

MSC 2020**International Scientific and Practical Conference «MAN. SOCIETY.
COMMUNICATION»****ROLE PLAY TECHNOLOGY IN THE FUTURE LAWYERS'
PROFESSIONAL TRAINING**

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Abstract

The article addresses essential aspects of a role play which is closely connected with the concepts of gamification and edutainment and plays a significant role in facilitating law students' professionally significant competences, building up their legal culture. The study undertaken here advocates the task-based language teaching as an integral part of the future lawyers' professional training. Hence the goal of our study is to provide theoretical justification and methodological development of the concept of role play in foreign language teaching as a means of promoting second language learning and facilitating professional training. We have analyzed the impact of role play on the learner acquisition processes and forming of their professionally significant competences. We have identified stages and worked out an algorithm of role play, have made an attempt to implement socio-pedagogical and psycho-didactic conditions, required for the proper integration of role plays into the educational process to make the process of forming future lawyers' professional competences possible. The conceptual framework of the study follows the model of professional competence approach. Research and experience data obtained in our experimental work make it possible to identify the significance of role play in second language learning designed for law students' professional development in educational programs at law faculties.

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1. Introduction

The system of modern higher education in Russia is designed to create an effective system of vocational training aimed at not only rendering learning content, but providing a new digitalized teaching environment as well, as one of the main conditions of shaping a competent specialist of a new generation.

One of the aspects of enhancement of the lawyer's professional training is an early job-oriented approach that is active introduction of a student into the future professional activity in the first year of his studies of social and humanitarian disciplines. The English language taught to students at the faculty of law has close interdisciplinary relationships with the disciplines of the legal profile and as a target language is an important part of lawyers' professional training.

The relevance of this study lies in the need to develop information, job-oriented and learner-centered technologies for teaching the English language, which plays an important role in the development of professionally significant competences of the future lawyer, forming his legal culture.

2. Problem Statement

An issue of forming student's professional identity, skills and competences is on the agenda of almost every institution of learning and requires a multi-aspect research and analysis of various systems of techniques and technologies applied in modern education nowadays.

Bearing in mind the complex of professional and information competences, which are to be developed by means of curricular and extracurricular activities in the process of English language learning, its organization must be based on a system of play-based tasks which turn the process of learning a foreign language into contextualized one.

Introduction of new innovative methods of teaching in professional training is closely connected with the problem of motivation and, mostly, with the lack of students' motivation to study. Lots of new teaching technologies have been developed so far to tackle this problem. Learning through making, imitation of real life discourse is considered in the world pedagogy as the most successful alternative to traditional methods (Bitrian et al., 2020; Martin & Betser, 2020; Meij van der et al., 2020). Role play is one of the methods of teaching in team-based learning, proposed by American and Russian teachers: Johnson and Johnson (1999), Polat et al. (2002).

In the twenty-first century due to digitalization of education and the wide use of open educational resources and training applications, the term gamification appeared. The phenomenon has attracted the attention of scholars interested in education and learning, and the potential of gamification has been explored from multidisciplinary points of view (Danka, 2020; Merilainen et al., 2020; Prieto, 2020; Wang & Tahir, 2020).

However, a number of scientists and teachers (Mironov, et al., 2019; Wang & Tahir, 2020) have expressed concern about the excessive use of information technologies that replace the usual format of lectures and practical classes in real time (offline mode) with an online mode that provides knowledge by means of an electronic monitor screen. Scientists of the leading universities of the country (The Russian Federation) are unanimous in their understanding of the problems of modern education, where it is important not to replace offline education with online education, but to have a reasonable balance between

the classical dialogue and the capabilities of modern digital technologies in the system of education (Mironov et al., 2019).

Reasonable introduction of gamification as an additional learning tool in the educational process reflects the modern concept of education – Edutainment (Kutzin, 2019; MacKay, 2019; Niemann et al., 2020; Sanina et al., 2020; Wolfensberger, et al., 2019) which includes two parts: educational and entertaining, while the learning process becomes an event, an active participation, an activity for the student, the learning process should be an event with everyone involved in it.

The role play as a form of edutainment enables to transform any educational activity into an entertaining process of learning, indulging into which a person who plays this or that role assumes the new image and mode of behaviour, overcomes his inherent backwardness and uninhibitedness, finds the integrity of existence possible.

Outlined by the researchers the following aspects of the play such as instrumental (teaching specific skills and abilities of foreign language speech activities), interpersonal (teaching interpersonal interaction connected with the role in the play), gnostic (gaining certain knowledge, development of critical thinking), developing (development of required abilities and mental functions) infer that the play is to be considered as the basic form of the English language learning (Kartashova, 2014), as well as a universal meta subject technology for teaching all ages of students.

3. Research Questions

In the course of research, the following points had to be worked out:

3.1. What competences are formed through role play activities?

3.2. What types of play-based tasks are used in the process of developing a communicative competence?

3.3. What pedagogical conditions are required for the effective organization of a role play

3.4. What algorithm is used in a role play?

3.5. What kind of means help to form the future lawyers' motivation sphere?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine the appropriate methodological tools and didactic conditions and capabilities of the role play technology combined with integrated information technologies to enhance the process of future lawyers' professional training in accordance with the requirements of digitalization of education.

5. Research Methods

The research methods used were the analysis of philosophical, pedagogical, socio-psychological, scientific-methodological and special professional literature on the problem of research; purposeful observation of the process of development and training of students, mathematical statistic methods, questionnaires.

6. Findings

In order to get an idea how the role play technology integrated in the process of the English language learning impacts the formation of students' professional identity, skills and competences, we have analyzed the system of play-based tasks and elements of edutainment as a medium of forming students' motivation, singled out the didactic conditions and stages of the role play, being integrated in the process of the English language learning by the first-year students majoring in Jurisprudence.

Bearing in mind the complex of professional and information competences, which are to be developed by means of curricular and extracurricular activities in the process of English language learning, its organization must be based on a system of play-based tasks which turn the process of learning a foreign language into contextualized one. The context requires interaction via a foreign language and offers a great number of language use called hidden practice as it is not intended and planned. To ease the process of learning a foreign language and make it age-appropriate, pleasurable and effective in our English language course designed for lawyers we have applied and further developed the system of play-based tasks, which can be broadly divided into two types: non-communicative and communicative games. The difference between them lies in the nature of language practice proposed during play. Non-communicative games can be defined as accuracy-focused games, aimed at an accurate reproduction of a pre-selected language pattern which takes place in a fully or semi-controlled practice. Non-communicative games as hidden drills consolidate vocabulary and grammar practice, are helpful in teaching speech patterns providing extensive pronunciation practice.

Introduction of the gamification element - the Quizlet training app - as a kind of non-communicative play-based task that serves to train grammar forms and speech models, lexical units, brings an element of competition to the learning process. The quantitative indicator of students' success in the play — the maximum score – serves as a quantitative result of the success and makes everyone take part in the entertaining training session, making the learning process more live and thus more effective.

As far as the students have had enough of reproduction of pre-selected language patterns the play-based tasks can be made more complicated gradually passing on to communicative types of play-based tasks resulting in free-flowing communication. Communicative tasks are aimed at practicing speech acts and dialogue interaction and serve as a kind of transition from language acquisition to mastering speech communication. They usually involve role plays in which target language is brought to life.

Role play is considered by us as a pedagogical technology for developing students' professionally significant competences. As a pedagogical technology role play is viewed by us as a systematic method of creating, applying and defining the entire process of teaching and learning, taking into account technical and human resources and their interaction, which aims at optimizing education forms.

Using role play on a systematic basis allowed us to define and work out socio-pedagogical and psycho-didactic conditions for the organization of the educational process, which are necessary for the effective formation and development of future lawyers' professional competences.

During the pedagogical experiment first-year students of the bachelor's degree program 40.03.01- Jurisprudence of the Law Faculty of Pskov Branch of the Academy of Federal Penal Service of Russia (Pskov, Russia) were selected as respondents; a total number- 50 participants. The experiment took place

in the period since September 2018 until June 2019. Role play was used as a testing form to assess the formation of professionally significant competences developed through various role plays. "Session of the General Assembly of Interpol" according to students' opinion turned out to be one of the most interesting plays in the system of communicative tasks as it was created by students who were offered to carry out the project work "The Role of Interpol in the Fight against Crime", the results of the project being presented in the form of the role play.

Elements of gamification in accordance with the concept of Edutainment were realized in the form of media presentations, use of original internet resource [www. Interpol.com](http://www.interpol.com) enabling to implement a content-based English language learning.

In accordance with the global strategy of the law enforcement - fight against crime- the suggested role play "Session of the General Assembly Interpol" evolved target language practice, providing students with an algorithm for interaction between representatives of the Interpol service being engaged in carrying out the law enforcement strategic task to combat world crime.

According to our research results, psycho-didactic conditions for organizing a role play represent a system of tasks to be solved by the teacher. Moreover, the success of the role play organization is dependent on the elaborate solution of the tasks: defining the goals of the role play, choosing the theme of the role play that corresponds to the age and professional characteristics of students, using pre-selected speech patterns, preparing students to play in a psychological aspect, i.e. to convince them to "accept" certain social roles with certain modes of behavior in situations of interpersonal interaction; preparing stage properties (role cards, decoration elements) and media visual aids such as tables, charts, mind maps with key words to use in conversational situations.

Implementation of psycho-didactic conditions for organizing a short-term project made it possible to organize and successfully conduct an Internet quest, which resulted in students' presentations on the types of crimes. The main objectives of the project activity were the formation of students' collective responsibility when performing the project task, the development of information and communicative competencies and increase of motivation to learn the foreign language.

The socio-pedagogical (external) conditions of the role play that help to optimize interpersonal communication of its participants, include the following characteristics: teacher's role of a supervisor, role play's evaluation by the play participants through the collective discussion of its results, using a professionally relevant communication situation to stimulate motivation to learning, placement of play participants in accordance with simulated reality conditions.

Another definite thing was revealed in the course of research: conducting a role play is subject to a specific algorithm consisting of 3 stages - challenge, comprehension and reflection - the sequence of organization of which reflects the laws of human mental activity and is a basic didactic cycle that represents the basis of the technology "Development of Critical Thinking through Reading and Writing" (Steel et al., 2007).

The stage Challenge is used to "draw" attention and arouse students' interest to the topic of the lesson. The greeting of the play participant "Interpol's General Secretary", stating the main subject and objectives of the "General Assembly", is accompanied by a graphic presentation of information — in a

cluster, the graphical classifier (Dansereau et al., 1983), which is used as a method of actualization of the students' knowledge on the topic "Structure and Functions of Interpol."

The stage Comprehension includes various information processing techniques which enable to convey an individual insight of the information to the participants. Performances of Interpol's "experts" are followed by the work of the play participants in small groups, who are asked to complete a number of tasks to organize the learning material into graphic forms. For example, fill in a graphic form using the INSERT-Interactive Noting System for Effective Reading and Thinking method (Vaughan & Estes, 1986), which implies active reading of a text using a system of symbols to mark the text ("v", "+", "-", "?"), systematization of the information upon filling data in the table and its discussion.

Drawing up a cause-and-effect diagram, "Fishbone" (Ishikawa, 2020) allows students to "break" a common problem topic into a number of reasons and arguments as a result of structural analysis of cause-and-effect relationships. Then the presentation of the collective work of small groups takes place. The play ends with the drafting of the resolution of the "Interpol General Assembly" which goes in small groups, with the discussion of their work followed.

The stage Reflection implies participants' discussion of the role play, summing up of the activities and filling in a questionnaire containing questions on the assessment of their work and the work of a small group, the most interesting methods of work, as well as techniques that helped to master the information more deeply, the new knowledge and experience gained in the team work, the possibility of applying this knowledge in future professional activities, etc.

Organization of the role play in accordance with a certain algorithm "challenge – comprehension – reflection" and the replication of the role play at the level of the pedagogical process and educational results state a universal, interdisciplinary nature of the proposed technology of role play, which can be used at any stage of education with a number of psycho-educational and socio-pedagogical conditions of students' educational activity organization having in mind.

The purpose of our experimental research was the study of the impact of role play technology with integrated information technologies (project technology and critical thinking technology) on the formation of professionally significant competences of future lawyers. For each considered competence (communicative and information) the indicators characterizing its manifestations and levels of formation were determined.

During the experiment the students were asked to evaluate their competence indicators at the beginning and end of the 1st year of studies. A questionnaire was used in the process of self-assessment of the students' level of competence formation. According to the results of students' self-assessment, we could conclude that they have a positive dynamic of formation of communicative and information competences.

In the process of preparing project tasks and during the role play at the control stage of the experiment, students demonstrated critical thinking: they analyzed problem situations, identified tasks (problems), showed ways to solve the tasks, made conclusions, expressed their attitude to the problem, and answered questions. At the same time, they participated in receptive and productive types of speech communication in English to solve communicative tasks, which indicated the formation of the communicative competence.

Based on this, we can state the following: the systematic use of interactive role play technology with integrated information technologies (the project technology and the technology of developing critical thinking) and elements of gamification in accordance with the concept of Edutainment in the process of the English language learning will enhance the future lawyers' professional training, improve their communicative and information competencies, result in the formation of their professional identity.

7. Conclusion

Universal and professional competences of a specialist are formed by their systematic integration into the whole educational process through the content that reflects the new realities of life, intensive role play techniques with integrated elements of gamification that provide for learning through making and environmental factors that create conditions for self-development and self-realization of the student.

Role play is perceived by us as a pedagogical technology for developing professionally significant students' competences. The role play activity included in the educational process allows each student to build up his own individual educational trajectory, his own route of individual development in society, putting the student in the position of a subject to master the qualities required in his future professional activity.

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