

**Transforming Traditional to Contemporary:**

**A Practice-based Exploration in Acting**

A thesis submitted to the University of Hyderabad in partial fulfilment of the award of  
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D.)

in

Theatre Arts

By

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**December 2022**

## **DECLARATION**

I, Guntheti Naveen, hereby declare that this thesis titled “**Transforming Traditional to Contemporary: A Practice-based Exploration in Acting**” submitted by me under the guidance and supervision of Professor Noushad Mohamed Kunju is a bonafide research work which is also free from plagiarism. I also declare that it has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this University or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

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## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis titled “**Transforming Traditional to Contemporary: A Practice-based Exploration in Acting**” submitted by Guntheti Naveen bearing Reg. No. 14SNPT05 in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in Theatre Arts is a bonafide work carried out by him under my supervision and guidance.

The thesis is free from plagiarism and has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma. Further, the student has published the following article before submission of the thesis for adjudication and has provided evidence for the same in the form of printed article in the relevant area of his research:

- 1) Guntheti, Naveen. 2021. “Surabhi Charithra – Sampradaya Pradarshakulu, Natana Paddhathulu – Bahumukha Prajna,” *Bhava Veena – Journal of Arts, Literary Culture and Language Study*, Vol. 18, Issue 1, 104-109.

The student has presented research papers in the following conferences:

- 1) International Federation of Theatre Research (IFTR) Conference, Universidade de São Paulo, Brazil, July 10-14, 2017. Paper title: “Appropriation of the conventions: A critical approach based on a devised performance, ‘Reflections.’”

- 2) Indian Society for Theatre Research (ISTR) 13<sup>th</sup> International Conference, Cultural Education Centre, Aligarh Muslim University, India, January 23-25, 2017. Paper title: “History and Travelling Performance Tradition of Surabhi Theatre.”

- 3) IFTR Conference, Stockholm University, Sweden, June 14, 2016. Paper title: “Versatility of acting techniques: The traditional performers of Surabhi.”

4) ISTR 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference, Goa, January 28-30, 2016. Paper title:  
“Interaction between on-projection live acting: An actor revisits current Perineum  
play production.”

5) IFTR Conference, University of Hyderabad, India, July 06-10, 2015. Paper title:  
“Democracy in Play Production Process: Analysing Perineum.”

Further, the student has passed the following courses towards fulfilment of  
coursework requirement for Ph.D.

| <b>Course Code</b> | <b>Name</b>                                                   | <b>Credits</b> | <b>Pass/Fail</b> |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| TA 801             | Research Methodology                                          | 4              | Pass             |
| TA 802             | Arts and World – Literary/<br>Visual/ Cultural Theory         | 4              | Pass             |
| TA 811             | Performance Theory and<br>Issues in Indian Theatre            | 4              | Pass             |
| TA 812             | Mapping the Question<br>(Exploring the topic with supervisor) | 4              | Pass             |

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# Chapter 1

## 1.1 Introduction:

### 1.1.1 Acting Training through practice: An entry point for research

Since childhood, I have been fascinated with the terms: Drama, Play, and Theatre, which are used interchangeably. My surroundings look like theatre, and the people around me look like performers. This fascination led me to perform cultural events during my school days, and over the period, I emerged as a budding performer. Eventually, I was trained in forms such as acting, dance, singing, stagecraft, theatre management, lighting, and playing instruments. I was also trained in Bundelkhand Martial arts (Stick fight), Chhau (semi-classical dance form of Purulia and Mayurbhanj), and internalized the forms into day-to-day theatre practice. Over the period, few questions were raised from the inner sense. How an actor gets benefits through the practice? How an actor realizes things through the practice of sustaining energy, agility, enhancing bearing capacity, the flexibility of an actor's body, strengthening of the body, coordination, balance, control and develop a creative mind and body. My continuous engagement with theatre motivated me to explore the intricacies and nuances of various art forms and leading to take-up the present doctoral research project aiming to explore Traditional acting practices as a base to construct and develop a contemporary actor's technique.

Actor training is one of the important discursive issues in the contemporary theatre research. There are number of methods are existing in acting training. All these training methodologies gradually developed from the day's theatre got evolved as art form in different regions and different cultures globally. Despite having many acting training methodologies people throng to practice and study theatre performances in terms of various aspects of voice, body movements. There is always a search of how to get trained as an Actor/Actress. Because of the conviction that a trained actor can make his or her presence much more visible and can have a successful career than depending on instinct and born talent. Actor training has been seen as an important domain in theatre as the treatises like: *Natyashastra*, *Abhinaya Darpana*, Ziami's

texts, etc., mentioned the training methods which are referred by theatre practitioners and many experts/trainers through the ages.

A brief look at the western theatre reveals the availability of many different kinds of actor training methodologies. The Stanislavski's method and the later offshoots from his school codified and standardized certain practices through the works of Michael Chekhov, Sanford Meisner and Lee Strasberg etc. Along with this, practitioners such as Eugenio Barba, Jerzy Grotowski, Phillip Zarrilli and David Zinder etc have adopted culture centric traditional performative strategies to create their own training methods. In Indian Context several theatre artists, researchers have attempted to study practice of voice and body movements of various performing art forms and its applicability in contemporary theatre/ acting training curriculum and pedagogy.

Present research work looked at various aspects of performance practices of voice and body movements in various stages: preparation, practice, recitation and repetition from a practitioner cum researcher point of view. Several traditional techniques (belongs to various traditional practices) such as rhythm, balance, body control, sustaining energy, transformation of body from rigidity to flexibility got explored and experimented with the practitioner cum researcher point of view.

The study titled as **“Transforming Traditional to Contemporary: A Practice based exploration in Acting”** is having a futuristic aim in continuing with practice for ‘Evolving Actor Training Methods: A practice-based research to create training modules for young theatre aspirants. As part of the present work the researcher amalgamated references from the traditional art forms like: Kalarippayattu, Kathakali, Yakshagana, Koodiyattam and Yoga, Meditation, Bundelkhand Martial Arts and the consistent Gym training etc. These particular art forms are being adapted in terms of physical motions; accommodating the body-mind-emotion-time-space expressed/manifested in gestures, voices etc in order to restructure them towards integrating into contemporary actor training process. The research and practice also took diverse reference from eminent actor trainer theorists and practitioners like: Meyerhold, Grotowski, Barba etc. and practiced “Rasa Box” by Richard Schechner.



The research focuses on the adaptation and application of tools and techniques of traditional forms into the contemporary actor training practices. As an actor, researcher has explored and practiced various traditional acting methods and techniques under the guidance of professional experts and also their disciples. The learning related to these traditional arts forms have been acquired through field-work in the traditional institutions of Kerala, Karnataka, and Madhya Pradesh like: Kathakali School, Madhava Mathrugramam Performing Centre for Kutiyattam, in Thrissur, Lakshmanan Gurukkal from Hindustan Kalari Sangam in Puthiyara, Kozhikode, Kerala, Guru Prashob Kalamandalam from Nanmanda, Balussery, Kerala. Guru Sanjeeva Suvarna from 'Kireeta Prashasti' for Udupi Yakshagana. Kendra. Undertaking work to Master these practices for the objective of adapting and restructuring them in contemporary actor practice was done without disturbing the inherent philosophy and values of the forms. Once the actor/ researcher become fluidly fluent with the body movements and expressions of these forms, he can develop new vocabulary for performance making.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem:**

Present practice-based study explored following questions in general they are: What is acting, how it is been defined, what are the acting training contexts in India, How in Indian conditions institutions trains actors, how individuals get trained by Masters of repute or their peers, how groups train its actors, how repertoire companies train in their process of making and touring with the plays. How workshop contexts inform and train the actor trainees, how far these practices are result oriented. All the above said queries lead to one specific question, i.e.; Why traditional performing genres informal and formal methods of training is not been considered as a prime area to experiment with, as well as, how can one blend the contemporary western oriented acting training along with the established traditions practiced in our country.

Being a performance researcher (As a theatre practitioner cum Performer -the present researcher), I always got pounded with queries regarding the training process and body practice required for an actor trainee and I always thought of how things happen when individual play productions happen, and realized most often individual

productions processes train the actors in interesting ways and means this is reflected in the case studies included in this project see the sessions case studies). After going through different kinds of the actor training process as a practitioner cum researcher I understood stipulated and structured modules for training actors in the Indian context is a necessity and for that the trainee should expose and experience the training process involved in the traditional as well as modern practice contexts.

### **1.3 Hypothesis:**

The present day contemporary acting training needs new advanced methods because acting training as well as the performance making woven with technological enhancement is becoming complex. But, taking the traditional inputs and methods which is been practiced, performed and proven for a long time will be the basic condition to change oneself to develop the new body practices for the contemporary actor.

So, it is hypothesised that resorting back to the tradition by exploring acting with a focus on body practice, through continuous training will help in constructing new tools aimed at developing contemporary acting methods and a training process.

### **1.4 Aims and Objectives of the Study:**

- The study is an explorative study which uses a unique methodology of practice as research. The process of research will be consuming a long duration of time cutting across varied psycho –Physical practices. Here, the actor trainee cum researcher is subjecting his own mind, body and the spirit into understanding learning methodologies of body practices aimed at developing new models of body practices for the contemporary actors. This will help one to self-equip to become a ‘performer’ and lead others in developing their skill-based approaches to reach the goal.
- Practitioner strive to understand what are the new answers hidden with regards to the body practices in the case of certain selected traditional performance practices like: Yakshagana, Kathakali, Kalarippayattu, Gym

Training, Yoga, Martial Arts and Contemporary dance (Bharatanatyam and Kalari mixed practice) based body practice.

## **1.5 Specific aims of the Research project while taking up each**

### **Traditional Practices:**

- To understand and experience the traditional Kathakali/Yakshagana/Kalari body practice and its applications through the researcher's body.
- To know the possibilities and difficulties of contemporary actor body practice and try to cut across it by synthesising the traditional practices like: Kathakali/Yakshagana/Kalari/Koodiyattam with the popular body practices like: Gym, Yoga, Martial Arts etc., by finding out applications which are capable to overcome impediments to become a lively actor with presence.
- To ponder upon, why contemporary actor needs to adapt traditional and martial arts kind of rigorous body practice and its applications to attain the presence while performing and living.
- Exploration of navarasa, text, rhythm, and physical body practice from conventional to contemporary is undertaken with trials and experimentation. The present research aims to find a training process to transform the concept of traditional actor body practice in to contemporary actor practice suitable for performance making process.

## **1.6 The Purpose of the Study:**

- To understand the adaptation of actor training tradition in Indian theatre.
- To restructure the traditional art forms to reintegrate in the present context of performance. Through exploration, experimentation and experiencing the process over a period time.
- To understand the process of adaptation of traditions to bring new expressions into global perspective in both practice and performance.
- To make training modules based on the compilation of above training and practice context with extensive visual documentation through video and graphic formats.

## **1.7 Salient Feature of the Study:**

Researcher using practice as research methodology which is specific to the actors training processes of the focused workshop and training contexts.

This is an attempt to understand and experience the traditional Kathakali/Yakshagana/Kalari body practice and its applications through one's own body.

To know the possibilities and difficulties of contemporary actor body practice when the traditional forms of body practice applications get involved.

This project also aimed at producing specified videos of actors training, through the visual documentation and recapturing the material with commentaries. It raises the question, why contemporary actor needs to adapt traditional and martial arts kind of rigorous body practice and its applications.

## **1.8 Scope of the Study:**

Present study explored following questions in general they are: What is acting, how it is been defined, what are the acting training contexts in India, in Indian conditions how institutions trains actors, how individuals get trained by masters, how groups train its actors, how repertoire companies trains in their process of making and touring with the plays. This study documented practical training of selected art forms and explored the possibilities develop actor training modules.

## **1.9 Literature Review:**

My attempts on understanding the academic production in the area of theatre acting and practice methods resulted in surveying diverse amount of literature already produced in this area. Which includes; Theatre, Acting, Acting Methods, Traditional Theatre Practices, Production, Practice as Research etc. By looking at the vastness of the present result, I have conveniently categorized it into four divisions, they are; 1. General Works - which includes History, Practice and elements of Theatre Arts (Western and South-Asian), 2. Specific Works pertinent to acting theory, methods and practices along with accounts by prominent practitioners of traditional as well as contemporary performances, 3. Works in English and Vernacular introducing the

nuances of performing genres such as Kathakali, Yakshagana, Kalari, Koodiyattam, Yoga, Martial Arts and Gym training etc., included in this category, 4. Theoretical works related to practice as research, performance as research and other performance practices including the performance and training material in the video form from the digital sources are considered in this category. (See the Appendix -1 for the review attached).

## **1.10 Area of Study:**

Theatre pedagogy, actors training and traditional performance culture, traditional performances, and traditional body practices with a focus on practices majorly from south India. Documenting the training methodologies through the appropriate visual documentations and notes taking will be unique to this project, the following comes under the subject area. The geographical area of research is specific to the contexts and the proposed application of the modules will be at Telangana State in the researcher's future endeavours.

### **1.10.1 Geographical area of study:**

Selected case studies are majorly from South India. So, these will be focused on the performances of particular traditional performances and the researcher's approach towards it from the South Indian traditions like Kathakali (Guru Prashob Kalamandalam from Nanmunda 14, Balussery, Kerala), Kalarippayattu (Guru Lakshmanan Gurukkal from Hindustan Kalari Sangam, Puthiyara, Kozhikode, Kerala), Yakshagana from Karnataka (Guru Sanjeeva Suvarna from 'Kireeta Prashasti' for Udupi Yakshagana Kendra), contemporary dance body practice (Shri Guru Padma Kumar from Pappan Dance Company, Ahmedabad) etc.

## **1.11 Application of the traditional elements to contemporary acting process:**

The major source of motivation for the contemporary actors is their personal interest, which ignites their urge to continue experimenting to build their physical and vocal abilities through the rigorous practice adopted from traditional theatre forms. Each trainee will approach differently their ways to adapt, the common thing in them is to

try and give a new life to a contemporary actor practice in order to apply traditional elements in their works. They often start with repeating the original process mostly using the blind imitation strategy, and in due course of time the process will make them try to innovate, for that they borrowed and experimented with traditional elements in their adaptations; which will in turn work as recreated reproductions of behaviour with doing and showing. The exploration in the presentation of body performance then becomes the noteworthy hallmark of few artists. As we know, traditional theatre practice has its unique identity and conventions of performance, which contrasts that of Western theatre practice. An actor performs his/her role through his/her expressions practically attained and reflected by body explorations which also allow the actors to sing with exaggerated gestures, modulations of dialogue delivery, and the description of scenes and characters.

## **1.12 The Techniques of Adaptation of Traditions to Contemporaneity:**

The methods of adaptation and appropriation approach differ from one artist/performer to another. Every individual has their own distinctive technique of adaptation to reach their goal. Complicated gestures, expressions, emotions, movements, way of dialogue delivery with breath, rhythm and energy level are simplified by using only basic rigorous actor practice through the traditional acting techniques, to make it understandable to the contemporary time actors need to use specific techniques devised by them. It is worthy to take note of the limited modification in majority of the works, where the original form is represented in wide-ranging manner, instead of attempting to attain the appreciation of an actor with perfection and detailing.

How does the practice help in building the actor's potential through the traditional acting practices? There is a two-way possibility here – either the actors are convinced of the alienation of present-day performers from traditional performing arts; or the limitation to understand their own backdrop and context. Though the real reason cannot be ascertained, but it might well be said that this results in actors keeping the

traditional theatre-forms with them. Venturing to present these traditional forms on the present-day stage accomplishes the actors' purpose in a couple of ways: the aim to put forward rigorous body practice of traditional acting or theatrical forms; and second, the aim to make the traditional forms become comprehensible to other contemporary actors and audience alike. Since both the ancient/traditional literature and traditional theatre are always held in high esteem – as refined artistic forms, and part of national heritage; the manner in which they were performed have been idealised as the guide, that must be followed. Hence, devotion and sincerity towards traditional customs are always respected and loved by audiences, especially those who have a traditional bent of mind. For them, alterations to contemporary performing styles are seen as difficult to appreciate. But many times, contemporary actors experimenting with traditional art-forms have experienced positive responses from conservative audience and actors alike. If they blend tradition and innovation with a creative bend of mind which can be approached and appreciated cutting across the localities and temporalities. A committed and concentrated effort by the trainees can satisfy the audiences who expect to see a traditional theatre in a contemporary context, the way it is with the spirit of the tradition. The reason behind the application of traditional elements in adaptation in contemporary times is due to the visibility of their unique character in our theatre. Their incorporation and performance of distinctive functions within the dramatic structure of the plays of mythology like Ramayana Mahabharata etc., make them an important method incapable of being overlooked.

The above-mentioned concerns lead one to make a practice-based research project with the specific aim to evolve the acting training modules. Which is applicable and vital in the growth of an actor's identity. The following section explains the Research methodology carried out for thesis

## **1.13 Research Methodology: Practice/Performance as Research (PaR):**

The most challenging question that a practitioner-cum-researcher grapples with is whether practice itself is a form of research which is directed towards the objective of producing new knowledge. Therefore, we find much debates regarding the difference underlying art as theory and art as practice. There always exists some sort of opposition between the conceptual understanding and aesthetic or sensory experience. Practice by its nature requires both investigation and exploration and, in the process, produces an object that had no previous existence thereby laying claim to be research. Research based on practice allows space for the exchange of ideas between theory and practice in which the practitioner as researcher can take action-oriented approach with a subjective methodology. The word ‘subjective’ is used to delineate the practitioner-cum-researcher’s investigation beyond the purview of a particular discipline thereby situating the work within the cultural conditions which produced and shaped the present research in a context. It is important to remember the fact that any form of art is not static but fluid, and during practice, new ideas are developed and experimented with, which are open to interpretation and change. In a way, the practice as research develops and extends the production of knowledge about the field of practice within the concerned discipline itself and seeks to ask new questions in order to shape up the discourse by capturing thought in action. This means that knowledge here is constituted in action and grasped in contextual terms.

The present research is informed by certain philosophical concepts like the German philosopher Martin Heidegger’s concept of “praxis,” idea of “technics” as advanced by the American philosopher Don Ihde, “physicalism” of Ansgar Beckermann, and the notion of “reflexivity” of Pierre Bourdieu. According to Heidegger, praxis implies that ideas and theory are resulted from practice, and it is through practical understanding that the original relations with things gets established.<sup>1</sup> Ihde furthered

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<sup>1</sup> Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, 1977, pp. 6-11. See also Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, 1977, pp. 262-263.



this position through his own idea of “technics” which means the “human actions or embodied relations involving the manipulation of artefacts to produce effects within the environment.”<sup>2</sup> Noted German philosopher Beckermann argues for the essentiality of physicalism within the context of mind-body problem.<sup>3</sup> For him, it is reductive because there is nothing but physical objects and physical language on which mental properties are dependent; and as well as non-reductive because mental vocabulary is indispensable for the “formulation of some regularities of behaviour.”<sup>4</sup> The French sociologist Bourdieu suggests the reflexivity in the relationship of the researcher to the object to be studied, as the key concern in practice-based research methodology and writes that “the body believes in what it plays at,” and what is “learned by body is not something that one has...but something that one is.”<sup>5</sup> This research satisfies the three conditions enumerated by Paul Carter in his theory “ethics of invention” in practice as research. These conditions are – a) description of the “forming situation” – the environment in which the project emerges and the attitude of the practitioner-performer to contribute something new; b) intelligence of materials – the discursive momentum which gives way to the interest of the practitioner-performer preceding invention, and the primary function is to study and document thereby allowing the materials to speak for itself; and c) necessity of design – the emergence of a dialogue between the practitioner-performer and the environment which allows creation without adherence to predetermined conditions. Practice as research in performance involves the use of human body in the performative space. Rhythm and fluidity are necessary for the construction of meaningful movements. As shown by Shaun Gallagher, the image of the body comprises a “complex set of intentional states and dispositions” such as attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, where “intentional object is one’s own body.”<sup>6</sup> Advancing the argument further, Eric Mullis proposes that there are three kinds of content

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<sup>2</sup> Ihde, *Technics and Praxis*, 1979, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Beckermann, et.al. (eds.), *Emergence or Reduction? Essays on the Prospects of Non-reductive Physicalism*, 1992, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>5</sup> Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 1990, p. 73.

<sup>6</sup> Gallagher, *How the Body Shapes the Mind*, 2005, p. 26.

constituting “body image – body percept, body concept, and body affect. Perception provides a sense of the body at any point in time, whereas conception allows an individual to understand the nature of his/her own embodiment. Body affect deals with the body invested with emotion thereby generating emotional responses.”<sup>7</sup> Use of the body in performance also helps in revealing a text and simultaneously creates an ambience for the audience to experience. For instance, the researcher has effectively used his Kathakali-trained body in the rendition of Duryodhana in a studio performance of Bhasa’s play *Urubhangam*. The bodily expressions coupled with rendering lines of shlokas in front of limited audience helped in achieving both ends – revelation of text and ambience, in a real-time response-driven environment. The researcher has therefore used the propositions of Kathryn Taylor and Susan Langer. Taylor notes in the context of the performance based on William Shakespeare’s *Othello* how the performance “acts as a cathartic release” of ideas about the text.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, Langer argues that performance arts refine body’s gestural abilities.<sup>9</sup> The objective of any performing art lies in the creation of an artistic experience for the viewers, by capitalising on the abilities of expressions of human body. In the present research, the practitioner as performer learned how to consciously inhabit the body and make it his own. In any live performance, bodies are the material through which the performance is “scrutinised, critiqued, displayed and transformed.”<sup>10</sup> Hence, for both the audience and the performer, the body becomes a locus of artistic value.

In this doctoral project, for the last one decade, researcher personally engaged into a practice as research (PAR)/Performance as Research (PAR) method in search of generating a training model based on the traditional performance genres like: Yakshagana, Kalari, Kathakali, Martial Arts and Contemporary dance in collaboration with the masters of the respective practice traditions. For that, the

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<sup>7</sup> Mullis, “The Image of the Performing Body,” 2008, p. 63.

<sup>8</sup> Taylor, “Putting Research Center Stage: Performance-Driven Student Inquiry,” 2015, p. 85.

<sup>9</sup> Langer, *Feeling and Form*, 1953, pp. 174-187.

<sup>10</sup> Parker-Starbuck and Mock, “Researching the Body in/as Performance,” in Kershaw and Nicholson (eds.), *Research Methods in Theatre and Performance*, 2011, p. 210.

researcher subjected himself with his own body, mind, and voice in correlation to understand the basic crux of the acting training methods used by select Masters. They are: Guru Sanjeeva Suvarna from ‘Kireeta Prashasti’ for Udupi Yakshagana Kendra; Guru Lakshmanan Gurukkal from Hindustan Kalari Sangam in Puthiyara, Kozhikode, Kerala; Guru Prashob Kalamandalam from Nanmanda, Balussery, Kerala; Shri Guru Bhagwandas Raikwar from Madhya Pradesh; Shri Guru Padma Kumar from Ahmedabad and others as mentioned in the following table.

As part of the PAR framework, researcher became familiar with concepts of pedagogy of chosen artforms by participating in training programs at selected places of the Gurus. Names of Gurus and their associated artform is given in the following Table 1.1 Table 1.2 and 1.3 shows the production oriented and practice-oriented workshop contexts in which the researcher participated to train himself along with the other aficionados.

**Table 1. 1: Selected Art Forms:**

| <b>S. No</b> | <b>Art form</b> | <b>Collaboration with Guru and name of the training centre/Institution</b>                           | <b>Training context</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Remarks</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.           | Kathakali       | Guru Prashob Kalamandalam (Nanmanda 14, at Balussery, Kozhikode (Calicut), Kerala. Pin Code: 673613) | Trained in 4 Phases<br><br><b>Phase 1:</b> - 1 <sup>st</sup> to 23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2016, 23 Days. University of Hyderabad (UOH)<br><b>Phase 2:</b> - 17 <sup>th</sup> May to 20 <sup>th</sup> June, 2018. one month, 4 Days. Nanmanda 14, at Balussery in Kerala. | Trained in the workshop mode and continuing practice till now.<br><br>Gurumukha training at the Gurukula system. continued training guru’s personal attention. extensive documentation, practice and making performance. |

| S. No | Art form       | Collaboration with Guru and name of the training centre/Institution                                                                                          | Training context                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Remarks                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|       |                | <p>Collaboration with supervisor Noushad Mohamed Kunju University of Hyderabad (UOH)</p> <p>Guru Prashob Kalamandalam</p>                                    | <p><b>Phase 3:</b> - 21<sup>st</sup> June to 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2018. 34 Days. at University of Hyderabad (UOH)</p> <p><b>Phase 4:</b> - 1<sup>st</sup> August to 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2018. 20 Days. at University of Hyderabad (UOH)</p> | <p>The practice became performance with <i>Urubhangam</i> (The broken thighs)</p> <p>Workshop mode training, continuing with personal consultation till now.</p> |
| 2.    | Yakshagana     | Guru Sanjeeva Suvarna (Kireeta Prashasti, Udupi)                                                                                                             | Trained from 1 <sup>st</sup> to 20 <sup>th</sup> March, 2019. (20 days)                                                                                                                                                                          | Workshop mode training, continuing with personal consultation till now.                                                                                          |
| 3.    | Kalarippayattu | <p>Guru Lakshmanan Gurukkal (Hindustan Kalari Sangam, Puthiyara, Kozhikode, Kerala, Est. 1952)</p> <p>Guru Padma Kumar (Pappan Dance Company, Ahmedabad)</p> | <p>Trained in 2 Phases</p> <p>Phase 1: - 1<sup>st</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> September 2016, (15 days)</p> <p>Phase 2: - 20<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> October 2019, (15 days)</p>                                                             | Both the phases were workshop mode training, continuing with personal consultation till now.                                                                     |
|       |                |                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                  |

| <b>S. No</b> | <b>Art form</b> | <b>Collaboration with Guru and name of the training centre/Institution</b>                                            | <b>Training context</b>          | <b>Remarks</b>                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.           | Koodiyattam     | Guru Ammannur Rajaneesh Chakyar. ("SHYAMAM" Madhava Mathrugramam Performing Centre for Kutiyattam, Thrissur, Kerala.) | 13th to 17th May, 2015, (5 days) | Workshop based on Navarasa and Natyashastra to Koodiyattam acting techniques - demonstration, documentation, and continuous practice with consultation. |
| 5.           | Yoga            | Riken Ngomle, Pambala Parvathalu and Self practice etc.                                                               | From 2018 till now               | Continuous daily practice for developing breathing techniques and Asanas followed by voice.                                                             |
| 6.           | Meditation      | Maharishi Mahesh Yogi: the practice of the Transcendental Meditation technique                                        | From 2001 till present day       | Continuous practice develops the practitioner to fill his consciousness with inner bliss, unlimited energy and intelligence.                            |
| 7.           | Gym             | 1. Trainers<br>2. Mentors<br>3. Collaborators<br>University of Hyderabad.<br>(UOH)                                    | From 2018 till now               | Regularly modified practice according to specific structures by instructors and advisors.                                                               |

**Table 1. 2 Production Oriented Workshops**

| <b>S. No</b> | <b>Production</b>                                                                                            | <b>Collaboration with the acting trainer/director and name of the training centre/Institution</b> | <b>Key role played by researcher</b> | <b>Training context</b>                                                                               | <b>Remarks</b>                                                                    |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.           | Henrik Ibsen's A Doll's House                                                                                | Noushad Mohamed Kunju University of Hyderabad (UoH)                                               | Researcher cum Participant observer  | 1 <sup>st</sup> to 29 <sup>th</sup> April 2019, (29 days) Production with acting specialized students | Analyzed the acting issues and possibilities in consultation with fellow actors.  |
| 2.           | “Birjees Qadar ka Kunba” by Raghuveer Sahay an adaptation of The House of Bernada Alba by F. D. Lorca (1936) | Nasreen Ishaque (Nibha Theatre Ensemble)                                                          | Researcher cum Participant observer  | 21 <sup>st</sup> March to 21 <sup>st</sup> April, 2019, (32 days) Production oriented workshop        | To understand and analyze how to deal with Amateur actors for the performance.    |
| 3.           | "Medea" by "Euripides"                                                                                       | Tolis Papazoglou (Greece) at University of Hyderabad (UoH)                                        | Researcher cum Participant observer  | 26 <sup>th</sup> September to 24 <sup>th</sup> October, 2018, (29 days) Production process            | Beholding approaches towards the actors and text of the Greek tragic performance. |

| <b>S. No</b> | <b>Production</b>                               | <b>Collaboration with the acting trainer/director and name of the training centre/Institution</b>                       | <b>Key role played by researcher</b> | <b>Training context</b>                                                      | <b>Remarks</b>                                                                 |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|              |                                                 |                                                                                                                         |                                      |                                                                              |                                                                                |
| 4.           | Paro Anand's Wingless (Fairy tale)              | Nasreen Ishaque at Oakridge international, Gachibowli, Hyderabad. school on 17 <sup>th</sup> Founders' day celebrations | Researcher cum Participant observer  | 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2017 to 08 <sup>th</sup> December, 2017, (12 days) | To analyze how to make creative acting performance for kids.                   |
| 5.           | The Trojan Women                                | Noushad Mohamed Kunju University of Hyderabad. (UOH)                                                                    | Researcher cum Participant observer  | 21st September to 26th October, 2017, (36 days) Production process           | An exploration of emotions through the physical approaches of Michael Chekhov. |
| 6.           | "Barrister Parvateesam" by Assistant Professor, | Shiva Prasad Thumu at Jaipur, Rajasthan State University                                                                | Researcher, participant and An actor | 4 <sup>th</sup> to 23 <sup>rd</sup> August 2016, (20 days)                   | An actor's exploration with the regional text and performance.                 |

| <b>S. No</b> | <b>Production</b>                       | <b>Collaboration with the acting trainer/director and name of the training centre/Institution</b>     | <b>Key role played by researcher</b>    | <b>Training context</b>                                                 | <b>Remarks</b>                                                                                                                          |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7.           | Wonder of will: This is your after life | Karen Libman<br>Grand Valley State College,<br>Allendale to Grand Rapids,<br>Michigan, United States. | Researcher, participant and<br>An actor | 26 <sup>th</sup> March to 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2016,<br>(19 days)     | Explored stylized acting possibilities with text.                                                                                       |
| 8.           | Satish Alekar's 'Mahapur'               | Aniruddha Khutwad<br>(Pune)                                                                           | Researcher, participant and<br>An actor | 26 <sup>th</sup> February to 25 <sup>th</sup> March, 2016,<br>(28 days) | Experimented and analyzed the realistic acting possibilities with the participants and in-depth characterization in the realistic mode. |



**Table 1. 3: Practice Oriented Workshops**

| <b>S. No</b> | <b>Workshop/ Seminar/Production/ Festival</b>                                                               | <b>Collaboration with the acting trainer/director and name of the training centre/Institution</b>                                | <b>Key role played by researcher</b> | <b>Training context</b>                                            | <b>Remarks</b>                                                                                                       |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.           | Acting workshop                                                                                             | Noushad Mohamed Kunju collaboration with National school of drama (NSD) in Delhi                                                 | Researcher cum participant observer  | 11 <sup>th</sup> to 23 <sup>rd</sup> December, 2017, (13 days)     | Observed the development in the psycho-physical approach and its result among the participants                       |
| 2.           | National Tribal Festival of Dance, Music, Theatre & Crafts and Seminar 3rd to 5th March, 2017. at Hyderabad | Organized by National School of Drama (NSD) in collaboration with the language and culture department of Telangana at Hyderabad. | Researcher cum coordinator           | 27 <sup>th</sup> February to 6 <sup>th</sup> March, 2017, (8 days) | Research explorations and discussions of regional state forms, performances, and their traditional acting practices. |

| <b>S. No</b> | <b>Workshop/ Seminar/Production/ Festival</b>          | <b>Collaboration with the acting trainer/director and name of the training centre/Institution</b> | <b>Key role played by researcher</b> | <b>Training context</b>                                       | <b>Remarks</b>                                                                                                                            |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3.           | Bundelkhand Martial Arts                               | Department of Theatre Arts, Central University of Hyderabad.                                      | Researcher cum participant observer  | 1 <sup>st</sup> to 15 <sup>th</sup> February, 2017, (15 days) | Strengthened the body and increased the endurance capacity with combat ability                                                            |
| 4.           | Acting workshop                                        | Noushad Mohamed Kunju collaboration with National school of drama (NSD) in Delhi                  | Researcher cum participant observer  | 26 <sup>th</sup> to 31 <sup>st</sup> January, 2017, (6 days)  | Explored the acting training methods like : Meyerhold's etudes in the company of other participants and analyzed their physical concerns. |
| 5.           | Grotowski Acting Techniques to the Contemporary Actors | Riken Ngomle.at Department of Theatre Arts, Central University of Hyderabad.                      | Researcher cum participant observer  | 7 <sup>th</sup> to 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2014, (25 days)   | Explored acting in a poor theatre way as devised by Grotowski through repeated practice with patience                                     |

| <b>S. No</b> | <b>Workshop/ Seminar/Production/ Festival</b> | <b>Collaboration with the acting trainer/director and name of the training centre/Institution</b>                                      | <b>Key role played by researcher</b> | <b>Training context</b>                                                                                                 | <b>Remarks</b>                                                                                                          |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6.           | Theatre Anthropology workshop                 | Carolina Pizarro Velásquez and Karin Ahlström, From Holstebro, Denmark at Department of Theatre Arts, Central University of Hyderabad. | Researcher cum participant observer  | 26 <sup>th</sup> September to 6 <sup>th</sup> October 2014, (10 days)                                                   | Based on actor's physical practice and the multi-cultural study of the acting techniques.                               |
| 7.           | Perineum                                      | Abhilash Pillai                                                                                                                        | Researcher, participant and An actor | 1 <sup>st</sup> to 24 <sup>th</sup> April 2012, (24 days) Production oriented workshop with acting specialized students | Explored the acting possibilities with the full-fledged exploration on Richard Schechner's concept of <i>Navarasa</i> . |
| 8.           | Reflections                                   | Noushad Mohamed Kunju University of Hyderabad. (UOH)                                                                                   | Researcher, participant and an actor | 1 <sup>st</sup> to 14 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011, (14 days) production process                                           | To understand how an actor's body speaks and conveys more than the words.                                               |

| <b>S. No</b> | <b>Workshop/ Seminar/Production/ Festival</b> | <b>Collaboration with the acting trainer/director and name of the training centre/Institution</b> | <b>Key role played by researcher</b> | <b>Training context</b> | <b>Remarks</b> |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
|              |                                               |                                                                                                   |                                      |                         |                |

As per PAR framework, the researcher developed a method and training modules for himself to use in the “Performance practice.” The tentative modules as conceived have been experienced and understood by me through the explorations with the masters along with documentations of it. Process of codification, dynamics of teaching, ways of learning, and physical and mental reflexes of it are the major points of attention in the process of future application for the development of theatre acting in particular, and actors training in general, with the goals of theatre application in different contexts.

### **1.14 Sources of data collection:**

Primary data was collected through four methods:

- Participant observant in a group setting
- Participant observation One-on one actor’s Practical training workshop
- Non-participant observant.
- Photo and video documentation

On traditional and other arts forms: Kathakali, Yakshagana, Kalarippayattu, Koodiyattam, Yoga, Meditation and Gym training.

### **1.15 Documentation of the practice at various stages for analysis:**

The researcher documented the entire process in four ways – a) video recording – it was done at the minimal level with SLR and mobile camera setups because a conducive atmosphere in the training context was required in order to document the training processes, lectures, and demonstrations of the gurus, as participant-observer in workshops; b) visual research - the already documented material of theatre exercises, lectures, and workshops done by eminent theatre practitioners like Eugenio Barba, Carolina Pizarro, disciples of Jerzy Grotowski, et.al., were worked upon for repeated practises; c) pictures and postures – the pictures and movements as documented were reproduced into line-drawing format in collaboration with the researcher's artist-friends. Especially, regarding the Yakshagana, Kalari, and Yoga, the corresponding movement postures were meticulously documented and divided into action units; and d) audio and video - Audio-Visual recordings of the gurus' trainings, speeches, and interviews constituted a part of the researcher's fieldwork. Documents have been used in a two-way approach – as part of training, i.e., using the document for repeated practice; and as part of presentation, i.e., reproducing the document for presentation of thesis.

### **1.16 Secondary data sources:**

Secondary data were collected in library and archives to understand gaps and to contextualize study.

### **1.17 Data Analysis:**

Observations, and learning experiences were documented in the form photographs, videos and filed notes. Documentations and codifications are required for analysis. In this context, the researcher prepared a tool for data with analytical points on functional aspects of performances which is part of the conclusion of the thesis. Collected data was organized into case (performance) wise folders, and further, folders were prepared according to practical exercises for easy retrieval purpose.

## **1.18 Chapter Summarizations:**

### **1.18.1 Chapter 1: Introduction**

Introduction Chapter provides the details like aims and objectives, area of research, methodology, hypothesis, Literature review, etc.

### **1.18.2 Chapter 2 – Structuring Body and its Parts: An Exploration of Kathakali Acting Techniques**

This chapter explores the Kathakali art form to train actors through the application of physical (body) and vocal (voice) movements. The researcher has briefly traced the evolution of Kathakali in four stages from the ancient to the contemporary period, which is followed by the detailed use of the body in practice which informs the pedagogy of Kathakali. The next section exclusively focuses on the practical participation of the researcher in Kathakali body practice in four phases. Phase I is an attempt to understand Kathakali through participation in a workshop conducted by Guru Prashob Kalamandalam, where the *Guru Mukha* rituals and exercises have been dealt with. The second phase pertains to further practice with body and voice in Kerala under Guru Prashob's supervision at his residence. The researcher's approach to and the performance of the play *Urubhangam* under the guidance of his supervisor Noushad Mohamed forms the third phase. In the fourth and final phase, the researcher's assistance to the Guru during acting-training and his gradual evolution in the process has been discussed. The whole learning and training procedure evolved the researcher from a novice to a capable performer by using body, face, and the voice in any performance.

### **1.18.3 Chapter 3: Energy in Space and Energy in Time: An Exploration of Yakshagana Based Acting Practice.**

The chapter deals with the art forms of Yakshagana and the researcher's participation in learning the art, and experience gained in this regard. The chapter begins with a brief historical overview of Yakshagana along with the geographical and environmental factors involved in its growth. Forms such as Moodalapaya

Yakshagana and Paduvalapaya Yakshagana are discussed with. The second half is concerned with the practical participation of the researcher in Yakshagana involving rhythm practice with palms and different movements of the body. It shows how the variations of practice along with rhythm and beats of music not only contributed to the proper learning of the art form but also in overcoming body rigidity, improved breathing, and energy sustenance.

#### **1.18.4 Chapter 4: In search of Strengthening Body and Movement: An Expedition through Yoga, Kalaripayattu and Koodiyattam:**

The chapter comprises three parts – Kalaripayattu, Koodiyattam, and Yoga respectively. It begins with a historical overview of the practice of Kalaripayattu, followed by the different schools of practice, and the importance of Kalaripayattu training in healing, meditation, dance, films, and tourism. Then the focus is on the application of *Marma*, *Adavu*, and *Vadivu* in the learning of the art and development of body posture. The experience of the researcher as practical participant in self-exploration is discussed in detail in the last part of Kalaripayattu.

The Koodiyattam forms the second part where attention has been paid to its importance in theatre pedagogy, acting manuals, and the utilisation of chief elements in the performance. Some important concepts such as *aranguthalikkuka*, *tharkkan*, and *kuthampalam* have been elaborated upon. The researcher has paid more attention to the workshop of G. Venu and his *Navarasa Sadhana*; the workshop and the first-hand learning experience under Rajaneesh Chakyar and his *rasa bhava*, and the *rasa* box practice under Abhilash Pillai.

The third part briefly considers the eight major Yoga exercises as practised by the researcher to further the exploration with his body and its overall development, and why Yoga is necessary for the practice. These explorations and practices have furthered the understanding and usage of diverse concepts and elements in the performance.

### **1.18.5 Chapter 5 – Transforming oneself through Collaborative**

#### **Practice: Experiments at Gym and Theatre Workshops:**

This chapter deals with the integral aspect of physical practice to enhance an actor's performing abilities, and is categorised into two parts – the first part exclusively focuses on the gym training process with special attention to warmup exercises, gym routine, and the major exercises including those of chest, biceps, triceps, latissimus dorsi, thigh and calf; the second part concerns itself with the most important Western theatre practitioners, their theories, concepts, and exercises. The two sections jointly contribute to the understanding of the whole gym training process and the learning and application of several theatre concepts and practices in the overall development of the researcher in terms of physique and acting performance. These processes have led to strengthening of the body, improvement in body flexibility and mobility, and to incorporate the art of acting through physical gestures and movements.

#### **1.19 Conclusion:**

After going through different kinds of the actor training process in various Indian tradition as a practitioner cum researcher understood that stipulated and structured acting training modules in the Indian context is a necessity. Present study is useful to developing, testing, reviewing, and re-making of the modules of practice in geographical and cultural domain of Telangana. This study is also motivating tool to cultivate certain amount of body practices for the contemporary acting training. It also provides a departure for New Directions in acting pedagogy which includes the summary, findings of functionalities, recommendations, limitations of the study, future scope of research work.



# Chapter 2

## “Structuring Body and its Parts: An Exploration of Kathakali Acting Techniques”

This chapter explains the process and applicability of voice and body movements of Kathakali art form in actors training. The researcher employed the “performing practice approach” for practice, data collection, analysis and drawing conclusions. The researcher collected data in four phases, as mentioned below:

- Phase 1: Understand performance by participating in a workshop at the University
- Phase 2: Practice of Performance at Guru’s residence
- Phase 3: Performing Play at University
- Phase 4: Evolving as a trainer and assisting guru during acting-training workshop

This chapter also addresses the methodological (art form selection, play selection and event selection) criteria for choosing Art Form Kathakali selection, Criteria for selection of plays, and Text (*Slokas of Urubhangam* play) selection. This chapter also attempts to explain the Kathakali art form and *Urubhangam Slokas*<sup>11</sup> in contemporary academic relevance in actors' training.

Kathakali is a classical art form of Kerala. The word Kathakali can be translated as “story-play” or “dance drama.” Phillip B. Zarrilli, who did extensive research on Kathakali, preferred to use the term “dance drama.”<sup>12</sup> Many other foreign authors used the term “story-play” which is more of a literal translation that does justice to the original Malayalam word. Some of them retain the word Kathakali as it is. Some European authors compared Kathakali with “ballet,” “miracle play,” “opera” and “pantomime” as shown by David Bolland. Kathakali is a unique art form and the

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<sup>11</sup> It refers to the *slokas* through which the play *Urubhangam* is performed.

<sup>12</sup> Zarrilli, *Kathakali Dance-Drama*, 1999, p. 1.

uniqueness of this art form will be more evident as one venture more into it. This chapter tries to give a brief description of the history of Kathakali and some of the most important aspects of it that are relevant to the present study.

## **2.1 Legends of Kathakali:**

Legend has it that Lord Krishna appeared before a priest in Calicut in the year 1657 and presented him with a peacock feather. In order to celebrate this extraordinary and divine incident, the dance drama known as *Krishnanattam* was created. *Krishnanattam* was religious in its form and content. It celebrated the exploits of Lord Krishna. Krishna and his many girl friends were the major characters in *Krishnanattam*. This art became very popular all over Malabar, which is in the north of Kerala. The Raja of the neighbouring state whose kingdom was Kottarakkara came to know about this art. He was fascinated with the knowledge of *Krishnanattam* and wanted to watch the performance. He informed the king of Malabar whether they can send a troupe of *Krishnanattam* players so that he can enjoy this new art form. At that time, these neighbouring states did not have a friendly relation and the King of Malabar used this occasion to take a dig at his rival, the King of Kottarakkara. The King of Malabar replied that only people with a good, refined sense of art can enjoy this new art. So even if he sends a troupe of *Krishnanattam* players to Kottarakkara, it will prove to be futile since no one in the state of Kottarakkara has such an elevated sense of art! The people of Kottarakkara will be unable to enjoy the performance on this account. This has infuriated the King of and he wanted to avenge the humiliation he faced at the hands of the King of Malabar. He prayed to the gods for vengeance and it is said that the gods appeared before him in a dream. They taught him a new art which was nothing but what is known as Kathakali today. Leaving the myths apart, it remains to be true that Kathakali has attracted the attention of art lovers and connoisseurs all over the world and it has become the marker of the Malayali's identity. Many from India and abroad learn this art out of sheer passion alone.

## 2.2 History and evolution of Kathakali:

Zarrilli gives a periodization of five stages in the history of Kathakali. According to him, the first period starts in the late seventeenth century and ends in the late eighteenth century. During this period, Kathakali originated and took a definite shape as an art form. He assumes that, by the end of this period, it was in such a shape that a modern viewer would recognize it as Kathakali. The period from the late-eighteenth century to the late-nineteenth century is the second period. During this period, “there was further refining of the expressive possibilities of the genre.” The modern stage of Kathakali starts in the twentieth century, especially in the 1920s. The name of Vallathol Narayana Menon should be mentioned with special importance here. He was a great Kathakali enthusiast and patron of this art form. He started the first secular institute for the training of Kathakali at Cheruthuruthi on the banks of the river Bharathappuzha. The fourth stage is the “recent past.”<sup>13</sup>

The earliest form of Kathakali was an art form known as *Ramanattam* which was simple in its presentation and setting. The Raja of Kottarakkara or Kottarakkara Thampuran (1625-85) was the one who authored the plays that served as the text for the dance performance in *Ramanattam*. His plays were based on *Ramayana*. It is also true that *Ramanattam* was modeled upon an earlier dance form known as *Krishnanattam*. The play for *Krishnanattam* was written by the ruler of Calicut called Manaveda between 1655 and 1658 A.D (18). There may be older traditions that influenced the art forms of *Ramanattam*, *Krishnanattam*, and even Kathakali. But a detailed inquiry into that subject is not necessary here. What is relevant here is the fact that *Ramanattam* was a rupture from the earlier traditions of performing arts which helped Kathakali to evolve as a distinct art form of the Keralites. The merit of *Ramanattam* was that spectators who did not know Sanskrit could also understand it since they were written predominantly in Malayalam. Till then, the plays were

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<sup>13</sup> Zarrilli, op. cit., 1999, pp. 17-18.

written in Sanskrit which made them incomprehensible for the not-too-learned spectators.<sup>14</sup>

David Bolland points out that the Raja of Kottarakkara formed his own company of actors who performed this art not just in royal courts or temples, but also in many villages and houses of the feudal chieftains. Following this example, similar troupes were formed in the Malabar area which led to the competition of these troupes at a professional level. This has contributed to the development of Kathakali literature. The case of the Raja of Kottayam or Kottayam Thampuran is an example. He wrote four plays based on *Mahabharata* which are touted as some of the best plays contributed by Kathakali to Malayalam literature. Anyway, this art became popular everywhere in Kerala.

It should be stated here that the term Kathakali came into existence after Kottayam Thampuran wrote those four plays.<sup>15</sup> Since the textual materials for the plays were not confined to *Ramayana* alone, the term *Ramanattam* might have become out of place and the play wrights and connoisseurs might have searched for a new term. Evidence suggests that Kathakali was the new term they invented. Two factors that decided the future course of development of Kathakali can be seen in this phase.

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<sup>14</sup> Bolland, *A Guide to Kathakali*, 1980, pp. 1-2. He makes the observation that Kathakali has emerged as the “people’s theatre.” The logic behind his observation is that *Ramanattam*, upon which Kathakali was modeled, could be enjoyed by ordinary spectators as well. The same goes true about Kathakali also. He also makes an interesting comparison between Kathakali and the Shakespearean theatre due to the same reason. Though it is true that *Ramanattam* and Kathakali were enjoyed by a larger share of the population compared to the other performing arts that were performed in the medieval temples; it is not completely true as still a larger share of the population did not have access to these art forms till recently. This is evident from his book itself. After comparing Kathakali with the Shakespearean theatre, he says in the same breath that the patrons of this art were the noblemen, especially the Namboodiri Brahmins. Even the spectators must be from the privileged communities. He also finds an interesting similarity between the Masques, a kind of plays that were prevalent in England in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries and Kathakali. The point of his comparison is the masks worn by the English actors and the facial make-up of the Kathakali artists. It is relevant to note here that one subject that has been discussed here in this chapter is the erasure of body in Kathakali performances. The make-up factor contributes to this phenomenon immensely. This will be discussed later.

<sup>15</sup> Zarrilli, op. cit., 1999, p. 18.

While *Krishnanattam* as an art form was confined to a particular geographical area, *Ramanattam* was spread all over Kerala which helped it grow as an art form of the entire Keralites. Equally important is to note the fact that *Ramanattam* drew its textual material from the episodes of *Mahabharata*. Both these developments were crucial to the evolution of Kathakali as an art form.

The earlier phase of Kathakali is marked by its relatively simple features. The actors had to sing the lines while performing. *Maddalam* and *Chengila* were the two musical instruments used in the background. Even the costumes and make-up were very simple.

The earliest patrons of Kathakali were mostly from Nayar families who were held high positions in the administrative hierarchy. Kottarakkara Thampuran, Kottayam Thampuran, and Vettom Thampuran were some of the notable figures who helped this art in its initial days. Kathakali also had some Kshatriya patrons at this stage. Patrons in those days gave financial assistance to artists and their troupes for two reasons - either they were supposed to conduct performances within the jurisdiction of their clan or *tharavadu*; or the performance was necessary as it may bring some good fortune for the family. These were not the reasons for their interest in Kathakali / *Ramanattam*. It must be for the sheer love of the art that they have financially aided the new art. Kathakali was influenced by the literary movement in Kerala known as the *Manipravalam* which was highly influenced by the Sanskrit language and its literary traditions. So, it is logical to assume that only those who knew Sanskrit would be interested in patronizing this art. It was the Namboodiri Brahmins and a few sections of the non-polluting Sudra caste known as Nayars who possessed the knowledge of Sanskrit. Logically and as suggested by historical evidence, the Namboodiris and Nayars were the major patrons of Kathakali in the medieval age.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., pp. 21-23.

In this initial phase, two changes influenced Kathakali's future growth and evolution as an art. One change has already been mentioned above, i.e., the expansion of Kathakali repertoire. This was started with Kottayam Thampuran when he took material from *Mahabharata*. The second change was the modification of Kathakali in a way to incorporate the expression of the *rasa* element. This was also a modification introduced by the Kottayam Thampuran. The scope for enacting the *rasas* of *sringara* (amorous) and *veera* (heroic) were especially important. The ruling class that patronized Kathakali took special interest in the presentation of *veera* as it would legitimize their war motive. The type of make-up used to perform the *veera rasa* is known as *pacha*. War heroes and characters who were the epitome of the quality of valour were plenty in Kathakali plays. Examples include Rama, Krishna, Nala, Rugmangada, the Pandavas- especially Yudhishtira, Arjuna, Bhima, etc. *Pacha* was the type of costume used to enact such characters on the stage. The word *pacha* means 'green' in Malayalam. This type of costume is predominantly green hence the word *pacha*. It is supposed that the green colour epitomizes the qualities of "moral uprightness," "inner refinement" and "calm inner poise."<sup>17</sup> Presenting heroes and their heroic deeds from the *Puranas* served two purposes. One is that the *veera rasa* could be presented by this. The second is that it could address the social classes that would be present as the audience in the performance. These classes included those who either engaged in wars or who benefitted from it. Bloodshed, and killing are abundant in Kathakali repertoire. This would serve the interest of the ruling class by idealizing war and invasion which were common between the small kingdoms in medieval Kerala.

Some other innovations in the early days of Kathakali deserve special mention here. This included the introduction of two singers in order to allow the actor to speak with his fingers (*mudras*); replacing the traditional masks with a new colourful facial make-up; using *chenda* and *ilattalam* in the chorus, changing Rama's and Krishna's blue make-up into emerald green, etc.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

While talking about the early innovations, the name of the Kottayam Thampuran should be discussed again. He along with his senior actor Vellattu Chathunni Panikker introduced so many innovations in the Kathakali theatre. *Chutti* in Kathakali make-up was first done by them. *Chutti* is done with white rice powder paste. In his four plays, Kottayam Thampuran tried to bring in many *bhavas* on to the stage. In order to realize these *bhavas* as *rasas*, they selected *ragas* according to the context and mood of the play. They introduced more rhythmic patterns and experimented slow tempo in dance. It was them who started using red lip colour so that the dark green coloured face will be in contrast with the lips.<sup>19</sup>

Kaplingattu Namboodiri and Ittiri Panikker brought in some new innovations in the second-half of the eighteenth century that improved the hand gestures or *mudras* in Kathakali. They drew *mudras* from *Koodiyattam*. They also relied on the classic Sanskrit text titled *Hastalakshanadipika* for improving the hand gestures.

The contributions of Princes such as Vira Kerala Varma and Karthika Thirunal Maharaja should not be forgotten. Vira Kerala Varma wrote several plays. Karthika Thirunal Maharaja is famous for works like *Rajasuyam*, *Narakasuravadham*, etc. Other noted figures who contributed to Kathakali literature include Aswati Tirunal Rama Varma (1756-94), Kallekkulangara Raghava Pisharody (1725-93), Kalloor Namboodirippad (1797-1835), etc. Aswati Tirunal Rama Varma's works include *Rugminiswayamvaram*, *Poothanamoksham*, *Ambareeshacharitham*, and *Pundrakavadham*. Kallekkulangara Raghava Pisharody is famous today for his *Ravanodbhavam*. Kalloor Nambooirippad's most famous work is *Balavijayan*. Two dominant features of the plays during this period are the anti-heroes and the interpolations associated with them. The anti-heroes include characters like Ravana (in *Ravanodbhavam* and *Balavijayan*), Narakasura (*Narakasuravadham*), Jarasandha (*Rajasuyam*), and Sisupala (*Rugminiswayamvaram*). Many

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

interpolations were inserted in these plays to present the anti-heroes in a new light. Ravana performing Tapass, Narakasura's peacock dance in Narakasuravadham are two examples.<sup>20</sup>

The discussion above shows Kathakali's progress as an art form in its formative years. The development of Kathakali in the next phase was influenced, though not affected by two factors- the European invasion and the attacks of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan. As a result of these, the patrons of northern and central Kerala - the Namboodiri Brahmins and some Nayar land lords- lost their earlier status. This was not the case in Travancore. Marthanda Varma became a powerful ruler of Travancore and during his reign from 1729-1758, Travancore became a powerful kingdom. In any case, Kathakali continued to get financial and aesthetic support from its patrons in Malabar, Kochi, and Travancore alike.<sup>21</sup>

The most important development in the nineteenth century was the development of different styles in Kathakali. These styles are known as *Sampradayas*. *Sampradayas* means distinct styles or traditions in Kathakali. When a group of teachers are known for some of their peculiar features in the performance and when these features are transmitted from one generation of teachers to the next generation and so on; a specific *sampradaya* will be identified. The *Kidangoor* style and the *Kalluvazhi* style were the two major styles or *sampradayas* developed in the nineteenth century. Along with them, there were other distinct traditions also, like the *Kadathanattu*, *Thakazhi*, *Karippuzha* styles. Each of these *sampradayas* are known after the place where they took origin.

Nalanunnni was the chief figure who developed the *Kidangoor* style in Kathakali. He developed it under the patronage of the Travancore King Utram Thirunal Maharaja (1815-1861). This style drew elements from *Ramanattam* and *Kalladikkodan* style. It was also influenced by Koodiyattam. Face expressions were

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., pp. 26-27.



used to their full potential in order to realize the *bhavas* as *rasas* during this period in the southern Kerala especially in Travancore where the *Kidangoor* style was developed. The *Kalluvazhi* style is associated with the name of Unniri Panikkar. This style was developed in the year 1850. Unniri Panikkar could not have developed this style without the famous Namboodiri family in the central Kerala known as Olappamanna Mana. Actually, this style incorporated the features of two other styles known as Kalladikkodan and Kaplingodan traditions. The said Olappamanna Mana continued their patronage till 1905 by which time, the troupe had to be disbanded. Even after the troupe was disbanded, this style continued its existence through eminent actors Itirarissa Menon and Pattikkanthodi Ramunni Menon. It must be mentioned at this juncture that it was this style that was adopted by the Kerala Kalamandalam, the first secular institute for Kathakali when it was formed.

Nineteenth century had the best years of Kathakali since this art form fully developed and it hit its aesthetic peak in that century. It had patrons like Utram Thirunal Maharaja and wonderful actors like Kochayyappa Panikker, Ittichenna Panikker, et.al. Kochayyappa Panikker was famous for his female roles known as ‘knife’ and ‘black’ in Kathakali. Ittichenna Panikker was most famous for his heroic roles known as *pacha* or ‘green’ in Kathakali. As a fully developed art, the artists and patrons could focus more on this art’s “aesthetic refinement.” This was also a major feature of the nineteenth century Kathakali. But it needs to be stated that this was not dawned suddenly in the nineteenth century. This had to be seen as part of an evolving tendency started as early as Kottayam Thampuran’s four plays and developed through Karthika Thirunal Maharaja, Unnayi Varrier, et.al. Karthika Thirunal Maharaja wrote the book titled *Balaramabharatham* which was a study of the Sanskrit aesthetics. Unnayi Varrier’s *Nalacharitham* is one of the best achievements of Kathakali literature. This poetic drama is sublime with its poetic beauty and is taught as a medieval poem in many of the Kerala State Universities. One thing obvious from the description of the trend of concentrating more on the aesthetic side of Kathakali is that this tendency represents a phenomenon that can be called as “Sanskritization.” As a result of the Sanskritization, actualizing *rasa/ bhava* became

the chief target of the Kathakali performance. In Zarrilli's words, "the actor embodies each state of being/ doing (bhava) through his cultivated ability to become the character."<sup>22</sup> The result of the performance is that the connoisseur cum spectator would enjoy the rasa. Here, rasa is like the sap or essence of a fruit relishing which is the ultimate aim of Kathakali.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, Kathakali faced some serious issues with its patronage. Till then, this art form never had any difficulty in getting patrons. In the second-half of nineteenth century, social order of Kerala changed considerably. Changes in the social and economic order affected the patrons of Kathakali to a great extent. Moreover, in the Travancore, after death of Utram Thirunal Maharaja in 1861, Ayilyam Thirunal Maharaja ascended the throne which affected the progress of Kathakali there. Ayilyam Thirunal was not particularly interested in Kathakali. The palace had a Kathakali troupe which was disbanded by the Ayilyam Thirunal Maharaja. The high number of new Kathakali plays produced during this period does not reflect the real state of Kathakali. It only shows that Kathakali remained an important art form for its patrons and connoisseurs as much as it used to be in the past; but they could not give the same support due to their declining social and financial status.<sup>23</sup> The traditional social structure of Kerala was anyway getting destroyed for good or bad, and this affected Kathakali too.

Kathakali had its greatest patron in the twentieth century in Vallathol Narayana Menon. He was a great poet and an art patron whose poems are known for their nationalistic spirit and poetic charm. He established the Kerala Kalamandalam. Kathakali had its revival through this first secular institute established to teach Kathakali. Vallathol sought the help of the well-wishers of Kathakali to raise funds and Kalamandalam was opened on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1930. He could also get the service of many well-known Kathakali teachers there.<sup>24</sup> Due to his efforts, the Malayali

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

people started recognizing Kathakali as a marker of their identity.<sup>25</sup> The institute grew slowly and now it functions with the funding of the Government of Kerala. As many observers have pointed out, the result of teaching Kathakali in a secular institute is many sided. Here the performers cannot focus entirely on Kathakali alone. They learn Kathakali along with many other subjects. More than a hundred performers learn Kathakali in Kalamandalam. Kalamandalam offers many other art forms in their syllabus now. It has become an institute of many traditional art forms; not just Kathakali alone. This institute is a deemed university now.

The contributions of Margi, another institute that teaches Kathakali should also be mentioned here. Margi has attracted so many performers and Kathakali experts. Unnayi Varrier Smaraka Kalanilayam and F.A.C.T. Kathakali school are two other institutions that give training in Kathakali. Kathakali does not have its traditional patrons or audience now. It is more of an urban-centred art form today. It would not be completely wrong to say that people take interest in this art more because of the exotic charm and less because of its artistic beauty.

### **2.2.1 Basic Kathakali setting:**

Kathakali is performed by a dancer-actor. The texts written for the performance of Kathakali are known as *Attakathas*. The stories for these texts are taken from the pan-Indian epic *Mahabharata*. Some of these stories are taken from other puranic texts like *Ramayana*. These days, as an innovation, sometimes texts are drawn from totally non-traditional sources. For example, *King Lear* has been performed on a Kathakali stage. Two singers will recite the lines of the text. Usually, these lines will be composed in a *raga* which suits the mood of the story and the dialogue of the character. *Chenda* and *Maddalam* are the two instruments used along with the recital. The story part of the text is known as *slokas* or *dandakas* whereas the dialogue part is known as *padam*. For communicating the dialogue part of the text, i.e., *padam*, the hand gestures will be used by the s. Thus, they will try to communicate the text using

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

hand and eye gestures and with his whole body. In fact, Kathakali is not mechanical communication of the text. What is being communicated is the *bhavas* which will be realized as *rasas* by the (ideal) audience. Thus, at the centre of Kathakali is the *rasabhinaya*. The nine *rasas* identified by art connoisseurs and approved by classical texts are *sringara* (desire), *raudram* (anger), *veera* (valour), *bhayam* (fear), *karunam* (grief), *hasyam* (laughter), *vibhastam* (disgust), *adbhutam* (wonder), and *shanti/shantam* (peace). The Kathakali artist will learn and practice enacting these *rasas* during his training.

### 2.2.2 Kathakali training

There are many Kathakali artists who wrote about their Kathakali life and training. These includes the accounts of both Malayali and non-Malayali artists. One would get an idea of the training process by looking at some of these accounts. Arjun Raina's account of his own Kathakali training would serve as a good model here. He is not just giving an account of his own training but he explains how the idea of *bhava/rasa* gets transmitted from the teacher to the trainee and how the trainer helps the trainee let the *bhavas* get embodied in him.

Arjun Raina defines the Kathakali theatre as “sociopsychophysical.”<sup>26</sup> He also makes another interesting observation that the movements of the Kathakali artist cannot be termed as actions; but gestures as actions leads to change in environment. In a Kathakali performance, everything is predictable for the audience and there are no surprises. The audience are familiar with the story line and there will not be any twist. Raina considers *bhava* as a state of emotion and not as a “state of being/ doing” as Zarrilli's later definition suggests. He explains the presence and absence in training with the help of the basic posture in Kathakali. He thinks that training the basic posture is of utmost importance in Kathakali.

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<sup>26</sup> Raina, “The art of creating a Kathakali performer's ‘Presence’,” 2015, p. 327.

If the basic posture in Kathakali is observed, “the feet are placed in parallel, slightly wider than shoulder width apart, with the head and trunk aligned right in the middle, with the trunk lowered, the knees bent outward and with the weight resting on the outer edges of both feet. The toes curl inward in an arc with the big toe pressing down hardest while clamping the foot to the ground. The lower back is then pressed inwards towards the belly and both arms rests stretched wide to each side. The breathing through this process is relaxed, slow and deep. The body is continuously lowered and kept down. This posture, with its low centre of gravity, allows the heavy costume to be carried with ease.”<sup>27</sup>

Training in basic postures helps the trainee develop body balance. Another training practice that helps a lot is the training for the feet which is known as *kalsaadhakam*. This training is pretty intensive and difficult to practice. This helps the artist improve the strength of his feet and during performance; the artist’s body will be well grounded on earth. This also helps them to shift the body weight from one foot to another by generating energy from the earth.

Two types of footwork routines are mentioned by Raina which he thinks would serve two different purposes. In his own words, the first type of foot works which can be called as Routine 1, is the “footwork directed to a central point, as if drilling a hole into the earth.” This exercise is called a “body rooting exercise” where the “step is done in slow, medium and fast tempos.” The *vaitari* (vocal chant) that accompanies this step is: “Dhi ta ta ta X 4.”<sup>28</sup>

He gives the description of the second type of footwork routine which he calls Routine 2 as follows – “Routine 2 has the foot being slapped firmly and hard onto the earth’s surface. The heel is then clicked followed by a stamping of the left and right foot.” This exercise is called “body grounding exercise” where the “step is done

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 331.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 335.

in slow, medium and fast tempos.” The *vaitari* (or vocal chant) that accompanies this step is: “Tai hita ti ti Tai hita tom tom X 4.”<sup>29</sup>

Raina mentions these two routines specifically not because there are no other routines involved in Kathakali training, but because such movements, as described above, will help stabilize the body in a better way. Moreover, unlike the steps mentioned above, some of the steps in Kathakali are purely meant for the aesthetic pleasure and not meant for helping the body balance or gaining energy.

Along with the feet movements, body movements and hand gestures, movements of the eyes are equally important. The training given to channelize the movement of the eyes towards actualizing the *bhava* is known as *Kalsadhakam* in Kathakali. The exercises for the eyes are done with the eyes wide opened. The eye lids will be held with the thumb and the index finger. Eye movements will be done both at a fast tempo and at a slow tempo. The teacher enacts a significant role in training the performers in the eye movement as in the case of all other exercises. The teacher may demonstrate a specific movement for the performers to imitate. He may roll the eyes either in clockwise or anti-clockwise direction which the trainees may follow. Sometimes he may move the eyes up and down or diagonally or even in a zigzag way.

Though the eye movements can be learned along; it has to be said that they are meant to coordinate with hand gestures, feet movements and the other body movements as in Kathakali, the *bhava* will be embodied in each and all body parts. The synchronized action in Kathakali is known as *Chuzhippu*. Most important in *Chuzhippu* is the coordination between the hand gestures and the eye movements. Six different types of *Chuzhippu* has been identified in Kathakali training (336). There is an oft-quoted saying in Kathakali and other classical Indian dance forms that,

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

“Wherever the gesture, there is the gaze  
Where the gaze is, there the mind  
Where the mind, there is the *bhava*  
Where the *bhava* is, there the *rasa*.”<sup>30</sup>

(*yadho hastha sthaddho drishti; Yadhodrishti sthatho manah; Yatho manah sthatho bhava; yadho bhava sthatho rasa*). This *shloka* is taken from Nandikesa’s *Abhinayadarpanam* and the translation is provided by Coomaraswamy.<sup>31</sup>

*Kannusadhakam* is aimed at actualizing these principles in their totality. The quote is relevant here in another sense as well. The essence of Kathakali performance is *rasabhinaya*. The ultimate goal of Kathakali training is to help the trainee in *rasabhinaya*.

Next to be mentioned in Kathakali training is the training of the pure dance sequences. It is evident that Kathakali has borrowed many elements from Kalarippayattu. Many dance sequences in Kathakali are directly influenced by Kalari. The exercises to prepare the trainee for the performance of these steps are also borrowed from nowhere else. Such steps resemble attack or defence in warfare. Kathakali literature is abundant with fighting scenes. Training sequences from Kalarippayattu helps the Kathakali artist perform such dance movements better. Anyway, training for the pure dance sequences is also very rigorous. In Kathakali’s terminology, this is known as *kalasham*. The Kathakali actor never stands still and he always moves in one direction or the other. When the actor presents aggression or attack in Kathakali, he moves towards the audience. On the other hand, moods such as relief, happiness etc. are performed with the body moving away from the audience.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 336.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 337.

Thus, basically, the actor will be performing any of these two movements during the performance. There are ten different *kalashams* identified in Kathakali that help the actor perform these dance sequences. Some *kalashams* are meant to express a particular emotional state where as some are meant to express punctuation marks such as a full stop, question mark, exclamation mark, etc. *Vattam Vachu Kalasham* is suitable for the romantic mood and the *Ettu Kalashams* are suitable for the entry or exit of characters when they are in an angry mood or are performing heroic deeds. *Urichil* or body massage is another important element in Kathakali training. Through this, the body, especially the surface of the surface body will be prepared for the task the trainee will have to take up in the future. It has to be stated that this is not done once or once in a while; this will be done daily. *Urichil* may continue for months or even years (337). Arjun Raina makes an interesting observation that training contributes to what Drew Leder calls as “the disappearance of the body.” This phenomenon is something that has to be dealt with in some detail.

### **2.2.3 Body in Kathakali**

A few observations can be made about the aspect of the “body” in Kathakali. First of all, it can be observed that a unique Kathakali language gets encoded in the body of the Kathakali artist. The body of the Kathakali artist learns this language during the training period. Through repetition, this language becomes a strong presence in the body. It evolves into a self-sustaining system that resists the conscious intervention of the artist. The result is the alienation of the mind of the artist. It is not just the mind that has been thus alienated; in fact, even the body of the artist becomes alien to the performance of Kathakali.<sup>33</sup> Each of these phenomena can be explained by taking examples. That is what is done in the following paragraphs.

Most of the Kathakali performances are of long duration and they demand strong physical and mental effort. This may lead a layman to think that the artist will have to prepare in advance for the performance; both physically and mentally. But

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<sup>33</sup> Narayanan, “Body Centric Knowledge,” 2016, p. 131.



Kathakali artists, including the most famous ones, have reiterated from their experience the fact that their work on the stage is not the product of such a homework.<sup>34</sup> The artist does not count on the physical and mental preparedness but on the artistic instinct. This instinct is something connected with the body and not with the mind. This may sound strange to a layman who is not familiar with many of the traditional art forms of India. The most fundamental part of these art forms is the embodied knowledge that makes their existence and continuity possible. This embodied knowledge is a system evolved from years of experience of the s and is passed on to the next generation of artists through training practices. It is this embodied knowledge that carries the DNA of the art form which gets reproduced in the next generation of artists. So, it is given that in order to understand Kathakali, as in the case of many of the other traditional art forms of India, one must know its training practices.

The training of the Kathakali artist starts from an early age. It starts with a few exercises the intensity of which grows as time progresses. Each exercise is meant to develop one part of the body. The exercises make the budding artists' body more flexible in a way to meet the necessities of the performance. The different parts of the body are thus developed independently. Later these parts' development is coordinated in a way that they develop coherently; for this, different exercises are combined. All these are done according to the division of body as given in the *Natyashastra* into three categories. The main body parts belong to the category called *anga*, the secondary parts belong to the category called *upanga*, and the subordinate or connecting parts belong to the category called *pratyanga*.

The training of the Kathakali artist is done in a way that the base of the spinal cord and the lower abdomen becomes a centre around which the balance of the entire

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 132. Narayanan quotes the words of the famous Kathakali artist Kalamandalam Ramankutty Nair on his performance of *Ravanolbhavam*, a famous Kathakali text. The performance of this particular play takes four hours but Ramankutty Nair says his mind is "blank" while he performs this play. The words of many such Kathakali s can be quoted but for fear of elaboration, such examples will not be quoted here except for this particular one.

body- its different parts and their movements- is concentrated. The basic assumption behind this still centre is that air flows from here to the other parts of the body. The concept of air flow mechanism is central to the Kathakali performance. The exercises that the trainee practices on a regular basis are selected in order to make this channelization of air easy.

It should be mentioned here that Kalarippayattu, a traditional martial art of Kerala, is also based on the same assumption and much of the training methods in Kathakali are derived from Kalarippayattu. The exercises the budding artist does will later evolve into the different steps, movements, postures, etc. that the future does on stage.<sup>35</sup> The outcome of the intensive training the budding artist undergoes is that it will inscribe the language of Kathakali in the body of the future artist.

The insistence on the physical aspect during the training period must be stressed here. The training of the Kathakali artist starts at a very early age when the muscles are flexible. The goal of the training is to groom the body for the performance. The young artist does not learn any Kathakali literature at this stage. In fact, the individual knows nothing about the significance of the different tasks he/she is undertaking.

Mostly, the children getting enrolled for Kathakali education will not know the significance of the exercises. Even the *bhavas* are learned by them without knowing that those are certain *bhavas*. The *bhavas* are expressed in the form of some facial and eye movements. The *bhava* called *Sringara*, for example is expressed with the help of the movements of the eyes, upper cheeks, and lips. So, the performer will only be taught the combination of the movements of these parts in a way as to produce a certain emotion. In order to express *Sringara*, the actor has to enlarge the eyes, quiver the upper cheeks, and curl the lips. The performer may not know the respective *bhava* this combination represents, but he/she does study it and practice without knowing that it is an important action in the performance of some Kathakali

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 133.

plays. Thus, what the emerging artist learns from the Kathakali training is the language of Kathakali.

In fact, the actor does not learn it, it gets encrypted into the body of the actor through the exercises he/she practises on a daily basis. This method is most similar to the rote learning method that many of the religions follow in religious education. It is also relevant to note that the child artist will not be able to comprehend the Kathakali literature at a tender age. This also gives justification for the mechanical learning practice. Thus, the training practice in Kathakali is all about grooming the body and it doesn't aim at imparting knowledge!

The actor does the performance by enacting the necessary combination of the movements of the body parts. He almost does this instinctively and without deliberation. The result of this type of training and later the practice on the stage is the erasure of what is called as the mind. Thus, one can arrive at the conclusion that the mind is absent in the performance of a play in Kathakali. Probably, this gives the answer to the statement of Kalamandalam Ramankutty Nair. But for the purpose of the present study, the researcher would not go back to Ramankutty Nair again. Here the point has been made clear that the mind is absent in a Kathakali performance and that the language of Kathakali gets written in the body of the artist. Later, this language speaks through the performance of the Kathakali artist. Just like in a conversation, the words we speak come out naturally without we select them consciously, the actions of the Kathakali artist are spontaneous. The mind does not play any role; instead, it is the body that acts spontaneously.<sup>36</sup> Some scholars even speak about a phenomenon called the “body mind” that comes into play during the Kathakali performance which will be discussed in the next paragraph.

The term “body mind”/ “body memory” was used and popularized by Philip B. Zarrilli to explain the role of a Kathakali artist's body in the performance. Scholars like Narayanan have borrowed them from Zarrilli. What Zarrilli and Narayanan

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 134.

mean by these terms in the present context is that the Kathakali artist's body is programmed to act or react to certain situations of a text/ Kathakali play. Just as the word "programmed" indicates, this does not happen as a deliberate action of the artist; instead, it happens automatically or spontaneously. To put it differently, the body reacts to certain stimuli in a particular way as it has been programmed to do so. This happens as a result of the long years of training.

The pedagogy of Kathakali inscribes a certain language in the body of the artist which speaks without the conscious intervention of the mind of the Kathakali artist. Taking a cue from Merleau-Ponty, Narayanan equates the performance of the Kathakali artist with that of the athletes or sports persons whose body has the knowledge to react to certain situations. The essence of what has been said so far is that the body has the knowledge which will be translated into bodily actions during the performance which happens to be the enactment of the Kathakali play.<sup>37</sup>

Despite all this, there is the question that whether an actor can achieve more perfection as he/ she matures in his/ her field. The common-sense assumption is that one's knowledge will improve and his/ her mental horizon will enlarge as he/ she gains more knowledge and more experience in his/ her field; but that should not be counted as a factor in the case of Kathakali since it has been argued above, that the mind, consciousness, and knowledge of the artist does not determine his/ her performance. The argument put forward so far is that it is the body; or more accurately, the "embodied knowledge", that is the source of Kathakali performance. This leads directly to the question of expertise. What constitutes expertise? If it is not the knowledge and experience, then is it just an output of mindless repetition of the art on a daily basis? Intimately connected to this is the question of individual creativity vs artistic norms.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 135.

### **What are the dynamics between these two aspects in the case of Kathakali?**

There is an answer to this question. But before coming to the answer, the distinct nature of Kathakali and the need to not extrapolate the conventional and common-sense logic into Kathakali should be stressed. Kathakali performance has a structured nature. This does not outmuscle the creativity of the artist. Similarly, knowledge and experience can come into play without subverting the structured pattern of Kathakali. In fact, one should try to understand these dynamics by understanding the art of Kathakali itself in a better way. The whole thesis is a humble attempt at that.

Coming back to the point of the absence of the mind in Kathakali, one would easily be led to think that the absence of mind would result in the predominance of body. Ironically enough, one of the fascinating aspects of Kathakali is that even the body gets erased during the performance. This can be explained from a structural point as well as a phenomenological angle. From a structural point, it is clear that the Kathakali artist does different roles in different performances. For enacting these roles, the artist must put on the costumes of a particular category like *pacha*, *katti*, *thadi*, *minukku*, etc. The category differs according to the character one enacts. More than categories, these terms refer to a typology and the artists' identity will be transformed into a different identity that the particular type demands. The artist will be visible to the audience not as an individual, but as a type with all its costumes. These costumes will give the appearance of a different identity from the real identity. The appearance of this costume actually erases the bodily identity of the artist. Anyone watching a Kathakali performance for the first time in their life would notice the costumes first. These costumes are so striking. The result of the peculiar costumes and the typology of characters is the absence of the real identity of the artist.<sup>38</sup>

One more factor contributes to the erasure of the body in the performance. It is the fact that the mind of the artist is unaware of the details of the actions that the body realises during a performance. The body is almost self-reliant during the performance as it cannot think about what he/she will do the very next moment. That sort of deliberation is not possible in Kathakali. The audience watches the body of the artist

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 137.

carefully and closely, but exactly at the same moment, the artist will be unconscious of his/her body. It is also interesting to see that the artist will feel his/ her body only when he/ she commits a mistake. This is one aspect that differentiates Kathakali from the other performing arts.

It has to be mentioned here that the erasure of the bodily identity could be the main reason why Kathakali cannot be reconstructed according to a modern audience. Many other classical art forms have been reconstructed according to the taste of an urban audience. Many artists having great star value could reconstruct their art according to taste of the modern stage. They could do it because their art form gives them an opportunity to express themselves. As a result, a well-known *Bharatanatyam* dancer can reconstruct a dance performance for an urban audience with a touch of her identity. Kathakali's structured manner does not provide this opportunity to the Kathakali artists.<sup>39</sup>

One interesting outcome of the erasure of the identity of the actor is that it makes it possible for the male actor to enact female characters. Nowadays, a lot of women take interest in Kathakali and learn it. If not for the erasure of identity of the artist, they would never have been able to put up a Kathakali performance. The feature of cross-roles is a direct outcome of the erasure of identity of the artist.<sup>40</sup> The points made so far prove that the training of the Kathakali artist and the pedagogy involved play a vital role in determining the nature of this art form. So, a close look at the pedagogy and its evolution is necessary.

Kathakali training is given in a system of residential education. The child artist will have to stay and get educated in a place called Kalari. Kalaris came into being in the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries when the art form of Kathakali took a definite shape but was still evolving. The system of Kalari was borrowed from Kalarippayattu, a traditional martial art form of Kerala. The Kalari will be run under a teacher who

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 138.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

will administer all matters from teaching to the day-to-day running of the institution. These institutes were directly under the patronage of royal families. In some cases, the local landlords and wealthy aristocratic families would finance them. Thus, a three-tier hierarchy existed in these institutes. Firstly, the teacher in charge of the Kalari, called *asan* in Malayalam would be subservient to his financier/ patron. Again, the trainee will be totally subservient to the *asan*. Understanding this stratification will help understand the power relation between these parties which in turn will help one know these two art forms in a better way. Anyway, it should be stated at this juncture that these two art forms share much in common.<sup>41</sup>

The aim of Kalaripayattu is to improve the physical ability of the trainees and prepare them for future combats. Self-defence is another aim of Kalaripayattu. On the other hand, Kathakali has an aesthetic purpose. The aim of Kathakali is to prepare the trainee for performance. Anyway, both these aim at registering a certain language and skills in the body of the trainee which can be reproduced anytime later instinctively without the conscious intervention of the mind. What is central in this process is the “embodied knowledge” that makes the existence of both these art forms though for different purposes. Moreover, Kalaripayattu and Kathakali share the same view about body. The training practices in Kathakali and Kalaripayattu are also similar.

The unquestionable authority of the *asan* is the most striking aspect of Kathakali and *Kalaripayattu* as far as the power relations within the institution of Kalari is concerned. Both the *asan* and the trainees come from financially backward homes. It is out of dire necessity that they chose Kalari as their destination. The teacher or *asan* depends on the patron for his personal survival and the maintenance of the Kalari. On the other hand, the trainees depend on the *asan* for their survival. The condition of the trainee is either completely submit themselves to the command of the *asan* or perish. Strict discipline was the norm and no traits of dissent would be tolerated. The performers at the slightest show of disobedience were subjected to

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 139.

severe punishment and violence. It was common in those days among trainees to attempt to run away from these camps or even commit suicide. In such an atmosphere, the only thing the performer was supposed to do was to submit his body completely to the trainer/ *asan*. Perhaps, this culture would explain the phenomenon of the “erasure of body”<sup>42</sup> that we were discussing so far.

This feature of the pedagogy can be elaborated a bit further. The body of the trainee during the training period becomes an object where pain can be inflicted without any resistance. The trainee loses his agency which will later reflect in the performance as the loss of identity of the actor. When the trainee does not have agency, ultimate agency will be located outside the Kalari with the patron. The curious thing about this is that the same patron and his social class will be watching the performance of the trainee in future. Thus, the artist is at a continuous loss of agency. He/she would always be under strict monitoring and mentoring; and will be looked at, evaluated, and judged by the social class that is born to be patrons.

The body of the artist that was an instrument during the training phase continues to be an object in the future as well; but then as an aesthetic object. Anyway, the artist does not have the authority over his/her body. The ultimate authority over the body of the Kathakali artist rests with the same social class that has the ultimate authority in the society. Thus, it can be concluded that the social hierarchy prevalent in the medieval society paved way for the complex engagement of body in Kathakali. A number of visible binaries reveal this hierarchy and its effect on the actor in a better way. The binary of the childhood- maturity is the first binary opposite that the trainee encounters after taking the initial plunge. The trainee and the future artist come to the realization that the artist would never attain maturity as he is permanently entrapped within a state of childhood. This binary directly leads to another binary which is also visible very clearly within the structure of Kathakali. Again, the artist remains in a permanent state of powerlessness and the power rests with an authority outside the spectrum of Kathakali artists in the form of patrons. The third binary that

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid.



would reflect the social hierarchy is the binary of object-subject where the artist, especially his body, remains forever to be an object.<sup>43</sup>

Now, the researcher will shift the focus from the theoretical aspects of the Kathakali training and performance to the practical experience, observation, and analytical process which the researcher himself underwent during Kathakali body practices. These practices, as witnessed and performed by the researcher, were done in four phases, interlinked to each other. It formed a step-by-step process in the learning of the craft. Every phase will exclusively deal with this learning process in a detailed manner as experienced by the researcher through first-hand practice.

## **2.3 Practical participation of Kathakali Body Practice in Phase I:**

In the first phase researcher attempted to understand Kathakali by participation in the workshop. The researcher underwent Actor's Physical Training workshop at the Department of Theatre Arts, Central University of Hyderabad. Workshop on Kathakali was conducted by Guru Prashob Kalamandalam from 1st to 23rd February 2016 at the department of Theatre Arts. In this phase, the researcher participated in training programme, acquired practical experience of various postures, besides collecting data by employing method of participant-observer in the group workshop.

### **2.3.1 *Guru Mukha* rituals during practice:**

The first phase of training helped to understand and become familiar with voice and body exercises. Practice of this exercise helped to overcome rigidity, achieving ease in various parts of body, improving concentration by centring the weight of the body on the back, and maintaining balance of the body by distributing weight to all parts. In everyday life, weight is carried on the whole feet. In contrary to this, one must keep the body balanced and carry the weight on the edges of the foot. Practice of Kathakali postures makes the body flexible with a decrease in anxiety, and the mind

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 140.

and body reaching neutral state. The researcher got the basic understanding and fundamental knowledge of procedure and functional aspects of various exercises.

In Kathakali Traditional Training Program, trainee's day begins with pre-practice rituals: cleaning practice place, *Dipa Prajawalana*, Recitation of *Om*, *Dhyana Sloka* and Kathakali Salutation. Thereafter practice of body exercises will be done under guidance of Guru. The practice will sign off with recitation of *Santi Sloka*.

**Table 2. 1: Pre- and Post-Practice Rituals**

| Sl. No. | Name of the ritual              | Periodicity                                                                                                              | Meaning attributed/<br>Functionality                                                                                        |
|---------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1       | Cleansing the performance place | Pre-Practice and daily ritual                                                                                            | This ritual to purify the place before performance practice.                                                                |
| 2       | <i>Dipa Prajawalana</i>         | Pre-Practice and daily ritual                                                                                            | <i>Dipa Prajawalana</i> has a significance that individual has to give up from one's selfish thoughts and connect with god. |
| 3       | <i>Guru Dakshina</i>            | Pre-Practice Exercise <u>only one time</u> , that will be in the session first day<br>After the <i>Jyoti Prajawalana</i> | <i>Dakshina</i> means honorarium. "Dakshina" will be given to guru                                                          |
| 4       | Recitation <i>Omkara</i>        | Pre, Post Practice and daily ritual, S. No 1. Kathakali, Phase -1, A.                                                    | To achieve presence of mind and body,                                                                                       |

|   |                         |                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                        |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|   |                         | Pre - rituals practice,<br>Recitation of <i>Omkara</i> ,<br>1st to 23rd February<br>2016. 06.00 A.M To<br>8.30- A.M | and achieving<br>concentration.                                                                        |
| 5 | <i>Dhyana<br/>Sloka</i> | Pre-Practice Exercises                                                                                              | Respect to the God.<br>Virtue,                                                                         |
| 6 | Salutation              | Pre, Post Practice Daily<br>Exercise                                                                                | expressing honour<br>and gratitude to guru<br>and Gods associated<br>with artform                      |
| 7 | <i>Shanti Sloka</i>     | Post Practice Ritualistic<br>Exercise                                                                               | To express gratitude<br>to the divine power<br>for the giving energy<br>and enthusiasm for<br>practice |

Given above is a table which contains necessary information about the pre- and post-practice rituals undergone by the researcher in the course of Kathakali practice. These rituals form an entry-point to the practice which becomes compulsory to follow in order to initiate the body into a new physical discipline. Let us discuss a bit more about these rituals in practice, which will give a clearer idea about its nature and significance.

#### **2.3.1.1 Cleansing the performance place:**

Place occupies a prominent position in performance. Performers' daily activity begins with cleansing the performance place. The performer cleans his ear marked place in practice hall by sprinkling water. After that he does *Dipa Prajwalana*.

### **2.3.1.2 *Dipa Prajwalana*:**



Figure 2. 1 S.No. 2. Kathakali. 1. Pre/Post Gurumukha Rituals 2. Deepa Prajwalan

*Dipa Prajwalana* has a significance in Kathakali tradition practice – that an individual has to give up one’s selfish thoughts and connect with God. Light gives positiveness. Illumination of light leads to path of enlightenment. It has a symbolic meaning knowledge and divine energy.

### **2.3.1.3 Guru Dakshina:**

In traditional Kathakali training, “Dakshina” will be given to the guru, i.e., to pay obeisance to one’s teacher, before the practice. This involves learning, seeking blessings from the teacher, and a reciprocal exchange between the teacher and student. The purpose of this practice is to respect and acknowledge the Guru as done by the trainee.

### **2.3.1.4 Recitation of *Om*kara:**

*Om*kara has to be recited in a Kathakali standing position for 40-50 seconds by closing the actors’ eyes and feeling the atmosphere. Later, the actor has to bring the body and mind to a balanced state. After continuing the balanced state for 40 to 50 seconds, he/she has to inhale slowly till his lungs fill with air. Thereafter, holding the breath for 4-5 seconds, has to slowly exhale through the mouth by reciting "Om".

This exercise is useful for the individual to come into the acting space from the outside noise and focus on the acting. As part of this exercise, the actor must pronounce the Om sound three times. This increases the actor's ability to control his breathing, inhale, and exhale. In the evening, the Guru used to teach techniques for

overcoming breathing difficulties while doing this exercise. The Guru made the actor recite vowels, and syllables in my mother tongue, and the researcher practiced repeatedly utterance of vowels, consonants, and syllables.

**For more details, watch the below mentioned video:**

Sl.No. 2. Kathakali 1. Guru Mukha Rituals, 4. Recitation of Omkara.

### 2.3.1.5 Dhyana Sloka:



Figure 2. 2 S. No. 2. Kathakali. 1. Pre/Post Gurumukha Rituals 5. Dhyana Sloka

After the recitation of *Omkara*, the researcher used should worship Lord Shiva and recite verses. This verse is called the *Dhyana Sloka*.

*Angikam Bhuvanam Yasya*  
*Vachikam sarva Vajmayam*  
*Aaharyam Chandra Taradhitam*  
*Vande Satvikam Shivam*

The meaning of the sloka is: Whose body and movement is spread all over the universe, whose language is spread all over the universe? Whose ornaments are stars and the moon, we all offer him prayers with pure hearts. Recitation of Sloka help helps to improve breathing, text modulation, rhythm, controlling body, mind, and concentration. This exercise mentally prepares an actor to perform on stage. After doing *Om* and *Dhyana Sloka* exercise research used to perform Kathakali Salutation. Guru guided the trainees in the recitation of *Om* and *dhyana sloka*. onwards

researcher used to do it along with Guru. During the workshop, Guru has concentrated practice on the body and mind of the trainees. He observed following functionalities among all participants and guided everyone to do properly.

- Function and coordination between various body parts
- Rigidity in body parts during stretching exercises
- Control on breathing process during recitation
- Holding breathing during recitation
- Weather retrains concentrating or not on exercises
- Sustaining energy levels during the practice of movement exercises

**For more details, watch the video mentioned below: -**

S. No. 2. Kathakali. 1. Pre/Post *Guru Mukha* Rituals 5. Dhyana Sloka.

#### **2.3.1.6 Salutation:**



Figure 2. 3 S. No. 2. Kathakali. 1. Pre/Post *Guru Mukha* Rituals 6. Salutation

Actors and practitioners begin their daily practice with Kathakali salutation. The main intention of the Kathakali salutation is a remembrance of all the deities requesting the strength and softness that the body requires for performance. In this exercise, the practitioners can gently strengthen the body through the contraction and expansion of their muscles in a systematic order.

The practice of many postures in this salutation process results in the contraction and expansion of muscles. This process makes strengthens the body. The uniqueness of this salutation process is that the body and mind of devotees surrender to the art form with concentration, gratitude, and devotion. **(Procedure of Salutation is explained in detail in 2nd Phase)**

For more details, watch the below mentioned video:

S.No 2. Kathakali 1. *Guru Mukha* Rituals, 6. Salutation.

### 2.3.1.7 Shanti Sloka:



Figure 2. 4 S. No. 2. Kathakali. 1. Pre/Post Gurumukha Rituals 7. Shanti Sloka

*Om purnaadah purnamidham purnaapurnamudachyate purnasya purnamadaya purnamevaashyate Om Shanti Shanti Shantih.*

Meaning is what is visible is infinite, and what is invisible is also unlimited. Out of the endless being, the finite has come, yet being infinite, only infinite remains. Peace in my heart, peace with each other, peace in the cosmic. Listening to mantras every day will create a state of mind in which you feel the true meaning of our life, and that is peace.

*Shanti Sloka* is a signing of ritual. After completing the training session, all trainees form a circle by holding hands. After that, trainees bring their hands to normal position and recite *Shanti Sloka* Purna mida purna madaschay...

Shanti Sloka's recitation makes an actor feel confident and complete the training.

**For more details, watch the video mentioned below: -**

S.No 2. Kathakali 1. *Guru Mukha* Rituals, 7. *Shanti Sloka*

### **2.3.2 Body Practice Exercises:**

After Kathakali salutation, the Guru used to train on body practice exercise. These exercises include warmup and preliminary. Workshop helped to gain new skills and techniques of traditional acting. After participation in workshop, researcher observed many changes in his voice and body attributes. By rigorous body practice, improved ability of expression through eyes, face, chest, hand, feet, and waist. Facial expressions are helpful to represent various emotions according to the imagination. *Kalsadhakam* and Lip stretching exercise helps to improve facial expressions. *Kalsadhakam* exercise helps to improve the ease of eye movements. Due to this activity, performers can express various emotions. In sum actor trainee cum researcher improved his capacities in voice and body functionalities. Through breathing and voice exercises such as Reciting syllables, tongue twisters, *Jatis*, *Slokas*, *Om* improved diction, Modulation, Rendering Variation.

#### **2.3.2.1 Impulse:**

The impulse of the body is an essential functionality which is intricately associated in our daily lives, and especially in the context of physical practice. It is through practice that the body memory gets increased and therefore, it becomes liable to respond to both internal and external stimuli generated in a particular situation. For example, on the first day of Kathakali workshop at the University of Hyderabad under Guru Prashob, the researcher had the enthusiasm to learn and felt confident but the body was a bit unbalanced and shaky at the start. In the first three days, there was pain in the body-parts because the body was not used to such kind of practice. It was on the fourth day that the pain had reduced. After the completion of the workshop, the researcher noticed that there was a considerable difference in the body movements, regarding flexibility, mobility, rhythm, breathing pattern, and overall balance. The researcher underwent a reduction in body weight due to the practice, and could carry the body with much more confidence. The continuous twenty-three-day training for two-and-a-half hours (6 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.) instilled discipline in the body and it felt as if the researcher's body could float in the space. Hence, what we



find here is the time taken or what may be called the transition period, during which the body adapted itself to the new condition.

### 2.3.2.2 Rhythm:

Rhythm is the way the duration of a note in music is set. Hence, rhythm is indicated by a change in the appearance of the notes. In other words, different note lengths are indicated by rhythm. If we relate it to a Kathakali performance, it can be said that if our foot does not hit the floor exactly when the accented note is heard, it resembles a syncopated rhythmic pattern. In other words, the strong beats are de-emphasised and converted into weak beats. *Jati's* are verbal cues like a di-ta-ta-ta contains rhythmic pattern. In practice of various exercise performers move them according to *jati*. The practice *Kalsadhakam* is a set of foot movements, with numerous variations, which helps actors' body movements to follow the rhythm. Rhythm is the essential element of performance. So, actor has to internalise rhythm and move his body according to *Jati* or music beats. *Malakkum Marayal*, *Tancam Vecciruttal* (Sword and Shield foot movements), and *Kettichattam* are also helpful to actors internalising the concept of rhythm in their bodies.

### 2.3.2.3 Control and Balance:



Figure 2. 5 Control and Balance

Ability of controlling body is very much required in contemporary acting. Main purpose of warm-up and preliminary exercises is to improving body control and balance. In this art form, body control is done by the pelvic area. During the practice

or performance actor's upper body weight is balanced by the pelvic area. Exercise such as Salutation, *Chattam*, *Kettichattam*, *Kalatavu*, *Parakkum Veccatavu*, *Vecciruttal*, *Tancam Vecciruttal*, *Malakkam Marayal*, back stretch leg stretches and toy extension and *Tirichu kuttuka* are highly useful to improve the strength in various body parts. This makes body powerful and control and balance weight of the body during movement. Among all *Chattam* and *Vecciruttal* are highly beneficial to improve the controlling capacity of the body due to jumping with various speeds and extreme stretches.

#### **2.3.2.4 Rigidity & Flexibility:**

Rigidity is major problem faced by contemporary actors. They (including researcher) cannot move body parts with ease due to rigidity. It is inability of moving body. Kathakali exercises help overcome rigidity and get flexibility in the performer's body. Flexibility enables an actor to mould his body according to the character. Among all body practices *Tirichu Kuttuka*, *Chattam* and *Vecciruttal* are effective exercise to overcome rigidity. *Tirichu Kuttuka* is set of body stretching exercise. This exercise comprises variety of postures and body moves in a circle. Due to this practice muscles will get relaxed and body gets the flexibility.

#### **2.3.2.5 Sustaining energy:**

Sustaining energy is a prerequisite for an actor's body. This functionality leads to acting efficiently in the main practice of form or performance. *Chattam*, *Kettichattam*, *Kalatavu*, *Parakkum Vecciruttal*, *Kalsadhakam*, leg stretch & toe extension and *Tirichu Kuttuka*. All of these exercises energize various body parts. Stretching helps the performer to move his body with ease and agility. All exercise listed here and particularly *Kalatavu* gives the benefits of preserving and reutilizing energy. A kick is a kind of energy achieved through *Kalsadhakam* exercise. This exercise relaxes and stretches the muscles of the knees. Jumping exercise also improves the agility and fleetingness of the body beside sustaining energy.

1st phase has given an entry point to understand importance and relevance of traditional Kathakali art form in contemporary theatre actor training. Through 23 day- practical exercises of body and voice, researcher realized his body's transformation from rigidity to flexibility, gaining and sustaining energy of body, strengthening, and stretching the muscles, controlling breathing besides developing in this phase researcher acquainted traditional *Guru Mukha* rituals of pre-practice, warm-up exercises, preliminary exercises and post-practice rituals. In group workshop researcher concentrated on functionalities and developing attributes like agility, adaptation of character, utilization of performance space, expressing navarasa emotions.

## **2.4 Phase II - Participant Observation (one to one):**

The researcher participated in the second phase of the Kathakali workshop in Kerala. This workshop was designed for the researcher to understand and practice various techniques of body and voice. This workshop was held in the residence of Kathakali Guru Shri Prashob. The workshop began on 19th May 2018 and continued for 33 days. The workshop is divided into three parts according to the time and nature of practice, as follows: Morning session (5 a.m. to 9 a.m.) – different body exercises and practices with maximal effect. Evening session (5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.) – rhythmic movements through oral recitation of talas, minimal exercises. Night session (8.30 p.m. to 10 p.m.) – analysis of the actor's practice by the Guru and the researcher's sharing of experience. Before participation in the workshop researcher under the guidance of his supervisor had chosen a *Urubhangam* play for practice. This Sanskrit play is written by poet Bhasa. For performance practice, the researcher identified 8 Slokas and rigorously practised 3 Slokas. *Urubhangam* is a one-act play. The protagonist in the play is Duryodhana's character represents *Navarasas* and provides an opportunity to practice all rasa's (emotions) of performance through voice, facial expressions & body movement. As part of PAR method, the Workshop is specially designed for the researcher's observation and practice. In this context, *Urubhangam* play provides scope to practice a variety of exercises of voice and movement.

### 2.4.1 Urubhangam:

*Urubhangam* is a tragic play written in Sanskrit by Bhasa in the second-third century CE. The play is based on the epic *Mahabharata*. *Urubhangam* narrates the character of Duryodhana, during and after his fight with Bhima.

Bhasa's portrayal of Duryodhana is completely different from the one depicted in the *Mahabharata*. Based on the last phase of the life of Duryodhana, the unbeatable warrior, Bhasa, with great affection and using the elegance of his imagination, has depicted differently. In the *Mahabharata* we see Duryodhana as a tyrant who is also arrogant and sinful. He possesses all the malicious qualities of a tyrant. There is no mercy in his heart. We all feel hatred to see him in the *Mahabharata*.

The researcher has practised with three *slokas* from *Urubhangam* – *Sloka* 1, *Sloka* 27, and *Sloka* 28. Their description is given below in the form of a table along with the meaning (refer 2.2).

| Sl. No. | Devanagari Script<br>Slokas (verses)                                                                                                                                                                                                 | English<br>Transliteration                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Meaning                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1       | <p>భీష్మద్రోణతటాంజయ<br/>ద్రథజలాంగాన్ధారరాజ<br/>హ్రదాం<br/>కర్ణద్రౌణి కృపార్కినక్రమ<br/>కరాందుర్యోధనస్రోతస<br/>మ్  <br/>తీర్థః శత్రునదీంశరాససి<br/>కతాంయేనప్లవేనార్జునః<br/>శత్రూణాంతరణేషువఃస<br/>భగవానస్తుప్లవఃకేశవః   <br/>౧   </p> | <p><i>Bhishmadronatatam<br/>Jayadrathajalam<br/>Gaandhaarraajhridam<br/>Karnadronikriporminkr<br/>amakaram<br/>Duryodhanastrotsam.<br/>Tirna Shatrunadim<br/>Sharasasikatam Yena<br/>Plavenarjun Shatrunam<br/>Vah Sa Bhagavaanastu<br/>Plavah Keshavah.</i></p> | <p>May Lord Krishna be the craft to overcome your enemies, the craft which carried Arjuna over the river of his foes; with Bhishma and Drona for its banks; Jayadratha for water; the Gandhara king for whirlpool; Karna, Ashwatthama and Kripa for waves, alligators, and crocodiles; and Duryodhana for current.</p> |
| 2       | <p>మమరిపుబలకాలంలా<br/>భలంలఙ్ఘయిత్వా<br/>రణగతమతిసన్నిహం<br/>చనావేక్ష్యదర్పాత్  <br/>రణశిరసిగదాంతాంతేన<br/>దుర్యోధనోర్వః</p>                                                                                                           | <p><i>Mama Ripubalakaalam<br/>Laangalam<br/>Langhyatvaa<br/>Rangatamatisandhim<br/>Maam Cha Naavekshya<br/>Darpata. Ranashirasi<br/>Gadaam Taam Ten<br/>Duryodhanorvoh<br/>Kulavinayasamridhyaa<br/>h Paatitah Paatyitvaa.</i></p>                               | <p>Nevertheless, of my (Baladeva) plough-share, which is death to my enemy forces, and nonetheless of deceit on battlefield, Bhima in his arrogance threw his mace on the thighs of Duryodhana in the front of battlefield, and hence brought Duryodhana</p>                                                           |

|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|   | కులవినయసమృద్ధ్యా<br>పాతితఃపాతయిత్వా॥౨<br>౭॥                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | low, along with the supremacy<br>of family discipline.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 3 | సౌభోచ్చిష్టముఖంమహా<br>సురపురప్రాకారకూటా<br>ఙ్కుశం<br>కాలిందీజలదేశికంరిపుబ<br>లప్రాణోపహారార్చితమ్<br> <br>హన్తోత్తిష్టహలంకరోమి<br>రుధిరస్వేదార్ద్రపాకోత్తరే<br>భీమస్యోరసియావదద్య<br>విపులేకేదారమార్గాకుల<br>మ్॥౨౮॥ | <i>Saubhochishtmukham<br/>Mahaasurpurpraakaark<br/>utaankusham<br/>Kaalindijaldeshikam<br/>Ripubalapraanopahaar<br/>aarchitam.<br/>Hantotikshpyahalam<br/>Karomi<br/>Rudhirasvedaardripaak<br/>ottare Bhimasyorasi<br/>Yaavadhya Vipule<br/>Kedaarmaargakulam.</i> | Meanwhile, throwing my<br>(Baladeva) plough-share<br>which destroyed the entrance<br>of the city of Saubha, and was<br>the hook to the gateway of the<br>rampart of Mahaasura's<br>capital, which ordered the<br>flow of waters of Yamuna<br>River, and was honoured with<br>the gift of the lives of<br>enemies. I will draw lines on<br>Bhima's big chest smeared<br>with blood and sweat. |

**Table 2.2: Urubhangam Slokas**

### 2.4.2 Training Methodology in One-to-One Workshop:

Early morning from 5 a.m. to 9 a.m. the Guru used to teach exercises related to body movements. Evenings were devoted to voice exercises. The remaining time from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., researcher used his time writing field notes and independent practice of various techniques. As part of *Guru Mukha* practice, the researcher used to begin his daily activities with *Dipa Prajwalana*, Kathakali salutation, *Dhyana Sloka*, recitation of *Om*, and a very short meditation to prepare the body and mind to practice exercises. These rituals help an actor enhance his concentration and focus all his energies on performing. The researcher's daily life begins with lighting the lamp, Kathakali salutation and taking the blessings of the Guru. In the second phase workshop, the researcher repeatedly practised *Om*kara and Kathakali Salutation.

The first three days were a crucial period of one-to-one training. Guru Prashob used to observe the body to understand its nature. He identified if the muscles in any part of the body are rigid or not, and accordingly, he started giving training. During these days, the Guru made the researcher practise preliminary body exercises and breathing exercises. We need to make sure that the upper body part, chest, the waist, the shoulder, the neck, the muscles in the back of the hip, the arms, the waist, the back area, and the forehead area are always in relaxed mood.

Guru made the researcher practice some exercises for moving his hands, fists, and wrists freely. In the Kathakali art form, the actors express their ideas through *mudra*. The fingers and wrist need to move freely when the actor expresses the emotions of the characters through *mudras*. The researcher tightened his lips in the process of doing some movement exercises the teacher noticed and suggested smiling exercises to overcome the problem.

#### **2.4.2.1 Recitation of *Om*:**

Researcher learned recitation of *Om* in first workshop. During 2nd phase, researcher repeatedly practised *Om* exercise. The practice of this exercise enhances the ability to control the inhale and exhale processes. He is able to observe his breathing, that increases the ability to control his or her breath. It means he can observe the process of breathing by which air enters the body from the outside world. He could feel the contractions and expansions of the lungs. This exercise allows us to control our breathing while delivering dialogue on stage.

During the *Om* pronunciation exercise, they can keep active the respiratory system by slowly inhaling the air, holding it for one to five seconds, and exhaling the air while uttering the sound *Om*. Repeated practice of this exercise helps an actor to improve breathing capacity which is essential element in performing on stage. This exercise also prepares body do more advanced movement exercise which demands lot of energy and sustains breath. While doing advanced movement exercises, actor will not get tired due to the control on his breath.

### **Findings:**

When the researcher practises the body exercises, the body moves according to the rhythm. Improving the breathing control system while performing rhythmic body movements will prevent the body from getting tired. When it comes to breathing, inhalation and exhalation is done through the nostrils only. During practice, the Guru has observed the researcher's breathing process and advised that it should not be done from the mouth. Lung's capacity can be improved by recitation of *Om*. It is also useful for the actor to come to a peaceful state of mind.

#### **2.4.2.2 Kathakali Salutation**

The main purpose of the Kathakali salutation is a remembrance of all the deities requesting for the strength and softness that the body requires for performance. In this exercise, the practitioners can gently strengthen the body through the contraction and expansion of their muscles in a systematic order.

The practice of many postures in this salutation process results in the contraction and expansion of muscles. This process strengthens the body, and the uniqueness of this salutation process is that the body and mind of devotees surrender to the art form with concentration, gratitude, and devotion.

##### **2.4.2.2.1 Pre-Preparation for Salutation: Variation I**



*Figure 2. 6 Pre-Preparation for Salutation*

When it comes to the practice, the actor should stand up and place both hands near the chest (salutation pose) and concentrate on the weight, to be balanced on the edges of the feet. Each foot should be open from the big toe to the heel and the weight of



the body should be centred from the pinkie (little) toe to the heel. The knees should bend down and the waist should be brought as low as possible. The concentration must be on the waist, keeping the shoulders to the chest area in a relaxed manner. Before performing this salutation, the practitioner should check his position and posture. New practitioners need to check twice for one like this. The spine should be straight without bending, especially when standing.

When the researcher stood up and checked his posture, he felt it was correct. But the Guru corrected the researcher's posture so that his spine was straight. The head should be kept at eye level. Keep the neck, shoulders, arms, wrists, and arm muscles in a relaxed way. With this posture, the body can be moulded smoothly, and this will improve flexibility. The rigidity in the body can be overcome in this process. The researcher realized this change while Guru was adjusting the body posture.

The uniqueness of the Kathakali salutation is that they can balance and control the whole-body weight at the waist. Due to this posture, energy and concentration will be distributed evenly in different parts of the body. The practitioner can move all the body parts rhythmically. By bending the knees can move the body and feet rhythmically. Inhalation and exhalation help to get the balance between the body and mind, improves concentration. Through the practice of salutation, an actor can observe the changes that take place in various parts of his body, muscles, and joints.

### **Challenges of Pre-Preparation of Salutation:**

Balancing the body is no simple task. It demands patience, effort, and discipline. Rigorous practice with discipline is required. Balancing the body means activating energy within the body and enabling all body parts. What the researcher observed and felt is that the standing position of Kathakali Salutation is different compared to the standing posture done in our daily lives. In the initial stage of practice, the researcher used to bend a little forward. Later, the Guru guided and corrected the researcher's standing posture. Also, the researcher felt a little difficulty in raising hands at shoulder level, and focusing energy at the wrist, and taking back to the relaxed position.



*Figure 2. 7 Salutation*

**Step 1:** After firmly settling in the standing position, the researcher has to open his hands and bring them from chest to stomach. Later, stretch his hands sideways. From there, he has to bring his hands on his head. Thereafter, he must raise his right leg by bringing his joined hands from head to chest.

**Step 2:** The joined palms of both hands (which are in the salutation position) which are near the chest should be spread out in the open position and brought to near the navel. Standing with both hands above the head in salutation pose, the performer should lift the right leg and open the foot with the thumb of the right foot from one side to the other for a while. Then slowly bring joined hands from above the head to the chest. In the process of doing so, the right leg should also slowly be brought down by touching the ground.



*Figure 2. 8 Process of Salutation*

Then, slowly drag the right leg over the floor and bring the body forward with the hands joined in the salutation position. Later, bring the left leg forward in the same way and sit down. During sitting position, the performer has to sit only on the last toes. One should not sit completely and the foot must not touch over the floor.

In this pose the knees should be widened and the body weight centred on the last edge of the foot. During sitting, the performer should bring both hands near the chest in salutation pose while tapping right knee on the floor. Later, the performer should touch his joined hands while bringing both the legs close together. In this phase, the body weight should be centred only on the toes (heels must not touch the floor). From this position, he must stand slowly, bringing both hands from navel to chest.

There is a point to note here. At the beginning of the salutation, from the position where both hands are near the chest, should be brought down to the navel below the

chest and from there extend both hands to the side ways. Later, place both hands in the salutation position above head. After touching the hands on the floor, one has to bring his feet together while slowly raising to standing position by bringing the hands from the navel to the chest. Later both arms have to be stretched sideways at shoulder height, leaving the wrist area free.

**Description:**

Watch the video below about Salutation practice process (Forward) Phase II for more details.

S. NO 2.4.2.2.1. Kathakali – Salutation.

**Observations and Finding on Salutation:**

On the first day of salutation, the researcher realizes the changes made by Guru in the body during the salutation exercise. The researcher understood how to stand, straighten the spine, and gradually build strength in different parts of the body. The researcher divided the body into two parts and analysed it.

- The chest area seemed to tighten when in a standing position.
- Achieving concentration by centring the weight of the body on the back.
- In everyday life, weight is carried on the whole of feet. In contrary to this, the body is to be balanced by carrying the weight on the edges of the feet.
- Balancing body by distributing weight to all parts of the body.
- Practice of Kathakali salutation makes the body flexible. The anxiety decreases, and the mind and body reach neutral state.

**Suggestions**

Kathakali salutation is extremely useful for contemporary actors. The practice activates different parts of the body. This traditional practice helps the actor to know the fundamentals and makes the body movement with ease to perform various postures.

**Variation II:**

This follows the first variation till the position of sitting down. Soon after coming to the standing position, the performer has to slowly lift the right leg. Later, with joined hands which are in salutation pose, the right hand should touch the toe of the right leg. Then the right palm should be brought near the forehead, showing towards the audience. The left hand should be brought near navel by opening towards sky while dragging the right leg

Then, after touching the big toe of the right leg with right hand, move it to forehead. Move the right leg forward from the standing position and slowly drag backwards. Later, the performer should sit on the knees. Thereafter, one has to turn right by widening the knees and centring weight on the waist.

In this process, the right arm is on the forehead and the left arm is near the navel. The waist controls the whole movement of the body. The weight, energy, concentration, and control of the body practitioner are concentrated in the area.

In this process, the right arm is on the forehead and the left arm is near the navel. The whole movement of the body is done through the waist. That is, the weight, energy, concentration, and control of the body are concentrated in the waist area. Then slowly bring the whole body under control by dragging the left leg near to right leg, and rotating the body in a circular motion towards the right side.

The right leg has to be one step ahead after the turn. Then the left foot should be paired with the right hand and come to the fore.

**Observation:**

In salutation -1, the performer does not rotate the body in a circle

In salutation -2, the practitioner turns the body in a circular motion.

In salutation - 2, the practitioner slowly taps the right leg on the floor and touches the floor with both hands by stretching forward and touching the floor.

Salutation 2 does not have this step. The practitioner slowly rises from a sitting position with his left leg joined to his right leg and returns to the primary posture.

In salutation-2, the total body is controlled by the waist. The basic salutation process perceives the equilibrium of the body. The breathing pattern remains normal. The basic principle of Kathakali is to increase awareness of the actor's body. Here we will expand the difference stepwise or pointwise.

### **Findings of Salutation - II:**

- During the practice of salutation - 2, the researcher was able to control his breathing by coordinating his forearms, arms, thighs, and knees.
- Opening the right palm towards the audience and bringing it closer to the forehead. Opening the left arm towards the sky and bringing it closer to the navel.
- The researcher was able to move the body with the waist as the focal point. He learned to move the body systematically without any jerks. This activity is essential for the actor.

Here we will expand on how each part of the body can be improved.

### **Difficulties of Salutation II:**

- Raise the right leg and balance the bodyweight with the right hand while holding the right toe.
- Concentrating weight on the waist as the focal point.
- Focusing the weight of the body on the edges of the practitioner's feet while sitting.
- When in a half-sitting position, join the left leg with right leg, centring weight on back.

### **2.4.3 Warm-up Exercise:**

Usual normal life never allows a trainee's body to exert itself into its limits. So, it generates and creates some kind of physical rigidity in the body and that rigidity exists for everyone for a long time and it becomes part of a usual cell. This existing rigidity will make our body dormant. In due course of time, we will not be in a position to move as free as any other children or things like that. So, for an actor he

or she needs to sit, jump, move, stand, in different ways and positions. But because of our rodent behavioural patterns, we get our body stiffened, so particular kinds of exercises are required to free up that particular thing. This is an important aspect for Kathakali. That is why as far as the part of Kathakali actor is concerned, he/she needs to strengthen the torso – *arabalam*, which will make them to easily supply change and get them into different kind of movements, different kind of standing positions, different kind of sitting positions, and so on. This is one of the particular criteria to be taken care of, and that is why initial warm-up is based on particular kind of exercise.

**Table 2. 2: Warmup – exercises:**

| Sl. No. | Traditional Names of Exercises | Movements Catered to                         | Number of Exercises practised | Functionality                                                                                                             |
|---------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1       | <i>Chattam</i>                 | Jumps                                        | 2                             | Balancing the body,<br>Sustaining and controlling of breathing,<br>Flexibility, and<br>Impulse.                           |
| 2       | Exercise 1                     | Bending body backwards with support of table | 1                             | Stretching spinal cord, and<br>Relaxation of pelvic area.                                                                 |
| 3       | Exercise 2                     | Walking on edges of foot                     | 2                             | Balancing and controlling<br>Concentration,<br>Stillness,<br>Sustaining and Distribution of energy, and<br>Grounded-ness. |

|          |            |                                                                            |   |                                                                                                                 |
|----------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>4</b> | Exercise 3 | Movement of thighs by joining foot                                         | 1 | Centre and lower body relaxation, and Spinal cord strength.                                                     |
| <b>5</b> | Exercise 4 | Lower body stretching<br>(Sitting by widening legs taking support of wall) | 1 | Stretching lower body part and Relaxation.                                                                      |
| <b>6</b> | Exercise 5 | Higher body stretching                                                     | 1 | Stretching upper body part and Relaxation.                                                                      |
| <b>7</b> | Exercise 6 | Sitting and standing with help of wall                                     | 1 | Concentration, Balance, Muscle Relaxation, Spinal cord strength, and sustenance of energy.                      |
| <b>8</b> | Exercise 7 | Rotating shoulders                                                         | 1 | Relaxation of muscles in neck, rip, and shoulder; Controlling and stretching, and Concentration on pelvic area. |
| <b>9</b> | Exercise 8 | Arms wings with turn                                                       | 1 | Concentration and relaxation, with Stretching of hand and legs.                                                 |



**Table 2. 3: Preliminary Exercise:**

| Sl. No. | Traditional Names of Exercises | Movements Catered to | Number of Postures                              | Functionality                                                                          |
|---------|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1       | <i>Chattam</i>                 | Jumps                | 4<br>Refer Prof. JP<br>Regarding posture/ step/ | Balancing the body, Sustaining and controlling of breathing, Flexibility, and Impulse. |
| 2       | <i>Kettichattam</i>            | Jumps steps          |                                                 | Activating muscle memory, and generating energy, Breathing.                            |

#### **2.4.4 Preliminary Exercise:**

The researcher practised a set of exercises aimed at achieving control of the body. In the table given below, a concise information on these exercises is provided, followed by a detailed explanation of the researcher's practice.

##### **2.4.4.1 *Chattam* (Jumping):**

It is the basic and an important part of the exercise in Kathakali. In the initial stages of training, the master instructed the performer or the disciple to get into an act of jumping.

*Chattam* has two postures/ steps as described below:

“Taking the arms from the centre at the navel, the arms are circling out and up, away from and in front of the body as a right step forward is taken. As the arms continue their circle and return to centre, the left foot joins the right, the momentum from the right and left steps providing the impetus for the jump (Figures 2.9). The feet/heels

should be raised in front of the body. The Performer lands on both feet, keeping his knees bent, and continues around the room performing jump after jump, the arms circling one complete rotation with each jump. Approximately 50 such jumps should take place in sequence.”<sup>44</sup>



Figure 2. 9 . Kathakali, Jump (Chattam), 19th May 2018 to 20th June 2018, 05.00 A.M to 9.00 A.M. Nanmunda. Kerala

One has to jump with the breath in and once about to fall down it is breath off. Breathe in while jumping up and breathe out while landing but the practitioner has to land on the toe. Toe of his or her own leg. An important aspect of this is while landing one should not create or make any of the sound. This is possible only by repeated practising and by strengthening the torso that is the middle part of the body. Due to the strength of the torso, it is called as *Arabalam* - the symbol once a practitioner jumps and lands like a cat. This also helps anyone in the initial stages of practice to loosen his/her body. The body will have its own stiffness at different points of time because of our daily way of behaviour practice in life. Generally, we “construct our body with lots of stiffness, but this initial jumping exercises with the hands swing and the legs up helps to loosen the body.”

This jumping exercise has multiple purpose also. While jumping, one has to keep the legs up and in front so that the jumping can be performed to a maximum height, and coordinating the legs up and the hands swing widely, along with breathing helps one to reach the whole parts of the body. So, a repeated doing of the particular jumping

<sup>44</sup> Zarrilli, *The Kathakali Complex*, 1984, p. 109.

and landing generates a free flow of breath and energy into the whole part of the body. That is the beginning of an application of Kathakali exercise into the actors training.

When an actor keeps on jumping and practising, he/she should be able to make both of their feet giving *namaskara* in the up so that the open foot is attached while jumping in the air. That is the perfect way of jumping and a person jumping in such a way learns some skills too. This is an important task. Anyone in their initial stage will not be able to do the jump properly. It is only possible in due course of time, through repeated practice, to jump; and while jumping, both the feet are open to each other and it is something similarly like giving a *namaskaram* with their feet.



Figure 2. 10 Jump Chattam

Another level of jumping is in the initial stages, when one jumps, he/she will not be able to control the body in the air. The body will go frontwards or generally backwards, up and down without a uniform motion, and that is a bad way of doing it. By concentrating and doing, and making the body steady, will only help the body to get particular kind of balance. So, this exercise of jumping needs a lot of time and repetition, and concentration to make its full use.

Thus, jumping with the concentration, jumping with an energy, jumping and floating by sustaining the energy, jumping and giving the *namaskaram* with the foot, jumping and sub-floating the body in a straight way, not with any kind of swing that takes time to generate and that greases the body positioning, is needed. The jumping exercise has so many other things also like - it is very difficult to jump initially with the perfect way. It takes its own time for that particular jump because it is very difficult to understand, control, and develop breathing while jumping in a task. It builds up in due course of time and interestingly, the swaying of the hands releases the existing body tensions. In due course of practice and in continuous practice of

the body, the weight reduces. It is the keep on jumping, jumping high, balancing the thing will help the body in control for the and it will become weight less. So, they can easily float that is the higher stages of doing this particular exercise. Jumping exercises give strength besides providing balance to the body. Practicing 50 to 60 jumps a day helps the body give up rigidity and improve flexibility and impulse. Practising jumping leads to sustaining energy within the body and controlling breathing.

#### **2.4.4.2 Kettichattam (Jump steps):**

After practising *Chattam*, the researcher used to practice *Kettichattam* or jump steps at various speeds. According to the rhythmic verbal pattern, “ti, ti, teum da ta,” the researcher used to practice “a series of steps to the right and left culminating in each case with a vigorous jumping kick.” In jump steps, the hands are held loosely to the sides at shoulder level. The primary purpose of this exercise is to activate muscle memory, generate inner energy levels of the body and control breathing.



Figure 2. 11 2. Kathakali. Phase II. 6. Pre-Saltation.

#### **Observations and findings: -**

Why proper breathing techniques are not used while jumping normally in our daily lives? This is because breath does not need to release that much of energy. When we consciously jump up by keeping the breath in, it helps to distribute the energy and breath evenly. So, jumping exercise is an interesting way to begin with, and an important way to change the pattern, which makes breathing source of our energy. The jumping keeps the breath and energy inside the body and helps us want to sustain it while floating on the air. Interestingly, what happens with the controlled way of releasing the breath is that the person lands on the air. In that way, the particular

exercise of jumping, changes the entire body structure and attitudes of the breathing and movement respectively.

Exhaling the breath from inside is slow as well as controlled which creates a particular kind of understanding of landing. In a way, breathing in and getting the energy distributed makes the body float. The controlling and sustaining of the breath helps in the landing, and changes the rigid structure of the body by making it fluid.

### 2.4.5 *Meyyarappatavu*

**Table 4: Preliminary exercise – *Meyyarappatavu***

| Sl. No. | Traditional Exercises (Names) | Movement Associated with the Body | Number of Postures Practised                                                      | Functionalities                                                         |
|---------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1       | <i>Kalatavu</i>               | Foot Movements                    | Two – kick with right leg first; followed by a kick with left leg.                | Improvement in the rhythm in feet and better synchronisation.           |
| 2       | <i>Parakkum veccatavu</i>     | Stretching and moving the legs    | Four – movements in a square.                                                     | Strengthening of leg muscles and maintaining balance.                   |
| 3       | <i>Vecciruttal</i>            | Stretching                        | Four – initial position; stretching right; coming to centre; and stretching left. | Improvement in the overall body posture and balance.                    |
| 4       | Back-stretch                  | Stretch                           | Five – starting position; right foot movement; squatting; move up                 | Strengthening of the upper and lower back and making the body flexible. |

|   |                               |                        |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                   |
|---|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|   |                               |                        | and bend; left foot movement.                                                                                                 |                                                                                   |
| 5 | <i>Tancam<br/>vecciruttal</i> | Bending                | Five – starting position, curling and bending; lifting of right foot; sliding foot forward; lifting and kicking of left foot. | Better rhythm and synchronisation.                                                |
| 6 | <i>Tancam<br/>vecciruttal</i> | Sword and Shield       | Five – similar to the exercise 5 above, with vigorous movements.                                                              | Body balance with extreme fluidity in movements.                                  |
| 7 | <i>Malakkam<br/>Marayal</i>   | Turning of the body    | Four – starting position; bending over waist; body turns on right heel; body turns on left heel.                              | Improvement in body flexibility, mobility, rhythm, and coordination.              |
| 8 | <i>Kaivisal</i>               | Arms swings with jumps | Eight – namaskaram; bending of body; right foot movement; left foot movement; right arm circle; left arm                      | Flexibility in the upper body and arms, and coordination of arms with lower body. |

|    |                        |                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                         |
|----|------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    |                        |                                      | circle; rotation of shoulders;<br>combined arm swings.                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                         |
| 9  | <i>Tirichu kuttuka</i> | Rotation of body                     | Three – starting position; body circles to right; body circles to left.                                                                                                                                           | Mobility in the overall body movements with better control and balance. |
| 10 | <i>Valaccu visal</i>   | Bend- Swing- Wave – rotation of body | Nine – starting position; left foot movement; right foot movement; left arm placement; circumscribing with right hand; bending over waist; body movement in circular motion to both sides; squatting; namaskaram. | Upper body fluidity, head-hand-feet coordination.                       |
| 11 | Leg and Toe            | Leg Stretch and Toe extension        | Six – starting position; right leg movement; left leg movement; slap step to right; extension of right                                                                                                            | Improvement in the flexibility of legs.                                 |

|  |  |  |                             |  |
|--|--|--|-----------------------------|--|
|  |  |  | foot; slap step to<br>left. |  |
|--|--|--|-----------------------------|--|



#### 2.4.5.1 *Kalatavu* (Foot movements):

The foot movements of Kathakali art form are derived from Kalarippayattu. At the Kerala Kalamandalam, the different exercises have been reorganized and combined from various solo exercises into one series of exercise. Through the foot movements, the arms are extended to the sides at level of shoulder, palms facing forward. With right foot raised, stamped to right side, slowly slide in the same direction. After this, the body goes with the flow of the movement, crouching into the sideways, using the outer feet with knees bent. “Immediately the right foot is raised (from the centre) and kicked in a forward, hard step, landing on the outside of the foot. A left forward hard kick/step is taken. The right foot is then kicked upward to forehead level so that the foot touches the hand. As the foot descends from the right kick, it is placed behind the forward left foot. The left foot is raised, and a strong backward step is taken on the ball of the foot. The performer returns to starting position by stamping the right foot in a similar step. This same sequence is then repeated using the opposite side, culminating in a left upward kick to forehead level.”<sup>45</sup>

*Kalatavu* play prominent role in performance of Kathakali art form. During one-to-one practical workshop researcher practised 11 kinds of foot movements. Through practice of *Kalatavu*, the researcher realized and experienced rhythm, concentration, controlling and balancing body on toes, heels, and outer edges of feet. These activities enabled the researcher to stretch and move body in rhythmic pattern besides enhancing breathing capacity for longer duration.

The important aspect is that every practitioner should be able to flexibly change the patterns of movement that includes different shapes of sitting, different types of standing, different types of movement, and things like that. Another important thing is to take care of the initial exercises. Interestingly, if we notice closely, we know that the stamping of right foot and left foot have the strength varying drastically. So, by providing the *arabalam* one has to concentrate and generate a kind of equal

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<sup>45</sup> Zarrilli, op. cit., p. 111.

strength to both these legs that itself contribute in the reshaping of our body and strength.

Equilibrium of strength for both right and left foot is significant. This is because, many of the movements are basically based on the tala and rhythm. In order to maintain a grace, strength and control of the feet are essential. An actor should take care of these because he/she has to show his/her own physical presence to the others. So, even though we feel it is a simple issue, it needs to be corrected before proceeding further. Kathakali exercises give these aspects a priority and gives disciples certain exercises which needs a concentrated effort to make the balance happens in imparting the strength in the two legs that helps them to continue in movements required for different characters.

An awareness about the standing, sitting and moving, and walking, by an actor is an important aspect and even understanding the minute variation in this is the first step or an important step for any actor who uses the physical body for his/her livelihood. Understanding once on standing position will help any actor to get into an imaginary standing position for when they portray any other characters. Hence, standing position and its clearance are an important thing. Kathakali exercises work for making the disciples understand their own body as well as their own standing, sitting, moving, postures and positions.

It is like if every human body resembles that of uncultured mud. A Kathakali trainer considers this as uncultured mud and try to clean up the impurities in make it more cultured and to get it functional like any of the clay potter does. Clay potters find out the clay, they clean it up and make it viable for making it to a kind of a pot. In the same way, the Kathakali training considers the body as an uncultured one and by doing the exercise they culture it in due course of time.

This culturing of the body is called *Meyyarppu* in Kathakali. ‘Mey’ is body and ‘yarappu’ means strengthening, but here the term *Meyyarppu* means making the

body strengthen - that is, culturing of the body. This *Meyyarppu* is generally created for getting the actors to doing different roles. Here the roles are particularly the stylized way of rendering the role so *Meyyarppu* gives the actor a kind of a freedom to render his or her role with the physical body. *Meyyarppu adavu* is a set of practices which is purely based on Kathakali and that has been applied by Prashob in making the body supple, strengthening it further, and creating awareness in the body to portray anything.

In the second part, Guru Prashob has always given priority to the rhythm exercise because it not only strengthens the body (by discovering possibilities through exertions) but also behaves with the body in a rhythm. That is why he gives so much importance to *Tala Sadakam*. They are a set of exercises where the actors' body, hands, mind and the gestures develop in control along with the *tala* system. The *tala* pattern used will progress into different kinds of expressions and rhythms - that is the rolling parts of the body in different parts. From the practice and incorporation of basic movements, the concentration goes in to produce the work on the *navarasas*. In order to get into this *navarasa* we have to do a particular kind of movement that caters to different parts of the body even the eyes, eyebrows, lips. Such kind of a practice needs to be cultured, so that concentrations are given to those kinds of exercises that help the actors to produce the bhavas.

**Watch the video below about *Kalatavu* basic jump practice for more details:**

S.No.2. Kathakali, 'Kalatavu Foot Movements.' 01st to 23rd February, 2016. 5.45 A.M TO 08.30 A.M. Studio 1, Department of Theatre Arts, Central University of Hyderabad.

#### **2.4.5.2 *Parakkum Veccatavu* (Leg Stretch and Move):**

This exercise consists of four postures/steps. It involves a sequence of movements beginning with the stretch of leg muscles and putting together of what Zarrilli calls “slap steps” thereby performing the movements in a square position. In the case of stage movement in Kathakali too, the performer moves round the stage and these movements resembles a square. As Zarrilli notes, “in the final part of the movement in this sequence” the performer “first massages his thighs, and twists his upper torso over the stationary lower body frame held in place by the wide basic stance.”<sup>46</sup>

#### **2.4.5.3 *Vecciruttal* (stretching):**

The next basic body control exercise practised at the Kalamandalam is used for balance and stretching, especially for the legs as used in battle and fight sequences. The following exercise is performed immediately following *parakkum veccatavu*.

“The exercise begins with the legs as wide apart as possible, feet facing forward, with the right fist against the right shoulder, left fist held across the body at stomach level (in “sword and shield” position). From this strong position, stretch slowly to the right, taking the weight over the right knee as the body is lowered over the stationary foot. From the right go back through the centre starting position and stretch in the opposite direction to the left. Repeat this stretching from side to side eight times, ending with the weight over the right stationary foot. The fingers spread and touch the ground. Slowly the hands, framing the head, begin an upper body circle from the ground around to the right. The hands circle above the head, and then pass along the body, touching the ground in front of the left knee. Keeping the left leg extended, and using the hands for balance, the body (following the lead of the head with the nose touching the floor) brushes along the ground, stretching to the left, the hips following the lead of the head. The back arches as the head comes up from the nose touch – the head bent back, eyes looking over the head. In this position, the right leg is now fully extended behind the body and the right knee is off the ground. Repeat: circle right, stretch right, and arch. The exercise continues with a series of

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<sup>46</sup> Zarrilli, op. cit., p. 111.

stretches like this from side to side, and finally concludes with a repetition of the opening stretches.”<sup>47</sup>

#### **2.4.5.4 Back Stretch:**

This exercise deals with the stretching of the back portion of the body.

The performer faces “the wall of the *kaḷari*, palms flat against the surface of the wall. His feet are placed approximately two actual foot lengths from the wall, stepped off by the right and left feet. The right foot is lifted, and then brought down along the line of the body and then placed back one step. The entire body is lowered to the ground in a deep bend/squat. The hips are immediately pushed forward toward the wall, and as the hips come as close to the wall as possible, they lead the body in moving up along the wall as the hands are used for balance. The back arches as the hands, hips rise further up along the wall. The hands leave the wall and lead the body as it arches, the head bending back over the now stationary hips. The right foot is returned to its starting place, and the exercise continues with the left foot. Finally, the feet are in a parallel position, and both hands stretch back in the final stretch over the head in a prayer position.”<sup>48</sup>

#### **2.4.5.5 *Tancam Vecciruttal* (Normal):**

Here, the hands are clutched, held in “sword and shield position” over one’s chest. In this position, with the feet curled and together, perform a deep knee bend. As the body comes up from the knee bend, lift the right foot up and down, and slide the foot forward in a step. Lift the left foot up and kick it forward with a strong stamp.

#### **2.4.5.6 *Tancam Vecciruttal* (Sword and Shield)**

Same as above, but to be performed with vigorous foot movements.

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., pp. 112-113.

#### **2.4.5.7 *Malakkam Marayal* (Step and body turn)**

“This exercise, begins with the feet planted flat on the floor, the knees bent, and hands up with palms facing forward, away from the body. This circling, twisting of the body is an exercise designed to keep the total body moving as one unit through a series of 180 degree turns. The head must be kept with the upper body as it moves, a necessity in performance where the must wear the large crowns.” The exercise continues:

“From the starting position, pivot on the left foot 180 degrees, at the same time the upper torso bends over at the waist so that the chest is parallel to the ground and the arms are straight down, hands relaxed. The momentum of the bend is carried through so that the entire body pivots on the right heel and turns, landing on the left foot with the knee bent, arms and chest forward at the beginning of the exercise. These body turns, pivoting on the heel of each foot in turn, continue across the floor.”<sup>49</sup>

#### **2.4.5.8 *Kaivisal* (Arms swings with jumps)**

This exercise deals with swinging of the arms which form the core movement.

“Beginning in the namaskaram position with palms up and feet together, the hand moves above the head, palms facing, and the Performer exercises a deep knee bend and rises again. The left leg is brought up along the body, and down again, sliding forward in a step. The right foot is then stamped into place next to the left. The hands, above the head, interlock, and the performer looks back over himself, arching and stretching his back.

The hands return to position in front of the chest, extended forward. Now the series of arm circles begins. First the right arm is circled backward around the shoulder (Figure 48) while the left arm remains stationary in front of the body. This isolation exercise is performed with the right arm eight times backward and then eight forward. The left arm repeats likewise backward and forward. Then the arms move together, circling backward eight times, and forward eight times. The circles continue by placing the left thumb at the waist while the right arm does eight figures

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., pp. 113-114.

of eight circles from the shoulder. Again, the left repeats. The arm circles are completed when both arms do the figure of eight circles together. (This is yet another exercise derived from *kalari payatt* – this time its upper body arm swings for exercising the shoulders upper body for use of weapons). The exercise continues as the fingers are placed on the shoulders, and the upper torso twists at the waist eight times right and eight times left. Keeping the fingers on the shoulders, the shoulders rotate forward and backward eight times each.”<sup>50</sup>

“Once again, the arms are placed in front of the chest, extended, and full combined arm swings are performed. Now the arms swings are combined with jumps for development of coordination. While the arms are still swinging, the right foot is taken up along the body, and down in a slide step to the right. The left foot is taken up and down along the body in a slide step to the left. The right foot is taken up and down in another slide step to the right and immediately a jump is performed while the arms are still swinging, with the heels kept forward of the body. This jump is performed in place. The left foot is taken up and down, slides to the left, and immediately another jump is performed. While the arms are still swinging, the right foot is taken up and down again along the body, sliding to the right, and immediately a jump is performed to the right, the Performer executing a full 360 degree turning jump to the right in place. Likewise, the same is performed to the left, completing the full exercise.”<sup>51</sup>

#### **2.4.5.9 Tirichu kuttuka (rotation of body)**

This exercise is concerned with the rotation of the body on floor. This has three postures/steps and the circling is done first with the right foot and then with the left foot. Much of it is similar to *valaccu visal* as explained below.

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 115.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

#### 2.4.5.10 *Valaccu visal* (Bend- Swing-Wave – Rotation of Body)

“This exercise concentrates on further development of the upper body moving in fluid circles, as well as developing the Performer’s ability to move in the basic square pattern on the floor...this exercise emphasizes a variety of steps and slides of the feet while using the box pattern of limited stage movement characteristic of much Kathakali stage movement.

The exercise begins with the arms parallel to the chest, palms facing the floor, and with a foot stamp and slide to the right. The left foot is taken up along the body, down, and slides to the left. The left foot is then crossed over the right, and a deep knee bend is executed. Immediately the right foot is brought up and down along the body, taking a slide step forward. Left foot up and down and slide to the right. Right foot stamp and slide to the right (completing the basic square).

The left arm is placed behind the back in a fist. The right hand with the full palm open begins to circumscribe a circle first from one toe to another, and continuing on around the back. Bending at the waist and arching the back so that the eyes/head follow the lead of the open hand, a complete circle is fluidly performed with the entire body engaged in the complete circle. This is performed three times turning to the right, led by the right hand. (This circling of the body is known as *tiricu kuttuka*.) The same is repeated to the left, the right fist behind the back, the body led by the left open palm to the left. Now using both hands open, the body is circled three times to the right, and then three times to the left.

The fingers are then placed on the floor, the body in a full squat. The left hand is placed behind the head on the floor. Then, the right hand is placed behind the head on the floor, so that a full circle is made with the body. This is performed three times in each direction. The exercise is completed by bringing the hands to the *namaskaram* position. Again, the body circles in this Kathakali exercise are directly derived from *kalaripayatt*’s numerous body circles.”<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.



#### **2.4.5.11 Leg Stretch and Toe Extension:**

This short exercise gives attention to stretching the leg/ankle and to developing the “big toe” extension – Kathakali’s peculiar extension and turning out of the big toe of each foot.

“Beginning with the palms at shoulder level facing away from the face, a right slap step to the right is performed. The right leg is then lifted and held under the right wrist, the arm lifting/stretching the right leg ankle upward. The same is performed to the left.

Another slap step to the right is performed. This time as the foot is raised along the body, the right toe of the foot is held by the thumb and first finger, and the right leg is kicked outward and up, the hand/fingers helping the extension of the foot. The same is performed to the left.”

For more details, Watch the videos below mentioned.

Sl. No. 2. Kathakali. 2.4.5 Preliminary Exercises of *Meyyarappatavu*, all videos.

## **2.5 Exploration at Individual Practice in Collaboration with Supervisor - Phase III**

After one month of intensive Kathakali workshop, researcher began practice in University of Hyderabad. In the third phase, the researcher performed Mahapoor play and Mahapoor “Urubhangam” besides practising voice and body exercises under the guidance of the supervisor. Play production titled Satish Alaykar’s ‘Mahapoor’ directed by Aniruddha Khutwad in March 2017 at the Department of Theatre Arts, Central University of Hyderabad. The researcher applied Kathakali techniques in performance. Researcher observed his body practice during the production process and realized notable changes took in body language, gestures, physical capabilities of an actor increased and it came out like per formative mode. During the production researcher avoided undesired movements, gestures unconsciously because control on body.

Later the researcher explored applicability of Kathakali tradition in performance of Urubhangam. Researcher worked on text, rhythm, tala, voice, speech, breath, footwork’s, Kathakali mudras, facial expression with navarasa exercises like kannusadakam and rigorous body movements. From this study as researcher realized and observed many changes through body practice and these practice reflections has transforms from actor to character.

In the third phase, the researcher practised the Kathakali with the performance of Urubhangam in two parts – a) at first, he devoted nine days towards individual body practice (22-30 June, 2018) at the department of Theatre Arts, University of Hyderabad; and b) collaboration with supervisor Noushad Mohammad for twenty-four days (1-24 July, 2018).

### **2.5.1 Individual Practice Process:**

The researcher started his individual practice after coming from Kerala, before going under the supervision of his supervisor. In the individual practice, the researcher

continued preliminary exercises of Kathakali which he had already practised under the supervision of Kathakali Guru Prashob Kalamandalam in Kerala.

The individual research practice comprised of the following elements:

- Preliminary exercises
- Mudras
- speech and voice exercises using of sloka for the practice (diction and rhythm)
- practiced mudras with movements according to the performance sequence
- each and every sequence of the performance

The researcher has concentrated and practised the slokas every day, and the documentation of making the performance of Urubhangam with guru Prashob Kalamandalam helped him to further his practice in making of posture, diction, facial expressions, pronunciation of text (slokas), rhythmic movements, using of mudras according to the text (sloka) in everyday practice in a performative way. Here, the important thing is that the researcher never got distracted, disconnected or deviated from the practice because the rules of body practice was followed strictly. During this period, the whole learning process from Guru Prashob Kalamandalam was put into practice by the researcher himself. It was a kind of a trial run before the beginning of actual serious practice.

### **2.5.2 Collaboration with Supervisor:**

The role of the supervisor was to guide the researcher to perform the play Urubhangam in a flawless manner with proper expressions and body movements. As the role of Duryodhana was chosen by the researcher to be performed as a part of his Kathakali body practice, there was a need for someone who could understand the portrayal of the character; and who could have been better than the supervisor Noushad Mohammad himself. Most important and significant aspect of his guidance was to bring variations in the depiction of the character of Duryodhana and this was to be achieved by body movements, voice modulation, and facial expressions.

The supervisor emphasised the need for understanding the connection between the text and the gesture or text and the body in order to ensure smooth transitioning from one sloka to another by eliminating artificiality in the process. This removal of superficiality and rigidity would lead to a proper performance without mistakes. To stage an effective performance, more rigorous practice was needed with attention being paid to breathing, flexibility and mobility, voice, diction, and control of the total body posture.

Body movements needed to be practised in accordance with variation in beats and tempo, as can be done using the following base tala. A proper coordination of mind-body-feet is required to perform smoothly on the beats whether playing fast or slow. The sequential body movements in a rhythm would generate the balance and motion which could be utilised for maintaining the correct body posture. This posture along with expressiveness in the face was required to bring out the perfection in an actor while portraying a character.

The researcher practised the rhythmic movements in beats expressed by the utterances of talas. It must be said here that these talas are models or tools for practice, which synchronises the upper part of the body with that of the lower part (especially the feet). Some talas are mentioned below:

**Tala Practice:**

**(Model I)**

*Dhin Dhin Dha Dha*

*Dha Dhin Dhin Dha*

*Ta Tin Tin Ta*

*Dha Dhin Dhin Dha*

**(Model II)**

*Dhin Taka Taka Dha*

*Dhin Taka Taka Dha*

*Tin Taka Taka Ta*

*Dhin Taka Taka Dha*

**Basic Mudras: -**

Here, the researcher used mudras in Urubhangam performance along with the sloka text. A total of 24 basic mudras exist in Kathakali practice which are called the hastamudras. These are applied to express more than 400 words through three combinations – mudras using single-hand, mudras using both hands, and mixed mudras with each hand expressing a mudra in variation with the other.

The 24 mudras and their representations have been provided below, as practised by the researcher in the rendition of Urubhangam performance:

Table 2. 4 Kathakali 24 Mudras

| SI No | Traditional name | Represence        |
|-------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1     | Pathaaka         | Flag              |
| 2     | Mudrakyam        | Seal/stamp        |
| 3     | Katakam          | Golden Wristband  |
| 4     | Mushti           | Fist              |
| 5     | Karthari Mukham  | Point of scissors |
| 6     | Sukathundam      | Beak of parrot    |
| 7     | Kapithakam       | Fruit             |
| 8     | Hamsapaksham     | Wing of swan      |
| 9     | Sikharam         | Beak              |
| 10    | Hamsasyam        | Beak of swan      |
| 11    | Anjali           | Salutation        |
| 12    | Ardha Chandram   | Half moon         |
| 13    | Mukuram          | Mirror            |
| 14    | Brahmaram        | Beetle            |
| 15    | Suchimukham      | Point of needle   |
| 16    | Pallavam         | Sprout            |
| 17    | Thripathaaka     | Tricolour flag    |
| 18    | Mrigasirsham     | Head of animal    |
| 19    | Sarpasirassu     | Hood of snake     |
| 20    | Vardhamanakam    | Seedling          |
| 21    | Araalam          | Curve             |
| 22    | Oornanabham      | Spider            |
| 23    | Mukulam          | Bud               |
| 24    | Katakaamukham    | Style of fighting |

## 1. Pathaaka (Flag):

There are a total of 46 hand symbols in this mudra – 10 single-hand and 36 double-hand.



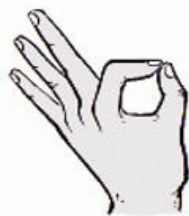
The single-hand symbols are: a) day, b) body, c) movement, d) forehead, e) tongue, f) noise, g) messenger, h) sprout, i) sandbank, and j) a particular thing.

### **The double-hand symbols include:**

sun, king, lion, elephant, ox, flag, arch, waves, climbing of plant, earth, hell, path, pot, evening, noon, cloud, hip, thigh, wheel, servant, stool, travel, vehicle, weapons of Lord Indra, rampart, door, pillow, ditch, leg, bolt, weapons of Lord Indra, etc.

## 2. Mudrakyam (Seal/Stamp):

There are a total of 25 hand-symbols in this mudra – 12 single-hand and 13 double-hand.



The single-hand symbols are – mind, thought, desire, wisdom, creation, life, future, defamation, doing by oneself, remainder, no, and fourth.

The double-hand symbols are – movement, growth, ocean, heaven, death, meditation, sacred thread, straight, forgetfulness, announcement, things, everything.

### 3. **Katakam (Golden Wristband):**

There are a total of 29 hand-symbols in this mudra – 9 single-hand and 20 double-hand.



The single-hand symbols are – mirror, flower, female, smell, sweat, quivering, offering of holy things to sacrificial fire with the chanting of mantras.

The double-hand symbols include – Vishnu, Krishna, Balarama, Lakshmi, arrow, gold, silver, veena, chain, lotus, crown, weapon, demon, chariot, etc.

### 4. **Mushti (Fist):**

There are a total of 40 hand-symbols in this mudra – 15 single-hand and 25 double-hand.

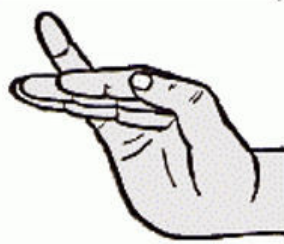


The single-hand symbols include – expression of vain, extreme, advisor of the King, crossing, bearing, agedness, robbing, food, victory, consent.

The double-hand symbols include – beauty, purity, curse, heroism, donation, medicine, mud, pulling, ankle, chariot drive, Yama, tail of an animal, lance, grievance, vomiting, child-birth, digging, spirit of ghost.

5. **Karthari Mukham (Point of scissors):**

There are a total of 26 hand-symbols in this mudra – 10 single-hand and 16 double-hand.



The single-hand symbols include – you, word, change of mood, we, humans, face, child, enmity, gradation, mongoose.

The double-hand symbols include – fame, sin, tiresomeness, skull, house, purity, dynasty, hunger, hearing, telling, gathering, hunting, male member of Brahmin caste.

6. **Sukathundam (Beak of parrot):**

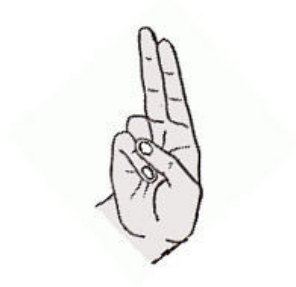
This mudra is represented by three double-hand symbols which are bird, goad and engagement.





7. **Kapithakam (Fruit):**

This mudra is represented by ten double-hand symbols – in doubt, to net, feather of peacock, drinking, touching, prevention, open expanse of land, outer side, descending, stepping.



8. **Hamsapaksham (Wing of swan):**

There are a total of 53 hand-symbols in this mudra – 42 single-hand and 11 double-hand.



The single-hand symbols include – God, Kamadeva, worship, sin, humility, embracing, blessing, tortoise, mountain, valley, moon, air, relatives, rock, happiness, female chest, croud, fish, to follow.

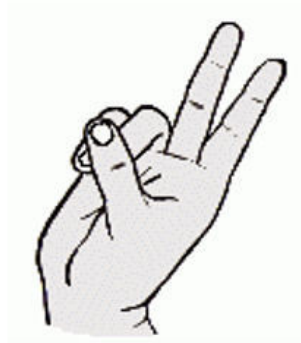
There are a total of 53 hand-symbols in this mudra – 42 single-hand and 11 double-hand.

### **9. Sikharam (Beak):**

There are a total of 11 hand-symbols in this mudra – 8 single-hand and 3 double-hand.

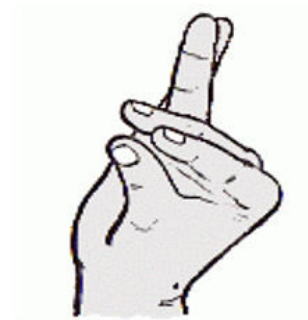
The single-hand symbols are – eyes, sight, legs, path, ears, to drink, detect, to walk.

The double-hand symbols are – Garuda, Jatayu, and swan.



### **10. Hamsasyam (Beak of swan):**

There is a total of 12 hand-symbol in this mudra – 4 single hand and 8 double hands



The single-hand symbol are – hair, rainy season, abdomen hair, three-dolds of skin on a women's naval

The double-hand symbols are – body hair, iris, whiteness, redness, bluish colour, dust, smoothness, mercy.

### **11. Anjali (Salutation):**

There are a total of 17 hand-symbols in this mudra – 2 single-hand and 15 double-hand.



The single-hand symbols are anger and twigs of a tree.

The double-hand symbols include – fire, horse, light, hair, rainfall, ear-rings, anxiety, river, flow, noise, etc.

### **12. Ardha Chandram (Half moon):**

There are a total of 13 hand-symbols in this mudra – 4 single-hand and 9 double-hand.

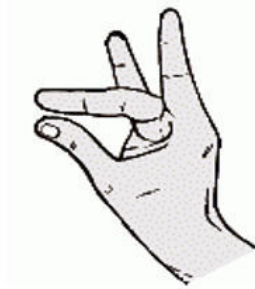


The single-hand symbols are represented by smile, start, contempt, and what.

The double-hand symbols include – sky, God, memory, hair, grass, helplessness, and the expressions if and what.

### **13. Mukuram (Mirror):**

There are a total of 20 hand-symbols in this mudra – 9 single-hand and 11 double-hand.



The single-hand symbols are – anger, excellence, rays, bangles, neck, arms, beetle, negative emotion, dissent.

The double-hand symbols include – waist, tusk, forelimb, brother, mortar, pillar, devil, growth and separation.

### **14. Brahmaram (Beetle):**

There are a total of 9 hand-symbols in this mudra – 4 single-hand and 5 double-hand.



The four single-hand symbols are ~~Gandharva~~, fear, weep, and birth.

The double-hand symbols are water, song, birdwing, umbrella, and elephant ear.

### **15. Suchimukham (Point of needle):**

There are a total of 26 hand-symbols in this mudra – 16 single-hand and 10 double-hand.



The single-hand symbols include a person, ear, dull moment, plurality, moon, giving up, people, witness, pity, etc.

The double-hand symbols include – Lakshman, universe, jump, break, tail, eyebrow, month, fall, loose, thing.

### **16. Pallavam (Sprout):**

There are a total of 15 hand-symbols in this mudra – 6 single-hand and 9 double-hand.



The six single-hand symbols are fuming, cane, tail, grain, distance, and pledge.

**17. Thripathaaka (Tricolour Flag):**

There are six double-hand symbols in this mudra represented by the sunset, commencement, to say hello, drinking, body, and begging.



**18. Mrigasirsham (Head of an animal):**

This mudra is represented by two double-hand symbols – animals, and the Supreme Being.



**19. Sarpasirassu (Hood of snake):**

A total of 9 double-hand symbols represents this mudra, as mentioned below.



The symbols are snake, sandal, worship, vomiting, saint, to go slow, escape, massage, and swinging of elephant ears.

## **20. Vardhamanakam (Seedling):**

There are a total of 9 hand-symbols in this mudra – 3 single-hand and 6 double-hand.



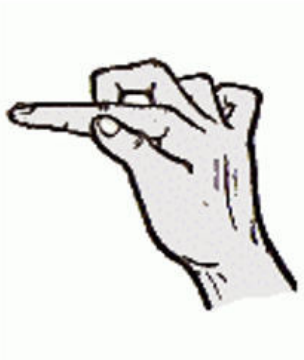
Three single-hand symbols are – whirlpool, navel, and well.

1. Whirlpool, 2. Navel, 3. Well

The double-hand symbols are – diamond necklace, female earrings, practice of Yoga, knee, to draw, and man looking after an elephant.

## **21. Araalam (Curve):**

This mudra is represented by five double-hand symbols – fool, tree, wedge, bud, and sprout.



## **22. Oornanabham (Spider):**

Seven double-hand mudras represent this mudra – horse, fruit, tiger, butter, snow, plentifulness, and lotus.



## **23. Mukulam (Bud):**

This mudra is represented by four double-hand symbols – fox, monkey, fading, and forgetting.



## **24. Katakaamukham (Style of fighting):**

This mudra is represented by four double-hand symbols – blow, servant, hero, wrestler, shooting arrow, and arrest.







1. Pathaaka



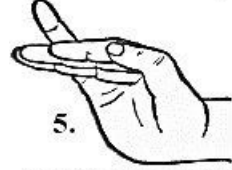
2. Mudraakhyam



3. Katakam



4. Mushti



5. Kartharee Mukham



6. Sukathundam



7. Kapidhakam



8. HamsaPaksham



9. Sikharam



10. Hamsaasyam



11. Anjali



12. Aarda Chandra



13. Mukuram



14. Bhramaram



15. Soochimukham



16. Pallavam



17. Thripathaaka



18. Mrigaseersham



19. Sarpasirassu



20. Vardhamanakam



21. Araalam



22. Oornanabham



23. Mukulam



24. Katakaamukham

Kathakali 24 Mudras

## 2.6 Participant Observer and Documentation - Phase IV

In the fourth phase of Kathakali body practice, the researcher played the role of an observer, focusing on the activities of the fellow practitioners through their body, and documented the practice. The detailed and subtle observances highlighted the difficulties, challenges, and problems as encountered with their bodies during the *sadhana*. This paved the way to adapt the body in a certain way as deemed perfect for the crafting of a performance. Similarly, the fellow practitioners were closely observing the changes in their bodies during Kathakali body practice, video documenting them, and watching them multiple times, and analysing the changes and difficulties in their bodies. Moreover, the documentation of this fourth stage Kathakali body practice is shown to the teacher after the class every day. It can be said that the key point in this fourth stage is that he analyses various new points with me and explains them in detail while participating.

Here, the researcher will describe the process of *Guru Mukha sadhana* and how it was useful in the research. The Guru devoted ten to twelve hours every day to this process. During this time, there would be full concentration with devotion and dedication on the part of the researcher towards the Guru. The physical and mental state of *sadhakula* used to be submitted to the Guru. This method has the capacity to provide better development and results for the *sadhaks* in *sadhana* as the *sadhakula* can facilitate correction of mistakes directly in the learning process by continuing the practice under the guidance of the Guru. It must be pointed out that the training in traditional art forms under the Guru's guidance is of a higher quality, and this ultimately brings out the best in the actor-practitioner provided there is the passion to learn, and implement the learning process into practice. Engaging in the *Guru Mukha* process, has allowed the researcher to observe both physically and mentally the changes in the *sadhana* process.

The time allotted for the body practice was for two hours, from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. Within this timeframe, the practitioners had to do the work with complete concentration and dedication. This early morning daily practice necessitates the

inculcation of discipline in the life of a practitioner without which nothing can be possible to learn. For the researcher, it used to be a practice with purpose. The purpose was to achieve a higher aim, and that higher aim consisted in the development of the overall body in physicality and movements. The researcher cultivated a healthy relationship with fellow practitioners, and the importance of the practice informed the research by discussing the problems faced by the actors during practice, and the changes they witnessed in their body after the practice.

The main focus of the researcher was to observe about the body functionalities.

They are as follows:

1. Balance
2. Control
3. Breathing
4. Strength
5. Flexibility
6. Firmness
7. Stability
8. Attitude
9. Concentration
10. Strengthening
11. Commitment and Dedication
12. Clarity
13. Rhythm
14. Temperament
15. Transmutation
16. Faith
17. Agility
18. Imaginative
19. Focus
20. Interest
21. Tension
22. Ambiguity

The researcher had the opportunity to observe how the body was affected by this sadhana from different angles. In the table provided below, there is an illustration of the body responses of the fellow practitioners, while practising Kathakali. Each and every action was observed and will be explained in depth. The important point that needs to be mentioned here is that all the twenty actors who participated here, were practising this Kathakali body practice for the first time and had no prior experience of practising this art form.

This Kathakali sadhana was meant only for theatre arts students. A total of twenty students participated in this workshop with the permission of the department; seven students from third year, and thirteen from second year. The researcher was given the permission by the department to participate as practical supervisor.

In this Kathakali Sadhana workshop, Guru Prashob performed these exercises for twenty days i.e., from August 1st to 20th from 6 am to 8 am. Similarly, from 5 pm to 6 pm in the evening, i.e., for about one hour, rhythm, the facial expressions, and facial features of the actors, such as eyebrows, eyelids, eyeballs, cheeks, chin, forehead, etc., were practised in Navarasa Sadhana. The internship was conducted by the Department of Theatre Arts, Central University of Hyderabad. The morning classes consisted of Guru Prashob Sadhana, which was a full body practice. In the evening the teacher concentrated on the rhythm of the body of the students.

On the first day, as usual in the Kathakali Body *Sadhana* process, before the practice, the lamp is lit in front of Lord Ganapati and the student or *sadhaka* gives two betel leaves in *Gurudakshina* form to Guru, two Vakkas and one rupee bill placed on them and bows to the Guru offering himself Manasa Vacha Karmana and gives them to the Guru and touches the feet of the Pidapa Guru. Once the Pidapa has received their blessings, the process of *sadhana* begins. Lamp lighting is done daily before *sadhana*. *Gurudakshina Sadhana* is done only on the first day. In this *sadhana*, first all the *sadhakas* choose their place suitable for their *sadhana* and after preparing for sadhana, first the guru starts with *Dhyana Sloka* and the *sadhaka* enters the *sadhana*

while remembering that Mahashiva. This *Dhyana Sloka* is the first process that all actors do before *sadhana* every day.

After this meditation chant, the Kathakali Namaskar process starts. On the first day of this process, the Guru performed the Kathakali Namaskar in front of him. He instructed the students to follow him while standing. So, following the Guru for first and second day, the students gradually mastered this process by doing it themselves.

After this Kathakali Namaskar process, the Guru started the most important exercise in the Kathakali Body *Sadhana*, *Chattam*, which means jumping. As a researcher, I can emphasize for hours that the importance of this jump is paramount and important in completing a thorough research through Kathakali's long practical participation and practice of this *sadhana* three times with a teacher and a supervisor.

This jump exercise made the teacher concentrate more on the students every day. Training was continued only on this jumping exercise for thirty minutes every day. The significance of this jumping has already been explained by a researcher in stages one and two of the Kathakali body. Through this, the Guru was able to easily know the physical nature of each seeker and through this basic exercise I started to observe the body functions of each seeker as a researcher. While doing this exercise, it is important that the practitioners do the following:

1. Breathing
2. Movements
  - A. hands,
  - B. knees,
  - C. feet,
  - D. waist,
  - E. face,
3. Concentration
4. Balance

5. Control
6. Power
7. Flexibility
8. Openness
9. A method of reaching the ground, etc.

The researcher began to notice how they were using atomic energy for the said exercise; that the thoughts I had as a researcher while doing jump exercises on the first day of the *sadhakas* started my research in different ways. It is also very difficult to observe everyone while doing jumping exercises on the first day. By doing video documentation, talking about the individual practice of each practitioner, analysing, discussing critical points in daily practice, changes after practice, sharing their experiences with each other was very helpful.

After the first day of practice, the video was shown to the fellow students and their practice process was followed by their practice method and conversations were held to make the next day's training more powerful. This video documentation was not only shown by the student to the students, but after the completion of each day's practice, he was shown these videos to the teacher with his permission. It was usual for the Guru to correct the mistakes made by every seeker every day but as there was only two and a half hours, the Guru would do the corrections as much as possible in their bodies. In this way, there was a brief analysis of the *sadhana* between the Guru and me. Each practitioner analyses the problems in different parts of the body and talks about how they can be controlled through this *sadhana*. A full *sadhana* begins with an analysis of the challenges and opportunities present in each student's body. Through this the research on the daily activities of *sadhakas* has been enhanced.

Knowing the problems and advantages of each student in the jump exercise described above, the teacher gives special training accordingly so that I can observe the changes in them myself. By analysing these changes with the teacher and with the students, the idea of how to teach this type of *sadhana* to other students or practitioners began.

As a practical participant observer, I began to focus on the activities that take place in each practitioner's body during practice. In the table mentioned earlier, the activities of each *sadhaka* are briefly described in the table. Based on the Kathakali exercises taught by the Guru in these twenty days, the reactions of all twenty *sadhakas'* bodies were analysed through their various activities. Although this twenty-day period is a short period of time for the Kathakali body practice stage students, the teacher applied the common exercises used as part of the Kathakali actor's training to the stage actors.

As a part of this training, the teacher will teach the actor's exercises in Kathakali, i.e., introductory exercises, especially jumps, muscle expansion, and how to react in the practitioner's body according to the rhythm. Guru Garu started this practice with the principle that the actors, especially the contemporary actors, should acquire a body that is physically and mentally stable. Accordingly, I continued my research. Through such thinking I analysed the changes in the body of every seeker.

As a researcher I focused my concentration on why activities in the practice process of my fellow practitioners. This means that each actor has many similar activities. But to what extent an actor uses them in his performance. Every man lives a rhythmic life without realizing it in the way he behaves every day in his eternal life. When it comes to performance, he becomes over conscious.

Similarly, every actor's body moves in a rhythmic way. It means that a trained actor is a common person in the society, body movements, behaviour, speech, mannerisms, facial expressions etc. He observes all this and puts it hypothetically into his body and performs it on the stage, so there is a great difference from the trained actors to ordinary people, because such trained actors observe as thoroughly as possible and practice it day by day, here the same actors observe the activities in the external activity and how to reveal them on the stage. As in traditional forms of

physical practice, there are many changes in the physical condition of the actor and he can bring activities in the body not only mentally but also physically.

Through this physical practice, every organ, tissue, muscle in the body is stimulated and stimulated to the actors and the actors are always energetic and physically capable to play any role. The reason for my focus as a researcher on these activities is that each actor has a lot of power. But how can it be added to the character on stage in a journalistic way? Such maturity both mentally and physically is what this physical practice develops in actors. This is just an example. This example makes me question myself as a researcher, but the story of this is the fourth stage of the physical practice process where other actors falter. Everything he does is done unconsciously irregularly, so every actor has power, rhythm, concentration, flexibility, ability to breathe, control, balance, elasticity etc. There are so many activities in him, but when doing a play, the process of codifying all these on the stage, applying them to the role he is playing, and holding his body according to that role is just a practice, it is also an art form, i.e., researches as a researcher, whether a Kuchipudi director, or a Yakshagana actor, either a Kathakali *Sadhaka*, or Kalari *Sadhaka*, etc. It can be said that if an actor is compared to many art forms, the common actor is less.

I began my research by looking at the different types of activities they engage in during practice and how this affects their bodies. As part of this, the body of each seeker has been analysed analytically to understand the challenges and opportunities that exist in them while performing Kathakali physical practice. Jumps is the first exercise that the Guru starts after the first day routine rituals are over. These basic exercises involve observation of the actor's breath, body balance, control, strength, flexibility, concentration, and attitude of the actor. As part of my research, the idea of how this sadhana process affects other actors started in me, and in the fourth stage of my research, I started to do *Lagnam* on the physical activities of Kathakali actors. Each *sadhaka* is explained below according to his body type and method of practice.



| Functionalities                                      |             |           |           |           |           |             |           |                |               |          |          |                           |                    |                     |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|----------------|---------------|----------|----------|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| S. No                                                | Actors      | Balance   | Control   | Breath    | Energy    | Flexibility | Rigidity  | Sustainability | Concentration | Attitude | Strength | Commitment and Dedication | Clarity in posture | Remarks             |
| Final Year Students - Specialization in Acting       |             |           |           |           |           |             |           |                |               |          |          |                           |                    |                     |
| 1.                                                   | Participant | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Above avg | Not at all  | Too much  | Good           | Good          | Good     | Good     | Excellent                 | Not Clear          | Enthusiast to learn |
| 2.                                                   | Participant | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Above avg   | Avg       | Avg            | Avg           | Neutral  | Avg      | Poor                      | Not Clear          | Unbalanced          |
| 3.                                                   | Participant | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg   | Above avg | Good           | Good          | Good     | Good     | Good                      | Avg                | Enthusiast to learn |
| 4.                                                   | Participant | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg   | Above avg | Good           | Good          | Good     | Good     | Good                      | Avg                | Enthusiast to learn |
| 5.                                                   | Participant | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg   | Avg       | Good           | Good          | Good     | Good     | Avg                       | Not Clear          | Uncontrolled body   |
| 6.                                                   | Participant | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Above avg | Not at all  | Too much  | Good           | Not at all    | Poor     | Good     | Poor                      | Not Clear          | Lazy Body           |
| 7.                                                   | Participant | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg   | Above avg | Good           | Good          | Good     | Good     | Good                      | Avg                | Enthusiast to learn |
| Second Year Students – Part of the acting class work |             |           |           |           |           |             |           |                |               |          |          |                           |                    |                     |

|     |             |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |       |                           |
|-----|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------|---------------------------|
| 8.  | Participant | Good      | Good      | Good      | Excellent | Excellent | Below avg | Great     | Excellent | Excellent | Excellent | Excellent | Great | Excellent learner         |
| 9.  | Participant | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Above avg | Avg       | Avg       | Neutral   | Avg       | Poor      | Poor  | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 10. | Participant | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Above avg | Avg       | Avg       | Neutral   | Avg       | Avg       | Avg   | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 11. | Participant | Poor      | Poor      | Poor      | Avg       | Below avg | Above avg | Poor      | Poor      | Poor      | Poor      | Poor      | Avg   | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 12. | Participant | Avg       | Poor      | Avg       | Avg       | Below avg | Above avg | Poor      | Poor      | Neutral   | Avg       | Avg       | Avg   | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 13. | Participant | Poor      | Poor      | Poor      | Avg       | Below avg | Too much  | Poor      | Poor      | Poor      | Above avg | Poor      | Poor  | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 14. | Participant | Avg       | Good      | Poor      | Avg       | Good      | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Neutral   | Avg       | Avg       | Avg   | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 15. | Participant | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Above avg | Avg       | Avg       | Neutral   | Avg       | Avg       | Avg   | Enthusiast to learn       |
| 16. | Participant | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg | Avg       | Too much  | Above avg | Above avg | Neutral   | Above avg | Above avg | Avg   | Enthusiast to learn       |

|     |             |      |      |      |           |           |           |     |      |         |           |      |     |                           |
|-----|-------------|------|------|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----|------|---------|-----------|------|-----|---------------------------|
| 17. | Participant | Poor | avg  | Poor | Above avg | Below avg | Too much  | Avg | Poor | Poor    | Above avg | Poor | Avg | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 18. | Participant | Avg  | Avg  | Avg  | Avg       | Avg       | Above avg | Avg | Avg  | Neutral | Avg       | Poor | Avg | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 19. | Participant | Avg  | Avg  | Avg  | Avg       | Below avg | Above avg | Avg | Avg  | Neutral | Avg       | Poor | Avg | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 20. | Participant | Good | Good | Avg  | Good      | Good      | Avg       | Avg | Avg  | Neutral | Above avg | Avg  | Avg | Enthusiast to learn       |

Table 2. 5 Actors functionalities Kathalali – 4<sup>th</sup> phase

| Functionalities                                      |             |           |           |            |           |                    |           |             |           |           |             |           |            |                     |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|------------|---------------------|
| S. No                                                | Actors      | Rhythm    | Stretch   | Reflection | Openness  | Questioning & Self | Agility   | Imagination | Focus     | Interest  | Tension P M | Ambiguity | Confidence | Remarks             |
| Final Year Students - Specialization in Acting       |             |           |           |            |           |                    |           |             |           |           |             |           |            |                     |
| 1.                                                   | Participant | Avg       | Good      | Avg        | Above avg | Above avg          | Too much  | Good        | Good      | Good      | Avg         | Above avg | Good       | Enthusiast to learn |
| 2.                                                   | Participant | Above avg | Above avg | Avg        | Avg       | Avg                | Above avg | Above avg   | Avg       | Below avg | Avg         | Above avg | Above avg  | Unbalanced          |
| 3.                                                   | Participant | Avg       | Above avg | Above avg  | Above avg | Above avg          | Above avg | Good        | Good      | Good      | Good        | Avg       | Good       | Enthusiast to learn |
| 4.                                                   | Participant | Avg       | Above avg | Above avg  | Above avg | Above avg          | Above avg | Good        | Good      | Good      | Good        | Below avg | Good       | Enthusiast to learn |
| 5.                                                   | Participant | Avg       | Above avg | Avg        | Avg       | Below avg          | Good      | Below avg   | Above avg | Above avg | Avg         | Avg       | Avg        | Uncontrolled body   |
| 6.                                                   | Participant | Avg       | Below Avg | Avg        | Below Avg | Below avg          | Above avg | Below avg   | Below avg | Below Avg | Above avg   | Above avg | Avg        | Lazy Body           |
| 7.                                                   | Participant | Avg       | Above avg | Above avg  | Above avg | Above avg          | Above avg | Above avg   | Good      | Good      | Good        | Avg       | Good       | Enthusiast to learn |
| Second Year Students – Part of the acting class work |             |           |           |            |           |                    |           |             |           |           |             |           |            |                     |

|     |             |           |           |           |           |           |           |       |           |           |           |           |           |                           |
|-----|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------------------|
| 8.  | Participant | Good      | Good      | Good      | Excellent | Excellent | Good      | Great | Excellent | Excellent | Excellent | Excellent | Great     | Excellent learner         |
| 9.  | Participant | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Above avg | Avg   | Avg       | Below avg | Above avg | Above avg | Below avg | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 10. | Participant | Below avg | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Above avg | Avg   | Avg       | Avg       | Above avg | Avg       | Avg       | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 11. | Participant | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Above avg | Avg   | Avg       | Avg       | Above avg | Above avg | Avg       | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 12. | Participant | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg   | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 13. | Participant | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Below avg | Avg       | Avg   | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 14. | Participant | Above avg | Avg       | Above avg | Avg       | Good      | Avg       | Avg   | Above avg | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 15. | Participant | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Above avg | Avg   | Above avg | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Enthusiast to learn       |
| 16. | Participant | Avg       | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg | Avg       | Too much  | Avg   | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg | Avg       | Enthusiast to learn       |

|     |             |      |      |      |      |           |           |     |           |           |           |           |           |                           |
|-----|-------------|------|------|------|------|-----------|-----------|-----|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------------------|
| 17. | Participant | Avg  | Avg  | Poor | Avg  | Below avg | Avg       | Avg | Poor      | Avg       | Above avg | Above avg | Below avg | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 18. | Participant | Avg  | Avg  | Avg  | Avg  | Avg       | Avg       | Avg | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 19. | Participant | Avg  | Avg  | Avg  | Avg  | Below avg | Avg       | Avg | Avg       | Avg       | Avg       | Above avg | Below avg | Poor in Physical Practice |
| 20. | Participant | Good | Good | Avg  | Good | Avg       | Above avg | Avg | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg | Above avg | Enthusiast to learn       |

Table 2. 6 Actors functionalities Kathalali – 4<sup>th</sup> Phase

## 2.7 Conclusion

Four phases of participation enabled researcher to improve his body and voice capacity to perform various expressions of characters. The researcher experienced and realized ability of Kathakali practice in transformation of normal body into performing body. The essence of Kathakali lies in the ability to transform an individual from the state of pre-expressivity to the state of expressivity. This is achieved through facial expressions and face movements, voice modulation, and the application of body-ethics (to discipline and nurture the body through rigorous practice). Moreover, the use of slokas and the mudras contribute to the invocation of the divine/spirituality in the performative space, and thereby generating the true performance respectively. Therefore, it can be said that Kathakali is an exercise or practice to transform a human being both within and outside.

To conclude, based on practical participant observation, we can say that traditional Kathakali movements and vocal exercise are relevant to contemporary acting training. This training helps to overcome various difficulties of lower and upper body parts, sustaining energy, agility, enhancing bearing capacity. As compared to other performative art forms, Kathakali's distinctiveness lies on its body movements and distributing and shifting weight on various parts based on rhythm and speech.

# CHAPTER 3

## “Energy in Space and Energy in Time: An Exploration of Yakshagana Based Acting Practice”

### Introduction:

This chapter explains the process and applicability of voice and body movements of the Yakshagana art form in actor training. The researcher employed the “performing practice approach” for data collection and analysis. For the practical participation observation, the researcher participated in the Yakshagana workshop from the 1st of March to the 20th of 2019. Bannanje Sanjeeva Sivarama conducted a body practice workshop at the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Hyderabad. The workshop began with Ganesh Prayer and ended with *Namo Narayana Sloka*. Workshop held daily for two hours from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. Training on Day One started with a ritual by offering prayer to Lord Ganesha, the god of education, success, and wisdom. After that, the Guru explained the training methodology on *Talas* and body practice. In any acting, be it in theatre or dance, *Talas* are inextricable. *Talas* are the essential elements in Yakshagana. Let us have a brief look at the historical development of the Yakshagana art form before examining the details of various *Talas*.

### 3.1 Brief overview Yakshagana:

The word Yakshagana is the Song of the Divine beings.<sup>53</sup> Yakshagana is a folk theatre form performed in many parts of South India. Its roots can be traced in 16th-century Sanskrit literature and theatre. Yakshagana also reminds the structure and narrative style of another performing art Harikatha which reached the current form revived by the Bhakti Movement in the 12<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>54</sup> It is also known as Kirthanand Katha Kalaksepa in different parts of India. The significant difference between

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<sup>53</sup> Ashton, “Yakshagana: A South Indian Folk Theatre,” 1969, pp. 148-155.

<sup>54</sup> Gargi, *Folk Theater of India*, 1966.



Yakshagana and Harikatha is that Harikatha is a solo performance. The singer himself is the narrator. Selected events of the narrative will be enacted by him. The dramatic element is minimal in Harikatha. Its origin has been found in the Harikatha tradition.

There are differences of opinion about the origin of Yakshagana. In the opinion of Adya Rangacharya the origin of folk theatres in Karnataka, Andhra and Maharashtra can be traced in the Harikatha performance. Basavaraj Malashetty says the word “Yekkalagana” mentioned in *Candraprabha Purana* of twelfth century CE has synonyms like “ekka,” “ekkadiga,” “jakka,” and “yaksandol.”<sup>55</sup> Scholars hold that “Yakshagana is a song-mode, and that it denotes the musician’s art.”

Yakshagana is mainly seen in the north, south and the western parts of Karnataka and Telangana as in Warangal, Nizamabad, and a few other districts. It is also performed in some northern districts of Kerala. Though there are minute differences in costumes, acting and dancing methods, the themes played in Yakshagana of the above regions have one thing in common i.e.; they are all taken from the Hindu Puranas.<sup>56</sup> This unique form of art which evolved from ancient times, is highly relevant even now. It is still growing on its own. Yakshagana is a kind of ballet, rendering dialogues with rhythmic movements, music, orchestra, and dance with colourful costumes.<sup>57</sup>

Though it is commonly called Yakshagana in Karnataka, the Telugu Yakshagana has two kinds of the same art form named Chindu Bhagavatham and Kuchipudi Yakshagana. The word Chindu means to jump. Chindu Bhagavatham is said to have originated in the Nizamabad district, and belonged to the Madiga community. Chindu Bhagavatham was restricted to performances only within the Madiga community until Chindu Yellamma, who mastered this art form, got an invitation

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<sup>55</sup> Malashetty, *Open-air Performances of Northern Karnataka*, 1983, p. 72.

<sup>56</sup> Ranganath, *Not a Thing of Past*, 1979.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

from the Dance Academy. The tradition of Telugu Yakshagana spread into Tamil Nādu as grand Melattur Bhagavathm. As the Yakshagana evolved in Karnataka independently as a native art, the grand Melattur Bhagavatham took its roots as Telugu Yakshagana.

Although Yakshagana, which is widely performed in Telangana, resembles the Karnataka Yakshagana in costumes, acting and dancing style, there is a significant difference in their evolution and background. According to folklore researchers, Telangana Yakshagana has the socio-cultural influence of the place and people. This is true because human beings are products of certain cultural environment. Various aspects of this art reveal the culture and influence of the surrounding/environment an individual lives in. The features of the land where the people live in will reflect on their quality of life and their culture. The stresses, struggles and joy of the people will make great influence on the lives of the people. This is applicable in rural India because economy and culture depend on agriculture. Thus, the weather as well as environmental changes affect their whole life.

In this scenario, the study of Yakshagana will be incomplete without clearly understanding the land, weather, topography, and the culture of the people. Mother Nature determines the habit and life of people. This leads us to the conclusion that nature helped Yakshagana to flourish and surpass through generations. The eastern side of Karnataka is decorated with Sahyadri Mountains which is also called Western Ghats. The region is blessed with rivers, hills, thick forests, and mountains at an altitude of 305 meters. Along with this serenity it has its share of miseries in the form of long-lasting heavy rains, flood, landslides, and disease. Two districts of the Coastal regions were directly under the British rule and the Malanadu regions were under the rule of the Mysore King. The entire area of the East and the West were completely ignored by the King as well as the British rulers. These adverse political conditions, and the extreme weather conditions restricted the performance of folk art forms into certain favourable seasons. Obviously, this made the performance of

Yakshagana quite seasonal in these regions as Yakshagana was performed by proletarian class.

Even in all these unfavourable circumstances, Yakshagana grew in the coastal area. H. K. Ranganath further states that the coastal strip of Karnataka with its sounding environment – fast-flowing rivers, seas, range of mountains, magnificent skies, etc., remains a land of beauty, and this is a motivating domain for any creative artist because they tend to feel the distinctiveness in their surroundings. Therefore, in the art of Yakshagana, the nature with its beauty and rugged terrain channelises the inner creativity in an artist, which in turn gets reflected in making Yakshagana as a colourful folk-art.<sup>58</sup>

Karnataka Yakshagana has two divisions *Moodalapaya* and *Paduvalapaya*. Moodalapaya can be further divided into *Doddata* and *Sannata* in which we can find the crude forms of Yakshagana as the purest folk artform. Even though Yakshagana is purely a folk form of art, there are some elements of classical forms which must have been added to it later. The *Paduvalapaya* has been divided as *Thenkuthittu* and *Badaguthittu*. The latter is popular in the district of north Canara, whereas the former in some parts of south Canara that includes Kasaragod district of Kerala.

*Moodalapaya* is also called Eastern Style of Yakshagana. These two divisions are distinguished by the specific kind of costumes in the *Angika* kind of dance method. Yakshagana is one of the forms of *Yakshagana Bayalata* which represents the traditions followed in an earlier period. Since this is performed on *Atta* or Stage, this is known as *Attadata*. But *Bayalata* is performed in open ground (*Bayalu*), and hence the name. *Paduvalapaya* is also called western style and the coastal Yakshagana. The coastal Yakshagana is greatly appreciated for its artists' decades long dedicated and improvised art form with inputs from scholars and thinkers. It appeared higher spirited and purer in comparison with all the other Yakshagana divisions. Whereas

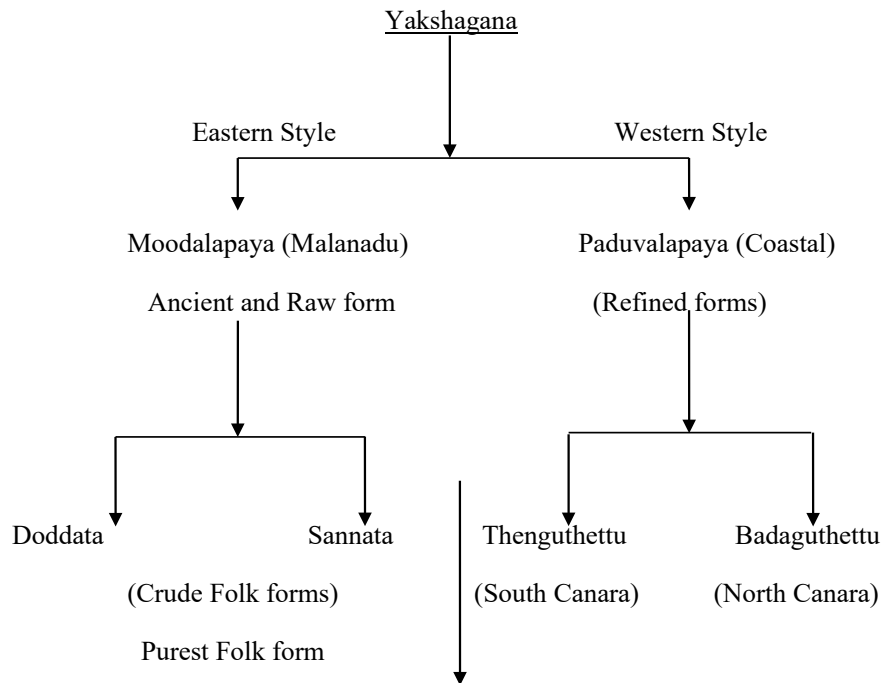
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<sup>58</sup> Ranganath, *The Karnataka Theatre*, 1982, pp. 50-62.

*Moodalapaya* which is also called Eastern style faded due to the absence of care received by *Paduvalapaya*. The history and growth of Yakshagana in various parts of Karnataka will be discussed elaborately.

### 3.2 The influence of Geographical and environmental factors in the growth of Yakshagana:

According to H. K. Ranganath “Any art is born out of the interaction of various cult.”



### 3.3 Moodalapaya Yakshagana:

Moodalapaya Yakshagana is from the ancient folk theatre that was prevalent in the eastern parts of Karnataka. But there is an argument by Basavaraja Malashetty that *Moodalapaya* is not what prevailed in the East, but a kind of theatre that arrived from the East. His idea implies that this theatre form has come to Karnataka from the Telugu-speaking regions. Both these areas were under the Rule of Vijayanagara kings. During this period, Moodalapaya was a nightlong performance. All of its

themes are drawn from the Epics and Puranas, or the Dramas like *Karibantana Kalaga* (The Battle of Karibantana) and *Kumara Rama* (the Young Rama), lives of other mythological characters were enacted.

This form has a ritualistic background and is performed in front of a temple or in the village's main square on a temporary platform stage. This is called *attadata*, which means Stage. This was also called the platform play. These theatre forms were performed during special festival seasons like *Jatra* (the local fair). The villagers gather in one place well in advance for the performance, and hire the services of a professional *Bhagavata* (the lead singer, who also acts as the teacher) to train them. *Moodalapaya* does not have professional troupes/performers, unlike coastal Yakshagana. The *Bhagavata* was always a professional singer and trainer.

The other artists were all from the same village. They do their rehearsal under the training of the professional *Bhagavata*. In the words of H. K. Ranganath, "Moodalapaya contains all essential characteristics of the Folk Theatre with the Bhagavata supported by a chorus called Hiwmela, energetic dances and music, colourful costumes and make-up and finally an epic theme and its organic development."<sup>59</sup> The platform is more spacious in the decorated arena than that of Yakshagana because it may accommodate many participants who perform wild dances. The performance is generally begun with prayer to Lord Ganesha. Different characters are introduced by the Bhagavata in Yakshagana. *Moodalapaya* has a jester called *Sarathi*, who does the introduction, necessary of the characters, and also provides the essential humour. Each character addresses *Sarathi* while speaking. The ingenious *Sarathi* forms a liaison between the stage and the audience. He fills in the gap between the exit of one role and the entrance of another. He often indulges in witty and humorous conversations with the audience. The *Sarathi* is usually assisted by *Kodangi*, the 'minor' jester.

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<sup>59</sup> Shastri, "Prakshipta pauranika prasangaalu," in B. Kukkuvali (ed.), *Oddolaga Mangalore: Bantara Yakshagana Kalotsava Samiti*, 2002, pp. 254-258.

In *Moodalapaya*, the *Bhagavata*'s voice will be supported by a chorus. His rendering will be accompanied by instruments called *Maddale* which is a barrel like percussion instrument and *Mukhavlne*, a reed instrument. The *Mukhavlne* is not used in Yakshagana. The symbols are played throughout the performance by the *Bhagavata* himself. As seen in a proscenium theatre, *Moodalapaya* also makes use of drop curtains in place of hand held curtain used in Yakshagana. However, in some places both these curtains are used. Before the characters are being introduced, the dancers shake the curtain vigorously standing behind it for a few minutes. Prior to the beginning of the performance, the actors offer a prayer to Lord Ganapathi. Then enter Sarade, the goddess of learning with *Hanumariyaka* the clown/*vidooshaka*. After the clown finishes his job of introducing all the characters, two young actors named Balagopalas appear. After seeking blessings from all of them, the actual show begins with the introduction of the main characters.

In the beginning the characters give an introductory address which is called *Pithike* (Introduction). Most of the stories deal with battles and Fights between the devas and asuras. As the other characters enter from behind. Asuras enter from the front. Their war cries are heard much before they enter physically. Then two people lead them to the stage, holding burning torches. They continue their shouting while entering. Character of Anjaneya (Hanuman) may enter by gliding on a rope from top of the stage. In most of these performances war between the good and evil is the core theme.

Many a times, the actors become emotionally involved in acting and it turns to be real fights. In the conventional classical Sanskrit dramaturgy, death is not presented on the stage. Death is presented as being reported by a character. Because it was believed unfavourable to present death on the stage. But in *Moodalapaya* and even in the extreme traditional forms of art including Yakshagana, death is presented by the actors without any hesitation in such scenes like *Bhima* killing *Kicaka* or *Dussasana* are presented with violence and bloodshed. This is how the folk theatre arts surpass the classical Sanskrit dramaturgy. The costumes of the characters of

Moodalapaya are attractive and Colourful even without being codified as seen with Yakshagana. Only major heroic characters and evil characters appear in colourful costumes. But subtle intra distinctions within the categories are not recognisable. The shoulder ornaments that look like wings are the most attractive part of costume. They are not found in Yakshagana. However, the crowns worn by female demons are very common in Yakshagana. The other female characters do not wear special costumes except the Coronet like ornament worn at the back of the head. The influence of *Aharyabhinaya* can be found in this kind of costumes.

The dance is always with swift and masculine movements with stress on the expression of heroic emotions. These points to a male-oriented theatre where the force of movement and energy of footwork is given more importance than beauty and grace of our body. more important than grace or beauty of body lines. B. Malashetty, points out this as “an actor who jumps, dances, and succeeds in breaking at least one of the wooden planks of the platform, gets the recognition as a good actor.”<sup>60</sup> Frequently, the actors get tired while dancing, due to the weight of the costumes. This forces them to take frequent short breaks after the dance and before they can utter dialogues. This reminds me of the relevance of exercises before the performances to increase body stamina. Stamina is the ability to sustain prolonged physical or mental effort. Here in this context stamina refers only to physical effort. According to medical terms stamina is defined as the ability of a living being to exert itself and remain energetic for a certain period of time, During the training we have observed my Guru Sanjeeva giving exercises to make our body flexible and energetic by moving our limbs, pelvic area, facial bones and cervical region in specific directions to overcome the above-mentioned problem. These kinds of exercises are attached in the coming session with a descriptive video.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Someshwara, A. Yakshataru. Mangalagangothri: Dr P Dayananda Pai & P. Satish Pai Yakshagana Adhyayana Kendra, Mangalore University, 2013.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

This kind of dance is more suited for the expression of valour and for the depiction of war scenes. This kind of dance do not have the felicity for expression of subtle emotions that is found in Yakshagana dance. But due to the expressions of vigour and valour, *Moodalapaya* dance is highly suited and as H. K. Ranganath says, “...with its war cries, wild dances and fantastic language, the Moodalapaya sometimes impresses as far more thrilling than Yakshagana.” The first thing with which *Moodalapaya* can be differentiated from Yakshagana is the dialogue.

The Yakshagana script contains only songs to be sung by the bhagavata and dialogues based on these songs are totally improvised by the actors. In *Moodalapaya* the script contains the songs and dialogues as well like a poem or a rhyme that can be rendered by the actor. The dialogues are thick with Sanskrit and old-style Kannada words. The use of alliteration and rhyme is very prominent and almost every sentence shows the use of these devices. The humour is provided by, The *Hanumanayaka* has the right to make fun of even the high and the mighty and he talks to every character. Apart from being the *Vidushaka*, he takes responsibility of the stage manager too. The words of B. Malashetty makes this clearer. “If any one of the ornaments like the shoulder ornament or the crown gets displaced in action, he is the technician on stage to restore them. Those characters dying on the stage are carried away by him.” His humour, sometimes becomes inappropriate and obscene in serious situations in the performance. In recent times, *Moodalapaya* has faced extinction as it was incapable of standing up to the challenges of media like cinema and popular entertainment theatre. The Folklore Department of Mysore University under the leadership of Prof. J. S. Paramashiviah had shown keen interest in the revival of this form of art.

### **3.4 *Doddata and Sannata***

According to B. Malashetty, “Nothing definite is known about the origin of sannata.” An examination into the time of composition of some *Sannata* plays may fix the date not earlier to 1850 CE. What can be positively said is that it was by 1900 that it got public acceptance which led to its existence as dramatic tradition. It is highly



remarkable to note that even being an unsophisticated folk theatre-form, it is not only existing but very much popular alongside *Doddata*. The story, style of expression, and music show variations to *Doddata*.

This seems to be following the *Satvikabhinaya* concept of *Natyashastra*. Moreover, by adopting both the Hindustani and Carnatic style, its music tuned to be much different from *Doddata*. The themes of *Sannata* were also different from *Doddata*. The lives of saints, imaginary or folk stories and even actual events from the day-to-day life became the attractions of these plays. The most popular and relevant among these, is *Sangya Balya* which is based on an actual incident. This play is on the relationship between Sangya, a rich young man and a married woman Ganga. It ends with his murder which retain its relevance even in our days. It is being staged even now, not merely by the folk theatre groups but by modern Kannada theatre troupes too.

### **3.5 Growth, Changes, and Challenges:**

According to Britannica, “the socio-economic impacts in the nineteenth century brought about changes in performing arts like Yakshagana. A lot of new compositions were written and the art form had begun to spread outside its native territory. In about 1800, Dharmasthala troupe of artists from Dakshina Kanara visited the king of Mysore and got permission to establish a troupe there. In the 1840s, another troupe from Uttara Kannada (North Kanara) visited Maharashtra, and inspired the first modern age mythological drama by Vishudas Bhawe. Later more troupes were established all over the coastal and other parts of Karnataka. By the early decades of the twentieth century, the Yakshagana gained a definite structure. The 1930s brought in some compositional, organizational, and presentational changes. There was progress in Dance and the Spoken Word which further refined its performance part. At the same time costumes began to degenerate as ‘modern’ clothing and stone jewellery replaced hand-woven fabrics and wooden ornaments. In 1950, Yakshagana performances were commercialized by a new establishment named ‘tent’ troupes by selling tickets for performances in ‘tent theatres’ with seats

for the audience. Electrical lighting replaced the ‘Gas Lights’ or ‘Petromax’ lamps and seating arrangements improved. Themes were expanded to include Folk Epics, Sanskrit Dramas and additionally created (Fictional) stories. Popular entertainment value, rather than ‘classical’ presentation, became the standard for judging a Yakshagana performance. Tulu, the language of the southern part of the Dakshina Kannada district gained a space on the stage. Previously only Kannada was spoken and this, greatly increased the popularity of Yakshagana. All these trends continued with added vigour after the 1970s. The writer Dr. Kota Shivaram Karanth experimented with the dance form by introducing Western musical instruments. He also reduced the time of a Yakshagana performance from twelve hours to two and half hours, for the convenience of city dwellers. Modern Yakshagana has undergone considerable innovations, including adaptations of Shakespeare and the incorporation of movie stories. Yakshagana was performed in Hindi for the first time in 2005.

However, these developments also lead us to think that the artistic control of Yakshagana seems to be slipping out of the traditional purity and into the hands of those who ruthlessly commercialise it. P. V. Hasyagara remarks about these kinds of commercial contractors as artistes, who have become the presiding deity, and everyone seems to be dancing in their tunes. Ignoring the objections from the traditionalists, these profit oriented group of commercial contractors have posed a new challenge to this ancient form of art.

### **3.6 Practical Participation of Yakshagana**

The researcher participated in the Yakshagana workshop from the 1st of March to the 20th of 2019. Bannanje Sanjeeva Sivarama conducted a body practice workshop at the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Hyderabad. The workshop began with Ganesh Prayer and ended with *Namo Narayana Sloka*. Workshop held daily for two hours from 9 am to 11 pm. Training on Day One started with a ritual by offering prayer to Lord Ganesha, the god of education, success, and wisdom. Thereafter, the Guru explained training methodology on *Talas* and body practice.

There is only seven *Talas* played in different tempos in Yakshagana. But a single song can be sung in more than one *Tala*. This is intentionally done in order to attract the audience with vividness where the dance demands it. The music players have the liberty to play in slow to fast tempos. There can be a lot of varieties from the limited structure of *talas* namely. *Aaditala*, *Chaoutala*, *Ekatala*, *Dhruatala*, *Matte* or *Mathyatala*, *Rupakatala*, *Chaoujamphe Tala*, *Kore Tala* (*Thitiththai*), *Ashtatala* (Some *Talas* have slow and fast versions separately named *Nidhana* and *Twarita*) *Jhampe* (*Nidhana* and *Twarita*), *Tripudra* or *Trivude* (*Nidhana* and *Twarita*).

A *Tala* is a beat-measured rhythm. The *Tala* or tempo of the song is chosen to the betterment of emotional expressiveness. For instance, vigour, fury etc. Fast tempo is ideal and slow tempo will effectively communicate sad verses. The rhythmic sound of the tiny cymbals or *jaagata* elaborate *Maddale* syllables will help to perform the entire range of the footwork. Though music has a superior role in Yakshagana, it is yet to given an independent space. The use of music in Yakshagana is only to support the dance and thereby enhance expressiveness of acting. There is a definite emotional purpose fixed for the *raga* and *tala* in which the *Bhagavata* is singing. In order to achieve this, the *Bhagavata* has to sing dedicatedly for the dancer or actor. Sometimes, the quality of the vocalists can influence or rather create high-spirited dance performers in Yakshagana. Hence, the effective emotional expressions of the entire performance primarily depends on the Yakshagana *Bhagavatas* ability to handle the *Raga*, *Tala*, *Bhava*, and the *Laya*.

Before describing 7 *Talas* we need to understand the terms associated with Yakshagana performance, clapping pattern, *Matras* (Count), *Beats* (Steps) and *Units*. *Matras* are one syllable sounds such as *Ta – Ka – Dhi - Mi- Ta – Ki - Ta*. *Beat* is combination of two or more *Matras* such as *Taka*, *Dimi*, *Taki Ta*. *Unit* is combination of beats in a cycle. Cycle represents more than one unit. For example, *Taka*, *Dimi*, *Taki Ta* is a unit from *Kore Tala*. *Rupaka Tala* constitutes units such as *Tai-Ta-Dhinaka*, *Dhim-Ta-Dhinaka*. Rhythm is the way the duration of a note in music is

set. Hence, rhythm is indicated by change in the appearance of the notes. A whole comprises 4 beat. The basic musical symbols for rhythm include - quarter notes (one count/beat), half notes (two counts/beats), whole notes (four counts/beats), eighth notes (half of one beat), and sixteenth notes (one-fourth of one beat). However, it is possible to chop the beats into further smaller parts and get thirty-second notes, sixty-fourth notes, etc. If we relate it to a performance, it can be said that if our foot does not hit the floor exactly at the time the accented note is heard, then it resembles a syncopated rhythmic pattern.

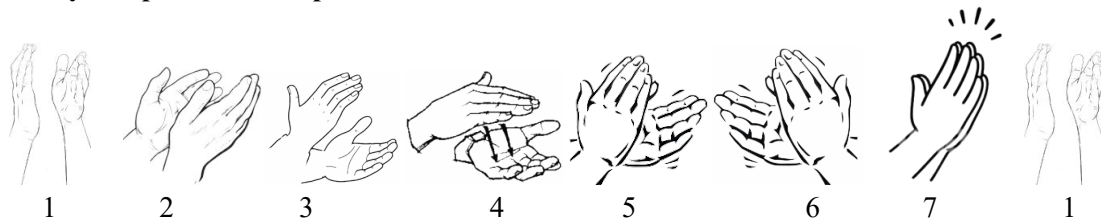
As a researcher cum practical participant, to understand the Yakshagana body exercises divided into two parts:

I. Rhythm practice with palms.

II. Movements of the body (Head, Shoulder, Palm and Foot movements).

The diagrams below illustrate how an actor's body parts movements at once while practicing rhythm.

### **I. Rhythm practice with palms**



The main purpose of learning clapping patterns is to understand

- How to hear the specific sounds around us;
- Basic rhythm and Sense of the rhythm of actors' specific environment;
- Beat and count of that particular sound;
- Internalizing the impulse;
- Tapping foot according to the rhythm.

Clapping pattern is the fundamental skill to understand the rhythm and it enhances our performance and helps in understanding every aspect of our musical experience.

Actors can try to find the impulse on their mind, wrist, and body to pull out the specific sounds around the actor's environment. Once you have learned how to truly pull out the impulse from the beat, it only takes a little time to truly practice.

The diagram above illustrates the basic clapping pattern process along with variations in rhythm. Rhythm is a source of great bafflement for many actors who are going through tough times. In order to grasp the beat, the actors must learn the rhythm through the method of clapping pattern. Before entering the Yakshagana physical practice, it is necessary to understand the rhythm by practising both palms.

It is very important that the actor concentrates his attention towards to rhythm. It is a multiple task for an actor to practice rhythm with the palms. As actors practice rhythm, it is important to focus on projecting, expressing, and pronouncing the text according to the method of clapping practice. Before learning any form, we must focus on the basics of that form. That practice makes the actor more grounded and it leads to further expansion of the next steps. Also, here in Yakshagana, first the practice of the palms is mandatory before exploring foot movement practice.

This palm exercise especially helps those who cannot move body parts in rhythm with coordination. But those with experience in music, traditional and classical dance forms can move easily along with an attractive rhythm. Researcher personally experienced the importance of learning rhythm with body practice. Below are diagrams and some individual examples that determine the learning method of rhythm.

### 3.6.1 Clap pattern of 7 Talas

1. **Kore Tala**: - It contains

- Seven (7) matras
- Three (3) beats
- Three (3) steps
- Seven (7) counts (2+2+3)

|     |     |      |      |       |         |                                                |
|-----|-----|------|------|-------|---------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | 2   | 3    | 1    | 2     | 3       | (Clap pattern)<br>0 Single clap<br>0 each beat |
| thi | thi | thai | taka | dhimi | thakiTa |                                                |
| 0   | 0   | 0    | 0    | 0     | 0       |                                                |

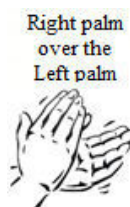
The group of 4 units is another pattern to explore on Kore Tala.

| Unit - 1 |       |        | Unit - 2 |       |         | Unit - 3 |       |        | Unit - 4 |     |      |
|----------|-------|--------|----------|-------|---------|----------|-------|--------|----------|-----|------|
| taka     | dhimi | takiTa | taka     | dhimi | taakiTa | taka     | dhimi | takiTa | thi      | thi | thai |
| 1        | 2     | 3      | 1        | 2     | 3       | 1        | 2     | 3      | 1        | 2   | 3    |

Figure 3. 1 YAK, 'Kore Tala palm practice in a rhythm', 19th March, 2021. 11.50A.M

Kore tala is a basic rhythm of Yakshagana. Enthusiastic learners are attracted by this tala and its movements because all further movements are based on this.

#### Clap pattern



(To be continued)

|         |     |     |      |
|---------|-----|-----|------|
|         | thi | thi | thai |
| Diagram | 1   | 2   | 3    |

Over the drawings and video documentation will clarify the timing and free space between the beat. It's the clear way to engage it the palm progress as well as.

The drawings and video documentation will clarify the timing and free space between the beat. It is a clear way to engage the palm progress as well.

**Diagram: - 1**

Thrust the right palm over the left palm and clap while saying '**thi**'. Later drag the right palm down.

**Diagram: - 2**

When the right palm goes down, immediately, the left palm comes over the right palm and forms a clap. After that, pull the left palm down the same way as it follows the above diagram. But here, when the left palm claps on the right palm, the performer has to recite '**thi**'.

**Diagram: - 3**

Here, left and right palms are clapping together with pronouncing the text of '**thai**'. Once the actor practises with the palm, it can be done easily with hands and foot.

## 2. Eka Tala :-

Eka Tala combination of

- Four (4) mantras
- Four (4) beats
- Four (4) steps

|      |       |      |       |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| tath | dhimi | taka | dhimi |
| 1    | 2     | 3    | 4     |
| 0    | II    | 0    | II    |

Clap pattern

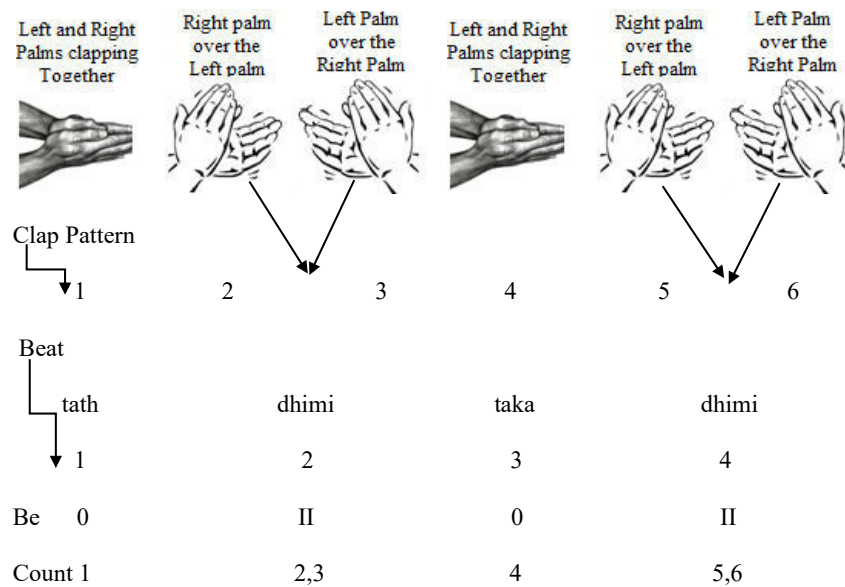
0 - Single clap

II - Double clap

Clap pattern:

- Every odd number beat in (0) single clap.
- Every even number beat in (II) double claps.

Prior to practice, it is through the clap that actors understand the rhythmic pattern of Tala which helps to heed all the movements and also to integrate it with the musical notations.





**Clap Pattern: - 1**

While the left and right palms are clapping together with uttering the matra 'tath'. Clap will be considered as beat number one.

**Clap Pattern: - 2 and 3**

Push the right palm over the left palm and clap. Then pull the right palm down and after that push the left palm over the right palm and clap, after bring the left palm down. The text 'dhimi' is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm. Calculate this whole process as in Rhythm beat (2) two. Clap two and three will be count as beat number 2.

**Clap Pattern: - 4**

Same here clap will follow like clap pattern 1 Left and right palms are clapping together with pronouncing the text of 'taka'. Clap four considered as beat number 3.

**Clap Pattern: - 5 and 6**

The clapping pattern here is similar to Pattern 2 and 3. The word 'dhimi' is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm. Clap five and six are counted as beat number 4 in rhythm count.

### 3. Jhampe Tala :-

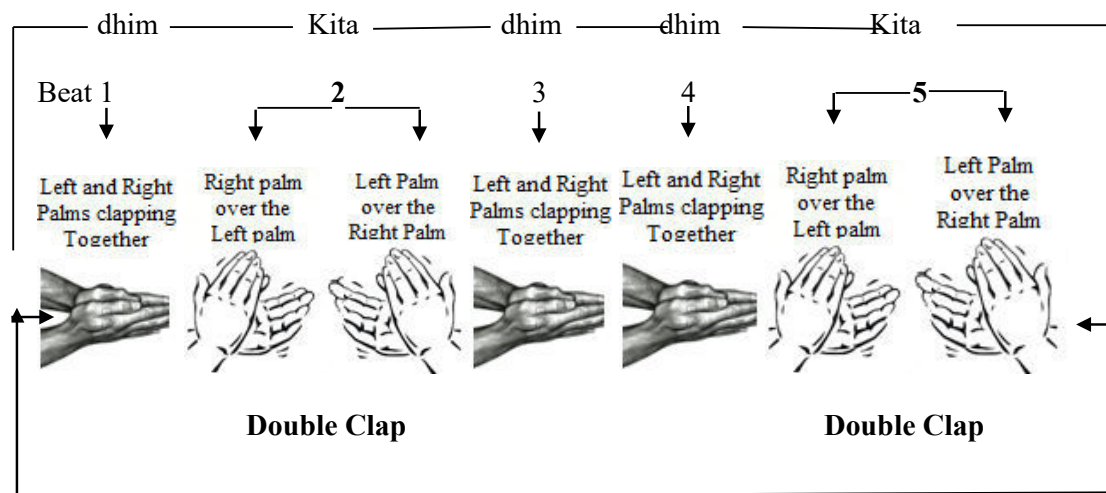
It consists

Five (5) mantras

Five (5) beats

|                    |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|                    | dhim | Kita | dhim | Kita | dhim | dhim |
| Total Clap Count → | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    | 1    |

In Jhampe tala, the clap pattern in beat numbers 1, 3, and 4 are single clap. On beat number 2 and 5 double claps.



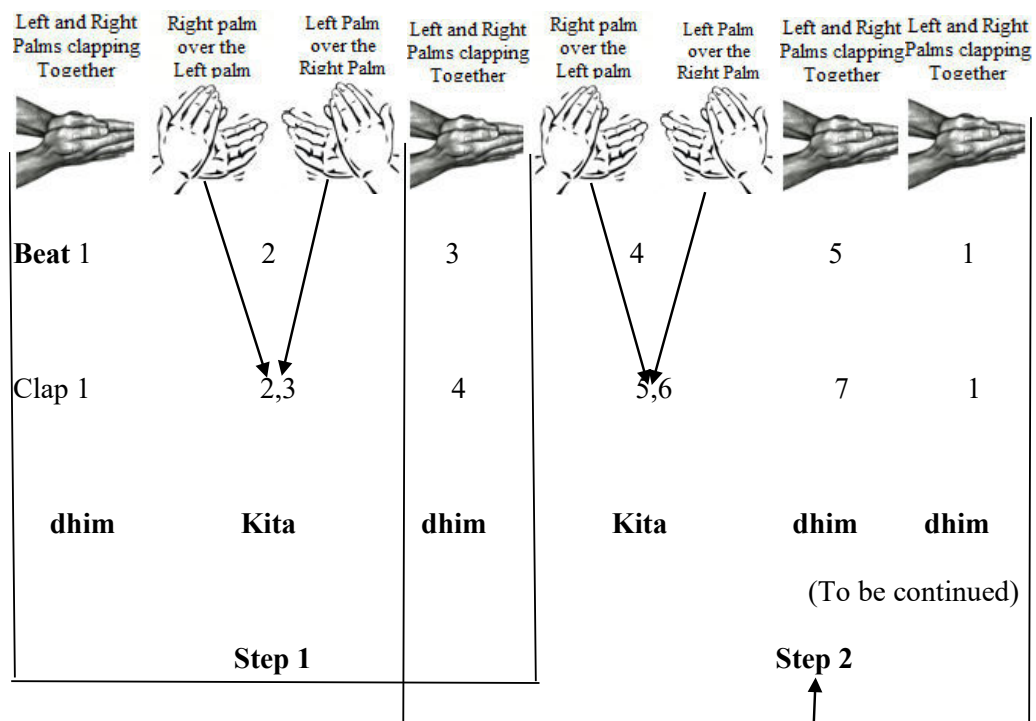
(To be continued)

|              | <u>Dhim</u> | Kita | <u>Dhim</u> | <u>Dhim</u> | Kita |
|--------------|-------------|------|-------------|-------------|------|
| '            | 0           | I I  | 0           | 0           | I I  |
| Beat Count   | 1           | 2    | 3           | 4           | 5    |
| Clap pattern | 1           | 2,3  | 4           | 5           | 6,7  |

The clap pattern of the Jhampe tala while practising:

For more details watch the video below about Jhampe Tala clap pattern practice

YAK Foot Note 2. Video (B) Palm Practice Jhampe Tala



Below diagrams determine the Jhampe tala clap pattern:

### Step - 1

Left and Right  
Palms clapping  
Together



Dhim

Diagram 1

Right palm  
over the  
Left palm



Kita

2,3

Left Palm  
over the  
Right Palm



Left and Right  
Palms clapping  
Together



Dhim

4

### Step – 2

Left and Right  
Palms clapping  
Together



dhim

5

Right palm  
over the  
Left palm



Kita

6,7.

Left Palm  
over the  
Right Palm



Left and Right  
Palms clapping  
Together



dhim

8

Left and Right  
Palms clapping  
Together



dhim

9

Diagramme (5,6,7,8 and 9)

In Jhampe Tala, the clapping pattern is similar to kore tala and in the case mentioned above, this is how the actor practised on the Kore Tala; here what needs to be done twice and add another to the clap. The actor needs to compare, observe, distinguish, and analyse the clapping patterns of each tala. An actor who follows these kinds of discipline and practises can develop a peripheral awareness of his body movements.

Researcher realized that the method of clapping for an actor is very important to practice and analyse the method of clapping to get out of the confusion of rhythm. By practising tala, every part of the body starts moving in rhythm. The actor himself

in particular is able to shape his body rhythmically. Jhampe Tala palm practice can be a little confusing in the early stages. If we practise with concentration, it helps in the foot movements to move easily and rhythmically.

### **Step: - 1**

#### **Diagram: - 1**

Here left and right palms are clapping together with pronouncing the text of '**dhim.**'

#### **Diagram: - 2 and 3**

Push the right palm over the left palm and clap immediately pull the right palm down. Thrust the left palm over the right palm and clap and immediately pull the left palm down with the pronunciation of text '**Kita.**'

#### **Diagram: - 4**

Left and right palms are clapping together with pronouncing the text of '**dhim.**'

### **Step: - 2**

#### **Diagram: - 5**

Here left and right palms are clapping together with pronouncing the text of '**dhim.**'

#### **Diagram: - 6 and 7**

Same as Diagram 2 and 3. Push the right palm over the left palm and clap. Immediately pull the right palm down. Thrust the left palm over the right palm and clap and immediately pull the left palm down with the pronunciation of text '**Kita.**'

#### **Diagram: - 8**

Same like diagram 4. Left and right palms are clapping together with pronouncing the text of '**dhim.**'

**Note: -** In Jhampe Tala, Step 2 diagrams like 5,6,7 and 8 follow Step 1 diagrams 1,2,3 and 4, but when its coming to Jhampe Tala clapping time, we are pronouncing the text like **dhim, Kita and dhim.**

#### **Diagram: - 9**

This is another extra palm clap movement we are adding here with pronouncing the text of '**dhim.**'

#### 4. Rupaka Tala:

Rupaka tala consists of

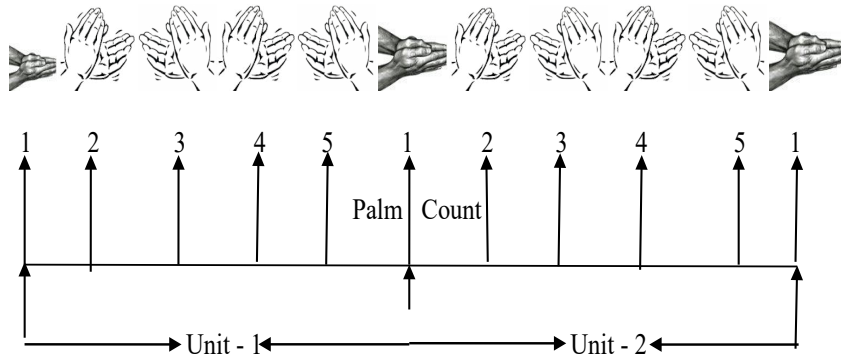
- Six matras
- Six beats
- Six counts

Although it is 6 beats, the count is divided into two units, with two units as given below.

| Unit - 1          |     |         | Unit - 2    |     |         |
|-------------------|-----|---------|-------------|-----|---------|
| thai              | tha | dhinaka | dhim        | tha | dhinaka |
| 1                 | 2   | 3       | 4           | 5   | 6       |
| Beat 1 2 3        |     |         | 4 5 6       |     |         |
| Count 1 2 3 4 5 6 |     |         | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |     |         |

In Rupaka Tala, the clap pattern in beat1 (thai) single clap remaining beat 2 tha and beat 3 dhinaka will be double and in unit 2 in beat 4(dhim) again single clap and remaining will be double clap which is shown below.

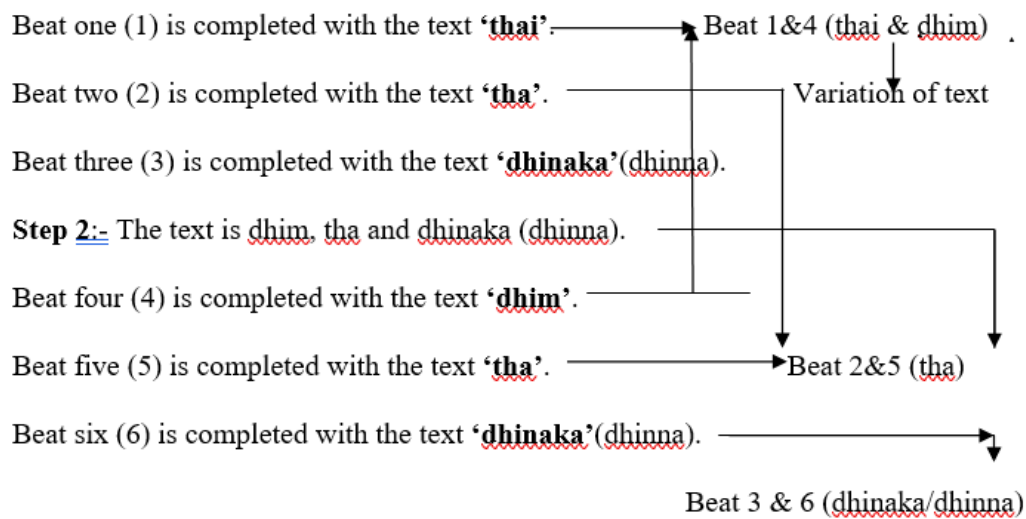
|      |     |          |      |     |          |                                                          |
|------|-----|----------|------|-----|----------|----------------------------------------------------------|
|      |     | (Dhinna) |      |     | (Dhinna) | { Clap pattern<br>0- Single clap<br>1 1 - Double claps } |
| thai | tha | dhinaka  | dhim | tha | dhinaka  |                                                          |
| 0    | 1 1 | 1 1      | 0    | 1 1 | 1 1      |                                                          |



Rupaka Tala is divided into two steps based on the pronunciation of the text.

### Step 1: -

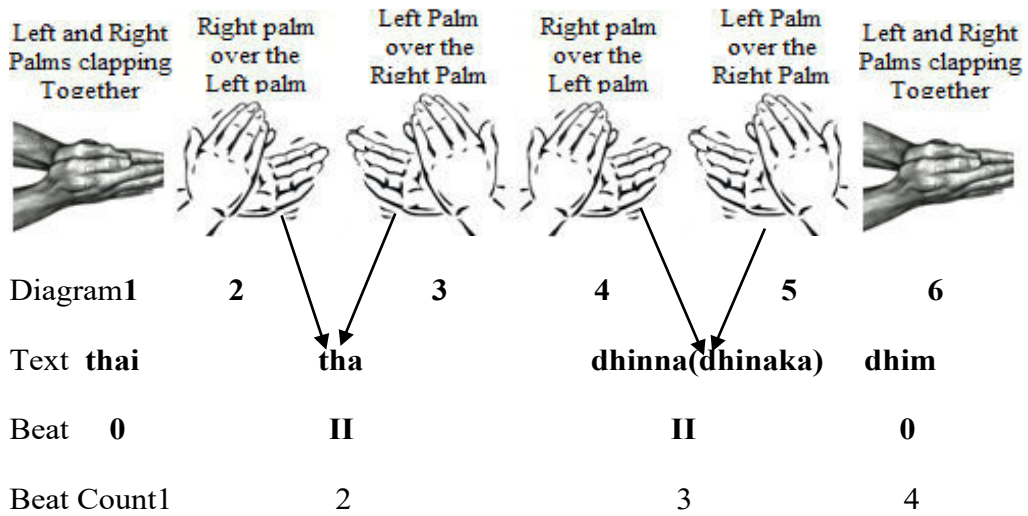
In step one, three beats are there and according to the beat, the text has to be pronounced. The text is thai, tha and dhinaka. (dhinna).



## Clap Pattern of Rupaka Tala: -

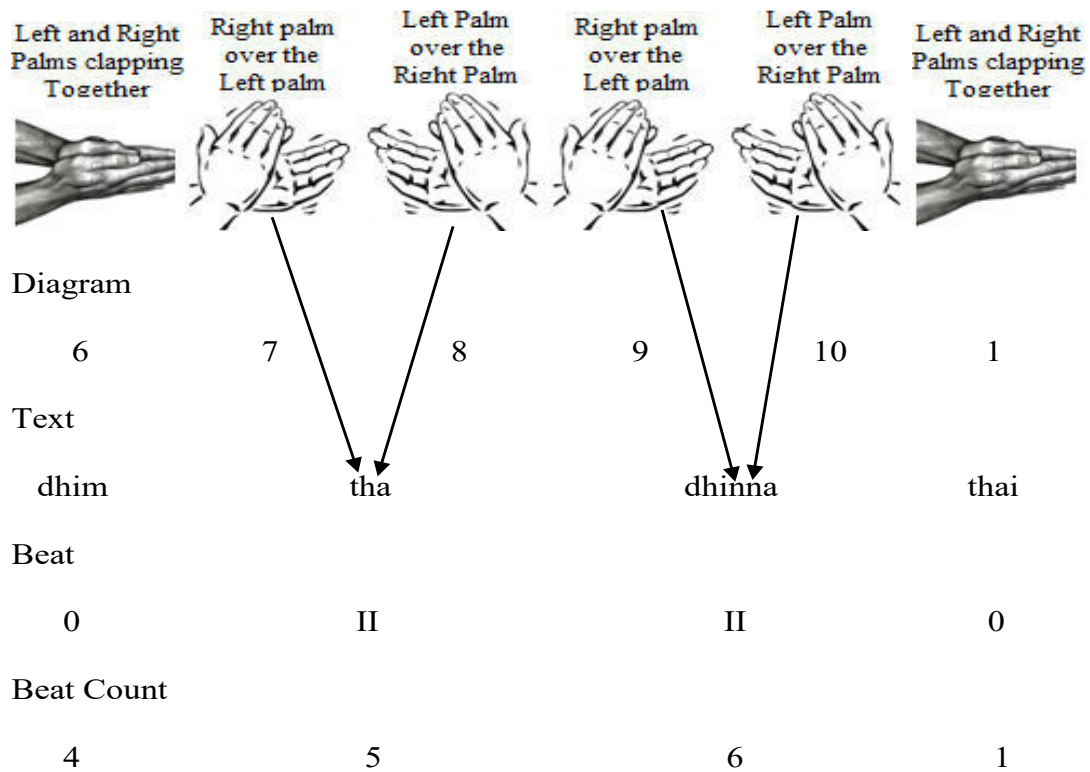
| Unit - 1 |     |         | Unit - 2 |     |         |
|----------|-----|---------|----------|-----|---------|
| thai     | tha | dhinaka | dhim     | tha | dhinaka |
| 1        | 2   | 3       | 4        | 5   | 6       |

### Unit – 1





## Unit - 2



## Unit-1

### Clap pattern Diagram 1:

Left and right palms are clapping together by pronouncing the text of 'thai'. Clap four considered as single beat and beat number One (1).

### Clap pattern Diagram 2 and 3:

Push the right palm over the left palm and clap. Then pull the right palm down and after that push the left palm over the right palm and clap, and then put the left palm down. The text 'tha' is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm. Calculate this whole process as in Rhythm beat (2) two. Clap two and three Diagrams will be count as double beat and count as beat number Two (2).

**Clap pattern Diagram 4 and 5:**

Push the right palm again over the left palm and clap. Pull the right palm down after that and push the left palm over the right palm and clap and then putting the left palm down. The text ‘dhinaka/dhinna’ is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm. Calculate this whole process as in Rhythm beat Three (3) two. Clap four and Five Diagrams will be count as double beat and count as beat number Three (3).

**Clap pattern Diagram 6:**

Again, clap pattern one. Repeat same as Clap pattern Diagram 1 like left and right palms are clapping together but with pronouncing the text of ‘dhim.’ Clap six to be considered as single beat and count as beat number four (4).

## Unit-2

In Unit 2 of Rupaka Tala, palm practice clap pattern diagram 6 which ends in the unit 1 will continue same here

**Clap pattern Diagram 6:**

Repeat same as Clap pattern Diagram 6 like left and right palms are clapping together but with pronouncing the text of ‘dhim.’ Clap six to be considered as single beat and count as beat number four (4).

**Clap pattern Diagram 7 and 8:**

Push the right palm over the left palm and clap after which pull the right palm down and after that push the left palm over the right palm and clap. Then the left palm must be put down. The text ‘tha’ is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm. Calculate this whole process as in rhythm as beat five (5). Clap seven and eight Diagrams will be as double beat and count as beat number five (5).

**Clap pattern Diagram 9 and 10:**

Push the right palm over the left palm again and clap, and pull the right palm down. Then push the left palm over the right palm, clap, and then pull the left palm down. The text ‘dhinaka / dhina’ is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm

and the left palm claps on the right palm. Clap nine and ten diagrams are counted as a double beat and beat number six (6).

## 5. Ashta Tala

Ashṭa tala is made of

7 matras

7 beats

7 counts

There are two talas at its practiced in Yakshagana:

1. Vilambha Ashṭa Tala

2. Thvaritha Ashṭa Tala

researcher practiced Vilambha Ashṭa Tala which spell as

“thath Dhim thaka dhim thaKita thaka dhim...!!2!!

thakku thaKita thaKita Kita thaam thaddhinna thaa thayya thadhigina dhim.”

|                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                      |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Right palm over the Left palm                                                       | Left Palm over the Right Palm                                                       | Right palm over the Left palm                                                       | Left Palm over the Right Palm                                                       | Left and Right Palms clapping Together                                              | Right palm over the Left palm                                                       | Left Palm over the Right Palm                                                        | Right palm over the Left palm                                                         | Left Palm over the Right Palm                                                         | Left and Right Palms clapping Together                                                |
| thath                                                                               | dhim                                                                                | tha -Ka                                                                             | dhim                                                                                | tha-Kita                                                                            | tha-ka                                                                              | dhim                                                                                 |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
| Clap -- 0                                                                           | 0                                                                                   | II                                                                                  | 0                                                                                   | II                                                                                  | II                                                                                  | 0                                                                                    |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
| Beat - 1                                                                            | 2                                                                                   | 3                                                                                   | 4                                                                                   | 5                                                                                   | 6                                                                                   | 7                                                                                    |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |

Clap pattern in Ashta tala is different among the all talas, here look at the beat 1,2,4 and 7 has single clap while in beat 3,5and 6 there has to be double clap

| thath | dhim | thaka | dhimi | thakita | thaka | dhim | <div>Clap pattern</div> <div>0- Single clap</div> <div>I I- Double clap</div> |
|-------|------|-------|-------|---------|-------|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0     | 0    | I I   | 0     | I I     | I I   | 0    |                                                                               |
| 1     | 2    | 3     | 4     | 5       | 6     | 7    |                                                                               |

Beat 1,2,4 and 7 Single Clap  
Beat 3,5and 6 Double Clap

| thath                                                                              | dhim                                                                               | tha-ka                                                                             | dhim                                                                               | tha-kita                                                                            | tha-ka                                                                               | dhim                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| thath                                                                              | dhim                                                                               | tha-Ka                                                                             | dhim                                                                               | tha- Kita                                                                           | tha- Ka                                                                              | dhim                                                                                 |
| 0                                                                                  | 0                                                                                  | I I                                                                                | 0                                                                                  | I I                                                                                 | I I                                                                                  | 0                                                                                    |
| 1                                                                                  | 2                                                                                  | 3,4                                                                                | 5                                                                                  | 6,7                                                                                 | 8,9                                                                                  | 1                                                                                    |

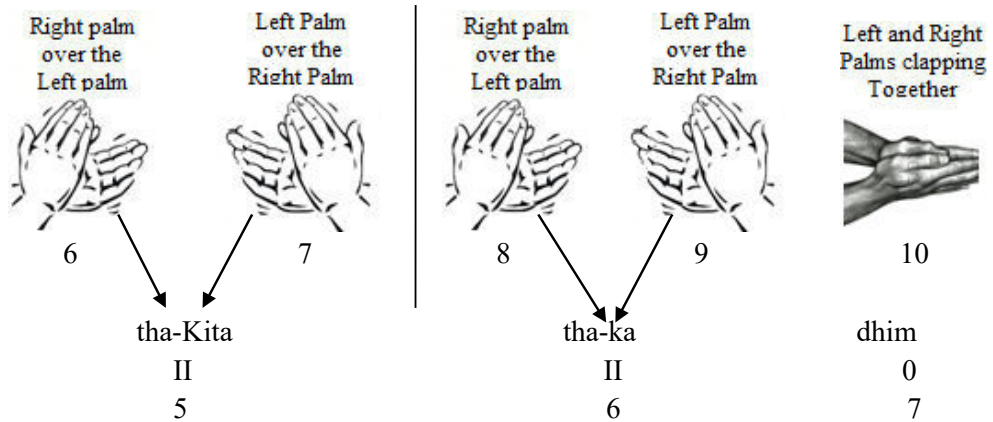
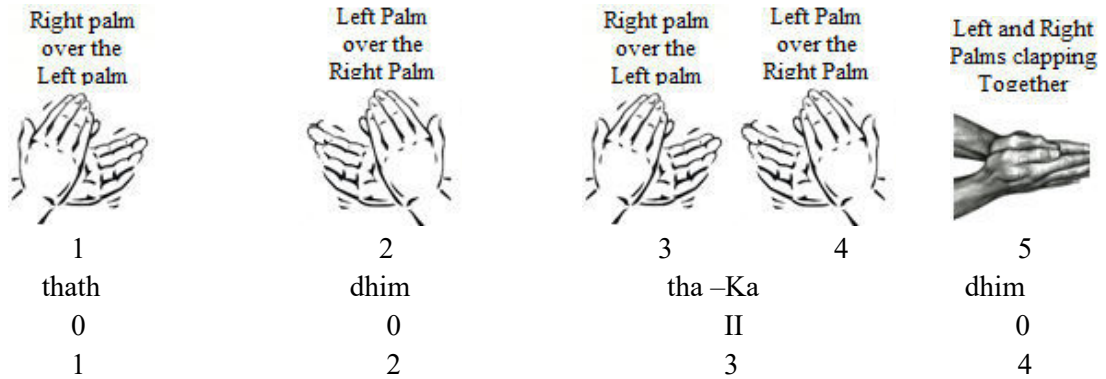
↕  
Clap count

**Ashta Tala palm pattern details are below:**

| Right palm over the Left palm                                                       | Left Palm over the Right Palm                                                       | Right palm over the Left palm                                                       | Left Palm over the Right Palm                                                       | Left and Right Palms clapping Together                                              | Right palm over the Left palm                                                       | Left Palm over the Right Palm                                                        | Right palm over the Left palm                                                         | Left Palm over the Right Palm                                                         | Left and Right Palms clapping Together                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| thath                                                                               | dhim                                                                                | tha -Ka                                                                             | dhim                                                                                | tha-Kita                                                                            | tha-ka                                                                              | dhim                                                                                 |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
| Clap -- 0                                                                           | 0                                                                                   | II                                                                                  | 0                                                                                   | II                                                                                  | II                                                                                  | 0                                                                                    |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
| Beat - 1                                                                            | 2                                                                                   | 3                                                                                   | 4                                                                                   | 5                                                                                   | 6                                                                                   | 7                                                                                    |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |

### Below diagrams determine the Ashta tala clap pattern

All the pictures below show the complete description of the Ashta Tala. The clap pattern has been described above theoretically through each and every picture and it is so easy to understand the clapping pattern of Yakshagana tala. There are chances to get confused as an actor. The researcher analysed each and every movement through his practise.



Below the descriptions are given about Ashṭa Tala clapping pattern with detail.



#### Beat 1

Push the right palm over the left palm and clap. Pull the right palm down and the text ‘thath’ is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm. Calculate this whole process as in Rhythm beat one (1) and clap will be count as single.



#### Beat 2

When the right palm goes down as above-mentioned beat 1, immediately push the left palm over the right palm and clap. Then pull the left palm down and the text ‘**dhim**’ is pronounced when the left palm claps on the right palm. Clap will be count as a single.



#### Beat 3

In beat three, push the right palm over the left palm and clap. Pull the right palm down after that and push the left palm over the right palm and clap. Then put the left palm down. The text ‘**tha-ka**’ is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm; as in the rhythm beat two, can be seen clapping twice.



#### Beat 4

The left and right palms clap together as the ‘**dhim**’ text is pronounced. Clap will be single in rhythm beat number four (4).



#### Beat 5

Push the right palm over the left palm and clap. Pull the right palm down after that and push the left palm over the right palm and clap after which put the left palm down. The text '**tha-Kita**' is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm. Clap will be double in rhythm beat number five (5).



### **Beat 6**

Again, push the right palm over the left palm and clap. Pull the right palm down and after that push the left palm over the right palm and clap. Then put the left palm down. The text '**tha-ka**' is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm. Clap will be double in rhythm beat number six (6).



### **Beat 7**

The left and right palms clap together as the '**dhim**' text is pronounced. Clap will be single in rhythm beat number seven (7).

## **6. Triputa tala /Trivude tala:**

It has

- 7 beats
- 7 counts

Triputa tala has 7 beat tala with 7 counts, but this tala differs from other talas in terms of its empty space and approach to rhythm.

Triputa tala /Trivude Tala spell it as

|             |      |        |        |        |        |        |        |     |
|-------------|------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----|
| —————→      | dhim | Kita   | tha-ka | dhim   | Kita   | dhim   | Kita   | tha |
| Clap Count→ | 1    | 2,3    | 4,5    | 6      | 7,8    | 9      | 10,11  | 1   |
| Beat Count→ | 1    | 2      | 3      | 4      | 5      | 6      | 7      | 1   |
| —————→      | tha  | dhi-ku | tha-ka | dhi-ku | tha-ka | dhi-ku | tha-ka | tha |

To be continued

Triputa tala /Trivude Tala is implemented with two versions in executing the text

|              |      |      |        |      |      |      |      |     |
|--------------|------|------|--------|------|------|------|------|-----|
|              | ↓    | ↓    | ↓      | ↓    | ↓    | ↓    | ↓    | ↓   |
| Variation 1  | dhim | Kita | tha-ka | dhim | Kita | dhim | Kita | tha |
| Clap pattern | 0    | II   | II     | 0    | II   | 0    | II   | 0   |
| Beat count   | 1    | 2    | 3      | 4    | 5    | 6    | 7    | 1   |

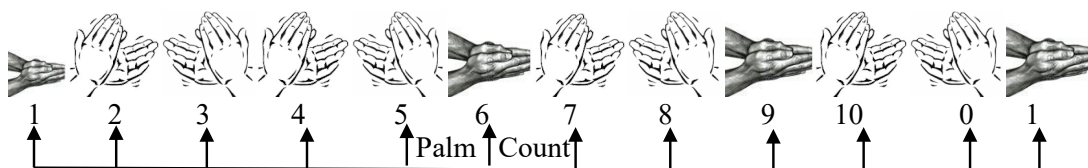
|              |     |        |        |       |        |       |        |     |
|--------------|-----|--------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-----|
|              | ↓   | ↓      | ↓      | ↓     | ↓      | ↓     | ↓      | ↓   |
| Variation 2  | tha | dhi-ku | tha-ka | dhiku | tha-ka | dhiku | tha-ka | tha |
| Clap pattern | 0   | II     | II     | 0     | II     | 0     | II     | 0   |
| Beat count   | 1   | 2      | 3      | 4     | 5      | 6     | 7      | 1   |

(To be continued)

Clap Pattern

0 – Single Clap

II – Double Clap



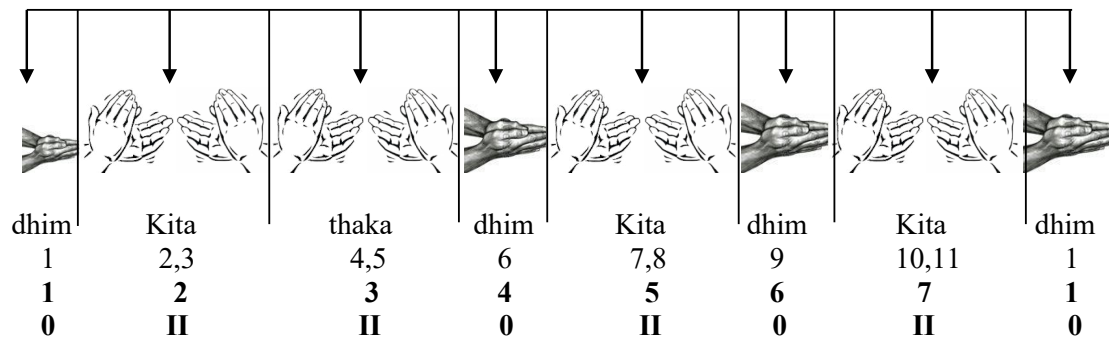
(To be continued)



Above mentioned palm diagrams determine the Triputa Tala clap pattern. Triputa Tala is distinct from the above two. Comparing with Jhampe tala and kore tala, here we need to extend and drag the clap pattern more.

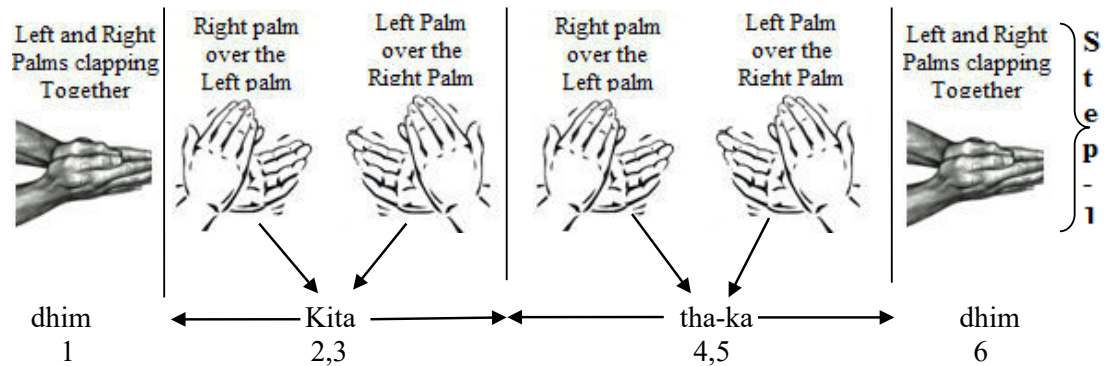
# **Variation: – 1**

**Variation one is implemented and determined entirely with diagrams**

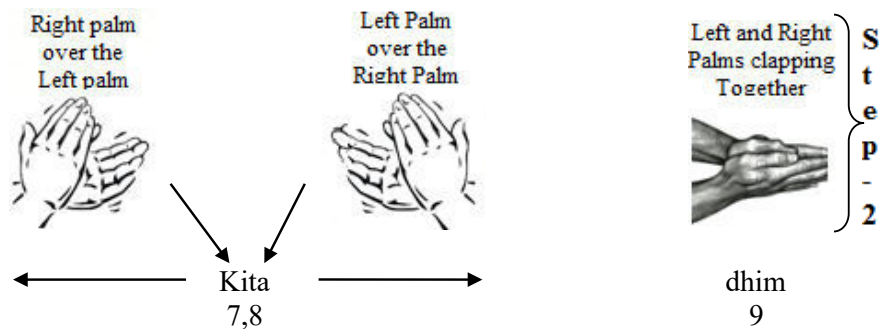


(To be continued)

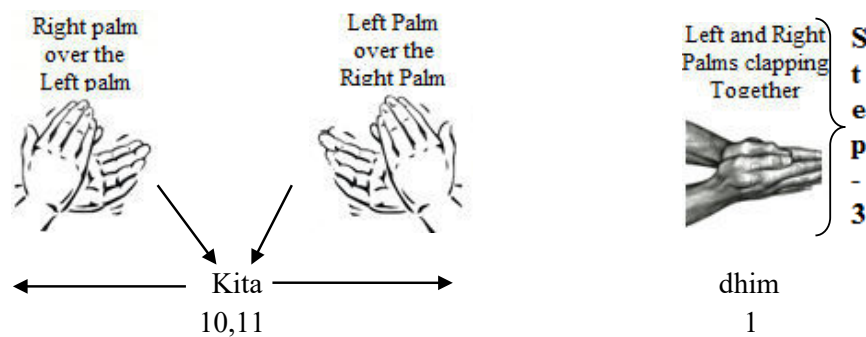
## **Step - 1**



## **Step - 2**



## **Step - 3**



(To be continued)

## Variation: – 1

|                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                    |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| dhim                                                                              | Kita                                                                              |                                                                                   | tha-ka                                                                            |                                                                                   | dhim                                                                              | Kita                                                                              |                                                                                   | dhim                                                                               | Kita                                                                                |                                                                                     | dhim                                                                                |                                                                                     |
| 1                                                                                 | 2, 3                                                                              |                                                                                   | 4,5                                                                               |                                                                                   | 6                                                                                 | 7,8                                                                               |                                                                                   | 9                                                                                  | 10,11                                                                               |                                                                                     |                                                                                     | 1                                                                                   |
| 1                                                                                 | 2                                                                                 |                                                                                   | 3                                                                                 |                                                                                   | 4                                                                                 | 5                                                                                 |                                                                                   | 6                                                                                  | 7                                                                                   |                                                                                     |                                                                                     | 1                                                                                   |

(To be continued)

| Step – 1 |      |        |      | Step – 2 |      | Step – 3 |      |
|----------|------|--------|------|----------|------|----------|------|
| dhim     | Kita | tha-ka | dhim | Kita     | dhim | Kita     | Dhim |
| 1        | 2,3  | 4,5    | 6,5  | 7,8      | 9    | 10,11    | 1    |

(To be continued)

Clap count

### Step - 1:

Push the right palm over the left palm and clap. Pull the right palm down after that and push the left palm over the right palm and clap. Put the left palm down. The text ‘**Kita**’ is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm. Calculate this whole process as in Rhythm beat 2 and double clap.

Again, push the right palm over the left palm and clap. Pull the right palm down after that and push the left palm over the right palm and clap. Put the left palm down. The text ‘tha-ka’ is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm. Calculate this whole process as in Rhythm beat 3 and double clap

Left and right palms are clapping together with pronouncing the text of ‘dhim.’ Clap will be single and beat number four (4).

### Step - 2:

Push the right palm over the left palm and pull the right palm down after clapping. Push the left palm over the right palm and pull the left palm down after clapping. The text 'Kita' is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm. Clap will be double and beat number five (5). Left and right palms are clapping together with pronouncing the text of 'dhim.' Clap will be single and beat number six (6).

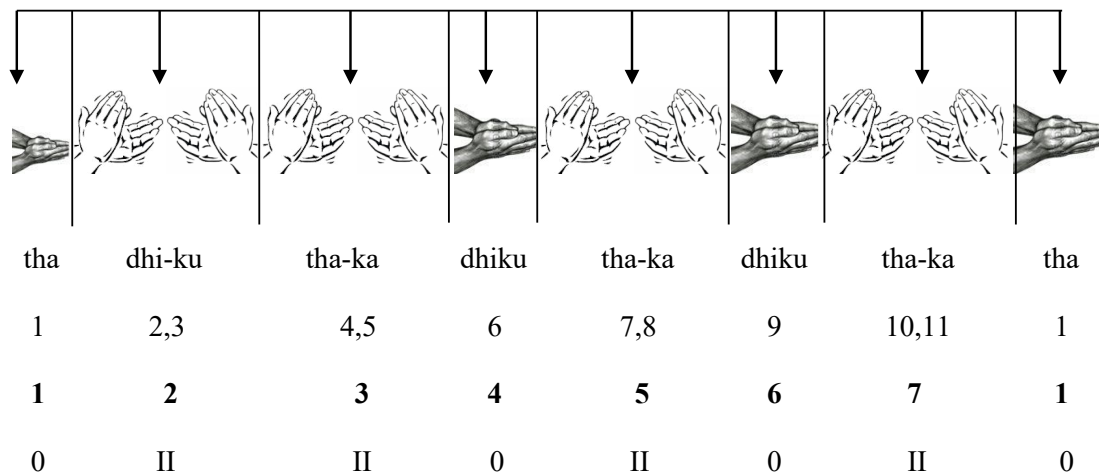
### Step – 3:

Push the right palm over the left palm and pull the right palm down after clapping. Push the left palm over the right palm and pull the left palm down after clapping. The text 'Kita' is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm. Calculate this whole process as in Rhythm beat seven (7) and double clap.

Left and right palms are clapping together with pronouncing the text of 'dhim.' Here again, the process will start from beginning with single clap and beat number one (1).

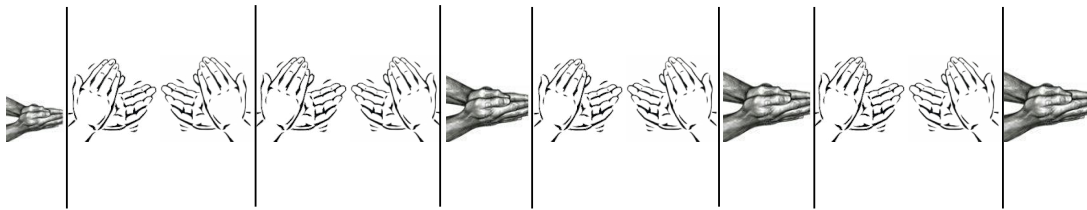
### Variation: – 2

Variation two (2) is implemented and determined entirely with diagrams.



(To be continued)

**Variation: – 2**



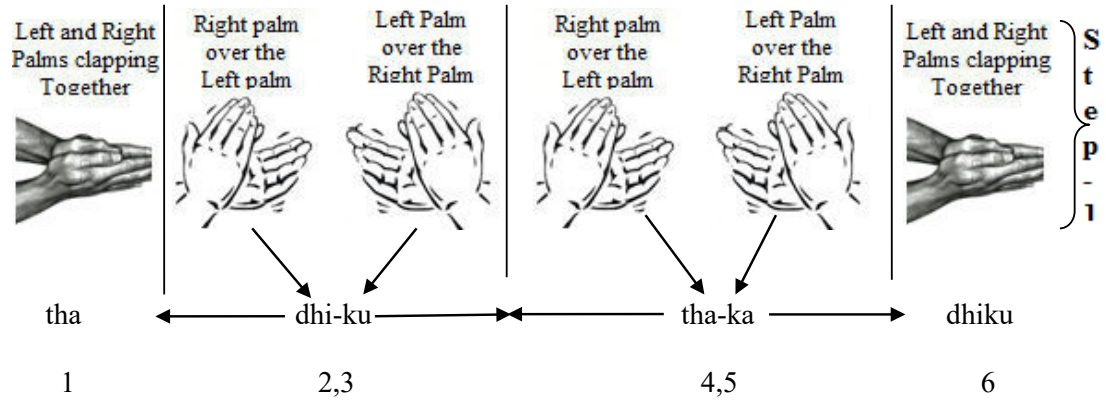
|          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| tha      | dhi-ku   | tha-ka   | dhiku    | tha-ka   | dhiku    | tha-ka   | tha      |
| 1        | 2, 3     | 4,5      | 6        | 7,8      | 9        | 10,11    | 1        |
| <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>1</b> |

(To be continued)

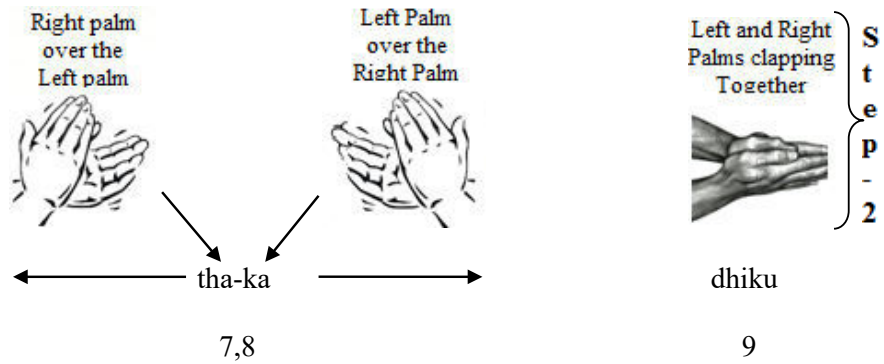
| Step – 1 |        |        |       | Step – 2 |       | Step - 3 |     |
|----------|--------|--------|-------|----------|-------|----------|-----|
| tha      | dhi-ku | tha-ka | dhiku | tha-ka   | dhiku | tha-ka   | tha |
| 1        | 2,3    | 4,5    | 6,5   | 7,8      | 9     | 10,11    | 1   |

(To be continued)

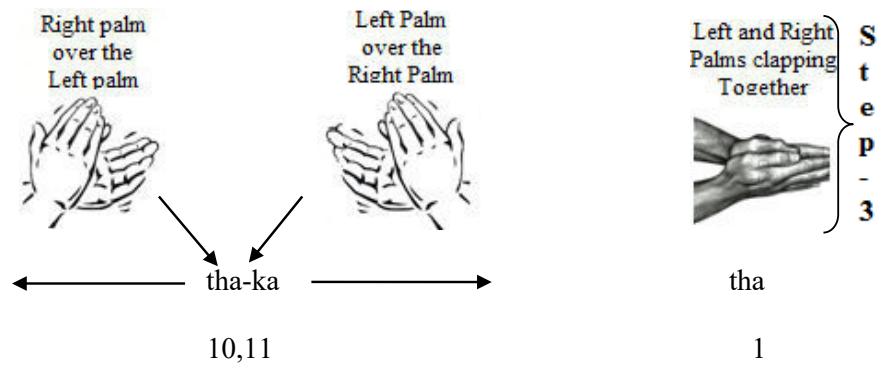
### Step – 1



### Step - 2



### Step – 3



(To be continued)

**Step – 1:**

Push the right palm over the left palm and clap. Pull the right palm down after that and push the left palm over the right palm, and clap. Put the left palm down. The text ‘dhi-ku’ is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm. Calculate this whole process as in Rhythm beat2 and double clap.

Again, push the right palm over the left palm and clap, then pull the right palm down after that Push the left palm over the right palm and clap then the left palm down. The text ‘tha-ka’ is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm. Calculate this whole process as in Rhythm beat Three (3) and double clap.

Left and right palms are clapping together with pronouncing the text of ‘dhiku’.

Clap pattern will be single count and Beat number four (4)

**Step – 2:**

Push the right palm over the left palm and pull the right palm down after clapping. Push the left palm over the right palm and pull the left palm down after clapping. The text ‘Tha-ka’ is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm. Here beat number will be five (5) and double clap. Left and right palms are clapping together with pronouncing the text of ‘Dhiku’ beat number six (6) and Clap will be single.

**Step – 3:**

Push the right palm over the left palm and pull the right palm down after clapping. Push the left palm over the right palm and pull the left palm down after clapping. The text ‘Tha-ka’ is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm. Calculate beat number as seven (7) and clap will be double. End of this clap again will start from the beginning.

Left and right palms are clapping together with pronouncing the text of ‘Tha.’ Clap will be count as single and beat one (1). Rest of the stages follow the 3 steps mentioned above.

## 7. Aadi Tala:

It has

- 8 Aksharas
- 8 beats
- 8 counts

Aadi tala also contains 8 Aksharas, 8 beat tala with 8 counts.

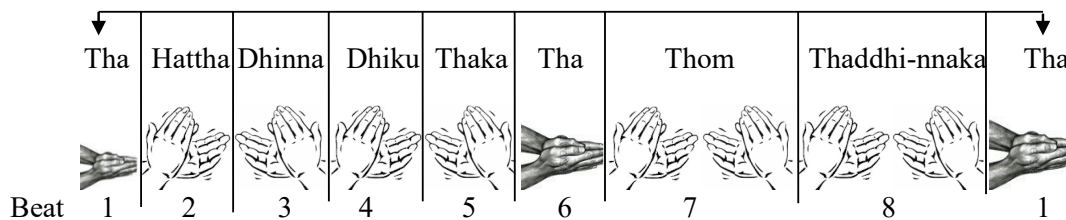
|              | tha                                                                                | hattha                                                                             | dhinna                                                                             | diku                                                                               | Taka                                                                               | tha                                                                                 | thom                                                                                 | thadhi-nnaka                                                                         |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Clap pattern | 0                                                                                  | 0                                                                                  | 0                                                                                  | 0                                                                                  | 0                                                                                  | 0                                                                                   | II                                                                                   | 11                                                                                   |
| Beat count   | 1                                                                                  | 2                                                                                  | 3                                                                                  | 4                                                                                  | 5                                                                                  | 6                                                                                   | 7                                                                                    | 8                                                                                    |
|              |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

(To be continued)

Clap Pattern

0 – Single Clap

II – Double Clap



Above mentioned palm diagrams determine the Aadi Tala clap pattern. Here in this Aadi tala,





### **Beat 1**

The left and right palms clap together as the ‘Tha’ text is pronounced. Clap will be single in rhythm beat number one (1).



### **Beat 2**

Push the right palm over the left palm and clap. Pull the right palm down, and the text ‘Hattha’ is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm. Calculate this whole process as in Rhythm beat two (2), and clap will be counted as a single unit.



### **Beat 3**

When the right palm goes down as beat as mentioned earlier 2, immediately push the left palm over the right palm and clap. Pull the left palm down, and the text ‘Dhinna’ is pronounced when the left palm claps on the right palm. Clap will be count as a single.



### **Beat 4**

Push the right palm over the left palm and clap. Pull the right palm down and the text ‘Dhiku’ is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm. Calculate this whole process as in Rhythm beat four (4) and clap will be count as single.



### **Beat 5**

When the right palm goes down as above-mentioned beat 4, immediately push the left palm over the right palm and clap. Pull the left palm down and the text ‘Thaka’ is pronounced when the left palm claps on the right palm. Clap will be count as a single.



### **Beat 6**

The left and right palms clap together as the ‘Tha’ text is pronounced. Clap will be single in rhythm beat number six (6). as same as beat number one (1)



### **Beat 7**

In beat seven, push the right palm over the left palm and clap. Pull the right palm down after that push the left palm over the right palm and clap. Put the left palm down. The text ‘Thom’ is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm. in the rhythm beat seven (7), can be seen clapping twice.



### **Beat 8**

Beat 8 resembles Beat 7 but only the text is different. Push the right palm over the left palm and clap. Pull the right palm down after that and push the left palm over the right palm and clap. Put the left palm down. The text ‘Thaddhi-nnaka’ is pronounced when the right palm claps on the left palm and the left palm claps on the right palm. In the rhythm, beat eight (8), can be seen clapping twice.



To be continued.

**For more details watch the videos below about clapping pattern of tala in Yakshagana.**

S.No.1. YAK, ‘Kore Tala palm practice in a rhythm’, 19th March, 2021. 11.50A.M.

S.No.2. YAK, 'Jhampe Tala palm practice in a rhythm'. 5th March, 2021. 09.00 A.M.

S.No.3. YAK, 'Trivude Tala palm practice in a rhythm', 19 March, 2021. 11.52A.M.

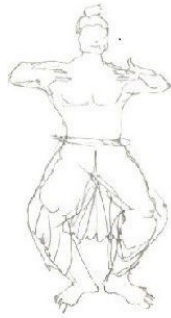
S.No.4. YAK, difference, and comparison of Kore Tala and Trivude Tala palm practice in a rhythm, 19 March 2021. 11.50A.M.

### 3.6.2 II. Movements of the body (Head, shoulder, palm, and foot)

#### Basic standing position

##### Actor's perspective

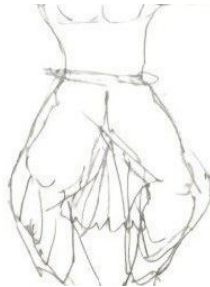
##### Basic Yakshagana Standing Position



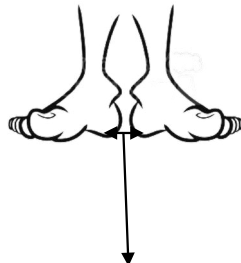
Right Hand  
Thumb Down



Left Hand  
Thumb Up



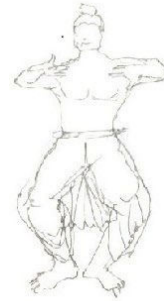
Pelvic & knee Area



Foot Position  
Heel together

##### Audience perspective

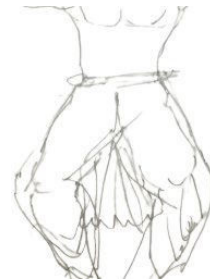
##### Basic Yakshagana Standing Position



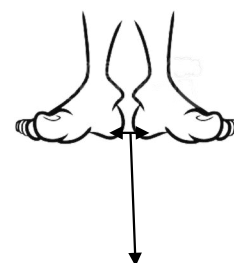
Right-Hand  
Thumb Up



Left-Hand  
Thumb Down



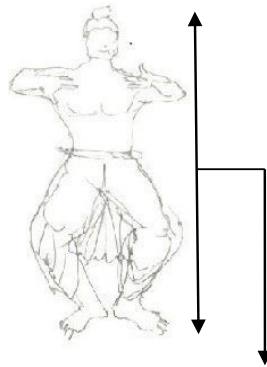
Pelvic& Knee Area



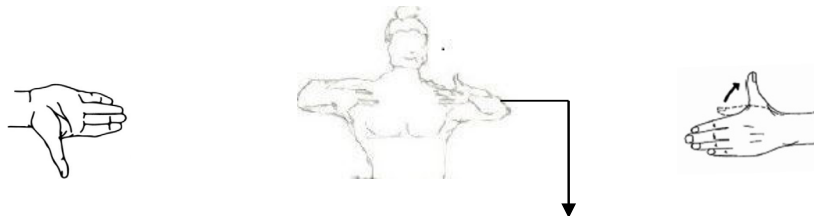
Foot Position  
Heel together

Here explained the basic standing position of Yakshagana with the help of the diagrams and practice video documentation instructions mentioned below.

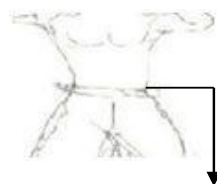
Actor's perspective  
Basic Yakshagana Standing Position



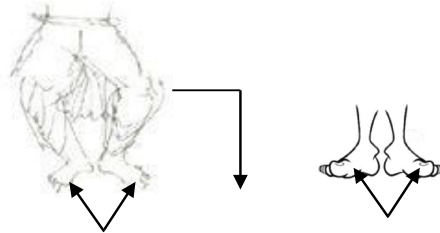
Performer's head should be relaxed position and in the centre with a smiling facial expression.



Shoulders are tensioned free, and kept the elbows at shoulder level by bending slightly. The right-hand palm should be open toward the audience and the left-hand palm open toward the actor. Here we need to concentrate more on the palm because the rotation of palms makes a bit of confusion while practising body movements.



When it comes to the pelvic area, the total energy of the actor is concentrated in this part. The pelvic area gives a greater amount of strength to the centre of the body and an actor strengthens the body by balancing physical and gravitational force.



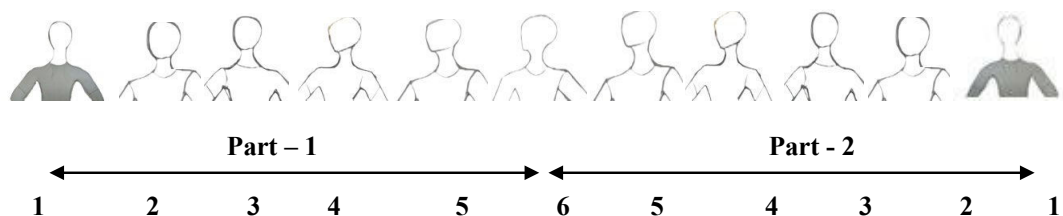
In the rest of the lower part of the body, bending the knees slightly may give more firmness to the body. Foot will be keeping as like 'V' shape and it helps to move the lower part of the actors' body in different dimensions.

### **First and basic exercise by Guru Sanjeeva Suvarna**

Here, before we go to the Yakshagana tala body practice, it becomes necessary to reflect on how the actor can understand the movements of the head, shoulders, palms and feet. Guru Sanjeeva Suvarna taught the basic movement exercise, which any actor can easily understand about the inner and outer parts of the body. It helps to know about the standing position and body movement of Yakshagana form and rhythm. This exercise reference video shows all the details.

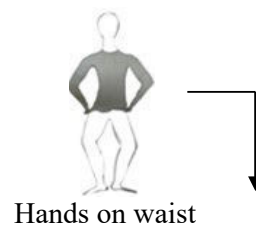
### **Head, hands on waist, pelvic and feet movements:**

#### **Gradations of head movements:**



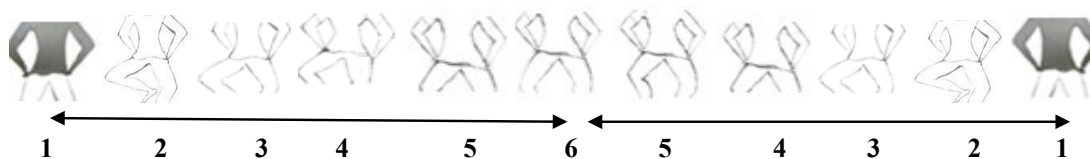
The head movements are based on the feet, with the head moving in the same direction as the leg. the gradations of movement are described in the actor's head, diagram 1 to 6 basic centre positions to right to the corner (always looking at open palm according to foot movement (centre to right) (right side of the corner)) same way bring back to the head from right to previous centre position (diagrams 6-1) with always smiling face it helps to avoid unnecessary tensions on face as well as head and neck part.

### **Kean observations and findings as a practical participant: -**



Personally, researcher has practiced and observed the movement of the Cultured and Disciplined Actors Body with Guru Sanjeeva. To understand the process, participant practised and analysed body movements and divided them into different parts through exercises.

### **Pelvic flexible movements: -**

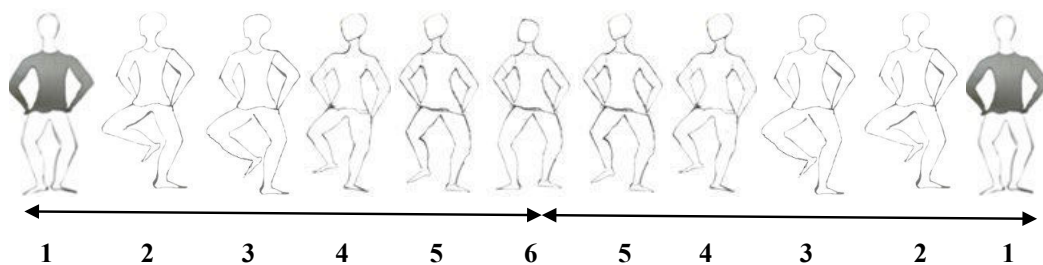


The diagrams shown above show how the middle part of the body coordinates as if balanced and rooted. It is the core centre for the body to strengthen all parts of the body. The pelvic region of the body can be known to play a prominent role to organize the all moments. It combines the flexibility, rigidity, and endurance of the body, especially as the amount of energy in the body increases. If we deeply go through the diagrams as Ascending order 1 to 6, we fins that all leg movements are

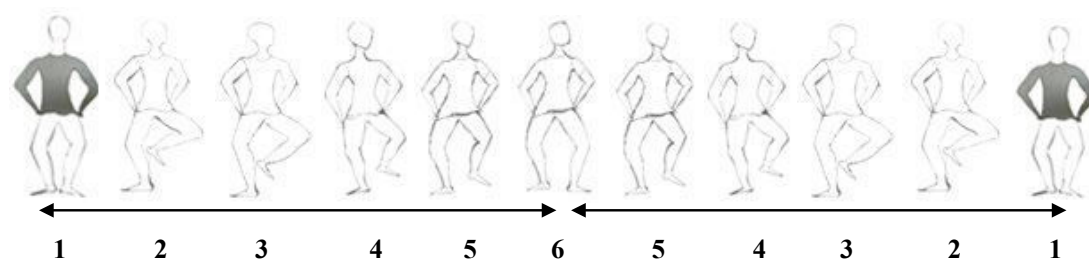
dependent, and move only the help of pelvic area, as a research scholar practically I have gone through this exercise and experienced the movements of the body with rhythm. Same as diagrams 6-1 Descending sequence also same but here keep moving the right or left foot forward and bring the same leg in centre position. Here I have demonstrated pelvic movements with the right foot.

### **Foot movements:**

#### **1. Right Foot**



#### **2. Left foot**

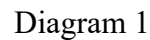


### **Description and applications:**

To analyse and understand basic movements of Yakshagana form he tried to make with meaningful exercise with us. At first standing basic Yakshagana position but here we did not use palm rotation because most of the students got confused with palm so changed the pattern of his methodology. First, we concentrated on foot movements putting hands on waist later we have gone through actual movements with palm rotations. Here we explored with footsteps with both feet right and left.



### Foot Movements: Divided into two steps



A diagram showing a person in a handstand position. A horizontal line extends from the person's center of mass to the left, where it meets a vertical arrow pointing downwards, representing the direction of the gravitational force.

Diagram 2

171

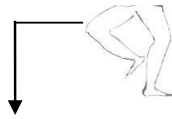


Diagram 3

From centre upward to slowly moving down



Diagram 4

From here, the right foot moves forward from the left foot. Changes in foot movements are prominent.

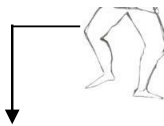


Diagram 5

Move the right foot forward from the middle. Practitioners can try to touch the right foot on the floor.

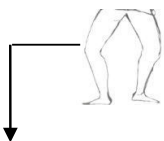


Diagram 6

Here, the practitioner moves his right foot completely forward and the foot touches the ground.

## Step - 2

The practitioner should do the same here as in Part 1. But here, the reverse process is to pull the right foot back and bring it to the starting position.



Diagram 6

Here, the practitioner touches his right foot completely on the floor. The right foot is apart from the left foot.

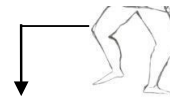


Diagram 5

The practitioner should lift the right foot from the front.

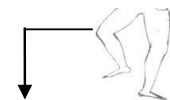


Diagram 4

Right foot moves from the front to backward centre.

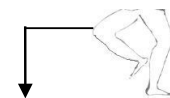


Diagram 3

From centre to slowly moving upward.

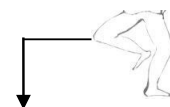


Diagram 2

The practitioner should raise his right foot as much as from the basic standing position



Diagram 1

The right foot returns to the previous yakshagana basic position. The knees should bend slightly. Place both feet together in a 'V' shape

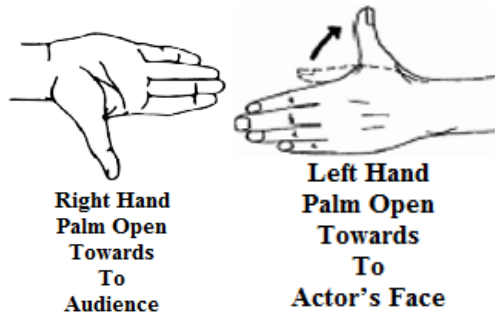
Note: For beginners this is a basic Yakshagana body movement exercise taught by Guru Sanjeeva. With serious consideration this exercise illustrated by my body and based on the diagrams described above. For the reference see the video YAK Practice Video. (A) Pelvic flexible movements, hands on waist.

For more details watch the video titled 'First and Basic Exercise.'

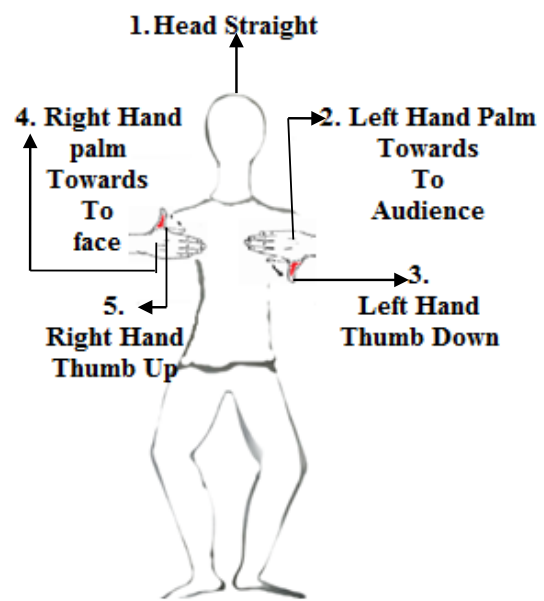
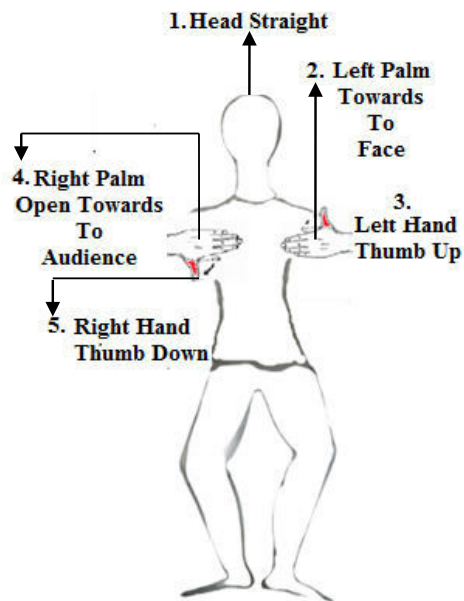
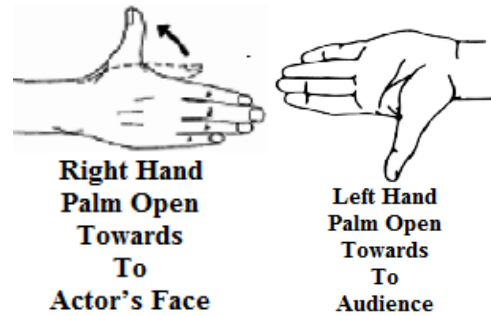
S.No.5. YAK, The first and basic exercise for the practitioner. Head, hands on waist, pelvic and foot movements. 02nd March, 2019. 09.10 A.M.

## Palm Rotation:

### Actor's perspective

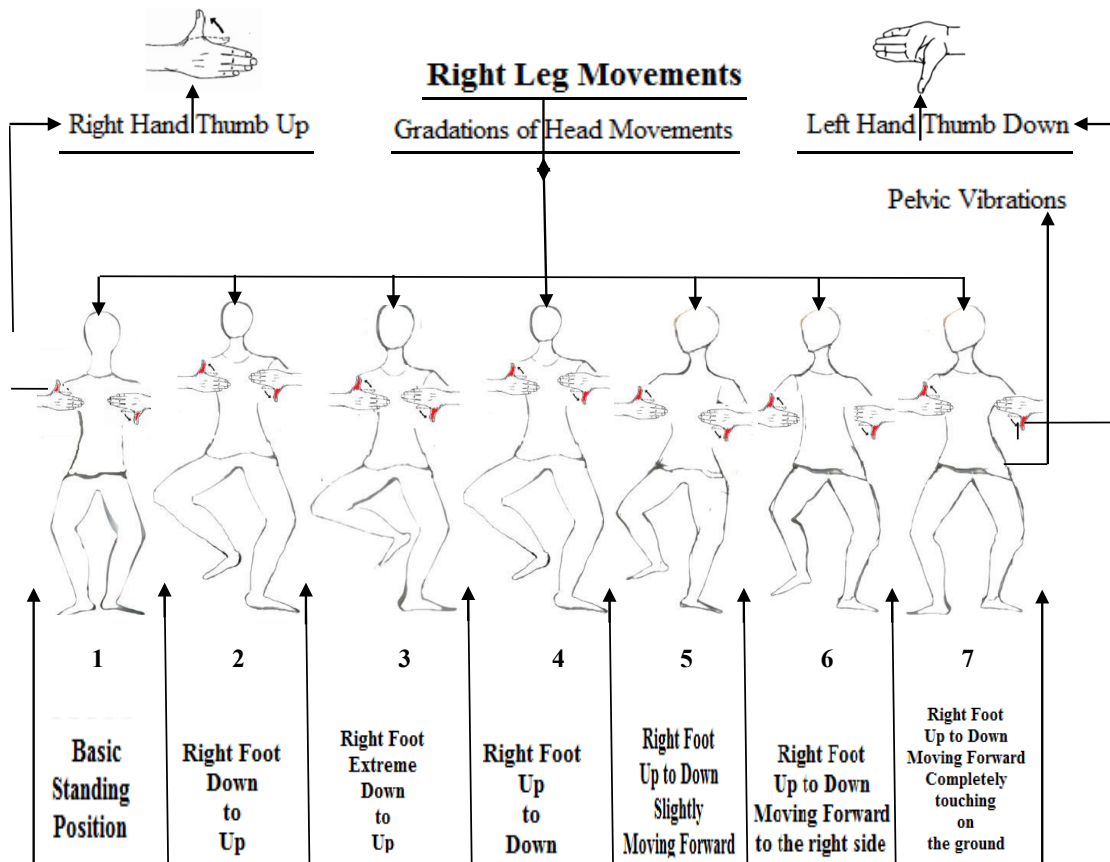


### Audience perspective



### Description and applications:

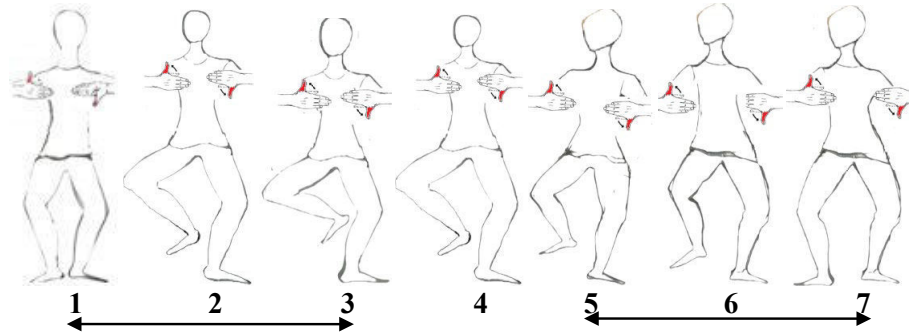
The palm opens towards the actor's face on the same side. Head and foot movements also move in the same direction. This type of practice improves the actors' better balance and coordination. In other words, it coordinates all the parts of the body and the actor needs the same. Improves endurance, mental performance, mental capacity, mood, memory, performance, strength and energy of the actors always keeps the body active.



**To understand the rhythm:**

All together: Rhythm with Head, palm, pelvic and foot movements

**1. Right Leg – Moving Forward**

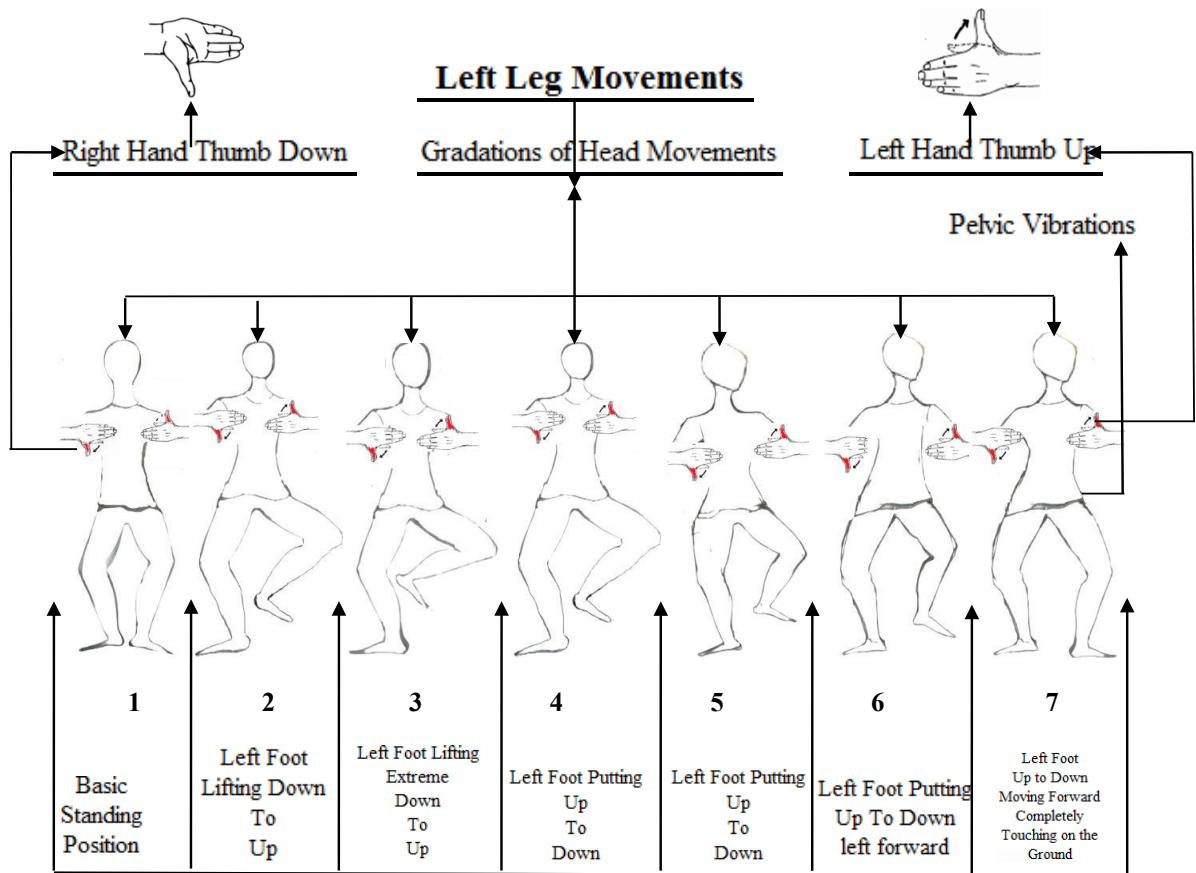


**Description and applications:**

First the actor slowly raises his right leg from his basic position and raises the same leg as high as he can (clearly shown in the diagram 1, 2 and 3). Slowly down the same right leg again, now the changes happen in the right leg according to diagram 5 up side to downwards can started to move forward. Diagram 6 keep moving the right leg forward apart from the left leg. Diagram 7 right legs completely putting down on the floor.

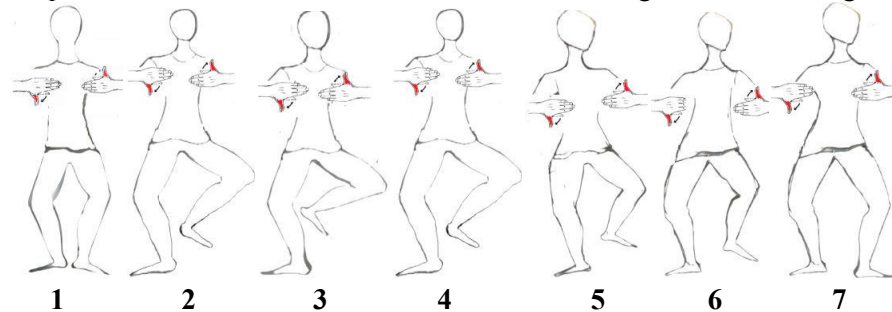
Watch the video below about 'First and Basic Exercise' for more details.

S.No.6. YAK, 'The first and basic exercise for the practitioner. All body parts together with, rotating both palms.' 02nd March, 2019. 09.20 A.M.



## 2. Left Leg – Moving Forward

here practice as mentioned above. but we use the left leg instead of the right leg.



## Description and applications:

The researcher raises his left leg slowly from his basic position as high as he can (clearly shown in the diagram 1, 2 and 3). The left leg slowly comes down, and now the changes happen in the left leg according to diagram 5, upsides to downwards, and can start moving forward. Diagram 6 keeps moving the left leg forward apart from the right leg. Diagram 7 left leg completely putting down on the floor.



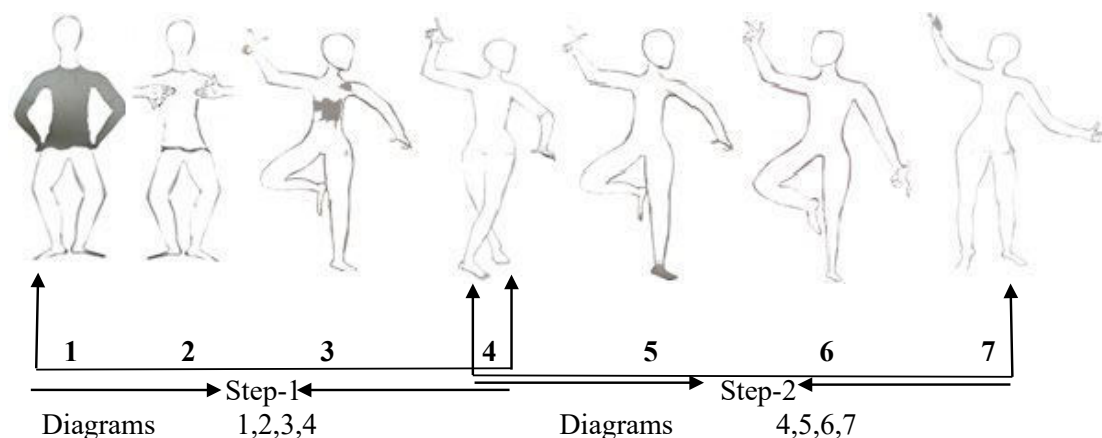
**Note:** Foot movements are more prominent here but, at the same time the head, shoulders, palm, and pelvic movements need to be understood with concentration. Whichever leg we are going to move, the palm of the hand on the same side opens towards the actor's face, the head movements also move in the same direction. Here gradations of each part of the body movements are very important and the actor can find his own vibrations and impulse form the inner.

### **Devadasi movement to understand the rhythm: (Both Legs Right and Left)**

This rhythmic practice is based on the female movement used in the Yakshagana Devadasi dance. The description and diagrams below illustrate the rhythmic pattern of the Devadasi movements.

With Right Leg:

Gradations of Head, Hand, Palm, Elbow, Pelvic Knee and Foot Step Movements



### **Description and applications:**

The diagrams above illustrate how to understand the rhythm with the body of the actor and it is the best exercise before going for the foot movements to analyse and understand the body (Head, Hand, Palm, Elbow, Pelvic Knee, and Foot Step) movements of the actor.

**With Right Leg:** - to understand this exercise researcher divided into two steps.

**Step-1: Above Diagrams 1,2,3,4**

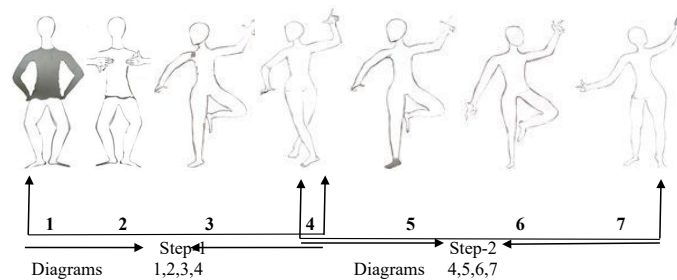
The actor must first stand in a neutral position (Diagrams 1) and after that he should come into the basic primary standing position (Diagrams - 2) of the Yakshagana, then slowly lift the right leg up (Diagrams - 3) and place the same leg behind the left leg (Diagrams – 4). At the same time the position of the actor's head slowly moves left and chin goes left and down. Right shoulder and elbow should be up and right palm will open and face upwards to the roof. Opposite changes will happen with the left-hand means left shoulder, elbow and palm goes down open palm facing to the floor.

**Step-2:**

Above Diagrams 4, 5, 6, 7 Body movement of 4th - diagram standing position to 5th - diagram. Actor's head will be the left and chin left and down. Right shoulder and elbow up and right palm open and facing the roof. Left hand means left shoulder, elbow and palm down opened left hand palm facing to the floor. From here the right leg slowly pulling from the back to centre up side. (Diagram – 5 here, in the diagram only the right leg dragging backward to front upside centre). From diagram – 5 to 6, actors can bring back the right leg from upside centre to down forward. Figure-7 illustrates the body posture of the actor with the right leg forward with a part from the left leg and the toes on the floor. The right shoulder and elbow are up and the right palm is open and facing the roof.

**With Left Leg:** Above mentioned description and diagrams illustrate the way of practice done for understanding the rhythm with the right leg, here also the same as but with the left leg.

Gradations of Head, Hand, Palm, Elbow, Pelvic Knee and Foot Step Movements.



### **Description and applications:**

With Right Leg:

#### **Step-1: Above Diagrams 1,2,3,4**

The actor must first stand in a neutral position (Diagrams 1) after that he should come into The Basic primary standing position (Diagrams - 2) of the Yakshagana, then slowly lift the left leg up (Diagrams - 3) and place the same leg behind the right leg (Diagrams – 4). At the same time, the position of the actor's head slowly moves right and chin goes right and down. Left shoulder and elbow should be up and right palm will open and face upwards to the roof. Opposite changes will happen with the right hand means right shoulder, elbow and palm goes down open palm facing to the floor.

#### **Step-2: - above Diagrams 4,5,6,7**

Body movement of 4th diagram is in standing position to 5th - diagram. Actor's head will be to the right and chin right and down. Left shoulder and elbow should be up and right palm open and facing upwards to the roof. Right hand means right shoulder, elbow and palm down opened left hand palm facing to the floor. From here the left leg slowly pulling from the back to centre up side. (Diagram – 5 here, in the diagram only the left leg dragging backward to front upside centre). From diagram – 5 to 6, actors can bring back the left leg from upside centre to down move forward. Figure-7 illustrates the body posture of the actor with the right leg forward a part from the left leg and the toes on the floor. The left shoulder and elbow are up and the left palm is open and facing the roof.

For the first 3 days, whatever rhythm researcher understood through the practice such as the body parts of palm, head, pelvic and foot, helped while practising the Kore Tala.

**Watch the video below about Devadasi body movement practice for more details**

S.No.8. YAK, “Devadasi Movement to Understand the rhythm” (Female body. head, pelvic, palms and foot) 03rd March, 2019. 9.00 A.M. TO 11. 00 A.M.

S.No.9. YAK, “Devadasi Movement to Understand the rhythm” (Male Body. head, pelvic, palms and foot) 03rd March, 2019. 9.00 A.M TO 11. 00 A.M

S.No.10. YAK, “Devadasi Movement to Understand the rhythm” (Male & female body, head, pelvic, palms and foot) 03rd March, 2019. 9.00 A.M TO 11. 00 A.M

All together: - practice in a rhythm with Head, shoulder, palm, pelvic and foot movements with all (7) Tala

### 3.7 Foot movements of Talas

#### 1. Kore tala:

Kore tala comprises of

- Seven matras
- Three beats
- Three steps
- Seven counts
- 

|     |     |      |      |       |         |                                                                                                                     |
|-----|-----|------|------|-------|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | 2   | 3    | 1    | 2     | 3       | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Clap pattern} \\ 0 \text{ Single clap} \\ 0 \text{ each beat} \end{array} \right\}$ |
| thi | thi | Thai | taka | dhimi | thakita |                                                                                                                     |
| 0   | 0   | 0    | 0    | 0     | 0       |                                                                                                                     |

Pattern to explore on kore tala.

Group of 4 units

| 1    |       |        | 2    |       |         | 3    |       |         | 4   |     |      |
|------|-------|--------|------|-------|---------|------|-------|---------|-----|-----|------|
| taka | dhimi | taKita | taka | dhimi | thaKita | taka | dhimi | thaKita | thi | thi | thai |
| 1    | 2     | 3      | 1    | 2     | 3       | 1    | 2     | 3       | 1   | 2   | 3    |

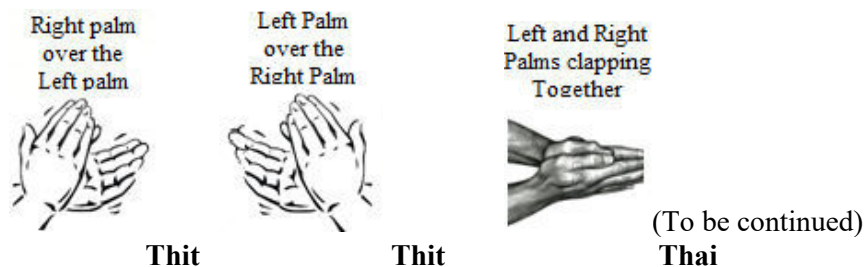
Kore Tala is the basic tala and rhythm of Yakshagana. Enthusiastic learners are attracted by this tala and its movements because all further movements are based on this. It is very easy to learn and another most important reason for their fascination is due to the fact that being the basic tala, kore tala teaches the learners to stand on the Yakshagana basic position.

Before going to Kore Tala body practice, as a researcher cum practitioner, my observations and findings are how to understand each movement of the actor's body practice of Yakshagana tala. To understand all this, I have divided it into several

parts to make it easier to know more about the Yakshagana which I practised with Guru Sanjeeva -how he taught the form of Yakshagana and how he articulated and applied the body techniques to understand the rhythm.

**Based on Kore tala practiced as below:**

**A. thi thi thai - Rhythm with palms**

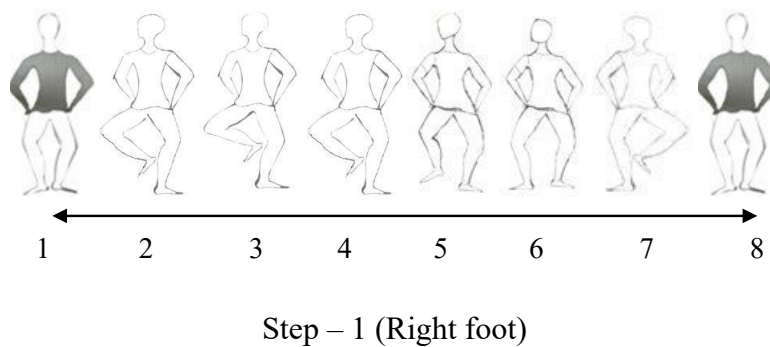


Over the drawings and video documentation will clarify the timing and free space between the beat. It is the clear way to engage the palm progress as well.

**B. thi thi thai - Rhythm with feet**

With serious consideration by researcher body and based on the diagrams described below. The diagram below shows as deeply as seen in a magnifying glass. The Kore Tala has the rhythmic movements of the both feet.

Study of the right foot movement gradation and practical details

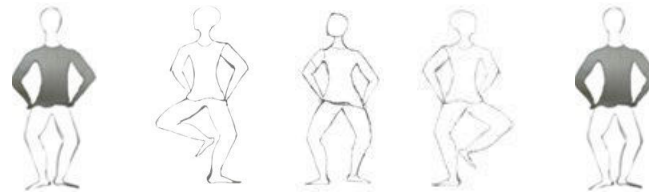


### Step – 1:

Standing in the basic Yakshagana basic position (1), slowly lift the right foot up from the down middle on the floor (2, 3) and place the same foot down and forward (4, 5) on the floor (6). The actor must drag his left foot from behind as well as also lift the same foot up in the centre and bring it down to the centre (7, 8). It means actor comes to the basic position of Yakshagana (8).

Here the actor's body position is to move the right foot forward and place it completely on the floor, and the left foot is supporting to move forward the actor's body or to help to stand in the same basic position of Yakshagana on the floor. It gives balance and strength to the left foot.

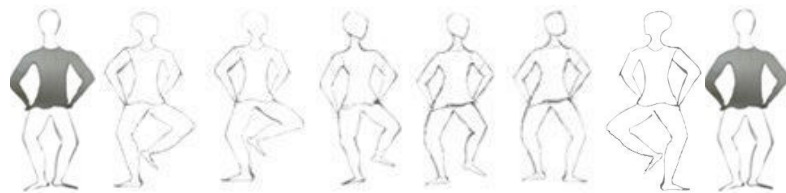
Simple way to understand Kore Tala footsteps with diagrams



Step – 1 (Right foot)

### Step – 2:

Study of the left foot movement gradation and practical details



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Step – 2 (Left foot)

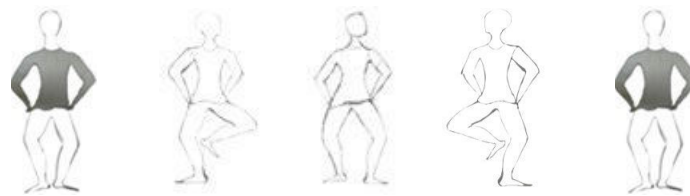
Here both legs are in the basic position on the floor (1). Lift the left leg from the basic position to the centre (2,3) and push the same leg forward from the centre downwards (4,5), and place the same leg on the floor (6,) down and forward and drag

his right leg from behind as well as also lift the same leg up in the centre and bring it down to the centre (7, 8).

Here the actor's body position is to move the left leg forward and place it completely on the floor, and the right leg is supporting to move forward the actor's body or to help to stand in the same basic position of Yakshagana on the floor. It gives balance and strength to the left leg.

Continue with both legs in the same procedure. Steps 1 and 2 are easy to follow to move forward with rhythm of Thit Thit Thai.

Simple way to understand Kore Tala footsteps with diagrams



Step – 2 (Left Leg)

The diagram shown above is Yakshagana foot movement. It is drawn to understand it better. Easily we can find the sensual variations in the actor's body. This only happens when the participant practices with his or her own practical participation.

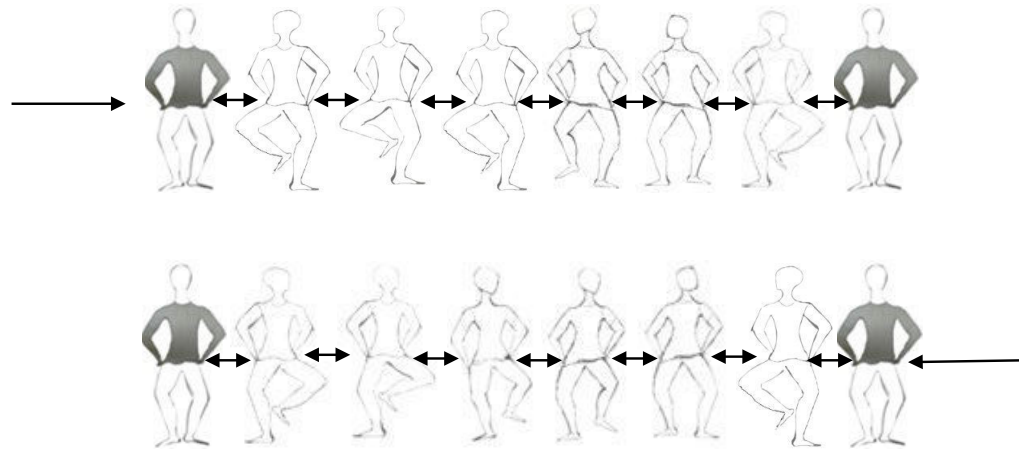
### **C. thi thit thai – Practice rhythmic movement using the pelvic area**

It is very difficult to practise with all the body parts together, as it is easy for actors to focus on each part of the body individually. However, it is also a must for the actor. Above mentioned descriptions and applications through the diagrams show clearly the palm movements and foot movements now coming to vibrations and sensory movements in the pelvic area. The pelvis performs important functions in locomotion because body weight is transmitted to the lower limbs through the pelvic



girdle. The support of the abdominal organs is also through both the pelvic floor muscles and the pelvis.

#### Keeping hands on the pelvic area



#### Observations and findings:

While practising Kore Tala, I focused mostly on the pelvic area, because only from here all bodily functions take place. It is the main hub for the actor's body, it helps the body parts to function and retain and produce energy from here.

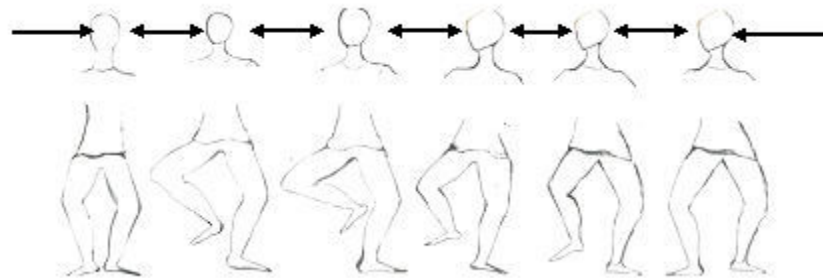
The video documentation above is an “understanding the rhythm” exercise Helped while practicing. Here the actors move according to the movements of the feet so that the hip area and the waist area i.e., the entire pelvic area are stretched.

When the actor raises his right leg from the primary Yakshagana position this lumbar spine supports the left leg and balances the body. If we see the diagrams gradations in waist and buttocks area, we can identify the changes in pelvic region. while putting right and left leg forward completely

When keeping the right or left leg completely down and forward, we can see the changes through the diagrams- Gradations in the waist and buttocks area. We can easily detect changes in the pelvic area.

#### D. thi thi thai:

Moving the head part from the middle to the right-hand direction

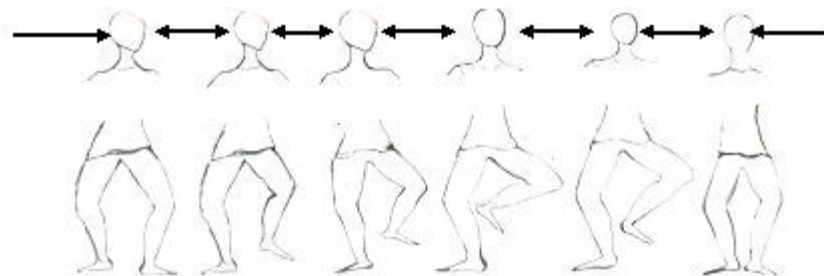


#### Observation:

In the introduction of 'kore tala,' complete information has been given about the foot movements and rhythm. Here we need to notice that head movements depend on foot step only, i.e., when an actor or participant lifts his/her leg in, the head movements are also in the same direction. That means above diagrams illustrates if an actor or participant wants to lift his right leg then head movements will follow the same right direction with in in gradations.

As shown in the diagram above, the actor is in the primary position, which explains that he is in a relaxed position, keeping his head in the middle and looking front in an eye level position. When an actor tries to lift his right leg up to the centre, then actors' head also slowly moves his right side direction.

Centre to left direction according to the movements of footsteps.



#### Findings:

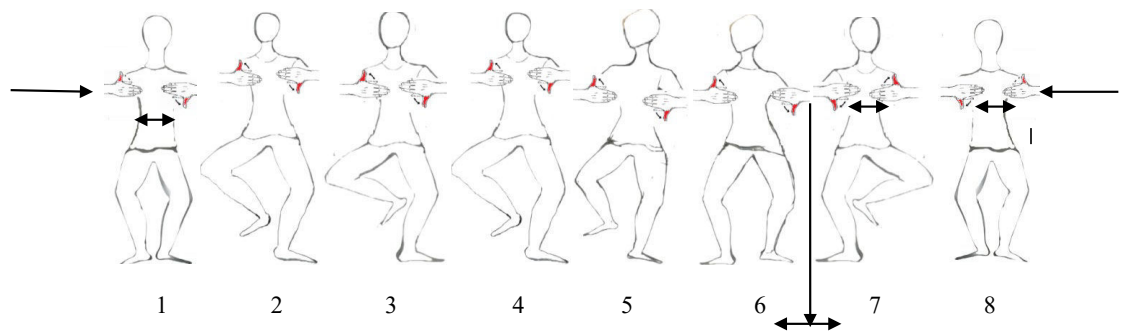
As shown in the diagram above, the actor is in the primary position, which explains that he is in a relaxed position, keeping his head in the middle and looking front in an eye level position. When an actor tries to lift his left leg up to the centre then

actors head also slowly moves to his left side. The Guru didn't start the direct Yakshagana tala process. He has taught a systematic methodology from the beginning to understand the rhythm with all body parts, one by one individually at first, foot, pelvic, head and palms. In this way he taught that first I must concentrate on footsteps to understand the rhythm and then I have to go through the pelvic and head individually and finally palms practice. Later, I mixed-up all parts of the body together and practised under the guidance of Guru Sanjeeva before entering tala practice. Then I realised that each and all tala movements are similar but timing and footstep count and beat are different. Above, all diagrams look like same but the process of each tala has different timing, beat and count, movements are there.

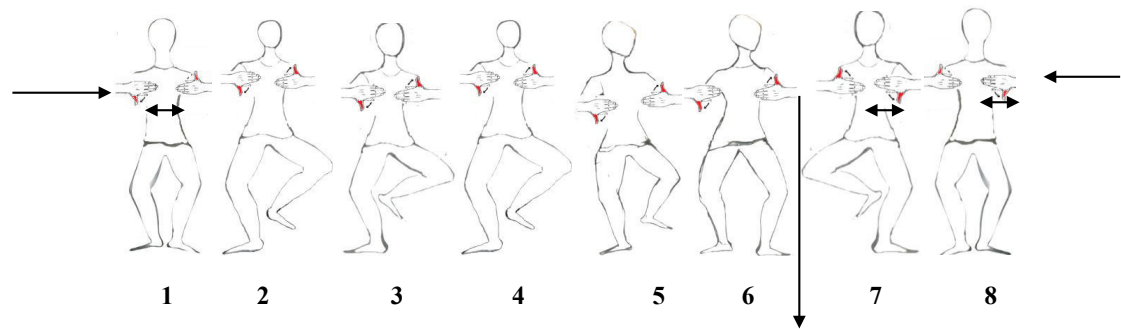
#### **E. thi thi thai - movements of head, hands, foot and palm (Altogether)**

(The open palm is always opposite the face)

Right to Left direction



Left to Right direction



### Observations and findings:

First the actor slowly raises his right leg from his basic position and raises it as high as he can (clearly shown in the diagram 1, 2 and 3). Slowly the same leg is brought down again, with changes happening in the right leg according to Diagram 5 - up side to downwards can started to move forward; Diagram 6 keep moving the right leg forward apart from the left leg and completely putting down on the floor. Note: - the transformation happens from here raise the left leg from the back and bring it up to the centre (diagram 7). The same leg should touch the ground in the same direction 90 degrees from top to bottom (diagram 8). Same as with left leg also.

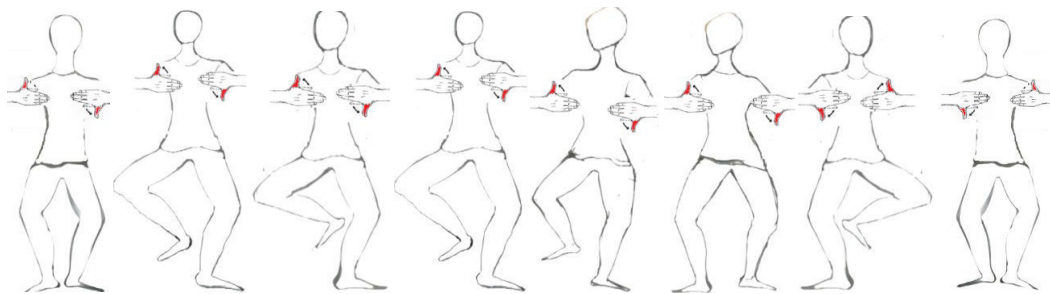
The body parts of the actor, i.e., head, shoulders, elbows, palms open and closed, waist, buttocks, thighs, knees and ankles and feet, simultaneously describe the learning process. But here we have added all the exercises mentioned above "a, b, c, d". The movements of the rest of the body are similar to the description and application of the above exercises. The palm opens towards the actor's face on the same side. Head and foot movements also move in the same direction. This type of practice improves the actors' better balance and coordination. In other words, it coordinates all the parts of the body and the actor needs the same. It improves endurance, mental performance, mental capacity, mood, memory, performance, strength and energy of the actors always keeps the body active.

**Altogether as put below,**

When an actor puts a smile on his face, he can remove the unnecessary tension on his face.

- a. thi thi thai - Smiling face with feet;
- b. thi thi thai - Smiling face with hands at pelvic area;
- c. thi thi thai - Smiling face moving the head to left and right according to feet movements.
- d. thi thi thai - With Smiling face moving the head, centre to right according to the movements of the hands. (Then open hand always facing the face)

Analytical body movements are shown step by step below the line drawings



**Keen Observations on the above Practice of Kore tala**

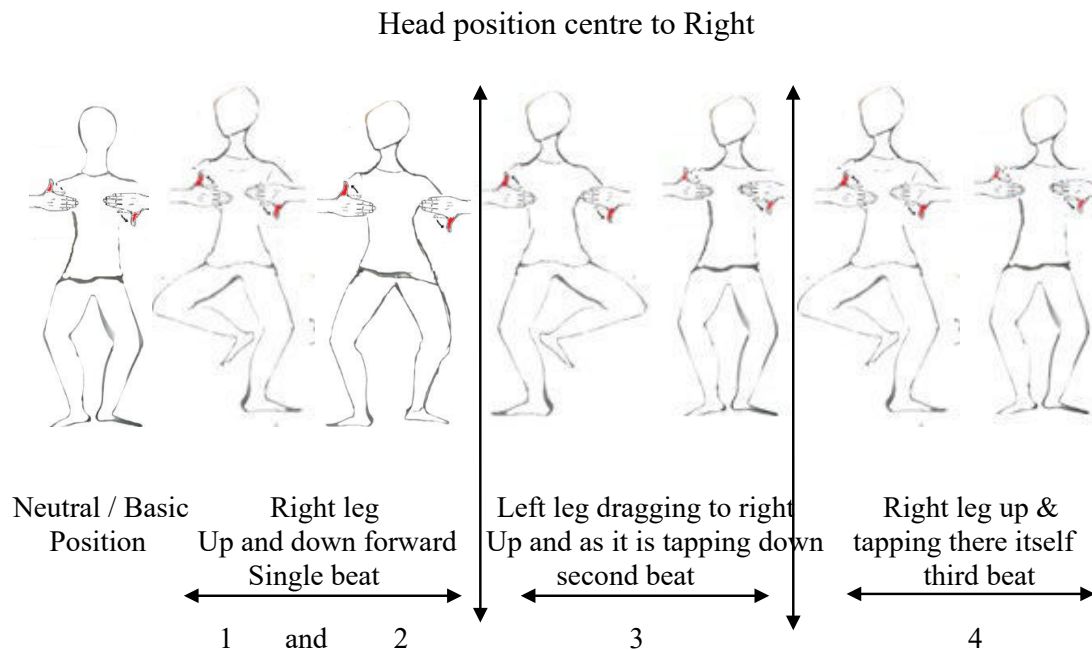
- In order to understand the rhythm, focussing on beat of the palms is essential.
- In a practitioner's view, raising the foot will be count one, tapping the foot on the floor will be counted as count two. This means first and second is counted as Single beat when it comes to theory. Out of the first two counts only one will be countable as a beat.
- The third count which includes raising the left foot and dragging towards right as well as tapping on the floor will be counted as Second Single beat.

- The third beat means raising the right foot and tapping at the right side of the floor with legs together and heels together. Then the left leg will move leftwards, tap on the floor and movements will continue same as before.

### Findings and Difficulties in Practice:

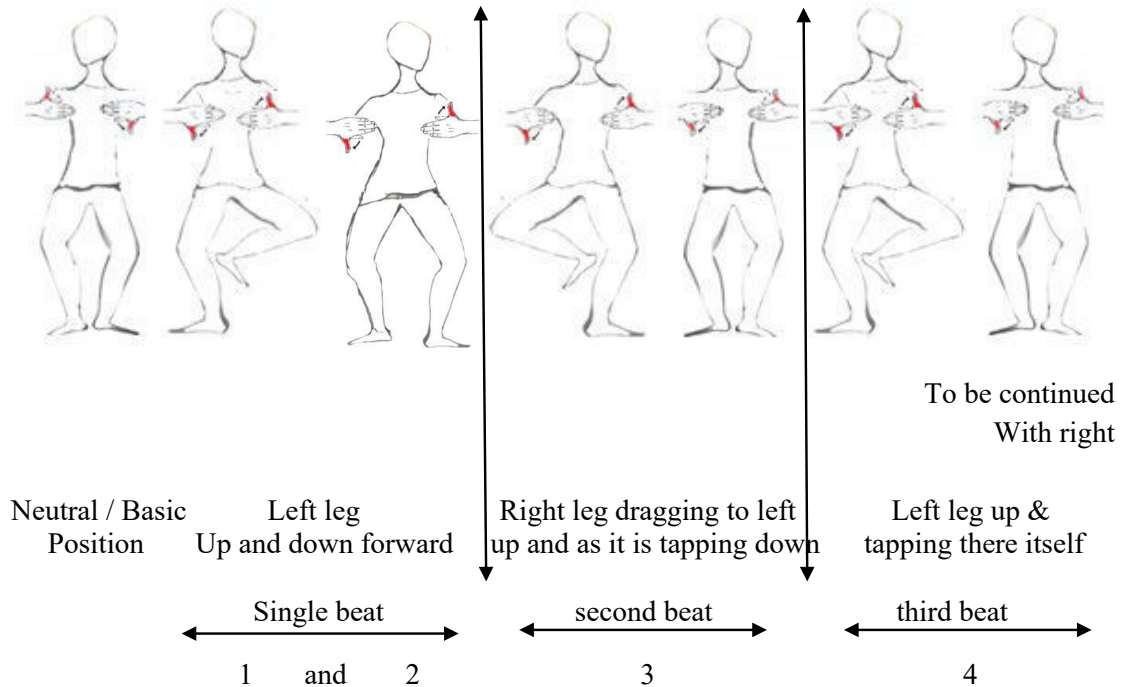
Practising Kore tala altogether (Foot, Pelvic region, Hands and Head movements) at a time is very difficult for a novice. Hence, I find that learning Kore tala step by step -primarily with foot movements will be highly advisable for a new learner. Unifying and concentrating the *Anga*, *Prathyanga* and *Upanga* into one single point will help the actor to take any Himalayan task in acting.

### Right Leg:



Left Leg:-

Head position Right - Centre - Left

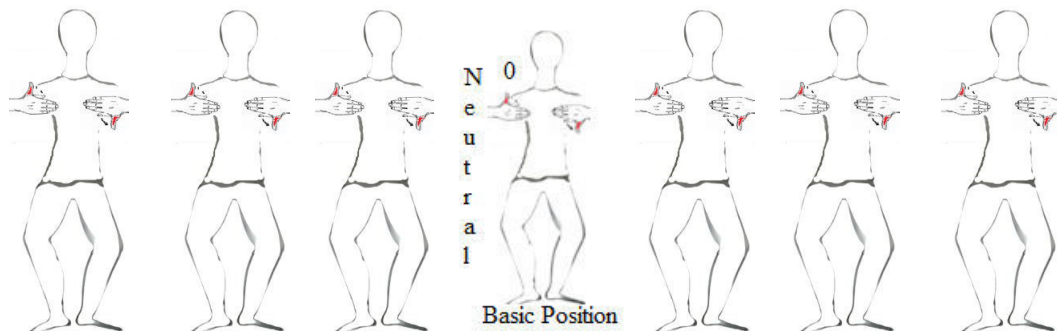


We have practised kore tala in two types of variations.

Variation 1: In this Kore Tala variation1, according to the practice can be divided into two steps.

Lift the right leg up from the basic leg position so that the same leg touches the floor some distance in front of the left leg. Then lift the left leg from the back up and bring it to the middle, then tap on the floor again. Now, place both legs together on the floor. Raise the right leg in a standing position and tap on the floor. To do this, the head should be completely turned from the centre to right. As well as the open palm of the right hand open towards to the actor's face. In the same way, continue to practice on the left side with the left leg.

**Analytical body movements of Kore Tala variation one shown step by step below with the help of line drawings.**



#### Observations and findings

1



An actor lifts his right leg and tries to move forward. Notice the changes here. When the right foot is lifted in the middle, the palm of the right hand immediately opens and the head turns to the right, looking at the open palm.

2. Placing the same right leg forward head and palm positions are the same as diagram 1







3. shifting left leg to centre on the floor. Here need to observe the changes. actor no need to lift his left leg as show as in the diagram1.



4. Shift the left leg into middle basic position. here two legs will be together.



5. Raise the right leg slightly (not as high as shown in diagram 1) and try to stretch forward.



6. Move the right leg Forward and tap same leg on the floor.

## Step - 2



7. This is where Phase 2 begins. The changes from here on out are significant. Lifting the left leg from the back to the upwards to the centre. The position of the head also changes from right to left as the left leg moves slowly from behind. The head position shown in the diagram is in the centre. Palm position also changes with gradation from right to left.



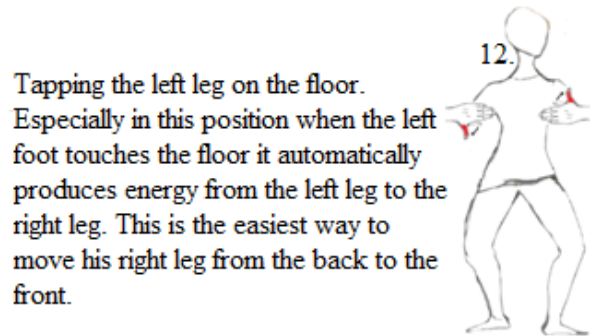
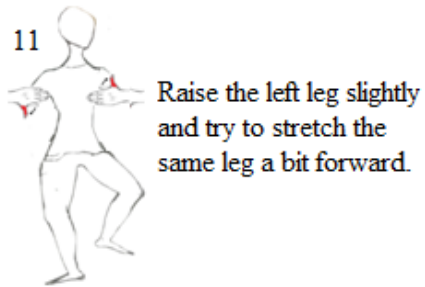
8. A complete transition from right to left in the head and palm can be seen here. The left leg moves from centre to forward and tap on the floor.



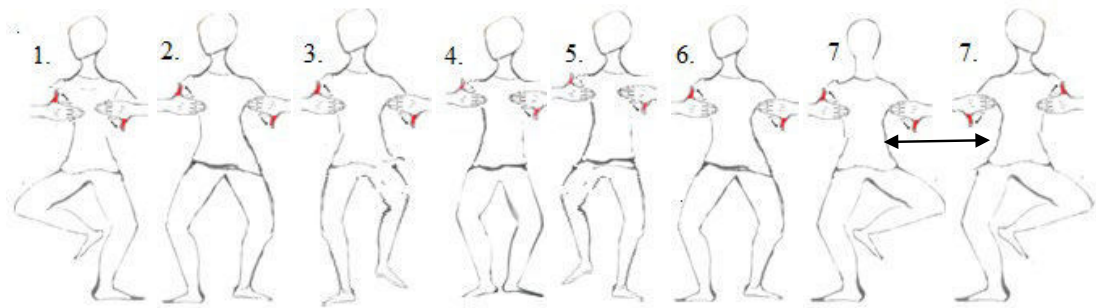
9. The actor shifts his right leg from back to the front. Here shifting process is prominent. Because controlling the timing according to beat and balancing the rhythm. By doing this, it will be much easier for him to move forward in rhythm.



10. Bringing back the right leg into the basic position and tapping on the floor in a gentle way. Here both legs are together. The left palm opens towards the actors face and the head also rotates to the left.



To be continued....



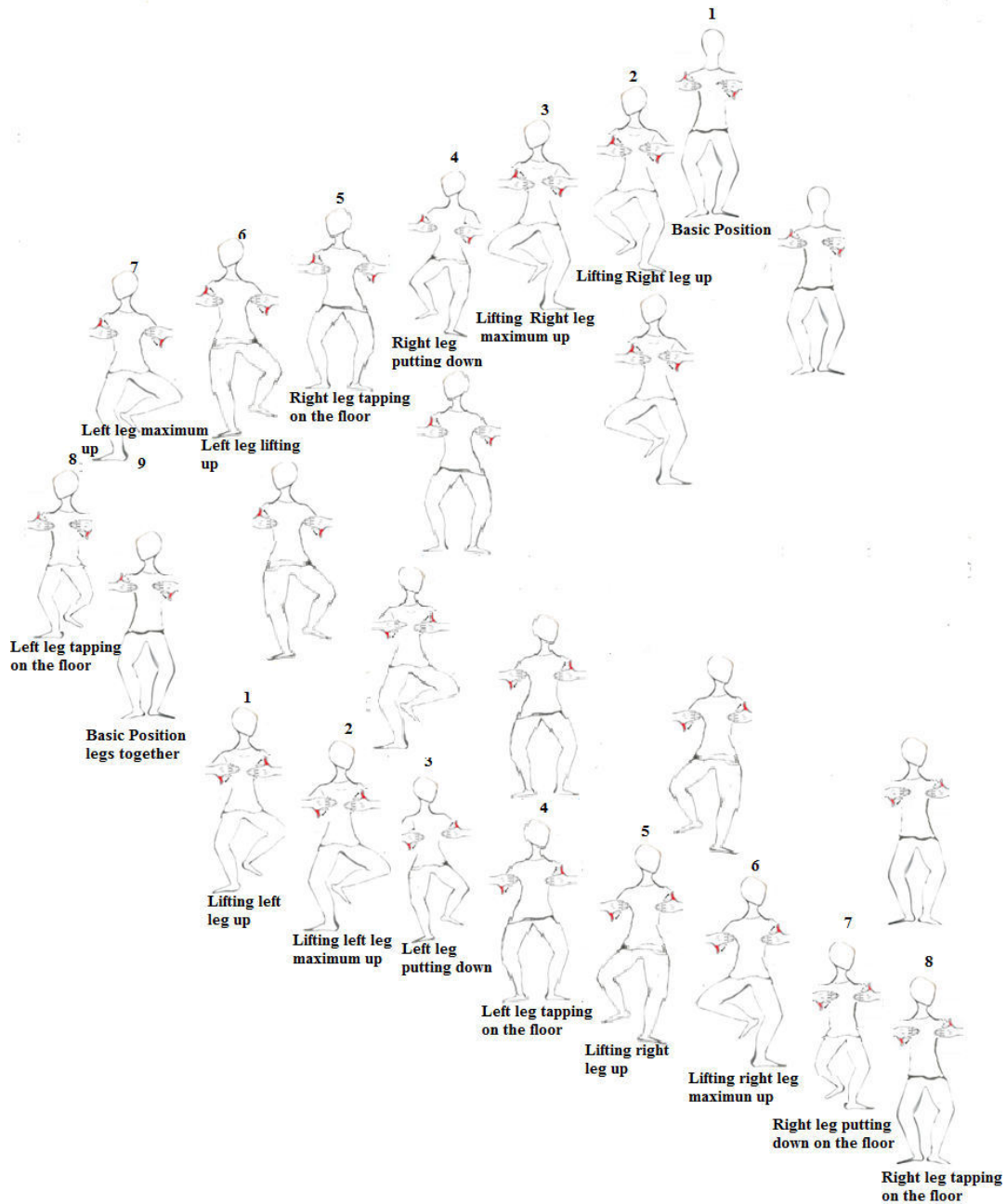
Watch the video below about Kore Tala variation one (1) practice for more details

S.No.11. YAK, Kore Tala variation one (1) 04th March, 2019. 9.00 A.M to 11.00

A.M

Analytical body movements of Kore Tala variation two:

## Variation 2:-

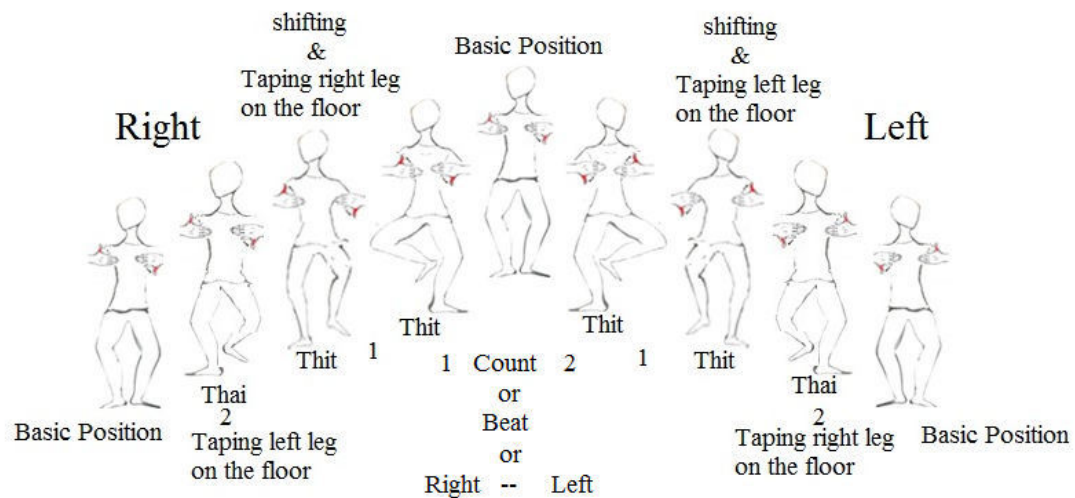


With the help of the diagram mentioned above, a detailed study of Kore Tala Variation 2 is given below.

The actor should be in the primary position of Yakshagana. At first, the actor jumps slowly (gentle) and taps his right leg on the floor. It is here that actor's right leg moves from basic position to right side where actors take gentle jump from the basic position to right side then the right leg position will be changed. Also, the total body weight of the actor shifts to the right leg. This means that the total weight of the actor shifts to the right side of the body and the left leg stays in the air. Here the total weight of the actor's body is distributed to the right leg. When the right leg hits the ground immediately drag the left leg slowly towards to the right leg and tap on the floor. At that same time, it returns to the basic standing position of the Yakshagana. Same practice process has done with the opposite (left) leg. In this process according to the rhythm we have used the text in three variations. More details see the Kore Tala variation 2 video. They are:

1. thi thi thai
2. One - two
3. Right, left

Below diagrams illustrates an easy method to understand Kore Tala variation2



Watch the video below about Kore Tala variation two (2) practice for more details  
 Yakshagana thesis videos\S.No.11. YAK, 'Kore Tala variation two (2)'. 04th March, 2019. 9.00 A.M. TO 11. 00 A.M.mp4

The main task of an actor here is to balance body and mind with concentration according to rhythm and the purpose of practice is to keep the body of the actor concentrated as it is difficult for an actor to control all the parts of the body at once. In tala practice, kore tala is the first one. So far, we have learned easily in a very short time by practising all the parts of the body separately and individually. All that practice brings together here in this Kore Tala what we have personally practiced with body parts. But, the beat here and the movements in those beats are different.

That is, whichever direction the foot moves, for example foot moves in the right direction actor should pronounce 'right,' and if the leg moves in the left direction should pronounce 'left.' The count in one and two is constantly mentioned above. It does depend on foot movements only. To understand the rhythm according to the body movements, this the easiest method.

### **Observations:**

From this practise, an actor can get the concentration and grip on all body parts. When he is pronouncing the text, according to that he can understand the rhythm and can move all his body parts in rhythm. Here the actor must leave his body free. Through this practice the rigid body becomes flexible, and the body will be in a rhythm. The actor has to shape his body rhythmically and that is also important. Here the head, shoulders, elbows, waist, and lower body all move in rhythm.

### **Findings:**

Here is when the jumps from the Yakshagana basic position to the right the weight depend on one leg of the body i.e., on the right leg, i.e., the total weight shifts towards the right leg. Then every part of the body will take place accordingly. It is very difficult to understand everything at once so when practising. If the calculation of one and two processes is followed by pronunciation, everything will be easier to understand. Even those of any age who are not at all aware of the actual rhythm can practice this Yakshagana. I was able to learn that through the physical practice under

the guidance of the Guru. The main purpose here is to move the body and body parts in rhythm. There is a great need for such practices for theatre actors.

## **2. Eka tala**

Eka tala has

- Four matras
- Four beats
- Four steps

That Dhimi Taka Dhimi

1 2 3 4

In Eka tala, clap pattern is every odd number beat in single clap. Every even number beat in double claps.

Clap pattern

That Dhimi Taka Dhimi

0 II 0 II

0- Single clap

II - Double claps

Prior to practice, it is through the clap that actors understand the rhythmic pattern of Tala which helps to heed all the movements and to integrate it with the musical notations.

### **Researcher's Observations about Eka tala;**

The leg movements in Eka tala are only slightly different from Kore tala. In Eka tala, while dividing each odd tala, we move our leg apart forward from the other and move it up and down as shown here below.

According to the foot movements we have practiced Eka Tala in three variations.

They are

- Variation A
- Variation B
- Variation C

Eka Tala variations “A”

### **Description and applications:**

The leg movements in Eka tala are only slightly different from Kore tala. In Eka tala, while dividing each odd tala, we move our leg apart forward from the other (2 and 3) with pronouncing the text ‘Thath Dhimi,’ and move the left leg from back to dragging upwards and tapping down (4,5 and 6) with the text ‘Thaka.’ Again, we do with the right leg up and tapping down at the same place (7 and 8) help of the text ‘Dhim’ as shown above in the diagrams. Same exercise has to be practised with the other (left) direction with left leg. Through these foot movements (7 and 8), the difference between the Kore Tala and the Eka Tala can be distinguished.

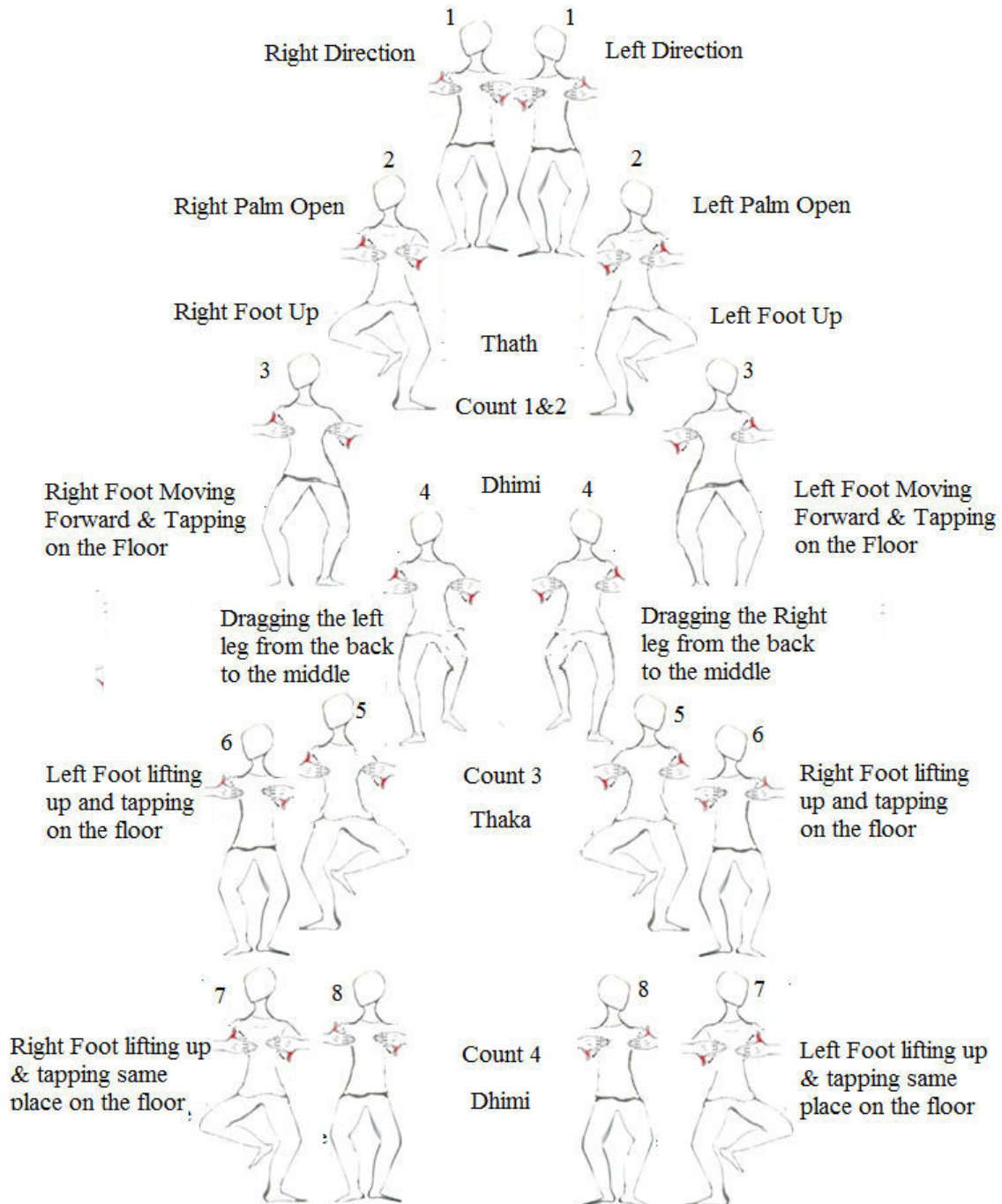
**Watch the video below about Eka Tala variation “A” practice for more details**

S.No.13. YAK, 'Eka Tala variation A'. 05th March, 2019. 9.00 A.M. TO 11. 00 A.M.

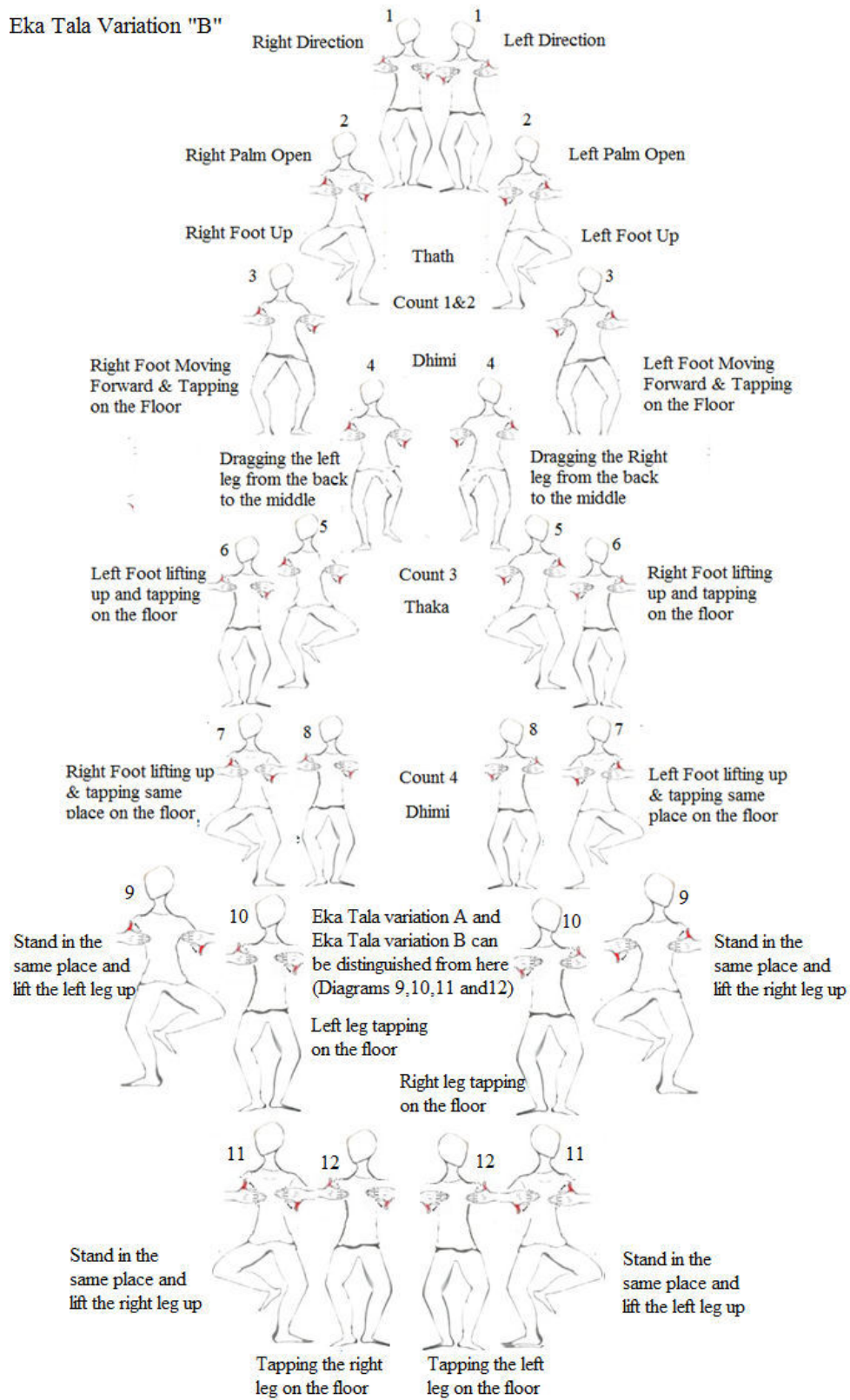


Below diagrams illustrates Eka Tala variation “A”.

“Actor’s perspective”



# Eka Tala Variation "B"



Above diagram illustrates the detail study of Eka Tala variation "B"

### **Description and applications:**

In Eka tala variation B, while dividing each odd tala, we move our leg apart backward or forward from the other with double tap and move it up and down as shown here below.

Here we have practised same as like variation A but added double tap (9 and 10) with both legs (after 7 and 8 diagrams), like we move our leg apart forward from the other (2 and 3) with pronouncing the text ‘Thath Dhimi’, and move the left leg from back to dragging upwards and tapping down (4,5 and 6) with the text ‘Thaka’, again do with the right leg up and tapping down at the same place (7 and 8) help of the text ‘Dhim’ as shown below in the diagrams. Here need to add double tap with the both legs (9, 10, 11 and 12). Same exercise has to be practised with the other (left) direction with left leg forward and backward. After these foot movements (7 and 8) adding double tap (9, 10, 11 and 12) is the difference between the Eka Tala variation A and the Eka Tala variation B can be distinguished.

### **Eka Tala variation “C”:**

In Eka tala, while dividing each odd tala, we move our right leg apart, and move it circulating forward and then backward in toe from the other as shown here below.

There is a need to explain about the movements.

### **Findings and Difficulties in Eka tala Practice**

That Dhimi Taka Dhimi

Tha Thaya Dhina Thadhina Dhainak DhinaThaya Thaya Tha Thim (2)

As compared to Variation 1 of Eka tala which is only slightly (just one step ahead from the other leg) different from Kore tala, Eka tala variation 2 is different from Kore tala by moving forward and backward with double tapping. But variation 3 of Eka tala is entirely different from Kore tala as the difference increases in comparison with Version 1 and Version 2 of Eka tala.

It is highly difficult for the actor to maintain the *Anga*, *Pratyanga* and *Upanga*'s rhythmic perfection in variation 2. Hence it demands great deal of dedication in practice. It is the circular movement that makes Variation 3 entirely different from variation 1&2. This urges the learners to subtly maintain balance and control the movements of feet and pelvic region. It is also necessary to keep the body flexible while putting both hands at the waist as well as circulating the whole body - simultaneously they will have to utter the measures of rhythm (Chollu) perfectly. Learning the above versions requires zeal and persistence and it is time consuming.

Watch the video below about Eka Tala variation “B” practice for more details

S.No.14. YAK, 'Eka Tala variation B'. 05th March, 2019. 9.00 A.M. TO 11. 00 A.M.

Watch the video below about Eka Tala variation “C” practice for more details

S.No.15. YAK, 'Eka Tala variation C'. 05th March, 2019. 9.00 A.M. TO 11. 00 A.M.

### **3. Jhampe Tala**

Five (5) matras

Five (5) beats

| Dhim | Kita | Dhim | Dhim | Kita |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    |

In Jhampe tala, the clap pattern in beat numbers 1, 3, and 4 are single clap. On beat number 2 and 5 double claps.

#### **Clap pattern**

| Dhim | Kita | Dhim | Dhim | Kita |                   |
|------|------|------|------|------|-------------------|
|      |      |      |      |      | 0- Single clap    |
| 0    | I I  | 0    | 0    | I I  | I I – Double clap |

#### **Description and applications:**

Jhampe tala is slightly different from Eka tala. The standing position is with two corners of heels of left and right foot together. Beat number one begins when the right foot taken apart from the heel and moves right forward. Moving the foot with heel backward is beat number 2 with the same position. Beat number three begins when the left foot taken apart from the heel and moves left forward. Moving the foot with heel backward is beat number 4 to the same position.

Same as in all other Talas, also in Jhampe tala one palm will be open towards the face with the right thumb up: the other palm will be opposite to face with the left thumb down in beat number 1- Dhim.

When left thumb is up and right thumb is down in beat number 3 and 4 -Dhim.

In beat number 2 and beat number 5 hand movements change. (Kita beat)

#### **Observations**

As a researcher, I have observed three variations based on the foot movements and palm movements.

- **Variation (a)**

As per the basic Yakshagana, the standing position is with two corners of heels of left and right foot. Right palm open towards the face with thumb up. Left palm close towards the face and thumb down.

As mentioned above, based on the standing position, the right foot taken apart from the heel and moves right forward and tap on the floor then taken backward and tap on the floor.

Similarly, when the left foot is taken apart from the heel and moves left forward and tap on the floor and backward then tap on the floor.

- **Variation (b)**

As per the basic Yakshagana standing position, the right foot taken apart forward and tapped on the floor then backward and tapped on the floor. Left foot moving up and tapped on the floor.

- **Variation (c)**

As per the basic Yakshagana standing position, the right foot taken apart forward and tapped twice on the floor then backward and tapped on the floor. Left foot moving up and tapped on the floor.

## **Findings and Difficulties**

By Following the variations (a, b and c) of Jhampe tala in its right sequence, it is easy to grasp and express through the body movements. Understanding the Jhampe rhythm and foot movements without proper concentration is practically impossible. I observe, if the learner's movements clearly and perfectly match with the strict rhythm of each beat it shows his inborn aesthetic sense after practice. Thorough practice is a fight to overcome stiffness of an actor's body to achieve flexibility. Freedom is the most essential element to achieve creative gestural movements with flexibility. It is possible only through thorough practice. It is said that accomplishment of any single step is the best tonic: If a learner succeeds in

overcoming any amount of stiffness in his body and achieves flexibility which brings in freedom and thereby, he acquires confidence. During my practise of Jhampe tala, these beats altogether tuned my body into a single rhythm. I found that practising Jhampe tala unifies my lower body (from pelvic region to downwards) movements. For practising foot movements, Jhampe tala is the ideal one.

Watch the video below about 'Jhampe Tala foot movement' practice for more details  
S.No.16. YAK, 'Jhampe Tala foot movement'. 05th March, 2019. 9.00 A.M. TO 11.  
00 A.M.

#### **4. Rupaka Tala**

Rupaka tala consists of

- Six matras
- Six beats
- Six counts

Although it is of 6 beats, the count is divided into two units, with two units as given below.

| 1st unit          |     |        | 2nd Unit    |     |        |
|-------------------|-----|--------|-------------|-----|--------|
| Thai              | Tha | Dhinna | Dhim        | Tha | Dhinna |
| 1                 | 2   | 3      | 4           | 5   | 6      |
| Beat 1 2 3        |     |        | 4 5 6       |     |        |
| Count 1 2 3 4 5 6 |     |        | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |     |        |

In Rupaka tala, the clap pattern in beat1(Thai) single clap remaining will be double and in unit 2 in beat 4(Dhim) again single clap and remaining will be double clap which is shown below.

Clap pattern

|      |     |        |      |     |        |                   |
|------|-----|--------|------|-----|--------|-------------------|
| Thai | Tha | Dhinna | Dhim | Tha | Dhinna | 0- Single clap    |
| 0    | I I | I I    | 0    | I I | I I    | I I – Double clap |

In Rupaka Tala, the foot movements are different from other Talas. Basic standing positions of Yakshagana in which both heels joined and in beat number 1 right foot jumps up. In beat 2 and 3 right and left up and down. In second unit in beat 4 the left foot jumps up and as beat 5 and 6 both up and down.



## **Observations**

- While observing Rupaka tala foot movements, from basic standing position of Yakshagana with corner of two heels together, the right foot raised slightly jumping and the same foot downwards to previous position. Then left foot raised slightly up and down. Similarly, the right foot is raised slightly up and down which is shown below.
- Above diagram will show the Palm movement. In during unit 1 is right palm thumb will be upward and left palm thumb moves down.
- From basic standing position of Yakshagana with corner of two heels together the left foot raised slightly jumping and the same foot downwards to previous position. Then right foot raised slightly up and down. Similarly, the left foot raised slightly up and down which is shown below.
- Above diagram will show the Palm movement. In during unit 2 is left palm thumb will be upward and right palm thumb moves down.
- Whatever was done with the right foot will be done with the left foot.

## **Findings and difficulties**

- As a researcher, I found through my body that Rupaka tala physical movements are important for an actor to understand foot function, peripheral perception of hand and palm rotations, rhythm, sense of pelvic and ballismus vibrations. Above the Tala practice is more grounded and routed.
- It will enhance the actor's control, balance, and perfection of the body. Rupaka tala is essential for beginners especially because theatre actors can get a good hold on rhythm through practice. Although there is a chance to become a tiny confuse in the beginning, practice can gain gradually control over the body through practice.

Watch the video below about 'Rupaka Tala foot movement' practice for more details

S.No.17. YAK, 'Rupaka Tala1 foot movement'. 07th March, 2019. 9.00 A.M. TO 11.00 A.M.

S.No.17. YAK, 'Rupaka Tala2 foot movement'. 07th March, 2019. 9.00 A.M. TO 11.00 A.M.

S.No.17. YAK, 'Rupaka Tala3 foot movement'. 19th March, 2019. 9.00 A.M. TO 11.00 A.M.

## 5. Ashta tala

- 7 Aksharas
- 7 beats
- 7 counts

Clap pattern in Ashta tala is different among the all talas, here look at the beat 1,2,4 and 7 has single clap while in beat 3,5 and 6 there must be double clap.

Clap pattern

|      |      |      |       |        |      |       |                  |
|------|------|------|-------|--------|------|-------|------------------|
| Tath | Dhim | Taka | Dhimi | Takita | Taka | Dhimi | 0- Single clap   |
| 0    | 0    | II   | 0     | II     | II   | 0     | II- Double claps |

Kore tala practised as 7 counts but here due to the space between the tala makes them different from each other through which can identify them.

|       | Tath | Dhim           | Taka              | Dhimi             | Takita         | Taka           | Dhimi |
|-------|------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|-------|
| Beat  | 1    | 2              | 3                 | 4                 | 5              | 6              | 7     |
| Count | 1    | 2(3) 4 5 6 (7) | 1 2 (3) 4 5 6 (7) | 1 2 (3) 4 5 6 (7) | 1 2,1 2 3..... | 1 2,1 2 3..... |       |

Here, while practising tala 3 and 7 counts are making the free space in the rhythm pattern. Practising of beat pattern through body, at first basic standing position of Yakshagana, first beat right foot tap on the floor and left foot will be slightly up; it can be in the air. Next on second beat left foot should tap on the floor and right foot will be in the air. In the third beat slightly jump both foots up and down in fourth beat right foot will be in the air, which is followed by foot movements in the second unit.

### **Observations, findings, and difficulties**

Ashṭa tala is similar to kore tala in 7 matras and 7 counts but in Ashṭa tala the space between the tala makes them different from each other, though as a practitioner I spotted them.

Coming to observations in this tala between the counts there is a space so according to that foot movements are little bit confused by the other tala. In this tala actor can find the timing of the movement and according to the rhythm.

From basic Yakshagana position turned over to count one tap the right foot on the floor and left foot will be in the air, in second count by the left foot tapping on the floor and right foot will be in the air. In count three need to move the both foots up and down and in fourth count right foot will be in the air same as followed by first unit with other foot.

When doing body practicing of Yakshagana most of the actors facing major problem is coordinating of all body parts like limbs, pelvic, head movements and relaxed facial muscles, so this tala practice can balance those kinds of possibilities.

Beginners, who do not know about rhythm, if they can practice with count like 12, 123... 12, 123 they can easily catch the movement as well as rhythm.

Watch the video below about 'Ashṭa Tala foot movement' practice for more details  
S.No.18. YAK, 'Ashṭa tala foot movement'. 08th March, 2019. 9.00 A.M. TO 11.00 A.M.

## **6. Triputa tala / Trivude tala**

It has

- 7 beats
- 7 counts

Triputa tala contains in 7 beat talas with 7 count but it differs from other talas in terms of its empty space and approach to rhythm.

|              |      |        |        |       |        |       |        |       |
|--------------|------|--------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
|              | ↓    | ↓      | ↓      | ↓     | ↓      | ↓     | ↓      | ↓     |
| Variation 1  | Dhim | Kita   | Tha-ka | Dhim  | Kita   | Dhim  | Kita   | Thaaa |
| Clap pattern | 0    | II     | II     | 0     | II     | 0     | II     | 0     |
| Beat count   | 1    | 2      | 3      | 4     | 5      | 6     | 7      | 1     |
| Variation 2  | Tha  | Dhi-ku | Tha-ka | Dhiku | Tha-ka | Dhiku | Tha-ka | Tha   |
| Clap pattern | 0    | II     | II     | 0     | II     | 0     | II     | 0     |
| Beat count   | 1    | 2      | 3      | 4     | 5      | 6     | 7      | 1     |

(To be continued)

Clap Pattern

0 – Single Clap

II – Double Clap

In this tala, foot movements are also different while practising the tala. From basic position on first beat we move our right foot apart from the left leg and tapping on the floor in the front with pronouncing the text ‘Dheem’ or ‘Tha’ and second and third beat we move and tap in a twice with our both feet up and down at the same place in the basic position with pronouncing the text of ‘Kita’ or ‘Dhiku’ (beat2) and ‘Thaka’ (beat 3). Here right and left foot both are tapping individually twice.

The fourth beat will be single and moving the right foot forward, tap on the floor in the front with help of the text ‘Dheem’ or Dhiku.’ Coming to fifth beat, lifting the right foot from the front to centre up and down tapping on the floor in the standing position and after that, immediately the left foot should be lifted and down, tapping on the floor with the text of ‘Kita’ or ‘Thaka.’ Here right and left foot both are tapping individually only once. In beat six and seven Same as beat 4 and 5 one more time

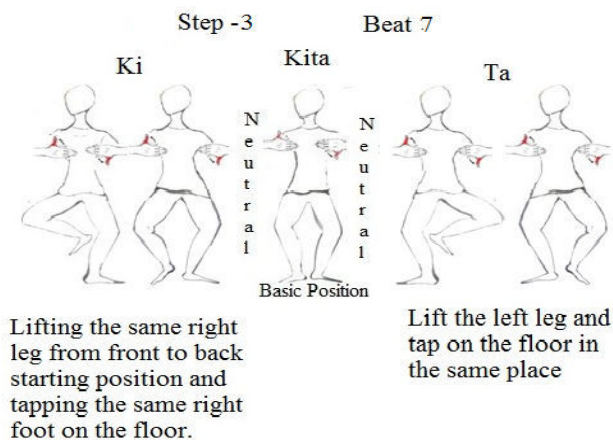
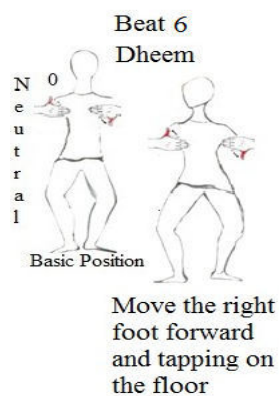
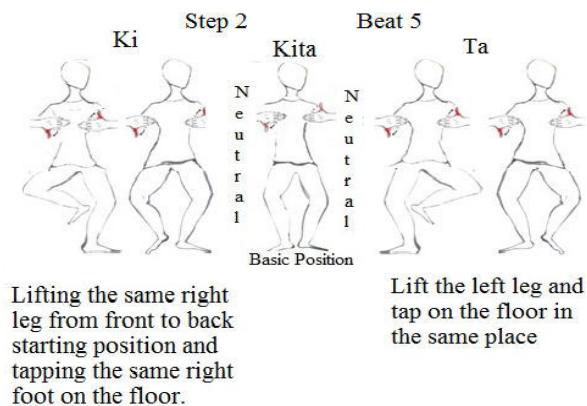
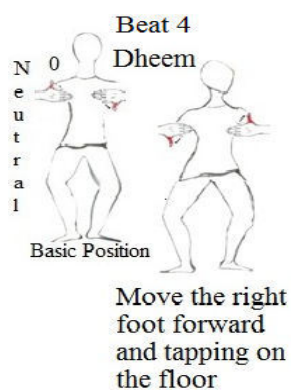
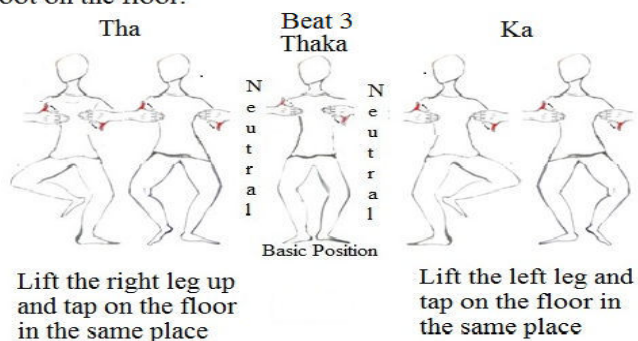
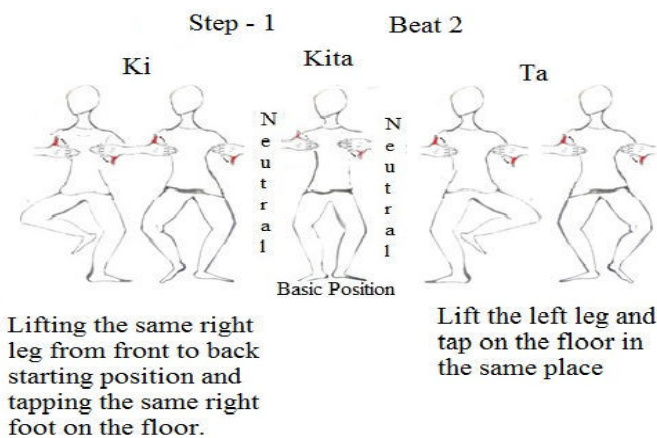
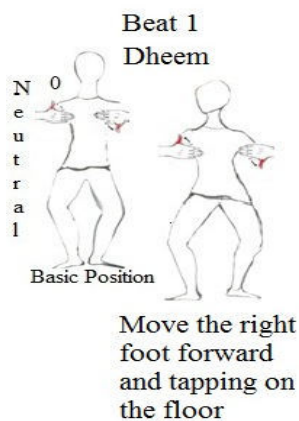
will continue. Here while practising tala 3 and 7 counts are making the free space in the rhythm pattern.

**Observations:**

As researcher I have gone through the detail study of Triputa Tala in way of 3 steps. In this process, 1st one contains counts in beat 1, 2 and 3. In beat 2 and 3 right and left foot, both will double tap on the floor. 2nd step in beat 4th will be single and the 5th beat has a single tap with two feet on the floor. The sixth is single and the seven is like the 5th beat.

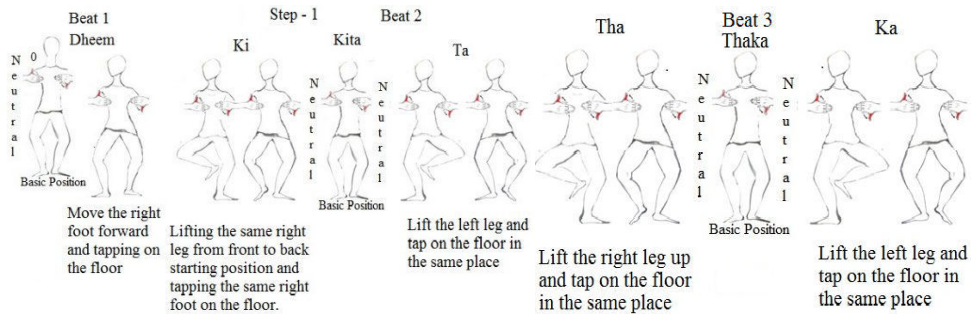
**Findings:**

In this tala, foot movements are prominent. In the step 1 according to the foot movement opened right palm and facing towards to the head direction will be the right side. When it comes to step 2, immediately the left palm will be opened and head direction will change. The direction will be from right to left but foot movements will be continuous in the right-side direction itself. In the 3rd step the right open palm is towards the head. And the foot movements are the same according to the step 2 movements. More details have been shown in the below diagram.

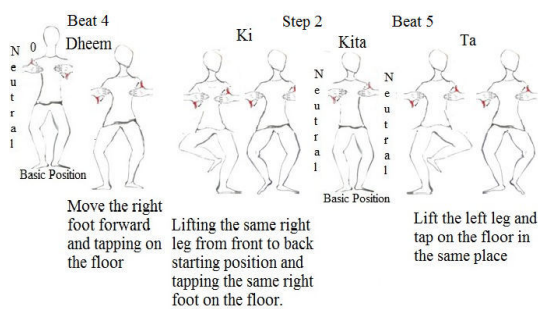


Below diagram illustrates the detailed study of Triputa / Trivude Tala foot movements

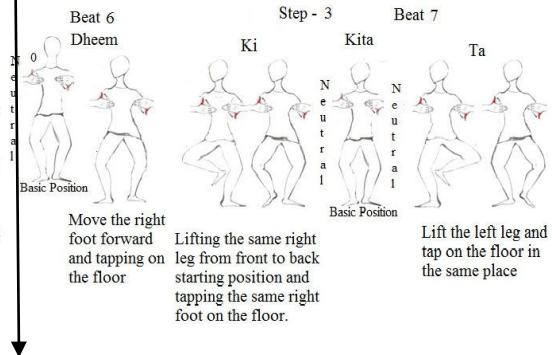
### Step - 1



### Step - 2



### Step - 3



Watch the video below about 'Ashta Tala foot movement' practice for more details

S.No.19. YAK, 'Triputa tala or Trivude tala1'. 09th March, 2019. 9.00 A.M. TO 11.00 A.M.

S.No.19. YAK, 'Triputa tala or Trivude tala2'. 19th March, 2019. 9.00 A.M. TO 11.00 A.M.



## **7. Aadi Tala:**

It has

- 8 Akshara
- 8 Beat
- 8 Count

Aadi tala has contains in 8 Akshara, 8 beat tala with 8 count.

|              | tha                                                                               | hattha                                                                            | dhinna                                                                            | diku                                                                              | thaka                                                                             | tha                                                                                | thom                                                                                | thadhi-nnaka                                                                        |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Clap pattern | 0                                                                                 | II                                                                                | 0                                                                                 | II                                                                                | 0                                                                                 | II                                                                                 | 0                                                                                   | 11                                                                                  |
| Beat count   | 1                                                                                 | 2                                                                                 | 3                                                                                 | 4                                                                                 | 5                                                                                 | 6                                                                                  | 7                                                                                   | 8                                                                                   |
|              |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

(To be continued)

Clap Pattern

1, 3, 5 and 7 0 – Single Clap

2, 4 6 and 8 II – Double Clap

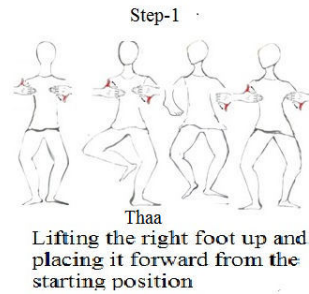
This Adi Tala which contains eight beat clap patterns, is like kore tala, but here kore tala's four beat patterns and other four of Aadi tala combine. In a beat 1, 3, 5, and 7 patterns will be single clap and in a beat 2, 4, 6 and 8 will be double clap. Aadi tala has different kind of foot movements and hand movements. Mostly we have concentrated on foot movements and once we practice thoroughly, then it becomes easy to catch the hand movements.

### **Observations**

As a researcher and practitioner engaged in the physical body practice of Aadi Tala. Process has given below step by step.

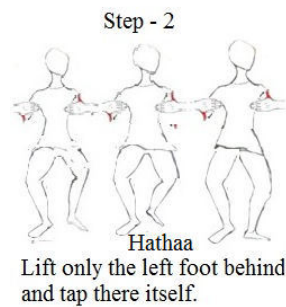
#### **Step 1:**

The practitioner must lift his right foot from the standing position and move his right foot up and forward completely and tap to the floor by using the text "Tha" in the process or count as one (1). Below shown diagram complete process of step 1.



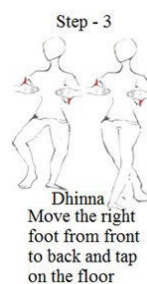
## Step 2:

Lifting the left foot up and tap to the floor there itself by using the text 'Hattha' or count two (2).



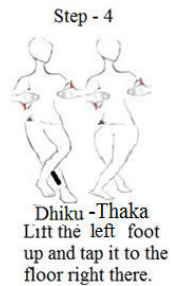
## Step 3:

Where we kept the right foot in the step one; from there the same right foot slowly moves to the back side of the left leg, i.e. to say, place the right leg behind the left leg. While doing this process using the text Dhinna or count as three (3).



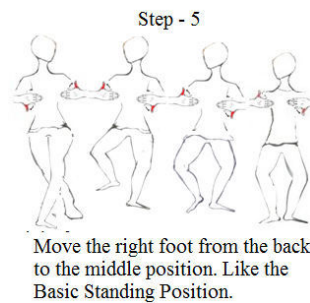
#### Step 4:

Lift the left foot up and tap on the floor there itself with the help of the text Dhiku – Thaka or count as four (4).



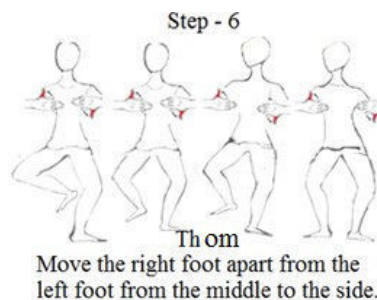
#### Step 5:

Here, practitioner can slowly pull his right foot from back to standing position with the help of the text ‘Tha’ or count as five (5).



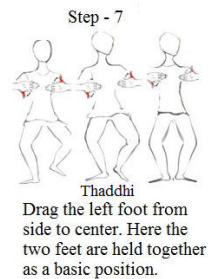
#### Step 6:

Move the right foot apart from the left foot from the basic position to the right-side direction. By the using the text ‘Thom’ or count as six (6).



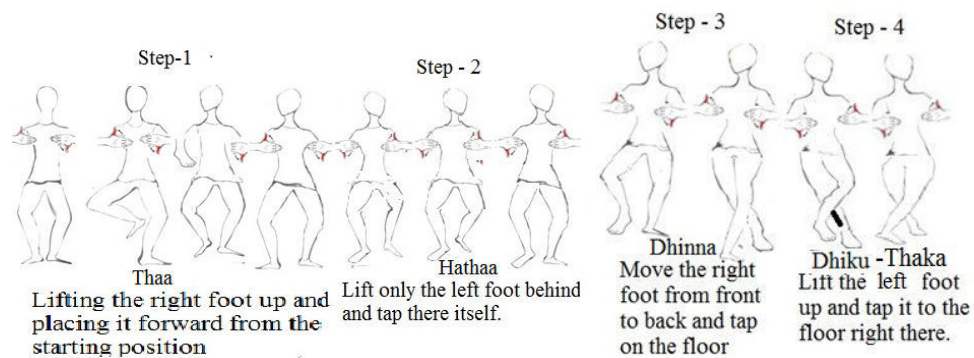
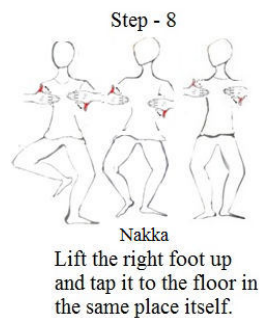
### Step 7:

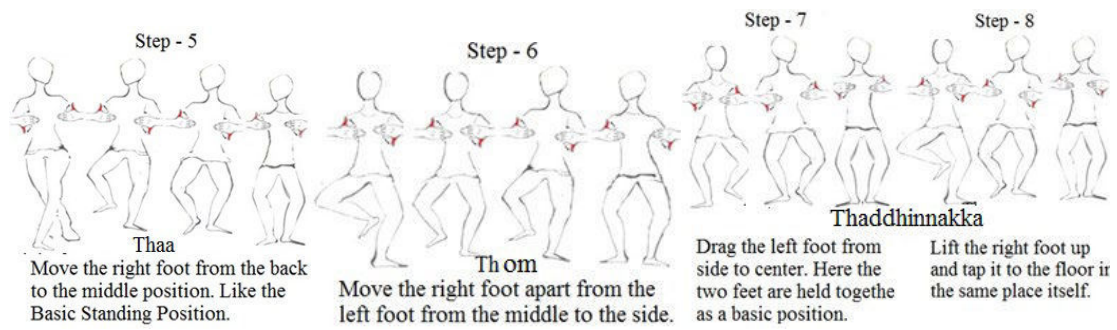
Drag the left foot from left side to the centre and here, again, the two feet are held together like as a basic standing position.



### Step 8:

Lift the right foot up from the seventh step and press the same spot on the floor. Again, comes the basic standing position.





The description and diagram above are for the right leg. The same happens with the left leg.

### 3.8 Conclusion

Present chapters discussed essential aspects of origin, history, structure, and role of talas in body and voice practice. As compared to other art forms selected for study, Yakshagana's uniqueness lies on its body movements according clapping pattern. Researchers realized transformation in various functionalities such as overcoming rigidity, improving breathing capacity, and sustaining energy. In the Yakshagana art form, the voice and diction of performers are in tune with the rhythm. The performer can move body parts according to the verses when reading any text. The form's uniqueness is that the actor can adjust the body's movements according to the rhythm. In this art form, rigorous training was given on "movements according to the rhythm" so the performer can express his emotions through bodily movements for every matra recited. The researcher realized that voice exercises helped pronounce sounds in various diction and tone. It is reflected while reading verses from the text during the practical workshop.

Simultaneously moving all body parts according to tala is challenging for actors. Concentrate on palm movements and foot movements at once while turning the body from centre to right side or left. Concomitantly stretching upper and lower body parts while reciting *jatis* and verses of text is also very difficult during the performance. Yakshagana exercise helps a performer overcome the above challenges and control his body efficiently and skilfully during the play's performance. One unique feature of this art form is the clapping pattern to denote rhythm during practice. The clapping pattern guides a performer to convey the meaning of matras and beats. This process leads the actor to improve his agility and move his body rhythmically.

# Chapter 4

## **“In search of Strengthening Body and Movement: An Expedition through Yoga, Kalarippayattu and Koodiyattam”**

### **4.1 In search of Inner energy and Focus: An amalgamation of Yoga Practices.**

#### **Introduction:**

Yoga is an ancient Indian spiritual practice for human well-being. This form originated in the Indian subcontinent and spread across the world, and was adopted by numerous countries. Yoga means achieving the unity of mind and body. The word Yoga is derived from ‘yuj,’ a Sanskrit word, meaning “conjunction or union.” The primary purpose of Yoga is to balance body, mind, and emotions. Yoga “teaches the suppression of all activity of body, mind, and will so that the self may realize its distinction from them and attain liberation.” Yoga helps in achieving human beings' physical and mental growth to radiate personality. Yoga practice positively works on the human from the physical state to the mental or emotional state. Through asanas, we can overcome negative feelings, anxieties, and stress. Yoga makes the mind calm and achieves balance. The primary purpose of asanas is to gain control over the body and mind. Asanas are necessary to learn about the human body, respiration, mind and beyond. One can control the mind and the body through the asanas. *Yogasanas* help to achieve holistic development.

Maharshi Patanjali developed *Yogashastra*. He compiled hundreds of Asanas. Among them, Namaskaras are an essential set of Asanas. Though used differently by different practitioners, yoga has some definitions. According to *Bhagavad Gita*, it is a skill in action. Elsewhere it is defined as a state of 'equanimity'. Patanjali gives yoga the “ability to direct the mind exclusively towards an object and sustain that

direction without any distraction.” Yoga deals with focus of mind and a state of equilibrium attained through the practice of concentration and alignment of the body. The primary purpose of asanas is to gain control over the body and mind. *Yogasanas* help to achieve holistic development. Asanas are necessary to learn about the human body, respiration, mind and beyond. One can control the mind and the body through the asanas.

There are many forms and variations developed by Maharishi’s and practitioners of Yoga. Bhakti yoga- fostering the deity-devotee relation as per *Bhagavad Gita*; Hatha yoga -founded by Matsyendranath combining physical postures with the breath control. Hatha yoga- also called as Bikram yoga, named after its eponymous developer, where the space is heated for added effect inducing further sweating and weight loss are some of the popular variations. Ashtanga yoga - created by T. Krishnamacharya, a vigorous form integrating eight limbs of yoga generating heat in body, Ramdev yoga- developed by Baba Ramdev for general well-being and weight loss in particular, and All these are the modified versions of the original Patanjali yoga with some changes and additions, to suit specific purposes.

The researcher practised some yoga asanas apart from the Balasana or Child’s Pose as mentioned above under gym practice. These āsanās are extremely significant for improving the performance of an actor as they are involved in developing overall flexibility and posture, which are essential for an actor to perform on stage. To quote the Polish theatre director and practitioner Jerzy Grotowski, “the actor is a man who works in public with his body, offering it publicly;” and through a “process of discipline, self-sacrifice, and moulding, attains inner harmony and peace of mind” therefore becoming “much sounder in mind and body”. For Grotowski, an actor must “speak” and “react” with the body.

Here, the yoga āsanās as practised by the researcher during his early stages of Exploration is discussed as follows:



### **I) *Tadasana* (Mountain Pose)**

This is known as the Mountain Pose, which basically functions as a starter for lot of other standing poses or āsanas in yoga. Hence, it may be said to be the most basic pose in yoga. Stand up either with feet apart hip-width, or the toes touching and heels a bit apart. Spread the toes apart and avoid locking the knees. Feel the muscles in inner thighs and make sure the muscles are relaxed. The spine should be in a neutral position. Engage the lower back and abdominal muscles to help stay in upright position. Take long breaths in a comfortable manner while keeping the same posture. Now, roll the shoulders up and back drawing the front of armpits back. Relax the shoulder muscles at the top of the arms and let the arms hang by the sides. Bring the chest a little bit up and forward in a comfortable position. Tuck the chin little into the chest making sure the neck is aligned with the spine. Keep looking down slightly while deepening the breath and focus on relaxing and engaging all the muscles. Maintain this position for about twenty to thirty seconds, and then move out of the pose. It helps to create awareness of muscles and balance strength and flexibility especially in the legs and hips.

### **II) *Phalakasana* (Plank Pose)**

Start by coming on to the hands and knees, with knees aligned with hips, and hands with the shoulders. Stretch the fingers widely apart, keeping palms connected to the ground while extending the legs behind and tuck the toes under. Keep reaching the heels back away from the body while coming up to a plank pose. The arms must be straight and chest lifting. Abdomen should be drawn in and lift the front of the body back towards the back of the body. Look forward and maintain this position for about twenty seconds. Then, slowly drop the knees down on ground, and revert to the initial position. This *asana* strengthens the arms, shoulders, wrists, abdominal muscles, and legs, and therefore develops flexibility and improves body posture.

### **III) *Bhujangasana* (Cobra Pose)**

The name of this *asana* comes from the Sanskrit word ‘bhujaṅga’ which means “snake.” Lie down on a yoga mat on the stomach, with forehead and top feet touching the mat. The elbows must bend to the sides closely, with palms downwards to chest. Finger-tips need to be in alignment with shoulder-tops. Now, the chest must be lifted above the ground by using back muscles. The neck should be in a relaxed position with elbows backwards. As the chest starts to face the ceiling/sky, look up. Press the hands to the ground so that the chest can be lifted higher, if it does not hurt the neck, shoulders, and lower-back. Make sure to keep elbows to the sides and in a bent manner so that the shoulders are not tensed. Hold on to this position and breathe slowly for about twenty to thirty seconds. Then, by lowering the body down, come to the initial position. This āsana is primarily meant for improving body flexibility.

### **IV) *Dandasana* (Staff/Stick Pose)**

Stretch out the legs keeping heels aligned with hip and pelvis in neutral position. Keep the hands by your sides with palms firmly planted on the mat. With the back straight, and face looking forward, try to bring pressure onto the hands. Gently breathe in and out. This is a seated pose that helps to stretch the shoulders and the chest and an effective pose for strengthening the back of the body, abdomen, and pelvis.

### **V) *Vrikshasana* (Tree Pose)**

Stand straight with arms in a relaxing position sideways. By spreading the toes, a bit, bring the weight towards the middle of the feet. Slightly bend the right knee and shift the weight towards the left leg. Lighten up the right leg by lifting the heel and maintaining balance on right big toe. Now, according to the maintenance of balance, the right foot may be placed on the top of the left feet against the left leg below the knee, or above the left knee with the help of hands. Keep activating the left leg and press the right foot against the inside of the left leg. At the same time, press the left leg back against the right foot. Open the right hip by moving the right knee back. Now by placing both hands in front of heart, in a *namaskaram* posture, extend the

arms towards the sky by widening them. Lift and extend the torso. Try to maintain an upper posture where the chest is reached forward a bit and up, straighten the arm and reach finger-tips up towards sky. Then, the eyes must look downwards to the ground with the head straight and stay focused while standing in this position for about twenty to thirty seconds. Bring the palms together in front of the heart, and then move the right foot down next to the left. This must be repeated with the other leg. This *asana* helps to maintain balance and concentrate while strengthening the legs and also tones the abdomen.

#### **VI) *Paschimottanasana* (Seated Forward Bend)**

Stretch out the legs while sitting straight with spine in erected position. The toes must be flexed towards the body. Breathe in and raise both arms above the head and stretch up. Exhale, and bend forward from the hips with chin moving towards the toes. Hold the right wrist in front of the feet or place the hands on the legs, whichever is comfortable. Place the head to the knees and have long deep breaths. Stretch the spine forward towards the legs with the head and keep breathing. Then, stretch out the arms in front and inhale. Come up to the sitting position and exhale. Lower the arms by the sides with palms firmly planted down. This *āsana* builds flexibility in spine and thus improves body posture.

#### **VII) *Utthita Trikonasana* (Extended Triangular Pose)**

Stand straight with arms relaxing sideways. Move a step back to right. Make sure it is a big step. The right foot must point in a forward direction, and the left foot to the left direction. Balance bodyweight equally across both legs. Open the right hip and reach “both arms out to the sides.” “Engage the abdominal muscles while reaching the right arm forward. Take the right arm down to right big toe. Keep stretching the left side of the torso while moving the left arm towards the ceiling/sky. Try to keep both the arms as straight as possible. Try to look up towards left fingertips keeping the chin slightly tucked into the chest, if possible; or otherwise, keep looking down. Press into the feet with right hip back allowing both sides of torso to extend forward. Maintain this position for about ten to twenty seconds. Then, using the strength of abdomen, come back to the standing position. Step the right foot back next to the

left, and repeat on the left side. This āsana stretches and strengthens the arms, shoulders, legs, and abdomen.” It also helps in improving digestion by stimulating the abdominal organs.

### **VIII) *Savasana* (Corpse Pose)**

This āsana comes at the end of yoga practice, also known as Dead Man’s Pose. Lie down on your back on a mat and extend both legs and feet on to the ground, allowing the feet to gently fall aside and bring the arms to the sides with palms facing upwards. Eyes must be closed and try to feel the ground below the body and keep breathing. Gradually, bring the shoulders down further. Arms should be relaxed fully and try to release the tension from the body, so that it is in a complete relaxed mode. After about two minutes, bring one hand to the heart and the other to the belly and take a deep breath. Bring the knees into chest and gently allow them to fall to the right side, allowing the head to relax on right arm. Keep breathing in this position. Maintain this position for about one to two minutes. Now, take the hand that is on the floor and by using the hands, press the body up to seated position. Here, the *āsana* ends. It is a very important pose because it allows the body to absorb all the practice done.

The above said *āsanas* provided strength, balance, flexibility, more energy, and brighter moods for the actor trainee which resulted in the wholistic development of health which is an essential thing for any actor. In fact, the early practices of the above said *āsanas* worked as a healing device and equipped the researcher with immense happiness to plunge into tasking physical cum psychological work. But only in the later stages with the exposure and collaboration with many practitioners the researcher identified certain applicable possibilities of yoga for the acting training , here most often it is a self-taught process.

### **4.1.1 Breathing exercises**

In yoga, breathing exercises play a vital role. Breathing is crucial for human beings, and the proper technique and alignment of breath while performing various tasks is essential for yoga practice. Yogic practices are broadly divided into two categories, namely *āsanas* and *pranayama*. The *āsanas*-physical exercises involve correct

breathing and alignment of various parts. Some asanas cure specific pains when done correctly. The pranayama focuses exclusively on different breathing techniques.

Yoga helps both physical and mental health. It is a stress reliever and keeps the mind calm and alert. Each asana has a specific purpose apart from flexibility. Yoga is highly beneficial in improving the overall quality of life by strengthening the body, maintaining body balance, and managing stress. It is most helpful if done regularly and systematically

Reciting mantras while practicing asana is believed to improve the overall impact of the yoga. It helps in elevating the consciousness as it has added spiritual benefits. They help in awakening various chakras - energy centres in the body. These chakras are also imperative in yoga practice as unblocking, activating, and balancing the chakras in body for optimal health. After performing asanas, Savasana is done at the end usually to calm the body and mind after the workout, followed by Pranayama. The focus while practicing is not on perfection but harmonizing body and mind, Increase body awareness and mindfulness.

Thus, Yoga is not just a bodily practice but it helps in holistic development of the individual. Yashoda Thakore asserts yoga and classical dances of India are 'complementary'. While the former is an apparent non-communicative and the latter, a communicative art, the linking aspects are the clarity of mind' and 'conscious movement of body' in 'congruence with breath'.

In context of dramatic performance and acting, practice of yoga helps in increasing flexibility, agility, improving strengths of muscle, thus perfecting the movements in acting.

### **Salutations:**

There are three types of salutations:

1. Suryanamaskaras
2. Ashtanga namaskaras
3. Shiva namaskaras

#### 4.1.1.1 Suryanamaskaras

There are numerous asanas focusing each body part or a combination of parts. Of all, Suryanamaskaras are a kind body stretching exercises. It is better to term Suryanamaskara as "Chalana Yoga Prakriya" rather asanas. These are a set of 12 asanas. They should be performed during sunrise or sunset on an empty stomach. The entire set with mantras and appropriate breathing are a complete form of exercises that improve the body language, maintain correct posture, and enhance flexibility. They involve almost all body parts and should be done on an empty stomach for best benefits and reduced injuries or stress. Twelve Mantras:

- A) *Om Mitraye Namaha*
- B) *Om Ravaaye Namaha*
- C) *Om Suryaaye Namaha*
- D) *Om Bhanave Namaha*
- E) *Om Khagaye Namaha*
- F) *Om Pushno Namaha*
- G) *Om Hiranyagarbhaye Namaha*
- H) *Om Marichaye Namaha*
- I) *Om Adityaaye Namaha*
- J) *Om Savitre Namaha*
- K) *Om Arkaaye Namaha*
- L) *Om Bhaskaraaye Namaha*

**Conclusion:** The mantra to be uttered at last is - *Om Sri-Savithru-Suryanarayanaaye Namaha*.

**First Position (*Tadasana*):**

Raise both arms and bend backwards while taking breathing. The shoulders should be touching the ears. The buttocks should be pushed as forward as possible. Stretch the knee caps and place both legs on the floor.

**Second Position (*Uttanasana*):**

Slowly exhale and bend forward, focusing on the waist. Slowly touch both hands on the floor with both hands on either side of the legs.

Note: Practitioner has to bend at the waist. Generally, the practitioners bend the spinal cord. It should be avoided.

Another mistake is that practitioners focus their vision on the following when leaning forward on the floor instead of looking straight.

**Third Position:**

Right leg should be stretched back as far as possible while breathing. The right knee should be bent and touched on the ground, and the Head should be slightly raised towards the sky. The left leg is kept straight between two arms by stretching the muscles of the thigh and toe.

Note: The chest should be stretched backwards. The spinal cord should be stretched forward.

**Fourth Position (*Dandasthiti*):**

The practitioner, while exhaling, should bring the left leg back and keep the whole body in a straight position. Hands should be placed at a right angle (90 degrees) to the ground, simultaneously looking forward and breathing slowly.

**Fifth Position:**

While exhaling, bend the body with the support of toes. By placing the weight on both hands, slowly lift the butts slightly above the ground, touching the chest on the forehead to the ground. Breathing should be stopped and controlled for a few seconds in this position.

**Sixth Position (*Urdhva Mukhasanam*):**

Lift the chest and forehead body while inhaling without moving the arms & legs and place the body at a right angle to the ground. Later while watching the sky stretch the knees and pull back the waist. In this position, the practitioners should breathe slowly and not close their eyes.

Note: long breaths should be taken, and eyes should be closed in this position.

**Seventh Position (*Adhohmukhasanam*):**

While exhaling, lift the waist, and touch the Head to the chest. Keep the distance of 75 cm between the legs. The body should be triangular.

**Eight Position:**

The third position should be performed as it is while inhaling.

**Ninth Position:**

The second position should be performed as it is while exhaling.

**Tenth Position:**

This position should be performed by inhaling and repeating the first to the second position.

**Eleventh Salutation Position:**

Keep both legs apart in shoulder-width alignment. In this position, both hands should be joined together so that the palms and fingers are touched. Moreover, the joined thumbs should face the chest.

**Twelfth Sama Sthiti:**

The body should be relaxed without any tension. The Head (without turning the sides) and eye vision should be straight. Long breaths should be taken and observed. The feet should be in the "V" shape.



#### **4.1.1.2 Ashtanga Surya Namaskaras:**

The main purpose of Ashtanga Surya Namaskaras is to do asanas concentrating on the eight parts of the body. One needs to follow the eight rules to achieve for holistic development.

- Yamam: Controlling negative thoughts
- Niyamam: Practicing good habits
- Asana: Learning the postures required for long-term meditation
- Pranayama: Practicing rhythmic breathing
- Pratyahara: Controlling the mind to avoid addicting to bad habits.
- Dharana: Focusing mind on the meditation
- Dhyanam: Continuous meditation

#### **Samadhi:**

Complete absorption of the mind in meditation (washing away from evil thoughts)

These eight rules help a person to be physically and mentally strong.

#### **First Position (*Tadasana*):**

The practitioner has to inhale profoundly, raise their arms above the Head, and interlock fingers by facing both palms towards the sky. Simultaneously, practitioners have to raise their shoulders towards their ears while exhaling.

#### **Second Position (*Uttanasana*):**

Exhale, bending forward with outstretched arms and waist extended. Keep both arms parallel to the floor on both sides of the legs and head raised and looking forward. After doing this for a short time (5 seconds) the head should be tilted and touched to the knees.

#### **Third Position (*Utthita Trikonasana*):**

Inhale and stretch the right leg backwards at 150 cm from the standing position.

After touching the right foot on the ground, the body should be turned to the right side.

Raise both arms parallel to the shoulders

The left leg should be turned 90° to the left.

The right leg should be turned forward at approximately a 45° angle.

While exhaling, the body must bend to left and the left palm should be touched to the left foot's side. The right arm also should be placed parallel to the left arm below.

Look at the sky from the right fingers.

While exhaling, bend the left leg forward at a 90° angle.

Bend the arm so that the right arm touches the shoulder (in this position, the body should be parallel from the right leg to the right arm. during this state, breath should be observed by practitioners.)

Note: Reach the starting position by releasing the body from the end position to the starting position. The exact process should be done in the opposite direction. The same rules apply to the left arm.

After that, come back to the second position and start the fourth position.

#### **Fourth position:**

After performing the *Uttanasana*, place the bodyweight on both hands and lift both legs to raise the backside. This position should come as *Bhujangasana*.

Inhale, and the body should be kept perpendicular to the ground.

**Fifth Position:**

In this position, the practitioner can perform any one asana as per one's choice. Later come back to normal position.

**4.1.1.3 Shiva Namaskaram:**

These are the most effective asanas to energize the external and internal body parts.

Shiva namaskaras are very useful in energizing the external parts of the body like the shoulders, waist, and thighs. Breathing gives the internal body parts. Shiva Namaskaram makes such breathing a rhythmic habit and helps in quick relief from fatigue.

**Practice process:**

**Sama Sthiti:** Keep both legs in a relaxed position approximately 75 cm apart, parallel to the shoulders. **Salutation Position:** In this position, the two hands should be joined together so that the palms and fingers are touched. Moreover, the joined thumbs should face the chest.

These above-mentioned and described yoga practices helped the researcher to make the body agile. This formed a part of preliminary exercises to develop concentration, balance, breathing, coordination, posture, flexibility, and mobility – all of which are extremely necessary for performing any kind of theatre art. The researcher was greatly benefited by the yoga practice in his quest for learning Kalari, Kathakali, and Koodiyattam. Yoga is the best alternative to gym practice, if anyone wants to cultivate the body without putting too much stress on the body.

## **4.2 Sensing the Body and extending its possibilities through Kalarippayattu**

### **4.2.1 Introduction:**

Kalari is an important form of martial art that has its origin in Kerala in the 12th century CE. An intangible heritage form of Kerala, Kalari is often referred to as the “mother of all Chinese and Buddhist martial arts.” It is a form that has flourished under royal patrons and is one of the oldest surviving martial art forms. It has immensely influenced both the martial arts and treatment since its origin. The institution which imparts knowledge of martial training is called Kalari (training space). It has played an important role in shaping the culture, history and society of Kerala and is an essential part of its contemporary popular culture too. Kalari also played the role of a level playing field in Kerala before the colonial conquest by the Dutch, Portuguese, and later by the British, by spreading the message of an egalitarian society as Kalari was accessible to all without class, caste, religion, or gender barriers.

It is a world-famous martial arts technique originated and developed from the Kalari system. It trains our body to face any kind of physical situation, and has received global attention in the last few decades due to its applications in healthcare, fitness, and overall well-being of the human body. Mastering the techniques of Kalarippayattu helps the practitioners to face injuries and mental distraction and gain strength. Kalarippayattu has many divisions. Some of them are: 1. Maithari 2. Kolthari 3. Angathari 4. Verumkai, etc.

Apart from its rich historical, and martial legacy, scholars have highlighted Kalari’s importance in healing therapy too. Since it is rooted in age-old traditions and has been sustained over many centuries as a body practice it possesses universal application in many areas and can be used along with Ayurveda, Yoga, etc. Recently, interest to learn Kalari is growing both within and outside India due to its universality, contemporariness, and useful applications in various fields. Therefore, it is desirable to understand the origin, knowledge system and various schools of

thoughts of this ancient martial arts system before we explore the Kalari's contemporary applications in various fields such as: Acting, Dance, Yoga, Tourism, Ayurveda, Marma etc.

#### **4.2.2 The Kalari system:**

According to popular Hindu myths, Lord Paraśurāma, who is an incarnation of Lord Vishnu is said to be the creator of this martial art form. He is also credited as the founder of the first Kalari which was established in Kerala. The legend goes that it was Lord Paraśurāma who had established 108 Kalaris in Kerala following his destruction of Kshatriyas to avenge the killing of his father by a Kshatriya King. He also created Kerala, by throwing his powerful axe into the sea, and the sea moved back to give way to land, as per Hindu mythology.

The Kalari had perceived the human body as a unique system that has been trained to perfection so that it provides full control and unlimited strength to the human body. The Kalari system is for all practitioners irrespective of their age, gender, race, or religious background.

#### **4.2.3 Different Schools of Kalari: -**

The Kalari is an extensive and holistic discipline with its own school of thought and practice. In order to systematically understand the discipline, one has to first have a clear understanding of the various schools of the discipline. Therefore, let us have a cursory look at the existing schools of this popular martial arts form.

The Kalari practice is divided into two schools - North Kalari and South Kalari. To understand more about the Kalari, first, one has to explore the key features and differences between these two schools. The fundamental difference between these two schools of practice is that the North Kalari focuses on Martial arts while the Southern counterpart emphasizes the Kalari treatment. Sage Parasurama and Sage Agastya are considered as the creators of Northern and Southern schools of practice respectively.

The Kalari is envisioned as a centre of learning, knowledge, and healing for humans. It also functions as a venerable shrine of the powerful Hindu deity Siva/Sakthi. This

deity is worshipped by all practitioners and gurus as the custodian of knowledge and discipline. This is been elaborately discussed in the section of *poothara vandanam*.

A Kalari teacher or guru is known by the title “Panikkar.” It has originated from the term ‘Parinayaka’ which means “captain of warriors.” As per the Buddhist traditions, it is Panikkar who teaches the art of battle and how to use weapons to his disciples. But, over many centuries, the titleholders came to be known as a different sub-sect of the warrior caste, Nayar. From this Kalari tradition, Kalarippayattu got developed.

#### **4.2.4 Kalari’s historical importance in Kerala:**

Kalari had played a significant role in the context of Kerala’s history and society. For instance, key exponents of Kalari have enjoyed a cult or demi-god status among both the commoners and practitioners. The heroic deeds of legendary Kalari warriors like Thacholi Othenan of Malabar region are mentioned in the popular ballads (*vatakkal pattukal* of Northern Malabar). They are said to have penned between 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

Devotees believe that Lord Ayyappa who is also known by the popular name, Harihara sutan (son of Gods Shiva and Vishnu) himself, mastered Kalari, under the popular exponent Cheerappanchira Panicker. It shows the importance attached to Kalari by the ruling classes of Kerala.

The below mentioned are some of the popular Kalaris that stood of the test of the time and disciples are trained in these even today. These include – “Mayyazhi Angakalari (Kadathanad),” “Dhooliyamakul Kalari (Kottayam),” “Dharmadom Kalari (Thalasseri),” and “Chirappan Chira Kalari (associated with Lord Ayyappa of Sabarimala cult).”

Historically, the Kalari system helped to create equality among the warring communities and castes of Kerala during tumultuous times of political instability and foreign invasions. However, Kalari had to face a setback during the British rule when they banned it as they feared that it might motivate the people to revolt against the colonisers. However, in recent past, it has witnessed a resurgence and revival thanks

to the renewed interest and popularity shown by both foreign and Indian practitioners.

As a martial arts form, Kalari had played a significant part in the early struggles against the European colonizers. Its contributions can be understood from the fact that the first documented internal rebellion against the British rule in Kerala was started by Kalari exponents between 18th and 19th centuries. Some of the key personalities who led these heroic rebellions included Kerala Verma Pazhassi Raja hailing from the Kottayam dynasty of Wayanad and the Diwan of princely state of Travancore Velu Tampi who attacked the British Residency in 1808.

Through the ages, cultivation of harmony among all, and peace of mind to the practitioners, are the major functions of Kalari in Kerala. It is said that all kinds of Martial art advocate universal harmony. Kalari also treats both the mind and body as unique and connected entities that cannot be separated. As a result, several exercises like breathing, meditation, etc., that are part of the Kalari training system helps to calm one's body. To master *Marma* also, the practitioners are required to undergo several steps. One can achieve the status of true *Asan* (master) only when he completely masters Amrit position for *Marma* treatment. Apart from its rich contributions in Kerala's history, society, and culture, it is a live art form with a contemporary outlook and approach to life. Now, we may discuss in detail about the contemporary practical applications of Kalari.

#### **4.2.5 Kalari and Meditation: -**

Meditation or *Upasana* is being practised by the disciples of Kalari from time immemorial. The objective is to gain both physical discipline as well as mental strength and concentration since physical discipline alone cannot provide the students everything to face challenges. Due to this, the exponents of the Kalari system emphasise on acquiring mental health along with physical training in Kalari. Apart from that, each Kalari has developed its own system of meditation practices over a period of time. The disciples practise and learn it under the special guidance of their master only.

#### 4.2.6 Application of Marma in Kalari: -

*Marma* refers to the pivotal points of our body. They are very important in the functioning of the human body and learning of *Marma* points makes up an integral part of Kalari learning. This stage requires a lot of dedication and hard work so that only the best disciples could do it. The lessons are taught by the Guru with the aid of diagrams and sketches of our body. At the outset, the practitioners try to understand what are the key *Marma* positions and their importance to our body system. This makes up the first stage of the learning and it includes studying the names of important *Marmas* in both Sanskrit and Malayalam.

It is believed that in Kalari tradition, the *marma*'s origins can be traced back to the times of ancient Indian Ayurveda texts such as *Suśruta Samhītā* written by Suśruta and Vagbhata's *Aṣṭāṅgahrdayavaiḍūryakabhāṣya* which can be further traced back to the ancient text *Charaka Samhītā* written by Charaka. This text dating back roughly to 1<sup>st</sup> century CE is a treasure trove of knowledge and it contains descriptions of 107 *marmas*. The chief among them are as follows:

1. *basti* (abdomen)
2. *hridaya* (heart) and
3. *shira* (head).

Further, Charaka mentions clearly *marma* positions by outlining our body into *skandha* and *śākhā*. While the former considers the human body as a branch with arms and thighs having 44 *marmas*, the latter treats the body as a trunk having *hridaya*, *basti*, *shiras* with the rest of the 63 *marmas*. He further elaborates the interconnectedness of all these *marmas* too in his work.

Charaka also talks about the existence of *prāṇa* in *hridaya*, *basti* and *shira* – body parts that altogether make up the pivotal *marmas*, indicating that one need to protect these vital parts in a battle or emergency situation. He devotes an entire chapter under *Śarīrasthāna*, to identify 44 *marma*-points and significance, and the effect of damaged *marmas*. It is worth mentioning in this context that Kalari system gives a befitting acknowledgement for this noble identification of *marmas* as described in



*Suśruta Samhītā*. Suśruta also laid emphasize on the importance of *marma* by mentioning that even if a person is badly injured, he can still survive as long as his *marmas* are not damaged.

#### **4.2.7 Tourism and Kalari: -**

The practical application of Kalari and its interdisciplinary approach to tourism has gained currency in recent times, thanks to the growth of tourism. Large numbers of tourists are visiting India for their treatment and rejuvenation of body and mind through therapies. Therefore, it has opened enormous opportunities to the Kalari system in terms of revenue.

Kalari treatment is found to be effective in treating the nervous system or musculoskeletal system. Currently, several Kalari treatment centres are operating in India to tap the potential of the huge in-flow of tourists who come here for rejuvenation therapy and healing.

#### **4.2.8 The Importance of Kalari in Dance: -**

Kalaripayattu in dance – Being a universal martial art, that can connect with the multiple requirements of various art forms, Kalari discipline has attracted dance aficionados from all over the globe. Dance practitioners and enthusiasts have turned their eyes to the Kalari to give more flexibility to their bodies and more perfection to their respective art forms.

In this context, it is worth mentioning that, already Kalari has been widely used in traditional art forms of Kerala. For instance, it has been widely received by traditional dance forms like Kathakali and Theyyam. The artists who practice these age-old art form, frequently rely on the techniques of Kalaripayattu to enhance their body movements, flexibility, and improve concentration.

#### **4.2.9 Kalari as a sports Medicine:**

The medical applications of Kalari are vast and untapped till date. Being a universal health system that emphasizes on natural rejuvenation and holistic way of life, Kalari can help sportspersons to treat injuries, reduce stress in the field and gain confidence through a rigorous fitness regime.

#### **4.2.10 Reduction of Crimes:**

Kalari helps in reducing the crime rates by strengthening the weak. It is a powerful self-defence technique that can be used to fight crimes across the world. Kalari enhances self-discipline and promotes harmony among the disciples.

#### **4.2.11 Other Wide-ranging influences of Kalari:**

The exploration of movements and gestures of Kalari has influenced a lot of artists and performers. Also, *Kalari* is adapted to amalgamate with contemporary trends. The blending of Kalari with a lot of other art forms provide contemporary take on various art forms like dramatics, dance, theatre.

The Kalari practice as resulted in to various exercise which adopted by fitness enthusiasts and actors irrespective of variables like region, gender, and age. Especially in a world that's undergoing a change as a result of pandemic, the enthusiasm for fitness is increases and maintaining a balanced and health body-mind dynamic has become a priority. It also plays a major role in wellness tourism which is known for in Kerala in preventive therapies, strengthening and rejuvenation sessions far from the sedentary lifestyle and stress.

#### **4.2.12 Influence on Films / Acting: -**

Martial arts and its adaptations in movies are not new. The *Kalari* techniques are used to maximise the performances in acting. This optimisation is a part of performance and training. The role and reach of the dexterous moves of Kalari in acting has wide influence on film industry. Curated using techniques that are traditional in nature, the combat art form has made its presence in various films in India and North America.

In the article "Doing the Exercise: The In-Body Transmission of Performance Knowledge in a Traditional Martial Art," Zarrilli, discussing the characteristics of martial and theatre artist, writes "The ability to "be," to exist in the "here and now," is an observable real characteristic of consummate martial and theatrical artists. This way of viewing the reality of the act, and the performer's involvement in the act and with the actions, was articulated by Zen Buddhist masters with respect to Japanese arts. But the

observation is equally vivid when applied to other Asian martial and traditional theatrical arts and artists...possess the same inner calm and fullness of performance in the here and now within their own culture and forms of performance as do the Indian masters of *kalaripayattu* martial art and Kathakali dance-drama.” He also writes that “...there is manifest a concentrated, effortless flow of energy in space as the practitioners execute intricate gymnastic jumps, turns, leaps, and exchanges with weapons. To see weapons manipulated at near lightning speed (up to 100 blows per minute with a short stick) is breath-taking. But as in all Asian martial and theatrical arts, the apparent effortless masks the ears of repetitious training required to achieve such mastery.”<sup>62</sup>

An acting trainee will always have a dream to attain the flawless movement for one’s body that is the reason behind the present researcher-cum-practitioner to stick on to Kalari’s *Adavu* and *Chuvadu*.

#### **4.2.13 Adavu and Vadivu - Sequence of steps and poses:**

The practice of *Kalari* is discipline oriented and highly demanding. It consists of a blend of several techniques. These traditional techniques are elaborate and extensive, involving various sequences, instructions, and commands. The challenging, severe, and intense intricate sequence of steps are called as *adavu* and the subsequent poses are called *vadivu*. The steps are gruelling in nature, training not only the body but also mind. The steps are practised in the *kalari*, a space that is sacred and open to only after the prayers and offerings by the master. They are followed through accurate commands and instructions, *vayttari* that are passed on to the *guru* or the master from generation to generation, who recites them in the unique space of learning the techniques. The traditional practice of *uzhichil* or the massaging is an important part of *kalari*, which is the oiling of the body to sustain it fit, like oiling a machine where the parts of the body are well-maintained and strengthened as a whole. The traditional robe that one drapes tight around, the *kachhakettal* is to protect the body during various swings and techniques avidly using the space or the training place to and from across the fencing or the gymnasium.

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<sup>62</sup> Zarrilli, “Doing the Exercise,” 1984, pp. 191-206.

The various *adavu* consists of tackling with scrupulously accurate defensive tactics. Acquiring such tackles takes a lot of discipline, devotion, and dedication. It also requires energy, flexibility and breath controlling. The dual mechanism – attack, and defence is interestingly blended in the training of body and mind. It sharpens focus on training, strengthening of physique, neuro muscular co-ordination and controlling of body and senses. The intricate pressure points or the vital point, *marma* in the human body and its knowledge is important in the practice because it involves disciplining both body and mind. Meditation also finds an important place in Kalari. It helps in keeping mind focused, controlled and sound.

During the learning at first, simpler moves are taught and subsequently the focus shifts to complex techniques. The practice starts with leg-exercises like initial warm-ups. The physical moves are observed, picked up by the novices, and are repeated to excel. As the techniques become complex, the time of the sessions also gets longer and when novices leave the Kalari early, the advanced practice sessions are longer. Observation is a very important aspect in learning Kalari. Only at a later stage, when the steps are thorough, use of weapon is permitted. With various shifts in style form, transitioning from defence to attack and attack to defence, and change between backward and forward, weapon combat techniques include a lot of thrusts and blows.

*Mayepayattu* is one among the *adavu* where body movements have the twists and turns with eight exercises involving legs and stronger reflexes, response, reaction, and tight and flexible muscles. It has instructions for various turns, twists, and poses in a sequence. It follows instructions one after the other and in the end are put together involving the manoeuvrability of the whole body. Another *adavu* called the *verum kai prayogam* or the bare hand fighting movement is one of the trickiest of the techniques where empty hand defence is used.

In Kalari, it is not only the *adavu* that is learnt but also the commands, the rituals, and poses. The poses are called *vadivukal*. A set of eight modules is significant in *kalari*. These are called *astavadivu* comprising of *vanakkatari*, *chuvadutari*, *maytari*, *koltari*, *ankatari*, *verumkaitari*, *marma chikilsatari* and *upasanatari*.

The *vadivu* or the poses are highly influenced by the natural surroundings. Nature is looked at for inspiration and has made its way in this martial form. The poses are similar to the movements of a lot of animals like “*gaja vadivu, varaha vadivu, simha vadivu, ashwa vadivu, kukuda vadivu, mayoora vadivu, marjara vadivu* and *sarppa vadivu*” which are borrowed by observing by the movements of different forms of organisms like elephant, tortoise, lion, horse, dog, peacock, cat and snake respectively. The most pivotal aspect of the influences of this organism is their alertness, which plays a major role in *Kalari* techniques. The inspiration drawn from moves of various organisms help to have variety in the movement, and does not make it restrictive even though it is not easy to master. The various elements of nature are observed, adapted, and practised in this system of martial arts.

*Gaja vadivu* reflects the movement of an elephant, with its body and strength given great importance. The constant practice to maintain body, its strength and agility is extremely important in *kalari*. The pose is used to strengthen hips and spine aims at providing flexibility like that of an elephant’s trunk; the gradual extension of muscles and stretching replicate the movement of an elephant’s trunk. The pose also involves the use of both relaxation and tension techniques. Zarrilli in the article “Kalarippayatt, Martial Art of Kerala” writes, “The first pose learned is Gajavadivu, or the “elephant pose. This pose is the beginning stance for each of the meippayatt.”

Similarly, *simha vadivu* involves techniques similar to the moves of a lion. *Kalari* is often known for its extensive leaps and shifts takes inspiration from those of a lion. Thus, movements are like lion’s royal leaps as Phillip B. Zarrilli calls the movements of *Kalari* in the article “Kalarippayatt, Martial Art of Kerala.”<sup>63</sup> The flow of energy in the movements is as majestic as that seen in lions.

The choreography of the movements through the flawless shifts of legs, hands, heads, and eyes match that of snake in *sarpa vadivu*. The movement is serpentine to show agility, preparedness, and flexibility.

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<sup>63</sup> Zarrilli, “Kalarippayatt, Martial Art of Kerala,” 1979, pp. 113-124.

The inspiration drawn from the movement of tortoise is important as the indigenous martial art involves various defensive tactics in which shielding is most characteristic. The feature of tortoise is to defend oneself from any attack. Such tactics are used especially during the weapon techniques in Kalari, for example the use of weapon called *parisa* to shield.

The practitioners maintain a physique that has signature styles, in which footwork is the main aspect. The steps and poses with footwork are called *chuvadutari*. Footwork in *kalari* requires a lot of practice to attain the steps and poses right. It has eighteen rhythmic movements. The effectiveness of the poses like *maytari*, *koltari* and *ankatari* depends on the accuracy of *chuvadutari*. It involves the flexible movements of commands, for example - the various *chuvadu* that are part of the modules are *akka*, *anga*, *catta*, *karadi*, *koti*, *kuthira*, *malakka*, *panni*, *pokka*, *naga*, *nikka*, *tanca*, *therukka*, *yer*, etc.

Practice and Participation as research in the two Kalari Workshops helped the researcher to get in to the nuances of this tradition. By elaborately exploring the practice with a purpose, the following discussion gives priority to the select number of exercises with the line drawings graphically freezing the action units. In order to maintain its rootedness to the land, the researcher extensively used a set of vernacular expressions in Malayalam in the following part too.

#### **4.2.14 Researcher as a Practical Participant - Self-exploration in practice with disciples: -**

Here, the researcher practically participated in the Kalarippayattu actor's body practice workshop with two different Gurus. It was an intensive physical workshop; the training being based on sequential pattern comprising of various kicks and postures of animals. Due to this combination, the participant discovered diverse energies in action and the way of applying them to any performance. Mainly, the workshops focused on body functionalities like resistance, correction of body posture, energy, flexibility, control of weight, focus, breathing, maintaining of balance, composition, and awareness of the centre of body, to explore the actor's challenges and possibilities with their physical body. The workshops, according to researcher

participation, consisted of learning, doing, development, practice, place, and time, and observed creative movement patterns based on Kalari for actor's training.

The researcher had participated as a practical participant in the first and second phases of the Kalaripayattu physical body actor training workshop conducted by Lakshman Gurukkal and Padma Kumar at the Department of Theatre Arts, Central University of Hyderabad. The first phase of the Kalaripayattu workshop was held from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 to 15<sup>th</sup> September 2016 (15 days), and the second one was from 20<sup>th</sup> September to 5<sup>th</sup> of October 2019 (15days).

In the first phase of the Kalari workshop, the researcher worked with Lakshman Gurukkal along with the other students, where we had started a guiding set of Kalari based exercises which could increase and improve the body flexibility, strengthen participants body and mind. So, he was not following a particular Kalari regime unsteadily but rather followed a method which is conducive for this workshop where most of the people were interested in learning acting, and using Kalari for their physical approach to the roles they would perform.

Creative movement patterns based on Kalaripayattu for actors training involved the use of Kalari movements in combinations to utilize as an actor's training tool. Here the guru Padma Kumar, being an exponent of Bharatanatyam and Kalari, mellifluously blended both the movements and created a composite patterns of movement clusters for the workshop. As a participant-cum-observer and as a researcher, documentation and participation were used. This was followed by training of movements with the documented material in the workshop.

By understanding the priority, Lakshman Gurukkal started with warmups to strengthen the participants' body. The exercises begin with the Suryanamaskaram in Kalari - the way how it is done, how was the process, and how it got repeated. After this, comes the Kalari Namaskaram. Now, certain questions arise here - How does this Kalari Namaskaram helped us to get into a structured rhythm in undertaking certain body movements? How it connects and transforms one action to the other without the loss of rhythm? So, the Kalari Namaskaram ensures concentration to the direction of mind as well as respect to the work which we are going to do. In a way,

this exercise was training our mind, as well as making our body much more flexible thereby making us to do perfectly the limited scarification with its curls, shapes, and forms. Kalari Namaskaram helps actors instil discipline to manage and generate their concentration, peripheral vision, balance, control, perfection in posture of the body and breathing etc. Kalari Namaskaram was extensively practised by contemporary dancers in their training and most of the performing artists. The direction provided by this Namaskaram in starting the daily exercise regime of acting-training, helped the researcher to understand the starting process, and the development of reverence for the act he was going to perform.

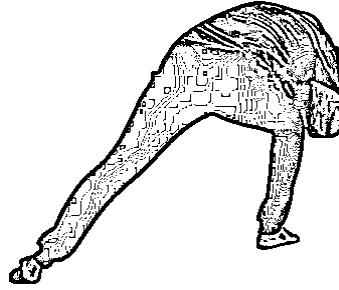
Each exercise emphasises the flexibility of the legs and arms, and in many of the Kalari patterned movements, legs and hands were used. Therefore, Lakshman Gurukkal resorted to make us study leg movements which included structure of the process, important observations, and important movements of all *vadivus*. *Vadivu* is the practice and implementation of movements through an actor's body. It involves a two-hour practice in total. The exercises like *Poothara Vandanam*, Surya Namaskaram, *Vadivus*, help the participant to correct postures of the body, and develop the body in exploring different types of functionalities. The three watchwords are – Learn, Do, Repeat. These Kalari exercises made the body of the researcher agile.

#### **4.2.15 Poothara and Guruthara Vandanam (Kalari Salutation):**

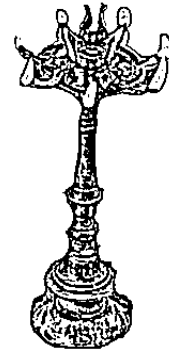
*Poothara* and *Guruthara Vandanam* form the first step of Kalari salutation. It is mandatory to take the guru's blessings before the practice of Kalari. *Poothara* is a structure of seven steps representing seven wheels of power as embedded in humans, and is associated with seven Gods (Vignesvara, Chandika, Viṣṇu, Varahascha, Sadaguru, Kali, Vastu Puruṣha). *Guruthara* is another elevated structure in the Kalari, located between *Poothara* and western pillar, where ancient gurus of Kalari are prayed and worshipped.

In the Kalaripayattu training, the master is called Gurukkal. He sets his right foot in the space while entering, and then bends to touch the ground with reverence.

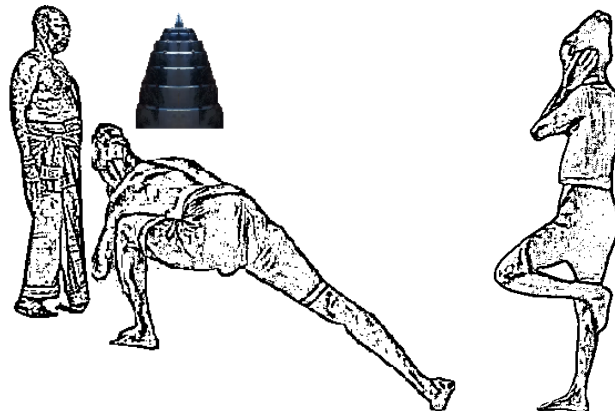




The traditional lamp is lit which holds five wicks.

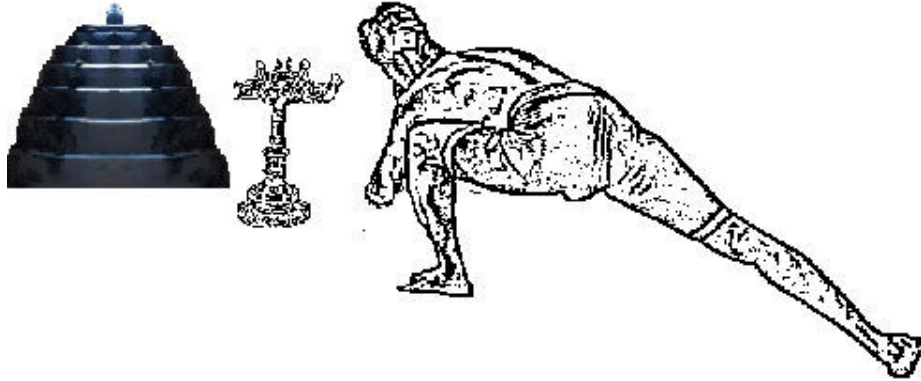


Generally, the “Namah Shivaaya” – Panchakshari mantra is chanted. The flowers used are tulsi, hibiscus, and tumba (*Leucas Aspera*), to write “Om” before placing it with reverence to invoke the “Poothara” and the “Guruthara” to obtain blessings of the divine power and the first gurus.



The participants enter the space of Kalari with their right feet first. Then they fall at the guru’s feet as a mark of respect, and pay him Gurudakshina (chiefly consisting of money, betel leaves, areca nut, *kacha*, and *mundu*). They are dressed in *langoti* or *arakacha* – loincloth, and subsequently receive a massage using medicated oil. Now,

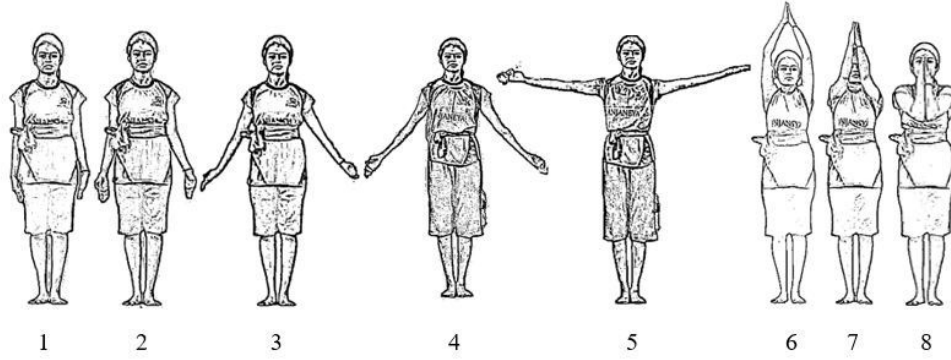
they become ready for training. The rituals mark the beginning and end of training each day. After this, the participants go right near the “Poothara” and touches the bottom step with right hand, and brushes the fingers against his forehead and chest, thereby paying respect.



With the increase in expertise in Kalarippayattu, he conducts this ritual through a series of specific moves, turns and delicately orchestrated leaps. Then, for a moment, he proceeds to pray at the *Guruthara*. At the end of the day’s class, he pays obeisance once again, by stepping back even as he faces the *Poothara*.

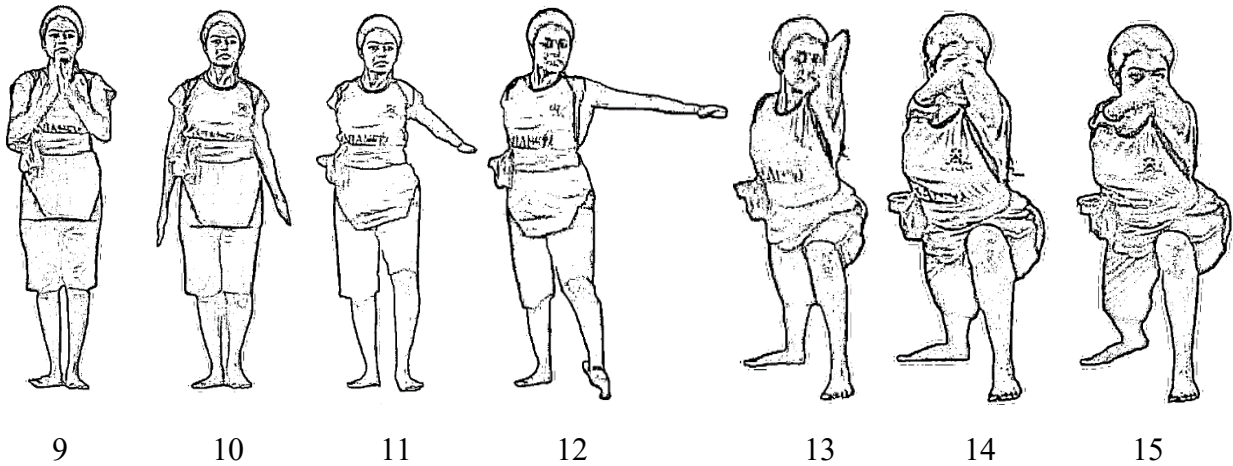
### **Kai Koopi Thozuthu:**

Participant standing in a relaxed position. Feet together in a ‘V’ shape with both hands close to the body and palms touching the thighs in this position (1). Slowly, the participant stretches both hands away from the body at shoulder level. Palms will face up and raise above the head, and both the palms will touch each other. During the movement, the participant’s whole body stretches upwards. Close elbows to the front and bring the hands down close to his body, covering the chest and palms closer to the face. Here the participant’s whole body starts to activate and stretches upwards.



### **Maaradakki Valinyu Amarna:**

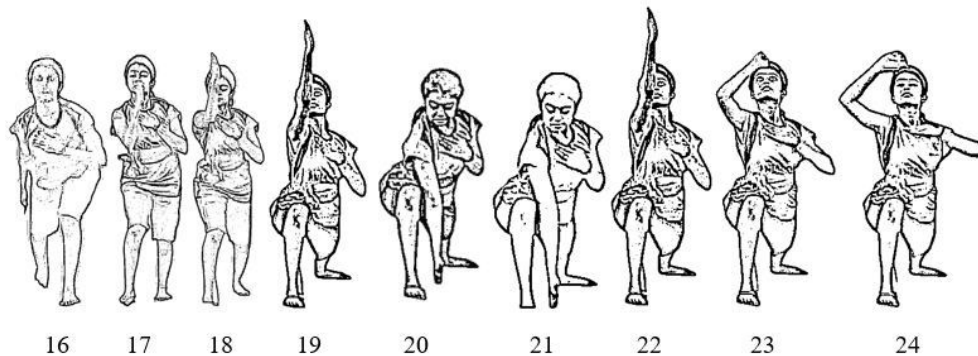
Bring both the hands down. The left hand and the left leg must push forward to the front in a swinging motion (11 and 12), with the left hand covering the participant's face by bending the elbow and touching the right shoulder, and the left-hand fingers touching on the upper chest.



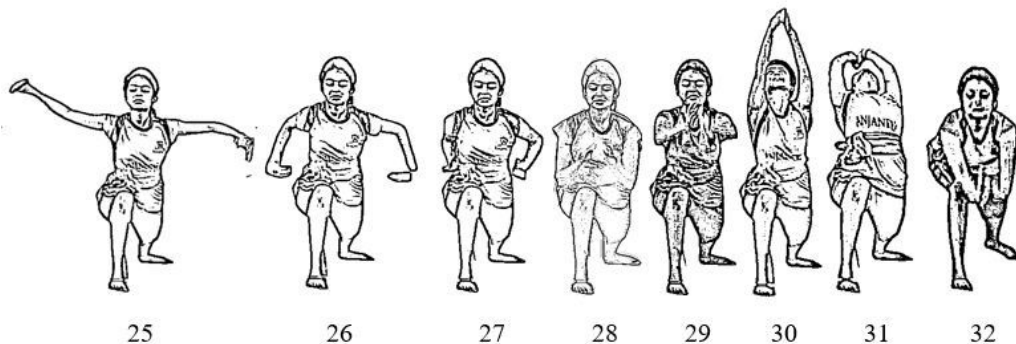
### **Valathu nadannu Kalarithottu vandhichu:**

Stretch the participant's right leg forward. Move the right hand from the back towards to the face and stretch it up to the front. The participant sits close to the ground by bending knees and keeping the left leg stretched to the back. The palm of left hand touches the participant right upper chest and the right hand touch the floor. After that, bring the right hand back to the forehead in a circular motion and the face should be pointing towards the palm. When the hand reaches above the head, palm

is brought to the forehead as if the thumb is touching in between the participant's eyebrows. During this action, the left hand remains at the participant's upper chest.

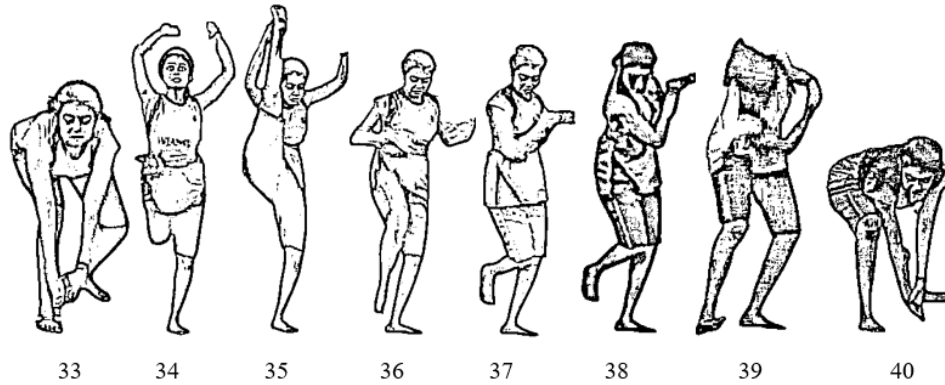


Now, bring both hands towards the side with palms facing back. Bring the palms toward the hips (focusing outwards). Hands should move in front at the chest level. Hold the palms together, and stretch up. While the upper body is stretching back, face towards to the hands at the same motion and bring them down towards the floor, and make sure that the same position is maintained. As the practitioner is about to touch the floor, then he slowly brings the left leg towards the top of right leg.

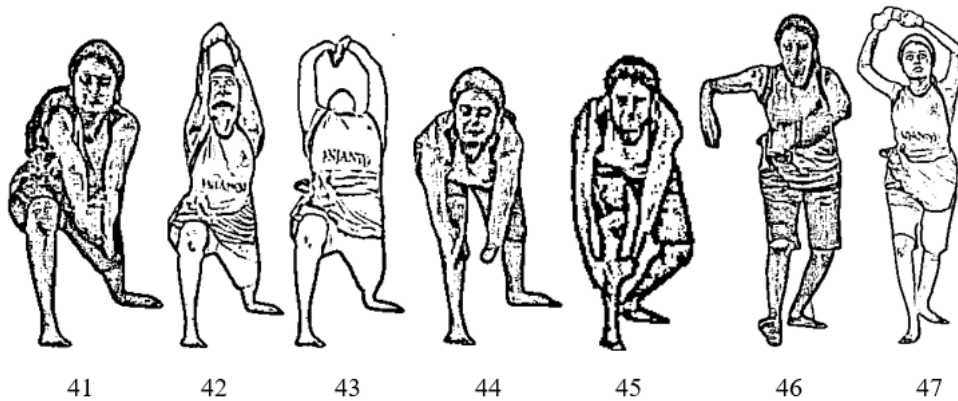


### **Valathu kal tooki valathottu neki chaviti:**

The practitioner stands up raising both the hands up, swings the right leg upwards and touches the right palm above the head. The practitioner turns 45° towards his left, keeping both palms together by the left shoulder, and simultaneously both the hands and the right leg is stretched towards the front.

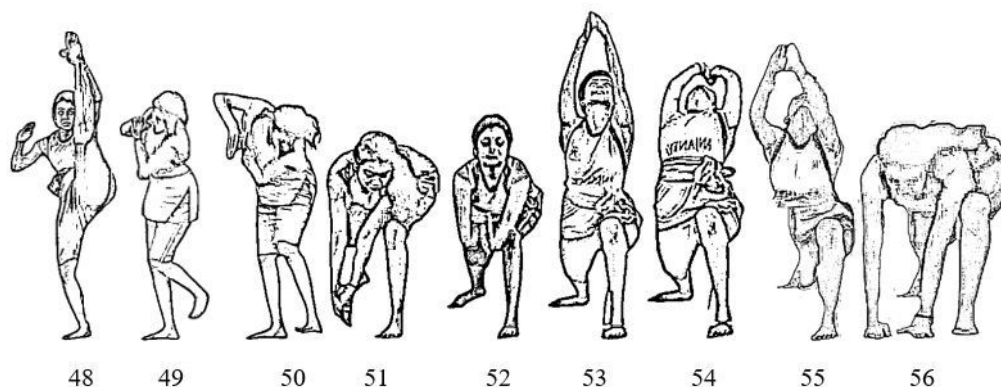


Bend down and touch the floor. Maintain the same action with both hands together stretching to the front and rise (while face pointing towards to the palms) till the body bends towards the back.



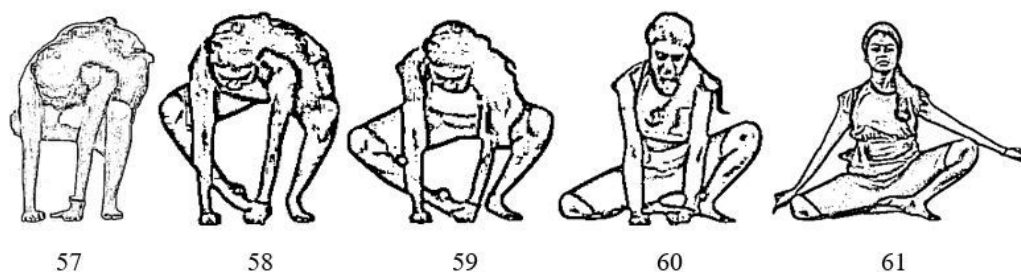
#### **Edathukal kal tooki edathottu neki chaviti :**

Here, the practice will be done with the left leg. The practitioner stands up raising both hands up (47), swings the left leg upwards and touches the left palm above the head (48). The practitioner turns 45° towards to his right (49) keeping both palms together by the right shoulder, and simultaneously both the hands and the left leg is stretched towards to the front (50). Now, bend down and touch the floor (51). Maintain the same action with both the hands stretching together in front (52) and raised up (53) (while face pointing towards to the palms) till the body is bend towards the back (54).



### **Valathu athil pandhittu:**

Both the palms should touch the floor from the sitting position. With support of both hands, the participant's right leg is folded in such a way that the body from knee to toe touches the floor (57, 58, 59 and 60) with the right thigh resting on it, and the left leg in a squatting (pandhi - position) position.



### **Muttuthottu and Muzhupputhotu: (knee and shoulder – touch)**

Take the hands from the supporting position, and stretch it away from the participant's body and rest it on both knees (61) while the elbows should not be bend. Cross over the hands and touch the opposite knees (62). From the muttuthottu position, open the arms down and stretch it, and bring towards the shoulder level (63). Bend the elbows and touch both the shoulders (64).

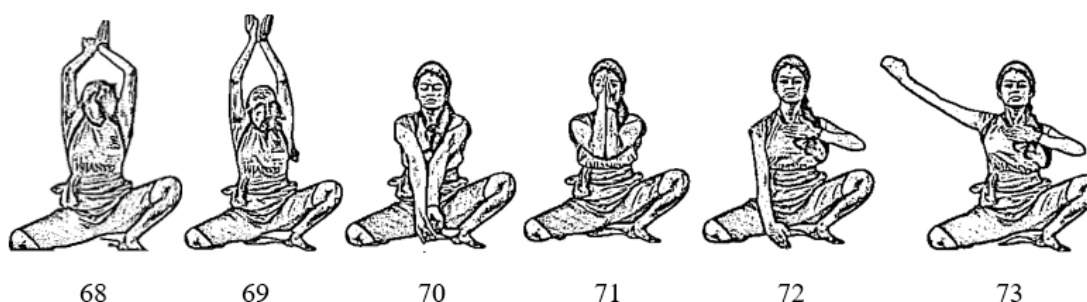


### **Kai nere Koopi thozuthu: (hands straight, palm together and praying hands)**

Take both the hands up (65) and bring it toward the front. Make sure that the palms are together and bring it down (70). Bring the hands up close to the body, raise up, stretch to the front, and touch the ground. Bend the elbows, keeping both the hands together and covering the chest part. Again, repeat Muttuthottu and Muzhupputhotu three times from the cross-hands position to praying position (71).

### **Thottu vandhichu:**

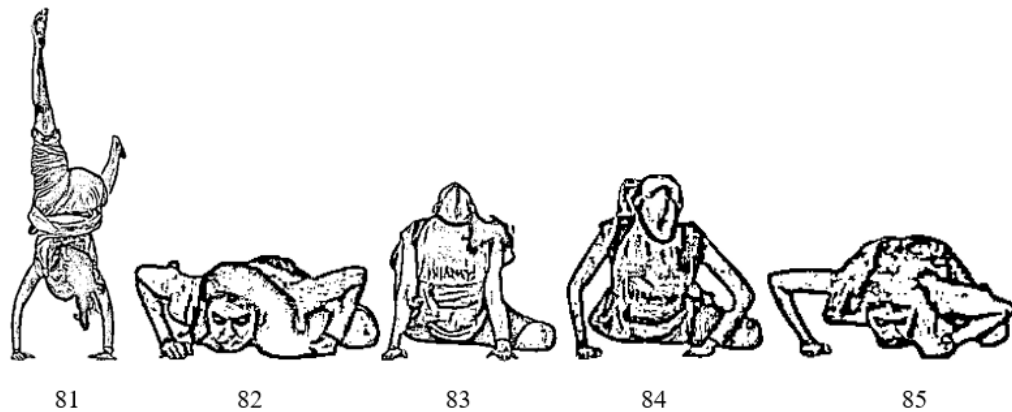
From the praying position (71), keep the left hand on the upper chest. Bring the right hand down and touch the floor (72). Stretch the right arm out and touch the top of head (74).



### Nelam Patti Vandichu:



Stretch both the hands out (75) and bring palms together above the head, while the face points upwards to the roof (76). From there, close the elbows and bring it down. Open the elbows and bring the elbows down at the chest level with palms touching each other. Open the palm (77) and touch the floor at shoulder distance; and then by balancing the body weight on participant's hands, propel his right leg up followed by left leg. Once he gets the balance, then kick and stretch the right leg up (81). Touch down using the left leg first, and the right leg will follow. Bring down the both legs to the floor and lie down on the floor.



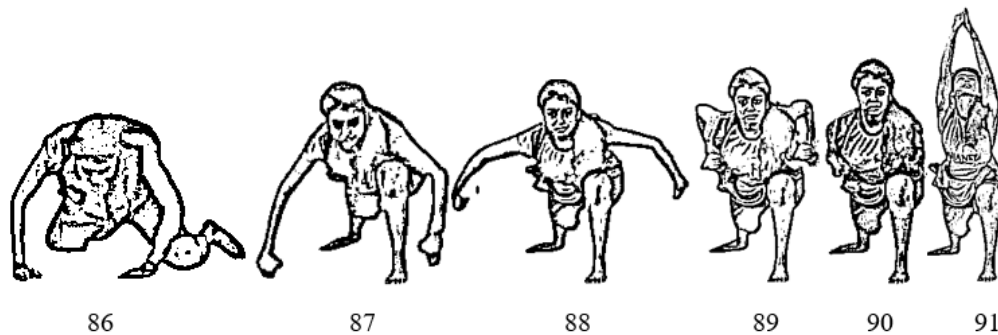
Fold the participant's left knee towards the left side till it touches the left hand (82) (the whole body and inner thigh of the left leg should rest on the floor). Then with



help of the participant both arms bend his upper body stretch back (83) and touch his head with right leg toe (84). Again, come back to laying position (85).

**Kai nere Koopi thozuthu: -**

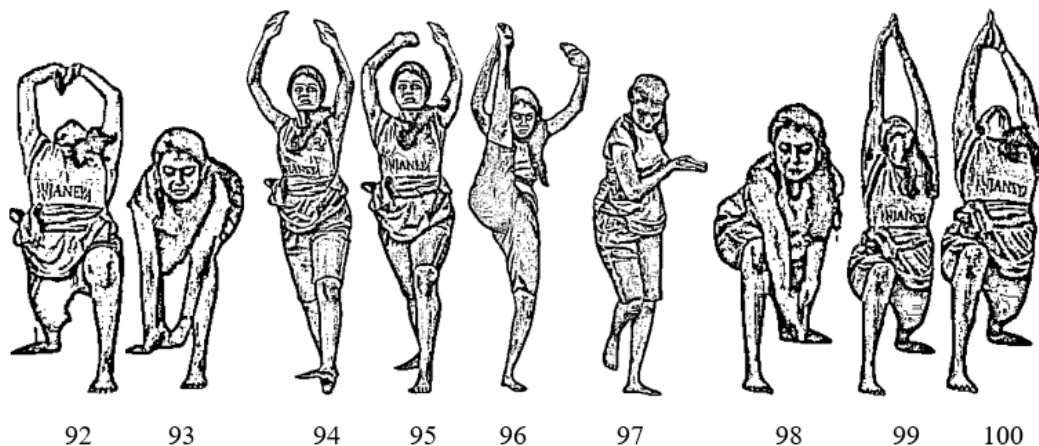
From laying down position, lift the body by standing on the arms and knees in jumping action. While using the hands on the floor (86), bring the left leg to the left knee touching left shoulder and left toe touching left palm. At the same time, stretch the right leg back and balance on both legs. Take the hands from the floor (87).



Bring both the hands toward the side palms facing back (88). Palms should be brought towards the hip (89) (focusing outwards); hands moving in front at the chest level (90). Holding the palms close, stretch up (91). While the upper body is stretching back (92), face towards the palms. Keeping the same motion, hands must be brought down towards the floor and the same position needs to be maintained (93).

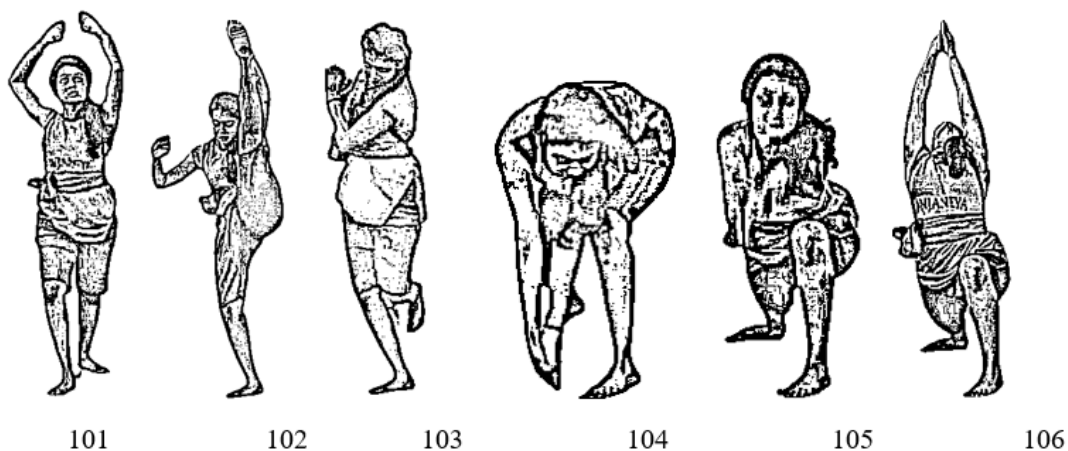
**Valathu kal tooki valathottu neki chaviti:**

The practitioner stands up raising both hands (94,95), swings the right leg upwards and touches the right palm above the head (96). The practitioner turns 45° towards his left (97), keeping both palms together by the left shoulder, with both hands and right leg stretched towards the front simultaneously (98). Bend down and touch the floor (98). Keep the same action with both hands together stretching to the front and raised up (99), and (while face pointing towards to the palms) till the body bends towards the back (100).



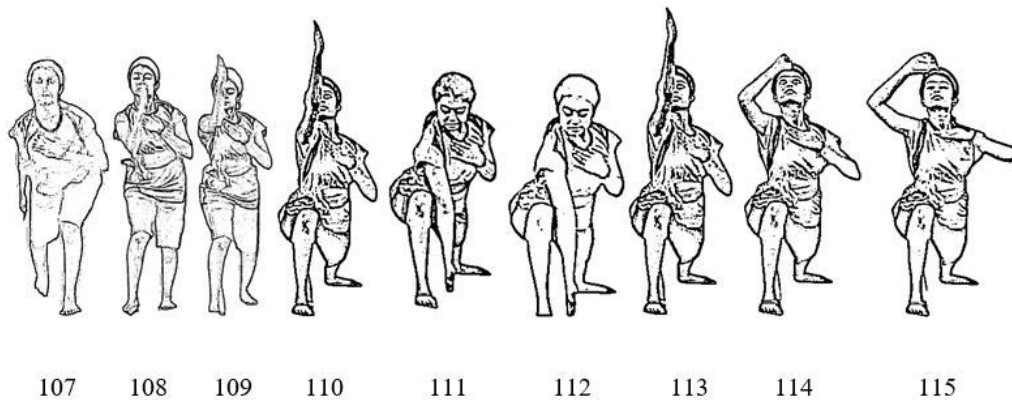
### **Edathukal kal tooki edathottu neki chaviti:**

The practitioner stands up and raise both hands (101); swings the left leg upwards and touches the left palm above the head (102). The practitioner turns 45° towards his right (103) keeping both palms together by the right shoulder and simultaneously both hands and left leg are stretched in front. Bend down and touch the floor (104). Maintain the same action with both hands together stretching to the front (105) and raised up (while face pointing towards to the palms) till the body is bend towards the back (106).



### **Valathu nadannu Kalarithottu vandhichu:**

Stretch the right leg forward. Move the right hand from the back towards to the face and stretch it up in front. The participant sits close to the ground by bending the knee and keeping the left leg stretched to the back; and the left-hand palm touches the participant's right upper chest and the right hand touches the floor. Bring back the right hand to the forehead in a circular motion in the same action. The face should point towards the palm when the hand reaches above the head. The palm is brought to the forehead as if the thumb is touching in between the participant eyebrows. During this action, the left hand remains on the participant's upper chest.



Now, bring both hands towards the side with the palms facing back. Bring the palm towards the hip (focusing outwards). The hands must move in front, at the chest level. With both palms together hold the palms close, and stretch it up. While the upper body is stretching back, face should be towards the hands, and at the same motion hands are brought down towards the floor with the same position being maintained. As the practitioner is about to touch the floor, then the left leg must be brought towards top of the right leg.



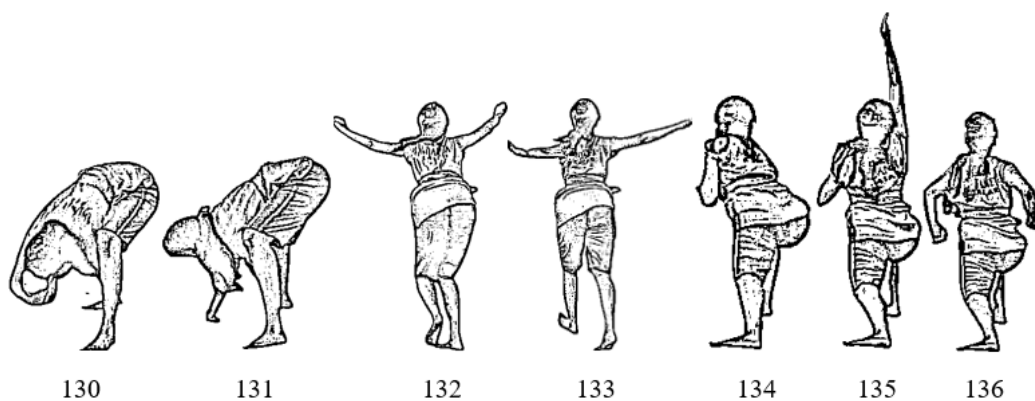
### **Pala marayil thirinja vangi:**

Bend and stretch back from the neutral position (122) by raising the right hand and keeping the left hand to the participant's right side of the upper chest. Bend the body in front while stretching the right hand to the front (123,124 and 125). Bring the participant's left leg in front and stretch the right leg back (125), with the left knee bending and forward (126) in a bowling action (127 and 128). With palms open, rotate the hand and bring it to the back of the head. Again, rotate the upper body while the legs are fixed. The head should be at the knee level (129, 130 and 131) and turn the body around to the back (132).



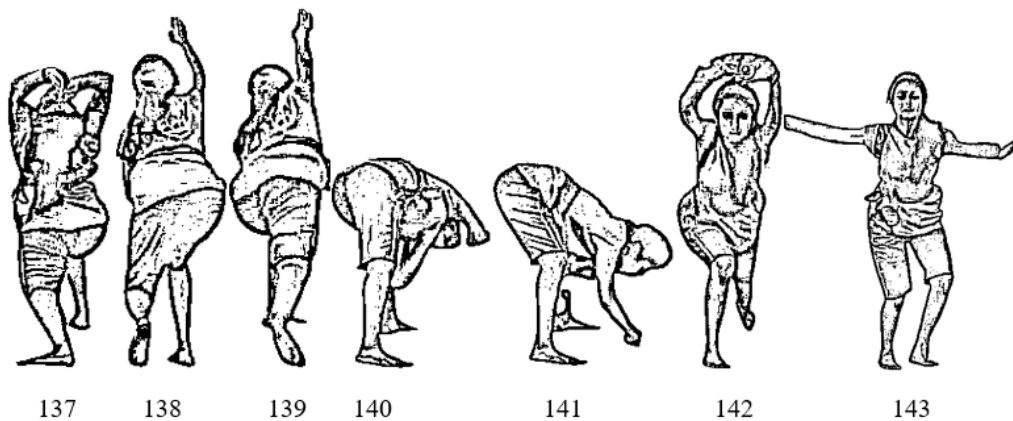
### **Kai nere Koopi thozuthu:**

Open both the hands and move two steps forward (132 and 133, Edathum valathum nadannu Kalari vandichu) with the right hand touching the floor (134). Bring back the right hand to the forehead in a circular motion with the face pointing towards the palm. When the hand reaches above the head, the palm is brought to the forehead and the right thumb is touching in between the participant eyebrows. During this action, the left hand remains on the participant's upper chest (135). Stretch both the hands (136) upwards to the back.



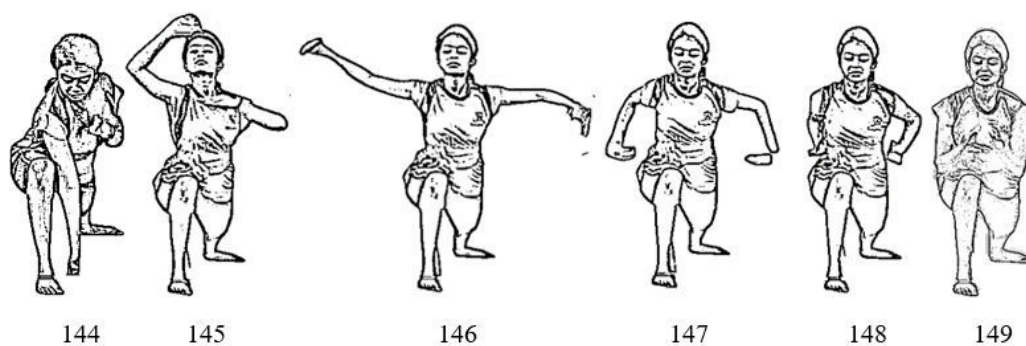
### **Pala marayil thirinju vangi:**

Bend and stretch from the neutral position (137) by raising the right hand. Bring the right hand straight up and stretch forward, by bringing the left hand down and take the same hand to the participant's right side of the upper chest. Bend the body in front and while stretching the right hand in front (138 and 139), bring the participant's left leg also in front, and stretch the right leg back (139) with the left leg knee bending and forward (139). Like a bowling action with open palms, rotate the hand and bring it to the back of the head and rotate the upper body while legs are fixed at the same position. The head should be at the knee level and then turn the body around in front (140, 141 and 142).



### **Kai nere Koopi thozuthu: -**

Here, both the both hands are open. The participant can move two steps (143) forward (Edathum valathum nadannu Kalari vandichu) and stretch the right leg forward. The right hand touches the floor (144) and after that bring the same hand back to the forehead in a circular motion. The face should be pointing towards the palm. When the hand reaches above the head, the palm must be brought to the forehead with the thumb is touching in between the participant eyebrows. During this action, the left hand is brought down to the participant's right side of the upper chest (145).

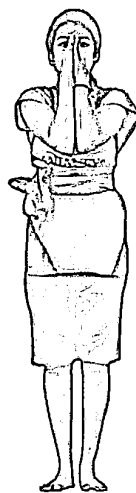
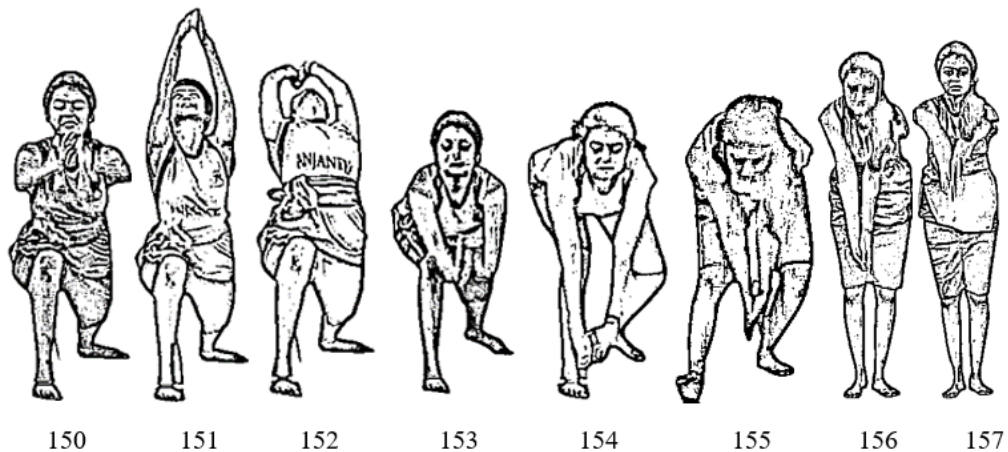


Bring both the hands to the side with palms facing back (146). Bring the palms towards the hip (147) (focusing outwards). The hands will move in front (148) at the chest level. Keep both palms together (149 and 150)) and stretch it up (151). As the

upper body is stretching back, face towards the hands (152). Bring the hands down to the floor with the same position being maintained (153).

### **Thozuthu Nivarnu: -**

The practitioner is about to touch the floor and after touching the floor, bring both hands together. Then, slowly bring the left leg towards the right leg (155). Slowly bring the upper body and stand straight. Close and fold his elbows to the front, and bring the hands down close to the body covering the chest. The palms must be closer to the face.



158

#### 4.2.16 Vadivu:

The term ‘vadivu’ means “posture.” It is based on some animal posture exercises. *Vadivu* is a posture similar to basic animal figure. It sculpts our own body by giving shape to it. While we reshape our body, the participants will have some energy points where the power goes, where the concentration exists, from where the energy flows and what are the directions of power flow. Getting into it and getting out of it - shaping and reshaping the body strengthens it and makes it flexible thereby increasing concentration. The researcher has concentrated on the animal posture exercises of *Vadivu* and it helps the researcher to have control over the body and mind. As an actor trainee, the animal exercise rope sequences are coming without any jerk through the practice. It is used in acting-training for making the actors’ body in perfect postures with controlled body by focusing on the movement. *Vadivu* exercise is working throughout the body's movement.

The following exercises are practised and discussed as per the table given below:

**Table 4. 1 Vadivu:**

| Sl. No | Vadivu | Corresponding animal | Basic postures (Action Units) | Remarks                                                                                | Documentation Source (Video Link)               |
|--------|--------|----------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 1.     | Gaja   | Elephant             | 1- 16                         | Strengthens the centre part of the body with balance in the concentration of the body. | S. No 1. Kalari. Gaja Vadivu (Elephant Posture) |
| 2.     | Simha  | Lion                 | 1 - 14                        | Increases concentration with focus and balances the body.                              | S. No 2. Kalari. Simha Vadivu (Lion Posture)    |

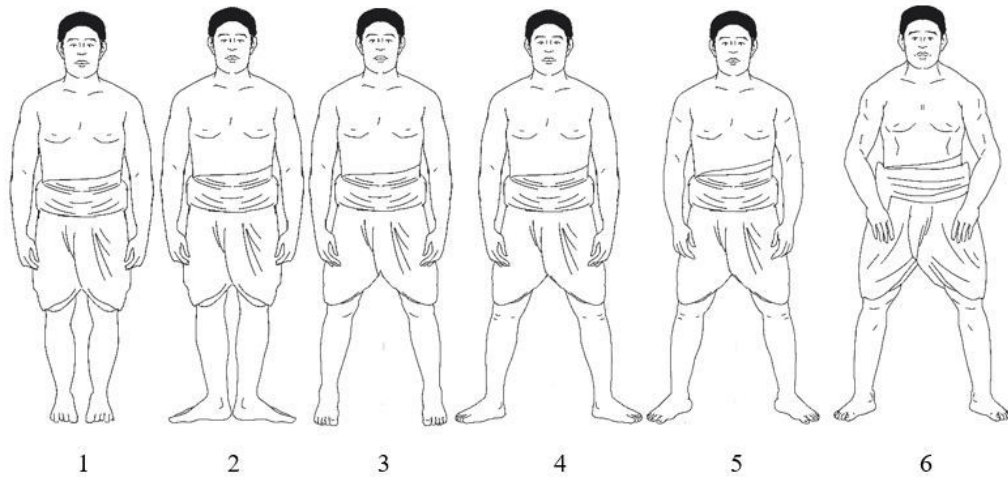


|    |         |           |        |                                                                                                                                               |                                                    |
|----|---------|-----------|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 3. | Ashva   | Horse     | 1 - 10 | The concentration of power and energy is directed in its indicated directions.                                                                | S. No 3. Kalari. Ashva Vadivu (Horse Posture)      |
| 4. | Matsya  | Fish      | 1 - 6  | Stretching helps balance the body and allows the body to remain still.                                                                        | S. No 4. Kalari. Matsya Vadivu (Fish Posture)      |
| 5. | Marjara | Cat       | 1 - 16 | Stretching and mimicking the postures through the body makes it more flexible.                                                                | S. No 5. Kalari. Marjara Vadivu (Cat Posture)      |
| 6. | Varaha  | Wild Boar | 1 - 39 | It helps to develop concentration, control strong upper-body movements through lower-body movements simultaneously, and keep the body strong. | S. No 6. Kalari. Varaha Vadivu (Wild Boar Posture) |
| 7. | Kukooda | Rooster   | 1 - 9  | The expansion and contraction of the body can describe possibilities and challenges within the body.                                          | S. No 7. Kalari. Kukooda Vadivu (Rooster Posture)  |

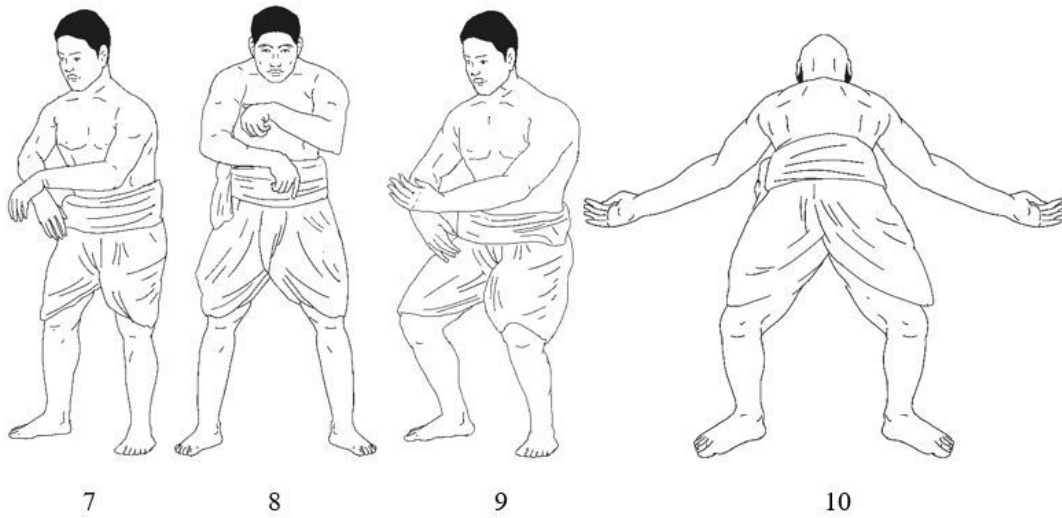
|    |        |         |        |                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                 |
|----|--------|---------|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8. | Sarpa  | Snake   | 1 - 13 | Stretching the body and distributing and transforming the body's energy always keeps the body in control, balanced and more energetic. | S. No 8. Kalari. Sarpa Vadivu (Snake Posture)                                                                                   |
| 9. | Mayura | Peacock | 1 - 5  | The body focuses entirely on balance and acts as a stretch and stillness.                                                              | Same as Matsya vadivu but here practitioner both arms should spread the both arms completely stretch side and balance the body. |

## 1. Gaja Vadivu:

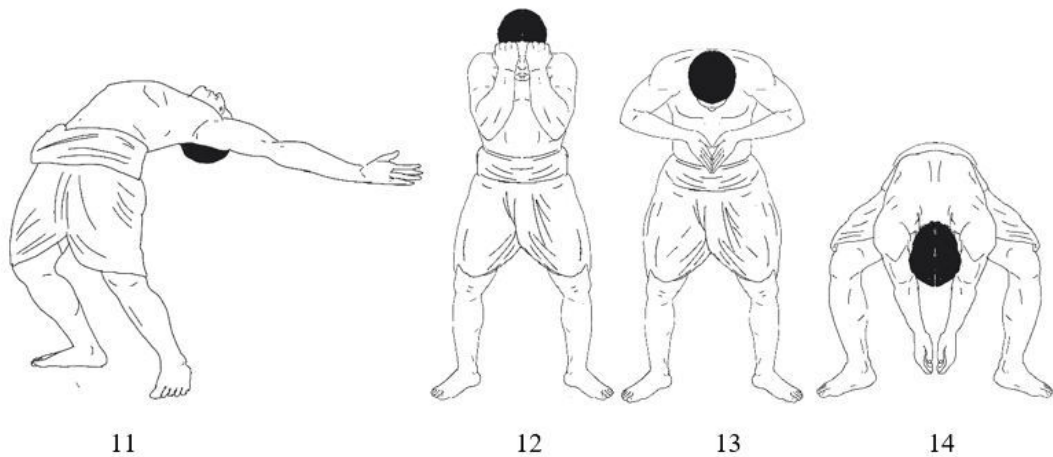
This is the posture of the elephant. As researcher-cum-participant, he practised Gaja Vadivu in a detailed manner. While he is practising each position of Gaja Vadivu, every movement is executed consciously by relaxing the body, shifting of the body weight, movement, and structure. In the starting position, the body weight is distributed equally through both legs.



Bring both the hands towards the chest with a flowing energy and in the same way take the energy from the chest. Spread both the hands to sideways in a relax, controlled, and balanced way. In this position, both knees will be bending slightly in a resting position in a controlled manner and whole-body weight will be on knees with power and energy on centre of the body (6, 7 and 8)

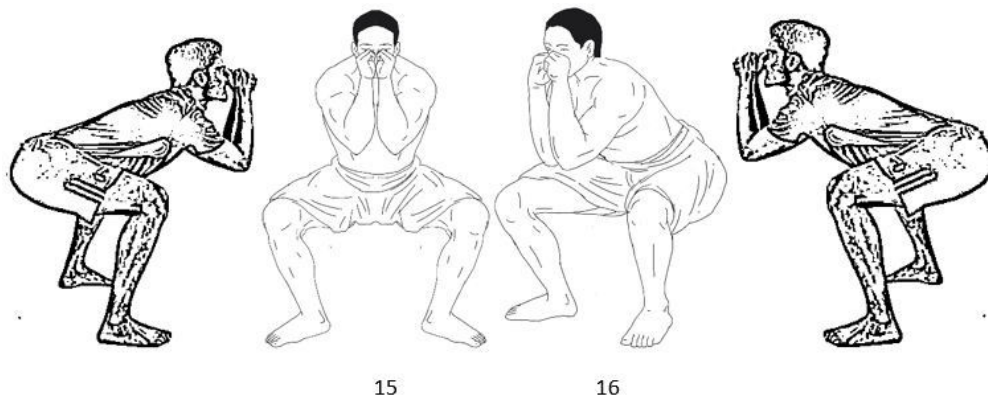


Pass a slight shift of weight onto both knees as if in preparation for the shift of the weight onto both knees and hands (9) going back to down (10). The upper body is balanced with the help of lower body and centre is the command point. Similarly, the actor's energy is directed towards its centre. The body weight rests entirely on the centre. The both hands are completely free in a controlled manner. Positions are not posturing here but dynamic transitions in the flow of movement.



Stretch the upper body straight back as far as possible with the help of both arms in balance with both knees. Shift the energy from the centre to the back, and again bring

the same energy from the back straight up, and again go straight down. The participant's upper body can then be brought straight back to a centre position with the same force. In this process both arms are stretched from side to back. Bring both the hands from back to straight up and from there to down to the centre dragging both hands over the face to down. Take both hands from the face and extend both hands down from the face and between the legs. From there, bring both hands to eye level.

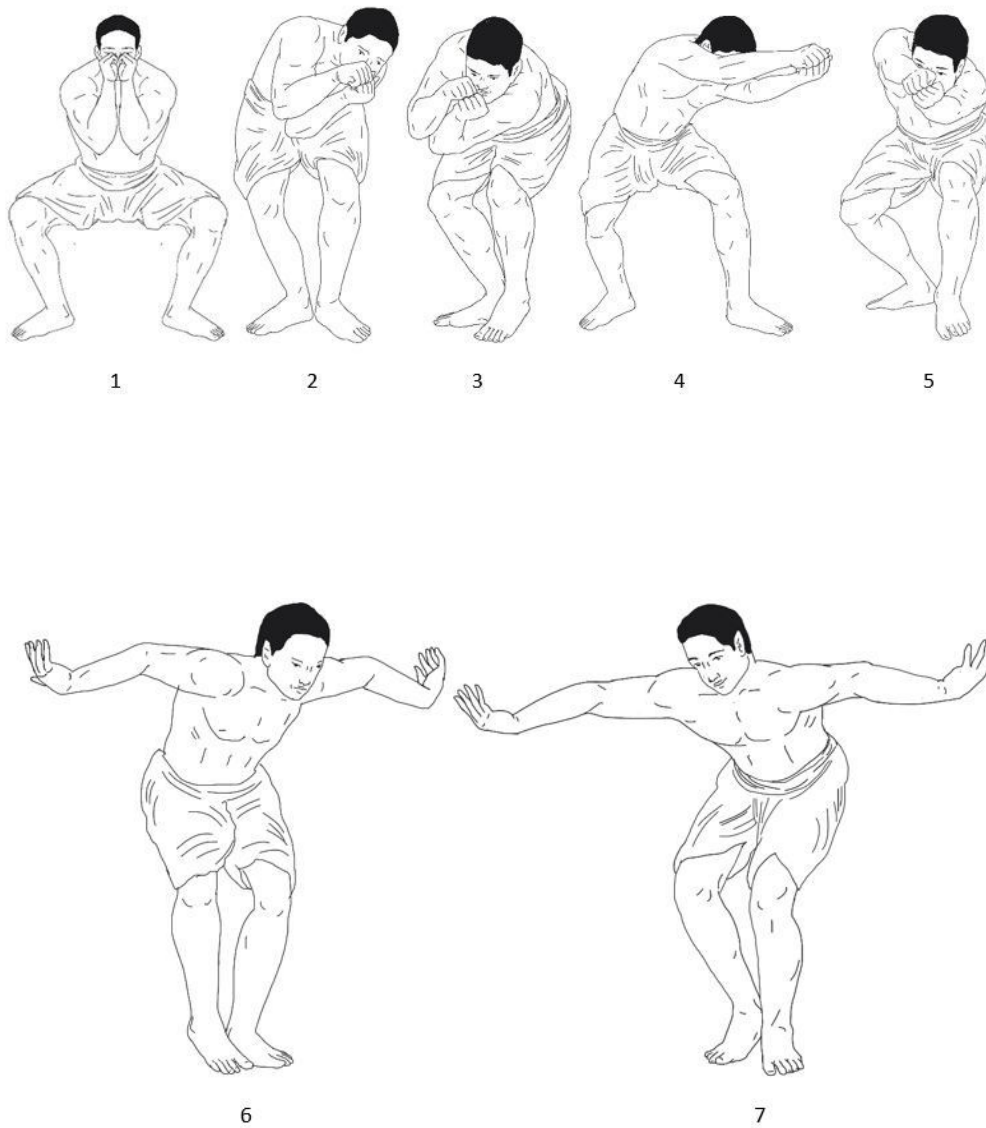


### **Basic standing posture picture 1 to the last posture as shown in picture 16 of Gaja Vadivu**

The researcher is looking at the way in which the posture gets shaped. In the case of Gaja Vadivu, the researcher did a detailed work. The same pattern is followed concerning the rest of the all other eight vadivus, and that is why the researcher is not repeating it. The pictures are self-explanatory. Each action unit is divided in such a way that corresponding posture and changes are very much visible, and thus the researcher does not describe all the vadivus in detail, but a brief and simple explanation is provided for basic understanding.

## 2. Simha Vadivu: -

This is the posture of the lion which is similar to that of Gaja Vadivu. The only change is that the feet are put perpendicular on the ground, and kept slightly apart than shoulder-width.





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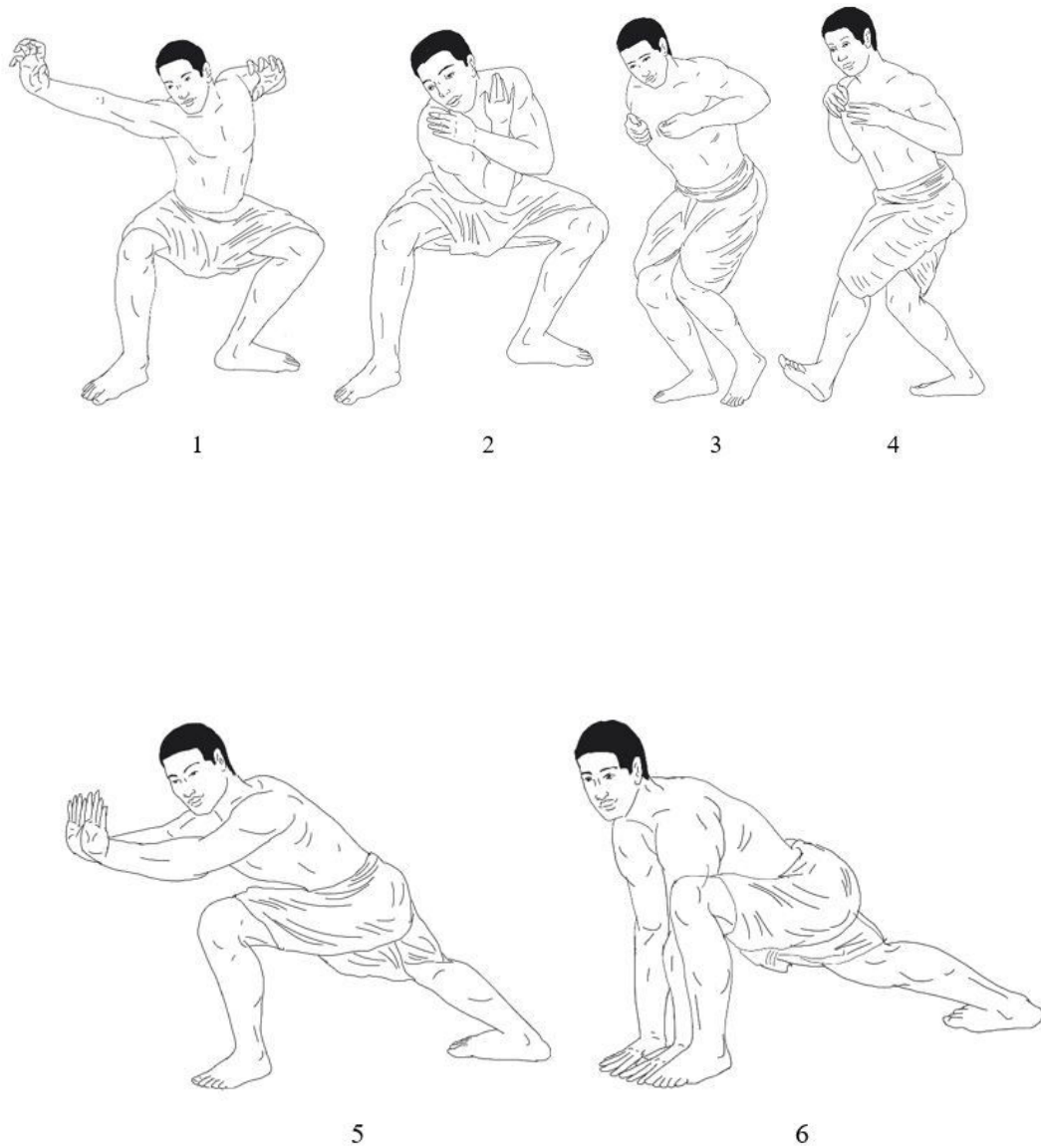
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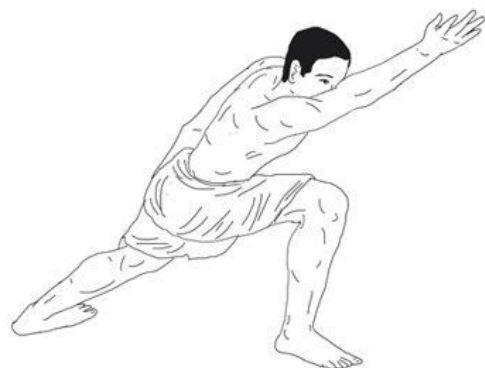
14

### 3. Ashva Vadivu: -

This is the pose of the horse. It must be noted that one leg must be put behind the other one. This other leg should be in front with the knee bent at 90°. Here, the researcher practised with the left leg first followed by the right leg.







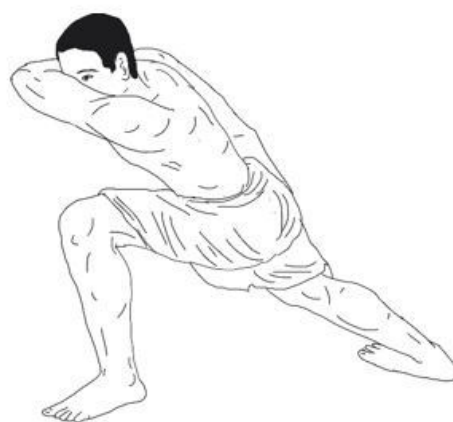
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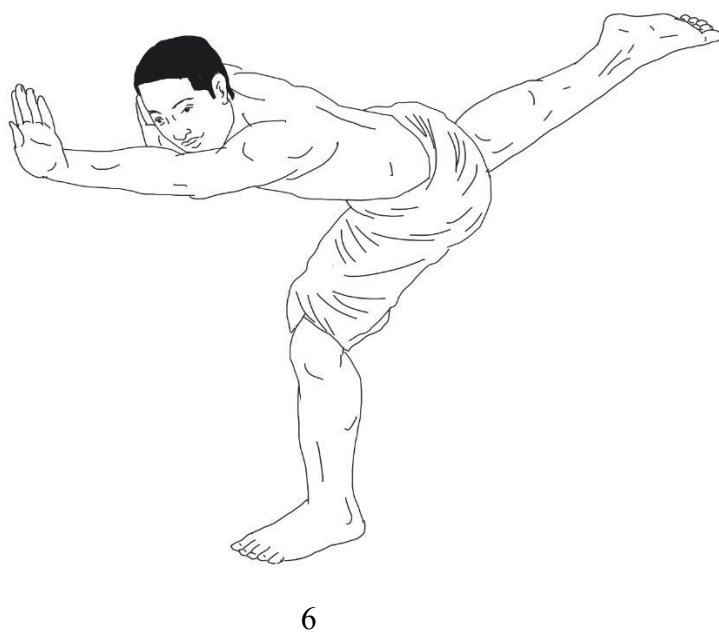
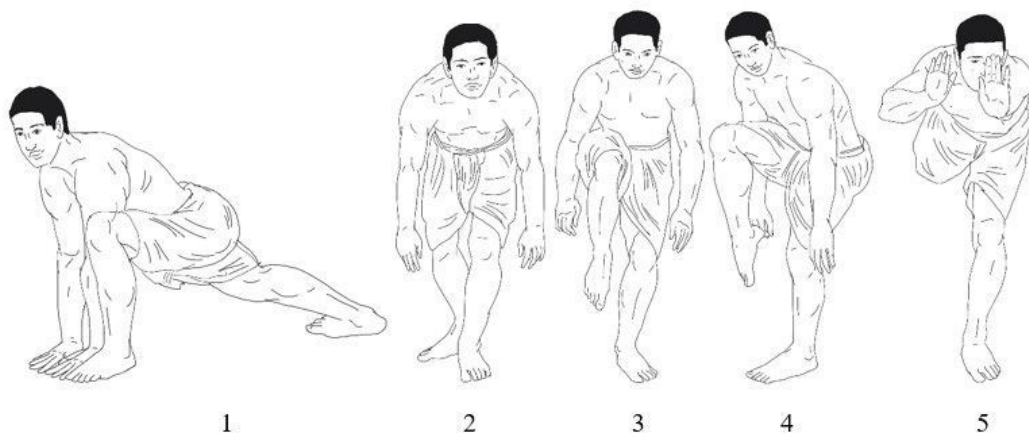
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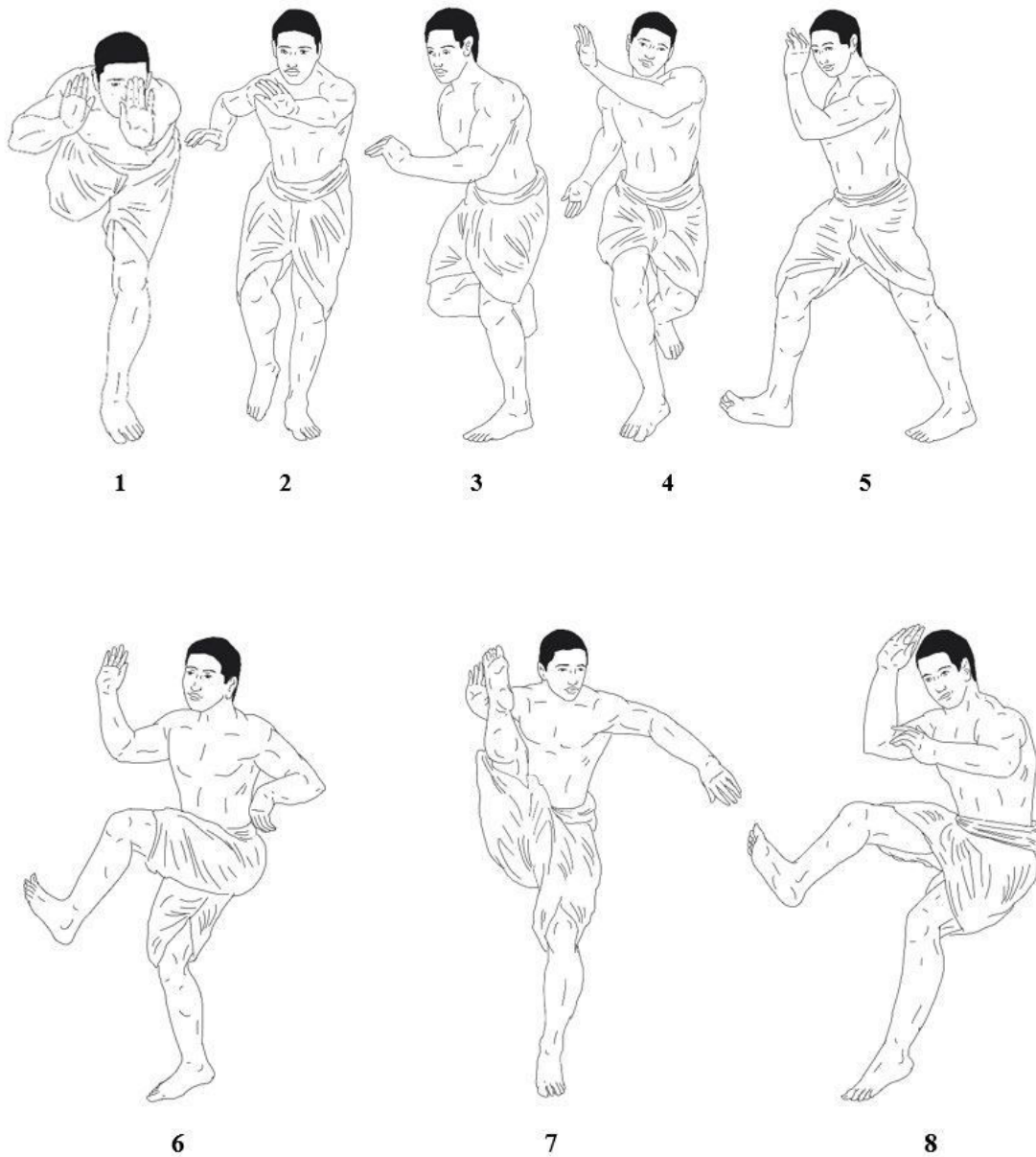
#### 4. Matsya Vadivu:

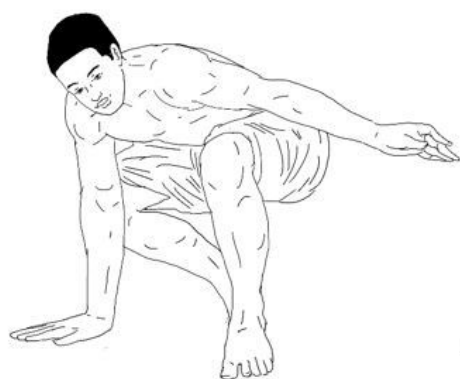
This is the pose of the fish. It is similar to the Ashva Vadivu, with only two differences – that the leg put behind must be raised above, perpendicular to the head; and the knee of the front leg must be straight and not bent. Here, the researcher practised with the left leg in front and right leg backwards in a perpendicular position.



## 5. Marjara Vadivu:

This is the posture of the cat. It involves a crouching position as if a cat is about to pounce upon a prey. The body must remain close to the ground, in a parallel position, with forearms on ground and fingers half-folded resembling that of the paws of cat.





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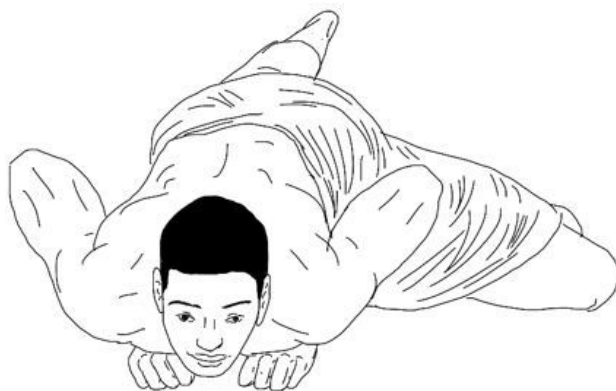
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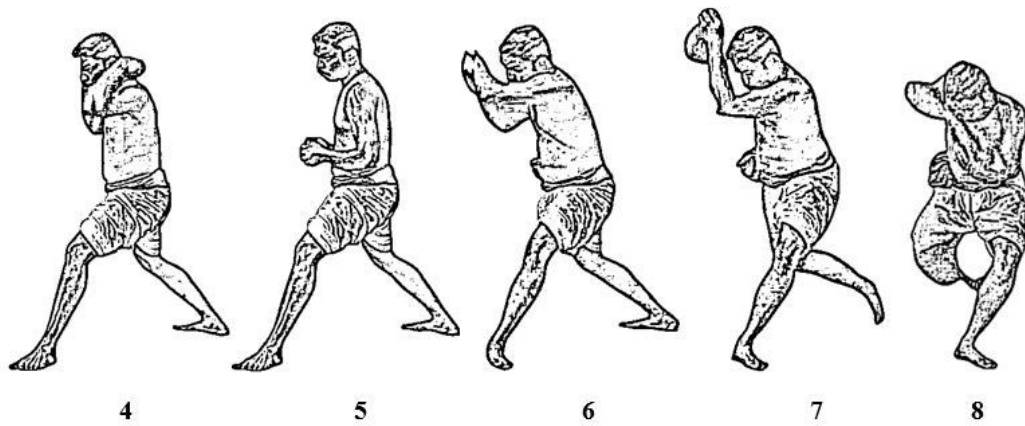
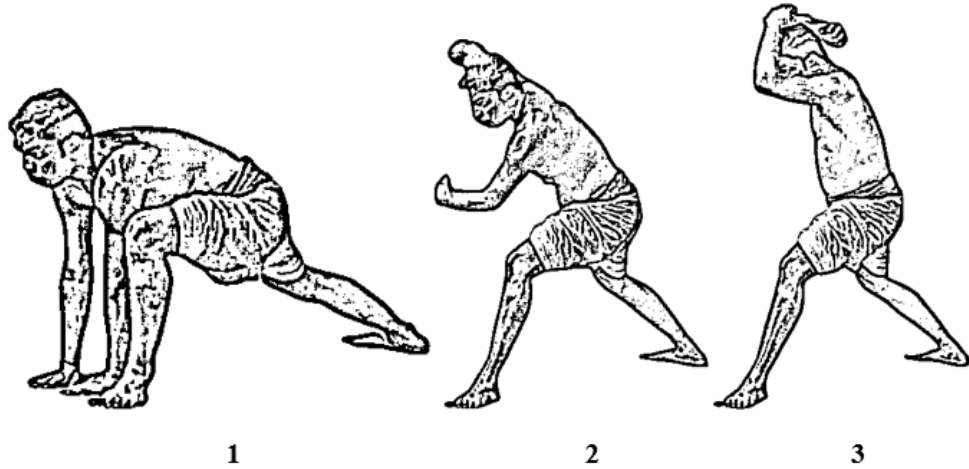
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16

## 6. Varaha Vadivu:

This pose is that of the pig or wild boar.





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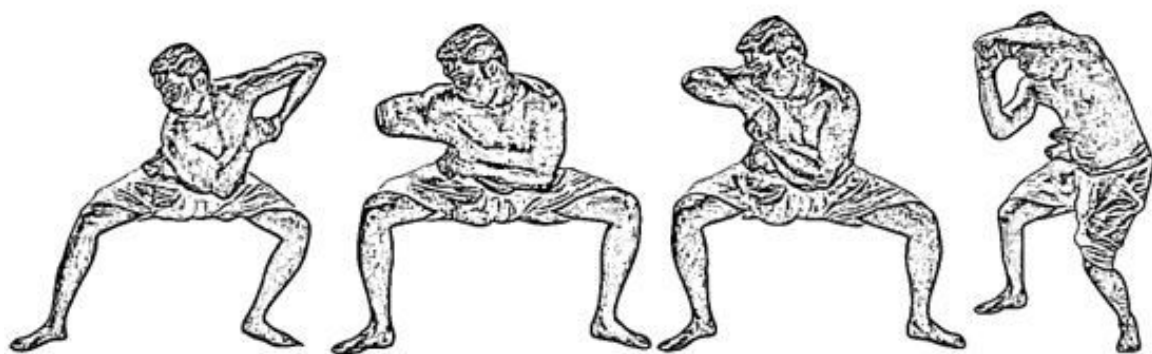
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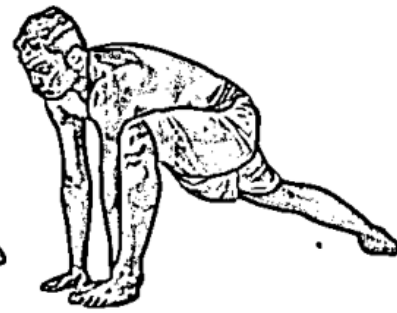
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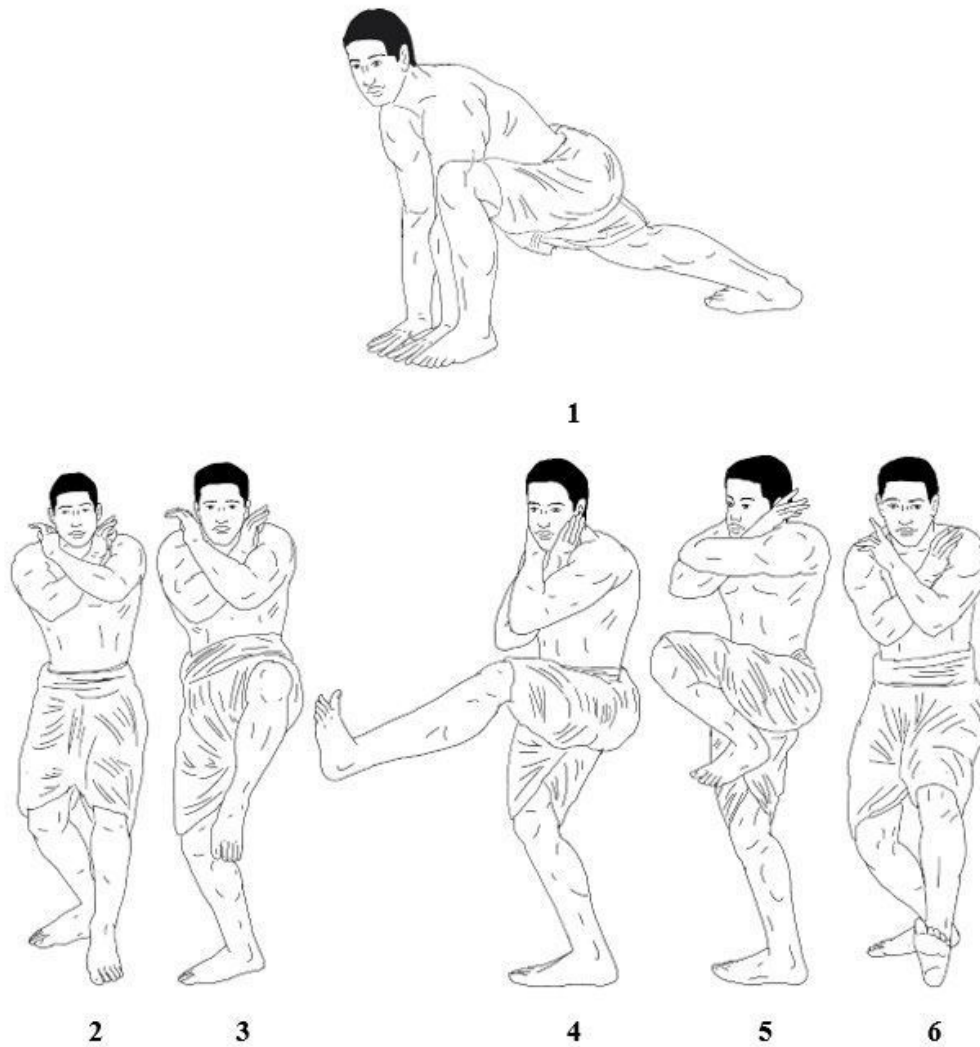
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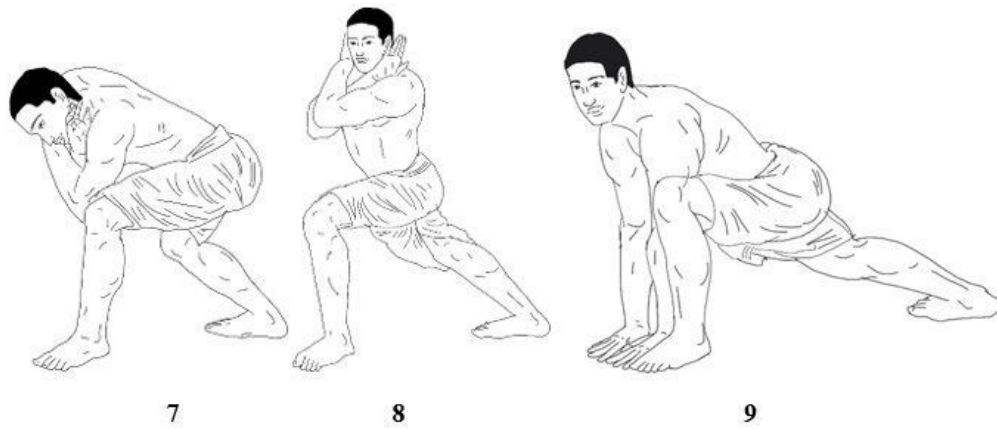


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## 7. Kukkuda Vadivu: -

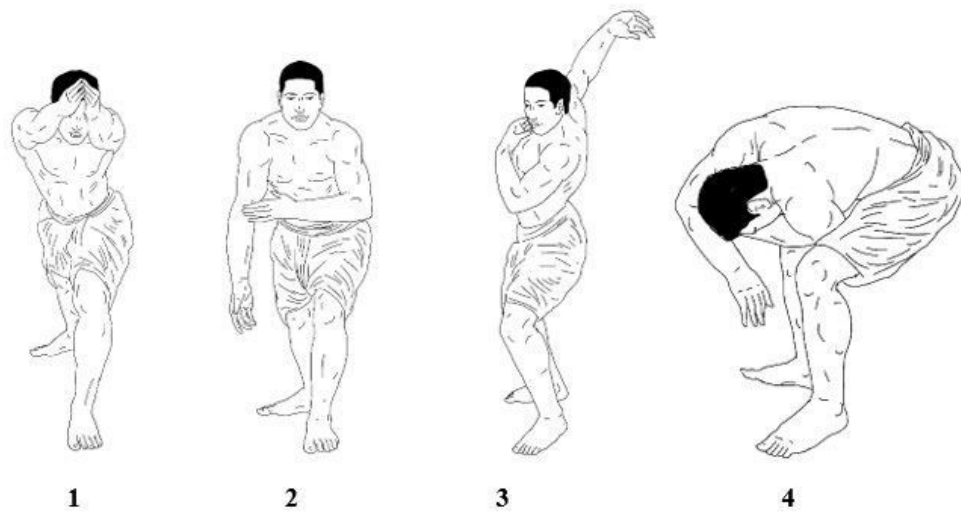
This is the pose of the cock. It is similar to Ashva Vadivu. The only difference is that, here, one leg needs to be raised in front, and the big toe must point upwards. Generally, raising of the right leg is the norm, but the researcher has practised with the left leg also.





### 8. Sarpa Vadivu:

This is the pose of the snake. It is similar to Ashva Vadivu, but with one difference – the upper body is in a more upright position, which helps the body to turn 180°.





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## 9. Mayura Vadivu: -

This is the posture of the peacock, and is similar to Matsya Vadivu. The only difference is in the placing of arms. Here, one needs to stretch the arms to the sides, parallel to the ground.



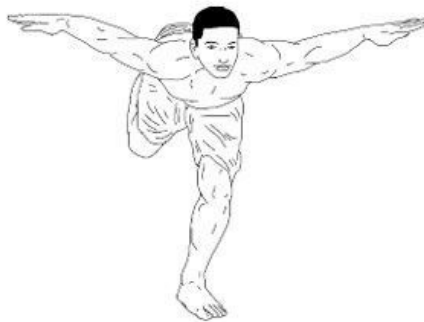
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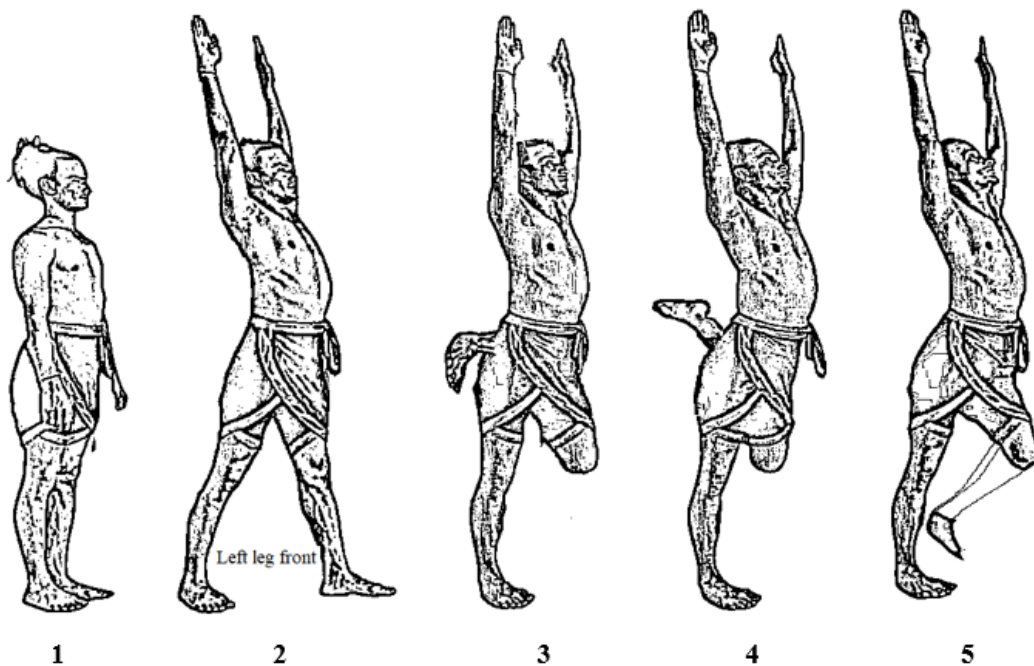
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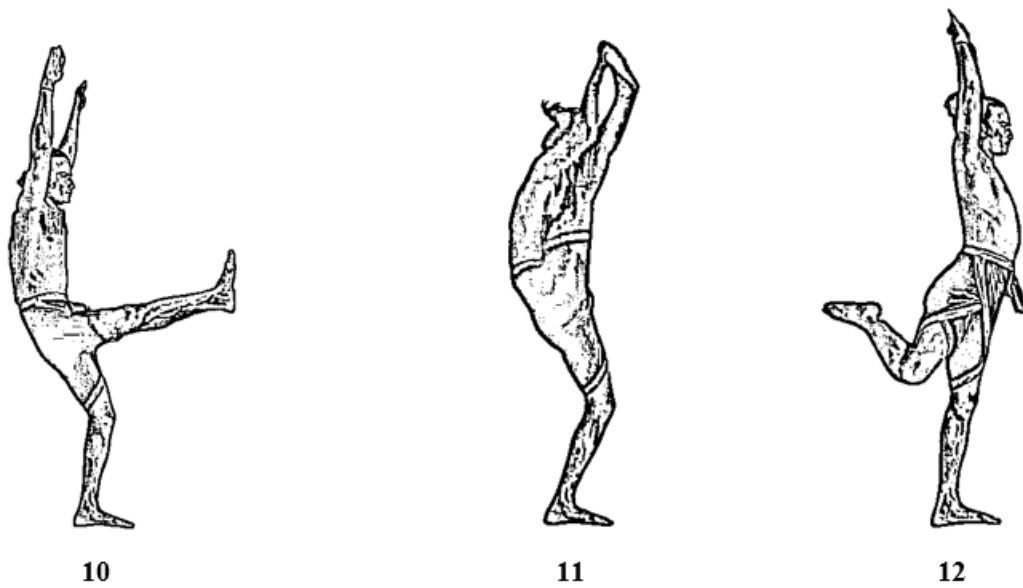
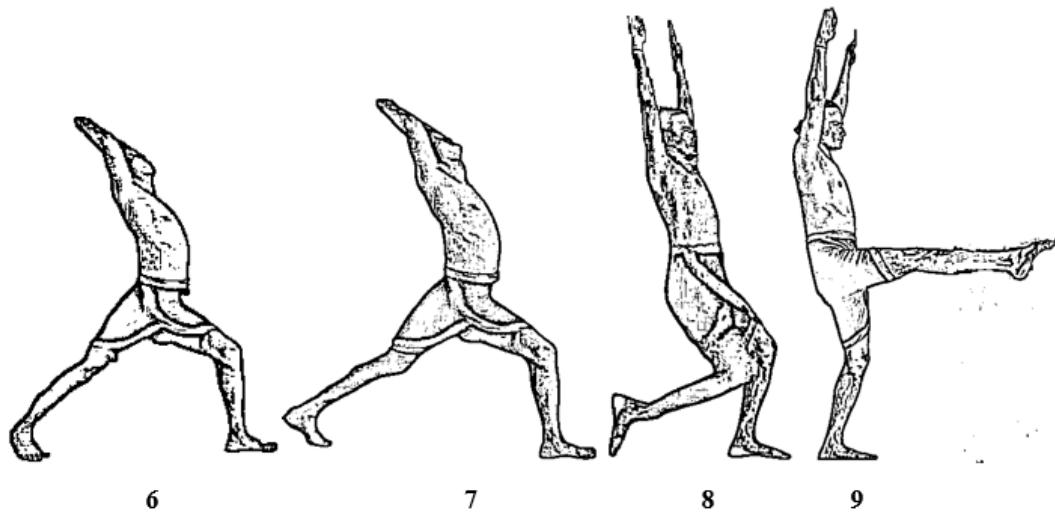
## 10. Nerkal:

“Nerkal” constitutes one of the six techniques of kick practice in Kalari. By keeping the knee straight, and the toes in an extended position, the kick is launched above the head. The researcher mainly focused on the exercises of Valathum Nere and Edathum Nere for the Kalari practice, because flexible and strong legs are a fundamental necessity for correct movements, balance, and posture of the body.

### 4.2.17 A. Valathum Nere (Right Leg):

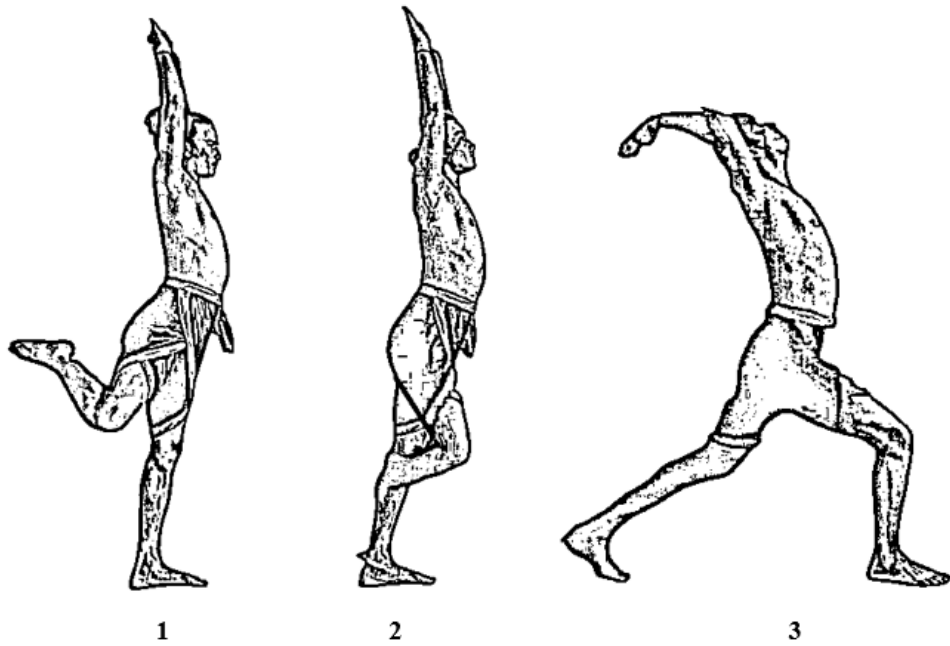
This involves the training of the right leg for the practice of Kalari. Depicted below are a set of twelve pictures, which clearly illustrate the postures in sequence as followed by the practitioner for the training of the right leg.





#### **4.2.17 B. Edathum Nere (Left Leg):**

This involves the training of the left leg for the practice of Kalari. Depicted below are a set of eight pictures, which clearly illustrate the postures in sequence as followed by the practitioner for the training of the left leg.







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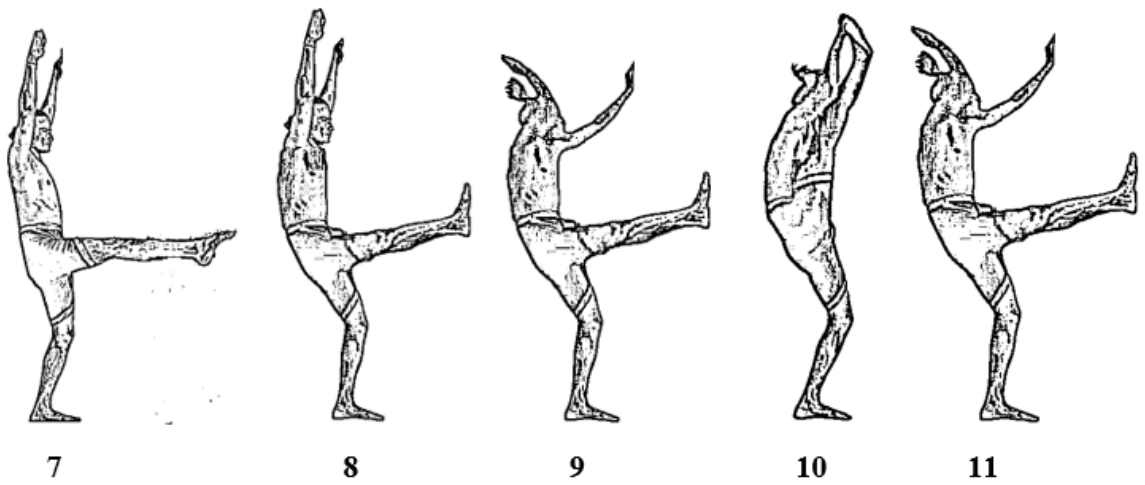
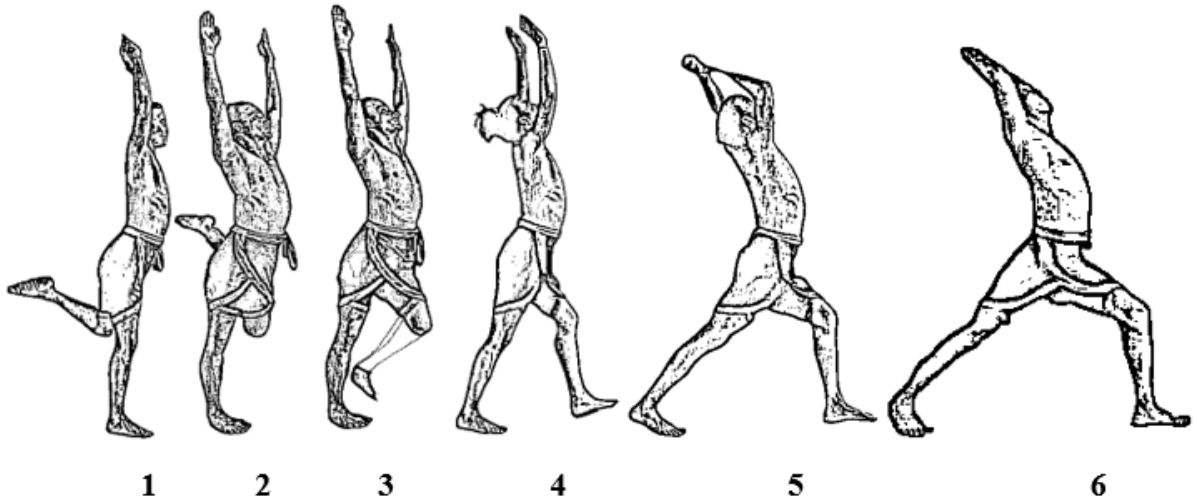


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**4.2.17 C. Nerkal: - 1 & 2. Valathum Nere and Edathum Nere and Turn movement Postures**





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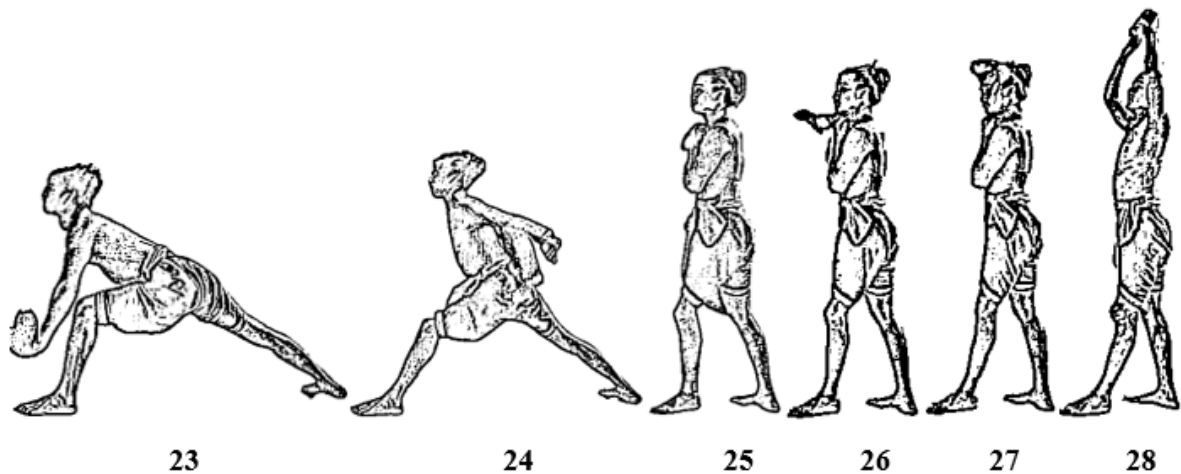
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The Vadivus and Nerkal improves overall balance of the body thereby helping to maintain proper body posture. Moreover, they play an important part in calming our mind, improving concentration, and strengthening the spine. It tones the upper, lower, and mid-back through stretching. The breathing movement and capacity also increases. Finally, they contribute in enhancing the flexibility of the body, especially legs, and helps to construct powerful range of motion with grace. However, any individual with serious back or leg injuries must avoid practising the postures and movements.

#### **4.2.18 The importance of Tradition and Gurukul System of Kalari**

It is observed that traditional ways of acquiring knowledge emphasizes on developing an individual both ethically and morally. The discipline of Kalari also adheres to this time-tested principle, therefore the traditional system of Gurukulasamprada (learning a discipline in the home of the Guru) has become the heart of the Kalari system too. It focuses on grooming a person holistically and thus help the person attain a unique personality.

Though in contemporary times, it might not be possible to follow the Gurukulasamprada in its real spirit, yet the niyama or disciplines have been followed strictly and religiously by most of the existing Kalari centres.

According to this, the moral development of a disciple must be followed in three levels –

1. Individual
2. During the period of training
3. During Kalarippayattu.

Initially, one of the ground rules for a beginner who starts his/her Kalari training is adhering to the principle of brahmacharya as a virtue in their life. According to it, he/she should avoid all vices that come in all forms in life such as alcohol, drugs, smoking etc. Apart from that, they need to strictly follow some instructions such as avoiding sleep during the day time, and strict observance of discipline that are hard for the feeble minds to follow in their lives.

For example, complete rest during the night, keeping away from evil and bad people, de not sleeping during day time and taking complete rest during night, avoidance of bad company etc. Laws pertaining to these are found in ancient Yoga guru Patanjali's Aṣṭāṅga Yoga, which delineates the eight limbs of Yoga in detail. It is believed that adhering to these laws will enable the practitioner to develop his personality and body in a holistic way.

Apart from this, according to the system of Kalari Gurukkals, one has to strictly follow some rules and give up physically, verbally and mentally the following 10 vices (doṣhas). They are:

- 1) Violence
- 2) Stealing

- 3) Prohibited desires
- 4) Malignance
- 5) Harshness
- 6) Untruthfulness
- 7) Revealing secrets
- 8) Evil thinking and design
- 9) Atheism
- 10) Perverseness

The understanding about the above said vices by the Kalari trainee (here the actor trainee) makes one gets into the disciplined way of life in order to approach the acting profession to become an ideal practitioner. Now, a bit may be discussed on what are the things which make an individual an ideal practitioner.

**What makes one an ideal practitioner:**

- Need to believe that Kalari is a Temple.
- Always enter the Kalari bare-foot, putting right leg first.
- Believe in *Poothara*, *Ganapatithara* and *Guruthara*.
- Always begin the practice by touching your master's (Guru) feet.
- Always respect other students.
- No gossiping, unnecessary jokes or discussion, abusive language, laughter, etc.
- Lit the lamp in morning as well as in the evening daily.

- Offer flowers in the sacred place called as *Poothara*, *Ganapatithara* and *Guruthara*.
  - Conclude the practice by worshipping at the *Poothara*, *Ganapatithara* and *Guruthara*.
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### **4.3 Experiencing Emotion through Koodiyattam practice for emotional balance and its continuities**

#### **Introduction:**

Koodiyattam, which literally means “playing together” is one of the oldest existing theatre forms both in India and the world, datable to second century BC Tamil epic *Silappatikaram*, where there is a reference to the word ‘chakkayan’ or the actor’s ability to depict two distinct emotions in two eyes. It blends the traditional precepts and rehearsed elements with improvisation. A form of Sanskrit theatre in Kerala, it is performed in some special “temple theatres” known as *Kuthampalam* (temple theatre), assigned specifically for its performance. It was most probably in the ninth and tenth centuries when Koodiyattam gradually started shifting to the theatres within temples due to the emergence of Brahminism in Kerala which resulted in temples becoming new power centres. Between fourteenth and eighteenth centuries, Koodiyattam evolved in its current form and the temple theatres are thought to be constructed during this period. This theatre form is practised only by members belonging to specific communities, such as the Chakyar and Nambiar. In 1949, the renowned Koodiyattam practitioner Painkulam Rama Chakyar performed the theatre form outside the temple. Members of other communities were allowed to train from 1965 onwards. On the 13th of May, 2001, Koodiyattam was recognised by UNESCO as “a masterpiece of oral and intangible heritage of humanity.”

Koodiyattam is believed to be the most refined model of acting methods by many experts in the world of theatre, and that is why many master theatre practitioners, theatre schools in India and abroad have adopted Koodiyattam as a distinct discipline in their pedagogy, which include the likes of the Intercultural Theatre Institute, Singapore; National School of Drama, Delhi; School of Drama and Fine Arts, University of Calicut; Theatre Department, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady and National School of Drama, Bangalore. Under the leadership of Ammannur Madhava Chakyar’s disciples and the founder of Natanakairali in Irinjalakuda, G. Venu, Kalamandalam Hariharan (Mizhavu), Margi Madhu and Usha Nangyar has been handling the tutelage of Koodiyattam in all these different



institutions. Moreover, Koodiyattam performers have played important roles in various inter-cultural acting workshops across the world. In the Singaporean director Ong Keng Sen's intercultural production of *Desdemona* (2000), the titular role was played by Claire Wong; and Madhu Margi from Kerala portrayed the role of Othello.<sup>64</sup>

The acting manuals in Koodiyattam tradition include *Kramadipika* (production manual), *Attaprakaram* (acting manual), *Nirvahana Sloka* (quatrains describing anecdotes), *Vidushaka Sloka* (quatrains followed by Vidushaka), *Tala Prasaranam* (rhythm pattern), which are the different aspects that together form the literature of Koodiyattam. The most important of these are the *Kramadipika* and the *Attaprakaram*, that act as stage directions and director's notes for the performing Chakyars. But still, the *Attaprakarams* are just parts of the whole, since the other elements like *Nirvahana Sloka* and *Vidushaka Sloka* help complete them. *Aattaprakaram* is a collection of written descriptions in Malayalam, about how actors shall move and what they shall do in order to perform the verse and prose of the drama on stage. *Kramadipika* acts as the director's notes for a performer which narrates the background information that is not explicitly stated in the text of the drama. Stage directions that are otherwise not described by the creator of the play, which will help the performer understand their entries and exits, costumes, etc., are part of the *Kramadipika*.

Koodiyattam the highly stylised performing art includes *natyam*, *sangeetham*, theatre, percussion and poetry. The chief elements are *angika* (mudras and body movements), *satvika* (facial expression), *vachika* (spoken verse) and *aharya* (make up, costume, ornamentation and props). The main artist performs solo or is joined by other actors. *Pakarnattam* (one artist enacting multiple roles), *ilakiyattam* and *kottu vilakkuga* are devices often used to highlight narrative. Characters such as Shurpanaka, Dusshasana and Ravana are differentiated by specific gait. Veshams include pacha, kathi, thadi, kari and minukku. A point to note is that Duryodhana

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<sup>64</sup> Lan, "Ong Ken Sen's "Desdemona", Ugliness, and the Intercultural Performative," 2004, pp. 253-254.

is a pacha vesham in Koodiyattam, Involuntary applause greeted Madhav who demonstrated simha (lion) with mudras, facial expression, and kinetics.

The performance of a Chakyar is generally called *koothu*, but when the number of performers exceeds one, it is then called *Koodiyattam*. *Aranganiyuka* is a term for decorating the stage with a plantain tree with fruits, tender coconut branches, tender palm/coconut leaves, bunches of flowers. Covering the pillars, the mizhavu,<sup>65</sup> the lamp and the stool with cloth and laying a piece of cloth for the Nangyar to sit on, while she recites the slokas, are all actions that fall under this term. *Thalayil Kettuka* is the act of tying a red cord to the head before the performer wears their costume and make up. Mizhavu Ochchapeduththuka (sounding the mizhavu) is when the Nambiar comes alone on stage before the beginning of the play, and starts playing the mizhavu. Then there is the combined presentation of the Nambiar's mizhavu and the Nangyar's cymbals and the hymn songs, which is known as *goshthi kottal*.

'Aranguthalikkuka' is the initiation of the play by Nambiar as he explains the essence of the story with the *mangalasloka*. The recital of the *panchavaadyangal* (five instruments) of Koodiyattam, before the entry of a character is called 'Vaayikkal' and the five instruments being mizhavu (copper drum), idakka (hourglass shaped drum), shankhu (conch), kombu (Horn) and kuzhiththalam (cymbals). *Poinakham* is a part of the costume that has been spread out in two layers over the front of the performer's waist. *Poinakhamkuththuka* is a term for when the actor takes up a female role. Gesticulation of the slokas instead of chanting it out, to communicate the meaning is an act that is called "artham aadi slokathine kaikaattuka". The act of tracing the history of the character, from the moment of his/her entrance, in reverse order is *anukramam*. *Sankshepam* is a short gist of the story of the character, from their genesis till where the *anukramam* ends. *Nirvahanam* is the detailed acting out of the parts that *anukramam* described, now in the correct order. Description of the physical appearance, from head to toe by the actor is called *Panchaangam Aaduka*.

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<sup>65</sup> A mizhavu resembles a copper drum or pot with wet calfskin tightened around its mouth and which is played with the palms and fingers as an accompanying percussion instrument primarily for the art forms of Koodiyattam and Koothu.

*Tharkkan* is the pitching of the voice while reciting the slokas. *Mudi Akkiththa* is a section of instrumental recitation that implies the closing of the performance. The sloka that describes the costume, physicality, emotion, and gait of a character in detail is called *Aalaamasloka*. *Kuruttumashi* is what the collyrium used in Koodiyattam. *Mizhaavina* is the name for the enclosure for the *Mizhavu*. To chant the *Maayamanthram* before getting into costume and make up is a traditional and *Churnavakyam* is the act of speaking in verse.

*Kuthampalam* is a space built inside a temple compound, especially for Koodiyattam performances with a stage made with blocks of wood. The architectural science behind the construction of such spaces is very particular to Kerala. The efficacy of other theatrical spaces in the world. Around 1,531 temples still house a *Kuthampalam* within their premises the sound plans for such spaces is superior to any.

#### **4.3.1 Training by G. Venu and Navarasa:**

It is better to have a look at G. Venu's use of Koodiyattam training for the contemporary performers. The students were trained by artists from G. Venu's *Natanakairali*, a centre for performance and research in Kerala. Before the practical sessions began, students had orientation sessions about the emergence of Koodiyattam and other art forms in Kerala, and the sociocultural and political situations during the growth of these forms. Six hours were set out for Koodiyattam every day. Initially, the focus was on building strength in the centre, control over the body and increasing flexibility by doing daily exercises that are part of Koodiyattam training. The exercises to strengthen the body and legs were 'Vattaththil Nadakkuka', 'Vattaththil Chaadi Nadakkuka', 'Kalappuraththu Nadakkuka', 'Chollunthi Nadakkuka' and 'Pakshisthobham'.

This was followed by eye exercises and the *Navarasa* practice. Beyond the traditional *navarasa* practice, there were also different improvisational exercises based on the *navarasas*, that Venu believed would be of use to the contemporary actor. According to Venu, the term 'acting' is too weak to define Abhinaya. Abhinaya is rather the navigation through the universe of the *angika* (physical),

*vachika* (verbal), *aharya* (ornamental) and *sathvika* (psychological) in order to reach the actor's goal/ the audience's heart. We have always pursued the sort of communication that goes beyond the *vachika* (verbal). The individual, through the actor in him/her, must have the skill to use the character's *sthaibhava* (primary sentiment) to identify with the character through the symbolic and mythical language of stylised theatre. It is in fact the internalised *sthaibhava* of the character which imparts a worldly attribute to the *Natyadharmi* (stylised, larger than life) code. This cannot be effectively explained in the terminologies of the existing contemporary Indo-Western context.

According to Indian notions, regardless of whether 'abhinaya' is *natyadharmi* (stylised and larger than life), or *lokadharmi* (more pertaining to the realities of the world), it is rhythm oriented and symbolic. In fact, when western ideas of theatre and even films became popular in India, these indigenous terminologies became irrelevant in the more modern theatre scene in India with the local theatre schools adopting western acting methodologies. It was only in the 1970s that modern experiments in theatre that used these Indian traditions came to the forefront. The realization that 'natya' is also 'nataka' (Theatre), led to the efforts to identify a modern theatre training method that is an effective amalgamation of both traditional and contemporary techniques. (Venu 2006: 101)

It was years of profound experience, especially with Western theatre that helped Venu bring this kind of an amalgamation into the Koodiyattam training as part of the Intercultural Theatre Institute pedagogy. In the final stage of their training, the students were trained in, what can be described as a very primal form of Koodiyattam, a small part of one of the stories, called 'Parvati Viraham'. To culminate the process, in the last and fourth month of Koodiyattam training, the students underwent intense practice of 'Parvati Viraham' with the accompaniment of the *mizhavu*, and even performed in front of an audience.

*Navarasa Sadhana* is a unique attempt of actors training, which has gained considerable popularity among trainers and it is used as a part of daily practice for acting-training in many countries across the globe. It is remarkable to find the

development of multiple possibilities through the induction of a small but effective element in this training process by giving a touch of contemporaneity to it. The researcher believes that the time has come when the *Natyashastra* must be subjected to independent interpretations coming from the actors.

Kunjunni Tampuran, a well-known Sanskrit scholar and Yoga master knew about this problem, and hence, he devised a much simpler system of practice- the *rasavayu*, which connected breath with the *rasa*. Ammannur Madhava Chakyar was renowned for using this technique for improvising the death sequences of Bali, which ultimately brought him international acclaim. A theatre-critic of *The Guardian* who witnessed the performance at Riverside Studio in London, wrote that the performance was “one of the most outrageous pieces of acting” he had ever seen.<sup>66</sup>

Why did G Venu decide pay attention to the *navarasas*? The *navarasas* form the integral part of the training process of an actor and the *rasa*, which represents the “aesthetic enjoyment” is enjoyed by the audience through the performance of the actor. In the context of Indian dramaturgy, this is an indispensable purpose of presentation. Even *Natyashastra* too gives importance to them. Masterly combination of *vaibhava* (determinant), *anubhava* (consequent), and *vyabhichari-bhava* (state of transition) produces *rasa* or sentiment. The researcher became convinced that the *vyabhichari bhava* has not been explored to its limits by both actors and academicians earlier. In *Natyashastra*, we find the mention of eight *rasas*, with the ninth one – *santha*, being the addition of Abhinavagupta. However, a careful perusal of *Natyashastra* discloses that Bharata did give a hint about this, i.e., the *nirveda*, implying absolute detachment from all the senses.

The methodology includes stylisation, based on bringing together of every *bhava* through certain exercises, related to the sensory and physical realms picked out from everyday experiences. As for *nirveda*, the associated *vaibhavas* are *adhikshepam* (abusive language), *avamanam* (to get insulted), *daidrya* (poverty), *ishta jana viyogam* (loss of loved ones), *thadanam* (wrathful beating), *thathvagnanam* (ultimate

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<sup>66</sup> G. S. Paul (2015, June 11). Deep into the rasas. *The Hindu*.

knowledge), and *vyadhi* (worry/illness). For all of these staged through imagination, the actor must identify the right voice, which can be achieved by following a process of producing various sounds, until the right one is attainable. This enables the individual to identify the right breath (*vaayu*) because breath becomes the essence of a voice. Once this state is reached, evocation of *santha* becomes useful. However, the practice itself is difficult and the students have to undergo both physical and mental distress during the training process.

Venu has trained the students only in *santha* which requires more than three weeks to master, and can be achieved through regular practice. Training in all the *rasas* may take a couple of years. Most of the people involved in theatre attending the course cannot train for such a long period due to prior commitments, and that is why they prefer to focus on the *rasa*. Koodiyattam too has *slokas* prescribed for evocation of the *rasas*, but this cannot be practised by theatre students and practitioners. Thus, the course is directed towards theatre actors. The researcher believes that the technique is extremely beneficial to an actor comparable to that of “swara sadhakam” for a musician.

#### **4.3.2 Workshop of Rajaneesh Chakyar – Researcher Experience: -**

As a researcher I could not have the opportunity to work with G. Venu, but fortunately I could attend a workshop by Rajaneesh Chakyar, who concentrated on the *rasa*, *bhava*, and rendering of *rasa bhava* with the base off Koodiyattam performance training. Before going further, it is necessary to note a bit on Rajaneesh Chakyar. He is a Koodiyattam artist from Thrissur who is trained in Ammannur style of performance under Padma Bhushan Dr. Ammannur Madhava Chakyar. Ammannur Rajaneesh Chakyar is an internationally acclaimed exponent of Koodiyattam and a Sanskrit scholar. Scion of the Ammannur tradition, his gurus include Ammannur Kuttan, Madhava and Parameswara Chakyar. A recipient of several prestigious awards and fellowships, this artist extraordinaire has performed at the Linz Festival, Austria; Indian Theatre Festival, Helsinki; Rothberg Museum, Zurich and Universita degli Studi di Padua, Italy.

In the workshop of Rajaneesh Chakyar, the researcher-cum-practitioner got initiated into how the rasas are expressed or bhavas are enacted to create a particular kind of rasa in the mind of the audience by Chakyar. With his permission, the researcher had to resort himself to concentrate on documenting this particular enactment with descriptions. The workshop was mostly on a lebdem model and he allowed the participants to imitate and reproduce the documentation, but by mistake, the researcher was observing the performer and concentrating on documenting the way Chakyar performed each bhava. During this documentation, I found out the comfortable position and the fixed frame focusing on the actor's performance (working on limbs and details of facial expressions) who through breath, has brought the powerful expressions of bhava through his face, neck, shoulders, and the body.

After the workshop, the researcher had a lengthy conversation with Rajaneesh Chakyar who further provided contacts to explore the methods of acting. Subsequently, the researcher had taken some selected portions of this video and started observing on his computer screen. The repeated observation of these videos helped him to imitate and reproduce the performance. This practice of observation and imitation was conceived by the researcher as an exercise where he found out a mechanical way of reproducing the facial expressions related to each *bhava* in between. Though the researcher tried contacting Chakyar for further help, which did not materialise, his interactions with his supervisor and seniors helped him to understand how the performance relates with the breath and experiences one has attained, and makes them to manipulate the mental state reproducing the *bhava*.

Even though this process was very raw and uncooked, but the rawness had its energy. Therefore, most of the time, the researcher was at the tail-ender's method of reproduction of this image. Repeating these bhavas before the mirror also constituted an important part of the researcher's practice – the mirror training practice. The mirror became a kind of a process of difference, giving the researcher as an actor, enthusiasm, and courage to play with facial expressions.

The relation with breath and emotions was a new path-finder in the way of actor training. Learning of half-breaths, deep-breaths, and first-breath brought rhythm and

made me control and bring emotional state well. In short, the exercises learnt in Rajaneesh Chakyar's workshop, the researcher's documentation, and methodology, followed by his imitation, reproduction, and realisation of the breath aspect in acting had a tremendous impact in the researcher's understanding of acting training.

### **4.3.3 The Rasa Box Practice:**

The concept of Rasa Box was introduced to the researcher by the workshop and production of the director Dr. Abhilash Pillai. Here, as part of the post-practice, the researcher was trying his level best to participate in different kinds of play productions by many experts. One important play production which the researcher participated and practised was *Perineum – A Retributive Justice* (2012), a play directed by Abhilash Pillai. During the rehearsals of that production, he introduced Richard Schechner's Rasa Box concepts as a practical exercise for the actors, and also for on-stage and off-stage participants who were part of that workshop.

The concept of Rasa box or Rasaesthetics as everybody knows is originally developed by Richard Schechner. According to Schechner, this system underlines the “artistically performed emotions” which consists a different kind of behaviour. The emotions performed “are separate from the feelings...there is no necessary and ineluctable chain linking these performed emotions with the emotions of everyday life.”<sup>67</sup> Schechner believes that “emotions in arts” are “knowable, manageable, and transmittable” just like the way flavours in a meal are managed through recipes.

This concept literally haunted the researcher and made him think about it. As a researcher-cum-practitioner, I suddenly became a fan of that particular concept and started practising myself by making the rasa boxes in my room. My own self-exploration had quite a lot of differences because there was no one to correct me; to help me in controlling the amount of energy and emotion I distribute in every box. But continuously practising rasa box exercise generated lot of energy and I was able to understand how the somatic emotions get immediate result and the recollection of

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<sup>67</sup> Schechner, *Performance Theory*, 2003, p. 341. Schechner has clearly explained that on a basic level, acting communicates emotions, whereas feelings are experienced.



how it can be easily brought in when really it is required, so the energy, emotion, eyes and recollection of everything was possible.

As an actor who is mostly interested in stylized presentational performances, the later stages of my exploration with rasa box exercise were much more extraneous and wilder. Looking at the reception and improvement of this, the people who had participated in that premium play production helped me to take it up as a choice to apply in three different contexts of actors training.

#### **4.3.3.1 The First Context (with animation and multimedia students):**

While doing this rasa box, the researcher had introduced them, made them draw the Raza box, given them some idea, and roughly made them to get into it. It was very difficult for them to emote initially. Certain things were in my mind which became huge because the researcher had already practised it many times. The researcher fondly remembers the exercises and maintained a standard for this particular performance. Though disappointed in initial stages, the researcher continued in providing ideas and suggestions. This gradually led them to improve. They started to enjoy, emote, make connection with the characters, and improve. This constituted the first stage. Any newcomer in the sphere of acting or a novice, can get in and perform the rasa box as a practice model.

#### **4.3.3.2 The Second Context (with Film Institute students):**

This happened when the researcher was teaching in the Film Institute as a part-time lecturer. For some time, experiment with the rasa boxes were tried upon. Even though film acting has nothing to do with it, but to engage the actors, and the participant. To understand the emotions and to get into it, the researcher applied some ideas like giving impromptu ideas and making them improvise. The researcher himself started improvising with this exercise, making and giving them characters, giving them suggestions before going, and they are getting into the rasa books with characters, etc. Practising in the group was a different kind of an experience and it has given the

researcher quite a lot of strength. I have again applied this in the third context where this place was understood there and there.

#### **4.3.3.3 Third context (with Masters (M.A) students):**

In this third context I myself got a little bit of mastery, maturity with regards to rasa box exercises and the students were also little bit already trained. So, it was easy for me to in inform them or make them aware of the rasa box and something that I really wanted. Interestingly, this time the exercise was very much faster and very much quicker in understanding and giving result. So, I have also practised, and have brought in the ideas of *Sancharibhavas*, (*Vyabhicāribhāva*), *Sthaibhava* and *Sattvikabhava* to it. Elements of these *Sancharibhavas* (*Vyabhicāribhāva*), *Sthaibhava* and *Sattvikabhava* were discussed; showed them something and made them understand how this can be acted by certain masters. The researcher asked the students to employ these three bhavas into practice by giving them characters and making them to get into the rasa box. Then, the characters were to be used for experimental innovations based on rasa box structure. All of these shaped the researcher's experience further through thorough understanding, learning, and continuous practice, thereby perfecting the practice as performance.

# **Chapter 5**

## **Transforming oneself through Collaborative Practice: Experiments at Theatre workshops And Gym**

### **5.1 Experimenting with the Intercultural Practices: A Combination of Western Acting Methods.**

#### **5.1.1 Introduction:**

The question may arise as to why the researcher has focused exclusively on the Western theatre practitioners within the overarching framework of “research as practice” especially when the attention has been paid to Indian art forms. This is because of the fact that the researcher had undergone multiple practice sessions following the exercises of the Western practitioners. There was a need for incorporating the Western training into the discipline in order to develop the body as well as acting practice. In this developmental process, the researcher as practitioner thought it necessary to look into the past so as to get a clear, concise idea regarding body movements and acting techniques. It must be noted here that this section neither deals with every Western theatre practitioner nor their comprehensive biographies. The focus is on certain significant theatre practitioners whose theories, concepts, and exercises for training process, have helped the researcher in his own understanding towards the theatre as an art form.

The modern Western theatre practices and actor training is a hallmark of mid-nineteenth century and twentieth century. Priorly, it was Neoclassicism that dominated the Western stage right from the Renaissance age in Northern Europe in fifteenth century till the first half of nineteenth century. The concept of Neoclassicism provided for a rigid separation in characters, subject matter, tone, and arc of action between comedy and tragedy. Neoclassicism dominated the theatre

forms and this domination was curbed by Romanticism. Romanticism begins with the German poet August Wilhelm Schlegel, who had differentiated between Romantic and Neoclassical theatre. In his opinion, the dramatic form of Shakespeare was “organic which germinated and flowered from within” as seen in a plant. Contrary to this, neoclassical plays achieved external and mechanical unity. Schlegel’s advancement found favour with the English poet and philosopher Samuel Taylor Coleridge who wrote off the Neoclassical unities of time and place, and supported the concept of organic unity.

In France, the writer and politician Victor Hugo supported Schlegel by claiming the combination of sublime nature of Romantic plays with grotesque moods. Romanticism emphasised on individual genius and craftsmanship and therefore energised European acting and star power. The Romanticism in Russia developed only after Napoleon’s invasion of Russia in 1812, markedly in 1830s when the reactionary Romantic plays of Kulonik and Polevoi were favoured. The invention of photography in Britain in 1839 by Henry Talbot revolutionised theatre by widening public appeal of the theatre actors and the rise of stage realism after 1850. It was left to Stanislavsky to formulate actor-training programme that was to found its way as some sort of a discipline and craftsmanship.

## **5.1.2 The Realistic Theatre**

### **5.1.2.1 Konstantin Sergeyevich Alekseyev (1863 – 1938)**

“Stanislavsky”, the stage name of Konstantin Alekseyev, is known for naturalism, psychological and socialist realism. He was born on 17 January 1863 in Moscow to aristocrats Sergei Alekseyev and Elizaveta Vassylievna Yakovleva, and was highly influenced by the nineteenth century actor Mikhail Shchepkin who believed in truthful acting by taking examples from real life. Theatres in nineteenth century Russia were actor-driven and as a result suffered from stagnation. The leading actresses during that time were concerned only with wealth and wardrobe. So, the acting process was not taken seriously. It was firmly believed by the actors and actresses that acting was not at all a skill which could be learnt. Hence, actor-training

programmes faced outright rejection. As an amateur, Stanislavsky blindly copied his favourite actor's gestures and intonations of the Imperial Maly Theatre. Therefore, it can be deduced that the climate in which Stanislavsky emerged was devoid of trained professional actors, directorial decision-makings, design concepts and ensemble companies.

Stanislavsky's theatrical revolution began by collaborating with the playwright Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko in 1898. Their efforts led to the establishment of Moscow Art Theatre, with Stanislavsky serving both as an actor and director, and whose primary concern was the application of psychology to performance. As a director, Stanislavsky devised a production plan which was to be made by filling a play-text with details. These details would consist in asking certain questions concerning the exact nature of movement and acting, changing positions, use of voices, etc., before the start of rehearsal.

Stanislavsky became drawn towards the Symbolism Movement in the first decade of the twentieth century. Two prominent individuals influenced him – one of the leading exponents of the Russian Symbolist Movement, Valery Bryusov, and the Belgian playwright Maurice Maeterlinck. Symbolism emphasised on the live performance of the actors and their physical body. Catering to this, Stanislavsky set up the Theatrical Studio in 1905, where he developed the psycho-physical training ground giving equal importance to an actor's physicality and psychology. The political upheaval in Russia in 1906 combined with Anton Chekhov's demise and failure of Symbolist plays led to the closure of the Theatrical Studio. Stanislavsky was dissatisfied with himself regarding the artistic quality of productions. His association with Nemirovich-Danchenko deteriorated steadily as the latter was concerned only with writing and direction, and not with experimentation in acting.

Stanislavsky wanted to organize a practical acting system and therefore he utilized various studios as laboratories for experimentation. The most significant was the First Studio where we find the collaboration of three great pioneers - actor Michael Chekhov, director Evgeny Vakhtangov, and teacher Leopold Sulerzhitsky. In the 1907 production *The Drama of Life* authored by Knut Hamsun, Stanislavsky

experimented with the inner character of the play. Sulerzhitsky introduced Hatha Yoga into the actor-training programme, and thus contributed to the experiment. Stanislavsky adopted cerebral approach through round-the-table discussions or production plans in his rehearsal for the play *A Month in the Country* staged in 1909, written by Russian novelist Ivan Turgenev.

The system of Stanislavsky had two categories – Work on Self which catered to actor-training practices to develop physical, emotional and vocal instrument; and Work on the Role catering to rehearsal techniques or round-the-table analysis to increase dramatically the hidden mysteries of a play-text. Actor-training was further classified into two categories – inner and outer. Exercises were developed to assist in inner preparation through concentration, imagination, meditation, and relaxation. Outer preparation would comprise of expressive face and hands, infectious stage charm, perfect diction, and strong voice. Work on the Role had dual approach – “round-the-table analysis” coupled with the psychology of a character through “historical research, imagination, and affective memory.” Stanislavsky believed in the productivity of the preparation on both the Self and the Role which would help actors to achieve “creative state” where they could stimulate creative will mentally, emotionally and physically.

It was by 1910 that Stanislavsky’s system was in place that consisted of four major elements apart from the “method of physical actions,” which were units and objectives, affective memory, communion, and inner motive forces. Units and objectives can also be referred to as bits and tasks. A play is divided into units in order to study its structure, and at the heart of every unit lays a “creative objective” which forms an “organic part of the unit.” An actor needed to focus on the action instead of the result and in that way, integrity of purpose can be developed. The “inner active objectives” would restrain an actor from acting falsely by directing him/her along the right path. It provides an actor the faith to come out on stage and stay there. The objective must come from inner spring of action or it will end up as just exhibitionism.

It becomes necessary for an actor to recognize quality and choose the right objectives, which according to Stanislavsky are – a) direction towards other actors instead of spectators; ii) personal yet analogous to those of the character portrayed; iii) to be creative (creating the life of human soul) and artistic (rendering the life in artistic form); iv) to be “real, alive, and human” as opposed to “dead and conventional”; v) truthful to the performance; vi) quality of attracting and moving an actor; vii) removal of vagueness; viii) implementation of value and content to in order to correspond to the inner body; and ix) pushing the role ahead. There are three types of objectives – physical, psychological, and rudimentary psychological. Physical involves any kind of mechanical physical action such as greeting someone by shaking hands and nodding of the head. Psychological pertains to deep psychic thoughts. For instance, stretching out one’s hand towards one’s enemy will obviously make mind think and re-think multiple times, and hence overcome emotions. Rudimentary Psychological is a combination of physical and psychological. Say, for example, holding hand of someone and expressing sentiments of love and gratitude through the grasping of the hand and look of the eyes.

Affective memory or Emotion memory are same terms which may be defined as the type of memory that is responsible for making us relive the sensations we once felt, to bring back those feelings already experienced by us in real world. The broader the affective memory, the richer is the material for inner creativity. Stanislavsky felt that an actor creates both the life of present time, and those of the past and future, and therefore, he/she needs to observe, experience, and conjecture, to be carried away with emotion. He has applied the effect of “past-tense memories on present-tense situations” to fictional situations in drama.

The much talked about ‘Stanislavsky System’ is not simply intellectual and philosophical but also accommodates the twin notions of experiment and practicality. Stanislavsky started with the external training process of “freeing the muscles” so as to liberate the imagination of an actor through physical relaxation. Another significant aspect of his system is the ‘affective memory’ or ‘emotion memory’ which forms a part of the plethora of human responses in daily lives. In other words,

the actors remembered an experience from their own life analogous to the event in play and then applied all physical and sensory details connected with that personal experience. What is important is the fact that the System is open to diverse interpretations because Stanislavsky himself continued experimenting with his approach until the very end of his life.

### **5.1.3 The Symbolistic Theatre**

#### **5.1.3.1 Vsevolod Meyerhold (1874 – 1940)**

Meyerhold was a pioneer of experiments in theatre which had a system for training actors, called “biomechanics.” This became the basis for his constructivism and was opposed to Stanislavsky System. From the 1920s, Meyerhold applied constructivism in his plays which were advocates of the Communist propaganda, as well as to Mayakovski’s grotesque futurist dramas. Meyerhold initiated sociological mode of training actors, involving the actor to demonstrate the character to the audience. The syllabus he devised for training actors in the new acting school in 1921 included learning of fencing, gymnastics, juggling, various dance forms, and other physical skills because the students needed to understand their body’s potentiality. He perfected more complex movement exercises known as ‘études’ where the actor “pantomimes a series of rhythmic movements” suggesting to run towards a quarry, to shoot an imaginary arrow, and celebrate the killing. This exercise requires a workout of muscular tension and release that would be appropriate for each movement. What is fundamental to all of his training process is the actor’s capacity to manipulate himself/herself, perceived as a physical object. For example, Meyerhold’s 1922 production of *The Death of Tarelkin* had a meat mincer setting designed by Varvara Stepanova, who referred to her set pieces as “acting instruments” that would permit robust physical limitation.

Stanislavsky conceived the identity of the characters and actors as complex selves but Meyerhold possessed a distinct notion. He considered the characters to be social selves and actors to be physical selves. According to Meyerhold, in the end, the characters had to “serve the purposes of an actor’s performance and the director’s



production.” He wanted the audience to engage with the actors on both “physical and social levels,” opposed to psychological one of Stanislavsky. His purpose was to create a “carnival in the auditorium” and not an illusion on stage. This was in line with the political atmosphere of that time in Russia, and had two implications. Firstly, Meyerhold wanted attention to be paid to the kind of physical and social transformations that was necessary for the welfare of the new Soviet Russia; and secondly, he believed in his theatre’s potential to help move Russia towards a “Communist utopia by providing models trained and energised with physical efficiency.”<sup>68</sup>

According to Meyerhold, a skilled worker has four qualities in his/her movement – a) absence of superfluous movement; b) proper body position; c) rhythm; and d) stability. An actor’s art consists in organising his material or to utilise the body’s means of expression. Meyerhold devised a formula for the actor: “ $N = A_1 + A_2$  (where  $N$  = actor;  $A_1$  = the artist conceiving ideas and issuing instructions for execution; and  $A_2$  = the executant who executes the instructions of  $A_1$ ).”<sup>69</sup> An actor needed to train his/her body so effectively that it must be able to perform tasks instantaneously. In other words, any actor’s task is the realisation of a particular objective through means of expression and precision of movements, which will generate positive pleasure. For Meyerhold, any actor needs to have “the innate capacity for reflex excitability” and physical competence which should have a sense of balance. As the art of the actor is the “art of plastic forms in space,” the body mechanics needs to be studied.<sup>70</sup> His ‘biomechanics’ is essential for every actor’s training process; and this is to be aided by the application of physical activities like acrobatics, boxing, dance, fencing, gymnastics, etc. Every acting cycle consists of three stages – a) intention – intellectual assimilation of a task externally prescribed by the dramatist; b) realisation – comprising mimetic, volition, and vocal reflex; c) reaction – attenuation of volitional reflex for the reception of a new action.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Zarrilli, et.al., *Theatre Histories*, 2010, p. 380.

<sup>69</sup> Braun, *Meyerhold on Theatre*, 2016, p. 244.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 245.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 247.

Similarly, Meyerhold's training is made up of three parts – otkaz, posil, and tochka. The 'otkaz' describes the preparation process an actor undergoes before the actual action; 'posil' refers to the happening of the action; and 'tochka' is the end point of the action cycle. The basic skills required for a biomechanical actor consists of balance, coordination, discipline, expression, precision, rhythm, and responsiveness. Some of the skills-based exercises include working with sticks, working with balls, tap steps, and études.

#### **A) Working with Sticks:**

Take a one-metre length stick. Hold it vertically, halfway down, in right hand. Then, toss it to the left hand, catching it in the same position. Ensure the body weight shifts from right to left and back. Now, take the stick in the right hand about three-quarters way down its length with right foot forward, left foot backward and feet in parallel position. Toss the stick up in a way that it spins 180° and catch it at the other end. Make sure the stick goes to the palm softly and do not move the hand upward to catch it. Again, swap hands, and this time the left foot must be in a forward position with parallel feet. Repeat the sequence throwing with the left hand.

#### **B) Working with Balls:**

Stand facing forward with feet shoulder-width apart. Throwing the ball from the left hand to the right hand, in an arc above the head, count "i, ras, dva" rhythm during the throw. The "i" will be the otkaz – the preparation for the throw; "ras" will be posil – the throw; and "dva" resembles the tochka – the end of the throw or freeze. Bring the ball and the body in control after the throw. Move into a circle and throw the ball across the circle in turns focusing on the three parts of biomechanics. Make an eye contact with partner before throwing. The partner may also follow the "i, ras, dva" rhythm while receiving the throw, where "i" will be the preparation to catch; "ras" will be the catch; and "dva" resembling the end of the catch or freeze. Still in a circle, now throw the ball underarm with right hand to the right hand of the individual next to you, anti-clockwise round the circle. This individual will then throw the ball in a similar fashion to the next individual around the circle, and this will continue. The ball must experience a smooth transition from one individual to

other. Now, alternate the process with the throw from left-to-left hand, clockwise round the circle. Continue the whole sequence until both clockwise and anti-clockwise balls move smoothly around the circle.

### **C) Tap Steps:**

Tap out a 4/4 rhythm on both right toe and heel for two, and left toe and heel for two. Move round in a circle, first in a clockwise direction and then anti-clockwise. Keeping the rhythm, move towards the centre of the circle and then move out, and move round in a circle. Now, allow the following leg to go behind leading leg so that they can cross (the individual practitioner may decide to assign the left/right leg to be in following and leading position). Alternate the step, and repeat the process. It must be noted that in order to do tap, one must have nimble feet, which will help to shift the weight from left leg to right leg, and from front to back.

### **D) Études:**

An étude is a small piece of work which teaches the importance of rhythm through repetitions. The études tell the story to an audience through physical language with a purpose. It is important to note a fundamental concept related to études, and that is dactyl. The dactyl is the movement that begins and ends each étude. It contains the preparation, the action, and the finish; same as the three parts of acting – otkaz, posil, tochka. The most important ones that help develop all areas of an actor's "physical craft" are: Shooting the Bow, Stab with the Dagger, Throwing a Stone, and The Leap onto the Chest.

Shooting the Bow – A vivid description is given by Erast Garin, one of Meyerhold's students, as follows: "An imaginary left bow is held in left hand. The student advances with the left shoulder forward. When he spots the target he stops, balanced equally on both feet. The right hand describes an arc in order to reach an arrow in an imaginary belt left behind his back. The movement of the hand affects the whole body, causing the balance to shift to the back foot. The hand draws the arrow and loads the bow. The balance is transferred to the front foot. He aims. The bow is drawn with balance shifting again to the back foot. The arrow is fired and the

exercise completed with a leap and a cry.”<sup>72</sup> The main purpose of this étude is to develop broad shoulders, free arm movements, and the use of horizontal extensions of body to find centre of gravity.

Stab with the Dagger – Every movement should have a strong basis and each element of the task must have its own point of support. The beginning and the end of the execution of every task must be distinctly accentuated. Every participant must signal to his partner with the recoil or by other means perceptible to the spectator. Here, two actors, Actor A and Actor B stand facing each other with a gap of three feet between them. Actor B takes a jump to come forward close to Actor A with right leg in front and left leg backward and knees bent slightly in forward direction. Both the hands are on either side at this position. Now, close the left hand to resemble a fist, and move the right hand in front of the left fist, so as to get hold of the dagger. The right hand (now in the stance of holding the dagger) should move like a tennis one-handed backhand extending completely at the back of head in such a way that the head and the right enclosed fingers are in diagonal position. At this moment, B is holding the dagger in his right hand and aiming to stab A at his chest. A gradually leans backward as the right hand of B, resembling dagger, is brought forward (the left leg comes in a forward position and the right leg backward) and stabbed into his chest. After the stab, B returns to the previous position of aiming the dagger while A turns 180°, showing his back to B and slowly falls to the ground. His feet lay parallel to each other, hands by side, and the head is slightly above the ground in front of the left foot of B. B leans forward placing both his hands on the shoulders of A and picks him up to stand straight. Immediately, B turns 180° with both the actors’ back facing each other. B holds the hands of A picking him up on his back. B moves in a forward direction to the initial position where he was standing, and from there he rotates one circle, coming to the initial position of A, and from there to the centre of the stage. B releases A from his back to let A stand straight while still holding his hands and both their backs facing each other. Finally, B releases his hands, and both return to dactyl posture. The objective of this étude is to establish coordination with one’s

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<sup>72</sup> Braun, *Meyerhold*, 1995, p. 174.

partner, to develop strength in the lower trunk for centre of balance and for the development of reflex excitability from outside sound stimuli.

Throwing a Stone – Prepare to run in the forward direction taking the position of a sprinter before the starting of a race. After few seconds, gradually turn the head to the right side to see the stone, and fall on it. Lift the stone to the feet and then transition the stone from the foot to the knee. Then be prepared to run. Spin the stone, take aim, prepare to throw, and groan down. Identify the strike of the stone, turn, and do the dactyl. Here, the aim is to develop rhythmic movement and coordination.

Leap onto Chest – In this étude, there is a need for two actors, A and B. Actor B stands looking front with left leg forward and right leg backward. The legs must be in a diagonal position to each other. Actor A is standing at a distance from B. Now, A comes forward in a motion just like a spin bowler in cricket coming to bowl to the batsman, and jumps onto the chest of B by moving his right leg upwards first and then the left leg. B leans backward as A sits on his chest. Then, A performs the action of stabbing B's chest using both the hands, and comes down. Simultaneously, B too reacts by falling on the ground on his back and so does A. Both fall on their back together with their feet lying parallel in front of each other and hands stretch out a bit from the body. The purpose is to support weight against the chest cage through positioning of the legs.

Meyerhold explored theatre as a “kinaesthetic spectacle,” which means that the actor could understand both inner and outer rhythm of the character. He was influenced by the intensive actor-training of Stanislavsky and the musicality of Chekhov's plays. Meyerhold believed that the function of theatre is not to mirror reality but to transcend everyday reality by deliberate exaggeration and distortion through stylised theatrical techniques, and therefore could be said to study the release of emotional and expressional potentials of the actor by using various things. He basically desired to “create a new theatre for a new era.” He joined the Bolsheviks in 1918 and attempted to radicalise the Russian theatres efficaciously by nationalising them under the control of the Bolsheviks. Further, he proposed the use of physical movement and dance to develop actors' awareness of their bodies, hence finding means of

expression through actions. This style of “preparing and performing” was called “biomechanics” by him. It consists of a series of exercises in developing and releasing the “emotional potential of the actor through movement.”

Meyerhold believed in the use of masks to enhance the actor’s creativity as depicted in the movements. This mask-training was explored through make-up, hair, hat, scarf, and Commedia dell’arte. The masks necessitated the exploration of paradoxical nature of theatre in both rehearsal and performance, and forced the actor in using the body as complementing facial expression. He incorporated the use of “puppetry” as a theatrical device from Kabuki theatre of Japan to transcend boundaries of theatrical form. Meyerhold explored deeply into the grotesque to breed discomfort and mix opposites – life and death, beauty and ugly, comedy and tragedy. It revelled in fantasy and mystery which increased his intentions to surprise the spectator. The stretch from naturalism to stylisation helped to achieve ideal performance according to Meyerhold. Meyerhold insisted that biomechanics does not tolerate anything accidental and everything must be done consciously and with prior calculations. All art is built on self-limitation. It is above all struggle with material.

#### **5.1.3.2 Michael Chekhov (1891 – 1955)**

He was born in St Petersburg in Russia on 16 August 1891 to Aleksandr Chekhov and Natalya Golden. In 1907 he joined the Suvorin Theatre School in Saint Petersburg and was influenced by his teachers Glagolin and Arbatov. The artistic climate during this time was of imitating the teacher-actors and there was no space for employing the art of acting. Physical and psychological exercise – technique to strengthen the body and the mind through exercise. Through meditation and yoga, it is possible to balance the both.

Chekhov wanted the actor to go beyond personal memory and considered dream to be a creative process occurring independently that is not personal. When the hypnagogic phenomena occur, certain images come before us as we are partly awake, and Chekhov wanted the actor to enter into a dialogue with these images and bring them into performance. This idea was applied to the textual characters from plays

where the actor was required to find more of the character, he/she is supposed to portray, and hence develop an interactive process. For example, Swetha was writing a piece on the Cold War. What can be visualised by imagining this? Now, there can be numerous questions which may arise out of this. Say, for instance, whether Swetha is male or female; dark-skinned or fair; the clothes being worn; place of writing; style of writing; pace of writing; means of writing; language used; expression on the face; arms and foot movements; etc. These questions seek more information about the image and helps the actor to flourish in his/her creativity. Chekhov wants to explore the psyche of the character portrayed through the imagination of the actor.

Chekhov prescribed the following exercises:

**A) Crossing the Threshold** – This exercise marks the transition of the actor from the space of everyday life to the creative space of the theatre. Make an inner gesture of leaving the personal life behind on entering the space of work. Imagine a line which separates everyday space from the imagination space. The space on the other side of this imaginary line is the space of work and while stepping across the line, try experiencing the creative space and its possibilities, therefore transforming oneself into the mental space of a creative individual.

**B) Contact** – A group stands in a circle holding hands with everyone looking around it and becoming aware of the presence of the individuals. This must be done to open oneself to others in order to collaborate actively and do away with fear and nervousness. Release hands when a sense of contact with others has been established. Now, the group may do some actions such as jumping in the air, sitting on the floor, touching walls of the room, etc., to feel the contact. Find a partner and stand face-to-face with each other. Open up with feelings of acceptance and warmth so that a good connection is established. Try changing partners if possible, and at the end of this exercise notice if there is a fundamental difference in oneself and in relation to the whole group.

**C) Confidence** – A group when in circle must do an activity. Each member should cross the threshold into the centre of group and while at centre, some activity must be done, and no mistakes must be made. For example, one may open his arms, sense

the chest and say 'I am an actor' and then leave a pause for the audience to receive his words, and return to his position in the circle. The positive energy needs to be felt, sense of contact be present with every member, and open up to receive the performance. One must imagine himself/herself to be a creative and skilful performer.

**D) Concentration** – By focusing on a particular object, concentration is developed. Try to look at an object from a distance, notice its shape and colour, and imagine a connect between oneself and the object. Imagine standing beside that object, touching and lifting it, so that the body is in contact with it. Now, stop focusing on the object and notice the difference. Repeat this exercise several times until there is a clarity about the difference on having the imaginary connection and without having it.

**E) Feeling of Ease** – This constitutes a set of very simple exercises. Stand straight and feel the body. Raise the arms into the air, bring them down, and in this process imagine the feeling of ease and lightness in the body. Try repeating this sequence at a quicker tempo. Go down to the floor lying back with head touching the floor and then slowly return to standing position. Imagine the body to be as light as a feather. Repeat the sequence a number of times. Chekhov believed that feeling of ease in an artist is a creative power.

**F) Feeling of Form** – While standing still, be aware of the body as form – the shape of the arms and hands, the head, the torso, legs, and feet. See the hands attentively and bring them together and feel it. Then, slowly move the hands by your side. Repeat the sequence several times until there is a clear visualisation of the movement of the hands in relation to the whole body.

**G) Feeling of Atmosphere** – Here, an individual is required to imagine the space filled with a chosen atmosphere, the atmosphere of the space of work. The images which come to mind must be noticed and a response must develop. There should be a harmony between the individual and the atmosphere. Hold a conversation with a partner and while conversing, the focus must be on keeping voice and actions in harmony with the atmosphere.



**H) Actions** – All actions can be performed either in a staccato or legato manner. In staccato, the movements are sharp and precise, and the body comes to an abrupt halt. On the other hand, movements are continuous in a legato, and the body comes to a halt gradually. One must explore these movements freely. Make large and small movements and feel how it is like to move in different ways. Now, try putting on and taking off a piece of clothing, first in staccato and then in legato. Once a thorough exploration has been done, try to combine the action with both staccato and legato. Focus must be there to the movements of transformation and change in feelings. Every movement must be clearly shaped and must flow like water into the next one. There should be a sense of rhythm and when coming to a halt, attention must be paid to the inner sense of quality. What is essential is that every movement must be linked together to get an experience.

**I) Archetypal Gestures** – Every gesture like that of pushing, pulling, lifting, throwing, opening, closing, embracing, etc., must be explored as clearly as possible involving the whole body in the space. As soon as the physical limit of the bodily gesture is reached, try to imagine the gesture continuing beyond the body. Pause after every movement. The gestures may be explored in staccato and legato. Each gesture must be repeated with slow beginning and acceleration towards the end. One of the effective `ways of doing is with a partner. A short piece of dialogue using contrasting gestures may be explored. First, explore using the body gesture and decrease the size of external gesture gradually until it becomes internal. Take time to receive impulse from partner, taking the action on oneself before initiating any contrasting movement. For example, say there are two actors – A and B.

A (embracing): How are you?

B (penetrating): Fine, what about you?

## 5.1.4 The Epic Theatre

### 5.1.4.1 Bertolt Brecht (1898 – 1956)

Born in a middle-class family in Augsburg, Germany, he had a short tenure as a medical orderly in German Army in 1918. It was between 1922 and 1928 when he got established as a director and writer in Berlin with a number of productions, which included his own *A Man's a Man* and *The Threepenny Opera*. After this, he broadened the scope of his work to radio and films. He also joined the Communist Party and wrote a short didactic play titled *The Measures Taken*. In 1933, he fled Germany coinciding with the rise of the Nazis only to remain fifteen years in exile. During these years he worked in several nations like Scandinavia, Finland, USSR, and USA, and completed the drafts of plays *Mother Courage and Her Children*, and *The Good Person of Setzuan*. He worked in Hollywood from 1941 to 1948 in several plays, most notably *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. Finally, he returned to Germany with the script of *Mother Courage* along with his wife Helene Weigel, and the couple planned to stake their future in theatre in Soviet-occupied Berlin on a play production. The premiere of *Mother Courage* was held on 11<sup>th</sup> of January 1949 and it was in the same year Brecht and Weigel founded the Berliner Ensemble where he directed and adapted his plays till his death in 1956.

“Brechtian theatre” owes its origin to the “documentary theatre” of Erwin Piscator of the late-1920s. Brecht favoured a theatre somewhat different from “socialist realism” as was being promoted by USSR's Commissars of Culture. He developed a socialist theatre which engaged the theatre audience in a cautious reading of their political options. By exploring the economic, political, and social relationships through dramatic lessons, he envisioned to educate, entertain, and empower the audience. Some of the ideas of Epic Theatre was based on the theatre of Meyerhold. It was especially after 1950 that the Epic Theatre enjoyed tremendous success not only in Germany, but across the world. It is to be noted that Meyerhold's “sociological mode of training actors” had a great impact on Brechtian aesthetics. The Berliner Ensemble, soon after its establishment, became the most influential socialist theatre after the Second World War. Brecht exposed the contradictions of capitalism working as both director and playwright, and employed what can be called

as “the theatrical means of animating audiences to political action.” By attacking the Aristotelian dramatic theory, he proposed a performance mode different from Stanislavsky’s, by drawing from both avant-garde and modernist tradition, as reflected in the theoretical writings of Brecht. Following the former, he was committed to overthrow capitalism and in the latter, wanted to work within the fold of mainstream institutions. Novel techniques were deployed so that the spectators could be distanced from the performance they watched. This was done to criticise the ideologies represented by the characters.

During the Cold War era when both superpowers were putting pressure on other nations to shape their society and culture in sync with the ideological dictates of the superpowers, many artists looked up to Brecht’s theatre as an alternative. The theatre stood as one of the means to oppose the global power of US capitalism and militarism. For instance, Giorgio Strehler from Italy and Ralf Langbacka from Finland directed production of the plays of Brecht so that both politics and socialist theatre could be influenced in Italy and Finland.

The term “epic” in Epic Theatre represents not only a mode of performance but also that of literature, differentiated by an emphasis, to tell a bit about the past, in opposition with drama with dialogue-based and present-tense show that gives importance to the author’s subjective thoughts. The most important theory of Brecht is touted to be the alienation theory or estrangement theory which is primarily achieved through narration which creates the alienation effect and is carried out by telling the audience what is going to happen before it actually does. Moreover, certain techniques are used in distancing the spectators from getting emotionally involved in the play by reminding them of “artificiality” entailing a theatrical performance. Such examples include captions with explanation, screen illustrations, actors coming out of the characters to either give a lecture or indulge in singing songs, and unusual stage effects which makes the audience aware of their presence in a theatre. Brecht had suggested two exercises for his alienation theory:

**A) Speaking a Verse in a Rhythm with Tap Dance** – This changes the normal tempo, emphasis, and the line-flow of any text that generates a notion of the initial

construction of that particular text, and assumptions which actually underpins the dominant way or method of its reading and interpretation.

**B) Eating with small knife and fork** – This practice disrupts the spatial arrangement, applied to create a strange effect on the normal custom followed on table while eating.

### **5.1.5 The Poor Theatre**

#### **5.1.5.1 Jerzy Grotowski (1933 – 1999)**

He was born in Rzeszow (South-east Poland) on 11 August 1933 to Marian and Emilia Grotowski. His father Marian was a forest ranger while mother Emilia was a schoolteacher. Jerzy's childhood was shaped by his mother completely for his father served as a Polish army officer when Germany invaded Poland in September 1939, and after the War he shifted to Paraguay. In his childhood, he was profoundly influenced by Paul Brunton's book *A Search in Secret India*, which was brought home by his mother. The Jewish philosopher Martin Buber and author Fyodor Dostoevsky served as foundations of his creative developments which he was to pursue later. Jerzy graduated from the Acting Department of the State Theatre School in Krakow in 1955 and received a scholarship to study direction at the State Institute of Theatre Arts in Moscow. In 1957 he joined the Theatre School in Krakow as an assistant professor and started directing productions for repertory theatres and organised a series of public lectures based on Asia. His involvement in the theatre work during his early years included the productions of *The Chairs* (written by French playwright Eugène Ionesco), *Uncle Vanya* (authored by Russian playwright Anton Chekhov) and *The Woman is a Devil* (work of French writer Prosper Mérimée).

His training process can be discussed under following heads:

**A) Space** – Jerzy never insisted on finding an appropriate space for work, rather he believed any space had the possibility for the actor to work on his craft. When a space would be selected, it needed to be transformed into a sacred space or a space with something special in it. The initial work of action necessitated the proper cleansing of the chosen space without any elements of distraction. For instance, once when Jerzy was invited by Peter Brook to conduct a workshop for the Royal Shakespeare Company in mid-1960s, he made the British actors to clean the stage on the very first day.<sup>73</sup> Hence, no work could begin without cleansing of the space as the care of the space of work is an integral element in the creation of quality.

**B) Behaviour** – As Jerzy puts it in his own words, “an act of creation has nothing to do with either external comfort or conventional human civility...it demands a maximum of silence and a minimum of words.”<sup>74</sup> The essence is that the actor’s outer and inner space must be empty of trivial matters which can be achieved through maintenance of silence during work, prevention of social chatter in the space of work, and minimising discussions among observers. Jerzy was inspired by Ryszard Cieslak who spoke rarely to the students during teaching and instead approached them with silence and fluidity. This however does not mean that Jerzy was uninterested in engaging about his work or process.

**C) Body of the Actor** – Jerzy was aware that actors have several blocks apart from physical blocks, and this is mainly in relation to their attitude towards their own bodies. If an individual does not feel confident with his/her body, it means a lack of acceptance of the body, and therefore a two-fold division takes place – ‘me’ and ‘my body.’ He suggests that “not to be divided is not just the seed of actor’s creativity but is also the seed of life.” For Jerzy, all reactions or impulses inside the body begin at *croix* (part of the body comprising lower part of spinal column with the base of the trunk including abdomen). This is what he referred to as “sacrum-pelvis complex.”<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 91.

<sup>74</sup> Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, 2002, p. 258.

<sup>75</sup> Grotowski, *The Grotowski Sourcebook*, 1989, p. 297.

He developed two particular exercises for this – a) The Cat, based on the observation of a cat as it stretches itself; and b) The Motions, consisting of ‘primal position’<sup>76</sup> and a series of stretches.

**The Cat:** The cat lies stretched out with face downwards, in a total relaxing manner. “The legs are kept apart with arms at right angles to the body and palms toward floor. It wakes up and draws the hand toward the chest by keeping the elbow upwards, so that the palms of hands form a support base. It reaches up with the head slowly and wiggles the spine side to side. By stretching the spine with the support of arms and legs, it raises the hips. Keeping the right hip near the floor, it places its weight in the arms and right leg, and extends the left leg out sideways. It repeats the process by changing sides. Again, coming back to the spine stretch with the support of arms and legs, it pulls the head and spine in a long curve forward along the floor. As the head reaches up and forward, the whole spine will be pulled into extension and onto the support of the hands. On return, the movement is initiated with the tailbone as thighs, chest and abdomen are drawn close to the ground. The exercise is completed by turning over and falling onto the back and relaxing.”<sup>77</sup>

**The Motions:** This exercise entails synchronisation of details within a group. There are three cycles of stretches where every cycle comprises of one specific stretch that is executed four times. These four times include the performing of the stretch toward each of the cardinal directions (North, South, East, West), and turning from one direction to the other without changing the spot. Every cycle is separated by a stretch called ‘zenith’ which is a quick stretch down immediately followed by a quick one up. As Thomas Richards points out that one must see what is before them and hear things around them in each moment of this exercise; and at the same time, one must be present to one’s own body – “see that you are seeing, hear that you are hearing.”<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> It refers to a position of the body where the spine is inclined a bit, and knees slightly bent.

<sup>77</sup> Slowiak and Cuesta, 2007, pp. 95-96.

<sup>78</sup> Richards, *At Work with Grotowski on Physical Actions*, 1995, p. 55.

**D) Presence of the Actor** – This can be grasped through three different practices – a) Attention to Space; b) Actor as Hunter; and c) The Stick Game.

**Attention to Space:** Jerzy held the notion that the easiest way to distinguish between a professional from amateur is by finding out the noise they make while walking. It should be remembered that walking is a form of exercise which shifts balance from one leg to the other. So, when the actor is in a higher state of attention, no noise would be made. There will not be any noise of the footsteps while walking in a static direction or whether an individual changes direction continuously, even if he/she walks in a four-walled room. Each step must be observed carefully along with the space. If we assume an enclosed space, say a room, where there are other people present, then this walking movement must be done in the same way with careful observation of both oneself and the others. One needs to have a clear idea as to where are the others exactly located in the space. It is important to give the others the space to work and when this space is controlled, everyone including oneself will be able to have a clear sensation as working together without collision.

**Actor as Hunter:** After achieving the control of space comes the concept of “horizontal attention” which provides an experience of the space through the merging of action and awareness. This awareness demands the actor to possess the attention of a hunter. Who is a hunter? Any individual who hunts. Well, that is the simplest definition one can provide. However, here we are going to focus exclusively on the hunter who hunts animals, and the space that the hunter occupies while during a hunt. The hunter knows that he/she does not know the occurrence of a critical moment and this is where the attraction is. Any hunter needs to have a superior attention avoiding presuming anything. Now, if the question is asked again – Who is a hunter? The alert individual. Thus, in Jerzy’s theatre, an actor is the alert individual.

**The Stick Game:** This must be performed in a substantial space with a number of other actors standing in concentric circle. Having the attention and control of space thus achieved, hunt for the right moment to pass the stick on to the other actor and be alert to receive. Hold the stick in the centre and keep it vertical. The stick must not fall on the ground, therefore implying a continuous giving and receiving among

the participants or a steady acceleration. As the stick moves rapidly from one to another, further sticks can be introduced until the number of sticks equal the number of actors in the given space. Now, the counting game begins. The participants must count from one to twenty with one voice for each number. If two individuals call out same number then the counting will again start from one. Also, if a stick gets dropped in the middle of counting, the counting will start from one. When the count reaches twenty, one stick can be taken out. The game proceeds in this way until all the sticks have been taken out. This exercise challenges the actors on attention, rhythm, stamina, and contact, which ultimately enables an experience of the space and activation of horizontal attention.

**E) Voice of the Actor** – Jerzy viewed voice as an extension of the body. He identified two necessary conditions for good vocal power – a) “the column of air carrying the sound must escape with force and without meeting obstacles,” and b) “the sound must be amplified by physiological resonators.”<sup>79</sup> Three kinds of respiration were recognised by Jerzy – a) pectoral respiration – upper thoracic respiration that is predominant among European and American women; b) abdominal respiration – engages the diaphragm and allows abdomen and lower ribs to expand; and c) total respiration – this begins in abdomen and then engages the chest, a type of respiration found in human babies and animals. Jerzy advocated that nobody should seek to achieve an ideal model of respiration but should cater to one’s natural respiration. The simple exercise he prescribed was to lie on the floor on one’s back and breathe.

## **5.1.6 The Group Theatre/American Laboratory Theatre**

### **5.1.6.1 Lee Strasberg**

Strasberg focused mostly on three aspects of actor training – affective memory, concentration, and relaxation. Affective memory constitutes the “basic element of an actor’s reality” drawing out past emotions already within an individual’s body and

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<sup>79</sup> Grotowski, op. cit., 2002, p. 147.



mind. The actor gets to prepare to respond instantaneously and in an expressive way with feelings and passion. For Strasberg, mastery of this technique helps the actor to be more alive in present. As has been pointed out, affective memory is a “rehearsal technique” exclusively designed for theatre which provides the actor to locate “emotional triggers” helping to set off proper feelings.

For the development of concentration, Strasberg stressed on a series of “sense-memory exercises” where the actor starts by handling imaginary objects such as drinking tea, or other daily activities. The objective is to get hold of the psychology underlying the experience. For example, let us assume that the actor is wearing an expensive watch gifted to him by his lover. By applying the Strasberg method, the actor just not sees the watch as a mere object but tries to recall how the watch was offered to him as a gift from his lover. In doing thus, the actor remembers the day and time of receiving the gift, the weather conditions, his lover’s face, etc., through the senses. Another exercise that Strasberg applied to maintain concentration is by making use of Private Moment. The purpose is to focus whatever the actor is doing with full concentration so that inhibitions are gotten rid of in public. In other words, being private even while being in front of audience.

#### **5.1.6.2 Stella Adler**

She was born to Jacob and Sarah Adler, members of the Yiddish Theatre in New York. In 1922, Stella got the opportunity to witness the performance of Moscow Art Theatre in New York which had a lifelong impact on her career. She established the Stella Adler School of Acting in New York City, in 1949. Here, she began to teach her own interpretation of the Stanislavsky’s system. This happened because Stella was the only member of the Group Theatre who could directly work with the master in 1934. She taught world renowned actors like Marlon Brando, Harvey Keitel, and Robert De Niro.

Adler gave importance to action in theatre performance. According to her, everything in theatre is action and “that is what acting means.”<sup>80</sup> For her, acting and doing are

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<sup>80</sup> Adler, *The Art of Acting*, 2000, p. 56.

same as the actors in due process develop into the character they portray. She conceived Stanislavsky's concept of inner action as "justifications" which helps to "experience the action and emotion."<sup>81</sup> She prescribes an exercise for this – to describe an object from nature. In her words, it is "useful to study nature because nature is large and timeless."<sup>82</sup> The aim of this exercise was to understand that external action consists of describing an object and also trying to communicate to the audience. Through such an exercise, an individual realises that external action is discovered experientially and not intellectually. Adler believed in the provision of play, idea, conflict, and style on the part of playwright and it was up to an actor to understand and experience the character through the character's situation and time. This entails an awareness required on the part of an actor every time he/she performs an action. To quote Adler here, - "When we act, we primarily perform an action. Our second objective is creating a reason for the action. This is called justification and before we continue examining actions, we must look into it."<sup>83</sup>

Coming to the question of imagination, Adler viewed that imagination is strengthened primarily through descriptive activities. Her approach was mostly mental unlike Stanislavsky who had aimed towards expressive physical action. However, like Stanislavsky she believed that everything depended on exercising and strengthening the imagination. Adler developed multiple exercises to strengthen the imagination and all of these had to do with factual details. For example, - "A long branch has fallen across the road. How recently did this happen? Is the foliage on it still green? Or is the branch long dead? How much effort does it take to pick up and throw it into the field?"<sup>84</sup> Other exercises include imagining an individual walking along a country road, road leading to a wooden bridge, robe of a Chinese emperor, etc. These suggested exercises not only require the actor to just imagine the specific thing mentioned but to dig deep and visualise other things related to it as well in detail. She further points out that a playwright provides only basic facts and therefore

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p. 125.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 125.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 68.

it is the responsibility of the actor to make those facts come alive in performance. By what means are the actor to achieve this? Well, Adler herself provides the answer – placing a greater value on one’s “store of knowledge” as the actor is a “storehouse of images” which are powerful enough to engage both the body and mind.

Regarding the use of Stanislavsky’s concept of active analysis, Adler differs on two aspects. Stanislavsky stressed about finding oneself in the role and the role in oneself but Adler considers an actor’s personality to be more important than the character. She stated that “it is part of the approach to acting that concentrates on who you are, not who the character is...this technique is about doing, not about feeling.” Secondly, Stanislavsky’s active analysis addressed body, mind, and feelings simultaneously but contrarily Adler gave importance to the physicality of the character sometimes at the expense of emotion and psychology involved. She said, “Character is physicalization with truth...your physical self is the most interesting thing in character.”

#### **5.1.6.3 Sanford Meisner**

Meisner was born on 31 August 1905 to emigrated Jews from Hungary, Herman and Bertha, in New York. After graduating from the Erasmus Hall High School in 1923, he joined the Damrosch Institute of Music to study piano. Later, he received a scholarship to study at the Theatre Guild School of Acting. It was here that he met Lee Strasberg, and came in touch with the American Laboratory Theatre Group.

Meisner believed that an actor must live truthfully in imaginary circumstances of a play and focus on living through the actions of the character. He approached action through repetition exercise that was to act as a springboard for inner action. In this exercise, two participant-actors sit across from one another. Actor X observes Actor Y physically and thereby makes an observation. Say, for instance, X says to Y – you have a blue shirt. Actor Y repeats what Actor X has told him. This exercise is intentionally practised to make it known to the actors that their response come from their co-participant. For Meisner, this exercise had the capacity to induce real emotion. The inner action depends on reaction and an actor should trust inner impulses to act in response to his/her co-participant. Impulse is nothing but a response to internal or external stimuli, and so the actor needs to respond by acting

on stimuli and create an impulsive behaviour emerging spontaneously from reactions. Meisner encouraged the actors under him to genuinely perform the action without any pretension.

If acting is doing, then imagination provides the starting point for the doing. According to Meisner, “the foundation of acting is the reality of doing.”<sup>85</sup> Meisner did not believe that imagination was dependant on real life experiences but imagination certainly helped to make given circumstances seem definite. His application of imagination as a tool for the actor is brought out by an exercise where he assigns his student-actors short, two-person scenes. Preparation was to be done by imagining the condition of their characters and their emotional frame of mind exactly the moment before the scene starts, followed by reacting to each other and performing their actions. Here, imagination is used for emotional preparation. He writes that preparation is a device which “permits to start a scene or play in a condition of emotional aliveness.”<sup>86</sup> Meisner, unlike Stanislavsky, did not use emotion memory exercise for he believed that young actors may not have sufficient experience in life to use emotion memory effectively as a tool.

### **5.1.7 The Theatre as an Empty Space**

#### **5.1.7.1 Peter Brook (1925 – 2022)**

Eminent English theatre-director Peter Stephen Paul Brook was born on 21 March 1925 in Chiswick, London. His parents, Simon and Ida, were Jewish immigrants from Latvia. Initially, Brook was studying languages at the University of Oxford until 1945, when he got involved with the Birmingham Repertory Theatre as stage director. He worked as the “Director of Productions” at Royal Opera House, London, from 1947 to 1950; and became the director of the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1962.

Though Brook was much influenced by the Theatre of Cruelty of Artaud, but he did not stick to its original form. In Brook’s own words, “Anyone who wishes to know what ‘Theatre of Cruelty’ means should refer directly to Artaud’s own writings. We

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<sup>85</sup> Meisner, *On Acting*, 1987, p. 16.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

used his striking title to cover our own experiments, many of which were directly stimulated by Artaud's thought."<sup>87</sup> Hence, the researcher believes that Brook's concept of theatre was different from Artaud's; that of an empty space.

Theatre-director Peter Brook is most noted for his direction of Shakespearean plays and most importantly the Mahabharata. However, Brook is significant in the understanding of theatre because of his four path-breaking theories in theatre – deadly theatre, holy theatre, rough theatre, and immediate theatre.

**Deadly Theatre** – It is the “bad theatre” of the West End and Broadway, which does not instruct or entertain us. The performances in this theatre are considered to be boring, conventional, and dull. There is absolutely no space to improvise and be creative, as this type of theatre relies on imitation rather than innovation. This kind of theatre solely exists on the criteria of consumerism, i.e., minting of money, and not on the criteria of creativity. i.e., incapable of adapting to changing cultures.

**Holy Theatre** – Brook calls this type of theatre as the “theatre of the invisible-made-visible.”<sup>88</sup> It is all about experience or the invisible – human consciousness, which generally elude our senses. Therefore, the theatre is a form of communion between the actor and audience.

**Rough Theatre** – This is the theatre of the people, or the mass. It is characterised by liveliness, vividness, and is flexible and creative. Brook calls this as “experimental theatre” where no convention is followed and simple things add up to create a performance. There is no complicated space here, as the audience can easily join in, sitting around tables, and theatre in back and upstairs rooms.

**Immediate Theatre** - The theatre which asserts itself in the present is called an immediate theatre. This means that no play can be planned completely because it will not be performed exactly as per the original plan. If it is executed in line with the original plan, then acting becomes dull and monotonous. Brook asserts that “a director who does his own designs naturally never believes that the completion of

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<sup>87</sup> Brook, *The Empty Space*, 1968, p. 58.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

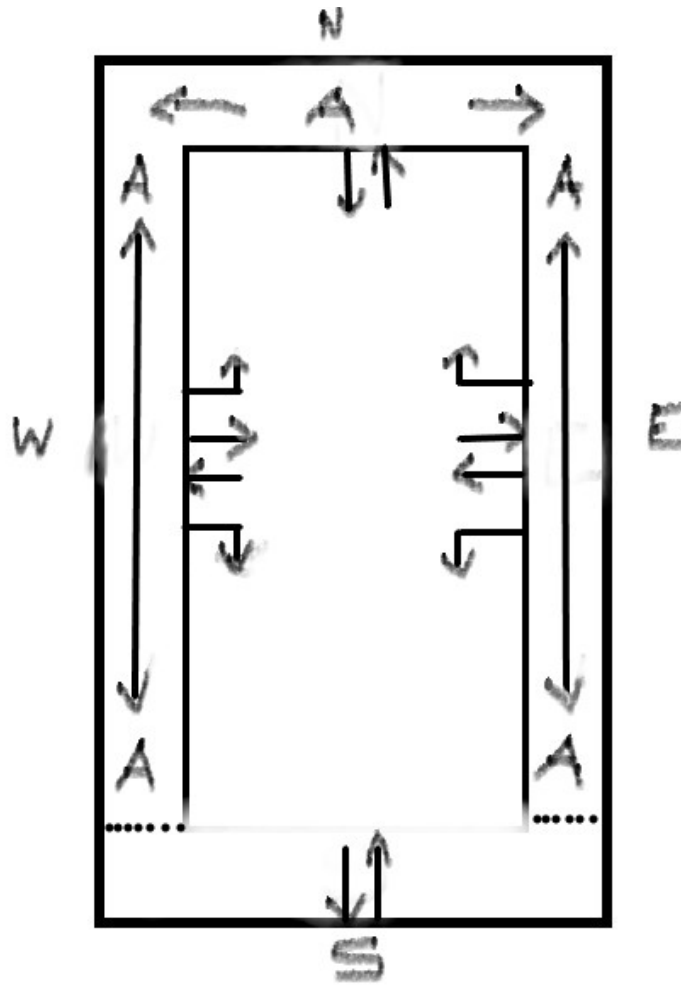
the designs can be an end in itself.” For him, an incomplete design is a necessity which has clarity without any rigidity, and therein lies “true theatrical thinking.” The designs are always in action, in motion, and in relation to “what the actor brings to a scene as it unfolds.”<sup>89</sup>

Brook utilised and followed certain exercises that would be extremely beneficial for an individual to practise with.

**A) Touching the Wall** – In a four-walled spacious hall-room, groups of people are in both standing and sitting position in four cardinal directions (North, South, East, West) close to the wall. The Every individual has to perform the exercise of touching the wall by coming from the opposite direction, and this should be done only through fast walking.

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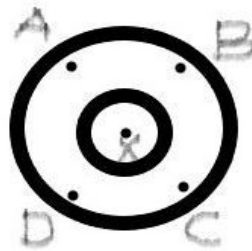
<sup>89</sup> Ibid., pp. 124-125.



In the figure as shown above, A stands for the actor-audience, who occupy the space between the inner imaginary rectangular area and the walls (the black outer rectangle). The dotted lines represent the end of the space occupied by the actor-audience. Within the space of inner rectangle, only movements in the form of fast walking will take place. The participants can walk from N to S and again from S to N; W to E and E to W. From E, a participant can also walk towards N as well as S; and in the same way he/she may go to N and S from W. A participant who is walking from E to W, W to E, and S to N, will not be able to touch the actual wall because of the actor-audience occupied space. They will have to come in front of the imaginary wall (the inner imaginary rectangle) or in front of the actor-audience and stop there. Only those who walk towards S can touch the actual wall. It must be noted here that the higher aim is not to touch the wall; for that is the primary aim. The higher aim

consists in the creation of a zigzag movement within the inner imaginary rectangular space. The participants do not do anything but only walking. However, while walking, the participants may well think of different things, and their arms may swing according to certain set of habits, and legs may stomp. So, the whole block that moves along is completely inexpressive or expressive of different haphazard things, and the participant does not believe in a central intention. The actor who focuses on this intention becomes believable at once, and justify what he/she is doing, even without any story or anecdote.

**B) Group Movements** – A group of participants is needed to perform this exercise. There is an inner circle and an outer circle. Only one participant stands within the inner circle (X), and another four participants form the outer circle (A, B, C, D) – standing diagonally in relation to X and maintaining one arm distance from each other.



X moves his head towards A, stretches the legs as comfortable, bends a bit, and slowly raises the left hand and points to A's left shoulder; then, A moves his head towards B, stretches the legs, bends, and raises the left hand and points to B's left shoulder. In the same way, B must follow the movement and point towards C; then C to D, and D back to A. Now, A should turn his head towards X, who will lower the hand and this same movement would be performed by raising the right hand.

The researcher must state that this is only the model provided as practised by him. This practice of group movement can be done in various ways. For example, there is no need for any inner circle. A certain movement or movements can be performed



just by forming a circle with each member directing the last move towards the other one. This helps in building rhythm and channelises the energy by giving and receiving. Also, even if a group practices by forming two circles as shown above, there is again no need of only four members in the outer circle. There can be more than four members for the practice. Whatever may be the variation, the important thing here is to bring out the concentration, discipline, and perseverance of the participants.

**C) Working with Bowl** – Hold an imaginary bowl with both the hands. Then, slowly, walk a distance, and place it on the table. This exercise, though seems to be easy, is not easy at all because this exercise has the capacity to distinguish an actor from non-actor. An actor will be able to perform this with full concentration, and proper expression, without any discomfort.

For Brook, there is a significant difference between the actor and the audience. The audience cannot be prepared as they have only assembled to watch a performance or an event. On the other hand, the actors undergo a thorough preparation for the performance or event. The actor comes to the audience to give something and for giving something, the actor needs to prepare what he/she can give and this preparation consists of a long process. It involves the tuning of the body just like the tuning of strings in an instrument, so that the desired effect can be achieved.

## **5.1.8 The Postmodern Theatre**

### **5.1.8.1 Eugenio Barba (1936 - )**

Barba is the founder of the Odin Teatret (1964) and has established Western Europe's sole government-funded theatre laboratories – "Nordisk Teaterlaboratorium." Barba has combined Eastern theatrics along with Western methods and applied it to the Odin Teatret. Training has been a central component in his theatrical approach which usually consists of separate vocal and physical sessions so that one does not dominate the other. Barba considered training to be a process of "self-definition" and "self-

discipline” which manifests through physical reactions.<sup>90</sup> He did not develop any systematic body of exercises that the actor needed to master in order to be ready for performance. With the Odin actors, he has formulated a training and rehearsal methodology. For instance, when Barba started working in Odin in the 1960s, his training was collective. This means that the actors were training together and learning acrobatics, gymnastics, pantomime skills, and vocal techniques. During this process, Barba realised the importance of “individual rhythm in training process” subsequently leading to a shift from emphasis on skill to emphasis on pace and rhythm.<sup>91</sup> Barba also developed “composition exercises” where the actor was required to concentrate on the balance of muscular tensions and “psychophysical association” instead of executing a task properly. Improvisations were employed too in order to develop the quality of performance during rehearsals. Initially, such improvisations were entirely based on texts that were written before a rehearsal, but with his 1972 production *Min Fars Hus*, this got changed as Barba and the actors developed it entirely during rehearsals. This emphasis on improvisation in *Min Fars Hus* placed the creative responsibility on the shoulders of the performers and the director because they did not have a single textual source that would serve as a guide for them.

Performers in Odin continually explore ways to acquire skills which include devising solutions for both physical and vocal problems, but this does not necessarily mean that they focus on learning new gymnastic exercises. In physical training, for example, an actor might learn how to control a particular fall; and in vocal training, he/she may explore the use of one’s voice in the best way possible in a street performance while remaining true to the basic principles they work with. Naturally, discipline also gets importance in such training method. The Odin performers exercise their bodies and voices regularly so that they could be ready for performance. So, the actors explore the physical and vocal potentialities through exercise and mental discipline. To quote Barba – “the performance is a tightly woven net which we must break through in order to liberate, in an unforeseen moment,

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<sup>90</sup> Barba, *Beyond the Floating Islands*, 1986, p. 56.

<sup>91</sup> Barba, *The Floating Islands*, 1979, p. 65.

fragments of our past and our experiences. Every evening the actors struggle with this net...they try to dissolve, to annul the rigid iron structure through which they reveal themselves and which makes them into actors and those who surround them into an audience.”<sup>92</sup>

Ian Watson, teacher on the Theatre Programme at the University of Pennsylvania, had been a witness to the Odin Teatret training session in the 1980s, and he has vividly described the process. In a room, there are a total of five actors (two men, three women) and everyone is working in a separate way. Initially, there is a brief warm-up stretch exercise, after which the actors work on their own activities. One of the actresses is maybe just sitting on a chair, moving her arms across her body; and then her head – from right to left, and then up and down. Every action of hers is characterised by precision and slow movement with small pauses in between. In the course of all her actions, there exists no gulf between the waist and chest, and spine is not in a curved position. This means that the body moves in one unit. Another actor may do a tap-dance at the back of the room by raising the arms in a ballet position, and spinning multiple times. What is worthy to note is that the upper portion of the body seems not to engage in the dance movement. Then, after a sudden stop, several shoulder-stands are performed and the movement gets concluded by returning to the original upright position every time. So, here, every move is executed in a precise and controlled manner. The sequence is – simple dance movement, moving around, occasional tap-dance, and finally, upright position.<sup>93</sup>

Another very significant aspect of Barba’s work pertains to the field of Theatre Anthropology. Barba defines the term as “the study of the pre-expressive behaviour of the human being in an organized performance situation.”<sup>94</sup> Here, the work of the performer addresses three different aspects – a) the individual personality of the performer which makes the performer unique; b) the historical-cultural context and

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<sup>92</sup> Barba, op. cit., 1986, p. 181.

<sup>93</sup> Watson, “Training with Eugenio Barba,” 2000, p. 218.

<sup>94</sup> Barba, *The Paper Canoe*, 1995, p. 10.

particularities of theatrical traditions through which the unique personality undergoes manifestation; and c) usage of mind-body in accordance with extra-daily techniques. The first two aspects are concerned with the transition from pre-expressivity to performance whereas the third one underlines personal, stylistic, and cultural differences. Barba also distinguished the extra-daily technique from the daily body technique. The daily body technique, according to Barba, follows the principle of obtaining “maximum result with minimum expenditure of energy” while the extra-daily technique is the principle of “maximum commitment of energy for a minimal result.”<sup>95</sup> As has been described by the extra-daily technique is based on “the emphasis of the actor’s behaviour on stage” and “the physical rules by which the action is performed.”<sup>96</sup>

There are three specific things which forms the essential features of Theatre Anthropology and may be discussed here briefly, as these have been of a great help to the researcher. These are – a) balance; b) equivalence; and c) the use of face, hands, and feet.

**A) Balance** – The extra-daily balance requires greater physical effort on the part of the performer which enables the performer to feel alive even before expressing. The role of the balance in performance is “stylisation and aesthetic suggestivity.” In order to keep the body in a symmetrical position, only a little participation of muscles is required as the essential work is done by the ligaments. To quote Barba, “the study of balance makes it possible for us to understand how a balance in action generates a kind of elementary drama: the opposition of different tensions in the performer’s body is sensed kinaesthetically by the spectator as a conflict between elementary forces.”<sup>97</sup> There are two concepts within balance which guides a performer – balance in action, and balance and imagination.

**Balance in Action:** According to Barba, balance in action refers to a performer’s “dynamic balance based on body’s tensions.” It is concerned with the generation in

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>96</sup> Okus, “Eugenio Barba and Extra-Daily Scenic Behaviour,” 2020, p. 36.

<sup>97</sup> Barba and Savarese (eds.), *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology*, 1991, p. 39.

spectator the sensation of movement, even if there is nothing other than immobility. The kinaesthetic consequences of performance in the form of sensations experienced by spectators while viewing the “dynamic patterns of scenic behaviour” needs to be understood by the actors.

**Balance and Imagination:** A human being is always mobile in the sense that he/she is always in a state of oscillation following “particular and complex rhythms” whether standing, sitting, or reclining. These rhythms are formed due to sensory-motor reflex systems that ensures the different body-postures and activity. The sensory-motor system which makes the balance system, includes “externo-receptive (visual, auditory, tactile) and auto-receptive elements (muscular, tendonous, articular, vestibular).”<sup>98</sup> Smooth and efficient functioning of the system is necessary to maintain the centre of gravity of humans. The actors do show a change of balance during a mimed execution of an action, even though he/she is accustomed to imagined gestures/actions.

**B) Equivalence** – This feature is employed in acting performance to reproduce reality by retaining gestural tensions which gets displaced into another body part. For example, if we take into consideration the exercise “Shooting a Bow” from Meyerhold’s biomechanics, we find that the bow and arrow are actually absent, but the consequent demonstration of sequences helps us in perceiving the tensions and forces essential for the shooting of the arrow. In this process, the spectator is able to witness the visual image, both dynamic and expansive, at each moment of action as suggested by the mime.

**C) Face, Hands, Feet** – The use of face, hands, and feet are extremely significant in the formation of any visual image. Eyes, mouth, and the facial muscles are indicators of the intentions and feelings of human beings.

**Natural Face:** This deals with the anatomical expression, which means that an actor conveys a particular emotion to the audience through the positioning of eyes and facial muscles.

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

**Painted Face:** It is used to modify expressions beyond the limits of conventions, and thereby to dramatize the facial features either by enlarging or deforming them.

**Provisional Face:** It necessitates the use of mask and to transform this static and immobile object into a living and suggestive one. The face must act or perform with the mask equally to express.

The hands are useful in expressing different gestures which provides clear specific ideas to the spectator. As Barba says, “the hand acts, and acting, speaks.”<sup>99</sup> Therefore, the hands continuously change the positions and tensions and helps in articulation of representation. For example, in different genres of dance, like Bharatnatyam and Kathakali, various hasta mudras are used in multiple ways in relation to facial expressions and body to create meaningful rendition.

Feet is the core of a performance because an actor can perform without arms and hands, but to perform without feet is inconceivable. Whether to create rhythmic movements in motion or just to stand still, the feet become the centre of interest. Moreover, feet are also connected with voice, as Barba notes that the “position of the feet determines even the strength and nuance of the actor’s voice.”<sup>100</sup>

Barba, specifically dealt with the relationship between theatre and spectator within the purview of Theatre Anthropology. He wrote that the theatre’s “raw material is not the actor, nor the space, nor the text, but the attention, the seeing, the hearing, the mind of the spectator” thereby theatre being the “art of the spectator”; and moreover, that Theatre Anthropology is focused on singling out the “principles which the performer must put to work in order to make this dance of senses and mind of the spectator possible.”<sup>101</sup> In essence, Theatre Anthropology is not based on the study of Asian or European theatres in their historical contexts, but on the Eurasian vision of theatre.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid., p. 130.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., p. 126.

<sup>101</sup> Barba, op. cit., 1995, pp. 37-38.

<sup>102</sup> Eurasian theatre is not concerned with theatres within a geographical area, but suggests a “mental and technical dimension – an active idea in modern theatrical culture.” It is

#### 5.1.8.2 Carolina Pizarro (1981 - )

Carolina Pizarro is a theatre-actress, director, and actor-trainer from Chile, associated with the Odin Teatret and Ikarus Stage Arts, both located in Holstebro, Denmark. She studied acting and theatre in the theatre school of Facetas between 2000 and 2003. In 2004, she joined the University of Chile to study Arts and Theatre Acting. During her university years, she studied about major Western theatre practitioners such as Stanislavsky, Meyerhold, Grotowski, Barba, Brecht, et.al. It was in 2006 that she encountered Eugenio Barba and Julia Varley, who accepted her as their disciple. She finally went to the Odin Teatret in 2010.

Carolina worked in five performances of Odin Teatret under the direction of Eugenio Barba in 2015 – *Inside the Skeleton of the Whale*, *Ode to Progress*, *The Great Cities under the Moon*, *The Chronic Life*, and *The Tree*. Julia Varley directed Carolina in her solo performance *Land of Fire* (2010-2012); and in her work-demonstration *De Amagaki to Shibugaki* (2012), both in the Nordisk Teaterlaboratorium. She also performed as an actress in several other projects. From 2008 to 2014, she directed five performances of Triskel Artes Escénicas - *Pajaristico* (2007-2011), *Kiki va a la escuela* (2010-2011), *Kiki en navidad* (2010-2011), *Té* (2012), and *Nada que deshacer* (2013). With the Ikarus Stage Arts, she has directed *Arcanum Zero* (2022), *Metamorfose* (2021-2022), *Roots from the Sky* (2021), and several other plays.

She is the only theatre practitioner with whom the researcher had a first-hand work experience in the Theatre Anthropology Workshop conducted from 27 September to 6 October 2014 in Sarojini Naidu School of Arts and Communication, University of Hyderabad. Though a student of Barba, Carolina has her own set of methods. These are not recipes to be followed in order to achieve the desired aim, but are helpful tools for approaching a performance. She mainly works on achieving artistic autonomy on stage during a performance, and in identifying the gulf between training and creation. Both these concepts of ‘artistic autonomy’ and ‘creation of bridge’ are

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concerned with a collection of theatres which provides points of reference for research. For details, see Barba, *The Paper Canoe*, 1995, pp. 44-45.

fundamental in her research and towards understanding the actor in the space of theatre.

**Artistic Autonomy** – The concept involves the recognition and understanding of the self as the basic and integral part. According to Carolina, it is important to recognise one’s body, soul, and mind as constituting one energy. She says that the dominant questions guiding her are “Who am I? What do I want? Who in me gets angry in the face of difficulty? Who in me reacts?”<sup>103</sup> Further, she believes that there is a comfortability in not knowing the self because in such a scenario, it becomes easy to blame other people and finding excuses for oneself. Carolina asserts – “I can’t create autonomy on stage if I don’t know who I am.”<sup>104</sup> The second step is to find a teacher/master, with whom a relationship of mutual love and respect can be created. The teachings and assistance of the master will always remain within one’s training, and performances. Once this step is done, again we must seek to recognise who I am. These steps must be continued until the arrival of autonomy without realisation.

**Creation of Bridge** - The training acts as the bridge to creation. In her words, “the training is a process taking place always in the present...is a bridge towards creation. When the creation is ready, the bridge disappears, but only in appearance because it is still there even though we cannot see it.”<sup>105</sup> The role of the bridge is to hold the performance and keep it alive. In order to create the bridge, an individual must undergo a deep learning process. Carolina’s work is based on three major things – “patience and perseverance,” “effort capacity,” and “keep calm and search for the essence.”<sup>106</sup>

The researcher practised three different exercises with her and under her supervision. These are as follows:

**A) Focus on the Self** – This is the first, basic exercise, which builds concentration and alertness of oneself. The participant focuses on breathing, and slowly adds push

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<sup>103</sup> C. Pizarro, personal communication, November 20, 2022.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.



and pull movements. Now, with the addition of music, a sound needs to be produced in sync with the breathing and the movement; leading to the creation of a posture – a physical connection without touching any other co-participants. It is a process of taking, sharing, and giving the energy within that particular space, a process of action and reaction.

**B) Rhythmic Dance Moves** – Here, a group of participants practises with music, and in a proper rhythm in sync with the beats. Music plays the most important role in the process. A combination of Regional and Western tracks with various beats helps in the rhythmic dance movements. It activates the body and prepares it for further training. The objective is to develop the ear-mind-body coordination, and experience the energy and fluidity of the immediate surrounding environment. This exercise also refreshes the mind and uplifts the mood, and in the process, brings enthusiasm for doing more.

**C) Art of Creation** – This forms the core training exercise, after the previous two exercises are completed. It signals the journey from the training to creation. The participant needs to choose a text and any character from that text he/she wants to portray. First, the realisation must occur as to “Who am I?” (Understanding the self); “What is my relationship with others?” (Connection with the environment); “What are my traditions?” (Being conscious of the values, culture); and “What is the value of my training?” (Awareness of the whole learning process). Then, the participant, enters the character using different physical movements with voice, facial expressions, and the utilisation of the space. The researcher himself had chosen the play *Macbeth* for his performance along with another participant.

Carolina believes in the value of action without interpretation, and this brings colour to the emotions. She searches for the empty space so that the character can arrive. This is in context of the interpretation of a character as revealed in a text through the body movements and expressions. During a performance, an individual needs to act without acting, and this is the trickiest thing. She provides the space to the character to express itself in dialogue by utilising the space, props, audience, and co-actors. For her, the essential principles of training include the “relation between organic –

dynamic level” along with “movement versus action.”<sup>107</sup> Apart from these, score concept, and space and directions, are also important as all of these are in relation with the text. In her words, “from the space of training new meanings emerge, it is a space where the characters live.”<sup>108</sup> The underlying objective is to empower an actor, create a dialogue with the performance, and decipher the meaning of actions.

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

### **5.1.9 Conclusion**

A careful study of the theories, concepts, and exercises of the Western theatre practitioners as discussed above, has shaped the researcher's understanding, insight, perspectives, and broadened his scope of knowledge in the domain of theatre in general, and acting in particular. The variety of exercises as followed by different practitioners enriched the researcher in developing the body marked by agility and strength, along with the required mind-body coordination. These improves our motivation, reduces stress, brings fresh energy, and helps an individual to express and emote feelings strongly. Teachings of the masters stays within an actor-cum-practitioner and all the learning comes into play in approaching and portraying a character on stage in a performance. This portrayal must be done with full concentration and discipline so that there is a connect with the audience and nothing looks superficial and monotonous.

The researcher has realised the importance of group practice which is beneficial in developing collective rhythm and energy, especially in the context of group performance where everyone needs to perform at their best. Both individual mind-body coordination and group coordination are significant for the staging of performances. Further, a clear notion of the technical approaches to the craft of theatre can be gained, relating to the lighting, costumes, make-ups, props, etc. There is no doubt that the learning process in theatre is still alive and the scope to make new discoveries always remain. Theatre helps to express and communicate with meaningful dialogues to the audience. It is a carrier of social change. The researcher believes that the theatre is a site of devotion, a space of progressive social and cultural practice and views performance as a prayer which can make this world better by shaking consciousness of oneself in this world.

## **5.2 Shaping, Strengthening and Structuring the Actor's Body through Gym training**

An actor can adopt all the disciplines of body practices. In this regard, gym practice is one of the processes of reshaping and strengthening his body in a well-structured and healthy way. It is a systematic approach to changing his body into good shape without losing flexibility. Most people misunderstand opinions on gym practice because they do not follow this process systematically. The researcher has undergone the gym practice training process with his physical body practices in a systematic manner.

The researcher faced a regrettable experience when doing the first phase of Kathakali training in the workshop held in the Department of Theatre Arts, Central University of Hyderabad, from 1st to 23rd of February, 2016. The researcher analysed himself as well as the bodies of other co-participants, and found issues with body overweight, flexibility, rigidity, strength, breath, control, balance, sustainability, rhythm, impulse, muscle memory, concentration, energy, attitude, commitment and dedication, rhythm, stretch, reflection, openness, questioning and self, agility, imagination, focus, interest, tension (physical and mental), ambiguity, confidence, clarity in posture etc. In order to overcome all these functionalities, the researcher had started the primary body practice with the help of the gym before going to the Gurumukha training process.

Three major things made him to do this gym practice, which are as follows:

1. Reducing over weight
2. Strengthening body
3. Sculpting body in a good shape

The researcher devised standard and routine rules for generating a pleasant and healthy environment. Here, the routine rules may be discussed to understand the development of the researcher as a practitioner.

Here, the researcher as a part of his research, made specific rules according to his practice. The researcher traces out his scheduled daily four hours divided into two sessions - morning and evening, in a day of physical training. As an actor trainee, for excellence, what rules did the researcher follow in life and why? The rules included waking up in the early morning hours, cleansing the body, an invocation of the divine, meditation, physical practices, diet, a compulsory six hours sleep every day and maintaining healthy relationship with each and every individual. These rules were followed because it helped the researcher to gain self-discipline, having a systematic approach to the things, getting familiar with the immediate environment, and most importantly, to know one's own self. How the researcher practiced those rules, how those rules helped the researcher pursue this physical training practice, and how it differed from the researcher's previous life? The researcher practiced yoga, the 'surya-namaskaram,' along with jogging, skipping, stretching and walking. He meditated for about thirty to forty minutes every morning; and attended festivals like the Christmas, Dussehra, Ganesh Chaturthi, Ramazan, and Ugadi. These things transformed the researcher from the space of a normal life to an altogether disciplined being. Moreover, there is another question which is important and that is how as a trainee, actor, manager, collaborator, social trainer, researcher, friend, guide, and disciple in the gym, how does a researcher pattern or shape his life according to practice modules? A researcher takes to discipline where there is a process of repeating and reproducing of the new stuff.

Aspects:

- Everyday routine – (Monday – Saturday)
- Understanding the breath and movement
- Sculpting the body
- Taking safety of the body
- Requirement of diet for physical trainee

- Rituals such as going to temple and celebrating a festival, ritualistic behaviour
- Meditation (breath, chanting, concentration, movement, visualization, and neutral position)
- Building a discipline from getting out of bed to lying on the bed
- Building healthy relationship with people
- Fasting on a particular day
- Roles played in life (student, practitioner, trainee, disciplined character, actor, manager, collaborator, social trainer, researcher, friend, and guide)

The following aspects helped the researcher's body physically and mentally. Here researcher made a schedule from Monday to Saturday daily routine practices. The main motive of this aspect is to make the researcher's body healthy and beautiful. The researcher chose this practice to understand his breath and body movement through various weight exercises that can properly sculpt his body. At the same time, he took care of his body while doing weight exercises without any short- and long-term injuries. Regarding this physical practice, the researcher had concentrated and followed diet plan like fruits multi grain sprouts, protein orated foods, which is more important for a body practitioner.

The researcher followed one of the basic rules, following Yoshi Oida and Lorna Marshall's concept of "cleansing the nine holes", where a performer should cleanse his 'nine holes' which includes the "two eyes, two nostrils, two-ears, one mouth, one hole for passing water, and one hole for defecation;"<sup>109</sup> before going on to the stage for performance, according to the Japanese tradition.

Here, the researcher's daily rituals according to his beliefs led to ritualistic behaviour to try to connect his body and mind with the supernatural power. Sometimes researcher celebrates the festivals like Ganesh Chaturthi and vehicle pooja on the occasion of the Dussehra festive season.

The researcher has undergone the Kathakali *Guru Mukha* training from 18<sup>th</sup> of May to 20<sup>th</sup> of June 2018, for a period of thirty-four days. On 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2018, four

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<sup>109</sup> Oida and Marshall, *The Invisible Actor*, 1997, p. 4.

months before starting this training, the researcher had started the gym training process to reduce his weight and strengthen his body. He had documented all his research processes in chronological order according to his rules and aspects. So here researcher has described all the fourth months of gym training.

Gym training helps the actor understand his anatomy and the possibilities of strengthening body muscles. There are plenty of exercises for each position, so selecting the required gym training exercise for the selected function, like abdomen, shoulders, biceps, chest, and thigh etc. According to the eminent Russian-American actor, director, and theatre practitioner, Michael Chekhov, physical exercises are required for an actor to overcome the body's resistance, but there is something more which an actor needs, and that is the "extreme sensitivity of the body to the psychological creative impulse."<sup>110</sup> This means that the body of an actor must be filled with psychological qualities because as Chekhov writes, a "sensitive body" and a "rich psychology" are complementary to each other, and in due process create a harmony that is necessary for attaining the professional aim of the actor.<sup>111</sup>

The researcher has been into meditation practice for the last twenty years, and still continues to do so. As a part of the researcher's individual practice, it is important to know how the meditation is a crucial process for the actor. He has given more priority to meditation because always an actor's body and mind needs to be neutral and active, so the meditation process for forty minutes a day brings his body and mind together and makes it functional. There are various kinds of meditation process the researcher has followed that includes concentrating on breath, chanting a word, imagination, listening to music and using the thought process etc.

Let us now attempt to understand the definition of meditation before proceeding further. Meditation as a word is indeed difficult to define, and scholars have attempted to provide several definitions. What we generally know is that it is a kind of practice which involves certain techniques. For instance, a recent definition of

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<sup>110</sup> Chekhov, *To the Actor*, 1953, p. 2.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

meditation considers it to be one of “intentional awareness activities” like focusing, observing, imagining, etc., “unified by the activity of awareness,” which may result in an “altered state of consciousness.”<sup>112</sup> Defined in the ancient Hindu yoga texts, there are four mental states in human mind. These are *chanchalata*<sup>113</sup> (random thought), *ekagrata*<sup>114</sup> (concentrated mind), *dharana*<sup>115</sup> (focused attention or concentration), and *dhyana*<sup>116</sup> (meditation). The third-century CE Buddhist text *Anapanasati Sutta* is a discourse which details Buddha’s instruction about using one’s breath to maintain mindfulness or achieve concentration.<sup>117</sup> According to the text, the practitioner lives in direct and constant mindfulness of the body, which means, for example, when dancing, the practitioner must be conscious of his/her dancing. Contemporary handbooks on meditation written by spiritual gurus does include characterization of meditations along with its definition. The British-Australian Theravada Buddhist monk Ajahn Brahm describes meditation as a “path to pure and empowered mind”<sup>118</sup> whereas meditation instructors such as John Yates, Jeremy Graves and Matthew Immergut define it as the “art of fully conscious living.”<sup>119</sup> In modern medical terminology, meditation is defined as a “self-regulated mental process and emotional control” which has been used as an “approach” for the management of stress and psychiatric disorders.<sup>120</sup>

The researcher has followed four different types of meditation techniques – chanting meditation, mindfulness meditation, movement meditation, and visualization meditation, in order to become a better performer. Here, the technique may be

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<sup>112</sup> Reddy and Roy, “Meditation-induced Prosociality,” 2020, pp. 471-479.

<sup>113</sup> It represents a disturbed and unsteady state of mind.

<sup>114</sup> As per *Bhagavad Gita*, the mind becomes concentrated by practice and renunciation.

<sup>115</sup> It is the initial step towards deep meditation, a condition where the mind is directed to one point. For the original *sloka*, please refer Patanjali’s *Yoga Sutra*, Chapter II, Verse 53. For commentary, see Vivekananda, *Patanjali Yoga Sutras*, p. 95.

<sup>116</sup> A well-mastered prolonged concentration.

<sup>117</sup> The word ‘Anapanasati’ means “mindfulness of breathing.” It is the 118<sup>th</sup> sutra in the *Majjhima Nikaya* collection of sutras.

<sup>118</sup> Brahm, *Mindfulness, Bliss, and Beyond*, 2014, p. 1.

<sup>119</sup> Yates, et.al., *The Mind Illuminated*, 2015, p. xv.

<sup>120</sup> Singh, et.al., “Evolution from four Mental States to the highest state of Consciousness,” 2018, p. 6.



discussed briefly. In chanting meditation, a mantra or mantras are uttered repetitively in order to clear our mind and allow the revelation of spiritual strength. The mind remains peaceful and alert.

Mindfulness meditation involves combining concentration with awareness. It helps in understanding how the mind works and there is an exclusive focus on our breath to bring the attention. This is instrumental in reducing stress and anxiety, and keeps the mind peaceful.

Exercises are benefitted by meditation and similarly meditation is benefitted by an exercise. Committing to any form of physical discipline is beneficial in our lives. Movement meditation caters to the movement of our body as the object of meditation. For example, the practice of doing yoga is a very important part of movement meditation.

Visualization meditation is all about an image that creates a particular feeling in our mind while sitting in an upright neutral meditating position. We can close our eyes and concentrate on anything that speaks to us. For instance, the researcher visualized an image of syllables first, as given by his guru. The syllable image created a feeling which automatically led to thoughts appearing of his previous activities. In other words, he used to be in a state of trance for about ten to twenty seconds, which actually helps in refreshing the body and mind, equivalent to a four hours deep sleep.

In meditation, the researcher has also followed certain processes which include the practice of meditating in early morning hours after invocation, for about half-an-hour to forty minutes; practising meditation before having breakfast, lunch and dinner, and also half-an-hour after drinking water; and meditating on the floor at least on a carpet or bedsheet in a comfortable position (i.e., there is no specific mudra position to do meditation but it must be ensured that the back should not take support of a wall or chair or any other thing).

Meditation helps an actor to maintain balance, purify the body and mind, restore the energy, and strengthen the mind. How does the mind get purified and strengthened? The act of meditation contributes in diverse ways such as removal of stress and

anxiety, doing away with negative thoughts and bringing in positive ones, making the brain active, broadening of vision, clarity of thought, controlling our impulse (uncontrollable emotions), self-consciousness and self-realization, reduction in depression, strengthening memory power, and helping in stimulating the nerves.

Now, coming to the question of exercises, it does not need any explanation as to why they are important, for we are all aware of the benefits. Before doing any specific exercises, one needs to warm-up the body. Accordingly, usual daily warmups are mandatory for the actor's practice. This warm-up is needed to understand the breath, connect with environment, prepare the body for concentration, make the and body mind together for the practice, and reduces stress on the heart. Here, the researcher followed a series of indoor and outdoor warmup routine exercises with and without equipment respectively.

### **5.2.1 Outdoor Warmups: -**

#### **Walk**

The researcher practised 400 meters walk in open air every day in the early morning to make the body active from the rest mode.



While walking, both the muscles of the upper and lower body contract to help in the coordinated movement. The muscle contraction requires a certain amount of energy which leads to an increase in demand for oxygen supply in muscle cells.<sup>121</sup> Walking is significant in managing hypertension, therefore, reducing the risk of

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<sup>121</sup> Kelly, et.al., “The Health Benefits of Walking,” in Mulley, Gebel, and Ding (eds.), *Walking*, 2017, pp. 65-66.

cardiovascular disease;<sup>122</sup> maintaining glucose control;<sup>123</sup> increases musculoskeletal health and fitness;<sup>124</sup> and promotes mental health by uplifting mood, boosting self-esteem, and reducing stress and anxiety.<sup>125</sup>

## **Routine stretches**



Routine stretches

## **I) Neck Roll**

One must sit/stand up straight with shoulders relaxed. Take a deep breath and then exhale, and while exhaling let the head drop forward. Then inhale, and while inhaling roll the head up to the left and exhale while the left ear gently drops towards left shoulder. The shoulders must be relaxed and few breaths should be taken during this position, followed by rolling the head back down to the centre as one inhale. Roll the neck to the right while exhaling so that the right ear gently drops towards the right shoulder. Take few breaths in this position. The whole sequence should be repeated at least thrice. This exercise relieves tension in the neck.

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<sup>122</sup> Murtagh, et.al., “The Effect of Walking on Risk Factors for Cardiovascular Disease,” 2015, pp. 34-43.

<sup>123</sup> Boulé, et.al., “Effects of Exercise on Glycemic Control and Body Mass in Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus,” 2001, pp. 1218-1227.

<sup>124</sup> Lawford, et.al., “Does Walking Improve Disability Status, Function, or Quality of Life in Adults with Chronic Low Back Pain?” 2015. Doi: 10.1177/0269215515590487

<sup>125</sup> McDuff and Phinney, “Walking with Meaning,” 2015. Doi: 10.1177/2333393615605116

## **II) Shoulder Roll**

One must sit/stand up straight with head facing forwards and arms relaxed by sides. Roll both shoulders forward thrice, taking calm and steady breaths. Both the neck and the arms must be relaxed. After completing three shoulder rolls, repeat the process in opposite direction thrice. This exercise relieves tension in the shoulders.

## **III) Triceps Stretch**

Keep the elbow bent and take the left hand as close to left shoulder and use right hand to push the elbow further back so that a good stretch can be felt in the triceps through the back of the arm. Maintain the position for about ten to fifteen seconds. Repeat the sequence with the right hand. This exercise improves the flexibility of the triceps.

## **IV) Standing Hip Rotation**

Stand in a straight position with arms relaxed by the sides. Lift one knee up toward the chest no higher than 90° while softening the standing leg knee. Slowly move the lifted leg around in the widest circle one is capable of while keeping the body facing forward. Continue this movement for about ten to fifteen seconds, and then change directions. Repeat the process on the other leg. This helps in stretching the quadriceps or upper thighs, back thighs, and pelvic muscles, ensuring the smooth functioning of hip joints.

## **V) Knee-to-chest Stretch**

Lie on the floor/table by keeping the legs straight. Bend the left knee while keeping the right one straight, and pull the left knee towards the chest going behind the thigh until a nice comfortable pull can be felt in the glutes and lower back. Hold on to this position for about half-a-minute. Repeat the process with the right knee. The whole sequence may be repeated thrice. This exercise improves the stability of lower pelvis, reduces pain and muscle soreness.

## **VI) Side Lying Hip Abduction**

By lying down on the left side with top leg (right leg) straight and bottom leg (left leg) bent for support. Lift the top leg up to about eight inches off the ground and hold for five seconds, after which gradually bring it down to the start position. Legs should be kept straight and do not let the hips roll forward or backward during the exercise. Repeat the process by lying down on the right side. Two sets of ten repetitions must be done on each side. This exercise helps in the reduction of knee valgus, and ensures better muscle activation and performance.

## **VII) Pose of a Child**

This is basically a yogic posture which is used as a “relaxing way to end a stretch routine.”<sup>126</sup> One should kneel on a blanket, where the knees can be apart or touching, and seat close to one’s heels. Fold the body forward with hands sliding ahead as far as they go and the foreheads must touch the blanket or at least be as close to the blanket. Shoulders should be relaxed. Take a couple of deep breaths in and out. This stretched position must be maintained for about half-a-minute, and thereafter slowly revert to the start position. The stretch must be repeated thrice.

There are many benefits to regular stretching. Stretching help increase an individual’s flexibility, which is essential for an actor’s fitness, but it is also beneficial for improving posture, reducing stress and body aches, because it assists in blood circulation and provide ‘nutrients’ to the joints.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Stauggard-Jones, *The Concise Book of Yoga Anatomy*, 2015, p. 280.

<sup>127</sup> Lam, et.al., “Effectiveness of the McKenzie Method of Mechanical Diagnosis and Therapy for treating Low Back Pain,” 2018, pp. 476-490.

## Jogging



Jogging is a very common, easy, and effective exercise, but certain points need to be kept in mind. Relax the shoulders with arms and breath moving naturally. The chin should be raised slightly and look ahead. Forefoot must land on the ground and make sure not to kick the ground. Jogging is said to be associated with lowest mortality and good heart condition if done for at least one to two hours per week.<sup>128</sup>

## Running



Running improves cardiovascular function, postural balance, and metabolism.<sup>129</sup> It can act as a “therapeutic tool” for various negative mental conditions like anxiety, depression, tension, and low self-esteem.<sup>130</sup> It is a simple exercise which boost’s the body’s energy levels and activates it from tiredness.

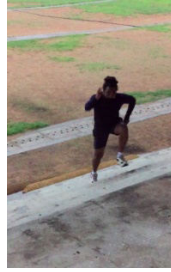
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<sup>128</sup> Schnohr, et.al., “Dose of Jogging and Long-Term Mortality,” 2015, pp. 411-419.

<sup>129</sup> Oja, et.al., “Health Benefits of Different Sport Disciplines for Adults,” 2015, pp. 434-440.

<sup>130</sup> Markotić, et.al., “The Positive Effects of Running on Mental Health,” 2020, pp. 233-235.

## Stairs Workout



Stair workout is another significant exercise. While climbing the stairs, make sure the whole foot is on the step. Keep upper body tilted forward and push from hamstrings and glutes. Try to maintain a straight posture and do not tiptoe. This exercise not only helps to burn belly fat but also strengthens the lower body. A recent study has shown how climbing stairs ensures smooth vascular muscle function.<sup>131</sup>

### 5.2.2 Indoor Warmups:

The research focused more on stretching the body muscles by using different equipment to understand the stretching of the body. In the indoor warmups, the researcher used the equipment necessary for practice which included cycling, pull and push exercises with different machines, stretching, skipping, using the cross trainer for lower part of the body, and treadmill for walking, jogging and running.

## Vibrating Belt



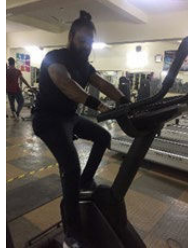
Here, the researcher has gone through with the equipment of a vibrating belt. He experienced the results with the vibrating belt, especially in weight loss. The belt is effective in toning the belly. As indicated by a research, vibration functions as a “safe

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<sup>131</sup> Yamaji, et.al., “Stair Climbing Activity and Vascular Function in Patients with Hypertension,” 2021, pp. 1274-1282.

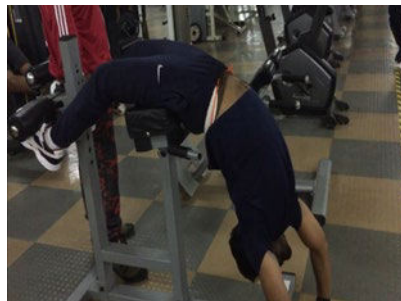
modality” in increasing “physiological responses of reflex and muscle activity” especially for those with neural conditions, athletes, and compromised health.<sup>132</sup>

## **Cycling**



Cycling increases stamina and strengthened bones, and plays an important role in reduction of weight, raising the rate of metabolism, building muscles, and strengthening the lower part of the body.

## **Roman Chair Hyperextension**



The hyperextension bench or a Roman chair is a gym workout equipment catering lower back health. It can lengthen back muscles and reduce pressure on lower back and core, thus improving body posture. It can also increase lower back strength and it develops more flexibility on pelvic area.

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<sup>132</sup> Cochrane, “Vibration Exercise: The Potential Benefits,” 2011, pp. 75-99.



## Skipping rope



Skipping with the rope is an intensity workout exercise. One must take a rope as suitable, stand in an upright position, and then begin the rotation by flick of the wrists. Take tiny hops and not big jumps in the air to keep the movement going smoothly. For beginners, try to do the exercise for at least ten to twenty seconds continuously and then some other related exercises like jumping jacks or air squats may be carried out. Then again move back to skipping. This alternate practice method is beneficial to keep the body momentum going and develop the stamina for a continuous long-time skipping exercise. Skipping regularly will help burn calories, reduce weight, improve coordination, and develop a flexible body. An experiment was carried out in China in 2019, where 229 overweight primary school children aged between nine and twelve years were made to do skipping rope exercise and nutrition education for two months, and it was concluded that a combination of both the exercise and nutrition has long-term benefits.<sup>133</sup> Regular skipping also increases bone mineral density in adolescent girls at the “lower extremities.”<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Hao, et.al., “Short-Term and Long-Term Effects of a Combined Intervention of Rope Skipping and Nutrition Education for Overweight Children in Northeast China,” 2019, pp. 348-358.

<sup>134</sup> Ha and Ng, “Rope Skipping increases Bone Mineral Density at Calcanei of Pubertal Girls in Hong Kong,” 2017. Doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0189085

## Standing Hip Extension



Hip extension is related with some of the strongest muscles, the hip extensors. Hold on to a table or chair or an equipment for support. Begin by engaging the abdominal muscles and then move one leg backward. Make sure to keep the knees straight and the angle flexed, and do not arch the lower back. Hold this position for two seconds, and revert to the starting position. Repeat at least three-sets of ten repetitions on each side. Hip extension takes place when one's hip joint is extended in order to increase the angle between pelvis and thigh. In fact, a person is actually in hip extension when he/she is standing and when one of the leg travels behind him/her. Athletes and exercisers generate power from hip extension during activities like walking, climbing stairs, running, jumping, swimming, etc. The exercises are important to strengthen those muscles in charge of extending the hips – adductor magnus,<sup>135</sup> gluteus maximus,<sup>136</sup> and hamstrings<sup>137</sup>; and further aids in stabilizing the pelvis.

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<sup>135</sup> It is located on the inner part of our thighs.

<sup>136</sup> It is the largest muscle in the buttocks of human beings.

<sup>137</sup> Three muscles of hamstrings support the gluteal muscles with hip extension – biceps femoris (double-headed muscle located on the back of the thigh), semimembranosus (a muscle that runs from the base of the pelvis to the back of tibia via tendons), and semitendinosus (lies at the back of the thigh between biceps femoris and semimembranosus).

## Pull-ups



A pullup is an upper body strength training exercise involving hanging from a pull-up bar with palms facing away from oneself, hands more than shoulder-width apart, and body fully extended. The upper body is raised up towards the bar until the chin is above or below the bar. Now, one must inhale and then extend the elbows and lower the body back to the starting position. As pull-ups mostly use the biceps and lats to move the body up, it is useful in the holistic growth of the upper body.

The researcher wants to highlight the effectiveness of the pull-ups in a brief manner as follows:

**A) Strengthening of the back muscles** – The pull-ups strengthen the muscles in the back like that of latissimus dorsi,<sup>138</sup> trapezius,<sup>139</sup> erector spinae,<sup>140</sup> and infraspinatus.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> A large muscle stretching from the middle to lower back contributing to “thoracobrachial motion” which includes extension, adduction, and internal rotation of the arm. For details, refer Goodloe, et.al., “Single Incision Latissimus Dorsi Surgical Technique: A Three Button Repair,” 2021, p. 213.

<sup>139</sup> One of the broadest, triangular, and superficial muscles of the upper back and trunk that is used for active movements like turning of the head, elevating the shoulders, and side bending. For details, refer Ourieff, et.al., “Anatomy, Back, Trapezius,” [Internet] 2022.

<sup>140</sup> They extend on either side of the vertebral column at the back between the base of the cranium and pelvis. Their main function is to move the vertebral column and maintain the posture by ensuring the spine is steady on the pelvis. For details, refer Fessler and Kim, “Surgical Approaches to the Cervicothoracic Junction,” in Schmidt and Sweet (eds.), *Operative Neurosurgical Techniques*, Volume II, 2012, pp. 2177-2191.

<sup>141</sup> A thick triangular muscle located at the back of shoulder, attached to humerus (upper arm bone) and scapula (shoulder blade). It helps to stabilise the shoulder joints. For details, refer Kadi, et.al., “Shoulder Anatomy and Normal Variants,” 2017, pp. 4-5 and 15-16.

**B) Strengthening of the arm and shoulder muscles** – It strengthens and sculpts the shoulders and forearms, and also helps in improving muscle tone.

**C) Improvement of grip strength** – Grip strength is important if one lifts weights. Moreover, it is significant in many sports like lawn tennis, table tennis, golf, cricket, hockey, etc. Even in our daily life, activities such as opening of cans and jars, holding a bucket, writing and drawing, shovelling of snow, etc., requires a good grip.

**D) Improvement in physical fitness** – Strength or resistance training can increase overall fitness level. When one is performing a pull-up, he/she lifts the entire bodyweight. This improves strength in body and reduces visceral fat. Such training is necessary for bone development by reducing back pain and other discomfort, and also helps in keeping good cardiovascular health.

**E) Ensures better mental health** – There is a positive correlation between strengthening hand-grip by training and the overall cognition in individuals, according to a study, which is “positively associated with improved visual memory”, reduction in depression, and maximising efficiency.<sup>142</sup>

## **Chin-ups**

Now, attention must be paid to a variation of pull-up, known as ‘chin-up’, which was practised by the researcher as a part of gym practice. What is the difference between pull-up and chin-up? Well, it is a really simple one. The main difference lies in how the bar is gripped by an individual. It means, in a pull-up, one grips the bar with palms facing away from the body (pronated/overhand grip); whereas in a chin-up, the palms face towards the body (supinated/underhand grip).

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<sup>142</sup> Firth, et.al., “Association between Muscular Strength and Cognition in People with Major Depression or Bipolar Disorders and Healthy Controls,” 2018, pp. 740-746.



A chin-up is basically a strength-training exercise which uses the body weight, especially focusing on the upper body. The bar should be grabbed with both hands with palms facing towards oneself, and the arms need to be apart shoulder-width. The upper body is raised until the chin is above the bar, and the elbows being fully bent. Then, in a controlled motion, the body must be lowered all the way back to the starting position, until the arms are straight. Chin-ups helps in improving grip strength, posture and appearance, while also strengthening muscles on the front of one's body, like biceps and chest.<sup>143</sup> It also reduces injury risk to the shoulders. Furthermore, the chin-up posture is frequently used in managing oropharyngeal dysphagia,<sup>144</sup> as it is considered to have some benefits in this regard.<sup>145</sup>

## Push-ups



<sup>143</sup> Chin-ups specifically work on upper-back and arm muscles – biceps, forearms, shoulders, and latissimus dorsi. It also engages the abdominal muscles.

<sup>144</sup> It refers to swallowing disorder, characterised by dysfunction of one or several parts of swallowing apparatus – mouth, tongue, lips, pharynx, airway, and oesophagus.

<sup>145</sup> Calvo, et.al., “Effects of chin-up Posture on the Sequence of Swallowing Events,” 2017, pp. 947-959.

Push-ups are a basic, effective, compound bodyweight exercise that works not only on upper body but when done in a proper manner, they use muscles of the whole body. Push-ups target several muscles of the body – pectoralis major<sup>146</sup>, pectoralis minor<sup>147</sup>, triceps, anterior deltoids<sup>148</sup>, and core muscles<sup>149</sup>. Hence, the push-up exercise has the ability to build significant strength in these muscles. The researcher, initially, performed the push-ups against a wall. His hands were placed on the wall, with feet on floor, at a slight distance from the wall. This used bodyweight to a lesser extent, and once the wall push-ups became easy, push-ups by placing hands on a couch or chair followed which used approximately 36%-45% of bodyweight against those of standard push-ups' 50%-75%. Push-ups build upper body strength, ensures muscle activation and hence flexibility, and strengthens the lower back too. Also, it was found by a study that performing more push-ups was related to decreasing risk of cardiovascular events.<sup>150</sup>

## **Pull-push stretching / exercises**

### **Pull**

#### **I) Dumbbell shrugs**

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<sup>146</sup> It is the largest muscle of the anterior chest wall. This muscle controls the coming down of the torso towards the floor and pushes back up to the starting position.

<sup>147</sup> A muscle of the chest, lying under pectoralis major. It keeps the scapula in position therefore allowing correct posture of the shoulders and upper back, while performing a push-up.

<sup>148</sup> Large, triangular-shaped muscles on top of the shoulder joints. These stabilise the shoulder during downward phase.

<sup>149</sup> This represents the abdominal muscles – rectus abdominis, transversus abdominis, pyramidalis, internal obliques, and external obliques. It keeps the spine straight during a push-up.

<sup>150</sup> Yang, et.al., “Association between Push-up Exercise Capacity and Future Cardiovascular Events among active Adult Men,” 2019, pp. 5-7.





Dumbbell shrugs are considered to be an isolation exercise which targets upper trapezius muscles, rhomboid muscles, and forearm muscles. Here, one needs to hold two dumbbells (a pair) by one's sides, with a neutral grip, and gradually lift the shoulders toward ears. Keeping this posture for about five seconds, the shoulders could be brought down to the starting position. The sequence can be repeated as many times a person wants. This exercise improves body posture, tones the upper back muscles, maintains mobility and stability of the scapula, and increases grip strength.

## II) Barbell Bent-over Row



Grab the bar firmly in the palms of the hands (overhand grip) with thumbs wrapped around and then lift the weight up, placing the feet just outside hips with toes pointed slightly outwards. The back must be straight and the upper body needs to be bended until it is perpendicular to the floor. Then, the weight must be rowed upwards into the lower part of the chest. After a brief pause, the body must return to the starting position. This exercise builds muscle and increases strength, and allows the lifter to use more weight leading to an improved, stronger grip.

### III) Cable pulldown



The cable pulldown or latissimus dorsi pulldown is one of the most popular exercises done to strengthen the back muscles. Grasp a cable bar slightly wider or according to one's comfort in a shoulder-width position, and settle down with the thighs under the pads for support. Pulling the cable-bar down to upper chest, keep the lower back curved a bit. Straighten the arms gradually, and revert to the initial position. It is important to take note of the breathing pattern here. One must inhale during eccentric phase of the exercise and exhale during the concentric phase. The muscles worked here apart from latissimus dorsi includes brachialis, brachioradialis, deltoid posterior, infraspinatus, teres major, teres minor, trapezius lower fibres, and trapezius middle fibres.

### IV) Biceps curl



Hold a barbell or dumbbell with a underhand grip and take a staggered position (one leg a bit forward position than the other). Bend the knees a little bit and stand with arms by the side. Raise the weights upwards slowly towards the shoulders, and slowly lower back down. Make sure to breathe slowly while doing this exercise. The exercise helps in developing the biceps muscles in upper arm, and also caters to muscles of lower arm which includes the brachialis and brachioradialis.



## **Push**

### **I) Dumbbell Incline Chest Press**



This is a free weight exercise that caters to the chest, shoulders, and triceps. Position the dumbbells to upper chest's sides. Keep pressing upwards until the arms get stretched. After this, the elbows should be gradually lowered back to the initial position. The exercise is helpful in muscle growth of the upper chest if performed on a regular basis, hence increasing chest size and strength. In other words, one can develop a well-balanced chest and shoulder musculature.<sup>151</sup>

### **II) Seated Dumbbell Shoulder Press**



The exercise is an option for those individuals who are new in strength training. One may sit on a bench/chair for this exercise. The dumbbells must be kept to the sides of the shoulders. The wrists should be above the elbows. Gradually extend the arms overhead. Hold this position for five seconds at the top. Now, gradually lower the elbows down to the original position. This exercise develops the deltoid muscle of

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<sup>151</sup> For details, refer Trebs, et.al., “An Electromyography Analysis of 3 Muscles surrounding the Shoulder Joints during the performance of a Chest Press Exercise at several angles,” 2010, pp. 1925-1930.

the shoulder and increases shoulder strength. The sitting position helps to stabilize the back. This exercise can be done through alternate use of arms, and a study has demonstrated that this way of practising is better at activating the core muscles.<sup>152</sup>

### **III) Incline Dumbbell Chest Fly**



This is again an isolation exercise catering to the development of upper chest muscles and the triceps. Lying back on a bench, the dumbbells should be raised over the chest. The elbows must be slightly bent and palms should face each other. Inhale and while inhaling, the dumbbells must be lowered slowly to the sides of the shoulders. Exhale and while exhaling, bring the dumbbells together, above the upper chest in starting position. The process stretches the chest muscles and makes everyday activities easier to do.

### **IV) Dumbbell Lateral Shoulder Raises**



This exercise is concerned with the development and strengthening of shoulder muscles, chest, upper back, and the arms. Here, one needs to hold two dumbbells (a pair), and stand straight. Next, the dumbbells should be lifted with palms facing down, and arms raised to the sides. Once the elbows reach the shoulder height, there

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<sup>152</sup> Saeterbakken and Fimland, “Muscle Activity of the Core during Bilateral, Unilateral, Seated and Standing Resistance Exercise,” 2012, pp. 1671-1678.

will be a pause, and then the arms must be lowered back to the starting position. The sequence can be repeated as many times as one desires.

These indoor and outdoor warmup exercises make the practitioner get into further practice according to his daily schedule.

| <b>Sl. No</b> | <b>Day</b> | <b>Morning Session<br/>7:15 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.</b>                                         | <b>Evening Session<br/>7:15 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1             | Monday     | SPL – Cardio and Squats.<br>Cross trainer, Treadmill, 100-meter sprints, Inchworm, Plank. | Chest<br>Bench – Flat, Incline and Decline with barbell and weights<br>Bench – Flat, Incline and Decline with Dumbbell press, Double bar, Push-ups.                                                                                                                                       |
| 2             | Tuesday    | SPL – Biceps<br>Calf & forums                                                             | SPL – Lats (latissimus dorsi)<br>pull-up bar- pulldown and pull up,<br>Barbell row - pull and push<br>Landmine Row. pull and push<br>Dumbbell row – pull and push<br>Incline Dumbbell Row – push and pull                                                                                 |
| 3             | Wednesday  | SPL - Shoulders                                                                           | SPL – Triceps<br>Skull Crusher, Seated Overhead Dumbbell Extension, Close-Grip Bench Press, Cable Rope / barbell Overhead Triceps Extension, Cable Rope Triceps Pushdowns, Decline Triceps Extension, Lying Triceps Extension with Barbell and Dumbbell, Dips, Close and Diamond Push-up, |
| 4             | Thursday   | SPL - Chest                                                                               | SPL – Cardio, Biceps.<br>Cross trainer, Treadmill, 100-meter sprints, Inchworm, Plank.<br>Barbell curl, Seated dumbbell curl, Ez-bar preacher curl, one arm dumbbell preacher curl, Hammer curl, seated dumbbell concentration curls and over hand cable curl / crucifix curl             |
| 5             | Friday     | SPL - Lats                                                                                | SPL – Shoulders, Trapezius<br>Seated barbell shoulder press- Back and Front, Dumbbell shoulder press, Arnold dumbbell press, front raise, Bent-over lateral raise<br>Barbell pull and push                                                                                                |
| 6             | Saturday   | SPL - Triceps                                                                             | SPL - – Squats, Calves, and forums<br>Barbell Front Squat, Air Squat, Sumo Squat, Dumbbell Lunge, Single-Leg Squat, Goblet Squat, Incline Leg Press, Leg Extension,                                                                                                                       |

|  |  |  |                                                                                                        |
|--|--|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  | Standing Calf Raises, Jumping Jacks. Palms-up wrist curl, Grip crush, Simple hand and wrist stretches. |
|--|--|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Table 5. 1 Gym Major Exercises

## Cardio

The researcher used certain exercises for cardio along with the warmups like walking, jogging, running, stretching, cross trainer, treadmill, 100-meter sprints, crunches in different levels etc. Everyday routine warmups were practised which has been mentioned above.

### Walk, jog, run, cross trainer and sprints

Here, the researcher every day follows the indoor and outdoor warmup exercises, but when it comes to cardio sessions, sets will be double.



Walking, jogging, running and sprints are the best exercises to start cardio, warm up the body, and leading to a rigorous cardio workout. These exercises will boost the practitioner's body in active mode every day and overcome heavy weight or

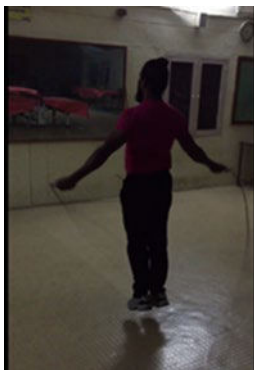
strengthen the body and prepare for the activity. Sprinting effectively develops the body and prepares it further for acceleration work.

### **Stairs Workout**



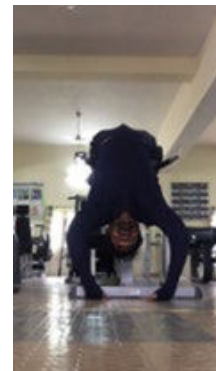
Here, the researcher has chosen the stairs. This activity requires no training or equipment. Regarding cardio sessions climbing stairs uses ten sets with per set consisting of twenty steps. Otherwise, six to eight sets can be alright. Climbing stairs develops the core muscles, and strengthens lower back.

### **Skipping rope**

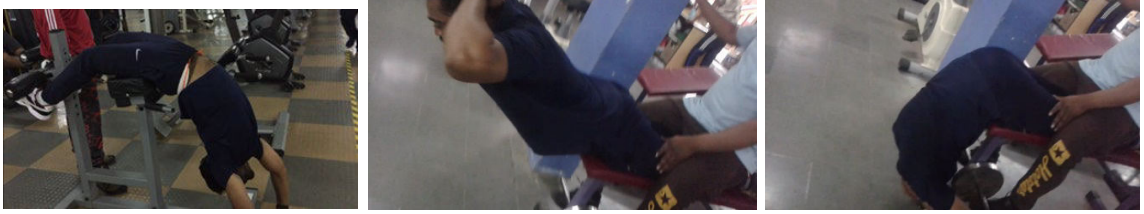


When the workout cardio comes, sets will be more than usual, that is to say, instead of doing six to eight sets, it will be double - ten sets per set fifty in cardio session. After the outdoor warmups, skipping rope exercise will affect more and reflective. It can enhance the breathing capacity and coordination of energy.

### **Roman Chair Hyperextension**







It lengthens back muscles and reduces pressure on lower back and core, thus improving actors' posture. It can also increase lower back strength and it develops more flexibility on pelvic area.

## Leg Raise



This is an exercise that develops the lower abs of abdominal muscles. One can start by performing two to three sets of ten to fifteen repetitions. Lie-up on a bench/mat with legs straightened and feet together, and place the arms by the sides with palms facing downwards or behind head in a clasped position. Then, lift the legs a couple of inches above the ground and toes pointed away from the body. One's pelvis must be tucked slightly and ribs should be down. Every repetition must begin from this position. The knees should be directly over the hips, and the legs need to form a 90° angle with upper body. Here, one can pause for two seconds, and then lower the legs

in a gradual manner. This sequence should be repeated multiple times as one desires. The exercise helps in stabilizing the body in motion, “strengthen the rectus abdominis muscle,<sup>153</sup> and the internal and external oblique muscles.”

## Crunches



Lie back on a blanket/mat with legs at 90° angle and feet flat on the floor. Keep the hands lightly, on the back of head so that the neck does not get pulled while coming up. Exhale while coming up, and hold the position for two seconds, and then lower back down. Repeat the sequence as desired. This exercise targets the upper abdominals.

## Cardio Conclusion

Indulging oneself in regular physical activity for a certain amount of time does improve one's overall health condition and prevents many diseases. Researches prove that exercises not only contribute to physical development but also provides psychological benefits. It, therefore, ensures the holistic growth of human body, catering to both physical and mental domain. Habitual physical activity reduces risks of heart diseases and stroke. As has been noted by the Professor of Physiology, University of Nottingham, Peter H. Fentem, “physical activity is likely to be protective through a combination of effects on metabolic and regulatory processes, on the profile of cholesterol and blood lipid concentrations and clotting factors,” and

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<sup>153</sup> It is a six-pack muscle that runs along front of the torso that flexes to bring shoulders to the hips and provides stability to the body. For details, refer Maquirrian, et.al., “Rectus abdominis muscle strains in tennis players,” 2007, pp. 842-848.



also “reduces both systolic and diastolic arterial blood pressure”, and weight.<sup>154</sup> Specifically, exercises enhance cardiovascular functions through several ways – reducing the probability of sudden death, controlling blood pressure in hypertension, regulation of arterial blood pressure, and reduction of the effects of age and chronic diseases. Psychologically, physical exercises reduce anxiety and depression, increases self-esteem, and improves memory.

Coming to the question of direct relation of gym practice and physical activity on the development and performance of an actor, it may be said that an actor is capable of performing to the best of his/her ability only when he/she is having a flexible, strong, and balanced body. During the performance on stage, an actor can maintain balance, control, breath, energy, concentration, dedication, confidence, mental strength, imagination, and reflection only when he/she is physically fit, for both the body and mind coordination is necessary for portraying any role. For example, acting means to feign, simulate, represent and impersonate.<sup>155</sup> Acting is a complex process, and as aptly remarked by Michael Kirby, anyone can act but not everyone can act in a complex way.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Fentem, “Benefits of Exercise in Health and Disease,” 1994, p. 1292.

<sup>155</sup> Kirby, “On Acting and Not-Acting,” 1972, p. 1.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

| Morning Session |        |                        |                                                     |                                                     |                                     |                                                  |                                                                        |                                 |                                                  |                                   |                       |                          |
|-----------------|--------|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| SL. NO.         | Day    | Daily Routines         | Rituals                                             | Meditation                                          | Gym                                 |                                                  |                                                                        | Daily Routines and Breakfast    | Rest                                             | Academics Reading and Writing     |                       | Remarks                  |
| Place           |        | Room                   | Room                                                | Room                                                | Outdoor                             | Indoor Weight practice<br>6.30 a.m. to 8.00 a.m. |                                                                        | Room                            | Room                                             | Department Supervisor and Library |                       |                          |
| Time            |        | 4.00 a.m. to 4.30 a.m. | 4.30 a.m. to 4.45 a.m.                              | 4.45 a.m. to 5.30 a.m.                              | 5.40 a.m. to 6.15 a.m.              | 6.30 a.m. to 7.15 a.m. (With out Equipm ent)     | 7.15 a.m. to 8.00 a.m. (With Equipm ent)                               | 8.15 a.m. to 8.30 a.m.          | 8.30 a.m. to 9.50 a.m.                           | 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.          |                       |                          |
| Exercise        |        | Cleansing              | Invocation (offer ing praye r to seek divin e help) | Restoring the energ y, Purif ying the body and mind | Stretch Bre ath Wal k Jog Run Jum p | Breat h Stretc h Pull and push Push-ups yoga     | Cross trainer Treadm ill Barbell Pull and push Stretch Skippin g(rope) | Clea nsing and Parti cular Diet | Rest ore the ener gy, Phy sical and men tal rest | Discu ssions and Analy sis        | Writ ing and Rea ding |                          |
| 1               | Monday | Clea nsing             | Invoc ation                                         | Resto ring the energ y, Purif ying the body         | Stre tch Bre ath Wal k Jog Run      | Breat h Stretc h Pull and push Push-ups          | Breath Stretch Pull and push Push-ups Stretch SPL – Cardio and         | Clea nsing and Mixe d Spro uts, | Rest ore the ener gy, Phy sical and              | Discu ssions and Analy sis        | Writ ing and Rea ding | Anal ysing and Rese arch |

|   |               |               |                |                                                                                   |                                                                 |                                                                                         |                                                                                                         |                                                                                           |                                                                                |                                        |                                   |                                      |
|---|---------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|   |               |               |                | and<br>mind                                                                       | Jum<br>p                                                        | yoga                                                                                    | Squats                                                                                                  | Egg<br>whit<br>e (3)<br>Any<br>juice                                                      | men<br>tal<br>rest                                                             |                                        |                                   |                                      |
| 2 | Tuesd<br>ay   | Clea<br>nsing | Invoc<br>ation | Resto<br>ring<br>the<br>energ<br>y<br>Purif<br>ying<br>the<br>body<br>and<br>mind | Stre<br>tch<br>Bre<br>ath<br>Wal<br>k<br>Jog<br>Run<br>Jum<br>p | Breat<br>h<br>Stretc<br>h<br>Pull<br>and<br>push<br>Push-<br>ups<br>Stretc<br>h<br>yoga | Breath<br>Stretch<br>Pull and<br>push<br>Push-<br>ups<br>Stretch<br>SPL –<br>Biceps<br>Calf &<br>forums | Clea<br>nsing<br>and<br>Mixe<br>d<br>Spro<br>uts,<br>Egg<br>whit<br>e (3)<br>Any<br>juice | Rest<br>ore<br>the<br>energ<br>y,<br>Phy<br>sical<br>and<br>men<br>tal<br>rest | Discu<br>ssions<br>and<br>Analy<br>sis | Writ<br>ing<br>and<br>Rea<br>ding | Anal<br>ysing<br>and<br>Rese<br>arch |
| 3 | Wedn<br>esday | Clea<br>nsing | Invoc<br>ation | Resto<br>ring<br>the<br>energ<br>y<br>Purif<br>ying<br>the<br>body<br>and<br>mind | Stre<br>tch<br>Bre<br>ath<br>Wal<br>k<br>Jog<br>Run<br>Jum<br>p | Breat<br>h<br>Stretc<br>h<br>Pull<br>and<br>push<br>Push-<br>ups<br>Stretc<br>h<br>yoga | Breath<br>Stretch<br>Pull and<br>push<br>Push-<br>ups<br>Stretch<br>SPL -<br>Shoulde<br>rs              | Clea<br>nsing<br>and<br>Mixe<br>d<br>Spro<br>uts,<br>Egg<br>whit<br>e (3)<br>Any<br>juice | Rest<br>ore<br>the<br>energ<br>y,<br>Phy<br>sical<br>and<br>men<br>tal<br>rest | Discu<br>ssions<br>and<br>Analy<br>sis | Writ<br>ing<br>and<br>Rea<br>ding | Anal<br>ysing<br>and<br>Rese<br>arch |
| 4 | Thurs<br>day  | Clea<br>nsing | Invoc<br>ation | Resto<br>ring<br>the<br>energ<br>y<br>Purif<br>ying<br>the<br>body<br>and<br>mind | Stre<br>tch<br>Bre<br>ath<br>Wal<br>k<br>Jog<br>Run<br>Jum<br>p | Breat<br>h<br>Stretc<br>h<br>Pull<br>and<br>push<br>Push-<br>ups<br>Stretc<br>h<br>yoga | Breath<br>Stretch<br>Pull and<br>push<br>Push-<br>ups<br>Stretch<br>SPL -<br>Chest                      | Clea<br>nsing<br>and<br>Mixe<br>d<br>Spro<br>uts,<br>Egg<br>whit<br>e (3)<br>Any<br>juice | Rest<br>ore<br>the<br>energ<br>y,<br>Phy<br>sical<br>and<br>men<br>tal<br>rest | Discu<br>ssions<br>and<br>Analy<br>sis | Writ<br>ing<br>and<br>Rea<br>ding | Anal<br>ysing<br>and<br>Rese<br>arch |

|   |          |                                          |            |                                                     |                                                 |                                                                               |                                                                               |                                                            |                                              |                          |                     |                        |
|---|----------|------------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 5 | Friday   | Cleansing                                | Invocation | Restoring the energy<br>Purifying the body and mind | Stretch<br>Breath<br>Walk<br>Jog<br>Run<br>Jump | Breath<br>Stretch<br>Pull and push<br>Push-ups<br>Stretch<br>SPL -<br>Lats    | Breath<br>Stretch<br>Pull and push<br>Push-ups<br>Stretch<br>SPL -<br>Lats    | Cleansing and Mixed<br>Sprouts, Egg white (3)<br>Any juice | Restore the energy, Physical and mental rest | Discussions and Analysis | Writing and Reading | Analysing and Research |
| 6 | Saturday | Cleansing                                | Invocation | Restoring the energy<br>Purifying the body and mind | Stretch<br>Breath<br>Walk<br>Jog<br>Run<br>Jump | Breath<br>Stretch<br>Pull and push<br>Push-ups<br>Stretch<br>SPL -<br>Triceps | Breath<br>Stretch<br>Pull and push<br>Push-ups<br>Stretch<br>SPL -<br>Triceps | Cleansing and Mixed<br>Sprouts, Egg white (3)<br>Any juice | Restore the energy, Physical and mental rest | Discussions and Analysis | Writing and Reading | Analysing and Research |
| 7 | Sunday   | Working on śloka with a Sanskrit scholar |            |                                                     |                                                 |                                                                               |                                                                               |                                                            |                                              |                          |                     | Analysing and Research |

Table 5. 2 Gym practice routine rules

| Evening Session |        |                                                 |                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                    |                               |                        |
|-----------------|--------|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| SL.NO.          | Day    | Gym                                             |                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Daily Routines and Dinner          | Academics Reading and Writing | Remarks                |
| Place           |        | Outdoor                                         | Indoor<br>Weight practice<br>6.30 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.              |                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Room                               | Room                          | Analysing and Research |
| Time            |        | 5.30 p.m. to 6.15 p.m.                          | 6.30 p.m. to 7.15 p.m. (Without Equipment)                       | 7.15 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. (With Equipment)                                                                                                                                                                  | 8.15 p.m. to 9.00 p.m.             | 9.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m.       | Analysing and Research |
| Exercise        |        | Stretch<br>Breath<br>Walk<br>Jog<br>Run<br>Jump | Breath<br>Stretch<br>Pull and push<br>Push-ups                   | Cross trainer,<br>Treadmill,<br>Barbell Pull and push<br>Stretch<br>Skipping(rope)                                                                                                                       | Cleansing and Protein content food | Character Study of Urubangam  | Analysing and Research |
| 1               | Monday | Stretch<br>Breath<br>Walk<br>Jog<br>Run<br>Jump | Breath<br>Stretch<br>Pull and push<br>Push-ups<br>Floor push-ups | Breath,<br>Stretch, Pull and Push-ups,<br><b>Chest</b><br>Bench – Flat,<br>Incline,<br>Decline with Barbell and weights<br>Flat,<br>Incline,<br>Decline with Dumbbell press<br><br>Double bar, Push-ups. | Cleansing and Protein content food | Character Study of Urubangam  | Analysing and Research |

|   |           |                                                 |                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                |                                    |                              |
|---|-----------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2 | Tuesday   | Stretch<br>Breath<br>Walk<br>Jog<br>Run<br>Jump | Breath<br>Stretch<br>Pull and<br>push<br>Push-ups            | Breath,<br>Stretch, Pull<br>and Push-ups,<br>SPL – Lats<br>(latissimus<br>dorsi)<br>pull-up bar-<br>pulldown and<br>pull up,<br>Barbell row -<br>pull and push<br>Landmine<br>Row. pull and<br>push<br>Dumbbell row<br>– pull and push<br>Incline<br>Dumbbell Row<br>– push and pull                                                                                                                          | Cleansing<br>and<br>Protein<br>content<br>food | Character<br>Study of<br>Urubangam | Analysing<br>and<br>Research |
| 3 | Wednesday | Stretch<br>Breath<br>Walk<br>Jog<br>Run<br>Jump | Breath<br>Stretch<br>Pull and<br>push<br>Push-ups<br>Stretch | Breath,<br>Stretch, Pull<br>and Push-ups<br>SPL – Triceps<br>Skull Crusher,<br>Seated<br>Overhead<br>Dumbbell<br>Extension,<br>Close-Grip<br>Bench Press,<br>Cable Rope /<br>Barbell<br>Overhead<br>Triceps<br>Extension,<br>Cable Rope<br>Triceps<br>Pushdowns,<br>Decline<br>Triceps<br>Extension,<br>Lying Triceps<br>Extension with<br>Barbell and<br>Dumbbell,<br>Dips, Close<br>and Diamond<br>Push-up, | Cleansing<br>and<br>Protein<br>content<br>food | Character<br>Study of<br>Urubangam | Analysing<br>and<br>Research |

|   |          |                                                 |                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                |                                    |                              |
|---|----------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 4 | Thursday | Stretch<br>Breath<br>Walk<br>Jog<br>Run<br>Jump | Breath<br>Stretch<br>Pull and<br>push<br>Push-ups<br>Stretch<br>100-meter<br>sprints | Breath,<br>Stretch, Pull<br>and Push-ups<br>SPL – Cardio,<br>Biceps.<br>Cross trainer,<br>Treadmill,<br>100-meter<br>sprints,<br>Inchworm,<br>Plank.<br>Barbell curl,<br>Seated<br>dumbbell curl,<br>EZ-bar<br>preacher curl,<br>one arm<br>dumbbell<br>preacher curl,<br>Hammer curl,<br>Seated<br>dumbbell<br>concentration<br>curls and over<br>hand cable curl<br>/ crucifix curl | Cleansing<br>and<br>Protein<br>content<br>food | Character<br>Study of<br>Urubangam | Analysing<br>and<br>Research |
| 5 | Friday   | Stretch<br>Breath<br>Walk<br>Jog<br>Run<br>Jump | Breath<br>Stretch<br>Pull and<br>push<br>Push-ups<br>Stretch                         | Breath,<br>Stretch, Pull<br>and Push-ups<br>SPL –<br>Shoulders,<br>Trapezius<br>Seated barbell<br>shoulder press-<br>Back and<br>Front,<br>Dumbbell<br>shoulder press,<br>Arnold<br>dumbbell<br>press, Front<br>raise, Bent-<br>over lateral<br>raise<br>Barbell pull<br>and push                                                                                                     | Cleansing<br>and<br>Protein<br>content<br>food | Character<br>Study of<br>Urubangam | Analysing<br>and<br>Research |

|   |          |                                                  |                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                |                                    |                              |
|---|----------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 6 | Saturday | Stretch<br>Breath<br>Walk<br>Jog<br>Run<br>Jump  | Breath<br>Stretch<br>Pull and<br>push<br>Push-ups<br>Stretch | Breath,<br>Stretch, Pull<br>and Push-ups<br>SPL - –<br>Squats, Calves<br>and forums<br>Barbell Front<br>Squat, Air<br>Squat, Sumo<br>Squat,<br>Dumbbell<br>Lunge, Single-<br>Leg Squat,<br>Goblet Squat,<br>Incline Leg<br>Press, Leg<br>Extension,<br>Standing Calf<br>Raises,<br>Jumping Jacks.<br>Palms-up wrist<br>curl, Grip<br>crush, Simple<br>hand and wrist<br>stretches. | Cleansing<br>and<br>Protein<br>content<br>food | Character<br>Study of<br>Urubangam | Analysing<br>and<br>Research |
| 7 | Sunday   | Working on theoretical aspects of play Urubangam |                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                |                                    | Analysing<br>and<br>Research |

Table 5. 3 Gym practice routines rules



| S. No | Gym Training exercise                                                                                                                    | Procedure Or Method                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Remarks function of exercise                                         | Effects and reflections on the body of exercise                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Major aspects                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|       | <p>Warm ups:</p> <p>1) Pull-ups</p> <p>2) Push-ups</p> <p>3) Pull-push stretching</p> <p>4) Cycling</p> <p>5) Standing Hip Extension</p> | <p>The researcher followed a systematic approach to reshape his body healthily. The method he followed made his workout fruitful. The following table has made before doing any significant exercise of body muscle.</p> <p>The practitioner must use push, pull, and contraction to prepare the body. Then only the practitioner can create his body in a shape. Here, the researcher explored the indoor exercises with the assistance of equipment.</p> | <p>Body warmups for actor's training with the help of equipment.</p> | <p>The researcher has experienced warmup exercises with the help of equipment. With outdoor warmups, already practitioner's body is fully warmed up but here, his body is ready for indoor warmups. According to his daily schedule, each specific part of the muscle needs to function. Warmup understands the breath, energy and technique to lift or stretch the body parts using the weights. Here, researcher concentrated and tried to understand the practices of breathing and energy together doing the weight pull and push exercise.</p> | <p>Prepares the actor's body for furthermore major workouts can be any physical practice and keeps the actor's body in a flexible mode; always actor's body and mind will be sharpened and active. Actors will know each part of the body with consciousness. An actor can identify and improves through these warmups more about his body muscle. Can build the concentrate on strength. They recognize the expansion and contraction between the forces. And expand each power of the body.</p> |

|    |                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                        |
|----|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
|    |                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | The researcher, as a practitioner, realized that weight lifting or pulling and pushing or stretching weight are entirely a game of using breath and energy.                                                                                                        |                                                        |
| 1) | <b>Pull-ups</b> | It was stretching the whole body from top to bottom by hanging. After reducing weight, he started strengthening his body through pull-ups which made his body more muscular and energetic because all back and limbs were more powerful. It led him to do it in a structured manner and technically used breath and energy together for further significant exercises. | Pullups are the most effective exercises for strengthening the back muscles. Makes the body more robust, flexible and energetic because it's a technique to lift the body with breath and energy so that all muscles can work at a time. Pull-ups effectively develop parts like Latissimus dorsi, Trapezius, Thoracic erector spinae, and Infraspinatus. | Pullups make lats wider, strengthen the forums, arms, shoulders, upper part of the back, and abdominal part and increase the breathing pattern. Further, it increases the muscle power, balance and control the body, in order to develop focus and concentration. | Strengthen the back muscles, arm and shoulder muscles. |
| 2) | <b>Push-ups</b> | The researcher practised the                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Push-ups strengthens                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Builds upper-body strength,                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Effective compound                                     |

|           |                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|           |                             | push-ups by placing his hands on the wall and feet on the floor, a little bit away from the wall.                                                                                                                                       | several muscles that include triceps, core muscles, anterior deltoids, pectoralis major and pectoralis minor.                                                                                                                                                                   | ensures activation of muscles, and therefore flexibility. Also, it decreases risk of cardiovascular diseases.                                                             | bodyweight exercise working on the upper part of the body as well as use muscles of the whole body, developing and toning them.                                               |
| <b>3)</b> | <b>Pull-push stretching</b> | It consisted of several exercises – dumbbell shrugs, bent-over barbell row, cable pulldown, biceps curl, dumbbell incline chest press, seated dumbbell shoulder press, incline dumbbell chest fly, and dumbbell lateral shoulder raise. | Pull-push stretching develops and strengthens chest and core muscles, upper trapezius muscles, rhomboids, forearm muscles, latissimus dorsi, brachialis, brachioradialis, deltoid posterior, infraspinatus, teres major and teres minor, and trapezius lower and middle fibres. | Tones the upper back muscles, increases the strength of grip, strengthens arms and shoulders, develops a well-balanced chest, and stabilizes the back of the body.        | Improvement in the overall body posture, maintains the stability of the scapula, activates the core muscles, therefore balancing and strengthening the body.                  |
| <b>4)</b> | <b>Cycling</b>              | The researcher practised cycling every day for about ten minutes after walking and running, in the morning.                                                                                                                             | Cycling builds several leg muscles without overstressing joints, like that of hamstrings, glutes, quads and calves. It also strengthens heart muscles and curbs obesity. A significant exercise for                                                                             | Promotes the release of endorphins in body that lowers stress levels and ensures confidence. It can lead to reduced risk of cancer, diabetes, fluctuating blood pressure, | Helps in losing weight, building muscles, and increasing metabolism. Reduces the risk of cardiovascular diseases and ensures overall positive health condition. Boosts memory |

|    |                               |  |                                                                                   |                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    |                               |  | strength and stamina.                                                             | and heart conditions. Bones are strengthened and joint mobility gets improved. | power and mental health. Enhances performance by increasing energy levels. Improves body posture, balance, and coordination.                                                                                   |
| 5) | <b>Standing Hip Extension</b> |  | Strengthening the hip muscles - adductor magnus, gluteus maximus, and hamstrings. | Stabilizes the pelvis and propels the body during several movements.           | Uses some of the body's biggest and strongest muscles, and hence, helps much in the conduct of daily activities such as waking, stair climbing, jumping, sprinting, and getting up from chair or sitting down. |

Table 5. 4 Gym practice routines rules

### **5.2.3 Major Exercises**

Here, the researcher followed a method in three aspects, as stated in the introduction – a) reduction of body weight; b) strengthening of the body; and c) shaping up of body muscles. The researcher completely followed the rules according to daily routine regarding this process whereby the body is strengthened through different exercises. The researcher's body got warmed up with the help of outdoor and indoor exercises. There were two sessions in each day - morning and evening. Each session was divided according to the concentration on specific individual muscle on his body, and was practised in a disciplined manner.

The major exercises are divided under following heads:

- 1) Chest
- 2) Triceps
- 3) Biceps and forearm
- 4) Shoulders
- 5) Lats
- 6) Thigh and calf

Before you jump into any workout routine, it is your first step to know the anatomy of that muscle group you like to grow. It will not only develop your knowledge and make a clear concept but also helps you to build a better mind-muscle connection as well.

#### **5.2.3.1 Chest**

Researcher has focused on chest as core part of his major exercises. According to his schedule, he had divided the chest part of the exercise in a series of exercises that he followed. The result could be seen after few months according to the chest workout with different multiple exercises. These can be further classified into five parts as follows.

- A. Barbell Bench Press: -
- 2) Incline Bench Press
  - 1) Flat Bench Press
  - 3) Decline Bench Press

- B. Dumbbell Bench Press:
- 2) Incline Dumbbell Bench Press
  - 1) Flat Dumbbell Bench Press
  - 3) Decline Dumbbell Bench Press.

C. Pec deck fly or Chest Fly

D. Parallel bar dips

E. Push-ups

### **A. Barbell Bench Press**

The researcher has properly practised bench press with barbell. Before describing the practice, it is important to note that one must start from the bench as well as set up the barbell. Most people are going to have the peg on the second hole. Some of them do not even have pegs. Set a point where one can lay down and get it off the bar and hit the bar off the pegs.

Before going to the workout, the practitioner needs to check his/her barbell and bench. The practitioner's way of holding of the barbell depends on the perfect measurement and distance from the barbell. It must be balanced in both sides with weight. There are lines on the barbell, and most people use their index finger next to the pinkie finger.



Keep the wrist bent. Hold the barbell straight and bring it down slowly over the chest. Lay down and put middle finger on the little line of that barbell.

Bring the bar up. Get the shoulder blades together, and bring the bar down across the chest nipple line and come down 90°, and push straight up. Breathe in on the way down.



### **1. Flat Bench Press**

The researcher concentrated on the exercise for his chest. In flat barbell bench press, he used the Olympic barbell that weighs 20kgs. One should always use a spotter when using a barbell. Now, when the practitioner focuses on his chest, he is going to have a bar going across his body. Many people get stuck here so it must be taken care of to ask for a spotter or have someone in vigilance while the exercise is being done. It is equally important to note that the bar must be in the right spot.



Lay down on the bench with the barbell above on the rack. Hold the bar with hands a bit wider than shoulder-width. The hands must be above the elbows to generate maximum force. Concentrate, lift the bar off the rack, with wrist straight. Bring the bar down slowly to the chest and inhale while doing this. Grip the bar more tightly and push it up. Exhale while performing this movement. It must be noted that the elbows must not be locked at the top of the movement and there should be a sincere effort to move the weight with chest.



For more details watch the videos below: -

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. A. 1. A. Barbell Flat bench

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. A. 1. B. Barbell Flat bench

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. A. 1. C. Barbell Flat bench



S. No. Gym 1. Chest. A. 1. D. Barbell Flat bench

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. A. 1. E. Barbell Flat bench

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. A. 1. F. Barbell Flat bench

## 2. Incline Bench Press

Now a lot of people think in the gym that they want to do this exercise, but they only hit the upper chest with Pectoralis major. However, the reality of the matter is going to be stimulating muscle fibre throughout the entire chest during this exercise, that also includes Pectoralis minor.

Genetically, some people have a bigger upper chest. Otherwise, it needs a considerable amount of training and weight-lifting to get a big upper chest. Now, the first thing is to sit down, and after that, lay on your back. Pinch the shoulder blades together so that the tension is taken off from the shoulder and rotator cuff, which will ultimately allow to do more powerful lift. The elbows must be brought closer to rib cage to alleviate some tension from anterior deltoid.



Basically, this is what it looks like when the practitioner is on the pad. Get into the position of the practitioner, put hands on the bar and while grabbing the bar, one must make sure that elbows are under the wrist, shoulder blades are together, and glutes are tight. The practitioner wants to do the bench the right way, which means bringing the elbows down just a little bit like that to feel more of the work through the triceps and the chest. Again, make sure that elbows are underneath the wrists and then squeeze in the bar as hard as possible. One more thing needs to be mentioned – the practitioner laying back is more of a personal preference. An individual can put feet out according to their comfort and can bring them back. The practitioner must be completely flat with butts staying down.

For more details see the video below: -

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. A. 2. A. Barbell incline bench press

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. A. 2. B. Barbell incline bench press

### **3. Barbell Decline Bench Press**

The decline bench press is not a functional movement. As a practitioner, the goal was to have a big chest and make my body more healthy and fit, and that is why barbell decline bench press has value. Here, one must lay back on the decline bench. Grab the bar with head underneath and lift it off the rack. Lower the bar to sternum just below the chest and press the weight back up until the arms are extended. The arms must form a 90° angle at the bottom and should be relatively straight at the top. Control the movement while coming down and going up. This will help in developing pectoralis muscles as well as triceps.



For more details see the video below: -

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. A. 3. A. Barbell Decline bench press

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. A. 3. B. Barbell Decline bench press

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. A. 3. C. Barbell Decline bench press

Conclusion (Barbell Bench Presses – Flat, Incline, Decline)

The flat bench press exercise strengthens the chest, front shoulders, and the triceps. The incline bench press helps in developing the upper part of the pectoral muscles, therefore, contributing to better posture, stronger chest, and increased shoulder strength. The decline bench press is mainly involved in targeting the lower pectoralis major muscles, and engages the upper pectoralis major, triceps, and anterior deltoids to a minimum extent.

## **B. Dumbbell Bench Press**

This is one of the best variations of the bench press. It is great for beginners and experienced athletes who want to target the chest, triceps, and delts and build more pressing strength and power.

Now let us dive into the how to do the dumbbell bench press in four easy steps, as given below.

### **Step 1: -**

Step one is something that may be called the pre-set and begins with picking up the dumbbells. If one does not have a partner to hand over the weights, which is the preferred and safer way to do; one can get into the sitting position on the bench as per one's comfort. Personally, for lighter and medium weights, the practitioner grabbed both dumbbells, setting both on his legs. In this way, the practitioner can sit right back and get into his position. One thing to note is that make sure one maintains that nice neutral torso. After sitting back, be prepared to hunch over to lift the weight.

**Step 2: -**

This is the transitory phase from the picking up of the dumbbells to the physical press. So, this part often gets overlooked by beginners, but it is extremely important. Like our barbell bench press, an individual needs to maintain a strong contact with his/her feet on the floor and squeeze his/her glutes. When pack those scalps back into pressed and pull them back creating that table like posture like the barbell bench press, that is going to give us a stable base to press from. It should be remembered that dumbbells are going to increase range of motion a little bit. Hence, it is imperative to keep the upper back nice and stable and those shoulders nice and packed. From here, the practitioner is going to think about grounding those feet, kicking back one, kicking back two, getting into position, squeezing the glutes, and then pulling those scalps nice and back before our first press.

**Step 3: -**

Transitioning into the press. So, some folks like to kick back the weights and press right away and then get into their set position; whereas others like to kick back the weights, hold them for a second, get into position, and then press. The practitioner's advice is to try this out for multiple repetitions with lighter weight and then figure out what works best for the individual. The individual might have a whole different sequence for when going to heavier weights. What is most important is that the practitioner is picking a means of doing the press which allows him to get into a strong set, consistent position.

**Step 4: -**

Pressing the weight now that he pressed the weight up to the top and he is about to begin a set, there are three key things to remember with the dumbbell bench press:

- The first one is the elbow angle. Participant should keep the elbows tucked in, avoid flirting those elbows out and shifting all that force into the deltoids.
- The second point is to consider is the eccentric portion of the movement. Since participant's shoulder is a little bit more unstable in the dumbbell bench press, he/she should not just drop the weights down. Therefore, a good tempo

is generally for about two to four seconds if he/she wants to increase the time under tension.

- The third point to consider is the range of motion. So, the dumbbell bench press does have a larger range of motion compared to the barbell bench press. This means that he/she is going to have a little bit more of an eccentric portion of this movement compared to the normal barbell. Generally, for most lifters, keeping the dumbbell just above the chest would be the ideal and comfortable position. Now obviously if the concerned participant has any kind of shoulder problems or impingement, stop short of those, and limit the range of motion.

The most important thing is that the participant performing in this manner will not only be comfortable but efficient also. Hence it is necessary to go with a consistent range of motion that matches his/her goals and what bodies needs best. So now that researcher have those three points in mind and participant have the weight pressed at the top, he is ready to start his repetitions. He is going to think about taking that nice big belly breath, keeping that nice stable upper back on the bench and take a nice three second eccentric tempo with the elbows tucked in. Once participant hit his full range of motion, he is going to then press up thinking about squeezing those pecks. Together and locking out like the Barbell bench press, he should breathe pretty much as he is breaking through that sticking point; he should not want to set his dumbbell down on another dumbbell. The researcher has seen beginners literally lose a pinkie doing that, and for the participant to avoid that, if possible, especially working at heavier weights.

So, there are four major benefits that come along with the dumbbell bench press

1. The first benefit is that of hypertrophy and increasing time and retention. This movement is generally a lot easier to perform for multiple repetitions and participant could alter tempos generally a little bit easier. That is why a lot of bodybuilders do this movement in terms of trying to build up more strength and hypertrophy of the chest.

2. The second benefit is that it is a great movement for beginners who want to learn the mechanics and movement patterns of the bench press. Now obviously the barbell can be taught to a beginner, but generally if you really have no guidance, the dumbbell is a little bit easier for the beginner.
3. If an individual is an athlete and wants to limit shoulder on shoulder stress, the dumbbell variation is often a good bet for the participant. He can turn the dumbbells neutral to really limit that shoulder stress in terms of the pressing motion. So, people like baseball players or other folks who want to really limit their shoulder exposure and stress, the dumbbell variation is a good bet.
4. Finally, this movement can be programmed for multiple needs, whether it be strength, hypertrophy, endurance, or power. Generally, one can find a variation or tempo or weight with a dumbbell that will work for what the actor needs.

Now let us talk variations of the dumbbell bench press. For the mentioned video, the participant is going to keep it to a strict flat dumbbell bench press. Obviously, participant used incline or decline in his daily routine in the exercise process; but here, the participant has practised all in three variations. He has described all the variations in a descriptive manner from his practical experience. Dumbbell bench press can be a nice substitute for giving that high training stimuli and keeping specific the carryover to the barbell bench for the recreational physical practitioners. The dumbbell bench press can replace just the normal barbell bench press. It can be performed for heavier weights also.

The researcher has followed three variations to reshape his chest part:

- 1) Flat Dumbbell Bench Press
- 2) Incline Dumbbell Bench Press
- 3) Decline Dumbbell Bench Press

## 1. Flat Dumbbell Bench Press

The researcher cum practitioner, in order to get more knowledge about muscle and strength in his routine, practised and performed the bench press with dumbbells. The researcher has seen videos of different bodybuilders doing that before. Here, the researcher wants to share the experience according to physical gym practice in acting training, something different, a special technique that researcher used to get the most contraction out of the chest and the right way to perform.

The researcher practised in the proper way to execute a flat bench dumbbell press using dumbbells. This exercise is going to be geared towards to the chest, shoulders, and triceps with most of the focus on the chest. Have a pair of dumbbells. Take a seat on the flat bench. Hold the dumbbell weights. Gradually, pull them up to the knees, keeping feet firmly planted on the floor. Next, lie on the back, keeping the weights in close to his chest, pressing straight overhead. palms facing out. Lower the weights down and back up in on the way down. Exhale on the way back up. Using dumbbells requires a lot of stabilization and focus in order to always keep control - not moving too fast and avoiding injury at all cost. Return to the original position after the set is completed. Now, by sitting up, return the dumbbells. It is important to remember to keep that weight right even with the chest and press it out while returning it back. Keep it slow and in control. That is how the researcher did a dumbbell chest press, working on his chest, shoulders, and triceps.



So, what practitioner really want when he is laying on the bench is that his chest should be the highest point of the body. Accordingly, he must create instead of laying just totally flat. There must be a little arch to the chest to really keep the chest up, to really bring in the contraction. Thus, when the practitioner presses those dumbbells up, he can really get contraction out of the chest. As an actor cum practitioner, I believe that every actor needs certain physical practises within the limits. If we go beyond that, there will be a problem for actors as well as acting trainers. Here, the researcher has chosen and practised within the limits of major parts of the body exercises within which the dumbbell presses fall.

There is no better exercise than the flat press. Here the researcher focuses more on using dumbbells because he can work in isolation, which is really the ideal way to isolate each pec individually and to keep a nice arch to the chest. I am really going to focus on the chest and try to get a contraction to see that the chest works and contracts with each repetition. Squeeze the chest. Do not touch the dumbbells together. The practitioner really accentuated that arch in the back to keep that chest really in high contract and everything gets controlled.

For more detail see the video below: -

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. B. 1. Dumbbell press flat bench

## **2. Incline Dumbbell Bench Press**

The researcher has gone through incline dumbbell press to reshape and strengthen his chest pecs and practically experienced the result of the workout through his practice. Basically, here the bench is slanted up. The purpose is to work our upper pectoralis muscles and the front of the shoulder. The process of incline dumbbell bench is to lie down on the upper bench and make sure that shoulders are pinched back and that chest is out. Dumbbell movement should be in sequence of:

- Outwards to the sides,
- Parallel to the floor/ground,
- Back to the top.





Repeat the movement again outwards to the side, parallel to the floor, and back up to the top; 12 to 15 repetitions a set. The researcher has practised about three-to-five sets.

When doing dumbbell press, there is no need to bring the dumbbell to the chest, depending on the length of the arm because that will put stress on the shoulders. Taking note of where arms are in space parallel to the floor, our upper arm is enough to recruit all the muscle fibres that the practitioner needs in his chest. Incline bench press is helpful in determining the right weight handling for the practitioner. The weight must be such that the practitioner can control without aching his back.

For more details watch the video below: -

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. B. Dumbbell press 2. A. incline bench

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. B. Dumbbell press 2. B. incline bench

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. B. Dumbbell press 2. C. incline bench

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. B. Dumbbell press 2. D. incline bench

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. B. Dumbbell press 2. E. incline bench

### **3. Decline Dumbbell Bench Press**

If development of muscle fibres and overall functional strength is what all practitioners are looking for, then the decline dumbbell press does the job much better than the Flat Bench Press. In fact, the decline bench press takes the place of the flat bench press. So, in a workout prescription, the flat bench press would not be required. Practitioners would do the decline for the maximum bulk of the pectorals,

probably 3/4 of the pectorals, and then do the incline for the remaining 1/4 of the pectorals originating from the clavicle. Again, the kinetic chain is activated with the body suspended pathways perpendicular to the floor. The breathing pattern remains the same, the angle changes, activation of kinetic change changes, and everything else remains the same. There are no special arcs, not a line trajectory, simply down and up.

The decline angle slightly rotates the shoulder internally. This is extremely comfortable on the shoulder. One can even lift the maximum load in the decline angle. One must remember it is a free weight and hence the pathway is going to be perpendicular to the floor. Normally, people who are used to the flat angle, forget the fact that they are perpendicular to the floor, and they keep themselves perpendicular to the body.

Remember that when the practitioner is on a decline angle, the pathway of the dumbbell will have to be perpendicular to the floor. That is a sweet spot where he can hold the dumbbells without much effort because the dumbbells are in this position resting on the shafts of the bones that are extended one on top of the other, the radius ulna and the humerus.

If we look at the position of the hands in relation with the muscle fibres, the bulk of the pectoral is in line with the movement. So basically, the decline angle will hit not only the lower fibres but also the mid fibres, thus covering a larger surface area of the pectoral. The decline angle should be a mild 15 degrees. Just dipping 15 degrees below the flat angle will give all the advantages on the working of pectoral fibres.

#### Conclusion (Dumbbell Bench Presses - Flat, Incline and Decline)

The flat dumbbell bench press directly impacts the chest muscles that helps in increasing the power to lift additional weights, building the upper body strength, and strengthening bones. The incline press develops the pectoral muscles, especially the clavicular head of pectoralis major. It is helpful for preventing muscle imbalance by keeping the shoulder joints strong. Decline press effectively works on the lower pecs, activates triceps, and thus, reduces stress on the back and shoulders.

### C. Pec deck fly or Chest Fly:

The researcher as part of his chest workout has practised chest flies on a machine. It is very important to choose a weight based on practitioner's fitness level. If the practitioner is going for strength, he should use heavier weights for fewer repetitions, say two to six repetitions with a heavyweight. If going for endurance, need to use lighter weights and higher repetitions. After choosing the weight, adjust seat height in order to keep the arms straight, parallel to the floor, and even with the chest. Hold the handles by keeping the shoulders down, chest outwards, feet firmly on the floor, and back straight. Exhale while bringing the weights around as if one is embracing a tree. Inhale while doing the return, exhale out, and inhale again. One must make sure they have proper form when doing this exercise, staying in control of the weights all the time.



One does not want to sling the weights around. Repeat several sets based on fitness needs. Just remember to keep those feet firmly planted on the floor. Keep the back nice and straight up against the pad. Try to always maintain correct form. Again, this is the chest fly machine working with chest and shoulders.

For more details see the video below: -

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. C. 1. Pec deck fly or Chest Fly

S. No. Gym 1. Chest. C. 1. Pec deck fly or Chest Fly

#### Conclusion (Pec deck fly or Chest Fly)

This exercise opens the chest muscles and reduces tightness in the upper part of the body. This means that it increases the mobility and flexibility of the upper body, reduces pain, and improves body posture. One can perform this exercise without weights also at home in order to get used to the motion or in case of some pain/trouble.

#### **D. Parallel bar dips:**

The researcher has practised parallel bar dips as part of chest exercise, which is the best chest workout that practitioner can ever incorporate into his routine. We may call it the upper body squad because of the use of the practitioner's body weight. By taking his weight all the way down and pressing it up, he contracts his chest. It works not only for the chest, but improves the strength of the triceps which is very essential if we are looking to develop an overall upper body.

By pushing ourselves, we need to get on the bar without any momentum. Vertically move down to stretch the chest completely. Inhale and go all the way up. Exhale and contract the chest. Stretch contract, stretch contract, stretch contract. If the body weight becomes easy, we can add weights with a belt onto our hips or grab a dumbbell with help of the feet and add resistance to this exercise.



For more details see the below video: -

S. No. Gym 1. D. 1. Parallel bar dips

S. No. Gym 1. D. 2. Parallel bar dips

### Conclusion (Parallel Bar Dips)

The parallel bar dips are a compound or multi-joint exercise which allows an individual to strengthen the muscles in shoulders, upper back, lower back, and triceps. It also allows to add extra weight and increase flexibility. This exercise can be performed anywhere including home, by using chairs and other household furniture, provided one has a bit of space.

### E. Push-ups: -

A lot of people think that the push-up is just a beginner's exercise, but as a researcher I do not believe this. The researcher believes that push-ups are one of the most underrated exercises out there, and they are also one of the exercises that is most frequently performed with poor technique. This is because a lot of people think it is just an easy exercise, and they adopt a form that allows them to achieve a repetition count that they would expect from an easy exercise. However, all that ends up happening when they do a bunch of poor-quality repetitions in order to get a high repetition count. Hence, it is not right to think that push-ups are particularly easy when they are done well.



They are effective for building just general fitness and muscle in the upper body if practised properly. Here is how the practitioner can get the most out of them. Firstly,

by changing the mindset of the practitioner about this exercise - instead of chasing repetitions and focusing on trying to do more repetitions, think about how practitioner can get the most out of what each repetition has to offer. Train with the intention of squeezing as much out of each repetition as he can, because his intention is going to greatly influence how he approach his training.

The next thing is making sure the practitioner can control the negatives. So many people just dive bomb the negative in the pursuit of more repetitions, but when he does this, he is skipping out on half of the repetition in. That negative portion of the lift is necessary for stimulating growth. If one wants muscle, they do not cheat the negative. Next, one must watch out for compensations. Things like sagging at the hips, that is a big one that he can see commonly. So, push-ups are easy to cheat and you want your body to be locked out hard all these compensations.

That you see, they reduced the load on the working muscles. So, identify those compensations, correct them, and now you can transfer more load to your upper body, which means you are going to get more out of the movement and better gains long term.

Finally, make sure you are moving through full range of motion. Thus, all things being equal, more range of motion equals more potential growth. Make sure the chest touches the ground and the elbows are locked out on every single repetition. One does not have to pause, but pause repetitions can be useful to ensure that one is moving through full range of motion. Thus, if anyone wants to get the most out of push-ups for building muscle, follow these simple principles.

For more details see the video below: -

S. No. Gym 1. D. 1. Push-ups

S. No. Gym 1. D. 1. Push-ups

Conclusion (Push-ups)

Push-ups are extremely beneficial because they form compound movement, i.e., they activate multiple muscle groups at once. This leads to efficiency in training.

Moreover, there is no need of any equipment for training and hence can be incorporated into home programme. It needs to be kept in mind that push-ups are functional exercise, which means that we perform certain actions in our daily lives that require the same movement like a push-up. For example, while pushing open a window/door, pushing a table/chair, pushing an individual on a swing, etc. The push-ups also help in maintaining cardiovascular health, good positioning, stabilisation of muscles, and improving upper body strength.

#### **5.2.3.2. Triceps**

The researcher has already provided the description of triceps above and so there is no need for repetition.

##### **A. Skull Crusher (Lying Barbell Triceps Extension)**



This is one of the most basic exercises for triceps. Lie down on a flat bench, and hold the bar with a close grip (at least thumbs distance apart) at the top of your head. Lower the bar down to the forehead, and then gradually come up, and extend the triceps.

Researcher has properly performed the lying triceps extension by holding the barbell with his arms straight up overhead. He has got a relatively close grip on the bar and is going to lower the bar back very slowly towards the forehead and lower it to the forehead. The barbell may be taken a little bit lower behind the head if preferred. Sometimes it is good to use both versions of workout.

As he presses up to the top position, the elbows remain in position throughout the entire process. It should not move around to the left or the right or forward or back. Obviously, it is desirable to control the movement down to the forehead. This will



help in strongly activating all heads of the triceps and help to build a lot of mass on that part of the muscle.

For more details see the mentioned below video: -

S. No 3. Gym, Triceps, A. Skull Crusher (Lying Barbell Tricep Extension)

S. No 3. Gym, Triceps. A. 1. Skull Crusher (Lying Barbell Triceps Extension)

S. No 3. Gym, Triceps. A. 2. Skull Crusher (Lying Barbell Triceps Extension)

S. No 3. Gym, Triceps. A. 3. Skull Crusher (Lying Barbell Triceps Extension)

S. No 3. Gym, Triceps. A. 4. Skull Crusher (Lying Barbell Triceps Extension)

S. No 3. Gym, Triceps. A. 5. Skull Crusher (Lying Barbell Triceps Extension)

S. No 3. Gym, Triceps. A. 6. Skull Crusher (Lying Barbell Triceps Extension)

S. No 3. Gym, Triceps. A. 7. Skull Crusher (Lying Barbell Triceps Extension)

S. No 3. Gym, Triceps. A. 8. Skull Crusher (Lying Barbell Triceps Extension)

S. No 3. Gym, Triceps. A. 9. Skull Crusher (Lying Barbell Triceps Extension)

## **B. Lying Dumbbell Triceps Extensions**



It can be done both with lying, sitting, and standing position with dumbbell in both hands, or one in both, and upper arms perpendicular to the ceiling with elbows totally bent.

Triceps extension will be using dumbbells for resistance and an exercise mat for support lying flat on the bench. The knees must be bended and the feet firmly placed



on the floor. Draw belly button in towards the spine, and straighten arm up above the shoulder place by keeping the core nice and tight, and chest up. Hold a pair of dumbbells in both hands and keep the arms at a 45-degree angle. All the elbows should be lined up right over the shoulder, and must be flexed basically in the triceps area, moving only the forearms, so it is easy to bring the dumbbells right to the side of head. Come up hard and squeeze the triceps nicely controlled all the way down.

When doing with one hand, make sure that the left hand is below the right elbow for support. Slowly, lower the dumbbell downwards, until the elbow gets bent at a 90-degree angle. A capital letter L will be formed between upper and lower right arm. Keep the right arm still, only lower right and left arms should be moving. Lower the dumbbell to a can of two and raise it back up to a can of three. Do not hold breath. Breathe normally.

A common mistake when doing lying dumbbell triceps extensions is keeping most of the beginners' upper arm vertically straight, as there is minimal tension on the triceps when the dumbbells are at the very top. Instead, position the upper arm on a slight angle to keep the tension on the triceps.

For more details see the video: -

S. No 3. Gym, Triceps, B. 1. Lying dumbbell triceps Extension

S. No 3. Gym, Triceps, B. 2. Lying dumbbell triceps Extension

S. No 3. Gym, Triceps, B. 3. Lying dumbbell triceps Extension

S. No 3. Gym, Triceps, B. 4. Lying dumbbell triceps Extension

### **C. Overhead Triceps Extension: -**

This involves holding a dumbbell with both hands by lying back on bench and extending arms over the head as far as an individual could holding the weight. Then elbows may be extended to raise the weight up and pausing at the top.



The researcher used a bench and a dumbbell. Sit down on the bench and turn to a side. Grab the dumbbell in a way that the palms are on the top. Bring the dumbbell over the head with elbows glued to the ears. Now, bring it down and in the process, inhale. Squeeze the triceps and keep the core tightened.

For more details see the video: -

S. No 3. Gym, Triceps, C. Overhead Triceps Extension

#### **D. Cable Rope / Barbell Overhead Triceps Extension**

Here, one needs to grab the cable rope, which must be ideally at the head level or a bit above that, and take a lunge forward by dropping the chest with one leg in front and the other at back for support. Arms could be straightened alongside ears to maintain torso angle.



Stand and hold the rope attachment set-up, and all one needs to do is to turn away from the machine. Take a step out with one leg in front of the other (as per personal preference). Keep the elbows tight over the body. Extend the lower arm.

Upper arm stays parallel with the floor by isolating triceps and extending all the way out. Take both hands and pull them apart just a little bit to get that extra peak contraction of that triceps. Always keep the core nice and tight and do not forget to breathe. That is major part. it is a very simple exercise to target those triceps.

When training triceps, it is good to incorporate some type of overhead triceps extension. The researcher likes to do a variation called the rocky style overhead triceps on the cable with the rope.

For more details see the video: -

S. No. 3. Gym. Triceps D. 1. A. Barbell overhead Triceps Extension

S. No. 3. Gym. Triceps D. 1. B. Barbell (Triangle) overhead Triceps Extension

S. No. 3. Gym. Triceps D. 1. C. Barbell overhead Triceps Extension

S. No. 3. Gym. Triceps D. 1. D. Barbell overhead Triceps Extension

S. No. 3. Gym. Triceps D. 1. E. Barbell overhead Triceps Extension

S. No. 3. Gym. Triceps D. 1. F. Rope overhead Triceps Extension

S. No. 3. Gym. Triceps D. 1. G. Cable Rope Overhead Triceps Extension

#### **E. Cable Rope Triceps Pull and Pushdowns: -**



#### **Pulldowns: -**

Here, the end of the rope is grasped and elbows are set at right angles alongside waist. Hands are brought to either side of the thighs. The practitioner is going to set himself

at a moderate weight first, and then if needed, can work his weights up. He should maintain some distance from the cable, at least a couple of feet. The practitioner keeps his elbows tucked by his side the entire time, so here he is not at all going to be using any momentum for this exercise. By staying tucked he must pull the rope downwards and apart. Now, by squeezing the triceps at the bottom, he needs to bring it up back to the starting position; and again, pull it down, apart, and squeeze. The chest must be out.

The main mistake of the practitioner is to roll the shoulders forward. This is a sign that signals the heaviness of the weight. A total of three to four sets may be practised, with about twelve to fifteen repetitions.

For more details see the video: -

S. No. 3. Gym. Triceps E. 1. Cable Rope Triceps Pulldowns

S. No. 3. Gym. Triceps E. 2. Cable Rope Triceps Pushdowns

S. No. 3. Gym. Triceps E. 3. Cable Rope Triceps Pushdowns

#### **Pushdowns: -**

The practitioner stands a couple of feet away from the cable rack. The starting and ending position has already been mentioned above in the pulldown exercise. Upper arms should be a bit higher than parallel, with abs being tight. Push this bar down to the thighs and squeeze the back of the arm – the triceps, bringing that bar back up to start. Inhale on the way up and exhale while going down. A total of three to four sets may be practised with eight to twelve repetitions.

For more details see the video: -

S. No. 3. Gym. Triceps E. 1. Cable Rope Triceps Pulldowns

S. No. 3. Gym. Triceps E. 2. Cable Rope Triceps Pushdowns

S. No. 3. Gym. Triceps E. 3. Cable Rope Triceps Pushdowns

**Close Grip Bench Press: -**

Barbell is grasped with an overhand grip and is held above sternum with arms straight. Lower bar must be down straight and then pressing the bar back up to starting position.

**Close Grip Push-up: -**

This is the push-up position with hands slightly narrower than shoulder width and hands directly below the shoulder. The elbows should be bent at 45-degree angle by laying lower down to the floor.

**Push-up (Close and Diamond Push): -**

By placing palm on bench or chair, lower the body until upper arm is parallel to the floor.

**Conclusion: -**

Skull crushers are effective in improving complex movements like bench press and adds mass to the triceps. The lying dumbbell triceps extension helps in strengthening triceps, stabilises shoulder joints and sculpts the upper body. Triceps extension straightens the elbow and shoulder muscles to extend the arm. Close grip bench press builds strong triceps and activates upper chest. Close grip push-ups target the chest muscles in particular, but also work on arms and shoulders. It improves balance, stability, mobility, and flexibility. Diamond push-up improves core strength and enhances shoulder strength.

**5.2.3.3 Biceps and forearms: -**

The researcher also focused on biceps, and it becomes important to know the muscle anatomy of biceps. Our biceps are primarily separated into two different parts and they are:

1. Brachii
2. Brachialis.

Brachii is also separated into two parts

A. long head of biceps (the outer part of brachii which is located just beside the Brachialis)

B. short head of biceps. (the inner part of the biceps)

Between the short head of biceps and the brachii, there is a small muscle in our upper arms. It is called the Brachialis. The primary function of biceps is the flexion of arms and twisting of biceps.

There is another muscle attached to brachialis, which is called the brachioradialis. Although it is the part of the forearm, it plays a major role in every bicep workout which is flexion of arms.

A bicep is a group of small muscles. as an actor it is not familiar with that heavy lifting and when practitioner start lifting heavy, it grows much faster. But gradually as practitioner becomes advanced, his body responds slowly with the heavy lifts. The bicep workout plan is for an actor who wants to reshape, structure, and make his/her body fit in the gym.

Here, the researcher followed set of series exercise which makes the biceps in shape, pump the blood, and strengthen the arms, focus on the brachii muscles.

#### **A. Barbell Curl**

The barbell curl exercise will pump up the biceps a lot and prepare body muscles for further heavy lifting exercises. The researcher practised and concentrated on barbell with different weights and measurements on the holding hands of the barbell. The barbell curl exercise will pump up the biceps a lot and prepare body muscles for further heavy lifting exercises.



for more details see the video link

S. No 4. Biceps A.1.Barbell curl

S. No 4. Biceps A.2.Barbell curl

### **B. Standing and Seated Dumbbell Curl**

This exercise accelerates blood flow in the biceps for a great pump. This is a basic old school exercise but very effective for adding mass to a trainee's workout.

Here researcher has done two variations in dumbbell curls - one is standing and other one is seated dumbbell curl. There is lot of difference in two variations. As a practitioner, the concentration on muscle is different, and lifting weight and bringing that weight on the muscle is completely on concentration and focusing of the muscle. Choosing weights according to strength can increase stamina and arm strength.



For more details watch the video

S. No 4. Biceps B.1.Standing dumbbell curl

S. No 4. Biceps B.2.Standing dumbbell curl

### **C. Ez bar Preacher Curl**

The third exercise is the EZ bar preacher curl. The reason researcher has chosen the EZ bar is that it is very wrist-friendly. For the beginning stage he was not familiar with lifting heavy weights, so he did not take a risk, because wrist is a very small joint and can be injured at any time. The preacher curl is best for beginners because the practitioner does not have any chance to move his body, as only the bicep muscle would be in focus. It will eventually help to build a strong muscle and mind connection as well. This exercise will build a lot of mass in biceps. The long head of brachii and brachioradialis muscle be targeted in this workout more. In the second workout dumbbell preacher curl may be done with a single arm at a time. Dumbbell preacher curl is a great workout to build strong muscle and mind connection.



For more details see the video: -

S. No 4. Biceps C. 1. Ez bar preacher curl

S. No 4. Biceps C. 2. Ez bar preacher curl

S. No 4. Biceps C. 3. Ez bar preacher curl

S. No 4. Biceps C. 4. Ez bar preacher dumbbell curl

S. No 4. Biceps C. 5. Ez bar preacher barbell curl

### **D. Standing and Seated Cable Curls**

First, it is compulsory to adjust the machine so that the cable is attached at the bottom with sliding adjustment. One must be able to grasp the cable metal grip comfortably. Stand with knees bent a bit and feet firmly planted on the floor. The back must be straightened and head steadied as one looks forward. Now, curl the weight up



towards the chest while exhaling. Hold at the top for a second. Then, lower the arms to the starting position and inhale during the process. One needs to stop before the weights return to the stack.

Cable curls can be performed in a seated position provided one has limitations in balance and stability. Sit and keep the back straight. The feet must be planted on the floor. Use the arms to lift and do not rely on the lower body to power the pull.



For more details see the video: -

S. No 4. Biceps D. A. Standing cable curls

S. No 4. Biceps D. B. Seated cable curls

### **E. Dumbbell Concentration Curl**

The dumbbell concentration curl is not only for the beginner but it is also a nice workout for advanced lifter as well. In this workout, the participant is going to target the short and the long head of brachii muscle more than the other parts.

It is focusing on biceps peak. This exercise will work on to get a good shape of bicep peak, for beginners who want to make their bicep muscle in a proper shape. In this workout, there will be no chance to swing practitioners' body because his elbow should be placed on his legs (quads). That means better mind-muscle connection and better growth.



## **F. Dumbbell Hammer Curl**

This is one of the great bicep exercises to increase the width of biceps. Hammer curl targets the Brachialis and Brachioradialis muscle. The researcher has seen a lot of people doing this workout in the wrong technique. This will be the concluding bicep exercise. Grab a pair of dumbbells with which you can do four sets of ten to twelve repetitions. During the movement do not swing the body and the elbow should be fixed.

When curling the dumbbells, curl it inward. The dumbbells should touch participant chest at the top. Then when participant lowers the weight, it should be slow and in a controlled manner.



For more details see the video: -

S. No 4. Biceps F. 1. Dumbbell Hammer curl

S. No 4. Biceps F. 2. Dumbbell Hammer curl

### **G. Forearm - the Standing Barbell Reverse Curl**

The researcher properly performed the standing barbell reverse curl. Grab the barbell with about shoulder-width apart and elbows by the sides. Palm must be facing down throughout this movement. This is similar to a barbell curl, but with reverse grip, as we are working a brachialis -muscle underneath the bicep; as well as the forearm extensors, right here at the top of the forearm, which gives mass and strength of that area. There is no swinging of the bar. No momentum used. The practitioner squeezed it to the top and lows to the bottom under control and that is how he properly performs the standing reverse barbell.



For more details of forearm exercise see the video: -

S. No 4. Forearm G. The standing barbell reverse curl

## **Conclusion**

The major function of these exercises is to develop the biceps muscles and those muscles of lower arm – brachialis and brachioradialis. Barbell curls increases upper body strength and can craft bigger biceps. The Ez Bar Preacher Curl develops muscle growth, maintains control over movements, and is easy to perform. Cable curls help in developing strength of biceps brachii and stabilises muscles in the shoulder and upper back. The dumbbell concentration curls strengthen the biceps and enhances muscular hypertrophy. This will ultimately boost performance in sports and gym, and give well-toned and bigger arms. Dumbbell hammer curls are important for increasing biceps size, strength, muscle endurance, and wrist stability. Reverse curls are required for increasing the ability in an individual to lift heavier weights, correct muscle imbalance, and improve grip strength.

#### 5.2.3.4 Shoulders:

The researcher concentrated and practiced series of sequences with barbell as well as dumbbell on shoulder muscle

- A) Barbell seated shoulder/military press
- B) Barbell seated overhead press
- C) Seated dumbbell overhead press
- D) Dumbbell Arnold press
- E) Barbell front raise
- F) Dumbbell front raise and Lateral Raise
- G) Standing bent over rear delt raise
- H) Barbell upright row
- I) Incline Side Delts with Scarecrows and Dumbbell Rear Lateral Raise
- J) Mugdar workout
- K) Dumbbell shrugs

#### A. Barbell Seated Shoulder/Military Press: -

The researcher always started the shoulder exercise with the seated barbell shoulder press exercise. This is a good exercise for building upper body strength and the main muscles. This reflects greater emphasis on the practitioner's body and affects the shoulders.



The anterior deltoid, which is the front deltoid, targets the triceps too. The triceps help in extending the arm, so there is a possibility of fatigue as the practitioner presses the weight over his head. Here, a point needs to be made - the researcher used to do a full range of motion with this exercise. The barbell is brought all the way down to the top of his shoulders. Then, he presses it over his head by extending his arms. The exercise is done either by sitting on a chair or bench. The feet are on the lower pegs and shoulders and lower back touches the pad for support. By grabbing the barbell as tightly as possible and maintaining shoulder width, the barbell is lifted and held over the head. After it is held steadily in a stable position, the barbell must be brought down behind the shoulder. The wrists need to be straight and elbows should be angled a bit forward so that it is in line with the wrists. When the barbell hits the back of the neck, again lift it up over the head. The core must be tight always and control must be maintained during each repetition.



For more details see the below mentioned videos: -

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. A. 1. Barbell seated shoulder/military press

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. A. 2. Barbell seated shoulder/military press

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. A. 3. Barbell seated shoulder/military press

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. A. 4. Barbell seated shoulder/military press

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. A. 5. Barbell seated shoulder/military press

## B. Barbell Seated Overhead Press: -

After Barbell seated shoulder/military press, the researcher has practised seated overhead press using a barbell. There are many ways of doing this. The researcher picked up the barbell stationed behind in a rack and did the exercise, and in free form. This exercise impacts three parts involved in a shoulder – front, side, and rear; and also, the triceps. First, one must sit down and gradually extend the arms to the bar, but the arms must not be extended fully. Then, get the bar off the pegs. Hold the bar tightly so that the arms come to a 90° angle. Keep the lower back against the pad and wrists straight. Gradually, bring the bar down to 90° touching the chin. Now, push the bar straight up and breathe out while going up. There is no need to be too low and no need to go past 90° as it may put unwanted strain on the body and pressure on rotator cuff. This exercise improves shoulder strength and mobility and the mobility of thoracic spine. It is beneficial for individuals with bad backs or those recovering from injury.







For more details see the below mentioned Videos: -

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. B. 1. BOHP (Barbell seated overhead press)

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. B. 2. BOHP (Barbell seated overhead press)

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. B. 3. BOHP (Barbell seated overhead press)

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. B. 4. BOHP (Barbell seated overhead press)



### C. Seated Dumbbell Overhead Press: -

The researcher always followed certain sequences to reshape his body through his own workout plan for every major exercise in gym practice with light and heavy weight, according to his comfortability without damaging flexibility. Here, the researcher followed his own method in each variation of the shoulders. At first, he has focused on barbell lifting the next dumbbell one after the other in sequential order.

- The primary muscle in this exercise is the shoulders consisting of three parts. These are:
  - A. The anterior front,
  - B. Lateral side,
  - C. Posterior part.

With the press movement, the practitioner is working on all three parts at the same time. It is always good to use compound movements in this exercise.

- The secondary muscle that he is going to hit is his triceps so not only will this be working on shoulders, but triceps as well.



The practitioner must pick up a weight that he is comfortable with in order to continue the exercise smoothly without strain on body. Hold the dumbbells tightly in both hands with palms facing out and arms at 90°. Raise the hands gradually and exhale while raising. Remember not to lock out the elbows at the top. There must be a soft bend in the elbow, otherwise, joints will be damaged. Now, lower the hands through the full range of motion of the shoulder, bringing arms to 90°. Inhale while coming back down. This exercise is useful for joint integrity.

For more details see the mentioned video below: -

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. C. seated overhead dumbbell press

C. Seated Dumbbell overhead press. 1

C. Seated Dumbbell overhead press. 2

C. Seated Dumbbell overhead press. 3

C. Seated Dumbbell overhead press. 4

C. Seated Dumbbell overhead press. 5

C. Seated Dumbbell overhead press. 6

C. Seated Dumbbell overhead press. 7

#### **D. Dumbbell Arnold Press: -**

The researcher has done this exercise specifically because he feels that his elbows are acting as elastic springs while doing this exercise. It is called Arnold press, named after the American bodybuilder and actor Arnold Schwarzenegger, who is arguably one of the best bodybuilders of all time and popularized this exercise. It adds a rotation to a classic shoulder press to get all three heads - anterior, lateral, and posterior of the deltoids working. So, it is A1 fell swoop shoulder exercise.





Researcher has done this exercise traditionally. Grabbing a pair of dumbbells with palms facing in and squeezing the glutes. The rib shoulders are down, abs tight and the focus is on the press to turn out, to keep the shoulders down and thereby get full extension at the top. Lower in control and just reverse the pattern. When he comes back in, the elbows are brought tight to his ribs and make himself into a nice plank position. The move must be done without hyper-extending the back of the top and the aim is to get full range of motion. The researcher also practised this with alternate motions in order to get a little rest between the sides, achieve higher intensity and extend the duration of the set. This exercise helps in stimulating all three heads of the shoulder – anterior, lateral, and posterior, for developing muscular strength.

**For more details see the video mentioned below: -**

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders.D.1 Dumbbell Arnold press

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders.D.2 Dumbbell Arnold press

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders.D.3 Dumbbell Arnold press

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders.D.4 Dumbbell Arnold press

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders.D.5 Dumbbell Arnold press

### **E. Barbell Front Raise: -**

The researcher adopted pronated grip on the barbell with arms shoulder-width apart in standing position. Gradually, the arms must come straight down to middle of the thighs. The elbows must be extended, head facing forward, and chest up. Neutral spine needs to be maintained and core support must be provided by the contraction of abs. This is the ideal starting position. Next, flex the shoulder and raise the weight by extending the elbows and maintaining neutral wrists. The upward movement of the arms should continue until the barbell is a bit above shoulder height. Return to the starting position after a brief pause. The barbell front raise exercise is particularly necessary for toning the upper part of the body, and in improving shoulder mobility.



### **For more details see the mentioned videos: -**

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders.E.1. Barbell front raise

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders.E.2. Barbell front raise

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders.E.3. Barbell front raise

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders.E.4. Barbell front raise

### **F. Dumbbell Front Raise and Lateral Raise: -**

Here, the researcher has practiced first with the barbell next to dumbbell. The dumbbell front raise works on the anterior, medial, and lateral part of the shoulder. This exercise must be done with a light pair of dumbbells at first, and gradually will

move to heavy pair. The shoulders must be pulled back with palms facing forward, abs tight, and arms by the side. A neutral spine should be maintained with wrists straight. The knees may be bend slightly and arch the back a bit. This is the desired starting position. Bring the pair up at shoulder height or to the chin. A point to note – while moving up, the muscles in rear deltoids must come into play. The researcher also practised this exercise in alternate arms, what may be called the “alternating front raises with dumbbells.”

In the dumbbell lateral raise, the researcher grabbed a pair of dumbbells in both hands and stood straight. There are basically two ways to start this exercise – either by holding the dumbbells in front and then raising the hands and arms at neck or chin level, or by holding them by the side and lifting them straight up. The shoulder blades must be pinched and wrists straight during the whole exercise. Knees should be bended and the back arched a bit in order to pinch the shoulder blades. Exhale while bringing the dumbbells up to the level of neck or chin as comfortable, and then lower them down and inhale in the process. The elbows must be maintained properly and knees bent slightly.

Both the front raise and lateral raise shapes the middle portion of the shoulders. It effectively helps in strengthening of the arms, chest, and upper back.



**For more details see the below mentioned video: -**

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. F.1Dumbbell front raise



S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. F.2Dumbbell front raise

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. F.3Dumbbell front raise

### **G. Standing Bent over Rear Delt Raise: -**

This exercise is done in a bent-over position with a strong, flat back and the butt hinged back. The dumbbells hang down in front, feet shoulder-width apart, shoulders engaged, thumbs facing each other, and palms facing the thighs. This position needs to be kept throughout the movement. Have a soft elbow with a slight bend, and bend the knees a bit. Keep a neutral spine with head facing downward. The shoulder blades must be pinched together. Now, bring the arms up and again back down. Exhale while opening the arms and inhale while closing it. It must be remembered that the back should be in arched position and the core tight. The necessity of this exercise is to develop and strengthen the rear deltoids.



**Watch the below mentioned video for more details: -**

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. G. Standing bent over rear delt raise

S. No 2. Gym standing bent over rear delt raise

### **H. Barbell Upright Row: -**

To begin, grab a bar with palms facing down. Hold the bar in front of the thighs by using a little less than shoulder-width grip. The arms need to be extended, with shoulders pinned back and feet spread hip-width apart. This is the starting position.

Exhale while raising the barbell. Make sure that the arms are bent and elbows moving out to the sides. The barbell must be kept close to torso until it is at the chest level. At the top of the movement, contract the delts and hold for a moment. Then, lower the barbell back to the starting position, and inhale in the way.

This exercise is focused on all parts of the deltoids, especially the medial deltoids, and thus help in building muscular and aesthetic shoulders. It uses the internal rotation of shoulders by which stability and mobility of shoulder joint improves thereby providing an improved upright posture.



**Watch the below mentioned video for more details: -**

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders G. 1. Barbell upright row

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders G. 2. Barbell upright row

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders G. 3. Barbell upright row

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders G. 4. Barbell upright row

### **I. Incline Side Delts with Scarecrows and Dumbbell Rear Lateral Raise: -**

The incline side delts with scarecrow is a variation of side lateral. Grip the dumbbell tightly and then rotate hands with palms facing back and bend the elbows a bit. Do not shrug too much. Now, raise the hands with dumbbells to the position equating with lower portion of the tummy. Exhale while raising the hands and inhale while coming down. This is an important movement for the lateral head of deltoid.

The dumbbell rear lateral raise is a variation of front raise. It is necessary to set up an incline bench at first. Lie with face downward on the bench, with shoulders over the edge of the bench. Do not arch the back too much. Now, lower the arms to the floor. Hold the dumbbells (preferably lighter weight) with thumbs facing each other. Slowly raise the arms outwards and a bit forward, so that the rear deltoids get engaged. Make sure that the elbows are bent slightly. The arms must be raised as high as one can but the shoulders must not be allowed to roll upwards towards the ears. Now, lower the hands gradually. This exercise increases shoulder hypertrophy by strengthening the rear deltoid and improves shoulder balance.



**Watch the below mentioned video for more details: -**

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. H. Incline Side Delts with Scarecrows and Dumbbell Rear Lateral Raise: -

S. No 2. Gym. Shoulder I. Incline Side Delts with Scarecrows and Dumbbell Rear Lateral Raise

**J. Mugdar Workout: -**

Here, the researcher practised with mugdar kind of equipment in the gym, but it is not actual mugdar but the kind of stuff made up with iron. It is important to describe a bit about the equipment. A barbell is attached with lump of iron; one side of the barbell has a handle for the practitioners and another side has a lump of iron of about 8 kg attached. The researcher specifically practised with a heavy or big club, and he



has practiced it with two hands on the handle. This same exercise can be performed with one hand on the handle.

First, it was necessary for the practitioner to breakdown the key positions of the back circle. He practised with the right hand on the bottom of the handle, left on top and pull down to about the navel. This was his guard position, position one. Position two is going to be a lock as if he was blocking a blow, direct attack overhead. Now, at the same time as the practitioner lifts his hands up and does an uppercut, he wants to lean away from the end of the club. So, he is going to turn slightly away from here and just clear his head. There is no need to go higher up from here. The hands are going to fold behind his neck, and the end of the club is going to point to the ground. His elbows are fully closed. The practitioner can notice this angle here in his elbow. Now, he wants to drop down here, and the club must swing up to the end of the pendulum, to the other side as he pulls it out on his shoulder, back into his position one.



The researcher practised some variations also. First, by holding the club in the crook of the arm and lifting it up. This is especially useful when he starts working with the heavy clubs that he cannot just swing with one hand only. Hence, the need for that extra assistance. The other variation would be to swing the club between the legs and then swing it above the head. There are certain things involved here - coordination, dexterity, and timing.

Again, it is required to switch and perform in the opposite direction with the opposite grip, but it is possible to work in both directions with the same grip. Just remember that the practitioner must match the volume on each side and each direction when he gets training. When he swings in front of the body or behind the body, from side to side, he can stay a little bit wider because it creates more stability. So, from here, he is going to lift the club to block the blood, swing to the opposite side and pull it down back circle and do a side view. Then, the practitioner will perform the exercise with one hand. Roughly, there are two options - he can either perform the same movement where he is going to bring the club up or above the head or he can do it behind his head, over the shoulder. There is a different requirement in the work because he is lifting the club higher up. So, it really depends on what he is working on, what type of exercise he wants to do.



Left to right back circle and right to left back circle

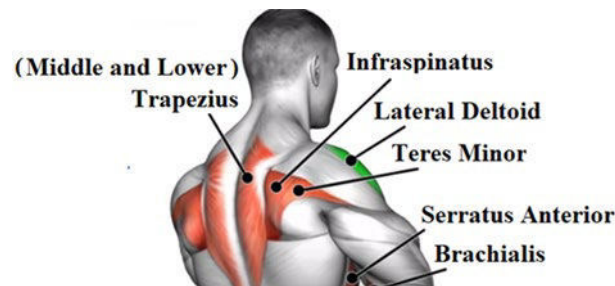
The mugdar exercise strengthens the shoulders and improves flexibility. Further, it helps in strengthening our hands, grip, and wrists, thereby maintaining body balance.

For more details see the below video: -

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. J. 1. Mugdar workout

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. J. 2. Mugdar workout

### **K. Dumbbell Shrugs: -**



Dumbbell shrugs are working of the muscles in his trapezius. While doing this exercise, the researcher has practised with lightweight dumbbells at first, before going to heavyweight ones. Hold the dumbbells by the side with palms facing inwards. The core must be engaged and feet shoulder-width apart. Raise the shoulders gradually as high as possible. Bring the dumbbells back down and repeat the process at least eight to ten times for better results. What probably heard them called is our traps. This is an exercise for you. So, researcher under gone the practice starts with heavier weights than normal. he used lightweights. This exercise is used to build trap muscle size.



**Watch the below mentioned video for more details: -**

S. No 2. Gym Major exercise. Shoulders. K. 1. Dumbbell Shrugs

### 5.2.3.5 Latissimus Dorsi (Lats)

The latissimus dorsi or lats form the largest muscles (triangular/V-shaped muscles) in the back of human body and are considered as “prime-movers” of the back muscles. They are expansive in form, originating from the “middle and lower spine, top of the pelvis, lower ribs, lower scapula, and insert on front of the upper arm bone.” Lats are responsible for adduction, extension, and internal rotation of the arm. In other words, lats can be called the “powerhouse” which stabilise the entire system of the human body.

The researcher has focused on seven different exercises to develop lats, which are described as below, followed by the conclusion dealing with the benefits of these exercises briefly.

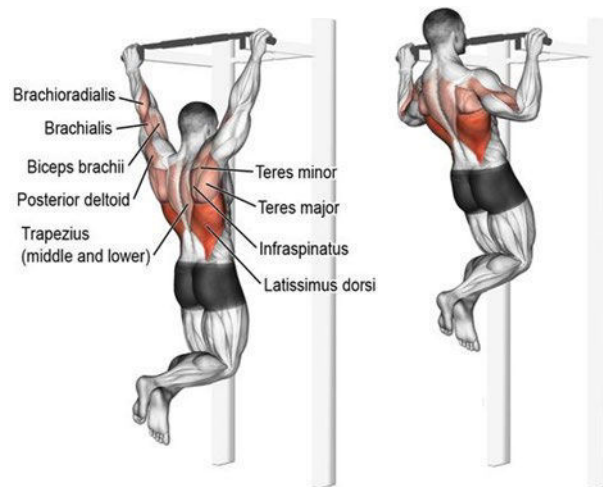
#### 1. Pull-up and Chin-up: -

There is nothing more effective in developing the back muscles than a pull-up. The primary thing required is to master one’s own body weight. The pull-up focuses on the lats, biceps, rear delts, core, and lower back muscles. A lot of variations exist in the pull-up. Here, the researcher has practised wide-grip pull-up, which is nothing but a basic exercise to reach upwards having body control. This means that the body must not swing. First, one must stand under a pull-up bar, with spine straight. Reach upwards and hold the bar with both hands. Remember to have a grip wider than the body and thumbs pointed towards each other. Both the arms must be about 45° from the body. By looking ahead, pull the body towards the bar. Hold on for a moment in this position, and gradually lower oneself back down to the starting position.



Given below is a step-by-step concise instruction how to do basic pull-up:

- a. Start by grabbing pull-up bar with the hands a bit farther than shoulder-width apart. This wider grip tends to be more difficult, but it is most effective for the lats.
- b. Adjust the difficulty and engage different muscles by changing the grip. A wider grip targets your lats, but a closer underhand grip targets biceps and is easier for beginners.
- c. Keep the trunk vertical and legs somewhat relaxed and hanging. Pull the body up in a straight line by squeezing the shoulder blades together and downward.



- d. With controlled and smooth motions, pull oneself so that the chin reaches pull-up bar. Slowly lower down to the starting position and repeat.

As pull-ups are challenging, it is recommended that beginners should start with Resistance band pull-ups and Australian pull-ups. Kicking and swinging legs are common mistakes. So, remember to keep the chest high, pull the elbows toward hips, and squeeze the shoulder blades.

For more details watch the videos as listed below:

S. No 5. 1. Gym Major exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Pull and chin ups Videos:

S. No 5. 1. A. Gym Major exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Pull and chin ups

S. No 5. 1. B. Gym Major exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Pull and chin ups

S. No 5. 1. C. Gym Major exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Pull and chin ups

S. No 5. 1. D. Gym Major exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Pull and chin ups

S. No 5. 1. E. Gym Major exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Pull and chin ups

S. No 5. 1. F. Gym Major exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Pull and chin ups

S. No 5. 1. G. Gym Major exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Pull and chin ups

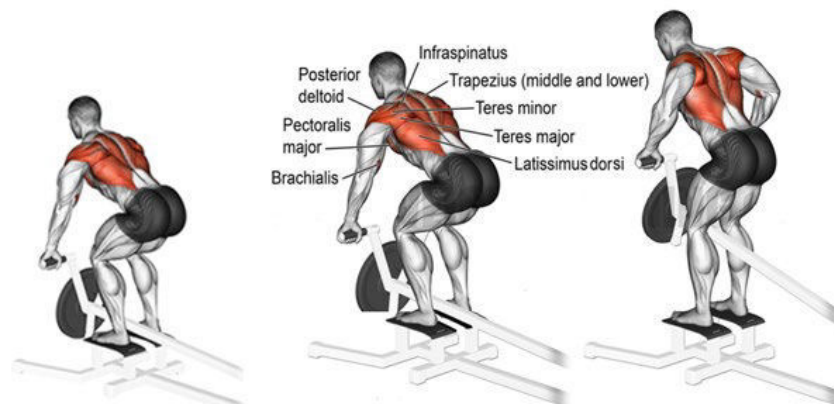
S. No 5. 1. H. Gym Major exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Pull and chin ups

S. No 5. 1. I. Gym Major exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Pull and chin ups

S. No 5. 1. J. Gym Major exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Pull and chin ups

## 2. T-bar Row: -

Load the barbell by adjusting the right amount of weight. By standing in an upright position, keep the feet shoulder-width apart. Bend forward and hold the barbell beneath oneself. The knees must be bent a bit in order to get more stability. Pull the barbell towards the body and inhale during this movement. Squeeze the shoulder blades at the top of the movement. Hold on to this position for a moment, and then gradually lower the weight back to the starting position. Exhale at the end, and repeat the whole exercise as per comfortability.







**For more details watch the videos as listed below: -**

S. No 5. 2. Gym Major exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) T-Bar Row Videos:

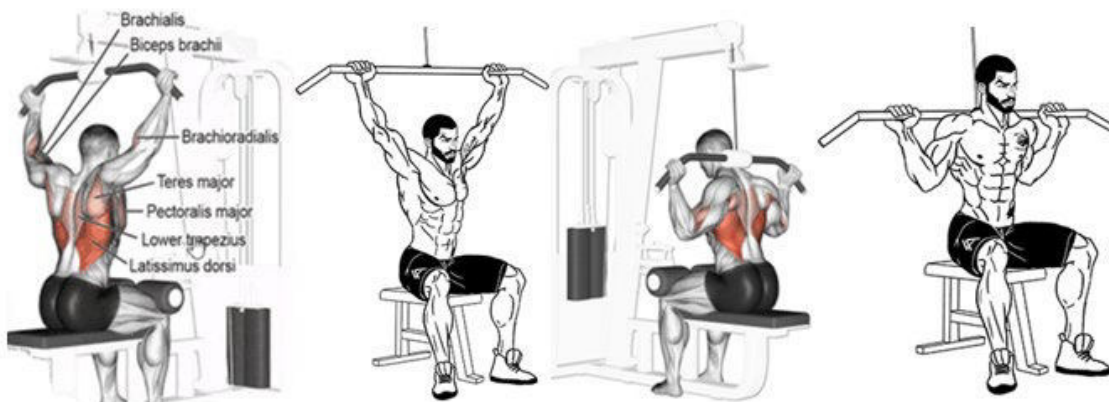
S. No. 5. 2. A. Gym Major Exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) T-Bar Row

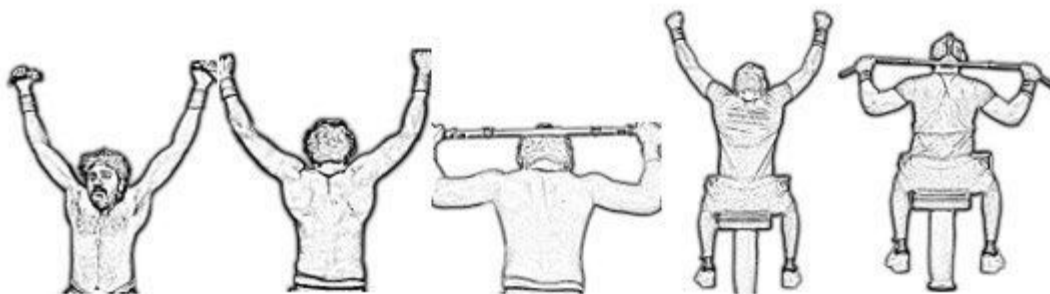
S. No. 5. 2. B. Gym Major Exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) T-Bar Row

S. No. 5. 2. C. Gym Major Exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) T-Bar Row

S. No. 5. 2. D. Gym Major Exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) T-Bar Row

**3. Behind the neck back pull-down: -**





The neck back pull-down can either be performed by sitting down or standing up. Face the machine and gradually reach up to hold the handles. Pull it down till the bar is behind neck and there occurs a feeling of strain on upper back and shoulders. Hold on for a moment, and let the bar rise upwards gradually. This exercise strengthens the shoulders by working on front and rear deltoids; builds the upper arm and upper back thereby developing triceps brachii and trapezius respectively; and engages the armpit over ribcage, the serratus anterior. If the pull-down is performed in a right way, it will strengthen the upper part of the body and improve body movements. It must be noted that one should not move head forward while pulling the bar behind neck, as it can cause much strain on shoulders and spine, and therefore will lead to long-term health issues. The control of the whole body with correct posture is the single-most important thing while doing this exercise.

For more details watch the videos as listed below: -

S. No 5. 3. Behind the neck back pull down all Videos: -

S. No 5. 3. A. 1. Gym Major exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Behind the neck back pull down

S. No. 5. 3. A. Gym Major Exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Behind the neck back pull-down

S. No. 5. 3. B. Gym Major Exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Behind the neck back pull-down

S. No. 5. 3. C. Gym Major Exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Behind the neck back pull-down



S. No. 5. 3. D. Gym Major Exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Behind the neck back pull-down

S. No. 5. 3. E. Gym Major Exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Behind the neck back pull-down

S. No. 5. 3. F. Gym Major Exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Behind the neck back pull-down

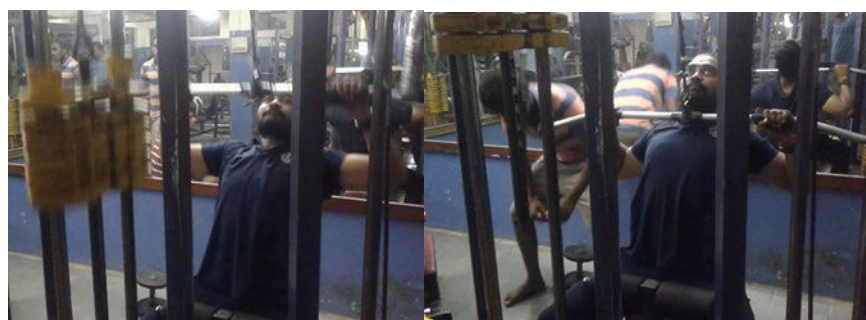
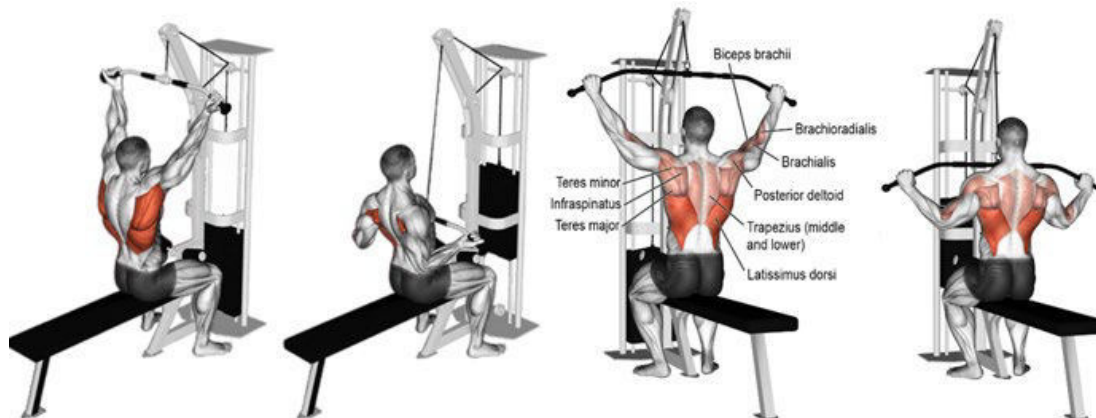
S. No. 5. 3. G. Gym Major Exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Behind the neck back pull-down

S. No. 5. 3. H. Gym Major Exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Behind the neck back pull-down

#### **4 Lat pull-down machine: -**

A lats pull-down is an exercise which helps to add muscles in our back. First, lock the legs under the cushions. Grab the weight by using different hand positions. Put the thumbs at the bend of the bar with hand extending outward. Make sure the chest is up, and pull the bar straight down under the chin. It is necessary to have a controlled motion. Hold on to this position for a moment and then slowly let the bar rise.

Lats pull-down are best done with a pull-down machine. Sit on the pull-down machine bench with the feet placed firmly on the floor and knees snug under the kneepad. For a standard lats pull-down, grab the bar overhead with hands shoulder-width apart. Lean backwards about 30°. Keep a neutral spine supported by abdominal muscles in order to prevent the arching of lower back. Inhale while pulling the bar close to the chest by engaging elbows and squeezing together of the shoulder blades. The pull must continue until one feels the stretch across chest muscles or the pectorals.



Now, revert to the initial position gradually, by extending the elbows and opening of shoulder blades while keeping the spine steady. Exhale while doing this movement.

There are certain things to keep in mind before performing this exercise. Beginners must always go for lighter weights and concentrate on form. The focus should be on the retraction of shoulder blades by keeping the spine steady, and without any head movement. Do not pull the bar down and leave it quickly, as it may cause muscle strain.

For more details watch the videos as listed below: -

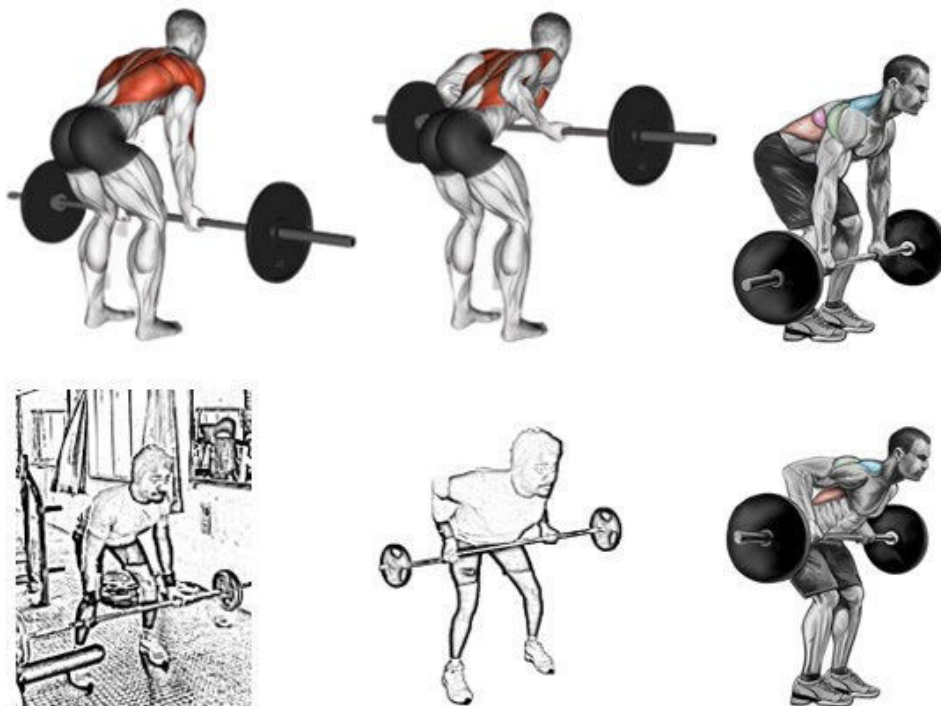
S. No 5. 4. Gym Major exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Lat pull-down Videos: -

S. No 5. 4. A. Gym Major exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Lat pull-down

S. No 5. 4. B. Gym Major exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Lat pull-down

## 5. Reverse-Grip Barbell Row: -

This exercise is similar to a normal barbell row. Stand straight and hold the barbell (underhand/reverse grip – hands outside the shoulders, palms facing away) with both feet and grip shoulder-width apart. Keep the lower back arched a bit, and the chest positioned high. Hinge forward so that the starting position of the bar is knee-height. The hips and knees must be bent with the torso lowered, parallel to the floor. Do not move the torso, and slowly pull up the barbell to upper abs by keeping elbows tight and squeezing the shoulder blades. Hold on to this position for a moment, and then, lower the barbell gradually to the original position. The torso must remain fixed throughout the exercise. Make sure that the shoulders do not slouch and ensure the efficient movement of the elbows.

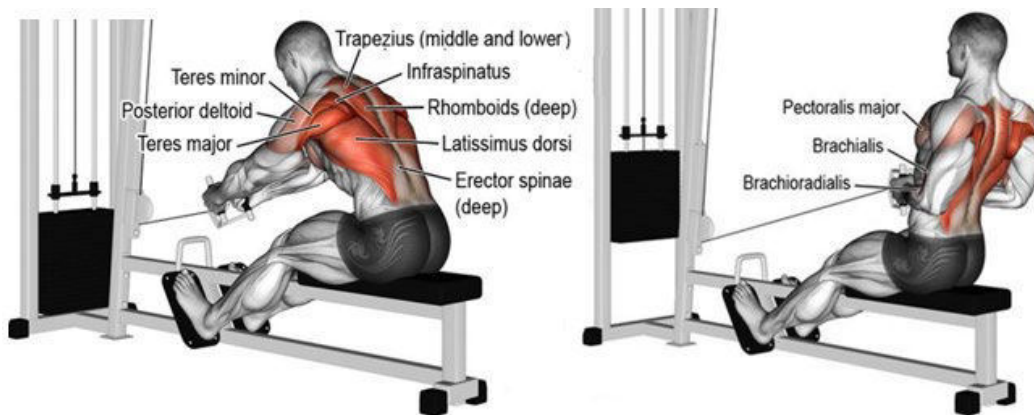


For more details watch the videos as listed below: -

S. No. 5. 5. Gym Major Exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Reverse-Grip Barbell Row

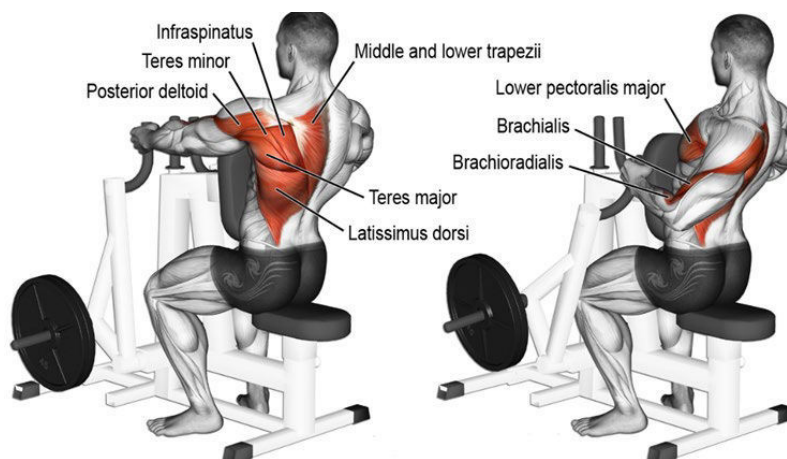
## 6. Seated Low-Cable Row: -

This exercise is performed on a “horizontal cable machine” with bench and footplates. First, it is important to adjust the weight as per the comfortability of the performer. Here, the researcher has used the grip which allowed him to have his hands close to each other. Now, sit down on the bench and hold the cable attachment. The knees must be kept bent a bit so that the arms can be outstretched for grabbing the handle without curling lower back. Ensure that neutral spine is maintained. Pull the handle slowly towards the lower abdomen and move the torso back with the arms. The chest will be out and there will be an arch on the back. This allows the shoulder blades to be pinched throughout the exercise. Squeeze the back and shoulders tightly. After doing this, come forward 90°, pull back, and exhale. Continue repeating the movements in a controlled manner to achieve maximum results.



## 7. Close-Grip Lat Pull-Down: -

This exercise demands a cable machine and close-grip attachment. Sit down on the pull-down bench facing the machine. Put the legs in a comfortable position under the knee-pads. Raise the arms up to hold the close-grip attachment with palms facing each other. Lean a bit backwards and bring the shoulder blades down; pull the attachment downwards till it touches the chest. Hold on to this position for a moment, followed by squeezing the lats. Now, slowly return to the starting position. The core must always remain tight and repeat the exercise as comfortable. It is important to remember that the attachment must not be pulled down below the chest, because the back does not remain engaged once the attachment comes below the chest and the shoulders are strained unnecessarily. Also, do not use the arms too much which may reduce the stress on the back. The exercise is primarily meant for training of the back. Some variations of this exercise can also be performed by anyone interested like Reverse Close-Grip Lat Pull-Down, and Supinated Lat Pull-Down.





For more details watch the videos as listed below: -

S. No. 5. 6. A1. Gym Major Exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Seated Low-Cable Row: -

S. No. 5. 6. A. Gym Major Exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Seated Low-Cable Row

S. No. 5. 6. B. Gym Major Exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Seated Low-Cable Row

S. No. 5. 6. C. Gym Major Exercise. Latissimus Dorsi (Lats) Seated Low-Cable Row

S. No 5. 6. A2. (Lats) Seated High and close Cable Row: -

S. No 5. 6. A. Gym (Lats) Seated Cable High and close Cable Row(V-bar)

S. No 5. 6. B. Gym (Lats) Seated Cable High and close Cable Row(V-bar)

S. No 5. 6. C. Gym (Lats) Seated Cable High and close Cable Row(V-bar)

S. No 5. 6. D. Gym (Lats) Seated Cable High and close Cable Row(V-bar)

### **Conclusion (Lats): -**

The T-bar row develops a strong upper back and this will assist to pull-off exercises like pull-ups and deadlifts. It heightens the upper body strength and improves overall body posture, core stability, and muscular hypertrophy. This means that the row exercise improves functional strength which is good for outdoor sports like rowing, cycling, climbing, kayaking, etc. Behind-the-neck pull-down exercise activates the shoulder muscles and those in the back of the body. It further strengthens the upper body, arms, and shoulders, and thus improve body functionality. The lats pull-down helps to increase the muscle mass of the back and gives the “V-shaped back” which

is desired by weightlifters and bodybuilders alike. Reverse-grip barbell row stabilises and strengthens the arms, back muscles, core, and the shoulders. Seated-low cable row concentrates on developing upper back and muscular balance, increases core strength and stability, and improves body posture. Close-grip lats pull-down activates the posterior deltoids, trapezius, and teres major, apart from the lats. This helps to strengthen the back of the body, increase strength in arms and shoulders, and improves posture.

#### **5.2.3.6 Thigh and Calf**

The researcher has practised a total of eight exercises in the category of thigh and calf, which are described below, followed by a conclusion where the specific advantages of these exercises have been discussed.

##### **1. Barbell Squat: -**

To perform the barbell squat, first choose a controllable weight which will allow to maintain proper technique. The barbell needs to be set up at the correct height in accordance with the individual's height, in the squat rack (barbell must be a bit lower than the shoulders). Remove the barbell and take two steps back. Step underneath the barbell and hold the sides with hands, making sure that the barbell rests on the muscles of upper back. Feet should be a slight more than hip-width apart with knees bent a bit. The shoulders must be over the hips and ensure that head and neck are neutral. Make sure that the body weight is evenly distributed on the feet, with the feet firmly placed on the floor. Now, rotate the shoulders outwards for engaging lats and upper back. Engage the core with ribs down and pelvis tucked slightly. Maintain the alignment and come down by bending knees, hips, and ankles, until the legs are parallel to the floor. Hold on for a moment, and then, begin to move up. Push the feet into the ground to stand but keep toes engaged. Keep the chest high, straighten the knees and hips, to slowly move forward. After completing the move, squeeze the glutes by maintaining neutral spine. The shoulders must finish over the hips at the end of every repetition.

This exercise shall be performed with perfect and controlled body movement. If anytime an individual feels pain or discomfort, the exercise must be stopped immediately. The barbell squat is basically a compound exercise which helps in the activation of muscles in lower body that includes lower back muscles, glutes, and hamstrings. Squats render significant help in other exercises like the bench press, deadlift, and the lunge.

## **2. Barbell Romanian Deadlift: -**

Stand with feet hip-width apart. Position the barbell over mid-foot (on top of shoelace). Squat down to hold the bar with palms facing the body. The spine must be neutral and lock the shoulder blades backwards. Balance body weight evenly on the feet. Extend the knees, maintain the position of torso, and slowly lift the barbell. Make sure that the barbell remains close to the body always. After the barbell passes the knee, one needs to perform the deadlift. Move the hips forward until the contraction of glutes takes place. Now, the knees can be unlocked and the hips moved back. Gradually lower the barbell as far as possible by maintaining correct body posture. Repeat the exercise as long as one feels comfortable. Certain things need to be noted here. The body posture is very important for this exercise and hence, the correct posture should be maintained throughout. Overarching the back and overextending the neck must be avoided. This deadlift exercise develops muscles like adductors, erector spinae, glutes, and hamstrings.

## **3. Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift: -**

This exercise requires minimal equipment – just a pair of dumbbells. Bend the knees a bit by standing with the feet hip-width apart. Hold a dumbbell each in both hands and keep them in front of the hips, with palms facing the thighs. Keeping the spine in a neutral position, shoulder blades must be squeezed, and hips moved back. Keep the dumbbells close to body. Lower them down in front of the shins. Do not sink the hips further, once the dumbbells go below the knees. The movement must be made through heels to extend both the hips and knees completely, and squeeze the glutes at the top.



Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift engages the core, glutes, hamstrings, and quads. It can be performed with a range of equipment.

#### **4. Dumbbell Lunge: -**

Stand straight with dumbbells by the side and palms facing body. Lunge forward with the right leg as far as possible by bending the knee. By using the heel of right foot, push the upper-body backwards to the initial position. Repeat the movement with the other leg. This exercise primarily targets the quads, but also works on abdominals, back muscles, calves, glutes, and hamstrings.

#### **5. Leg Extension: -**

Leg extension is mainly done with a “lever machine.” First, the machine needs to be set up so that the pad is at the top of lower legs, at the ankles. The knees must be at 90°. Choose a weight which will give a moderate load for performing repetitions. Now, the hands should be placed on the hand-bars. Gradually lift the weight until legs are straight. Exhale while lifting. There is no need to lock the knees and to arch the back. Lower the weight back to the starting position. This exercise strengthens the quads mainly, and engages the butts, core, and hip muscles.

#### **6. Leg Press: -**

This exercise is performed with the help of a leg-press machine. Sit on the bench with the back and head resting comfortably against the pads for support. The feet must be hip-width apart and placed on foot-plate. Ensure that both butts and heels are flat. The legs need to form a 90° angle, with knees in line with feet. This alignment should be maintained throughout the exercise. Hold the handles for support and keep the head and spine in position. Now, pushing the platform away with the heels, extend the legs, exhale, and keep the head and back resting against seat-pad. Hold on at the top of the movement. Bend the knees gradually and return the foot-plate to the starting position. Inhale during the process. It must be kept in mind that one must not lift more weight than one can, as proper form is the most

important thing. Do not place hands on the knees; instead hold the handles. Moreover, the head must be steady and no jerking is allowed. The leg press targets the glutes, hamstrings, and quads.

### **7. Lying Leg Curl: -**

Leg curls are done through the help of a curls machine. Lie on the bench with face downwards and stretching out the legs completely. Make sure that the roller pad rests above the heels, especially over the calves. Hold the assist handles on both sides of the machine. Bend the knees and exhale, thereby pulling the ankles close to butts. Hips must lie firmly on the bench. Hold on to this position briefly, and then, gradually return to the starting position. Inhale while doing this return. The movements must be performed in a controlled manner. Beginners must practise standing leg curl before doing the lying leg curl. The lying leg curl works on hamstrings and calf muscles primarily, but also activates glutes, quadriceps, and tibialis anterior.

### **8. Seated Calf Raise: -**

The seated calf raise exercise can be done in two ways – through the help of a machine, and by sitting on a chair. Both these ways may be discussed briefly below:

a) Sitting on Machine – Sit upright and keep the toes on the lower part of the platform with heels extending off. Lower thighs must be under lever-pad which needs to be adjusted in accordance with the height of the thighs. Hold the top of the lever-pad thereby preventing it from slipping forward. Raise the lever a bit by pushing the heels upward and by releasing the safety-bar. This is the starting position. Bend the ankles and lower the heels gradually so that the calves are stretched completely. Inhale while doing this movement. Extend the ankles and raise the heels as high as one can, and exhale. The calves must contract, and do hold on to this position for a moment. Repeat the movements according to one's comfort.

b) Sitting on Chair – This can be done anywhere, and simpler to perform. Sit upright in a chair with feet hip-width apart. Bring the feet backwards so that the heels are

behind the knees. Now, raise the heels off the floor and come up to the toes. Hold on for a moment and gradually lower the heels back down. Repeat the movements.

The seated calf raise works on the soleus (inner calf muscle) as the gastrocnemius (outer calf muscle) is in a shortened position. For training both these calf muscles, standing calf raise should be performed.

### **Conclusion (Thigh and Calf): -**

Each of the exercises as described above has certain exclusive benefits. The barbell squats build muscle mass in the lower body. If performed in correct form, it burns calories and increases fitness. The barbell Romanian deadlift is particularly suitable for increasing back strength, muscle growth, calorie burning, and therefore, reducing the risk of an injury. Dumbbell Romanian deadlift builds strength for workouts such as running and walking. Dumbbell lunge improves balance and mobility, and maintains bone health. Leg extensions are important to strengthen the knees and increases the force in any kind of kick movement, such as football and cycling. Hence, it is beneficial for the smooth athletic performances. The leg press helps to maintain proper balance and stability by developing leg muscles. Lying leg curls are responsible for strong hamstrings that is essential for balance, stamina, and strength, which will help in flexible body movements. Seated calf raise focuses on building stronger and leaner calves which is responsible for providing much better muscle structure, working of joints, and balance. In a way, it also stabilises the feet and ankles.

#### 5.2.4 Conclusion (Overall Practice)

The practise of the exercises, be it yoga, meditation, warmups, or gym, all equally contributed to enhance the ability of the researcher to perform as an actor. As we are increasingly becoming aware of the positive role of exercises in the development of an individual, it becomes necessary to state that this positivity lies in finding the state of balance not only just physically, but more so psychologically. Exercises boost psychological functions to a great extent. A study clearly showed how exercise increases confidence, emotional stability, memory, mood, perception, functioning of the intellect, self-control, etc., and decreases anxiety, depression, anger, headache, psychotic behaviour, etc.<sup>157</sup> It has also been pointed out how regular exercises “enhance personality traits that promote energetic behaviour.”<sup>158</sup> Meditation and self-control are interlinked just like mind and body, and plays an integral role in the concentration of a performance for the actor. To quote Professor of Philosophy Noa Latham – “self-control can be naturally extended to control of the body in cases going beyond ordinary bodily actions that include difficult manoeuvres in artistic performance and sport...such control of the body facilitates control of the mind and meditation, and control of the mind can facilitate control of the body.”<sup>159</sup> Yoga, too, is known for proving its effectiveness in maintaining emotional well-being of an individual and in providing “resilience to stress.”<sup>160</sup>

Coming to the elaborate gym training sessions that the researcher underwent, it was an essential part concerning the body practice and development. The researcher wants to make it clear that he never took any kind of protein supplements or steroids

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<sup>157</sup> Taylor, et.al., “The Relation of Physical Activity and Exercise to Mental Health,” 1985, p. 196.

<sup>158</sup> Sinclair, et.al., “Exercise changes behaviour,” 2014, p. 658.

<sup>159</sup> Latham, “Meditation and self-control,” 2016, p. 1797.

<sup>160</sup> Hartfiel, et.al., “The effectiveness of yoga for the improvement of well-being and resilience to stress in the workplace,” 2011, pp. 75-76.

in the gym to achieve muscular figure within a short span of time. Gym training was undertaken in a natural manner as part of the researcher's dedication and discipline towards his body. So, there was no space to just show-off the physique. It became supplementary to yoga, meditation, and warmup exercises. The researcher firmly believes that human body is like a temple and the muscles are work of art in this temple, thereby adorning the body. Gym not only sculpts the body and give a proper shape, but also strengthens the muscles involved in the functioning of different body parts. Therefore, there was a conscious and determined effort on the part of the researcher to undergo rigorous practice towards developing the stable and mobile body.

The main objective, apart from achieving agility and flexibility of body, was to instil discipline in life which the researcher has achieved through these different exercises. A combination of various exercises resulted in the mental and physical well-being of the researcher. As it is well-known, that in order to perform any activity successfully, it is a preliminary requirement to possess mental and physical balance. Similarly, the researcher as a practitioner and an actor, could undergo several training processes, and could undertake acting performances only due to the balance he achieved. It is extremely fundamental for an actor to justify his/her actions through body and mind, so that the expressions could find an articulation on stage and in the vision of the spectator. This can be possible through regular practice of exercises, to make the body agile and flexible. In other words, stiffness must be removed. Exercises produce rhythm and rhythm leads to perfect sequential movements without flaws, and the combination of sequential movements creates articulation where the body movements speak.

# Chapter 6

## Conclusion

### 6.1 Summary:

The study is an explorative study with a unique Practice as Research (PaR) methodology. In this methodology, the actor trainee cum researcher is subjecting his mind, body, and spirit to understanding and learning methodologies of body practices to develop new acting modules and practice for the contemporary actor's training. As part of the methodological framework, the researcher attempted to understand traditional forms of body practice techniques like: Yakshagana, Kathakali, Kalarippayattu, Koodiyattam, Yoga and Gym training. The researcher experienced and understood the various body practice exercises besides documenting the practice process in video format. The different exercises and functionalities are analysed based on the field notes and participant observation tool. The researcher understood that every form had its unique style of techniques of body practice. Performance Traditions such as Kathakali, Koodiyattam and Yakshagana provide space for voice practice and body movements. Kalarippayattu and Gym training are body-centric arts forms. Yoga also stresses body practice through various *asanas* and limited importance for voice cultivation through pranayama techniques. All these functionalities are illustrated in previous chapters. The present chapter provides a summary of findings of selected artforms as observed and understood by the researcher cum practitioner in his long voyage through the psycho –physical process.

| Sl. No. | Variable       | Kathakali                                                                                                                                       | Yakshagana                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Kudiyattam                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Kalaripayattu                                                                                                                                      | Yoga                                                                                                                                                      | Gym                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1       | <b>Diction</b> | Reciting syllables, tung twisters, <i>jatis</i> , <i>slokas</i> , Om, along with breathing exercises enable improvement of performer's diction. | <p>This study found that Yakshagana relies on musical elements and singing the text. Narration plays a crucial role in story progression.</p> <p>Narration demands clarity in speech. So, improving diction is very important in Yakshagana performance.</p> <p>Diction improvement exercises as similar to Kathakali.</p> | <p>This art form contains dialogue delivery and background narration.</p> <p>Voice plays an essential role similar to Kathakali and Yakshagana.</p> <p>Diction improvement exercises as similar to Kathakali.</p> | <p>This art form does not demand any dialogue delivery or recitation except by saying “de-de-da.” So, there is no training on voice exercises.</p> | <p>Yoga is a different form intended for physical health. Pranayama, which contains a set of breathing exercises, helps to improve the speech system.</p> | <p>Gym exercises are intended for physical health and fitness of body with the help of various types of equipment.</p> <p>There is no space for voice-related elements in Gym.</p> |

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| 2 | <b>Modulation</b> | Enhancing 'modulation' capacity through the practice of recitation <i>Om</i> , alphabets, <i>jatis</i> and slokas.                                                                                | Voice modulation is important attribute in this art form. To improve modulation actor practices reciting <i>jatis</i> , <i>slokas</i> , spiritual poems, singing folksongs. | Voice modulation practices are similar to Kathakali.                                                                                                                          | Not applicable                                                                                                                                             | Not applicable                                                                                                             | Not applicable |
| 3 | <b>Rendering</b>  | <p>Reciting syllables and text by stretching at different speeds and tone enables voice rendering.</p> <p>Rendering exercises are also useful to facial expressions beside vocal development.</p> | Rendering practices are almost similar to Kathakali. For the rendering of talas in combination with claps (see the chapter)                                                 | <p>Rendering occupies prominent place in Kudiyaattam as compared with Kathakali.</p> <p>Rendering practice is done by stretching and stressing words in different speeds.</p> | Minimally used while doing the <i>meypayattu</i> movement. At the initial stages of the training <i>vaithari</i> helps the performer to lead the movement. | Marginally used as chanting, most often during the Surya namaskaram. This will help in developing concentration and focus. | Not applicable |
| 4 | <b>Variation</b>  |                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                            |                |



|   |                |                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|   |                | Recitation of <i>jatis</i> and syllables at various sound levels makes a performer pronounce the voice at multiple variations. | Variations of voice exercise is similar to Kathakali.                                                                                                                             | Variations of voice exercise is similar to Kathakali.                                                                                  | Not applicable. At times variation in the speed of <i>vaithari</i> controls the movements speed.                                     | Not applicable. At times variation in the speed of completing each step in the asanas helps in developing endurance through breathing variation | Variation in the use of weights and the number of repetitions are added according to the fixed routine to strengthen the muscles.                                                                           |
| 5 | <b>Rhythm</b>  | The practice of the Kathakali exercise helps actors' body movements to follow the rhythm.                                      | Yakshagana's uniqueness lies on its body movements according to clapping and musical rhythm.<br><br>The clapping pattern guides a actor to move his body according to the rhythm" | A rhythmic pattern in rendering lines according to the characters mental state is codified and used as part of the character training. | While mastering the form the trainee acquires an internal rhythm in his/her ways of executing the <i>adavus</i> and <i>vadivus</i> . | As similar to Kalari practice.                                                                                                                  | Often musical rhythms are used as an aid to keep up the repetition of muscle building through various exercises. similar to Kalari practice repetitions moulds the trainee to get in to an internal rhythm. |
| 6 | <b>Impulse</b> |                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

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|---|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|   |                                   | Impulse is essential functionality that can be achieved preliminary movement exercise and salutation.                                                                                                                                        | Talas, warrior exercises are useful to improve the ability of impulse.                                                                                   | Similar to Kathakali                                                                        | Impulse is achieved through salutation, <i>meypayattu</i> , it helps to transform each movement to the other. | Impulse gets initiated through the stretching positions from the basic stance.    | Without impulse the routine cannot be initiated, so it is an important element to take up and continue training. |
| 7 | <b>Control</b>                    | Main purpose of warm-up and preliminary exercises are to strengthen body control and balance. In this art form body control is done by pelvic area. During the practice or performance actor's upper body weight is balanced by pelvic area. | Controlling and balancing body is equally important in Yakshagana.<br><br>These abilities achieved through practice of body movements according to Tala. | Aspect is not only related to body alone, but also it helps in having an emotional control. | Mostly similar to the Kathakali exercises. Control and balance go hand in hand.                               | The control of the movement helps the trainee to acquire balance of body posture. | Control helps the body movement to gain perfection in shaping the structure.                                     |
| 8 | <b>Rigidity &amp; Flexibility</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                             |                                                                                                               |                                                                                   |                                                                                                                  |

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|   |                          | <p>Actors cannot move body parts with ease due to rigidity.</p> <p>Warm-up and preliminary exercises useful to overcome rigidity and flexibility in body of performer.</p> <p>Flexibility enables an actor to mould his body according character.</p> | <p>Tala practice helps an actor to improve his body flexibility.</p> <p>Adi tala practice is more useful to make body flexible.</p> <p>Yakshagana exercises are more rhythmic as compared to Kathakali and Koodiyattam</p> | <p>All exercises of this art form are similar to Kathakali to achieve flexibility of the actors' body.</p> | <p>This art form contains stretching, muscle contraction exercise. It is the best form to attain flexibility to a new actor or amateur actor in less time.</p> | <p>Yoga provides lot of scope to make actors body flexible through <i>asanas</i>. Surya Namaskara is play crucial role to achieve flexibility in the actors' body.</p> | <p>Gym equipment are helpful to do back-stretching, front stretching, skipping, pull and push and rope exercises. These body practices are useful to achieve actors' body flexibility.</p> |
| 9 | <b>Sustaining energy</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Sustaining energy can also get aided                                                                       | Similar to kathakali.                                                                                                                                          | Asanas of various kind and its                                                                                                                                         | Strengthening the body go along                                                                                                                                                            |

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|    |                | <p>Sustaining energy is pre-requisite for actors' body.</p> <p>This can be achieved through rigorous warm-up &amp; preliminary exercises. This functionality leads to act efficiently in main practice of form or performance</p> | <p>Researcher practically experienced sustaining energy by rigorous practice of 7 Tala exercises.</p>                                              | <p>with the breathing exercises.</p> <p>Emotional freeze used as the part of the rasa box helps in sustaining somatic energy.</p> | <p>Repetition of <i>adavus</i> and <i>vadivus</i> increase the growth of internal energy and unconsciously develop the ability to sustain energy.</p> | <p>repetitions rely upon controlled breathing pattern helps in developing these aspects.</p> | <p>with sustaining energy.</p>                                                                                                       |
| 10 | <b>Stretch</b> | <p>Stretching exercise helps relaxation of various body parts. Stretching helps the performer to move his body with ease and agility.</p>                                                                                         | <p>Warrior exercise are special exercises of Yakshagana body practice.</p> <p>These are useful to stretch body parts and relaxation of muscle.</p> | <p>Not applicable in the case of present researcher.</p>                                                                          | <p>Stretch is an integral part of Kalari exercises. So, it helps in developing the flexibility of the body movement to.</p>                           | <p>As similar in the case of Kalari. especially in the case of executing asanas.</p>         | <p>Stretch is used during the warm up as well as the ground exercises. Stretching and pulling helps the muscle building process.</p> |
| 11 | <b>Kick</b>    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                      |

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|    |             | A kick is a kind of energy achieved through 'Kaal sadhakam' exercise. This exercise relaxes and stretches the muscles of the knees. | In this form warrior exercises are useful to attain kick to body.                                                                              | Not applicable       | Kicking, tapping and stamping is commonly used in combinations as part of the movement exercises. Particularly for the <i>poothara/ guru vandanam</i>                                                                   | Not applicable                                                                                                                                                      | Used in the warm ups.                                                                                                                                                 |
| 13 | <b>Hand</b> | Hand movements are called mudra in Kathakali. 24 Mudra of this form represents various feelings and emotions.                       | Mudra is similar to Kathakali form. Exercises such as rotating hands while changing mudras improved the easiness in palms, fingers, and elbows | Similar to Kathakali | Complete hand movements with stretching and speed is used. Hands are often used as a shield of protection. Many kinds of hand movements and its patterns are employed. Eyes and hands go in tandem to attain precision. | Hand movements leads and helps the completion of asanas. Hands are used in stretched and closed positions. Hands positioning also support the completion of asanas. | There are many exercise using hands. Such as biceps, triceps etc. strengthening hands is a priority in the gym exercises shaping hands provides looks and confidence. |

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|  | <b>Jumping</b> | <p>Jumping exercise occupies a prominent place in this art form. The uniqueness of this form is bringing both legs forward while jumping.</p> <p>Jumping exercise also improves the agility and fleetingness of the body.</p> | <p>Jumping exercise are also part of In Yakshagana body practice.</p> <p>Knees will go backward in Yakshagana jumps.</p> <p>Jumping exercises are useful to getting energy and enhance agility of the body.</p> | Not applicable in the case of present researcher. | <p>This exercise occupies a prominent place in this martial art form. The uniqueness of this form is bringing both legs forward while jumping.</p> <p>Jumping exercise also improves the agility and fleetingness of the body. Jumping also used in generating energy and heights. Jumping goes along with landing and turning practices.</p> | Not applicable | <p>At the stage of warm ups with many variations to attain initial energy and releasing of stiffness of body. skipping exercise mainly rely up on jumping.</p> |
|--|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|    |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                |
|----|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 14 | <b>Feet</b> | <p>Foot movements and focussing body weight play a notable role in Kathakali's.</p> <p>Standing position and in overall performance actor standing on outer edges of the feet is the uniqueness of this art form.</p> | <p>In Yakshagana standing position is normal as in daily life. Feet are placed in 'V' shape.</p> <p>Feet move rhythmically according to clapping pattern.</p> | Similar in the case of kathakali                                                                                                                                                            | <p>Feet carries the entire weight of the body in order to make the body float in air the practitioners use the spine and torso movement with the help of feet positioning. Stamping of the feet and variation in the positioning according to the shifting of body weight is excessively used.</p> | <p>Full flat feet is carefully used in the execution of <i>asanas</i>. Attaching feet to the body is part of the different stances of <i>asanas</i> specifically used for gaining and maintaining the balance.</p> | Extensively used for the building of lower body parts, through many exercises. |
| 15 | <b>Face</b> | <p>Facial expressions are helpful to represent various emotions according to the imagination.</p> <p>Kanu Sadhakam and Lip stretching exercise helps to the improve facial expressions.</p>                           | <p>Facial expressions appear as normal in daily life. There is no much melodramatic expression in this art form.</p>                                          | <p>Facial expressions are helpful to represent various emotions according to the imagination.</p> <p>Kanu Sadhakam and Lip stretching exercise helps to the improve facial expressions.</p> | <p>Rarely used as part of massage and <i>marma</i> therapies.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <p>Maintaining neutral face is a credo.</p>                                                                                                                                                                        | Controlling facial expression while doing weights is advisable.                |

|    |             |                                                                                                                                   |                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                       |                                                                                                    |                                                                                 |
|----|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 16 | <b>Eyes</b> | Kannu Sadhakam exercise helps to improve the ease of eye movements. Due to this activity, performers can express various emotions | Researcher could not practice this aspect. | Expressive eyes and the eyebrows are an essential feature of the form. Kala Sadhakam exercise helps to improve the ease of eye movements. Due to this activity, performers can express various emotions | Eyes leads the entire movement pattern here eye is considered as the inner eye which emanates energy. | Asanas helps in achieving a glow in the eyes. As similar in the case of Kalari in a matured state. | Hand and eye coordination while training is necessary for sustaining the focus. |
|----|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|



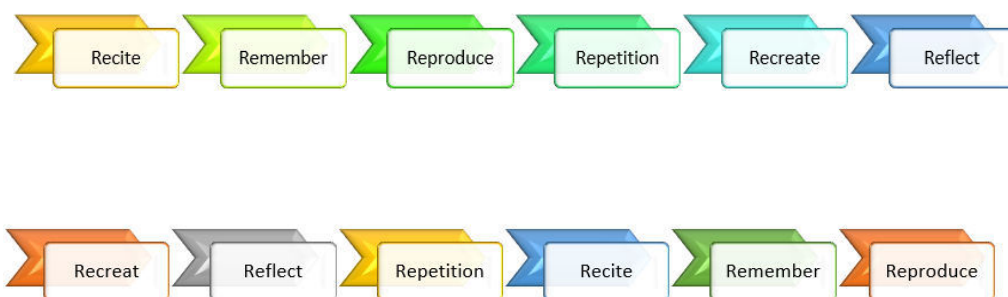
|    |                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 17 | <b>Self Reflexivity</b> | <p>During Practice researcher realized the change in various qualities such as becoming body flexible, agile and improving ability breathing control for a longer time. Also, experienced a qualitative shift in voice modulation, diction and rendering during performing “Urubhangam Play”</p> | <p>During body practice exercise researcher experienced a change in body movements and vocal development. Researcher participated this work after attending Kathakali one to one workshop. Kathakali body practice helped to easily learn various voice and body exercise.</p> <p>Researcher felt that body movements of Yakshagana are not as stressed as Kathakali.</p> | <p>The repeated practice using mirror helped the actor training to achieve the externalisation of emotions using facial positioning and expressions. This workshop triggered ideas lead the trainee to implement practice modules for self and others. Repeated reproduction of <i>navarasas</i> exploration helped in building confidence in understanding and executing emotional state.</p> | <p>while Practicing researcher realized the change in various qualities such as flexibility, agility, compatibility etc. the practice improved sustaining breathing control for a longer time.</p> | <p>Practicing yoga generated confidence, focus and fluidity in approaching various life situations. Breathing released energy and helped the trainee to control on once body and mind.</p> | <p>The practice strengthened and shaped the posture. A structured and fit body developed the trainees endurance to sustain all the hardships of the professions.</p> |
|----|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Table 6. 1 Gym table summary chart

The above shown table clearly indicate how certain common functionalities, found by the researcher in due course of his practice gets reflected. The lengthy practice of different theatrical traditions got intermingled with the western acting training methods learned and practiced by the researcher in the entire period of present research. Most often certain body practices and voice culturing exercises were used in the creative productions guided by experts. At times the researcher continued the already learned techniques using a linear progression of six 'R's.' They are repeat, recite, remember, reproduce, recreate, and reflect. This happened in a linear progression at the initial stages like-

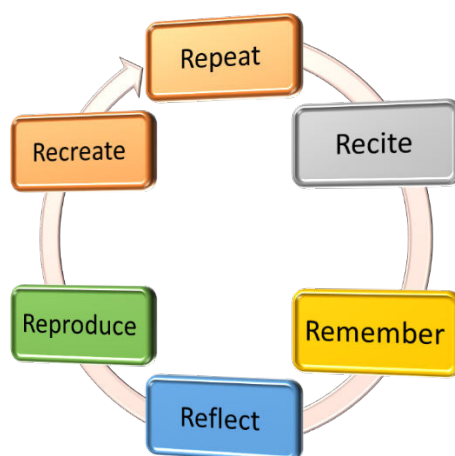
- Repeat (whatever is seen, heard, learned- imitation is the crux of the action)
- Recite (recite the verbal rendition related to action often with repetition)
- Remember/Recollect (here the trainee try to use his cognitive abilities to recollect what is done by himself)
- Reproduce (this is aimed at replicate the 'doings' done as part of the stage of imitation)
- Reflect (this is an act of self-reflection on the actions realized)
- Recreate (most often the recreations purposefully happened with variations and during the latest stages the performer version became more and more significantly creative).

The following figures shows the different combination of the process happened during the training and post training phases.





The above shown combinations are not complete ,different patterns of combinations including the si[x ‘R’ got actualised at different junctures of practice as research process. During the later stages the linear compositions changed into circular mode where the trainee can start the process of the practice anywhere as shown in the circular flow chart.

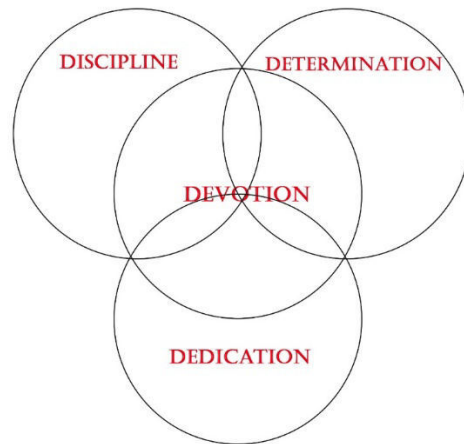


In the circular mode the core is playfulness and relaxation, but in the linear mode seriousness and ritualization become the centre of action. One can easily Read the text actualized by the performer/ trainee and critically comment about it to make it better or fruitful. Here the idea of reading a text (performance text actualized in that context) comes into picture. Documentations of the practice helped the researcher to utilize this critical practice in resorting to a self-evaluation of the performed work to make it improve at later stages. Most often better communication of the idea

transmitted is the goal. This practice as research makes one believe the following. They are:

1. If the actor is physically ready, he/she will be mentally better.
2. If once endurance is good, he/she will be able to deliver for the best for every day.
3. If one is physically fit, he /she can take up any demanding work.
4. If one is strong, he/she will have better posture, less physical issues, more mobility with flexibility which helps one to have a graceful stage presence

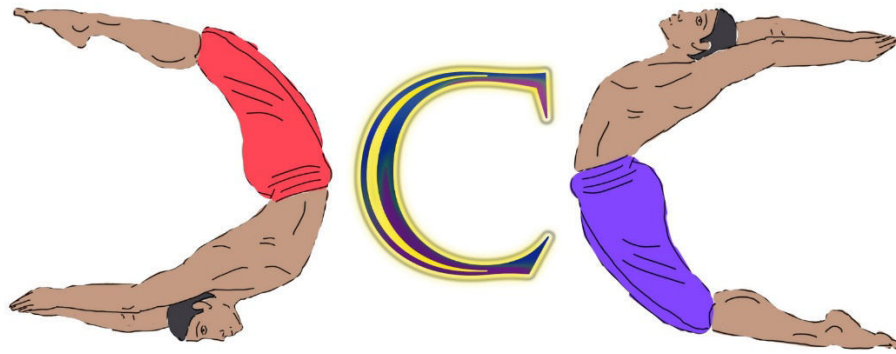
So, a continuous training, healthy diet and plenty of rest is recommended but this practice should have the spirit of following ‘D’s’ as per the figure. The intersecting circle of discipline, determination, dedication, should have the soul which is devotion, that can only bring an actor trainee to be happy and healthy.



This is the major recommendation that the thesis make and the present researcher cum practitioner’s daunting voyage through the physical practices of traditional form as well as the martial arts reveals that relying on the basic structural practices of the performing body-based tradition always help in actualizing the D’s mentioned. Where Devotion in its larger sense becomes the Core of practice.

The entire practice of research, the acting trainee came across many concepts starting with word ‘C’ as ‘C’ is the fundamental sonic sound while spelling the word ACTOR. The following figure show the often-crisscrossed concepts starting with C.

The figure consciously avoid concepts like: Concentration, to concentrate the play of these concepts in my future practice and research towards making a commune of actors who think and act through practice.



CREATIVE THINKING  
COLLABORATING  
CONCERN  
COMPROMISING  
COMMUNICATING  
CONFIDENCE  
CURIOSITY  
CITIZENSHIP  
COMRADESHIP  
CHARACTER  
CHANGE  
CHAOS  
CONTROL  
CLIMAX  
CONTEXT  
CONFLICT  
COMMITMENT  
CONVENTION  
CRITICAL THINKING  
CONTRAST  
CREATIVITY  
COOPERATING  
COMBATABILITY  
CRISIS

.....AND MANY MORE

## **6.2 Future scope of Research work**

The present research project has its limitations despite dealing with diverse practices and art forms. This limitation will pave the way for future research where new enquiries can be made and further practices can be utilized for the sake of better understanding. Though the researcher has explored different forms such as Kathakali, Yakshagana, Kalarippayattu, Koodiyattam, Yoga, Gym Training and Western theatre practice; these are by no means complete and totally justified. The underlying fact is that practice entails discipline and this discipline needs to be continued for several years before the attainment of mastery over the specific practice or art form. Preliminary exercises trained the body for practice, and the practice in workshop as done by the researcher proved to be an initiation into that discipline. In-depth learning and flawless performance can only be attained by subjecting oneself to devotion towards the art. Therefore, the path to make enquiries in new directions through exploration of diverse art forms and their application in acting training is still open. The liveliness of performance arts is that there can be many interpretations regarding practice, and the way a specific training or practice is incorporated within a wider objective. In a way, the present research opens up the possibility for new investigations and discoveries.

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## Appendix A

### Review of Literature

Stanislavski's first book, *My Life in Art* (1924), did not actually discuss his acting system. This was a time in Stanislavski's life when he desperately needed money. His son, Igor, was suffering from tuberculosis and required treatment in Switzerland. The Russian revolution had taken Stanislavski's personal fortune and his only income was that which he and his wife received from their salaries at the Moscow Art Theatre and on tours of the company's productions (Benedetti, 1990). *My Life in Art* was drafted from Stanislavski's diaries and notebooks. It recounted Stanislavski's early struggles and the formation of the Moscow Art Theatre. The book was a story of the transformation of an amateur into a professional actor. The American translation was rushed into print and was disappointing to Stanislavski and many of his followers. A Russian edition, considered superior to the American version, was published in 1929 but the 1924 American edition continued to be the version used in English speaking countries (Benedetti, 1990). Sayler (1919) recognized the importance of the Moscow Art Theatre and the work Stanislavski was doing there. Proclaiming the Art Theatre to be the "world's first theatre," Sayler praised the wonderful new approach Stanislavski was taking. In 1922, the Moscow Art Theatre toured the United States.

Within three years of the tour, the debate over the Stanislavski approach was in full swing. The Quarterly Journal of Speech printed two letters insisting that an actor should feel his part (Pratt 1925, Adams, 1925). Four months later, the journal printed a thoughtful reply to the first letters (Perego, 1925). Benedetti (1990) explained that in 1923 Stanislavski had a great need of money. The Soviet government had taken his family fortune and the only money he possessed was what he earned from his work with the Moscow Art Theatre. Unfortunately, his earnings were inadequate to care for his son suffering from tuberculosis. Thus, when the opportunity came to

publish a book about his life in the theater, Stanislavski was quick to accept the offer. In 1924, *My Life in Art* was published.

The writing of *An Actor Prepares* was rather more complicated than that for *My Life in Art*. In 1930, Stanislavski signed over power of attorney to the translator of his work into English, Elizabeth Hapgood. Hapgood negotiated publication and movie rights to Stanislavski's works in the United States. Benedetti (1990) explained that this was significant for two reasons. First, in order to get around the fact that the Soviet Union was not a member of the international copyright agreement, Hapgood listed herself as co-author. Second, by copyrighting the work in the United States, all countries party to the agreement were bound to publish only the Hapgood translations. *Building a Character* was published in 1949; *Creating A Role* in 1961. The thirteen years between publication of *An Actor Prepares* and *Building a Character* did result in a misunderstanding of the system. The failure to adequately present an integrated psycho-physical technique resulted all too frequently in an imbalance in training. *An Actor Prepares* became the system, while *Building a Character* seemed like a less important afterthought. The supposed supremacy of inner motivation, of "feeling it," led several generations of young actors to reject or neglect the rigorous development of vocal and physical skills. Students and tutors alike appeared unaware that, before beginning to develop his psych technique at the age of 43, Stanislavski was already recognized at home and abroad as an actor of consummate technical skill (Benedetti, 1990).

Cohen's text, *Acting One* (1992), emphasized the principles of "Goals, Other, Tactics, and Expectation." Cohen saw his text as a beginning tool to train "your acting instrument - primarily your voice and body - into a more workable, more exciting, apparatus." Cohen emphasized the need of the actor to communicate with others. Once this communication was established among actors or between the actors and the audience, the actors had to achieve a practical basis for communication. Cohen also discussed techniques to improve vocal quality, physical stage presence, and understanding the character's phrasing of the lines.

Uta Hagen's *Respect for Acting* (1973), was one of the most popular texts on the list. Filled with anecdotes illustrating points Hagen made on the way, the book discussed how an actor could discover a character's motivations and communicate who the character was to an audience. Elements of Stanislavski's emotion memory technique underlay the idea of using one's own experiences to spark a true performance. Hagen discussed the need for an actor to discover who he is and to define objectives as did Stanislavski. The difference in Hagen's technique was that she instructed the student to ask questions such as "What do I want?" or "What is in my way?" Stanislavski's concept of "given circumstances" was also lightly explored. The style of *The Actor at Work* (Benedetti, 1990) with its emphasis on action was praised in the forward by Ted Danson as "A clear, less abstract writing style — less jargon." Benedetti provided instruction in the mechanics of the production of sound as well as exercises for the development of the voice. The book also discussed the concept of action and was recommended for "the more experienced actor." Benedetti acknowledges his use of Stanislavski's concepts as well as others as he adapted his exercises to make a point. A useful text which the student could come back to time and again, the book's use of varied techniques from many sources is an impediment to the formulation of a unified theory of actor training.

In *Acting: The First Six Lessons* (1933), Richard Boleslavski discussed with a student named "the creature," a method of actor training similar to Stanislavski. As one of Stanislavski's prize students, Boleslavski had been in charge of the First Studio of the Moscow Art Theatre. When Boleslavski came to America, he began teaching acting and published his book based on Stanislavski's system. Items of emphasis in *Acting: The First Six Lessons* include concentration, emotion memory, dramatic action, and characterization. Boleslavski called on the actor to train on three levels. First the actor must train the body as his instrument. Second, the actor must train the mind to concentrate on the task at hand. Third the actor learns to adapt to the circumstances of the production he is faced with through his cultural education. *Acting: A Handbook of the Stanislavski Method* (1995) by Toby Cole is another



compilation of various actor-training theories. The various pieces selected, including two by Stanislavski himself, primarily treated the application of the system in terms of the inner technique and failed to paint an accurate picture of the entire system. The article by Vakhtangov was enlightening because it demonstrated how one of Stanislavski's favorite pupils developed his own performance theory based upon what he had learned at the Moscow Art Theatre. Thomas Richards provided what must be a revelation to many in the theater world. His *At Work with Grotowski On Physical Actions* (1995) began with a chapter titled "Stanislavski and Grotowski: The Connection." This chapter explained that rather than rejecting Stanislavski, Grotowski embraced the system of physical actions which the Stanislavski System explored and on which Stanislavski himself spent his last years. The book demonstrated that where Grotowski diverged from Stanislavski, the diversion was actually a natural next step for the system. Grotowski had heeded the call of Stanislavski to take his system, learn from it, and then go out and create one's own system. Grotowski recognized that Stanislavski never wanted the exploration of the art of acting to stagnate. The actor must continue to grow and adapt to the changes of the world.

*The End of Acting* (1992), by Richard Hornby was an attack on the "Method" that Lee Strasberg developed from Stanislavski's early work in *An Actor Prepares*. Hornby examined the state of acting in the United States and determined that Strasberg and his focus on emotion memory as a primary acting technique had resulted in a stagnation of acting abilities. He then discussed how Strasberg misinterpreted Stanislavski and refused to consider a revision of his approach even after having been confronted with the realization that he was not teaching all of Stanislavski's system. Although Strasberg had given a cursory explanation of the physical side of the system, the main focus was on the psychological side. Useful in dispelling misinformation from Strasberg, Hornby's book does not do much to explain the full range of possibilities presented in Stanislavski's *Building a Character*. McGaw and Clark's *Acting Is Believing* emphasized such concepts as internal and external training of the actor as well as interpretive skills. Attention was

placed on rehearsal and performance techniques. The book also explored both the idea of physical actions and the idea of understanding the physical life of the character. The influence of Stanislavski is evident in the ideas of consciously preparing for one's role as well as the idea of physical actions. *Acting is Believing* also provided instruction on developing the vocal instrument. This treatment was no different from that which could be found in other texts. The inclusion of this section however demonstrated McGaw and Clarks determination to make the book a useful tool for a young actor.

Other texts such as *Acting with Style* (Harrop & Epstein, 1990), *Theatre Games* (Spolin, 1985), and *The ABC's of Acting* (Whelan, 1994), had in common with the above texts distinct traces of Stanislavski's system in their teachings. Yet none provided the comprehensive explanation of the life of an actor as does Stanislavski. All of these texts were good tools for the actor. However, the influence that Stanislavski's work had had on the art of acting permeated all of them in one fashion or another. This focus on the Stanislavski system in western theater prompted the criticisms discussed earlier in this chapter. Additionally, the fact that these many fine textbooks provided lessons based on a system that they did not initially teach their students prompted the research that led to the present dissertation. Appa Rao (1967), in *A Monograph on Bharta's Nāṭyaśāstra Naatyamaalaa*, his monograph, talks about the great Indian tradition of theatre and in particular about the *abhinaya*, *charis*, *mandalas*, *karanas* and *angaharas* among others. Rao has talked about various techniques and methods of theatrical performances which are grounded on Indian performing arts. In his monograph, Rao clearly makes a distinction between two styles of acting: *Nāṭyadharmī* and *Lokadharmī*. While *Nāṭyadharmī* style of acting is predicated on true and actual rendering of events and performances following established norms and conventions; the *Lokadharmī* style of acting believes in natural expression and provides more scope for artistic liberty. By studying *Lokadharmī* style of acting, one can get the knowledge about the prevalent social system and beliefs.

A board of Scholars' book of *The Natya Sastra of Bharatmuni* (1996), Dr.Parasnath Dwivedi *Natyasastra Ka Itihas* (2004) (The history of Natyasastra) and Adya Rangacharya's '*The Nāṭyaśāstra*' (2007). These books described them in details of chapters such as; The origin of Natya, Tandava and Lasya Nritya, acting of the subordinate parts of the body, *Abhinaya* of the hands and of the major limbs, the performance of *Charis*, the stage walk of characters, regional styles and nature of plays (*Natyadharmi* and *Lokadharmi*), *Vrttis* and Kinds of *Abhinaya*, etc. These descriptions give help to basic knowledge to understand Indian performance style. Dr. Puru Dadhichi's book '*Ekadush Natya Sanghra our Prayoktagarh*': This book is divided into two parts - first part describes the eleven elements of theatre Art, *rasa*, *bhava*, *abhinaya*, *dharmi*, *vrtti*, *pravriti*, *siddhi*, *swara*, *aatodh*, *gaan* or *nritya*. In second part describes the *Sutradhar*, *Esthapak*, *Bharat*, *Shailush*, *Kushiluv*, *devadasi* etc. This book gives a wide information and interpretation of physical movements and expressions.

In a *Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology*, Eugenio Barba and Nicola Savarese (2005) discuss on various aspects of play performance with human behaviour taking as center stage. Barba and Savarese have talked about the daily life and its extension into theatrical performances. They have also written on various other aspects such as balance, opposition, rhythm, *organicity* and the nature of training provided to actors among others.

Kanahailal (2016) '*Theatre of the Earth*' on his theatre work is an expression of the self as well as the reflection of the society, after reading this book we come to a conclusion that his theatre is deeply engrossed and embedded not only in his philosophy of theatre but also in the experiences of a region and its people.

Kanahailal (2016) this outstanding and remarkably return document not only describes some of his major production through his words but also tries to capture a sense of every aspect of his theatre making, his partner/ collaborator Heisnam Sabitri also gave her words in these documents and observations of various notable scholars

and researchers, including H.S. Siva Prakash, Rustom Barucha, and Richard Gough as also included their valuable observation in the documentation.

Mahesh Anand *Kahani Ka Rangmanch (Story theatre)*, in which writers (Nirmal Varma, Bhishm Sahani, and Dhramveer Bharti) shared their own experiences on watching own stories being performed on stage...and actors also got the chance to get their reviews which these eminent writers experienced during the performance.

Jane Turner (2004) „*Eugenio Barba* has compiled a book on the theatre practices of Eugenio Barba with the same title. This book is based on Eugenio Barba's method of actor training and performance styles. Turner portrays Eugenio Barba's practical exercises and traces the ways in which his ideas and practices have been developed and explored the common characteristics and the ways his actors explore their performances through physical and mental exercises.

Dharwadkar's (2008) book, *Theater of Independent* mainly focus on post-colonial theatre. How Indian theatre affected from the colonial theatre and how Indian theatre practitioners were searching a new path to getting own identity. Dharwadkar studied about Western and Indian theatre practitioners such as Richard Schechner, Barba, Peter Brook who were interested with the Indian classical and traditional art form and developed new intercultural theory. Dharwadkar discusses about antirealism and contemporary folk theatre.

Nandi Bhatia's (2010) book ***Modern Indian theatre*** is a study about the postcolonial theatre and about the Modern Indian theatre. One main article was written by Suresh Awasthi the name of "In defence of the theatre of roots" this is information of the postcolonial theatre. Awasthi's article based on the Indian theatre practitioners basically who changed the Indian theatre trend and brought back indigenous theatre with the help of own classical and traditional art form. Bhatiya's another article name 'Enacting the life of Rama, Classical Traditions in Contemporary Religious Folk

Theatre of Northern India' written by Lothar Lutze. Through 'Ramlila' the Indian religious theatre, Lutze described and co-related with the Brecht theatre.

Erin B. Mee's (2007) book *Theatre of Root* has given the sight about the Indigenous theatre. It has discussed the Political and theatrical origin of the root movement in the nineteenth century, from movement to style to 'National Theatre' at the Sangeet Natak Akademi. Suresh Awasthi's (1985) article has discussed also the Root Movements, after the colonial era how Indian theatre directors explored own theatre.

## **Appendix B**

### **Interviews**

#### **Personal Interviews:**

Kumar, Padma. Personal Interview on Kalarippayattu, 08<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

Suvarna, Sanjeeva. Personal Interview on Yakshagana, 21<sup>st</sup> March 2019.

Kalamandalam, Prashob. Personal Interview on Kathakali, 18<sup>th</sup> May – 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

Chakyar, Rajaneesh. Personal Interview on Koodiyattam, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

#### **Email Communication:**

Pizarro, Carolina. Personal Communication, 20<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

Kalamandalam, Prashob. Personal Communication. 20<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

## Appendix C

### Workshop Practice Photos with Carolina Pizarro

The Workshop with Carolina Pizarro, theatre-practitioner, actress, and director, was conducted at the Department of Theatre Arts, Central University of Hyderabad from 27 September to 6 October 2014.



**Figure 1: Focus on the Self – Carolina Pizarro (in the centre) giving the instructions before the starting of practice. The basic instruction was to concentrate on our individual selves and to be present in the performative space both physically and mentally.**



**Figure 2: Dance Posture – Carolina Pizarro is carefully inspecting our body postures and balance before the beginning of dance practice.**



**Figure 3: Rhythmic Dance Movement – All the Workshop participants are following Carolina Pizarro to perform the dance moves in a rhythmic way by moving the body according to the beats of music.**



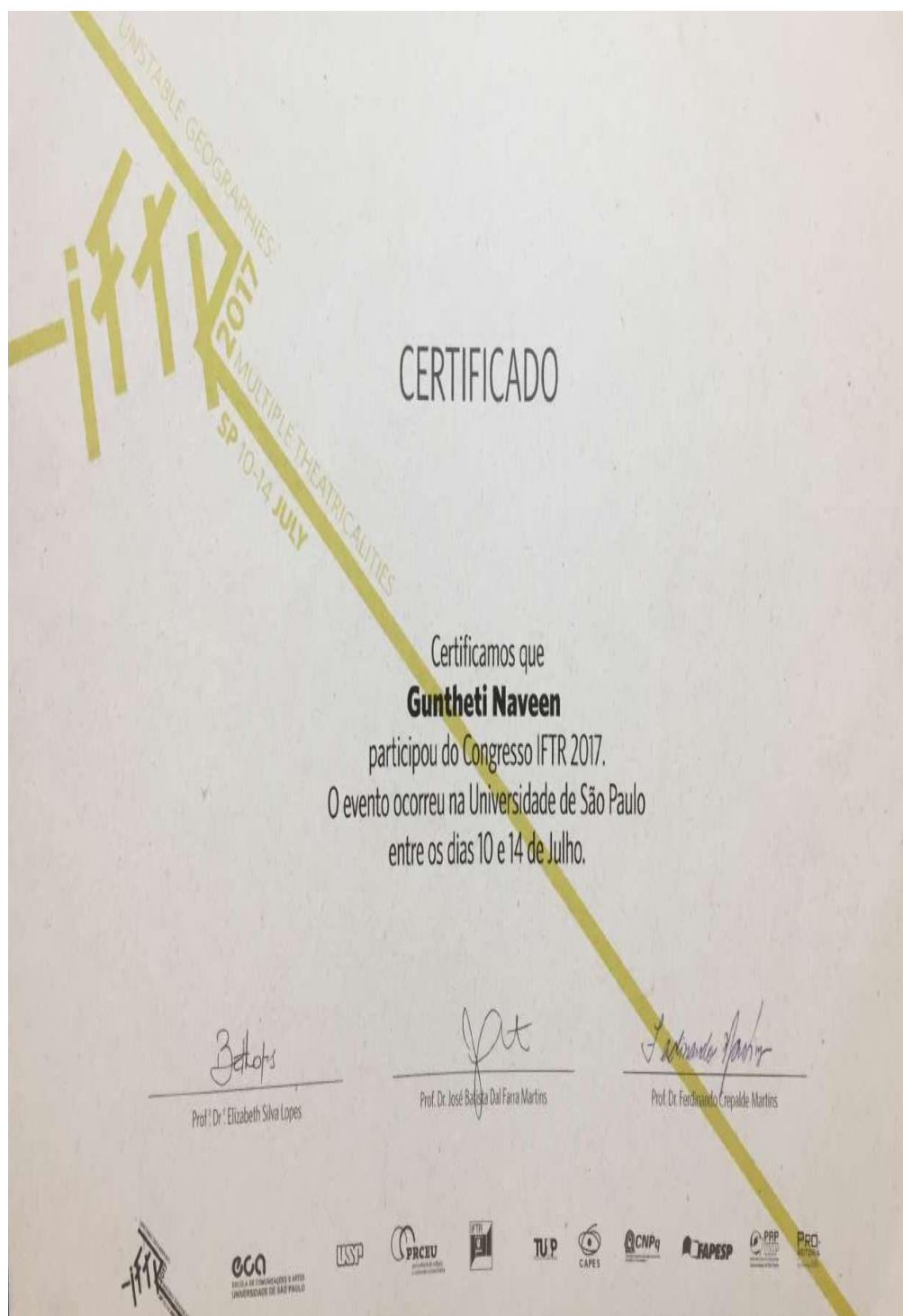


**Figure 4: Art of Creation (A) – I am performing the play *Macbeth* along with my co-participant. The focus is on physical balance with expressions.**



**Figure 5: Art of Creation (B) – Here, the focus is on facial expressions and voice modulation.**

a





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Course: Ph.D.  
Subject: Theatre Arts 40

Month & Year: November 2014  
Semester: I

| Sl. No | Regn.No. | Name of the Student | Course No. Credits - 4 | Course No Credits - 4 |
|--------|----------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
|        |          |                     | TA-801                 | TA-802                |
|        |          |                     |                        |                       |
|        |          |                     |                        |                       |
|        |          |                     |                        |                       |
|        |          |                     |                        |                       |
| 6      | 14SNPT05 | G. Naveen           | Pass                   | Pass                  |
|        |          |                     |                        |                       |

| Course No. | Title of the Course                               |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| TA- 801    | Research Methodology                              |
| TA -802    | Arts and World – Literary/ Visual/Cultural Theory |

Dated: 03.12.2015

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NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

Course: Ph.D.  
Subject: Theatre Arts 40

Month & Year: April'2015  
Semester: II

| Sl. No | Regn.No. | Name of the Student | Course No. Credits - 4 | Course No Credits - 4 |
|--------|----------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
|        |          |                     | TA-811                 | TA-812                |
|        |          |                     |                        |                       |
|        |          |                     |                        |                       |
|        |          |                     |                        |                       |
|        |          |                     |                        |                       |
| 6      | 14SNPT05 | G. Naveen           | Pass                   | Pass                  |
|        |          |                     |                        |                       |

| Course No. | Title of the Course                                        |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| TA- 811    | Performance Theory and Issues in Indian Theatre            |
| TA -812    | Mapping the question (Exploring the topic with supervisor) |

Dated: 03.12.2015

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*by* Guntheti Naveen



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