

## PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF SPECIALISTS OF ACTING BASED ON A COMPETENCY-BASED APPROACH

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**Abstract:** The purpose of the research lies in improving the professional training of specialists of acting by applying international practices and domestic experience in educating a competent professional. For the purpose of the research, a critical analysis of domestic and foreign literature was carried out, which made it possible to systematize information about the features of the competency-based approach, the professional development of the specialist of acting, key pedagogical approaches to the professional training of specialists of acting. The results of the research show that professional competencies are an integral part of higher education; they are also a priority area for the development of modern education, based on foreign experience.

**Keywords:** competencies, acting skills, pedagogy, competency-based approach.

### 1 Introduction

Currently, it is significant to update the models of professional training of specialists in various industries. Specialists of acting are no exception. In the conditions of the new statehood formation and the democracy building in Ukraine, special attention of scientists, practitioners, activists, public figures, artists is attracted to the issue of forming a purposeful, creative, humane and open to communication personality, capable of self-fulfilment and self-actualization. The contemporary education system is based on the formation of professional qualities of specialists. However, the formation of universal values of the citizen is a promising direction of development of our state and the establishment of a democratic system.

Art has a significant impact on the inner emotional world of each person; consequently, the specialists, working in this direction, are the bearers of universally recognized human values. This is precisely why the quality of their training attracts the attention of numerous teachers, psychologists, critics, philosophers, practitioners of acting.

The relevance of addressing issues related to training specialists of acting (actors of theatre and cinema, film and theatre directors, announcers, heads of circles (clubs) and studios, music and artistic directors) is stated in government regulations as follows: the Laws of Ukraine "On Education", "On Higher Education", "On Culture", the Decree of the President of Ukraine "On the Strategy of National-Patriotic Education of Children and Youth for 2016-2020", "On Theatres and Theatre Business", "On Cinematography", "On Approval of the Long-Term Strategy for the Development of Ukrainian Culture - Reform Strategy". All these state instruments form special, national and cultural requirements for the creation of a new specialist.

These documents define the priority principles in the field of acting, namely: democracy, decentralization of cultural management, complementary subsidiarity, intercultural dialogue, etc. (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2016).

However, a new practice of training specialists based on a competency-based approach has recently appeared in Ukraine. This approach is not innovative for Ukraine; it is widely used in many countries, and it is the basis for the formation of creative specialists (Lokshyna, 2008; Lugovyj, 2009). The emergence of this approach is related to the actual requirement of the modern education system, due not only to the significant spread of information technology, but also to the situation in the society.

The purpose of the research lies in improving the professional training of specialists of acting by applying international practices and domestic experience in educating a competent professional.

In order to achieve the purpose outlined, the following tasks should be accomplished, namely:

- to conduct a critical review of the literature on the training of actors by using different approaches;
- to determine the specifics of the competency-based approach;
- to determine the specifics of the professional development of the specialist of acting;
- to identify key pedagogical approaches to the formation of specialists of acting by using a competency-based approach;
- to consider the problems of applying a competency-based approach to training specialists of acting.

### 2 Literature Review

The issues of training specialists of acting are sufficiently described in the scientific literature. For the purpose of conducting the present research, foreign and domestic scientific literature covering this issue has been analysed. Stamati, (2022) in his study shows the importance of a level approach to training actors, forasmuch as modern pedagogical world methodology uses gender, racial and critical theories for assessing the social representations reproduced by actors on the stage. A sufficient number of investigations have been devoted to the national approach to training actors. In particular, the study of Yoo J. (2017) should be highlighted, forasmuch as he studies the Korean approach to training actors, which is special by applying the practice of the psychophysical nature of the creative process. Similar approaches in the preparation of actors are also used in Asian acting practices described by Yi, K. (2021). Recently, in the context of globalization processes, publications related to training actors in the context of digitalization have become increasingly popular (Roznowski, 2015). Zazzali (2021) in his study has reflected the main problems related to the importance of academic education for training actors, as well as the role of social, cultural and national approaches in shaping the professional qualities of the actor. The possibility of creating an independent product that the actor can implement on his own or by assembling his own team is of great importance in the development of professional acting qualities.

As for domestic publications, numerous researchers have focused on the theoretical and methodological principles of the issue (Dmytrenko & Kramareva, 2008; Bolotov & Serikov, 2003; Khymynets, 2010; Ravem, 1999; Lugovyj, 2009). In particular, the scientific works of Raven (1999), Lugovyj (2009) consider the problems of introducing a competency-based approach into training practice. This issue is also the subject of investigation in the academic papers of Zhuk (2004), Lokshyna (2008). In general, the issue of professional training of specialists of acting on the basis of a competency-based approach is insufficiently studied, and, therefore, it is of a special scientific and practical value.

### 3 Methodology

In order to achieve the purpose outlined, as well as to perform the tasks set during the research, a complex of scientific and cognitive methods and theoretical and empirical methods has been used.

Analysis, synthesis, comparison, generalization and systematization of the research data of domestic and foreign authors form the basis of the theoretical method. Generalizations and systematization are used to determine the key theoretical

provisions of the research, to explore pedagogical experience of modern domestic and foreign approaches to training specialists of acting, educational programs of Ukrainian higher educational institutions. These approaches are used to clarify the categorical apparatus of the research.

Deductive and inductive approaches are used to identify problems and methods of solving them. The empirical methods include observation, which make it possible to diagnose the readiness level of specialists of acting for their own self-fulfilment.

#### 4 Results

Great changes are taking place in Ukrainian education. Its system is being modernized, and new requirements are being imposed on the personal and professional activities of a specialist in a particular field.

##### 4.1 The essence of the competency-based approach

The competency-based approach is a reality of modern education, which is actively implemented in the educational process, including in the process of training specialists of acting. This is evidenced by the use of this concept not only in many regulations, but also in the scientific works of domestic and foreign teachers (Kostrova, 2011; Vvedenskyj, 2004). The competency-based approach, setting its own requirements for the content, pedagogical technologies, means of control and assessment, is primarily focused on a new vision of goals and evaluation of the results of vocational education. The introduction of the concept of educational competencies into the normative and practical component of education allows solving a typical problem for higher education, when students, possessing a good knowledge of a set of theoretical knowledge, experience significant difficulties when it is necessary to use this knowledge in solving practical problems.

The concept of competency implies a certain ultimate outcome of education. It does not exist in the abstract, and it is applicable to a specific field of activity. For instance, Vvedenskyj (2004), considering professional competency, notes that it cannot be reduced to a simple set of knowledge, skills, abilities. The conceptual feature of competency is the effective use of a set of personal capabilities in order to solve professional problems.

An indicator of the formed competency, according to the viewpoint of numerous scientists, is the willingness of the specialist to join a specific activity. Kostrova (2011) and Vvedenskyj (2004) consider competency through the professional prism of activity, highlighting the importance of operational and cognitive components. According to the position of Bermus (2005), competency includes a set of personal, subject and instrumental features.

Markov, (2003) believes that competency is an individual characteristic of the degree of compliance with the profession requirements, a psychological state that allows acting independently and responsibly, with the capability and ability to perform certain job functions.

##### 4.2 The specifics of the professional development of the specialist of acting

Professional development and formation of the specialist of acting takes place in the process of active creative activity. It is considered as a process that has certain specifics and leads to the creation of a new product, and creativity is perceived as a potential, an internal resource of a future specialist, a kind of attitude to the world, which in a certain sense is opposed to a cognitive attitude.

For specialists of acting, the ability to think in images, work with literary and musical material, create highly artistic works and ideas are the necessary conditions for professional suitability; consequently, they are of particular importance (Baklanova & Zotova, 2016). In particular, such requirements are imposed not

only on actors but also on directors. Despite the fact that the director's activity is extremely diverse and multifunctional, the director's creative activity is primarily manifested in the creation of a harmonious whole work based on the skillful use of traditional and innovative means of expression. A competent director will not be able to become a professional in his field without possessing the skills and abilities of staging, among which are as follows: skills and abilities in creating a staging plan, creative organization of rehearsals, the ability to correctly choose the genre solution of the play, to translate a literary text into a figurative form, and the language of emotions and feelings – into the language of action.

Thus, the educational and cognitive activity of students - future specialists in acting, has a pronounced creative character. In this process, much attention should be paid to the issue of value-based learning and communication, the creation of educational and creative axiological environment of education in order to attract students to universal humanistic values. In such an environment, training based on understanding the possibilities of different types and genres of art, their expressive and semantic potential is of particular importance. These are music and dance, poetry and rhetoric, graphics and painting, speech and movement, make-up and costumes, sculpture and architecture. In this context, professional competency should be understood as the unity of theoretical and practical readiness of graduates of art specialities for creative activity.

Professional competencies provide as follows:

- the ability to conduct creative search independently or together with others, using special tools and methods that help to gain stage skills;
- willingness to develop, improve one's qualification and acting skills;
- willingness to create artistic images with the help of various acting tools;
- the ability to interact with the audience in a stage performance, concert, perform a role in front of a movie, camera in a studio;
- the ability to work in a creative team, adhering to one artistic idea;
- the ability to be in good shape and the psychophysical condition necessary for conducting professional activities;
- willingness to conduct acting skills workshops;
- willingness to teach the basics of acting and auxiliary disciplines in educational institutions of higher and secondary vocational education, and in the framework of educational programs aimed at advanced training and retraining of specialists.

Professional and specialized competencies involve the ability to create artistic images using acting tools based on the idea of directors in the drama theatre, cinema, and television. A stage manager is understood as a director, an artist, a music director, etc. (Suleneva et al., 2015).

##### 4.3 Pedagogical approaches to the formation of specialists of acting

The competency-based approach is able to ensure the formation of professional competencies among graduates, forasmuch as it involves as follows:

- equal relations between teachers and students, mutual respect and dialogue in the educational and creative educational process;
- joint creativity of teachers and students, enrichment of an individual with the creativity of others - in the process of mastering the theoretical and practical fundamentals of the subject;
- a holistic systemic vision of the future professional activity;
- formation of experience in solving creative tasks by setting up relative algorithms of creative activity.

From this perspective, it is clear that the teacher plays a significant role in the process of professional training of specialists of acting. In the context of the competency-based approach used to train specialists of acting, the personal position of the teacher is changing. To some extent, he becomes a consultant who uses pedagogical technologies of active creative learning. This creates conditions for active search and cognitive activity of students.

The teacher helps students to organize joint and independent activities. Due to this, they gain experience in creative activities, cooperation, mutual understanding, division of roles and responsibilities, setting a time frame for work, achieving the desired result.

“Academic knowledge” is far from all that is needed for the professional training of specialist of acting. The transition from abstract-theoretical to associative-image and system-practical cognition is required. It is the training based on a competency-based approach that makes it possible to single out students from the very first year who seek to consciously expand their knowledge, work on improving their creative abilities. At the same time, they should link the content of education with their future careers. The emphasis shifted from the knowledge assessment to a clearly defined outcome in the form of demonstrating mastery of competencies, provides a mandatory minimum of education. This makes the subject more active, and also makes it possible to meet the requirements for the quality of education on the part of the society.

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of the teacher in the process of training future professionals. Constant improvement of his skills and qualifications is becoming more and more relevant.

It should be noted that the education system does not create a new product, as in the case of economics or management. Its goal lies in turning a student into a graduate of a higher educational institution who is a specialist in acting. He is endowed with completely new personal qualities, unique abilities and skills. The graduate becomes the bearer of the knowledge gained during taking the course of the educational program. The peculiarity of such a “product” lies in the fact that the student is the subject of his own development, subject to the active participation of teachers.

However, the efficiency of training specialists of acting to a great extent depends on them. Having the desire and ability towards self-study and self-development, they significantly increase the effectiveness of the educational and creative process. It becomes obvious that the quality of a graduate is the sum of the efforts of the teacher and the student.

## 5 Discussion

Nowadays, numerous authors are inclined to use a complex of different approaches for training specialists of acting, applied according to inquiries of the consumer of the final product offered by actors. Despite the use of different approaches, including cultural, national, psychological, cognitive, acmeological (Markova, 2003), the competency-based approach remains the most important among them, which forms the ability of the actor to adapt to the market requirements and apply one or another approach in accordance with the conditions of creativity. Along with this, the basis of the competency-based approach is the ability of the actor to make decisions concerning the use of various techniques. At the same time, decision-making is formed on the basis of the obtained theoretical knowledge, practical activities, experience and specifics of activities. Such requirements to competency necessitate a flexible teaching system, which is based on the development of individual or personal rather than professional competencies. Under such circumstances, a number of controversial issues arise, which are described in the scientific works of Bermus (2005); Bolotov & Serikov (2003).

### 5.1 Problems of standardization of training specialists

The issues of standardizing the training quality of specialists of acting require considerable attention. On the one hand, in accordance with the new requirements of the Bologna process and the task of building a global single European space, it is envisaged to create a system of qualifications of higher education, according to which they would be presented in terms of workload, level of learning outcomes and competencies. Modern ideas about the transformation of educational processes are driven by the tasks of building a single European institution of higher education (Conference of European Ministers, 2009). The concept of high-quality and competent training implies a high level of professionalism, determined by a set of indicators of the object related to his ability to satisfy the established and expected needs of the organizers of the acting and the viewer. Requirements of the modern society towards the level and quality of training specialists in various fields are reflected in state educational standards. On the other hand, the possibility of applying such standards to a specialist of acting remains a matter of debate. This is due to the fact that acting skills have a multifaceted expression, and, therefore, non-standard approaches that are obtained or acquired by students outside the training process may become more popular among consumers of products. This is precisely why the training of specialists of acting in order to form a competent specialist is based on the use of creative, flexible and individual approaches. This problem is described in the scientific work of Zazzali, P. (2021), where it has been revealed that it is quite difficult to achieve the goal under standardization conditions.

### 5.2 The problem of the general quality of education

The issue of the education quality, upbringing and general development of students has become especially relevant in the context of reforming modern education (Bakhrushyn & Gorban, 2012). This is due to the need to train competitive professionals motivated to succeed. They must be able to apply the acquired competencies in the new conditions determined by the requirements of the modern labour market. The quality of training acting skills is a complex, comprehensive concept that is clearly impossible to interpret. Therefore, it is necessary that both students and teachers training specialists of acting learn to evaluate their activities in terms of fundamentality, uniqueness, personality formation and practice-oriented creative nature of learning (Raven, 1999). The issue of comparing already developed qualification requirements with current requirements and formulating requirements for university graduates in the context of the competence approach is particularly acute.

### 5.3 Implementation of an individual approach

Insufficient attention is paid to the formation of more stable, competitive and meaningful qualification indicators. This issue is especially relevant if we talk about training of specialists of acting. In this context, we can even talk about some forms of “personalized” training, which involves the use of a flexible approach based on the assessment of abilities, individually unique qualities, achievements and aspirations of each individual student as a unique creative person. In this regard, it is very important to find a way of individual creative training and development, taking into account the uniqueness of each student who is a future actor or director. In addition, it is significant for students to acquire competencies related to the production of new knowledge, methods, technologies, etc. (Bakhrushyn & Gorban, 2012).

## 6 Conclusion

Taking into account all above-mentioned, we can consider the fundamentals of the formation of students’ professional competencies as part of higher education of the personality, as one of the priorities of modern education in the field of culture and art. This makes the issue of developing professional competencies based on a deep and meaningful studying the specific features of the professional education of future

specialists of acting especially relevant. In the process of their training, it is necessary to combine the competency-based approach and the creative nature of the educational process of a higher educational institution of culture. The competency-based approach provides the opportunity for the actor to independently decide on the use of approaches in the representation of creativity in order to obtain the closest contact with the consumer of the product. The competencies of the actor are also essential in the organization of independent activities and flexibility of the actor in accordance with the environment in which he operates. The practical significance of the research lies in its using in the process of creating a methodology for training specialists of acting on the basis of the competency-based approach. The directions for future research should be aimed at studying the issue of adaptation of flexible and creative learning by using individual approaches to higher education standards applied in Ukraine.

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