Abstract: Critical Movement (SM) and the Babel Technique (SM) 2-18-13
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The practice of Critical Movement (SM) is dependent upon adaptable neural connections ready and capable of rewiring in order to meet the demands and challenges in a living, thinking, moving, speaking body. Often dancers are trained in silence, ready to embody the complexities of thought and action without voice or vocal projections. This paper and supportive film/performance describe a process built from an innovative experiment, called the Babel Technique (SM), which offers a combination of sensory vocal and motor skills for mind body connections. Critical Movement emerges from the practice of these mind body connections. The process involves freeing the voice to make a myriad of creative sounds in order to reestablish interconnectivity and expression through acts of serious and restorative play, first devised in 1996 in a dance theatre work “The Gossips”, Sullivan has experimented with the technique for decades. The technique is applied through workshop and performance experiences to examine, devise and promote the practice of heightened mind body connections.

Concern about a learned disconnect was heightened in a rehearsal in 2006, when an intelligent, talented dancer stated, “I no longer know how to dance when I have to speak.” The Babel Technique (SM) is built from the critical thinking and intellectual standards of clarity, accuracy, precision, relevance, depth, breath, logic, significance and fairness. The technique enhances the connections of speaking with moving, thinking, sensing, and feeling (Feldenkrais), builds from Space Harmony (Laban) and reflects an authentic wholeness, which is being named "Critical Movement (SM)".

The experiment transformed university students into powerful performers. They described their work as gaining boldness, building perspective, depth, and sensation, challenging the way they think, finding release, faith, trust and confidence. A short film describes the full-length dance theatre work “The Table Where We Met” and sections from the short performance “Alone Together” as they develop and construct applications through creative, improvisation. The paper presented describes the theory of Babel Technique (SM) and Critical Movement (SM). It examines how the theory stands on the shoulders of experiments in language and movement, as well as dance experiments in vocal choreography (Forsythe, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui & Damien Jalet), the use of text in dance since the 1960s, and current experiments from non-dancers (William Birmingham).

It is proposed that the requirements necessary to practice the verbal/physical language of Critical Movement (SM) require that sensory soma amnesia (Hanna) be replaced with innate connections, influencing our practice of self-efficacy, affecting how we inhabit knowledge and contributing to our health and well-being. It is proposed that the Babel Technique (SM) can awaken a host of dormant interconnections to support all lives, resulting in interdisciplinary applications throughout education, research, technology, performance and health care environments.