



Legitimating ball games

The recontextualisation of ball games knowledge in Swedish physical education and physical education teacher education

av

Jan Mustell

Akademisk avhandling

Avhandling för filosofie doktorsexamen i idrottsvetenskap,
som kommer att försvaras offentligt
fredagen den 31 januari 2025 kl. 13.15,
Hörsal G, Örebro universitet

Opponent: professor Lars Tore Ronglan
Norges idrettshøgskole
Oslo, Norge

Örebro universitet
Institutionen för hälsovetenskaper
701 82 Örebro

Abstract

Jan Mustell (2025): Legitimizing ball games. The recontextualisation of ball games knowledge in Swedish physical education and physical education teacher education. Örebro Studies in Sport Science 42.

This thesis is about ball games as content within physical education teacher education (PETE) and physical education (PE) in a Swedish context. The focus of the study is on how knowledge related to ball games becomes legitimate in PETE, and how this knowledge is transformed and used in pedagogic practice in PE. This thesis consists of four articles investigating these questions in different educational contexts. In Article I, I examine how PE teacher educators define legitimate ball games knowledge in PETE through the lens of Shulman's theory on teachers' knowledge. The findings suggest that PE teacher educators define legitimate knowledge as a combination of content knowledge related to participation in sports and pedagogical content knowledge related to learning for all pupils. In Article II-IV the focus is on how knowledge is recontextualised in transitions from PETE to PE and the analysis is done through Bernstein's theoretical framework. The findings in Article II show that the pre-service teachers' pedagogic discourse of ball games involved substantial changes and transformations in the transition from university to school placement. These changes can be explained by recontextualising rules that either constrain or enable the use of knowledge. The findings in Article III indicate that beginning teachers had different aims in their teaching, some aimed to develop pupil's understanding of games while others used ball games as a means to develop movement or cooperative capabilities. The teachers employed different strategies to handle challenges of the cultural influence from competitive sport. The findings of Article IV suggest that beginning teachers consider knowledge from PETE useful and relevant and were able to reproduce this knowledge in PE practice. They were also missing important knowledge, and their teaching was affected by contextual factors. The thesis contributes to existing scholarship with knowledge about the recontextualisation process in which the pedagogic discourse of ball games is constructed within PETE and transformed and reproduced into PE practice.

Keywords: Ball games, physical education teacher education, content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, Bernstein, recontextualisation, beginning teachers, transitions, PE practice