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Assessment Methods for Evaluating Ballet Students in Different Pedagogical Approaches

Ying Wang ^{1,*}

¹ Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

* Correspondence: Ying Wang, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



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Abstract: The evaluation of ballet students requires sophisticated assessment methodologies that account for the complexity of dance education across different pedagogical frameworks. This paper examines contemporary assessment methods employed in ballet education, analyzing their effectiveness across traditional, modern, and technology-enhanced pedagogical approaches. Through comprehensive analysis of current research and pedagogical practices, this study identifies key assessment criteria including technical proficiency, artistic expression, physical development, and cognitive understanding. The research reveals that effective ballet assessment requires a multifaceted approach combining formative and summative evaluation techniques, incorporating both traditional observational methods and innovative technological solutions. Motion capture technology, computational models, and digital assessment tools are increasingly integrated into ballet pedagogy to provide objective measurements alongside subjective artistic evaluation. The findings indicate that successful assessment programs must balance technical skill evaluation with artistic development, considering individual student progress within diverse pedagogical contexts. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that contemporary assessment methods benefit from teacher-student collaborative approaches and peer evaluation systems. The integration of technology-enhanced assessment tools with traditional pedagogical methods shows promising results in providing comprehensive feedback to ballet students. This research contributes to the understanding of how assessment methodologies can be optimized to support student development across different ballet pedagogical approaches while maintaining the artistic integrity essential to dance education.

Keywords: ballet assessment; pedagogical approaches; dance education; evaluation methods; technology integration; student development

1. Introduction

Ballet education has evolved significantly over the past decades, with pedagogical approaches adapting to incorporate modern educational theories, technological innovations, and diverse learning styles. The assessment of ballet students presents unique challenges that distinguish it from other forms of academic or artistic evaluation. Unlike traditional academic subjects where quantitative measures can easily define student progress, ballet assessment requires the evaluation of both technical precision and artistic expression, making it inherently complex and multidimensional [1]. The integration of scientific computing models with motion capture technology has revolutionized the way ballet posture and technique can be objectively measured and evaluated, providing educators with unprecedented tools for student assessment [1].

Contemporary ballet pedagogy encompasses various methodological approaches, from traditional Russian and French schools to modern pedagogical frameworks that emphasize student-centered learning and collaborative development. Each pedagogical approach necessitates specific assessment strategies that align with its educational philosophy and learning objectives [2]. The implementation of convolutional neural networks and blended learning environments has introduced new possibilities for continuous assessment and personalized feedback in dance education, allowing for more comprehensive evaluation of student progress [2].

The challenge of ballet assessment extends beyond technical skill evaluation to encompass artistic development, creativity, physical conditioning, and psychological well-being. Modern assessment methods must address the holistic development of ballet students while maintaining the rigorous standards traditionally associated with classical ballet training [3]. The grounded theory approach to analyzing qualitative data in dance pedagogy has provided valuable insights into effective assessment practices and their impact on student learning outcomes.

Virtual training platforms and behavioral coaching packages have emerged as innovative tools for both instruction and assessment in ballet education. These technologies enable educators to provide more consistent and objective feedback while maintaining the personal touch essential to artistic development [4]. The integration of virtual reality and motion tracking systems allows for detailed analysis of student performance, providing both instructors and students with precise feedback on technical execution and artistic expression.

The pedagogical approach to dancer development increasingly emphasizes coaching methodologies that support both technical and personal growth. This shift requires assessment methods that can evaluate not only the acquisition of technical skills but also the development of artistic maturity, creative expression, and professional readiness [5]. The relationship between teacher and student in ballet education creates unique dynamics that influence both learning and assessment processes, requiring evaluation methods that account for these interpersonal factors [6].

Cultural and institutional contexts significantly impact ballet pedagogy and assessment practices. The implementation of dance education policies varies across different educational systems, creating diverse approaches to student evaluation and progress measurement [7]. Understanding these variations is crucial for developing assessment methods that are both culturally sensitive and pedagogically effective.

2. Traditional Assessment Methods in Ballet Education

2.1. Classical Evaluation Techniques

Traditional ballet assessment has historically relied on observational methods where experienced instructors evaluate students based on established criteria rooted in classical ballet traditions. These methods emphasize technical precision, adherence to classical positions, and the execution of fundamental movements according to established schools of ballet technique. The classical approach to assessment typically involves regular class evaluations, periodic examinations, and formal presentations where students demonstrate their mastery of prescribed curriculum elements [8]. These traditional methods have proven effective in maintaining the high standards and artistic integrity that characterize classical ballet training.

The evolution of ballet pedagogy demonstrates how traditional assessment methods have adapted while maintaining their core principles. Contemporary applications of classical evaluation techniques incorporate both traditional and modern approaches to ensure comprehensive student development [8]. Instructors utilizing traditional methods often employ structured rubrics that evaluate technical elements such as alignment, turnout, port de bras, and musical interpretation, while also considering artistic qualities including expression, performance quality, and stage presence.

Classical assessment techniques typically involve hierarchical progression through established levels or grades, with students advancing based on demonstrated competency in specific technical requirements. This systematic approach provides clear benchmarks for student progress and ensures consistency in evaluation standards across different instructors and institutions. The structured nature of traditional assessment allows for standardized measurement of technical proficiency while accommodating individual artistic development within established parameters.

2.2. Formative Assessment Practices

Formative assessment in ballet education involves continuous evaluation during the learning process, providing ongoing feedback that guides both instruction and student development. This approach emphasizes the importance of regular, constructive feedback that helps students understand their progress and identify areas for improvement. Research has shown that imagination and mental preparation significantly impact ballet performance, making formative assessment crucial for developing both technical skills and psychological readiness [9]. The integration of formative assessment practices allows instructors to adjust their teaching methods based on individual student needs and learning patterns.

Contemporary formative assessment practices in ballet education incorporate various feedback mechanisms, including verbal corrections during class, written evaluations, video analysis, and peer assessment activities. These methods provide students with multiple perspectives on their performance and create opportunities for self-reflection and goal setting. The continuous nature of formative assessment helps maintain student motivation and engagement while supporting gradual skill development and artistic growth.

The effectiveness of formative assessment in ballet education depends significantly on the quality of teacher-student relationships and the establishment of supportive learning environments. Dance teachers' experiences of learning and teaching prerequisites directly influence their ability to implement effective formative assessment strategies [10]. Creating assessment environments that encourage risk-taking and creative exploration while maintaining technical standards requires skilled pedagogical approaches that balance support with challenge. Table 1 presents the comparative analysis of traditional assessment methods and their effectiveness across different pedagogical contexts.

Table 1. Comparison of Traditional Ballet Assessment Methods.

Assessment Method	Technical Focus	Artistic Evaluation	Student Feedback	Instructor Requirements
Classical Observation	High	Medium	Limited	Expert Knowledge
Structured Rubrics	High	Medium	Systematic	Training Required
Formal Examinations	Very High	Low	Periodic	Standardization
Continuous Evaluation	Medium	High	Frequent	Time Intensive
Peer Assessment	Medium	Medium	Interactive	Guidance Needed

2.3. Summative Evaluation Approaches

Summative assessment in ballet education serves to measure student achievement at specific points in their training, typically at the end of terms, academic years, or program completion. These assessments provide comprehensive evaluation of student progress and achievement, often determining advancement to higher levels or program completion. Performance quality assessment in ballet requires sophisticated evaluation criteria that account for both technical execution and artistic interpretation [11]. The development of

standardized assessment protocols helps ensure consistency and fairness in summative evaluation processes.

Summative evaluation approaches in ballet education often take the form of recitals, competitions, examinations, and portfolio assessments that demonstrate student learning over extended periods. These assessments require careful planning and preparation, involving both students and instructors in comprehensive review of learning objectives and performance standards. The high-stakes nature of summative assessments necessitates clear evaluation criteria and transparent grading procedures that students understand and can work toward achieving.

The design of effective summative assessments requires consideration of both individual student progress and program-wide learning outcomes. Ballet programs must balance the need for standardized measures of achievement with recognition of individual artistic development and creative expression. This balance is particularly important in preparing students for professional careers where both technical proficiency and artistic individuality are valued and required for success.

3. Technology-Enhanced Assessment Methods

3.1. Motion Capture and Digital Analysis

The integration of motion capture technology into ballet assessment represents a significant advancement in objective evaluation methods. Scientific computing models combined with motion capture systems provide precise measurements of student movement quality, technique accuracy, and performance consistency [1]. These technological tools enable instructors to analyze student performance with unprecedented detail, identifying subtle technical errors and tracking improvement over time with quantitative precision.

Motion capture systems in ballet assessment capture three-dimensional movement data that can be analyzed for various technical parameters including joint angles, spatial relationships, timing precision, and movement efficiency. This technology provides objective data that complements traditional subjective evaluation methods, creating a more comprehensive assessment framework. The ability to replay and analyze movement sequences from multiple angles and perspectives enhances both instructor feedback capabilities and student self-awareness of their technical execution.

The implementation of motion capture technology in ballet education requires careful integration with existing pedagogical approaches to ensure that technological enhancement supports rather than replaces essential human elements of dance instruction. The data generated by these systems must be interpreted within the context of artistic expression and individual student development, maintaining the balance between objective measurement and subjective artistic evaluation that characterizes effective ballet assessment.

3.2. Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Applications

Artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies are increasingly being applied to ballet assessment, particularly in the analysis of movement patterns and the identification of technical errors. Convolutional neural networks have shown promise in enhancing dance education through automated analysis of student performance and personalized feedback generation [2]. These technologies can process large amounts of movement data to identify patterns, track progress, and suggest areas for improvement based on established technical standards and individual student learning trajectories.

Machine learning algorithms can be trained to recognize optimal movement patterns and identify deviations from established technical standards, providing consistent and objective assessment criteria. The application of AI in ballet assessment enables the processing of complex movement data that would be difficult or impossible for human observers to analyze in real-time. This technology can identify subtle technical issues that

might be missed during traditional observation and provide detailed feedback on specific aspects of student performance.

The integration of AI and machine learning in ballet assessment requires careful consideration of the artistic and creative elements that cannot be quantified through algorithmic analysis. While these technologies excel at technical evaluation, the assessment of artistic expression, creativity, and performance quality still requires human judgment and expertise. The most effective implementations combine AI-generated technical analysis with human evaluation of artistic elements to create comprehensive assessment frameworks. Table 2 illustrates the capabilities and limitations of various technology-enhanced assessment tools used in contemporary ballet education.

Table 2. Technology-Enhanced Assessment Tools in Ballet Education.

Technology	Technical Analysis	Real-time Feedback	Cost Considerations	Implementation Complexity
Motion Capture	Excellent	Limited	High	High
Video Analysis	Good	Moderate	Low	Low
AI Recognition	Very Good	Good	Medium	Medium
Wearable Sensors	Good	Excellent	Medium	Medium
Virtual Reality	Moderate	Excellent	High	High

3.3. Online and Blended Learning Assessment

The development of online and blended learning environments has created new opportunities and challenges for ballet assessment. Digital platforms enable continuous monitoring of student progress through various technological tools, including video submissions, online portfolios, and interactive feedback systems. The development of formative assessment protocols for online dance learning has demonstrated the effectiveness of technology-mediated evaluation in supporting student development [12]. These platforms provide flexibility in assessment timing and format while maintaining educational quality and standards.

Online assessment methods in ballet education must address the unique challenges of evaluating physical movement and artistic expression through digital media. Video-based assessment allows instructors to review student performance multiple times, providing detailed feedback on technical execution and artistic development. However, the limitations of camera angles, video quality, and the absence of real-time interaction require careful consideration in the design of online assessment protocols.

Blended learning approaches combine the benefits of traditional in-person instruction with the flexibility and technological capabilities of online platforms. This hybrid model allows for comprehensive assessment that includes both real-time evaluation during in-person sessions and detailed analysis of recorded performances submitted through digital platforms. The integration of various assessment modalities creates opportunities for more comprehensive evaluation while accommodating diverse learning styles and circumstances.

4. Pedagogical Approaches and Assessment Alignment

4.1. Student-Centered Assessment Strategies

Contemporary ballet pedagogy increasingly emphasizes student-centered approaches that prioritize individual learning needs, personal artistic development, and collaborative learning experiences. These pedagogical frameworks require assessment methods that support student agency and self-directed learning while maintaining appropriate

standards and expectations. The analysis of teachers' instructions and feedback in contemporary dance education reveals the importance of personalized assessment approaches that consider individual student characteristics and learning preferences [13]. Student-centered assessment strategies focus on growth and improvement rather than solely on achievement of predetermined standards.

Self-assessment and reflection play crucial roles in student-centered ballet education, encouraging students to develop critical evaluation skills and take ownership of their learning process. These approaches require scaffolding and guidance from instructors who must balance support with independence, helping students develop the skills necessary for lifelong learning and professional development. The implementation of student-centered assessment requires careful attention to individual learning goals and personalized feedback that supports each student's unique artistic journey.

Collaborative assessment approaches involve students in the evaluation process through peer feedback, group projects, and shared responsibility for learning outcomes. These methods help develop important professional skills including constructive criticism, collaboration, and communication while maintaining focus on technical and artistic development. The success of student-centered assessment depends on creating supportive learning environments where students feel safe to take risks and explore their artistic potential.

4.2. Differentiated Assessment Methods

Differentiated assessment in ballet education recognizes that students learn and develop at different rates and in different ways, requiring varied approaches to evaluation that accommodate diverse learning styles and abilities. This pedagogical approach necessitates flexible assessment methods that can adapt to individual student needs while maintaining consistent standards and expectations. The reciprocal relationship between teachers and students in ballet education creates opportunities for personalized assessment that considers individual strengths, challenges, and artistic goals [6]. Differentiated assessment methods must balance individualization with the collective standards essential to ballet training.

The implementation of differentiated assessment requires careful consideration of multiple intelligences, learning preferences, and cultural backgrounds that influence student learning and performance. Assessment methods must accommodate students with different physical abilities, learning challenges, and artistic sensibilities while ensuring that all students have opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. This approach requires extensive planning and resource allocation but can significantly improve student engagement and learning outcomes.

Multiple assessment formats and options allow students to demonstrate their learning through various modalities including written reflection, oral presentation, creative projects, and traditional performance evaluation. The diversity of assessment options helps ensure that evaluation methods align with student strengths while still addressing essential learning objectives and skill development requirements inherent in ballet education. Table 3 demonstrates the alignment between different pedagogical approaches and their corresponding assessment strategies in ballet education.

Table 3. Pedagogical Approaches and Assessment Alignment.

Pedagogical Approach	Assessment Focus	Evaluation Methods	Student Role	Instructor Role
Traditional	Technical Mastery	Formal Testing	Passive	Authority
Student-Centered	Individual Growth	Self-Assessment	Active	Facilitator
Collaborative	Peer Learning	Group Evaluation	Interactive	Guide

Technology-Enhanced	Data-Driven	Digital Analysis	Engaged	Analyst
Holistic	Comprehensive	Multi-Modal	Reflective	Mentor

4.3. Cultural and Contextual Considerations

Ballet assessment practices must consider the cultural and contextual factors that influence both teaching and learning in diverse educational environments. Cultural sensitivity in assessment requires understanding how different cultural backgrounds affect student learning styles, communication patterns, and artistic expression. The implementation of dance education policies across different cultural contexts demonstrates the need for assessment methods that are both culturally responsive and pedagogically sound [7]. Assessment practices must respect cultural diversity while maintaining the international standards and traditions that characterize ballet as an art form.

Contextual factors including institutional resources, class size, student demographics, and program objectives significantly influence the selection and implementation of assessment methods. Urban and rural educational environments may require different approaches to ballet assessment based on available resources, technology access, and community support. These contextual considerations must be balanced with the maintenance of educational quality and standard that prepare students for success in professional ballet careers.

International variations in ballet pedagogy and assessment reflect different cultural values, educational philosophies, and institutional structures. Understanding these variations helps educators develop assessment methods that are both locally relevant and internationally recognized. The globalization of ballet education requires assessment practices that can accommodate cultural diversity while maintaining the technical and artistic standards essential for professional preparation and artistic excellence.

5. Implementation and Best Practices

5.1. Assessment Design and Development

The design and development of effective ballet assessment requires careful consideration of learning objectives, pedagogical approaches, and student needs. Comprehensive assessment design begins with clear articulation of what students should know and be able to do at various stages of their ballet training. The development process must align assessment methods with curricular goals while ensuring that evaluation practices support rather than hinder student learning and artistic development [10]. Effective assessment design requires collaboration between educators, administrators, and sometimes students themselves to create evaluation systems that are both rigorous and supportive.

Assessment development in ballet education must address the unique challenges of evaluating both technical skills and artistic expression within the constraints of educational timelines and resources. The design process requires consideration of multiple assessment formats, clear rubrics and criteria, and appropriate feedback mechanisms that support student growth. The development of assessment protocols must also consider the professional development needs of instructors who will implement these evaluation methods.

Quality assurance in assessment design involves piloting new methods, gathering feedback from multiple stakeholders, and continuously refining evaluation approaches based on evidence of effectiveness. The iterative nature of assessment development ensures that evaluation methods remain current with pedagogical best practices and continue to serve student learning needs effectively. Documentation and standardization of assessment procedures help ensure consistency and fairness across different instructors and educational contexts.

5.2. Teacher Training and Professional Development

The effectiveness of ballet assessment depends significantly on instructor expertise and professional development opportunities that support high-quality evaluation practices. Teacher training programs must address both the technical aspects of assessment implementation and the pedagogical principles that underlie effective evaluation. Virtual training platforms have shown promise in preparing dance instructors to implement behavioral coaching packages and advanced assessment methods [4]. Professional development opportunities help instructors develop the skills necessary for effective assessment while maintaining currency with evolving pedagogical practices.

Ongoing professional development in assessment practices enables instructors to refine their evaluation skills, learn new assessment methods, and stay current with technological innovations in dance education. Training programs must address the complex balance between technical evaluation and artistic development that characterizes effective ballet assessment. The development of assessment expertise requires both theoretical understanding and practical experience with various evaluation methods and student populations.

Collaborative professional development approaches enable instructors to share best practices, discuss challenging assessment situations, and develop shared understanding of evaluation standards and expectations. Professional learning communities focused on assessment can provide ongoing support for instructors as they implement new evaluation methods and adapt their practices to meet evolving student needs and educational requirements. Table 4 outlines the essential components of effective teacher training programs for ballet assessment implementation.

Table 4. Teacher Training Components for Ballet Assessment.

Training Component	Content Focus	Delivery Method	Duration	Assessment Method
Assessment Theory	Pedagogical Principles	Workshop	16 hours	Portfolio
Technical Skills	Tool Usage	Hands-on	24 hours	Demonstration
Cultural Competency	Diversity Awareness	Seminar	8 hours	Reflection
Technology Integration	Digital Tools	Online	12 hours	Project
Professional Ethics	Assessment Standards	Discussion	4 hours	Case Study

5.3. Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

Quality assurance in ballet assessment requires systematic monitoring of evaluation practices, regular review of assessment outcomes, and continuous improvement based on evidence of effectiveness. Quality assurance systems must ensure that assessment methods are fair, reliable, and valid while supporting student learning and development. The establishment of quality assurance protocols helps maintain consistency in evaluation standards and provides accountability for assessment practices across different instructors and programs.

Continuous improvement in ballet assessment involves regular collection and analysis of data regarding assessment effectiveness, student outcomes, and instructor experiences. This evidence-based approach to assessment improvement ensures that evaluation methods continue to serve their intended purposes and adapt to changing educational needs and contexts. Student feedback and outcomes data provide valuable information for refining assessment practices and ensuring that evaluation methods support rather than hinder learning.

The implementation of quality assurance systems requires commitment from educational institutions to invest in assessment monitoring, instructor support, and continuous

improvement processes. Regular audit and review of assessment practices help identify areas for improvement and ensure that evaluation methods remain aligned with educational goals and best practices in dance pedagogy. Documentation of quality assurance processes provides transparency and accountability for assessment practices while supporting continuous enhancement of evaluation effectiveness. Table 5 presents a comprehensive framework for implementing quality assurance measures in ballet assessment programs.

Table 5. Quality Assurance Framework for Ballet Assessment.

Quality Measure	Implementation Strategy	Monitoring Frequency	Stakeholder Involvement	Improvement Actions
Reliability Testing	Inter-rater Analysis	Semester	Instructors	Calibration Training
Validity Studies	Student Outcome Analysis	Annual	Students, Faculty	Method Refinement
Feedback Collection	Survey Administration	Quarterly	All Stakeholders	Practice Modification
Standards Review	Curriculum Alignment	Biannual	Administration	Criteria Updates
Technology Evaluation	System Performance	Continuous	IT, Faculty	Upgrade Planning

6. Conclusion

The assessment of ballet students across different pedagogical approaches requires sophisticated, multifaceted evaluation methods that balance technical precision with artistic development. Contemporary ballet education benefits from the integration of traditional assessment techniques with innovative technological solutions, creating comprehensive evaluation frameworks that support student growth while maintaining the high standards essential to classical ballet training. The evolution of assessment methods reflects broader changes in educational philosophy, emphasizing student-centered learning, collaborative development, and personalized feedback that addresses individual learning needs and artistic goals.

Technology-enhanced assessment tools, including motion capture systems, artificial intelligence applications, and digital learning platforms, have expanded the possibilities for objective evaluation while preserving the essential human elements of artistic instruction and mentorship. These technological innovations complement rather than replace traditional assessment methods, creating opportunities for more comprehensive and nuanced evaluation of student progress. The successful integration of technology requires careful consideration of pedagogical principles and the unique requirements of dance education.

The alignment of assessment methods with pedagogical approaches ensures that evaluation practices support rather than undermine the educational objectives and learning experiences that characterize effective ballet instruction. Student-centered assessment strategies, differentiated evaluation methods, and culturally responsive practices contribute to more inclusive and effective educational environments that serve diverse student populations while maintaining artistic excellence. The implementation of these varied approaches requires significant investment in teacher training, professional development, and institutional support systems.

Quality assurance and continuous improvement processes are essential for maintaining the effectiveness and relevance of ballet assessment practices. Regular monitoring, stakeholder feedback, and evidence-based refinement ensure that evaluation methods continue to serve their intended purposes and adapt to evolving educational needs and

contexts. The commitment to ongoing improvement reflects the dynamic nature of both ballet education and assessment methodology.

The future of ballet assessment lies in the thoughtful integration of traditional and innovative approaches that honor the artistic heritage of classical ballet while embracing the pedagogical advances that can enhance student learning and development. As ballet education continues to evolve, assessment methods must remain flexible and responsive to changing needs while maintaining the rigorous standards that have historically characterized excellence in dance education. The success of these efforts depends on continued collaboration between educators, researchers, and practitioners committed to advancing the field of ballet pedagogy through effective assessment and evaluation practices.

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