

THE ROLE OF GAME IN THE SWIMMING LESSONS OF THE STUDENTS OF SOFIA UNIVERSITY “ST. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI”

Preliminary communication

Boryana Tumanova

Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, Department of sport, Sofia, Bulgaria

Abstract

The scientific-methodological literature in Bulgaria, concerning swimming training for students, as well as that of the physical education in school, is highly restricted and insufficiently adapted for the purposes of education. Changes in the work stereotype are necessary. Under changes, one ought to understand the discovery of new possibilities for the application of more effective methods for work in the sport area, with the purpose for establishment of optimal conditions for mental activities and physical stress for the trained, and in particular, for the students. This is manifested in the elaboration and approbation in practice of new methodologies, which will be synchronized with the worldwide practices. In the swimming lessons, almost all existing forms of the game methods and means (game exercises and games) could be applied. The inclusion of appropriate games in all parts of the lesson (in and outside the pool), we hold, would increase the efficiency and quality of the training process, and will enhance the motivation, interest and success rate of the trained.

Keywords: *swimming, students, appropriate games*

INTRODUCTION

Games as a pedagogical means stand out in their complete strength (Protnih (Протных), 1984). According to Rachev et al (Рачев и кол) (1989) the playing method is based on the methodological peculiarities of the game activity: plot, predetermined rules, constant alteration of the situation, attempts to reach certain goals through manifestation of sufficient acumen, agility and variety of actions. These features of the game activity determine it as a method for complex amelioration of the habits concerning the development of the physical abilities, and, primarily, the motor orientation of the students. During the game, positive emotions occur which build up the following moral qualities: comradeship, mutual aid, persistence, team-work, etc. (Rachev et al (Рачев), 1989). The motivation and activation of students towards sport occupations is among the goals in the work of the sports teachers in the Sofia University (Aleksandrova (Александрова), 2010; Nikolova & Kostov (Николова & Костов), 2006; Tseneva (Ценева), 1994; Yaneva (Янева), 2010). Many authors and sport pedagogues view the contemporary sport as a dynamic and permanently changing system (Chow et al, 2006; Kirk, Macdonald & O’Sullivan, 2006). Through games, students acquire specialized knowledge about various activities related to the assimilation and improvement of techniques, the development of motor qualities, and the rules (Sevev (Севев) 1978; Deutscher 2003). The engendered emotions in the students provoke activity, which is in itself a prerequisite for the achievement of better results and efficiency in training (Yaneva (Янева), 2010).

METHOD

The objective of the current research is to discover new methodological approaches, non-traditional forms and tools which could be accorded with the traditional ones. To find the correlation between the established in theory and practice and the contemporary trends in the development of education and society. In our opinion, through the game methodology, the efficiency and quality of the training process will be increased. The route for the mastering of the planned technical elements and the establishment of motor abilities and habits will be more appealing, amusing, and emotional.

For the realization of this goal, we have set the following tasks:

1. An inquiry of the literature concerning the issue.
2. The elaboration of experimental educational games and their

approbation in the practice of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

3. The determination of the efficiency of the applied game method.

It is important to be understood that training grounded on the game does not preclude technique. This is a methodology that facilitates lessons and assists beginners in the quicker acquisition of motor abilities and habits. The game method is a road on which sport skills, motor habits, and the related attainments are collectively acquired. The technical elements are improved and the physical fitness of the trained is developed (Davidova, Gurdeva & Aleksieva (Давидова, Гърдева & Алексиева), 2005; Tseneva (Ценева), 1994).

The study was realized on a sample of 48 participants, students at Sofia University. We divided the swimming groups into a control (K) and experimental (E) one, as in each group an equal number of boys and girls, willing to learn swimming, were allocated.

Experimental group was composed from 24 students that were taught by the experimental game methodology. Control group included other 24 students that were taught following the currently employed program in the practice of the SU.

Exercises are conducted once a week with a duration of 90 minutes.

The experiment took place during the two semesters of the academic year: 2016-2017.

Applied games were divided in three different groups: games in the preparatory part of the lesson, games in the main part of the lesson and games applied in the final part of the lesson.

The expert evaluation was made by 5 swimming coaches’ specialists.

Design of applied games

Games in the preparatory part of the lesson – help for the organization of the students and the drawing of their attention. Functionally prepare the body for the upcoming stresses, give the necessary motor preparation for the mastery of the technical skills, and create a working atmosphere. Games in this part of the exercise ought to induce a gradually increasing, but relatively moderate physical tension. They must meet these conditions:

- To provide the possibility for an easy transition to the next part of the lesson.
- All engaged should be simultaneously solving the same tasks with equal psychological and physical impact.

- To be dynamical and temporarily short

Through games in the main part, the planned tasks of the relevant exercise are solved. The moral and will qualities of the students are developed (Davidova, Gurdeva & Aleksieva (Давидова, Гърдева & Алексиева), 2005; Djambazova (Джамбазова), 2009). Games that are placed in it include swimming over a certain length, surmounting obstacles, throwing, catching, counteraction, etc. They are an assisting tool for improvement of the technique and motor abilities (Zaciorski (Зациорский), 1966). They are used as a controlled means for testing the resistance of the motor stereotypes for emotional regulation. They are a universal method for regulation of the physiological and emotional stress. The diverse motor activity which takes place in the main part of the lesson is realized through the unity of the cognitive and functional processes, while the optimal rotation of a more intense work with one with a smaller intensity is being followed.

The games are separated into 2 groups:

- Main. Include the motions which have to be learned or improved. If these are new physical skills they are studied at the beginning of the main part when the organism has a high efficiency and the student is more attentive. The same is relevant for the development of the motor abilities. Games with elements of confirmation and improvement follow.

- Auxiliary - all other games and exercises included in the frames of this part of the lesson. They are themselves divided into generally-preparatory and specifically-preparatory (Djambazova (Джамбазова), 2009; Rachev (Рачев), 1989).

Games in the final part of the lesson, through the games, the functional activity of the students must be incrementally reduced, and their organisms should be in a relatively peaceful condition. The authors of plenty methodological approaches emphasize the usage of the so-called “quite games” with low intensity for the achievement of: the reduction of the physiological activity and unnecessary stress of certain muscle groups through calm and deep breathing exercises and regulation of the emotional condition through calming games (Alipieva (Алипиева), 1987, Davidova, Gurdeva & Aleksieva (Давидова, Гърдева & Алексиева) 2005; Tseneva (Ценева), 1994).

Having in mind the short time for conducting the games, they must be economically organized, easy to present, and allow the participation of each student. Games also create favorable conditions for the development of motor abilities, as well as for their maintenance at a certain level (Slunchev (Слънчев), 1992).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the research a 4-degree classification for determining the success rate was used:

- Degree 0 – lack of any success
- Degree 1 – swimming with serious mistakes
- Degree 2 – swimming with minor mistakes
- Degree 3 – swimming with no mistakes

We found the variations of previously chosen indicators concerning the acquisition of the material by the participants. We established a testing battery with 7 index of success of the taught material. They are presented in Table 1. Differences between experimental and control group in analyzed seven analyzed indexes are presented in Table 2.

Figures 1 to 7 illustrate the data from the examination of the success rate of the participants. Particularly, following index for both experimental and control group are presented: success rate in breathing (Figure 1); successes rates in sliding (Figure 2); free style– legs (Figure 3), Starter jump (Figure 4), Backstroke – legs (Figure 5); Free style–coordination (Figure 6) and Backstroke – coordination (Figure 7).

Table 1. Success rate indexes

Index	Group	N	0	1	2	3
Breathing	E	24	0	1	5	18
	K	24	3	7	8	6
Sliding	E	24	0	2	4	18
	K	24	3	2	7	12
Free style - legs	E	24	0	1	3	20
	K	24	2	7	5	10
Free style - legs	E	24	2	4	5	15
	K	24	8	6	6	4
Backstroke - legs	E	24	2	5	9	10
	K	24	9	6	9	0
Starter jump	E	24	1	4	10	9
	K	24	9	7	6	2
Free style - coord.	E	24	2	5	4	13
	K	24	8	7	4	5

Table 2: Differences between experimental and control groups in analyzed indexes

Index	Group	N	Mean \bar{x}	Std. Dev. Σ	Std.error Mean S	Variance V%
Breathing	E	24	10,50	2,34	,957	5,500
	K	24	10,67	1,033	,422	1,067
Free style - legs	E	24	6,50	1,049	,428	1,100
	K	24	7,67	1,033	,422	1,067
Backstroke- legs	E	24	3,67	,816	,333	,667
	K	24	5,17	,753	,307	,567
Free style – coordination.	E	24	7,00	1,414	,577	2,000
	K	24	8,67	1,506	,615	2,267
Backstroke – coordination.	E	24	9,50	1,517	,619	2,300
	K	24	11,50	1,378	,563	1,900



Figure 1. Experimental and control group success index in breathing



Figure 2: Experimental and control group success index in Sliding



Figure 3. Experimental and control group success index in Free style - legs



Figure 4: Experimental and control group success index in Starter jump

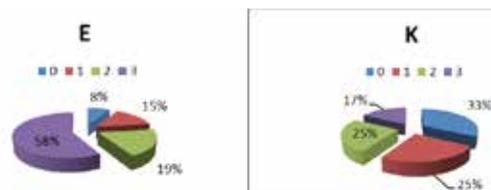


Figure 5: Experimental and control group success index in Backstroke - legs

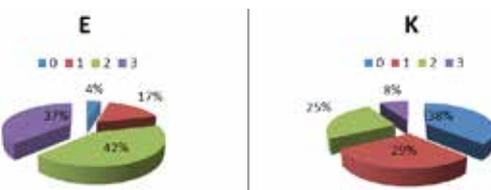


Figure 6: Experimental and control group success index in Free style - coordination

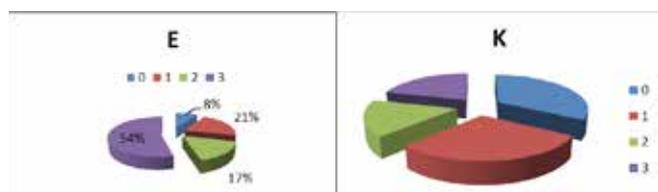


Figure 7: Experimental and control group success index in Backstroke - coordination

CONCLUSION

In all 7 elements a preponderance in the acquisition level of Group – E participants is observed.

Based on obtained results and observation from the experts, we would suggest following:

- Games are intriguing and provoke a desire for sport-mastering.
- This emotional methodology has helped for the improvement of the motivation for participating in the lessons – games are accessible and do not highlight the complexity of swimming.
- The increased students' motivation for an engagement with sport through games leads to the development of their motor abilities, which contributes to their harmonic growth, healthy lifestyle, and serves as an active form of recreation from their intense academic daily routine.
- Through the application of games in swimming, it becomes

possible to check the sustainability of the students' motor abilities and habits and provides a possibility for their employment under novel and more complex conditions.

- Games are an indispensable control tool.

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Correspondence:

Boryana Tumanova
Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”
Department of sport
15 Tzar Osvoboditel Blvd
E-mail: b_tumanova@yahoo.com