How Do Wii Learn to Dance in Physical Education?

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Dance is a core content in the Swedish curriculum, but according to previous research it nevertheless rarely occurs in physical education and health (PEH) practices. In PEH, balls or gymnastic apparatuses, are available for teachers as teaching aids to help students in their search for knowledge. However, few artifacts have been investigated, and even more so in relation to dance. Furthermore, there is a lack of language to communicate this didactic knowledge (Larsson, 2009).

The research questions in this study is therefore: (1) what kind of movement qualities do students use when dance exergames are used as teaching aids and when the students work in groups to create a dance, and (2) how does the learning of these movement qualities occur in interaction with the exergames and between the students in the groups?

Seven PEH-lessons were explored. Four of the lesson had a specific purpose, such as working with rhythm and coordination where the exergames Nintendo Wii Just Dance 3 and 4 were used as teaching aids. In two other lessons the students worked in groups to create their own dance, and as a final goal, at lesson seven, the students showed their dance to the others. All the lessons were video recorded. To answer the first research question, the students’ movement qualities were analyzed using a framework inspired by Laban’s Movement Analysis (Laban, 1988). Since Laban’s analysis do not clearly account for relations to other individuals, music or artifacts such as exergames, the study also involves a socio-cultural approach to learning, where learning is understood as something that occurs through interactions between students but also between students and artifacts (Quennerstedt, Almqvist & Öhman, 2011). This socio-cultural approach was used to answer the second research question.

The results show a way to describe students’ movements, which contribute to PE-teachers common language of knowledge in movements. The results also demonstrate different ways of learning taking place between students and between students and the exergames.

References:

