

Keith Lyons

Proposals for research leading to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Introduction

I am a lecturer in Movement Studies at St. Mary's College, Twickenham. I have chosen to submit my proposals to the University of Surrey for the following reasons:

- i) the nature of the postgraduate programme within the Institute for Educational Technology;
- ii) ~~my concern with double-edged research~~ ^{the fact that the IET concerns both secondary and higher education.} My research focusses upon the teaching of physical education within the school context but an extremely important aspect of the research will be **the examination of the preparation of physical education teachers at higher education level;**
- iii) at the present time St. Mary's College is seeking validation by the University of Surrey. I hope that my application can be viewed as one attempt to forge a link both in terms of academic standards and informal contact.

Research Proposals

1. Background to the research.

I have indicated in my application form that I have become interested in the **qualitative aspects** of teaching and learning in physical education in the secondary school. This interest has emerged from my experience of teaching and lecturing in physical education. I hope that my proposed research fits in with the Institute for Educational Technology's concern with 'educational technology' as a "rational, problem-solving approach to education, a way of thinking sceptically and systematically about learning and teaching" (brochure for prospective students 1981-82, p.4).

My experience of physical education has afforded an opportunity to reflect upon the **problems of knowledge in physical education.** I am interested in what happens in the physical education lesson. This focus yields a number of research questions and I suggest that physical education offers a rich vein of data relating to teacher-pupil interaction. I hope that my empirical research

will:

- i) offer evidence about teaching and learning in physical education and thus contribute to the understanding of the education of secondary school children;
- ii) present evidence that might say something in general about teaching and learning;
- iii) provide the basis for rethinking the ^{physical education} curriculum at secondary school and higher education level and thus be concerned with practice rather than the theory of practice.

At the present time, I envisage the scope of my ^{field work} research to be limited to physical education in the secondary school with particular reference to boys' physical education; *The outcomes should however be of value both to teaching and the training of teachers.*

In a recent edition of the journal Sociology (November 1981), the entire contents were devoted to the teaching of research methods. A strong theme to emerge from the contributions was that research was very much about getting ideas and testing them. At the present time I have a number of ideas that await empirical testing. I hope that the Institute for Educational Technology can help in the construction and direction of my research ideas. The spirit of my research will be best served by field research methods involving the collection of qualitative data. In this respect I hope that my research will seem appropriate to the work of the I.E.T..

2. Elements of the proposed research.

At the present time the following elements form the basis of my research:

- i) epistemological and ontological interests: the nature of knowledge, conceptions of man and their implications for teaching and learning;

- ii) the significance of physical activity and education in the learning experiences of secondary school children;
- iii) physical education as an empirical focus for curriculum issues of a pedagogical and political nature;
- iv) the significance of research IN education rather than of education - research for whom and by whom ?
- v) the use to be made of qualitative data collection and the possibility of emergent concepts;
- vi) comparisons with other literature on socialisation.

3. Research Questions

I would like my research to address the following questions:

i) Methodological

What methods can be used to describe what takes place within the physical education curriculum of secondary schools ?

ii) Aspects of Socialisation

Questions related to the physical education teacher:

- (a) How important/significant are biographical factors in the teacher's construction and interpretation of the physical education curriculum ?
- (b) Do teachers act as curriculum researchers ? ^{To what extent,} Do they take ~~any~~ notice of their pupils' ^{concerns} ?

Questions related to pupils:

- (a) What factors influence a ^{pupil} child's involvement in physical education ?
- (b) Are pupils sensitive to teachers' strategies and styles ?

Questions related to 'physical education' as an element of the school curriculum:

- (a) what values are placed upon physical education by those involved in education ?
- (b) ^{How important is} ~~Is there any evidence to suggest that physical activity is central~~ to the education experience of children ?

iii) Implications and Applicability of Empirical Research :

What might the research yield in terms of curriculum assessment, evaluation and development ?

What does the research contribute to the quality of teaching and learning in the secondary school ?

What are the implications for ^{P.E.}~~X~~ courses at higher education level in terms of content and transmission of ideas ?

I hope that the above research questions reflect the interests and orientations of the Institute for Educational Technology.

Keith Lyons,

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