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THE IMPORTANCE OF ROMANIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN ROMANIAN EDUCATION: A VITAL DISCIPLINE FOR THE ROMANIAN SCHOOL SYSTEM

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Abstract: *The study of Romanian literature enhances critical thinking and empathy, as it provides insight into the complexities of human experience, societal struggles, and moral dilemmas. Whether it's the poetic introspection of Eminescu or the historical reflections in the works of Romanian novelists, literature helps readers connect with universal themes while staying anchored in the unique Romanian context.*

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INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly changing world, education plays a crucial role in shaping not only the minds of the younger generations but also the identity of a nation. Among the various subjects taught in Romanian schools, the Romanian language and literature hold an indisputable place of importance. These two disciplines are not just fundamental for acquiring linguistic proficiency, but also for preserving cultural heritage, fostering critical thinking, and ensuring the intellectual growth of students. Here are some compelling reasons why Romanian language and literature are absolutely necessary in the Romanian educational system.

MAIN TEXT

1. Preserving Cultural Heritage and National Identity

One of the primary roles of the Romanian language and literature in schools is to preserve and transmit the rich cultural heritage of the country. Through the study of literature, students gain a deep understanding of Romanian history, traditions, and values that have shaped the nation over centuries. The works of great Romanian authors such as Mihai Eminescu, George Coșbuc, and Ion Creangă are more than just literary texts; they are repositories of national identity and collective memory.



By reading these works, students are introduced to the nuances of Romanian culture, including folklore, traditions, historical events, and the language's evolution. This connection to their roots is essential in a globalized world where national identities risk being overshadowed by international influences. Learning Romanian literature helps students develop a sense of pride in their cultural history, fostering unity and patriotism.

2. Building Linguistic Competence and Communication Skills

At the heart of the Romanian language and literature curriculum is the development of linguistic competence. The ability to read, write, and speak effectively in one's native language is vital for personal success, academic achievement, and future professional opportunities. Romanian is the cornerstone of communication within the country, "dynamic of dialog"(A-M DUDĂU, 1/2025, 137) and mastery of the language ensures that students can engage meaningfully in all areas of life.

Moreover, studying literature allows students to expand their vocabulary, improve their grammar, and develop a sense of linguistic nuance. An understanding of literary devices such as metaphor, irony, and symbolism enhances their ability to interpret texts, express themselves eloquently, and communicate persuasively. This skill set is not only necessary for academic success but also for fostering strong social and professional relationships.

3. Fostering Critical Thinking and Analytical Skills

Romanian literature offers rich and diverse material for developing critical thinking. The texts students encounter are often layered with symbolism, complex characters, and multifaceted plots that invite deep analysis and interpretation. By engaging with these works, students learn to think critically about the world around them, question assumptions, and form well-reasoned judgments.

Through literature, students develop an appreciation for different perspectives, exploring issues such as love, injustice, identity, and social change. In turn, this cultivates empathy and emotional intelligence, allowing them to better understand the diverse experiences of others. Furthermore, literature often presents moral dilemmas and philosophical questions, encouraging students to reflect on their own values and beliefs (Manasia 2023: 79).

4. Improving Creativity and Imagination

Literature is a powerful vehicle for enhancing creativity and imagination. Romanian literary works, whether they are classic texts or contemporary ones, stimulate the imagination by presenting fantastical worlds, complex characters, and thought-provoking situations. Through reading fiction, students learn to visualize stories, empathize with characters, and imagine alternate realities.

This imaginative exercise is not just an academic pursuit—it is essential for cultivating creativity in all aspects of life. The creative skills (Manasia 2020: 6) developed through literature are invaluable, whether a student goes on to become a writer, artist, scientist, or entrepreneur. Creativity is a key driver of innovation, and literature provides a unique platform for its development.

5. Linking the Past with the Present

Romanian literature serves as a bridge between the past and the present. The stories and poems written by authors from different eras offer insights into the social, political, and cultural contexts of their times. For example, the works of Tudor Arghezi and Marin Preda reflect the complexities of Romanian society during the 20th century, while modern writers continue to address contemporary issues such as globalization, migration, and social justice.

By studying these works, students gain a better understanding of how history has shaped the present and how the Romanian people have navigated various challenges. This connection to the past allows students to contextualize their own experiences and understand the ongoing evolution of Romanian society.

6. Promoting National and International Dialogue

In a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected, mastering one's native language is vital not only for domestic communication but also for engaging in international dialogue. Romanian language and literature are powerful tools for introducing Romania's culture to the world. As students become proficient in Romanian, they are better able to share their cultural achievements, participate in global literary discussions, and contribute to international literature.

Furthermore, the study of Romanian literature can foster cross-cultural understanding and dialogue. Many great Romanian works have been translated into foreign languages (Manasia 2016: 26), contributing to Romania's reputation on the international literary stage. By learning to appreciate their own literary heritage, students also gain a deeper understanding of other cultures and literary traditions.

Romanian language and literature are indispensable components of the Romanian education system. They are not just subjects to be studied for academic purposes; they are vital for preserving national identity, promoting communication, fostering critical thinking, and encouraging creativity. In a world where cultural boundaries are constantly shifting, the role of the Romanian language and literature is more important than ever in shaping the minds of future generations and ensuring that Romania's rich cultural heritage is not lost. For these reasons, the study of Romanian language and literature must remain at the core of the educational experience in Romania.

The role of teaching the Romanian language and literature in school is multi-faceted, aiming not only to develop linguistic and literary skills but also to foster cultural understanding and national identity. Here are some of the key roles:

1. **Language Proficiency:** The study of the Romanian language helps students develop strong communication skills, enabling them to express themselves clearly, both orally and in writing. It also promotes reading and comprehension abilities, which are essential for academic success in all subjects.
2. **Cultural Identity and Heritage:** Teaching Romanian literature is a way of connecting students to their cultural roots, history, and national identity. Through classic and contemporary texts, students learn about Romanian traditions, values, and historical experiences, helping them understand the cultural context they live in.
3. **Critical Thinking:** Engaging with Romanian literature encourages students to think critically. Analyzing texts, understanding different perspectives, and interpreting themes and symbols develop their ability to think independently and evaluate complex ideas.
4. **Personal Development:** Literature often deals with universal human experiences—love, conflict, moral dilemmas, and personal growth. By studying these themes, students can reflect on their own lives, fostering empathy and emotional intelligence.
5. **Appreciation for Arts and Creativity:** Romanian literature, much like any literary tradition, exposes students to different artistic styles and forms of expression. This not only fosters an appreciation for the arts but also stimulates creativity, encouraging students to think imaginatively and express themselves artistically.
6. **Social Cohesion and Civic Engagement:** Through the study of Romanian literature, students become more aware of the social, political, and ethical issues facing their society.



This awareness can inspire them to become more engaged citizens, promoting social responsibility and collective well-being.

7. **Language Preservation and Development:** By teaching Romanian language and literature, schools contribute to the preservation and development of the Romanian language. It ensures that the language remains alive, relevant, and adaptable to modern needs.

CONCLUSION

In summary, teaching the Romanian language and literature is crucial for building strong communication skills, preserving cultural identity, fostering critical thinking, and nurturing personal and social development.

The importance of the Romanian language and literature lies not only in their cultural significance but also in their role in preserving national identity, fostering communication, and enriching the intellectual and artistic landscape of the country.

Firstly, the Romanian language is a key part of the national identity. It connects people to their history, culture, and traditions. Language is the vessel through which generations pass down stories, customs, and values, keeping the continuity of the nation's heritage alive. In this sense, it is more than a means of communication; it is the heartbeat of the community.

Romanian literature, with its deep-rooted tradition, offers an invaluable treasure of intellectual and emotional exploration. From the medieval writings of the "Chronicles" to the modern masterpieces of authors like Mihai Eminescu, Mircea Eliade, and Marin Preda, Romanian literature captures "with expressive values" (A-M DUDĂU, 1/2025, 140) the essence of the country's spirit. It reflects the social, political, and philosophical evolution of the Romanian people, offering a rich tapestry of thought, imagination, and critique.

Moreover, the study of Romanian literature enhances critical thinking and empathy, as it provides insight into the complexities of human experience, societal struggles, and moral dilemmas. Whether it's the poetic introspection of Eminescu or the historical reflections in the works of Romanian novelists, literature helps readers connect with universal themes while staying anchored in the unique Romanian context.

In an increasingly globalized world, where languages are often overshadowed by the dominance of English and other major languages, the preservation and celebration of the Romanian language and its literary heritage are vital. They safeguard the cultural diversity that enriches humanity as a whole, contributing to a more pluralistic and open-minded world.

Ultimately, the Romanian language and literature are not only important for Romanians but for anyone who values cultural richness, intellectual diversity, and the beauty of human expression.



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