

ROLE PLAY SIMULATION



MAIN FEATURES

Reinforced skills (TASC Cluster)	LEADING
Suitable for	Teachers, Students
Difficulty level	Low
Setting	Group
Minimum number of participants	3 to 30
Average time length	30 minutes
Special Equipment	No
Online version	Yes



1. DESCRIPTION

This exercise allows social conflicts and decision-making to be simulated according to the interests of the group. This exercise helps participants to have some new responsibilities in a role playing/simulation that they might not be accustomed to. By applying this exercise, the instructor of a game keeps a relatively low profile and participants are free to interact with each other spontaneously.

2. AIM / BENEFITS

The role playing/simulation is a valuable exercise to develop and practice behavioural skills and can encourage creative thinking, collaborative leadership, an awareness of the dynamics of power in the relationship, motivation and involvement necessary for learning languages or other teaching / learning subjects. The applied strategy is beneficial for social learning, creating real-life simulation situations. This exercise helps to think about decision-making possibilities, stimulates argumentation-based discussion, and improves cognitive social and behavioural skills. It is a very useful tool to improve classroom climate and to be aware of possible consequences of action taken as well as to look for potential solutions to a problem/s addressed.

3. COMPETENCIES CLUSTER(s) related

CLUSTER NR 3 (skills: Awareness of the dynamics of power in the relationship) and 8 (Skills: Collaborative leadership)

Why

1. Awareness of the dynamics of power in the relationships, because this exercise is very useful in order to gather an understanding of the power dynamics with a focus on the idea that building solutions to improve the classroom climate is a co-constructive process, actively involving every actor. Also the simulation of situations helps to understand the role of power each actor has and the imbalance of power due to the different roles. Being aware of their role of power can help teachers use it in a positive way, while facilitating the classroom climate. Discussion can be focused on how strong emotions are expressed from a different perspective.

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2. Collaborative leadership because this method focuses on decentralising team power from a single leader and involving everyone in the decision-making process. The purposes of these techniques are to prepare learners to take on the role of others in a role-play; to develop individual potential and encourage greater commitment to the common goal; and to enhance interaction skills in the environment where ideas and views are discussed freely by the learners themselves.

4. HOW TO DO THE EXERCISE

Step 1 / Preparation

During this stage, the instructor of the game will need to focus on a theme, present a simulated situation, choose and assign roles. Distribution of roles can be assigned by giving each participant a card with exact role description. This step requires extensive research and design as instructors must take into account as many aspects of the theme as possible and provide explicit instruction of what is expected of participants.

The individual instructions should be very concrete, for example:

- Participant 1:
 - You want to be the leader of the group;
 - You do not take the project very seriously or have many ideas.
 - You are Player D's best friend and always support him/her.
 - You take a lower profile in the first 10 minutes.
 - You dislike Participant 5.
- Participant 2:
 - You are generally negative and like to question everything.
 - You have few if any ideas of your own.
 - You feel that Player 4 is a liability for the group and are generally dismissive of his/her ideas.
 - You take a lower profile in the middle 10 minutes, ant etc.

The whole group of participants can be divided into sub-groups and the distribution of roles can be done within each group.

Step 2 / Warm up

Starting the game by rehearsing assigned roles in a warm-up activity, used to prepare a group for role-plays. Allow students enough time to research their roles, ask questions, and become comfortable with the scenario. If needed, the warm up activity can be extended, because for some participants, this might be their first time experiencing this kind of learning, therefore providing participants with tips or examples is helpful.



Step 3 / Application

- The group starts roleplaying according to the descriptions of roles.
- During actual role play/simulation, the instructor will take on the role of observer and interject if necessary.
- The instructor may act as a moderator if students need to debate on issues, or they may just provide a debrief at the end of the gameplay.

Step 4 / Evaluation

The instructor of the game should ask the participants to reflect on the results obtained. Participants share feelings about what it was like to be in one or more roles.

5. DEBRIEF

In about 15 minutes (approx.), the instructor asks the participants to share their experience in plenary.

Possible questions:

- Which of the solutions seems the most convincing?
 - What did you feel, how could you express your emotions?
 - What problems did you have during the game?
 - Was the game realistic?
 - Which parts of it could be applied in other situations? What situations?
- Having all the students engage with one another and share experiences promotes enhanced reflection, which promotes critical thinking and encourage positive interactions.

6. SPECIFIC MATERIALS

- The white board and pencil in order to write down a short description of the simulated situation and/ or individual roles.
- Paper and pencil in order to provide each participant a card with exact individual instructions, if needed.

7. TIPS AND TRICKS

- The instructor of the game starts and ends the game.
- When assigning roles and creating instruction for participants, specific tasks with concrete time constraints helps participants to remain organised and not overwhelmed.
- If necessary, the instructor can offer a break at certain moments in the game to encourage reflection. For example, the break should be taken if the simulation leads to very strong emotions or conflict.



8. ON-LINE VERSION

www.spatial.chat can be an alternative online platform to be used in running this exercise.

9. REFERENCES - WEB-REFERENCES

- Tompkins, P. K. (1998). Role playing/simulation. The Internet TESL Journal, 4(8), 143-150.: <http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Tompkins-RolePlaying.html>.
- Alabsi. 2016. The Effectiveness of Role Play Strategy in Teaching Vocabulary. Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 6(2) 227-234.
- Krisdiana, B. P., Irawati, E., & Kadarisman, A. E. (2018). The Effectiveness of Role-Play Integrated with Word Cards on Students' Speaking Skill for Communication. Jurnal Pendidikan Humaniora, 6(2), 78-84.