

Children's engagement in physical education could be improved by **stories** and **imagination**



LILIANE MORGADO · BORIS JIDOVTSSEFF

Department of Sport and Rehabilitation Sciences, Research Unit on Childhood, University of Liège, Belgium



Introduction

- ✓ The development of fundamental motor skills is essential during childhood and should be a learning outcome in the physical education (PE).
 - ✓ With the children between 3 to 6 years old it could be sometime difficult to get their attention and motivation during PE lessons.
 - ✓ Teachers have to use a very adapted pedagogical approach in order to get all children's engagement.

Experience at the CEReKi Research Center (ULg, Liege, Belgium)

- ✓ Adapted activities have been developed at CEReki Center for preschools children.
- ✓ Children are developing perceptuals and fundamental motor skills during playing situations
- ✓ From our field experience one of the most efficient way to get children attention and participation is to introduce the activities with **stories** and **imagination**.
- ✓ Teachers from CEReKi are using fantasy in order to invite children into a funny world where everything could become possible like the "the never-never land of Peter Pan".
 - ✓ The way of telling the story as well as the used characters (like the wolf) must be adapted to the age of the children.
- ✓ However using stories and imagination with the children is neither a natural nor an easy thing for inexperienced teachers.



CEReKi experience ≠ scientific evidence

What are the hypothesis behind our observations ?

1. Stories and imagination could influence affectivity as activities appears more fun and enjoyable. This could also facilitate the memorization and encourage creativity.
2. As children are engaged in an imagination process, they are achieving activities in a more active way, even those activities that are not their favorite ones.
3. The fantasy context can increase children engagement and posteriorly could improve children's motor learning and physical development.
4. Teacher who are trained to introduce stories and imagination in their activities should be more effective than those who are not trained.
5. Such strategy may positively enhance young people's attitudes towards physical education and ultimately, physical activity participation.

My PhD !



How to verify these hypothesis ?

1. Develop and/or use Scales to assess children enjoyment
2. Measure children engagement toward activities
3. Measure children memorization of the activity and development of creativity
4. Measure children longitudinal motor and physical development
5. Measure children longitudinal attitude toward PE and PA
6. Compare trained and untrained teacher effectiveness

In different context :
(with and without stories + imagination)

How to measure all these dimensions with 3 to 6 yo children ?