Learning from Parkour: A Belgian Case Study

Marc CLOES, Rosalie COOLKENS & Nicolas VANHOLE

Symposium
‘Threshold concepts in physical education: From theory to praxis’

2021 AIESEP Virtual Conference
Descending the mountain : Exploring the impact of research on pedagogy and practice
University of Alberta, McGill University – June 7-10, 2021

Parkour: individual activity in which a person tries to overcome various obstacles by means of swings, jumping, climbing and running
(Coolkens et al. 2018)
Context/Case Study

- Step 1 – Fiona contacted Marc

Marc: Never practiced Parkour but experienced Natural Method (Hébertisme) during childhood and adolescence

Context/Case Study

- Step 1 – Fiona contacted Marc
- Step 2 – Marc contacted Rosalie proposing Parkour as the basis of the process

Rosalie: Completed a Parkour initiator course, wrote a practical guide for teachers, gave workshops and used it as the content taught in her PhD
Context/Case Study

- Step 1 – Fiona contacted Marc
- Step 2 – Marc contacted Rosalie proposing Parkour as the basis of the process
- Step 3 – Rosalie proposed Nicolas as an Parkour’s expert

Nicolas: Moved from gymnastics to Parkour when he was adolescent; became one of the best ‘traceurs’ in Belgium and launched a school to share his passion

Context/Case Study

Marc: Good memories of moments spent with friends and feelings of nice motor feelings that influenced his professional values

Rosalie: An ideal content since everyone can move on their own ability level; allows differentiation; nothing like wrong or right

Nicolas: Way of life, a leisure activity that became a profession
Methodology

- Influence of the socio-ecological approach
- Marc & Rosalie prepared an interview guide
  - Context
  - To be in the zone (practitioner’s perspective)
  - To be in the zone (teacher’s perspective)
- Nicolas’ interview (1.5h)
- Verbatim transcript
- Marc & Rosalie separately selected key ideas
- Agreement on the threshold concepts
- Nicolas validated the analysis and added some details

Threshold Concepts - Practitioner

I can see the move to do and judge myself ()
and know if I can do it in a safe way

Try a movement in a controlled way

They know how a jump is maybe too difficult () and do it in their way

Determine one’s capability

I can feel the jump, but I know exactly what to do if I don’t make the jump

Find one’s solution
Threshold Concepts - Practitioner

- Listen your feelings

There’s always that moment when you feel ready to do things you wanted to do.

- Keep calm is a priority

We wait until the adrenaline slows down because it doesn’t give you a lot of control.

- Chose you own challenges

Getting into the zone will be more intensive if you found your own challenge.

Threshold Concepts - Teacher

- It is not about winning or losing what creates a different atmosphere

Priority to individual progression

- Reinforce teamwork and encouragement

You can see the way people train, give positive feedback to each other ...

- You can see how responsible, even a 6 year-old can train. That’s really cool to see

Encourage autonomy
Implications for Praxis
For teaching and experiencing Parkour

• Agree to try a movement and perceive it as a possible challenge
• Learn to control his/her movement to guarantee is/her safety (maintaining a low level of excitement, imagining the movement to be realized, identifying the possible risks)
• Demonstrate supportive behaviors to his/her classmates
Implications for Praxis

- Be able to show persistence
- Show autonomy and creativity to find way to overcome barriers
- Listen his/her body
- Develop a goal orientation for task mastery

http://hdl.handle.net/2268/260602
References