

## THEATRE AND THEATRICAL GAME AS TEACHING METHODS FOR GREEK TRADITIONAL DANCES

Georgios Lykesas<sup>1</sup>, Douka Styliani<sup>1</sup>, Maria Koutsouba<sup>2</sup>,  
Panteleimon Bakirtzoglou<sup>1</sup>, Giosos Ioannis<sup>2</sup> and Dimitrios Chatzopoulos<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

<sup>2</sup>National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

Review paper

### Abstract

*The purpose of this paper is to define the terms "theater" and "theatrical game" and to determine the field of their practical application of Greek traditional dance in the school education. To help students to acquire the necessary knowledge in order to reconsider behaviors and attitudes on the subject of Greek traditional dance and to perceive, comprehend and realize the value of dancing with a more pleasant mood. With respect to data presented, we established that the use of theatrical game was an excellent methodological tool not only for the design and evaluation of the programme but also in helping students to develop cultural awareness and understanding elements of tradition, history and traditional music, singing and dancing.*

**Key words:** active participation, students' attitude, teaching methods, traditional dance, theatre, theatrical game.

### Introduction

The multidimensional artistic experience of theatre at school constitutes a great vehicle for the transition towards an education that has both an anthropocentric and collective character. In a time when the school has to bring tangible results, the goal of education can no longer be to foster only "well-informed citizens of tomorrow"; it should also foster active citizens of today". Within a society that is desperately trying to find compasses and starting points, the modern school has the responsibility to bring forward a new approach (Schopf, 1996; Grammatas, 2014). Students' participation and their active involvement in a complex and demanding discipline such as theatre, familiarizes them with unmediated and substantial communication. According to research, theatre and theatrical game are universally accepted and enthusiastically welcome by children because they offer them the opportunity to broaden their imagination, experience knowledge, develop personal solutions, express themselves freely without worrying about succeeding or failing, and satisfy their desire for action, creation, communication and acceptance through the dynamics of the team spirit (Schnapp et al., 2003; Armstrong, 2009; Matijević, 2012; Costa et al., 2014). The purpose of this study was to clarify the concept of theatrical game and define where and how it can be implemented in the teaching of Greek traditional dances at school. For this purpose, a literature review was initially conducted with reference to what constitutes the theatrical game, how it is related to theatre, theatre education and play in general.

### From theatre to theatre education

Theatre constitutes a communication scheme, since all communication components are present in a theatrical performance (transmitter – receiver –

referent – message – channel – code). Essential prerequisite for having this particular communication scheme is the presence of at least one receiver – viewer. The moment one actor performs a role before at least one viewer, there is a theatrical act and at the same time there is a communication act (Tsatsoulis, 1999; Lykesas, 2018). Theatre can make the best of students' pluralism and let out their multiple skills and abilities in a fruitful way, respecting their particularities and personal inclinations. The integration of theatre in the educational process benefits both students and teachers, contributing to the promotion and enhancement of education itself (Grammatas, 1999; Babatsikou, 1998). Original theatre creations and performances, in the form of personal - mimetic experiences, encourage participants to "identify" with mythological heroes or ideological models, and combined with the teaching material of any other school subject provide "knowledge", "entertainment" and "catharsis" (purification") (Crimmens, 2006). According to Crimmens (2006), Theatre Education helps people develop self-confidence, improve their self-image and become more responsible, as it affects their physical, emotional, mental and social skills. As an educational method, Theatre has been influenced by Anthropology, Psychology, Sociology, Psychodrama and Kinesiology, contributing significantly to the holistic development of the individual's personality (Crimmens, 2006). Theatre also promotes cultural diversity, as it is essentially required to understand and accept "the other", as well as to have respect for all cultures (Choleva, 2010). In their study, Costa et al., (2014) highlight the significant contribution of theatre as a medium for socialization and for perceiving the concept of the "whole". They point out that theatre constitutes a useful metaphor to explore, study and illustrate

social life processes. Heathcote (1985) defined theatrical art in education as the selective expression of human interaction within which codes and behavior patterns can be re-examined (Heathcote, 1985). This offers the opportunity to revise behaviors and attitudes towards Greek traditional dance, with the aim of creating responsible and consciously aware students. In particular, students' participation and active involvement in a complex and demanding disciplined experience such as a theatrical performance, familiarizes them with unmediated and meaningful communication. In addition, they are oriented towards an experiential relationship with art that awakens senses, activates imagination, liberates the body and, above all, reveals inner paths leading to self-awareness (Papadopoulos, 2010).

Theatre in the educational process can take various forms: Theatre Sketch, Happening, Writing Workshop (script work), Theatrical Analogion (Stage Theme), Pantomime, Dramatization, Theatrical Game, Theatrical Performance (integrating speech, music, dance, visual arts, decoration, architecture and lighting), Theatrical Improvisation, Puppet Theatre and Shadow Theatre (Karagiozis) (Petris, 1986; Moudatsakis, 1994; Sextou, 1998; Babatsikou, 1998; Patsalis, 1998; Kouretzis, 1999; Alkisti, 1999; Keramidioti, 2003; Grammatas, 2004; Chatzikou, 2005; Pavis, 2006; Grammatas & Moudatsakis, 2008). Jennings (1986) supports that Theatre Education "brings change in individuals and groups through direct experience".

It is also worth mentioning Cattanach's view that Theatre Education enhances children's self-esteem in different age groups by cultivating their creative expression and teaching them new theateric plays and skills (Cattanach, 1996). Furthermore, according to the British Association of Drama Therapists (BADth), Theatre Education is a method combining work and play that "facilitates creativity, imagination, learning, insight and growth". Theatre Education develops mutual respect and trust among students, stimulating cooperation rather than competition (Freire, 1970; Schnapp & Olsen, 2003). Schnapp and Olsen (2003) claim that storytelling, as a drama education activity, improves verbal and social skills, as children gain self-confidence and understand social norms.

### **From children's play to theatrical games**

In his evolutionary theory (1968), Piaget correlates the children's play with stages of cognitive development. Children's play is essentially their own way to release an experience from reality, the repeatable action sequence of this experience, its preparation and formulation in order to enable its assimilation and full cognitive accommodation. Thus, play is related to the evolution of cognitive functions and is a medium for accommodating the external world. Play is the pure assimilation or incorporation of the "external" in the "self" (Piaget, 1968). Hermelin and O'Connor (1970) emphasized

that students should experience and explore the environment in which they interact through their senses, i.e. in a natural, kinesthetic, olfactory, tactile, gustatory, visual and palpable way. Activities addressed to senses should be designed in such a way that they allow for a wide range of specific experiences. Toys, educational and teaching material should be available in all classrooms, from the lowest to the highest grades of education (Bia, 2006). Children have a natural inherent drive to play by improvising. Improvised solutions provided by children are usually functional, full of boldness and magic. It is a way in which every child thinks, relaxes, works, remembers, tests their powers, creates and concentrates. However, primarily and fundamentally, play is based on imitation as a purely biological impulse, whether playing individually or in a team. When children play, there are often clear references to animals, people, objects, even emotional states; it is then that play gains another dimension and becomes itself a theatrical game. (Slade, 1954; Sergi, 1991).

Vygotsky (2003) argues that play is ruled by socially formulated rules and incorporates an imaginary situation (Faure & Lascar, 2001; Vygotsky, 2003). As Moudatsakis (1994) points out, the adjectival attribute 'theatrical' in the term "theatrical game" is reborrowed from the principles of theatre art. Therefore, in theatrical game, as happens in theatre, nothing retains the usability it has in reality; nothing is what it really is. A chair, a table, a cloth, and every single object acquires a different meaning and becomes another entity (Faure & Lascar, 2001). The teacher has the potential to replace or renew traditional teaching methods, stimulate students' imagination, raise their interest, enrich verbal means of communication and promote their skills and qualifications (Moudatsakis, 1994). Within theatrical game, every child reproduces, interprets, comments on and gets familiar with the world; they rename the world and give it new meaning and content of their own. The more playful this effort is, the better the deeper the child enters the world without being humiliated, assimilated and exhausted as an individual (Giannaris, 2001).

The theatrical game combines pedagogical science with theatrical art. It familiarizes students with experiential teaching methods and aims at helping them develop creative skills in formulating and experiencing learning original pedagogical material. It directly and drastically makes the best of perceptual abilities of students from all educational grades and helps them assimilate pedagogical information (Kontogianni, 2000). Lastly, theatrical game is a pleasant activity, suitable for students of all educational grades and different potentials; it can provide social-emotional learning, as it integrates emotional, intellectual and social challenges necessary preconditions to acquire cultural awareness and artistic education, particularly in the field of dances (Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson, 1999).

### **Theatrical game: content & methodology**

Theatre and theatrical game aim at making students learn in an experiential, cooperative and active way, promoting their critical thinking and creativity, and developing the sense of social responsibility (Avdi & Chatzigeorgiou, 2007). Theatre and theatrical game also contribute to the development of different personality aspects, eliminate problematic behaviors, build relationships of mutual trust, alleviate stressful situations, create friendships and interactive relationships (Bell, 1997; Alkistis, 2000; Ioakeimidis, 2003; Pavis, 2006; Tsiaras, 2007). Theatre Pedagogy goes hand in hand with Theatre Education, since learning "through theatre" is identical to what Aristotle defined as "mimesis" (imitation) (Aristotle, 1991).

Imitation has always been the mother of learning, the womb of civilization. Humans imitate by playing and play by imitating. First, though, it is required to have established and cultivated "relationships", and also to have created communication channels through these "relationships". Through theatre, one perceives life experiences differently, comments, questions, classifies, has a view of the subjective and objective world from a new perspective (Kouretzis, 2008). In theatrical game, students reproduce, unleash their imagination, cultivate their psychomotor expression, experience, activate, transform and express their own individual needs, their highly imaginative and peculiar world through the familiar type of play (Bernstein, 1985; Kouretzis, 1991, 2008). Aesthetic education is expressed through the basic forms of art: visual arts, music, dance and theatre. Each one of these forms of art contributes distinctively to the development of creativity and imagination of individuals, while encouraging their learning through discovery, experimentation and expression of feelings and experiences. Dance, in particular, promotes the development of motor abilities and skills, improves self-esteem and social interaction, enhances auditory/ visual/tactile-kinesthetic abilities, synchronization and creative movement.

In general, dance plays a strong psychotherapeutic role in the school setting, as it offers students a unique opportunity to release psychologically charged situations, express themselves through motion and create new kinetic and expressive models (Faure & Lascar, 2001). The themes and content are designed by teachers, while students collect, present and suggest relevant information. Techniques that are mainly used in theatrical game activities are: 1) sensory play games, 2) body parts game, 3) voice games, 4) pantomime, 5) improvisation, 6) movement - dance (Sergi, 1991; Moudatsakis, 1994; Beauschamp, 1998; Faure & Lascar, 2001). Theatre Education should therefore be an indispensable part of the curriculum at all levels of education, since its aim concerns mainly their social - cultural education, which will allow them to integrate into the social environment. Thus, art appears to be an important tool in children's education, as it liberates their inner

world, creates gentle feelings and thoughts, encourages their direct and active involvement in the process of learning, and facilitates the fulfillment of their personal, social, emotional and cognitive goals (Sergi, 1991; Beauschamp, 1998; Bakirtzis, 2003). The theatrical game is a pleasant activity developed by a group, aiming at helping group members get familiar with the environment, socialize, get acquainted with their body and themselves, and ultimately work on their psycho-emotional cultivation (Kouretzis, 2008). It is based on theatre techniques and the simple elements of theatrical expression, which come to interweave and come out through the playful character of body expression (Grammatas, 2001). The theatrical game differs from the established "acting" process of a script, because it is not just a sterile script representation; instead, it constitutes a field of action where students reproduce, experience and represent their own special imaginary and mental world (Sarris, 2002).

### **The theatrical game within the context of teaching traditional dances at school**

As various studies conducted in Greek schools have demonstrated, there has been a constant and significant decrease in students' satisfaction with all school subjects they are taught and particularly with Physical Education; as a result, this affects negatively their effort to perform well and the way they perceive their teachers' attitudes (Digelidis & Papaioannou, 1999). This lack of students' satisfaction with the subject of Physical Education is due to the competitive learning environment, and their consequent fear to make a mistake, fail and be negatively criticized about their school performance. The difficulty they face in their peer relations and generally the problematic communication with others, in combination with low self-esteem, results in poor performance in various sports activities. The same applies for specialized motor skills such as dance, due to limited fine or gross motor skills and restricted visual-kinetic coordination (Lykesas, et al., 2003; Papaioannou, et al., 2004; Papaioannou & Siskos, 2008).

Many times there are also phobic reactions (school refusal, excessive stress, fear for rejection by schoolmates etc.) or even depression when students fail in developing other ways to cope with the above problematic conditions (Panteliadou & Botsas, 2007). All these problems can be addressed with the use of theatrical game. For within the context of theatrical game there are various creative student-centered teaching techniques that can be implemented either separately or in combination, e.g., guided discovery or inventiveness, and divergent production. The role of students should be pivotal, so that their interest is constantly retained and the goals that have been set are achieved -both cognitive and even more importantly emotional goals (Mosston & Ashworth, 1994; Papaioannou & Theodorakis, 1996). Within the context of theatrical game, the teacher acts as a 'lever' for activating the children's creative

powers and as a 'supporter' to ensure the free movement of their ideas and creations; the program becomes a flexible framework and guide for these actions and approaches; the teaching method is perceived as a coordinating process that brings together the teacher, the student, knowledge and reality (Lykesas, 2002; Lykesas & Papadopoulou, 2007). In traditional dance, physical movement is used as a functional and personal expression that engages the mind, body and soul (Joyce, 1994). As a consequence, traditional dance is suitable to be taught through theatrical game. It is therefore by no coincidence that research by Doulia et al. (2005) demonstrated that, when adolescents participate in traditional dance groups, their main incentive is not to be successful and gain prestige, but mainly to experience satisfaction, feel members of a group and socialize. They do not regard dance as a painful motor skill; on the contrary, they consider it to be a social activity that improves their physical condition, boosts their mood, elevates their spirit and, as a result, upgrades their quality of life. According to research by Lykesas et al. (2015), the use of theatrical game has proven to be an excellent methodological tool for teaching Greek traditional dance to elementary school students. Students are encouraged to express their own viewpoints and develop initiatives. When such a program is prepared, the students' active participation in the planning and implementation of all integrated activities is of primary importance.

### **Implementing theatrical game in teaching traditional dances**

The development and processing of theatrical game is a process that goes through five phases (Sextou, 2002; Grammatas, 2004; Bia, 2006; Lykesas, 2015):

#### *Phase A: Raising Awareness and Forming Groups*

At this stage, we help children: a) overcome any inhibitions and hesitations, b) communicate and play with each other. Children move and express themselves freely in the space. By implementing body expression and sensory kinetic action exercises and games, their observability is sharpened, they relax, concentrate, improve their psychomotor coordination and transform their feelings into movements. The aim of this phase is to prepare children for role-playing games that will follow, and also familiarize them with various techniques and ways of expression.

#### *Phase B: Role-Play*

This is the phase of reproduction. Children discover roles; they reproduce and compose short dialogues through which the roles function; they find solutions, are led to conflicts and make various combinations; they disguise themselves according to the role they have chosen; they form groups of roles and reproduce various themes that are developed simultaneously; they organize traditional dances they have been taught and integrate them into the theme.

In this phase, imagination is released, children's experiences are presented in a specific or abstract way, and finally they reach a point of becoming fully conscious of a situation. With photographic material from dance performances and appropriate musical sounds, children are asked to improvise motor skills and play roles inspired by the photographic stimuli they receive in pairs. The children's free motor improvisations will give rise to role groups in which children play and move in different ways. This may happen in a coordinated way, but there may also be intense conflicts within one group or among different groups; for example, some of the students may move in the opposite direction, wanting to impose their own way, disturbing their classmates and making a lot of fuss, and as a result not allowing the other groups to play. To overcome such problems, students will have to discuss with each other and set rules concerning both relationships within their own team and their group's behavior towards other groups. If there is a lot of interest in the same role, the students can vote whether the role will be given to all those interested or whether they should draw a lot.

#### *Phase C: Stage Improvisation*

This is the phase of developing and implementing the thematic axis. Once arranging the stage space, children start presenting the themes they have engineered and compose roles. Using dance movements and speech, they create a theatrical improvisation. In this phase they use music and sounds, determine some of the traditional dances they have been taught and organize stage props; they act, get familiar with concepts and situations and understand them better, modify their behavior depending on the role. Once determining the thematic axis, the children themselves arrange their stage space and repeat the act they played in the previous phase, modifying and adding roles.

#### *Phase D: Analyzing*

This is the multiple processing phase for discussing and analyzing the activities that preceded, the way the roles were acted and the issues that have arisen. The processing in this phase connects even more the theatrical game with the teaching process -especially through singing, speaking, visual arts, music and traditional dances. During the evolution of the above four phases of theatrical game, the teacher keeps a diary of his/her own observations concerning how children participate, how they react to various stimuli, how they approach their role, their relationships with others, their ideas and views on the theme, how these are being modified and evolved, along with the children's remarks and comments.

#### *Phase E: Dramatization - Role Play*

The final evaluation of the program lies on the final outcome of the working plan: the creation of a story that the children themselves "have written" and dramatized. Taking advantage of the various stimuli they received from the games and roles, the script they created and the experiences gained

during their visit to cultural clubs, the knowledge they got from the Internet and from their visits to libraries by reading books and fairy tales related to the theme, the children's group have made a story to dramatize. Thus, from games and improvisations, the children have now passed into the most complex process of acting. The scenario made by the students is related to events and customs, as well as to songs and traditional dances of various regions of Greece with which they have got acquainted. As the script develops, the teacher takes the role of an 'anti-hero' and represents the 'objector' by asking the children to stop their actions and forget everything about the places they have visited and what they learned.

The above attitude towards the group with the teacher taking the absolute opposite position from what the children support, aims at making the team process their views even further, and justify why they act in the one or the other way. In this way, their perspective of the theme broadens, and by modifying or sometimes changing the action, children adopt an attitude of reflection and self-criticism that facilitates the observer in assessing the team. The children will convene a meeting in the classroom to ask all participants. It is also worth mentioning that, in this way, children get interested in finding out even more information about their themes, traditional dances, songs, music, history and tradition. Once processing the final script, the children proceed to determining with greater accuracy the persons, space, place and evolution of the plot, and then present it to their parents during a special event; they can even illustrate it and collect photographic material, create a book, maybe even a DVD, and distribute them as souvenirs for their participation in the program.

### **The role of the educator**

The role of teachers is important as they propose activities tailored to the pace, needs and interests of children. They must be prepared to accept refusal of students who do not want to participate in traditional dances. It must also be noted that teachers should accept the children's ideas and suggestions regarding activities, and make sure that these are used. In addition, the teacher should act as a simple member of the team who communicates with, influences and facilitates the students' group mainly on practical issues. Teachers are next to the students throughout the lesson with regard to anything the students feel like suggesting, anything they are concerned with, anything they seek and experience (Lykesas & Koutsouba, 2008). It is very important to point out the difficulties when implementing such a program. It takes quite some time for children to get familiar with the ways of expression and techniques that will follow; and it is often hard for the teacher to find this extra time due to the time pressure for covering the school curriculum. Teachers must be familiar with theatrical game techniques and have the flexibility to adapt them to the needs and level

of every team, avoiding "didacticism", criticism and strict guidance. They can intervene, suggest, tell their opinion only when the team asks for it, by helping the children with appropriate questions, stimuli and whatever else they think fit to help the team. Roles are allocated according to the interest the children express after having first a discussion to deepen in the roles and investigate the meanings that are essential for the imaginative situation. This is essential so that students are able to participate having all their senses active, in order to fully understand and become conscious of the restrictions imposed by the roles and situations, undertake responsibility for their behavior and adapt their action to the requirements arising from the fictional environment (Papadopoulos, 2010). The different fields from which students can choose their roles are: directing, acting, singing, dancing, prompting, backstage coordination, make-up, scenography, choreography, costume design, musical investment, stage coordination, poster/advertising brochure design, tickets, reception. Each position requires responsibility, efficiency and smooth cooperation, so that the optimal result is achieved.

### **Discussion**

The theatrical game is a process of constant interaction, since every participant moves, dances, speaks, acts, exerts and receives influence from the actions and behavior of other members of the team (Kontogianni, 2000). Through exploratory acting, students have the opportunity to discover the complex image of the "other" beyond the simplified stereotypes that society has attributed, and at the same time discover their own self. The roles that children assume show their potential self. It is what Aristotle called "Allelopathy". You put yourself in the shoes of others, understand them, empathize with them and make a rehearsal, a test of life, discovering a hidden part of yourself (Alkistis, 2008). During the above theatrical game phases, some conclusions are usually drawn.

During Phase B, information is gathered about the children's ideas and views upon the theme they are processing, as well as their knowledge about songs, music, traditional dances, local history, customs and people. However, while acting the roles they have chosen, children come up with questions and queries that may arise. So, the children propose to carry out research as a group on the Internet, in libraries and cultural associations (Phase D) to find information after they have first determined what it is that they want to learn about. The children ask for more information about music, dance, history and traditions of their research areas. Within theatrical game, children are given the opportunity to express themselves with their bodies, overcoming difficulties such as shyness, timidity, difficulty in expression and movement. As a result of the conflicts arising during the acting of their roles, children themselves set rules concerning their in between cooperation (for example, "We are not talking all together at the same time", "We do

not bother others", "We listen carefully to others"), as well as rules regarding their behavior within the roles they are given. The ones who want the 'leading' roles agree to alternate one with another, whereas those who hesitate to take leading roles choose second roles or decide to make costumes, stage settings or conduct research upon music and dance. When composing the scenario, children present the way in which they want to go on this journey of learning and exploration. When the teacher assumes the role of persuading students to stop their difficult but also interesting actions, it is necessary for all participants to set their arguments and the final decision has to be accepted by everyone.

In this way, the teacher is given the opportunity to escape from the traditional role of the 'omniscient' 'all-knowing' educator and to work as a teammate and co-creator, and sometimes even as a viewer-observer following up the evolution of action, the dynamics of the team, the roles and how these are undertaken, without criticizing and making comments. The above opposing position and attitude of the teacher towards the team enhances the potential of creative teaching method models.

Furthermore, children are given the opportunity through improvisation and discussions to participate in the planning of the program by proposing activities and expressing questions and concerns, to verify and confirm assumptions, to create a script for their performance, to resolve queries, to identify problems and propose their own solutions through role-playing. There is also improvement in the participation rate of all students, especially in dance activities, discussions and development of arguments, as well as in the distribution of roles, even for children who used to have difficulty with their cooperation, speaking and motor skills.

The diary and video recording is a key tool for the planning and development of the program, as it reveals the children's interests and preferences expressed both verbally and non-verbally, as well as the needs of the group and their in between relationships. As they meet the cognitive goals they themselves have set, they fully perceive the aesthetic dimension of the theme, the traditional - social dimension of the theme, the value of traditional music and dance in people's life. In addition, they become conscious of the conflicting proposals and try to provide a satisfactory solution.

Experiencing roles allows them to change perspective and look at things from a different angle (Papadopoulos, 2007). Students are no longer passive recipients of the new knowledge. Instead, they participate more actively in the teaching-learning process of traditional dances; they learn much faster with personal enthusiasm and willingness and understand everything more profoundly than if they were forced to do so. (Woolland, 2010) The lesson becomes more student-centered.

Such a student-centered environment allowing every student to use their own learning paths, ways and strategies for acquiring knowledge by interacting with others, contributes to school socialization and favors the success of learning traditional dances. (Lykesas & Koutsouba, 2008). The positive results of the above teaching method are also confirmed by surveys in preschool children (Pavlidou, 2001; Lykesas et al., 2003; Venetsianou & Leventis, 2010), elementary school students (Lykesas, 2002, 2014) and adolescents (Douliaset al., 2005). Children who attend a theatrical game and traditional dance program, get to know and love traditional dance, improve significantly their basic motor skills, physical condition, perceptual ability, expressiveness, willingness for communication, emotional satisfaction and social skills, and in general feel happier.

### Conclusions

To sum up, we suggest that theatrical game is used as a new teaching method at school for it constitutes an 'intersection' in the educational process, as well as an important pedagogical tool, affecting positively students' attitude towards Physical Education and towards the cognitive subject of Greek traditional dances. As a result, this encourages the development of their cultural consciousness and active social participation.

The use of theatre in education does not offer just an aesthetic experience. It engages students in the learning process, and help them understand the value of culture, by creating more flexible conditions aiming at holistic learning. It has the potential to empower communication bonds, critical thinking, responsibility, tolerance and respect of others' ideas and views, team spirit, cooperation and mutual aid. It contributes to fostering a suitable learning environment; that is to create appropriate conditions within which a teacher and student interact dynamically and cooperate to achieve the optimal result.

Lastly, it succeeds in channeling and making the best of students' interests and inclinations to generate an ultimate overall result. Theatre at school serves educational goals but not simply in the sense of transferring knowledge to fill in the gaps and inadequacies of the educational system. The role of theatre in the school setting is multifaceted and multidimensional. It cultivates students' spirit and personality in an integrated way, being at the same time a cognitive subject, a teaching method and a field for personal expression and artistic creation. Theatre is the most effective way to engage students in the learning process for it provides incentive for activation, creativity, communication and cooperation (Grammatas & Moudatsakis, 2008). It has the unique feature of embracing and encouraging the participation of all students with different skills and abilities, as it is clear that all contributors are absolutely necessary for the materialization and success of a performance.

## References

- Armstrong, T. (2009). *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Aristotle (1991). *The Rhetoric*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Avdi, A., & Chatzigeorgiou, M. (2007). *The Art of Drama in Education, 48 proposals for theatrical education workshops*. Athens: Metaichmio.
- Bakirtzis, K.N. (2003). *Communication and education*. Athens: Gutenberg.
- Babatsikou, I. (1998). The Theatrical Game in Kindergarten: A Modern Learning Tool, *Modern Kindergarten*, 5, 303-305.
- Bia, D. (2006). Dramatic Art Drawing Techniques for Designing and Evaluating Environmental Education Programs for Sustainable. *Proceedings of the 2nd Conference of School Environmental Education Programs, Athens*.
- Beauchamp, H. (1998). *The children and the dramatic game, familiarity with the theater*. Athens: Tipotheto.
- Bell, J. (1997). *Methodological planning of pedagogical and social research*. Athens: Gutenberg.
- Bernstein, B. (1985). *Drama as a Context for Transformation. Creative Drama in a Developmental Context*. New York: University Press of America.
- Cattanach, A. (1996). *Drama for People with Special Needs*. London: A & C Black.
- Chatzikou, E. (2005). *Improving: aid to teach children's theater*. Athens: Ntountoumis.
- Choleva, N. (2010). *You like Me. Exploring diversity through the theater*. Athens: Panhellenic Network for Theater in Education.
- Costa, N., Faccio, E., Belloni, E., & Iudici, A. (2014). Drama Experience in Educational Interventions, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 116(21), 4977-4982.
- Crimmens, P. (2006). *Drama Therapy and Story making in special education*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Diggelidis, N., & Papaioannou, A. (1999). Age-group differences in intrinsic motivation, goal orientations and perceptions of athletic competence, physical appearance and motivational climate in Greek physical education. *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine and Science in Sports*, 9, 375-380.
- Doulias, E., Kosmidou, E., Paulogiannis, O., & Patsiaouras, A (2005). Examination of Participation Motives in Folk Dance Groups. *Inquiries in Sport & Physical Education*, 3(2), 107 – 112.
- Faure, G., & Lascar, S. (2001). *The Theatrical Game*. Athens: Gutenberg.
- Freire, P. (1981). *The People Speak Their Word: Learning to Read and Write in Sao Tome and Principe*. *Harvard Educational Review*, 51. New York: Seabury Press.
- Giannaris, G. (2001). *Theatrical Education and Game*. Athens: Grigori.
- Grammatas, T. (1999). *Teaching the theater*. Athens: Tipothito.
- Grammatas, T. (2004). *The Theater at School: Methods of Teaching and Application*. Athens: Atrapos.
- Grammatas, T., & Moudatsakis, T. (2008). *Theater and Culture at school, for the education of primary and secondary school teachers*. Rethimno: E.DIA.M.M.E.
- Grammatas, Th. (2014). *The Theater in Education. Artistic expression and pedagogy*. Athens: Editions: Diadrasia.
- Heathcote, D. (1985). *Collected Writings on Education and Drama*. London: Hutchinson.
- Hermelin, B. & O'Connor, N. (1970). *Psychological experiments with autistic children*. New York: Pergamon.
- Jennings, S. (1986). *Creative drama in group work*. London: Winslow press.
- Joyce, M. (1994). *First Steps Teaching Creative Dance to Children*. California: Mayfield Company.
- Ioakeimidis, P. (2003). *Dramatization and Theatrical Game in Primary Education: Teacher attitudes and implementation framework in the classroom. Postgraduate work*. Athens: Rethimno.
- Keramidioti, K. (2003). Theater for children's audience: dressing up and having fun. *Modern Kindergarten*, 32,62-66
- Kontogianni, A. (2000). *The dramatic art in education*. Athens: EllinikaGrammata.
- Kouretzis, L. (1991). The Theatrical Game: Pedagogical theory, practice and theatrical approach. Athens. Kastaniotis.
- Kouretzis, L. (2008). *The play and its dimensions*. Athens: Taxideftis.
- Lykasas, G. (2002). *Teaching Greek traditional dance in primary school with the method of Music and movement education*. Ph.D. thesis. Thessaloniki: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.
- Lykasas, G., Thomaidou, E., Tsobanaki, T., Papadopoulou, S., & Tsapakidou, A. (2003). Development of motor flexibility - flexibility and originality through creative movement in Kindergarten. *Inquiries in Sport & Physical Education*, 1(3), 211 – 220.
- Lykasas, G., & Zachopoulou, E., (2006). Music and movement education as a form of motivation in teaching Greek traditional dances. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 102, 552-562.
- Lykasas, G., & Papadopoulou, S. (2007). A teaching approach proposal of Greek traditional dances in school practice through music/movement education. *Music in 1<sup>st</sup> grade*, 62-69.
- Lykasas, G., & Koutsouba, M. (2008). The teaching of Greek traditional dance in school education with the adoption of creative methods of teaching. *Journal of Health and Sport Performance*, 3, 37-49.
- Lykasas, G. Tsapakidou, A.&Tsompanaki, E. (2014). Creative Dance as a Means of Growth and Development of Fundamental Motor Skills for Children in First Grades of Primary Schools in Greece. *Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Studies*, 2(1), 211-218.

- Lykesas, G., Koutsouba, M., Giosos, I. & Tyrovola, B. (2015). The Effectiveness of a Theatrical Playing Program in the Process of Learning Greek Traditional Dance in Elementary School Students. *Woman & Sport*, volume IX, σ. 47-56.
- Lykesas Georgios. (2018). The Transformation of Traditional Dance from "First to Second Existence". The Effectiveness of Music and Movement Education and Creative Dance in the Preservation of our Cultural Heritage. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 6(1), 105-113.
- Lynch-Brown, C., & Tomlinson, C. (1999). *Essentials of Children's Literature*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Matijević, M. (2012). The New Learning Environment and Learner Needs this Century. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46, 3290-3295.
- Mosston, M., & Ashworth, S. (1994). *Teaching physical education*. Inc. Macmillan College.
- Moudatsakis, T.E. (1994). *The theory of drama in the School Act*. Athens: Kardamitsa.
- Panteliadou, S., & Botsas, G. (2007). *Learning difficulties: basic concepts and features*. Thessaloniki: Grafima.
- Papadopoulos, S. (2010). *Pedagogy of theater*. Athens: Self-publishing.
- Papadopoulos, S. (2007). *With the language of the theater*. Athens: Kedros.
- Papaioannou, A., & Theodorakis, Y. (1996). A test of three models for the prediction of intention for participation in physical education lessons. *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, 27(4), 383-399.
- Papaioannou, A., Marsh, H., & Theodorakis, Y. (2004). A Multilevel Approach to Motivational Climate in Physical Education and Sport Settings: An Individual or a Group Level Construct. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, 26, 90-118.
- Papaioannou, A. & Siskos, B. (2008). Changes in achievement goals and self concept in the early months of junior high school. *Psychological Reports*, 103, 745-763.
- Pavis, P. (2006). *Dictionaries of the Theater*. Athens: Gutenberg.
- Pavlidou, E. (2001). Rhythmic as a means of education in pre-school age: A combined program of rhythmic and kinetic treatment. *Proceedings of the 3rd Panhellenic Conference. OMEP, Athens*.
- Petris, G. (1986). *Karagiozis: a sociological essay*. Athens: Gnosi.
- Piaget, J. (1968). *Explanation in psychology and psychophysiological parallelism*. In *Experimental Psychology: its Scope and Method*. Routledge & Kegan.
- Sarris, D. (2003). The theatrical play as a communication mediator in hareous children: the mediating function of the body shape. *Education Sciences*, 1, 113-128.
- Sergi, L. (1991). *Dramatic expression and treatment of the child*. Athens: Gutenberg.
- Sextou, P. (2002). Drama and Theatre in education in Greece: past achievement, present demands, and future possibilities. *Research in Drama Education*, 7(1), 123- 133.
- Schnapp, L., & Oslen, C. (2003). Teaching self-advocating strategies through drama. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 38, 211-219.
- Schnapp, L., Kragl, M., Rubin, L., & Tanaka, E. (2003). Hedgehog signaling controls dorsoventral patterning, blastema cell proliferation and cartilage induction during axolotl tail regeneration. *Development*, 132, 3243-3253.
- Schopf, S. (1996). *Mit Kinderspielen*. [To play with children. In German.]. Frankfurt: Diesterweg.
- Slade, P. (1954). *Child Drama*. University of London Press.
- Tsatsoulis, D. (1999). *Semiological approaches to the theatrical phenomenon*. Athens: Ellinika Grammata.
- Tsiaras, A. (2007). *Theatrical Education in Primary School: A Psycho-Sociological Approach*. Athens: Papazisis.
- Venetsanou, F., & Leventis, C. (2010). *The Greek traditional dance for preschool children*. Athens: Athlotipo.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (2003). Imagination and creativity in childhood. *Journal of Russian and East European Psychology*, 42(1), 7-97.
- Woolland, B. (2010). *Teaching Primary Drama*. New York: Pearson Education Limited.
- \*\*\* The British Association of Dramatherapists in: <http://badth.org.uk/home>

---

Received: September 1, 2018  
Accepted: September 15, 2018  
Correspondence to:  
Georgios Lykesas, Ph.D.  
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece  
E-mail: glykesas@phed.auth.gr