The analysis of pretend play in American (pre-)school children, and its portrayal in movies

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Undergraduate thesis / Završni rad

2016

Degree Grantor / Ustanova koja je dodijelila akademski / stručni stupanj: **Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences / Sveučilište Josipa Jurja Strossmayera u Osijeku, Filozofski fakultet**

Permanent link / Trajna poveznica: https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:142:000159

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Download date / Datum preuzimanja: **2024-09-21**

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Mentor: doc.dr.sc. Goran Milić

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Summary:

This paper examines pretend play, its characteristics and its importance. The defining is done by presenting criteria, suggested by Lorraine McCune-Nicolich, which need to be fulfilled in order to observe the play as a pretend play (e.g. pretending to be someone else, treating inanimate objects as animate, performing actions without necessary materials or by substituting them with others, etc). In the head section, the methods and strategies that pretend play consists of, according to Doris Bergen, are presented. According to Bergen, the methods are role taking (e.g. parent-child), script knowledge, and improvisation; while strategies include joint planning, negotiation, problem solving, and goal seeking. Those components are all again defined, as well as explained and exemplified with the help of several videos from *YouTube* web page and American movies portraying pretend play among (pre-)school children. The accent is on gender-specific characteristics, and on the observing of boys' and girls' discourse in specific examples (e.g. how boys and girls give direct orders, or achieve goals with words). Jenny Cook-Gumperz and Amy Kyratzis' paper *Child Discourse* is used as a basis for this part of the research. Finally, it is discussed whether suggested presumptions related to gender division are proven, or not.

Contents

1. Introduction

Play is an important part of children's lives and in this paper, the focus is on one specific form of play – pretend play. First, several definitions are given defining pretend play and its parts, i.e. criteria necessary for the play to be interpreted as pretend play according to Lorraine McCune-Nicolich. Also, its importance is suggested. Later, in the head section, it is proposed that pretend play is characterized by several major methods that Doris Bergen suggested, and each one of them is defined and exemplified separately. Those methods are role taking, script knowledge, and improvisation. After that, strategies used in pretend play – joint planning, negotiation, problem solving, and goal seeking – also according to Bergen, are defined and exemplified as well. At the same time, examples are explained with the help of Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis' paper *Child Discourse*, propounding how girls' and boys' discourses differ in many ways. The examples include videos from *YouTube* web page and several American movies (e.g. *The Parent Trap, Tom Sawyer & Huckleberry Finn, The Baby-Sitters Club,* etc.) In the end, the conclusion will be given, proving or refuting those assumptions.

2. Defining pretend play

During childhood, children spend most of their time playing, and even in the later years play remains the important part of their lives. Various types of play can be distinguished, and the one that helps children to develop their intellect and language is pretend play. Kaufman, J. Singer and D. Singer assert that pretend play or make-believe play, as some researchers refer to it, involves "the acting out of stories which involve multiple perspectives and the playful manipulation of ideas and emotions." (Kaufman, et al. 1) Bergen claims that "there is a growing body of evidence to suggest that high-quality pretend play is an important facilitator of perspective taking and later abstract thought, that it may facilitate higher-level cognition, and that there are clear links between pretend play and social and linguistic competence." (Bergen 2) Kyratzis (1998) even points up how "preschool children explore possible selves and gender issues via dramatic play narratives of pretense." (qtd. in Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis 602) Children of that age are persistently marked by their gender, therefore, in extension, this research will be focusing on gender division, on phenomena attributed to boys and girls, and the attempt to demonstrate if those are merely prejudices or facts.

Many researchers agree when it comes to the importance of pretend play, but what is actually pretend play? When simply defining pretend play, Bergen explains that "pretend play requires the ability to transform objects and actions symbolically." (Bergen 3) Moreover, Nicolich does it in more details, and lists and explains criteria used to signify that a child is pretending. (Nicolich 785) Those criteria will be exemplified with the help of processed movies and videos available on *YouTube* web page. First, she itemizes the fact that children treat inanimate objects as animate, and gives an example of children's caretaking of a doll. (Nicolich 785) Caretaking is usually typical for girls, which will be discussed more thoroughly later, but in processed examples, it can be seen that, at least when influenced by females, boys accept that role, too. The best example for treating an inanimate object as animate is Barbie's commercial from the campaign *With Barbie, Anything is Possible* since is shows and compares girls' interaction with Barbie dolls and real people side to side. (Barbie, 2015) Another criterion is that everyday activities are performed without the necessary materials, for example, a child drinks from an empty cup. (Nicolich 785) In addition to materials necessary for a play, children tend to ideate new human beings to play with, so the concept of imaginary friend, one that is very often in younger children's lives, and consequently in movies would be suitable to add to this particular category. In the movie *The*

Baby-Sitters Club, there is a young girl who introduces the audience to her imaginary friend Jimmy-Tony and other, older characters, accept her pronouncement:

> Mallory: Jessi, Nina Marshall can´t find Jimmy-Tony. She said you know
> where he is.
> Jessi: Hi, Nina. Hi, Jimmy-Tony.
> Nina: Jimmy-Tony´s not there. (*The Baby-Sitters Club*, 1995)

Moreover, Nicolich asserts that during pretend play children perform actions usually done by someone else, such as cooking or telephoning. (Nicolich 785) That will be explained more thoroughly when defining role-taking. Now, among processed movies, most of such examples are from *Tom Sawyer & Huckleberry Finn,* in which Tom, since he often wants to represent himself as older and more experienced than he really is, gives other characters' lessons on how to be an adult, how to be engaged, or how to rescue a captive. Furthermore, in the early age, most of the children have someone they look up to, and it is not rare that the person they admire is an actor, singer or anyone famous. By virtue of the Internet, and modern technology, children can easily perform actions usually done by someone else, such as their favorite singer, and post them online for everyone to see, so one of the videos analyzed for this research shows two girls recreating a music video, and emphasizing: "This is our first cover, it is only for fun! We do not claim to be singers, so be kind!" (Annie & Hope JazzyGirlStuff, 2016) Another criterion among those that Nicolich suggests is children's substitution of one object for another which can even lead to the equation of shell and a cat. (Nicolich 785) In *The Baby-Sitters Club*, already mentioned girl with an imaginary friend later turns to shaving, and now, instead of performing the activity without necessary objects, decides to select a substitution for a razor, and substitutes it with a butter knife.

To summarize, Fein (1975) acknowledged that during pretend play children transform activities from their real objectives, just like objects from their real counterparts, concluding that that transformational quality is the defining attribute of symbolic play. (qtd. in Nicolich 786)

3. Methods

It has already been mentioned that Bergen gave definition to pretend play evaluating that it "requires the ability to transform objects and actions symbolically; (that) it is furthered by interactive social dialogue and negotiation; and (that) it involves role taking, script knowledge, and improvisation." She follows that up with explaining how "many cognitive strategies are exhibited during pretense, such as joint planning, negotiation, problem solving, and goal seeking." (Bergen 3)

At this point, we will concentrate on her postulates, trying to corroborate them with the help of videos and movies included in the research. Also, the accent will be on finding similarities in watched templates, classifying them, and scrutinizing division between genders in children discourse within pretend play, relying mostly on Kyratzis and Cook-Gumperz's paper *Child Discourse*.

3.1. Role taking

Fein defines role playing as "behavior in which the child simulates the identity or characteristics of another person" and adds that the roles children take "may be reciprocal in that they reflect complementary social relationships (parent-child, server-eater, doctor-patient)." (Fein 1101)

Also, Kyratzis noticed that the roles are often predetermined by the gender, that "protagonists explore possible selves organized around gendered themes of power and physical strength for boys … and of beauty, graciousness, caring for others, and nurturance for girls." (qtd. in Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis 602) Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis in *Child Discourse* go on claiming that "children evolve norms of gender-appropriate emotion display" since "girls develop positive attitudes toward nurturance/caring and boys evolve negative attitudes toward the display of fear." (Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis 602) Mc-Loyd (1980), Pulaski (1973), Smith (1977), and Stone (1971) also noticed that "boys are more likely than girls to adopt fantastic or motoric roles (e.g., monsters, spacemen, or play fighting), whereas girls are more likely to adopt anticipatory or sedentary roles associated with domestic activities, marriage, and holidays." (qtd. in Fein 1105)

In general, that hypothesis turns out to be accurate, but there are also some exceptions. So, we have boys calling themselves heroes in the movie based on the story of Peter Pan: "Peter, we'll miss breakfast. The heroes have risen. They must now feed." (*Pan,* 2015) and a girl pretending to be a princess in *Along Came the Nanny*: "I'll play Sleeping Beauty, and you can play the ugly sister." (*Along Came the Nanny,* 2014) The previous example can be looked as a representative of "nanny-movies" where usually a young girl comes to a rich family, and faces difficulties when trying to befriend a child. It can be seen that the girl uses direct order, showing that she is superior. But also, in a different movie with the nanny characters we can find a girl pretending to be a pirate and naming a younger boy friend her slave in *The Baby-Sitters Club*: "I´m Pirate Esmeralda, and this is my slave." (*The Baby-Sitters Club,* 2015)

When it comes to nurturance, the example of girls showing the need to nurture and care about the others will be explained with the help of the movie *The Parent Trap,* but the research revealed that nurturance and caring are not only characteristic for girls, but also for boys. Aditi Syal's video on *YouTube* shows a boy feeding a baby (an imaginary one) and a dog. (Aditi Syal, 2014) In the movie *The Parent Trap,* concurrently to the nourishing role, we can also observe the relations between both parent and children, and server and eater. In the movie, girls organize dinner for their parents and welcome them by saying "Elizabeth and Nick, your dinner awaits you." (*The Parent Trap,* 1998) It is noticeable that in the previous statement girls conceive themselves to be superior to their parents, calling them by their names, and indirectly suggesting what they should do. Gleason (1988), Ervin Tripp (1976), and Wootton (1977) inferred that children would be indirect to older people and those who have a higher status in the play situation, but that they would not use indirect strategies while talking to their parents. (qtd. in Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis) However, in this particular scene from *The Parent Trap* girls treat their parents differently, showing that their status in the play situation is higher.

Furthermore, in suggested and examined samples appeared children who take the role of a doctor, but also the ones who take the role of a patient. In the movie *My Girl,* the girl who is surrounded by corpses and familiar to various illnesses due to the nature of her father's job often visits doctors and pretends to be sick, even saying "I think it's my prostate." (*My Girl*, 1991) on one occasion. On the other hand, in one of the videos found on *YouTube* a boy takes a stethoscope and when his mother asks him what he is doing he answers: "I'm just checking baby's tummy, to see, make sure, she's healthy." Later on, the boy says "I'm going to teach you how to feel better. First, you eat…!" (beeboo1798, 2011) using direct order, which Cook-

Gumperz and Kyratzis explain saying how "children reveal a range of understandings of the complexities of directives and requests," and that in "doctor-and-nurse game doctors give direct orders." (Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis 593-594)

3.2. Script knowledge

Barr and Feigenbaum (1981) defined a script as „a standardized sequence of events that describes some stereotypical human activity such as going to a restaurant or visiting a doctor," (qtd. in Koller, Pinkal and Regneri 979) and Regneri, Koller, and Pinkal added that scripts are „fundamental pieces of commonsense knowledge that are shared between the different members of the same culture, and thus a speaker assumes them to be tacitly understood by a hearer when a scenario related to a script is evoked." (Koller, Pinkal and Regneri 979) Kim also averred that the pretend play is based on them which implies that children understand the facts about the roles they play, and the sequence of events, or how one action leads to another. (Kim par. 3) Sheldon and Rohleder (1996) declared that children invoke gender-associated scripts of play, such as houses for girls, and the roles of good and bad guys for boys, even when they do not possess the necessary materials. (qtd. in Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis 602) In the previous paragraph, it has been shown that gender-associated scripts are not always followed.

Already mentioned example of a girl saying "I´m Pirate Esmeralda, and this is my slave." (*The Baby-Sitters Club,* 2015) confirms that scripts attributed to boys and girls are not always followed, so a girl becomes a pirate. However, she is the older child in the game, and consequently higher in status.

On the other hand, an example from the movie *Along Came the Nanny* shows a prototypical girl wanting to be a princess who shows that she possesses a script knowledge but follows it unknowingly, and does not know to explain how it is done:

> Ava: Wanna play princess?
> Nanny: How do you do that?
> Ava: I don't know, you just do. Nanny Mike knew how, and he was man.
> I'll play Sleeping Beauty, and you can play the ugly sister. (*Along Came the Nanny,* 2014)

This example also presents a dialogue prototypical for younger children, as it abruptly ended. McTear (1985) has documented that when it comes to the coherence of a dialogue, "younger children's next-contributions tended to be responses without initiations, meaning that conversational topics abruptly ended and new ones had to be introduced abruptly, lending a choppier feel." Unlike them, older children "displayed more diverse ways of creating continuity in dialog." So, the relation between questions and answers differs – in younger children's dialogues responses were, as Ervin-Tripp (1976) noticed, usually the repetitions of the partner, while older children were able to respond not only to questions, but statements, and made dialogues more coherent. (qtd. in Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis 599-600)

Another example of a girl following the script without a background knowledge is from *My Girl* where the girl is familiar with the illness, but not the conditions and possible patients:

> Shelly: What's wrong with her?
> Father: She's just pretending. … Get up and eat your broccoli.
> Vanda: I think it's my prostate. (*My Girl,* 1991)

In the movie *The Parent Trap* girls play cards and spontaneously get to the part where they bet. They never talked and planned that they should bet, but because of their script knowledge, it just came spontaneously. The following example also shows girls thoroughly accepting and playing their roles:

> Annie: Sorry, ladies. Two pair. Read 'em and weep.
> Hallie: I'm out.
> Annie: So that's it? No more takers?
> Hallie: I've nothing left.
> Annie: I'll take a whack at it.
> Hallie: Take a seat, Parker.
> Annie: Deal me in.
> Hallie: Tell you what I'm gonna do. I'll make you a little deal. - Loser
> jumps into the lake after the game.
> Annie: Excellent.
> Hallie: But naked.
> Annie: Even more excellent.
> Hallie: Start unzipping, Parker. Straight in diamonds.

Annie: You're good, James. But... you're just not good enough. In your honor, a royal flush. (*The Parent Trap,* 1998)

Finally, there are examples of a boy familiar with the script and the role he wants to play, and the boy is Tom Sawyer. In one of the scenes, he explains to a girl how to be engaged and directs her how to behave:

Tom: Have you ever...ever been engaged?

Becky: No. Of course not. Never. Um, Tom? What's that mean, anyway?

Tom: Oh, you gotta try it out.

Becky: Oh, Oh, I... I don't know, Tom. How does that work?

Tom: HOW? Uh, well, it's as easy as nothing. All you gotta do is say to a guy like me that you'd never, ever take another guy, and then you kiss each other and then that's it. Everyone can do it. (*Tom Sawyer & Huckleberry Finn,* 2014)

3.3. Improvisation

Bergen documented how Sawyer (1997) claimed that instead of following a script, preschool children's pretense often involves improvisational exchanges, and that implicit, in-frame play strategies are more successful than those explicit, out-of-frame strategies. (Bergen 6) It is practically impossible to discuss the phenomenon of improvisation in movies, since the scriptwriter usually idealizes various events from the real life, but the sure thing is that they portrait events from everyday life, so due to familiar experiences, not only those related to pretend play, we can assume which situations would actually be marked by improvisation.

In the movie *My Girl* clumsy behavior of the main characters in the scene where they discuss the first kiss contributes to the interpretation of that scene as it is improvisation. Still, a girl is the one leading the conversation, and represents the superior character, which is additionally highlighted with the usage of "OK" as a marker of a higher-status role. (Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis 594) Goodwin (1990) also noticed that "girls shifted their style toward using more direct forms of requests when playing with boys rather that with other girls." (qtd. in Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis 605) That too can be observed below:

Vanda: Have you ever kissed anyone?

Thomas: Like they do on TV? No.

Vanda: Maybe we should, just to see what's the big deal.

Thomas: But I don't know how.

Vanda: Here. Practice on your arm, like this.

Thomas: Like this?

Vanda: OK. Enough practice. Close your eyes.

Thomas: Then I won't be able to see anything.

Vanda: Just do it.

Thomas: OK. OK.

Vanda: On the count of three. One. Two. Two-and-a-half. Three. … Say something. It's too quiet. (*My Girl,* 1991)

However, script knowledge and improvisation do not necessarily exclude each other. The same example that has been used to elucidate the instance of script knowledge, of girls playing cards from *The Parent Trap* (page 7)*,* can explain the instance of improvisation. As it has already been said they knew what their roles were, but anyway, the scene of them placing a bet can be explained as improvisation as it was spontaneous, not planned.

4. Strategies

As it has already been mentioned, Bergen inferred that "many cognitive strategies are exhibited during pretense, such as joint planning, negotiation, problem solving, and goal seeking." (Bergen 3) They will be explained in the following pages.

4.1. Joint planning

When children play, first they plan what will the game be, and even during the play they proceed with planning how it will be performed. Kaufman, J. Singer, and D. Singer say that even teachers guide children in "jointly planning of play scenarios before enacting them." (Kaufman, et al. par. 7)

Kyratzis and Ervin-Tripp concluded that when children were playing in pairs, "girls were more likely to sustain a joint pretense narrative while boys were more likely to lapse into arguments about how to proceed, disrupting joint fantasy." (qtd. in Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis 604) However, Fein claims that children of all ages "were more likely to communicate about their own plans (e.g., "I gotta drive to the shopping center") than about joint plans or the plans of their partners." (Fein 1101)

Two of the girls who plan together throughout the entire movie are the twins from *The Parent Trap.* The moment when they find out that they are twins, the planning starts:

> Hallie: I have a brilliant, beyond brilliant, idea. I'm serious, I am a total
> genius. - You want to know what dad is like, right?
> Annie: Right.
> Hallie: And I'm dying to know Mom, so what I'm thinking is... Don't
> freak out, OK? I think we should switch places. When camp's over, I'll
> go back to London as you and you go back to California as me.
> Annie: What?
> Hallie: Annie, we can pull it off. We're twins, aren't we?
> Annie: Hallie, we're totally and completely, 100 percent different.
> Hallie: So? What's the problem? I'll teach you to be me and you teach me
> to be you. … Look, I can do you already. (British accent) Yes. You want

to know the difference between us? I have class and you don't. Come on, Annie. I gotta meet my ma. (*The Parent Trap,* 1998)

Dunn (1996) claims that during arguments children will most likely take account of the others' feelings when it comes to their friends (qtd. in Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis), and Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis add that "children may care more about managing to maintain continuous harmonious communication with their friends than with family members." (Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis 603) In this case, girls are siblings, but they were not familiar with that until recently, so it is not odd that they treat each other as friends.

Also, Tom Sawyer is the character that has something to plan throughout the whole movie. His plans include being engaged and saving a convict with Huckleberry, and here is the example from the latter incidence:

Huckleberry: Tom, look! We got the tools right here to do the job! I say we bust a hole through this here wall and then just get him out.

Tom: Would you please hush, Hucky? How am I supposed to concentrate and come up with the perfect solution with you chatter-boxing the entire time? Hold the lamp. I got an idea. We're not gonna go through the wall. No, we're gonna go under the wall. Yeah, that's how we're gonna do it. Just like I've read it's been done in lots of my books. Here we go, right here's the spot.

Huckleberry: What the heck are you doing, Tom?

Tom: Hucky, can't you see that I'm digging a tunnel under this confounded wall?

….

Tom: Damn it, Huck. Potter's gone.

Huckleberry: He is gone. I can't believe it. What are we gonna do now?

Tom: To be honest, I don't know. But I do know that, without us, he's not getting too far. (*Tom Sawyer & Huckleberry Finn,* 2014)

Finally, Kaufman, J. Singer, and D. Singer have noted that actual studies demonstrated cognitive benefits of pretend play such as increased usage of subjunctives, future tenses, and adjectives. When observing joint planning, not surprisingly, we can find a lot of examples of future tenses. (Kaufman, et al. 2)

4.2. Negotiation and problem solving

When planning, children tend to face disagreements, so the joint planning is often associated with negotiating. Lillard (1998) said that pretend play involves "out of play frame" negotiation between the players who have different views. (qtd. in Bergen 3) The instance of negotiation in pretend play in general, and in the examined examples, is connected to problem solving which actually arises from negotiation so those strategies will be discussed together.

It has already been said that boys tend to face difficulties in understanding themselves more often, so the best example to prove that is again the one between Tom and Huck, from the same scene as the previous example (page 11) is. Goncu (1993) has documented that children are expected to reach solutions which are predefined in problem-solving activities (qtd. in Kim par. 11) so here is an example of how boys are working towards the solution:

> Huckleberry: Well, I don't think we got that long. I mean, by the time we do that, Muff Potter will be either hung high or probably be dead from old age or something.
>
> Tom: Now, come on, do you honestly and truly think that we're gonna need 37 years to get through this little bit of earth, huh? He was sitting on solid rock and he only had one knife. We got two. And, Huck, for someone who can't read and write, you're pretty smart. But, I have read practically every topic that's ever been printed on this book.
>
> Huckleberry: Yeah?
>
> Tom: Yeah.
>
> Huckleberry: I don't care how the counts are doing it in France. All we need is a shovel and a pickaxe to get the job done. He is pretty drunk. Hope we don't gotta carry him out like this.
>
> Tom: Don't worry, Hucky. He'll be okay by the morning. Let's get outta here.
>
> Huckleberry: What? Well, I thought we came here to break him out today.
>
> Tom: Yeah, Hucky, we will, but not just yet. Let's make tracks.
>
> Huckleberry: After all this hard work, we're losing precious time. I mean, what happens if we come back tomorrow? They're gonna hang an innocent man. That poor guy'll be strung up for nothing.

Tom: Huck, we're gonna get him out in the morning. A break like this needs to be planned to detail. Otherwise, they're gonna get Muff before he even notices that he's on the run. Now, let's get outta here. (*Tom Sawyer & Huckleberry Finn,* 2014)

In the previous dialogue, one can notice that Tom starts the sentence with connective "now." Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis note that McTear (1985) "examined children's use of various surface devices which are used to show cohesive ties between utterances, including ellipsis, pronouns, and connectives" and concluded that children use "now" to signal a switch in topic. (qtd. in Cook-Gumperz, Kyraztis 599) Indeed, Tom uses "now" to disrupt Huck which is also a way of proving himself to be superior. Cook-Gumperz and Kyrazis have also documented that "the higher-status role will also use more discourse markers such as "OK," "now," and "so." (594) Another example of "now" as a signifier of the higher-status role can be found in Barbie's commercial where a girl acting to be a professor asks her students a question: "Now, does anybody know how big the brain is?" (Barbie, 2015)

In addition, Huckleberry is not the only character that Tom negotiates with. He often negotiates to persuade others to do what he wants. One of the examples includes wise avoidance of painting the fence, and the other one the process of negotiation that preceded the engagement. The examples are below:

Ben: So... I'm going swimming, you know? Wouldn't you not like to come along? Nah, what am I thinking? Tom Sawyer'd prefer to work.

Tom: You calling that work?

Ben: So, are... are you saying that... that's not work, what you got going on right there?

Tom: Maybe. Maybe not. I don't know. But, I do know that I'm having the time of my life.

Ben: Come on, Tom Sawyer, cut it out. You're really trying to tell me that you're having fun?

Tom: Well, believe it or not, I'm having a lot of fun. You know, you don't get the opportunity to paint a picket fence every day. You just don't have the chance to have this much fun. You know what I mean, booga-bean?

….

Ben: I... could I, uh, think I... think I might, uh... Mind if I give it a try?

Tom: Nuh-uh, Ben, buddy man. Auntie Polly is real particular about how it's done and about who do it, too. She is proud of her picket fence. This is precision work right here. This white picket fence is out here through thick and through thin. I really don't think that there is one in 1,000 who can do this job the way it's meant to be done. Well, maybe one in 2,000, maybe.

(*Tom Sawyer & Huckleberry Finn,* 2014)

In this example, Tom uses "well" to "indicate a dispreferred response" (Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis 599) signifying that the negotiation is to follow. The example below again contains Tom's "now," marking his superiority over all the other characters.

Becky: I... I don't know, Tom. How does that work?

Tom: HOW? Uh, well, it's as easy as nothing. All you gotta do is say to a guy like me that you'd never, ever take another guy, and then you kiss each other and then that's it. Everyone can do it.

Becky: Kissing? Why on earth would...

Tom: Uh, yeah. Uh, kissing is for... Oh, you know, 'cause they always do that. But first, you gotta say that you love each other.

Becky: Oh. I don't... I don't think I want to be engaged.

Tom: You... you don't have to say it too loud. You could even whisper it real soft. I love you. Now, you whisper it to me just like I did. … Now, you tum your face away, and don't you say a word of this to anybody.

(*Tom Sawyer & Huckleberry Finn,* 2014)

4.3. Goal seeking

When it comes to goals, they are again marked as gender specific, so Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis noticed that "in same-sex groups, girls interact so as to sustain interaction and realize group goals, and boys interact so as to top or one-up conversational partners and realize self-goals. (Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis 604) Also, they noticed that both boys and girls use different speech strategies available in order to "manipulate speech style for given interactive goals" and that those strategies may reflect not only gender, but also the level of power (such as directness). (Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis 605) Maltz and Borker (1983) found a reason for that "gender segregation", explaining how girls and boys usually play in same-sex groups, evolving different goals for "social interactions and distinct communicative styles." Moreover, they noticed girls and boys using different genres of speech and skills for manipulating things with words. So, they documented that girls usually learn that talk is for: "(1) creating and maintaining relationships of closeness and equality; (2) criticizing others in acceptable ways; and (3) interpreting accurately the speech of other girls," while boys learn that talk is for: "(1) asserting a position of dominance; (2) attracting and maintaining an audience; and (3) asserting themselves when another speaker has the floor." (qtd. in Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis) Finally, they realized that girls' talk is "collaboration-oriented" and boys' talk is "completion-oriented." (Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis 603-604) Those postulates turn to be correct when it comes to observed examples, comparing examples of girls from *The Parent Trap* and those of boys from *Tom Sawyer & Huckleberry Finn.*

However, when observing previously mentioned example from *Tom Sawyer & Huckleberry Finn* (page 13) one can notice that Tom starts few of his sentences with "Let's…" showing lower level of directness, which Maltz and Borker (1983) found typical for girls, and Cook-Gumperz and Kyrazis explained how "These mitigated the imposition of the request and helped constitute a more egalitarian form of social organization." (Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis 604)

5. Conclusion

To summarize, pretend play is characterized by role taking, script knowledge, and improvisation, and the strategies children use while playing are joint planning, negotiation, problem solving, and goal seeking. All those methods and strategies have been listed along with specific examples from videos and movies, and concurrently analyzed. What was analyzed is postulates from Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis' paper *Child Discourse,* based on the division between girls and boys and their discourse during pretend play. It has been proven that, in the given templates, those postulates turn out to be true, of course with several exceptions. So, it has been proven that girls' and boys' discourses differ, that they use different strategies for example to pronounce directive orders or to use words to fulfill their goals. Also, it has been proven that, in general, girls choose other roles than boys, so girls usually take the role of a nourisher, and the person who takes care of others; or the role of a princess, while boys choose more masculine roles, and those of heroes. However, even in this limited corps, exceptions can be found. Also, it has to be emphasized that the used examples are from movies, and even though movies portray real life, they do not have to be necessarily accurate, in a way that they tend to caricature people's behavior, or simply idealize specific events.

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