Chapter 14
Assessing Learning Processes in Games and Sports:
Practical Recommendations and Suggestions for Measuring Psychomotor-Related Performance in Game-Play Within the School Context

Francesco Sgrò
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2062-4908
Kore University of Enna, Italy

Teresa Iona
University of Catanzaro "Magna Graecia", Italy

Mario Lipoma
Kore University of Enna, Italy

ABSTRACT

Physical education (PE) curriculums all over the world recognize the relevance of teaching games and sports throughout all school stages with the aim of helping a student to become an active participant in different typologies of sport. To support this mission, the game-based approaches (GBAs) are the teaching strategies used the most. Appropriate assessment instruments are also needed to properly support PE teachers. In this respect, the tools used for assessing these learning aims need to go beyond the measure of a skill performed outside of the game-play context, but they also have to account for the decision process adopted by a player when he/she has, for example, possession of a ball or when performing a movement without a ball. This chapter describes the theoretical models which support the tools used for the proper assessment of game-play performance as well as the main characteristics of the indexes of these tools and provides indications for their use during PE lessons.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-9621-0.ch014

INTRODUCTION

The Assessment of Game-Play Performance in Relation to The Psychomotor Domain

Games and sports are an integral part of any physical education (PE) curriculum in primary and secondary schools worldwide, so a large part of the sport pedagogy community has focused its studies on the development of adequate and effective teaching strategies for supporting PE teachers in this task. Starting from the Teaching-Games-for-Understanding (TGfU) approach proposed by Burke and Thorpe (1982), we see that various other approaches have been proposed in literature for teaching game concepts and skills in both school and extra-school contexts (i.e., Play Sense, Tactical Games Model, etc.). Due to their expansion in recent decades, they have all been grouped under the appellative of the "Game-Based Approach" (GBA - Burke & Thorpe, 1982). The main aim of these approaches is to support the development of students who are able to play well in several sports because they have learned both fundamental skills and tactical awareness, up to a good level. In order to reach these goals, various forms of game-play (i.e., adapted, modified and exaggerated) are used in each part of the lesson and the students have to be placed at the center of the teaching-learning process as active learners.

Significant research has also been conducted in order to identify which assessment methods are the most adequate for detecting changes in students' learning during the PE curriculum. In fact, assessment in general is an integral and essential part of each teaching-learning process and that related to games and sports in particular is quite complex. This is because it is founded on several learning aims related to these activities, as well as to the different learning areas covered by these PE processes, including psycho-motorial, cognitive, and socio-cognitive domains. In agreement with the pedagogical principles which inspire the GBAs, these methods have to be able to capture changes in students' performances with regard to tactical learning rather than modelling only their motor skills.

To do that, the methods have to capture the students' performances in authentic and contextualized assessment, where the students are fully involved. In addition, the assessment procedures have to be adequate for supporting the teacher both in formative and in summative assessments.

From the previous lines it is clear how difficult it is for a teacher to identify the assessment instrument that is the most adequate for detecting the global characteristics of a certain performance. In order to deal with these highly complex problems, Goudbout (1990) worked to identify the main elements of interest which characterized the assessment of team-sport performances, and that could be overlapped with those related to the outcomes of the GBA teaching-learning processes. Goudbout identified two levels of analysis for the aforementioned assessment (i.e., the facets and the strategies), built specific models for each level, and reasoned on the possible interactions between these levels (for more details on models and their graphical representation the readers may consult Gréhaigne and colleagues [1997, pp: 501-505] and Nadeau colleagues [2008b, pp: 66-70]). Regarding the facets, the model built by Goudbout took into consideration four categories of information (i.e., product, process, technique and tactics) as well as their interaction. For example, a teacher might be interested in the way a goal has been shot (technical process) or on the number of shots performed by a player with his/her right hand (technical product). Likewise, a teacher may be focusing on the number of decisions made correctly by a player (tactical product) or on the type of choice used by a player to complete an action (tactical process).