



Reflection-in-Action and Assessment in Physical Education Teachers in Secondary and Intermediate Education: Case Studies in Medellin (Colombia)

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Date read: 29 June 2017

Editor:

© Generalitat de Catalunya
Departament de la Presidència
Institut Nacional d'Educació
Física de Catalunya (INEFC)

ISSN: 2014-0983

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Section:

Doctoral Dissertations

Original language:

Spanish

Cover:

Handball Spain:
Ademar León and Liberbank
Sinfín play the first match
with masks during a
Sacyr Asobal league game
in October 2020, to
comply with the regional
regulations of COVID-19.
J.Casares/(EPA) EFE/
lafototeca.com

Abstract

This study identified and explored conceptions and reflection-in-action in six physical education teachers. It explored the teachers' perception of assessment and its constituent parts (content, stakeholders, times and instruments). It also analysed reflection-in-action in the three teaching stages, i.e. how decisions are made before a teaching unit is started (pre-interactive stage), the nature of the discourse and the reflection-in-action during the lessons (interactive stage), and what kind of reflections arise at the end of the unit (post-interactive stage).

The research presented a qualitative design based on multiple case studies. The strategies used were interviews and video and audio recording of the lessons of a teaching unit, diary and documentary analysis.

The findings show that the teachers' conceptions of assessment are an amalgam of discourses that reflect their wish to accept formative assessment but do not correlate to what was observed in the interactive stage. In their conceptions, teachers see themselves as the main actor in the assessment, and highlight the importance of evaluating procedures, concepts and attitudes. However, when they describing their criteria, the latter focus on attitudes, particularly on behaviour and active participation in the class, and attitudes that reflect values such as teamwork, cooperation, respect and autonomy take something of a backseat.

In relation to their pre-interactive decisions, planning for the assessment does not warrant a great deal of interest from teachers, since their experience affords them the confidence to tackle future units.

Nine subcategories emerged in the evaluative discourse. The assessment of student attitudes, both positive (motivation – congratulations) and negative (criticism – warning), enjoyed prominence, with the information about the actual motor tasks being relegated to third (corrective) and fourth (offering solutions) place. Information that would allow students to internalise learning, be aware of what they are doing and develop their autonomy (argumentative, inquisitive, pointing out mistakes) came in last.

The reflection-in action analysis (interactive stage) was consistent with what was expressed in the conceptions and planning. There was no systematic gathering of information based on specific instruments and criteria.

The teaching staff's thoughts in the post-interactive stage focused essentially on potential changes in certain strategies and instruments. Assessment of their own assessment (meta-assessment) was uncommon, possibly indicating that reflection is not a constant action among teachers or that they lack the skills needed to engage in it.

Keywords: physical education, teacher's thinking, assessment of teaching, assessment of learning, evaluative discourse, meta-assessment.