

Rosen Movements and Words

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Abstract

A Rosen Method movement class can be viewed as an alive communication situation based on visual and verbal expressions. The movement teacher uses both her body and her voice to communicate with the class. How words are used can have a great impact on how participants understand and perform movements. What we say, how we say it, and when we say it, are some of the dimensions involved in the communication process. The article presents a conceptual framework with examples that aim at increased understanding of how words can be used when teaching a movement class. The concepts discussed can be used to study and analyse movement classes, to better understand the use of words for giving instructions, to improve teaching skills, and to provide feedback during teacher training.

INTRODUCTION

This article discusses the role of verbal instructions when teaching a Rosen Method movement class. How the movement teacher uses words can have a great impact on the class. Words influence how participants understand and perform movements, and also how the body responds to movements. The way instructions are given can also influence the person as a whole, and contribute to creating a feeling of freedom and ease of moving.

In addition to words, the way the teacher uses her (or his) body to give instructions strongly affects how the class performs and experiences movements. Body language and words interplay, and the timing of words and movements is an important aspect of the verbo-visual communication that takes place when teaching a class.

Words are important because if communication is unclear, the class may feel insecure and hesitate. Confusion and hesitation can lead to tension and stress, which is the very opposite of the intention with the movements. The movement teacher must therefore take care to use her voice and her body in such a way that the class can understand instructions easily and clearly.

METHOD

The work presented in this article is based on my experience from teaching, observing, and participating in movement classes, and also on informal discussions with movement teachers and movement students. About 10 movement teachers and 15 movement students have been observed. Some teachers have been observed over a period of several years, others on single occasions. The method used can be characterised as participant observation, based on a qualitative paradigm (Ely et al., 1991).

What I have focused on in my observations are (1) situations when movements of the class are flowing, and when I myself feel as in a flow, and (2) situations when the class is hesitating, and when I, as a participant in the class, “slip” and make the wrong movement and feel insecure about what to do.

What I have felt in these situations is that the way words are used plays a central role in my ability to perform movement in a way that flows easily. While the choice of words vary among teachers, expressing instructions with confidence seems important for creating confidence in the class. Moreover, timing and preparation seem to greatly influence the occurrence of the above two opposite situations.

Overview of Rosen Method Movements

The Rosen Method comprises Rosen Method Movements (Rosen & Brenner, 1991) and Rosen Method Bodywork (Rosen & Brenner, 2003). This article discusses teaching the movements of the Rosen Method. Marion Rosen started teaching movement classes in 1956, as a way to prevent aches and pains, and to gain and maintain the free movement of the body.

A Rosen Method movement class is usually about 60 minutes long. The class is led by a movement teacher who gives verbal instructions and shows movements that participants perform simultaneously with the teacher. During movement sequences, the teacher and the participants move together, performing movements in a synchronised, yet free and relaxed way. Often there is a feeling of being part of and moving as a whole, especially in classes in which students have had previous experience with Rosen movements.

Movements are done to music that is selected to harmonize with the movements. A class consists of five sections: Warm-up, Stretch, Circle, Across-the-floor, and On-the-floor. Each section has a different purpose, focus, tempo, intensity and mood. Movements are done both individually, together in a circle, and in pairs, both standing and lying down on the floor.

The goal of the class is freedom of movement and breath, to reduce tension and stress. Rosen movements are done in a non-forceful way that allows muscles to let go of tension. This special way of moving lets the body move more freely and release both physical and mental stress. The movements can also create increased body awareness.

During a class, all joints in the body are lubricated by moving them in all directions. Usually you do not sweat, but it is beneficial to wear soft and comfortable clothes. To experience the joy of moving, with music and together with others, is also essential to the movements. Rosen & Brenner write: *“Every movement can be enjoyable, every movement can be a dance. To use movement as a dance, to dance through life – that is really our goal”* (Rosen & Brenner, 1991, p. 19).

While the purpose of many training and workout disciplines is to make muscles work hard, the purpose of a Rosen movement class is to allow muscles to relax. The movements are a form of active relaxation that can aid in moving more freely in life. Rosen movements have similarities with Rosen Method bodywork, such as letting go of tension and opening up, but in the movements you actively move the body to achieve relaxation.

Communication Theory

The communication agents in a movement class consist of the participants in the group and the movement teacher. Communication takes place by showing body movements and using words to give instructions and coordinate movements. Music is used to facilitate movements and set the mood of the various sections of the class.

This communication situation can be viewed as an example of *alive communication* (Fogel & Garvey, 2007). In the class, there is a continuous flow of coordinated action between teacher and participants and also between participants. Co-regulation and ordinary variability are at play throughout the class as participants follow instructions and patterns, and as the teacher takes in the group and adjusts movements and movement sequences as needed. How the teacher uses words and body movements will affect the co-regulation and ordinary variability that goes on in the class, and will greatly influence the way the class can perform the movements and benefit from them.

A movement class can also be viewed as a form of *verbo-visual communication*. To communicate with the class, the teacher has at her disposal her voice (words) and her body (images). Commonly applied to information design in visual media (Pettersson, 2010), verbo-visual communication refers to communication using words and images. Effective forms of verbo-visual communication often integrate words and pictures in the same context to create a coherent whole. An example is the use of voice balloons in comic books. The direct graphical association between the character that is speaking and the voice bubble produces a striking illusion of someone speaking (McCloud, 1993). Similarly, the movement teacher coordinates body movements and words when giving instructions to the class to help participants take in the movements.

A movement class unfolds in time. Animators have developed principles for creating life-like animated movies (Thomas & Johnston, 1981). One of the basic animation principles is anticipation. In animated film, anticipation is used to prepare the audience for what will happen next. An example is a character looking at and reaching for a jewel, before quickly snatching it and rushing off. The principle of anticipation can be used when showing movements to the class, to prepare for the next movement. Anticipation can also be used to prepare for ending a movement.

The Role of Words

Words can be powerful. Words create images, emotions, feelings. The way the movement teacher gives instructions will strongly influence how the class performs movements.

Words Make Us Feel

Different words can give rise to different feelings and words can trigger different feelings with different people. Words can create relaxation, or create tension and stress. Some words are soft, friendly and relaxing, other words are hard, hostile, and create stress. For example, consider the feelings created by the words "stretch" and "float". "Stretch" can be argued to feel harder than "float", which has a softer and more gentle quality to it. Words affect the way the class responds to instructions. What we say, how we say it, and when we say it will influence the way the class will experience a movement session.

What Words Are Used For

During a movement class, the teacher uses words for many different purposes:

- Tell which movements to do and when to do them.
- Give instructions on how to perform movements.
- Coordinate movements in the group (rhythm).
- Communicate the feeling of the movement.
- Communicate the physiological purpose of the movement, and create awareness of the anatomy of the body.
- Send focus during the movement to affected parts of the body and deepen the experience of the movement.
- Enable relaxation and the letting go of tension (words can also cause tension, which should be avoided).
- Enable free breath.
- Establish the mood of the class.
- Set rules for the class, what is OK and what is not, how to behave during the class.
- Create a social setting, make the class feel comfortable, ease opening up.

Observations

During my teacher training, when preparing for teaching my very first ten-minute session at a Rosen Method Movement Intensive, I was faced with the challenge of how to give instructions. It was one thing to select and prepare the movements, but to actually teach the movements and give verbal instructions was yet another challenge. This was when I started to get interested in how words are used when teaching a movement class. From this point, I began to observe and experiment with different ways of giving instructions, using different words and phrases, and analysing the effect of timing of words and movements.

One thing that I have observed is situations when confusion and hesitations occur in the class:

- When the teacher hesitates, the class hesitates.
- When the teacher gives unclear instructions, the class becomes confused.
- When the teacher does not prepare for starting a movement, hesitation occurs.
- When teacher's movements are ahead of verbal instructions, confusion can occur.
- When teacher does not prepare for ending a movement, confusion can occur.

These problems can be addressed by improved understanding of how to use words when teaching movements.

Giving Instructions for Movement

To further discuss how words are used in a movement class, we will use a framework consisting of the following dimensions: *intention* (what we wish to say), *phrasing* (how we say it), and *timing* (when we say it).

The **intention** is what we want to say, what we wish to communicate, our purpose with speaking. For example, the intention can be to give a movement instruction, to remind people of the feeling of a

movement, remind them about the breath, or provide feedback to the class.

The **phrasing** is how we say it; the actual words used to communicate the intention. Phrasing is a rich subject that includes aspects like length of instructions, type of instruction and type of language used. How the teacher presents herself (or himself), how she uses her voice and intonation, and the level of confidence displayed in giving instructions, also affect how participants interpret and act on the words they hear.

Timing is when we say it; the coordination of words and movements. Do words come before or after showing a movement? Or simultaneously? How are instructions and body movements coordinated? Anticipation is a key factor in the timing of words and movements. Timing is also related to the preparation of a movement, and to how movements and movement sequences are built up.

An important goal of a movement class is moving in a relaxed way. Both the intention with the instructions and the actual words used should contribute to that goal.

The following are some of the aspects involved in giving movement instructions:

- **Length of instructions.** We can use many words (long phrases) or just one word or very few words (short phrases).
- **Level of clarity.** Are instructions clear and easy to understand, or are they vague, using words that distract rather than clarify?
- **Level of confidence.** Are instructions given with confidence, or does the way instructions are given create hesitation and make the class feel insecure?
- **Tone of voice and intonation.** Words can be spoken using a wide variety of intonations. How does the tone of the voice and the intonation used affect the class? Is the voice loud enough for all students to hear?
- **Direct and indirect instructions.** An instruction can be direct, saying exactly what to do to accomplish a movement, or it can be indirect, creating an image or awareness that will result in a motion or change in the body.
- **Words that support the feeling of a movement.** How do words support the feeling of a movement? What kind of language can be used for this? What kind of voice tone is used?
- **Words that support breath.** At times, using words to remind participants of their breath can facilitate relaxation and opening up.

Length of Instructions

Instructions can be long or short (and everything in-between).

Example of long instruction that reveals hesitation: *“Now I think that we should lift one arm... and then I think we should lower it again.”*

Short instruction: *“Lift one arm... and lower it.”*

Very short instruction: *“Lift... lower.”*

As a general rule of thumb, short instructions should be preferred. In my experience, they tend to be clearer and do not distract. However, instructions should not be cold and “mechanical” commands. Warm and inviting instructions may use more words, but better communicate the feeling of the movement. Long and short instructions can be mixed, and be used when appropriate. For some movements, for example on

the floor, more elaborate explanations may be needed, because the participants may not be able to see the teacher. For other movements, such as rhythmic steps in the circle, short instructions work better since they do not interrupt the flow of the movements.

Level of Clarity

Related to the length of instructions is the level of clarity. As a teacher, it is important to take the perspective of the class, and consider how they interpret and make sense of instructions given. Are they familiar with the terminology used for giving instructions? Are there parts of the class that require a more elaborated explanation? To prepare and rehearse can help in finding instructions that are to the point, have the right level of detail for the class, and clearly communicate what the class is expected to do.

Level of Confidence

When the class notices that the teacher hesitates, the class too may hesitate. As a teacher, take time to notice and reflect on the use of words that can signal insecurity, like *"I think we should"*. However, it all depends on how words are said. Every movement teacher should develop and use a style that feels comfortable and goes together with her or his personality. Being confident is not the same as perfection. The goal of a movement class is to experience the joy of moving, not to conduct a perfectly executed dancing performance. A confident teacher can still hesitate and forget movements, and be nervous, without the class becoming uncomfortable.

Tone of Voice and Intonation

How the teacher uses her voice will also carry across to the class, and help (or distract from) performing the movement. To begin with, everyone should be able to hear the instructions. This implies speaking with a loud enough voice and a clear intonation. Speaking too loudly may however become distracting and cause irritation among participants. The teacher can ask people who hear (or see) less well to stand closer, to avoid having to talk in a very loud voice. Is the teacher's voice soft or hard? Is the voice calm, relaxed and inviting, or is it hard and cold, or even irritated? Is the voice coming from a relaxed place in the teacher? These qualities carry across to the class, and affect the experience of the movement.

As with the music, the tone of the voice can also support the mood and rhythm of the different sections of a movement class. For example, by speaking more softly during Stretch and On-the-floor, and with a more distinct tone during the rhythmic sections. One should however be careful to not overact and exaggerate the use of the voice, as participants will instantly feel if the voice is "done" rather than coming naturally with confidence.

Intonation and tempo can be used to support movements. For example, when saying *"Let the arm float upwards"*, the tone could rise at the end of the phrase, when saying "upwards", to support the upwards motion. Similarly, the voice could go down at the end when saying "down" in the phrase *"And go down"*. Speaking slowly during slow movements, and faster during faster movements, is another example of how the voice can be used to support the movement.

Another aspect that should be mentioned is silence – what happens when the teacher is not speaking. Pauses and silent parts are important to take in the movements, and to allow for reflexion. This can be particularly evident for the sections Stretch and On-the-floor, where instructions that are too wordy

could disturb the class. Silence can also benefit outgoing sections, such as Across-the-floor, where too many words can disrupt the flowing experience of moving together in a dance. When the music supports the movement, as with rhythmic movements, the teacher can choose to use fewer and shorter verbal instructions.

Direct and Indirect Instructions

If we wish to give an instruction, it can be a plain, direct instruction, or the instruction can be given indirectly. Direct instructions are useful for telling how to do a movement. Example of a direct instruction: *“Move one foot to the side... and back.”*

As an alternative to direct instructions, indirect instructions can be used. Some movements and parts of the class can benefit from direct instructions, other parts and movements can benefit from indirect instructions. For example, it can be very hard to relax on command. Let us say that the intention is to allow for letting go of tension in jaws, cheeks and face. Here are examples of instructions to make this intention happen:

Direct instruction: *“Relax the face.”*

Direct instruction phrased differently : *“Drop the jaws, let the cheeks hang loose.”*

Indirect instruction: *“Notice how your cheeks and your face feel.”*

Which words would you use to communicate this intention? Which words would you use in your native language?

An indirect instruction can work by directing attention to an area of the body, which can open up for a change in that area. Indirect instructions can make participants feel tensions they hold, and as a result, relax. The difference is that they experience this themselves, which may potentially go deeper than a direct instruction would. Indirect instructions can also be useful to remind of breath.

Words That Support the Feeling of a Movement

Words have qualities associated with them. The quality of the words used to give an instruction can help to support the quality of the movement, and support how the class experiences the movement. The quality of the voice also plays an important role.

Some words are **Soft**, others are **HARD**. For example, **STRETCH** can be argued to have a hard quality, while **Float** can be argued to have a soft quality. Soft and hard words evoke different feelings. Psychologist Wolfgang Köhler showed in 1929 that there is non-arbitrary mapping between speech sounds and hard and soft visual shapes, using the words **TAKETE** and **Maluma**. This sound-shape correspondence has been shown for both toddlers and adults (Maurer et al., 2006). See Figure 1 for examples of hard and soft shapes.

Consider the following words. Which ones feel hard and which feel soft? Which ones are neutral? Which words have soft and hard qualities in your native language?

“Bend”, “Flex”, “Reach”, “Open”, “Twist”, “Stretch”, “Squeeze”, “Bounce”, “Swing”, “Rock”, “Lift”, “Float”, “Extend”, “Move”.

Figure 1: Examples of hard and soft shapes.



It is not only the sound of a word that determines if it is experienced as soft or hard. Some words carry a connotation of “doing” or “effort”, while others invoke images and feelings of “allowing” or “letting go”. The tone of the voice can reinforce the soft and hard qualities of words. A soft voice can help the class to reach inwards, which can be beneficial, for example during Stretch and On-the-floor. A more energetic and distinct tone can be beneficial for faster synchronised movements, like the ones done in the Circle.

As a more elaborate example, let us use the movement of stretching arms up, by raising and lowering one arm at a time. This is a slow movement that opens up the rib cage. How we give instructions for this movement can tell us something about using words to support the feeling of a movement, with relaxation and freedom as the goal.

Consider the following alternative phrasings. Which ones support the intention of the movement? Which words would you use in your native language?

“Stretch the arm up... then bring it back again.”

“Extend the arm upwards... and take it down.”

“Raise your arm... and lower it.”

“Let the hand float up into the air... and gently lower it.”

“Allow the hand to float upwards... and let it come down.”

Furthermore, instructions can be plain, explaining what to do using concrete language, or instructions can be more abstract, using analogies, metaphors, or poetic language. An example of a plain instruction: *“Raise the arms above the head, bring them out to the side in a big circle, and come down”*. A metaphorical instruction for that movement could be: *“Open up”*. Another example of metaphorical use of words is *“Say yes”*, when giving an instruction for nodding the head. Another metaphorical example is saying *“Make a smiley”*, when moving hips from side to side with feet apart, shifting the weight back and forth from one foot to the other. In this movement the center of the belly “draws a smile”. The “smiley” can become more clear if placing the fingers of one hand below the navel. Analogies with animals can also be used, for instance *“Wiggle the tail”* and *“Raise the back like a cat”*.

Everyone may not appreciate metaphorical and poetic language, and others will love it. This has to be taken into consideration when teaching a class, so that participants do not feel embarrassed or offended.

Words That Support Breath

In Rosen movements, controlled breathing is not used (compare to Yoga where this is common practice). Instead, the breath comes naturally, and movements aim at free breath rather than controlled breath. However, at times during the class (for example during Stretch and On-the-floor) it can be beneficial to make participants aware of their breath, because this can create an opening for deeper breathing. Participants who have a shallow breath can be helped to breathe deeper and more relaxed when they focus on their breath.

Consider the following examples of direct and indirect instructions. Which words would you use? How would you phrase instructions in your native language?

"Take a breather" (Marion Rosen's expression)

"Take a deep breath"

"Allow the breath to come"

"Allow the body to breathe"

"Allow the air to flow through the body"

"Notice where breath comes"

"Notice your breath"

Timing and Preparation of Movements

Movements take place in time. Coordination of words and movements, and preparation of beginning and ending of movements can greatly influence how confident and relaxed the class is when performing movements.

Anticipation

In their book, *The Illusion of Life*, Disney animators Ollie Johnston and Frank Thomas outline the principles of animation (Thomas & Johnston, 1981). One principle that is directly applicable to teaching a movement class is *anticipation*. Anticipation is used to prepare the audience for the next action. In animation, a character can for example signal action by leaning backwards before running off. If the character would run off instantly, the audience might miss the action and wonder what happened. By contrast, when prepared, they have time to recognise and see the movement. In a movement class, the principle of anticipation can be used to prepare the class for the beginning and ending of movements. This can be done both through words and body language.

Preparing Movements

The teacher can prepare for the next movement by beginning the verbal instruction before starting the actual movement. One thing with which to experiment is beginning to give the instruction, then starting the movement and continue the instruction during the movement, with words slightly ahead of the movement. As an example, consider the movement of making a circle with the hand/arm in front of the body. If the teacher just begins this movement without preparing the class, participants fall behind and have to catch up with the teacher. To prepare for the movement, the teacher can start giving the instruction

before the movement begins:

"Move a hand in front of the body [Start movement] making a full circle."

Preparation can be elaborated further by making a body movement that prepares for the circle of the hand/arm. In this example, the right arm is doing the circle:

[Extend right arm slightly out to the right side]

"Start here"

[Wait for class to be in the start position]

"Make a circle" [Move the right hand/arm to the left in front of the body and around in a full circle]

Since the movement starts with the arm extended to the side, the circle gains momentum and naturally becomes a full circle.

To combine words and body language to prepare for movements, as in the above example, can be used in many situations. For example, if the teacher is going to show the movement of taking a hand out to the side, she can slightly move her hand to direct attention to it before giving the instruction and beginning the movement. Here is an example:

[Lift one hand slightly]

"A hand goes [Start movement] to the side."

[Short pause in the end position]

"and back" [Start back movement]

As another example of using body language to prepare for moving the hips in a circle, the teacher can put her hands on the hips, drawing attention to that area of the body.

To prepare for a step with a foot, the teacher can bring the foot to the starting position of the movement, and hold it there until the class has prepared in the same way, then give the instruction and begin the movement.

Ending Movements

During movements with several repetitions, it can be helpful to signal when the last repetition is approaching. Just as it is important to prepare for the beginning of movements, the teacher should prepare for the ending of movements. For example, in the circle, when moving feet/toes to the side and back to center, one can say *"Last time"* slightly before doing the last repetition. Then participants will have time to prepare for ending the movement, and will not be caught by surprise when the teacher stops doing the movement. Words can be very helpful for signalling the ending of a movement. Body language could also be used, for example by slowing down and coming to a stop in a movement sequence.

Building Up Movements

In Rosen movements, a common pattern is to repeat a specific movement a number of times (but not too many times, to avoid exhaustion), to let the joints become lubricated and to fully get into the movement. One way to build up such a sequence is to give a plain and simple instruction the first time the

movement is done, then for the second time direct attention to the essence of the movement, and for the third time let the class do the movement undisturbed in silence. As an example, consider the movement of raising a hand/arm up in the air above the head. Notice that in this sequence, words start before the actual movement (anticipation).

[First time - first arm] "Let the arm float up into the air... and come down"

[Pause]

[First time - second arm] "Now the other arm"

[Pause]

[Second time - first arm] "Notice where breath comes"

[Pause]

"Last time"

[Second time - second arm] [Silence]

(This movement can be just right to do twice for each arm, since it is done slowly.)

Other examples of building up movements include sections in the Circle, where several of the movements that are done help prepare for longer sequences. Preparing for the "Grapevine" (a dance-inspired sequence) is a typical example of this. For movements across the floor, it is also useful to prepare for more complex dancing steps by starting out with movements that are easy to perform. In addition, to build up and prepare movements have important physiological implications. Unless muscles are warm and joints lubricated, movements may hurt, and the body as well as the mind may be affected in a negative way.

Rhythm

Rhythm is important for several of the movements in the Circle and also for movements Across-the-floor. These movements are flowing and contain elements of dance, and are interconnected with the music. The teacher has the responsibility of coordinating these movements to help the class perform them in a rhythmic and relaxed way.

Preparation is important for rhythmic movements. One way to build up rhythmic movements is to start out by doing the movement in slow tempo (half tempo), and then shift to faster tempo (full tempo). This enables participants to build up confidence and get into the movement in a relaxed way. Furthermore, it can be easier to both give and follow instructions when starting out in half tempo. This gives the class time to take in instructions and get into the movement before shifting to faster tempo.

The slow/fast tempo shift is useful for several other movements, for example Hip Swings and movements that involve feet and legs.

Aliveness

A movement class can be viewed as an on-going, alive communication between teacher and participants. There is also alive communication among participants. How the teacher uses words and body movements will affect the co-regulation and ordinary variability that goes on in the class. The experienced teacher can observe and take in the class, and make in-the-moment adjustments to instructions and

movement sequences, based on the on-going process of the class.

For example, the teacher may have prepared for a particular movement sequence, but in the moment, she feels like doing another variation than the planned one, just because it “feels right”. It might be the case that the class is joyful and attentive, opening up for movements that the teacher did not originally feel would work with the class.

A class where participants are familiar with each other and with the teacher can experience more ease in performing movements, feeling confident and relaxed as they can anticipate the next movement and also contribute to the way the class performs as a group. This kind of co-creation can be particularly evident in the dancing parts of the Circle and when moving across the floor.

CONCLUSIONS

Anticipation is an important principle for communicating movements in a clear way that reduces the risk of the class hesitating or feeling insecure. Clear communication can enable creation of flow and aliveness, resulting in greater freedom of moving and breathing, facilitating the “letting go” of stress and tension. When the class feels comfortable and secure, participants can relax and experience joy in moving together.

From the classes I have taught, I have noticed that it is beneficial to begin giving the instruction before starting the movement. I feel that this also helps me as a teacher to get into the movement. It has also made me feel more secure and less hesitant. Using a slow tempo for the first time(s) a movement is done, using pauses at the end positions, has also helped. Once the movement has been shown it can be done in regular tempo. Similarly, I have found that preparing for the ending of a movement helps me to be clear in the way I show the movement.

I would like to encourage the reader to try out and experiment with these principles: To prepare for movements by starting to give instructions ahead of performing them, and to prepare for the ending of movements by saying something ahead of the last repetition.

When the participants in the class finish a movement sequence together with the teacher, and together with each other, this can result in greater sense of being synchronised and feeling part of a whole, compared to when the teacher suddenly stops doing the movement, and the class, unprepared for this, make the last repetition half done. There is a satisfaction in the feeling of belonging to the group and moving together. As a movement teacher, supporting the class in beginning and ending movements together can help in creating this particular feeling.

For future studies, more structured and systematic observations of movement classes can be made, using alive communication theory to analyse the communication going on in the class. In addition, records of informal observations of Rosen Method movement classes can be a valuable contribution to the development of the movements.

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Appendix: Use of words in the different sections of a movement class

A movement class consists of five sections. The following is an outline of the use of words in each of the sections. Some sections are more introverted and others are more extroverted. This affects the words used and how to speak to the class. Note that the class is not told how to feel, rather the introvert / extrovert feeling comes through the movements, music, and words used.

1. Warm-up

The purpose of warm-up is to get started and loosen up, to warm up muscles and joints, and to get into the mood of the class. The teacher chooses words that establish the desired mood of the class, and uses her (or his) body and personal appearance to communicate the essence of the movements.

In this part of the class, it is desirable to give clear and simple instructions, and make sure everyone can hear and follow the instructions. Using the principle of anticipation helps participants to get into the movements.

During warm-up, the class is both introverted and extroverted.

2. Stretch (open-up, reach-out, lengthen the body)

The purpose of this section is to open-up and lengthen the body. (Personally, I feel that “Stretch” is a somewhat unfortunate word, because in my native language (Swedish) it can imply enforced stretching of the body.)

For this section, words that enable relaxation should be used, words that allow people to let go of stress and tension. It can also be beneficial to use words that remind participants to notice or become aware of their breath. For example, *“Notice your breath.”*

Further, allow participants to notice how the face and jaw feel, as these are places where we commonly accumulate tension. During neck movements, and when hanging down, the teacher can send awareness to this area by using phrases like *“Notice how the face and jaw feel.”*

During Stretch the class is usually calm and introverted, but there are several movements in this section for opening up and reaching out, and words should support this (*“open up”, “reach out”*).

3. Circle

The purpose of the Circle is to move joyfully, loosen up and work with coordination, hip support, and balance. The teacher should make sure to prepare movements, and build up movements using half/full tempo sequences. Anticipation is very important and participants should not be surprised by the next movement, but be prepared for it. Short and clear instructions are useful. It is important to make the hip/pelvis support the body, to get the body into alignment. One example of a movement that is done in the circle is to lift knees, one knee at a time. But if we just tell the class to lift the knee, the supporting leg can be forgotten and become stiff, and the hip goes out of alignment.

Here is a way to build up this movement in a way that engages legs and hips. First do a movement where both knees are bent (one can do this in half tempo to begin with, then in full tempo). Pause after this. Next, one foot/knee is lifted and the supporting knee is bent slightly by lowering the pelvis, while supporting the upper body. Movements are done while holding hands in the circle, using each other for support.

Example of instructions for this sequence:

[First movement, in rhythm, first half tempo, then full tempo] “Knees soft... gently bend both knees... now twice as fast.”

[Pause]

[Next movement, also in rhythm] “Lift one knee, slightly bend the other knee and drop the tail [lower the pelvis]... and twice as fast.”

In the circle the class is extroverted.

4. Across-the-floor

The purpose of this section is to experience joy, open up and realize yourself through movements inspired by dance and music. This is also a time “to be seen” by others.

It is important to give participants freedom to perform the movements on their own, individually or in pairs, depending on the movement. Therefore, give plain and simple instructions to introduce each movement, and, importantly, show the class how to perform the movement so that everyone hears and sees. Do not begin giving instructions for the next movement until everyone has completed the previous movement sequence and has walked back over the floor. During this section the teacher does not talk a lot. You can give individual instructions as needed, but talking to the whole class once a movement has started works less well, because of the cheer and music in the class.

Movements across the floor can begin by doing individual movements (for instance, moving together in a line, but without holding hands), then go in pairs (with pairs moving in a line or in a sequence). How to organize movements across the floor depends on the number of participants and on the size and shape of the room. For long and narrow rooms, pairs moving in sequence works better than moving in a line.

Across the floor the class is extroverted.

5. On-the-floor

The purpose of the final section is to relax and release tension in the back. The body is now warm and joints are lubricated as a result of the previous sections. When lying on the floor, gravity does not compress the spine as when standing up, so this section presents an opportunity to move the back while the spine is decompressed. In addition, when the spine is supported by the floor there is less danger of injury to the spine.

Regarding instructions, one very important difference between this section and the previous ones is that the class cannot see the teacher that well. Therefore, words become the dominant way of communicating with the class.

Begin by having participants lie down comfortably and relaxed on their backs. A short guided relaxation can be helpful after the out-going movements in the Circle and Across-the-floor. Use calm voice and clear instructions. For example, *"Lie down on your back... allow the body to let go... let the mat support the body... feel the air flowing in and out of the body..."*

If desirable, one can do a guided body scan: *"Allow feet to let go... legs... upper body.. arms, hands... allow the head to let go, cheeks, jaw, ears, nose, eyes, forehead... allow the top of the head to let go"*. (This relaxation was to my knowledge not included in Marion Rosen's original teaching of the movements, but it has been a practice used by some of the movement teachers I have studied for.) However, if doing relaxation for too long, the body may become cold and stiff, and the floor movements may not be as beneficial as they potentially could.

When giving instructions on the floor, use clear, to-the-point instructions. If talking too much, the meditative/introspective mood can be disrupted. But you need to be clear, since participants may not be able to see you even if you demonstrate the movement, and they may have their eyes closed.

Example of instructions for a sequence that activates the back/spine in a gentle way, following after the initial relaxation:

"Lie on your back, bend one knee at a time, let the feet rest on the floor."

"Lift one leg, and let the knee gently bounce towards the head."

"Bring the foot down and rest."

"Lift the other leg, and let it bounce."

"Come down and rest."

"Lift one leg, then the other, let both knees bounce towards the head."

"Put hands on the knees, let the knees make a circle."

"This is a massage for the lower back."

"The circle goes one way... then changes direction, and goes the other way."

"Come to the middle and rest, put one foot at a time on the floor and relax."

On the floor the class is introverted, except if working in pairs, which is more extroverted. One example of this is when ending the class by doing partner work that brings participants to standing. This can be used as a way to prepare for going out into the world, after the deep relaxation on the floor.