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CHARACTER AND CHARACTERIZATION: FOUNDATIONS OF ACTOR TRAINING IN THEATER EDUCATION

Abstract. *This article explores the essential concepts of "character" and "characterization" in the context of actor training within theater education. It emphasizes the significance of understanding these concepts for developing professional skills in future actors. The article discusses the methodologies for shaping a character, including techniques such as K.S. Stanislavski's system and M.A. Chekhov's method, and their application in practical training. It also outlines the necessary conditions for effective learning and the importance of integrating theoretical knowledge with hands-on experience in developing character traits.*

Keywords: *actor training, character, characterization, K.S. Stanislavski, M.A. Chekhov, theater education, professional skills, methodology, acting techniques.*

Аннотация. *В статье рассматриваются важнейшие понятия «характер» и «характерность» в контексте подготовки актёров в театральном образовании. Особое внимание уделено значению этих понятий для развития профессиональных навыков будущих актёров. Обсуждаются методики создания характера, включая систему К.С. Станиславского и метод М.А. Чехова, а также их применение на практике. Также изложены необходимые условия для эффективного обучения и важность интеграции теоретических знаний с практическим опытом в формировании актёрских качеств.*

Ключевые слова: *подготовка актёров, характер, характерность, К.С. Станиславский, М.А. Чехов, театральное образование, профессиональные навыки, методология, актёрские техники.*

AnnotatsiY. *Ushbu maqolada teatr ta'limidagi aktyor tayyorlash jarayonida "xarakter" va "xarakterlik" tushunchalarining ahamiyati ko'rib chiqiladi. Ushbu tushunchalarni tushunishning kelajakdagi aktyorlarning professional malakalarini rivojlantirishdagi ahamiyati ta'kidlanadi. Maqolada K.S. Stanislavskiy tizimi va M.A.Chexov metodikasi kabi uslublarni yaratish texnikalari va ularni amaliyotda qo'llash muhokama qilinadi. Shuningdek, samarali o'qitish uchun zarur bo'lgan shartlar va nazariy bilimlarni amaliy tajriba bilan birlashtirishning ahamiyati keltirilgan.*

Kalit so'zlar: *aktyor tayyorlash, xarakter, xarakterlik, K.S. Stanislavskiy, M.A. Chexov, teatr ta'limi, professional malakalar, metodologiya, aktyorlik texnikalari.*

Introduction

The current stage in the development of our education system is characterized by a trend of creative searches among participants in the educational system, aimed at optimizing the educational process, improving the content, methods, and organizational forms of learning.

Before discussing the technology of professional training for students of theater faculties, it is essential to clearly understand the concepts of "character" and "characteristics."

A theatrical performance involves an actor's presentation of "character," "face," or "mask." An actor is a mask-wearer; when performing on stage, they are perceived as an embodiment of something. The actor creates from themselves in two senses (demonstrating their own characteristics):

Like any artist, from their imagination.

Specifically, using their own face as the material from which a character is created.

The actor shapes their material creatively by working with their voice, intonation, declamation, gestures, facial expressions, and figure. These qualities define the actor's behavior on stage. The actor conveys the character and characteristics of the face they portray. Character and characteristics are the

content and form of their role. Special attention should be given to this in the preparation of future actors.

In the course of their professional activity, the actor acquires new objective qualities: a unique "actor's psychology," mimics, gestures, behavioral mannerisms, and compositional relationships between the form of sensory images on stage and the ideas represented by the character. The artistic task of theater is not the realization of the actor's personality or the revival of a literary image, but the sensory embodiment of an idea in the character created by the actor's creativity. Unfortunately, this is often not fully considered in the professional training of future actors.

Methods

Thus, character and characteristics are a key area in the professional preparation of future actors. Without character, there can be no characteristics, and without characteristics, there is no character. These two categories are inseparable.

For future actors to successfully and effectively master their profession, a number of conditions are necessary:

- the teacher must have knowledge of the current content of the professional concepts being developed ("character," "stage character," "characteristics," "effective analysis") based on work with scientific literature, analysis of concept definitions, and their interpretation in various theater systems;

- understanding potential sources of modern theatrical concepts and their impact on the quality of mastering these concepts;

- the implementation of theoretical knowledge into independent practical work by students;

- organizing active cognitive activity for future actors at all stages of professional learning, including research activities in the formation of new theatrical concepts;

- ongoing control over the quality of mastering professional concepts through specially developed tests, keeping in mind that the sooner a mistake is identified, the easier it is to overcome;

introducing each new theatrical concept in a motivated manner, explaining its meaning and place in the system of scientific concepts and in practice. This is often neglected in most cases.

The teaching method for future actors should focus on forming a system of professional knowledge, enabling students to expand their horizons independently and apply their knowledge in practice. Influenced by the demands of professional theater practice, all its components undergo changes in the educational process: objectives, content, methods, and organizational forms. It is important to remember that for future actors, what is truly objective is what is directly or indirectly confirmed through practice. Thus, the logical criterion for developing the methodology for mastering the profession of future actors through "character and characteristics in the methodology of effective analysis" is derived from practical experience.

Discussion and Results

In the learning process, the future actor must acquire systematic knowledge. Systematicity is the quality of a set of knowledge that is characterized by the presence of structural connections in the student's consciousness, which are adequate to the relationships within the scientific theory. It is known that systematicity is the quality of knowledge, characterized by the presence of substantive-logical relationships between individual components of knowledge. The problem of systematizing and generalizing the knowledge of future actors is becoming increasingly important in the context of raising the scientific level of students as a whole. The role of developing students' thinking and forming their scientific worldview is also growing.

The content and logical structure of the educational process for future actors includes some fundamental concepts such as "character," "characteristics," "effective analysis," and other more specific concepts like "stage character," "event," and "proposed circumstances." All of them are aimed at improving the quality and effectiveness of the learning process.

Special attention should be given to the manifestation of the character of future actors during auditions (emotional excitability, quick reaction, accuracy in performing immediate tasks). Then, as they develop the stage character, the future actor must first show their individuality and character ("I" in the proposed circumstances), filtering through the fundamental professional terms ("event," "action," "evaluation of facts"), and then reveal the "characteristics" of the character they are portraying. The character and characteristics of the character transform throughout the performance. Mastery of movement, development, and the transformation of character and characteristics using the method of effective analysis is the basis of the future actor's professional activity.

When considering character and characteristics in the methodology of effective analysis as the foundation of pedagogical technology for the entire learning process, future actors master the profession in a unified logic and sequence. This ensures their high level of professionalism.

The method of effective analysis is a method of analyzing the events of the play, proposed circumstances, character, and characteristics. Event-based analysis allows one to discover meaning and realize it in action. Action, in turn, is defined and organized by the proposed circumstances. The proposed circumstances form a holistic system of relationships between the person and the surrounding world. Events, actions, and proposed circumstances are closely interconnected. The method of effective analysis, as a method of creativity in theater, encompasses the entire artistic and creative process, penetrating all its aspects, and the method of physical actions, as a complete system of rehearsal techniques and approaches, with the essence of searching for the correct, singular action in each case. It has become a solid foundation for the professional training of actors and directors in various theatrical systems. Without understanding the essence of the methodological discoveries of K. S. Stanislavski, left as a legacy to the theatrical school, further development of both theater and theatrical pedagogy would be impossible.

Effective analysis helps the future actor uncover the dialectic of the development of dramatic character and characteristics, expressed in their actions, since each action reveals its cause-and-effect relationships.

Effective analysis assists the future actor in seamlessly entering the rehearsal process of creating a stage image. In psychological theater, effective analysis is the basis for the work of the theater teacher. In this method, character appears as the substantive (inner) side of the dramatic hero's life, their nature, feelings, truth of life, and system of relationships. Characteristics, on the other hand, are physical traits, forming the shape of the character, a system that embodies the stage image.

The teaching methodology for acting skills includes a combination of K.S. Stanislavski's system and M.A. Chekhov's method. M.A. Chekhov's method is based on a holistic philosophy of creating a stage character and synthetic approaches to it. When working on the characteristics of their future character, the future actor must be able to identify its anatomical and physiological features: thin, fat, hot-headed, beautiful, strong, weak, sick, near-sighted, blind, lame, etc. These features should be identified from the text of the play and through "role fantasizing" according to M.A. Chekhov. It must be explained to the future actor that rehearsals alone are not enough. The work on the character's traits should be done continuously, both during rehearsals and outside of them.

M.A. Chekhov proposed effective methods for working on characteristics. He suggests that at the first stage of character work, the actor should identify the differences between themselves and the character in three areas: mind, feeling, and will. By discovering the differences between themselves and their character, the future actor must gradually incorporate them into the created stage image. Next, M.A. Chekhov suggests identifying the "centre" of the character, where all the main psychological traits and features converge. For example, arrogance and cynicism may be externally expressed in a slightly raised eyebrow, a protruding jaw, or a crooked smile. These "points" can be conditionally called the "centre" that expresses the essence of the character.

The third method of transformation in creating a stage image, according to M.A. Chekhov, is playing with the "imagined body." When reading the play, the future actor must imagine the "body" of their character and mentally encounter it. The "imagined body" should exist between the stage image and the student; for instance, if the character's neck is longer and thinner than the actor's, they should try to elongate it. Externally, the future actor will always feel "on alert," which already manifests the psychological outline of the role. According to the fourth method of transformation or creation of a stage character, M.A. Chekhov suggests that the future actor should list all the stage actions their character must perform, in a sequential order, from the beginning to the very end of the character's stage life. Once this list is ready, the student should try to carry out all these actions. This will help the future actor build a continuous line of their role.

By using all four methods of transformation, the future actor will create a unique and individual stage image. "I play this role my way, as no one else will. I do not imitate anyone, I do not borrow from anyone. I express myself through the mask of my hero, transforming into them" [4, p. 112], states M.A. Chekhov.

The "mask" – character and characteristics according to M.A. Chekhov, into which the future actor transforms, allows the expression of their "I" in relation to the image. Through the "mask," the future actor on stage expresses their true feelings and authentic attitude toward the character they are portraying.

M.A. Chekhov's method, according to theater critic A.G. Morov, is the system of "new acting." In the professional training of future actors, it is essential to rely on both his theoretical and practical developments.

Characteristics form the role. A character without form is not an image. Character and characteristics are inseparable categories of the artistic image of the role. The "seed of the role" is the concept of the role's form. The "seed of the performance" is the idea expressed in the image form. The future actor should remember that the "seed of the role" is in the adjustments, as it reveals the individuality of the stage character they create. The logic of the stage character's actions will lead the student to the correct emotional logic, expressing character

through action. The future actor must understand that "the purpose of our art is not only the creation of the 'life of the human spirit' of the role, but also its external transmission in artistic form" [2, p. 127].

Significant attention should also be paid to elements conditioned by the character's costume. The costume is linked to specific plasticity and behavior. The teacher must pay special attention to this stage in the role preparation. External characteristics that do not depend on the internal life of the character also include traits related to a person's profession. The future actor must observe how people from various professional fields behave in real life.

Substantial importance when working on external characteristics is placed on national and local peculiarities, both in speech and in movements. To master these peculiarities, the future actor must begin work as soon as they receive their role, as this is a labor-intensive process. All these stages of role preparation should be considered part of the student's independent work, with the teacher's feedback.

When creating the stage character, the future actor must understand how the character will act in the conflict embedded in the play. Three parameters determine the fullness of the character: physical appearance; psychological portrait; life in a social environment.

Conclusion

The future actor must be able to construct a "life story" of their character based on the information in the play. To do this, the student needs to identify all the facts of the character's life from the lines of other characters, the author's description, and stage directions. These facts should then be arranged within the play's timeline. This creates a unified line of the character's life, their "romance." The student must also fantasize about the character's life before the play begins and after it ends. After fully composing this "life story," the student will learn to think and act in the logic of their character. The events outlined in the play should be compared with the character's life events – this will enrich and deepen the character and their characteristics.

By identifying the character's traits, the future actor should be able to sharpen the proposed circumstances in the play. The proposed circumstances must be close and understandable to the future actor, they should stimulate their emotional nature and generate organic feeling.

To give the stage character depth, the future actor, while working on the image, must ask themselves questions related to their character. It is advisable to begin work on creating the character with "studies from the past life," beyond the immediate action of the play. Studies help the student understand the "through-line" of the play. During the rehearsal period, a task should be given: analyze the character's role across the entire play, from the perspective of their character. In this way, the future actor will determine all of their character's actions, goals, and relationships with other characters. Through such analysis, the future actor will be able to build the core of the role and understand the character and characteristics of the character.

Thus, the fundamental section in the process of training future actors should be the section "character and characteristics."

The technology of professional training for future actors in the country is structured differently. Some theater teachers base their teaching on the system of K.S. Stanislavski, while others combine Stanislavski's system with the new approaches of E.M. Grotowski, etc.

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