

THE ROLE-PLAY AS A METHOD OF EVALUATION OF THE KNOWLEDGE IN THE HISTORY IN THE ACADEMIC EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

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Abstract: *The Role-Play is used as a learning method, but in the history lessons it is not frequently than in the other formal activities. Studying the past and actually realities, students could simulate a situation and learn about it. In this way, they find more details and understand better the scientific contents of the history. This paper proposes to use the Role-Play Method from the evaluating perspective. We have developed a educational research that allowed to apply this method as a method of the alternative / complementary evaluation.*

The results of the research demonstrate that the Role-Play Method is a pleasant method that share the level of student's knowledge and a stimulation method to learn better. Using this method the responsibility of the student for the proposal activity and his individual preparation are increased.

Key words: *history, competences, education, evaluation.*

Introduction

In the pedagogical literature, the Role Play is presented as a learning method (Chiş V., 2005), a method that allows students to learn something by playing a situation; thus the students simulate a situation and learn about it, find more details and understand better the historical notions.

Generally, the Role Play is used in the primary school and, occasionally, in the secondary school, because it has a ludic aspects more than a learning one (Bogoş M. D. 2013, p. 384). In conclusion, until 14 years old, the pupils / students learn by this didactical method. After the age, the Role Play is less and less used. Sometimes, the Role-Play is takes the shape of the dramatization (Cerghit, I., 2008, p. 375), as a study method which enables the pupils / students to play a literary texts, artistically (one example is done by the „literary process”, that encourages the students to analyze a literary text critically, a characters and literary situations (Jaques D., 2001).

In the history field, the Role Play is not so frequently used than in the literary field. The history lessons allow the Role Play method applied in the non formal activities, such as the dramatic field, played in a different situation (traditional dates, historical commemorations, artistic performances).

In the historical formal activities, the Role Play is used like a *Case-Study*, or a *Debate*, is seen as a learning method by simulating the realities. For example, in the academic educational system, the debate is a method that encourages the students to discuss few problems from a different perspective (each perspective represents one reality or one character, an action, a behavior etc.). In the majority of the debating activities refer to discussions which sustain and no sustain some

aspects (actions, opinions, attitudes, ideologies, mentalities etc.).

This paper proposes to use the Role-Play Method from the evaluating perspective. We have developed a educational research that allowed to apply this method as a method of the complementary evaluation.

Hypothesis, observations, discussions

School today has changed towards modernization that is why I've thought about a new method to make teaching more attractive, creative and helpful in accumulating knowledge / information in a certain field.

I started this argument and method having in mind the idea of making history study more attractive for all students, and I recommend it to be used for all subjects taught in University (we all know that our students are less interested in hearing lectures and more interested in the practical, new, attractive way of memorizing facts (events).

Starting from these reasons we intend to use the Role Play from the evaluating perspective. I consider that this learning method could be used like an evaluating method. In this way, the Role Play becomes the alternative / complementary method of evaluation, like the *Project*, the *Systematic Observations*, the *Investigation*, *Self-evaluation* and the *Portfolio* (Manolescu M., 2006; *Idem*, 2010).

We demonstrate the value of the Role Play method by an educational study (a cvasiexperimental research). Our educational approach, during 14th weeks, has done at the practical activities of 35 students (from the second year of study) who are preparing to become the teacher in the preschooler and primary educational system (one specialization at the University of Galati).

At the beginning of the study, in the initial test, we notice that the students didn't like very much how the evaluation activity is done.

- 87 % of them said that they learn during the examination period. So, in general, for prepare their exams, they reserve the time only in the evaluating session period;
- 13 % of them learn systematically because they have many responsibilities or they learn with pleasure, or they like to know more and more.

Of course, 92% of them said that their stress is the biggest in the examination process from various causes: the bad evaluating atmosphere, the fear of exams, and the importance of marks in their future plans.

Results of test encourage applying other evaluating methods, that can became a complementary methods (Stan C., 2001). From this reason, we used the Role Play, with its different shapes, like an evaluating method. We are sure that the Role Play Method will make it more attractive and dynamic for the young generation.

The Role Play or the simulation evaluating method is a method which permits to apply the students' knowledge acting a situation, a reality or a character. Even if it a complementary method, the Role Play is a motivating method for preparing the exams and it removes the stressing factors before the examining activity.

Using the Role-Play as an evaluating method, the student' attitudes towards the evaluating process have been the better one.

In this way the students may notice their mistakes better and can talk about them in an easier way. The students involved in the Role Play activity may participate in this debate sharing the problems that are no understandable for all of them.

Under the circumstances, the Role-Play Method is based on the specialized knowledge; the students should be better informed before they are playing a role.

While the students are playing the situation indicated and the end of this activity, the teacher is evaluating their knowledge using different techniques such as: the observation sheet, the scale of the knowledge, the self evaluation. The result of these testing instruments have done become the partial marks.

Our approach connects the theoretical knowledge in the individual study and then they have applied knowledge in the Role-Play activity which is following the aspects:

- the formation and development of the notions and representations;
- the understanding of the human evaluation and the different events and personality activities from the cause to effect perspective;

- the knowing and critical interpretation of the historical resources.

Starting from the above observations, next we suggest a concise presentation of our educational intervention, which emphasizes competences, associated the History field, and the types of activities evaluating.

Units of contents. Curricular scientifically themes	Evaluation competences (using the Role Play)
Unit No 1 Castles. Palates. Courts of Romanian Lords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ability to present the signification of the prince buildings from Europe and Romanian space in the Middle Age and Modern centuries; • the capacity to correlate the prince architecture with the elements of the social and political evolution of the European states; • the ability to underline the specific of the prince building; • the ability to argue the relationship between the international politic of the European prince and lords with their building residents.
Unit No 2 The Romanian Principates (XIV th -XVI th centuries). Politic and military confrontation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ability to present with argues the international relationships of the Romanian Principates in the XIVth - XVIth centuries; • the capacity to explain the Romanian political decisions linked the European context; • the capacity to analyze the politics and militaries events from the cause-effect perspective;
Unit No 3 Europe, Romania and The Mondiale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ability to present the Romanian situation in the context of the First War and Second War

First War and Second War events;
 • the capacity to analyze the politic and military facts from the European and mondiale interests and decisions perspectives;
 • the capacity to underline the facts of the First War and Second War from the cause-effect perspective.

Unit No 4
 The communist world. Romania in the communist era.
 • the capacity to analyze the social, cultural, mentality and economic transformations in the communist regime politic;
 • the ability to correlate the instauration of the communist in Europe with the politic and military events in the 1944-1990;
 • the ability to underline the effects of the communist regime politic.

bibliography done by the teacher.

Unit No 2
 • free playing activity (without the scenario made by the teacher);
 • playing activity with the characters mentioned by the teacher.
 • History Process.
 • Meeting of the century.
 • „Pro and Contra” Debate.
 • Dramatization.

Unit No 3
 • free playing activity (without the scenario made by the teacher);
 • playing activity with the characters and bibliography mentioned by the teacher.
 • History Process.
 • The Days of the biggest decisions.
 • Europe has decided.
 • Romania has decided.

Unit No 4
 • Role Play who respect some criteria done by the teacher;
 • Dramatized reading (the students take on the roles provided by the text and imitate interaction).
 • A day in a communist world.
 • Communist and the great decisions.
 • The man and the communist regime.
 • Like a communist day.

Table 1. *History competences and evaluate them by the Role Play Method*

These units were evaluated by the Role Play Method. We present in next Table the association between the curricular scientifically contents and the Role Play activities.

Units of contents.	Type of Role Play activity	Role-play Evaluating Method
Unit No 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> free playing activity (without the scenario made by the teacher); playing activity in group, with different task for each of them; playing activity starting from the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trip through the museum. A Day of the life of the king / Romanian prince. Visit of the king / Romanian prince. Traveling in the any country.

Table 2. *Evaluation of the History competences by the Role Play Method*

An important aspect is done by the organization the Role Playing activity. In order to be well prepared the students must:

- to think about what they will say and how they will do it;
- to organize their speech, to put the ideas in the proper order etc.;
- to write ideas, dialogues;

- to act / play out the conversation / their part in the dialogue;
- to evaluate (give marks) to one another (by the players and the non player students, at the end of Role Play activities).

The debate about history problem established often allowed the student to find creative solutions and, in the same time, developed their critical thinking.

Take on the role of some situations or characters the students studied, refer to a historical moments, events, period of time, fill out a biography with their assumed identify and perform a role play in front of their colleagues. The other students are asked to watch them play take notes and evaluates. After the playing activity the students have to discuss and give arguments and marks.

Another advantage of this method is the improvement of the relationships with all the other members of the team so that their responsibility for the proposed activity and their individual preparation (learning) is increased.

We thing that it is necessary to focus on some problems we may face up when using this method; one of them is the fact that the students have to know the directions of the evaluation clearly. From this reason the students should know the evaluating tools used by the teacher. In the case of Role Play, these evaluating tools are done by the performances standards, which the students have known at the beginner learning activities. But as important as the evaluating instruments are the reflection instruments, like the self evaluating techniques.

The importance of the reflective activity is immediate, as a result of the duration and the mobilizing effect it has over the student. So, the data obtained during reflections can be kept for a longer period of time, a fact that will allow the student to follow their evolution, to remember the solutions that have proven to take out a act, dialogue, and to use them in his future playing activities. Their constructive feedback aspect allows the student's quick and effective intervention over the learning activities.

Next, we offer two instruments that will help develop the interest for using the Role Play as an evaluation method. For this reason, we propose a work instrument regarding apply of the Role Play for evaluating the knowledge of students.

Instrument No 1. Reflection exercise

<i>Why am I accepting to play in act?</i>	<i>Why am I not accepting to play in act?</i>
<i>What conditions have to I know for successful playing in act?</i>	<i>What conditions have to I find more for successful playing in act?</i>
<i>What information I read for to play the act?</i>	<i>What information I found for the players?</i>

Instrument No 2. Information sheet of learned scientifically contents

No crt.	Unit of reflection	Essential questions
1.	Learning experience (cognitive experience)	What I learned from this activity How I do it What ideas / pieces of knowledge were more interesting
2.	Own behavior involved	What I will do next How I have to learn in the next time How I will use this experience I am satisfy with my learning results What I can change
3.	Emotions, affects lived in the activity	What I am feel I like what I found about me Why yes, why no

Conclusion

Role Play is a popular classroom technique used to expose own knowledge and to motivate the students to reflect on their cognitive and emotional experiences. In this reason, the Role Play is a way of the internalization of the meeting of the information and also an oral evaluation method which allows the measure level of students' knowledge (to identify with character and realities sees them as real problems) and perceives their situation as plausible.

After the study, the students said that the Role-Play Method is a pleasant method that share the level of their knowledge and a stimulating method to learn better.

The results of the self evaluating demonstrate that the Role-Play method is a new, successful method applied by our Department.

The results of the research demonstrate that the Role-Play Method is a pleasant method that share the level of student's knowledge and a stimulation method to learn better. Using this method the responsibility of the student for the proposal activity and his individual preparation are increased. More that, at the end of this activity, the „player” became the „evaluator”.

All forms of the Role-Play need to respect the following rules:

- the pupils / students have to be motivated to participate at the activity;
- the pupils / students need knowledge about what they are going to do;
- the pupils / students must work together (they need to communicate to each other);
- the pupils / students ought to read more specialized literature for understanding what they have to do;
- they must have a clear view of the situational context(time, place, events, reason);
- the students should be encouraged to express their own thoughts and feelings allowed to interaction and perform tasks in situations simulate to those encountered in real terms, to use the information in tasks that simulate real-world.

This method should remain a complementary evaluating method and can replace the tests and oral examination

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