

Eastern Michigan University

DigitalCommons@EMU

Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations

Master's Theses, and Doctoral Dissertations,
and Graduate Capstone Projects

2017

Examining teaching as performance: A study of developed persona

Justin Hopper

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.emich.edu/theses>



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#), and the [Theatre and Performance Studies Commons](#)

Examining Teaching as Performance: A Study of Developed Persona

by

Justin Hopper

Thesis

Submitted to the School of Communication, Media & Theatre Arts

Eastern Michigan University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

Theatre Arts

with a Concentration in

Interpretation and Performance Studies

Thesis Committee:

Anita Rich, Ph.D., Chair

Lee Stille, Ph.D.

April 27, 2017

Ypsilanti, Michigan

Abstract

This study explores teaching as performance in relation to Richard Schechner's view on "performance in everyday life." The focus of the investigation centered on why teachers in higher education develop teaching personas. The phenomenographic study used observation and interview to better understand the topic. The sample included nine lecturers from higher learning institutions in Southeast Michigan; data from field notes and audio recordings were used. Four of the lecturers taught or had professional experience with the performing arts. The correlation between those with performance backgrounds and those without was studied. Reasons for specific teaching personas being developed include the teacher's method of assessment or field of study, their desire to approach teacher types pluralistically, and the impact of their own teachers. An awareness of existing personas is important in understanding the self and needs to be considered when exploring issues of teaching and learning.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
List of Tables	v
Chapter 1: Description of Thesis	1
Chapter 2: Review of Literature	3
Richard Schechner on Performance Studies	3
Teaching Is Performance	4
Teaching As Performance	5
Research Design	6
Erving Goffman’s “Front”	8
Pre-Existing Teacher Types	9
Research Questions and Theories	11
Chapter 3: Methodology	13
Chapter 4: Observations	17
Instructor 1	17
Instructor 2	18
Instructor 3	19
Instructor 4	19
Instructor 5	20
Instructor 6	22
Instructor 7	23
Instructor 8	24
Instructor 9	26

Performance Background & Teaching Persona	27
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion	29
Field of Study & Teaching Persona.....	30
Former Teachers & Teaching Persona.....	31
Consciousness of Developed Personas.....	32
Areas for Further Research.....	32
Works Cited	34
Appendix A: Interview Protocol	37
Appendix B: IRB Exempt Letter	38
Appendix C: Topic of Discussion Transcripts	39

List of Tables

<u>Table</u>		<u>Page</u>
1	“Five Teaching Styles”	10
2	Teaching Persona Traits and Their Development	30

Chapter 1: Description of Thesis

The following thesis examines why teachers develop personas in the classroom that are distinct from their natural personas. By exploring teaching persona, the desired outcome of this study is to situate this research within the discipline of performance studies and the idea of teaching as performance or, more specifically, teaching as persona. Through observation and interview, the specific outcome for each individual instructor was to identify (as best as possible) their teaching persona type, how and why that persona is developed, and how their field of study (and other factors) might affect the persona that they develop. Questions that were explored within the actual investigation are included with the interview protocol provided in Appendix A. Specific research questions are addressed in the following sections of this thesis.

This thesis is of great value to the investigator for a multitude of reasons, including, foremost, the necessary experience of creating structured, informed, and stimulating research within the field of study. The observation of instructional practice and the pedagogical nature of the research is also of great significance as the investigator applies to doctoral programs since the investigator's career goal is to be a faculty member in higher education and teaching assistantships are not currently available in the theatre program at Eastern Michigan University.

This investigation should be of value to the field of performance studies, as it helps to theorize that the idea of teacher types as they have been formerly researched should have roots in performance studies, rather than being distinctly rooted in pedagogy. Through this study I aim to establish that "persona," as I defined it in the *Research Design* section of Chapter 2, should be in public discourse. I also aim to contribute to the dialogue about teaching persona by potentially discovering additional archetypes leading to new research questions. Finally, it is my desire that

the instructors I investigated become more conscious of their presented self in the workplace, leading to individualized professional development.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

There is a significant amount of literature on teaching methodologies that focus on creative teaching often leading researchers to view the act of teaching as a performance. How the comparison of teaching and performing is understood has been brought into question a number of times (Pineau; Prendergast; States). Some studies seem to suggest a performance metaphor, but do not actually embrace the comparison at all. For example, in “Humour and teaching in higher education,” it is argued that ideas are better understood and less disruptive when a positive attitude, especially humorous, is taken with the subject matter (Powell & Andresen 79). Here, “teaching as comedic performance” could be explored through a performance theory lens, but it is not. In another example, “Cultural Myths in the Making of a Teacher: Biography and Social Structure in Teacher Education,” it is argued that in examining the personal histories of teachers, “time, place, people, ideas, and personal growth contributes to the process of professional development” (Britzman 443). Again, we could examine this idea through a performance theory lens and change the focus of this topic to “teaching as a personal narrative.” It could be that scholars in the field of Education are simply unaware of Performance Studies or that the field of Performance Studies was not as relevant at the time of publication.

Richard Schechner on Performance Studies. While some scholars believe that “a definition of performance, as we have been pursuing one, is a semantic impossibility” (States 3), it is important here to provide a definition at least of performance studies so that we can examine the divide in relevant literature.

According to Schechner, in order to understand performance studies, we must first understand what it means “to perform” in relation to four categories: Being, Doing, Showing doing, and Explaining “Showing doing.”

“Being” is existence itself. “Doing” is the activity of all that exists, from quarks to sentient beings to supergalactic strings. “Showing doing” is performing: pointing to, underlining, and displaying doing. “Explaining ‘showing doing’” is Performance Studies. (Schechner 28)

Schechner goes on to highlight that objects and ideas can be “performative” or can be analyzed “as” performance (30). Here we can establish that saying “teaching *is* performance” is not the same as saying “teaching *as* performance.” Schechner explains that “any event, action, or behavior may be examined ‘as’ performance,” but “‘is’ performance refers to more definite, bounded events marked by context, convention, usage, and tradition” (48-49). I have organized the literature by these categories, acknowledging that some of the literature may not fit neatly into either category.

Teaching Is Performance. According to Harry A. Dawe, “sometime around the [twentieth] century, the public came to see teaching as analogous to medicine” which led to institutionalizing a “science of pedagogy” (548). Dawe’s argument however is that “teaching is not a science [...] it is [...] a performing art and the preparation for this art, the working conditions, and the compensation should be modeled on other performing arts” (548). The basic idea here is that teachers are more valuable than they are currently credited.

Since then, much research in the “teaching is performance” metaphor has turned to the efficacy of scripted versus improvised teaching (Egan; Sawyer, “Creative Teaching”; Sawyer

Structure and Improvisation in Creative Teaching). While these scholars argue for creative, unscripted teaching over “assembly line” methods, they make their argument based on backgrounds in educational philosophy and creativity rather than performance studies. Sawyer even references Pineau in his article and touches on the “teaching as performance” metaphor, but does not seem to fully grasp the concept. Sawyer could be one of the researchers that Monica Prendergast is referencing when she expresses concern with the “narrow usage of performance theory” she sees in some literature (16).

I do not want to assert that such research is unfounded or unimportant in the realm of pedagogy, but rather that the foundation on which it may be based is potentially problematic. As Pineau puts it, “the claim that teaching is a performance is at once self-evident and oxymoronic” —meaning this type of assessment reaches only facile thinking (4). It, in no way, reflects the “specific cultural circumstances” that must be referenced to determine what “is” a performance according to Schechner (38). Let us then turn to the second form of the performance metaphor.

Teaching as Performance. Schechner states that performance occurs “in eight sometimes separate, sometimes overlapping situations” (31). Of those eight situations, I would like to point out three: performance in everyday life, in technology, and in ritual. Performance in everyday life I will return to in the *Research Design* section of this chapter.

In “Teaching as performance in the electronic classroom,” Doug Brent highlights “teaching as performance” as it occurs in technology—more specifically, live classroom instruction versus online course instruction (10). Brent points out:

Teaching has almost entirely resisted textualization to this day [...] Even professors who read their lectures *verbatim* remain in the classroom year after year, even though they

could in principle write their lectures out and distribute them on paper, or videotape themselves reading them. (17)

Even if lectures are copied to online forms, the student experience is heavily impacted. While Brent goes on to explain that the battle over “intellectual property” in the textualization of teaching might be a more important focus than asserting the faults of online instruction, what I find most promising is his clear understanding that although teaching is performative, it is important to view teaching as a “constant, living interaction between teacher and audience [that] makes every performance a new event” (18). What Brent is arguing here is that teaching and performance are dialogic.

In “The Liminal Servant and the Ritual Roots of Critical Pedagogy,” Peter L. McLaren discusses “teaching as performance” as it occurs ritually (164-77). McLaren argues in his literature that both teaching and learning can be described as a symbolic performance or ritual (Harrison-Pepper 126). In Sally Harrison-Pepper’s article, “Dramas of Persuasion: Utilizing Performance in the Classroom,” she points out that “for McLaren, rituals are ‘forms of enacted meaning [that] enable social actors to frame, negotiate, and articulate their phenomenological existence as social, cultural, and moral beings’” (126). Harrison-Pepper found that McLaren’s link between ritual and teaching is accurate when she implemented a combination of theory and practice in her classroom based on Victor and Edith Turner’s methodology of performing ethnography.

Research Design. In returning to Schechner’s situations of performance–performance in everyday life is the performance in which teaching is most evidently present: “rules of behavior

are obvious with regard to established roles such as [...] ‘teacher’ [including] the specific gestures, tones of voice, costume [...].” (209). He continues:

But what happens in less guarded moments, when people are “off-duty” [...] the teacher not teaching [...].? During these times, the performance aspect of ordinary behavior is less obvious, but not absent. [...] As never before, people are performing their multiple selves all day, every day. (Schechner 210-11)

The performance of multiple personas by teachers is the specific area of study from which I have formed my research question. I wondered if the divide between teaching persona and natural persona should be eliminated since other research shows that treating a classroom as a workplace affects the view of which students have about their learning environment (Marshall 9-16).

Instead of figuring out the effect that teaching personas have on students, I wanted to better understand *why* instructors develop and use these personas. Once this was established, I mapped a comparison of different persona traits based on instructors who have expertise in theatrical performance and those who do not.

Because much teaching research is vague in regard to grade level, I narrowed my research on teaching as performance to a college setting. The focus of this research included phenomenographical observations and interviews, as the data gathered yielded unique ways in which the sample undergoes a similar experience. In the remaining sections of this thesis, “teaching persona” refers to the presentation of self in regard to the established social role of “teacher.” By “teacher,” I am referring specifically to a person whose career it is to educate students on a specified subject in a classroom setting. “Natural persona” refers to any qualities a person possesses in their everyday, social, and friendly experiences and interactions. Erving Goffman coined these persona changes “front regions” and “back regions,” a nod to the onstage-

offstage relationship of an actor (Goffman 114). I have referred to these shifts in my own way so as to specify the nature of the field of study and develop transparency. In the following section, I explore Goffman's concept for clarification.

Erving Goffman's "Front." In order to confront some of the variables for my methodology, I would like to look more closely at Goffman. As I have previously mentioned, Goffman refers to my explanation of teaching persona as a "front." He also points out that it is "convenient to distinguish and label what seem to be the standard parts of front," which include setting, appearance, and manner (Goffman 22). Setting refers to the "furniture, décor, physical layout, and other background items which supply the scenery," and by such a definition

[It] tends to stay put, geographically speaking, so that those who would use a particular setting as part of their performance cannot begin their act until they have brought themselves to the appropriate place and must terminate their performance when they leave it. (22)

So while setting refers to a specific location, the presentation of that location is important to an individual as well. Appearance refers to

Stimuli which function at the time to tell us of the performer's social statuses [...and] the individual's temporary ritual state, that is, whether he is engaging in formal social activity, work, or informal recreation. (24)

These stimuli remain either inherently constant to an individual (including things like gender, age, race, and other physical features)—or are held constant in my sample as I establish. Manner refers to "stimuli which [prepare us for] the interaction role the performer will expect to play in

the oncoming situation,” and thus, the manner that I look at in my investigation is a more focused idea of the teaching persona (24).

I highlight these parts to point out that though my sample does not necessarily remain constant in these three aspects amongst the participants, these parts are (and should absolutely be) constant for the individual. By this I mean that my observations were of the same “front” that each teacher is accustomed. I took note of the setting in my observation by drawing a quick rendering of the classroom layout. Though the classroom was different for each instructor I observed, this was not a factor in determining each individual’s teaching persona beyond the fact that the setting helped establish it. In accordance with appearance, I was not concerned with variable demographics between participants as, again, these things are constant for the individual. As I hope to make it understood, in the most basic format, the setting is the classroom and the appearance is the role of teacher, and that is all that matters for the purposes of this investigation.

Pre-Existing Teacher Types. Now that I have expressed my definition of teaching persona and its grounding in performance studies, I would like to explore some literature from the field of education that focus on the idea of “teacher types” or “teacher archetypes,” my argument being that these types are actually personas. The purpose of listing them here is due to my assumption that I would encounter some of these types during the investigation.

Anthony F. Grasha defined five specific teaching styles in 1994 that have been cited in many scholarly articles in the field of education: expert, formal authority, personal model, facilitator, and delegator (see table 1).

Table 1

“Five Teaching Styles”

Style	Description	Advantage	Disadvantage
Expert	Possesses knowledge and expertise that students need. Strives to maintain status as an expert among students by displaying detailed knowledge and by challenging students to enhance their competence. Concerned with transmitting information and ensuring that students are well prepared.	The information, knowledge, and skills such individuals possess.	If overused, the display of knowledge can be intimidating to inexperienced students. May not always show the underlying thought processes that produced answers.
Formal authority	Possesses status among students because of knowledge and role as a faculty member. Concerned with providing positive and negative feedback, establishing learning goals, expectations, and rules of conduct for students. Concerned with the “correct, acceptable, and standard ways to do things.”	The focus on clear expectations and acceptable ways of doing things.	A strong investment in this style can lead to rigid, standardized ways of managing students and their concerns.
Personal model	Believes in “teaching by personal example” and establishes a prototype for how to think and behave. Oversees, guides, and directs by showing how to do things, and encouraging students to observe and then to emulate the instructor’s approach.	The “hands on” nature of the approach. An emphasis on direct observation and following a role model.	Some teachers may believe their approach is “the best way,” leading some students to feel inadequate if they cannot live up to such expectations and standards.
Facilitator	Emphasizes the personal nature of teacher-student interactions. Guides students by asking questions, exploring options, suggesting alternatives, and encouraging them to develop criteria to make informed choices. Overall goal is to develop in students the capacity for independent action and responsibility. Works with students on projects in a consultative fashion and provides much support and encouragement.	The personal flexibility, the focus on students’ needs and goals, and the willingness to explore options and alternative courses of action to achieve them.	Style is often time consuming and can be ineffective when a more direct approach is needed. Can make students uncomfortable if it is not used in a positive and affirming manner.
Delegator	Concerned with developing students’ capacity to function autonomously. Students work independently on projects or as part of autonomous teams. The teacher is available at the request of students as a resource person.	Contributes to students perceiving themselves as independent learners.	May misread students’ readiness for independent work. Some students may become anxious when given autonomy.

Source: Anthony F. Grasha, “A Matter of Style: The Teacher as Expert, Formal Authority, Personal Model, Facilitator, and Delegator.” *College Teaching*, vol. 42, no. 4, 1994, p. 143.

In 1997, types similar to Grasha’s were discussed by Charles E. Bidwell, Kenneth A. Frank, and Pamela A. Quiroz in high school settings and included the rigorist, the moral agent, the pal, and the progressivist. According to their research,

The rigorist sets high standards for attainment and pays little attention to differences in individual students’ ability, motivation, or interest [...] The moral agent uses traditional

teaching methods in the service of inculcating morality [...] The pal's objectives and teaching methods are highly responsive to students' preferences, and social distance is low between the pal and students [...And finally,] the progressivist is a contemporary exemplification of the instructional aims and methods of progressive education. (Bidwell et al. 288-89)

As you can see, some of the types discussed in these two articles seem to relate to one another and in some cases overlap, particularly the rigorist with the expert and delegator, the moral agent with the formal authority, and the pal with the facilitator. And again, the teacher types listed here are both foundational for and complementary to other types I believed I would encounter in my investigation.

Research Questions and Theories. The purpose of this study was to explore what the foundations of developed persona may be. According to the literature, it seems that the teaching persona might be developed based on two (or more) things: (1) the type of course taught or the expected outcomes of the course, and (2) prior lived experience including, but not limited to, the influence of former teachers or the conscious decision to present the self in a certain way (Bidwell et al. 285-307; Sexton 46-57). With this in mind, my research questions were as follows:

1. Does the individual's field of study and/or their method of student assessment affect the developed teaching persona and in what way?
2. In what way are the personas of the individual's former teachers a factor of the development of the individual's own persona?
3. Does consciousness of the developed persona allow for the individual to adjust their persona at will?

My theory was that because methods of assessment are generally “mimetic” or “pragmatic” for learning a new language and “expressive” for demonstrating a talent, then the persona that the teacher develops in those assessments should be geared toward a specific type (here I am using literary criticism terms to apply to a broader sense of critique) (Abrams 7-22). Learning a new language might be grounded in these methods because student success is measured on memorization and precision, while demonstrating a talent generally focuses on the students’ connection to their work. But, in relation to that, I also posited that the personas teachers develop are not made up of a single type, but like Grasha assumed, a combination of many. It seems, also, that a pluralist or eclectic approach to developing one’s persona is, in a certain sense, more practical for an educator than a monist approach. I also wondered if, during this process, I might uncover additional teacher types that have not previously been defined.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Participants in this investigation of teaching persona included five full-time lecturers in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures at the University of Michigan and four full-time instructors in the School of Communication, Media & Theatre Arts at Eastern Michigan University. All University of Michigan lecturers taught 100- and 200-level beginning and intermediate French language courses at the time of the study, while Eastern Michigan University instructors taught the Fundamentals of Acting course.

The reason for the selection of this sample was twofold; first, this was a convenience sample because all participants were personal acquaintances of the investigator, and secondly, the investigator had no prior personal experience in observing the teaching practices and styles of these lecturers in these specific courses. It was helpful for the investigator to be a personal acquaintance of the lecturers because of the focus of the research being on the examination of developed personas and the cross-sections of these developed personas and their natural personas. Because the research reflected teaching as performance and Richard Schechner's views of performance in everyday life as it relates to performance theory, a conscious decision was made to include educators with a background in theatre or the performing arts as a base for comparison between the two groups. Because the researcher is not fluent in French, the focus of the observation on French lecturers specifically reflected the actions and reactions of the lecturers rather than the content of the lecture.

Before beginning observations and interviews, permission was obtained via signed consent. For the sake of this research the participating lecturers are referred to as "Instructor [#]" throughout the following sections of this thesis based on the order in which they were observed.

Observation consisted of attendance to one class for each lecturer. The University of Michigan institutes a system for fifty-minute lectures where the class period is scheduled on the hour (or half hour) but officially begins ten minutes after for travel time and setup. Observation began during setup rather than the start of the lecture. For observations at Eastern Michigan University, the investigator arrived during setup of the lecture as well (at least five minutes before the start of class). During the observation, the researcher took detailed notes in a notebook pertaining to chronological action of the lecture, general layout of the classroom, and its inhabitants throughout the class period (as previously stated), as well as conscious and unconscious actions of the lecturer. Conscious actions included such things as taking a drink from a bottle of water, movement throughout the room, and so on. Unconscious actions consisted of more personal, habitual reflexes like clicking a pen or twirling hair. It should be noted that observation was strictly of the instructor, not the students, though the reactions and responses of students were recorded where relevant. Students were generally aware of the researcher's presence but were only informed of the scope of observation upon the instructor's choice.

Following the observations, lecturers were asked to set aside ten to fifteen minutes for the purposes of conducting an audio-recorded interview. Each interview was conducted in a private office or classroom in a face-to-face format. The general protocol of the interview focused on four questions: (1) "What do you like (or dislike) about teaching on a day-to-day basis?" (2) "Why do you think you have developed a teaching persona in the classroom?" (3) "What words would you use to describe that persona?" and (4) "Why did you become a teacher?" Question 1 was used as an easy, guiding question for the rest of the interview, while Question 4 was used as a probing question to discover more about the lecturer and to segue into any emerging questions about teaching persona. Before Question 2, the lecturers were given a brief overview of the topic

of research and were asked if they understood all concepts and ideas presented. Generally, the following was the scripted explanation provided:

In my research I have defined “teaching persona” as the presentation of self in regard to the established social role of “teacher.” By “teacher,” I am referring specifically to a person whose career it is to educate students on a specified subject in a classroom setting. In this investigation, my sample only consists of college-level teachers. The “persona” is based on the idea of “front” put forth by Erving Goffman who labels it as “that part of the [teacher’s] performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those [students] who observe the performance” (22). The point we establish here is that the teaching persona is separate from the persona(s) in which you present yourself in other settings. While *some aspects* of the teaching persona might be present in other personas, it is my theory that your specific teaching persona is separate from your natural persona, and is *developed* based on multiple variables.

For theatre instructors at Eastern Michigan University, additional questions were asked regarding their background, whether or not it has affected their teaching persona, and how. As previously stated, a copy of the interview protocol is provided in Appendix A. The Eastern Michigan University Human Subjects Review Committee (UHSRC) deemed this research project (assigned #1028781-1) “exempt” in accordance with federal regulation 45 CFR 46.102 (see Appendix B). After the interviews were conducted, topic of discussion (or flow) transcripts were created for quick reference (see Appendix C). Complete transcriptions were only created for the purposes of quotes within the following sections of this thesis.

It should be noted that Instructor 3 was not interviewed due to unforeseen circumstances and a lack of follow-up time. Results from the observation of Instructor 3 were still provided

where relevant. As a qualitative study, the outcome of any results and conclusions made should not have been affected because of this.

Chapter 4: Observations

Instructor 1. During the interview, the first instructor vocalized a desire to be more outgoing in the classroom. This was a sentiment shared by several of the instructors interviewed. Instructor 1 explained, “I imagine [the reason behind this] is (in a way) trying to help students come out of their own shells and not to be afraid to use the foreign language.” Instructor 1 further expressed, “I try to help them understand that making mistakes is natural in the language learning process.” Other words used to describe Instructor 1’s teaching persona included “meticulous,” “prescriptive,” and “high energy.”

While Instructor 1 expresses a desire to be more outgoing in the classroom, my perception of the instructor’s natural persona would suggest being fairly outgoing in social interactions as well. During my observation, Instructor 1 tended to focus on students who were not as talkative during partner and group discussions. Additionally, a student who answered a question in a quiet manner was asked to repeat the response and speak up. I would assert that the reason Instructor 1 tends to strive for a more outgoing, higher-energy persona in the classroom is to try to incite similar energy levels with the students. Adversely, a moment during the observation that did not directly reflect this sentiment included the instructor’s placement of hands in pockets for a brief period of time, which might suggest a more relaxed or reserved persona. This observation could be a reflection of the correlation between teaching persona and natural persona.

The desire to be more outgoing in order to heighten the energy level is not generally necessary in average social situations. During normal interactions, especially interactions during periods of rest, relaxation, and pleasure, energy level is controlled by the activity at hand rather

than the participants. In this sense, this is an area where teaching persona differs from natural persona.

Instructor 2. Instructor 2 also described their teaching persona as more outgoing, but the reasoning was different. In this regard, Instructor 2 said:

“I tie that more to my persona in French. I feel like [...] French was a persona developed in my adult life, centering around speaking with other people, whereas English comes with the weight of [...] different social situations that aren’t as comfortable all the time, [but] I feel like the French persona of me and the teaching persona kind of go hand-in-hand because when I teach in English I get a lot more nervous.”

When asked why teaching in English leads to nervousness, Instructor 2 responded, “It’s not something I’ve done enough yet to feel comfortable doing.” Rather than developing a more outgoing teaching persona for the purpose of helping facilitate students’ desire to be more outgoing in the classroom, it seems that Instructor 2 developed a more outgoing teaching persona for the purpose of comfort when being the center of attention during lectures. Other words used to describe Instructor 2’s teaching persona in the classroom included “decisive” and “guiding.”

During my observation of Instructor 2, it was noted that methods for garnering response included a nondirect style of questioning. Rather than calling upon students individually, questions were generally formatted with association (e.g., Who has experienced this? or Which of you relates to this?). When asked why, Instructor 2 said, “To get students to find commonalities. [...] It just gives them more of a chance to be more natural about expressing themselves. If [I am] out with friends wherever, we don’t go around the table and call on people.” Here we can see an example of how natural persona has affected teaching persona.

Instructor 2 also discussed the opposite of this phenomena, saying that somewhat of an argumentative quality has developed in the classroom that has bled into the natural persona. Instructor 2 described this as, “if somebody says one thing, then [I counter with], ‘But have you considered this other point?’” It seems that this would be most useful in the classroom as a method of examining numerous perspectives.

One quality observed during the lecture that was not discussed in the interview was a clear change in Instructor 2’s tone of voice. My evaluation is that this change might be more authoritative or professional than normal.

Instructor 3. As aforementioned, Instructor 3 was not interviewed. The following specifically reflects my observations during the lecture and my perception of the instructor based on prior interaction.

During my observation, Instructor 3 was the only instructor who appeared less outgoing in comparison to the natural persona. This could be due to an adverse Hawthorne Effect in which the instructor was relatively more nervous than normal because of the awareness of my presence. Fortunately, as the lecture proceeded, the instructor developed more of a sense of ease than initially. A reason for the initial nerves may have also been provoked by an incident before the start of the lecture which I discuss as a means of future research in Chapter 5.

Instructor 4. Like Instructor 1, Instructor 4 expressed a desire to be more energetic in the classroom in order to be “positive and encouraging, but realistic about the workload [the instructors] are asking of [the students] and the potential difficulty of the ideas at hand.” In this

sense, Instructor 4 attempted to facilitate participation and encourage higher levels of energy among the students.

During my observation of instructors of French, Instructor 4 was the only instructor that conversed with the students before the start of class (beyond generic greetings and taking attendance). The instructor was able to ask about specific events and seemed to be familiar with the students on a more personal level, or at least on a level that the students felt comfortable enough to share personal things. It would seem that by taking the ten minutes before the start of the lecture to associate with the students, Instructor 4 successfully established a link of rapport between them, ultimately leading to what I would consider validation of students' success in the classroom and beyond. Instructor 4 noted, "I get to know a lot of my students pretty well throughout the semester so I'm always excited that each day is another chance to get to know them better." My perception was that Instructor 4 genuinely cared about the students. Because of this, it was more difficult for me to find clear differences between teaching persona and natural persona with Instructor 4. When asked in the interview if the instructor thought a teaching persona that differed from the natural persona had developed however, it was acknowledged that a difference does exist, describing the teaching persona as "bubblier" and "direct."

One difference between personas that I was able to notice was a more pronounced amount of gesticulation in the classroom, including a lot of hair twirling while speaking to the students. This unconscious action could be a reflection of a personal habit that appears heightened.

Instructor 5. Upon observation of Instructor 5, I noted that this French instructor was the only one who crouched down in front of students to listen to their interactions with each other during

group discussions. Instructor 5 also sat in a student desk while presenting the lecture rather than standing at the head of the class. Both of these conscious actions seemed to enable an essence of collaboration, association, and equality between student and teacher, adding a new dimension not previously observed with the instructors of French. The overall demeanor of the instructor was very relaxed due to being dressed in a hooded sweatshirt and jeans and often leaning against the wall.

In the interview, Instructor 5 said, “I try to be humorous and not take things too seriously in the classroom. [...] Sometimes students want to talk about something not entirely related, but if it’s in French and a good conversation I won’t immediately reorient their conversation.”

During the lecture, the instructor had decided to play the French national anthem for the class and sang along. It seemed like the idea was to get the students to join in, but they were very hesitant. This led to a humorous moment that did not in any way reflect the natural persona as the instructor is generally not the type of person who enjoys singing in public. From the interview, words that the instructor used to convey their teaching persona included “light-hearted,” “accepting,” and “organized.”

One specific reason why Instructor 5 has developed this teaching persona might be because of one of the instructor’s early French educators. In response to why Instructor 5 became a teacher, it was stated:

My first French teacher was a Belgium-native lecturer. [...] I remember enjoying her classes a lot, getting very good grades, and finding it challenging and fun to speak another language. I told her one day about struggling in [other] courses and she suggested I study French instead. I changed majors that semester and it was this one off-hand compliment that led me to study French and become a teacher. I wanted to emulate her.

Though I have no bearing on whether or not Instructor 5's teaching persona reflects that of this inspirational teacher, this seems of great importance to note. Though speculative, the desire to live up to someone else's example might be a key factor in developed personas.

Instructor 6. In shifting to observing Fundamentals of Acting instructors, there was a clear change in overall demeanor (from Instructors 1–5). Like other instructors, Instructor 6 mentioned an overall desire to be more enthusiastic in the classroom. However, of the four acting instructors, Instructor 6 was the only one who claimed, “If we’re looking at the specific difference between my teaching persona and my regular persona—it’s not huge. I can be a little presentational just by nature.” I would argue that this is not necessarily the case; of all of the instructors observed, Instructor 6 was the only instructor who I have previously observed as a student (in a different course). From my own experience, I would suggest that not only is there a difference between natural persona and teaching persona for Instructor 6, but there is also a slight difference between the teaching persona in the Fundamentals of Acting classroom and the teaching persona in the classroom of which I was a student. I explore this notion further in Chapter 5.

The class that I observed was working on scenes in partners or small groups. Overall, Instructor 6 seemed relaxed and chatted with the students one-on-one as they worked, creating a level of comfort like that of Instructor 5. While there seemed to be a sense of ease, it did not seem like Instructor 6 was familiar with the students on a personal level. In any case, there were several instances where Instructor 6 seemed (for lack of a better word) transparent. At one point the instructor called a student by the wrong name, but acknowledged the mistake and recovered humorously. In another instance, while meeting with the groups, Instructor 6 explained, “Let me

ask you a question, because I think it will lead you where you need to go...” Exchanges like these, coupled with strong eye contact and interest, seemed to eliminate certain communication barriers. In the interview, Instructor 6 noted floating somewhere between expert and personal model in relation to Grasha’s teacher types, with which I would agree.

Instructor 7. One significant difference between Instructor 7 and all of the other instructors was a disclosure to me during the observation that this instructor always tends to arrive at the scheduled class start-time rather than early. While this led me to assume that the instructor probably has less of an established personal relationship with the students, it seemed like this was not the case. In my observation, Instructor 7 seemed very lively and humorous, creating a dialogue on what everyone did over the previous weekend and allowing for discussion for several minutes before diving into course material. This raises the question then, with Instructor 4, of whether or not there is a shift in teaching persona between the time before class starts and the aforementioned scheduled class start-time. Instructor 4 went from personal conversations to course material based on time, but Instructor 7 allowed the rapport to begin and continue while on the clock. I find this to be an interesting distinction.

During my observation of Instructor 7, the students were performing scenes. As each scene was performed, the instructor sat with the other students to watch. Instructor 7 did not take notes, but observed silently and then approached the performers in their performance space at the end of their scene. This was a commonality I observed among all of the Fundamentals of Acting instructors, but only observed with Instructor 5 of the five French instructors—that the instructors placed themselves among the students. I think this eliminates the idea of the formal authority teacher type from these instructors as it does not seem like they are attempting to “possess status

among students” (see table 1). Instructor 7 did identify with several other teacher types of Grasha’s though, including the personal model, facilitator, and delegator.

In the interview, Instructor 7 (like several others) mentioned the task of raising the energy of the students. This instructor’s teaching persona revolves around a certain energy level, noting that there is a baseline energy needed to be able to act (perform theatrically) and the instructor “[has] to surpass that.” When asked about why this high-energy persona has been developed, Instructor 7 explained that gender and age are both a large factor. Because Instructor 7 began teaching college classes at the age of twenty-seven, being very close to the same age as the students led to a need for building connections rather than establishing a role of authority. I explore how age and gender affect teaching persona more in Chapter 5.

Instructor 8. Instructor 8’s communication approach was very similar to that of Instructor 7’s, with the exception that Instructor 8 did show up to class about five minutes early and talked briefly with individual students before the official start of class. After taking attendance, the instructor started a discussion about a movie they saw over the weekend, which led to an open discussion between teacher and students. After this discussion began to saunter off, Instructor 7 asked the students, “What else has happened since we last saw each other?” Multiple students shared stories, garnering feelings of comfort and welcome—some of the stories were even met with congratulations and applause. At one point, Instructor 8 referred to the students as “friends.” This approach was highly personal and even left me, as a non-participating observer, feeling good.

Open discussion continued throughout the class, but shifted toward feedback for student performers. After a group performed a scene, Instructor 8 asked the students watching to respond

to their classmates' performance. Once a few students provided feedback, the instructor also provided feedback and asked the performers to explore something new and try again. This opportunity for a re-do, coupled with probing questions from Instructor 8, allowed for what seemed like individualized growth within the course of a single class period.

Instructor 8 explained that it is important to possess a persona that can “direct and guide” in the classroom, whereas the instructor’s natural persona tends to prefer listening in social situations. To discuss energy-level in the classroom, Instructor 8 used a metaphor: “I always feel like there’s a balloon (not a Helium balloon) that has to be kept in the air and it can’t fall to the ground. And so I enjoy keeping that balloon up there...” because it challenges both the instructor and the students. Like Instructor 5, Instructor 8 also mentioned that the developed teaching persona was initially modeled after a mentor. Instructor 8’s mentor was guided by a philosophy of less structure and less guidance because it allowed for both instructor and students to take risks, but over time Instructor 8 realized that this philosophy was not very efficient in regard to time and allowed for students to more easily disengage. So while emulating a teacher might be a reason for developing a certain teaching persona, there might be a need to incorporate more personal qualities with growing experience as well. In regard to Grasha’s teacher types, Instructor 8 associated mostly with facilitator, but also with the expert. When asked if Instructor 8 would like to share anything else about teaching persona, the following was stated:

I didn’t understand—at least in the first few years—how important it is to head problems off before they get a chance to take root. So if you see that a potential situation is beginning to evolve, I now take people aside and say, “Listen: this, this, this, this, this...” And I think that saves me a whole lot of trouble.

In this sense, it seems that Instructor 8’s teaching persona includes notions of counselor.

Instructor 9. Instructor 9 seemed to value teaching as a continued learning experience. In the interview, Instructor 9 said that there is something to enjoy about interacting with the students on a day-to-day basis because it leads to discovering new things that might help the next time the same subject is approached. One of the instructor's favorite mantras is "To teach is to learn twice," a quote by French moralist and essayist Joseph Joubert. On the contrary, Instructor 9 does not enjoy the structure and repetitive nature of lecturing, which, in their own words, "Maybe [due to] the artist in me," but might also be because they teach the same courses from semester to semester. Because Instructor 9 holds the title of lecturer as opposed to professor or faculty, there is a sense of a lack of opportunity to develop the Fundamentals of Acting course as they see fit.

Like many of the other instructors, Instructor 9's discussed teaching persona involved a heightened, more energetic form of the natural persona. A need for flexibility between prepared pieces and improvised portions of lecture was also mentioned. Instructor 9 was the only instructor who specifically addressed physical persona and noted being much louder and more vocally precise (but not concise) in the classroom. I did notice a rise in volume during my observation. In reading Grasha's teacher types, Instructor 9 also picked a combination of facilitator and expert, the same as Instructor 8. In regard to the expert, Instructor 9 said, "I know the skills they need to develop in order to survive in the professional world."

During the lecture, Instructor 9 started by taking attendance very far removed from the students. When that was finished, the instructor asked the students to create a circle for warm-ups (stretching and vocal exercises that an actor might do before a performance) and led the students in various exercises while standing in the middle of the circle. After warm-ups, the instructor gave the students a handout to work on, which I think lent itself to Instructor 9 acting

as a personal model for the class; the instructor said, “Let me give you an example...” and then provided a demonstration of the desired outcome of the handout. This continued during some of the students’ performances, where the instructor would speak with the performer one-on-one after the initial performance and tell them exactly what they wanted to see. For as much as Instructor 9 seemed to act as a personal model, I was surprised it was specifically said the instructor did not feel that way in the interview.

Performance Background & Teaching Persona. Upon interviewing the four instructors of the Fundamentals of Acting course, it was clear and unanimous that having a background in performance affected their developed teaching persona in some way. The following are narratives from each of the four instructors as to what extent their performance background has affected the persona in the classroom:

- “You know, my degree was in performance [and] I’ve done a lot of professional acting. [...] The first thing it takes care of is any fear of presentation [...] I couldn’t remember [...] the last time I had any stage fright. And I think the preparedness you learn as an actor really helps you as a teacher as well. [...] Spending time with the lesson plan, going over the material before class, so that [...] you feel completely comfortable teaching the subject matter of the day.”
- “Because I started out as an actor, and because I also did a lot of improvisation, and because I like to make people laugh, I think that’s the cornerstone of what I do; I try and make my class fun—I try and make my students laugh in every class, because I feel like if I can do that, they’re going to go on the journey with me.”

- “Because my mentor believed that you have to create, not only a supportive environment, but ultimately a safe environment, he always said, ‘In order to be a good actor, you have to be willing to be a bad actor, because you’ve got to be willing to take risks.’ So I know that I want to get the most out of myself when I perform and I know the setting in which I can do that. So I want to recreate that setting [as a teacher]. [...] Then I feel like it’s not a formal thing and if you mess something up, you mess something up.”
- “One of the things that I think is interesting about the whole notion of teaching as performance is that I have to commit to the truth of the material every single day, even though I have taught it over and over and over again. [...] I have to treat it not unlike a piece of dramatic literature or a piece of set text in that I’ve got to commit to the beginning, middle, and end of it [and] I’ve got to remember that it’s the first time [the students have] ever heard it. [Teaching] is an outlet for performance for me [...] and I think that can be very exciting...”

The overall notion gathered here seems to be that the skills someone might develop and hone as an actor lend themselves very easily to methods of teaching. I find it interesting that many of these instructors gravitated toward mostly the same teacher types when shown Grasha’s examples. I should also point out that all but one of the Fundamentals of Acting instructors interviewed said they became a teacher by accident. The one instructor who did not become a teacher by accident decided to get a degree in Education as a “fallback.”

Chapter 5: Discussion & Conclusion

In seeking to research why educators develop personas that differ from their natural personas, a few fundamental explanations were explored and analyzed among multiple participants. It seems that the greatest commonality among instructors is developing a persona that is more outgoing or more energetic than their natural counterparts as a method of garnering the same response from students during classroom discussions and exercises. Oftentimes this increase is simply described as a heightened version of the natural persona. In some cases, the development of a more extroverted nature helps to alleviate the stress of nerves caused by being the center of attention. For those instructors with a background in theatrical performance, the idea of stage fright seems to be altogether eliminated. Also tied to the idea of being more outgoing, establishing a persona that allows for a comfortable rapport between teacher and students is viewed as being desirable by many of the observed instructors. When this establishment is made, students appear validated by their instructors' sincerity and desire for the student to succeed in and outside the classroom. As Instructor 7 puts it,

Teaching is for later. And I won't always see the results of my teaching. In the given semester, the chances are I might see somebody grow an inch, but they're really going to grow the mile five years from now—ten years from now—and so it's kind of like this special present that you give to people and you just hope that it hatches.

A relaxed persona also tends to reflect validation, but can be seen as an effective means of creating a collaborative, egalitarian environment in the classroom, too. Finally, it is apparent that some personas are developed as a direct representation of another individual's persona based on inspirational or motivational qualities. As an instructor gains more experience, this emulation might become more of an individualized adaptation though. Table 2 summarizes these findings

in an easy-to-read format. While other reasons for developing teaching personas may have been observed, those included here were most definitive and reoccurring.

Table 2

Teaching Persona Traits and Their Development

Teaching Persona Quality/Trait	Why Is It developed?	How It Works
High-Energy	In an effort to make students participate and respond with a similar amount of energy.	By putting forth an air of willingness or a clear desire to be present, students can feed off of positive energy.
Outgoing	In an effort to alleviate nerves while being the focus of attention in large groups of people.	By ridding immediate thoughts of doubt or insecurity, the instructor also rids themselves of anxiety.
Relaxed/Personable	In an effort to establish rapport between teacher and student and allow for validation.	By creating an environment of ease, students can view the material and the instructor as more approachable.
Inspirational/Motivational	In an effort to emulate the teaching persona of someone who inspired or motivated the instructor.	By trying to emulate someone who positively impacted their learning experience, instructors can try to positively impact their students.

In returning to my assessment of Instructor 8's teaching persona having notions of counselor, it seems that the counselor could be a new archetype to be explored. Having spoken in passing with other instructors, the idea that students are reaching for help from their teachers beyond the realm of coursework is increasingly relevant. Reasons for this development might be related to the current political climate, or perhaps related to generational differences, but these are only theories and are not yet definitive.

Field of Study & Teaching Persona. In moving to the instructor's field of study and its impact on teaching persona, I find that there are two competing conclusions to be explored. First and foremost, it is clear beyond a doubt that an instructor's teaching persona is definitely influenced

if they possess a background in theatrical performance. It is also clear that the ways in which instructors of French and instructors of Fundamentals of Acting approach classroom instruction varies, sometimes minutely and sometimes greatly. So though I do believe that field of study, and ultimately an instructor's method of assessment, have an impact on teaching persona, I am beginning to see more plainly how it serves as a simple, singular impression on the persona within a collection of many degrees of impact.

Though I was inclined to think so before conducting this research, I now have a greater understanding that personas (teaching or otherwise) are highly individualized. So while instructors' fields of study impact their teaching persona, so do other demographics and situations of which I tried to normalize or ignore within this investigation. These other impacts can include age, gender, location of school, years of experience, level within the collegiate hierarchy, course being taught, student success, and so much more. Of the nine instructors I observed and interviewed, my views have shifted because one person, when asked why they have developed their specific teaching persona, simply responded that it has to do with the fact that she is a woman. For this reason, I believe that any further research on teaching persona should focus on individualized case studies or on teaching archetypes (like the development of teacher as counselor, for example), unless *all* of the aforementioned variables can be controlled. Additional areas for further research are explored later in this chapter.

Former Teachers & Teaching Persona. In regard to how much of a factor former teachers are on an instructor's teaching persona, I think (though not really measurable) it is small. While two of the instructors observed specifically mentioned mentors and their impact on the development of teaching persona, it seems that this might not be a lasting impact. Instructor 5 is a young

educator, only a year or so removed from myself and fresh out of graduate school. While this instructor might emulate another inspirational instructor now, it seems from the response of Instructor 8 (an associate professor who has been teaching for decades) that eventually the emulation becomes less defined until the persona is shaped by personal experience rather than a form of mimesis.

Consciousness of Developed Personas. In turning to my final research question, it is easily comprehended that awareness of existing personas is important in understanding the self (based on the ideas put forth in Table 2 and beyond). Upon completion of the observation and interview, several of the participating instructors expressed feelings of interest in this area of research simply because they had never previously reflected upon themselves in such a way. Often, people are aware of specific traits that they possess but do not explore why they have developed those traits or how those traits affect their overall personas. In re-examining the literature, Richard Shechner's ideas hold much weight; while "gestures, tones of voice, costume, and [many other traits]" can be clearly defining features of a teacher, other traits are not obvious, not as universal, and the reason for their existence has not been previously explored (209).

Areas for Further Research. In seeking other areas for further research, several ideas sparked my interest throughout this process. Beginning with the aforementioned, during my observation of Instructor 3, a curious incident occurred. Upon our entrance to the classroom, I asked where it would be preferable that I sit and was given a response in French. Instructor 3 is definitely aware of the fact that I do not speak French fluently and so, in the moment, apologized and mentioned already being in "classroom mode." In this instance, I wonder what affect environment has on

teaching persona and Goffman's notion of setting could be explored. Further research could involve a case study of the observation of teaching persona during a lecture given outside the classroom or normal teaching environment. Though perhaps not immediately plausible, I would be curious to see how giving a lecture to a group of students in the lecturer's place of residence would affect the immediate performance of the teaching persona. Other areas for further research that could be explored are the impacts of varying types of institution (i.e., research versus teaching university, or other grade levels) on the development of teaching persona.

In reflection of one of my introductory statements—that I wondered whether the behavioral divide between natural persona and teaching persona should be eliminated for the sake of the effects of treating a learning environment as a place of work—the answer is, simply put, of course not. It is obvious that many, if not all, of the teaching persona traits developed are in some way beneficial to students. It is the responsibility of the educator to harbor, in the best terms possible, the most effective learning environment—but by no means does there seem to be a superior method of doing so.

Works Cited

- Abrams, Meyer Howard. *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition*. Oxford U.P., 1971.
- Bidwell, Charles E., et al. "Teacher Types, Workplace Controls, and the Organization of Schools." *Sociology of Education*, vol. 70, no. 4, 1997, pp. 285-307.
- Brent, Doug. "Teaching as performance in the electronic classroom." *First Monday*, vol. 10, no. 4, 2005.
- Britzman, Deborah P. "Cultural Myths in the Making of a Teacher: Biography and Social Structure in Teacher Education." *Harvard Educational Review*, vol. 56, no. 1, 1986, pp. 442-55.
- Dawe, Harry A. "Teaching: A Performing Art." *Phi Delta Kappan*, vol. 65, no. 1, 1984, pp.548-52.
- Egan, Kieran. "Metaphors in Collision: Objectives, Assembly Lines, and Stories." *Curriculum Inquiry*, vol. 18, no.1, 1988, pp. 63-86.
- Goffman, Erving. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Anchor Books, Doubleday, 1959.
- Grasha, Anthony F. "A Matter of Style: The Teacher as Expert, Formal Authority, Personal Model, Facilitator, and Delegator." *College Teaching*, vol. 42, no. 4, 1994, pp. 142-49.
- Harrison-Pepper, Sally. "Dramas of Persuasion: Utilizing Performance in the Classroom." *Excellence in College Teaching*, vol. 2, no.1, 1991, pp.115-27.
- Marshall, H. H. "Work or Learning: Implications of Classroom Metaphors." *Educational Researcher*, vol. 17, no. 9, 1988, pp. 9-16.
- McLaren, Peter L. "The Liminal Servant and the Ritual Roots of Critical Pedagogy." *Language Arts*, vol. 65, no. 2, 1988, pp. 164-79.

- Pineau, Elyse Lamm. "Teaching is Performance: Reconceptualizing a Problematic Metaphor." *American Educational Research Journal*, vol. 31, no. 1, 1994, pp.3-25.
- Powell, J. P., & Andresen, L. W. "Humour and teaching in higher education." *Studies in Higher Education*, vol. 10, no. 1, 1985, pp. 79-90.
- Prendergast, Monica. "Teacher as Performer: Unpacking a metaphor in performance theory and critical performative pedagogy." *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2008, pp. 1-20.
- Sawyer, R. Keith. "Creative Teaching: Collaborative Discussion as Disciplined Improvisation." *Educational Researcher*, vol. 33, no. 2, 2004, pp. 12-20.
- Sawyer, R. Keith. *Structure and Improvisation in Creative Teaching*. Cambridge U.P., 2011.
- Schechner, Richard. *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. Routledge, 2013.
- Sexton, Steven S. "Power of Practitioners: How Prior Teachers Informed the Teacher Role Identity of Thirty-Five Entry-Level Pre-Service Teacher Candidates." *Educate Journal*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2007, pp. 46-57.
- States, Bert O. "Performance as Metaphor." *Theatre Journal*, vol. 48, no. 1, 1996, pp. 1-26.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Protocol

1. What do you enjoy (or not enjoy) about teaching on a day-to-day basis?

The following summary of the research and relevant information is provided before Question 2:

“In my research I have defined “teaching persona” as the presentation of self in regard to the established social role of “teacher.” By “teacher,” I am referring specifically to a person whose career it is to educate students on a specified subject in a classroom setting. In this investigation, my sample only consists of college-level teachers. The “persona” is based on the idea of “front” put forth by Erving Goffman who labels it as “that part of the [teacher’s] performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those [students] who observe the performance” (22). The point we establish here is that the teaching persona is separate from the persona(s) in which you present yourself in other settings. While *some aspects* of the teaching persona might be present in other personas, it is my theory that your specific teaching persona is separate from your natural persona, and is *developed* based on multiple variables.”

2. Do you understand my explanation of teaching persona?

If yes:

- a. What language would you use to describe your teaching persona?
- b. Why do you think you have developed this persona?

For Acting teachers only:

- c. Do you think your background in performance has affected your teaching persona? In what way?

3. Why did you become a teacher?

Table 1 is provided before the following question:

4. Which of these five teaching styles do you think best represent your persona? You can pick more than one.

5. Do you have any questions, or is there anything else you would like to share regarding your teaching persona?

Appendix B: IRB Exempt Letter

RESEARCH @ EMU

UHSRC Determination: **EXEMPT**

DATE: **March 1, 2017**

TO: **Justin Hopper
Department of CMT
Eastern Michigan University**

Re: **UHSRC: #1028781-1
Category: Exempt category 1
Approval Date: March 1, 2017**

Title: **Examining Teaching as Performance: A Study of Developed Persona**

Your research project, entitled **Examining Teaching as Performance: A Study of Developed Persona**, has been determined **Exempt** in accordance with federal regulation 45 CFR 46.102. UHSRC policy states that you, as the Principal Investigator, are responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of your research subjects and conducting your research as described in your protocol.

Renewals: Exempt protocols do not need to be renewed. When the project is completed, please submit the **Human Subjects Study Completion Form** (access through IRBNet on the UHSRC website).

Modifications: You may make minor changes (e.g., study staff changes, sample size changes, contact information changes, etc.) without submitting for review. However, if you plan to make changes that alter study design or any study instruments, you must submit a **Human Subjects Approval Request Form** and obtain approval prior to implementation. The form is available through IRBNet on the UHSRC website.

Problems: All major deviations from the reviewed protocol, unanticipated problems, adverse events, subject complaints, or other problems that may increase the risk to human subjects or change the category of review must be reported to the UHSRC via an **Event Report** form, available through IRBNet on the UHSRC website

Follow-up: If your Exempt project is not completed and closed after **three years**, the UHSRC office will contact you regarding the status of the project.

Please use the UHSRC number listed above on any forms submitted that relate to this project, or on any correspondence with the UHSRC office.

Good luck in your research. If we can be of further assistance, please contact us at 734-487-3090 or via e-mail at human.subjects@emich.edu. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Alissa Huth-Bocks, Ph.D.
Chair
CAS Human Subjects Review Committee

Appendix C: Topic of Discussion Transcripts

Justin Hopper (JH) Interviewing Instructor 1 (I1)

Length of Recording – 12:44

Place – Instructor 1's Office (Modern Languages Building, University of Michigan)

Date – March 11, 2016 at 1:14PM

Initials	Counter Number	Topic of Discussion
JH	0:01	Introduction
JH	0:08	How are you doing?
JH	0:16	First Question: What do you enjoy about teaching?
I1	0:25	Interaction –really likes having office hours
JH	1:08	What do you not like about it?
I1	1:14	When people don't come to office hours –the grading aspect – more open-ended questions are okay because he can see how students are thinking –nice when students can use the grammar and communicate properly
JH	3:07	Giving information on my research –Richard Schechner's ideas concerning performance in everyday life –Give quote: What is your teaching persona like in the classroom?
I1	4:10	A lot more outgoing: -speaking in French vs. English –study abroad
JH	5:39	Why do you think you have developed that persona?
I1	5:46	Helps the students come out of their shells –making mistakes is okay
JH	6:44	Anything else?
I1	6:48	More meticulous –based on how he learned French –becoming more lenient and accepting with different forms of French – also try to have a higher energy level
JH	8:15	Why did you become a teacher?
I1	8:23	-Fell into it –studied music and French –had to decide on the viable option –undergrad French teacher –required to teach French in grad school
JH	10:34	How does that translate with your students?
I1	10:47	Being able to share his love for French: -languages in general –cultural openness –explore the world
JH	12:19	Anything else?
I1	12:30	Don't think so
JH	12:33	Wrap-up/Thank you

Justin Hopper (JH) Interviewing Instructor 2 (I2)

Length of Recording – 13:36

Place – Instructor 2’s Office (Modern Languages Building, University of Michigan)

Date – March 14, 2016 at 10:08AM

Initials	Counter Number	Topic of Discussion
JH	0:01	Introduction
JH	0:11	How are you doing?
JH	0:17	First Question: What do you enjoy about teaching?
I2	0:23	Interaction with students –learning about the students and referring back to their interests –other courses are large lectures so people don’t know their name
JH	1:00	What else do you like about it?
I2	1:09	As a job: -Always something different to do –talking with other instructors –changing atmosphere
JH	1:39	Giving information on my research –Richard Schechner’s ideas concerning performance in everyday life –Give quote: Do you agree with this idea?
I2	2:13	Clarification and understanding
JH	2:39	Do you feel that you have developed a persona in front of your students that differs from your social/everyday persona?
I2	3:14	More outgoing: -less nervous –tied to “French” persona –developed in my adult life –centered around speaking with other people – “When I teach in English I get a lot more nervous.”
JH	4:05	Why do you get nervous in English?
I2	4:09	I don’t know: -just like a switch –I can’t find the words to say it
JH	4:26	French persona: How would you describe it? Examples given.
I2	4:56	-Decisive –typically care more about certain things, i.e. students being able to express themselves –developed argumentative side; “but have you considered this other point?” –always questioning
JH	6:34	Is there any more you would like to say? Now that you are thinking about it, are you discovering anything that you hadn’t thought about previously?
I2	6:57	Not as outgoing as I thought I was (in class): -more on his mind while teaching today [because I observed him]
JH	7:47	Last question (more unrelated): Why did you become a teacher?

I2	8:13	Didn't know what else to do, but also because French teachers got him out of his shell in college –made friends and found common interests –going abroad –teachers he had: “I want to be them for somebody else.” –inspire people to go abroad and do thing
JH	9:06	So do you try to reflect that in your persona? (How so?)
I2	9:25	Focus on what's actually interesting to the students –guide them to relevance
JH	10:28	Observation: a lot of your questions were vague – rather than call on specific students you said, “Who has done this?” or “Who relates to this?” etc. –Is there a reason?
I2	10:56	To find commonalities: -“Oh yeah, me too” –more chance to be natural about expression –when you're out with friends you don't go around the table calling on people
JH	11:54	As a teacher do you think there is an intrinsic quality of leadership?
I2	12:10	Yes: -but always tries to do it as a guide –ask questions to come to that
JH	13:18	Anything else?
I2	13:30	Nope
JH	13:33	Wrap-up/Thank you

Justin Hopper (JH) Interviewing Instructor 4 (I4)

Length of Recording – 15:06

Place – Instructor 4’s Office (Modern Languages Building, University of Michigan)

Date – April 8, 2016 at 10:13AM

Initials	Counter Number	Topic of Discussion
JH	0:01	Introduction
JH	0:07	How are you doing?
JH	0:21	First Question: What do you enjoy about teaching?
I4	0:36	Enjoy seeing students each day: -hearing what they have to say –more personal level –gets more sophisticated with higher level courses –nice because the class size is really small -
JH	3:38	What else?
I4	3:49	Being the center of attention: -“I like that they need my help.” –being the one to look to for help –getting to speak French
JH	4:40	Giving information on my research –Richard Schechner’s ideas concerning performance in everyday life –Give quote: What is your teaching persona like in the classroom?
I4	5:32	-Very energetic –positive and encouraging –staying realistic about workload –being personable –try to show that I listen –bubblier but more direct
JH	7:39	Why did you become a teacher?
I4	7:46	Working around people: -still being independent –good combination of teamwork and individual –French and other languages are fascinating –love sharing experience -inspire
JH	9:50	Anything else?
I4	10:04	Elementary school: -raised hand when asked about teaching –liked being in front of the class –loved writing on the board
I4	12:35	Francophile vs. teacher: -used to say Francophile –focus has shifted to teaching –more students and more development
JH	13:54	Are your lectures more rehearsed or improvised?
I4	14:03	-About 65% rehearsed -35% based on flow –sometimes too rigid, sometimes things go long
JH	14:48	Anything else?
I4	14:53	Nothing
JH	15:01	Wrap-up/Thank you

Justin Hopper (JH) Interviewing Instructor 5 (I5)

Length of Recording – 17:12

Place – Instructor 5's Office (Modern Languages Building, University of Michigan)

Date – April 8, 2016 at 4:06PM

Initials	Counter Number	Topic of Discussion
JH	0:01	Introduction
JH	0:08	How are you doing?
JH	0:15	First Question: What do you enjoy about teaching?
I5	0:28	Impression of not actually working: -jobs in the past –wanting to go home –time flies teaching
JH	2:00	Anything else?
I5	2:07	-Things have value –worked retail as a cashier –quality of work felt irrelevant –mundane –teaching is opposite, leaves him charged –hopes students enjoy class time
JH	3:50	Anything else to add?
I5	3:58	-Enjoys designing lessons –feels like “a job well done” –put in a lot of effort for the students –doesn't like grading though –takes too much time –corrections don't always help students –would rather find other ways to motivate
JH	7:26	Giving information on my research –Richard Schechner's ideas concerning performance in everyday life –Give quote: What is your teaching persona like in the classroom?
I5	8:36	-Would be interesting to have students describe him –light-hearted –accepting –organized –try to validate what students share –humor; can't dwell on bad lessons –giving reminders - clarity
JH	13:20	Why did you become a teacher?
I5	13:34	Started as pre-med: -language was required –didn't enjoy Spanish in high school –in awe of French teacher –enjoyed class and got good grades –had been struggling in Chemistry courses –she convinced him –wanted to emulate her
JH	16:50	Anything else?
I5	17:00	Nada!
JH	17:06	Wrap-up/Thank you

Justin Hopper (JH) Interviewing Instructor 6 (I6)

Length of Recording – 12:11

Place – My Office (103A Quirk, Eastern Michigan University)

Date – March 8, 2017 at 5:03PM (Observation conducted March 6, 2017)

Initials	Counter Number	Topic of Discussion
JH	0:01	Introduction
JH	0:09	How are you doing?
JH	0:12	First Question: The class that I observed: was it on par with how it normally goes?
I6	0:22	Different that day because they were rehearsing scenes – normally they do warm-ups and a lecture/exercise –didn't have time for that this day
JH	0:47	Okay, good to know –What do you enjoy (or not enjoy) about teaching on a day-to-day basis?
I6	0:59	Enjoy most: -when students pick up on his enthusiasm and it is shared – becomes exciting when students become hungry for knowledge
I6	1:27	Dislike: -varies from school to school (he teaches at a variety of schools) –at Eastern, he is given trust to create the class as he deems necessary (other schools do not do that and he thinks it is detrimental to their ability to do their job) –“If the teacher is being forced to teach from a specific textbook – especially if that textbook is out of date – [...] you're not getting the best possible work.”
JH	2:07	Summary of my research: Do you understand my summary?
I6	3:48	I do.
JH	3:50	What language would you use to describe your teaching persona?
I6	3:56	-“If we're looking at the specific difference between my teaching persona and my regular persona – it's not huge. I can be a little presentational just by nature.” –enthusiasm is intentionally channeled –when you teach a class multiple times you become more prepared, comfortable, etc. (real life is “off the cuff” –not as talkative in real life –doesn't like being social much –classic “introvert/extrovert” type thing –classroom persona is “essentially just myself but heightened” Does that make sense?
JH	5:47	It does: This is the only instructor I have actually seen teach before – different sort of setup

JH	6:20	Is there anything you'd like to add on why your teaching persona is just a heightened version of your natural persona?
I6	6:33	Ties back to enthusiasm: -caring about the subject matter and caring about teaching – making sure that the students walk out having learned something
JH	7:06	Do you think that your background in performance has affected how you teach?
I6	7:18	Absolutely: -degree was in performance, done a lot of professional acting – takes care of any fear of presentation –can't remember the last time he felt stage fright –also the preparedness helps (learning lines and blocking outside of rehearsal, etc.)
JH	8:18	Why did you become a teacher?
I6	8:24	“Something that was offered to me...not necessarily on my radar...” –twelve years ago –thought it would be fun –came accidentally but very naturally
JH	9:02	Seems to be a commonality –provided table on teacher types: Which, if any, of those styles best represent your persona?
I6	9:55	“This is interesting...there are definitely aspects of multiple ones...”
I6	10:38	Of these five: float somewhere between Expert and Personal Model –teach from a wide body of experience –“things I wish somebody had taught me earlier in my career” –tries to avoid the intimidating aspect of the Expert though –has a lesson plan but is flexible –learns the needs of the students and adjusts accordingly –in an acting class you have to do it
JH	11:56	Do you have any questions, or is there anything else you'd like to share regarding anything we've spoken about?
I6	12:04	Can't think of anything
JH	12:05	Wrap-up/Thank you

Justin Hopper (JH) Interviewing Instructor 7 (I7)

Length of Recording – 14:17

Place – School of Communication, Media & Theatre Arts Conference Room (124 Quirk, Eastern Michigan University)

Date – March 6, 2017 at 3:14PM

Initials	Counter Number	Topic of Discussion
JH	0:01	Introduction
JH	0:09	How are you doing?
JH	0:13	First Question: Was today's class typical of how the class normally goes?
I7	0:25	Had 3 people missing –those 3 can be difficult students
JH	0:52	What do you enjoy (or not enjoy) about teaching on a day-to-day basis?
I7	0:58	-most fun is seeing people who won't be doing this professionally find –tapping into childish imagination again - least fun thing is getting people to be ready and willing –kind of have to be a “cheerleader” –“and when I'm not having the best day, that can be a struggle”
JH	2:01	Move on to brief summary of my research –Do you understand?
I7	3:28	“Yeah”
JH	3:31	What language would you use to describe your teaching persona?
I7	3:38	-“In a class like that...” “cheerleader” –high level of energy to get them to a baseline level of acting energy (“so I have to surpass that”) –also “I think this has to do with the fact that I'm a woman”: doesn't show reactions to a lot of things (especially upsetting) –issues with certain students it seems – on a personal level she's not like that
JH	5:20	“Perfect. Interesting.” –Why do you think you have developed this persona? –“Would you like to go into more detail?”
I7	5:32	Part of it is being a woman, part of it is that she started teaching very young (27), which means she was very close in age with her students –can show more of her emotional core now than she used to
JH	6:15	Do you think that your background in performance has affected your teaching persona? In what way?
I7	6:22	“Oh yeah...” –started out as an actor –did a lot of improv and likes to make people laugh –tries to make class fun, make students laugh –“they're gonna go on the journey with me”
I7	7:05	On the contrary: When first started teaching “that very serious Graduate training was not a valuable service for me to teach this class – made mistakes about being too harsh on students –took 4 years

		to go “that’s good enough” –“If they are feeling joyful in the work, that is the greatest lesson I can give them. The technique can come later; that’s not for Fundamentals of Acting.” –her counters: the clown and the very serious nit-picker
JH	8:20	Which leads me to the next thing: Why did you become a teacher?
I7	8:25	Became a teacher by accident: -Needed something to fill time before she moved to a big city and became a performer –“I think...and you never know for sure...I think I’m a better teacher than I am an actor.” –“the fact that I get to make a personal connection and see growth is the thing that really made me want to continue and become a better teacher (because I never think that that process is over)...” –wavers day-to-day
I7	9:56	“The real truth of teaching”: -“Teaching is for later. And I won’t always see the results of my teaching. In the given semester, the chances are I might see somebody grow an inch, but they’re really gonna grow the mile five years from now – ten years from now – and so it’s kind of like this special present that you give to people and you just hope that it hatches. And you never know...” –just have to have confidence and patience –it’s the student’s responsibility –sometimes they learn what they don’t want to become, but at least there is something to be learned –“I hope that I am giving good. Chances are that I am giving some bad too.”
JH	11:37	Next, provided table with teacher types –asked to look over and pick one or more
I7	13:31	In this class (Fundamentals of Acting): -the personal model, the facilitator, and the delegator
JH	13:50	Do you have any questions?
I7	13:55	No
JH	13:56	Is there anything else you would like to share regarding your teaching persona?
I7	14:09	“I think that’s it!”
JH	14:13	Wrap-up/Thank you

Justin Hopper (JH) Interviewing Instructor 8 (I8)

Length of Recording – 11:26

Place – Instructor 8’s Office (Quirk, Eastern Michigan University)

Date – March 7, 2017 at 1:53PM

Initials	Counter Number	Topic of Discussion
JH	0:01	Introduction
JH	0:09	How are you doing?
JH	0:17	First Question: Was today’s lecture on par with how this class normally goes?
I8	0:25	Not really because it’s a performance day –on non-performance days they have discussions on honesty, the vivid imagination, task, etc. –usually do an exercise to illustrate the point
JH	1:00	What do you enjoy (or not enjoy) about teaching on a day-to-day basis?
I8	1:12	-enjoy that it’s a big improv thing –“I always feel like there’s a balloon (not a Helium balloon) that has to be kept in the air and it can’t fall to the ground. And so I enjoy keeping that balloon up there.”
JH	2:00	Brief summary of research: Do you understand?
I8	3:35	“Yes – and I agree!”
JH	3:39	What language would you use to describe your teaching persona?
I8	3:53	-Director and guide (way more than in a social setting) –keep that balloon going –Challenge them
JH	4:29	Do you think that there is a reason why you have developed this persona?
I8	4:36	-used to give less structure and less guidance because of the philosophy that his mentor taught –found that it was not as efficient (time-wise) –less structure provides more opportunity for students to disengage
JH	5:16	Do you think that your background in performance has affected your teaching persona?
I8	5:25	Absolutely: -mentor believed that you have to create supportive/safe environment –“In order to be a good actor, you have to be willing to be a bad actor. Because you have to take risks.” – want to get the most out of myself and I know what setting I need for that, so I try to recreate it –tries to build strong relationships and get to know them (personally) –that way, if you mess something up, it’s not as formal
JH	7:00	Why did you become a teacher?
I8	7:06	Always planned to come back and teach:

		-became clear that going to a big city and making a living as a performer wasn't something that was taught –owned his own business as a coach and casting assistant –really want other people to know things beyond just this technique
JH	8:27	Teaching styles table: Which of these five teaching styles best represent your persona?
I8	9:22	Mostly Facilitator, but a little bit Expert
JH	9:39	Is there anything else that you would like to share regarding your teaching persona, or anything we have talked about in this interview?
I8	9:52	Do you have an example?
JH	9:54	No, just a clearinghouse question!
I8	10:05	“I didn't understand – at least in the first few years – how important it is to head problems off before they get a chance to take root. So if you see that a potential situation is beginning to evolve, I now take people aside and say, ‘Listen: this, this, this, this, this...’ And I think that saves me a whole lot of trouble.”
JH	11:13	Good to know! Anything else?
JH	11:20	Wrap-up/Thank you

Justin Hopper (JH) Interviewing Instructor 9 (I9)

Length of Recording – 17:58

Place – Lab Theatre (107 Quirk, Eastern Michigan University)

Date – March 7, 2017 at 4:45PM

Initials	Counter Number	Topic of Discussion
JH	0:01	Introduction
JH	0:09	How are you doing?
JH	0:15	Was today's class on par with how this class normally goes?
I9	0:21	On par with this specific class –teach 4 sections and every one is different –this class is very social/talkative –section at 11am is the complete opposite
JH	1:16	What do you enjoy (or not enjoy) about teaching on a day-to-day basis?
I9	1:26	-enjoy the interaction with students that leads to discovering things that might help the next time he teaches the subject – one of his favorite quotes: “To teach is to learn twice.” –that worked, that didn't, etc.
I9	2:20	“So interesting that you asked what I don't like...”: -always had trouble with structure –“Maybe it's the artist in me...” –enjoys it when he gets here, but it's always tough/monotonous
I9	2:56	“I'm a lecturer”: -unlike Faculty, he doesn't have as much opportunity to develop his classes –teaches the same classes from semester to semester so it gets repetitive
JH	3:30	Brief summary of research: Does that make sense?
I9	5:01	It does make sense – and it's interesting!
JH	5:08	What language would you use to describe your teaching persona?
I9	5:12	-energetic –heightened from regular persona –vocally, it's louder and precise (not concise) –modulated in such a way that he feels like a performer in class
I9	6:22	“This may relate to a question you are going to ask later...”: -“One of the things that I think is interesting about the whole notion of teaching as performance is that I have to commit to the truth of the material every single day, even though I have taught it over and over and over again.” –energy –treat it like a piece of dramatic literature, or text –commit to the beginning, middle, and end, and remember it's the first time they've ever heard it –acts as an outlet for performance which is very exciting –you have to commit the same way you would to a play script
JH	7:52	Jump to (and I think I know the answer):

		Do you think that your background in performance has affected your teaching persona and in what way?
I9	8:10	Absolutely: -as a teacher at the high school/public school level (he has a degree in Education) –felt more comfortable letting go at the college level –took a long time to be able to improvise (or what some educators would call “Socratic teaching”) –may have to postpone the next prepared segment and be flexible – so it’s a mixture of improv and set pieces –but started with the energy (got to warm up, etc.) –and trust that every audience isn’t going to respond the same way
JH	10:47	Wonderful: Why did you become a teacher?
I9	10:54	Listened to the warnings/admonitions of parents: -need something to fall back on (besides theatre) –he gave in – put the big city thing on hold to get the Education degree –B.S. in Speech Education –taught drama and directed a little bit – always knew that he wanted more discipline and exposure to theatre so his Master’s was a performance specialization –it’s made the Plan A mesh with the Plan B fairly well
I9	13:04	Back to the original question: -want people to see more theatre –new generations are growing up with small screens –he grew up in a small town, etc. –accidental or not, it’s been a really good calling
JH	14:28	Teaching styles table: Which of those do you think best represent your persona?
I9	15:58	-somewhere between Facilitator and Expert –constantly remind students of things he has learned in the professional world –“I know the skills they need to develop to survive in the professional world...” –but also, tries to ask questions, explore options, etc. –not a Formal Authority or Personal Model
JH	17:33	Do you have any questions, or is there anything else you’d like to share regarding your teaching persona?
I9	17:42	I don’t think so!
JH	17:53	Wrap-up/Thank you

