

Change in Self-Reported Personality in Students of Acting

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Abstract : The field of personality change has recently garnered increased attention, while the psychology of acting has remained relatively understudied. This research tried to contribute to the both research field by investigating whether the process of acting can lead to personality changes in acting students and, if so, in what manner. It was hypothesized that significant differences would be observed in self-reported personality traits of acting students between the beginning and end of their role preparation. The study also examined potential moderator variables, including the reported personality traits of the roles portrayed by the students, empathy, disintegration, and years of formal acting education. The sample comprised 47 students of acting from the Faculty of Dramatic Arts (first to fourth-year) and the Faculty of Modern Arts (first-year students only). The research involved two waves of testing, conducted at the beginning (T1) and end (T2) of the semester. Personality traits (measured using the HEXACO-60 self-report version), empathy (measured using the Questionnaire of Cognitive and Affective Empathy, QCAE), and disintegration (measured using the DELTA9, 10-item version) were assessed at both T1 and T2, while the personality of the role (measured using the HEXACO-60 observer version) was assessed at T2. Repeated-measures t-tests revealed significant differences in emotionality and conscientiousness between T1 and T2. Additionally, an index of absolute personality change was significantly different from 0 for all traits, indicating personality change. The average test-retest correlation for HEXACO traits was 0.57, lower than that proposed in similar research. However, the personality of the role, empathy, and disintegration did not explain the changes in students' personality traits as moderator variables. The magnitude of personality change was highest among fourth-year students, with no significant differences observed among the remaining three years of study. Overall, the findings suggest the presence of personality changes or trait variability in acting students. However, these changes cannot be conclusively attributed to the process of role preparation. Further research with more stringent methodologies is needed to better understand the role of acting in personality change.

Keywords : personality change, psychology of acting, empathy, disintegraton

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