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Getting ready to move as a couple. Accomplishing mobile formations in a dance class

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Authors' biographies

Mathias Broth is an associate professor of language and culture at Linköping University, Sweden. His interest in language and embodied human interaction has led to many studies on television production, learning, and mobility. He has edited a special issue "Communicating, Place, Space and Mobility" (Journal of Pragmatics), and is currently editing a book on video practices (Routledge). Broth also develops research around learning to drive cars.

Leelo Keevallik is a professor of language and culture at Linköping University, Sweden. In her research she has focused on grammar as a temporal phenomenon in interaction and its coordination with the body. She has recently published articles on dance teaching in *Research on Language and Social Interaction and Pragmatics*.

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Getting ready to move as a couple. Accomplishing mobile formations in a dance class

Mathias Broth¹ & Leelo Keevallik²

Abstract

The article focuses on how students in a Lindy Hop dance class move into a complex mobile formation as a sequentially relevant response to a directive embedded in the teachers' verbal and embodied instructions of the next task for practice. This sequence of actions accomplishes a transition from a stationary constellation of observing students to a mobile circle of practicing dance couples. The article describes in detail how instruction is turned into practice in an emergent way, in and through the simultaneous accountable production and reception of *qualitative instruction*, *practice proposals*, *structuring instructions* and *count-ins*. The analysis shows how student behavior is oriented to the couple as a relevant mobile formation, and how couples gradually become more synchronized with each other.

Keywords

Mobile formations, dance instruction, Lindy Hop classes, activity transitions, embodied response, multimodal interaction analysis, Ethnomethodological Conversation Analysis.

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1. Introduction

This article is about how a particular kind of mobile formation – dancing couples in a Lindy Hop class – comes into being. Typically, dance classes are organized in two kinds of recurrent segments: instruction and practice. During instruction, teachers comment on student performance and give guidelines for the practice to come. Following the instruction students practice the dance moves in couples. The analysis shows how participants in a dance class move from instruction to practice in an emergent way, reflexively and accountably (Garfinkel 1967, p. 33). The transition from instruction to practice is sequentially organized as a directive utterance by the teachers to which the students comply by beginning to practice the dance. In focusing on a pair of actions that is accomplished by two collective parties (the teacher couple and the students), and where the relevant student response is an interactionally accomplished embodied action, the article extends previous research on paired actions (Schegloff 2007). The analysis demonstrates how beginning to move as a couple in a dance class – an activity that itself involves a precise spatial coordination among partners and couples – constitutes a recognisable response to a directive turn. A mobile formation can thus be a resource for building a relevant next action. The study also shows what it takes to accomplish a transition from a stationary formation to a collective moving party.

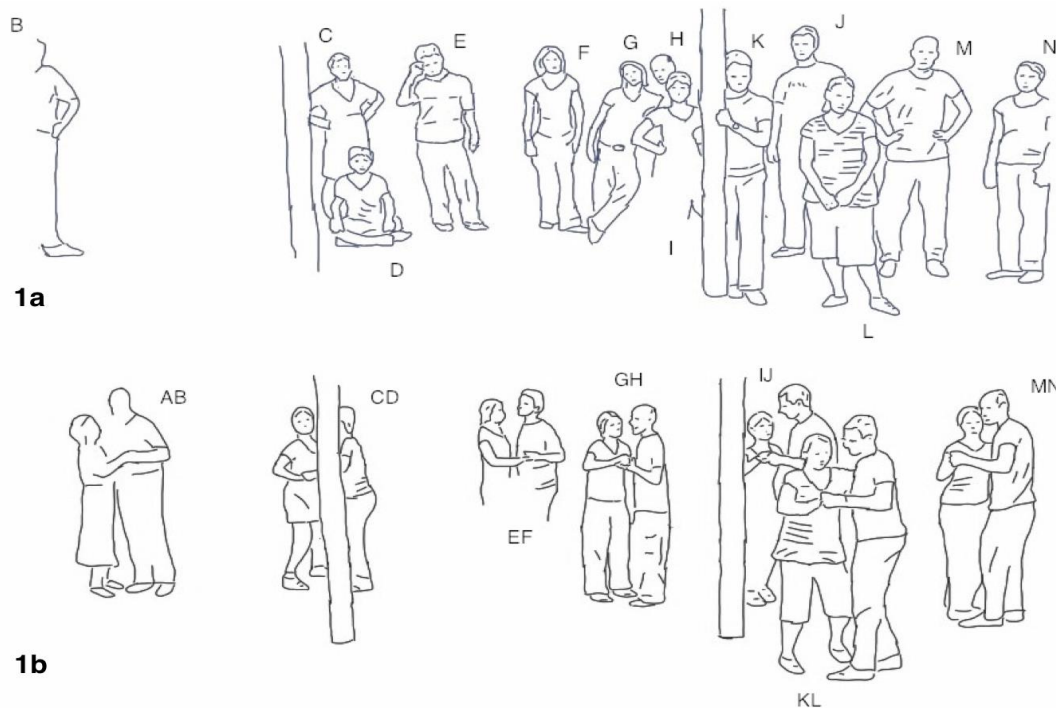
Many types of group instruction are organized in such a way that students form a single simultaneously acting party. Examples range from gymnastics and choral singing to the traditional study of Koran. The interactional advantage of a collective party is that it can be collectively addressed, and the pedagogical advantage is, of course, that a large group of people can simultaneously profit from the practice. Besides, students can use each other as points of reference for evaluating their own performance.

In group dance classes the students often move in synchrony. Acting as part of a collective party in the class furthermore involves starting to dance at the same time as everybody else. It is a complex practical task for the participants to coordinate the beginning of a joint rhythmic activity and achieve collective mobility. A further complication in classes of partner dance, among them Lindy Hop, is that the students have to arrange themselves into couples in order to accomplish mobility in a relevant manner. Thus, the global moving body of students in partner dance classes consists of smaller constellations, which also have to be arranged in response to guidance by the teachers.

One way to organize students in a dance class is as a circle around the teachers. During the instructive segment the circle enables all the students a free view of the teachers, and during the practice segment the arrangement on a circle functions as a device of avoiding collisions, as everybody moves in the same direction. It can also function as a structuring device for partner change. At the same time, the circle affords easy spotting of divergent behavior, and it is thus also a pedagogical instrument. In the figures of this article we will see one section of a circle.

Our focus will be on the interactional accomplishment of the embodied transition between the relatively immobile relaxed posture of the students during instruction and their joint synchronized initiation of the dance. Figures 1a and 1b, taken from our target case, show the bodies of the students while the teachers are demonstrating a dance move, and 17 seconds later when the step practice is about to start. Throughout the article, each student will be identified by a letter, and couples by two neighboring letters in alphabetical order.

Figure 1: (a) Attending to teachers' demonstration. (b) Beginning to dance, the teacher utters *sju* ('seven') in the count-in (Excerpt (4), l. 21).



These above two images show two rather different situations: one clearly stationary and the other on the verge of becoming a dancing mobile formation. Nevertheless, at both moments, all participants comport themselves in a highly similar way. In the following, we will identify the cues that lead the students to increasingly engage themselves as dancing couples, analyze the practical problems they face in the task, and reveal the methodic practices through which these are dealt with.

2. Sequences, directives, and embodiment in mobile formations

One of the defining characteristics of Conversation Analysis as a discipline is its theoretical and analytical interest in the sequential organisation of actions-in-interaction (Sacks, 1992:I, p. 3-11). Some actions were early on identified as forming “adjacency pairs”, actions that are normatively tied together in a particularly strong way through a “conditional relevance” (Schegloff 1968, p. 1083). The claim is that, from a participant’s perspective, “[...] given the first, the second is expectable” (Schegloff 1968, p. 1083.), and if not produced, it is noticeably missing. Many types of adjacency pairs have been described, for example, greeting – greeting, question – answer, and request – granting/refusal. These straightforward pairs may be expanded in different ways (see further Schegloff, 2007).

More recently, there has been an increased interest in the embodied and visual aspects of adjacently paired actions, especially regarding responses. For instance, an embodied response may be the only relevant alternative, as when you are asked to pass the salt at a table, turn right as the driver of a car (Haddington, 2010) or make a shot of a particular participant in the studio as the camera operator during a TV-production (Broth, 2011). Clearly, there are limits to what can be done with words only.

So far, studies have mainly focused on the *sequential* relations between an initiating action and its response. But of course participants do not vanish from the scene while somebody else is involved in the production of either of the two parts of an adjacency pair.

Rather, they embody themselves as recipients of the other's action in accountable ways. As Goodwin (1979) was one of the first to show empirically, there is a very fine-grained *reflexive* and simultaneous relation between the activities of speakers and recipients, leading to the understanding that actions are co-constructed at a minute level of detail. The ethnomethodological and conversation analytic research tradition that is now establishing itself as "multi-modal interaction analysis" (see e.g. Streeck, Goodwin & LeBaron, 2011) has continued this work and describes how participants use not only talk but also visual resources (gesture, gaze, body posture, manipulation of artifacts, etc.) to build sequences. Participants can, for example, project themselves as next speakers through pointing (Mondada, 2007), take a stance on assessments through facial expressions (Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori, 2006) and initiate a sequentially expected embodied response through camera panning (Broth, 2011) well before the completion of the first verbal action.

The relevance of participants' mobility for the sequential organisation of action has recently also become a focus of interest (McIlvenny, Broth & Haddington, 2009; Haddington, Mondada & Nevile, 2013). The mobility of participants often, but not always, implies a change or modification of the mutual spatial positioning between the participants. Kendon (1990), studying relatively stationary settings, first showed how people position themselves in different "F-formations" (or "facing-formations", Kendon, 1990, p. 249) in focused interaction (e.g. face-to-face, in a circle or side-by-side). Mondada (2005) described how the "interactional space" thus created is flexibly related to the on-going activity and the local environment. This work now continues in a renewed interest in what has early on been described as "vehicular units" or mobile "withs" (Goffman, 1971, pp. 8, 19), or accountable "togethernesses" (Ryave & Schenkein, 1974, p. 270). With the added focus on the dynamic, emergent and achieved character of groups of people on the move, the mobility of groups is studied as it is ongoingly maintained, initiated or ended: for example, Mondada (2009) describes how mobile participants become stationary as a new interactional space is set up for asking the way in the street; Broth and Mondada (2013) analyze how stationary participants become mobile as a way of closing the current activity; and Broth and Lundström (2013) analyze both these aspects in a detailed analysis of walking between different places during a guided walk at a boat club.

On a relatively global level, the actions involved in the concerted accomplishment of the relevant mobile dance formations considered in the current article are 1. a directive (telling someone what to do), and 2. its compliance (cf. Craven & Potter, 2010). This is analysable as an adjacency pair where the first pair part is built using verbal and other embodied resources and the second pair part produced through a particular kind of embodied response: starting to dance. Although the literature on directives in conversation is extensive (see M.H. Goodwin, 2006 for an overview), few studies focus directly on embodied responses to directives. For notable exceptions, see M.H. Goodwin (2006) on sequential trajectories of directives in families, Cekaite (2010) on shepherding children, Mondada (2011) on directives in video gaming, and Lindwall and Ekström (2012) on crocheting instruction. The present article builds on this work by looking at how embodying a particular kind of mobile formation can be a relevant response to a directive in a dance class. Furthermore, rather than being sequentially discrete units in time, the analysis shows how the directive and its compliance emerge together, as the compliance is initiated well before the directive is achieved.

3. Data and methodology

The data were video recorded in classes of Lindy Hop during 2006 to 2010. Lindy Hop originates from the improvisational engagement of African-American dancers in the ballrooms of Harlem in the 1920s, but has after its revival become a genre that is taught at regular teacher-guided classes. It is a partner dance typically taught by a “lead” and a “follow” teacher. The overall length of the corpus is about 25 hours and the 13 teachers speak English, Swedish or Estonian. The example here will be in Swedish but the described pattern applies all across the data. The phenomenon of transition from instruction to practice occurs about 12 times per hour, thus being a frequent concern for the participants.

The data are analyzed from a multimodal and interactional perspective, to unveil the detailed ways in which the participants deal with the practical problems of the moment in a methodic, emplaced, embodied and accountable way. Regarding the systematicity of the participants’ practices, our data present a relatively unusual characteristic, and that is that it features, in a single clip, a large number of participants facing not only an identical, but actually the same, practical problem: how relevantly to respond to a specific emerging qualitative instruction and a following directive to start the practice. This means that we are able to observe a great number of responses in a single clip, in a way already providing a collection of cases. Although students demonstrably also orient to each other, we propose that such a “single clip collection” offers interesting empirical evidence of participant orientations, as it documents not only an orientation by many participants toward a particular *type* of initiating action, but in fact toward *the same* initiating action. In our case, the initiating action is performed by dance teachers and the response takes the form of an emergent mobile formation by students.

4. Analysis

Transitions from the teachers’ demonstration and instruction of how to dance to moments where students dance in couples turn out to involve a certain number of highly regular phases. At the end of the qualitative instruction about what will have to be practiced, the teachers announce that it is now time to start the practice, and also support the students by structuring and coordinating their beginning to dance. This is done via a *structuring instruction* and a *count-in*. The analysis will follow this step-by-step procedure.

4.1 Closure of instruction as foreshadowing student activity

The very fact that an instructive stretch of talk is about to end is oriented to by some students as foreshadowing the upcoming dance practice. This is observable in Excerpt (1), where some participants rearrange their body posture at what could be heard as the closure of the instruction.

Excerpt (1) VL10-2I. Participants: TeaL Lead teacher, TeaF Follow teacher, StuA – StuF Student A – Student F.

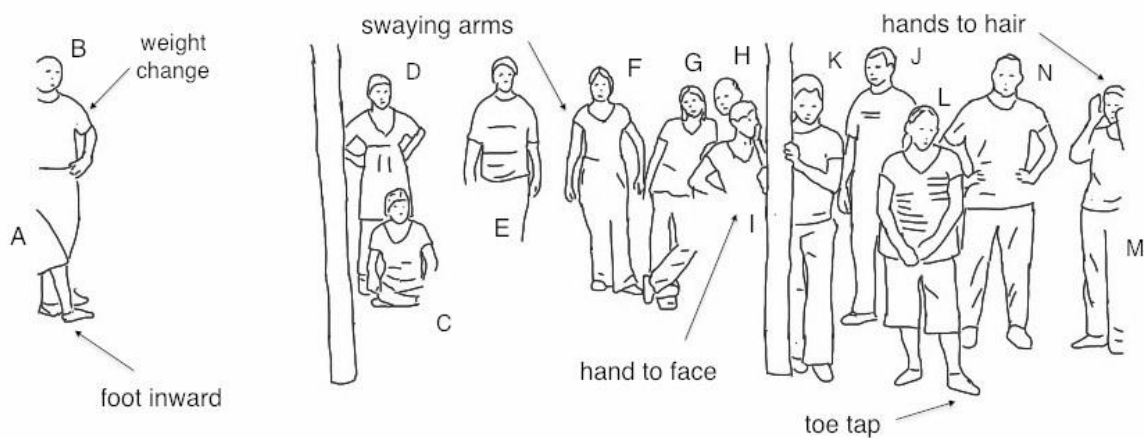
01 TeaL: +[BOM]
 02 TeaF: +[BOM]
 TeaF/L +>>--dance-->

 03 (0.5)
 04 TeaF: s:å går vi ner i swing out för,
 then we go down in a swing out 'cause
 05 TeaF: (0.8) infö:r en swing out, vill man gärna ha're där.
 before a swing out you really want to have this
 06 (0.6)
 07 TeaL: s:+träckta.Δ (0.2)+ βv (.) sλiträckta läΔvφaget.λ=

| | | |
|----------|---|--|
| | <i>stretched</i> | <i>stretched position</i> |
| StuC: | | ((sniff)) ϕ |
| TeaF/L | ->dance+ disengage+ | |
| TeaL | Δ hands up <u>demonstrating a "stretch"</u> --> Δ | ((apex underl.)) |
| StuB | | β weight shift |
| StuN | | vmoves hand slightly vhand to hair-->> |
| StuF | | ϕ moves hand on leg ϕ sways arms-->> |
| StuL | | λ foot up and down λ |
| StuI | | ihead turn, hand to face-->> |
| StuA | | α moves foot-->> |
| 08 TeaF: | =sträckt un:dergrepp ζ | |
| | <i>stretched undergrip</i> | |
| 09 | (0.5) | |
| 10 TeaL: | just de.= | |
| | <i>that's right</i> | |
| 11 TeaF: | =jaå. | |
| | <i>yeah</i> | |
| 12 | (0.3) | |

At the beginning of the excerpt, the students embody a stationary *observer's position*. By this we mean that the students are bodily oriented toward the center of the dance hall, relatively immobile and gazing at the teachers in the middle of the circle. The two teachers collaboratively explain a detail pertaining to a preferable way of holding hands before a particular dance figure (*swingout*). The follow teacher's turn (4-6) is recompleted by the lead teacher in the form of an increment (Ford, Fox, & Thompson, 2002) (7). The qualitative instruction is performed and treated as a composite display (constituted by both dance movement, talk and gesture), which is visible in the fact that both demonstrative dance and talk are completed before any of the students begin to move. Two students (B and N) move slightly after a pause following a first possible completion point, that is, where the talk can be heard as complete (middle of 7). And as soon as the lead teacher reaches a second possible completion point of the collaborative turn, which furthermore coincides with the ending of the iconic gesture "gestalt" that he produces (end of 7), several students reposition their bodies slightly, in what is understandable as getting ready to move themselves: F starts swaying her arms, L taps with her toes, I turns her head and touches her face, N begins to re-arrange her hair and A retracts her foot (for exact timings, see multimodal transcription in line 7).

Figure 2. Summary of first signs of slight movement by the end of instruction, on *sträckt* ('stretched') in line 8.



These moves, visually summarized in Figure 2, can be taken as public displays of recognition of what the end of the teachers' instruction implies, that is, that it will soon be up to the

students to practice. In this way subdued movement, while reflecting recipient analysis of the verbal-bodily structures in teacher instruction, can adumbrate a future major mobile action that is relevant and accountable in the activity context. However, in order to actually start dancing, the students need further instruction and coordination by the teachers. This is accomplished in the form of an initiating directive action that will be unpacked below.

4.2 Initiation of the directive utterance: practice projectors

The first teacher action that explicitly makes relevant a response in the form of actual dance by the students is the production of what we call a *practice projector*. The practice projector constitutes, together with the subsequent specifications (see 4.3 below), the first pair part of an adjacency pair, a directive action. A practice projector can be found in line 13 in Excerpt (2), which is the direct continuation of (1):

Excerpt (2) VL10-2I

12 (0.3)
 13 TeaL: VI TESTAR.
Let's have a go ((lit. "we test"))
 14 ps: γ(0.3)
 StuG γturns head towards partner (StuH), uncrosses feet-->>
 15 TeaL: ηβFRÅ:N,
from
 StuH ηturns head towards partner (StuG)-->>
 StuB βtakes step forward-->>

After closing the instruction (shown in Excerpt 1), the lead teacher turns towards the students and utters the phrase *vi testar*. ('let's have a go', line 13). This is the beginning of the first part of a two-part action sequence: 1. A directive to start the practice by the teachers, and 2. Dance practice by the students. There are some immediate student reactions (as shown in line 14 and 15) that embody a projection of the fact that the next relevant action is expectable from them in the near future. These movements also suggest that the distance between the directive and the first step of dance practice may be preferably minimized. However, the majority of the students do not yet move. Instead, they seem to wait for more before an appropriate response can be accomplished.

In contrast to the previous excerpt (1), when the upcoming practice was only distantly projectable and not yet required, here some students immediately begin to move into dance positions, as can be seen in their movements toward their prospective partners (as defined via rotation on the circle). The category of a partner emerges as imminently relevant as soon as the practice segment is understood to be approaching, and the practice projector defines the time-span until the practice as relatively short. In the current movement of the students we see evidence that beginning to form dance couples is treated as the proper thing to do after the practice projector. This authorizes an analysis of the activity as an emergent adjacency pair, where the first action, the directive, although still expandable, already makes preparing for the second, the practice, conditionally relevant (Schegloff, 1968, p. 1083).

In the global organization of the class, the practice projector is a salient marker of transition from an instruction segment to a practice segment and from observers' position to dancing in student behavior. Practice projectors can take many different forms. Our collection of practice projectors excerpted from our Swedish and English corpora include the following:

- *Vi testar*. ('Let's try')

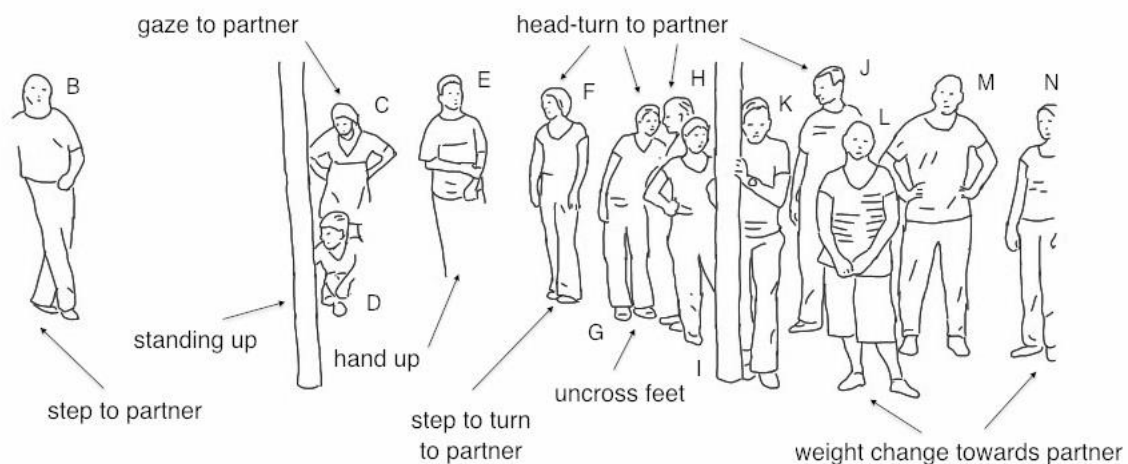
- *Vi provar tillsammans.* ('Let's try together')
- *(Vi tar det) en gång till/igen.* ('(Let's do it) one more time')
- *Sista gången.* ('Last time')
- *Nu gör vi en* [step name]. ('Now we'll do a [step name]')
- Can we try that?
- Could we all try that?
- Let's just try that.
- Let's do it together.
- Let's try again.
- Could I just see that?
- All together.
- Here we go.
- I'll put on a song and let you do it on your own

Practice projectors constitute a clear example of the context-renewing/context shaped character of turns at talk (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974, p. 699). They project that it is now the students' turn to dance, but what exactly should be practiced is only recoverable by referring back to the previous qualitative instruction. In this article, however, we are not looking at the content of the dance practice or its success. Our focus is on the mechanism of embodied transition from the instruction to the practice segment via a complex directive action.

Some of the practice projectors listed above, such as 'one more time' presuppose that the relevant step has been practiced just previously, others do not pose such a restriction. Some explicitly define the step to be practiced. These objects organize future action in the class by making relevant an activity-specific compliance, starting to dance. However, there are further actions to be taken before the dance can actually start. The couples have to be assembled and a common rhythm established for the dance. The subsequent analysis will focus on how the students, ongoingly managed by the teachers' directive, go about producing the second pair part (practicing the relevant dance steps), in an orderly manner.

The teachers' cueings, from the practice projector onwards, importantly accomplish an increased streamlining of the students' activities. The students' movements become gradually more dance-related, and less generic and self-grooming. After the practice projector we can observe movements that are preparatory to coupling up, such as gazes and weight changes toward partners. Note however, that there are yet almost no actual readjustments of bodies in space (except for B). The exact timing of these movements is shown in Excerpts (2) above and (3) below with the resulting position changes visualized in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Preparatory movements for coupling up by the time *cir-* in line 17 is uttered.



In reflexively responding to a practice projector as a transition marker in the teachers' unfolding talk, the students thus gradually begin to move from being stationary individuals in observer's position to couples ready for practice.

4.3 Continuation of the directive utterance: Structuring instruction

While some of the students begin to form couples in response to the emergent directive, the teachers continue their directive talk. Building on the earlier qualitative instruction, the teachers now verbally identify from where in the sequence of dance steps the students should start practicing. This amounts to a distinct instruction that crucially structures the following practice segment. As can be seen in Excerpt (3), which is the continuation of Excerpt (2), already the very first item of the structuring instruction, 'from', can be seen to result in more students beginning to form couples:

Excerpt (3). VL10-2I

15 TeaL: γβFRÅ:N,
 from
StuG γ>>--turns head towards partner (StuH), uncrosses feet-->>
StuH ηturns head towards partner (StuG)-->>
StuB βtakes step forward-->>

16 TeaF: δχ(.) [UND-] ((English pronunciation))
17 TeaL: [CiηR]KEL].
 Circle
StuD δrises from floor-->>
StuC χlooks down at rising partner (StuD)-->>
StuI χturns left towards partner (StuJ)-->>
StuJ χturns right towards partner (StuI)-->>
StuE ηturns right towards partner (StuF)-->>
StuF ηturns left towards partner (StuE)-->>

18 (0.2)
19 TeaF: ohkej.
 Okey

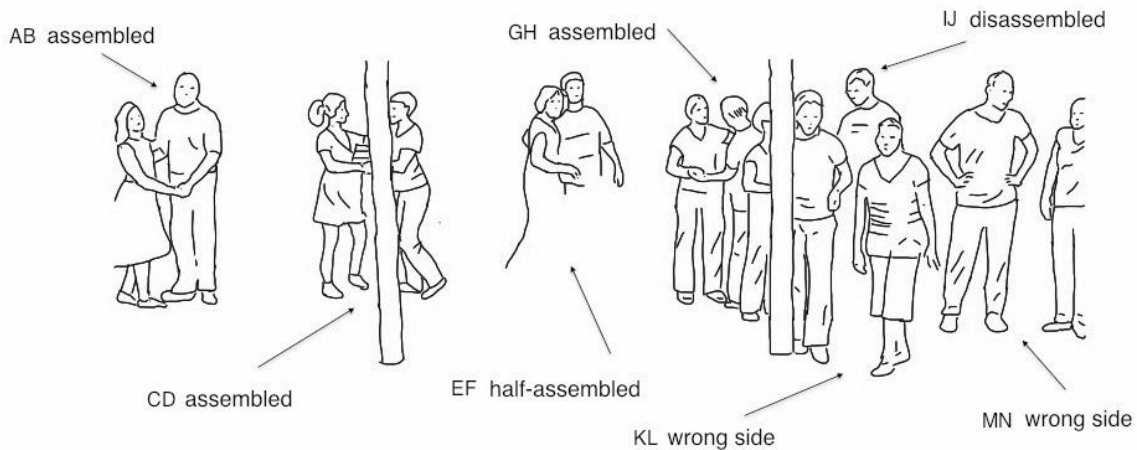
20 TeaL: λ(.) cirkel unκder the arλch swingout fem,
 circle under the arch swingout five
StuL λlets go of linked hands λsteps fw left foot-->>
StuK κremoves hand from post, turns tw part (StuL)-->>

The lead teacher incrementally continues his turn, previously begun with the practice projector *vi testar* "let's try" (line 13 in Excerpt 2 above), with a preposition (*från* "from", 15) that projects a step specification. This projection is clearly visible in the follow teacher's attempt at a collaborative completion (Lerner, 1996), where she begins such a specification by *und-* (16, understandable as the beginning of the name of a figure *under-the-arch*). However, this is overlapped by a conflicting specification uttered by the lead teacher (*cirkel* "circle", 17) and the follow teacher soon publicly accepts the lead teacher's version (19).

From the very beginning of the structuring instruction, the remaining immobile students begin to form couples. Although individual students move at quite different times, by the end of the structuring instruction, the majority of the students are clearly orienting towards a partner, as shown in Figure (4). What is also notable, is the fact that students who are part of a particular couple begin to move at the same time. Thus, whereas Students G and H move right after the practice proposal (15), C and D, and I and J once the preposition has been produced (17), E and F after the first specifying syllable (17), K and L begin to move quite a bit later, as they wait until the first part of the specification has been overtly agreed on by the teachers

(20). These findings further demonstrate the relevance of the prospective couple in this activity, in that students not only respond to the teachers' instruction in beginning to move, but are clearly also sensitive to the activity of the anticipated partner.

Figure 4. Position on *-out* in line 20, immediately before the count-in starts.



This part of the sequence thus shows how the teachers provide structuring resources. In so doing, they also provide students with the time necessary to actually form couples. Whereas some students begin to move into couples very early, at the moment when the entire instruction segment can be heard to be approaching closure, others may still wait considerably, even beyond the structuring instruction. However, by the time of the first item of the count-in, all couples are on their way to being formed, while they also reveal awareness that they still have the entire count-in – that establishes the necessary rhythm for the dance practice – to finalize the formations.

4.4 The count-in

The last phase of the transition from instruction to dance practice is the count-in, which immediately precedes the first dance step on the *wam* in line 22:

Excerpt (4) VL 10-2I

20 TeaL: (.) **cirkel under the arch swingout fem,**
circle under the arch swingout five
 21 TeaL: (0.7) **sex (0.5) å fem sex ↑sju::=**
six an' five six seven
 22 TeaF: [↓å:: Σwam]
an::d wam
 Stus Σdance-->>
 23 TeaL: = [↓å:: cir]kel,=
an::d circle
 24 TeaF: =pam pom (.) wam

Having specified from where the students are supposed to start dancing, the lead teacher immediately launches the count-in (end of 20). On its completion, all students begin to dance simultaneously (22). The count-in does a multiple duty in this activity: it a) establishes a public rhythm for the upcoming practice; b) enables joint establishment of rhythm within every couple; c) projects a distinct spate of time for the students to get ready for beat 'one' of

the dance; and d) thus achieves a highly synchronized onset of dancing within and between couples as part of a double-layered mobile formation.

Lindy Hop is danced to four-beat music usually organized into eight-beat figures that stretch across two bars. This means that the practice is generally structured in eight-counts. The conventional format of counting in the joint practice is to utter the following:

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------|---------|-------|---------|--------|-------|---------|---------|-----------|
| <i>Counts:</i> | 'five' | (pause) | 'six' | (pause) | 'five' | 'six' | 'seven' | 'eight' | 'one ...' |
| <i>Beats in bars:</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 |

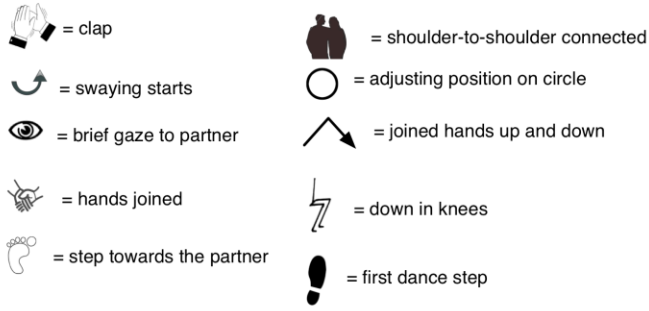
All the initial syllables of numbers fall on the beats and pauses are held for one beat. In the second half of the pattern the increasing immediacy of the start is iconically marked by the more elaborate counting. The counting format is heavily conventionalized, as the first 'five' actually falls on beat one and the 'six' on three in the first bar of the two-bar structure. In addition, as can also be seen in line 22 in Excerpt (4), the 'eight' can be replaced with 'and', which sets it apart and formulates its distinct meaning as a start signal in the class. Another feature emphasising the importance of the 'and' is its joint production by the two teachers, even though just one of them counted thus far. Parts of the count-in may be emphasized by embodied behavior, such as claps, snaps and stomps. In the current case, both teachers clap their hands, as shown in Figure (5).

























































In terms of the social coordination of the students, it is crucial that the time limit for the start of the practice is ultimately determined from the moment when 'five' and 'six' have been uttered. The interval between the two words projects the total length of time it takes to arrive at the next 'one' in the eight-count pattern, when the first dance step has to be taken. That leaves the students with a clearly projectable end of preparation and enables a synchronized beginning of the practice. Similar phenomena of joint starts in conversation and in vocal master classes have been analyzed as "choral productions" (Lerner 2002) and as minute coordination between a pianist and a singer (Szczepek Reed, Reed, & Haddon, 2013). All of them necessitate a clear projection in the ongoing activity.

In order to take the first step on the "one" the students will have to go down in the knees on the beat before it as well as lift the stepping foot from the floor. And in order to jointly go down in the knees and accomplish an embodied upbeat, they have to take the dance position on beat three-and-a-half at the latest. They also have to anticipate the going down with a slight raise in the body and especially a marked raise in the joined hands. Thus, minimally the coupling up has to be terminated by beat three-and-a-half of bar two, from which moment everything has to be set for the step practice to start. The couples who are not ready by then will unavoidably be late. Ideally, the couple will also have established a common rhythm by count seven-and-a-half by jointly swaying during the count-in, which many have done here.

Nevertheless, there is still considerable variation in what the couples actually do during the temporally and rigidly projecting count-in, as shown in Figure (5). The starting positions of the couples before beat one of the count-in (i.e. the first "five") were shown above in Figure (4): AB, CD, GH are already in dance position, EF is connected on the shoulder-to-shoulder side, while IJ, KL and MN are disassembled. However, by count seven everybody is in perfect synchrony.

Figure 5: Schematic presentation of the teachers' and couples' activities during the count-in.



| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | | |
|--------------|--|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TeaF: | |  | |  | |  | |  | 'a::nd, wa' | | |
| TeaL: | 'five' |  | 'six' |  | |  | 'and f i v e s i x SEVen |  | a::nd, cir-' | | |
| AB: | F F  | |  | | | |  |  |  | | |
| CD: | F  |  | | | | |  |  |  | | |
| EF: |  | |  | | | |  |  |  | | |
| GH: | F  L  | | L  | | |   |  |  |  |  | |
| IJ: | F   |  | | F  L  |  |  | |  |  |  | |
| KL: | F  | L  |  | |  |  | |  |  |  |  |
| MN: | | L  |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  | |

As can be seen in Figure (5), a variety of movements take place during the count-in: adjusting the mutual placement of the partners, connecting both sides of the couple (simultaneously or one at a time), adjusting the placement of the couple on the global formation of a circle, and establishing a joint rhythm by swaying. In the chart we can see the variation in the timing and possible ordering of these actions by the seven couples. For example, the swaying is generally started after the complete assembly of the couple, but hands can also be joined later (EF). The swaying can go on for a longer or shorter period, or even be skipped (MN), but is a clear indication of readiness to start the dance. By swaying the couple furthermore claims their current dance space in relation to other couples in the circle.

In short, we can observe the following tendencies in the students' emergent responses to the teachers' count-in: a) coupleship may be established by gazing, turning bodies, stepping closer, or raising and connecting hands; b) distance to a prospective partner is adjusted before the partners take hold of each other; c) shoulder-to-shoulder side is connected before the hands; d) global formation of a circle is adjusted after couple assembly; e) swaying is initiated when at least shoulder-to-shoulder side is connected and when the global position on a circle is established. In addition, in Figure (4) above we can see evidence of the 'neighbor'-effect, as couples next to each other display a tendency to be in approximately the same phase of preparation: the couples on the left are generally assembled whereas the ones on the right are not. This shows mutual social control and adjustment on a more generic scale within the circle, suggesting that couples do not only react independently to teachers' talk but also to the behavior of other nearby couples.

The count-in ends in the students' synchronic dance preparation on counts "seven" and "eight". A preparation in Lindy Hop consists of a raise and then a going down in knees. The moment when the couples jointly raise their hands on the upbeat (beat "eight") is captured in Figure (1b) shown early on. The step sequence that starts on "one" (as illustrated in the right-most column of Figure (5)) constitutes the target of the practice, and thereby functions as a fitted response to the teachers' directive action that was built through three qualitatively different parts (practice proposal, structuring instruction, count-in). The response, however, gradually started to emerge while the directive action was still underway. The count-in demonstrably works as an action-specific device for coordinating the students as a single party in a dance class.

5. Conclusion

Building on recent studies on how mobility figures in interaction, this study looked at how a double mobile formation is reflexively accomplished in a specific setting of dance classes. By scrutinizing a single case, it showed how the students already foreshadow a transition from instruction to dance practice already when the termination of the teachers' instruction is projectable and before the actual directive to practice is produced. In response to several activity-specific devices, such as practice projectors and count-ins, students move in increasing synchrony and in growingly dance-related manner to bring about the beginning of the dance practice. Their activity results in a circular global mobile formation consisting of highly coordinated moving couples. The analysis showed the step-by-step achievement of both the temporal, spatial and mobile aspects of the emerging dance formation that was collectively, yet individually built by 14 different students. It targeted mobility as a responsive accomplishment, displaying its sequential and reflexive relationship to talk.

Human action is organized sequentially. Although sequences of turns-at-talk have attracted the most attention in interaction studies (Schegloff, 2007), sequences can also be

built using other resources. In this article, we focused on a specific instructive setting and studied emerging mobile formations as a particular kind of embodied response to a verbal directive. The relevant response to the teachers' directive proved to be highly specific (but nevertheless oriented to in very similar ways by the 14 dance students), involving not only starting to dance but also doing this with a particular partner and as part of a moving circle of couples. These two kinds of mobile formations, the couples and the circle, are layered on each other and reflect the pedagogical character of the activity, insofar as they make individual student performance inspectable, and thus assessable by the teachers. We argued that a responsive action can be prepared during the evolving directive, displaying understanding of the general activity structure.

The sequentiality of interaction implies that participants are constantly concerned with what is a relevant next action. By using a practice projector, the teachers accomplish a situation where students can understand that dance practice is a relevant next and begin to get ready for it, minimizing the time-span between the directive and its response. At the same time, the teachers can continue the directive utterance by structuring instructions, providing a final specification for the students' responsive action. All the while, the imminence of the practice is reflected in the action of the students, who move in finely orchestrated ways to accomplish a functioning mobile formation in a timely manner.

Transcription conventions

Talk has been transcribed according to conventions developed by Gail Jefferson (see e.g. Schegloff 2007 for a full description).

An indicative translation is provided line per line, in italics.

Multimodal details have been transcribed according to the following conventions:

- Δ Δ delimit descriptions of the lead teacher's actions.
- + + delimit descriptions of collective teacher actions.
- α α delimit Student A's actions.
- β β delimit Student B's actions; Etc.
- Σ Σ delimit descriptions of collective student action.
- α ---> action described continues across subsequent lines.
- α --->> action described continues until and after excerpt's end.
- > α action described continues until the same symbol is reached.
- >>-- action described begins before the excerpt's beginning.
- StuA** participant doing the action is identified in grey and bold characters.

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