

Exploration of Texture

by

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## ABSTRACT

The paper is researching the subject of texture in dancing, and exploring the definition, causes, stories, and description of texture in different dance styles through daily training, choreography and improvisation. It's also probing if different dance styles can integrate and connect naturally together without conflict. Also, the project is related to live music and recorded music, seeking more about the relationship between dance texture and music. The final 20 minutes piece contains video projection technology and live dance performance (improvisation and choreography), which went along with my creative idea and framework of my research on the various textures. The goal of my project is to understand and figure out the definition of the texture in dancing, to find out the reasons for the forming and appearance behind each dancer's distinctive texture with unique characteristics and qualities, to make attempts to find a way to analyze and describe the texture of their movements, and to know and explore what factors do influence the texture of their display. At the same time, I was exploring how to naturally connect the sound of the violin with the dance styles and textures, and how to interpret the violinist's creating process through dance performances. In the process, each dancer is like a materialization of the violinist's emotions and expressions. Using the appropriate combination of music and dance movements to express the violinist's inner mental and emotional changes in the creative process.

## DEDICATION

I dedicate my work to everyone I have danced and worked with. You are my inspiration and energy, and you keep this work challenging and rewarding.

I truly dedicate this thesis to my dancers, family, friends, and incredible committee members. Thank you all for your encouragement and practical assistance all the time.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### *Choreographic Intent*

My project is divided into two parts. The first part mainly explored the performers on the definition of texture, meaning, performance presentation, and the forming of distinctive texture reasons, training way, and theoretical knowledge support, including the episteme and analysis of the Effort category in Laban Movement Analysis. In the meantime, I collected and documented those dancers' daily training and their improvisation and choreography process. This part mainly was an analysis of each dancer's texture interpreting the movements based on the concept of Laban Movement Analysis.

The second part is the live performance section, in which I want to describe the process of creating a composition by the musician. From my perspective, music and dance are inseparable. In this section, each chapter has different emotions, feelings, textures, expression themes, and music settings. I plan on showing various textures through different improvisation and choreography in the form of chapters written by the musician, which gives the audience an intuitive and strong feeling. Then in the next part, I intend to set up three pieces of all the cast dances. I will invite four dancers (including myself). In this part, most of time I will play the recorded music, and meanwhile, the sound of the violin will serve as a transition and a foreshadowing at the interval of each piece.

In this section, the violinist will combine all the things, which are the whole thoughts, emotions, and ideas that burst out of her creating process. The choreography of whole members will use the edited music to put all of the dancers' textures and emotions that they are representing together to convey the combination of different dance forms and individual experiences in front of the audience so that we can further deepen the understanding of texture and sensory awareness.

There are three parts in total, and two songs are used in these parts. The first song will be used twice in the section of all cast dancing, which is to present how dancers with different styles and textures can create a sense of contrast in different phases. The second song is more lyrical and slower. I'd love to show as much variety, diversity, and inclusiveness as possible on the same stage, and explore how we would deal with each music choice and dance style.

Finally, we ended the show with the cypher, which is a central element traditionally seen in Hip Hop culture. The purpose is that the spirit and energy we convey will always be continuously communicated and passed on through the cypher.

I intend to focus on the intention, process, and presentation of the second part where dancers will perform on the stage in the approaches of improvisation, choreography, and collaboration. As I wrote down in the introduction, there is a specific dance style, music, and emotion for each performer in each chapter/section, so I hope that performers will be able to build and create their own work based on the definition and emotion of dancing on their own.

In this second section, I invited the musician and then provided a space to display her composing and improvising. In each of these chapters, I was inviting four excellent

dancers to demonstrate their texture and dynamics. The process of musicians creating music is an artistic and aesthetic way to express different dynamics and show distinctive dance forms in order to show different textures on the stage. During the musician's creating and composing process, her mind may constantly jump in and out of different characters, plots, emotions, and so on. Hence, I envisioned the musician's inner ideas and processes, interpreting the whole artistic creating process through the dancers' expressions for the corresponding music by their different textures and styles individually and collectively.

Moreover, co-choreography is a measurement of dancers' ability to collaborate, communicate and organize all aspects. In my research, I hope the invited dancers can become a member of our large family. Furthermore, performing a team choreography will have a strong stage visual impact and influence, but also will give the audience a larger and more powerful impression.

### *Research Questions*

1. What is texture?
2. How can I define and describe moving textures using the concept of Laban Movement Analysis?
3. How can I put different dance styles together to have a natural picture on the stage?
4. What is the reason for the forming and development behind each dancer's distinctive textures?



5. What factors influence the texture of their performance/interpretation?
6. Is it possible that different textures make tight connections and bridge to each other, thereby producing a cohesive and natural work eventually?
7. How to naturally connect the sound of the violin with the dance styles and textures I am exploring? And how to interpret the violinist's creating process through different dance textures on the stage?
8. Combining LMA knowledge, how to interpret the Effort category with dance movements?
9. How does texture affect the movement's meaning and appearance?
10. What are the stories/plots behind each choreography?
11. What is the creation process? What's the meaning for creators?
12. How do the dancers apply their own texture and how do they train it in daily life?
13. What factors affect their texture in the improvisation/choreography?
14. Why is a texture so important for dancers?
15. How do researchers dive into dance styles/textures?
16. What is the tool to help dancers achieve such a skillful effect of training the texture?
17. How do we combine seemingly incredible combinations/collaborations? For example,

the violin is combined with various dance styles of Hip Hop.

### *Significance of the Work*

My piece “Exploration of Texture” holds plenty of significance to me. Personally, as a dancer, choreographer, teacher, and researcher, I constantly believe it is essential to find new and suitable ways of conveying what intrigues me a lot and creating to express my own voice in the field of dance. Moreover, I am very interested in the presentation of different dance styles. Therefore, I think I choose the direction and fields of greatest interest, to do research with infinite motivation and enthusiasm. Overall, I found that there was less research on texture in the field of dance, and the definition of texture is also varied, so I want to fill the gaps based on previous research through my project, and also provide a more comprehensive and accurate direction for future research in the area of texture in dance.

In my project, I will develop texture definitions to enhance dancers’ recognition and consciousness of dance styles, using the Laban Movement Analysis to describe and analyze different dance textures. I hope my piece can help dancers to know the importance of texture and attempt to explore their own texture to the largest extent. Also, my piece tries to combine the individual style with the collective formation together and to integrate the improvisation with the choreography, as well as to link dance creation with the music-composing process.

I am devoting myself to making the audience understand the spirit and meaning of my piece and inspire them to pay more attention to dance as an art form, encourage them

to feel and perceive the charm of dance, and be strong supporters and appreciators of dance. Dancing can guide and lead people to respect and understand their bodies, listen to the real themselves, and understand dancers' internal thoughts and intentional expressions.

### *Definition of Terms*

#### 1) Textures in dancing

Textures in dancing refer to how the movement feels on your body (when you do it) or how the movement feels on the eyes (when you watch it). (Jessie Ma, 2021).

Texture in dance refers to the feeling of a movement, whether it be strong, soft, or sharp. This can be how something feels in your own body or how something feels when it is presented to the viewer. Essentially, in my research, texture refers to personal dance style conveying that through a visual level to make viewers feel and perceive the movement or the pattern of the body. This feeling can be specified in how the dancers move, what dancers move, and where the dancer moves.

Also, from the STEEZY Blog, there is a diagram exploring what textures in dancing are. First of all, it is based on a coordinate system. On the abscissa, the far right is fast, and the leftmost is slow. On the ordinate, the top is high, and the bottom is low. Then it forms an axis with four quadrants. The first quadrant is strong and fast. The second quadrant is strong and slow. The third is loose and slow, and the fourth is loose and fast. (STEEZY Studio, 2020) This allows us to sort out dancers' actions and textures clearly and directly. In addition, there's a video on YouTube about the definition of textures. The following quotes are about defining textures in the video. "It's the dance

element that relates to how a movement is a done-movement quality.” “Textures give nuance and variety within a piece or movement.” “We should learn how to put different qualities in our movement that can help us diversify the rhythm in dance and find new contrasts and creative phrases.” (Negative Space, 2021)

In addition, I found some correlational research on dance texture. The article was from Montclair State University-Physical Listening: The Influence of the Black Arts Movement on Free Jazz-Inspired Movement by Lauren Putty White. In the thesis, the author puts forward a new point of view and introduces a personal method of translating music into movement. Through her investigation, she was able to transcribe music into movement motifs, exploring the idea of freedom and how active listening translates music into body movement. In my understanding, the texture is a property that displays a dancer's ability to speak the language of the music by reacting to rhythms through isolated body parts. At the same time, the author also proposes how to create movement through a focus on specific musical elements. There are two parts-ostinato (a repeated rhythm) and melodic phrasing (line of the melody).

Also, I really agree with this, the author's description and summary of the relationship between texture, musicality, storytelling, and intention among dancers and musicians. “The dancers had to accent the pitch with level changes as well as accent the texture of the sounds with complementary movement qualities.” “Textures accentuate intention in the hearing and specificity in the musicality while elevating a story in the movement with an undeniable intimacy between the dancer and musician.” (White, 2020)

Oden Chelsea makes a similar point. “Dance, film, and music are living art forms. They unfold through time, motion, environments, and bodies. They take up shapes, rhythms, textures, and tones. They tell stories.” (Oden, 2021)

Feifan Song mentioned the importance of dance consciousness in changing dancers' movement texture. In the article, he mentions that “Dance is an art with the human body as the material carrier. Its emergence and occurrence are accompanied by the existence of consciousness, which is a potential spiritual activity of human beings. Dance consciousness is the self-consciousness produced by dancers in the process of dance movements.” (Feifan, 2022), so texture is to some extent determined by the dancers' consciousness of the dance.

## 2) Choreography

Choreography is the art of creating and arranging dances. The word derives from the Greek for “dance” and for “write.” In the 17th and 18th centuries, it did indeed mean the written record of dances. In the 19th and 20th centuries, however, the meaning inaccurately but universally shifted, while the written record came to be known as dance notation. The composition of dance is a kind of notation that is a work of analysis and reporting, performed generally by people other than the choreographer, in language or signs that may well not be understood by the creator. (Britannica, 2019).

The most important role in choreography is the choreographer. The choreographer's function is to conceive and make dances. They need to select the music, dancers, and other performers that may be involved in the work; establish the style and specific steps of the dance; determine the design elements such as sets, props, lighting,

and costumes; as well as share in the responsibility of producing the dance (Thomson & Jaque, 2021).

### 3) Laban Movement Analysis

Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) is a method and language for describing, visualizing, interpreting, and documenting all varieties of human movement. Also known as Laban/Bartenieff Movement Analysis, the method uses a multidisciplinary approach, incorporating contributions from anatomy, kinesiology, psychology, Labanotation, and many other fields. It is one type of Laban Movement Study, originating from the work of Rudolf Laban, developed and extended by Lisa Ullmann, Irmgard Bartenieff, Warren Lamb, and many others. In addition, many derived practices have developed with great emphasis on LMA methods. It is used as a tool by dancers, actors, musicians, athletes, physical and occupational therapists, psychotherapists, peace studies, anthropology, business consulting, leadership development, health & wellness, and is one of the most widely used systems of human movement analysis today. (“LABAN/Bartenieff Institute of Movement Studies – Learn to understand, analyze, synthesize and create movement in all its facets!”, 2021).

### 4) Effort category in LMA

Laban Movement Analysis is a theoretical and experiential system for the observation, description, prescription, performance, and interpretation of human movement. LMA provides a rich overview of the scope of movement possibilities. There

are four major categories: Body, Effort, Shape, and Space. I plan on researching my study in the effort category.

Effort can be described as the dynamics, qualitative use of energy, texture, color, emotions, inner attitude, etc. There is an ongoing (Flow) sense of self (Weight) in relation to the environment (Space) over time (Time). Effort is both functional and expressive. Effort is not quantitative—it is qualitative. There is sometimes an underlying functional Effort (for example, Strength in a weight shift underneath a Light upper body). Usually, however, we are more concerned with the expressive aspects of Effort. (Robin Konie, CLMA, 2011).

#### 5) Elements of Dance

Dance can be broken down into the following five elements: Body, Action, Space, Time, and Energy. These five elements are interconnected; at times it's hard to separate one from the other. But we are able to discuss each one and include specific vocabulary used to talk about dance and examine how each element can be manipulated to create different results.

Body means the dancer who dances. Dancers use their bodies to take internal ideas, emotions, and intentions and express them in an outward manner, sharing them with others. Action is the moves that the dancer does. Action is any human movement involved in the act of dancing. Space refers to where the dancer does move-through space-changing from the perspectives of level, direction, place, pathway, size, and relationship. Time is how the body moves in relation to time. Choreographers have to make decisions about timing. Energy means how the dancer moves through space and

time with energy. Energy will help us to identify how the dancers move in terms of effort category in LMA. The effort the dancers use can communicate meaning, depending on the energy involved, which is crucial in bringing the inner expression of emotion out to the stage performance. (Elements of Dance, 2021).

### *Assumptions*

My research is mainly aimed at the distinctive and personal dance styles and finally bringing the excellent dancers together to present a natural choreography, so for this purpose, the premise of the study is to discover and invite stylized and creative dancers with distinctive styles, and who are willing to communicate and take the time to express their textures through improvisation and arrange collaborative works together. Besides, these dancers should be able to be observed, such that researchers can watch their daily training, getting to know their forming of texture/style and understand their improvisation and choreography ideas and thoughts in their pieces. They should be able to grant permission and allow this study, meanwhile possessing their own unique insights in the field of texture in dancing. In addition, the study is based on a violinist's composing process, so it needs an artist who is good at performing and playing the violin.

Finally, the research is to explore the texture of the dancers, so I needed to have a clear definition of texture at the end of this study and to be familiar with and master the methods and theoretical basis for summarizing and analyzing those dancers' movements.

### *Limitations*



Language: English is my second language. It may be challenging to invite dancers to my project. I'm a little concerned about if I can transmit everything the dancers want to say and convey what they really want to express most.

Dancers: I'd like to find another ideal three dancers and one musician (violinist). I will try to start looking for and communicating ahead of time.

Time: The timing of the entire study is dense and tight. First I'll find the dancers and communicate and ask if they'd like to come to my project. Then, with their consent and permission, I will ask them to record and send their self-introduction videos at the beginning, about one minute for each person. Afterward, I'll send a list of research questions to everyone, (including myself). Then I hope they will record it in a written version and return it to me.

I then will ask them to send a video of about 5 minutes of personal practice every week, which can be basic skills training, improvisation, or choreography. Then I'll set up their own solo music based on the specific theme and music of each chapter based on their appropriate dance texture. Each person will have about one minute of solo expression in each chapter. In the subsequent cast choreography, we need to discuss ideas and choreograph actions through meeting sessions. So my biggest concern is the heavy task and tight schedule. Meanwhile, various dancers with different dance forms are involved.

### *Delimitations*

I plan to set the first part of the introduction. The introduction is in the form of a video, mainly for the three areas of introducing yourself, your texture, and your

understanding of texture. Before the video shows up, observation is a necessary part, which is focusing on the dancers' daily training, dance improvisation, and performance, which is mainly analyzed from the dance textures they present, combined with the content of Elements of Dance and the Effort category of the LMA, as well as attempt to describe their movement texture in as much detail as possible.

The second part is a live performance which includes a lot of live music, improvisation, and choreography. Here I will arrange and design parts according to the dancers' dancing styles. For each chapter, they will have a specific theme, texture, style, and music for each. Those dancers are asked to improvise and choreograph under the specific understanding and definition of texture and dancing. Then the choreography will be a cast piece where our dancing mainly shows up those portions of movements, formation arrangement, stage design, and musical choice. In the end, we will engage in the form of a cypher to close out the performance. Each person will have two eight counts to improvise and perform. The sound will be from the violin and our clapping.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### *Analysis of materials*

My topic is to study the texture of dance. The main questions involved are: What is texture? What is the definition of texture? How to analyze texture? How to describe and analyze texture in written language? How to connect dance and live music naturally through the exploration of texture? Visually, I will mainly study different styles and dance textures of each dancer, including their personal moving space, spatial awareness, usage of the space, and space management on the stage, as well as the use of timing, strength, speed, etc., which together is a study of their texture. For aural, I was exploring how to connect hip-hop dance naturally to live music (violin). Because when people think of Hip Hop dance, they automatically think of the DJ, who is the key person that can handle and control the whole scene. However, my research was designed to challenge and test whether this fusion could work, and for me, it was an unconventional way to explore it on a deeper level.

In terms of written academic research, I am studying how to describe and analyze texture through written language. During this period, I tried to use Laban Movement Analysis to analyze the various textures of dancers and hoped to make some contributions and supplements to this field. When I did a second review, I found that everything that unfolded was much better than I had expected. For example, during the transition, the process of musicians playing and then leading out the next dancer is more natural and skillful than expected. During the last part of the cypher, the audience

consciously gave us enough support and encouragement, which made me deeply feel that they truly understood what I wanted to express and research. I'm very encouraged and touched. When the cast dances together with various unique textures, it is also a kind of beauty. I prefer to show diversity and inclusiveness in dancing. This is my aim and pursuit of art.

Besides, I learned to use my own language and understanding to summarize the definition of texture. The texture is the natural physical response of the dancer to the understanding of music in the movement space, and at the same time forms a distinct personal style of movement performance. I learned what to look for in a dancer's movement and texture and style in terms of those aspects of time, space, flow, and weight. I learned how to integrate live music and dance performance better. I learned which aspect to study texture from. I also learned how to collaborate with dancers and create better work together.

### *Contribution*

In my opinion, my research has made the following contributions to this field:

1. The use of LMA for analysis has unified the analysis standards to some extent so that people can have an accurate standard and analysis criteria for the analysis of texture.
2. Diversified research materials and objects are provided, providing more possibilities and potential.

3. My research contributed a variety of definitions of texture, including the dancers studied and my own definition and understanding.

4. I think my attempt to present the hip-hop community on the stage may not be so successful and entertaining, but I am trying and working hard.

### *Background*

I've always been interested in the study of texture in dance. "Originally, Texture refers to the feel, appearance, or consistency of a surface or substance." (Were, 2018). However, Textures in dancing refer to "how to move feels on the body (when you do it) or how move feels on the eyes (when you watch it)." (Jessie Ma, 2021). In my opinion, the texture in dance is to feel and perceive the sensations that the action conveys physically to describe them in detail and then to transform them into text that can be recorded or any information in the media that can be stored and become a form of data and documents that we can continue to study and dive into. To be frank, it is to explore and feel personal dance forms and to translate descriptions into researchable documentaries.

In more detail, the definition of texture in dance is "Textures/dynamics are how you accentuate the music and match the changes and flow of the song, as well as adding a performance aspect to a piece."(Loughlin, 2021). "Dance textures are expressions of the dance music." ("What are Textures in Dance? – CLI Studios", 2022) These definitions of texture in dance are closely related to music. It highlights the main role and position of music, describing texture and dynamics to better serve the rhythmic changes and flows.

Based on the literature and study of the Elements of Dance, the definition of texture relates to the following three aspects. One refers to dynamics which means “how the dancer moves. e.g. fast/slow, sudden/sustained, speed/deceleration, strong/light, direct/indirect, flowing/abrupt.” Another is about the noun space, which refers to “where the dancer moves. e.g. pathways, levels, directions, size of movements, patterns, spatial design.” There are the third term-actions that mean “what a dancer does. e.g. traveling, turning, elevation, gesture, stillness, use of body parts, floor-work and the transference of weight.” (“Do You Wanna Dance?”, 2021).

In summary, texture refers to feeling and perceiving the movement of the body that conveys the feeling through the visual level. This feeling can be specified to how the dancers move, such as from the speed, strength, and other angles of analysis; what dancers move, like turning around, floor moves, changing gravity, etc.; where the dancer moves, such as changing the pathways, the directions and so forth. Moreover, the expression of texture and the harmony of musical elements is essential. It is necessary to maintain the interpretation of the personal style of music, including the lyrics, rhythmic changes, and flow to extremely understand and then express.

Combining the above definitions with the Laban Movement Analysis, I will conduct my research from the Laban Movement Analysis's effort/ energy/ dynamics category. For the part of recording and interviewing dancers about their texture, I will describe and analyze their movements and personal styles in combination with “what” the dancers have done, “how” and “where” they move. And then I will describe and interpret their movements and practices in detail through the vocabulary and knowledge of the effort category in Laban Movement Analysis. In addition, in my research, I will focus on

the expression and fusion of music and dance texture, the dancers' understanding of their texture, the uniqueness of the individual, and the fusion of collective texture expression.

Studies have also provided answers about how dancers should train, practice, elevate, and enhance their own dance texture and style. "Think about different materials. They are smooth, rough, silky, spikey, rigid, flowing, dry, wet, light, heavy, solid, soft, etc. Now think in terms of textures/dynamics in relation to dance, we can apply these words to our movement to give it variation and keep our dancing interesting." (Loughlin, 2021). One of the studies objectively documented its texture and what it looked like, by providing examples of the different textures for a single move. For example, "Texture is resistant, tense, and drawn out. It looks/feels like dancing in a tub of jello." (Jessie Ma, 2021). This is a good and vivid way for the researchers and dancers to understand and comprehend the specific feelings and expressions of this specific texture.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY/PROCESSES FOLLOWED IN CREATING THE WORK

#### *Overview of Creative Process*

I have always been interested in texture analysis because I enjoy watching different dancers on the same stage show their style and texture. That's why I started my research. For the creation process, I first chose two songs for the entire cast. Both of them are my favorite songs, the first of which, in 2002, Nas released the album *God's Son*. The song's name is "I CAN". The second song is *Hrs & hrs*, since I would like to create a big contrast to show a different texture on the stage, compared to the first song. Then I began to choreograph. Starting from movements, I would create and arrange dance movements in the form of counting and combining them with the actual meaning expressed by the lyrics. At the same time, I also arranged the formation and then wrote them down. This is followed by a meeting with the dancers to determine their solo repertoire and push them through choreography to ensure that everyone is committed to the project. Then we rehearse and cooperate together.

#### *Collecting the Data*

I asked each dancer to send me their self-introduction and collect their definition of dance texture as well as their practice videos, including improvisation, choreography, basic skills training, and so on.

#### *Population of the Study*



In my project, there is a population of four dancers.

### *Analyzing the Data*

I analyzed the data based on the collected materials, including video and text content, and according to the Laban Movement Analysis of scientific and systematic analysis in different categories. Part of the knowledge and theory of elements of dance are also used.

### *Determining the Content*

After determining the topic and direction of the research, I began to determine the general form and content of the project. First of all, I want to show the dancers' basic cognition and definition of dance texture and the dance movement texture presented by them. Therefore, I have determined that the first part will present the general content of the research theme and the dancers' basic self-introduction, and so on. In the second part, I hope to present different dancers and different styles on the same stage to show different textures, fusions, and collisions. So I put the music in the hands of the dancers and let them decide what to do. Then I decided on two songs and started choreographing the dance moves and conveying the effects and goals I wanted, the formations, and so on.

### *Choreographing the Interaction*

In general, I will arrange several dance scenes and settings first, then arrange the formation, and then arrange the dance movements. In my project, the second part is a live performance, and in this part, We have the partners' interaction before the formal dance

movement and we were conducting the four dancers' cypher and the invisible interaction between dancers and musicians through melody and dance and the formation change and movement, and the interaction with the audience.

### *Choreographing the System*

I first arranged the movements according to the meaning of the song. I usually choreograph a song in two ways. The first is the arrangement of counting the beats; The second is the choreography of actions through lyrics. I think either way, we should be very familiar with the music, including its sounds, instruments, or sound effects... Only then can we express and visualize music through dancing.

### *Choreographing the Environment*

In the performance, I hope to use violin melody to surround the whole stage, lingering around the whole environment and achieving the effect of infecting the audience. I used the personal charm of the dancers, the interaction between the dancers, the interaction between the dancers and the audience, the interaction between the dancers and the musicians, and the interaction between the musicians and the audience to create this place and this atmosphere.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS OF COMPLETED WORK

#### *Assessment of the advantages*

Music: I devote myself to relating live music (violin playing) and recorded music (four solo songs and 2 cast songs) to the dancers. I used the pieces of dancers as a connection to build up a bridge between live music and recorded music.

Dance formation: There are relatively many formation changes. Each dancer has their preference to dance in a different spot on the stage for their solo parts, and I provide the space and respect their choice. Also, I devote myself to changing various dance forms to make the whole picture more colorful and diverse.

Conceptual: Texture in dance is an area that has some gaps, so it is a good research direction to delve into. In addition, I try to use the Effort category of Laban Movement Analysis to describe the dance texture and style of dancers.

#### *Assessment of the weaknesses*

Music: I think more thought could have been given to how to better integrate violin and dance because there are still some disconnect points in this project that I believe could have been done better. For example, in the transition of every solo song, is it necessary to let the violinist wait for a while before playing? The whole process seems to lack coherence and integrity.

Dance movements: We can have more changes because, in this project, the dance moves are relatively plain and slow. I always believe that good work should not be

monotonous and boring, so I firmly believe that the choreography of dance movements can be varied and there should be more contrasts and comparisons.

Dance formation: More formation changes and substantive interaction between dancers can be carried out. Now each of these pages is relatively separate.

Theoretical knowledge: maybe it can show more about hip hop's original culture and research knowledge. The project just showed little of this.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE

#### *Concluding Reflections and Finding*

The whole project is divided into two parts. The first part is about the definition and interpretation of texture in the field of dance, the self-introduction of each dancer, and a brief introduction to the basic theory and knowledge of Laban Movement Analysis. I think the good part of this part is that it can let the audience intuitively understand the direction and topic we are studying and have a basic understanding of each dancer. The deficiency is that there may be a lack of a certain degree of analysis of texture as well as results and theoretical content. The second part revolves around the violinist's creative process from beginning to end. My original intention is to describe the entire creative process of a violinist, including every inspiration, idea, and source she breaks out, the process of different ideas fighting and battling in her brain, or different inspirations merging and cooperating. Her ideas and inspirations are expressed and presented by the dancer's movements and textures. In this process, we have a solo, partner interaction, all-cast collaboration, and musician's solo. In addition, I also presented “dancing in a circle”—cypher on the stage, because it is an important element of hip hop. The good thing is that I presented the cooperation of live music and dance and a complete process of displaying texture, but I should have made more formation changes and interactions. For example, the time of the cypher could be extended to let the audience know more about this aspect. Mashup music can be used to connect with live music naturally at the same time. It can make the connection and transition of each scene more natural and smooth.

### *Future Directions*

In addition, in terms of the results and analysis of texture in dancing in Laban Movement Analysis, Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) is a method and language for describing, visualizing, interpreting, and documenting all varieties of human movement. Personally, I think this research fits well with the combination of LMA, because I applied it to the Effort category of LMA.

Effort can be described as the dynamics, qualitative use of energy, texture, color, emotions, inner attitude, etc. There is an ongoing (Flow) sense of self (Weight) in relation to the environment (Space) over time (Time). Effort is both functional and expressive. Effort is not quantitative—it is qualitative. There is sometimes an underlying functional Effort (for example, Strength in a weight shift underneath a Light upper body). Usually, however, we are more concerned with the expressive aspects of Effort. (Robin Konie, CLMA, 2011). It fits perfectly with the texture I want to study flow, weight, space, and time. It provides powerful evidence and analytical tools to help me better analyze and evaluate the dance and texture of each dancer, so as to better study and document the texture of movements.

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APPENDIX A

DANCERS' ANSWERS TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

*What is texture in dancing?*

Research participant-Hannah Berbard

Texture in dancing is how certain movement patterns appear to the audience and how certain movement qualities feel to the performer's body. My moving textures are a direct translation of my emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental state. Texture is like a vital nutrient that works in conjunction to help build the artist's story. It allows the audience to understand what emotions are being conveyed, the subject matter, and the overall story. The stories behind my choreography all deal with an internal conflict and reflect how I find myself in life dealing with my battles internally. Also my choreography presents possibly a resolution to the internal conflict.

It is necessary for each and every dancer to discover their innate movement texture because it can help to create the foundation of authentic movement. Not only does authenticity differentiate individuals and objects but also is centered at the root of the identity of the dancer. Just like not everybody experiences life in the same manner, not everyone's movement qualities are released with the same type of energy, personality, and intention.

Research participant-Tongjie Kong

Texture is the natural physical response of the dancer to the understanding of music in the movement space, and at the same time forms a distinct personal style of movement performance.

Originally, Texture refers to the feel, appearance, or consistency of a surface or substance. However, Textures in dancing refers to how the movement internally feels on

the body (when you do it) or how the movement externally feels on the eyes (when you watch it).

I've been looking for ways to go from the surface definition of texture to the deeper definition and meaning of texture in dance. For me, as I delve deeper and apply my cognition from the textured surface to kinematics, I feel that through touching, perceiving, imagining, and simulating the real entity and substance and then imitating and translating those visual feelings into corresponding dance movements. For example, I want to simulate the feeling of nails scraping on the wall, if there is a wall next to me, I can personally use my hands to touch the wall, and then remember and describe that tactility in my mind, such as, uncomfortable, choppy, not smooth. After that, I will constantly imagine and strengthen this feeling in my brain and try to apply actions to show such texture.

In my opinion, the texture in dance is to feel and perceive the sensations that the action conveys physically and to describe them in detail, and then to transform them into text that can be recorded or any information in the media that can be stored and become a form of data and documents that we can continue to study and dive into. To be frank, it is to explore and feel personal dance forms and to translate descriptions into researchable documentaries.

Research participant-Youngjoo Jang

(1). What is the texture in dancing?

Texture in dance is your movement quality, the layers you add to convey different weights and feelings.

(2). How will you define and describe your moving textures?

My texture tends to be wavy while incorporating hits throughout.

(3). How does texture affect the movement's meaning and formation to you?

I change my textures to better portray the character that I'm embodying or to better emphasize the music.

(4). What are the stories/plots behind each of your choreography? Where are they from?

I don't use a lot of linear storytelling/plots, I create a character based on the song's tone and I'll use their narrative to lead the direction of my choreography.

(5). What is the "creating process"? What's that meaning for creators?

It's the process of executing/fleshing out your artistic vision, it looks different for everyone but many artists have a ritualistic way of creating that they may call their own creative process.

(6). As we all know, different textures of distinctive dance forms such as Hip Hop, popping, locking, breaking, and Jazz, how and why do they perform like that? What are the reasons and stories appearing behind each of them?

The dance forms surrounding Hip Hop like locking and popping etc are all created within the context of the history and the music. Some were created in club settings for example and it shows in the rhythm of the movements.

(7). How do you train your texture and basic skills to develop your style and groove in daily life?

I did freestyle a lot to different songs because music plays a large role in the direction of my movement. I also watch other dancers both in person and online to learn from and do popping drills from YouTube.

(8). What factors affect your texture in the improvisation/choreography?

Definitely the music because it just leads the direction for my choreography.

(9). How do you literally name and describe the movements/texture on your own?

I try to use analogies but sometimes I just use words like “ slimy “ and “ groovy” because they invoke the feeling I’m trying to embody.

(10). Do you think every dancer needs to have their own dance texture? Why is it so important for dancers?

I think every dancer has their own textures naturally and it’s something that they continuously develop throughout their dance journey. It’s important because it’s essentially their movement style.

(11). What do you think is the reason for the formation of different dance textures?

I think different influences from pop culture and history such as robotting or animation from sci-fi movies. I also think that people just naturally create their own textures through exploration, trial, and error.

(12). What approaches and tools can help dancers achieve such a skillful effect of training that texture?

I would honestly recommend training in different styles of popping to grow awareness of the body. Popping plays with so many different textures that you can practice

(13) . Do you have any impressions and opinions about live music and music that has been recorded before? Do you think they're the same or different during live performances?

I think that live music forces you to adapt more because anything can happen while recorded music allows you to get a consistent experience each time.

Research participant-Alyssa Ramirez

(1). What is the texture in dancing?

Texture means how the moves feel to me as the dancer. It goes hand in hand with movement quality and dynamics for the reason that a dancer's texture can be based on specific qualities and dynamics such as speed, time, and energy. Textures can also reference the way an audience views the movement feels or is happening within a dancer in space.

(2). How will you define and describe your moving textures?

I define my moving textures as flowy, groovy, hard hitting, smooth, sharp, sudden, and outpouring.

(3). How does texture affect the movement's meaning and formation to you?

Texture affects the movement's meaning and formation by creating the intensity, flow, and energy of the movements. Texture is what makes moves come off a certain way to an audience.

(4). What are the stories/plots behind each of your choreography? Where are they from?

Personally, when creating choreography, I tend to steer away from stories and plots. Instead, I find myself creating movement solely based on the music itself. In detail, I focus on musicality and ways to play with the rhythm and tempo of music rather than creating stories. The closest I get to creating a “story” of some kind is if my movement is based on the lyrics or message of a song I am creating.

(5). What is the “creating process”? What’s that meaning for creators?

The creating process is the steps or journey one takes to establish ideas and movements. The creating process is never a linear process for the reason that ideas can be reworked or forgotten. It is a process that pushes the creators to discover their strengths, weaknesses, and go-to habits when creating. The meaning of this process is not definite for the reason that the process can lead to various pathways for each creator. Personally, the process is a time-consuming journey that allows me to look into my creative toolbox where I hold all my learnings and further place those learnings into new ideas and movements.

(6). As we all know, different textures of distinctive dance forms such as Hip Hop, popping, locking, breaking, and Jazz, how and why do they perform like that? What are the reasons and stories appearing behind each of them?

The forms of Hip Hop have different textures and distinctive qualities because they all come from different places and backgrounds. Although these forms have influenced one another, the movement intents of each form are different from one another. For example, the DNA of locking is the lock whereas the DNA of breaking is the footwork. Each form calls for a different emphasis on the body which brings out different textures and qualities of movement. This is not to say that these forms do not have similar textures. Take the example of locking and popping. In locking, the lock, uplock, and points are extremely sharp, intentful, and linear similar to popping which includes linear shapes and sharp, hard-hitting contracted movements.

(7). How do you train your texture and basic skills to develop your style and groove in daily life?

To develop my style and groove, I simply listen to music and freestyle or improvise. It's a great way to practice thinking and creating on the spot in connection to the music. It allows me to see what textures I gravitate towards and which ones I shy away from.

(8). What factors affect your texture in the improvisation/choreography?

Factors that affect my texture in improvisation and choreography are the music, the setting, and the mind state I am in. First texture is affected by the music because I find it easiest to connect to music when my texture matches the texture/quality of the music. For example, if a song is extremely groovy then my movement will embody the grooviness of the music. As for setting, I believe where I physically place myself can limit the ways I explore texture through direction changes, level changes, and speed changes. Regarding mind state, my movement and its texture is connected to where I am at mentally. For example, if I am feeling energetic and open to challenges, I see my texture being outpouring and hard-hitting.

(9). How do you literally name and describe the movements/texture on your own?

In more literal terms, I describe my textures as flowy, groovy, hard hitting, smooth, sharp, sudden, and outpouring. I see my movements textures as very oppositional meaning I go back and forth and between each texture that I see fits best with my improvisation and music.

(10). Do you think every dancer needs to have their own dance texture? Why is it so important for dancers?

I don't think every dancer needs to have their very own specific dance texture but instead, be able to embody various textures. To me, each dancer, whether they are aware



of it or not, has their own dance textures that arise when they move to music, prompts, and stories. Each dancer has their own way of moving and feeling movement which is why I consider texture not a necessity but a given aspect of being a dancer. With that being said, dance texture is important because it is what the dancers embody to help display the emotions, feelings, and energies intended to come out of the movement.

(11). What do you think is the reason for the formation of different dance textures?

I think different dance textures have formed the way they have for the reason that different movement scenarios bring forth different movement possibilities and ideas. By scenarios, I am referring to aspects of dance that help one create movement such as music, stories, props, etc.

(12). What approaches and tools can help dancers achieve such a skillful effect of training that texture?

Regarding approaches and tools dancers could use to achieve a skillful effect of training texture, dancers may use the approach of relying on music to help build a sense of texture in their movement. Additionally, the same can be said with stories and plots. A dancer can create feelings that then help to create a feeling a dancer can body thus developing the texture of movements. Outside of those approaches, there's the tool of improvisation that dancers can use to train or work on movement textures. With the tool of improvisation, a dancer can work on emoting and performing using various textures such as smooth, fluid, heavy, etc.

(13). Do you have any impressions and opinions about live music and music that has been recorded before? Do you think they're the same or different during live performances?

My impressions about live music and recorded music is that they both enable me to want to move and create. My body responds easily to recorded music because I typically know what is going to happen next in the music. As for live music, I believe it encompasses a surreal essence in which the movement can become just as lively as the live music. I believe each is similar in the way that they allow me to move with a musicality intent, but are different in the ways the body reacts to the sounds of each.

APPENDIX B

ANALYSIS SAMPLE-ANALYZING TONGJIE'S DANCING STYLE

BASED ON THE EFFORT CATEGORY IN LMA

Definition:

Effort, or what Laban sometimes described as dynamics, is a system for understanding the more subtle characteristics about movement with respect to inner intention.

Categories:

<b>Effort Factor</b>	<b>Effort element (<i>Fighting</i> polarity)</b>	<b>Effort element (<i>Indulging</i> polarity)</b>
Space	Direct	Indirect (flexible)
Weight	Strong	Light
Time	Sudden (quick)	Sustained
Flow	Bound	Free

From the perspective of space, she knows how to pay attention to the usage of space. She is constantly carrying out mental activities to enhance thinking and cognition, as well as dance awareness of space. I classify her texture as normal flexibility, which is about all encompassing thought and all-round attentiveness. She always connects movements from point A to point B by drawing circular shapes and rolling with different body parts. But also sometimes there are some normal directness ideas in her movements, such as allowing the presence of fixed points and lines or pinpointing some accents in the song by using other shapes, including square and triangle.

In terms of weight, it's more about the intention, will power, sensation, and a 'gut' feeling of the dancers. For this part, I see the normal lightness and extremely strong in her. It depends on how she reacts and feels to different songs. In her daily practice, she always likes to draw circles and show a watery and flowing texture in her body. However, when she hears some music that is appropriate for a Krump session, she can completely switch the texture to extremely strong, which can be described as brutal, and stubborn.

From the point of view of time, this aspect is about intuition and timing of dancers' awareness. I would describe her texture in terms of normal sustained and extremely sustained. And from her, she always gives time for an event to fully develop, who always is waiting for the best moment to make music more visible. Nevertheless, occasionally I can see the laziness and hesitation in her quality after a complete change of music.

From the perspective of flow, it is more about personal feelings. I would like to describe her style as normally free, which is fluent, easy going, and smooth. The whole process was flowing, and watery. And I can see that her personal characteristic comes through in the way she dances all the time.