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METHODOLOGY OF TEACHING PHYSICAL EDUCATION BY
IMPLEMENTING THE GAME AND COMPETITION METHOD

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Abstract

The aim of the research is to increase the efficiency of the teaching process in the physical education discipline with 14-15-year-old students by combining the game and competition methods. The game method, widely used in physical education lessons in primary education, remains also valid for lower secondary education, but unlike primary grades where play is a method of expressing emotions and knowing the surrounding world, at this stage, the game becomes an element that defines personality. Implementation of the game and competition method in the lessons of physical education is particularly important for teenagers who manifest passivity and indifference, because the attractiveness of lessons increases. Implementation of this method also improves the motor training level and health indicators of the teenagers. Specificity of the methodology lies in comparing forces of the people involved in the game, who behave like rivals in a struggle, which develops with the participant's volitional qualities. By combining the game method with the competitive method, the real reason of the contest, personal pride, is satisfied. The preventive analysis of the results obtained from questioning 14-15-year-old adolescents highlights their poor motivation for attending physical education classes, dissatisfaction with their quality and lack of self-confidence. The analysis of the physical education teachers' results reveals their positive attitude towards the use of the game and competition method for the efficiency of these lessons in lower secondary education.

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Keywords: Physical education lessons, game method, competition method, motivation, dynamic games.



1. Introduction

In the 9th grade physical education lessons, it is important to keep students' interest in motor activities and their openness to self-development and, in this context, the teacher's freedom to select and implement the most appropriate methods and means of teaching-learning, creates prerequisites for diversifying and boosting the lessons through game and competition, avoiding the monotony of the didactic process (Grimalschi & Boian, 2016). The method of play reflects the methodological particularities of the game, that is what distinguishes it, in methodological terms (according to the particularities of organising student activity, its leadership etc.), from other methods of education. The method of play is characterised by the organisation of pupils' activity on the basis of a theme that aims to achieve the goal under different conditions (Ghimp & Budevici-Puiu, 2016; Ivankov, 2005). The theme of the game is inspired by reality or specially created. This method applies to perfecting the complicated elements of the movement, when they are already mastered, in order to consolidate, refine and use them in various situations. Games have a complex character and are based on the combination of various motor actions (running, jumping, throwing etc.). Game participants are given the opportunity to creatively solve their tasks. At the same time, they must show independence, initiative and ability to make choices. The execution of actions under various conditions increases the dynamism of the formed motor stereotypes.

Games are especially attractive for students, because, in order to defeat, it is necessary not only a certain superiority in the physical training of the participants, but also a lot of intelligence. At the same time, they exert a profound and multilateral influence on the body, boosting its overall physical development, improving speed, strength and endurance, but also vital abilities such as running, jumping and throwing. (Neverkovich, 2006)

The competitive method used in lessons perfectly corresponds to the psychological peculiarities of the 14-15-year-old students, who show such a strong desire for self-assertion that each participant seeks personal means to impose him/herself in the eyes of others in order to measure and demonstrate his/her strength. We rely on the fact that the psychological tendency of adolescents to win, while respecting the rules of the game or competition, will lead students to show their best physical and mental qualities, sometimes to prove themselves that they are able to do more than expected at the start. We mention that one of the mandatory conditions to be observed in the implementation of the competition method is to prepare the participants in advance for the exercises to be used in the competition. This method can be used in both elementary and extended forms, and the advantage of using it in the physical education lessons is that it ensures the improvement of students' motor skills, but also educates their motor skills in rival conditions and competition, imitating interhuman relationships in the modern society to which they will adapt over the course of their lives (Mikhaylova, 2005).

2. Problem Statement

The study was conducted by applying the game method combined with the competitive method in the physical education lessons for 14-15-year-old teenagers.

3. Research Questions

The research took place at the “M. Sadoveanu” and “Pro-Success” High Schools in Chisinau, and the subjects were 70 students aged 14-15 years, in the dynamics of the educational year 2015-2016.

4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of the research is to increase the efficiency of the teaching process in the Physical Education school subject for 14-15-year-old students, by combining the game and competition methods.

5. Research Methods

Before proceeding to the direct achievement of the experimental research, we have established the methodological principles that must be observed by the teacher and students in the physical education lessons, in order to meet the purpose and objectives of the present scientific work. These include:

- Creating a trustful climate between the teacher and the student, a true teacher-student partnership in which both actors fully understand the responsibilities they need to prove in the educational process.
- The physical education teacher chosen to organise the physical education lessons in the experimental classes must be a person who enjoys the respect of the students.
- The teacher’s professional competence, as well as self-confidence, charisma, sense of humour, diplomacy, passion for the work carried out and love for people, must be a worthy model.
- The teacher must show an unbiased attitude in relation to the participants in the game.

6. Findings

Physical education lessons in the experimental classes were organised according to the provisions of the 9th grade curriculum, differing from the control classes by the fact that the method of play and competition was used throughout the lesson in all its component parts. In the preparatory part of the lesson, under the leadership of the teacher of physical education, the students were arranged, warned and familiarised with the purpose and objectives of the lesson, with the specifics of its development. During this process, the teacher nominated a person as his/her assistant. At the same time, consideration was given to the need for joint preparation, by warming up the musculoskeletal system, and adaptation of the cardiorespiratory system to physical effort, these objectives being achieved by performing physical exercises in which the heart rate would reach 130-150 beats per minute for 5-6 minutes.

To achieve these goals, restful gymnastics exercises were performed on a slow-moving run. Further, the chase and movement games developing attention and agility were most commonly used. Each time, the physical education teacher or his/her assistant gave the participants the following information: name of the dynamic game; actions to be undertaken by the participants during the game; rules of the game; demonstration of actions (as appropriate) and conditions required to obtain the title of winner; sanctions to be applied for non-compliance with the rules of the game; the start and end signals of the game; the signals stopping the game during its course (Figure 01).

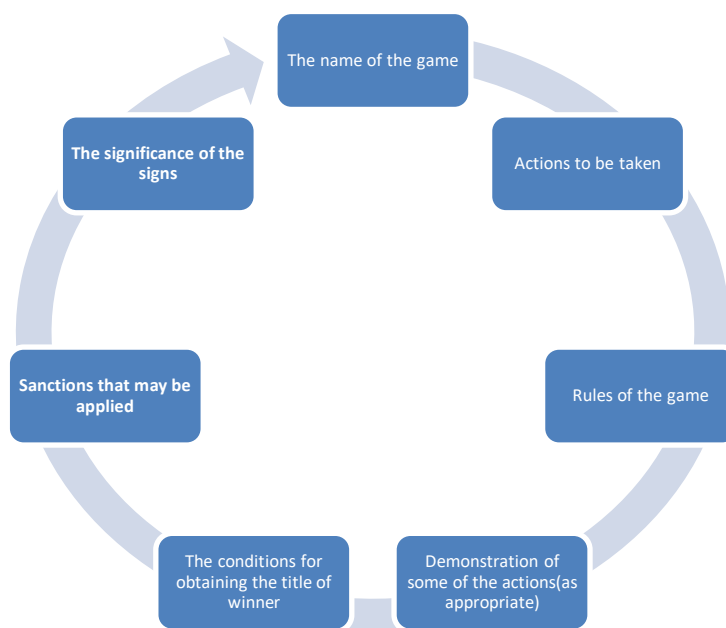


Figure 01. Algorithm for presenting information on the game and competition specificity in the experimental class

Most students present in the gym participated in chase and movement games. In this process, they learned from each other, comparing what has improved their movement technique and the coordination of their body movements. In the basic part, some goals were solved, which was necessary to diversify activities and prevent the monotony of the lesson.

Thereby:

- a) in order to improve the speed quality, there were used games requiring instant reactions to visual, tactile or auditory signals with sudden stops, quick breaks, instantaneous delays, short distance;
- b) for the continuous improvement of skills, there were practiced games requiring the fine coordination of movements, but also a clear understanding of the partners' movements, the achievement of some well-thought-out tactical actions and the creation of good moments for defeating the opponent;
- c) for the strengthening of general endurance, there were selected dynamic games involving running (chasing, clearing obstacles etc.);
- d) for the development of speed-strength, there were chosen games requiring the execution of strength exercises – short-term speed, various forms of overcoming the opponent by direct contact with him/her, performing weight-carrying motor activities.

During each lesson, to achieve the objectives proposed by the teacher, dynamic games were used both separately and in combination with other means for general physical development and special physical exercises. When planning dynamic games, we took into account the objectives of the lesson; we established their role and place in achieving the overall goal. It was important that the degree of difficulty of physical exercises and the relationships between partners corresponded to their possibilities and gradually increased. At the same time, we paid special attention to observing the safety techniques and the rules, especially when the participants were throwing weights, were clearing obstacles in the gym, were crawling on the ground etc. It was important that each time the game involved the overcoming of certain difficulties so that the students could express their full potential and the willingness to succeed, to develop and improve their skills

and abilities, taking into account that otherwise the game would not have a successful end, and the participants would not feel the satisfaction of their own effort.

Evaluating the results of the game is of great pedagogical importance. That is why information was collected from the teacher's assistant or assistants to announce the results, creating a calm environment to make it known. The teacher's decision was compulsory for all. The announcement was laconic, and the results were exhilarating, so that the students could get the correct appreciation of their actions. After announcing the results, the game was analysed. Thus, the game revealed the most important technical and tactical errors committed by the participants.

The specificity of combining the game method with the competition one, in the case of the methodology used by us, resides in the comparison of the strengths of persons involved in the game, who present themselves as rivals in the fight for priority. The combination of these two methods is useful when the need for maximum mobilisation of the motor potential of the game participants arises. We assume that, in this case, dynamic play entails a tense emotional background that stimulates the functional status of body systems, which adapt to physical effort; the players' volitional qualities are intensely developed, and the player's basic motor skills are improved.

Schematically, the use of the competitive method in the game involves the following: existence of rivalry, struggle for priority, comparison of rival forces by the teacher or public, official establishment of the winner (Figure 02).

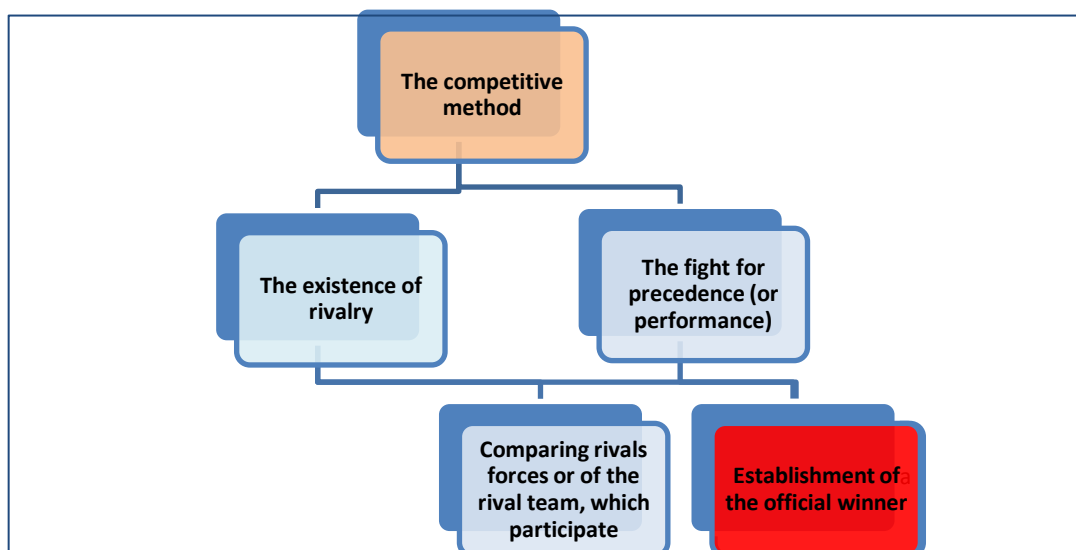


Figure 02. The specificity of using the competitive method in dynamic play

Considering that the use of the competitive method is rational if the participants have a rather advanced level of motor, technical and tactical training, but also some psychological training (requirements that could not always be observed by all participants), we have provided the creation of such conditions that would ensure the achievement of the objectives of the lessons.

The game method combined with the competition one was used during most classes, and each time the games were selected according to the theme and objectives of the lesson. Acquiring the skills and abilities of using the means of physical education in the lessons and the leisure activities provided:

formulation of the purpose of practicing physical exercises or physical education lessons; selection of the means and methods appropriate to the purpose; organisation of the physical activity on its own; proper physical exercise, from the technical point of view; evaluation of the body reaction to physical effort; correct dosing of physical exercise by intensity and volume.

We also asked ourselves: “Why do the 9th graders lose interest in the lessons of physical education, what is the cause of it?” From the literature review, we found out that one of the main causes could be the absence of success stories. According to Usinski, “the student who, in the process of learning, has not tried to overcome the difficulties, loses interest in studies”, and Belkin believes that “if the student has not known the joy of success, they do not trust their own powers and no pedagogical trick can relive their interest in learning in their primary grades” (Vasil’kov, 1990). In this context, it was important that, during each lesson, the teacher showed an individual attitude towards the students, appreciating even the small successes achieved by the teenagers. In some situations, the teacher also invoked and praised some students in public. Praise is one of the most powerful tools of the teacher, but only when used correctly. In his paper, Camus (1998) mentions that “it is more useful for any person to be presented in a positive light than to show only the bad traits”. Based on what we have outlined, we used praise to help students become active in motor terms. For example, the phrases: “By all means, you will succeed!”, “I entrust only you with the demonstration of this exercise!”, “You failed to execute the whole combination perfectly, but you succeeded some elements perfectly!” etc. We have established that sometimes a good word helps the student to achieve better results as usual, to light up his/her desire to self-improve. In general, implementing the methodology of the game and competition method in physical education lessons for middle-school students is summarised as follows:

- Selection of games and competitions according to the type, purpose and objectives of the of lesson, in line with the interest of adolescents;
- Implementation of this method in all stages of the lesson in accordance with the objectives of each one, so that it holds 50% of the time allocated to it;
- Compliance with the algorithm for presenting information on the game and competition specificity within each lesson;
- Demonstration, when necessary, of the game-competition or its specific elements;
- Systematic use of the game and competition method in athletics and gymnastics lessons for both acquiring new elements and improving the level of motivation, as well as the emotional background of the lessons;
- Sequencing most complicated games with easier ones, which is necessary to adapt the body to high-intensity physical effort and gradually restore its functions;
- Permanently changing the conditions for method implementation, but also the number of participants and the rules of the game;
- Ensuring a gradual increase in the volume and intensity of effort in games and competitions;
- Motivating the initiative of students with advanced exercise techniques, as well as those who work to surpass their own results etc.

In this way, the experimental lessons will be of a complex nature, ensuring general physical development and the selective improvement of certain motor qualities from one lesson to another. The

presence of competition elements will sometimes require more physical effort than usual, which will have a positive influence on the functional status of body systems and will strengthen the already formed motor skills. At the same time, the feelings of satisfaction and positive emotions, specific to the method of play at any age, will increase the adolescent's interest in movement games and physical exercise. We have determined that the game method combined with the competition one will systematically hold 50% of the time spent on the lessons, which, in our opinion, may be sufficient to ensure a positive dynamics of the health status indicators and the general motricity, as well as the interest and satisfaction of adolescents with the Physical Education school subject.

7. Conclusion

As a result of the analysis and synthesis of the theoretical-methodological and scientific information on the particularities of organising physical education lessons in the middle school, we have established that the methodological aspects of the teaching process in the Physical Education subject are not sufficiently explored. The game and competition method is most commonly used in physical education lessons with primary school students in the work of various sports sections. At the same time, the literature does not specify the possibility of using the game and competition method to diversify the physical education lessons with adolescents or the methodology of its implementation.

The combination of the game and competition methods during the lessons of physical education for 9th grade students leads to increase self-confidence, which shows their effectiveness in preparing adolescents for life and work in modern society.

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