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STUDY ON STUDENTS' PERCEPTION IN THE FINAL YEAR REGARDING THE ROLE PLAYED BY THE DISCIPLINE : CORPORAL EXPRESSION AND EURHYTHMIA

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Abstract*

Aim. The aim was to discover, through a questionnaire, the students' perception in the third year on the discipline role: "Body Expression and Eurhythmia" foreseen in the curriculum of the program of university studies, Physical Education and Sports.

Methods. The research methods used were: the bibliographical study, the observation, the inquiry, the statistical-mathematical method, and the graphical representation.

Results The requirements identified are extrinsic, yielding notable arguments in appreciating the applied motor content. Achieving them in the conditions of an appropriate accompaniment, motivating for a pleasant movement, creates a good mood, an environment favorable to the intense work that is overcome.

Conclusions. After analyzing and interpreting the results, it can be observed that the research hypothesis has been confirmed, so we can say that the formative valences exercised by the discipline of corporal expression and eurhythmia constitute important values of the students' personality as future trainers.

Key words: corporal expression, eurhythmia, perception, students.

Introduction

The concept of body expression is used to highlight various movements of body segments and forms that can be made to express different ideas. (Meaning and Definition of Corporal expression. 2016). After reading the professional literature and based on my' university teaching experience, important motor expression means have been identified that could influence the performers' bodies. The systematic and organized practice of expression means influences positively the harmonious, multilateral and healthy development of the human body and mind. (Dobrescu, 2006a). Speaking and singing, are two possibilities of expression for the human soul. In this sense, eurhythmia is the revelation of human soul, but also of the body through its expression in space. (Dobrescu, 2006b). A body, whether or not developed physically, can easily interfere with the activity of the mind, influencing the moral qualities. (Dodin, 2006)

Referring to the teachers' role in the lesson, Văideanu (1971, p. 200) recommends us to focus, using the support offered by the educational system, on the "development of the aesthetic sense" of the pupils, emphasizing the fact that "Nothing would engage more the teachers' creativity than treating the didactic process as an art form, as a process that has its own well-defined techniques, but with aesthetic characteristics, being susceptible to become, according to the culture and talent of the ones that perform it, an artistic process in the best sense of the word".

The starting point in choosing this theme was personal belief that the corporal expression as a

specialized subject in the physical education university curricula can influence in various ways the training of students as future specialists.

The option for this theme was based on the desire to highlight the role played by the specific means of the Corporal Expression and Eurhythmia discipline in influencing the third year students who have participated in the lectures and practical courses.

This paper aims to contribute to the identification of the most important motivation elements that the corporal expression means exert on the aesthetic sense as perceived by the students, for the benefit of the professional training of the future specialists.

For this purpose, a poll was conducted among the third year students to observe their perception on this discipline, being made aware and expressed as future trainers. (Rață, Dobrescu, Rață, Rață, & Mares, 2011)

Methods

The purpose of this paper was to discover, through a questionnaire, the third students' perception on the role played by the discipline "Corporal Expression and Eurhythmia" foreseen in the curriculum of the of university program Physical Education and Sports in influencing the future graduate.

Starting from the values of the body's motor expression identified in the professional literature, but also from the observations made during the practical courses, it was noted that the performers' interest was

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not as high as expected. Thus, this study was conducted on the third year Physical Education and Sports students that have during their second semester the course "Corporal Expression and Eurhythmia".

Based on the elaborated premises, *the research hypothesis* started from the presumption that the identification of the students' perception of the role played by "Corporal Expression and Eurhythmia" could offer information on its possible capitalization as pragmatically as possible in their training as future specialists.

The research was conducted during the academic year 2015-2016 at the Faculty of Movement, Sports, and Health Sciences, on the third year Physical Education and Sports students, full time and part time education.

The target group was selected from the students who have expressed their desire to participate in this study, under confidentiality clauses.

In order for this research to have a greater relevance a target group was organized, of 46 subjects, comprising two groups, of 20 part time undergraduate students, and 26 third year full time undergraduate students.

The *research methods* we used were: study of the bibliographical material, the observation, the inquiry, the statistical-mathematical method and the graphical representation method.

The sociological intervention consisted in a questionnaire-based inquiry that comprised 10 items, with closed and precoded questions (with YES/NO type answers), or open questions with multiple answer

choices.

The questions referred to the:

- importance of the means learned during the corporal expression course;
- attractiveness of the learned means;
- accessibility of the specific skills and the verification demands;
- role of the course in teaching the motor content in school as trainers;
- motivation to participate in the practical courses;
- promotion of the learned skills in independent activities;
- training values of the course on the personality of the future trainer.

Results

In regards to the first item, according to the respondents, in the importance order of the specific means of the course, the first position was taken by the specific corporal expression technique training (41.30%), then by the education of posture and artistic performance (39.13%), musical training (30.43%), acting training (26.08%), specific terminology (17.39%) and general physical training (13.04%).

The students perceived the technical training as being more accessible for both genders, creating a partnership during the teaching process.

It must be emphasized that the full time students appreciated more the acting training (34.61%) and the education of posture and artistic performance (46.15%). (Fig. 1)

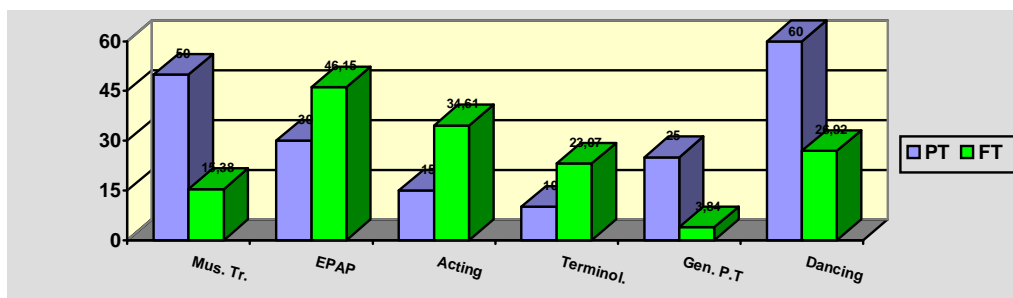


Figure 1. The corporal expression means according to their given importance

Half of the subjects considered to be harder to perform the technical challenges (50%), then, in decreasing order, the rhythm education challenges (47.82%), the eurhythmia accomplishments (36.95%), and the combination of specific structures performed creatively (30.43%).

The corporal expression elements technique (dancing steps) has created difficulties in their performance, especially for full time students (53.84%) who consider them as valuable as the rhythm education challenges (53.84%). (Fig. 2).

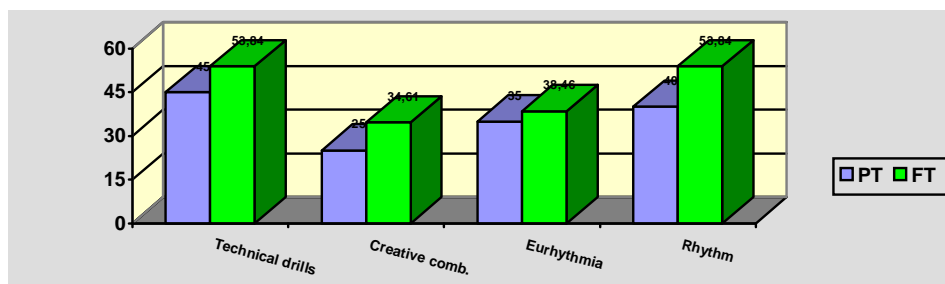


Figure 2. Degree of difficulty for the CEE assessment demands

More than half of the subjects are aware of the very important role played by the acquired knowledge and artistic motor content.

These skills learned during the practical courses can also guide some of the graduates in organizing school dancing clubs or specific competitions that the children like. Also, most of the respondents (96.52%) appreciate the possibility for these skills to be used in their extracurricular daily life and to support the future teachers in organizing school parties or festivities. 93.48% of the subjects think that the dancing elements learned during the course *Corporal*

expression and eurhythmia constitute a motivation for the practical activities, which proves that they are aware of their benefits. In the subjects' perception (Figure 5), the most accessible dance style is Latin - American (52.17%), then the rock styles (45.65%), then traditional dances (41.30%), and finally the standard style (28.26%) (Fig. 3). Even though the Latin - American dance steps are difficult to perform, it was noticed that for both groups of subjects (45% and 57.69%, respectively) they were more attractive by their intricate style and the exciting South American musical accompaniment.

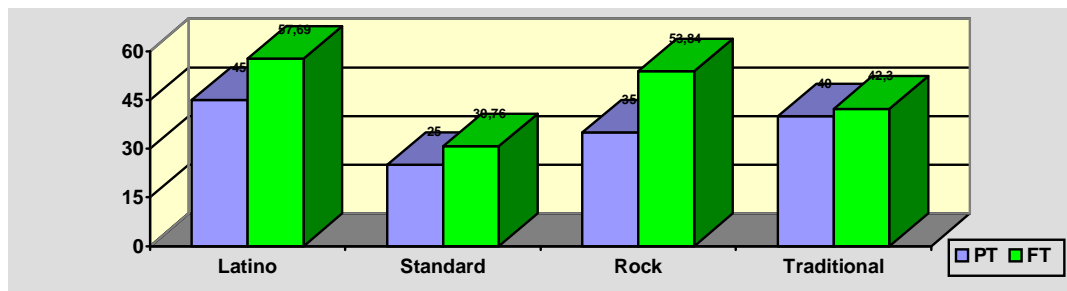


Figure 3. Assessing the specific dance steps rhythm according to their accessibility

The inquiry has shown that the rhythm education means were considered to be the most expressive ones in the category of step combinations and coordination with the body segments (52%), then came the segmental motions (43%), and then the motions performed through complex (37%) or simple percussion (26%). (Fig.4)

At this item both groups have put in the first position (45% and 58%, respectively) the step combinations in conditions of segmental coordination, which, although they are more complex and need more attention in their performance, were more well-liked by the students, who considered them to be more expressive and natural.

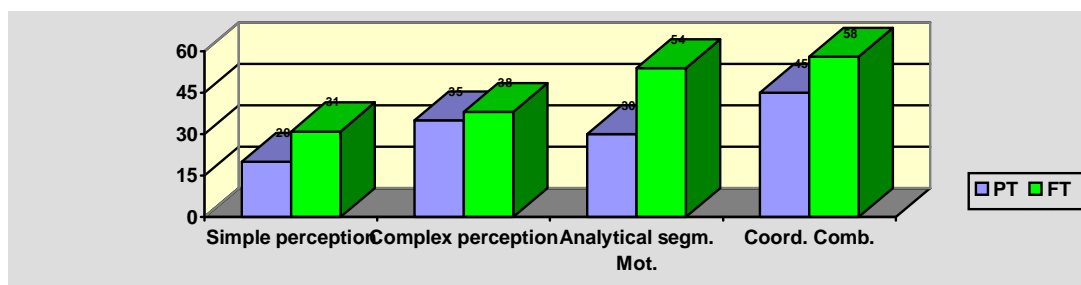


Figure 4. The role of expressiveness of the rhythm education means

Regarding the students' motivation for practical courses, 56.52% have answered that they have chosen this course because through its discipline, structure and content, creates a good mood during the lesson, 52.17% appreciates the ambient, and 50% have chosen it because it engages them without feeling tired. The extrinsic needs identified at this item bring in notable arguments in regards to the assessment of the applied motor content. Performing it with an adequate musical accompaniment, motivates the students, creates a good mood, an ambiance that favors intense work, which can be overlooked easier this way. Performing it using acting means needs a nonverbal expression of a proposed theme, presupposing well identified facial

expressions and diversified gestures using the upper limbs. These activities of communication through pantomime, hand gestures have been perceived by the students as being the most suggestive (56.52%). This assessment is justified by the fact that the facial expressiveness elements can be perceived after a longer practice period, and performed using diversified means, which does not go along with the reduced number of practical courses in the syllabus. After verifying the formative values' influence on the personality of the future trainers, one can see that most respondents appreciate the artistic performance assessment skills and the creative and imaginative thinking skills acquired during the instruction process

at this course (50%). Less students (19.58%) think that through the corporal expression lessons they have gained the necessary skills to use and capitalize on the

motor content they have learned during the extracurricular activities. (Fig. 5).

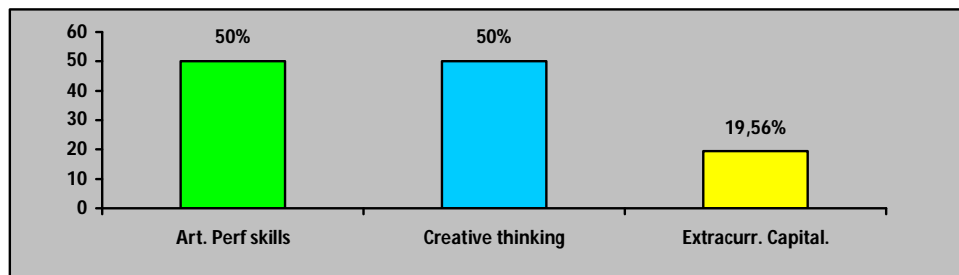


Figure 5. Formative values acquired in the corporal expression classes

Discussions

Some authors confirm the initiative of our study, stating that there is a lack of research that examines the beliefs, understanding and attitudes of practitioners to teaching dance in England (Connell, 2009).

One of our conclusions is supported by other authors who emphasize that the improvement of corporal expressiveness in the physical education students is linked to the means used to recognize one's own body and its possibilities for expression in various situations (Moraru, Croitoru, & Grosu, 2014).

As a result of the research, we appreciated students' perception of the group of means for technical training as being more accessible to both sexes and the influence of the partnership created in execution. In this respect, Marta Castañer appreciates that it is obvious that interaction with partners generates different behaviors than individual work, and more than that this mode of work seems to inspire. (Castañer, Torrents, Anguera, & Dinušová, 2008)

In a similar study on the effectiveness of university courses in teaching students to teach dance in school, concerns have been expressed about the opportunities students have in schools and the low number of students who have been able to learn from an experienced dance teacher. This raises questions about the initial education of faculty teachers. (Rolfe, 1997).

In another study in the field, Amado notes the increase in the perception of autonomy and, in general, the level of self-determination towards the curricular contents of bodily expression, focused on the ultimate goal, underlining the usefulness of the program in increasing student motivation towards this content. It is so complicated for teachers in this field to develop. (Amado, 2014).

Conclusions

After conducting this research, we were able to draw the following conclusions:

At the end of the study, the authors have identified, in the perception of the third year physical education students, the formative values of the course Corporal Expression and Eurhythmia, and the role played by its means in shaping the future specialists.

According to the subjects, the most preferred mean was the specific corporal expression technique

(41.30%), this being accessible to both genders and creating the possibility to perform it with a partner.

Respondents in both groups thought that the dance steps (50%) presented some difficulties in performing them, the full time students mentioning also the drills regarding the education of rhythm (53.84%).

Perceived that both groups (45% and 57.69%) assessed dancing to be more attractive for its rhythm and the South American musical accompaniment.

The inquiry has shown that although the drills performed in coordination with the body segments are much more complex and require special attention, they were more liked by the students, who thought they are more natural and expressive.

In regards to the acting and eurhythmia communication drills, the students perceived the arm and hands gestures as being more suggestive than the facial expressions.

Creating a good working mood, a good ambiance, and engaging in effort without feeling tired are all good motivations that were identified in this study, motivations that ensure the presence of the students at the practical courses.

Considering the given answers, one can conclude that the third year students are aware of the formative value of this motor expression course in regards to their personality as future teachers. Thus, the students have appreciated the assessment qualities of the artistic expression of a creative behavior acquired during an instruction process that can be capitalized on in the extracurricular area.

At the end of the research, it can be said that the hypothesis has been confirmed, and the information identified through the perception of third year undergraduate students can constitute arguments for the students to promote and capitalize on as future teachers.

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