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**DEVELOPING PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCE OF FUTURE ARMY OFFICERS THROUGH THE USE OF ROLE-PLAYING GAMES**

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**Abstract**

Psychological and pedagogical training is insignificant at military educational institutions, so its results do not meet the needs of the armed forces as to a high level of psychological and pedagogical competence of officers who are in constant contact with servicemen while training and educating them. One way to solve this problem is to intensify the practical component of psychological, pedagogical or leadership courses by using role-playing games when cadets give mini-lectures and psychological workshops. Substantiation of expediency and study of use of the specified role-playing games makes the purpose of the research which tasks include defining the essence of psychological and pedagogical competence of future army officers, substantiation of the significance and experimental check of the efficiency of role-playing games as conditions of effective means for developing the specified competence.

**Keywords**

Psychological and pedagogical competence – Army officer – Cadet – Training – Role-playing

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## Introduction

### Relevance and researched problem

An officer who is a commander of a military unit needs to develop pedagogical and psychological competence and skills that determine the quality of interaction with military personnel in war, training and service in peacetime. In addition, in some armies of the world, a certain category of officers performs pedagogical functions on a professional basis. In particular, in the former Soviet army and in some modern armies of the former Soviet bloc countries, certain officers are responsible for educational work in units and providing advocacy to servicemen, which takes place in the form of lectures, talks, etc<sup>1</sup>. In other armies of the world, this function is usually entrusted to direct commanders.

It is obvious that the professional training of an army officer consists of general military courses and a training course in their military specialty. Since army officers cannot work as teachers, there is limited scope for them to receive any psychological and pedagogical training. It should be noted that in the world practice of training army officers they acquire psychological and pedagogical knowledge and skills either while studying relevant training or leadership courses, which depends on the traditions of a particular country. One can see how insignificant psychological and pedagogical training can be by giving an example of the Military Institute of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, which became a basic one for conducting the study. The total number of psychological and pedagogical courses for 4 years of bachelor's training is 15 credits or 6.25% of their total training (240 credits) for future army officers whose job duties will include performing pedagogical functions in the process of educational work and advocacy (specialty "Political Science", specialization "Military Political Science"). And for the cadets of other specialties (except for future military psychologists) the amount of psychological and pedagogical training is only 3 credits (1.25% of their total educational program).

Thus, we must admit the problem of inconsistency between the needs of the armed forces in the high level of psychological and pedagogical competence of future army officers and the existing conditions of their training which are characterized by a minimum number of pedagogical and psychological disciplines.

One of the ways to solve this problem is in the intensification of the practical component of educational disciplines of psychological and pedagogical content or leadership courses through the use of role-playing games for cadets when they give mini-lectures and psychological workshops as one of the formats of a practical class. The first type of role-playing games will effectively prepare future army officers for giving theoretical training, and the second one – for giving practical training.

The purpose of the study is to substantiate the feasibility and check the effectiveness of the use of role-playing games by giving mini-lectures and psychological workshops while training army officer as a means of developing their psychological and pedagogical competence.

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<sup>1</sup> V. G. Bezbakh, *The Theoretical Foundations for Moral and Psychological Support for Activities of the Armed Forces of Ukraine* (Kyiv: Military Institute of KNU, 2008).

## Objectives of the study

to establish the demand for psychological and pedagogical training of cadets and the essence of psychological and pedagogical competence of army officers while analysing sources on the researched problem;

to substantiate the importance of the introduction of role-playing games of giving mini-lectures and psychological workshop as a condition for its effective development;

to carry out an experimental test of the effectiveness of these role-playing games for developing psychological and pedagogical competence of future army officers.

## Research methods

Justification of the need for developing the psychological and pedagogical competence of future officers led to the use of methods of theoretical analysis, comparison and generalization while studying research papers on the problem. These methods, as well as the method of modelling the concept, were used to substantiate and provide a definition of the psychological and pedagogical competence of army officers.

The leading method of the practical part of the research was a role-playing game, which involved giving mini-lectures and psychological workshops. Seventy-six cadets of the Military Institute of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv were involved in the role-playing games.

The results of the role-playing games in view of their effectiveness were studied by interviewing cadets who provided self-assessment of the development of a number of psychological and pedagogical skills before and after them. The objectivity of the self-assessment is justified by determining the correlation between the average final value of self-assessment and the assessment that the student received from the teacher based on the results of the course (Pearson's correlation coefficient was used). At the same time, it was assumed that the success of certain training exercises, which was assessed by the teacher, is affected by the level of development of cadets' corresponding skills.

## Research results

### Literature review on the researched problem:

Psychological and pedagogical training of officers of various services is widespread in the world. The historical experience of army officer training also proves its necessity. For example, back in 1868, the military academies of the Russian Empire began using new curricula which included the discipline called "Military Administration". Their semantic units of the discipline were as follows: the latest theories in the field of pedagogy and psychology, the basics of military personnel training and education, methods of analysis and accounting of combat training, assessment of their training and combat capability<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> S. Pokhodiaev y V. Masliakov, Pedagogical training of officers in the middle of the XIX – at the beginning of the XX centuries in the system of higher professional military education. Theory and practice of education in the modern world. Proceedings of the IV International Scientific Conference. St. Petersburg, Jan 2014. (pp. 18-21), (St. Petersburg: Renome, 2014).

The Soviet military school intensified the tradition of psychological and pedagogical training of the Russian officers, emphasizing the need for political education of servicemen. This can be confirmed by the example of publications in the periodicals of the early 1930s which speak of the need to ensure the readiness of junior commanders to conduct training in the specialty and the political education of servicemen<sup>3</sup>. Excessive politicization of the Soviet army led to the emergence of a strong system of military specialists in political education. Some elements of this system can be seen in the armies of the former Soviet bloc countries until now. It should be noted that the collapse of the Soviet political regime changed the vectors of educational influence on the servicemen, but the content of educational work is still built around the values of patriotism, the history of their country, service to their nation, etc. Having got rid of the communist-ideological burden, the educational system focused on ensuring the moral and psychological readiness of a person to risk their life for the sake of not artificial, but natural human values, while certain officers must develop, maintain and renew morale (moral and psychological state) of the military personnel in order to complete the assigned tasks successfully<sup>4</sup>.

It should be mentioned that in the former Soviet army and in some modern armies of the former Soviet bloc countries the unit commanders still have deputies who are responsible for educational work and providing advocacy to servicemen. In the Soviet Army, these people at different times used to hold such positions as a commissioner (political leader) of various ranks, a morale officer (deputy commander for political work) and so on. For example, in today's Ukraine, this officer holds a position of a deputy commander for moral and psychological support.

In the vast majority of armies in the world, where the politicization of the armed forces was significantly inferior to the priority of professionalization of servicemen, there were other trends in building up a system of psychological and pedagogical interaction of officers with military personnel. In the majority of countries, the main educating and educational work is entrusted to direct commanders (in addition to them, some special units, military chaplains, public organizations, etc. are involved in educating military personnel, but their role is not as significant as the role of a commander). However, in the United States, in particular, officers receive civilian education, including a political one<sup>5</sup>. That is, graduates of higher military educational institutions are highly educated, their general outlook, erudition and competence go far beyond military science, which makes them well-prepared to perform a wide range of tasks and, among other things, carry out educating work in military units without the assistance of a special deputy.

The need to work with military personnel has led to such a trend in the army officer training worldwide as training of leaders. Accordingly, the leadership itself became the foundation in building up a system of relations between military leaders of various ranks and their subordinates. Various leadership courses have taken a prominent place in the training programs of army officers. For example, the Canadian Army General Staff Training Curriculum for all three levels of education (Pre-Commissioning/Basic Officer – platoon

<sup>3</sup> A. Grigoriev, "On training of the junior officer personnel of Army Signal Corps", Military Bulletin (1930): 24-28.

<sup>4</sup> O. Boyko, The main purpose of the structures of moral and psychological support of the Armed Forces of Ukraine: handbook for specialists of structures of moral and psychological support. 2019. Retrieved from <https://dovidnykmpz.info/zagalni/osnovne-pryznachennia-struktur-moral-no-psykholohichnoho-zabezpechennia-zsu/>

<sup>5</sup> United States Military Academy. Academic Program. Curriculum and Course Descriptions. 2020. Retrieved from: <https://courses.westpoint.edu/static/index.htm>

commander (lieutenant), Junior Officer – company commander (captain, junior major), Intermediate / Senior – battalion commander (senior major, lieutenant colonel)) contains only three large parts, one of which is Command, leadership and ethics<sup>6</sup>. It should be noted that at different levels of military qualification, future and current officers consider issues that have a pedagogical and psychological nature: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, stages of group development, group structural dimensions, team cohesion<sup>7</sup>, moral issues in military decision making, teacher/trainer's the ability to change between lecturing and coaching<sup>8</sup>, leader development techniques, values-based behaviour, individual motivation<sup>9</sup> and many others.

The examples of the demand for pedagogical and psychological education and skills of the officer-leader are ones from the curriculum of servicemen in other countries. In particular, the course Leadership, Ethics, Law, Philosophy & Psychology is taught at the US Naval Academy<sup>10</sup>. Future naval officers study the basics of psychology, social psychology, personality, leadership, and other subjects.

The leadership course is a major one at the Korean Military Academy and includes courses in communication, counselling psychology, leadership theory, etc<sup>11</sup>.

As it is stated on the official website of the US Military Academy, the curriculum at West Point is carefully designed to meet the needs of the Army for "officer-leaders of character to serve the Army and the Nation"<sup>12</sup>. In the description of the goals in the educational program in psychology, it is stated that leaders teach, train and counsel, and cadets during training will acquire relevant skills, learn how people learn and develop and in the future will be able to use this knowledge to learn how to help others develop and become more effective in their service to the nation<sup>13</sup>.

Thus, the issue of development of psychological and pedagogical competence in officers is a popular aspect of training for those military professionals who are directly responsible for educating in accordance with their duties, and commanders in general, who have a set of functions when working with subordinates.

Let us find out what the psychological and pedagogical competence of a military officer should be.

<sup>6</sup> Canadian Defence Academy – Generic Officer. Professional Military education. Reference Curriculum. 2011. Retrieved from [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_topics/20111202\\_Generic-Officer-PME-RC.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_topics/20111202_Generic-Officer-PME-RC.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Canadian Defence Academy – Generic Officer... 22.

<sup>8</sup> Canadian Defence Academy – Generic Officer... 48.

<sup>9</sup> Canadian Defence Academy – Generic Officer... 77.

<sup>10</sup> United States Naval Academy. Leadership, Ethics, Law, Philosophy & Psychology Course Information. Retrieved from: <https://www.usna.edu/Academics/Majors-and-Courses/course-description/NL.php>

<sup>11</sup> Korea Military Academy. Retrieved from: <https://before.kma.ac.kr/home.do?domain=eng.education.composition>

<sup>12</sup> United States Military Academy. Academic Majors. Retrieved from: <https://www.westpoint.edu/academics/majors-and-minors>

<sup>13</sup> United States Military Academy. Academic Departments Behavioral Sciences and Leadership Psychology. Retrieved from: <https://www.westpoint.edu/academics/academic-departments/behavioral-sciences-and-leadership/psychology>

The very concept of psychological and pedagogical competence has been studied by a number of scientists, and the differences in understanding of which have even become the subject of special analysis<sup>14</sup>. In particular, it is noted that various experts when revealing the essence of the concept, focus on professional readiness for teaching and effective interaction with subjects of teaching, elements of professional and general culture, advanced pedagogical experience, use of pedagogical diagnostics and its results for individual work with students, able to stimulate them to self-improvement and self-development. An example is given of N. Kuzmina's approach to determining the content of psychological and pedagogical competence: *special competence* – knowledge and combined experience of a specialist within the discipline and specialty; *differentially psychological competence* – the ability of the teacher to take into account the emotional state of the subjects of teaching, identify their inclinations and preferences, the ability to establish contact in any situation; *methodological competence* – knowledge of pedagogy and psychology, the ability to use various teaching methods in educational activities; *auto-psychological competence* – the teacher's ability to reflect<sup>15</sup>. We believe that this approach to structuring and filling the content of this competence is a systematic one and reflects the comprehensive aspects of its implementation in the educational process, therefore, can be used to determine the psychological and pedagogical competence of an army officer. The authors of the analysis proposed their own structure of psychological and pedagogical competence of the specialist. It consists of the following components: *cognitive* (basic and special psychological and pedagogical knowledge); *professional* (mastery of methods, methodology and techniques of teaching, taking into account the principles of teaching at a particular institution); *motivational* (orientation of the individual to self-improvement in professional activities); *personal* (the presence of the necessary pedagogical personal qualities); *behavioural* (use of established patterns of behaviour to solve pedagogical problems)<sup>16</sup>. In general, agreeing with the proposed structure, we should note that in the case of a military officer at least cognitive competence requires significant adjustment and clarification, because such a specialist should focus not only on psychological and pedagogical knowledge, but also on the content and technology of combat operations, use of military machines and equipment, advocacy and other issues. In this case, the army officer must have knowledge not only about his own army, but also about the enemy's army.

The question of the essence and content of the psychological and pedagogical competence of army officers was actually studied by military scientists. In particular, Stasiuk and Tolok<sup>17</sup> define the psychological and pedagogical competence of military professionals as an individual "trajectory" of ascent to the top of professionalism, a means of transition from one level of professionalism to another. This opinion about climbing to the top of professionalism is, in our opinion, very correct, because in today's world all sorts of technologies, which are a means of an army officer and are constantly changing and improving, there is a targeted and meaningful renewal of their professionalism, which requires constant improvement. At the same time, the above-mentioned scientists insist on a psychological and pedagogical aspect of the professionalism of the military specialists: to have thorough and comprehensive knowledge, to update and replenish it systematically; to

<sup>14</sup> A. O. Davidchuk; S. V. Zeleniuk y N. V. Kirzha, Professional and pedagogical competence of a teacher of higher education: textbook (Vinnytsia: TOV "Nilan LTD", 2017).

<sup>15</sup> A. O. Davidchuk; S. V. Zeleniuk y N. V. Kirzha, Professional and pedagogical competence... 84.

<sup>16</sup> A. O. Davidchuk; S. V. Zeleniuk y N. V. Kirzha, Professional and pedagogical competence... 86.

<sup>17</sup> V. V. Stasiuk y I. V. Tolok, "Psychological and pedagogical competence as the basis of professionalism of a military specialist of operational and tactical level of training", Bulletin of the National University of Defense of Ukraine Vol: 5 num 30 (2012): 274-278.

emphasize and give preference to pedagogical creativity and imagination in solving pedagogical problems; to boost the ideological and humanitarian orientation of the pedagogical process, to develop in pupils an ability to creatively apply their knowledge in professional activities and everyday life; to see their main goal in development and professionalization of the students rather than just giving them knowledge or improving their skills and abilities; to improve the organization and comprehensive methodological and didactic support of students; to provide an unbiased assessment of the level of education of cadets, to constantly develop their analytical and creative thinking; to provide training for military specialists who would rationally combine thorough theoretical knowledge and a high level of practical training<sup>18</sup>. These views are valuable for us in defining the concept of psychological and pedagogical competence of an army officer and justify the choice of role-playing games for the appropriate training of future professionals. Therefore, the view of Ye.Yu. Litvinovsky, who determined that psychological and pedagogical competence involves having pedagogical foresight, pedagogical techniques, which, along with other personal qualities, fit into the concept of “pedagogical skill” of army officers, is especially valuable to us<sup>19</sup>.

The above mentioned views on the essence of psychological and pedagogical competence, as well as our understanding of the content of pedagogical activities of an officer in the contemporary armed forces allow us to propose our own definition of this competence. Thus, the psychological and pedagogical competence of army **officers** is an integrative characteristic of personality that combines theoretical knowledge, practical skills, experience and personal qualities, which in the training and education of servicemen are manifested through the presence of such components as *a cognitive one* (a permanent process of learning military psychology, pedagogy, military sciences, etc.), *an operational and methodological one* (an ability to identify and take into account the emotional state of servicemen, choose communication means and pattern of behaviour, use teaching and educating methods, training technologies, etc.), *an auto-psychological and pedagogical one* (an ability to reflect, perform self-analysis of your own activities, constitute self-improvement through determining relevant goals and means for their achievement, etc.).

## Results of the experimental study

As mentioned above, the process of training military officers usually includes training courses in psychology and pedagogy or leadership courses. Each of these courses should contain both theoretical and practical components, the last of which will be considered in the course of our study. In our example, we will focus on the discipline “General and Military Pedagogy”, the study of which involves theoretical training (18 hours of lectures and 18 hours of seminars) and practical training (36 hours). In the theoretical part of the course, cadets study traditional learning material for general pedagogical disciplines (principles, laws, methods, means of teaching and educating, etc.), with special attention focused on the conditions of training and educating of servicemen. The purpose of the practical training is to provide cadets with initial pedagogical experience and to develop their skills for performing training activities. We design two types of such activities – theoretical, when officers explain, and practical, when officers organize, accompany and monitor the performance of soldiers. Taking into account the specific character of military pedagogical

<sup>18</sup> V. V. Stasiuk y I. V. Tolok, “Psychological and pedagogical competence...”

<sup>19</sup> E. Lytvynovskiy, “Officer of educational work structures in the Armed Forces of Ukraine – manager of the educational process”, Bulletin of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv: military sciences num 5-7 (2003): 29-33.

activity and the defined content of the psychological and pedagogical competence, we came to the conclusion that the most appropriate format of the workshop is to hold two role-playing games – when cadets conduct mini-lectures and when they organize workshops. The first of them simulates a theoretical class with servicemen, and the second – a practical one. Let us consider the specifics of organizing and holding each of the role-playing games.

During the role-playing game of conducting mini-lectures, each cadet alternately played three roles. Naturally, the leading one is the role of a lecturer. Its implementation took place in several stages. At the first stage, this role involved the choice of relevant topics for cadets, as well as some preparation: theoretical (selection of material), methodical (distribution of material on issues, selection of teaching methods, preparation of questions for the audience) and technical (making presentations, posters, selection of videos, demonstration means, in particular by their own examples, etc.). Then, the cadet gave a lecture for 20-25 minutes, having to demonstrate fluency in the topic, the ability to structure the presentation (in particular, to motivate students to perceive, focus on key points, draw conclusions), to use visual aids, to keep in touch with the audience (by means of dialogues, questions, discussions, conversations, etc.), to diagnose the level of perception of their own presentation by the audience. At the last stage of performing the role of a lecturer, the cadet carried out an introspection of the lecture, after which it was publicly discussed by the cadets-listeners. Then, the cadet gave a lecture for 20-25 minutes, having to demonstrate fluency in the topic, the ability to structure the presentation (in particular, to motivate students to perceive, focus on key points, draw conclusions), to use visual aids, to keep in touch with the audience (by means of dialogues, questions, discussions, conversations, etc.), to diagnose the level of perception of their own presentation by the audience. At the last stage of performing the role of a lecturer, the cadet carried out an introspection of the lecture, after which it was publicly discussed by the cadets-listeners. Thus, all the components of the psychological and pedagogical competence were being developed during the event.

Another role in this role-playing game is the role of a student. He or she should carefully perceive new information, but also observe the communicative and organizational activities of the lecturer. Obviously, this role contributed to the development of the cognitive component, as the cadets learned new material and learned how to teach it from their peers. The auto-psychological and pedagogical component also improved, as they compared their own lectures with what they observed.

The third role of cadets – public analysis of the lecture after its completion – had formative influence on certain components of the psychological and pedagogical competence. During the workshop, each of them analysed from 10 to 20 lectures conducted by other people, as well as their own mini-lecture. Analysis was carried out according the following criteria: the degree of achievement of the lecture objectives, the communicative behaviour of the lecturer and students, the organization of interaction between them, the quality of visual aids, and others. Those who analysed had to highlight both strengths and weaknesses of each lecture. As a result, future officers learned to give objective assessment of the training event, gained positive experience from other cadets and identified mistakes that should not be made in the future while conducting lectures.

The role-playing game for conducting workshops consisted of three stages. The first was theoretical, methodical and organizational preparation of cadets. The future officers had to prepare for one of the eight workshops: “Team building”, workshop on group communication, “Just believe in yourself”, “Mask of myths and metaphors” (self-understanding), “Successful person is me”, workshop in relieving emotional tension in the

group, workshop in creativity development and “Communication and interpersonal relationships”. Depending on the number of cadets in the group (it ranged from 9 to 25 people), workshops were prepared by one or two cadets. The preparation of workshops required goal setting, task selection, preparation of visual aids and handouts, assessment of one’s own readiness for the workshop, and so on. Thus, all the components of the psychological and pedagogical competence of army officers improved increasing their readiness to conduct workshops.

The second stage is conducting the workshop. The trainer had to determine the objectives and tasks, instruct the audience on the rules and peculiarities of performing individual exercises, monitor their performance, make timely adjustments or provide assistance, and discuss with participants the effectiveness of the exercise, its significance, personal impressions and feelings that took place during their performance. Developing the operational and methodological component of the psychological and pedagogical competence was the priority of this stage.

In turn, the emphasis on the formation of its other component, auto-psychological and pedagogical, was made at the last stage of the role playing game – reflexive and evaluative one. The participating cadets analysed the success of the workshop from different views – achieving the overall goal of the event, the feasibility of using individual exercises, communicative behaviour of trainers etc. In turn, the cadets-trainers summarized general results of the workshop and analysed their own activities, pointed out mistakes and directions of their own further improvement as officers in performing the pedagogical function.

The last lesson of the workshop series was devoted to cadets’ self-analysis of their psychological and pedagogical skills. They were asked to carry out a ten-point self-assessment of certain skills before and after studying the course “General and Military Pedagogy”. Most of the skills had to be formed during the workshop, so we actually asked the cadets to evaluate the effectiveness of the role-playing. We believe that the cadets were ready for self-assessment, because during the workshops they constantly participated in the evaluation of their peers’ and their own work, i.e. received adequate insights into the formation of their own knowledge and skills. Next, we studied the correlation between the average grades of cadets and the marks they received from the teacher for conducting workshops, so we checked the objectivity of self-assessment.

Let us consider examples of average values of self-assessment by cadets of their own skills in relation to individual components of the psychological and pedagogical competence (assessment was carried out by a 10-point scale).

As for the cognitive component, in preparation for the role-playing games, the cadets carried out a detailed study into certain topics. The selection of the learning material developed relevant skills. In particular, the ability to select lecture material increased on average from 5.38 points by 33.87%, and the ability to select workshop tasks – from 5.55 to 8.25 or by 48.77%. The difference in the quantitative growth of these skills is explained by the fact that the cadets had previous experience of preparation for public speeches or reports, but they did not have any experience of preparation for military personnel management in the educational process. What was important was not just a set of selected tasks, but their semantic relevance to the topic and their logical sequence to achieve the goal of the workshop, which required designing a large amount of training materials.



Regarding the operational and methodological component, the cadets carried out self-assessment of a number of skills. Among them are:

- to choose and use verbal methods of communication (increased from 5.24 points by 38.29%);
- to observe servicemen while making a speech (on average increased from 6.47 points by 26.04%);
- to observe the correct performance of tasks by other people (on average increased from 6.8 points by 23.08%);
- to apply and alternate different teaching methods (oral, written, graphic, control, etc.) (increased from 5.66 points by 43.78%);
- to select questions for a person or a group of people (changed from 5.29 to 7.64 points or by 32.21%);
- to diagnose the readiness of the group to perceive information (this skill eventually increased from 5.38 points by 32.05%) and to diagnose the psychological and practical readiness of the group to perform exercises. The latter increased on average from 5.61 to 7.73 points or by 37.65%;
- to prepare visual aids (increased on average from 5.38 to 7.49 points or by 32.37%);
- to manage the group's attention during the interaction (increased from 5.44 to 7.93 points or by 35.56%);
- to raise a problem for servicemen (increased from 5.91 to 7.69 points or by 27.99%), and to organize a discussion and solution of the problem (increased from 6.14 points by 34.81%);
- to actualize the significance of performing individual exercises (increased from 6.05 points by 33.46%);
- to organize individual students' work changed from 6.36 to 8.16 points or by 28.21%, and groups of people – from 6.34 points by 30.82%;
- to analyse servicemen's mistakes (increased from 6.32 points by 30.58%).

Future officers also assessed a certain set of their own skills from the perspective of the auto-psychological and pedagogical component of the psychological and pedagogical competence. In particular, we obtained the results of self-assessment of the following skills:

- to psychologically adjust themselves to communication with the military (the initial level of 5.38 points, an increase of 41.15%);
- to manage their own psychological state during workshops (the initial level was 6.42 points, an increase of 28.4%);

- to control their own movements and communicative behaviour (increased from 6.33 points by 27.43%);
- to analyse their own work with the group: on the management of cognitive activity of other people (increased from 6.27 points by 27.98%), on the management of communication in the group of servicemen (increased from 6.07 points by 27.27%);
- to identify their own mistakes as a psychologist and teacher (coach) (increased from 6.45 points by 29.93%); during role-playing mistakes were not only stated but also classified into groups: mistakes in planning and preparing classes, organization of exercises, mistakes in interaction with participants, etc.);
- to determine the degree of achievement of the workshop objectives (increased from 6.7 to 8.45 points or by 26.1%).

Objectivity of the cadets' self-assessment results was checked with the Pearson correlation coefficient<sup>20</sup>. The correlation was determined between the average final value of self-assessment of each cadet's skills and the grade he received for the course from the teacher (36 points – for mastering the theory, 64 points – for workshops, total – 100 points). Thus, we assumed that progress in a particular activity and the level of development of relevant skills in this activity are interrelated.

The correlation coefficient was  $r = 0.224$ . In this sample size ( $n=76+76=152$  - the sum of the number of values in both samples,  $k=152-2=150$  – the number of degrees of freedom) correspond to the following levels of significance of the coefficient – 0.16 ( $p=0.05$ ) and 0.21 ( $p = 0.01$ )<sup>21</sup>. Thus, the correlation coefficient is in the zone of significance, which confirms the objective nature of self-esteem determined by the cadets.

## Discussion

A fairly high rate of skill growth (from 23.08 to 48.77%) is due to several conditions. Conducting role-playing games was an appropriate stage in the development of the psychological and pedagogical competence of future officers, which was preceded by a theoretical training. From the first lecture the cadets were preparing for the application of theoretical knowledge during the workshops. Thus, they approached role-playing games theoretically prepared and motivated to implement the knowledge.

Another motivating factor was the design of the learning content, which ensured the cadets' awareness of the importance of psychological and pedagogical training. Another important factor in the motivation of the cadets to actively participate in the role-playing games was due to the possibility to manifest their creativity as teachers. In particular, preparing for the lecture, they independently selected the topic, and before the workshop they selected exercises (we provided recommended sources<sup>22</sup>, however, the cadets could

<sup>20</sup> Minitab Express Support. Methods and formulas for Correlation. Retrieved from: <http://support.minitab.com/en-us/minitab-express/1/help-and-how-to/modeling-statistics/regression/how-to/correlation/methods-and-formulas>

<sup>21</sup> Statistics solutions. Table of Critical Values: Pearson Correlation. Retrieved from: <https://www.statisticssolutions.com/table-of-critical-values-pearson-correlation>

<sup>22</sup> Trepsy.net. Psychological exercises for workshops. Retrieved from: <http://trepsy.net/training> y A. Gretsov, Development workshops with teenagers: creativity, communication, self-cognition (St. Petersburg: Piter, 2011).

use their own sources or design their own exercises). Their creativity was also manifested in the fact that several cadets gave their lectures in a foreign language (English, while the traditional language of instruction was Ukrainian), and this, in our opinion, was the right way to conduct classes given the integration processes between the armed forces of different countries.

The opportunity to focus on the best examples of the peers, to manifest their individuality no worse than others encouraged cadets' active participation in the role-playing games. Some cadets gave two lectures each and there were many others wishing to conduct another lecture and a workshop, which emphasized the fact that they were motivated to master their psychological and pedagogical competence as a result the role-playing games.

## Conclusions

The study proved the importance of the psychological and pedagogical training of cadets and allowed determining the content of the psychological and pedagogical competence of army officers as consisting of cognitive, operational, auto-psychological and pedagogical components. The study experimentally proved that the effective development of each of them becomes possible when theoretical training is accompanied by practical pedagogical training, which consists of role-playing games when cadets give mini-lectures and workshops.

The promising areas for further research are: substantiating and testing other means of developing the psychological and pedagogical competence of future officers, including expanding the topics of role-playing games, involving cadets of different years of study, providing methodological support of role-playing games.

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