Ἔχεις μοι εἶπεῖν, ὦ Σώκρατε, ἢρα διδακτόν ἢ ἀρετή; ἢ οὐ διδακτόν ἂλλ' ἀσκητόν, ἢ οὔτε ἀσκητόν οὔτε μαθητόν, ἂλλα φύσει παραγίγνεται τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἢ ἄλλω τοῖς τρόπων.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6-21</td>
<td>A STUDY OF ADULT LEARNERS’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS INFORMATION AND</td>
<td>Vasilis Neofotistos, Efthymios Valkanos, Giorgos Hlapanis, Dr. Makrina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)</td>
<td>Zafiri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-35</td>
<td>ADULT EDUCATION: NECESSITY, EVALUATION AND TRENDS OF EDUCATION</td>
<td>Konstantinos Kapsokavadis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TEACHERS IN GREECE AND EUROPE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-53</td>
<td>AMBIGUOUS FOREIGN STUDENTS' IDENTITIES: NATIONAL IDENTITY “IN</td>
<td>Evmorfia Kipouropoulou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BETWEEN” IN A GREEK INTERCULTURAL SCHOOL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54-66</td>
<td>BRANDING CULTURAL HERITAGE: GLOBAL VS LOCAL</td>
<td>Vasilios D. Spanos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-75</td>
<td>CONSTRUCTING CHILDHOOD IN EDUCATIONAL DISCOURSE</td>
<td>Sofia Avgitidou, Sonia Likomitrou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-86</td>
<td>ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PUPILS’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS GEOGRAPHICAL VARIATION</td>
<td>Dimitris Papazachariou, Anna Fterniati, Argiris Archakis, Vasia Tsami</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IN POPULAR CULTURE TEXTS: EVIDENCE FROM GREEK DATA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-99</td>
<td>ELITE POWERS AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE EDUCATION OF THE PRINCIPALITY</td>
<td>Sofia Iliadou-Tachou, Manolis Varvounis, Alexia Orfanou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OF SAMOS (1834-1912)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-119</td>
<td>ETGIDOINES EN FRANCE, EN GRÈCE ET AU QUÉBEC – UNE ÉTUDE</td>
<td>Vincent Beck, Annette Braconne-Michoux, Assia Nechache, Kostas Nikolantonakis, Laurent Vivier, Patrick Wieruszewski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>COMPARATIVE SUR LA FORMATION INITIALE DES ENSEIGNANTS DU PREMIER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DEGRÉ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120-125</td>
<td>PÉDAGOGIE, THÉÂTRE POUR LE FLE ET FRANCOPHONIE</td>
<td>Dr. Triantafyllia Kadoglou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126-142</td>
<td>PRINCIPALS’ VIEWS OF THE EFFECTS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRISIS ON</td>
<td>Sofia Avgitidou, Eleni Kominia, Sonia Likomitrou, Vassiliki Alexiou,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PRIMARY EDUCATION</td>
<td>Alexandra Androuso, Domna-Mika Kakana, Vassilis Tsafos, Konstantinos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kousaxidis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>143-160</td>
<td>RELIGION, EDUCATION AND THE CONFIGURATION OF NATIONAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IDENTITY IN THE OTTOMAN MILLET’S CONTEXT: A CASE STUDY OF THE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Authors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>161-175</td>
<td>BLACK SEA ORTHODOX COMMUNITIES (1453-1923)</td>
<td>Pougarioudou Paraskevi, Iliadou-Tachou Sofia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>176-194</td>
<td>STUDENTS’ INTERPRETATION OF VARIABLES AND THE PHENOMENAL SIGN OF ALGEBRAIC EXPRESSIONS</td>
<td>Konstantinos P. Christou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>195-229</td>
<td>THE INFLUENCE OF TUTORED DRAMATIC PLAY ON THE SOCIAL RELATIONS OF STUDENTS IN THE FIFTH GRADE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL</td>
<td>Vassiliki Papadopoulou, Simos Papadopoulos, Ilias Maroudas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>195-229</td>
<td>THE LAKATOSIAN HEURISTIC METHOD OF TEACHING AND STUDENTS’ ACHIEVEMENT OF HIGHER ORDER THINKING IN GEOMETRY</td>
<td>Chrysoula Demetrou-Hadjchristou, Ugorji I. Ogbonnaya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE INFLUENCE OF TUTORED DRAMATIC PLAY ON THE
SOCIAL RELATIONS OF STUDENTS IN THE FIFTH GRADE OF
PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Abstract

The present study examined the influence of tutored dramatic play on the social relations of students in the Fifth grade of primary school, as regards peer acceptance and group cohesion. Two methodological tools were used: sociometry as a quantitative approach and observation as a qualitative approach. Research findings were in accordance with previous similar applications of drama education activities. Specifically, they indicated improvement of group cohesion, increase of social acceptance tendencies, as well as of social rejection ones, improvement in particular of cross-sex relationships and increase of expressed liking among pupils.

Keywords: Dramatic play, social relations, peer relations, social acceptance, group cohesion, observation, sociometry

1. Introduction


The research presented here examined its influence on the social relations of students in a fifth grade class of primary school. In particular, the research tested its contribution to the change of the unidirectional acceptance that each member of the

The presentation will at first focus on the influences of applications that fall within the general conceptual range the term ‘tutored dramatic play’ may include. Quite a few references concern various applications related to tutored dramatic play or, often indeed, to untutored dramatic play (Mellou 1994: 119-130).

More relevant to the theme under discussion is Leyser's research (1979: 156-166) focusing on schoolchildren. It showed moderate results in encouraging acceptance and limiting rejection among peers. The reason for that was suggested to be, mainly, the subjects' insufficient time exposure to the influence of the experiment's independent variable.

Following, a research of considerable significance is that by Tsiaras (2003) in a primary school; he found improvement of peer relations, as the inter-personal relations mentioned by students increased and special care was taken to include isolated students, patterns that according to the researcher were the result of the application's influence at a personal and group level. Further, looking into the views of the class teachers he found they all shared a positive feeling concerning the improvement of inter-personal relations, firstly among peers, same-sex and cross-sex, as well as teacher-student relations. Nevertheless, he did not notice a decrease in the number of rejected students or of cliques, but only a slight decrease in the number of popular students. The researcher connected the overall results of his intervention at an individual level to the strengthening of self-knowledge, self-esteem and social skills. At a group level, he connected pupils to the widening of a net of group communication and interaction, within a more general democratic framework.

In a subsequent research, Tsiaras (2007: 75-101, 259-272) found that teacher-student communication improved, and that children who tended to be class clowns, captious or generally rejected, joined the student group; moreover, the attitude of children who tended to be overbearing, careless or over talkative improved. He suggested those patterns to be the result of using specific techniques, some borrowed from the discipline of psychotherapy.

Kontogianni’s research (2000: 143-150, 247-286) also focused on primary education or, more precisely, on special education and, in particular, on students with learning disabilities. She found that promotion of social skills transcended the time and space of the workshops, as well as an improvement in linguistic and cognitive-perception skills. She basically suggested that the results of intervention were due to application of game techniques where children improvised dramatic roles, which offered opportunities for self-expression, mutual communication, cooperation, acceptance of a common set of rules and the creation of shared experiences.

Pavlidou's research (1998: 196-210) focused on preschool children. She integrated dramatic play into a more general program where the basic element was rhythm. She found general improvement of social relations and particular improvement of cross-sex communication and acceptance. She considered the findings to be the result of self-improvement, due to the application of expressive arts, children's natural inclination towards drama play and the use of an appropriate educational approach.
In another research, realized in a sampled primary school class, Hortaria (2003: 140-154, 206-208) found development of trust within the group, decreased isolation, improvement of communication and cooperation, encouragement of self-discipline and in general promotion of peer relations, including cross-sex ones. She associated those specific results with cultivating trust, politeness and maturity as well.

Following, Koudigeli, (2004: 81-95) examined the influence of tutored dramatic play on coping with stress in primary school children. She noted different levels of communication skills, as well as self-discipline and the ability to take decisions and initiatives. She suggested those benefits to be the result of the influence of tutored dramatic play, and, in particular, of its contribution in distinguishing between fiction and reality, as well as of acquiring skills of harmonious social interactions and acceptance of others in general.

Kouretzis, (1991: 43), does also mention a research attempt realized with a sample of teachers from almost all districts of Greece. Overall, it was proposed that the systematic application of tutored dramatic play had a positive effect on and sensitized the children's behavior, their artistic expression and their relations with each other.

The next paragraphs present in brief research that is related to the objectives of the present study but to a lesser extent than the above mentioned.


A brief mention follows, on the influences of applications that fall within the broader framework of drama education but do not nevertheless fit exactly to the term tutored dramatic play. Those specific influences concern improvement of interaction, social skills and student group cohesion (Kintigh 1999: 41-73, Bayliss & Dodwell 2002: 43-60), stimulation of group leading skills (Seidel 1996: 3-5), change of attitude (Greenwald 1970: 214-219) and decrease of prejudices that cause student group members in an intercultural environment getting rejected (Gay & Hanley 1999: 364-370); moreover, decrease of aggravating behavior and stimulation of confidence (Bernstein 1985: 219-223, Sheldon 1996: 115-116), reinforcement, in particular, of
cross-sex relations (Ollif 2001: 223-229), but also cultivation of language in combination with the promotion of communication (Moudatsakis 1997: 23-27, Papadopoulos 2007: 240-244) have also been related to drama education.

However, during the applications of similar programs there have been insufficient results concerning the encouragement of self-perception and emotion, the improvement of social skills and the decrease of troublesome behavior (Jackson 2000: 26-28, Conard & Asher 2000: 78-84). Similar discrepancies have been identified in relation to cultivating ethical assessment skills (McCambridge 1998: 69-74), discouraging the creation of cliques, and experiencing manifestations of dominance (Schultz 1994: 153-196), as well as to having children with special needs being accepted by the rest and consequently included in mainstreaming classes (Miller 1989: 3-4).

Finally, it seems that dramatic play and pertinent drama education activities have a positive influence on the improvement of peer relations through the increase of acceptance and group cohesion. Yet, such a promotion is not absolute and there isn't always sufficient disruption of cliques or decrease of aggressiveness, conflicts or manifestations of dominance.

2. Research objective and hypotheses

The present research aims to investigate the potential of tutored dramatic play in improving the social relations of pupils as regards the development of mutual acceptance and the cohesion of primary school classes.

In particular, the following hypotheses have been made:

Systematic application of tutored dramatic play can contribute to:

a) The improvement of social relations between students from the aspect of acceptance, through
   a1) increasing tendencies of acceptance
   a2) reducing tendencies of rejection or neglect
   and a3) stimulating cross sex relations
b) The improvement of cohesion of the school class as social group.

3. Methodology

3.1. Sample

The subjects of this research have been fifth grade pupils and more specifically the students of class E2 of Thessaloniki's 61st Primary School.

There were 17 persons in total in the class, 8 boys (47%) and 9 girls (53%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAMPLE</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table I. Sample gender composition
3.2. Process
The chosen method falls under the category of before/after controlled experiments (Filias 1996: 39-42). The subjects were submitted to the influence of the application of tutored dramatic play through a series of 10 sessions/workshops, each lasting 45 to 60 minutes, taking place approximately once a week.

3.3. Research tools
Two research methodological tools were used: within a quantitative approach, sociometry was selected and, in particular, the sociometric nominations (CDC) system. In accordance with it, the subjects were grouped in 5 provided categories, based on the times each one was chosen or rejected by the rest: a child met with high acceptance levels was ranked as popular, while in the opposite case the child was ranked as rejected. If the case was something in between, the child was ranked as average and if the case was a combination of acceptance and rejection as contradictory. Finally, a child that got neither particularly accepted nor rejected was considered to be neglected, whether the child was ignored against its will or it chose to withdraw (Coe, Dodge & Coppotelli 1982: 557-570, Bikos 2004: 137-143). In order to facilitate the comparisons needed to be made, those five categories were assigned respective numbers as follows: popular: 5, average: 4, contradictory: 3, neglected: 2 and rejected: 1 (Grigoriadis 1999: 58). The sociometric criterion was the choice of partner in the play (Lockheed 1986: 617-628, Terry 2000: 27-53), given unlimited within the group choices, positive or negative. Moreover, the group cohesiveness index, based on the number of realized peer choices within the group divided by the maximum possible number of such choices, was examined (Gronlund 1959: 79-81, Evans 1962: 34-38). Two more questions were added considering the estimated influence of tutored dramatic play on the improvement or deterioration of peer relations.

Within a qualitative approach, observation was used, in a systematic, semi-
structured, participatory and explicit way, with the help of audio and video recordings as forms of technical mediation. Attitudes related to acceptance, rejection or indifference, as well as attitudes indicating high or low levels of group cohesion were at the core of observation. The critical events approach was adopted for the evaluation of the material (Fassnacht 1982, 88-90; Papadopoulou 1999: 52, Wragg 1997: 62-64, Flick 2000: 75-92). More specifically, 6 events during the early stages of the applications of tutored dramatic play were identified and another 6 towards the last ones. All events, representative of the whole situation, were analysed and interpreted with the help not only of the total recording material but also of the quantitative data. Then, a comparison was attempted of the elements that were relevant to the investigated qualities which occurred during the early stages and at the end of the application.

In any case, for reasons of discretion, the research subjects were codified based on the alphabetical order of their surnames as follows: B1 to B8 for boys and G1 to G9 for girls.

4. Findings

The following paragraphs present the research findings in three units, by comparing data before and after the experiment's application. The first unit elaborates on acceptance and the consequent popularity within the student group, the second on group cohesion and the third on statements or conclusions of a more general nature. In the context of each unit quantitative results precede the qualitative ones.

4.1. Acceptance and popularity within the group

4.1.1. Quantitative approach

The total number of times each member of the student group was chosen from the rest, during the first count, prior to introducing the experiment’s variable, was 83 and during the second count, after the subjects’ exposure to tutored dramatic play, the total number increased by 62.6%, rising to 135, a statistically significant change (Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test, Z: -3.424, Asymp. Sig.: 0.001).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B1</th>
<th>B2</th>
<th>B3</th>
<th>B4</th>
<th>B5</th>
<th>B6</th>
<th>B7</th>
<th>B8</th>
<th>G1</th>
<th>G2</th>
<th>G3</th>
<th>G4</th>
<th>G5</th>
<th>G6</th>
<th>G7</th>
<th>G8</th>
<th>G9</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1st COUNT</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2nd COUNT</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test, Z: -3.424, Asymp. Sig.: 0.001)
The total rejections recorded were 30 during the first count and 48 during the second count; there was in other words an increase of about 60%, a change that is also statistically significant (Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test, Z: -2.097, Asymp. Sig.: 0.036).

Table III. Total number of rejections per student

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>B1</th>
<th>B2</th>
<th>B3</th>
<th>B4</th>
<th>B5</th>
<th>B6</th>
<th>B7</th>
<th>B8</th>
<th>G1</th>
<th>G2</th>
<th>G3</th>
<th>G4</th>
<th>G5</th>
<th>G6</th>
<th>G7</th>
<th>G8</th>
<th>G9</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1st COUNT</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2nd COUNT</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test, Z: -2.097, Asymp. Sig.: 0.036)

Diagram III. Comparison of rejection numbers per student

The comparison of the sociometric classifications before and after the application showed signs of group bonding during the second classification, in the average
category (Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test, Z: -1.271, Asymp. Sig.: 0.204).

Indeed, half the children originally classified as rejected (35.3% of total) switched finally to the average category (17.6% of total). A similar pattern occurred with children originally classified as contradictory (5.9% of total) or popular (29.4% of total). The percentage of the children originally classified as contradictory dropped to zero, reinforcing the average category. A part of the children originally classified as popular (5.9% of total) switched as well to the average category, which finally turned out stronger, increasing from 23.5% to 35.3% of total. Reinforced, to a lesser extent, turned out in the end the popular category as well, increasing from 29.4% to 35.3% of total. The percentage of children classified as neglected did not change (5.9%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st CLASSIFICATION</th>
<th>2nd CLASSIFICATION</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diagram IV. Correlation of 1st & 2nd classification percentages

F: first count  S: second count

Considering the above changes overall, it is clear a tendency among girls to improve their sociometric scores more, as opposed to boys (X²: 4.289, df: 4, Asymp. Sig.: 0.368, Phi: 0.502, Asymp. Sig.: 0.368, Cramer’s V: 0.502, Approx. Sig.: 0, 368). Indeed, 33.3% of girls improved their scores by 3 points, 11.1% by 1 point, 44.4% did not change, while only 11.1% dropped by 1 point. On the contrary, 12.5% of boys dropped by 2 points, another 12.5% by 1 point, 50% did not change and 25% increased by only 1 point.
4.1.2. Qualitative approach

When first exposed to tutored dramatic play, the students of that specific class, riddled with discipline problems and particular displays of aggressiveness, at least as far as the boys were concerned and showed a tendency to reject or even isolate some of the group members. For example, student B3 had been repeatedly rejected and neglected during activities that required pairing up.

On the other hand, there was a counter tendency to avoid isolation, both from the students mostly rejected as well as from the rest who would finally agree playing with someone they didn't particularly like just to avoid ending up alone. An illustration of the first case was the incident where, during the second event, G4 student, usually rejected, kept clinging on student G3 with striking persistence, while G3 remained more neutral. An illustration of the second case was identified in the third event, where student B7, during a pairing up activity, started playing with student B3, though he was
During the experiment and as far as marginalized children were concerned, there were signs of increased eagerness and confidence, but also signs of relatively higher levels of acceptance by the rest. A similar illustration of that occurred in the eighth event with the particularly vivid, considering the task at hand, manifestations of the quite distant till that point students B3 and G4, manifestations that were welcomed by the rest. Towards the end of the sessions two members of an isolated subgroup of boys did indeed show increased participation tendencies. Special attention should be made in the case of student G2, who displayed particular talents in various activities of drama expression and at the same time boosted her status and popularity in general, according to the sociometric data of the second classification.

In total, there was evidence of a slight increase in eagerness and participation of the student group members, which was attributed to increased tendencies of accepting marginalised, rejected or neglected children.

**4.2. Group cohesion**

**4.2.1. Quantitative approach**

Group cohesiveness index increased from 0.2 to 0.3 in the first count; there was in other words an increase of about 50%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st COUNT</th>
<th>2nd COUNT</th>
<th>INCREASE</th>
<th>INCREASE PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0,2</td>
<td>0,3</td>
<td>0,1</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Diagram VI. Group cohesiveness index change**

![Diagram of group cohesiveness index change](image)

**4.2.2. Qualitative approach**

Early during the applications there was evidence in general of conflicts and problems in group coordination, but also a tendency of subgroup formations: one comprising of several girls and one of two boys. Indeed, the latter showed tendencies of evolving to a
clique, defying in other words the objectives of the performed activities, which was also identified in the sixth event and involved students B7 and B8 in specific.

Later on, there was evidence of the dynamics of the class as social group growing, in mainly two ways: The first way concerned the growing of discipline within the group, with the class showing a tendency to correct themselves as a group, without always the need of the animator's interference. A similar occurrence, among others, took place during the seventh event where G4 scolded B1 who, without being disruptive, was moving beyond the agreed boundaries. The second way concerned the stimulation of solidarity through support interventions, towards members that needed it, especially in the girls' subgroup, like during the ninth occurrence when G5, G9, G2 and G8 rushed, in that order and without verbal communication, to comfort G6 who was sad with how the game had developed.

In brief, then, during the research realization there was evidence of growing discipline within the group of the school class comprising the relevant sample and a respective increase of solidarity between the group's members, especially among girls. These specific findings led to the conclusion that group cohesion improved.

4.3. General statements and conclusions

4.3.1. Quantitative approach
The positive influence of tutored dramatic play on peer relations was acknowledged by 88% of children or, more specifically, 87.5% of boys and 88.9% of girls.

Table VII. Acknowledgement of positive influence of tutored dramatic play on peer relations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS</th>
<th>BOYS</th>
<th>GIRLS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>7 (87.5%)</td>
<td>8 (88.9%)</td>
<td>15 (88.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>1 (11.1%)</td>
<td>2 (12.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>8 (100.0%)</td>
<td>9 (100.0%)</td>
<td>17 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lastly, 30% of children stated negative influence of tutored dramatic play on
their relations with each other (boys: 25%, girls: 33%).

**Table VIII. Acknowledgement of negative influence of tutored dramatic play on peer relations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS</th>
<th>BOYS</th>
<th>GIRLS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
<td>3 (33%)</td>
<td>5 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>6 (75%)</td>
<td>6 (67%)</td>
<td>12 (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>8 (100%)</td>
<td>9 (100%)</td>
<td>17 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Let us also note that the cross sex pairs of mutual preference were 5 (18% of total) during the first count, while during the second increased by 160%, rising to 13 (30% of total).

**Table IX. Appearance of cross sex pairs of mutual preference**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAIRS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st COUNT</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd COUNT</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INCREASE</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INCREASE PERCENTAGE</td>
<td>160%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diagram IX. Appearance of cross sex pairs of mutual preference
4.3.2. Qualitative approach
The development of more positive tendencies in the group and the stimulation of solidarity, mentioned in a previous sub-unit, did not mean the group spared its members. On the contrary, in a constructive yet manifest way the group criticized the exhibited behavior of some of its members while not hesitating to punish others by temporary rejecting them. An illustration of the first case was identified in the eleventh event relating to the reactions of B1, G1 and G7 towards the sociometrically classified as contradictory student B2 for his interventions, which were at least untimely and at most annoying. Reactions towards the specific student ranged from playful pretence of indignation all the way to direct, corrective advice. An illustration of the second case occurred during the twelfth event, when B8 was asked by the rest to leave for a period of time for not respecting the rules of a given activity, after which he was allowed by the group to return in the next activity.

The overall findings of the previous paragraph are associated to another phenomenon, particularly evident towards the end of the applications: a more overt expression of emotions, undoubtedly including negative ones also, as for example in the seventh event when B2 gave vent to his anger against G2.

Also, despite the tendency mentioned earlier to avoid isolation, there was at first reluctance to create sub-groups of mixed gender, which is to be expected to a certain extent in that age range. For instance, in the fourth event, student G7 was found to prefer staying alone rather than pairing up with the last remaining student B5 who, likewise, did not show any particular desire to do so. Gradually, that tendency seemed to disappear, as illustrated in the twelfth event when B1, G1 and G9 cooperated.

Overall, then, there was evidence of a tendency to express both positive and negative emotions in a more uninhibited way, as well as to restore justice even if in a potentially strict way. Also, children of both genders participated together, now, in sub-groups that performed the tutored dramatic play’s fun activities in collaboration.

5. Discussion - Conclusions
Combining the findings of quantitative and qualitative approaches, the research recognizes, at first, positive influence of tutored dramatic play on the improvement of peer relations.

Indeed, there was evidence of increased acceptance levels among the group, with girls showing greater improvement and bonding among the subjects in an average
sociometric classification of popularity. The girls' superiority could be explained by the fact that they made better use of the communicative framework that tutored dramatic play offers, as they appear to be more capable in emotional perception (Goleman 1998: 190-195), in decoding and sending non verbal messages (Pease 1991: 137, Papadaki-Mihailidi 1998 152-158, 199), and especially in the implicit expression of aggressiveness (McGuire 1973, 542-549); as a result, they become more popular since they can respond better. However, there are objections as to the general cross-sex differentiation concerning communication skills (Antonopoulou 1996, 153), by virtue of the different kind of socialization that each gender experiences (Dwyer 2000: 106-109).

The overall experiment was nevertheless considered undoubtedly positive, since there was a decrease in the percentages of the extreme categories, which are not in general desired for a school class to work properly. Moreover, there was improvement in cross-sex relations. To the specific changes contributed the increase of participation and a certain improvement in the way students approached each other during shared playful activities, as well as the confidence that some members developed, after having been rejected several times during the first count.

Thus, the pertinent research hypotheses (parts a1 and a3) were confirmed. Still, there was a simultaneous increase of rejections that could be attributed to the intensification and a more overt expression of emotions during the applications. There is possibly an association between the above and a clearer realization by each child of the expectations it had as regards to the behavior of the rest, which led to providing constructive criticism as well as passing rigorous judgement when necessary. It is possible that if the program introducing the experiment's variable was applied over a longer period of time the group would have been able to overcome the phase of conflict and move on to a phase of a more solid cooperation by combining and working out the differences (Caple 1978: 470-476, Tuckman & Jensen 1977: 419-427). To this direction, forming a group of activities more focused in relation to the desired objectives so to give the research a more specific intervening nature, would also contribute (Renshaw & Asher 1982: 380-382, Rubin 1982: 369).

Overall, the research condition indicating a decrease in rejection tendencies (part a2) was not confirmed. The pre-existed intense rivalries, controversies and tensions among the members of the peer group were responsible to a certain degree for the hypothesis in question being disproved, yet further investigation of the reasons behind it was out of the current research's given framework.

Also, group cohesion changed for the better, with a particular increase in mutual acceptance among children, improvement of group bonding, especially in the girls' subgroup, as well as gradual development of discipline within the whole group. The overall condition confirms the second part of the hypotheses.

Finally, a significant statement made by the students has been recorded, that the experimental application of the tutored dramatic play helped improve their relations; additionally, a significant statement that, on the other hand, it did not damage them.

Certainly, the limited sample did not allow, during the quantitative approach, statistically significant conclusions to be drawn, but only certain tendencies to be identified. Specific cases have been investigated further, during the qualitative approach.

In conclusion, there was evidence that the application of tutored dramatic play increased peer acceptance, but to a certain extent peer rejection as well, within the group. Also, it improved the group's cohesion.

It would be purposeful for future researchers to focus on investigating the criteria with which students are chosen or rejected by the rest and which are associated to the students' participation in tutored dramatic play activities; moreover, future research should be applied over a longer period of time so to follow the development stages of the student group or co-form them as intervention attempts.

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THE INFLUENCE OF TUTORED DRAMATIC PLAY ON THE SOCIAL RELATIONS OF STUDENTS IN THE FIFTH GRADE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL
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