

# UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI SALERNO



Dipartimento di Scienze Politiche, Sociali e della Comunicazione

DOTTORATO DI RICERCA IN

Scienze della Comunicazione, Sociologia, Teorie e Storia delle Istituzioni, Ricerca  
Educativa, Corporeità Didattiche, Tecnologie e Inclusione

*Curriculum*

CORPOREITÀ DIDATTICHE, TECNOLOGIE E INCLUSIONE

XV CICLO – nuova serie

## ABSTRACT

*“The spatial and temporal categories of movement: simplex and vicarious  
perspectives”*

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Anno accademico 2016/2017

## **Theoretical Framework**

Space-time orientation is closely dependent on input, and therefore on perception. As learning progresses, the consolidation of acquisitions and the transformation of abilities into competencies takes place.

Motor skills can be identified as abilities that adapt to changing environmental contexts. An example of this is the execution of an action for which one has the acquired ability but of which it is obviously impossible to experiment the infinite number of variables that may intervene.

A competence can be performed during the execution of a motor task, which envisages knowing 'how to do' and knowing 'how to act' effectively especially in heterogeneous environmental conditions.

In this respect, the degree of competence achieved is carried out based on the success of the task and implies a high level of quality of the action which is put into practice with mastery, effectiveness, safety, automaticity and systematically.

Therefore, these represent the natural evolution of the acquisition and consolidation of motor skills and abilities. These represent the functional prerequisite for developing competent motor action.

Motor skills are a complex field of research which is further enriched by theoretical knowledge, personal inclinations and masteries, which allow the achievement of results that promote versatility in action and adaptation to the environment.

From nursery through to primary school, motility is a crucial time when the child's corporeity is enhanced by communicative and expressive meanings that contribute to the achievement of autonomy.

Through the child's experience of motor and postural schema that are adapted to an array of play-situations, the child progressively gains recognition of his own body and its parts, both in static as well as in dynamic form.

Motor, intellectual, affective, relational, social and moral development in childhood proceeds in parallel with the rapid acquisition of competencies that cannot be separated from the motor area if they are to be considered significant.

As claimed in the National Curriculum Guidelines for nursery and primary school, acquiring a competence means play, move, manipulate, be curious, ask questions, learn to reflect on experience through exploration, observation and contrasting different properties, quantities, characteristics, facts; it entails listening and understanding, narrations and discussions, accounting and revoking actions and experiences and translating them into personal and shared records; being able to

describe, represent and imagine, repeat situations and events through simulation and role play using different forms of language”.

From this what emerges is the potential of didactics concentrated on movement in preschool years with the aim of offering children an array of motor opportunities to refine their competencies. The objective is that of reaching full autonomy of their own corporeity in pre-school through a wide spectrum of motor opportunities. Moreover, the importance of the theme of motor evaluation is highlighted, more particularly, the monitoring of psycho-motor characteristics in childhood and the organisation of space and time.

## **Methodology**

The sample consisted of 379 children, aged between 3 and 6 years (mean age 4.75 years), attending nursery and primary schools in the province of Salerno. The sample was subjected to psychomotor observations to investigate difficulty in coordination, levels of autonomy, motor skills and gender differences in the development of coordination.

The tool used is the Movement ABC Checklist (Assessment Battery for Children), administered by class teachers, previously subjected to targeted training. The evaluation methods are an integral part of accurate observations of the child's daily activities in the school environment. The first four sessions of the Checklist (48 items) were taken into consideration. These are related to psychomotor behavior of the child's interaction with the surrounding environment in order to highlight motor performance in progressively more complex situations.

## **Results**

The study conducted demonstrates that the females tend to be more coordinated, both with respect to the males as well as when age progresses. Another aspect that emerged was the discontinuity of the results with respect to the linear progression, in terms of difficulty, of the motor tasks as presented in the standardised checklist. In fact, the results go against the continuity element of the sessions, thus showing incompatible results with a linear progression model.

The findings reveal a lack of motor skills that are performed through the autonomy of each child. This condition sheds lights on which daily and school life characteristics should guide the teaching for the recovery, development and strengthening of psychomotor skills.

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