

The Somatic Actor: Feldenkrais and Alexander Technique in Theatre Pedagogy

Dr. Murali Basa

Department of Performing Arts, Assam University, Silchar, Assam, India

murali.basa@aus.ac.in, +91 9989614901

Actor training can demand sustained emotional and physical intensity, yet curricula do not always teach students how to regulate and recover from that intensity. This paper examines the pedagogical relevance of the Feldenkrais Method and the F. M. Alexander Technique for developing more sustainable actor training. The study adopts a qualitative, conceptual research design based on critical analysis and synthesis of literature on somatic education, actor training, performer wellbeing, and de-roling. The analysis focuses on how the two somatic approaches address habitual tension, psychophysical awareness, efficient movement, and transitions into and out of demanding performance states. On this basis, the paper proposes a three-phase Somatic Actor Model comprising Entry, Sustaining, and Exit. Entry prepares the performer through awareness and inhibition; Sustaining incorporates moment-to-moment regulation during demanding work; and Exit provides a structured process for physical recovery and separation from the performed role. The framework is designed as a pedagogical layer that can complement existing acting and movement practices rather than replace them. The study does not claim that the model has been empirically demonstrated to prevent burnout. Instead, it identifies a theoretically grounded pathway for reducing avoidable strain and proposes directions for future empirical evaluation. The paper argues that recovery should be treated as a teachable component of actor training and as part of professional preparation for sustainable performance practice. This approach also encourages institutions to consider performer wellbeing within curriculum design rather than treating recovery solely as an individual responsibility. The proposed framework is intended as a pedagogical model for implementation, observation, and subsequent empirical assessment.

Keywords: *Feldenkrais Method; Alexander Technique; somatic pedagogy; actor training; performer wellbeing*