EXPERIENCE AND PECULIARITIES OF THE CONTENT OF TRAINING FUTURE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SPECIALISTS TO WORK IN THE SYSTEM OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

Abstract. The article presents the experience and peculiarities of the content of training future international relations specialists to work in the system of strategic communications. It has been found that the relevance of the study is due to a number of factors, including the need for future international relations professionals to ensure a positive reputation for organizations or institutions (agencies), and to promote confidence in them. Strategic communication is defined as a developing field in the social sciences of communication and management; it is the purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfill its mission. The results of the study led to the conclusion that a specialist in strategic communications should be able to develop strategies that contribute to the achievement of these goals; having knowledge of the target audience, its needs, values and preferences is key to successful communication strategies. Professionals in this field also need to have research competence and analytical thinking, be able to analyze the market situation, identify key trends and analyze the competitive situation. Creativity and creative thinking, the ability to work with media resources, knowledge of various communication channels and platforms, such as social media, PR, advertising, and content marketing, are very important for professionals in this specialty. The training of specialists in the field of strategic communications is characterized by a number of features. It should be based on the principles of an interdisciplinary approach and include elements from such fields as journalism, advertising, psychology, marketing, and political science.
The training of future professionals to work in the strategic communications system is a complex task involving a comprehensive approach. In order to effectively prepare future international relations professionals to work in the system of strategic communications, it is important to use rational foreign experience that can be useful for Ukrainian higher education institutions that offer students relevant programs.

**Keywords:** future specialists in international relations; strategic communications; professional training; communication management; critical thinking; professional competence; professional knowledge.

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ДОСВІД І ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ЗМІСТУ ПІДГОТОВКИ МАЙБУТНІХ ФАХІВЦІВ МІЖНАРОДНИХ ВІДНОСИН ДО РОБОТИ В СИСТЕМІ СТРАТЕГІЧНИХ КОМУНІКАЦІЙ

Анотація. У статті представлено досвід і особливості змісту підготовки майбутніх фахівців міжнародних відносин до роботи в системі стратегічних комунікацій. З’ясовано, що актуальність дослідження зумовлена низкою чинників, серед яких необхідність майбутнім фахівцям міжнародних відносин забезпечувати позитивну репутацію організаціям або установам (відомствам), сприяння зміцненню довіри до них. Стратегічні комунікації визначаються як сфера, що розвивається в галузі соціальних наук про комунікації та управління, це ціле спрямоване використання організацією комунікації з метою виконання своєї місії. Результати дослідження дозволили зробити висновок, що фахівець у сфері стратегічних комунікацій повинен вміти розробляти стратегії, що сприяють досягненню цих цілей; володіти знаннями цільової аудиторії, її потреб, цінностей та переваг є ключовим для успішних комунікаційних стратегій. Фахівцям цієї сфери потрібно також володіти дослідницькою компетентністю та мати аналітичне мислення, вміти здійснювати аналіз ситуації на ринку, виявляти ключові тренди і аналізувати конкурентну ситуацію. Креативність та творче мислення, вміння працювати з медіа ресурсами, знання різних комунікаційних каналів та платформ, таких як соціальні мережі, PR, реклама, контент-маркетинг є дуже важливыми для фахівців цієї спеціальності. Підготовка фахівців у галузі стратегічних комунікацій характеризується низкою особливостей. Вона має ґрунтуватися на
Statement of the problem. The need to study the experience and content of training future international relations specialists to work in the system of strategic communications is due to a number of factors.

Firstly, effective strategic communications ensure a positive reputation of an organization or institution (agency) and help build trust to them. When customers and clients trust an organization, they interact better, improve sales dynamics and order services, and recommend them to others.

Secondly, strategic communications help organizations, institutions and companies achieve their goals and objectives. They can influence the opinions, preferences, and behavior of the target audience in order to attract support, build brand awareness, improve reputation, and ensure the successful implementation of the strategic goals of the organization.

Thirdly, effective strategic communications help organizations, institutions, and agencies maintain and enhance their competitiveness, position the organization in the marketplace, differentiate it from other competitors, and highlight the unique benefits and values it offers. This can help attract new customers, retain existing customers, and increase market share.

Fourthly, in the conditions of the crisis and the special period which Ukraine is currently experiencing, strategic communications strengthen information security and help counteract hostile information influence.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The results of the analysis of scientific publications covering various aspects of training future international relations specialists to work in the system of strategic communications have shown that the problem of strategic communications and their implementation was studied by Ukrainian and foreign scholars, in
particular V. Lipkan, H. Pocheptsov, O. Kushnir, L. Berk, S. Paterson, O. Barovska, V. Landsman and others.

In particular, the collective publication «Definition of Strategic Communication», authored by D. Verchich, B. Ruler, K. Shriramesh, K. Khallakhan, D. Kholtskhaussen, presents a universal definition of the concept of «strategic communication» [1]. Among Ukrainian scholars, the scientific understanding of strategic communications is introduced by H. Pocheptsov (strategic communications in politics, business and public administration. A. Barovska, S. Soloviov and O. Kushnir.

The results of the analysis of scientific publications allow us to conclude that scientists consider strategic communications as a tool for achieving goals in various fields of activity. A successful communication strategy is essential in the activities of local organizations or large corporations, as well as in building international relations and state governance. That is why it is difficult to find a single universal meaning and explanation for such a broad concept.

Strategic communication is defined as field developing in the social sciences of communication and management. In general, it can be defined as the purposeful use of communication by an organization to achieve its mission.

At the same time, the experience and peculiarities of the content of training future international relations specialists to work in the system of strategic communications require further research.

The aim of the article is to publish the results of the study on the experience and peculiarities of the content of training future international relations specialists to work in the system of strategic communications.

Presentation of the main material. We can state that the experience and peculiarities of the content of training future international relations specialists to work in the system of strategic communications are being studied in various aspects.

Foreign researchers of strategic communications, in particular D. Anderson, T. Blackley, C. Johnson, P. Cornish, M. Lynch, H. Pang, D. Psaki, D. Holzhausen, B. Hamilton, O. Horne and others believe that there is currently an ambiguous perception of the universal interpretation of strategic communications, since such tools are used in public administration, international relations, corporations and informal organizations [2-4]. In particular, E. Holdman in his publication on the use of strategic communications as a tool for war emphasizes that effective strategic communications require clear, consistent messages that stem from the policy goal [4].
The generalization of the results of the publications of scholars researching the problem of strategic communications allows us to conclude that the authors of publications mainly distinguish three main components of strategic communications:

- public relations, which involve managing public opinion, building relationships between society and government agencies or corporate structures to objectively understand social, political or economic processes;
- public diplomacy, which is identified with a set of measures aimed at studying and informing foreign audiences and establishing contacts;
- information and psychological operations, which scientists define as planned forms and methods of spreading information to have a certain impact on the attitudes and behavior of the community.

Summarizing the approaches that are currently most common in science to define the essence of strategic communications, we can identify their main characteristics:

- the main goal is to identify and achieve the interests of the state, organization, institution, agency, etc. at the national or international level;
- effective interaction and fruitful cooperation between politicians and activists to achieve a common goal;
- establishing a trusting relationship with the audience, providing information and supporting feedback;
- the ability to take into account the needs of the audience and study reactions to certain events and messages;
- the possibility of interpreting actions as information and feedback;
- establishing activities between institutional organizations;
- the purposeful use by an organization to fulfill its mission;
- coordination of communications between entities of different organizations to enhance the strategic effect;
- improving the positions of the main actors;
- creation of an information environment [5].

The scientific works of Ukrainian scholars, in particular, A. Barovska, A. Veselovskyi, O. Kushnir, V. Lipkan, H. Pocheptsov, Ye. Tykhamirova, and others analyze the global impact of innovative technologies on the political, economic, and social spheres of international relations, consider the peculiarities of international interaction and foreign policy activities with regard to communication tools, and highlight the characteristic features of strategic communications of leading international institutions.

In relation to the topic of the study, publications that describe the experience of training future international relations specialists in various aspects of professional activity are of interest. In particular, the formation of
intercultural competence of future specialists in international relations in the educational environment of a classical university was studied by O. Snihovska, and Yu. Popovskyi presented the peculiarities of training future specialists in international economic relations for professional communication by means of training sessions.

Ye. Makarenko’s study [6] presents the conceptual and applied aspects of strategic communications, which the author considers an innovative tool in the field of international relations. The researcher also analyzes the role of strategic communications in the practice of international diplomacy and Ukraine. According to the author’s research, the role and importance of strategic communications as well as the need for more transparent and effective interaction with the public are growing every year [6].

The study by T. Prymak is also of interest. The author notes the relevance of training universal communicators to the extent required by modern market requirements. Despite this, none of the Ukrainian higher education institutions is engaged in their training [7].

The publications of V. Vynohradov, T. Volkova, Yu. Karaulov, V. Karasik, V. Tretok, A. Chudinova present certain aspects of the problem of formation and development of the international specialist’s personality.

Other researchers, in particular, A. Ionova, revealed the peculiarities of educating international students and developing their skills of discussion communication, and I. Zotkina’s publications deal with the development of professional communication skills in the process of language training of diplomats.

Important aspects of training students for anti-crisis communications in business and the public sector are presented by K. Yaresko [8]. The author believes that future specialists in the field of public relations and media communications need to master the basic provisions of strategic and anti-crisis communications, master the skills of analyzing a crisis situation, forecasting its development, and the skills of justifying an anti-crisis strategy. Moral and volitional qualities, the ability to reflect, critical thinking for crisis communications, self-expression and media creativity ability in crisis communications, as well as skills in using modern tools of anti-crisis PR and anti-crisis communications are important for media communications professionals [8]. For this purpose, in the educational process, it is advisable to use educational cases, role-playing games, and methods of modeling situations of professional activity.

The experience of training future officers of the German Armed Forces in strategic communications [9], presented in the publication by V. Konarzhevska, is worthy of attention. The author draws a logical conclusion that in order to
effectively prepare for work in the system of strategic communications, it is advisable to provide future officers with a special course in strategic communications during their professional training in military educational institutions. It should include an in-depth study of the basic principles of the information space and information structures, public relations, peculiarities of public diplomacy and promotion of the state’s goals, formation of the image policy of the security and defense forces of Ukraine, a mechanism for effective cooperation between all parts of this system, etc. At the same time, the author notes that it is impossible to completely copy foreign experience, since it is also important to take into account the national peculiarities of the functioning of the state, national power structures and the system of professional training of military personnel during their studies at military universities [9].

Summarizing the results of the study, it can be concluded that in countries with a high level of economic development, activities to achieve strategic and economic interests by information means are constantly in progress. Therefore, strategic communications are the most modern and promising form of influence in the information space. The correct use of the main means of strategic communication allows forming consistent, logical messages that perform not only an informational function but also an influence function [10].

The results of the generalization of scientific sources [7-10] and educational and professional programs for training international relations specialists to work in the system of strategic communications allow us to conclude that a specialist in the field of strategic communications should have a wide range of knowledge and skills, since this field requires a comprehensive approach to planning, implementing and evaluating communication strategies. Here are some of the basic knowledge and skills required for a specialist in this field:

understanding of strategic thinking – a specialist must understand how communication affects the achievement of business goals and be able to develop strategies that contribute to the achievement of these goals;
knowledge of the target audience – understanding the audience, its needs, values and preferences is key to successful communication strategies;
research competence and analytical thinking – a specialist must be able to analyze the market situation, identify key trends and analyze the competitive situation;
creativity and creative thinking – strategic communications often require the development of creative ideas and solutions that make your company unique in the market;
ability to work with media resources – understanding how the media works, how to communicate with journalists and respond to crisis situations are very important skills;
knowledge of various communication channels and platforms, such as social media, PR, advertising, content marketing, etc;
ability to respond effectively to crisis situations and manage the company’s reputation;
communication skills;
knowledge and understanding of modern technologies and tools that can support strategic communications, such as analytics, CRM systems, social media platforms, etc;
understanding of ethical norms and principles, as well as taking into account social responsibility in communication strategies;
multimedia skills in using graphic, video and audio materials in communication strategies;
ability to create and manage both company and personal image and brand;
intercultural skills and cultural and linguistic communication skills;
knowledge of the law, understanding of the legal aspects of communications and advertising, as well as knowledge of personal data protection laws;
project management skills;
ability to identify key efficiency indicators and track them to evaluate the results of communication strategies;
readiness for continuous learning and professional development.

According to scientists, this very list of skills and knowledge will help a strategic communications specialist create effective strategies and succeed in this field, regardless of the specific organization or industry in which they work.

As for the experience of training international relations specialists to work in the strategic communications system, for example, in the UK, many universities offer training programs in PR and advertising. These programs provide students with knowledge of the basic principles and strategies of working in this field, as well as the opportunity to perform practical tasks, such as developing advertising for a specific product.

In the United States of America, strategic communications professionals are trained at the Master’s level. Students study various aspects of this field, including strategic planning, media strategies, and PR.

Many countries, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany, have specialized strategic communications programs at the
Bachelor’s and Master’s level. Such programs usually combine knowledge of specialized communication theory, media and Internet technologies, as well as practical skills in managing communications in organizations and conducting strategic communications.

Also, professional associations such as the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) and others provide training, certification and other opportunities for strategic communications professionals.

Researchers note that in the United States, strategic communication «is defined at the state level as the U.S. Government’s efforts to understand and engage key audiences to create, strengthen, or maintain conditions favorable to meeting the interests, policies, and goals of the U.S. Government through the use of coordinated programs, plans, messages, and products that are synchronized with the actions of all government instruments» [10].

It should be noted that in the United States and the EU, one of the most important current trends in communication management is the steady growth of the role of strategic communications and change management. In this regard, scientists argue that in the coming years, online communications and interpersonal communication will become the most promising communication channels, which requires the development of new educational programs to improve the competence of communication managers.

In German educational institutions, future international relations specialists take part in trainings on professional communication and conflict studies. The main principle of training is the idea that a modern specialist in strategic communications should acquire not only professional knowledge in the course of professional education, but also be trained for qualified communication work, which involves making decisions in a conflict situation and the ability to respond adequately to problems using strategic communications and tactics [11].

The experience of conducting general classes for future strategic communications specialists on media training with students of civilian specialized universities in Germany is especially interesting. For instance, members of the Federal Union of Higher Education engaged in security policy research, as well as experts on national and international security issues, are involved in this process. Both cadets and students are also invited to participate in security policy seminars held at the Bundeswehr Command Center, including those from the Helmut Schmidt Military University of Hamburg and the Bundeswehr University of Munich [9].
In general, according to the results of the generalization of publications on the research problem, the training of specialists in the field of strategic communications is characterized by a number of features. First and foremost, it should be based on the principles of an interdisciplinary approach and include elements from such fields as journalism, advertising, psychology, marketing, and political science. This helps students understand the broader context of communication strategies.

International relations professionals in the context of strategic communications should also learn to demonstrate the ability to research, analyze and develop communication strategies that meet the goals and needs of organizations. They should understand the role of communication strategies in achieving business goals and developing organizations.

Preparing international relations professionals for strategic communications should include training students to conduct research, analyze target audiences, study trends, and evaluate the effectiveness of communication expectations. Research skills help professionals develop targeted and balanced communication strategies.

Since technology is of great importance for communication processes in today’s world, students need to master the skills of using various digital tools, social media, analytical platforms, and other technologies to effectively communicate with the audience and analyze data.

When training international relations professionals to work in the strategic communications system, it is important to focus on practical work. For this purpose, it is advisable to offer students to carry out project tasks and participate in real communication campaigns in order to gain practical experience and develop professional skills.

The implementation of these features of training international relations specialists to work in the system of strategic communications will contribute to a deep understanding of communication processes by students, develop their ability to analyze and solve problems, and develop effective communication strategies for different organizations and contexts.

These considerations indicate that training international relations specialists to work in the system of strategic communications and improving the quality of this training is an urgent problem that has not yet been the subject of a comprehensive national study. It is advisable to focus on designing a structural and functional model for training future international relations professionals to work in the strategic communications system.

Conclusions. Thus, for the effective training of future international relations specialists to work in the system of strategic communications, it is important to use effective foreign experience. Training future professionals
to work in the strategic communications system is a complex task that requires a comprehensive approach. The foreign experience of training specialists in this field can be useful for Ukrainian higher education institutions that offer relevant programs to students.

An important **prospective task** is to develop scientific and methodological support for the educational and professional training of future international relations specialists to work in the system of strategic communications, which should include the consideration of experience in the legal regime of martial law.

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