her own and other peoples' bodies.

Although some older Circle dancers found the dance had highlighted their awareness of posture, such as the second Circle dance teacher, one 65 year old lady who had done different dance forms throughout her life spoke of always being aware of her posture

I wouldn't say it's, changed my experience of my body because I have always done dance throughout my life. It's actually continued it, so that when I'm walking I'm conscious that I shouldn't slouch along and keep my head up and so on. Because my eyesight isn't as good as it was.... My daughters say I tend to walk with my head down..... looking at the floor to make sure I don't trip ..... so I try to stand erect and sit well and all that sort of thing. So I wouldn't say Circle dancing has changed that. I would just say that it enforces me to continue to be conscious of how I hold myself (interview 1.C.1)

The emotional analysis shows how this 65 year old lady feels confident about her awareness of her posture because of always having been a dancer, although she feels problems with her eyesight means she tends to walk with her eyes down. She spells out slowly and deliberately how she feels Circle dance enforces her to maintain this awareness of posture.

Modifications of Circle Dance for the Ageing Body

A number of older Circle dancers spoke of how the dance movements could be modified for the ageing body (see some examples in sections 'Physical Health Benefits of Circle Dance', 'Growing Older as a Circle Dancer' and 'Risks of Injury from Circle Dance' in this chapter). Here is an extract from my ethnographic diary, showing how the first Circle

dance teacher challenged the group to exercise their arms and shoulders but also demonstrated modifications to movements involving hand-holds or jerking the hips.

> The teacher explained about the importance of exercising the arms and shoulders in the dances. 'No pain, no gain. From the age of 25, the muscles in your upper arms and shoulders get shorter so you need to exercise them more to retain function.' She gesticulated to her own shoulders and upper arms as she spoke these words. 'When you raise your arms above your head, you need to challenge yourself to push your arms that little bit further back. No pain, no gain.' G., the retired professional tap-dancer replied, 'We do this exercise at Keep Fit to strengthen arm and shoulder muscles. You place one hand behind your neck and push the bent elbow upwards with the other hand.' She demonstrated as she spoke with a smile. The teacher explained how hand-holds could be modified for painful shoulders for example, in Greek dance instead of holding in an upright W formation with elbows bent, the arms are thrust forward with elbows bent …When it was break the teacher came to speak to a 72 year old lady, who explained why she had missed several classes. The teacher told her which movements would be difficult, demonstrating how any movement which involved jerking the hips or sudden turns would put strain on her lower back and her abdominal muscles. She warned her to be careful in dances that used such movement (C.1, 13.7.07)

Risks of Injury from Circle Dance

Several other older Circle dancers found Circle dance helpful for recovery after sustaining an injury during the course of their daily lives or doing some other form of exercise. A 68 year old lady from the second Circle dance group spoke in detail about her heel spur and how she modified the dance to cope with it.

> I: Has your heel caused you much problem with the Circle?
>
> K: No, no, it's.... I think I did it because I was standing, I didn't do it dancing. I did it because I was standing in my kitchen all afternoon in my slippers on a concrete floor, and putting my weight on the back of my heels. I was baking. And if I had given up half way through, I wouldn't have had any ill-effect. I think it was just enough to set the foot off... And as a result, I was limping in July and August and I didn't go to the doctor's, I didn't go to the doctor much, and I wasn't going to the doctor with it until about, I think it was about the beginning of October. By which time it was beginning to get better, but it was still so slow. I mean I'd had it for several months.

> These things go on for months, and go on for years really. And it's still a wee bit sore.... I mean it's still a wee bit sore now, but I'm, but I'm managing anyway... It's. I can now walk again, and I walk quite fast and that's important to me as well. So I'm dancing. But to-day with these sort of heels and stamps, I'm a bit careful and I'm sort of hopping on it. (interview 1.C.3).

The emotional analysis shows this 69 year old lady spoke in a fast and fluent voice, strongly emphasising the underlined words. She feels she is physically and psychologically healthy as she repeats the statement three times that she does not go to see the doctor very often. She similarly repeats the statement 'it's still a wee bit sore' as she feels she has to be careful about 'stamps and hops'. She is aware of the limits of her own physical body and when to make modifications of the steps.

One 65 year old lady had got involved in Circle dance because it was less strenuous on the ageing body than other forms of dance. This particular lady had been seriously injured when doing Scottish Country dancing.

> The Five Rhythms dance that I was talking about earlier is much more vigorous than the Circle dancing..... in various aspects of it, so that's something I did more in my 40s..... and you can still do it, I mean they say you can do it sitting in a chair even .... participate. But I felt frustrated about not being able to do what I really wanted to do, so Circle dancing is good in as much as you can more or less do everything that is asked of you... I did do, oh there's something else I did, I used to do Scottish dancing, a lot, and I would do that at least once a week ... but then I slipped a disc, and it was so bad, I was ill, and I couldn't go to work...the pain was excruciating. Eventually after about six weeks it subsided, but I knew I couldn't go back ... to Scottish dancing because it's again much more vigorous, jumping and ... it puts a strain on your back. So Circle dancing was the next progression in a sense (interview 1.C.1).

The emotional analysis shows how this 65 year old lady talks in a fast and fluent voice, with pauses to reflect. Her voice trembles as she talks about her injured back from Scottish Country dancing. This is painful in both psychological and physical terms as it threatens her future in dancing.

Most of the older Circle dancers had not suffered an injury from Circle dancing, and the several older Circle dancers who had suffered an injury when dancing, found their injuries were relatively mild. A 67 year old lady from the second Circle dance group said she has not

had any injuries from Circle dancing, but then remembered that she had just had 'a pulled tendon' (interview 2.C.7). The second Circle dance teacher spoke of someone stamping on her bare-feet when dancing, embedded in a discussion about appropriate footwear.

> I usually wear slacks and, bare feet... I notice most people don't have bare feet and as people get older they tend to wear shoes, maybe it's more supportive of the foot to wear shoes. I know people who do, a lot of dancing professionally, doing it all the time they feel they have to wear shoes because it protects their feet more. I've never had any injuries from... Oh actually, that's not true, somebody did stamp on my foot once, and the next day I could hardly walk and I was doing a paper round at the time, and I had to literally stagger round (laughs). So if you're bare-foot, you are vulnerable, especially if your partner's wearing hob-nail boots (laughs) (interview 2.C.9).

The emotional analysis shows how this 65 year old Circle dance teacher talks in a matter of fact voice, emphasising certain words as she feels strongly that people tend to wear shoes for dancing as they get older in order to protect their feet. Her tone of voice really changes and becomes much more lively as she remembers when someone stamped on her bare-foot when dancing. She laughs softly, showing her discomfort about this foot injury being caused by 'hob-nail boots', an inappropriate form of footwear.

Outline of Findings on Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step

The smaller stories which contributed to the larger story of "Physical Health, Sense of Belonging and Growing Older as a Dancer" were ' Physical Health: Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step', "Growing Older: Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step', 'The Ageing Body: Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step', 'Modifying Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step' and 'Risks of Injury in Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step'. Further examples of these smaller stories can be found in the appendix through the focused coding that refers to the interview transcripts and the ethnographic diary.

Physical Health: Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step

Most of the older Scottish Country and Ladies' Step dancers talked about the dance as both good physical and mental exercise, just as many of the older Circle dancers did. The 71 year old man who did Ladies' Step dance particularly identified how Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance were both good physical and mental exercise (see sections 'Ladies' Step

and Scottish Country Dance Promote Well-Being' and 'Death in Ladies' Step and Scottish Country Dance'). Like Circle dance, Scottish Country dance could be enjoyed for it's physical benefits of general exercise, or as exercise to help a particular aspect of the body. For example, a 63 year old lady from the second Scottish Country dance group defined the health benefits of the dance in both mental and physical terms, identifying how people who could only walk through the steps could still benefit from the exercise

> (Laughs) Well I think it makes you feel better. I'm sure it makes you feel psychologically better.... And also physically, you can... the best dancers who are really, dancing, will get a lot of exercise out of it. But... people who are just walking round actually are getting less exercise, but nevertheless are getting some exercise so, it is exercise as well... And it's mental exercise and physical exercise. So I think it's a terribly good way... of assisting health (interview 2.S.8).

The emotional analysis shows this 63 year old lady laughs with pleasure as the dance makes her 'feel better', both in psychological and physical terms.

The 64 year old Indian lady from the second Scottish group positioned Scottish Country dance as healthy, pleasurable exercise though less strenuous than Indian dance.

> I take it as good exercise, for me. And I feel, sometimes it's quite exhausting, especially in a small room when so many of you are confined and you are doing the fast movement dances and all, it's really, really hot, isn't it? (laughs) ... often I heard people saying, who have been doing it for years and years, 'It's all giving the strain on my knees.' That's what they say, but... up to now, I don't have any problem. So I think... it is quite healthy exercise, and it's a pleasurable exercise, unlike going to the... gyms, and trying to work with machines, it's more or less you are communicating with the people, and doing the dance, isn't it? Which is quite fun I find... So I keep it up (laughs). ... in Indian dance one needs to be much more strenuous in a way, because you've got all the body language, with your expression with your face, with your eyes, your neck movements and your hand signals, your hand gestures, whereas with the Scottish dance, all you do is either hold the hand of somebody or just... I find... it's good exercise, but not as intensive as... training classically... in dance (2.S.10).

The emotional analysis shows this 64 year old Indian lady finds the Scottish Country dance is a fun way of getting physical exercise, as she talks about it in a lively and animated voice, laughing about getting hot when dancing fast with lots of people in a small room. She

feels it is a pleasurable activity as she laughs about being able to 'keep it up' whereas she finds exercising in a gym with machines boring. Her voice becomes slower and more reflective as she describes in detail why Indian dance is more strenuous than Scottish Country dance in physical terms, because she feels it requires disciplining various parts of the body.

Later in the interview this 64 year old Indian lady mentions concerns about putting on weight if she stops dancing, a concern specifically voiced by only one other of the Scottish Country dancers I interviewed.

> I think to some extent it keeps me more fit and more and more creative... because you've got to move faster and do the things properly, isn't it? So I think it will ... help me to keep my body in better condition, to do all the movements in a way. Obviously if I start putting on too much weight, I don't look right for me, I will stop doing the dancing (laughs). At the moment, I feel I think... it's like a vicious circle, if I want to dance, I've got to keep up my figure. My figure will help me to dance in a way and the dance is helping me to keep the figure... It's mutual I would think (interview 2.S.10).

The emotional analysis shows how this 64 year old Indian lady talks in an animated manner, with laughter in her voice when talking about the vicious circle between dancing and keeping your figure through not putting on too much weight.

The 63 year old lady from the second Scottish Country dance group, quoted at the beginning of the section, started Scottish Country dancing for exercise and talks about feeling physically fit, but later says she finds the dance has no beneficial effect on her weight, even though she feels her body is a different size and shape.

> But it's great, it's great for exercise. It's absolutely great. I don't think I quite know how fit I am. But when I've done, when I've been to a dance, they usually have twenty-two dances, plus repeats, and at then end of the evening, I'm hot and probably a bit tired but then the next morning I'm fine. So my level of fitness, in that respect, is quite high...But during that period since 1998 I've gone up to a maximum of nearly fifteen stone and back down to twelve again so that, nothing to do with Scottish dancing, but I didn't even, when I was at my maximum, I didn't feel any different. It's a pity really because... I know I'm a different shape because people tell me (laughs). And I know I'm a, different size but as far as my energy is concerned and my ability to cope with whatever, it doesn't seem to have made any difference (interview 2.S.1).

The emotional analysis shows this 63 year old lady feels enthusiastic as Scottish Country dance is 'great for exercise' because her voice becomes lively whereas earlier in the interview, she uses a very matter of fact tone. Her voice becomes slow and reflective again as she discusses problems with her weight but she laughs with pleasure because people tell her she is a different shape. So it seems this 63 year old lady experiences a more toned body, even if her weight fluctuates.

The 59 year old Scottish Country dance teacher from the first group spoke of how her joints and hips had been damaged through doing a lot of Highland dancing as a child, but at the same time positioned Scottish Country dance as good aerobic exercise that could be continued in old age.

> I think, from my point of view, it has taken its toll on the joints, hips and knees particularly, have had quite a pounding. But I put a lot of that down to the fact that I did a lot of Highland dancing as a child while the bones are still forming, and I think if you do that, with Highland dancing you're very much, pounding on the spot... you're hop-hop-hop-hop and that is, punishing at the joints and I feel perhaps if I hadn't done quite so much Highland dancing in my formative years, then I wouldn't be suffering quite so much now. But ... and again we did an awful lot of dancing in our youth. We did as I say we were dancing four, five nights a week sometimes ... And I think just, the cumulative effect, over the years definitely does take it's toll. But at the same time, aerobically, it's excellent it gives you as good a ... work out as any other sport that you can think of really... You don't have to be able to sustain it for the length of time that you could, you're not running a marathon, but for a dance you've got to get through, 32 bars, 64 bars, or however many times as first couple, to get you to the bottom of the set, before you get a breather. And you have to be able to do that it's still a form of exercise that you can do, well into your advanced years. And we do have people who have turned up in class, sometimes 60, 70, sometimes 80 (interview 1.S.5).

The emotional analysis shows this 59 year old dance teacher's voice becomes flatter when she discusses her joint and hip problems, as she seems to feel sad about this physical difficulty. She talks in a more animated and authoritative way about the aerobic benefits of Scottish Country dance. Her voice is fluent and animated as she talks about the number of bars the first couple are required to dance before they get a breather. She feels this is an activity that can be carried on into old age.

Growing Older: Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step

One 65 year old lady from the second Scottish Country dance group, the Ladies' Step group and the second Circle dance group, spoke briefly of retirement as not making much difference to the amount of dancing she does although she feels she has more energy.

> Well I'm glad to have a bit more health and strength now I am not working (laughs)... Yes l mean I dance in the evenings, it hasn't really made any difference. The only extra dancing I've done is the Circle dancing. Because now I've got the Monday afternoon but... there's no Scottish goes on during the day. So that hasn't made any difference for Scottish dancing (interview 2.S.6).

The emotional analysis shows this 65 year old lady spoke with a soft and reflective voice, laughing with pleasure about having 'more health and strength' now she has retired. She was the only Scottish Country dancer who talked about her dancing in the context of retirement.

Some Scottish Country dancers described the positive image of seeing older people being physically still able to dance. A 63 year old lady from the second Scottish group said,

> (Laughs)... I think it's by seeing those dancers who are older than ourselves, and seeing how people cope well, even though they are in their 70s, 80s, even 90s, we have people dancing, to see how most of them, providing they've got some mobility and can actually, keep up and keep going. And I think that's a really good, a good thing... And I can see that's something which Scottish dancing, providing one can stand up and move, as something you can keep doing for as long as you possibly can. You can see there are some people who have had perforce unfortunately to drop out... or will do one dance, or half a dance, and that's it, that's a pity. And I think people usually regret when they have to give up.... But there are some people we've got who are quite elderly, like the little 85 year old lady, who didn't dance for some years because her husband was ill, and then at a tremendous age, suddenly came back dancing again which I think is wonderful (interview 2.S.8).

The emotional analysis shows this 63 year old lady laughs as she considers the difficult issue of growing older. She feels strongly it is ' a good thing' that people in their '70s, 80s even 90s' with some 'mobility' can 'keep up and keep going'. There is laughter in her voice as she feels it is really 'wonderful' that an 85 year old lady had come back dancing, after taking a break to look after a sick husband.

The 58 year old Scottish Country dance teacher, from both Scottish Country dance groups, developed this theme of seeing people dance at a great age. She says how their example takes away the fear of physical ageing, embedded in a story about memory problems.

> There are people that are dancing well into their 80s. They need a little bit of help or a little bit of consideration maybe their memory's not so good. We've got one person in the club... we help them out, we point to where to go or we tell them in passing 'Oh you're going to do Set and Cast Off' or 'It's going through there and there.' After they've done it once, they usually remember it. And they are still getting their exercise, which they probably wouldn't at 80 plus, and quite good exercise too. There are quite a few people dancing who have had either one or two hip replacements. Now hip replacement is a major thing but you look at them and you say 'OK, it can't be that frightening. Because they can come back and they can dance again. So therefore, I know the operation's improved a lot more'... So it takes away some of the fear of what might happen and if that does happen to you, would you still be able to do these hobbies of yours. The answer is 'Yes.' Providing you follow the hospital's instructions and everything... And... you look at other people ... older people that perhaps have got problems with their knees and their ankles, they are still able to dance, albeit not in the prescribed first Scottish group's method, but they can still dance, and they can still do the things like get to the right place in the right time, and enjoy themselves. They don't get the level of exercise that a more agile person would but they are still getting the exercise and they're getting the social contact and the enjoyment (interview 2.S.7).

The emotional analysis shows how this 58 year old Scottish Country dance teacher is enthusiastic about how the example of older people dancing takes away the fear of physical ageing because she speaks with an animated and fluent voice, emphasising all the underlined words. She raises the issues of older people being able to dance through modifying the physical movements, an idea mentioned by a number of the older Scottish Country dancers.

The 59 year old Scottish Country dance teacher from the first group and her 60 year old husband from the first Scottish group, spoke of how you can modify the dances as you get older and your knowledge of the physical movements means you can use non-verbal communication to physically direct other dancers, enabling your years of experience to be appreciated. This example particularly shows how narratives can be shared between interviewees.

T: I think we adjust, don't we? I mean the… the standard of dancing I suppose is not quite as it was… the technique is not always there. It's much more probably about… getting, going through a dance… enjoying the people in the set that you're dancing with and making sure that you're not… upsetting the dance for them. So you've got to still be able to, go with the flow as it were and make it enjoyable for the rest of the set as well as your partner…

C: You still have a lot of knowledge, you can still help the set through a dance, when you get one or two people who are in the set who perhaps can't do the dance or don't know it. And you as the person who knows the dance, can actually guide them and help them through. So even though your own dancing is perhaps not up to the mark any more, you can still give a lot of knowledge to that person and still help them. And it's often appreciated. At the end of the dance they say 'Thank you. We wouldn't have got through it if you hadn't been there.' … And that's quite, gratifying.

T: You don't have to say anything. It's a question of the lead, and you can lead with any part of the body, with a hand, with a gesture, with the shoulders, with the eyes or a glance in a certain direction. Provided you've got a communication with your partner, and other members of the set… you can command the way in which the dancers actually get through that dance (interview 1.S.5).

The emotional analysis shows how the 60 year old Scottish Country dance teacher speaks in a soft and reflective voice, as he considers how dances can be adapted but still enjoyed as you get older. His 59 year old wife fluently emphasises the importance of your knowledge as an older, experienced dancer and how this is greatly appreciated by inexperienced dancers. He then echoes her feelings by spelling out the importance of leading with parts of the body during a dance.

The Ageing Body: Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step

Some older Scottish Country dancers simply denied that the dance had changed their relationship with their ageing bodies. Some older Scottish Country dancers tended to talk about Scottish Country dance in terms of improving the functionality of the ageing body as a whole, whilst other Scottish Country dancers spoke of their physical limitations due to ageing body parts. The 64 year old Indian lady from the second Scottish Country dance group spoke of the dance in functional terms as keeping her fit, embedded in a story about her active lifestyle and family members back in India thinking she looks young for her age.

I think as an exercise it's keeping you quite fit because it's not an intensive exercise, exercise but doing different movements. Keeping the music rhythm, and using the footwork and everything, you are using all parts of your body, which is beneficial for keeping you quite fit, and... when I go back to India, you'll be surprised because quite a few people who are the new acquaintances of our family in India, some of them didn't even know that I had existed because I have been here for too long. I go back, and often people get mixed up, me for my nieces and... so they say, they don't even believe it when I say I am what I am (laughs). So, in a way, they all say it's quite a good compliment because I jumped to a younger generation in a way you see, but obviously, keeping all these activities, perhaps it keeps me quite, active I think, and to be honest, I don't find anything different since the day I came over to this country. Now I'm a grandmother, I've passed on quite a bit, but still I kept my daily routines, what I did, years ago and the tradition of Scottish on top of it, so that way I think ... it keeps me quite healthy and ... I feel quite happy about what I am. So I don't think ... probably it will help you growing older, may be, I don't know, but I think at the moment, I don't feel I'm old (laughs) (interview 2.S.10).

The emotional analysis shows this 64 year old Indian lady laughs with pleasure about people in India thinking she looks much younger than she actually is. She attaches great importance to the fact that she is 'fit', as she emphasises this word particularly strongly. She laughs with pleasure as she is not aware of bodily ageing.

Scottish Country dance was interpreted as improving the function of the ageing body in other ways besides fitness. A 77 year old lady from the second Scottish Country dance group, spoke of how the dance helped her posture especially in terms of standing still, embedded in a story about demonstrating Scottish Country dance to primary school children.

Well you need to hold yourself in a good position. You need at least try to stand up straight... My eldest grandson, for a while he went into teacher training... And he spent some of his practical time at a school down in a nearby village. And the headmistress there, takes a country- dance class. It's a primary school, a small church school and she takes the children for country dancing once a week. And he told her that his grandma was involved in Scottish Country dancing. So I was then asked if I could take a team down there and involve the children. Well I managed to get the chairman of the second Scottish Country dance group (laughs) as usual, and two other women, there were four of us. And we demonstrated, just two couples doing

> something that the two couples could do, and then we could have the children join in. And I had a lovely letter back from the children, and one of the things one of the children said was 'I learnt something to-day, I learnt how to stand still.' Now that is important because if you are going to learn Scottish Country dancing, you've got to stand still and listen and watch so you've got to be composed. That's another thing I've noticed, a lot of young people, their bodies are always on the twitch... children particularly, they don't know how to stand still. So how can their minds be concentrated on anything if their body's not ever still. It's all a question of being, self-controlled and ... being composed. I can sit still, I can sit here like this and if I want to know the time, I pick my arm up and look like that, because I can't be bothered to move otherwise (laughs). But you know, maybe I was born that way, I don't know (interview 2.S.3).

The emotional analysis shows how this 77 year old lady tells her story in a soft voice, particularly emphasising how one child wrote to her saying 'I learnt something to-day, I learnt how to stand still.' She laughs at her own ability to sit still as she takes great pleasure in this.

The 58 year old Scottish Country dance teacher who belonged to both groups spoke of how the dance made her more spatially aware of her body and the use of body language, an idea discussed by the two dance teachers from the first Scottish Country dance group in the previous section 'Experiences of Growing Older'.

> It makes you more spatially aware, knowing where your feet are, where your hands, where your arms are ... your body. But also, as I have said much earlier on, you are using body language probably more with dancing, than you perhaps would be in another situation. So therefore you're keeping that... evolutionary thing running... I mean as somebody once said to me ' Oh your feet are so good, they look like... Did you learn ballet? You must have done!' I said 'No.' And again, that's a body thing. Because I'd done so much dancing, you have to point your toes, get a good straight line there. It indicated that I had done quite a lot of ballet. But I hadn't... (Sighs) You do notice the aches and pains and the stiff muscles, but then there are ways of getting round that... and if you do it sufficiently... you just keep it so you don't get the stiffness. If you have a long break, then yes you notice that... but basically, I think you develop a more acute sense of, especially with your legs and your feet, where they are, because you have to have the exactitude of the footwork. And that way... you probably have a much more, detailed sense of what your legs and your feet

are doing... from that point of view. But as I say... I think really, basically it comes down to the growth in spatial awareness (interview 2.S.7).

The emotional analysis shows this 58 year old dance teacher talks in a fast and fluent voice, demonstrating her expert knowledge, strongly emphasising how you use all parts of the body in Scottish Country dancing and how this heightens spatial awareness. She sighs, suggesting that she finds the aches and pains and stiff muscles in her own ageing body a problem.

The two Scottish Country dance teachers from the first Scottish Country dance group told stories in functional terms about their bodies slowing down due to age. The 60 year old man is conscious that he cannot dance as much as he could five or ten years ago and prefers slower dances. His 59 year old wife is aware that they are both slowing down and dancing together is comfortable, particularly as her husband understands her physical health problems.

T: Well yes, I think I'm conscious of the fact that I can't... do as much as I did... even five years ago, ten years ago, because when we were dancing two or three times a week and going along to dances and doing all 26 dances on the programme ... not feeling it at all. Certainly now we can't do that. We go along to a dance now and I might do all of the dances in the first half and probably half the dances in the second half, on a good night ... But I'm starting to find excuses not to do the dances I don't particularly like.... Or the ones that are most stressful, where there is a lot of setting, turning and that sort of thing.

C: I do remember as a child... I would look at people on the dance floor and think 'Gosh they're old!' ... And when you're at the other end of the scale, 'these children have got far too much energy!' (laughs)...We're slowing down, they've still got their get-up-and-go, whereas ours has got-up-and-gone.

T: I must admit I do enjoy, a good Strathspey these days as opposed to a ... really fast dance. But that has it's limitations, because in a Strathspey, you're using much more muscle control ... it's a slower speed and a lot more control is required so perhaps on a dance programme, one or two or maybe three Strathspeys, that's me done...

C: Now one of the things we've always enjoyed is dancing together... growing old together doing it, we are actually adjusting to the pace of the dance more or less at the same rate. Perhaps you've probably got a bit more energy and a bit more get-up-and-go than I have at the moment, as far as that goes, but I feel that I enjoy dancing with T. and sometimes I feel that because he knows of my health problems, I would

> rather dance with him because then I don't have to apologise for it... if you get up and dance with somebody else, you're probably feeling that you're not producing the sort of ... partner for them that they would like, because you're not quite up to the mark any more (interview 1.S.5)

The emotional analysis shows that the 60 year old man talks fluently, with pauses for reflection, about how he is slowing down, as he seems to feel very in touch with the needs of his ageing body. His 59 year old wife also talks fluently but puts a lot of expression into her words and laughs about young energetic dancers. Her humorous use of words suggests she is using humour as a way of emotionally adjusting to the problems of an ageing body. She strongly emphasises how she likes dancing with her husband but flattens her voice as she talks about her various health problems, suggesting she feels sad about these physical difficulties.

Several of the older Scottish Country dancers spoke about how the dance highlighted their physical limitations due to problems with specific parts of the ageing body. Mostly these were specific parts of the ageing body that seemed to be aggravated by the physical movements of Scottish Country dance, sometimes resulting in serious injury. It seems difficult to disentangle cause and effect in the interview transcripts about experiences of the ageing body. The 59 year old dance teacher interpreted problems with her hips and joints in older age as being caused by too much Highland dancing in her youth, but it is not clear whether these were really caused by the dance or the natural processes of ageing or an interaction between both these factors. The 71 year old man who did both Ladies' Step and Scottish Country Dance similarly interpreted problems with his left hip as being aggravated by the dance in his recorded interview, but the exact cause of this physical health problem is not clear cut either (see sections 'Physical Health: Scottish Dance and Ladies' Step' in this chapter and 'Death in Ladies' Step and Scottish Country Dance' in Chapter Five: Psychological Health, Sense of Belonging and Growing Older as a Dancer).

Several of the older dancers spoke of how problems with an ageing body part required taking special precautions when dancing, such as modifying footwear or the actual method of dancing. One 63 year old lady, from the second Scottish Country dance group, mentioned how she wears shoes with heels due to a knee problem.

> F: Shoes... I wear, some people wear ballet shoes, some people wear the, gillies with the lace-up... I wear a shoe with a slightly, just a slight heel... that's because my, I've got one knee that isn't terribly good, so I prefer a little bit, bit more than just a very small soft shoe.

I: More supported?

F: Yes, yes. Just a tiny, tiny heel. So it has a slightly larger sole... it feels a bit, so it gives a bit more. That works, anyhow (interview 2.S.8).

The emotional analysis shows this 63 year old lady's voice becomes hesitant when she talks about the problem with her knee, as this is something which causes her distress. She does not talk about her experience of her ageing body in depth, and she focuses on this knee, positioning it as an object, when I later ask her a question about how the dance has changed her experience of her body, as this is the part of her ageing body that sometimes prevents her from dancing.

Oh gosh (laughs).... I think it does help you, it obviously helps your mobility, and to retain, mobility... Like most people you get some joint goes wrong at some stage... I've got a, knee, from time to time, I just can't... I can't dance, and then it corrects itself.... So unfortunately, sometimes, I just can't do it... but then, once that gets better, that's absolutely fine so. I don't think it's really changed the experience of my body as well (laughs) (interview 2.S.8).

The emotional analysis shows how this 63 year old lady laughs at my question about her body, as she feels this is difficult to answer. The pauses and hesitations in her voice as she talks about her knee indicate she feels upset about this physical problem. She objectifies and emphasises this problematic body part 'I've got a, knee' and positions a joint problem as part of the natural process of ageing.

Modifying Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step

Some of the older Scottish Country dancers spoke of how the dance could be modified for the ageing body (see Chapter Four: Learning to Dance as an Older Person). A number of examples have already been mentioned in other sections of this chapter on physical health. A 63 year old lady from the second Scottish Country dance group spoke of older people walking through dances and how she herself modified her footwear because of a problematic knee (see sections 'Physical Health: Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step', 'Growing Older: Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step', and 'The Ageing Body: Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step', interview 2.S.8). A 58 year old Scottish Country dance teacher who belonged to both groups spoke of other dancers helping an older man with memory problems, seeing older people adapt dances took away her own fear of ageing and how she herself had learnt how to prevent stiffness (see sections 'Growing Older: Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step' and 'The Ageing Body: Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step', interview

2.S.7). The 59 year old lady and her 60 year old husband, who were both Scottish Country dance teachers, spoke of how you could modify the dances so that you were able to get through them even if your technique was not so good. They positioned your knowledge as an older dancer as useful to beginners. At social dances, they participated in fewer dances because their ageing bodies were slowing down (see sections 'Growing Older: Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step' and 'The Ageing Body: Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step', interview 1.S.5).

The two ladies form the Ladies' Step group, who were 67 and 69 years old, were also Scottish Country dancers and continued this theme of modifying the dances for the injured or the ageing body. As they discussed in their interview,

> A: We've done enough, you know how you can still do something without... We've both had shoulder injuries from falls, which are nothing to do with dancing but they take a long, long time to get better.... And it was either not do any dancing, for a year or something, or getting there as soon as you can. Don't use that but use the other hand for various things. We got by.
>
> B: And I think it also helps you to get better more quickly. Because eventually you start using the, injured limb, perhaps a bit sooner than you might otherwise. And I found particularly with, Keep-Fit, I'm sure that really completed my recovery. All the Keep-fit I do... as well as dancing. Because you do a lot of arm movements and I'm sure, if I hadn't have done that, I wouldn't have got better as quickly as I did...
>
> A: Well I'm afraid I just expect to be able to carry on. I think because I've always done it, I just expect to be able to do it, and I'm very put out if I can't (laughs).
>
> B: You might sometimes have to modify something... perhaps not do a Pas de Bas quite so energetically, because you can feel tired a bit more quickly, or something like that, but otherwise you keep going. Hope for the best (laughs) (interview 1.S.7).

The emotional analysis shows how the 67 year old lady slows her voice as she reflects on how they both carried on dancing with shoulder injuries. The 69 year old lady fluently talks about how the exercise of dance, coupled with Keep Fit, had helped her get better, as she feels this is very important. Both ladies laugh with pleasure at their expectations of being able to continue Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step, as they grow even older, with the 69 year old lady suggesting modifying steps so as to save energy.

The 58 year old Scottish Country dance teacher, who belonged to both groups, spoke of how Scottish Country dance told a story about her own experience of modifying Scottish Country dance when she had just had plaster removed from her foot.

> Oh that's another story... when I started the music, I had this accident, and I had my leg in plaster for three weeks, and then they took it off and put one of these horrible sticky plasters on. We had our big annual dance. And I'd only just been out of the plaster cast for about three or four days and I went to the dance really as a spectator. And one of the people there who was a very well known dance teacher from up north, this man, and he said 'Oh, will you do a dance with me?' And I said 'Oh I've only just come out of plaster!' He said 'Well you can do one!' So we did a Strathspey, so it was me hobbling around with this one footed thing trying to do a Strathspey on one foot. And I'd been out of plaster three days and I'd got a plaster cast on. And again, the same thing, I went up to the Summer school, and at the end of... that one week I was up there, because of the continued exercise... I actually could get, I could hop on that foot, not very far, but I could get it off the floor. And it just shows you that, what you're doing, you've got the physiotherapy aspect there, all of these things combined together says that 'OK, as you get older, your body gets worn out in various parts, providing your brain is still in gear, you've got ways of getting round those disabilities. You can still dance, and then you move that into your other life. OK. I can't do this now as I used to do. OK. I'll find a way round it. ' So consequently, it probably does help you adapt to reduced mobility, if you suffer from it, as you get older (interview 2.S.7).

The emotional analysis shows that this 58 year old Scottish Country dance teacher has laughter in her voice as she talks about doing a Strathspey hobbling on one foot. She is amused by her own modifications of a dance. She continues her story in a fast and fluent voice, emphasizing how it is possible to adapt dances to get round disabilities and adapt to reduced mobility.

Risks of Injury in Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step

Examples of older Scottish Country dancers who literally danced themselves to death have been discussed in Chapter Five: Psychological Health, Sense of Belonging and Growing Older as a Dancer, section ' Death in Ladies' Step and Scottish Country Dance'. Other older Scottish Country dancers seemed to suffer from a range of injuries, some minor and some quite serious, such as the 58 year old dance teacher from both Scottish Country dance groups

who had to have her foot in plaster after an injury at a social dance, discussed in the previous section of this current chapter. The 77 year old lady from the second Scottish Country dance group spoke of a more minor injury, how her legs and knees ached from dance, embedded in a story about how she had injured her knees against a chair when walking around the hall where the dance took place, rather than from the actual dance.

> It makes your feet and legs ache (laughs). No a week before my 75th Ceilidh, because I had another one when I was 75, just in case I'm not dancing when I'm 80, this is my idea. And a week before… it was my turn to do the teas. I went out to the kitchen, just as they were walking through a Strathspey which I knew was going to last … it was an 8:32 so we're looking at between seven and eight minutes with the music. I took the trolley to the doorway… I took the trolley to the doorway, and I thought 'I've just got time to go to the loo while they finish this dance.' Well they were dancing and as you know, there were chairs along the side. So I was carefully manoeuvring past the dancers and the chairs to get out of the back to go to the loo, and all of a sudden I found myself…. One of my friends said one of the legs of the chairs was bent. Can only think that as I was walking straight, looking where I was going, my foot caught on this bent leg. I didn't know I was going to fall down, so I didn't put my hand out, maybe it's just as well because I might have broken my wrist … and my knees have never been the same since. It's here. But I wear knee supports. I went to the doctor after a while because it didn't improve and he said 'Well if you've got to your age without any arthritis, then you're lucky.' But … I mean I've other aches and pains, the same as other people when they're getting older do. But… it's my knees … Well I wasn't actually dancing then you see (laughs). It was just one of those things. (interview 2.S.3).

The emotional analysis shows this 77 year old lady uses humour to psychologically adjust to the physical problems of an ageing body as a Scottish Country dancer. She laughs about Scottish Country dance making 'your feet and legs ache'. She really emphasises the suddenness of her fall and the potential of breaking her wrist, as she feels this was a real danger. She points to her knees as she speaks about the physical difficulties she has with these body parts. Finally she laughs at not having an injury from the dance but from the environment where the dancing takes place.

The 76 year old man from the second Scottish Country dance group suffered a much more serious injury to his leg that seemed closely related to the actual dancing. He concludes that Scottish Country dancing is bad for your physical health because this injury was so severe.

> Well as I've already said, every now and then I do register that my knees are thinking of creaking but... I don't know about any real experience of my health. Every now and then I pull the odd muscle that is rather deplorable. There was one absolutely splendid occasion when I was calling the dances at the Summer dance and we had got to the third dance in the second half. And I emphasise that it wasn't immediately after the interval when my joints might have been a little bit rusty. We'd done two perfectly good dances ... I'd been up on the platform and announced the third dance, danced down the steps to go off and join my set, and as I got right down the steps, there was a 'Ping' and it wasn't just a 'Ping' that I heard, it was a 'Ping' that a number of neighbouring groups heard, and I assumed that my garter elastic had snapped. Then I realised that my leg hurt and I went off and attempted to go through that dance and... it was all rather unsatisfactory. So... at the end of that dance, someone, and I can't imagine how, had a bag of frozen peas. Now I never take a bag of frozen peas with me to a Scottish dance. So if I'm buying frozen peas at the supermarket, I make sure I'm going straight home afterwards. Anyway, I spent the rest of that dance with... somebody's bag of frozen peas round my calf... calf? Yes. And handed over the calling to somebody else. I still don't understand why it happened, as I say, not immediately after the interval... Fortunately, in those days, I still had a wife and I learnt that there was a sports' clinic at the hospital that was prepared to accept Morris dancing injuries as being sports. The only remit is that you have to turn up within 48 hours and so within 48 hours of the Saturday evening I turned up at the hospital's sports' injury clinic and they... nursed me back to health over the next fortnight. So, yes, Scottish dancing is definitely bad for the health. (interview 2.S.4).

The emotional analysis shows how this 76 year old man's voice is soft and reflective as he goes into narrative, telling a detailed story of how he injured his leg when doing Scottish Country dancing. His repetition of the word 'Ping' is onomatopoeic, showing how he experiences the injury as sudden and painful. He especially emphasises that he does not take frozen peas to a dance, but someone gave him some that were strapped to his calf. He really

speeds up his voice at the end of this story to strongly emphasise how he feels 'Scottish dancing is definitely bad for your health'.

Some of the older Ladies' Step and Scottish Country dancers talked about strategies to prevent aggravation of existing injuries or the development of new injuries. A 63 year old lady from the second Scottish Country dance group wore heels to prevent further injury to her problematic knee (see sections 'Physical Health: Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step', 'Growing Older: Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step', and 'The Ageing Body: Scottish Country Dance and Ladies' Step', interview 2.S.8). A 77 year old lady from the second Scottish Country dance group wore knee supports, as discussed earlier in this section. A 65 year old lady from both Scottish groups and the second Circle dance group, who had never suffered an injury herself, spoke of the importance of minimising the risk of injury through wearing in-soles in her shoes, embedded in a story about the importance of an appropriate environment or hall for dancing that is not too slippery or too hard. The following extract really demonstrates the value of working ethnographically as a researcher, as this enables me to use appropriate questions and probes about the risks of dancing.

> I: How do you find the floors?
>
> D: Hard... We're having trouble with the second Scottish group's floor... they won't let us put down slip-stop and frankly I think it's dangerous. Because that floor is very slippery now, we always used to put down slip-stop... powder. And they won't let us put down the powder. For the older people, if there's an accident, heaven help us... And I don't know why they've suddenly changed, because we've danced there for 40 years or so, I mean we haven't changed. They've changed. So they've got a new, care-taker or something, I don't know. But I'm sure we'd be happy to sweep the floor. We'd sweep the floor on a Thursday when we finished. I'm sure ...that would solve things... sweep the floor there. Have you ever danced at the local school? It's a sprung floor.
>
> I: No. I haven't.
>
> D: It's on the first floor, you're not dancing on solid concrete, it's lovely... and there's a floor I think, it's in L. somewhere, which is literally built as a sprung floor, you can wind it up and down at the sides... and it's got tremendous give and you can stand there, you can feel it bouncing, if everyone's dancing in time, you're waiting for your turn, you can feel that floor bouncing, it's wonderful. You finish the evening and

you're as light as a feather. Some floors… you're dancing on solid concrete. Doesn't do peoples' feet much good.

I: Like the one at the Ladies' Step sessions?

D: It's fairly, fairly hard… But I always dance with insoles in my shoes. I would never dream of dancing without rubber insoles.

I: Do you find it gives you some protection?

D: Much, much better. I think I've got at least two pairs in each shoe now… you get endless knee problems and… all sorts of things if there's just nothing between you and the floor. And you're jumping. It's like jogging. And they have special shoes now, don't they?

I: Have you injured yourself Scottish dancing?

D: No, I've been very lucky but I've seen other people… people have awful trouble with their knees. I'm lucky, well I suppose I'm reasonably fit, but I've always worn in-soles. Once you wear them, you realise how much more comfortable it is. Do you put in-soles in your shoes?

I: I haven't but I think I will from now on.

D: It would be a jolly good idea actually. I think it should be recommended. I mean I just go to an ordinary shoe-shop and buy… the rubber, not the fleecy ones obviously and not the cork ones. You can get rubber, any shoe-shop will sell them to you, any shoe repairs… a couple of pounds. Get the right size…. It makes all the difference… Wow (interview 2.S.6).

The emotional analysis shows this 65 year old lady talks in a soft and reflective voice, and she seems to have an easy rapport with me as a researcher, especially when strongly advising me to get in-soles for my ballet shoes as she feels this is very important for the prevention of injury when she strongly emphasises 'It would be a very good idea actually'.

The 67 year old lady from the Ladies' Step group gave me a short and spontaneous ethnographic interview about the metatarsal injury, damage to the nerves between her toes, that she had suffered due to dancing on hard floors or tarmac. As I recorded in my ethnographic diary

> 'We both do about eight displays a year at fetes and other local events. Often we're dancing outside on hard tarmac, which is really bad for your feet. I've got a metatarsal injury, damage to the nerves between your toes, from dancing on hard surfaces in soft shoes. The first question the doctor asked was "Do you wear high

heel shoes?" I said "No." Apparently you can get the same injury from wearing high heels but I had injured myself Scottish dancing', said the 67 year old lady (S.1, 18.4.08).

The 58 year old teacher from both Scottish groups also told a long story about unsuitable floors and discussed the use of special hand-holds to avoid injury besides the value of warm-ups.

> One of the main things is, and I've suffered from it, too much dancing on really hard floors, when I used to dance four, five nights a week and go to day schools. I ended up with shin splints because of the continual pounding on a hard floor... But again, you just have to be sensible. You can't help it if somebody is, gets you off balance and you pull a muscle (sighs.) That's just one of the things that happens... Floors, we are always moaning about these days... they are hard, there are very few good floors with a bit of give in them, dance studio type floors with a sprung floor...
>
> One of the things is with injuries, people on a good night, they can be a bit wild, and they might grab you, swing you around, whatever, and one of the key things is when, you do an arm link, what they do is they don't keep their thumbs together, and the number of people that have ended up with bruises on the inside of their elbow by people pressing their arm there, is legion. And it's one of the prescribed things in. teaching dancing is to teach them not to put their arm in there... Also people can be a little bit, inconsiderate, they might want to spin you, and some people don't want to be spun for one reason or another... and again, there are ways of stopping them doing that... and you just have to be careful. I mean you don't, on the whole people don't fall over, the thing, the type of injury you get is more likely to be a pulled or a strained muscle... perhaps the floor is uneven in it's slipperiness or stickiness... perhaps something's been spilt on it and you just find a sticky patch on a normally smooth floor, your foot gets caught, and that's the sort of thing that can end up with a pulled muscle...
>
> There is a lot of discussion, advice, about whether people should do a warm-up as you would do in aerobics.... And then people say 'Well, we could spend twenty minutes of our one hour class warming up and not doing any dancing'.... It's a good idea that you don't sort of just, get out of a car and take two steps into the hall and then dance. It's if individuals are sensible when they start dancing, they won't dance

at their optimum, their highest level, they will build it up gradually. That way they will be using and warming up the correct muscles, because a lot of the prescribed exercises do not actually warm-up the muscle groups that you're really going to be using, unless you do the exercise... if you're sort of stretching your legs out that's fine because you'll do that when you do a Skip Change of Step but that won't necessarily quite help you if you do a Setting Step, because the muscles you use are slightly different. So consequently it's better to start off with what we call a Lilting Step, not putting all the hops in, and then as you're working on that, then you gradually build it up. If people have all got out of a car, get them to walk through the first dance (interview 2.S.7).

The emotional analysis shows this 58 year old dance teacher speaks with a fast and fluent voice, with occasional pauses to reflect, showing her expert status. Her sighs show how she is distressed when people injure themselves simply by falling off balance. The speed and tone of her voice when talking about the possibility of a class spending 20 minutes warming-up suggests she feels cynical about the effectiveness of such exercises. Indeed she goes on to explain that warm-up exercises do not necessarily warm-up the correct muscle groups and how simply walking through the first dance may be a more beneficial exercise for physical health.

Discussion of Findings

Circle dance was positioned by older people in both groups as good for their physical health in general terms and sometimes in terms of specific health problems. This relates to the *World Health Organisation's* (2009) recommendations of at least 30 minutes of moderately intense exercise on five days a week for older people to maintain their health. A 71 year old lady told a story about Circle dance both as good exercise and an activity that could be modified for health problems such as a bad knee. She laughs with pleasure about seeing people who had been physically ill coming back dancing. Her sentiments are echoed by the 72 year old lady who did Circle dancing to promote her health after a heart-bypass as she found Keep Fit boring. Many older Circle dancers seemed to recognise the importance of exercise for preventing disease and maintaining mobility (Bird et al., 2009; Eyigor et al., 2009; Hui et al., 2009). Circle dance was often positioned as helpful for both mobility and emotional health, as in the story of the 68 year old lady who had had to drop out of one dance because of a painful heel spur. Nevertheless she positioned Circle dance as a dance form that could be adapted for older dancers. The 78 year old deaf lady told a story of how Circle dance kept her body and mind active, as an interaction between physical, psychological and social factors occurred

(Engel, 1977). Her experience relates to the qualitative and quantitative psychological research on the phenomenology of embodiment as situated in action complexes (Brown et al., 2009; Garza and Fisher Smith, 2009). In contrast, the 74 year old lady, who was the retired professional ballerina, saw no connection between dancing and physical health, simply talking about balance problems and decreased ability to run as problems connected with growing older.

The first Circle dance teacher particularly emphasised the healing power of Circle dance in physical and psychological terms, sending the light or energies created by dancing to those who were sick when blowing out the candle at the end of each session.

She used visualisation of sick members during the dancing, emphasising how a lady undergoing chemotherapy found this particularly helpful. Several older members of this first Circle dance group bore witness to this physical healing and social and psychological support provided for sick members. In contrast, the second Circle dance teacher took a more low key approach to the healing power of Circle dance, although she still sent the light to those who were sick at the end of the session. These findings link with the two quantitative studies on the physical and psychological health benefits of dance (Eyigor et al., 2009; Hui et al., 2009) and the psychological research on the phenomenology of embodiment as situated in action complexes (Brown et al., 2009; Garza and Fisher Smith, 2009).

Older Circle dancers talked about Circle dancing as improving the functionality of their ageing body whilst recognising their limitations, a finding apparent in my earlier ethnographic and qualitative interview study of 'dance-exercise' for older people (Paulson, 2005a; 2005b). Again this relates to psychological research on the phenomenology of embodiment as being accessed through action complexes (Brown et al., 2009; Garza and Fisher Smith, 2009). This theme of the importance of the functionality of the body in older age seemed to be a shared narrative (Murray, 2000; 2004). A 71 year old lady told a story of how she felt younger since she had retired, because of the opportunity to exercise more and lose weight, doing activities such as Circle dance. She had found a strategy for managing her weight, an important issue for older women in terms of appearance as well as functionality (Hurd Clarke et al., 2002; 2009). Seeing other older people dancing makes her laugh as she feels the fear of ageing is taken away. Her narrative has become important for emotional expression about positive aspects of growing older (Hiles and Cermak, 2008; Rossiter et al., 2008). This is complemented by the 65 year old teacher from the second Circle dance group talking about the possibility of doing Circle dance at a great age as the steps could be modified. The 78 year old deaf lady spoke of how Circle dance made her think about the functionality

of her whole body, as well as overcoming dizziness on turns. The 71 year old lady spoke of how Circle dance made her move her whole body and because of Circle dance, she found it easier to learn tap. The 77 year old retired professional tap dancer saw Circle dance as maintaining mobility and functionality, embedded in a story about putting on weight due to growing older (Hurd Clarke et al., 2002; 2009). The 65 year old teacher from the second Circle dance group developed this shared narrative of functionality to consider bodily appearance, positioning Circle dance as heightening her awareness of bodily symmetry. In contrast, a 65 year old lady, who had done different dance forms throughout her life, felt she had always been aware of her posture.

As mentioned by several Circle dancers, Circle dance movements could be modified for the ageing body, as in my description in my ethnographic diary of the different arm holds demonstrated by the first Circle dance teacher and her advice to avoid jerking the hips if you had a back injury. Indeed several older Circle dancers found Circle dance helpful for recovery after an injury as it could be modified, as in the case of the 68 year old lady with a heel spur. A 65 year old lady had moved to Circle dance, as it was less strenuous than Scottish Country dance, a dance form that had given her a serious back injury. Many older Circle dancers seemed not to have suffered an injury from Circle dance, or if they had done, these were relatively mild such as the 67 year old lady who had pulled a tendon or the second Circle dance teacher who spoke of someone stamping on her bare foot with a hob-nail boot.

Most older Scottish Country dancers from the second Scottish Country dance group and the Ladies' Step dancers from the first Scottish Country dance group, spoke about the dance as good mental and physical exercise, such as the 71 year old man who did Ladies' Step and the 63 year old lady from the second Scottish Country dance group. This reflects the findings of the two recent quantitative studies on the physical and psychological benefits of dance for older people (Eyigor et al., 2009; Hui et al., 2009). The 64 year old Indian lady saw Scottish Country dance as pleasurable and healthy exercise though less strenuous than Indian dance. She worried about putting on weight if she stopped dancing, whilst a 63 year old lady found Scottish Country dance made her feel fitter with a better body shape although it had no effect on her weight (Hurd Clarke, 2002; Bird et al., 2009). A 59 year old teacher positioned Highland dancing in childhood as damaging her joints and hips but saw Scottish Country dance as good exercise which could be continued in old age.

A recently retired 65 year old lady spoke of retirement as not making much difference to the amount of dancing she does although she feels she has more energy. A 63 year old lady spoke of the positive image of seeing older people still able to do Scottish Country dancing. A

58 year old Scottish Country dance teacher spoke of seeing people dance at a great age and how this took away the fear of ageing, although she was well aware of the problems of an ageing memory. The 59 year old Scottish Country dance teacher spoke of modifying dances as you got older, with your knowledge as an older dancer being helpful because you could use non-verbal communication to physically direct other dancers.

Some older Scottish Country dancers denied that the dance had changed their relationship with their ageing bodies whilst others talked about the dance as improving functionality or making them recognise physical limitations due to ageing body parts (Latimer, 2009; Leder, 1990; Paulson, 2005a; 2005b). The 64 year old Indian lady spoke of Scottish Country dance as keeping her fit, embedded in a story of an active lifestyle and her family in India thinking she looks young for her age. A 77 year old Scottish Country dancer spoke of Scottish Country dance as helping her posture in terms of standing still. The 58, 59 and 60 year old Scottish Country dance teachers saw the dance as making them more spatially aware and conscious of the use of body language. The 59 and 60 year old Scottish Country dance teachers described their own bodies in functional terms as slowing down due to age. As mentioned earlier, it was often difficult to disentangle cause and effect in the interview transcripts, whether problems with specific body parts were caused by ageing or the dance. Several older Scottish Country dancers modified footwear or the actual method of dancing to cope with a problematic ageing body part. The 59 and 60 year old Scottish Country dance teachers especially spoke of modifying the dance so that you could get through them if your technique was not so good, a theme developed by the 67 and 69 year old Ladies' Step dancers. The 58 year old Scottish Country dance teacher had modified a dance for herself when she had just had plaster removed from her foot.

Scottish Country dance seemed to pose a much greater risk of injury than Circle dance, and indeed, some older Scottish Country dancers danced themselves to death. A 77 year old lady suffered minor aches in her legs and knees, and ironically injured her knees against a chair when walking around the dance hall. She wore knee supports as a result. A 76 year old man had suffered such a severe injury to his leg that he concluded Scottish Country dance is bad for your health. Older dancers developed their own strategies for preventing injuries, such as wearing heels, knee supports or in-soles in shoes. It was important to be aware of the condition of the floor in order to prevent injury from Scottish Country dance, and the fact that I had worked ethnographically enabled me to appreciate the problems of hard floors and the metatarsal injuries that could be caused. Warm-ups and appropriate hand-holds were

other important strategies to prevent injury, as advocated by the 58 year old Scottish Country dance teacher.

So in conclusion, older dancers saw both Circle dance and Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step as beneficial for their physical health, especially in general terms such as exercise, functionality, weight and mobility. Some older dancers found these dance forms beneficial for their physical health even when they suffered with a problematic body part. These physical benefits were often coupled with psychological and social benefits. The first Circle dance teacher particularly emphasised the physical and psychological healing facilitated by the dance, and several older Circle dancers agreed with these aspects. Circle dancers and Scottish Country dancers both talked about the importance of modifying dance movements for the ageing body or using strategies to prevent injuries, which in the case of Scottish Country dancing were a particular risk because of the physically demanding nature of the dance form and the hard floors. Even though injuries in Scottish Country dance were more common and severe than in Circle dance, most Scottish Country dancers saw the physical benefits as outweighing the risks, apart from the 76 year old man who positioned Scottish Country dance as bad for your health. So despite physical difficulties that were sometimes posed by the dance forms, most of the older dancers in this study positioned dance as beneficial for their physical health and a physical activity that could be modified as you grew older.

Chapter Seven: Conclusions and Reflection

I have answered my question 'An exploration of how various "cultures of dance" construct experiences of health and growing older' through conducting a comparative ethnographic and narrative style interview study of two Circle dance groups and two Scottish Country dance groups, including a Ladies' Step dance group. I have explored these dance groups in terms of their meanings for those in the 50 plus age group. I have worked from a critical health psychology perspective as I have used an innovative combination of qualitative methods, both dance ethnography and narrative style interviews, in order to contrast my observations and stories about the cultures of the dance groups with those of my interviewees (Griffin and Bengry-Howell, 2008; Marks, 2002; Murray and Gray, 2008; Murray, 2004; Ness. 2004;). The dance ethnography enabled me to explore the phenomenology of embodiment through my observations and writings, exploring the various meanings of the different dances for both individual dancers and the dance group as a whole (Ness, 2004). Listening to the interview tapes enabled me to access the embodied experiences of the interviewees in terms of emotional expression (Hiles and Cermak, 2008; Rossiter et al., 2008). It can be argued that subjective experiences of ageing embodiment are pre-verbal, so any attempt to use language to write or talk about the body will be limited. I acknowledge that my narrative style interviews tend to focus on those older people who were able to verbalise about their love of dance and their ageing bodies easily, but I hope that my ethnographic writing, even though using language, captures some of the non-verbal and emotional aspects of dancing and how this constructed experiences of ageing embodiment for the older person (Latimer, 2009; Leder, 1990).

The rationale for this research study was provided by a review of the existing research literature on dance for older people, critical health psychology and the creative arts and dance psychotherapy. I also explored the debates on relativism and realism, taking a midline position on the ageing body and the subjective experience of ageing embodiment, arguing that these are both real and socially constructed at the same time according to the particular local context, a critical realist position (Collier, 1998). I have explored the debates in the sociological literature relating to the ageing body and ageing embodiment, especially masking theory and the female beauty hypothesis and how culture shapes experiences of embodiment. I have noted how psychological research situates the phenomenology of embodiment in action complexes in both quantitative and qualitative studies (Brown et al., 2009; Garza and Fisher Smith, 2009). I found several ethnographic and qualitative interview studies on ballroom

dance for older people but I did not find a comparative ethnographic and narrative style interview study of Circle dance and Scottish Country dance within this literature (Cooper and Thomas, 2002; Maristela and Vieira, 2007; Thomas and Cooper, 2002; 2003). I have noted that there has been increased interest in promoting dance to all ages in contemporary Britain because of the physical and mental health benefits (Age Concern, 2007; UK Arts Council, 2006). Since I began this research, *Sadler's Wells Ballet* has been involved in promoting creative or contemporary dance for older people through their own *Company of Elders* and outreach work with dance teachers from all over the UK (Ross, 2007). It is useful to explore how existing dance groups attended by older people can promote health in old age and to identify what support such dance groups may need in the future.

Whilst acknowledging the limitations of my study as small-scale qualitative research where the findings are restricted to those individuals and the particular dance groups directly involved, the study nevertheless provides food for thought in terms of critical health psychology. I have managed to provide in-depth descriptions of the various 'cultures of dance' and to demonstrate how such 'cultures of dance' construct subjective experiences of ageing embodiment for older dancers in the here and now, sometimes providing a sense of transformation of experiences of ageing embodiment (Flick, 2004). I have explored the processes through which older people may form an identity with a particular 'culture of dance', looking at the features which individuals may find empowering or disempowering. Important features included:- community feelings in dance forms that did not require a partner, learning about the particular 'culture of dance', the mental and physical demands of the dance form and the expression of emotions and memories of other dancing experiences, a flexible dress code with the opportunity to dress up if you so wished, beautiful music and opportunities to socialise in retirement. I also considered negative cases, a retired professional ballerina who did not like Circle dance because there was not the opportunity to learn dances to perfection. One of the Circle dancers had moved from Scottish Country dance to Circle dance because of a severe back injury sustained whilst Scottish Country dancing.

I have also explored the processes of learning to dance as an older person and there seems to be a real gap in the research literature on this issue. A particularly interesting finding was the variety of mnemonic strategies for learning dances used by older dancers, suggesting that it is possible to dance in old age even if you do suffer from memory problems. Another interesting finding was the details of how the various dance movements could be modified according to the physical problems of an ageing body, and both older dancers and dance teachers developed a range of modifications. The dance teachers had an important role in

facilitating older people to learn and enjoy the different dance forms. The processes of learning to dance as an older person show how various 'cultures of dance' actually become embodied, and these processes are accessed both through the dance ethnography and the interview narratives. The emotional analyses of the interviews show that enjoyment was the predominant emotion expressed. Indeed enjoyment seemed more important for these older dancers than gaining a sense of the dance as embodied, an ideal advocated by some social theorists and experienced dancers, such as dance teachers and professional dancers (Schwaiger, 2008; 2009; Turner and Wainwright, 2003; Wainwright and Turner, 2005; 2006).

All the dance forms were important for promoting the psychological health of older people. Feelings of well being were coupled with the experience of dance as an important opportunity for emotional expression. Sometimes dance was described as a therapy or a healing process by interviewees, particularly in the case of the first Circle dance group. The social support and the creativity facilitated by such dance groups, such as the motivation to dress up in ethnic clothes, learn a musical instrument, write poems or compose dances, was very important for the psychological health of certain individuals. Dance helped some older individuals to cope with life-threatening illness, bereavement or even sudden death on the dance floor, which seemed to be positioned as a good death by other dancers.

All the dance forms were important for promoting the physical health of older people. Older people talked about improvements to their physical health in general terms such as providing exercise or maintaining mobility, and sometimes in specific terms, such as helping with a problematic body part. All dance forms could be modified so that an older person with a problematic body part, such as a bad knee or painful shoulders or hips, could participate. Circle dance was a gentler dance form than Scottish Country dance or Ladies' Step dance, so the injury rate was much lower in Circle dance. Despite some severe injuries, older Scottish Country and Ladies' Step dancers seemed to persevere with these dance forms because they enjoyed the physical challenge. The lack of suitable dance floors for these more aerobic and balletic forms of dance, Scottish Country dance and Ladies' Step dance, raises wider concerns about how to promote dance for health amongst all ages in an environment that has caused rising levels of obesity (Egger and Swinburn, 1997).

On reflection, this was a most enjoyable research study that successfully explored how specific local 'cultures of dance' constructed older peoples' experiences of health and growing older. As outlined at the end of Chapter Two on Methodological Issues, I am aware that my own enjoyment of dance and interests in health and older people coloured the nature of this research study. At the same time, I am aware that my own experiences of enjoying dance are

influenced by my participation in dance groups that attract community dwelling older people and my interest in listening to their stories of the meaning of dance in their lives. In terms of my own health, it has been a physical and mental challenge to complete as I designed the study whilst undergoing my first course of chemotherapy, surgery and radiotherapy for the treatment of cancer. I have written up the study whilst undergoing further chemotherapy for terminal cancer. I hope to have facilitated the voices of my research participants to speak clearly about the pleasure of dance in old age, and I hope I have captured the enjoyment of embodying dance throughout this dissertation. I share the sentiments of my research participants and it was a pleasure to actually dance with them.

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Appendix: Ethics Form

Ethics Release Form for Psychology Research Projects

All students planning to undertake any research activity in the Department of Psychology are required to complete this Ethics Release Form and to submit it to their Research Supervisor, **together with their research proposal**, prior to commencing their research work. If you are proposing multiple studies within your research project, you are required to submit a separate ethical release form for each study.

This form should be completed in the context of the following information:

- An understanding of ethical considerations is central to planning and conducting research.
- Approval to carry out research by the Department of Psychology does not exempt you from Ethics Committee approval from institutions within which you may be planning to conduct the research, e.g.: Hospitals, NHS Trusts, HM Prisons Service, etc.
- The published ethical guidelines of the British Psychological Society (2004) Guidelines for minimum standards of ethical approval in psychological research (BPS: Leicester) should be referred to when planning your research.
- **Students are not permitted to begin their research work until approval has been received and this form has been signed by 2 members of Department of Psychology staff.**

Section A: To be completed by the student

Please indicate the degree that the proposed research project pertains to:

BSc ☐ M.Phil ☐ M.Sc ☐ Ph.D ☑ D.Psych ☐ n/a ☐

Please answer all of the following questions, circling yes or no where appropriate:

1. Title of project

An exploration of how various cultures of dance construct experiences of health & growing older

2. Name of student researcher (please include contact address and telephone number)

Susan Paulson 35 Parthmore Rd, Cambridge CB1 7AE 01223-212909

3. Name of research supervisor

Dr Carla Willig

4. Is a research proposal appended to this ethics release form? (Yes) **No**

5. Does the research involve the use of human subjects/participants? **(Yes)** No

If yes, a. Approximately how many are planned to be involved? 40 - ~~80~~ / 50

b. How will you recruit them? Via dance teachers & dance groups

c. What are your recruitment criteria? Through surrounding information sheets on participant observation & information sheets for interviews all with City University Ethics committee contacts

(Please append your recruitment material/advertisement/flyer)

d. Will the research involve the participation of minors (under 16 years of age) or those unable to give informed consent? **Yes** (No)

e. If yes, will signed parental/carer consent be obtained? Yes **No**

1

6. What will be required of each subject/participant (e.g. time commitment, task/activity)? *(If psychometric instruments are to be employed, please state who will be supervising their use and their relevant qualification).*

Participants who give verbal consent to be observed for my ethnographic diary on dance will just participate in their usual dance groups
Participants who give signed consent for narrative interviews will be interviewed at a venue of their choice

7. Is there any risk of physical or psychological harm to the subjects/participants?

Yes (No)

If yes, a. Please detail the possible harm? ----------

b. How can this be justified? ----------

8. Will all subjects/participants and/or their parents/carers receive an information sheet describing the aims, procedure and possible risks of the research, as well as providing researcher and supervisor contact details?

(Yes) (No)

(Please append the information sheet which should be written in terms which are accessible to your subjects/participants and/or their parents/carers)

9. Will any person's treatment/care be in any way compromised if they choose not to participate in the research?

Yes (No)

10. Will all subjects/participants be required to sign a consent form, stating that they fully understand the purpose, procedure and possible risks of the research?

Those participants who agree to taped recorded interviews will sign a consent form (Yes) **No**

(Please append the informed consent form which should be written in terms which are accessible to your subjects/participants and/or their parents/carers)

11. What records will you be keeping of your subjects/participants? (e.g. research notes, computer records, tape/video recordings)? Tape-recorded interviews & transcripts typed into computer with no identifying details
written ethnographic diary typed into computer with no names or identifying details

12. What provision will there be for the safe-keeping of these records? All tapes & written/typed notes/transcripts kept in a locked office with any computer backups

13. What will happen to the records at the end of the project? All materials will be destroyed at the end of the project.

14. How will you protect the anonymity of the subjects/participants? Only refer to them by age & gender, no use of identifying details

15. What provision for post research de-brief or psychological support will be available should subjects/participants require?

Participants' privacy at the dance groups will be respected if they do not wish to participate in the research. Time for de-brief after interviews & refer to GP if health problems arise. Transcripts will be available for editing by interviewees if they so wish.

(Please append any de-brief information sheets or resource lists detailing possible support options)

If you have circled an item in bold print, please provide further explanation here:

Information sheets re dissemination information & consent forms re interviews attached.
All participants recruited to the study will be community-dwelling adults who may withdraw from the study at any time

Signature of student researcher Susan Paulson Date March 1st 2006 16th 2007

Section B: To be completed by the research supervisor

Please mark the appropriate box below:

Ethical approval granted ☑

Refer to the Department of Psychology Research Committee ☐

Refer to the University Senate Research Committee ☐

Signature Mark L. Reiss Date 16.03.2007

Section C: To be completed by the 2nd Department of Psychology staff member *(Please read this ethics release form fully and pay particular attention to any answers on the form where bold items have been circled and any relevant appendices.)*

I agree with the decision of the research supervisor as indicated above ☐

Signature Jonathan Bolen Date 16.03.2007

3

Consent Forms

Information Sheet and Consent Form for Participant Observation

Please consider participating in a research study looking at experiences of learning to dance, health and growing older. This is part of my Phd in Health Psychology at City University London. I will be observing and writing about dance classes so that I can understand the practical aspects of learning different dance styles. I will also be trying to learn the dances myself. I do not need to observe and write about everyone in the class. Psuedonyms will be used for the writing of the notes and any publications, in order to maintain anonymity. If you are happy to participate in my research, please let me know.

Contact Details: Susan Paulson, 35, Rathmore Road, Cambridge. CB1 7AB.

Tel No: 01223 212909

The University Complaints Clause

If there is an aspect of the study which concerns you, you may make a complaint. City University has established a complaints procedure via the Secretary to the Research Ethics Committee. To complain about the study, you need to phone 020 7040 8106.

You can then ask to speak to the Secretary of the Ethics Committee and inform them that the name of the project is "How various 'cultures of dance' construct experiences of health and growing older." You could also write to the Secretary at:

Dr Naomi Hammond, Secretary to Senate Ethical Committee, Academic Development and Services, City University, Northampton Square, London. EC1V OHB. E-mail: naomi.hammond.1@city.ac.uk.

Information Sheet and Consent Form for Narrative Interviews

Please consider being interviewed about your experiences of dance, heallth and growing older as a member of a Scottish or Circle Dance group. This is part of my Health Psychology Phd at City University London "How various 'cultures of dance' construct experiences of health and growing older." I would like you to explore the meanings of dance, health and growing older through telling me stories. I will only ask you a few open questions because I would like you to tell me how the dance has influenced your experiences of health and growing older. So that I can give you full attention and listen to your ideas, the interview will be tape-recorded. The material will be used anonymously to protect confidentiality and I will use pseudonyms so that individuals cannot be identified. The results will be published using only pseudonyms to continue protecting anonymity. All tapes will be destroyed at the end of the research study. There will be an opportunity to discuss the interview at the end. You should contact your GP if you feel that the interview has drawn attention to further health problems. You are not obliged to answer every question and the interview may be stopped at any point and the tape erased. The interview will last about an hour. Can I just ask for your consent and record it on tape?

Signature: Name in Print: Date:

Contact Details: Susan Paulson, 35, Rathmore Road, Cambridge. CB1 7AB.

Tel No: 01223 212909

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Information Sheet and Consent Form for Photography/Video

Please consider being photographed or filmed for my psychological study on experiences of dance, health and growing older. This is part of my Phd in Health Psychology at City University London "How various 'cultures of dance' construct experiences of health and growing older." The use of photography or video is so that I can capture the complexity of the movement, interactions, non-verbal communication and appearance/dress. The photographs and video will be seen and coded by the researcher only. The written results from the photographs/video will be published using only pseudonyms to protect anonymity. There will be an opportunity to discuss the photography/video at the end and the material will not be used if you wish to withdraw. Can I ask you to sign your consent?

Signature: Name in Print:

Date:

Researcher's Signature:

Contact Details: Susan Paulson, 35, Rathmore Road, Cambridge. CB1 7AB.

Tel No: 01223 212909

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You can then ask to speak to the Secretary of the Ethics Committee and inform them that the name of the project is "How various 'cultures of dance' construct experiences of health and growing older." You could also write to the Secretary at:

Dr Naomi Hammond, Secretary to Senate Ethical Committee, Academic Development and Services, City University, Northampton Square, London. EC1V OHB. E-mail: naomi.hammond.1@city.ac.uk

Information Sheet and Consent Form for Use of Photography/Video at a Conference.

Please consider being photographed or filmed for my psychological study on experiences of dance, health and growing older. This is part of my Phd in Health Psychology at City University London "How various 'cultures of dance' construct experiences of health and growing older." The use of photography or video is so that I can capture the complexity of the movement, interactions, non-verbal communication and appearance/dress. The photographic or video material will be used at.....(name of specific conference) only although there is some risk individuals could be identified, even though names will not be used. The written results from the photographs will be published using only psuedonyms to protect anonymity. There will be an opportunity to discuss the photography or video at the end and the material will not be used if you wish to withdraw. Can I ask you to sign your consent?

Signature: Name in Print:

Date:

Researcher's Signature:

Contact Details: Susan Paulson, 35, Rathmore Road, Cambridge. CB1 7AB.

Tel No: 01223 212909

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If there is an aspect of the study which concerns you, youmay make a complaint. City University has established a complaints procedure via the Secretary to the Research Ethics Committee. To complain about the study, you need to phone 020 7040 8106.

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Dr Naomi Hammond, Secretary to Senate Ethical Committee, Academic Development and Services, City University, Northampton Square, London. EC1V OHB. E-mail: naomi.hammond.1@city.ac.uk

Letter to Interviewees

35, Rathmore Road,
Cambridge.
CB1 7AB.
Tel: 01223-212909

26.5.08

Dear

Thank you so much for helping me in my research. Here is the interview transcript. I will change all names when writing up the research. Please send any comments in the enclosed s.a.e.

Please may I ask you a further question.

Are there any more stories you would like to tell me about the meaning of dance?

If so, we can either arrange another interview or you can write to me.

Thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely,

(Susan Paulson)

PS. You may keep this copy of the interview if you wish.

Ages and Genders of Interviewees

First Scottish Group

1.S.1. 71 year old man

1.S.2. 63 year old woman, who had been a dance teacher in Canada.

1.S.3. 56 year old woman

1.S.4. 43 year old woman

1.S.5. 59 year old woman and 60 year old man, who were both dance teachers.

1.S.6. 36 year old woman and 57 year old man

1.S.7. 67 and 69 year old women

1.S.8. 49 year old woman

Second Scottish Group

2.S.1. 63 year old woman

2.S.2. 70 year old woman

2.S.3. 77 year old woman

2.S.4. 76 year old man

2.S.5. 58 year old woman and 71 year old man

2.S.6. 65 year old woman

2.S.7. 58 year old woman, who was a dance teacher

2.S.8. 63 year old woman

2.S.9. 66 year old woman

2.S. 10. 64 year old Indian woman

First Circle Group

1.C.1. 65 year old woman

1.C.2. 70 year old woman

1.C.3. 71 year old woman

1.C.4. 67 year old man and 65 year old woman

1.C.5. 73 year old woman

1.C.6. 72 year old woman

1.C.7. 77 year old woman

1.C.8. 71 year old, 68 year old and 74 year old women

1.C.9. 78 year old woman

1.C. 10. 71 year old woman, who was the dance teacher

Second Circle Group

2.C.1. 62 year old woman

2.C.2. 65 year old woman

2.C.3. 68 year old woman

2.C.4. 68 year old woman

2.C.5. 63 year old woman

2.C.6. 69 year old woman

2.C.7. 67 year old woman

2.C.8. 79 year old woman

2.C.9. 61 year old woman, who was the dance teacher

Summaries of Emotional Analysis

Interview 1.C.1

This 65 year old lady spoke in a very soft voice, with pauses to reflect. She strongly emphasises how much she loves Circle dance and her voice becomes more confident as she talks about the five rhythms. She laughs at her memories of dancing when younger and because she is doing as much dancing now as she did at school. She tells a reflective story with hesitations about the difficulties of learning Circle dance and laughs at the idea of Circle dance as good for her ageing brain. She strongly emphasises how Circle dance is good for her ageing body and mind. Her voice becomes very animated as she repeats how the Circle dance teacher admires her clothes. She laughs with pleasure about the fun of dressing up. Her voice becomes hesitant as she finds it difficult to describe a dance. She becomes animated as she describes her enjoyment of Circle dance and keeping active in her retirement. Her voice trembles as she talks about her back injury from Scottish Country dance. She laughs with pleasure as she talks about the spiritual nature of Circle dance. Her voice becomes sad as she talks about friends who have had to give up due to health problems. Her voice becomes animated as she discusses future directions for the research.

Interview 1.C.3

This 71 year old lady alternates between a very slow and reflective voice and a really animated voice when she talks of the pleasure of the dance. She laughs about her ability to learn dance easily. Her tone of voice seems to mimic the different styles of dance. She laughs a lot about her enjoyment of dressing up for Circle dance. She is more reflective as she tells the story of being in love with a Greek man when on holiday in Greece. She is deeply reflective about the emotional support provided by Circle dance, especially through touch. She laughs with pleasure about seeing people who have been ill coming back to Circle dance. She talks in a hesitant voice about sitting too much when at work and laughs about feeling better since she has retired. She laughs as she can do Circle dance in the day and seeing older people dance takes away the fear of ageing. She laughs with pleasure as other people are impressed by her ability to dance and she would like to sing and dance together.

Interview 1.C.4

This 67 and 69 year old married couple told very long and reflective stories with animated voices about the meaning of Circle dance in their lives, showing their love of the dance and music. The wife emphasises the physical, emotional and spiritual aspects of the

dance. Her husband speaks more hesitantly but emphasises her sentiments. The wife's voice shakes as she talks about her initial anxiety about getting steps wrong. The wife laughs about wanting to feel younger by wanting to dance with a group of younger people. Her voice rises as she talks about the music lifting you up and lowers as she talks about deep feelings. Her husband's voice slows down as he talks about the deep effect of the music and dance on him. Their voices are very expressive as they talk about emotions and Circle dance holidays, and they only laugh occasionally about aspects of Circle dance, such as too many women.

Interview 1.C.9

This 78 year old lady starts speaking in a hesitant voice, sounding a little nervous as she reflects on the meaning of dance in her life. She emphasises her enjoyment of Circle dance. Her voice becomes heavy and sad when she talks about her family problems. She laughs about her difficulty with rhythm. She pauses often when telling a story about crying during Circle dance. Her voice lightens and she laughs when she tells a story about her love of ballroom dancing with her brother during World War Two. She laughs about going to dances with an RAF black man straight after Church. The hesitations in her speech emphasise her difficulty in learning Circle dance due to deafness and her poor memory. She emphasises how her male friend encourages her to dance as it makes her happy. She feels she is an active person and laughs about getting involved in Circle dance which makes her forget about growing older, improves her posture and enables her to overcome dizziness on turns. She laughs as she feels Circle dance is a safe activity which takes you onto another plane.

Interview 2.C.3

This 68 year old lady tells long stories in a reflective manner, with lots of expression and pronounced pauses, emphasising her love of free dance, Scottish Country dance and Circle dance as an adult. She feels Circle dance is spiritually rewarding whereas Scottish Country dance does not have this emotional dimension. She laughs with pleasure about enjoying dance in her retirement, even if sometimes her feet will not do the dance, and the teacher teases her for practising at home. She talks intensely about the deep emotions aroused by a Circle dance workshop. She laughs as she enjoys wearing sparkly things for dance. She laughs, as she does not feel old. She feels as though she has to dance, even though she has a heel spur, and laughs about dance giving her an enormous lift. She reflects deeply on the meaning of dance for her as she grows older and laughs as she has talked so much.

Interview 1.S.1.

This 71 year old man has a slight hesitancy in his voice as he starts to speak. He talks fluently about his wife's involvement in Scottish Country dance, emphasising that she had grace whilst he has memory. Talks in past tense about his wife as she has died. There is laughter in his voice about animosity between rival dance groups and pleasure in his voice whilst talking about his good memory for dance figures. There is surprise in his voice when I comment that people in my dance class find it difficult to remember the dances. He sounds upset when he talks about being reprimanded for poor technique. He goes into long narratives about the history of Scottish Country dance. His voice softens and he pauses to reflect on details and to emphasise keywords. There is lots of expression in his voice :- amusement, fascination, pleasure, dissatisfaction, laughter and disappointment. He chooses his words carefully when he talks about the group he runs for very complex dances and there is pleasure and laughter in his voice. There is pleasure in his voice as he talks about Scottish music, and displeasure in his voice when he talks about Scottish music halls. He shows me his Scottish Country dance books and laughs at my amazement at the difficulty of the dances. He switches to 'we' as he talks about buying these books with his wife. There is laughter in his voice, as he feels appalled by dancers with poor memories. He tells a very long narrative about Ladies' Step dance in a slow and reflective voice, concluding with emphasis on trying to publish his wife's collection of Ladies' Step dances and showing me a draft of his book. He is disappointed as there are arguments within the organisation about publishing this book, but he also laughs about these squabbles. He tells a long narrative about the details of the steps as he shows me his books of choreography. He laughs as he feels enjoyment is more important than getting the footwork perfect in Ladies' Step though it is important to know the figures in Scottish Country dances. He emphasises strongly that he would rather die on the dance floor than in a nursing home. He laughs a lot as he tells the story about his brother being active in old age and upsetting the social worker. There is sadness in his voice as he talks about the declining numbers of Scottish Country dancers and rivalries between groups.

Interview 1.S.3

This 56 year old lady from my beginners' Scottish Country dance class fluently tells the story of her parents doing Scottish Country dances at a party at her home. There is laughter in her voice. The pauses emphasise the importance of Scottish Country dance in her life. She laughs over the fact that she hid her ability in ballroom dance from her husband. She tells a story about the lack of opportunity to dance, becoming reflective as she talks about learning

Latin dance. Her voice speeds up to show the ease of doing Scottish Country dances she had learnt as a child. She becomes more reflective as she talks about the lack of opportunity to repeat dances in the Scottish Country dance class. Her voice is sometimes fluent, punctuated with laughter, and sometimes reflective, such as when she talks about the process of learning Scottish Country dance. She feels pleased because she has wanted to go Scottish Country dancing even when it is raining, positioning it as good for your health and lifting her mood. She laughs as she tells stories about how she feels it is nice people change partners all the time and a childhood memory of her father disapproving of Maypole dancing.

Interview 1.S.5

This 59 and 60 year old married couple were both dance teachers. They told lengthy stories about Scottish Country dance from an expert position, in fast and fluent voices, punctuated with laughter or pauses for reflection, strongly emphasising key words. The husband quickly passes over the death of his father-in-law, strongly emphasising the significance of getting his kilt. Many of the narratives are shared between this couple as they talk about dancing throughout their married life, sometimes overlapping each other as they both talk at once. There is disappointment in the wife's voice as she talks about their children being resistant to Scottish Country dance. The husband's voice shakes when he talks about being nervous of going to the teachers' class at summer school for the first time. The wife laughs as she had trained first. They both tell stories about teaching classes and teaching techniques in a confident manner. The husband sounds frustrated when he talks about having to be content with small improvements from the students, but he laughs about using mirror-image to demonstrate and spells out teaching methods in detail, echoing his wife's emphasis on posture. The wife laughs about my question on memory, softening her voice as she says her memory is not so good now. She tells a long story about the importance of memory both for class members and the teacher in an animated voice and her husband continues this story in a similar manner. The wife's voice rises as she says 'lift' and 'away we go' when talking about demonstrating. The husband tells a more reflective story about teaching strategies, pausing to reflect on the soreness of his throat muscles after teaching. The wife laughs as she talks about students telling them the stories of dances, but she sounds sad when acknowledging that Scottish Country dance is in decline. Both husband and wife tell lengthy stories in an animated manner about the relationship of music and the dance. Both feel proud of being dance teachers, but the wife's voice flattens as she talks about her health problems. The husband talks in an animated manner about the dance as therapy and his wife talks in a lively

way about physical benefits. She becomes very animated when talking about the problems of slippery floors. Both laugh about their own problems of slowing down due to age. The wife tells the story of her father-in-law's death on the dance floor in a very calm and matter of fact voice, and her voice only shakes when she talks about the problem of not noticing the 'warning signs'. The wife laughs as she tells a story about her father teaching a man in his 90s to dance. The husband tells a reflective story about adjusting to age and leading younger dancers with non-verbal cues, sounding annoyed when talking about beginners not standing attentively. The wife laughs and echoes his sentiments with a story on the importance of body language. The husband concludes with a reflective story about the different styles of Scottish Country dance.

Interview 1.S.7

These 67 and 69 year old ladies gave a more ethnographic style interview with many instances of spontaneous sharing of ideas between themselves and myself as the interviewer. Both ladies at times spoke in a reflective manner, such as when they told stories of how they got involved in Scottish Country dance. One lady laughs, as she started as a beginner in the advanced class. She emphasises the hall was too cold for dancing and laughs about finding a warmer one. She laughs about not being able to go out dancing quite as much when her daughter was born. The other lady laughs with pleasure about getting involved in English Country dance with her friend. She talks about Ladies' Step in a fast and fluent voice, with pauses for reflection. The shared nature of narratives is shown as these two ladies interrupt each other as they talk about Ladies' Step and learning Scottish and English Country dance. Both ladies laugh as one of them offers to do a demonstration of the English Hornpipe Step. One lady laughs as she finds it difficult to say how many dances she knows off by heart and the other lady laughs about memory problems. One lady laughs about Ladies' Step getting easier with practice, becoming reflective as she talks about her grand daughters enjoying Scottish Country dance. The other lady laughs about only getting to dance as a child during wet PE sessions. She laughs about needing a skirt in Ladies' Step for your hands to hold. She softens her voice when she mentions her bowel cancer, just as the other lady does when she talks about needing a long time to regain her enjoyment of dance after the death of her husband. The pause indicates she is reflecting about her loss. The other lady's voice trembles as she talks about the people involved in dance helping her, but she later laughs. Both ladies laugh about their dance injuries, attributing some of them to dance and some of them to age. They both laugh as they intend to carry on dancing.

Interview 2.S.3

This 77 year old lady tells very lengthy stories, as she has been heavily involved in Scottish Country dance. Her voice is soft and reflective. She passes over painful issues quickly, such as the death of her husband. Her voice lightens and she laughs a lot as she tells the story of her involvement on the committee of the second Scottish Country dance group. She emphasises strongly how she likes the sociable nature of Scottish Country dance as she feels it is 'very, very enjoyable'. She sighs as she talks about feeling lost when asked to organise the entertainment for a Ceilidh. She laughs as I will be invited to the next one and she still has responsibility for the entertainment. She laughs about growing older and finding Ceilidhs too exhausting. Her sighs suggest sadness that younger people are not getting involved in Scottish Country dance. She goes into a lengthy narrative about the importance of memory, pausing to reflect. She laughs about her own inability to dance and give instructions at the same time. She laughs, as she feels amused by a dancer who can do this, and laughs at her own memory lapses. She tells a long story about different versions of dances, laughing at her own difficulties with versions which require you to dance most of the time without a rest. She laughs as the dances make her legs and feet ache and her injury to her knees was caused by a chair leg rather than the actual dance. She laughs a lot when I ask about the psychological benefits of dance and emphasises how she likes to keep positive and active, telling a story about a friend who complains about growing older. She laughs as she feels great pleasure in her own ability to be composed due to dancing having made her learn to stand still. She feels dance is important for emotional expression as she talks of her life-long love of dance, laughing as neither of her husbands were dancers. She laughs as she recites a poem she has written about Scottish Country dance. She fluently tells stories of composing dances and poems for friends and recites another poem with lots of expression.

Interview 2.S.4

This 76 year old man sounds a little nervous initially but soon goes into a slow, reflective narrative style, telling long stories about his involvement in Scottish Country dance. His voice shakes when he eventually tells me about his wife's death and he sounds very sad. His voice later speeds up and he laughs about his vow never to spend a Saturday night at home. He laughs as he feels his generation is more vigorous than the young. He becomes reflective again as he tells stories about English Country dancing and the organisation of the second Scottish Country dance group. There is surprise in his voice when he talks about being asked to be chairman of the second Scottish Country dance group. Later, his sighs suggest he

is weary of being on the committee. He continues with long stories about instructions for dances and learning new dances for balls. He strongly emphasises his anger at having two dances he had composed rejected for publication. There is laughter in his voice as he talks about people who liked these dances. He sighs when he complains about the first Scottish Country dance group teaching dances that do not fit. He tells stories about memory and his severe injury in a reflective manner. He strongly emphasises Scottish Country dancing is bad for your health.

Interview 2.S.6

This 65 year old lady strongly emphasises her problems with ballroom dance because of not having a partner. She becomes reflective as she tells the long story of her involvement in Scottish Country dance with her voice becoming lively as she mentions the names of Scottish Country dances. She strongly emphasises how the music helps you to remember the dances. She growls about the learner who got angry when someone put out a hand to help her in a dance. Her voice is soft and reflective as she tells stories about her involvement in opera and Scottish Country dance. She strongly emphasises the problems of slippery floors and becomes authoritative as she recommends me to get insoles for my ballet shoes. She tells the story of her involvement in Circle dance and international folk in a soft reflective voice. The interview changes to a more spontaneous ethnographic style as we discuss Fosse and Drewry Scottish Country dances. Her voice lightens and she laughs about enjoying dance. She strongly emphasises the problems caused by people dancing in the incorrect footwear. She claps her hands to emphasise how the music makes you want to get up and go. Her voice remains soft and reflective for the rest of the interview.

Interview 2.S.7

This 58 year old lady's voice is incredibly animated throughout the whole interview, suggesting a fascination with Scottish Country dance. She has expert status as a dance teacher. Her stories are lengthy with pauses to reflect. She emphasises emotionally significant events, such as her difficulty learning the Pas de Basque step as a child or the social aspect of chatting to other dancers when travelling to Scottish Country dance events. She laughs about teaching children Scottish Country dance, as this was the only class available. She passes over the details of her accident very quickly as this was a painful memory and she laughs with pleasure about taking up the accordion as she could not dance for a while. She tells lengthy stories about various dance forms, becoming very animated when talking about the repertoire of the Reelers. She laughs about having to run a practice Scottish Country dance session for an all

male regiment. She sounds excited when she describes how new Scottish Country dances are being composed. She talks fluently about her experience of being a dance teacher and the health benefits of Scottish Country dance. Sighs indicate her distress at injuries. Her tone of voice suggests cynicism about the value of warm-ups. Her voice becomes very soft and reflective when talking about dancers who have died on the dance floor. Her voice becomes fast and fluent again as she talks about her enjoyment of Scottish Country dance and she tells long stories about adapting this dance form for older people. She laughs about how she herself managed to dance when her foot had just come out of plaster. She sighs as she finds aches and pains a problem. She laughs about telling such long stories as she reflects on the importance of dance in her life, telling long stories about the history.

Interview 2.S.8

This 63 year old lady tells stories in a fluent voice, with pauses to reflect. There is often laughter in her voice, such as when she tells a story about doing Scottish Country dance in Uganda and mentions a Sikh doing it in a turban or the Massai joining in. She explains the difference between Scottish Country dance and international folk, with a strong emphasis on the different countries and telling the story of her involvement in a lively and animated voice. She laughs about the difficulty of the formations in Scottish County dance and the length of time she has been involved with the second Scottish Country dance group. She tells the history of this group in a reflective manner and laughs about the fact that in the past, you had to prove your Scottish ancestry, in order to join. She laughs as she has been on the committee for about ten years. She laughs about her involvement in Scottish Country dance and the difficulty of learning the dances. She softens her voice to talk about the dance written in memory of someone who died. She talks in an animated voice about her strategies for learning dances. She laughs about the ability of older dancers to get to the right place at the right time and she laughs at her own memory. She laughs about dance becoming intuitive and people using verbal and non-verbal cues. Her voice becomes hesitant when she talks about the problem with her knee. She laughs about dance making you feel better. She reflectively considers problems of injuries and slippery floors. She laughs, as she feels envious of good dancers.