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A QUALITATIVE APPROACH TO PROBLEMS OF DIDACTIC AND APPERCEPTIVE INTERACTION IN SPORT GAMES

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SUMMARY

This paper discusses the work of one of the subjects/themes that concerns the innovation of educational programs at pedagogical universities. Its purpose is, on the one hand, to submit basic information on qualitative research (a qualitative approach), on the other hand to provide sufficient incentive for actual educational content, i.e., for qualitatively aimed observation, analysis and evaluation of phenomena in the didactic process. The incentives are presented as collections of questions in the scope of: *teacher's activity (educating)*, *student's activity (learning)*, *didactic interaction*, *apperceptive interaction*.

Key words: qualitative research, alternative approach, theory and didactic of sports games

ASSUMPTIONS, CHARACTERISTICS

Qualitative research is in the concentration on scientific discipline on man and society, most commonly presented as an alternative approach in empirical research. Proponents of this approach as a rule depart from criticism of distinctive applications of “traditional” research conceptions, i.e., conceptions connected with a quantitative methodology. In the context of theoretical questions, which deal with social and humanitarian fields, the untenability is pointed out of a unilateral use of methods that are a more adequate solution to problems in the natural and technical sciences. The “disproportion of a purely qualitative thinking” in the research of these fields and the “impossibility of reduction in the quality of individual social phenomena, processes, relationships, forms, etc. solely on their only – measurability” is noted. (Ondrejko, 1996, p. 207).

A sense and concept of qualitative research are parallel relations, sometimes justified by a “turning point in the philosophy of the time that brings in the present a certain skepticism toward rationalism, a weariness from a long prevalence of natural scientific

methods and, on the other hand, the necessity of subjective understanding of man by man” (Pýchová, 1993, p. 405).

For a contemporary and already established designation of a discussed methodology, i.e., for “qualitative research” or for a “qualitative approach”, a series of synonyms appears in professional publications: e.g., “intensive methodology”, “interpretational and critical research”, “paradigm ecological, approach ethnographic”, “postpositive research”, “ethnographic qualitative method”, “method of natural, naturalistic evaluation” ... On the level of a precise summary, Hendl (1999, p. 19) speaks about a “new method of empirical research in sociology, psychology and pedagogy” and designates it as “alternatively qualitative, naturalistic, ethnographic, interpretational, postpositive research”.

ESSENCE

The essence of qualitative research (see e.g. Locke, 1989; Strauss and Corbinová, 1999; Majerová and Majer, 1999; Hendl, 1999; Švaříček, Šed'ová et. al., 2007) is founded on the observation and verbal description of selected phenomena, on their verbally formulated interpretation and on their generalization. The advantage of such an approach is that a resulting characteristic or evaluation reflects a certain status of facts and it is therefore difficult to criticize or refute. One speaks of an “entrenched theory”. On the other hand is a disadvantage, and that also becomes the main object of criticism of qualitative methodology, there is a relatively considerable measure of subjectivity in forming theoretical conclusions on the basis of an interpretation and generalization of described phenomena.

For the safeguarding of the greater objectivity and credibility of theoretical conclusions, attained verbally interpretative analysis of human behavior, practices or actions, yet more is, used – accompanying techniques and methods. In the terminology of qualitative research, this is referred to as the “triangulation method”. For example, the connectivity of numerical-quantitative data with a verbal characteristic and explanation is recommended. In other possibilities of “triangulation”, suitable and useful even for practice, the participation of a method founded on questioning and, understandably, the confrontation of findings with knowledge in professional literature, presents itself. If it concerns more detailed, more systematic professionally literature search, sound, e.g., semantics, we may speak about the content of analysis.

In the search for a more concrete statement of the essence of qualitative research, we find the citation of Pýchová (1993, p. 407 and 409), who identifies six concisely formulated points for the “ethnographic method of research”:

“Complete characteristic: A subjective, qualitative method aimed at the process, the course of a certain activity.

Goal: Research of natural behavior of people in thier natural living context from the standpoint of the researcher and the studied individuals themselves.

Course of research: The research begins without a priori assumptions (hypotheses). A gigantic amount of data on the concrete behavior of people and on its context is collected, recorded and interpreted. In the course of research, hypotheses ‘surface’. Induction is used.

Techniques: Long-term observation or other techniques of field research, cooperation of the researcher with the informers in the collection of data, without any kind of interference in the action or manipulation of the variables. The researcher is the outside observer or – more often – a participant in the activities of the observed group.

Processing of data: Written (verbal) processing of data (qualitative): Description, analysis, interpretation of data on human behavior and its context.

Evaluation: Interpretation of data by several researchers (triangulation), balancing of similar research, similar groups or individuals in a similar context.”

APPLICATION IN PEDOGOGICAL RESEARCH

Even the area of pedagogical research does not remain spared from thoughts or opinions on the use of qualitative methodology. On the basis of professional materials of foreign as well as domestic origin (see e.g., Griffin, 1985; Giordan, 1989; Pieron, 1989; Pýchová, 1993; Maňák, 1996; Průcha, 1996; Švaříček, Šed'ová et. al., 2007), the justification of this research can be briefly formulated thus:

1. The area of pedagogy is with its specific component problems of teaching, instruction and education extremely sensitive to social development and changes this development brings. If the other social and humanitarian fields react in this direction in the field of science and research, it would be illogical if the field of pedagogy did not react in the same way.
2. Simultaneous requirements, emphasizing in the educational process in schools a qualitatively different comprehension of the pupil and his activities (learning), create in pedagogical research a need for a new interpretation of problems, research goals and methods of their solution.
3. Experimentally harmonized approaches in pedagogical research tends to be for their specific efforts about the elimination of all undesirable variables blamed for the deliberateness of the formation of laboratory conditions, and by that even a considerable obscurity from the reality of practice.
4. Results of existing present research, conducted by mostly traditional methods of quantification, are sometimes blamed for a low utility in practice.
5. Some phenomena, comprising, for example, the products of teaching (knowledge, skills), hereafter schoolwork, the behavior of the teacher and pupil in the didactic process..., can be quantified in wider contexts only with great difficulty, or not at all.

Similar arguments likewise appear in cases that promote the significance of qualitatively empirical approaches to problems of physical activities, sports and physical education. These arguments are remembered on one hand in the scope of the already solidly formulated epistemology of qualitative research, and on the other hand a series of published studies with a solution of problems by a qualitative approach. Locke submitted a distinctly and theoretically justified abstract of the application of qualitative research in the area of physical education and sports in 1989. In the variety of examples of Czech professional literature, the work of Jan Hendl is especially noteworthy (e.g., 1999, 2005).

PROPOSALS FOR PRACTICE

In the conception of a theory and didactic of sports games, we have been observing, by the use of the qualitative approach, two aims. The first is heading toward a familiarization with the principles of qualitative methodology and with the possibilities of its eventual application in the task of professional jobs that demand a precise delimitation of the problem and its solution (e.g., diploma theses). With this is immediately connected the second – the much more practical aim, which affects questions of the type “what to observe”, “what to analyse and evaluate”, “what to characterize and interpret”? In a somewhat different, more common formulation of this aim, we note that there is a search for suitable (interesting, potentially illuminating) phenomena (objects) of qualitative analysis and evaluation. For the didactic process in sports games, two main areas of the proposals present themselves in this direction. The first deals with the activities of the teacher, i.e., education, the second relates to the activities of the pupil (or pupils), i.e., to learning. If we incorporate into these activities in addition the mutual relationship between the subsystems of the didactic process, i.e., the relationship between the teacher and the pupil (pupil and teacher), and the relationship between the pupil and the subject matter (subject matter and pupil), we can identify two further spheres of the proposals, namely the sphere of didactic interaction and the sphere of receptive (apperceptive) interaction. It is apparent that, whereas the first two cited spheres will guide the realization of one’s own investigation more to a verbally descriptive characteristic, the second two spheres of the proposals provide a greater opportunity to a verbally descriptive and interpretational characteristic of the selected – observed phenomena. The interpretation is a well-intentioned explanation (rationale).

Concrete expression of proposals for the qualitative analysis and evaluation of the didactic process in sports games: To the specification of the proposals in the individual spheres, we give the possibility of a choice between the already completely material objects of observation and their processing by means of qualitative analysis and evaluation of the didactic process in sports games. However, this does not mean the elimination of initiative in the sense of a search for individual, subjectively more suitable or more desirable sources. From the standpoint of our recommendation, it concerns:

Ad 1 Activity of the teacher (teaching, forming of conditions for learning, arranging of teaching conditions)

- Structure, organization of a teaching unit – hereinafter only TU (We can substantiate this with these questions: To what extent is/was the theoretical assumption of the organization – disintegration of the TU, in view of its individual parts? Is/was the theoretically recommended proportionality maintained between these parts? Does/did the TU express its fully organized interpretation, an interpretation in the sense of the teacher’s improvisation or something something in between? How is/was the teacher prepared to direct the TU? How is/was the final part of the TU utilized?)
- Application of didactic methods in the criteria of material and chronological structuring (We can substantiate this with these questions: Is/was it possible for the TU to read/register the application of some of these methods? What kind of method does it concern? Was that method suitable in view of the choice of subject matter and of the

established goals of the TU? Is/was the requirement of variable practice sufficiently filled?)

- Use of a method emphasizing the burdening of the pupils in the bioenergetic sense of the word (We can substantiate this with these questions: To what extent is/was the theoretical assumption of this method filled in the TU? By what kind of activities? Is/was it possible to determine/establish/stipulate/set the burden in the sense of practice, game training or fitness training? What is/was the context of the burden in view of the intensity and volume of the burden in the individual parts of the TU? Is it at all necessary to respect the principles of this method in the TU in school physical education?)
- Use of methodical-organizational forms – hereinafter only MOF (We can substantiate this with these questions: Does/did the teacher use all the MOF's in view of the presentation of the subject matter and goal of the TU? How great is/was the prevalence of this or that MOF in the TU? Why? Do/did the purposes – goals of the TU fill the possibility of the application in the choice of all MOF's? Is/was it at all necessary to speak in the sense of the application of the MOF's?)

Ad 2 Activities of the pupils (in a more common interpretation)

- Vital displays and displays of behavior (We can substantiate this with these questions: How do/did the pupils behave in the TU? Can we speak in the prevalence rather of discipline or a lack of discipline? How do/did pupils react to the teacher's instructions in the assignment of an activity-oriented task – exercise? Is/was it possible to assess their attention? How did/do pupils show themselves in the fulfilling of a task (tasks)? Is/was their interest or lack of interest in the assigned activity rather noticeable? We can identify the types of activity-oriented tasks or MOF's that better suit the pupils in this direction? Are the differences between the behavior of the male and female pupils noticeable?)

Ad 3 Didactic interaction and communication between the teacher and pupils

- The choice of subject matter for the TU (We can substantiate this with these questions: Is/was the choice of subject matter appropriate from the viewpoint of the stated performance levels of the pupils? Has the teacher acquainted the pupils with the goal of the TU? Has the choice of subject matter corresponded with this goal?)
- Method of presentation of activity-oriented tasks (We can substantiate this with these questions: How can the teacher express himself during the presentation of an activity-oriented task – exercise? Was/was not his explanation, instruction in the content and organization of the exercise too lengthy? Does/did the teacher utilize the possibility of a clear example? Does/did the teacher sufficiently and comprehensibly emphasize the critical places in the activity-oriented task? Is/was there in his explanation a sufficiently organization of the exercise? What is the level of the teachers' expression? Is it necessary to be concerned with it?)
- Reaction of the teacher to the performance of the pupils in an activity-oriented exercise (We can substantiate this with these questions: How does/did the teacher react to the vital displays of the pupils in the fulfillment of the activity-oriented tasks? Is/was he sufficiently flexible to the relevant deficiencies in the displays of execution of the activity – task by the pupils? How does/did the teacher react to unexpected events? Is/was his effort at providing retroactive information apparent? Does/did an evaluating part and a corrective part appear in this information? Which of these parts prevailed/prevail? Is/was the teacher in these situations rather positive or negative?)

- Use of motivational factors (We can substantiate this with these questions: Did/does the teacher motivate the pupils by some means to fulfill the activity-oriented tasks and to increase their efforts in these tasks? What kind of methods did/does he use? Does/did it rather concern natural means – his own authority, provocation in a good sense of the word, the presentation of the subject matter..., or the means in the sense of “carrot and stick”? To what extent does/did the teacher utilize didactic styles? Is/was it possible to determine the inclination toward one of them?)
 - Didactical interactive and communicative situations (We can substantiate this with the question: What kind of socially organized forms prevail/prevalled and why?)
- Ad 4** Receptive (apperceptive) interaction (subjective identification)
- Problems of simplicity and complexity of activity-oriented tasks (We can substantiate this with the questions: How do/did the pupils react to the presentation of the activity-oriented task? Is/was it obvious to them what they had to do? Is/was the organization of the exercise clear to them? Do/did they understand the significance of the activity? Is/was the included activity and MOF adequate to their performance and mental level? We can identify – on a more common level of statement – the simple and complex activities and MOF?)
 - Course, realization of the activity (What do/did the pupils experience during the realization of the activity-oriented task? To what extent do/did they manage to fulfill the specified requirements? Do/did they pay attention to the implemented activity for the entire duration of the exercise? Can we determine how long it takes for the realization of an activity-oriented task to an inhibiting effect? How did/does it manifest itself? Do/did the pupils manage to fulfill the assigned task with the required intensity? How do/did the pupils develop in the different types of MOF? What kind of activity-oriented task gives/gave them the greatest difficulty? What, on the other hand, is/was rather the simplest?)
 - Reaction of the pupils to the teacher’s intervention (We can substantiate this with these questions: How do/did the pupils react to the intervention – e.g., to the retrospective information, lecturing – of the teacher? Why do/did they react in this way?)

CONCLUSION

Changes in the conception of university-level education call for the necessity of innovation in accredited fields and their subjects. In a full extent, this also concerns pedagogical faculties and educational institutions of a similar type. It is obvious, for example, that whereas the conception of bachelor’s studies program is heading predominantly toward practical knowledge and its professional use, the establishing masters studies is following a larger orientation on theoretical and research activity. From such more commonly perceived assumptions come modifications, proposals and more precisely stated offers even in the field of theory and didactics of sports games. The contribution reflects the processing of one of these concepts. Its endeavor is to point out the possibility of applying qualitative methodology for the purpose of observing, analyzing, and evaluating the activity of the teacher and the activity of the pupil (pupils) in the didactic process in sports games.

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AKTUÁLNÍ PROBLÉMY KVALITATIVNÍHO HODNOCENÍ VYBRANÝCH JEŤŮ PŘI VYUČOVÁNÍ VE SPORTOVNÍCH HRÁCH

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SOUHRN

Příspěvek vyjadřuje zpracování jednoho z námětů, které se týkají inovace vzdělávacích programů na vysokých školách pedagogického směru, a to v záměrech teorie a didaktiky sportovních her. Jeho smyslem je jednak podat základní informace o kvalitativním výzkumu (kvalitativním přístupu), jednak poskytnout dostatek podnětů pro vlastní vzdělávací obsah, tj. pro kvalitativně zaměřené pozorování, analýzy a hodnocení jevů v didaktickém procesu. Podněty jsou prezentovány jako soubory otázek v okruzích: *činnost učitele (vyučování)*, *činnost žáka (učení)*, *didaktická interakce*, *apercepční interakce*.

Klíčová slova: kvalitativní výzkum, alternativní přístup, teorie a didaktika sportovních her

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