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ROLE-BASED TRAINING IN STAGING AN EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to try to determine the role of actor role-based training in staging an educational performance and address the creative issues of the improvement of this process in a higher drama school. **Methods.** There are two levels of research – cultural and art studies – that determine the application of the interdisciplinary approach to a complex methodological system. There is an analytical method to investigate the conceptual approaches on which actor role-based training is based. The systematisation method is used to create a training system in staging an educational performance in the paper. **Scientific novelty.** The author first studies the process of role-based training in producing an educational performance of the graduate students in a higher drama school and considers the specifics of the word, which has a semantic field, which reproduces semantic and associative series in a performer's mind. **Conclusions.** Training can become the main professional skill in working on such a role that the actor has to master in the creative process of staging an educational performance. Training is not a set of fixed exercises learned in a higher drama school, but the ability to constantly look for different ways of working on a role. The solution of the problems of theatre pedagogy, connected with transformation and regulatory role of the word in an actor's behaviour on stage, is a necessary part of the continuation of K. Stanislavsky's search, which remains unfinished, but still attracts attention. It has been proved that role-based training, which has a psychophysiological fact, is necessary for creating specific conditions in the actor's approach to educational performance. Training requires systematisation, in which feelings are born, formed, and developed dynamically in the process. It has been ascertained that acting is not a performing act but a profound creative process involving both the conscious and the unconscious.

Keywords: psychotechnique; role-based training; given circumstances; educational performance; imagination; atmosphere

Relevance of the research topic

Modern stage art requires the improvement of forms of training and development of the psychophysical apparatus of future actors and the creation of a complete training system at all stages of training in theatre school, which is one of the main modes of professional existence and thinking. Actor training changes over time supplemented with new exercises; metamorphoses occur with the old ones.

It has been proved that Stanislavsky's system anticipated the development of the natural disciplines largely and have aroused active interest among scientists-psychologists and physiologists. Now we are witnessing the mutual influence of the performing arts and the human sciences. The representatives of related sciences analyse acting creativity in scientific developments mainly.

In our opinion, the contemporary theatre school remains alienated from K. Stanislavsky's teaching about words in many ways. The problem is a focus on the peripheral processes of developing the apparatus of external implementation out of the general creative and psychological processes. The most challenging thing, in our opinion, is the activation of the "depths" of the creative personality. It is the purpose of role-based training in staging an educational performance in a higher drama school.

Analysis of the latest research and publications

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Researchers mostly focus on the theoretical aspects of actor training in drama school, namely psychotechnique and the etude method. M. Barnych (2018, p.11) reveals aspects of "how an actor can control his body and reproduce and create outwardly what happens with the breathing, voice, facial expression, speech and general behaviour of the character at the same time". N. Davitashvili and M. Ludov analyse the modern experience of the national Georgian school of theatre pedagogy in the context of didactic verification of Vsevolod Meyerhold's biomechanical training. The block of pieces of training proposed by the authors for analysis and implementation in pedagogical practice "prepares the body [...] for considerable strain and is aimed not only at the improvement of performance skills but also stage attention" (Davitashvili and Ludov, 2020. p.229). N. Donchenko (2016, p.72) emphasises that the basis of an actor's work on a role is the path "through the conscious psychotechnique of the actor to the subconscious creativity of his organic nature". Theatre theorist and practitioner L. Gracheva (2011) emphasises that training is absolutely necessary at the initial stages of an actor's education and throughout their creative biography. Art historian M. Krypchuk (2015, p. 225) emphasises that the etude is "an effective means of actor's thinking". Researcher L. Lymarenko (2009) proves: Training is an active form of group work and an effective form of individual activity of each participant [...] of the theatre on himself. The path to discovering the possibilities of personal gifts lies through learning the secrets of psychotechniques, constant training of the psychophysical apparatus". Yu. Starostin (2016, p.201) raises the problems of actor training rather superficially and believes that "one of the problems [...] of contemporary theatre is the problem of actor technique". V. Filshtinsky (2006) considers etude to be a special field where there are no limits to an actor's creativity and improvisation.

Unfortunately, the solution to the problems of using role-based training in preparing an educational performance remains beyond researchers' attention.

The purpose of the study is to determine the role of actor role-based training in the general process of educational performance preparation and to solve the creative challenges of improving this process in a higher drama school.

Main research material

Continuing the research on the problems of the creation of theatre performance in a higher drama school, attention should be paid to role-based training.

Actor training is not only a means of teaching the future actor, not only the “scales and arpeggios” for the preparation of psychotechnique in the ability to use the skills of the profession acquired in drama school but also the essential skill that must remain the basis throughout an actor’s creative career.

The majority of training elements should be included in the daily actor arsenal and become a ritual of life. Only in this case, it is possible to continue the development of the actor’s personality after graduating from a higher drama school. In this sense, exercises for the development of all elements of psychotechnique should remain with students throughout their lives.

In senior years, especially during occupational training, when they work on the course play actively, and each student plays a role, this involves individual training, new creative connections between the exercises and the main content of the acting classes. In our opinion, it is important to assimilate a through-line of action and the “heart of role” during this period.

Actor training as an integral part of actor education is represented by a large number of methods nowadays. Various techniques that help an actor do the performance have long been known. It should be noted that only with the appearance of Stanislavsky’s system can we talk about a complex, conscious, theoretically correct well-grounded influence on the actor’s psychophysical apparatus (Stepanova, 2006).

Despite the research on issues related to actor training, the role-based aspect has been poorly studied in Ukrainian art studies. In any case, this process is based on the discoveries of psychophysiology, psycholinguistics, which are aimed at closing with the role and has a psychophysiological justification.

It should be noted that thought management, inner speech, vision are key concepts in role-based training. An actor creates an entirely different personality with another consciousness and another behaviour on stage very often. A behavioural act is always guided by a consciously set goal conditioned by thinking.

Another person’s consciousness begins with a change in the actor’s thinking. In this sense, a person’s language and, therefore, their way of thinking determines the circumstances of life selected by an individual; this is the ecological niche of human existence. The environmental niche can be expanded by expanding the boundaries of language. The theory of language games is based on the fundamental premise that with the help of a particular language one explores the edges into which they have been transposed. An ecological niche is a framework which boundaries can be expanded or altered with a language. In this sense, according to the author, the most important thing is imagination, which activates the brain, making it function according to the given circumstances. In stage creativity, the activity of the human body is determined by the content of imagination.

Producing an educational performance, imagination and thinking are a single whole. However, thinking is trainable, self-governing, whereas imagination is guided by thought arising from the awareness of the unconscious before this point of perception.

The thought can be logical or illogical. Not every thought is accompanied by a vision that arises rather from illogical thoughts related to perception and awareness of the associative, affective.

Visions cannot be ordered and memorised, because in this case there appear not visions that activate our senses, body, mind, make us turn away from the deliberate logic of behaviour and thinking, but a list of studied, provided so-called "pictures" when we know everything in advance. It is rather an abuse of imagination, preventing true thinking, imagination, perception.

Considering the latest studies in the field of psycholinguistics in the context of the fundamental provisions about the adjustable role of words in the organisation of actor's behaviour on stage, attention is drawn to the study of L. Gracheva (2005, p.39), who develops "action training" and "role-based training" in the context of the development of psychotechnique and "mechanisms of thinking in search of its special (actor's) training".

It is owing to the word that images arise at different levels. However, the word changes its content and systemic meaning in human consciousness development. At the first stage, consciousness effectively reflects the world, while later, it has a visual and efficient nature. "Only at the final stage consciousness acquires an abstract verbal-logical nature, different from the previous stages both in its meaning and in its systemic structure" (Luria, 1998, p. 44).

When we are talking about creating an author's image, then all stages of the stage personality's formation and consciousness must also be observed here. The actor comprehends the way of thinking, finds freedom through the text of the play. In this case, the course of role creation from the way of thinking to the personality is possible. Art historian M. Barnych (2019, p.67) considers: "The process of thinking and imagination must be removed from the public performance of the role. [...] In the public process, what was addressed to the actor earlier when working on the role is addressed to the audience". And one cannot disagree with this. At the same time, the researcher emphasises:

In a text-less role without text, it is not the process of thinking that works but the process of perception. When one perceives something, one neither thinks in words, imagines, nor analyses intentionally, but simply perceives – sees and hears. Thinking is not lost at this moment, it is carried out, but it's absorbed by perception. In fact, this elusive and imperceptible thinking process is triggered and used by the actor in the role. (Barnych, 2019, p.67)

A word has a semantic field; that is, saying or perceiving a word involves a mechanism of reproduction of the semantic, associative series related to it, individual to each person in the brain.

For a professional actor, the words spoken by a character have the exact semantic fields of a particular person. We can unravel the circumstances of life from what a character says or what is said about him or her while watching the play. But it turns out that the very proclamation of an exact text gives rise to something in the actor's brain that connects with the content of the character's consciousness because there is also the factor of frequency of word use in the language. It's about the coincidence of language rhythms. In this process, we both set the language code, encode a holis-

tic information exchange, and create the general psychophysical context of language and a certain mental attitude. The researcher L. Gracheva (2011) draws attention to this.

The main task in training the actor's thinking is to "inhibit" their own semantic fields, selectivity of words and expand their previous experience to the "experience" of the role. Theatre teachers often misinterpret the concept of "inner speech", and experts require a performer to speak the inner speech aloud. In this way, we interfere with his thinking process needlessly; we stop the actor's real inner language, replacing it with an ersatz of the inner pseudo-language of the role. The inner language cannot be spoken. It is only possible to verbalise the course of thoughts and deliberation; that is, the inner language is used if necessary. The author considers it's possible not at every moment of life in the etude and the role.

The opposite value is given to training on thinking in the development and utterance of the actor's inner speech. It is namely the language of the actor, not the role. This process is really important for the awakening of imagination in the context of working on the role and developing the emotional sphere.

The actors rehearsing, for example, the Voynitsky character based on A. Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* play, were offered a topic for reflection aloud "My life has been a failure." (the text from the third act). It should be noted that these words arouse certain chains of associations when they are uttered. This can be applied both to the performance of the role and to the actor's life and previous experience.

In the pre-performance thinking-imagination training, the actor often uses the word as a regulator of the imagination in practice. Sometimes the performers recite the character's past to themselves, sometimes force the body to live at an intense, active rhythm, they recite the author's text of any scene in this rhythm preparing the climax. For example, the student playing the role of Serebryakov recites the scene from the second act, in which the need for change in his life with his wife becomes obvious.

It should be considered that it is possible to set oneself up with words because associations, thinking, inner speech and feelings are activated. At the same time, physical actions do not affect the necessary brain mechanisms. The thinking is influenced by the rhythm of physical life and only the rhythm, even if the nature of the physical activity has nothing to do with the role. Still, at the moment of "mental activity", the actor will simply move (walk) to the appropriate rhythm.

The duration of the exercise, the conscious, volitional retention of speech, and therefore thinking about the topic are significant for training real incitement (activation of thinking on a given topic).

It should be emphasised that the training of thinking must be based on mechanisms that are effective in life, namely: first, inner speech in the role and the etude must appear passing through the stages of its occurrence in a child: the utterance of the whole stream of consciousness on the topic in a detailed form, whispering, the transition to the proper inner speech in a non-detailed form; second, just as with children, the utterance of a stream of consciousness on a topic should be subject to control only to a small extent (correctness/incorrectness of analysis); third, the emotional context in telling yourself about the character has justifying nature of everything that happened

in the hero's life, and should be dialogical in nature; fourth, the word is the most important step in the transition from sensory to rational cognition, that is, it is the most important tool for the formation of human consciousness, it is a tool for the creation of a fictional personality. The more the author "speaks" about the life of the role, the more expressive the consciousness of the fictional personality is for him; fifth, the word, the sound of a person's speech has a volitional nature and, therefore, rhythm and frequency that affect the rhythms of human consciousness and existence, emotions and behaviour, etc.

In role-based training, the actor's imagination is activated by the word (it should be noted that not by the author's text, but the actor's own words, born in thinking that are provoked by the author's text). The actor forms a new consciousness and, therefore, a new personality. The exercises help not only to adjust the psycho-emotional sphere to the circumstances of the etude but also to prepare the body for the imaginary circumstances in their entirety, starting with the imaginary feelings.

First, one needs to learn to perceive imaginary reality. It is known that perception is inseparably linked with feelings. Thus, the first step in working on a role, the first step of getting closer to it is the training of imaginary feelings in the role. Imaginary feelings in the circumstances of the role are one of the most important aspects of the actor's imagination. One has to train their body (heart, breathing, etc.) to subordinate to the imagination, to make it function according to the given circumstances, which are set by the words "uttered" to oneself (what one sees, hears, feels, thinks).

58 With the help of role-based training, problems of disclosure of the atmosphere of the particular scene in production are solved. The "accumulation of a problem situation" should be added to the complete analysis of the play's given circumstances. In this case, another task should be added in addition to the proposed development of rhythm in "speech" in the training of sense of rhythm. For example, in the initial process of auditions for W. Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* play, students proposed the *Morning in the Capulet House* etude, in which not only the characters of the play appeared in the circumstances of that morning, but also other residents who were not in the dramatic work (a cook, a personal doctor, a gardener, etc.), who, as it seemed to the students, were necessary for the existence of the house.

There were no thrilling external events in this work. However, it is interesting to watch how the participants' relationship develops the way of life in this house. In this training, the common past of all participants emerged, the relationship between them and the relationship of each of them to the owner and Signora Capulet were established, and the characters (not W. Shakespeare's ones) who were interesting and played their part in the life of the house were justified. The "accumulation" of each participant's imagination and the characters' common past is important in this process.

Every problem that arises in the production process in working on the role must be solved with the help of specially created training exercises. It can result in a number of new exercises that are necessary when working on a particular performance.

Scientific novelty. In the article, the process of role-based training in staging an educational performance in the senior years of a higher drama school is studied for the first time, the specifics of the word, which has a semantic field, which reproduces semantic and associative series in a performer's mind, are considered.

Conclusions

To summarise, it can be stated that role-based training, which has a psychophysiological justification, is a necessary prerequisite for the creation of specific conditions in the actor's work on educational performance.

In role-based training, it is impossible to plan the result in advance. Feelings are born, formed, and developed dynamically in the process. There is no exception to the given circumstances, as it sometimes happens in actor's etudes. There is a complete immersion in another life, which creates a single creative process.

Training can become the main professional skill in working on such a role that the actor has to master in the creative process of producing an educational performance. Training is not a set of fixed exercises learned in a higher drama school, but the ability to constantly look for different ways of working on a role. The solution of the problems of stage pedagogy, connected with transformation and regulatory role of the word in an actor's behaviour on stage, is a necessary part of the continuation of K. Stanislavsky's search, which remains unfinished, but still attracts attention.

In the author's opinion, the study of the art studies backgrounds of actor training in the context of the latest performative practices, in which the improvisational skills of actors are key ones, is promising. It is the subject of the author's further scientific research.

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РОЛЬОВИЙ ТРЕНІНГ У РОБОТІ НАД НАВЧАЛЬНОЮ ВИСТАВОЮ

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Анотація

Метою статті є спроба визначити роль акторського рольового тренінгу в загальному процесі підготовки навчальної вистави, розв'язання творчих проблем удосконалення цієї роботи у вищій театральній школі. **Методологія.** Два рівні дослідження – культурологічний і мистецтвознавчий – визначили застосування міждисциплінарного підходу до складної методологічної системи. У роботі використано аналітичний метод під час дослідження концептуальних підходів, на яких ґрунтується акторський рольовий тренінг, та метод систематизації для створення системи тренінгу в роботі над навчальною виставою. **Наукова новизна роботи.** У статті вперше досліджено процес проведення рольового тренінгу під час створення навчальної вистави на старших курсах вищої театральної школи, розглянуто специфіку слова, яке має смислове семантичне поле, що відтворює у свідомості виконавця смисловий та асоціативний ряд. **Висновки.** Тренінг може стати головною професійною навичкою в роботі над такою роллю, яку актор повинен опанувати у творчому процесі створення навчальної вистави. Тренінг не є набором незмінних вправ, засвоєних у вищій театральній школі, він є вмінням постійно шукати різні власні шляхи в роботі над роллю. Розв'язання проблем сценічної педагогіки, пов'язаних з перевтіленням і регулювальною роллю слова в поведінці актора на сцені, є необхідною складовою продовження пошуків К. Станіславського, що залишилися незавершеними, але привертають увагу й донині. Доведено, що рольовий тренінг, який

має психофізіологічне обґрунтування, є необхідною умовою створення специфічних умов у роботі актора над навчальною виставою. Тренінг вимагає систематизації, де почуття народжуються, формуються та динамічно розвиваються в процесі виконання. З'ясовано, що акторське мистецтво – це не виконавчий акт, а глибокий творчий процес, що зачіпає як свідомість, так і несвідоме.

Ключові слова: психотехніка; рольовий тренінг; запропоновані обставини; навчальна вистава; уява; атмосфера

