Analysis of the activity of PE teachers facing reform: current research

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Introduction

Why this subject?

Canton of Vaud:
Summative assessment
No grades
Introduction

New PE assessment prescriptions - 2015
secondary school
(12 to 16 years)

- Mandatory summative assessments
- Summative but not grading
- Different assessment objects (motor skills, competencies, affective behaviours)
- Directive / freedom
- Official but not controlled

Teacher oppositions
New concept of PE assessment

Cantonal prescription:
per year, teachers have to do **8 to 12 summative assessments**:
- 2 « cantonal assessments » (mandatory tests)
- 6 to 10 «school assessments » (decided within teaching teams)

Assessment codes (no grades)
E = trained
R = successful
BR = well done
TBR = very successful
Assessment in PE

Confusions and tensions
- Development / control
- Formative = Function / summative = approach
  (De Ketele, 2010, Mougenot & Dugas, 2014)
→ Assessment arrangements
  (Cogérino & Mnaffakh, 2008)

Negative effects of certification
- Arbitrary and subjectivity
  (Annerstedt & Larsson, 2010)
- Avoidance strategies
  (Pulfrey, Buchs, & Butera, 2011)
- Perceived teacher support
  (Lentillon-Kaestner et al. 2018)

Sustainability of traditional assessments
- Performance
- Physical tests
- Assessment of learning
  (Hay & Penney, 2009)

Recent reforms
• USA 2004 puis 2014 (Avery, 2012)
• Norway 2011 (Leirhaug & Annerstedt, 2015)
• Sweden 2011 (Larsson & Nyberg, 2017)
• Ireland 2016 (MacPhail & Murphy, 2017)

Evolution towards "alternative" assessments
  (Lopez–Pastor et al., 2013)
- Assessment for learning (AfL)
  (Leirhaug & MacPhail, 2015)
- Authentic assessment
  (Collier, 2011)
→ Assessment as a learning tool
Activity of PE teachers facing assessment reform 2015

- Same tensions?
- How and why does the new assessment framework wake up these tensions?
- How do teachers interpret prescriptions and adapt them to their concerns?
Theoretical framework

Clinic of activity
activity analysis
(Vygotski, 1960; Clot, 1999)

CHAT Cultural historical activity theory (Vygostski, 1960)
Psychological current of the theory of activity

Development of the power to act

internalization of cultural signs, (professional rules or skills) (Vygotski, 1978)
capacity to be affected (Vygotski, 1978)

based on dilemmas (intrapsychic conflicts) linked to:
- prescribed vs performed activity
- actual vs performed activity and debates with others (interpsychic conflicts) (Vygotski, 1978)
**Theoretical framework**

**Clinic of activity**  
activity analysis

**CHAT** Cultural historical activity theory  
(Vygostski, 1960)

**French Ergonomics**  
(Clot, 2008)

**Development of the power to act**

**Intrapsychological conflicts** related to:  
- competing motives for action (Vygotski, 1978)  
- the change of focus of the activity:  
  - self oriented (subjective) / activity object oriented (efficiency) (Saujat, 2010)

- Creating **new goals** (motives) &  
  **new skills** (operationse) (Leontiev, 1984)  
- Reinforcement or removal of motives  
  → asymmetrical interaction (scarfolding) (Bruner, 1983)
Research questions

- Under what circumstances do PE teachers develop facing reform?
- Which intrapsychic conflicts promote or hinder the development of power to act?
- Does the confrontation with one's own assessment activity lead to the creation of new goals and a shift or reinforcement of one's motives for action (meaning) and/or a change in operations (efficiency)?
Methodology

Data collection
- Academic year 2017-2018
- 2 secondary schools (cycle 3)
- 6 teachers (3 women / 3 men)
- In 6 classes (4 mixed / 2 no mixed)

Method used for data processing
- Video recordings of summative assessment lessons
- Simple and collective self-confrontation interviews (Yvon & Garon, 2006).
- Language material analysis with brands and indicators of potential development (Bruno & Méard, 2018)
Results of the current research (1)

- Case n° 1 Line (first name)
- Partial results (4 simple auto-confrontation interviews)

Results appeared in langage material show potential development linked to:

1. Intrapsychological conflicts related to **competing motives**

- Promoting students' self-confidence
- Controlling assessment and learning
- Creating links with students
- Proposing equal treatment
- Ensuring the success of the weakest
- Ensuring security
- Feeling helpful as a teacher
- Making students autonomous and responsible
- Keeping the program
- Proposing several activities
Results of the current research (2)

Other results appearing in language material show potential development linked to:

2. Intrapsychological conflicts related to the *change of focus of the activity* (Saujat, 2010)
   
   self oriented (subjective) / activity oriented (efficiency)

Line: Well, after that I didn’t really want to have to manage how they were doing behind!

Line: (...) they had fun with, at one time! But others (.) they discuss! After that (( shrugs )) as long as they don’t disturb me (.) there the goal was still to assess (...) 

Line: I’m really more focused on the assessment and then I almost prefer that they discuss and then they don’t disturb the assessment (.) if they don’t want to do well, I won’t come every two minutes to bawl them or (.) otherwise I lose my assessment or it lasts three hours, haha!
Results of the current research (2)

- Self-oriented (subjectivity)
  - Keep quiet your assess
  - Most important is not to be disturbed
  - Focused on assessment
  - Fear losing her assessment
  - Be quiet
  - Don’t intervene

- Activity oriented (efficacity)
  - Students have fun
  - Goal is assessing
  - Most important not to disturb assessment time
  - Assessment will last 3 hours

Development of the power to act
Results of the current research (3)

Last results appeared in language material show potential development linked to:

3. Creating **new goals** (motives)

Succession of new goals come from peer assessment in cantonal test:

- **Coordination 10e**

- To spread the assessment over 3 lessons
- To form pairs by affinity
- To film assessment to control student activity
- To assess herself and make an average
- To train students more
- To help students to integrate the criteria
- To try more complex exercise only if easiest are successful
- To film and watch video with students to help them to understand results

Development of the power to act
Discussion

**Intrapsychological conflicts** appear thanks to:

- Interactions with other teachers (interpsychic conflicts)
- Discussion and questions of the researcher during simple and collective auto-confrontation interviews

- Subjectivity is part of the activity of the teacher
- Balance between prescription and subjectivity
- To be healthy at work and integrate the prescription, teachers have to:
  - keep the program, ensure student safety, help students succeed, etc. (efficacy), BUT ALSO
  - Be comfortable, appropriate the assessment, see the meaning, avoid stress, do not be afraid, etc.
- Not to neglect subjectivity in order to be able to appropriate prescription and make one’s job.
Conclusion

Practical implications

► To understand teachers’ resistances and difficulties in PE assessment
► To support them better in a reform of the PE assessment
► To promote collective work and dialog

Scientific extensions

► Future results will provide interesting insights and further development of this initial results
► This study should provide a better understanding of the subjectivity of assessment activity and thus complement existing studies
Thank you
References

- Larsson, H., & Nyberg, G. (2017). 'It doesn't matter how they move really, as long as they move.' Physical education teachers on developing their students' movement capabilities. Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy, 22(2), 137-149.
References