

## The Impact of an Acting Course on Prospective Teachers' Beliefs About Language Teaching

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### Abstract

*Problem statement:* Incorporation of acting theories into teacher education has always indicated a positive influence on certain critical aspects of teacher competences such as professional identity development, nonverbal communication and immediacy. Although teacher beliefs are considered to be the heart of professional identity, the relevant literature does not present a study in which the impact of an acting course on the beliefs of prospective teachers was investigated. The reason why researchers have not pondered over this issue may be the lack of studies and accordingly a limited body of literature discussing the profession in terms of aesthetic criteria. In this respect, this paper aims at analyzing the development process of pre-service teachers' beliefs on learning and teaching through an acting course that is specifically designed for English teacher education.

*Purpose of Study:* This paper presents a study measuring the impact of an acting course on the beliefs of prospective teachers about teaching English.

*Method:* Drawing findings from a qualitative research conducted at a Turkish university, the study investigates the transformational process through which prospective teachers shape their beliefs during the acting course. 67 student-teachers were randomly selected from seven different classes of an English Language Teaching department, and they were observed through certain qualitative tools during the course.

*Findings and Results:* The results suggested that an acting course designed for English teacher education helps student-teachers reconstruct their beliefs and approximate them to an academic level. Examination of prospective teachers' beliefs at the beginning of the study showed that almost all of them possessed a behaviorist understanding of teaching English. However, the findings obtained at the end of the course displayed

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a significant improvement in two major variables. First, the sources of teacher beliefs were found to shift from personal experiences to an academic origin. Second, the types of teacher beliefs were observed to evolve from a behaviorist perspective to a more cognitive/constructivist ones. While types of teacher beliefs did not display a radical change like the impressive improvement in the sources of beliefs, the available findings, nevertheless, provided us with a glimpse of the change or the process of development in teacher beliefs.

*Conclusions and Recommendations:* The results are promising in many ways for pre-service teacher education. While still remaining as an uncharted territory, the literature of teaching as a performing art at least indicates that the pursuit of integrating arts and acting into teacher education is not a burden but a must. A longitudinal study beginning in pre-service years and ending in in-service years of teachers may investigate whether, and to what extent, the impact of such courses is permanent and influential in shaping the teacher beliefs.

*Key Words:* Pre-service education, teacher beliefs, teacher behavior, acting

Prospective teachers\* bring with them a lot of learning experiences to their pre-service years. These experiences are known to construct a set of beliefs about learning and teaching, the transformation of which should be the major concern of all teacher education programs (Richardson, 1996) due to the fact that these beliefs mostly have a strong impact on the classroom practices of these novices (Borg, 2003; Clark & Peterson, 1986; Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992; Sigel, 1985; Woods, 1996). It is not likely that even very few of these prospective teachers have already developed a general philosophy, or effective beliefs on education, without any formal training on what education, learning, and teaching are. As for the field of English language teaching (ELT), it may take many years to figure out the influence of contemporary linguistics on language teaching, or, more specifically, the differences between *teaching* a foreign language and teaching *about* it.

There is abundant evidence that claims making changes in the beliefs of prospective teachers is a challenging and complicated task in that these beliefs are firm and resistant to change (Joram & Gabriele, 1998; Murphy, Delli, & Edwards, 2004; Wubbels, 1992; Zeichner & Gore, 1990). These persistent beliefs of prospective teachers, according to Pajares (1992), can only be altered if sedulously confronted throughout the pre-service years. To illustrate the actual sophisticated nature of the task, Zeichner and Tabachnick (1981) mention that prospective teachers' beliefs may remain hidden, but come forth when they start to teach in their own classes. In this respect, the quality and the quantity of the change in the beliefs of prospective teachers during pre-service education can also be considered as a major indicator of the success or the failure of the program.

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\* The terms 'Prospective teacher' and 'Student teacher' were used interchangeably in this paper.

In the last three decades, almost all of the studies on acting and teaching revealed that teacher educators should pay special attention to the philosophy of actors for three reasons. First, there is research evidence to illustrate that acting courses designed for teacher education programs contribute to identity development and nonverbal immediacy (Hart, 2007; Özmen, 2010). Second, these courses were unanimously found to have a strong impact on the nonverbal communication skills of the teachers (Vandivere, 2008). Third, various leading teacher educators persistently emphasize the necessity of learning from the field of acting to educate effective teachers (Burn, 1999; Sarason, 1999; Tauber, & Mester, 2007; Travers, 1979). They also claim that benefiting from acting literature is not a luxury but an indispensable source for enhancing the current practice of teacher education. To this end, this study aims to reveal and unravel how an acting course may influence the beliefs of prospective teachers on foreign language teaching and on being an English teacher.

### *Teacher Beliefs and Behaviors*

Teacher beliefs are the ideas that influence how teachers conceptualize teaching (Ng, Nicholas & Williams, 2010). From a broader perspective, beliefs are thought to "act as very strong filters of reality" (Arnold, 1999, p.256). Therefore, prospective teachers' beliefs are considered to operate as a dispositional system, through which the content and context of teacher education programs are filtered and evaluated. To understand the core of the beliefs, Richardson (1996) identifies three different sources from which pre-service teachers' beliefs originate: personal experiences about teaching, the teacher's experience of being a student, and, finally, the knowledge of the subject matter and language pedagogy. In a further study, Richardson (2003) found that the second source, experiences in schooling as a student, was the most important.

Originating from different types of educational experiences, these beliefs are critical in shaping teacher behavior (Calderhead, 1996; Cronin-Jones, 1991; Thompson, 1984). However, the relation between teacher beliefs and teacher behavior is mostly elusive (Pajares, 1992), as teacher beliefs are complicated and incoherent with regard to their origins, nature, and influences on practice. This aspect of the beliefs makes it hardly possible to determine the exact and specific influence of beliefs on teacher behavior (Pearson, 1985). However, while the research on the relationship between teacher beliefs and behavior does not provide a clear portrait of the phenomena, the available findings on the issue reveal the fact that reflection has a "mediating role between beliefs and practice" (Warfield, Wood, & Lehman, 2005, p.442). The influence of reflection reported in various studies (eg. Cobb, Wood, & Yackel, 1990; Fennema, Carpenter, Franke, Levi, Jacobs, & Empson, 1996) may also be the evidence of how important it is to approach prospective teachers as individuals and to cater for their personal growth process. The truth is that we can challenge the primitive beliefs only by creating a context in which prospective teachers can go through real and powerful experiences that are supported by reflection and feedback.

Kagan (1992) claims that a teacher's belief "lies at the very heart of teaching" (p.

85). If so, what makes them so powerful? Whether in the classroom context or in daily life, people would like to behave as they believe; it may be an irritating feeling to know that your attitudes are not in parallel with your principles. Therefore, it is quite reasonable to accept that even veteran teachers meticulously try to approximate their beliefs towards their actual teaching behavior in order to achieve specific instructional goals (Saroyan & Amundsen, 2001). Thus, in spite of the vague portrait of the relationship between beliefs and behaviors of teachers, it is acceptable to claim that carefully shaped teacher beliefs in pre-service years are likely to result in effective teacher behaviors.

#### *Acting as a Teacher Competence*

A teacher equipped with basic acting skills and knowledge displays certain teaching performances that are critical in facilitating learning. First, the acting-teacher is mostly consistent and natural in exhibiting her professional identity (Hart, 2007; Vandivere, 2008). Second, the acting-teacher is aware of the nature and dynamics of the nonverbal communication network and flow in the classroom, both as an active communicator and as an observer (Vandivere, 2008). These two critical skills enable her to make the right manipulations in the classroom atmosphere when necessary. Third, the acting-teacher uses her body language and voice more effectively than a usual teacher (Tauber & Mester, 2007). Fourth, an acting-teacher also utilizes certain dramatic devices such as humor, self-disclosure, and narrative more frequently (Javidi, Downs, & Nussbaum, 1988). The tendency and aptitude of using dramatic devices mostly results in better learning experiences and habits for the students. Actually, these four characteristics of *the teacher as a performing artist* can be found in any teaching methodology textbook, mostly as 'The whats of effective teaching'. However, it is quite clear that benefiting from acting literature to enhance teaching contributes to actualization of these general principles of the teaching profession, which can be called 'The hows of effective teaching' (Özmen, 2010).

Is there any aesthetic aspect of teacher communication? Should we really be well-trained in nonverbal communication as teachers? Should teaching borrow some knowledge from the performing arts? Over the last four decades, these and similar questions have been asked and investigated by researchers. The findings clearly illustrate that it is high time educators give the necessary attention to the inseparable grounds of these two professions (Sarason, 1999). However, none of the studies have investigated the impact of 'an acting course for teachers' on the beliefs of student teachers. In this regard, the following research questions will be investigated to explore the nature of this phenomenon:

- Does an acting course for teachers result in an improvement in the beliefs of student teachers about language teaching and being an English teacher?
- How do student teachers define language teaching and being an English teacher after the course?

## Method

### *Participants*

All phases of the study were conducted at a Turkish university. Sixty-seven student teachers were randomly selected from seven different classes of the ELT department and participated in this study. Participants enrolled in the "Creative Drama" course during the 2009 fall semester. This fourteen-week course was designed to teach basic acting skills and knowledge at the undergraduate level. The student teachers ranged in age from 21-23 ( $M = 22.2$ ;  $SD = 0.41$ ), and the average GPA was 2.98 ( $SD = .69$ ). All were third-grade students. Participants consisted of 22 male and 45 female students.

### *Data Collection*

To address the research questions, this article draws from the findings of a qualitative study. The study was completed in fourteen weeks. Two interviews (see appendix) were conducted to gather the data. At the beginning of the course, a semi-structured interview was conducted in order to gather data on the student teachers' beliefs on teaching and being a teacher. As a second step, all of the student teachers were interviewed at the end of the course. The second interview was structured; therefore, the questions were different from those of the first interview. However, different questions in these interviews were not an obstacle to make an objective comparison. Duration of the interviews was between 20 to 50 minutes. All interviews were audio taped and transcribed verbatim.

### *Data Analysis*

Two different categorization tools were selected for analyzing the qualitative data. The first thematic categorization was based on a study of Richardson (1996), who identified three main sources from which teachers' beliefs are derived. Used as the categories for the student teachers' beliefs, these sources were summarized as: 1) personal experiences about teaching; 2) the teacher's experience of being a student; and 3) academic knowledge.

Initially, the plan was to group the findings that relate to the sources of beliefs under these three categories. Therefore, the first interviews were analyzed immediately and categorized under the three themes (Richardson, 1996) in order to find out whether or not these categories worked in practice. Specifically for the categorization of the first interviews, adding one more category was needed in order to place the data that were irrelevant to the other categories. The need for one more category emerged from the fact that some of the ideas of the student teachers were simply vague and inconsistent in this phase. That is why the fourth category 'self-referential' was added to include these kinds of data. The second interview was conducted with the same participants.

In addition to the first categorization that was used to classify the sources of the teacher beliefs, a second categorization was designed to classify the types of teacher beliefs. These data were about how they perceive teaching a foreign language and being an English teacher. Before gathering data, the classification of Martinez, Sauleda, and Huber (2001) was identified for the thematic categorization. Martinez et

al. (2001) classified metaphors reflecting beliefs into three main dimensions, namely behaviorist/empiricist, cognitivist/constructivist, and situative or socio-historical perspective. However, the analysis of the data revealed that the beliefs of student teachers of this study fell into two main categories, behaviorist and cognitive/constructivist. Therefore, these two major dimensions were utilized to classify the types of the teachers' beliefs gathered in this study.

The participants were given nick names in the data analysis so as to secure their privacy. Following the data analysis work, another researcher analyzed the data with regard to two different thematic categorizations. The trustworthiness was confirmed with 92% accuracy.

### Findings

*Research Question 1: Does the acting course result in an improvement in the beliefs?*

Before the trainees became involved in these tasks and activities, the first interviews were conducted immediately in the first week. In analyzing the sources of teacher beliefs at the beginning of the course within the framework offered by Richardson (1996, 2003), 25.4% of the participants were found to base their beliefs concerning teaching a foreign language and being an English teacher on "experiences about teaching", 38.8% on their experiences as a student, 16.4% on academic knowledge gained at the ELT program, and 19.4% were found to base their beliefs on other sources and variables that were not consistent or clear (see Table 1).

**Table 1**

*Classification of the Beliefs in Terms of Their Sources at the Beginning of the Course*

Area Of Questioning (Semi-structured questions)	Core Relevant Narrative Formed From Quotation (Key content summarized through relevant quotations and linked by formulated meaning statements)	Emergent Themes (Initial themes arising within quotation)	f %	
			f	%
Sources of Teacher beliefs before the acting course	<i>The examples observed in secondary school education provided a model to adopt and actualize (ST1, ST9, ST11, ST16, ST 21)</i>	1. Personal experiences about teaching	17	25.4%
	<i>Personal experience as a student shapes the dispositions of teaching. (ST3, ST10, ST19, ST33, ST46, ST49, ST51, ST60)</i>	2. Teachers' experience of being a student	26	38.8%
	<i>Teacher education program influenced our understanding of learning and teaching a foreign language. (ST5, ST14, ST25, ST28, ST31, ST38, ST50, ST53)</i>	3. Academic knowledge	11	16.4%
	<i>The best way of teaching English is to make sense of the globalized world. (ST12)</i>	4. Self-referential	13	19.4%

ST: Student teacher

The first impression of the findings was that only a very limited number of the student teachers were able to develop *an academic sense* in their beliefs although they completed half of the ELT program. In their definition and understanding of teaching a foreign language and of being a foreign language teacher, 59 of the 67 student teachers (88.1%) displayed a behaviorist perspective and only 8 (11.9%) were found to hold some set of beliefs that included various cognitive and constructivist elements (see Table 2). These findings can be associated with the classification presented in Table 1 in terms of the sources of the beliefs. The results have shown that, at the beginning of the course, the beliefs of 56 (83.6%) of the participants were based on non-academic grounds, which indicated that their previous experiences in learning a foreign language were mostly conducted in a behaviorist way.

**Table 2**

*Types of the Beliefs at the Beginning of the Course*

Area Of Questioning (Semi-structured questions)	Core Relevant Narrative Formed From Quotation (Key content summarized through relevant quotations and linked by formulated meaning statements)	Emergent Themes (Initial themes arising within quotation)	f %	
			f	%
Types of teacher beliefs before the acting course	<i>Repetition of the grammar rules is the key for effective foreign language learning. (ST3, ST7, ST10, ST12, ST31, ST44, ST52, ST53, ST59)</i>	5. Behaviorist	59	88.1%
	<i>Language is for communication, so it should be taught in contexts in which students interact. (ST8, ST19, ST22, ST30, ST47, ST48, ST52, ST58)</i>	6. Cognitive/Constructivist	8	11.9%

ST: Student teacher

Conversely, at the end of the course, the analysis of the data gathered in the second interviews within the framework offered by Richardson (1996, 2003) showed that 16.4% of participants were found to ground their beliefs on "experiences about teaching", 17.9% on their experiences as a student, 61.2% on academic knowledge gained at the ELT program, and 4.5% on other sources classified as self-referential. The findings illustrated that the student teachers displayed a tendency towards restructuring the sources of teacher beliefs from personal to more academic (Table 3). Based on the findings in the "self-referential" category (4.5%, F = 3), it was also found that vague and inconsistent teacher beliefs decreased significantly, which indicated that the student teachers did at least develop a sense of what teaching and being a teacher were at the end of the course.

**Table 3***Classification of the Beliefs in terms of Their Sources at the End of the Course*

Area Of Questioning (Semi-structured questions)	Core Relevant Narrative Formed From Quotation (Key content summarized through relevant quotations and linked by formulated meaning statements)	Emergent Themes (Initial themes arising within quotation)	f	%
Sources of teacher beliefs before the acting course	<i>Influence of previous school education. (ST7, ST13,ST21, ST34)</i>	7. Personal experiences about teaching	11	16.4 %
	<i>Personal experiences as a student shapes the dispositions of teaching a foreign language. (ST6, ST11, ST20, ST35, ST42, ST45, ST50, ST63, ST65)</i>	8. Teachers' experience of being a student	12	17.9 %
	<i>Teacher education program influenced our understanding of learning and teaching a foreign language. ST6, ST13, ST24, ST27, ST30, ST41, ST52)</i>	9. Academic knowledge	41	61.2 %
	<i>I use my own method to teach English. (ST20)</i>	10. Self-referential	3	4.5 %

ST: Student teacher

Quite different from the beginning of the course, 30 of the 67 student teachers (44.8%) displayed a behaviorist perspective, and the remaining 37 (55.2%) held a cognitive/constructivist view of teaching a foreign language and being a foreign language teacher (Table 4). In relation to the nature of the change in the sources of beliefs, these findings indicated that academic knowledge (61.2%) presented in the acting course had an influential impact on the student teachers' beliefs.

**Table 4***Types of Beliefs at the End of the Course*

Area Of Questioning (Semi-structured questions)	Core Relevant Narrative Formed From Quotation (Key content summarized through relevant quotations and linked by formulated meaning statements)	Emergent Themes (Initial themes arising within quotation)		%
Types of teacher beliefs after the acting course	<i>Reading aloud the reading texts is very helpful to develop speaking skills. (ST2, ST12, ST17, ST16, ST34, ST42)</i>	11. Behaviorist	Beha	4.8 %
	<i>Drama activities and other project based tasks enable students to learn the language more effectively (ST13, ST29, ST33, ST41, ST45, ST58, ST61, ST66)</i>	12. Constructivist	Cogn	5.2 %

ST: Student teacher

Unanimously, all of the student teachers reported that the acting course, designed in parallel with the methodology courses, had a significant impact on their understanding of what language, language learning, and teaching are. At the beginning, the beliefs they reflected were mostly behaviorist: "I believe that first we need to teach some grammar so that we can teach them reading, writing, and speaking. Without grammar, it is not easy to learn the language skills" (First Interview, Student Teacher 34). Another noted that "The students need to do repetitions to learn the vocabulary. To do that, I will ask them to write the words on papers as many times as possible. [...] Of course, with Turkish definitions" (First Interview, Student Teacher 19).

In the second interviews, most of the student teachers had an idea about the basic characteristics of the ELT profession. "My attitudes in the classroom will be mostly shaped by the nature of my subject matter, English. I am teaching a vehicle of communication, so I need to focus on finding effective ways of interaction in my classes" (Second Interview, Student Teacher 22). As for more specific evidence of the change in the beliefs about English language teaching, remarks of one student teacher were important: "I will teach how to communicate in English. To do that, I need to create a context in which people will [feel] free to communicate and share their ideas. Patience and being a facilitator are my major characteristics" (Second Interview, Student Teacher 41). The rest of the qualitative data that related to the student teachers' perspective on teaching English and being an English teacher are discussed in the next section.

*Research Question 2: How do they define teaching and being an English teacher?*

As was shown in the previous section, the participants mostly defined teaching English in a behaviorist way (88.1 %, F = 59). After the 14-week treatment, slightly

more than half of the 67 participants were found to hold a cognitive/constructivist perspective (55.2 %, F = 37). Further findings of the second interview enabled us to observe how this change happened throughout the acting course. An enthusiastic female student teacher (63) reported that:

“In the acting course, I had the opportunity to realize all the theoretical things we learned in language teaching courses. For example, so as to diminish the affective filter, I need to use humor. But how was I going to do it? I did not know it before this course.”

Being able to materialize certain requirements of teaching a foreign language, such as effective use of voice and body language or conducting drama activities, effectively provided prospective teachers with a training context in which they could try to experience the contemporary understanding of teaching English via utilizing acting techniques. “..., after this [acting] course, I stretched my boundaries as a teacher candidate. I can easily conduct story-telling and drama activities or the ones require so much energy and involvement of the teacher.” (Second interview, Student teacher 2).

The expansion of the 'learning menu' or the teachers' repertoire pointed out that the student teachers not only developed their performance skills as teachers but also enhanced the variety of teaching behaviors they are likely to display when becoming professionals. Another critical remark made by a student teacher who focused on the importance of observation: “Now, I can observe the classes or generally speaking the people more effectively. Being aware of my nonverbal communication enables me to understand how my students feel or whether they are learning” (Second interview, Student teacher 3).

Another significant finding gathered in the second interviews was about the impact of the acting course on how student teachers viewed and valued the field of knowledge they were introduced to in the department. This indicates that student teachers do value academic knowledge. A student teacher shared her insights about the process of developing her professional identity, her beliefs, and values on teaching English:

“Any kind of knowledge is not precious for me if I do not associate it with my personality. During the course, I observed that I was approaching the issues discussed in this or other courses with this perspective. So when I adopted a teaching technique, I was able to rehearse here in this course” (Second Interview, Student Teacher 4).

At the beginning of the course, the student teachers were asked to identify the characteristics of the teacher role they wanted to adopt in their professional career. Identification of the ideal professional identities was followed with a profound analysis of personal resources, abilities, and characteristics that could be critical in the development process of this ideal teacher identity. This phase was the emotional preparation period. In this phase, it was observed that before learning to employ various acting techniques and rehearsing the teacher identities, the student teachers questioned their beliefs on teaching and being a teacher. One student teacher (11) noted in the second interview that, “If we really want to become a good teacher as

we rehearsed in this course, we need to establish our philosophy of teaching on our education as a teacher, not on good or bad memories as a pupil”.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

Examination of student teachers’ beliefs at the beginning of the study revealed that almost all of them possessed predominantly a behaviorist understanding of teaching English. Considering the fact that the previous national curriculum, updated in 2005, was heavily based on the behaviorist perspective of foreign language learning and teaching, it is not surprising that student teachers’ beliefs developed in accordance with what they experienced in primary and secondary schools as students. This finding supported previous research, indicating that student teachers mostly adopt a behaviorist perspective before their training (Richardson, 1996).

The findings obtained at the end of the course, however, displayed a significant improvement in two major variables. First, the sources of teacher beliefs were found to significantly shift from personal experiences to an academic origin. Second, the types of teacher beliefs were observed to evolve from a behaviorist perspective to more cognitive/constructivist. While the types of teacher beliefs did not display a radical change (see table 4) like the impressive improvement in the sources of beliefs, it can be interpreted that the available findings provided us with a glimpse of the change or the process of development in teacher beliefs. In this respect, at the end of the study, the student teachers were disposed to reshape their ideas on teaching a foreign language. In a similar study, Leavy, McSorley, and Bote (2006) examined the student teachers’ beliefs about teaching and learning through metaphor construction and found that teacher beliefs evolved during teacher training courses and teaching practicum.

In identifying the sources of the teachers’ beliefs, Richardson (2003) revealed that the experiences of the student teachers as a student or their previous learning experiences have the greatest impact on their teaching behavior. At the beginning of the course, nearly half of the participants were found to base their teaching beliefs on their previous educational experiences. This finding also supports that the initial beliefs of the student teachers about education were dominantly behaviorist. However, at the end of the study, the impact of previous educational experiences was only 17.9%, which suggests that the most influential variable on teacher beliefs can be transformed to academic during an acting course for teachers.

During the course, the student teachers experienced the opportunity of thinking about who becomes a teacher, how to do it by benefiting from the ELT methodology, and the possibilities that an acting course for teachers can provide. The most influential aspect of the course was perhaps the adoption of the idea that teacher identity can be rehearsed if identified, analyzed, and supported by practice. Recent studies have shown that incorporation of theories of performing arts, specifically acting, into teacher education brings new and innovative thinking dispositions for both trainers and student teachers (Hart, 2007). Therefore, the authenticity and

dynamic nature of the learning context that the acting course provided for the participants were as powerful and influential as the previous educational experiences of these students. Danielewicz (2001) points out the true nature of the teaching profession by reminding us how important it is to develop a 'teacher self' in order to materialize the requirements of the methodology of the field, whether teaching English or Biology. No doubt, at the core of the identity are the teacher beliefs, which mostly create the major winds that lead the way in classrooms.

Further research on acting implications in teacher education may focus on teacher beliefs from various perspectives. A longitudinal study starting in the pre-service years and ending in the in-service career of specific participants may investigate whether or not the impact of such courses is permanent and influential in shaping teacher behavior. Another study may observe the process of the change in teacher beliefs in a longer span than this study did. This 14-week study indicated some promising findings on the issue, but the limits and impact of this change should be revealed so as to understand the true impact of acting theories and techniques on teacher education.

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## Appendix

### *First interview questions*

1. Can you please describe the strategies you have employed when learning English?
2. When you were learning English, what were the typical activities and exercises your teachers utilized?
3. Can you tell us your way of learning vocabulary and grammar and four skills?
4. Which aspects of English were mostly dealt in your English lessons?
5. What will be the major aspects of your language classroom? Can you tell me some teaching strategies and methods you will apply in the future?
6. Do you believe that the way you learnt English was methodologically effective? Why? (or Why not?)

### *Second interview questions*

1. Do you believe that this course has some relevance with your education as a teacher? If yes, describe why and how.
2. What specific aspects of your thinking have changed about language teaching after this course?
3. When considering your language learning experience before university, in what aspects do you find your teachers successful or incompetent?
4. What has this course changed in your behaviors as a teacher candidate?
5. Can you tell me about the atmosphere of your future English classroom including your role, students' role and your approach to teaching English? Please give some details.

## Bir Oyunculuk Dersinin Öğretmen Adaylarının Dil Öğretmeye Dair İnançlarına Etkisi (Özet)

### *Problem Durumu*

Öğretmen eğitiminde aktörlük sanatının kuram ve pratiğinin kullanılması kırk yıllık bir çabanın ürünü olsa da, bu çalışmalar geniş bir kitlenin ilgisini çeken ve öğretmen eğitimi alanında derinlemesine tartışılan bir konu olmamıştır. Öte yandan, bu alanda yapılan neredeyse tüm çalışmalar öğretmen eğitiminde oyunculuk tekniklerinin ve oyuncu yetiştirme felsefesinin kullanılmasının, literatürde genel anlamda kritik olarak görülen öğretmen becerilerine anlamlı katkıları olduğu saptanmıştır. Bu becerilerden bazılarını örnek olarak sözsüz iletişim, sözsüz yakınlık ve profesyonel kimlik gelişimi verilebilir.

### *Araştırmanın Amacı*

Sınıf içindeki öğretmen davranışını tam olarak şekillendiren akademik bilgi midir yoksa bireysel eğitim deneyimleri midir? Her ikisinin de etkili olduğu varsayımından hareketle, bu değişkenlerin hangisi öğretmenin gerçekleştirdiği davranışlar bütününden daha fazla sorumludur? İşte bu noktada öğretmen inançları alan yazımını anımsamak gerekir. Bu temel argümanlardan hareketle, bu çalışmanın amacı öğretmen eğitimi için geliştirilmiş bir oyunculuk dersinin öğretmen inançları üzerindeki olası etkisini ölçmektir.

### *Araştırmanın Yöntemi*

Bu çalışmada İngilizce öğretmenliği lisans programında okutulmak üzere geliştirilen oyunculuk dersinde, öğretmen adaylarının (N=67) inançlarında meydana gelen değişiklikler üzerinde durulmuş ve bu değişiklikler nitel bir çalışma dâhilinde çeşitli açılardan ele alınmıştır. Çalışmaya ışık tutan araştırma soruları şunlardır:

- Öğretmenler için hazırlanan oyunculuk dersi öğretmen adaylarının dil öğretimi ve İngilizce öğretmeni olmak üzerine inançlarında bir değişikliğe yol açar mı?
- Dersten önce ve sonra öğretmen adayları dil öğretimini ve İngilizce öğretmeni olmayı nasıl tanımlamaktadır?

### *Araştırmanın Bulguları*

Çalışmanın başında elde edilen bulgular öğretmen adaylarının yabancı dil öğretme üzerine inançlarının ağırlıklı davranışçı ekol temelli olduğunu göstermiştir. 2005 yılı öncesi yabancı dil öğretimi ulusal müfredatının ağırlıklı davranışçı ekol temelli olduğu gerçeğini düşününce, öğretmen adaylarının dil öğretimine dair inançlarının bu yönde belirlenmesi beklenmedik bir sonuç değildir. Bu bulgu aynı zamanda öğretmen adaylarının öğretmenlik eğitimleri öncesi çoğunlukla davranışçı bir bakış açısıyla dil öğrenmeyi tanımladıkları bulgusuyla örtüşmektedir.

Dersin sonunda ulaşılan veriler ise iki önemli değişkende anlamlı bir gelişim olduğunu göstermiştir. Birincisi, öğretmen inançlarının kökenlerinde bireysel deneyimlerden akademik orijine doğru anlamlı bir hareket olduğu gözlenmiştir. İkincisi ise, öğretmen inançlarının türlerinde davranışsal bakış açısından

bilişsel/yapılandırmacı bir bakış açısına doğru yönelim olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Öğretmen inançlarının türlerinde öğretmen inançları kökenlerinde olduğu gibi radikal bir değişiklik gözlenmemiş de olsa, türlerde olan gelişimin bizlere uzun vadeli bir değişim sürecinin bir kısmını ifade ettiği sonucuna varılmıştır. Zira, inançlarda olması beklenen değişimler 3 aylık bir dersle ancak tetiklenebilir ve bulgular bize bu tetikleminin gerçekleştiğini göstermektedir.

#### ***Araştırmanın Sonuçları ve Önerileri***

Araştırma sonuçları bize oyunculuk alan yazınının öğretmenlik eğitiminde kullanılmasının öğretmen inançlarını akademik bir boyuta taşımakta ve öğretmenin sınıf içi davranışlarının bilimsellik anlamında geliştirilmesinde faydalı olabileceğini göstermektedir. Öğretmen adayları için hazırlanmış bir oyunculuk dersinin öğretmen adayının ses, beden dili kullanımı gibi çok temel öğretmen yeterliklerine katkı sağlamasının yanı sıra, ders boyunca profesyonel öğretmen kimliği üzerine düşünüp, tartışıp provalar yapması öğretmen adaylarında meslek yaşantıları boyunca sergileyecekleri öğretmen kimliğinin gelişmesi ve pekişmesine de katkı sağlamaktadır. Bu araştırmanın da temel katkısı daha çok gelişme sürecine giren öğretmen kimliğinin bir yansıması olan öğretmen inançlarında oyunculuk eğitiminin manidar etkisinin altını çizmektir.

Eğitim fakültelerini dolduran öğrenciler üniversitelere yıllar boyunca gelişmiş bir öğrenme deneyimiyle programlarına gelmektedirler. Öğretmen adaylarının öğrenci olarak elde ettikleri bu deneyimleri onlara aynı zamanda öğrenmenin ve öğretmenin nasıl olması gerektiği üzerine de bir dizi inançlar kazandırmaktadır ve bu inançların değiştirilmesi öğretmenin eğitiminin temel çaba ve odaklarından biri olması kaçınılmaz bir zorunluluktur. Zira, yapılan araştırmalarda öğretmenlerin öğrenme ve öğretme üzerine inançlarının sınıf içi davranışları ve öğrenme sürecini şekillendirmelerinde belirleyici olduğunu göstermektedir. Eğitimleri süresince değiştirilebilmeleri çok zor olarak tanımlanan öğretmen inançlarının akademik bir seviyeye çıkartılabilmesi bilinçli bir çaba gerektir çünkü bu inançların yıkılması ve yenilenmesi oldukça güç olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Aceleci bir düşünce ile öğretmen adaylarının akademik eğitimleri öncesi geliştirdikleri öğretme ve öğrenme üzerine inançların öğretmenin eğitimi programlarında sunulacak öğretmenlik felsefesi ve uygulamalarıyla paralel olabileceği veya çok da farklı olmayabileceği fikrine kapılabiliriz. Ne var ki, üniversite sınavında başarılı olmak için dil bilgisi kuralları ve kelime ezberiyle geçiren bir İngilizce öğretmeni adayı, nasıl iletişimsel dil öğretiminin kavramlarını özümsemiş olarak fakülteye gelebilir ve nasıl modern anlamda dil nedir dil öğrenme ve öğretme nedir sorularına dair doğru yanıtlara sahip olabilir? Bu noktada çoğunlukla yabancı dil öğretmeni yetiştirme programlarında akademisyenler öğretmen adaylarının bu inançlarıyla mücadele etmekte ve bilimsel olanın doğru ve yanılmaz olduğunu ispat etmeye çalışmaktadırlar.

Bu noktada temel soru ve sorun şudur: Yaşamsal deneyimle elde edilen öğrenme ve öğretme üzerine bireysel inançlar, öğretmenlerin mesleklerini nasıl icra edeceklerinde çok etkiliyse, akademik eğitim sunan öğretmen yetiştirme programları en az yaşamsal deneyim kadar güçlü bir değişim ve gelişim süreci sunmak için ne yapmalıdır?

Bu araştırma ekseninde ileride gerçekleştirilecek çalışmalarda performans sanatları ve oyunculuğun öğretmen eğitiminde uygulamaları bağlamında öğretmen inançları farklı değişkenler açısından ele alınabilir. Uzun yıllara yayılmış bir nitel araştırma bizlere hizmet-öncesi eğitim boyunca gelişim süreci gözlenen öğretmen inançlarının hizmet-içi dönemde nasıl bir boyut kazandığını gözlemleyebilir. Bu sayede bu çalışmanın sunduğu verilerin de geçerliği tartışılmış olabilir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Hizmet öncesi eğitim, Öğretmen inançları, Öğretmen davranışı, Oyunculuk