

Journal of Trainee Teacher Education Research

**A study of primary school pupil perspectives on the
implementation of role play in their lessons**

Eleanor Trefusis

(PGCE General Primary, 2020-2021)

email: eleanortrefusis@aol.com

Abstract

Vygotsky's (1978) cultural historical theory suggests that role play can be applied to help children to develop socially, emotionally and cognitively, and multiple studies have revealed the advantages of role play in the classroom. However, minimal research has examined pupil perspectives surrounding the use of role play in their lessons. This proposal outlines a small-scale case study that would use both qualitative and quantitative data to examine what Year 2 and Year 6 pupils think about the use of role play in their lessons and if it is beneficial to their learning. It finds that pupils must be able to explore the use of play and role play in their lessons in order to develop socially, emotionally and cognitively, and that teachers must place their pupils at the centre of their learning for this development to occur through role play.

© Eleanor Trefusis, 2022

Note

In 2020-2021 the COVID-19 crisis disrupted the second assignment for Primary PGCEs meaning that they were unable to undertake research in classrooms. As a result the assignment was changed to make it a research proposal instead. Therefore, the articles included from the Primary PGCEs do not include results and discussions, but do provide detailed proposals for researching pupil perspectives about different aspects to school and learning.

A study of primary school pupil perspectives on the implementation of role play in their lessons

Eleanor Trefusis

Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that role play is a creative activity that enables children to communicate, explore contrasting viewpoints and develop deeper thinking. The National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE) (1999) suggests that creativity is a crucial aspect of children's learning, not just in 'creative subjects', but throughout the curriculum. By implementing role play across the curriculum and throughout the school years, teachers create possibilities for pupils to access their learning in creative ways and therefore develop their understanding of topics in more depth.

Vygotsky's (1978) cultural-historical theory suggests that role play helps young children to develop socially, emotionally and cognitively. Nonetheless, multiple studies have revealed the lack of emphasis placed on understanding children's perspectives when implementing role play in lessons (Clark, 2005; Howard, Bellin & Rees, 2002; Linklater, 2006). The majority of research studies apply adult perspectives to comprehend how role play aids children's learning, but this lacks insight into whether pupils find role play truly beneficial to their individual understanding.

Therefore, this research aims to address the following two questions:

- What do pupils think about the use of role play in their lessons?
- Do pupils regard role play as being beneficial to aid their understanding?

My background in acting, applied theatre and dramatherapy has sparked an interest in understanding pupil perspectives on the use of role play throughout the primary school years. Therefore, I will include participants from Years 2 and 6 in my study, to understand perspectives of children in Key Stages 1 and 2, and I will take into account a spectrum of pupils with different abilities in an inclusive classroom. Regarding pupils as individual learners will provide a well-rounded insight into pupil perspectives, so that I can understand the benefits of implementing role play throughout primary school in more depth.

Literature Review

Defining Role Play

In order to understand the benefits of role play on children's learning, the term must first be defined. Maley (1987) likens role play to the fable of a blind man attempting to describe an elephant, due to the fact that the term "takes on different meanings for different people" (p.3). Moreover, Rubin (1980) states that "play is not consistent from organism to organism and from situation to situation" (p.70). Although role play is not an easily defined concept, due to the plethora of role play categories, the term could be described as the amalgamation between the two words, as someone takes on a 'role' whilst assuming an aspect of 'play' (Shapiro & Leopold, 2012).

It is necessary to indicate that 'play' and 'role play' intersect when applied in the classroom, as they are closely defined concepts. Andresen (2005) distinguishes between pretend play and role play, suggesting that pretend play is "any play with fictitious meanings" (p.397), whilst role play is "pretend play with role taking" (p.398). However, according to Vygotsky's definitions of play, sociodramatic play, or pretend play, is a type of role play, as it contains the presence of roles and is about the dramatic (Karpov, 2003; Schärer, 2017). As children develop and their roles become more defined, pretend play evolves into more mature role play. Therefore, throughout this literature review, the term 'role play' will encapsulate every aspect of classroom play where children take on or create a character, thus portraying the benefits of role play throughout the school years. This includes sociodramatic play, where children imitate real life situations with play; improvisation, where children spontaneously create a role play; and the Mantle of the Expert, where children become experts in a certain situation through role play. This literature review will focus on three benefits of role play that have been identified through various studies: the development of children's social and cognitive skills; the potential for role play to offer pupils alternative perspectives; and the benefits of role play on all children, including those who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL) or have a Special Educational Need (SEN).

The Importance of Pupil Perspectives

As aforementioned, multiple studies have revealed the benefits of role play on children's learning from the teacher or researcher's perspective. However, in her ethnographic study, Linklater (2006) observed how uncommon it is for children to be included as active participants in research, so she

analysed the extent to which role play is implemented in the classroom to benefit children. Although small-scale and carried out on just three families, Linklater's research found that the Reception classroom is a strongly teacher-focused environment, which provides little time for creativity, imagination and play. This has been further demonstrated in other studies over the years (e.g. Bennett, Wood & Rogers, 1997; Rogers & Evans, 2006). Curriculum changes and the introduction of a new Early Years' provision framework formalised the foundation stages and eliminated much of the time that would have been used for play (Kwon, 2002; Wood, 1999). However, this inhibits children from accessing their potential for growth and development through role play, which permeates into Key Stages 1 and 2.

Linklater's (2006) research was particularly influenced by the Reggio Emilia approach, due to its focus on placing children as powerful learners and experts. Indeed, by involving children in deep level investigations and viewing them as specialists in their own learning, the Reggio Emilia approach allows children to be active in constructing their knowledge as apprentices, rather than as targets of instruction (Hewett, 2001). Vakil, Freeman and Swim (2003) emphasise the importance of understanding children's unique perspectives, in order to assist every child in their individual learning experience. A plethora of research studies have found multiple benefits of role play in the classroom but, without considering pupil perspectives and placing the child at the centre of their learning, it must be analysed whether the true benefits of role play have been considered.

Role Play as an Aid to Children's Development

Multiple studies have found role play to be necessary for children's cognitive and social development (Kingdon, 2018; Rubin, 1980; Savina, 2014). Sociodramatic play is a type of role play which is usually applied in the Early Years and Key Stage 1, and which allows children to create imaginary scenarios that connect to the real world (Smilansky, 1968). During their study, Elias and Berk (2002) used observation to measure whether sociodramatic play can help children to self-regulate. Their research included 53 three and four-year-old children, and they found that sociodramatic play was particularly advantageous in the cognitive development and self-regulation of highly impulsive pupils. This was due to the presence of play goals, verbal role play, and social rules. This connects to Vygotsky's (1967) cultural-historical theory, which focuses on the significance of role play between ages 3 and 7 (Hakkarainen & Brdikyt, 2014). Vygotsky suggested that role play holds high cognitive importance if it contains the creation of an imaginary situation, the presence of roles, and a set

of internal rules (Bodrova & Leong, 2015; Rogers & Evans, 2006). If role play contains these three aspects, children are able to liberate themselves from societal constraints, thus they can cognitively develop and self-regulate (Fleer, 2018; Kingdon, 2018; Smith, 2010). Elias and Berk (2002) concluded that the development that can occur through sociodramatic play prepares children for the challenges that they will encounter during their school years.

However, it is important to note how this development occurs during role play and if it meets any barriers. Many studies that examine the use of role play in children's development, including Elias and Berk (2002), draw on the concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). Formulated by Vygotsky (1978), the ZPD is "...the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more able peers" (p.86). This is well-regarded as being a leading concept associated with child development, but it is important to note the role of the teacher during children's social and cognitive development during role play. Vygotsky (1977) draws a distinction between children's development in problem solving and in play, as he suggests that role play creates its own ZPD. Therefore, the adult's role during role play in young children should alter as, although their presence may be necessary in role play, they may disrupt the process (Hakkarainen & Brdikyt, 2008). van Oers (2013) emphasises this further, stating that, during role play, adults "should never minimise children's freedom, impair their involvement, or impose rules that go beyond the activity needs of the children" (p.194). However, McSharry and Jones (2000) identified that many teachers find this difficult, as they fear loss of control. Indeed, the NACCCE (1999) suggests that "there are many misconceptions about creativity. Some people associate creative teaching with a lack of discipline in education" (p.10). This has caused teachers to hold multiple misconceptions about the potential benefits of role play and how to implement it in the classroom. Harrison, Robins, Cartledge and Meiner (2005) established that teachers often regard role play as a time-filler, whilst Schärer (2017) found that many teachers believe role play should be unguided and should occur between blocks of instructions.

However, in their year-long ethnographic study, Rogers and Evans (2006) researched pupil perspectives surrounding the benefits of role play on their learning and development, if it is applied correctly. They collected data through qualitative methods, including photographs, observation and informal conversation, and they found that, although social interaction and development are leading functions of role play, the teacher's role in the classroom mitigates against children's full social

development and ability to develop complex narratives. Booth (2013) suggests that “when students participate in drama, they are in charge of building the dramatic experience through their actions and words” (p.78). Therefore, Rogers and Evans’ (2006) findings highlight the significance of teachers’ self-awareness during role play, so that pupils can cross their ZPD through self-directed role play activities with their peers. According to Vygotsky’s cultural-historical theory, this consequently allows children to internalise their interactions so they can control behaviour and transform attention into higher cognitive, cultural and social functions (El’konin, 1999; Fox & Riconscente, 2008; Freyberg, 1973).

The Potential for Role Play to Offer Alternative Perspectives

Although Vygotsky’s cultural-historical theory applies closely to role play in early childhood development, it is important to understand the continual development that can occur from the implementation of role play throughout the school years. Schärer (2017) notes that a learning motive becomes prominent in role play when children reach the end of their sixth year. Furthermore, throughout the school years, the type of play adapts into increasingly structured scenarios with more defined roles. Furness (1976) suggests that role play provides children with “improved communication skills, creativity, increased social awareness, independent thinking, verbalization of opinions, development of values and appreciation of the art of drama” (p.19). Many of these benefits result from the fact that role play requires children to take on different roles, thus allowing them to perceive other people’s situations and experiences. The opportunity for pupils to experience different points of view and learn about the world around them in more depth is made increasingly possible as children cognitively develop. Brock (2013) states that “drama and socio-dramatic play offer enormous potential to get children to see things from another’s viewpoint” (p.133). Indeed, by placing themselves in someone else’s situation, pupils are able to develop their understanding and discuss ethical and moral issues that could be difficult to talk about (Colby, 1987; Paolitto, 1977; Winston, 1999).

In their ethnographic study, Kilgour, Reynaud, Northcote and Shields (2015) implemented four different role play scenarios in teacher education environments, in order for students to understand the reality of others in certain situations. This included role play in a multicultural education class, which was implemented to help student teachers to understand their preconceptions surrounding the experience of being part of a minority group. During the researchers’ study, students were randomly

allocated roles of workers with varying amounts of money, exposing them to feelings and situations they may not normally encounter during the improvisation activity. Clawson (2006) suggests that role play can “push them [pupils] to focus on significant details they otherwise might ignore” (p.141). This can be perceived in the results of Kilgour et al.’s (2015) study, which were collected through questionnaires following the role play activity. The questionnaires included asking the students about their emotions during the role play, encouraging deeper thinking into the role play experience. Therefore, it is clear that the role play activity allowed the participants to receive a fuller understanding of the experiences of minority groups and analyse the feelings and emotions that could be felt in situations different to their own.

In the 1960s and 70s, Dorothy Heathcote established the Mantle of the Expert (MoE), which resembles whole-class dramas that provide children with in-role activities. Heathcote’s MoE allows children to become experts in situations and assume imagined specialist knowledge and skills, thus reversing roles with their teachers (Baldwin, 2004; Brock, 2013). Shor (1992) suggests that, when children take part in role play activities, they are able to consider “deep meanings, personal implications, and social consequences” (p.169). This can be perceived clearly through Terret’s (2013) study, in which MoE was applied in a Year 5 class to encourage the children to explore the construct of gender and challenge the binary of male and female. The pupils recreated the male protagonists’ experiences of exploring femininity from David Walliam’s (2008) children’s book, *The Boy in a Dress*, followed by a discussion out of role. Terret (2013) notes that “the dramatic framing of this fictional enquiry helps the children to distance and perhaps become more conscious of their own learnt beliefs and behaviours surrounding gender identity” (p.194). The concept of gender binaries could be perceived as difficult to discuss in the primary school classroom. However, this was made possible as the children were able to explore the experiences of the protagonist through role play in a safe and active way.

Valdes (2019) discusses the importance of humanising the classroom and deduces that role play provides “a very close approximation of the real-life experiences of difficult emotions and conflict while, at the same time, providing a safe distance from the actual experiences themselves” (p.12). This is important to note, as the classroom must remain a safe and trusting environment for children to be able to explore and discuss other people’s situations and perspectives through role play. Heathcote and Herbert (1985) suggest that MoE can help children to communicate, whilst also developing and learning socially, personally and theoretically. Furthermore, O’Neill (2014) states that

MoE provides children with “authentically holistic teaching” (p.4). Therefore, it is evident that role play provides a deeper understanding of the world through allowing children to assume imagined situations that they may not normally have the opportunity to experience.

Role Play as an Aid for Every Child’s Learning and Understanding

Whilst examining the benefits of role play on children’s learning, it is vital to take every child’s individual needs into account. An analysis and summary from data sources carried out by the Department for Education (DfE, 2020) found that there were around 1.32 million children with a Special Educational Need (SEN) in the UK in 2019. The term SEN includes, but is not limited to, children who have speech and language communications need, a learning difficulty, or autism spectrum disorder. Furthermore, the DfE (2021) reveal that there are over 1 million pupils in UK primary schools who speak English as an additional language, which can also have an impact on children’s learning. Consequently, teachers must be conscious of their provision for each individual child at every stage of role play, ensuring that their classroom remains inclusive and that they are aware of the benefits of role play for EAL and SEN children (Magos & Politi, 2008; Tompkins 1998). Additionally, teachers must take time to individualise the curriculum so that every child’s learning and development is scaffolded, and role play can help make learning more accessible to some children (Vakil, Freeman & Swim, 2003).

This is supported by Grant and Mistry’s (2010) study, which focused on how role play activities can enhance the learning of EAL children in a Year 4 class at an urban, multicultural school. They suggest that, without a cultural understanding of pupils’ backgrounds, teachers cannot differentiate learning for pupils’ individual needs to be fully met. Therefore, prior to carrying out their research, they noted that the children’s current levels of English language understanding “ranged from fluent to monosyllabic” (Grant & Mistry, 2010, p.156). The researchers measured the pupils’ development through role play and found that role play was a beneficial tool in EAL children’s learning. In his study, Seif (2017) also measured pupils’ understanding before and after role play, and he found that pupils’ English grammar understanding improved significantly due to the implementation of role play activities.

Nonetheless, teachers can consistently hold low expectations for EAL children, offering pupils unchallenging material due to their lack of understanding of the English language (Cooke, 1998; Ludhra & Jones, 2008). This prevents EAL pupils from developing their knowledge, thus it is vital

to understand how role play can benefit pupils' language learning, as well as their social and cognitive skills. Andresen (2005) suggests that the ZPD can be crossed during role play, as it provides the opportunity for children's talk to alter "relations between language and its situational context" (p.378). Indeed, through role play, the meaning of objects, actions and people are altered and transformed by using language to generate altered meanings (Andresen, 2005; Fleer, 2018). Bruner (1983) states that "play under the control of the player gives to the child his first and most crucial opportunity to have the courage to think, to talk, and perhaps even to be himself" (p.69). Role play provides EAL children with this opportunity to explore and dramatize different situations alongside their peers, thus encouraging pupils to work collaboratively and cross their ZPD.

It is also important to consider how role play can benefit pupils who have additional needs and may find creative and collaborative learning activities more difficult. Winter (in Taylor & Winter, 2020) states that the introduction of the MoE in her Year 1 and 2 mixed-age classroom engaged every child in her class, and that it significantly assisted the learning development of a child with autism. She states that, "for the first time, he has talked about his learning, asking to undertake activities directly linked to themes being explored within the Mantle context with other members of his family." (Taylor & Winter, 2020, p.80). Indeed, role play can increase student engagement alongside other methods of active learning (Clawson, 2006). This can be seen further in Vitalaki, Kourkoutas and Hart's (2018) three-year study across two primary schools in Crete, with the focus of building inclusion between pupils with and without SEN through role play, narrative speech and creative writing. They studied 7–9-year-olds and found that pupils with and without additional needs collaborated in their learning, and that every pupil remained engaged. The use of role play allowed pupils to develop empathy, collaboration and self-awareness, thus highlighting how role play can be viewed as being a fundamental aid for children's learning. Furthermore, Dorathy & Mahalakshmi (2011) studied the use of role play on language learning and found that it helps shy learners to mask themselves behind a role, whilst working collaboratively. Therefore, they found that learners are able to express themselves in an increasingly liberated way through role play. Consequently, it appears that role play is successful in aiding learning when the teacher applies it with every participant's individual needs in mind, thus allowing them to develop their knowledge further.

Methodology

Research Design

Mixed-method approach

Denscombe (2010) acknowledges that “the idea of a case study is that a spotlight is focused on individual instances rather than a wide spectrum.” (p.53). The aim of my research is to examine the benefits of role play on individual children’s learning and understanding from pupil perspectives. A case study approach will provide me with a holistic perspective, allowing me to analyse the data in more detail and comprehend whether role play truly aids children’s learning (Noor, 2008). Furthermore, in order to receive a comprehensive, in-depth understanding of pupil perspectives about role play, I have chosen to adopt a mixed-method research approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) suggest that a mixed-method approach is the “third research paradigm” (p.14), due to how it draws from the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research, whilst minimising the weaknesses of single research approaches. Indeed, mixed-method approaches help to eliminate any intrinsic bias that can be associated with single method approaches (Denscombe, 2010; Denzin, 1989a; Creswell, 2014). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) indicate that no method of research can be “100 per cent accurate” (p.133). However, a mixed-method approach will provide me with a deeper understanding of the benefits of role play from the perspectives of children.

When choosing which research methods would provide the best results, it is integral to take into account the way in which certain methods can undermine pupil perspectives through a teacher or researcher focus. In their study on pupil perspectives of role play, Rogers and Evans (2006) observed that “adults such as parents and teachers cannot give valid accounts of children’s social worlds” (p.44). This is certainly correct, but multiple studies have chosen research methods that attempt to show the effects of role play on children’s learning, without taking pupil perspectives into account. Although role play is a visual medium that can be watched and observed, the method of observation provides results from an adult perspective, rather than from the pupils themselves. A plethora of studies that focus on adult perspectives surrounding the impact of role play on children’s learning have placed observation as a core research method (Elias & Berk, 2002; Grant & Mistry, 2010; Vitalaki et al., 2018). However, this has prevented them from fully comprehending how role play can

aid children's learning. Furthermore, observation is a subjective method, thus it can be unreliable when gathering information (Kumar, 2014). Therefore, I have considered various research methods and their reliability for showing pupil perspectives, and I have found that questionnaires and semi-structured interviews are the most appropriate methods for my case study.

Questionnaires

Munn and Drever (1990) emphasise that questionnaires provide every respondent with the same question, so it is impossible for them to be influenced by the researcher, their teachers or their peers. Therefore, I will implement a Likert scale questionnaire, which will allow pupils to individually consider the degree to which they agree or disagree with certain statements (Bryman, 2012; Neuman, 2014). Bell (2007) points out that questionnaires should use "unambiguous, straightforward language" (p.463), particularly when targeted at younger children, as they can take questions literally. I have chosen a Likert scale questionnaire, rather than structured or unstructured questionnaires that require written answers, as it is straightforward and simple, which will help to prompt the children to consider what they think about the use of role play in their lessons (Malhotra, 2006). Borgers, de Leeuw and Hox (2000) point out that researchers should be careful with their wording, as ambiguity in the questions can significantly impact the quality of the responses. Therefore, I have ensured that my questionnaires use simple language and well-considered statements, so that the participants are able to respond accurately.

In their 2010 research project, Grant and Mistry found that the children in their study were completely unfamiliar with the use of role play in their lessons, as the school implemented sport, rather than the creative arts, as an initiative to improve their results. It is integral to take into account whether the pupils included in my study have previous experience of role play, as this will have a direct impact on every aspect of the study. Consequently, I have decided to apply two different questionnaires during my study – one that will be carried out one week before the role play activity and one immediately after. Before handing out the pre-activity questionnaire, I will ensure that the pupils are aware of how role play can be used in the classroom, so they can reflect on their own experiences of role play activities. The pre-activity questionnaire will inform my planning for the level of difficulty and type of role play that will be implemented during the study, such as the Mantle of the Expert or improvisation. Following the role play activity, I will hand out a second questionnaire, which will provide me with an all-round understanding of pupil perspectives on role play.

Semi-structured interviews

Alongside the questionnaires, I will carry out individual semi-structured interviews, which will provide me with a deeper understanding of pupil perspectives on the use of role play in their lessons. Scott (2000) draws attention to the fact that there is an apparent reluctance to include children's responses in research, due to their vulnerability to be influenced by others' opinions. I have taken this into account, as it is vital that the pupils' distinctive perspectives are not altered, thus I have chosen to carry out individual, rather than group, interviews. Crabtree, Yanoshik, Miller and O'Connor (2013) suggest that the aim of individual interviews is to explore a topic extensively and receive a detailed description of the participant's perspectives, as well clarifying intentions and meanings. My case study is focused around understanding the benefits of role play on every pupil as an individual, thus individual interviews will allow me to focus on each pupils' personal perspectives.

According to Noor (2008), semi-structured interviews offer "sufficient flexibility to approach different respondents differently while still covering the same areas of data collection" (p.1604). Semi-structured interviews will allow me to explore the reasoning, thoughts and feelings that my participants have surrounding the use of role play to a greater level (Denscombe, 2010). I have chosen to carry out interviews with six pupils, as this will provide me with enough information to evaluate, whilst allowing me time to transcribe and analyse the themes to an intensive level. Grant and Mistry (2010) selected a sample of six children in the qualitative part of their study, thus they were able to extensively observe and focus on these specific pupils during their study and receive extensive information for their research. Furthermore, Kuzel (1992) advocates that six to eight interviews are sufficient, whilst Guest, Bunce and Johnson's (2006) study suggests that a sample of six interviews is adequate to discover and interpret key themes and interpretations. Therefore, my decision to carry out six individual, semi-structured interviews will provide me with substantial information so that I can analyse pupil perspectives on role play to a deeper level.

Participants

In order to understand pupil perspectives on the use of role play in their lessons, my research study will include two sample ages. Multiple studies have examined the impact of role play on children in the foundation stages (Linklater, 2006; Rogers & Evans, 2006; 2007; Saltz & Johnson, 1974), due to Vygotsky's (1967) cultural historical theory surrounding the educational impact of play during the pre-school years. However, van Ments (1983) suggests that role play is underused in Key Stage 2,

even though it's a useful and versatile tool that can have a significant impact on assisting with children's learning. Indeed, I have examined multiple studies that show the development of older children and adults due to role play (Grant & Mistry, 2010; Kilgour et al., 2015; Terret, 2013; Vitalaki et al., 2018). As a result, my study will examine whether role play aids the learning of children in Year 2 (ages 6-7) and Year 6 (ages 10-11). Through including pupil perspectives from Key Stages 1 and 2, I will be able to analyse what children think of the use of role play across the school years and receive a wider range of results surrounding the benefits of role play.

As my case study is focused on understanding what every child thinks of the use of role play, I will ensure that I am inclusive throughout my research. Kilgour et al. (2015) carried out a questionnaire with every participant in their role play activity, thus allowing them to analyse the effects of role play on participants who may have different needs or opinions. My questionnaires will be completed by every child in the Years 2 and 6 classes whose parent or guardian has given consent, which will provide me with a good understanding of the perspectives of every pupil.

To provide me with a more detailed understanding of pupil perspectives alongside the questionnaires, my semi-structured interviews will be carried out with male and female pupils, whilst ensuring that this sample includes EAL and SEN pupils. I have chosen to include a representative sample of pupils in an inclusive classroom, as every learner in the classroom should "have opportunities to participate in a full range of classroom activities" (Pollard et al., 2019, p.490). The benefits of role play on every child's development can be seen in research such as Vitalaki et al.'s (2018) study that revealed the positive impact of role play on inclusivity and collaboration in the classroom, as well as Grant and Mistry's (2010) study, which shows the benefits of role play on EAL pupils' language learning. Therefore, my interview will include three pupils from Year 2 and three pupils from Year 6, which will include at least one child with SEN and one child who speaks EAL. Without an insight from children with SEN and EAL, the study would fail to fully represent pupil perspectives in an inclusive class, thus this purposeful sample must be selected. As a result, these interviews will allow me to understand what pupils with different current levels of attainment and understanding think of the use of role play and its benefits on their learning.

Statistical Analysis

When I have collected the quantitative and qualitative data from the questionnaires and interviews, I will systematically analyse the data to identify key themes and trends. In their 2006 ethnographic

study, Rogers and Evans applied qualitative data methods and all themes that were found were checked against the data by two researchers to ensure they were reliable, as they did not collect any quantitative data. I am carrying out my research independently, but Nemoto and Beglar (2014) state that the data from Likert scale questionnaires “can be profitably compared, contrasted, and combined with qualitative data-gathering techniques” (p.2). Therefore, my use of quantitative and qualitative research methods will allow me to compare my findings to ensure they are accurate across the study.

I will analyse my findings from the two questionnaires and display the data in bar charts, which I will create on Microsoft Excel. The Likert scale questionnaire will allow me to receive data that fits into categories, and bar charts help to display categorical data clearly so that it can be interpreted (Swires-Hennessy, 2014). Many of the studies that have examined the use of role play in lessons have analysed questionnaires and interviews through written discussion, rather than through displaying results in charts or graphs (e.g. Grant & Mistry, 2010; Rogers & Evans, 2006; Vitalaki et al., 2018). Although this presents an analysis of their results, it continues to include a degree of subjectivity. I have chosen to display the data with bar charts, rather than pie charts, as they allow the quantities to be displayed by length, which is perceived as being more accurate than pie charts (Streit & Gehlenborg, 2014). A range of bar charts in response to the statements on the questionnaires will also allow me to display data from both year groups adjacently, thus allowing for a clear understanding of pupil perspectives in both age groups.

The six interviews will be audio-recorded, transcribed and analysed. I will identify key themes and subthemes through coding, which will allow me to organise the data into categories. Rubin and Rubin (2005) state that “analysis entails classifying, comparing, weighing, and combining material from the interviews to extract the meaning and implications” (p.201). Consequently, I will follow Braun and Clarke’s (2006) checklist of criteria for thematic analysis, which will provide me with a framework to analyse my data. When I have identified key themes, I will create a thematic map, which will display the themes that respond to my research questions.

I acknowledge that my thematic analysis may include an aspect of subjectivity, as I will be interpreting the data from my adult perspective. Following their study, Elias and Berk (2002) coded the results from their observations of role play to understand the patterns in pupils’ behaviours. They noted that they were unable to code every aspect of the children’s behaviour during short intervals, thus acknowledging that coding is being completed from an adult’s perspective. St. Pierre and

Jackson (2014) identify that, when looking for key themes in qualitative research methods, a researcher will attempt to identify patterns and categories, even if they are non-existent, in order to reach a conclusion. Therefore, it is important to note that my coding of interviews will not merely reveal pupil perspectives, but that my significant decisions during research analysis will help to present aspects of their true perspectives on whether role play is beneficial for their learning (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations will be central to my research. Stutchbury and Fox (2009) suggest that “researchers need to be mindful of rules, laws and codes of conduct which determine how to behave whilst they are conducting their research” (p.489). Therefore, prior to commencing my case study, I will ensure that I have considered every ethical aspect of the research by completing an ethics checklist and understanding the ethical requirements of the British Educational Research Association (BERA) (2018). Subsequently, I will approach the headteacher of the school to be granted permission to commence the study, followed by the class teachers of both classes. I will receive the school’s approval before approaching the pupils’ guardians, so that I have permission to carry out the case study in regard to the school’s safeguarding policy and ethical approval.

Following this, I will send a consent form to the pupils’ parents and guardians, explaining exactly what is involved in the research and allowing them to opt-out if they do not want their child to participate in the study. I will follow the school’s GDPR guidelines and will provide guardians with two weeks to respond, which will include frequent reminders. Flewitt (2005) draws attention to the fact that there could be ethical concerns when participants are approached via a gatekeeper, such as the class teacher or headteacher. She suggests that their decision could be influenced due to concerns about it impacting their relationship with the school and the teachers. Therefore, I will ensure that the children’s guardians are provided with multiple opportunities to opt-out of the study in a safe and trusting environment.

Denzin (1989b) suggests that “our primary obligation is always to the people we study, not to our project or to a larger discipline” (p.83). Role play can seem intimidating to some children, depending on their levels of confidence and social interaction (Valdes, 2019). Therefore, like Grant and Mistry (2010), I will ensure that I am aware of the pupils’ previous experiences with role play, and that I

create a safe and trusting environment for every child. BERA (2018) indicate that “researchers should do everything they can to ensure that all potential participants understand, as well as they can, what is involved in a study” (p.9). I will explain that the study is voluntary to the children in both classes, as well as providing them with information about what will be involved in the role play activity, questionnaires and interviews.

Participants in research studies have the rights to confidentiality and anonymity (BERA, 2018). Therefore, I will not mention the real names of pupils, teachers or the school, and I will replace any names with pseudonyms. Audio recordings of the interviews will be labelled with numbers to signify each child for transcription purposes and will subsequently be immediately destroyed.

Implications for my Future Practice

Ultimately, it is evident that, although multiple studies have revealed the significant benefits of role play, pupil perspectives must be acknowledged to fully understand if role play aids children’s learning throughout primary school. At the beginning of my research, my interest in role play stemmed from my background in drama and the creative arts, alongside a hope to understand what pupils really think about the use of role play in their lessons. As my research has progressed, it has become increasingly clear that role play holds the potential to develop children’s cognitive, social and linguistic attainment throughout the primary school years, if it is applied appropriately. My research has shown me that, although these benefits have been proven, it is integral to place children at the centre of their learning and understanding. Therefore, for my future practice, I will take these benefits into account, whilst ensuring that I consider pupil perspectives surrounding what they think of the use of role play in their lessons and its benefits for their learning.

Through analysing different studies surrounding inclusion during role play, I conclude that it is vital for me to consider how the type of role play I choose will benefit each individual child. My research has inspired me to consider creative ways that I can apply role play to help every child to develop, have fun and express themselves in my future practice. Grant and Mistry’s (2010) study particularly stood out to me, as they implemented role play in a school where the pupils had never previously experienced any form of this creative medium. Their findings that role play significantly impacted EAL children’s language learning was inspiring, and I hope to apply role play so that it can help every child to cross their ZPD.

According to Vygotsky (1967), role play creates its own ZPD that can be crossed through taking on roles and dramatic exploration of different situations. As a teacher, I am aware that my role is to help children to cross their ZPD, but I will ensure that I do not prevent children from being able to cognitively and socially develop and self-regulate during role play activities when they are working alongside their peers. Furthermore, my research has revealed the potential for role play to help children to delve more deeply into the experiences of others so that they can understand their situations. I will facilitate and introduce the task, whilst taking into account that pupils should be immersed into their roles so they can experience alternative perspectives throughout the curriculum. Reflecting on Terret's study (2013), I will include time for children to reflect on their role play experiences through discussions with the rest of the class, so that they can consider its impact on their learning. Additionally, I will ensure that I create a positive, safe and trusting environment, where pupils feel they can take on a role and encounter other people's life experiences without judgement.

References

- Andresen, H. (2005). Role Play and Language Development in the Preschool Years. *Culture & Psychology*, 11(4), 387–414. doi: [10.1177/1354067x05058577](https://doi.org/10.1177/1354067x05058577).
- Baldwin, P. (2004). *With Drama in Mind: Real Learning in Imagined Worlds*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Bell, A. (2007). Designing and testing questionnaires for children. *Journal of Research in Nursing*, 12(5), 461–469. doi: [10.1177/1744987107079616](https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987107079616).
- Bennett, N., Wood, L., & Rogers, S. (1997). *Teaching through play*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- British Educational Research Association (BERA). (2018). *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*. Retrieved from https://www.bera.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/BERA-Ethical-Guidelines-for-Educational-Research_4thEdn_2018.pdf.
- Bodrova, E. & Leong, D. J. (2015). Vygotskian and Post-Vygotskian Views on Children's Play. *American Journal of Play*, 7(3), 371-388. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1070266.pdf>.
- Booth, D. (2013). *I've Got Something to Say!: How Students Voices Inform our Teaching*. Ontario: Pembroke Publishers.

- Borgers, N., de Leeuw, E., & Hox, J. (2000). Children as Respondents in Survey Research: Cognitive Development and Response Quality 1. *Bulletin of Sociological Methodology/Bulletin de Méthodologie Sociologique*, 66(1), 60–75. doi: [10.1177/075910630006600106](https://doi.org/10.1177/075910630006600106).
- Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. doi: [10.1191/1478088706qp063oa](https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa).
- Brock, A. (2013). Playing in the Early Years: At Liberty to Play - Not only Legal but also Statutory!. In A. Brock, S. Dodds, P. Jarvis & Y. Olusoga (Eds.). *Perspectives on Play: Learning for Life* (pp. 120-145). Abingdon and New York: Routledge.
- Bruner, J. (1983). Play, thought, and language. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 60(3), 60-69. doi: [10.1080/01619568309538407](https://doi.org/10.1080/01619568309538407).
- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods* (4th ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Clark, A. (2005). Ways of Seeing: Using the Mosaic Approach to Listen to Young Children's Perspectives. In A. Clark, A. T. Kjørholt & P. Moss (Eds.) *Beyond Listening. Children's Perspectives on Early Childhood Services* (pp. 29–49.). Bristol: Policy Press.
- Clawson, J. G. S. (2006). Role-Playing. In J. G. S. Clawson & M. E. Haskins. (Eds.) *Teaching Management: A Field Guide for Professors, Consultants, and Corporate Trainers* (pp. 141–153). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2000). *Research Methods in Education* (5th ed.). London: Routledge/Falmer.
- Colby, R. (1987). Moral education through drama: a 'beyond justice' perspective. *Two D Drama/Dance*, 7(1), 72–80.
- Cooke, S. (1998). *Collaborative Learning Activities in the Classroom: designing inclusive materials for learning and language development*. Leicester: Forest Lodge Education Centre.
- Crabtree, B. F., Yanoshik, M. K., Miller, W. L., & O'Connor, P. J. (2013). Selecting Individual or Group Interviews. In D. L. Morgan (Ed.). *Successful Focus Groups: Advancing the State of the Art* (pp. 137-152). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Trefusis, E.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *A concise introduction to mixed methods research*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Denscombe, M. (2010). *The Good Research Guide: For small-scale social research projects*. (4th ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Denzin, N. K. (1989a). *The Research Act* (3rd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Denzin, N. K. (1989b). *Interpretative Bibliography*. London: Sage Publications.

DfE. (2020). *Special educational needs and disability: an analysis and summary of data sources*.

Retrieved from

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/882802/Special_educational_needs_and_disability_-_an_analysis_and_summary_of_data_sources.pdf.

DfE. (2021). *Schools, pupils and their characteristics, Academic Year 2019/20*. Retrieved from

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics>.

Dorathy, A. A. & Mahalakshmi, S. N. (2011). Second Language Acquisition through Task-based Approach – Role-play in English Language Teaching. *English for Specific Purposes World*, 33(11). Retrieved from

<https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.1037.602&rep=rep1&type=pdf>.

Elias, C. L. & Berk, L. E. (2002). Self-regulation in young children: Is there a role for sociodramatic play?. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 17, 216–238. doi: [10.1016/S0885-2006\(02\)00146-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0885-2006(02)00146-1).

El'konin, D. B. (1999). Toward the problem of stages in the mental development of children.

Journal of Russian and East European Psychology, 37(6), 11–30. doi: [10.2753/RPO1061-0405370611](https://doi.org/10.2753/RPO1061-0405370611).

Fleer, M. (2018). Play and Learning in Everyday Family Contexts. In P. K. Smith & J. L.

Roopnarine (Eds.). *The Cambridge Handbook of Play: Developmental and Disciplinary Perspectives* (pp. 417-560). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Flewitt, R. (2005). Conducting research with young children: some ethical considerations. *Early Child Development and Care*, 175(6), 553-565. doi: [10.1080/03004430500131338](https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430500131338).
- Fox, E. & Riconscente, M. (2008). Metacognition and Self-Regulation in James, Piaget, and Vygotsky. *Educational Psychology Review*, 20, 373–389. doi: [10.1007/s10648-008-9079-2](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-008-9079-2).
- Freyberg, J. (1973). Increasing the imaginative play of urban disadvantaged kindergarten children through systematic training. In J. L. Singer (Ed.). *The Child's World of Make Believe: Experimental Studies of Imaginative Play* (pp.129-154). New York: Academic Press.
- Furness, P. (1976). *Role Play in the Elementary School: A Handbook For Teachers*. New York: Hart Pub. Co.
- Grant, K. & Mistry, M. T. (2010). How does the use of role-play affect the learning of Year 4 children in a predominately EAL class?, *Education 3–13*, 38(2), 155-164. doi: [10.1080/03004270903130796](https://doi.org/10.1080/03004270903130796).
- Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How Many Interviews Are Enough?: An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability. *Field Methods*, 18(1), 59–82. doi: [10.1177/1525822X05279903](https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X05279903).
- Hakkarainen, P., & Brdikyt, M. (2008). The zone of proximal development in play and learning. *Cultural-Historical Psychology*, 4(4), 2-11. Retrieved from http://lchc.ucsd.edu/mca/Mail/xmcamail.2010_12.dir/pdf6DAHjotjsS.pdf.
- Hakkarainen, P., & Brdikyt, M. (2014). How play creates the zone of proximal development. In S. Robson & S. Flannery Quinn (Eds.). *The Routledge International Handbook of Young Children's Thinking and Understanding* (pp. 31-42). Abingdon & New York: Routledge.
- Harrison, L., Robins, J. Cartledge, F., & Meiner, J. (2005). Remaking role-play in Barnsley. *English 4-11*, 25, 18-20.
- Heathcote, D. & Herbert, P. (1985). A Drama of Learning: Mantle of the Expert. *Theory Into Practice*, 24(3), 173-180.

- Hewett, V. M. (2001). Examining the Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Childhood Education. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 29(2), 95–100. doi: [10.1023/A:1012520828095](https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1012520828095).
- Howard, J., Bellin, W., & Rees, V. (2002, September 12-14). *Eliciting children's perceptions of play and exploiting playfulness to maximise learning in the early years classroom*. Retrieved from <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/00002574.htm>.
- Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed Methods Research: A Research Paradigm Whose Time Has Come. *Educational Researcher*, 33(7), 14–26. doi: [10.3102/0013189X033007014](https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X033007014).
- Karpov, Y. (2003). Development Through the Lifespan. In A. Kozulin, B. Gindis, V. S. Ageyev, & S. M. Miller (Eds.), *Vygotsky's Educational Theory in Cultural Context* (pp. 138-155). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi: [10.1017/CBO9780511840975.009](https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511840975.009).
- Kilgour, P., Reynaud, D., Northcote, M. T., & Shields, M. (2015). Role-playing as a tool to facilitate learning, self-reflection and social awareness in teacher education. *International Journal of Innovative Interdisciplinary Research*, 2(4), 8-20.
- Kingdon, Z. (2018). Young children as beings, becomings, having beens: an integrated approach to role-play. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 26(4), 354-368. doi: [10.1080/09669760.2018.1524325](https://doi.org/10.1080/09669760.2018.1524325).
- Kumar, R. (2014). *Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners* (4th ed.) London: Sage Publications.
- Kuzel, A. (1992). Sampling in qualitative inquiry. In B. Crabtree & W. Miller (Eds.). *Doing qualitative research* (pp. 31–44). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Kwon, Y-I. (2002). Changing Curriculum for Early Childhood Education in England. *Early Childhood Research and Practice*, 4(2), 2-11.
- Linklater, L. (2006). Listening to learn: children playing and talking about the reception year of early years education in the UK. *Early Years*, 26(1), 63-78. doi: [10.1080/09575140500507868](https://doi.org/10.1080/09575140500507868).

- Ludhra, G. & Jones, D. (2008). Conveying the “right” kind of message: Planning for the first language and culture within the primary classroom. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 7(2), 56-70.
- Magos, K. & Politi, F. (2008). The Creative Second Language Lesson: The Contribution of the Role-play Technique to the Teaching of a Second Language in Immigrant Classes. *RELC Journal*, 39(1), 96–112. doi: [10.1177/0033688208091142](https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688208091142).
- Maley, A. (1987). Foreword. In G. P. Ladousse. *Role Play* (p.3). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Malhotra, N. K. (2006). Questionnaire Design and Scale Development. In R. Grover & M. Vriens (Eds.). *The Handbook of Marketing Research: Uses, Misuses, and Future Advances* (pp. 83-94). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- McSharry, G. & Jones, S. (2000). Role-play in science teaching and learning Role-play in science teaching and learning. *School Science Review*. 82(298), 73-82.
- Munn, P. & Drever, E. (1990). *Using Questionnaires In Small-Scale Research: A Teacher's Guide*. Glasgow: SCRE.
- National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE). (1999). *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education*. London: DfEE. Retrieved from <http://sirkenrobinson.com/pdf/allourfutures.pdf>.
- Nemoto, T. & Beglar, D. (2014). Developing Likert-scale questionnaires. In N. Sonda & A. Krause (Eds.), *JALT2013 Conference Proceedings*. Tokyo: JALT. Retrieved from https://jalt-publications.org/sites/default/files/pdf-article/jalt2013_001.pdf.
- Neuman, W. L. (2014). *Basics of Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (3rd ed.). Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
- Noor, K. B. (2008). Case study: A strategic research methodology. *American Journal of Applied Science*, 5(11), 1602–1604.
- O'Neill, C. (2014). *Dorothy Heathcote on education and drama: Essential writings*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Paolitto, D. P. (1977). The role of the teacher in moral education. *Theory Into Practice*, 16(2), 73-80. doi: [10.1080/00405847709542678](https://doi.org/10.1080/00405847709542678).

- Pollard, A., Black-Hawkins, K., Cliff Hodges, G., Dudley, P., Higgins, S., James, M., Linklater, ... & Wolpert, M. A. (2019). *Reflective Teaching in Schools*. (5th ed.). London: Bloomsbury.
- Rogers, S. & Evans, J. (2006). Playing the game? Exploring role play from children's perspectives, *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 14(1), 43-55, doi: [10.1080/13502930685209801](https://doi.org/10.1080/13502930685209801).
- Rogers, S. & Evans, J. (2007). Rethinking role play in the Reception class. *Educational Research*, 49(2), 153-167. doi: [10.1080/00131880701369677](https://doi.org/10.1080/00131880701369677).
- Rubin, K. H. (1980). Fantasy play: Its role in the development of social skills and social cognition. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 9, 69-84. doi: [10.1002/cd.23219800907](https://doi.org/10.1002/cd.23219800907).
- Rubin, H. J. & Rubin, I. S. (2005). *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. (2nd ed.) Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Saltz, E. & Johnson, J. (1974). Training for Thematic-Fantasy Play in Culturally Disadvantaged Children: Preliminary Results. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 66(4), 628-630. doi: [10.1037/h0036930](https://doi.org/10.1037/h0036930).
- Savina, E. (2014) Does play promote self-regulation in children?. *Early Child Development and Care*, 184(11), 1692-1705. doi: [10.1080/03004430.2013.875541](https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2013.875541).
- Schärer, J. H. (2017). Supporting Young Children's Learning in a Dramatic Play Environment. *Journal of Childhood Studies*, 42(3), 62-69. doi: [10.18357/jcs.v42i3.17895](https://doi.org/10.18357/jcs.v42i3.17895).
- Scott, J. (2000). Children as respondents: the challenge for quantitative methods. In P. Christensen & A. James (Eds.). *Research with Children: perspectives and practices* (pp. 98-119). Abingdon: Routledge.
- Seif, M. (2017). The Comparative Effect of Unscripted and Scripted Role-Play on EFL Learners' Grammar Achievements. *International Journal of English and Education*, 6(1), 147-157. Retrieved from http://ijee.org/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/14.8122628.pdf.
- Shapiro, S. & Leopold, L. (2012). A Critical Role for Role-Playing Pedagogy. *TESL Canada Journal*, 29(2), 120-130. doi: [10.18806/tesl.v29i2.1104](https://doi.org/10.18806/tesl.v29i2.1104).

- Shor, I. (1992). *Empowering education: critical teaching for social change*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Smilanksy, S. (1968). *The Effects of Sociodramatic Play on Disadvantaged Preschool Children*. New York: Wiley.
- Smith, P. K. (2010). *Children and Play: Understanding Children's Worlds*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.
- St. Pierre, E. A., & Jackson, A. Y. (2014). Qualitative Data Analysis After Coding. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 20(6), 715-719. doi: [10.1177/1077800414532435](https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800414532435).
- Streit, M. & Gehlenborg, N. (2014). Bar charts and box plots: creating a simple yet effective plot requires an understanding of data and tasks. *Nature Methods*, 11(2), 117.
- Stutchbury, K. & Fox, A. (2009). Ethics in educational research: introducing a methodological tool for effective ethical analysis. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 39(4), 489-504. doi: [10.1080/03057640903354396](https://doi.org/10.1080/03057640903354396).
- Swires-Hennessy, E. (2014). *Presenting Data: How to Communicate Your Message Effectively : How to Communicate Your Message Effectively*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
- Taylor, T. & Winter, N. (2020). Mantle of the Expert. *FORUM*, 62(1), 79-90. doi: [10.15730/forum.2020.62.1.79](https://doi.org/10.15730/forum.2020.62.1.79).
- Terret, L. (2013). The Boy in the Dress: queering Mantle of the Expert, Research in Drama Education. *The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 18(2), 192-195. doi: [10.1080/13569783.2013.787264](https://doi.org/10.1080/13569783.2013.787264).
- Tompkins, P. K. (1998). Role playing/simulation. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 4(8). Retrieved from http://www.unice.fr/sg/resources/articles/tompkins_1998_esl-efl.htm.
- Vakil, S., Freeman, R., & Swim, T. J. (2003). The Reggio Emilia Approach and Inclusive Early Childhood Programs. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 30(3), 187-192. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ670164>.
- Valdes, K. S. (2019). *Humanizing the classroom: using role-plays to teach social and emotional skills in middle school and high school*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.
- van Ments, M. (1983). *The Effective Use of Role-Play: A Handbook for Teachers and Trainers*. London: Croom Helm.

Trefusis, E.

- van Oers, B. (2013). Is it play? Towards a reconceptualisation of role play from an activity theory perspective. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 21(2), 185-198. doi: [10.1080/1350293X.2013.789199](https://doi.org/10.1080/1350293X.2013.789199).
- Vitalaki, E., Kourkoutas, E., & Hart, A. (2018). Building inclusion and resilience in students with and without SEN through the implementation of narrative speech, role play and creative writing in the mainstream classroom of primary education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 22(12), 1306-1319. doi: [10.1080/13603116.2018.1427150](https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2018.1427150).
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1967). Play and Its Role in the Mental Development of the Child. *Soviet Psychology*, 5(3), 6-18. doi: [10.2753/RPO1061-040505036](https://doi.org/10.2753/RPO1061-040505036).
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1977). Play and its role in the mental development of the child. In M. Cole (Ed.) *Soviet Developmental Psychology* (pp. 76–99). White Plains, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Walliams, D. (2008). *The Boy in a Dress*. London: Harper Collins.
- Winston, J. (1999). Theorising Drama as Moral Education. *Journal of Moral Education*, 28(4), 459-471. doi: [10.1080/030572499103016](https://doi.org/10.1080/030572499103016).
- Wood, E. (1999). The impact of the National Curriculum on play in reception classes. *Educational Research*, 41(1), 11-22. doi: [10.1080/0013188990410102](https://doi.org/10.1080/0013188990410102).