



ACTING SKILLS IN WORKING WITH IMAGINARY OBJECTS AND ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL BASIS

Zamira Akhmedova

Associate Professor, Department of Dramatic Theater and
Cinematography, Uzbek State Institute of Arts and Culture

Abstract

This article analyzes one of the most essential elements of acting—the process of working with imaginary (non-existent) objects. Based on K.S. Stanislavski’s principle of the "magic if" and Michael Chekhov’s theory of inner psychological energy, the study explores methods for achieving harmony between an actor’s attention, imagination, and physical action.

Keywords: Magic if, scenic attention, creative imagination, inner energy, space, physical action, psychological justification.

Introduction

Acting is the art of movement. The environment surrounding the actor on stage is often artificial (decoration, props). Therefore, the actor is required to “see” what is not there, to give a different quality to what is there (for example, plywood) (for example, a heavy palace door).

Working with imaginary objects serves as an “alphabet” in honing the actor’s internal technique.

“If only” and attitude to the object

According to the teachings of K.S. Stanislavsky, an actor should approach any prop on stage with the question “what would I do if this object were real?”

K. S. Stanislavsky’s famous phrase “if only” constitutes the essence and foundation of the actor’s work. This tool acts as a “magic key” that transfers the actor from real reality to the world of fantasy and stimulates internal creative activity.



“On stage, the actor must accept the artificial objects (decorations, props) that surround him as they are, because a living and healthy eye cannot deceive the artificial into believing that they are real.”¹ But the actor must change his attitude towards these objects with the help of “if”. For example, if the actor has a bunch of rope lying under his feet, and his eyes are looking at the rope, he must set the internal condition “what if instead of this rope there is a snake?” As a result, instead of the usual attitude towards the rope, an attitude of danger and horror is expressed towards a real snake.

Also, each source on the stage (object, person or scene) requires the actor to look at it with the eyes of a symbol. The actor, using his imagination and “magic if”, can perceive an ordinary teapot as a “bomb” or a sheet of plain paper as a “letter with a terrible message” and act accordingly.

Attitude is the basis of any action, and the identity of the symbol is determined precisely by its attitude towards the surrounding objects and events. Only when the actor can connect the inner attitude that has arisen through the “magic if” with physical movement, a true creative state and artistic reality arise on stage. The rightly chosen environment and the sense of imagination created with the help of the “if” encourage the actor to live a new life and make the creative process logical and productive.

If an actor has a bundle of rope under his feet, his eyes should look at the rope, but his thinking should give it the quality of a “snake”. In this case, as a result of the change in attitude, the physical movement also changes - the actor begins to wriggle from the rope like a snake.

In the art of acting, a change in attitude is the actor’s ability to change his inner view of objects, events or his companion (partner) on stage with the help of his imagination and internal technique and give them a new quality from the point of view of the image.

The main aspects of attitude change can be classified as follows:

1. “If only” is the key to attitude change

K.S. Stanislavsky’s expression “if only” (if only) is the main tool for changing attitudes. Essence: The actor sees artificial objects on the stage (decoration,

¹ Ж. Маҳмудов. Актёрлик маҳорати. Тошкент: «Фан ва технология». 2012



props) as they are, but through the condition “what if this object is something else?” he expresses a new attitude towards it.

Example: A bundle of ordinary rope lying on the stage appears to the actor to be a rope, but with the internal condition “what if this rope is a snake instead of a snake?” the attitude towards it changes to fear and disgust.

2. Attitude is the basis of action

The sources emphasize that if the tool of acting is action, then at the heart of any action lies attitude.

An actor cannot begin a logical and truthful action on stage without changing his attitude.

Working on a role means, in fact, finding the attitude of the character to the surrounding reality.

3. The identity of the character is determined by attitude

The identity of a person (or character) is manifested through his attitude to objects, people and events.

For example, if a simple plywood door on stage is an ordinary object for the actor, then for the image of the "servant" it is a majestic "door to the khan's palace", which should arouse fear and excitement in him.

4. Types of stage attitude

Attitudes are divided into two stages:

Habits and attitudes formed in the character's life before the events of the play begin.

A change in attitude towards new events and facts that occur during the action on stage. Each new fact requires the actor to update his attitude and assess the situation.

5. Internal and external balance

A change in attitude affects not only the psyche of the actor, but also his physical condition. The correctly found attitude ensures the freedom of the muscles and makes the movements natural. Only when the actor believes in the “internal



attitude” created in his imagination, a truly creative situation arises on stage, and the audience believes in it.

The change of attitude allows the actor to transform stage convention into artistic reality. The right attitude saves the actor from playing "falsely" and makes his performance lively and impressive.

Concentration of attention: In order to believe in the "realness" of an imagined object, one must focus on its small details. For example, in order to imagine an ordinary teapot as a "bomb", one must first carefully observe its color, shape, and the flowers in it, and then, with the power of imagination, give it a dangerous quality.

Concentration of attention (stage attention) in acting is the most important technical tool that allows the actor to control his creative process, achieve freedom on stage, and convince the audience of the reality he is creating.

The main aspects of focusing attention can be classified as follows:

1. Types of stage attention

External attention: Focused on objects and objects outside the actor, perceived through the organs of vision, hearing, taste, touch and smell.

Internal attention: Focused on the actor's own mental states - thinking, imagination, memory and emotional experiences.

Voluntary and involuntary attention: While in life attention often begins involuntarily (accidentally), on stage the actor must voluntarily focus his attention on a specific object and control it.

2. Circles of attention (according to the Stanislavsky system)

To facilitate the concentration of attention, it is divided into three circles in terms of space:

Small circle of attention: A small area immediately surrounding the actor and the objects in it. In this circle, the actor can feel "alone" and concentrate his attention to the highest level.

Medium attention span: Covers a specific part of the stage, furniture, and partners.

Large attention span: Covers the entire stage area and the inside of the portal.



3. The importance of stage attention

Achieving freedom: By focusing attention on a single point (object), the actor gets rid of the tightness (tension) on the stage and relaxes his muscles.

“Protection” from the audience: An inexperienced actor’s attention involuntarily wanders to the auditorium, which increases excitement.

Focusing on the stage protects the actor from the negative influence of the auditorium and returns him to the life of the stage.

Animating the object: The actor gives a new quality (snake) to an ordinary object (for example, a rope) with the help of his thinking and attention. In this process, attention expands the essence of the object.

4. Exercises to sharpen attention

The sources recommend the following practical exercises to develop attention:

Distinguishing sounds: In the silence of the room, try to hear the sounds coming first from the street, then from the corridor, and then from the next room separately.

Mirror exercise: One student repeats the actions of another student exactly as if in a mirror.

Rhythm and rhythm: Memorizing the rhythm of the teacher's applause, repeating it without fail and passing it on to a partner.

Object observation: Observing several objects for five minutes, then describing their location, color, and shape from memory.

Concentration of attention is the actor's "trap" on stage, which arouses emotions, initiates action, and ensures the continuity of the creative process.

2. The connection between physical movement and internal energy. In the exercises of M. Chekhov and K. Stanislavsky, working with an imaginary object is considered the main factor that activates the actor's internal strength (energy).

Emotional memory: In order to "grasp" an imaginary object, the actor must first remember the experience of dealing with this object in real life. For example, when lighting an imaginary match, the actor must feel the weight of the matchbox, the friction of the wood, the heat and smell of the fire.

Internal and external movement: Without changing the external appearance of the body, it is necessary to evoke a strong wave-like movement in the psyche. If the



actor is lifting an imaginary heavy stone, his muscles should feel the real weight, but this movement should not be "mechanical", but obey the command of the "internal actor".

3. Practical exercises and their importance - The following exercises are recommended for developing imagination in acting lessons:

Movement without an object: Cut a lemon in your imagination, feel its sour taste and smell. Feeling space: Move as if standing in water up to your throat. This exercise helps you feel the flow of internal energy in your body from one point to another.

Transformation of an object: When passing an object (for example, a book) from hand to hand, constantly change its name and quality (hat, snake, turtle).

Conclusion

Working with objects in your imagination saves the actor from "false" performance on stage and brings him to a truly creative state. The richer the actor's imagination and thinking abilities, the more he can bring any inanimate object on stage to life and convince the audience of the reality of the scene

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