

Acting and Teacher Education: The BEING Model for Identity Development

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Abstract

This study follows three pre-service teachers during three academic semesters in which they took an acting course for teachers and participated in practicum with a special focus on rehearsing and developing their teacher identities. In order to create the necessary context for them, an acting course for pre-service teacher education was designed in parallel with a model which is based on an influential acting theory. This model, namely the BEING (Believe, Experiment, Invent, Navigate, Generate), was also designed by the researcher. The incentive behind designing a model grounded on acting literature was that the relevant literature does not provide trainers with a universal model which can be referred as a manual for running and monitoring acting courses for teachers. In this case study, this model was also tested in terms of its applicability and functionality in practice. Based on analyses of audio taped interviews, session journals and reflections, the five stages of the BEING Model was found to be highly applicable and functional in terms of reflecting the natural development process of teacher identity development. Pre-service teachers displayed a significant development in communication skills and professional identities. Therefore, the BEING model provides a perspective and a philosophy of benefiting from acting literature for teacher educators with little or no knowledge on acting and theatre.

Keywords: *Pre-service teachers; professional identity; acting*

Introduction

The task of integrating actor preparation methods into teacher education has been going on for at least four decades, but these studies have never been a central debate in teacher education. Fortunately, the efforts of a few scholars enable us to conduct more specific research studies. Among these scholars, there is a general accord with the idea that considering teachers as performing artists has an influential impact on the practice and production of teacher education (DeLozier, 1979; Eisner, 1979; Griggs, 2001; Hart, 2007; Sarason, 1999; Travers, 1979; Tauber, Mester & Buckwald, 1993; Tauber & Mester, 2007). In terms of effective teaching skills, this impact is usually defined as the ability and consciousness in nonverbal communication (Vandivere, 2008) and nonverbal immediacy (Hart, 2007), teacher enthusiasm (Tauber & Mester, 2007), constructing strong teacher identities (Hart, 2007), an effective use of body language and voice (Baughman, 1979; Dennis, 1995; Freidman, 1988; Nussbaum, 1988; Tauber & Mester, 2007; Timpson & Tobin, 1982), use of humor (Baughman, 1979; Tauber & Mester, 2007), and effective communication (Griggs, 2001; Freidman, 1988; Javidi, Downs and Nussbaum, 1988). Many more variables can be studied so as to reveal and unravel the contributions of acting methods to teacher education on the grounds that this is not only a pursuit of developing communication skills of teachers, but also a philosophy of the teaching profession that can radically change the way we approach teacher education and accordingly shape professional identities of trainers. It is quite surprising that this issue has been mostly neglected in teacher education (Sanford, 1967; Nussbaum, 1992).

Scholars carrying out studies on professional identity, or teacher identity, claim that teachers need to develop an identity, preferably beginning by pre-service, so as to perform their professions effectively

(Danielewicz, 2001; Hanning, 1984; Hart, 2007; Palmer, 2003; Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Travers (1979) accentuates that teacher educators should benefit from acting theories, specifically from the theory of Stanislavski, so as to construct consistent and influential teacher identities. He claims that Stanislavski provides teacher educators with a theory of identity construction in pre-service years (1979).

The available studies present various theoretical discussions on similarities of acting and teaching professions (Burns, 1999; Dennis, 1995; Eisner, 1979; Freidman, 1988; Hanning, 1984; Van Hoose and Hult, 1979; Jarudi, 2000; Lessinger & Gillis, 1976; Rives Jr., 1979; Sarason, 1999), acting activities designed for teacher education (Griggs, 2001; Hart, 2007; Tauber & Mester, 2007), some acting materials for teacher training (Lessinger & Gillis, 1976) and a course design with a syllabus and materials (Hart, 2007). Among these studies, we cannot come across abundant number of studies which suggests a model that may lead us to shape our practice in using acting techniques, activities and materials (Özmen, 2010). On the other hand, the syllabi and course designs may shed light on our curricular choices in teacher training practice, but as is known, syllabus and course design studies have an aspect which heavily addresses local and institutional needs. We may need a model based on a widely-accepted theory of actor training or preparation for teacher education so that we can facilitate and monitor the acting courses designed for teachers more consciously and effectively. Moreover, such practice-oriented models may help trainers with a limited knowledge of acting feel more confident in using acting tasks in their context. In this respect, this study aims at suggesting a universal model of teacher identity development which is based on the acting theory of Stanislavski (1949). The proposed framework, The BEING Model (Believe, Experiment, Invent, Navigate and Generate) was designed by the author in a case study completed in a fifteen months in pre-service English teacher education.

Teachers as Actors

A persuasive argument of the idea of "teacher as actors" can be constructed by addressing the study of Hanning (1984). Hanning reflected on his early years as an advisor when he encouraged the novices who were anxious about their teaching attempts by saying: "Just go there and be yourselves!" Hanning (1984) then admitted this advice was not valid, mentioning that pre-service teachers are to develop a teacher identity, and that they may do it by shaping their teacher identities in parallel with the needs of the learners just like actors do in theatre performances.

The burden on the shoulders of teacher education programs may get even heavier with these propositions. However, a slight change in our understanding and practice may result in amazing improvements in pre-service teachers' experience of preparation to become a teacher. No matter how talented a teacher is in terms of using acting techniques, it takes time to construct the whole teacher identity. What we also know is that the construction period should start by the first course hour of a teacher education program. In this sense, creation of a teacher role is quite different from that of an actor in that actors are trained to perform different roles during their professional career. They are trained to use their cognitive, affective and biological resources to embody someone else. As for the teachers, they are just finding a new way of expressing and embodying themselves, but in a more alert, conscious and professional way and for using the resources of this new self for getting learners to a level where they may enhance their learning process. "The teacher does not want to create a role that is a 'false front' but rather wants to create a way of the BEING that maintains her personal integrity and allows her to interact with her students most effectively" (Hart, 2007, p. 36).

Hart (2007) acknowledges that "While the actor's lines remain constant from performance to performance, the teacher varies her text each time she performs a lesson" (p. 62). This is a very important distinction between the dynamics and functions of both performance-based professions. The most important aspect of this distinction is that actors need to stick to the play-script and the instructions of the director so that all the components of a show, such as music, setting and so on, can function harmoniously. However, in this sense, teachers are like actors, producers and directors of the whole play. "Teachers are in much greater control of their own scripts – they write, direct, and produce them" (Timpson & Tobin, 1982, p. 28). I may not agree with Timpson and Tobin (1982) on the idea that teachers write their plays in that teachers are already given a play script, which is the

syllabus of the course and all the materials to be utilized for the completion of the course program. However, it is certain that teachers are both actors and directors of their own plays, and even sometimes they can do many manipulations on the syllabus and materials, which means they can interfere in the authors business to a certain extent.

Theory of Stanislavski and Development of Teacher Identity

The contributions of Stanislavski to a contemporary understanding of theatre acting are invaluable (Bilgrave & Deluty, 2004) in that he constructed a theory which has had a great impact on all actors, directors and theoreticians of this field. His universal methodology is known as 'The Method' and is referred to unequivocally as one of the major theories of acting in theatre and cinema arts. Mainly, the theory of Stanislavski is a way of rehearsing and embodying an identity for theatre performance. "The focus of the method approach is to develop self-awareness for the purpose of broadening one's self-identity, one's capacity to play a range of characters credibly" (Griggs, 2001, p. 30). As an educator, Travers (1979, p. 16) notes that "Stanislavski had essentially a complete theory of how a personality can be created in the adult." This process is materialized through analyzing the emotional and cognitive schemata of the target identity and discovering ways of performing them so that an authentic version of the role can be created. Thus, what Stanislavski proposed is not an insincere imitation of the role to be performed, but the actualization of a possible and believable version of the role. In this sense, Stanislavski does not offer pretending, but becoming and "*being*." Pointing out the limitations of competency-based teacher education three decades ago, Travers (1979) refers to Stanislavski's work by claiming that "Superficial features of a role do not have to be learned, for they appear automatically once the deeper structures have been developed" (p. 17). As for teachers in a pre-service program, these deeper structures represent their objectives, motivations, their personal and professional resources, all of which form the characteristics of their ideal teacher identities. In this respect, the proposal of this study is that the acquisition and internalization of the teacher identity, which Griggs (2001) defines as a transformational period, can be enhanced by the theory of Stanislavski.

In Stanislavski's theory, creating a role starts with an emotional journey to the life and heart of the actor who is working on the role. Actors are the people who are aware of their emotional and physical resources, possibilities and limitations. This ability is also crucially important for the teachers. This emotional journey is accompanied by the emotions, dispositions and personality of the target role. Actors simply find certain ways of embodying the target role by basing it on their personal resources so that an authentic version of the role can be created. In other words, this emotional preparation process is highly important because the only way of creating a believable identity depends on a careful analysis of the self and the target identity. Imitation or copying the role is a threat for the process of creating a version of the role. "An attempt to copy a role produces disastrous effects, for the role then lacks the authenticity that it must have to be effective" (Travers, 1979, p.17). This emotional preparation process offered by Stanislavski is also quite important in that pre-service teachers should be aware of the development process of their professional identities. Therefore, a model based on Stanislavski's theory will require much attention on the observation and analysis of the personalities of the pre-service teachers. The first step is to lead pre-service teachers to ponder over the qualities which can make them effective teachers. Therefore, in addition to thinking about their ideal teacher identities, pre-service teachers should also analyze themselves carefully so as to find out which of their personal resources are critical and necessary to embody their ideal teaching identity. When this process is completed, the rest is based on practice and a discovery process. Actors need to find out the right codes of voice and body language, all of which represent the emotional characteristics of the target role. As for the pre-service teachers, this process can be a discovery process of using body language, voice, communication strategies in the classroom, use of classroom space, observing and manipulating the classroom atmosphere and so on.

In order to apply the theory of Stanislavski in pre-service teacher education, the BEING Model is developed based on the remarks of Stanislavski on creating a role. In this case study, I have observed the identity development process of three pre-service teachers to find out whether this model works in practice. The trainer of the course shaped the course content and methodology in parallel with this model.

Research Method

Aim, Research Questions and Design

The incentive behind this research study is to test the applicability and functionality of "the BEING Model" as a framework based on Stanislavski's acting theory. I aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. Can we apply Stanislavski's 'The Method' to teacher education as a model for constructing teacher identity?
2. Are the stages that the BEING model presents in parallel with the actual development process of teacher identity development?
3. Can the BEING Model provide a basis for acting courses designed for development of teacher identity?

A case study was conducted in an English language teaching department on three pre-service teachers who took the course "Acting for Teachers". Ceren (Female, 23), Ece (Female, 22) and Cem (Male, 22) were the subjects and selected randomly from the class. Development process of teacher identities of these pre-service teachers was observed in terms of the designed model. The case study includes three stages that were completed in two years. The first stage was the 14-week acting course in the fall semester, 2008, in which pre-service teachers practiced acting techniques in terms of Stanislavski's approach. The second stage was the following semester (spring, 2009) during which the pre-service teachers took typical language teaching methodology courses, and they performed many teaching demonstrations in these courses. During this semester, pre-service teachers were asked to report the possible impact of the acting course on their teaching strategies and beliefs. The third stage began in the fall semester of 2009, when the pre-service teachers started to teach in the practicum to real students. Throughout these three stages, the following data collection tools were utilized.

Data Collection

The following instruments were used for data collection:

1. Pre-service teachers kept a weekly session journal in which they wrote down the details of their experiences in their acting course.
2. They were asked to write reflections on the contributions of the acting course to their methodology courses and their beliefs on teaching and learning. They began to write these reflections in September, 2008, and completed in November, 2009. The pre-service teachers were free to decide how many reflections to write. The collected reflections varied from 7 to 12.
3. Three interviews were conducted with the pre-service teachers. Duration of the interviews was between 30 minutes to 50 minutes. The first one was completed at the first weeks of the acting course in September, 2008. The second interview was made at the end of the course in January, 2009. The third was carried out at the end of the teaching practicum in December, 2009. All interviews were audio taped and transcribed verbatim.
4. The researcher observed the acting course regularly and took notes for his research journal. During the study, the researcher interacted with the participants in the interviews.

Data Analysis

Data analysis started from the first interviews so that the possible problems that pre-service teachers might encounter could be anticipated before the course begun. Then the reflections and session journals of each week were analyzed so as to observe whether the presumed stages of the BEING model were applicable and feasible in terms of the natural professional identity development of the pre-service teachers. Constant-comparative method, which is derived from grounded theory (Glaser

and Strauss, 1967), was used in analyzing the data. Also another researcher analyzed the data in terms of the proposed thematic categorization (The BEING model) and confirmed the reliability with a 97%.

The identified categories which are based on the theory of Stanislavski were: *believe, experiment, invent, navigate and generate* (Tables 1 and 2). While all categories were highly parallel with the actor preparation stages of Stanislavski (1949), "navigate" was added by the researcher to place the data that relates to the problem solving strategies of the pre-service teachers during the process of rehearsing their professional identities.

Results and Discussion

The Designed Categories

The first category, *Believe*, refers to the data that was collected when three pre-service teachers carried out "emotional preparation" activities in which they were simply asked to analyze themselves and to identify an ideal professional identity that they want to become and accordingly rehearse in the acting course and other methodology courses. The second category, *Experiment*, refers to the data that was collected during the acting activities that were conducted in the course. These activities aimed to strengthen the body language, voice control and sensory awareness of the pre-service teachers. In the third category, *Invent*, the participants were asked to find out their way of teaching which they were to display with various gestures, mimics and nonverbal communication patterns that are unique to them. In addition to the written data that were gathered from reflections and session journals, the observation of the researcher and the trainer were also used to verify the self-reporting of the pre-service teachers in this stage. The fourth category, *Navigate*, refers to the problem-solving strategies that pre-service teachers employed during the acting course. They were asked to identify the actual obstacle in their pursuit of constructing their professional identity and to overcome it through various actions that were decided by peers and the trainer. While these four categorizations were mostly constructed during the first phase of the research, which was the 14-week course period, the data that relate to the last category, *Generate*, was analyzed and categorized during the other methodology courses and teaching practicum between the January and December, 2009. The category *generate* refers to the core of the identity and to the repertoire of certain verbal, nonverbal communication strategies, inner and outer observation skills, gestures, mimics and improvisation techniques that reflect the unique identity of each pre-service teachers and were created during the acting course and aftermath. The following sections discuss the findings in terms of the categories of the BEING Model in parallel. In these sections, the categories are addressed as stages.

Experiences of the Three Pre-service Teachers during and after Acting Course

All of the pre-service teachers reported that the idea of rehearsing their ideal teacher identities and working on them provided new and uncharted thinking territories for them. According to Ceren, the idea of distinction between personal and professional identity was a revolutionary one. She reported that:

"I had never thought about developing a teacher identity, nor had I known something like that. However, judging by the teaching of our professors, I can see that they are actually acting out a professional self. For instance, Dr. [...] is very active and funny in young learners course, but when lecturing a theoretical course, he adopts a different role" (Reflection).

Developing a professional identity is a natural and expected process for all fields. However, this process can be more successful if pre-service teachers are given opportunities to ponder over and study on it. In this respect, three pre-service teachers were quite excited and interested in the idea of identifying the territory and dynamics of their own teacher identities from the first hour of the acting course. During the first three weeks of the course, emotional preparation activities, which were designed to help pre-service teachers decide on their identities, enabled them to set up achievable goals for the following acting activities in the course. Cem told that:

"The first weeks of the course was quite important for me since I was more conscious in acting and improvisation activities. I mean I knew what I was doing, why I was performing all that activities. It was all kind of experiments to reach my ideal teacher self"(Second interview).

In the following weeks of the course, the pre-service teachers were introduced to various aspects of acting, such as body language, voice control, the use of setting and atmosphere control, and manipulation. After they had completed these fundamentals of acting, the pre-service teachers focused on certain rehearsals of their teacher identities in various tasks and activities. The last step of these tasks and activities were completed after the course when the pre-service teachers began to teach in their teaching practicum, which is categorized in the stage 'generate'. The objectives of these activities are presented in Table 1.

During these activities, the pre-service teachers noted that they were able to see how much of their objectives were achievable and doable throughout these activities. They also accentuated that during the course, they discovered many aspects of their both personal and professional identities. Remarks of Ece on this issue are quite important, as follows:

"At first, I really felt nervous about the course, but the emotional activities helped a lot to overcome my anxiety. It is interesting that the teacher identity I identified was quite a modest and honestly an ordinary one. Of course I realized it after I saw that I was actually better in observing myself and others so as to change the atmosphere in the classroom, or in finding gestures and mimics that are unique to me"(Second Interview).

Table 1. Course Content of the BEING Model

STAGES OF THE BEING MODEL	TYPE OF ACTING ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES OF ACTING ACTIVITIES
BELIEVE	Emotional preparation. Analyzing the personal resources.	Stating or finding out why to become a teacher: what is my mission as a teacher? Observing and analyzing emotions that relate to teaching performance. Finding out personal concerns concerning becoming a teacher. Identifying the characteristics of the professional identity. Finding out personal resources, skills and knowledge to support the construction of the professional identity.
EXPERIMENT	Body language, Voice, Sensory awareness	Acting tasks and activities on using body language, voice and sensory awareness. Improvisations on using space, setting and communication. Analyzing nonverbal communication patterns of the self and others. Practicing nonverbal immediate behavior.
INVENT	Body language, Voice, Sensory awareness	Observing the existing atmosphere of the classroom and giving some attempts to manipulate it to create the target atmosphere. Practicing personal gestures, mimics and postures as well as nonverbal communication patterns that are unique to oneself. Doing general acting exercises to construct automatic and habitual reactions deliberately.
NAVIGATE	Establishing new thinking dispositions, Problem solving, Rethinking the objectives	Overcoming the problems that emerge in the previous stages. Pondering over the missing links of the professional identity and referring to the previous stages to find

STAGES OF THE BEING MODEL	TYPE OF ACTING ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES OF ACTING ACTIVITIES
GENERATE	Construction of teacher identity	<p>a solution. Evaluating constructed teacher identity in terms of the first stage. Discovering the uncharted territories of the teacher identity: is it really like what it was planned before?</p> <p>Performing the teacher identity in micro and macro teaching demonstrations. Performing the teacher identity in the practicum, the real classroom context. Creating further ways of interactional expression. Observing the change in teacher identity in different classes and teaching contexts. Deciding on what to do next to invest in the development process of the teacher identity.</p>

Believe: Exploring the Territories and Borders of Teacher Identity

In the beginning of the course, the pre-service teachers were curious about the content. As the weeks pass, they began to understand that the course was not a kind of 'show-like' course in which they will learn how to act, but truly an actor/teacher preparation course through which they were expected to question their missions, their ideals, thoughts and emotions about becoming a teacher. Only then the regular acting activities were presented to them so that these pre-service teachers had a real purpose for putting forth their efforts and energy wholeheartedly. Besides construction of an identity, whether in theatre for artistic purposes or in teacher education, requires a lot of thinking about personal resources, abilities, motivations and feelings in order that the constructed identity could be a believable and an authentic one. Stanislavski (1949) advocates that no verbal and nonverbal messages will be convincing and believable if they are not accompanied by corresponding feelings. Therefore, the first three weeks were mainly designated for materializing this purpose, which is also the first stage of the model (Believe).

Ceren was an open-minded person. She could easily find creative and innovative ways of expressing herself. Her process of emotional preparation was mostly based on shaping her ideals that relate to becoming an effective teacher. She repeatedly noted in her reflections that her ideal teacher identity was such an influential one that it was hardly possible to reach that level. However, she was told that the aim of the course was not to construct perfect teacher identities in couple of years, but to construct the core and the thinking dispositions of a flexible teacher identity which can be developed in some years and updated autonomously by her. Ceren responded positively to this feedback and presented an objective of teacher identity which is close to her way of thinking and life. Her reactions were actually inspiring for the rest of the classroom because she unconsciously led her peers to ponder over their teacher identities, instead of offering some objectives which are quickly decided and quite artificial.

On the other hand, Ece was an introverted person who is quite and composed in the classroom. Selfless and naïve as a young woman, Ece displayed a lot of doubts and concerns about studying her teacher identity. Ece used to believe that it was impossible to stand in front of students and teach them English. We decided to give her extra out-side-the-class tasks which aided her to think about the source of her fear. She cooperated with us and shared some of her experiences of presentations and demonstrations in secondary school, where she had been scolded by the teacher quite harshly. I offered a drama activity for her in which the same case would be dramatized by her and later she would share what she felt. In her reflection, Ece reported that "I have never talked to a teacher that way before, but this time I warned a professor!" (Reflection).

Cem has always presented a social but controlled character in the course. His process of deciding on a teacher identity was also a pursuit of finding out his reason to become a teacher and the meaning of this profession in his life. His dream was to be an influential and a respected teacher who is knowledgeable and consistent. Cem also reflected a lot about the differences between his personal and professional identities. He even prepared a list, which he called "Me Versus Me" list, in which he stated the similarities and differences between his teacher identity and personal identity. His remarks on his professional identity and acting are quite interesting:

"The BEING a respected and a consistent teacher is not only a matter of the BEING able to use my voice and body language effectively. However, when I taught in the practicum, I was amazed to see that it was the acting skills that helped me perform my methodology knowledge" (Third interview).

Experiment: Finding out Unique Ways of Oral and Bodily Expression

The second stage, *Experiment*, was literally the stage in which participants learned about main tenets of acting and practiced many different acting tasks, activities and improvisations. The first acting exercises were mostly detached from English language teaching (ELT) methodology and their teacher identity. Following acting activities were related with ELT context so that participants were able to do a lot of experiments on their professional identities. Some of the activities focused on nonverbal communication and nonverbal immediacy. Others provided a context in which the participants were able to analyze and practice their teaching styles and strategies in parallel with acting techniques. In addition to classroom work, many pair and group tasks were assigned to them so that they were able to do more acting exercises outside the classroom. They were told to ground their performances on an argument when doing all the activities. Our argument was the idea of doing a lot of experiments on the construction of their teacher identity.

The experiments of Ceren were successful. She discovered various nonverbal devices and patterns that were practical and helpful in her teaching attempts. In addition to these patterns, she displayed a significant improvement in her observation skills. In one of her session journals, she gave us a valuable reflection, "When someone teaches, I can observe them successfully. But it is not that easy to observe myself when doing a performance. As I do practices, I can see that I can observe myself in my demos [micro teachings] more effectively." Ceren simply mentioned the differences between regular observation and 'observation in-action'. Actually this is not a problem that only Ceren experienced, but a natural process of learning to act.

Ece also went through a successful experimental stage, in which she was able to try a lot of dramatic devices in both acting course and methodology courses. In her words, "It was like trying many different clothes and finding the best dresses in a nice department store" (Second interview). In this stage, Ece repeatedly wrote about her ideas on self-observation. She believed that her success as a teacher depended on her ability to observe her mood and nonverbal communication style. As an introverted person who most probably has a high intrapersonal intelligence, she diagnosed herself quite carefully and reflected on her experience. "Learning acting has become even more exciting for me since I can see that I observe myself consciously, not only in classroom but everywhere, even when I talk with someone at the bus stop" (Reflection).

In this stage, Cem reflected on his experience in terms of the discoveries he made concerning his body language and voice. "Each and every acting task has made me reveal a different way of figuring out the nature of my communication. I think these discoveries will help me make right choices of body language and voice in teaching" (Reflection). He also reported the impact of acting course in his daily life. Cem believed that learning to act is not only doing a lot of tasks and improvisations but also to pondering over it and doing experiments wherever and whenever possible. "I sometimes change my mood and behave differently in different places, like in shopping, to see whether I am convincing or, or just acting naturally" (Second interview).

INVENT: Discovering the Instruments of Expressing Themselves through Dramatic Devices

The third stage was a transitional one, in which participants were expected to associate their acting knowledge and skills with general teaching skills and teaching English. During this stage, regular acting activities were conducted in parallel with more complicated assignments such as performing short plays, analyzing micro teachings on video and doing certain rehearsals of personal teaching styles. In addition to these assignments, pre-service teachers were also expected to perform more practices on observing, analyzing and manipulating classroom atmosphere. The BEING able to analyze and manipulate classroom atmosphere was central to the studies in the phase *invent* because the pre-service teachers could only display their performance skills by creating a strong bonds of communication and interaction with the students they teach. Otherwise, the acting course provided for these per-service teachers may turn into a drama course in which pre-service teachers could possibly focus on their own performance without thinking about any interaction with the students. Therefore, the idea of analyzing and manipulating classroom atmosphere was our focus throughout this phase (Figure 1). This idea also enriched the experiences of the pre-service teachers in that it provided a context, and a purpose, for doing certain rehearsals on general acting skills and on their unique teacher identities.

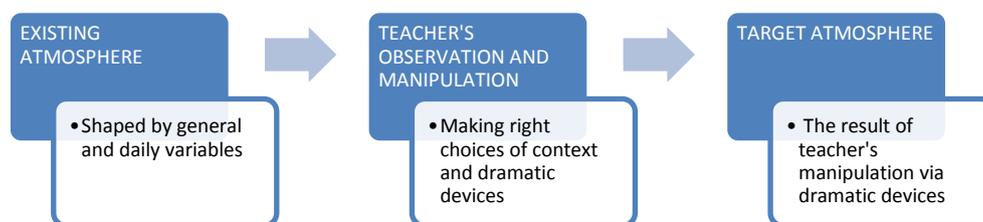


Figure 1. Phases of Classroom Atmosphere Control by an Acting Teacher

The third phase enabled Ceren to expand her horizons in terms of teaching and acting beyond her recognition. She even reflected on the first phase, *Believe*, and made some adjustments in her teacher identity by adding more specific objectives. Most of her inventions in terms of nonverbal communication devices, gestures, mimics and so on were quite creative and unique to her. In this stage, she also tried hard to make discriminations between her teacher identity and other influences such as her primary and secondary school teachers, even professors. Although the trainer advised her that she did not have to make such a distinction if the models were beneficial for her. However, Ceren noted that she wanted to do it so that she could control her verbal and nonverbal communication skills more consciously.

After taking active part in many acting activities, Ece begun to create her own way of communicating nonverbally and show some evidence of her control over her body language and voice. While she did not develop her voice significantly in the last five weeks, which is quite acceptable, Ece was able to make creative inventions of dramatic devices which made her feel comfortable in both acting activities and other demonstrations that they performed in methodology courses. "I feel safer when I know where to put my hand, or simply how to walk in the classroom and monitor students. The feeling confident enabled me to focus on methodological aspect of my teaching performance" (Second interview). Although she kept complaining about weakness of her voice, Ece provided us with a valuable feedback on her development by reporting that "I still need lots of practice for strengthening my voice. However, I realized that even if my voice is not that strong, I can still control the classroom by teaching at a high level of energy, with an enthusiasm" (Reflection). Her observation reminds us of the studies of Tauber and Mester (2007), who claimed that use of dramatic devices and knowledge of acting contributes to teaching performance in terms of enthusiasm.

The success and applicability of a theoretical model is surely based on whether its stages are in parallel with the natural development of the phenomena. In our case, the BEING model should be offering a set of phases that reflects and fits to the actual reality. In this respect, Cem's reflections in the *Invent* stage are very significant. Cem believed that finding out some personal dramatic devices or creating a way of acting the professional self is nothing but a natural process. "For me, this process [referring to *invent* stage] was full of discoveries and creations of my acting self. It is like learning to swim or ride bicycle; you never forgot them (Third interview).

Cem's insights and reflections as a novice were impressive because he gave us adequate feedback on not only the applicability of the BEING model but also on the structure and content of the syllabus that had been prepared in parallel with the five phases of our model. In his reflections, he also noted that "I think my body has a memory, too, because once I acquire a dramatic device, or any technique of using my body language, I never forget them. And during a teaching performance, they all activate the moment I need them."

NAVIGATE: Breaking through the Problems and Obstacles

As was mentioned, this stage of identity construction is not directly related with the acting method of Stanislavski. However, it is crucially important to leave room for the problems that emerge during the preparation period and rehearsals of teacher identities and guide pre-service teachers to find solutions for the probable obstacles. *Navigate* stage is also a point of meta-cognitive reflection about the objectives of the pre-service teachers. Some of the pre-service teachers did better than they imagined, and conversely, some did not achieve what they identified. Therefore, this stage enabled them to think and talk about their experience to address such concerns and occurrences.

Ceren was among the few students who went through this process smoothly and rapidly. She had already made some adjustments in her objectives that she identified in the stage *believe*. However, Ceren reflected on her concerns to become a teacher quite frequently in her written reflections and in the classroom tasks and discussions. "I can really see the improvement in my teaching skills in this course. But I sometimes feel nervous when thinking about my professional career. Will I be able to become a good teacher?" (Reflection). Her concerns were actually quite understandable because her aim was to become an influential teacher. We interpret her concerns like the feeling of anxiety that actors feel just before the play night. Ceren shared these concerns when the course was about to be completed. In the following semester (2009 spring), they were observed in their other methodology courses and they kept writing reflections on their developments. However, when they began to teach in the real classroom setting (2009 fall), I felt a need for reminding Ceren her concern and ask her whether she thought the same way. She responded that "No, I don't think the same way! After some teaching attempts, I felt better and every week I felt stronger as a teacher and tried many of my dramatic devices and other patterns that I invented in acting course (Third interview).

Ece felt a need for overcoming her anxiety of being in front of people. While she reported that the drama course helped her to feel more confident in her teaching demonstrations, she also believed that her anxiety problem was an obstacle for performing her acting skills. Therefore, in the *navigate* stage, Ece asked for more responsibilities in the drama activities. She took part in nearly all drama activities, and assisted the groups who need extra participant. Later, Ece noted that "Drama activities made me feel better. I just tried to stand in front of the classroom because sitting and watching teachers and peers have not helped me for years" (Second interview). Ece also mentioned that she voluntarily presented assignments with her friends in different courses.

Cem claimed he focused on his performance to such an extent that he sometimes forgot to observe the classroom. He specifically mentioned that "When I cannot make effective observations, I cannot manipulate the classroom atmosphere spontaneously" (Reflection). He was advised to keep doing acting activities and not to forget this important point when teaching in the classroom. Throughout a whole year, Cem displayed a significant improvement in his observational skills. "Well, it is all about automaticity. Just like learning a language. When the dramatic devices became a part of me, I was then able to give extra attention to the interaction in the classroom" (Third interview).

GENERATE: Stretching the Boundaries of the Teacher Identity in the Real Classroom Context

The stage 'Generate' is a product as well as a process. It is a product because it is what we want to achieve. It is also a process due to the flexible and dynamic nature of the phenomena, which it is called professional or teacher identity. It surely takes years to construct the whole dispositions and actions of the teaching-self. However, the stage generate refers to the state in which pre-service teachers and novices have constructed the core of their identities and major professional thinking dispositions. Stanislavski (1949, 1972) repeatedly mentions that superficial aspects of a role do not have to be necessarily acquired, because once the core of the character is developed, the details of the role emerge instinctively. In this respect, this stage constitutes the core of the professional identity.

At the end of the acting course, most of the work concerning the previous four stages was completed. Also, the pre-service teachers practiced many tasks on the stage 'generate'. However, after the completion of the first phase of the research, the pre-service teachers were observed in the following two semesters in methodology courses and in the practicum to see how they experienced the impact of the acting course and the development process of their professional identity. I observed many significant developments of their teacher identities specifically in the practicum phase, during which the pre-service teachers taught in real classrooms. They unanimously reported the fact that after they saw how useful the acting skills were in the real classroom setting, they began to feel confident.

Does the BEING Model Really Work?

On the one hand, it is quite easy to say 'Yes!' because we know that acting methods contribute significantly to the education of teachers. On the other hand, that is a hard question to answer. It is a fact that more studies, especially in different countries, should be conducted to see effectiveness and applicability of the BEING Model in developing professional identity. We experienced many different problems and situations that we did not even think about before the research study. I am sure any application of this research study will bring different problems in different settings. However, it is our conclusion that the BEING Model provides pre-service teachers with valuable stages of identity construction. Figure 2 describes visually how these stages are interrelated in the acting course for pre-service teachers. The first three stages are cyclical in that any problem that hinders the generation of certain aspects of teacher identity is handled in this cyclical process. Therefore, the stage *navigate* is also a meta-cognitive thinking and problem solving process, the results of which are so step back to the previous stages and do the necessary tasks and exercises.



Figure 2. The BEING Model in Action

It is a fact that pre-service teachers go through an education which requires a transformation of their various social identities. While it is commonly accepted that transformation is the heart of all educational activities (Griggs, 2001), the transformation of a pre-service teacher requires more challenging tasks in that an effective teacher is known to display a strong teacher identity. "Student teachers must undergo a shift in identity as they move through programs of teacher education and assume positions as teachers in today's challenging school contexts" (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009, p. 175). In this respect, an acting course does not only provide pre-service teachers with the opportunity of practicing basic acting skills but also creates a context in which pre-service teachers see themselves as teacher candidates working on their professional identities. In doing so, The BEING model facilitates the application of different syllabuses of acting course and enables pre-service teachers to see where they are in this journey. The categorization of the data given in Table 2 also

shows the stages that pre-service teachers went through and roles of the trainer during the application of the acting course.

Table 2. Developmental Stages of the BEING Model

STAGES OF THE BEING MODEL	EXPECTED ATTITIDES OF THE PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS	ROLES OF THE TRAINER
BELIEVE	Identifying an identity which one wishes to become	Giving feedback for emotional preparation
EXPERIMENT	Creating own version of the role	Monitoring and eliciting rehearsed identity
INVENT	Analyzing oneself carefully to discover required qualities	Shaping the identities by reflections and feedback
NAVIGATE	Rehearsals in a practical situation	Providing group discussions and feedback for problem solving
GENERATE	Constructing a flexible, democratic teacher identity that is open to change and innovation.	Feedback for identity that is developed, and identifying personal dispositions.

Do teacher education programs provide a context in which teacher candidates acquire the deeper structures of their teacher identities? Have our graduates really developed strong professional identities so that they can carry what is academic and methodological into their teaching context? The answers will vary depending on the country, system of education and so forth. However, one universal answer may be found in benefiting from acting literature to help pre-service teachers develop their core of teacher identities. In this respect, the BEING model was found to provide certain sound stages of rehearsing teacher identity in an acting course for teachers and in the following teaching practicum.

Conclusion

This research study shows how, through the BEING Model, the development process of professional identity in pre-service teacher education is facilitated in an acting course designed for teachers. The BEING Model aims to assist trainers to sequence the acting activities, monitor the developmental stages of preparation of a role in teacher education, do the correct manipulations when and where necessary and impose the idea of rehearsing the professional identity by referring to personal missions, resources and skills. The data analysis displayed how this model worked in the professional development of three pre-service teachers. The stages of the model were in parallel with the theoretical framework of Stanislavski.

In this final section, I will discuss the place of the BEING model and the acting course in a typical English pre-service program. Is it a luxury to design yet another course and find trainers who are able to teach acting to teacher trainers? The results of this research study show that it is not. The ongoing debate about focusing on personal growth or competences of pre-service teachers in teacher education (Meijer, Korthagen & Vasalos, 2009) is also a discussion of our approach to educating young people to become teachers. There are surely certain competences that pre-service teachers should acquire so as to become effective teachers. However, Danielewicz (2001) believes that it is not the methodology that makes someone an effective teacher, but "it requires an engagement with identity, the way individuals conceive of themselves so that teaching is a state of the BEING" (Danielewicz, 2001, p.3). There are also some variables that are critical for using these competences in classrooms. Surely these variables are based on the state of a new self and another way of the BEING. Whether we accept or deny it, the process of becoming a teacher is also a process of personal growth.

Therefore, incorporation of acting methods into teacher education is also a pursuit of leading pre-service teachers to acquire the professional teaching competences and associate the professional knowledge with the personal one. Meijer et al. (2009) found out that "Paying attention to the connection of the personal and the professional in teaching and teacher education may contribute to

educational goals that go far beyond the development of the individual teacher" (p. 308). In this respect, in addition to the critical competences of effective teachers like awareness in nonverbal communication and use of dramatic devices to shape classroom atmosphere, the model I proposed also aims at integrating the professional thinking dispositions and habits with the process of personal growth.

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