

# Philophonetics:~

## LANGUAGE FOR THE WHOLE BEING

Drama-Therapy based on the  
universal sounds of all human languages

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A language exists, common to all humankind beyond our separate languages, ancient and fresh, known to all and forgotten by most, in which all mother tongues are united. Babies speak it in their cradles, poets in their secret places, lovers in very special moments and mothers as they give birth. It is the language composed of all the sounds of human speech, consonants and vowels and their combinations, prior to their composition into existing words, the phonemes. Some thirty-five to forty strangely sounding noises, having no specific meaning in any dictionary when taken one by one, but which carry the whole of human communication throughout the all known and unknown history around the globe, humanity's universal language.

What are these sounds, half-conscious carriers of so much meaning, humble servants of human expression? Dr Rudolf Steiner's unique approach to linguistics (1924) describes them as the building stones of our vital body, the carriers of our deepest experiences, the echo of universal creative forces in all the levels of our inner and outer life, and as potential fore-runners of new dimensions of human consciousness to come. If they mean so much to us, these sounds, why is it we know so little about them? The answer: their time to become conscious to humanity is only here now, at the end of this century, when conditions are ripe for major parts of humanity to take a step in inner and outer awareness.

Philophonetics is a method of personal development, artistic development and therapy, established in the mid-80's in Sydney, Australia, following years of research into the psychological, artistic and educational effects of the direct experience of the sounds of speech. Other methods of applying the sounds in various fields existed before: a method of using

the sounds for the development of artistic speech - Speech Formation, for an art of movement - Eurythmy, and for an art of medically prescribed therapy Curative Eurythmy, were established by Rudolf and Maria Steiner at the beginning of the century, and are being taught and practised world-wide. A method of massage based on the sounds, Chryophonetics, was established by Dr Bour from Austria much later on. But for the direct application of the sounds into psychological awareness and the development of a new approach to theatre based on them - conditions, according to Rudolf Steiner in 1924, were not yet ripe.

But now their time has come. Within a very short period of experimental work the sounds revealed themselves as the most powerful supportive elements for personal development, self awareness, release, strengthening and artistic development. Have you ever imagined that a sound spoken to you with some strength when you listened to it, not with your trained mind, but rather with your whole vital body, can become a unique sensuous and emotional experience, alarmingly resembling a whole range of your inner experiences? Try it, and you will be amazed. They do. Take them one by one, the whole spoken alphabet, sense them, touch them, taste, feel and react to them freely, and the whole range of your inner life will be powerfully addressed, touched, tickled, stirred, calmed, upset and soothed, as the case might be for you in your hitherto unconscious relationship to each of the sounds of your mother tongue.

Then try to express in gesture and movement these sensations, emotions and responses, and a whole new range of expressive movements, such as you never before thought yourself capable of will expand your existing movement vocabulary, no matter how developed you are in


your communicative ability. Then the pictures will come to you, such as you haven't seen before - colours, shapes, patterns and qualities, resembling very specific qualities of your inner life, bringing back memories, good and bad, waking up dormant aspects of yourself, delighting and agonising you, they will all come alive.

And when you start to speak these sounds for yourself, silly and ridiculous as they will sound to you at first, you will dare to accompany these utterances with the movement and gestures which will come very naturally from your body and emotions as you speak - then will new dimensions of your inner strength come forth, beyond your trained self-image, beyond the limitations which you called yours before, from beneath and from above your very known self.

These are but a few of the whole range of exercises developed out of the Philophonetics research during the last six years through intensive work with several thousand people in Australia (Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne, Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Canberra), England, Israel and Switzerland. With every session, with every workshop, training course and rehearsal new aspects of the conscious encounter with the sounds constantly reveal themselves. It is as if there is no limit to the creative potential of the sounds of our speech, when taken creatively.

Philophonetics has so far evolved into three major fields of activity: educational, therapeutic and artistic.

The educational aspect of Philophonetics is applied as a method of self development, self awareness, mastery and creativity, communication skills and expressivity for adults. Through the dynamics of sounds, gesture, movement, sensation and visualisation one develops new tools for self-knowing, orientation,



**Philophonetics**  
 SOUND, MOVEMENT, VISUALIZATION  
*Arts Therapy*  
 • COUNSELLING • PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT  
 based on the work of Rudolf Steiner

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confronting deeper layers in oneself, bringing them to life and releasing them. It is a very practical path of inner transformation.

The therapeutic application of Philophonetics takes the educational one step further into specific work with a whole range of difficulties, from emotional blocks to scars from early childhood, from stress and tension to headache and period pains, and just about everything in between, within the Psycho-Somatic range. The sequence of sound, movement sensation and visualisation can address, simulate and make conscious physical, vital and emotional patterns, release them,

development for actors and for dramatic production. With Philophonetics sequences of emoting, visualising, sensing, gesturing and speaking - every nuance of human character, quality and experience - can be discovered, manifested and recreated, becoming a permanent skill. This applies to the on-going development of the actor, to the building of any particular character and to the production as a whole.

In short, Philophonetics claims and demonstrates that every human experience can become conscious, inwardly visualised, outwardly expressed in a gesture, precisely simulated and enhanced

reverse them and transform them into fresh energies. As therapy Philophonetics is both a form of body work and of personal counselling.

The artistic application of Philophonetics is mainly in the field of the performing arts, which is the origin of the method, being in the beginning a method of de-

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References: Rudolf Steiner *Speech and Drama*, Steiner Press, London; Brian & Esther Crowley, *Words of Power*, Llewellyn Publications, Minnesota USA, Chapter 21 "Universal Sound" about Philophonetics