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Teacher or coach? How logics from the field of sports contribute to the construction of knowledge in physical education teacher education pedagogical discourse through educational texts

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The main purpose of this paper is to focus attention on educational texts as central conveyers of discourses of sport into physical education teacher education (PETE) and by extension into physical education (PE). A considerable volume of research suggests that sport and games continue to be dominant elements of curriculum and practice in contemporary PE. Given the issues of masculinity, physicality and performativity resulting from such continuing sport-focused PE practice, it is relevant to question how such practices are discursively produced or reproduced. In this regard, one area has received only scant attention, namely the potential influence of educational texts used in PETE. Using the theoretical frameworks provided by Michel Foucault, Basil Bernstein and Norman Fairclough, this paper considers educational texts as important contributors to the discursive construction of knowledge in PETE, and thus also as a central resource for studying—and challenging—those discourses that influence on the PE teachers' perceptions of PE and their choices when it comes to the organisation of the PE class. This paper is based on a thorough examination of Danish PETE course documents listing educational texts prescribed by teacher educators for PETE programmes in Denmark. Several of the prescribed educational texts are published by private organisations with sporting interests, such as Team DK and The Sports Confederation of Denmark. This paper conducts a discourse analysis of these texts in order to illuminate how specific social rules regulate their content and involve specific constructions of the learner, the teacher and the relation between them. The paper's findings underline the need for an increased awareness among those who engage in PE practices of the ways in which discourses shape our thinking, and of the potential dangers that lie in the transfer of particular meanings and values as they are constructed in educational texts.

Keywords: *Discourse analysis; Basil Bernstein; Physical education; Educational texts; Physical education teacher education*

Introduction

A considerable volume of research into physical education (PE) has emphasised that since the middle of the last century, discourses of sport have dominated PE as a school subject (Coulter & Chroinin, 2011; Garrett & Wrench, 2007; Green, 2008; Harvey & Donovan, 2013; Kirk, 2010; Seelen & Munk, 2012; Trost, 2006). This sport-focused PE practice has been questioned for reproducing valued aspects of sport and, in so doing, reproducing social inequalities relating to, for example, gender (Dowling, 2006; Grahn, 2012; van Amsterdam, Knoppers, Claringbould, & Jongmans, 2012; Wright, 1999) and social class (Evans & Davies, 2008; Kirk, 2010), for marginalising certain groups of pupils (Gard & Wright, 2001; Hardin & Hardin, 2004; Seelen & Munk, 2012; Trost, 2006), for drawing attention to measures of performance and appearance rather than to meaning (Tinning, 2010; Wright, 2000)

and even for being ‘culturally obsolete’ (Kirk, 2010, p. 8). Several studies suggest that strengthening the capacity of PE teachers to resist or overcome reproducing these sporting logics provides a significant challenge for physical education teacher education (PETE; Backman, 2008; Coulter & Chroinin, 2011; Mordal-Moen & Green, 2012; Tinning, 2004; Tinning & Glasby, 2002). Meeting this challenge requires, among other things, an increased awareness among those who engage in PE practices of the ways that discourses shape our thinking and, more specifically, demands ability ‘to recognize the ways particular meanings and values (ideologies) associated with sport [...] are produced’ (Wright, 2004, p. 183). The main purpose of this paper is to focus attention on educational texts as central conveyers of discourses of sport into PETE and by extension into the PE practice. Using the theoretical framework provided by Basil Bernstein (1990, 2000), Michel Foucault (1971, 1972, 2001) and Norman Fairclough (1992, 2000, 2003), we examine educational texts as important contributors to the discursive construction of knowledge in PETE, and thus also as central resources for studying—and challenging—those discourses that influence on the PE teachers’ perceptions of PE and of their choices when they come to organise a PE class.

Educational texts may be defined as all kinds of texts used in a pedagogical setting (Selander & Skjelbred, 2004). In PETE, such texts are a central conveyor of knowledge about different areas like exercise science, sociology and pedagogy. But at the same time, they are complex structures which embody and reconstruct particular values and discourses (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Johnsen, 1999), and, according to Selander and Skjelbred (2004), they are fundamental sites for illuminating what counts as knowledge in an educational setting. To look at educational texts in PETE is especially relevant since we have our roots in a Danish setting. First, the Danish system allows anybody to produce textbooks and other texts that can be used in educational settings. This means that such texts are subject to the logic of the market in that they possess profit-making potential (Devis-Devis, Molina-Alventosa, Peiró-Velert, & Kirk, 2011), and that, inevitably, competing interests are at play in this field. Second, in Denmark—like in some other European countries—it is not the task of the State to approve the educational texts that the

schools should use, as it is in the USA, for example (ibid.). This means that in Denmark, teacher educators (PETE teachers) are the main agents for making decisions in the selection of educational texts for students.

This paper is based on a thorough examination of Danish PETE course documents listing educational texts prescribed by PETE teachers for PETE programmes in Denmark. This examination reveals that a significant proportion of the most popular educational texts used in this context are published by private organisations with sporting interests, such as Team DK and The Sports Confederation of Denmark (DIF). This means that a significant proportion of the educational texts routinely used in PETE are not regulated by official pedagogic agencies or by provisions of the State (e.g. in the curriculum) but derive directly from the field of sport. In this paper, we conduct a discourse analysis of these texts used in PETE programmes in order to explore, in the words of Bernstein (1990), how specific social rules regulate the content of these texts and involve specific constructions of the learner, the teacher and the relation between them. The analysis has three main findings. First, it illustrates how a sector with a specific interest in developing young sports people contributes *on a concrete textual level* to the construction of educational knowledge in PETE. Second, it shows how, in addition to being mediators of knowledge, educational texts for PETE are *in general* embedded in specific discourses, carrying with them particular values and ideologies (Backman, 2008) and creating possibilities and limitations for what can be said and done in PE. Third, it exemplifies the analytical *scrutiny* of educational texts that we find it important to encourage among PETE teachers and pre-service teachers in general.

Related studies

A growing body of research has been concerned with defining and discussing dominant discourses in PE. A large body of these studies has examined curriculum texts and policy documents (Green, 2008; Johnson, Shirley, & Horrell, 2013; Kirk, 2006a, 2010; MacDonald, Hunter, & Tinning, 2007; Penney & Evans, 1999; Rossi, Tinning, McGuaig, Sirna, & Hunter, 2009; Tinning & Glasby, 2002; Trost, 2006; Webb, Quennerstedt, & Öhmann, 2008; Welch & Wright, 2011). Others have been occupied with exploring dominant discourses among students and/or teachers in PE and PETE (Backman, 2008; Coulter & Chroinin, 2011; Harvey & Donovan, 2013; Mordal-Moen & Green, 2012; van Amsterdam et al., 2012). Together these studies identify sport and health discourses as the most influential discourses in PE. Green (2008) and Trost (2006), for example, find that PE curricula in many countries reflect considerable continuity through their persistent emphasis on competitive team sport and so-called traditional team games such as basketball, soccer and volleyball. In that regard, Trost (2006) suggests that the exclusive focus on ballgames in particular may increase the polarisation between more and less athletically gifted children. Similarly, Coulter and Chroinin (2011), Harvey and Donovan (2013) and Garrett and Wrench (2007) find that the value of competitive sport and ball-games is significant among pre-service PE teachers and plays a central role in the daily

practices of PE. Kirk (2010) suggests that the main problem in PE is the pride of place given to the *techniques* of games and sport over the pupils' enjoyment of and participation in the games and sport themselves (ibid.: p. 41). Closely related to this critique, other studies find that PE is dominated by a 'performance discourse' (Tinning, 1997, Wright, 2000). Wright (2000), for example, finds that this sporting practice of PE basically involves 'a body which is first and foremost a natural and biological object which can be studied, manipulated and its movements minutely measured' (ibid. p. 39) in order to improve performance. The analysis of educational texts in this paper contributes to this critical discussion of the dominance of sport in PE. It also aligns with this tradition in arguing that discourses should be considered as the framework of meaning, which creates possibilities and limitations for what can be said and done in PE, and—in that regard—that discourse analysis provide a central starting point for critical reflections on contemporary PE practices.

Only a few studies have specifically addressed educational texts for PE or PETE. Through a content analysis of high school PE textbooks in Australia, MacDonald (2013) finds that textbooks are sites that continue to perpetuate specific myths of 'biological race'. Grahn (2012) looks at textbooks for coaching education programmes in Sweden with specific focus on gender constructions. She observes some remarkable differences in the discursive construction of boys as opposed to girls and suggests that 'what is written can [...] be interpreted as expressions of what is considered to be accepted and normalized in sport as part of certain common assumptions' (Grahn, 2012, p. 15). Through a content analysis of pictures in Spanish PE textbooks, Táboas-Pais and Rey-Cao (2012a, 2012b) find that these textbooks portray males and females and disabled persons in stereotypical roles and conclude that 'these findings highlight the need to increase awareness regarding the image content in Physical Education textbooks' (Táboas-Pais & Rey-Cao, 2012a, p. 398). Images of disabilities are also the subject matter of Hardin and Hardin (2004). Their findings indicate that in general PE textbooks do not include photographs of persons with disabilities (Hardin & Hardin, 2004, p. 1). In a study of the way textbook authors address multicultural concepts in textbooks for secondary school PE in the USA, Hsu and Chepyator-Thomson (2010) stress that textbooks 'occupies a dominant and powerful position so as to resolve what knowledge is of most worth for students to learn, and in so doing determine students' consciousness of what is real in society' (Hsu & Chepyator-Thomson, 2010, p. 217). Finally, looking at educational texts for PE from a slightly different perspective, Devis-Devis et al. (2011) adopt Basil Bernstein's theoretical framework and look at teachers' selections of printed materials for PE. They conclude that the choice of texts plays an active part in the production of educational knowledge in PE since PE teachers' selection of texts is 'part of a mediating process between the primary and secondary fields of production of the pedagogic discourse of PE' (ibid., p. 30), but they also find that more research is needed in this field, especially concerning the *content* of the texts that are used in PE (ibid., p. 31).

Taken as a whole, these studies emphasise that educational texts serve as a powerful mediator of different values and interests, and that they occupy a central

position in the discursive construction of educational knowledge in school. However, they also agree that this remains a field of limited study. Consequently, more research is needed into the content of those texts that are used in PETE.

PETE in Denmark

In Denmark, PETE is a one-year educational programme offered as one out of three main subjects in a four-year teacher training programme. No further or supplementary education within PE areas is offered. Graduate students become teachers at primary and lower secondary schools. In 2007, the traditional teacher training academies were brought together with other institutions of further or higher education with professional focus and upgraded to University Colleges. Today there are eight University Colleges, which together offer 16 PETE programmes in Denmark. The main aims and objectives of these programmes are formulated in a national curriculum. The programme is obliged to provide pre-service teachers with knowledge in a variety of areas such as exercise science, anatomy, play, pedagogical and didactic theory and methods, ball games and outdoor education (Ministry of Research, Innovation and Further Education, 2013) with the main aim of acquiring the competences to develop ‘the pupils’ personal, social and physical abilities and competences’ and to ‘apply, judge and analyze knowledge about pupils’ physical, psychological, social and cognitive development in order to develop their action competences’ (ibid.). Specific sport skills and specific sport disciplines are *not* mentioned in the curriculum; however, it appears that the student should be able to *use* sport (together with play, aesthetic movement activities and outdoor activities) as a mean to work with the pupils’ physical, social and personal development (ibid.). This national curriculum for PETE is closely related to the curriculum for PE as a school subject. In addition, in the curriculum for PE as a school subject the physical, social and personal development of the child—and not specific sportive skills—is at the center of the subject. Furthermore, Peter J. Arnold’s (1979) educational framework—*in, through and about movement*—constitutes a central focal point in both ministerial directives (Ministry of Education, 2009; Ministry of Research, Innovation and Further Education, 2013). Within this framework, the themes, content, methods and dimensions of the course (approximately 30–45 ECTS) are a local responsibility formulated in each institution’s local curriculum. Furthermore, it is up to PETE teachers themselves to plan the specific content and select educational texts for the educational programme. These are listed in local course documents for each programme and form the basis of the final examination of the pre-service teachers.

Theoretical perspective

According to Foucault, our speech, thinking and acting are always subject to a range of constraints. It is not possible, therefore, to understand the accumulation of knowledge within a field as a progressive process leading to deeper realisation

(Foucault, 1971, 1972, 2001). Instead, knowledge must be seen as regulated and as bound to the logic of a specific time and place. Foucault terms this regulation of speech and thought as ‘discourse’, and he describes discursive practice as ‘a body of anonymous, historical rules, always determined in the time and space that have defined a given period, and for a given social, economic, geographical, or linguistic area, the conditions of operation of the enunciative function’ (Foucault, 1972, p. 117). By ‘the enunciative function’, Foucault means that each discourse puts discursive positions at the disposal of the subject. A discourse position characterises a standpoint from which the subject is able to participate in the discourse, and it includes a system of ideas and values that also has implication for practice. Bernstein (1990, 2000) offers a conceptual framework that permits an analysis of the discourses of the area of education, and more specifically of educational texts chosen for PETE. Bernstein suggests that the meeting between power, knowledge and modalities of consciousness in educational settings is established and controlled by a pedagogic device (Bernstein, 1990, p. 205). The pedagogic device is defined as consisting of ‘the distributive, recontextualizing, and evaluative rules for specializing forms of consciousness’ (ibid., p. 181), and the relationship between these rules is basically hierarchical. Each group of rules is related to specific contexts and fields and, by extension, to specific agents and agencies. The distributive rules relate to a primary context and by that to the intellectual field of the educational system, which produces educational discourse (ibid., p. 191). They regulate ‘the fundamental relation between power, social groups, forms of consciousness and practice and their reproductions and productions’ (ibid., p. 180). The evaluation rules of pedagogic practice are related to a secondary context of the production of pedagogic discourse and regulate the field of reproduction, the practice at the class room level (Bernstein, 2000, p. 115). Finally, the rules of recontextualisation relate to the context of recontextualisation and they regulate the field of recontextualisation.

The field and the rules of recontextualisation are in specific focus when it comes to the analysis of ‘specific pedagogic discourse’ (Bernstein, 1990, p. 91, 180) and of the subsequent analysis of the (pedagogic) discourses of educational texts.¹ The recontextualisation field is related to a subset of fields including the official recontextualisation field—embracing, for example, educational departments and agencies of the State—and the pedagogic recontextualisation field—encompassing educational researchers, teachers and specialised journals of education (ibid., p. 192). Following Bernstein, these fields constitute together a recontextualisation principle that regulates the construction of pedagogic discourse. In Bernstein’s words, the recontextualisation principle ‘selectively appropriates, relocates, refuses and relates other discourses to constitute its own order’ (Bernstein, 2000, p. 33). Here Bernstein is seeing pedagogic discourse as an embedded discourse made up, on the one hand, of instructional discourse—‘a discourse of skills of various kinds and their relations to each other’—and, on the other, of regulative discourse—‘a discourse of social order’ (ibid., p. 31), the former being embedded in the latter (Bernstein, 1990, p. 185). The regulative discourse both regulates the content of the text and ‘the theory of instruction’. The latter ‘contains within itself a model of the *learner* and of the *teacher* and of the *relation*’ (Bernstein, 2000, p. 35, our emphasis). As already mentioned, we find in PETE in Denmark a range of educational texts that are published by private organisations with sporting interests. These are selected by a

recontextualisation agent (the PETE teacher as a part of the pedagogic recontextualisation field), but the *content* of the texts is not recontextualised in the recontextualisation field of the pedagogic device. This also means that their content is not itself regulated by agents from the recontextualisation field of the pedagogic device and does not relate to official texts such as curriculum texts. In his work, Bernstein emphasises the dominant role of the state in the regulation of the recontextualisation field (ibid., p. 33). Thus, he does not problematise the issue that educational texts might be dominated by discourses that belong to neither the official recontextualisation field nor the pedagogic recontextualisation field like, in this case, the discourses of sports. However, he does work with a more general conception of recontextualisation of knowledge (Bernstein, 1990, p. 65; Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p. 107). In this way, we may say that we also find embedded discourses in the texts that are published by private organisations with sporting interests. In tracing these different (pedagogic) discourses, we will employ Fairclough's conceptualisation of the specific text as 'a product of the process of text production' and consider 'the formal properties of a text [which can be regarded] from the perspective of discourse analysis on the one hand as traces of the productive process, and on the other hand as cues in the process of interpretation' (Fairclough, 1989, p. 20). The concrete tools for data analysis will be elaborated in the following.

Methodology

The research question and the empirical basis of this paper have grown out of a systematic collection and analysis of course documents from PETE programmes in Denmark. We contacted the teachers responsible at each of the 16 PETE institutions in Denmark, asking for course documents listing the educational texts that they have prescribed for their current PETE classes and the themes they were prescribed for. Out of 16 requests—and two reminders—11 course documents were returned.

These course documents are tailored specifically to the one-year PETE course of the teacher training programme at each institution and they contain the educational texts that form the basis of the final examination taken by pre-service teachers enrolled in the course at the time of the data collection.

We gathered all the texts (articles from popular science magazines, reports, videos, websites for inspiration, textbooks and excerpts from textbooks and scientific books) that were mentioned at the course documents into a common table and ordered them by title, author, year of publication and number of pages. Texts were given only one listing, but the number of instances of each text was noted. All in all, 296 different texts (all Danish texts except one in English) were listed. After that, we gathered information on the authors, the publisher and the type and intention of the text. On the basis of this information, we coded the texts into four categories (listed in Supplementary Table 1): (1) texts recontextualised within the recontextualisation field of the pedagogic device, (2) texts from the primary context, (3) texts published by private organisation with sporting interests, and (4) other texts.

In this paper, we are especially interested in the texts from category three. Texts coded into this category are all published by or in collaboration with private organisations with sporting interests. All are written by researchers, coaches or athletes. Most of are aimed at training coaches for sports clubs. According to the lists from the PETE teachers, these texts are prescribed for themes like 'physiology', 'anatomy' and 'health and lifestyle' (not, therefore, for teaching sportive elements, cf. the description

of the curriculum for PE and PETE). All in all, 50 texts fell into this category. We are familiar with all these 50 texts, but we have chosen to take a further look at the most popular ones. Thus, the more detailed content analysis in this paper is conducted around those seven texts in category three that are mentioned in four or more course documents (see Supplementary Table 1).

In the analytical process, linguistic tools from Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (CDA) were used. A key point in Fairclough's text-oriented version of CDA is to understand the dialectical nature of the text. According to Fairclough, a text can be regarded both as material (i.e. distinct units in the form of words and phrases) and as a product of complicated discursive processes (Fairclough, 1989, p. 20). In line with both Foucault (1972) and Bernstein (1990, 2000), Fairclough argues that the discursive processes imply the construction of 'social identities', 'social relationships between people' and 'systems of knowledge and belief' (Fairclough, 1992, p. 64) and he accentuates that these can be decoded through a detailed analysis of different texts.

In conducting this task, we employed a range of linguistic focal points (Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 2003). We have especially looked for *wordings*, and, taking that further, for different *metaphors*, to identify how meanings were worded across the various pedagogical texts. We have been analysing *modality* to describe the degree of affinity attached to the propositions, and *cohesion* in order to describe the rhetorical mode of the text. Finally, we have been looking for *presuppositions* in order to scrutinise the underlying principles and rules for various statements in the texts. These different tools and concepts were used heuristically, and they have informed the analysis and the presentation in the following section.

Analysis

In what follows we will present our major findings from the analysis of educational texts published by private organisations with sporting interests. The analysed texts are all (except one) published by The Sports Confederation of Denmark (DIF). They describe themselves primarily as texts for educating coaches, instructors and other agents in, for example, sports clubs, but some of them also claim to have uses in other contexts like PETE and PE. The texts all involve chapters on exercise science, anatomy or physiology and hereby they take their primary starting point in natural science. These are also the themes for which they are prescribed in the PETE programmes. In what follows, we will look deeper into the way that this scientific knowledge is delocated from the primary field of production and relocated into the secondary field, and the rules that regulate this recontextualising process.

The lungs are placed in the rib-cage, well protected by the ribs. The diaphragm consists of two big muscles that are arched like a dome [...]. An inhalation takes place when the diaphragm is tensed and flattened [...]. The size of the lungs cannot be trained, but the diaphragm can. (DIF, 2006b, p. 13)

This quote is typical of these texts. They give the reader a more or less detailed introduction to the inner organs, muscles, joints of the body and so on and to the function and training of these different parts of the body. Elsewhere, the heart is described as the 'engine responsible for the oxygen supply to the muscles' (DIF, 2006a, p. 13), and the muscles as entities that 'produce power' (DIF, 2005, p. 15). Such use of language makes it easy to claim that these texts are constructing a body

that is objectified and metaphorically seen as a machine. However, what is more interesting in this context is the way that discourses of sport influence the presentation of this scientific content. For example, the above-mentioned section about the lungs adds that ‘the lungs in themselves are not the main factor limiting performance. Only in extreme sports situations may they exert an influence’ (DIF, 2006b, p. 13). Elsewhere, DIF (2006b) describes concepts like ‘heart rate’, ‘circulation’ and ‘oxygen uptake’, and adds that: ‘in general it is important to have a high level of physical fitness in order to complete training sessions that are long enough and in order to stay focused during competition’ (DIF, 2006b, p. 22). In the same way, DIF (2006b, 2007a) introduces concepts of aerobic and anaerobic exercise and suggests that ‘good physical shape may create the foundation for good performance in sport’ (DIF, 2007a, 2007b, p. 2), and in DIF (2005) the author exemplifies the necessity of having an understanding of biomechanical elements by explaining that ‘when heading in soccer you want your upper-body to move fast. In that case you need to keep your centre of gravity close to your hip’ (DIF, 2005, p. 79). With words like ‘performance’, ‘competition’, ‘training sessions’ and ‘sport situations’, it appears that the underlying intention behind this scientific ‘mapping’ of the body through anatomy, physiology, biomechanics and exercise science is to teach the reader how to (help others) achieve an *increase* in the capacity of the different parts of the body through *systematic exercise* with the intention of *improving performance and results within sport*. Using Bernstein’s concepts, we may say that ‘physical fitness’, ‘lung capacity’ or ‘centre of gravity’ as concepts have been relocated from their primary contexts and transformed by social rules, in this case especially features relating to discourses of sport (cf. e.g. Kirk, 2010; Tinning, 2010; Wright, 2000). This point is further substantiated by the fact that, while the texts all promote an approach to sport and exercise that is rooted in basic elements like motor control, strength training and aerobic training, and all argue for a many-sided (rather than a specialised and unilateral) approach (DIF, 2002, 2005, 2006b), in the end this approach is supposed to develop the ability to take part in (and improve special abilities within) more traditional sports disciplines. We see this, for example, through statements like ‘there is good reason to believe that in the long term early specialisation will have a downright inhibiting effect on the development of the potential for sport in the young’ (DIF, 2002, p. 87), and not least through the images in the books, which (almost without exception) present sports people who are already fit and taking part *in the game* (Picture 1).



Picture 1. DIF, 2007b, p. 3

The scientific introduction to the (training of the) body constitutes the subject and the content of the pedagogic practice. But the underlying logic of sport also regulates the theory of instruction. First of all, the participants are discursively constructed as (potential) athletes and the reader as a (potential) coach. This takes place with specific wordings like ‘athlete’ (e.g. DIF, 2006a, p. 2), ‘the jumper’ (DIF, 2005, 83), ‘coaches’ (e.g. DIF, 2007a, p. 10) and ‘coach behaviour’ (Danish Federation of Volleyball). As already stated, these texts manifest a clear vertical hierarchy and logic of progression, in which a broad diversity of skills has to be trained and mastered before moving to the next and more specialised stage (see also Wright, 2000). In this regard, the primary role of the coach is to secure this succession and to act as the major guarantor that ‘training is *accomplished* with the right load and intensity’ (DIF, 2002, authors’ emphasis) so that no potential for sport is lost. It is important to notice here that these texts often use the passive voice and the present tense, which place the text in the realm of ‘natural law’ and gives them an omniscience and an irrefutability that place the content beyond discussion. Examples are statements like ‘when the competition season gets closer’ (DIF, 2006a, p. 31) and ‘each exercise is repeated with a relatively large number of repetitions in each series’ (DIF, 2002, p. 262). In this way, the many descriptions of exercises, activities and techniques stimulate the reader (the coach) to accept and follow the instructions in the books and not to reflect upon the issues they raise or the content they present. Taken as a whole, the implication is that, in using these texts for acquiring knowledge about anatomy or exercise science, PETE students and teachers are also encountering (more or less implicit) specific values and ideas from the field of sport and the subject positions related to them. We will discuss this issue further in the following.

Discussion

This analysis illustrates how the instructional discourse in these educational texts is embedded in a regulative discourse that is itself based on the discourses of sport. Essentially, the texts present the idea that it is necessary to be provided with a detailed exposition of the body’s anatomy and physiology in order to *increase* the capacity of the body and perform *better*. Thus, they construct the idea that the body must be systematically worked upon for instrumental and competitive ends (Wright, 2000). These findings are not surprising. As already emphasised, several studies have found

that privileged knowledge and practices both in PE and in PETE are based upon natural science and sportive traditions and values. In the same way, it is not surprising that texts published by private organisations with sporting interests construct the body as a machine and give prevalence to systematic exercise, performativity and competition. According to Wright (2000), sport is one of the principal sites ‘where the objectification of the body has traditionally been promoted’ (ibid., p. 37). However, taking our theoretical approach into account, the analysis points to some educational challenges in PE and PETE extending beyond the Danish context.

First, our data suggest that a wide range of educational texts are available for the PETE teachers, and that several of these are regulated by agents who do not belong to the recontextualisation field of the pedagogic device. As a consequence, critical *selection* of educational texts seems to be important (see also Devis-Devis et al., 2011). This involves, among other things, teachers being able to identify the underlying ideological premises of the various textbooks—where they are ‘coming from’, so to speak, their underlying ideological premises—and to be critical in their discussion of the authors’ intentions.

Second, this analysis provides an example of how educational texts are a product of a process (Fairclough, 1989, p. 20) and embedded in social rules that regulate the content of the texts and involve specific constructions of the learner, the teacher and the relation between them (Bernstein, 1990). In this case, the pupil is constructed as an athlete and the teacher as a coach whose role is to manage progress and secure success in sportive goals. These are, in the words of Foucault (1972), the discursive positions that these texts put at our disposal and they create possibilities and limitations for what can be said and done. If we accept that the choice of educational texts constitutes a central elements in the planning and delivery of the class (Seelen & Munk, 2012; Sikorova, 2012; Svendsen, 2013), it is also relevant to suggest an increased *reflection* among those who engage in PE practices on ways in which discursive positions and more or less concealed values and ideas are embedded in educational texts *in general*. In the words of Chouliaraki (2001), in every case it is important to ‘call attention to the way that regulative discourses [...] construct practices and subjects as “natural”’ (ibid., p. 62). In that regard, this paper provides an example of the kind of critical scrutiny of educational texts that we find important to encourage among PETE teachers and pre-service teachers in general.

Finally, the analysis of this paper tells us that PETE teachers in Denmark select a number of educational texts that give prevalence to the discourses of sport. These findings support those studies that emphasise that privileged knowledge in PETE is based on traditions within sport and science (Backman, 2008; Mordal-Moen & Green, 2012; Tinning, 2004, 2010; Tinning & Glasby, 2002). This undoubtedly poses problems—not least, perhaps, with respect to curricular goals of PE and PETE. In line with authors like Kirk (2006b) and Vlieghe (2013), we will claim that there is a major difference between using sport as a ‘medium for the realization of broader educational goals’ (Kirk, 2006b, p. 256) and the imitation of popular sport ‘with winning as a primary goal’ (ibid.). Thus, these texts may be seen as resources for teaching specific course elements (e.g. anatomy or physiology), but in the *usage* of these texts PETE teachers as well as pre-service teachers should engage critically with the way that sport is presented. This will allow them to avoid transferring the aims of

popular sport onto PE and instead use sport as a medium that permits them to educate pupils *in, about and through* movement (Arnold, 1979).

Conclusion

In this paper, we have been occupied with the way that discourses from the field of sport contribute to the construction of knowledge in PETE through educational texts produced by private organisations with sporting interests. This paper provides a picture of how educational texts are central conveyers of discourses of sport into PETE and eventually into PE. It calls attention to educational texts as a central site

where dominating discourses on sport are reproduced—an area that has attracted only scant attention in the discussion of this issue. Every text developed for a pedagogical setting is a product of selection and transmission, and the main intention of this paper has been—in line with Wright (2000, 2004), Kirk (2006b) and Tinning (2002) among others—to underline the necessity of scrutinising the ways particular meanings and values are constructed (in educational texts, for example) if we are going to be able to reflect, discuss and maybe change dominant practices in PE. Thus, the scrutiny of educational text that we have applied here should be applied not only in relation to these specific kinds of texts but in general among teachers and students engaged in PE and PETE.

Further research will be needed to illuminate how educational texts impact on the construction of pedagogical knowledge in PETE and later in PE. A further development of this study will be to investigate how PETE teachers select and use these materials and whether pre-service teachers adopt these discourses in their future work with PE. In this way, this line of research would be extended by involving elements of what Bernstein terms the ‘evaluation rules’, the rules that regulate the production of texts in pedagogic interactions.

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Supplemental data

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Note

1. Bernstein uses the term ‘pedagogic text’ and defines it as ‘a distinctive realization of pedagogic discourse’ (Bernstein, 1990, p.194).

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