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A Holistic Approach to Teaching and Learning a Theoretical Content in Physical Education and Sports

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Abstract

A holistic view of the teaching and learning of the theoretical lesson in the field of physical education and sports involves the elaboration and implementation of the integrated curriculum in the didactic process. Integration has several levels that should be tackled: *mono-disciplinarity*, focused on independent study subjects; *multi-disciplinarity* with reference to achieving an effective "correlation" of the efforts and potentialities of the various study disciplines in order to provide a more complete view over the researched subject; *inter-disciplinarity*, which involves an intersection of different disciplinary areas, which can lead to new study subjects. The essential objectives of curricular integration, grouped in two directions: linking different segments of study programmes and linking the learning process to concrete life situations can contribute to the acquisition and development of the professional competencies of an efficient specialist in the field.

Keywords: holistic model, teaching, learning, theoretical lesson, integrated curriculum

Introduction

Didactics studies the educational process in a formal and institutionalized way. Thus, by inclusion of formal and informal elements, didactics represents *the discipline, science and the art of teaching*. Now, didactics is known as a part of pedagogy, which deals with the organization of the teaching process. At the same time, didactics has *a research dimension* (investigating the new elements introduced by different social sciences and learning theories), *a prescriptive and normative dimension* (through suggestions offered to teachers) and *an innovative dimension* (through incorporating of significant elements of sciences and human practice, which favours and optimizes teaching) [4,7].

Nowadays, the education based on competencies presupposes a number of new dimensions, such as: the accentuation of monitoring the way the objectives assumed at the beginning of the study year are reached, giving a new significance to the teaching process, certification of teaching results, etc. [3,5].

From pedagogy through objectives, passing through the pedagogy of "full learning", it came to the pedagogy (didactics) centered on competencies [5,9].

In higher education studies of physical education and sports, the competencies are approached in terms of three dimensions:

- a dimension originating in the strict scientific sense of the competencies;
- a dimension resulting from the key competencies offered at the European level;
- a dimension of concretization of described competencies in the university curriculum on the study discipline (general and specific competencies).

Today the process of accumulating the knowledge necessary to the specialist in the field of physical education and sports is in a continuous process of differentiation. New disciplines of study appear in the curricula relating to the specializations. Each formed discipline advocates for its own consecration not only in the scientific plan, but also in the curriculum [5,9].

In such conditions, in higher education, its integration tendency is trying to oppose this differentiation. The "informational explosion" leads not only to the quantitative increase of knowledge, but also to essentiality, integration. Essentiality can be expressed by what Mircea Malita has called "the law of decreasing knowledge". According to this law, under conditions of exponential growth of information, "*the volume of useful knowledge decreases, but the minimum instrumentation with which we process the facts we need increases*" [1].

In this context, among the established experiences of organizing the contents of higher education, the following can be categorised as innovations [6,8]:

- the interdisciplinary approach;
- the integrated teaching of knowledge;
- the modular organization;
- the assisted learning by the originator.

Aim and methodology of research

The main aim of the research is the elaboration of the holistic model of teaching and learning the theoretical lesson in the field of physical education and sports.

The theoretical lesson taught in the field of higher education of physical education and sports can be identified as any subject provided in the programmes for the specializations from the approved and accredited curricula for the training of specialists in the field.

Research methodology: analysis of professional literature, survey, self-observation, systematic observation, statistical and mathematical analysis and graphical method.

Questioning processes of the student and analysis of results

The administration and questioning of students took place through the distribution of the questionnaire and the interpretation of the answers given by teachers and students, regarding the quality of the teaching subject, as well as the accumulation of knowledge by the students during the theoretical courses for the disciplines, completed according to the individual educational course. The activity for responding to the questionnaire was carried out within the seminars conducted with students from the Sports, Pedagogy and Kinetotherapy faculties of the State University of Physical Education and Sports.

The calculation methodology implied the percentage of answers with the presence declared to the course. This self-declared presence of the students does not always have absolute credibility, but the anonymity of the questionnaires still hatches a note of sincerity from the respondents. The results of the questionnaire analysis are presented below. For confidentiality reasons of the information only summary values are presented.

Interpretation of the obtained results

Regarding the question "Do you know what integrated teaching involves?" (Figure 1), 33% of the teachers answered positively, 7% negatively, while 36% of the students did not know how to answer this question. 24% of the students mentioned that teachers providing the teaching process during the theoretical courses use this teaching method.

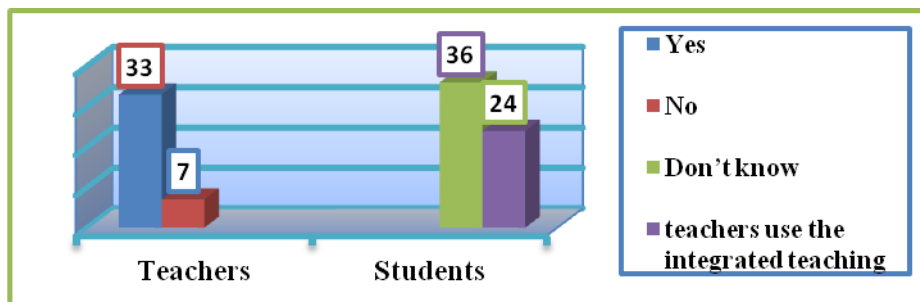


Figure 1. Responses regarding integrated teaching

According to the professional literature [2,3,9], integrated teaching is a solution for a better correlation of science with society, culture and technology. However, there are difficulties, especially in the section "Changing of teachers' mentality", by eliminating their convenience and inertness, practically making integration still remain a controversial issue.

In the teaching/learning of higher education contents, the tendency to organize the learning contents from an integrated perspective is increasingly more present. Thus, the teaching of self-contained disciplines is out of date for the benefit of the one that is on the basis of integrating the contents into "integrated cognitive fields" that cross the boundaries between disciplines [7]. The integration of the contents involves establishing some close and convergent relationships between the following elements: concepts, abilities, values belonging to the distinct subjects of study [4]. The main levels of knowledge integration are presented in Figure 2.

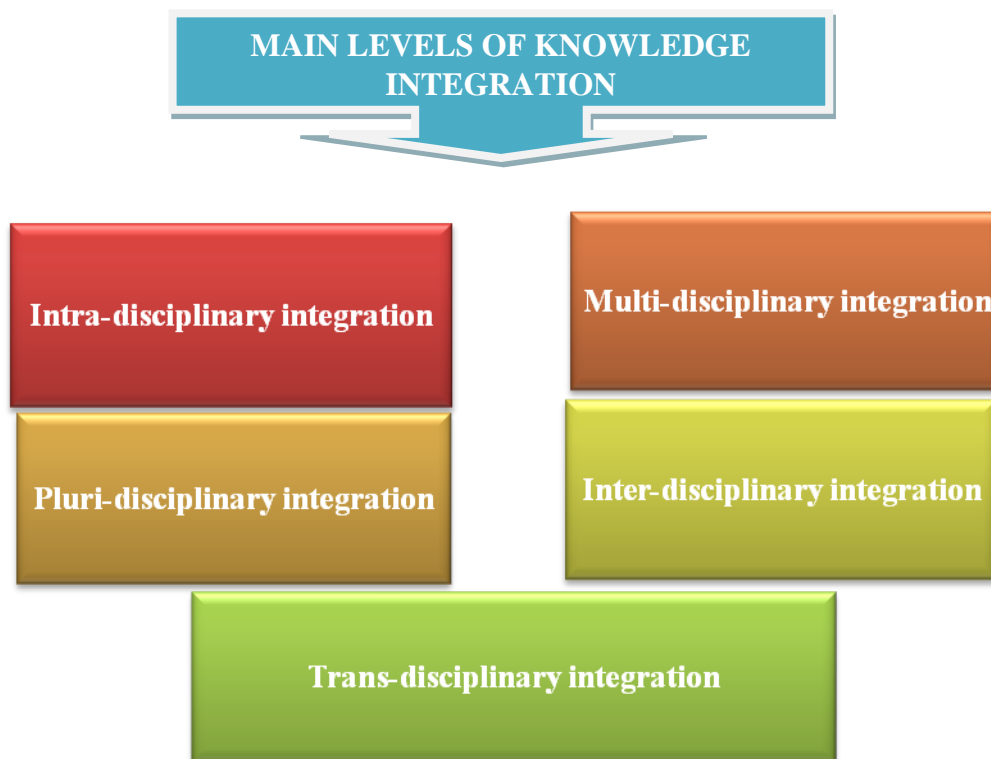


Figure 2. Main levels of knowledge integration

Intra-disciplinary integration is the operation that involves the conjugation of two or more interdependent contents belonging to the same field of study, in order to solve a problem, to study a subject or to develop the skills [2,3].

Multi-disciplinary integration involves juxtaposition of different contents, sometimes without any apparent relationships between them. This approach proposes teaching of the contents belonging to a study discipline through specific means of each field using the arguments of other subjects [2,3,9].

Pluri-disciplinary integration (the prefix *pluri* means "more") refers to the study of a content (process, phenomenon) from a subject through more subjects at once or better, the treating of a content from the perspective of several subjects [2,3].

Inter-disciplinary integration (the prefix *inter* means "between") is a form of cooperation between different subjects regarding a particular process, a phenomenon whose complexity can be explained, demonstrated, solved only by the convergent action of several points of view [2,3,9].

Regarding the answers to the question "Which of the levels of knowledge integration are used most frequently in your theoretical courses?" (Figure 3), the teachers who provided the theoretical courses reported that they generally prefer the intra- and inter-disciplinarity approach. Among the reasons for their use, the following were mainly reflected: intra-disciplinarity directly provides both to the teacher and the student a structure that respects the previous knowledge hierarchy, being secured, so as it progresses in the subject, the student realizing the way which he has gone through.

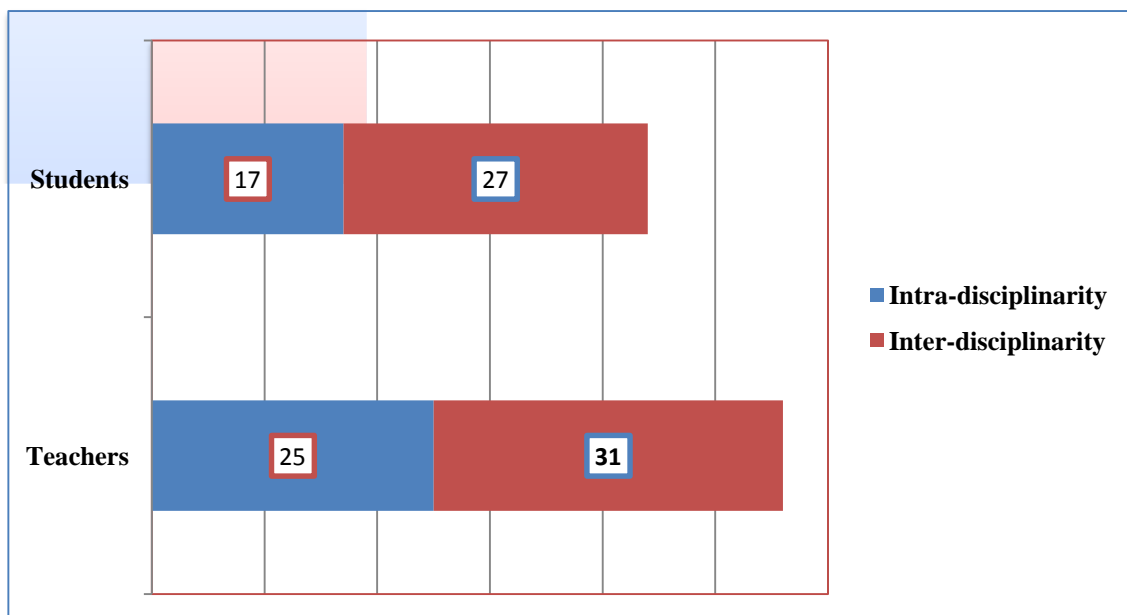


Figure 3. Graphical reflection of responses regarding approaching the levels of knowledge integration in the teaching process

Concerning inter-disciplinarity, they have stated that although this is a principle which derived from scientific research, they can identify some ways of implementing it at the level of the university curriculum. At the same time, the teachers considered that a designed, developed and used curricular content in an interdisciplinary manner corresponds much better to the presented reality, leading to a better and unitary understanding by the students.

The complex and integrated character of some issues such as globalization, migration, inter-culturality, environmental protection, information explosion, poverty, conflicts, etc. demands a trans-disciplinary educational approach. In this context, in order to cope with the continuous uncertainties and changes that are characteristic to market economies, students need strategic competences such as the abilities of learning to learn, of problem solving, evaluation, creativity and innovation, critical thinking [5].

The perspective changing from mass production to the flexible one requires skills and knowledge wider than those provided by previous specializations. Thus, the national education system must respond to the changes appeared under external conditions, redefining the societal needs as a whole.

The integrated curriculum is presented by education, organized in this way as it crosses the barriers of the study subjects, bringing together different aspects of the curriculum in significant associations, focusing on wider areas of study [8,9]. Teaching and learning are seen in a holistic perspective, reflecting the real light that is interactive. Thus, integration is completed by the following levels, such as:

- *mono-disciplinarity* - focusing on independent study subjects, on their specialty;
- *pluri-disciplinarity* (multi-disciplinarity) - refers to the situation where a theme belonging to a certain field is subject to analysis from the perspective of many subjects, the latter maintaining naturally the structure and being independent from each other;
- *inter-disciplinarity*, but in terms of eliminating the strict limits of the subjects, looking for common themes for the different subjects of study, that can lead to the achievement of the higher learning objectives, these include the metacognitive capacities such as decision-making, solving problems, assimilating effective learning methods and techniques, etc.

Starting from these levels of knowledge integration in the theoretical lesson in the field of physical education and sports, we developed the holistic model of teaching and learning, which is presented in Figure 4.

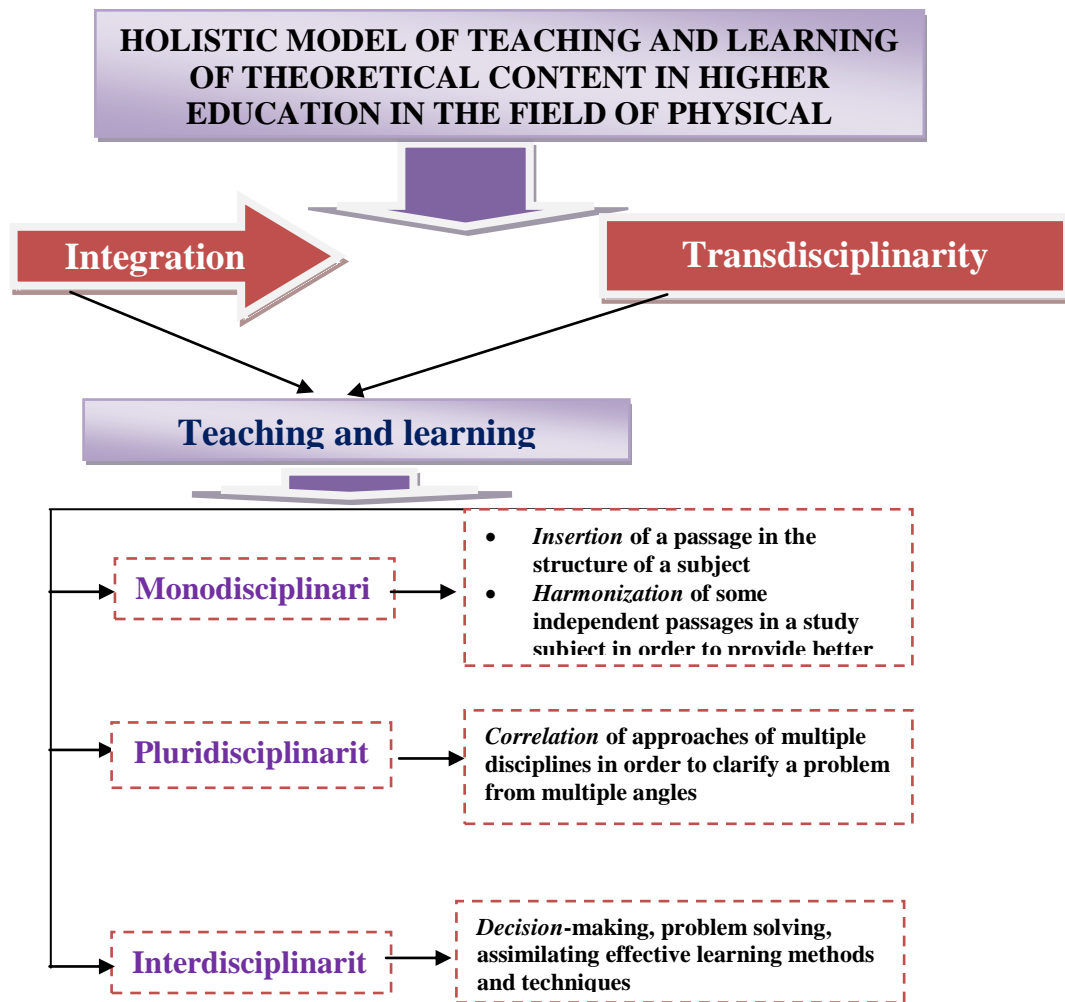


Figure 4. Holistic model of teaching and learning of theoretical content in higher education in the field of physical education and sports

Concluding, we can mention that applying the integrated curriculum in higher education studies of physical education and sports creates the prerequisites for trans-disciplinarity. Thus, students collaborate in groups, help each

other, jointly enjoy their successes achieved collectively or individually from those of the colleagues, understand and assume roles depending on context and personal competencies. At the same time, by applying the holistic model of teaching and learning of theoretical content in higher education, the specialized practical skills are formed and developed, contributing to the development of students' organizational spirit and critical thinking, their effective communication in various forms (verbal, with the use of specialized, non-verbal terminology) and, last but not least, providing awareness of the situations or ways in which individual decisions can affect them, the group to which they belong as well as the community.

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Social Partnership in Education for Students' Career: Reality and Trends

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Abstract

Choosing a career and going through the approaches necessary in the training of a young person as a specialist in the chosen field are complex processes that have a defining impact in their professional future. Career education, as an educational intervention to develop the skills and abilities necessary for young people to develop and manage their own careers, is an essential element of the process of university vocational training. At the same time, it is absolutely necessary to involve other social actors and to create a partnership between the social stakeholders in order to adjust the process of professional guidance of the students to the existing occupational context. The sociological study conducted by the Centre for Career Guidance and Counselling of the State University of Physical Education and Sport, Chisinau, demonstrates the respondents' awareness of the necessity to involve several elements in the professional guidance, counselling and career guidance of the students, such as: families, university and other educational agents, the information resources and the media, non-governmental organizations, potential employers and various economic agents.

Keywords: carrier, vocational guidance, counseling, social partners

Introduction

One's career covers and identifies different roles where the person is involved: student, employee, employer, community member, parent, etc., the way they work in family, school and society. In this context, every person has a