Iryna Titarenko National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, PhD Student Kyiv, Ukraine kobernukirina@gmail.com

PECULIARITIES OF CONDUCTING FORUM THEATRE AS A METHOD OF DEVELOPING CONFLICT COMPETENCY OF PROSPECTIVE SPECIALISTS IN ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Abstract. The research paper deals with peculiarities of conducting forum theatre as a method of developing conflict competency of prospective specialists in advertising and public relations. It has been found out that directing motivation and values sphere of prospective specialists in advertising and public relations to constructive conflict resolution alongside with acquiring integrated knowledge on conflictology have been provided on the preparatory phase of the forum theatre; while developing conflict skills and acquiring practical experience of constructive conflict resolution have been carried out on the realization phase. The latter has been subdivided into warm-up, action, forum, preventive information and feedback phases. Methodical provision for developing conflict competency of prospective specialists in advertising and public relations has been given including familiarization with the essence of the forum theatre; performance planning; mastering search, analysis and processing methods; development; distribution of roles; mastering techniques of scenario contemporary theatre pedagogy; participating in exercises and games for improving body language, expressing feelings and actualizing personal experience; performing character roles by spectators, expressing opinions by the third party; performing roles of a stage director, actors and spectators of the forum theatre in turn. It has been stated that conducting forum theatre in the pedagogical process of H.E.E. will promote effective communication in external and internal professional environments of prospective specialists in advertising and public relations.

Keywords: forum theatre, method, developing, conflict compentency, prospective specialists in advertising and public relations

Formulas: 0, fig.: 0, tabl.: 0, bibl.: 12

Introduction. As is known, professional activities of specialists in advertising and public relations are aimed at building effective communications with internal and external environment. Conflictological training, which aims at the formation of conflictological competence of the above specialists, is an integral part of their overall professional training. At the beginning of the 2016-17 school year, the levels of maturity of conflictological competence of future specialists in advertising and public relations (Bachelor-degree students of the 3rd and 4th years) were diagnosed. The results of diagnosing the stage of conflictological competence formation of prospective specialists in advertising and public relations of prospective specialists in advertising and public relations and public relations the ability to integrate knowledge about conflict from different subjects, to use the acquired knowledge in their future professional activity (25.21%); need external stimulation in resolving conflicts (36.72). However, the majority of students (81.33%) are aware of the necessity

of conflictological training at universities. Therefore, it is important, in our view, to introduce in the learning process the methods of formation of conflictological competence which potential is insufficiently studied. One of these ways is forum theatre.

Literature review and the problem statement. Forum theatre comes from the Theatre of the Oppressed created by Brazilian director and politician Augusto Boal in the 60's of the 20th century, in times of dictatorship in Brazil. The aim of the Theatre of the Oppressed was coverage of acute socio-economic problems [Boal 1993].

Analysis of scientific papers indicates that the forum theatre is also used in the educational process, including in vocational training. Forum theatre is regarded by scientists as a way to implement interactive approach (O. Kapinus) [Kapinus 2012], a form of extra-curricular activities (O. Vyshtak) [Vyshtak 2014], a means of resolution of conflict and other social problems (E. Edeleva) [Edeleva 2004]. Jagiello J. [J. Jagiello 2012] justified the reasonability of conducting forum theatre when training managers that allow solving different organizational problems. Rae I. [Rae 2013] emphasizes that forum theatre promotes the introduction of a democratic approach to learning, development, and change in organizations. According to K. McCarthy [McCarthy 2011], participation in forum theatre encourages students to form their own active civil position and take social responsibility. Researchers McClimens A. and R. Scott [McClimens & Scott 2007] believe that forum theatre is an integral part of inclusive education and ensures the involvement of students with learning difficulties to collaboration with persons of the same age.

Kapinus O. [Kapinus 2012] distinguishes the following functions of forum theatre in the learning process of higher educational institutions: 1) training (formation of the relevant educational competences); 2) educational (expansion of outlook, acquiring knowledge about the culture of communication); 3) developmental (development of interactive skills); 4) motivational and stimulating (directing towards interaction); 5) communicative and compensatory (formation of value attitude to communication, evaluation of oneself as a subject of interaction); 6) relaxational (creation of a favourable atmosphere in class, elimination of emotional strain, "organization of success").

The research paper aims at determining the stages, methods, techniques and forms of conducting forum theatre as a way of formation of conflictological competence of prospective specialists in advertising and public relations.

Research results. At the formation stage of pedagogical experiment aimed at the formation of conflictological competence of prospective specialists in advertising and public relations, the forum theatre was introduced in unsupervised and practical work of students as a method of theatricalised representation and discussion of the conflict. As is known, the main goal of the forum theatre is to provide information and acquire skills to solve problems using own experience and that of others. The advantage of the forum theatre compared to other conflictological methods is that participating students had the opportunity not only to analyze the complex situation, but also jointly develop their own algorithm necessary actions, to create a model of optimal behaviour in this situation.

At the preparatory stage, of the forum theatre the motivational and value sphere of prospective specialists in advertising and public relations was being oriented towards constructive conflict resolution. First of all, the students were made acquainted with the essence of the forum theatre and its leading function for conflict resolution - mediatory. It is that the forum theatre helps people find mutually acceptable solutions to their problems and convince them that developing solutions which best meet the interests of all parties to the conflict depends on them.

At the preparatory stage, the students were planning phases of the forum theatre. Ten Steps to Successful Performance proposed by I. Palko were used as an indicative plan [Palko 2009]:

1. Topic determination. Search for ideas. Formulation of the problem.

2. Selection of the performance's genre.

3. Getting maximum detailed information on the chosen topic.

4. Search of original screenwriting and directing course.

5. Writing a script based on the rules of composition.

6. Selection of artwork of the performance, costumes.

7. Musical arrangement of the performance.

8. Casting according to idea.

9. Analysis and reflection on the means of activating the viewer's attention.

10. Conducting rehearsal period productively and creatively.

Actions of prospective specialists in advertising and public relations on planning the performance (independent formulation of the topic and problem of the performance, generation of ideas for writing the script, musical arrangement and artwork of the performance, formation of a creative group, collective thinking on how to make the audience interested and activate it) contributed to the development of value attitude to interpersonal relationships, perception of the other party to the conflict as a partner, readiness for dialogue interaction, overcoming differences and lack of understanding, joint search for solutions, etc.

At this stage, integrated knowledge in conflictology was obtained by prospective specialists in advertising and public relations. The students have mastered teaching material required for the preparation and making a performance independently. This material included not only information about the nature of the conflict, ways to resolve it, and the features of professional activity of prospective specialists in advertising and public relations; specifics of industrial conflicts, types of parties thereto, conflict situations and so on. The students worked on various sources of information, made notes to subsequently develop a script of the performance.

Due to this, the students mastered the methods of finding information (according to N. Medvediev) [Medvediev 2014]:

1. Audit of own knowledge base of information (files, books, audio and video materials).

2. Recommendations from friends and colleagues.

3. Different links contained in previously studied sources.

4. Search for the lists of references on specialized forums.

5. Various subscriptions for specialized mailings.

6. Participation in various electronic communities devoted to the chosen topic.

7. Visiting shops, including search in online stores.

8. Contacting experts to get recommendations on the appropriate literature.

9. Desk searches.

According to the author's recommendations, prospective specialists in advertising and public relations, having received information from the existing

knowledge base, complemented it by working with library funds, in search engines, through watching videos and listening audio materials, communication with experts on the research topic, observations, surveys, questionnaires, testing (focus groups, brainstorming, etc.).

After that, the students analyzed and processed the information obtained, singled out the main and secondary information, its interpretation according to the research objectives and audience specifics. The idea of Novikova T. [Novikova 2012] on the organization of "context of vital activity" is valuable. Students got the following sets:

1) "similar tasks have to be solved during the professional activity", which involved the use of active forms and methods of information processing (discussion, formulation of problem issues and tasks, differentiation and graduation of new information with the division of material into three groups: I know – I learnt - I want to learn; required interaction between students and materials (texts) being processed;

2) "the content of educational activity is not mere reproduction of heard or read material, but is generation of own ideas, thoughts, attitudes, thinking through the arguments" because, based on the global goals of modern education, to teach first of all to think, to structure and interpret knowledge is much more effective than endlessly accumulate information.

In developing the script the recommendations of V. Petruk and A. Zdikhovskyi [Petruk, Zdikhovskyi 2011] were used, who rightly noted that "creating a scenario is a complex, multi-level creative process that includes periods of accumulation of semantic information, formation of the idea, writing a dramatic work. Script author has to combine all its components so that this would result in a complete dramatic work".

The students were made acquainted with features of a script: on the one hand, it has a common framework similar to the dramatic works of the theatre, film, radio, TV (action, a chain of events related to the plot, actors and conflict as a struggle between characters or understanding of any conflict situation combining the components in a particular sequence (episodes and blocks) into a single unit), and specific features (real basis, single plot course). Development of the script goes through the following stages: choosing a topic, determining the idea and conflict, identifying the plot, building script course, making composition of the future script.

Observations of the researchers [Petruk, Zdikhovskyi 2011] that the main action is a reflection of the process of struggle and its twists and turns, events and clashes in which conflict is being resolved, are significant. So, the students' attention was paid to the fact that this part of the script must meet the following basic requirements:

1) a clear consistency of building the topic: each episode of a script must be built logically, being interconnected by "bridges" from the previous number to the next one;

2) all numbers and episodes should be arranged with action intensification, while one cannot move from emotionally strong to weak numbers;

3) each episode should be completed, each having in terms of its structure relative independence and completeness, underlying message, objective and place in the developments, and is aimed at the culmination which makes the idea of the performance clear.

At the implementation stage, the conflictological skills of future specialists in advertising and public relations were being developed. Distribution of roles among the students was important. The opinion of Novhorodskyi R. [Novhorodskyi 2014] is correct: a special role and place in the forum theatre is played by the presenter (joker), and his skills and abilities of a presenter are more significant than any other (special) skills and abilities. The joker's functions include:

1) stimulating the performance participants for search of ideas, the development of these ideas, selection of strategy of resolving the situation, analysis of own actions, joint discussion and making a decision on what behaviour or strategy can be effective in real life, and what cannot be;

2) maintaining dialogue between actors and audience; attentive hearing of the participants, responding to their cues;

3) relieve the tension (demonstration of tolerance; positive attitude; sense of humor; gender sensitivity, etc.);

4) making clear to participants and audience that there are no errors or "wrong" interventions in their dialogue, as the theatre is a space of play and creativity;

5) timely response to the actions of the audience if they became ineffective or repeated, switching to a different mise-en-scène or conclusion of a performance.

To remove psychological barriers, before participation in the new form of practical work the students were explained that the participants of the forum theatre are not obliged to be trained in acting, but it is advisable to learn certain acting techniques.

The recommendations given by L. Lymarenko [Lymarenko 2009] were valuable for our research, who summarized the methods of modern theatre pedagogy: introspection, setting, acting exercises. We agree with the researcher that exercises in introspection makes it possible to monitor and correct psychophysical flaws, defects of speech apparatus, disadvantages creative general state. Exercise for setting, according to the researcher, are aimed at activating all elements of internal and external general state, ensure the development of memory, imagination, physical action. We assure that these exercises also contribute to the formation of self-regulation skills of prospective specialists in advertising and public relations. Acting exercises were integrated – as a system of exercises for muscle relaxation, development of imagination; control of the elements of creative general state; determining the content and purpose of creative activity; improvement of technique and logic of speech; breeding the culture of stage movements (plastique, facial expressions, gestures, posture, coordination, rhythm). The exercises proposed by a group of authors (D. Dowset, O. Edeleva, I. Zakharchenko, etc.). [Dowset, Edeleva, Zakharchenko 2007] were also used to train tactile sensations, auditory and visual analyzers and so on.

Thus, a set of exercises was made, and games were played to work with the body, feelings and actualization of personal experience of the participants to create opportunities for dialogue, critical reflection of professional reality and active search for solutions to the problems that arise in professional activities. According to E. Edeleva [Edeleva 2004], methodical basis of the forum theatre are phases (stages) of its conducting (warm-up, action, forum, transfer of preventive information, feedback, discussion of the performance results by actors and specialists). In the study we used the author's recommendations on the implementation of these stages, making the necessary changes in accordance with the features of professional training of future specialists in advertising and public relations. At the warm-up stage (15-20 minutes) bodily exercises were made and games were played to enhance relaxation of the participants, relieve muscle tension. In addition, as rightly observed by E. Edeleva [Edeleva 2004], these exercises allow establishing contacts at the verbal and nonverbal levels between the actors and the audience, help audience faster plunge into the atmosphere of theatrical action and not be afraid to be participants of the performance. We took into account the author's recommendation to keep a certain sequence of exercises, making it more complex by their content and emotionality, attracting more and more participants into the action. The actors were also told that it is important for them to be active, relaxed, inventive and emotional, because only in this way they will be able to prepare and "charge" the audience to work in the interactive.

At the action stage the actors played 4-6 mise-en-scènes, which ended with a stop frame. Thus, the end of the performance remained open, so the audience predicted the outcome of events. The joker engaged the audience to discuss the problems, express the feelings and impressions. This was followed by a transition to the next phase - the beginning of discussion both monologue and in dialogue form.

At the forum stage the audience performed the roles of actors to develop the optimum solution of a conflict. Analysis of the research findings shows that at this stage the whole group of conflictological skills of participants of the forum theatre were actualized - communication, perceptual, prognostic, creative and self-regulation. The role of actors in this process was important who, on the one hand, played up to the audience, and on the other hand, the prevented them for the audience to search for new ways to resolve the conflict. Since the conduct of the forum theatre provided for the maximum approximation of situation being played through, to life, the audience had to realize that difficult situations cannot be resolved immediately and unequivocally. Duration of the forum stage depended on how much inventive and creative solutions were suggested by the participants.

The stage of preventive information provided for expression of thoughts by a third party. Usually, it is some expert (invited expert or from among the students). But he could perform a variety of roles, including:

1) technical expert or analyst (commenting on the processes taking place in the group, behavioral acts of individual participants, as well as speculation and informing that help participants move in the right direction);

2) reference participant (demonstration desirable and appropriate behavior patterns);

3) intermediary (an expert who is not taking responsibility for what happens in the group, but occasionally intervenes in group process and directs it);

4) member of the group (authentic person with individual features and life problems).

At the feedback stage, the audience discussed the performance, shared experiences, feelings, etc., statements on change of attitude to the problem which is raised in the performance. At this stage, attention was also focused on successful or unsuccessful actions of the actors, "discoveries" of the audience, which will help them in resolving conflicts in real life.

Experience in constructive conflict resolution was acquired by prospective specialists in advertising and public relations when the students alternately served as directors, actors, and spectators of the forum theatre. Thus, one of the

forum theatres was devoted to the communication of specialists in advertising and public relations with the representatives of media and conflicts between them.

At the warm-up stage, the exercise called "Mixture" was used. Spectators and actors focused on the similarities and differences between journalism, PR and advertising activities. Accordingly, the participants divided into three groups and "mixed" or separated from each other by analyzing the components of these sectors (goal, object, functions, basic methods, typical channels, customer, key professions, essence of work, works, genres, audience, etc.). Thus, at this stage, a relaxed atmosphere of cooperation through free movement of students, unity, cooperation was created, on the one hand, and on the other hand, their knowledge of the future profession was updated.

As a foreword, the provisions of research by H. Melnyk [Melnyk 2012] were used. It was noted that specialists in advertising, public relations, and journalists are seemingly natural partners in their daily activities. PR services provide significant and useful for the public information (press releases, background material) in various forms, and the media, in turn, use it for a broad spectrum of news thus forming public opinion. The information field is also created by journalists and prospective professionals in advertising and public relations - it is an area of mutual interest and mutual responsibility. However, despite common platform of interaction, PR services and media have their own interests, their information activities have own specifics, so conflicts may be given rise to. Media relations are realized in the following areas: 1) organization of events and activities for the media; 2) partnership programs with the media; 3) joint publications; 4) comprehensive media campaigns in the Internet media; 5) professional copyright (scripts, articles, speeches, etc.).

At the action stage, mise-en-scènes of the forum theatre demonstrated conflicts between specialists in advertising and public relations and media staff. One of the situations was devoted to the areas of responsibility. Both groups expressed distrust to one another - journalists complained that specialists in advertising and public relations give them false information and require to publish in media unidirectional positive information which is far from deep analysis, interpretation and evaluation of various phenomena from the standpoint of their social significance . However, specialists in advertising and public relations "did not trust" to journalists believing that they want to receive all the required information from their organization without taking any responsibility. These specialists also blamed journalists for commitment to certain groups (businesses, political lobby), work "to order" which leads to the manipulation of the facts, biased estimates, and judgments, etc.

At the forum stage the audience together with the actors reached the following conclusion as to resolving this conflict: developing joint position of PR service and media, which is the mutual commitment not to use unverified and unconfirmed data; to provide an objective assessment of the organization's activity that initiated the event; meet the customer's interests if it is not contrary to professional ethics, law or public interests.

Another conflict situation dealt with the deadlines of the information submission. It is known that for journalists not only timely manner is important, but also advancing others, and this is considered an indicator of professionalism. PR specialist also cannot take risks: it is important to choose the most convenient time of presenting information to get positive effect [Melnyk 2012]. Therefore, students stressed on the need to support each other, and not to let down with the deadlines.

Playing through the following scenario, the participants considered the priority problems covered by both journalists and specialists in advertising and public relations. For the former, priority is the social significance of the problem, for the latter - the importance of the position of the organization. However, the task of PR in the relations with the press is achieving maximum number of publications of advertising and PR information. At the forum stage, the spectators with the actors stressed on the need to consider as a public interest such interests of the target group in the process of interaction of specialists in advertising and public relations with the media, on the importance to recognize own mistakes, apologize and be positively minded to cooperate.

At the preventive information stage, the students serving as experts described the classic forms of contacts of the above two groups of specialists, including: press conferences, interviews, and press releases. It was noted that at the press conference the specialists in advertising and public relations, with the support of representatives of the media, can convey the message to the public that refer to the organization represented by these specialists. The experts explained that in order to avoid conflicts and criticism of journalists, it is necessary to promptly send out invitations, prepare the necessary materials and documentation; during a press conference it is advisable not to exaggerate and call a spade a spade; show respect to competitors; avoid disputes; give detailed answers to questions; be careful about the subjects which publication in the media is undesirable.

The experts stressed on the importance of knowing the nuances of interviewing for radio or television. Thus, specialists in advertising and public relations should, first of all, get accurate information about the place and the broadcast of the interview, its duration and the presence of other participants; during an interview relate own message with the time allocated; avoid flattery, compliments to the listeners or viewers; use concise meaningful proposals; keep calm and balance, even during the "uncomfortable" questions, if there is a need one cam reformulate them; think about the answers; watch over the voice and breath. During interviews on TV, one needs to take care of the culture of appearance, position, direction of view towards the audience, etc.

The experts focused the participants' attention on the requirements to the preparation of press releases. In order to avoid confusion with the media, the press release should correspond to the information media to which it is addressed. When preparing a press release it is also necessary to separate the objective information from subjective one, event from comment; present up-to-date, interesting and informative topics; present a press release correctly; place the information on the basis of answers to the question - who (the company's details, address), what (description of events, goods and services), where (venue), when (timing of the event), how (the use of a product or service), why (intended purpose of the goods or services, their benefits); avoid special (narrow and obscure) terms.

At the feedback stage, the students noted that conducting this forum theatre made it possible to better learn themselves as a subject of communication and future professional activity, identify the objective and subjective factors that lead to conflicts and to develop ways to eliminate obstacles in relations with other people.

Conclusions. Thus, in the course of conducting forum theatre conflictological competence of future specialists in advertising and public

relations were being formed in the following stages: preparatory stage and implementation stage (warm-up, action, forum, transfer of prevention information, feedback, discussion of the results of the performance by actors and experts). Therefore, when conducting the forum theatre the formation of conflictological competence of prospective specialists in advertising and public relations was carried out due to an appropriate methodological support: making acquainted with the essence of forum theatre, performance planning, mastering the methods of the information search, analysis and processing, script development, distribution of roles, mastering the techniques of contemporary theatre pedagogy, making a set of exercises and playing games to work with the body, feelings and updating personal experience, performance of acting roles by the spectators, stating opinions by a third party, alternate performance of the roles of director, actors and spectators of the forum theatre. Results of the research conducted in March 2017 showed a significant increase in the indicators of maturity of the conflictological competence of future specialists in advertising and public relations. Thus, in terms of motivational and value criteria the increase amounted to +13.04% (focus on constructive conflict resolution), in terms of the cognitive and practical criteria +26.09% (the level of assimilating knowledge) and +19.56% (the level of skills development), in terms of the control and corrective criteria +28.26% criterion (stability of conflictological position).

Prospects for further research include studying the characteristics of other ways of forming conflictological competence of prospective specialists in advertising and public relations, including the narrative construction.

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Data przesłania artykułu do Redakcji: 13.03.2017 Data akceptacji artykułu przez Redakcję: 04.04.2017