

## ***Papers III: LANGUAGE AND MOVEMENT***

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### **New approaches to communicate embodied psychotherapeutic practice**

Essential tools in Dance Movement Psychotherapy (DMP) are to mirror, synchronize, amplify, and interact with the client's movement material not solely in movement but also in words. Just like a mirror and narrator, the therapist aims to help a client to find words for their embodied experience, kinaesthetic perception, emotional response or train of thought.

However, there is no research to date on how the embodied experience can be verbalized. This inquiry explores other ways of verbalizing the embodied experience and inquires into the essentially subjective undertaking of yielding meaning in the movement (Daly, 1988). The researcher's concern is the successful communication of profound inner experiences from one human being to another. The research explores links between movement and narration, the possibility to word the embodied experience (Sheets-Johnstone, in press 2008; Parviainen, 2002, 2003; Ylönen, 2003, 2004), particularly including the subjective experience of the therapist.

The approach has been concentrated on the significant moments in therapy (Campbell et al 2003; Elliott et al 1994; Friedlaender et al 1994). These noteworthy moments of change are the basis for a further investigation through writing and moving, parting from the written word through an embodied experience and coming back to the written word.

The procedures have its roots in a threefold methodology structure:

1. Artistic research methodologies (Hannula, 2004; McNiff, 1986, 1992, 1993, 1998; Nevanlinna, 2004; Wadsworth, 2000) underline the creative process which is the very heart of the Creative Arts Therapies.
2. Movement and dance as a method of inquiry (Cdordas, 1993; Riley, 2004; Smith, 2002; Koltai, 1994;) allow for an integration of the embodiment approaches which are gaining more recognition in a wide range of disciplines (Riley, 2004; Berrol, 2006) due to recent neuropsychological findings (Carroll, 2006; Panksepp, 2006a, 2006b; Damasio, 1994, 1999); philosophical paradigms (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 1964; Bourdieu, 1977; Sheets-Johnstone, 1999; Fuchs, 2001, 2004) and cognitive linguistics (Lakoff and Johnson 2003).

3. Writing as a form of analysis (Reason and Hawkins, 1988; Sparkes, 2002, 2003; Wolcott, 1994) making use of the process of composition and the textual product itself (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996).

First results of the study, which belongs to a bigger project, will be presented, including the importance of the embodied experience in order to investigate significant moments from the therapeutic process. Movement not only triggers memories, but also associations, and brings the therapist closer to his/her countertransference experience. However, shifting from writing to moving and back to writing, highlights how the embodied experience often reduces the embodied word, concentrating its content and discounting technical jargon. First conclusions of the study propose this technique for supervision, but also suggest its use for any embodied psychotherapeutic practice.

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### **Mind the body: Unearthing the affiliation between the conscious body and the reflective mind**

In this presentation, I will outline the major theoretical and methodological foundations of my research project that focused on the following question: What kinds of mental reflections does bodily presence generate? The study is based on a presupposition that bodily knowledge and mental reflections are intertwined, and that it is possible to facilitate their relationship. The extent to which it is possible to become aware of some processes that we usually do not attend to in everyday life, as well as the meanings that our prereflective, or bodily experiences generate when attended to are the focus of this study.

In an attempt to facilitate internal awareness, I developed a method based on introspection, and combined it with bodily movement, and reflective writing. Shortly stated, introspection means observing the inner reality that positivist science refused to accept as a part of physical reality. This methodology and its theoretical premises that link neural and phenomenological structures are recently being employed by a growing number of scholars. This reflects a growing interest in multidisciplinary approaches in studying human existence and, e.g., bodily knowledge.

The data collected for this study includes written reflections from five female dance professionals, aged 30-40 years. Through a qualitative thematic analysis, I arrived at eleven categories and that form four themes: observing, thinking, sensing and connecting. In my presentation I will briefly discuss these themes, but most importantly, I will describe the qualities of mental reflections that arose

from bodily presence and an apparent ease and swiftness of the movement between different ways of perceiving, sensing and thinking. Our inner life seems to be spontaneous yet purposeful at the same time, and our experiences and meanings that arise resemble improvisation where surprise and purpose become intertwined. At the same time, an intricate interplay between the outer and inner worlds evolves into a multilayered fabric with different contours, colours and shapes.

This study illuminates the dynamic movement, or “heavy traffic” that goes on between our conscious thought and bodily experiences. It seems to me that the nature of this movement itself is still vaguely understood, and that we have not even begun to appreciate the richness of meanings that are being generated through it. In closing, I will discuss how the study can also be conceived as a window on what dancers know. Dancers know through their bodies and about their bodies. They seem to be able to access the prereflective realm quite easily, and generate rich meanings and varied mental reflections based on their bodily experiences. Moreover, often these reflections are poetic and metaphoric in nature, and are related to existential questions and complex issues related to oneself, others and the world.

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## **Seeing the Light in John 1:1 Through Heidegger’s ‘On the Essence of Truth’**

Let us substitute “The Word” with “Saying” (active verb) to constitute the Greek Logos. Saying is an active event instead of a noun, or fixed substance. The substitutions will allow us to move through the full proclamation of John 1:1, which itself is composed of three parts (‘in beginning was the word, the word was with the god and god was the word’). But everything changes with the substitution within the term Logos. Our hypothesis involves a chiasmic ontological-theological act: the movement traces an event inside the three parts of the full statement about God, and it is Heidegger’s “On the Essence of Truth,” which can provide the lens to see what this movement traces. Are we seeing the living God in the movement of the movement’s un-concealing?

God happens in an original way one can say. But this subsumes the parts within a whole statement that constitutes a single act. Here Heidegger’s “On the Essence of Truth” is especially helpful in our illumination of John 1:1’s mystery. God is the happening of the original in which the saying occurs as a relation or communion of God as Truth. This transcends the flatness or inertia or lifelessness of a subject-predicate constitution: ‘God is Truth’ or ‘God is Word.’

We have to ponder the interrelations of the three sets of three as it constitutes the Event of Truth's Disclosure. This ontological ground of moving relations makes possible the meaning of what appears to us in the surface of the single statements in Koine Greek, transliterated Greek, Latin and the literal English (taken from Wikipedia: John 1:1)