

PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF LEADING THE JUNIOR FOOTBALLERS' TEACHING - LEARNING PROCESS

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Abstract: *The coach is directly responsible for the good accomplishment of the process of transmitting the information, but especially for his result – preparing today's athletes to become members with full rights, but also with responsibilities in tomorrow's society. The paper highlights the priority aspects of the psychological peculiarities of the junior footballers' personality and their importance in gaining performance. The conclusions of the current research will make the coaches' teaching process as well as the athletes' learning more efficient.*

Key words: *teaching, learning, psychology, football.*

1. Introduction

The teaching -learning process requires more and more work on the part of teachers, who must impose training in the specialized field that allows permanent contact with the latest information in the field. Besides, they must be trained developing flexibility of logical thinking, the spirit should remain permanently alive in action and more importantly, it should be permanently in the service and for the benefit of students [21].

As long as the organizational, administrative, disciplinary and interpersonal aspects of the school environment inevitably influence the future citizens' mental health and

personality development [3], it is the obvious duty of society to solve these problems as appropriately and constructively as possible [2]. The primary responsibility of school is to promote mental health and personality development, to cultivate the development of the intellect and to ensure the assimilation of knowledge. But, the role of school may be additional to that performed by other socializing institutions, such as family and immediate social environment.

The educational ideal represents a projective model, an ideal anticipation, in certain conditions an imperative that must be fulfilled as a result, as a finality of the complex and long educational process.

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The educational ideal occupies the central place in pedagogical theory and action. It involves a conception and certain clear ideas regarding the dimensions that the personality must include in its development as the finality of the educational action [7].

In our case, that of training through football for life, it can be said that it is much better to work with athletes who have received a proper education in family and then at school. If his family has left its mark on the athlete's personality development in a positive way, it is much easier to train valuable players, who will be a successful representative for the football activity. There are countless examples of valuable players, who due to their poorly developed character, failed to overcome the junior period.

Competition has both favourable and unfavourable influences on personality development. On the positive side, it stimulates the effort and productivity of the individual, promotes higher norms and aspirations and reduces the gap between capacity and achievements [6].

Puberty, like adolescence, is characterized by the transition to maturity and integration into adult society, with taking social roles corresponding to the statuses that young people have or will acquire. During these periods, the influence of family and school (relatively strong at the beginning of the child's life) gradually changes, being socially integrated in legal provisions and in the assumption of responsibility by young people. The dominant note of the whole stage consists in the intensive development of the personality under the influence of socializing factors and as a result of the individual's own willpower [20].

Somatically, the rapid transformations during the pubertal stage are replaced by slower processes, characterized by the reduction of the increase in height (especially with girls) and by the increases of the perimeters and segmental diameters [19].

From a sporting point of view, in the two periods, the youngster has never known before and will never know later such an extraordinary biological and social evolution, as the one that determines the transition from the "child" stage to the "young adult" stage. Through the development of individualization and stabilization, the "capacity, typology and individual particularities of learning" appears more and more clearly. The coach should consciously exploit these learning strategies in order to influence both the motivation for preparation (learning) and the results he seeks to achieve from it [25].

The coach and the training will have both positive and negative effects on the personality of the pre-adolescent and adolescent football players. The development and the level of knowledge accumulated by the first factor will depend on the development and the final result of the second one - the formation of valuable players, with a strong-balanced personality conducive to great performance.

2. The Study of Literature and Consequences for the Training of Athletes

Priority factors of the junior football athletes' personality, who have been studied to obtain performance in leading the teaching-learning process:

A. The psychological profile of the individual's personality

A useful development regarding the relationship between personality traits and the position of the individual in the group was made by Adrian Neculau [13]. The personality structure of the individual will necessarily lead to specific ways of behaving in personal life and in relationships with others. Among the elements that help us in understanding the mechanism of partners' perception, a first issue is that of the individual's role and status. "Being a personality also means having a position, being among others, being recognized as a value, imposing yourself, occupying a place in the community by valuing qualities and behavioural style." This statement outlines the main aspects of the athletes' condition within the sports group, the team.

Thus, the author defines the status as the place of the individual in society:

- the position of the individual in the social group, implying the expectations towards those who occupy other positions within the same structure, in the sports situations: player, team captain, coach, manager;
- the place related to the distribution of prestige within a social group and, sometimes, through implication, towards the distribution of rights, obligations, power and authority. Within the same system and in the sports team, hierarchies are established and bonuses are granted according to competencies, and within the club, as a system, specific rules operate;
- high position related to the distribution of prestige within the group.

Football players will have a baggage of personality traits, a psychological profile that will allow them to make their way to

senior teams. Regarding personality, they include [11]:

- correct attitude towards life;
- availability for sustained work, for maximum efforts;
- combativeness, total commitment; the strength to give up everything that does not directly serve the efficiency of sports behavior and performance;
- general mental resistance, maintaining tactical discipline;
- learning methods that allow the athlete to become responsible, to stay healthy, to self-regulate;
- performance motivation (taste for performance, risk, commitment, activation, aspiration for perfection, etc.);
- integrity: resistance to psycho-moral disruptors, consistency, honesty;
- vivacity, energy, "openness" to the new, activism, creativity;
- ability to communicate with others (expressiveness, acceptance, empathy, argumentation), self-control and fair play;
- complex self-regulation capacity;
- collaboration with the coach and the technical team.

The characteristics of the players' personality make the team as a whole stronger, each athlete having to perform the individual and collective tasks established at the team level. A football team is a group with a purpose, in which the personality of each member is equally important, and the result is nothing but the result of the efforts of each player.

B. Players' motivation

Children and adolescents need exercise for their physical and mental development to proceed harmoniously. This need is generally fulfilled spontaneously due to their impetuous desire to move. The

motor activity of children, more important than that of adults, is due, on the one hand to the dominance of cerebral impulses and, on the other hand, to the fact that the constraint resulting from movement is subjectively less felt by the child than by the adult" [24].

Children's motivation to continue or interrupt participation will depend on a number of personal and external factors such as perceived ability, the location of control, training style and social support from significant people such as coaches, parents and teammates.

The motivation development strategy, also valid in working with athletes, is presented as follows [5]:

- to motivate our player correctly;
- to motivate someone means to determine them to adopt an attitude desired by the coach;
- to motivate someone means to make them give up an old attitude in favour of a new one;
- motivating someone means raising awareness, addressing one of their unfulfilled needs and making it clear that adopting a certain attitude can meet that need.

Several authors establish the different types of motivations and what they represent. The types of motivations for high performance are internal, external, operational, psychological, social and biological [11]. Non-motivation expresses the relative absence of motivation of any kind [23].

The coach must pay attention to the motivational, emotional elements of the athletes in order to know how to orient them towards the goal of performance through appropriately organizing the entire training program. He has several possibilities at hand to influence the initial

motivation of athletes [22].

Knowing the initial reason, the coach can intervene with care and attention and by using arguments related to the training objectives or transmitting new tasks during training lessons, he could change (intrinsic or extrinsic) motivation from the beginning. He could also achieve that by convincing them to accept new guidelines, which will eventually lead to the acceptance of new motivation to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the learning process with those activities that interest them, which avoid boredom [17].

One of the ways in which players express their motivation to participate – aspiration derives from the previous idea. Aspiration is a conscious motivation, aimed at achieving goals at a height that varies depending on how you appreciate your own possibilities. In football, the aspiration largely coincides with the proposed performance objective and can be: tenure, promotion, obtaining categories, titles, selection, etc." Needs and motives generate different attitudes such as direction, intensity, complexity towards oneself and others, things, ideas, etc. [12].

Football players, like other athletes, are driven in their work by the need for achievement or the need for performance. Motivation is one of the most important factors in the game of football, regarding the ways of understanding the conditions and forces of conscious psychic life. In order to increase the interest and enthusiasm in training, it is necessary to use different motivational, verbal or behavioural techniques. Moreover, the trainings should be as interesting as possible and shape the conditions and the competitive atmosphere.

C. Intelligence and thinking in the game of football

The concept of intellect circumscribes a very complex psychic phenomenon, hence the multitude of its approaches and definitions [14]. The intellect designates a system of relations, activities and higher psychic processes: intelligence, thinking, memory, imagination, language, a system that appears and functions entirely at the human level, overcoming the sensory experience, but relying on it, using specific properties of the human brain and being constructed only through cultural modelling and socio-cultural integration.

The author speaks about two types of intelligence [15]: practical and motor. Practical intelligence achieves the simultaneous appreciation of all data as well as the immediate solution of the problems they pose, through a kind of "motor scheme" that regulates dynamically from the inside attitudes and body positions during the action. The action is, of course, influenced by the experience gained, but first of all it must be seen as a supple adaptation to the situation, by anticipating the conditions and integrating them into a unitary whole.

On the field of play, for example, each athlete takes into account the particularities of his teammates, his opponents and his own particularities, the position that each one has on the field.

Motor intelligence concerns the selection, capture and treatment of the information from outside and inside the body in order to develop appropriate motor responses. The specific intelligence of the football game is manifested as a technical ability that involves not only the correct execution of a technical procedure - passing, taking over, shooting at the goal, etc. - but also the adaptation of the motor

behaviour to the concrete situation determined by the nature of the field, the presence of the wind, the speed and the direction from which the ball comes, etc.

The intellectual capacity of adolescent players makes it necessary to comply with the following methodological rules [1]:

- developing the thinking and intelligence of the game through specially designed training, by compiling exercises that develop especially the player's creative ability, his adaptation to the new situations arising in the competitive game;
- improving communication relationships, by introducing modern communication methods in training.

The role and qualities of thinking have been a permanent concern for various specialists in both sports and psychology, being directly related to the intelligence of the football player.

In sports, there are highly appreciated those who have reached a higher level of technical and tactical training and who manage to cope with difficult situations that arise during the game, which are activities that stimulate the development of thought.

Practicing performance football requires quick thinking, because the problems that arise must be solved without delay. In practice, it is necessary to combine two elements: the rapid solving of situations and the rather long time required for the function of thinking. The combination of these elements is done in the lessons and trainings that precede the official games, anticipating most of the technical and tactical situations in the official game. In conclusion, the player's thinking develops through the game and for the game. The success of the game depends largely on the intellectual skills of the whole team.

D. The temperament of football players

Temperament represents the dynamic-energetic side of the personality, expressed in particularities of intellectual activity and affectivity, as well as in external behaviour (motor skills and especially speech) [9]. The type of players' temperament can be determined, within some limits of certainty, by two ways of making the psychological observation [16]:

a) by looking for the extent to which the player clearly shows most of the traits described in each of the 4 temperamental types;

b) by observing and appreciating the player's behaviour from the point of view of the 3 main directions of manifestation of the type of superior nervous activity:

- strength, manifested by resistance to intense or long-lasting efforts, rapid recovery after exertion, the ability to mobilize energy efficiently;

- balance, manifested in the ability to control emotional reactions, in the ability to postpone the immediate satisfaction of a desire, the ability to wait;

- mobility, manifested by dynamism, the speed of motor and verbal reactions, the speed of formation and restructuring of skills, the ease with which the player moves from one activity to another.

Temperament is expressed both in the particularities of intellectual activity and affectivity and in external behaviour. The temperamental profile of football players tends to be sanguine towards choleric, which is confirmed in specialized experimental researches. Temperament has no meaning; it cannot be considered good or bad. That is why children with other types of temperament should not be excluded, because the positive temperament traits needed for football can be cultivated over time with

favourable results.

The temperamental type of teenage football players, who will make the move to senior teams, is an essential condition for successful integration. It is essential that the predominant temperamental traits be those of sanguine and choleric temperament, due to the specifics of the modern football game in which players must show an accentuated combativeness of the game. Today, there are few players in big teams in which melancholic or phlegmatic characteristics predominate, and if they are predominant, they must be discovered and educated at the junior level.

E. The character of the football player - the attitude model

Character, as a system of volitional attitudes and traits, is entirely socially determined, being the direct result of reflecting the conditions of material and social life in the psychic structure of the human individual. Character education is achieved through instructive-educational work, which acts at all levels.

In the opinion of Cosmovici and Iacob, the school and social performance of each student cannot all be at a higher level, especially when school tasks are at a high level of difficulty. Therefore, educators will create situations in which students identify not only their limits (which are natural and should be seen as such; they shouldn't be considered failures involving personal responsibilities), but also their resources [9].

In sports, things are simplified, because the coach works only with those skilful students who have passed several selections; thus, especially in the case of teenagers, the responsibility is already channelled in a clear direction - towards

performance.

Attitude formation, the main structural elements of character, involves specific methods and techniques. The behaviour which is closest in time to reward is best learned. Alternatively, a small immediate punishment can lead to the abandonment of a certain type of behaviour, even if it would lead to a considerable reward in the longer term.

3. Conclusions

The teacher must be, by definition, an effective personality. Several authors analyze the multiple meanings of the concept of pedagogical competence. We note three complementary meanings [10], [4]:

- the ability to meet the goals of education that allows the evolution of personality;
- personality trait that determines the achievement of pedagogical objectives (tests);
- the behaviour of the personality that achieves an educational goal (globally evaluable, at the level of managerial decision).

Leadership is human communication that changes the attitudes and behaviour of others towards fulfilling the group's goals and needs [18]. The characteristics of management and decision problems, which are adaptable to the field of sports, are as it follows.

- leadership by objectives starts from the desideratum and goals that individuals and the group want to achieve in a given period and with predetermined means.

- leadership through “human relationships” takes into account the “group dynamics” and is achieved by considering the individual integrated in

the system of interpersonal relationships and having a certain motivation. The art of the leader is manifested in the way he knows how to treat human relationships.

- decision-making management focuses on the decision, as a choice of one of several alternatives.

In the sports group in which the activities are largely regulated, the decision is necessary only in certain situations and it can be taken by the coach or by the team. In sports, feedback is the information that athletes receive as a consequence of the execution of skills [8].

All authors contributed equally to this research.

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