

## ARTICLE BY A. BIANCO - FIVE LANGUAGES ABSTRACTS

(E)(F)(S)(P)(Italian)

## CONCEPTS AND EPISTEMOLOGY RELATING TO "ADAPTATION": STRONG POINT IN "ADAPTED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT"

The article presents the different meanings of the term "adapted", and the difference between "physical activity" and "adapted physical activity".

Adaptation is considered from three different angles: perspective of sports and sports logics, perspective of social view and activity's internal logics, perspective of motor view and emotional and motor-sensory pleasure. Handicapped people's real demands, operating possibilities and interest will determine whether the sport, social or motor perspective is to be taken for their development.

Since 1975 Italy has accomplished school level integration of all physically and mentally handicapped people (from the less to the most serious cases), whom represent 78.71% of total integrated students, as it can be seen from MPI (Public Education Ministry) data. For this reason the problem of defining which kind of adaptation is needed for these kinds of students is particularly felt by researchers and people operating in the sector and is a key issue particularly difficult to resolve.

Key words: adaptation; adapted physical activity; disabled.

## CONCEPTS ET ÉPISTÉMOLOGIE RELATIFS AU TERME "ADAPTATION": L'OPTIQUE DE « L'ACTIVITÉ PHYSIQUE ADAPTÉE »

L'article analyse la signification du terme "adaptation" qui fait la différence entre « activité physique » et « activité physique adaptée ».

L'adaptation est vue en 3 différents contextes : optique sportive et logique du sport, optique sociale et logique interne de l'activité, optique motrice et logique de l'émotion et du plaisir sensori-moteur. A partir des réelles exigences, potentialités et implication personnelle des personnes handicapées, se déterminent les modalités des adaptations à effectuer pour faire évoluer ces personnes.

A partir du 1975, l'Italie a réalisé l'intégration scolaire de toutes les personnes avec handicap : les handicaps mentaux (des moins lourds aux plus lourds) représentent le 78,71% du total des élèves intégrés, comme on peut voir des données du MPI (Ministère de l'Instruction Publique). A cause de ça le problème de trouver la meilleure modalité d'adaptation de l'activité pour ces élèves est très important et se pose comme une question urgente et de solution difficile.

Mots-clés: adaptation; activité physique adaptée; handicapés.

## CONCEPTOS Y EPISTEMOLOGÍA RELACIONADOS AL TÉRMINO "ADAPTACIÓN": LA ÓPTICA DE LA "ACTIVIDAD FÍSICA ADAPTADA"

Este artículo analiza el significado del término "adaptación" que establece la diferencia entre "actividad física" y "actividad física adaptada".

La adaptación se considera en tres contextos diversos: óptica deportiva y lógica del deporte, óptica social y lógica interna de la actividad, óptica motora y lógica de la emoción y del placer sensorio-motor. Partiendo de las reales exigencias, potencialidades e implicaciones personales, se determinan las modalidades de las adaptaciones que serán efectuadas para la evolución de tales personas.

Desde 1975, Italia ha hecho la integración escolar de todas las personas disminuidas: Los disminuidos psíquicos (de los menos disminuidos a los más disminuidos) representan 78,71% de un total de alumnos integrados, como se puede constatar partiendo-se de los datos del MPI (Ministerio de la Instrucción Pública). Por eso el problema de encontrar la mejor modalidad de adaptación de la actividad para tales alumnos es muy importante y se presenta como una cuestión urgente y de solución difícil.

Palabras-clave: adaptación; actividad física adaptada; minusválidos.

## CONCEITOS E EPISTEMOLOGIA RELACIONADOS AO TERMO "ADAPTAÇÃO": A ÓTICA DA "ATIVIDADE FÍSICA ADAPTADA"

Este artigo analisa o significado do termo "adaptação", que estabelece a diferença entre "atividade física" e "atividade física adaptada".

A adaptação é considerada em três contextos diferentes: ótica esportiva e lógica do esporte, ótica social e lógica interna da atividade, ótica motora e lógica da emoção e do prazer sensorio-motor. A partir das exigências reais, potencialidades e implicação das pessoas, determinam-se as modalidades das adaptações a serem efetuadas para a evolução dessas pessoas.

Desde 1975, a Itália realizou a integração escolar de todas as pessoas com deficiência: os

deficientes mentais (dos menos deficientes aos mais deficientes) representam 78,71% do total de alunos integrados, como se pode constatar a partir dos dados do MPI (Ministério da Instrução Pública). Por isso o problema de encontrar a melhor modalidade de adaptação da atividade para esses alunos é muito importante e apresenta-se como uma questão urgente e de solução difícil.  
 Palavras-chave: adaptação; atividade física adaptada; deficientes.

**DEI CONCETTI E DELL'EPISTEMOLOGIA IMPARENTATI DEL TERMINE "ADATTAMENTO":  
 L'OTTICA DELL' " ATTIVITÀ FISICA ADATTATA"**

L'articolo prende in esame il significato del termine "adattamento" che distingue l'"attività fisica" dall'"attività fisica adattata".

L'adattamento viene visto nei tre diversi contesti: ottica sportiva e logica dello sport, ottica sociale e logica interna dell'attività, ottica motoria e logica dell'emozione e del piacere senso-motorio. A partire dalle reali esigenze, potenzialità e coinvolgimento delle persone diversamente abili, si determinano le modalità degli adattamenti da effettuare per far evolvere queste persone.

L'Italia dal 1975 ha realizzato l'integrazione scolastica di tutti i portatori di handicap: gli handicap mentali (dai meno gravi ai gravissimi) rappresentano il 78.71% del totale degli alunni inseriti, come si può osservare dai dati del MPI (Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione). Per questo il problema di quale sia la migliore modalità di adattamento dell'attività per questi alunni, è particolarmente sentito dai ricercatori ed operatori del settore e si pone come una questione pressante e di difficile soluzione.

Parole chiave: addatamento; attività fisica adattata; persone diversamente abili.



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## CONCEPTS AND EPISTEMOLOGY RELATING TO "ADAPTATION": STRONG POINT IN "ADAPTED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT"

(E)

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### 1- PREFATORY NOTE

In Italy, a reform is underway in university training for university courses in the area of physical education and sport started in 1998/99. The new courses, which include a specialised degree in Adapted Physical Activity and Sports, will require the different meanings of "adaptation" to be examined in greater depth, including in relation to the concrete reality of scholastic integration, since it is at this level that the true difference between physical education and sports, and adapted physical activity and sports, actually lies.

As a general introduction, I think it is important to mention some considerations made by Gardner (2002), which are not specifically related to adaptation, but that are well suited to this situation, and that should for this reason be taken into account. He said:

- "Remember the decisive importance of the first discoveries" [I also wonder 'of the first experiences' regardless of what age these occur at];
- "Use a person's potential so as not to risk losing it" [I believe this is even more important in the case of people with problems, in APA we say 'start from their potential'];
- "Take into account the plasticity and flexibility of the nervous system in the first few years of life" [hence the importance of intervening as early as possible; some deficits at the cerebral level may be compensated for if intervention is concrete and early, whereas it would be difficult if not impossible at a later stage];
- "Remember the importance of action and activity in developing the brain" [thus motor action in first place!];
- "Take into account the sectorial nature of activity, that is the 'gap' that exists between different skills" [some may be in a better condition than others, for example motor capacity may constitute a resource... But I can also see the intersectorial nature of motor experience];
- "Remember the importance of music" [not only in structuring rhythms, but even more so in the emotion of melody];
- "The crucial role of the emotional code" (H. Gardner, 1999; my comments in square brackets).

As we will see later, Parlebas has said that without emotion people cannot learn: I fully agree.

### 2 - ADAPTATION

The concept of "adaptation" marks the difference between "*Physical and Sport education*" and "*Adapted Physical and Sport education*".

In this article I intend to analyse the conception of adaptation in Physical and sport activity.

In pedagogy, the concept of "individualized" activity has long been in use: the teacher adapts his or her work plan to the requirements of the pupils.

In adapted activity, on the contrary, the teacher starts from the reality of the persons and "creates" the work plan, in many cases outside any precise programme. Thus the standpoint is overturned: it is as though, in the operative phase, the teacher were to approach the activity to be done without any pre-constituted starting point: as though (s)he were to "search" among his/her heritage of skills to find that which most fits the person's needs.

We saw above that, although APA originated as a means to rehabilitate motor and sensory disorders, today new prospects have opened up, with an extension and evolution of its range and significance, that has also brought about an evolution of the meaning of "adaptation". I will now analyse the concept of "adaptation" in the light of these new prospects.

The "European Charter for Sport", adopted by the Council in 1987 at Strasbourg, and which constitutes the fundamental point of reference, speaks of three types of adaptation:

- educational or methodological (teaching, approach and working methodology;

- technical (rules and regulations);
- structural (specific activities for a certain type of disability, for example torball for the blind).

However, the reference models are the activities engaged in by "normal people", while the adaptation may be of different degrees, sometimes minimal, depending on the extent of the deficit and gradually, as it becomes possible, it tends to be reduced progressively or to be eliminated.

Different practices of physical activities may be used as reference points that, depending on the goals to be reached, may be seen in relation to three different perspectives: sports, social, and psychomotor. I will now look at these three perspectives in greater depths.

In Europe, the debate is still lively concerning integration. For example, F. Bailleau (1990), a French scholar, has distinguished three terms and three meanings: "assimilation" (being like others), "intégration" (being with others), "insertion" (making a place among others). In Italy this debate has to a great extent been made irrelevant by the reality of school and social integration; however, it is of interest to consider this terminology with regard to the three types of adaptation and the above three perspectives, as well as in historical terms.

In the Italian context, we may agree with the two terms "assimilation", being like others (with its reference to the sports perspective) and "integration", being with others (that relates to the social perspective).

From the psychomotor perspective, though, I think we must approach the question in another way, that is from the standpoint of the significance that the person gives to his or her motor activity, rather than seeking to make a place for the handicapped person among others.

## 2.1- Adaptation in Sport: the Sports Perspective and the Sport Rationale

"Teaching and organising the practice of sports, without denaturing sport and starting from the characteristics of the person, to enrich his or her personality.

Integration is necessary among the different systems that organise the person (sensory/motor/cognitive/psychic)" (P. Therme, 1990).

Serge Bluteau sustains that the word "sport" is used incorrectly in everyday language to indicate any practice of physical activity, and observes that "we must remember that sport is a particular form of practice of physical activity characterised by:

- the search for performance (results, progress, feats)
- fixed conditions to produce performance (training)
- a specific institutional context for practice (federations, sports associations, competitions).

*sports  
perspective*

For there to be sport, it is necessary for all these characteristics to be present simultaneously" (S. Bluteau, 1990).

It is not appropriate here to discuss what is meant by performance, producing performance, the institutional context: suffice it to say that we are analysing the situation from the sport perspective and must follow a sports rationale.

Henry Miau says that: "A specific activity enters into the sports rationale when it responds to three criteria that define its general framework, and within which performance is produced:

- a motor situation involving the person at the bodily level, following pre determined forms and rules;
- a competition with precise rules;
- institutionalised action, that is officially judged and sanctioned by a federation or by its decentralised delegations (H. Miau, 1991).

*sports  
rationale*

With regard to adaptation from the sports perspective, Therme holds that adaptation must tend:

"1) to make the person learn and organise sports practice, without denaturing sport (thus respecting the sports rationale of the activity) starting from the characteristics of the person, to enrich his or her potential;

2) to achieve integration of the different systems that structure the person (sense/motor/cognitive/psychic);

3) to consider sport as a factor of citizenship and of restoration of the principle of reality, when this is weak or missing" (P. Therme, 1991).

It follows that adaptations are very important at the level of equipment, instruments, rules of motor behaviour, technical regulations, to obtain athletes who act following the model of normal persons.

The goal is integration into sport, "to be as far as possible like others with regard to rules, type

of preparation, training, results, participation in the same competitions or in the same type of competitions" (F. Bailleau, 1990).

Historically, it was within this perspective and rationale that the first adaptations were studied.

## 2.2- Adaptation of physical activity in free time: the social perspective and the internal rationale of the activity

But it is not always possible to respect the sports rationale; frequently a person's potential does not allow it. Other criteria come into play, and take priority as they are aimed at "making the person act in the social dimension", to experience integration in the sense of "being together with others" and sharing their activities.

Nuttin says that "it is necessary to follow a path that takes on board the motivations and relations within the person/environment framework, to progress from the individual object of integration, to the individual subject of integration. To structure free time means to enter into the social fabric and create a systemic point of anchorage to encourage weaving a web of relations in the four areas of time: scholastic, professional, daily life and free time" (Nuttin, 1985).

Mantuit has said that physical and sports activities "through an approach centred around the person in action, enable two types of goals to be reached:

- 1) to reduce "handicapping" situations;
- 2) to reduce factors that produce risks.

The path used entails:

- a) situating the individual within an integration process (evaluation of the person's life habits) (he quotes Faugeyrollas, 1991);
- b) organising the practice of physical and sports activities so as to follow the personal programme set by the institution in charge of the person, for the organisation of the environment (structural evaluation);
- c) starting from what the person is capable of doing, whatever the deficit, problem, or incapacity that lies at the origin of specific handicapping situations. By speaking in terms of expressed capabilities, individual goals can be defined pertinently (evaluation of capacities);
- d) proposing pedagogical situations in which, thanks to the organisation of space and to the orders given, each person finds the possibility of acting, choosing, expressing him or herself and evolving (adaptation of activity)" (D. Mantuit, 1995).

Pantaleon speaks of sport as "a means for young people to meet and form a group; a means of expression of daily life; a means of expression of social rules; a factor in psychic and mental health; a compensation strategy; a place of exchange and meeting". (N. Pantaleon, 1997)

Bui-Xuan, Marcellini and MiKulovic have determined three stages

"1st stage: sensitisation;

2nd stage: starting to move, importance of a favourable environment;

3rd stage: making the person progress in assigned tasks". (Bui-Xuan, Marcellini, MiKulovic, 1997)

Camy reminds us that "to understand the sense that actors give to their practical activity, five fundamental dimensions must be taken into consideration:

- the relationship with others;
- the relationship with space;
- the relationship with time;
- the relationship with one's body;
- the relationship with sports results" (J. Camy, 1990).

Here we find some parameters that constitute the person's "links" to experience his or her relationship with others, but that also constitute the connections, that it is the elements of continuity between the social perspective and the psychomotor perspective, as we will see below.

Situations of interaction with the environment and with the world must be put in place so as to progress from the individual object of integration to the individual subject of integration, thus the adaptations must be at the level:

- 1) of the person, so that he or she can discover his or her potential and skills;
- 2) of the arrangement of the environment and space;
- 3) of the organisation of free time.

Through APA the person may express his or her psychological state, way of being and freedom of choice, may experience leisure, may relax, may acquire and demonstrate personal skills and affirm his or her social belonging.

When operating in a social perspective, it may not be necessary to work following the sports rationale; it may frequently be sufficient to respect the concept of "internal logic of the activity".

In the opinion of Pierre Parlebas "by internal logic of an activity we intend: *internal rationale of the activity*

1) a system of elements pertinent to a specific motor situation;

2) the consequences that the system itself implies in the realisation of the corresponding motor activity.

For example, in swimming, the action of swimming may be defined as entering a liquid environment, stretching oneself within it, making movements and

moving (above or below) the liquid, being able to orient oneself, feeling at one's ease, mastering one's breathing, making propulsive movements with one's legs and arms. This definition is the hard core, the 'identity card' that groups together the most salient characteristics of the activity 'swimming'. But this activity is not necessarily sport." (P. Parlebas, 1981)

This internal rationale is a second concept, that flanks the previous concept of sports rationale.

Physical and sports activity as elements of culture, elements underlying citizenship, choice of life plan, possibility of social life. Pleasure of play, free expression of acquired capabilities, to measure oneself against others, to test oneself: even if possible to enter competitions, if the person involved so wishes and is capable of progressing to the sports rationale.

Thus from the social perspective, adaptations typical of the sports perspective (training, results, motor behaviour) become less important, whereas those aimed at making the person with special requirements act in the social dimension become fundamental, to reduce the handicapping situations, factors and mentalities, to achieve the goal of integration in the sense of "being together with others". (D. Mantuit, 1995)

Thus adaptations at the level of the person, so that he or she can discover his or her potential and skills; at the level of arranging the environment and space; and at the level of organising free time.

### 2.3- Adaptation from the motor perspective, rationale of emotion and of amplifying objects

From the two previous perspectives (sports and social) the person has made the choice to participate, has decided to practice a physical/sports activity.

The true problem we must face is to tackle and study the level at which this choice is not yet present or possible, or in any case when the person does not have the motivation or the desire to practise an activity involving movement. *motor perspective*

This situation is frequently found in schools and special structures, or in all those cases in which the person does not practice motor activity; in particular it concerns those with mental handicaps.

If the person "does not want" to participate in an activity involving movement, he or she is unable to perceive the "pleasure" of doing so, nor the "satisfaction" of achieving improvement, even though this may be slight.

If, on the contrary, for this person "movement" becomes a source of pleasure, repeating this pleasure also implies repeating the movement that is at the origin of the pleasure: this means being alive and participating at the emotional level, it means giving an emotional sense to movement.

In this connection, I believe it is fundamental to start from what Monique Bauer said in her conclusions at the end of a study day on mental handicap, when she pointed out that the "red line" along which the debate had taken place could be summed up in these words: "to start their body moving, the person with a handicap or with problems requires first of all to find a meaning in the activity, so that he or she becomes the active subject of that activity, quite apart from all that that we can do for them and on their behalf". (M. Bauer, 1991)

It is important to take into account:

- that the person must be active, the person must not be transformed into an object;
- the extraordinary individual complexity of the person;
- the decidedly positive approach by persons with mental handicaps if they are stimulated or

engaged in APA;

- to choose the approach carefully (Vincent's emotional pedagogy, Koechlin's mirror work, use of competitiveness following Bui Xuan and Bluteau);
- the person must not be forgotten;
- the staff must be a highly qualified and competent.

Vincent calls our attention to the term "emotion". He has pointed out that "frequently emotion has been experienced as behaviour that destabilises, upsets, paralyses the individual. On the contrary, in the entomological sense of the term *emotion motivates action* (which derives from the Latin "to move") emotion is defined as the driving force, the movement, the motivation to action" (B. Vincent, 1991).

He identifies emotion in this second meaning (which also includes the sphere of affect and imagination) and thus as the foundation and driving force of action.

He is in agreement with Parlebas, who expresses the same concept in these words: "Emotionality is the key to motor behaviour. The only case in which we may suppose that emotion does not intervene is that in which the individual faces a situation that has no sense or meaning for him or her and that therefore produces no change, no learning. Every act of learning mobilises the person as a whole, the emotional dimension, indissociable, is always stimulated, thus emotion is an integral part of the act of learning. In other words, situations of non-learning are those that do not stimulate the person in his or her emotional dimension.

It is very important to optimise the degree of emotion because there is a risk of hindering a learning dynamic. It is necessary to know how to regulate the emotional cost of a pedagogical situation, acting on three poles:

- the group, which may generate or inhibit emotions;
- the task to be learned, which must be adapted;
- the teacher, who must be able to analyse critically his or her own behaviour with the people he or she is working with, the words he or she uses, his or her communications system, whether verbal or not. (P. Parlebas)

The teacher must always take these factors into account, whatever the level of capabilities, age and severity of handicap or problem affecting the person, "he or she may stimulate emotion by using amplifying objects and amplifying attitudes whose value is rooted in the emotional sphere". (B. Vincent, 1991)

*stimulate  
emotion*

This amplification of emotion will enable persons whose initiative is inhibited to be stimulated in their most ancient and deepest needs.

Vincent motivates and develops this approach; he points out that "in science, amplifying instruments are intermediaries that enable us to perceive and understand the infinitely small (for example the electron microscope), the infinitely long (for example the telescope or radar), the infinitely large (for example calculations in mechanics). These instruments extend the hand, the eye, the hearing, the brain: they are at our service to understand better and to act in consequence.

In the same way, by exaggerating the experience of perceptions we facilitate the acquisition of information, memorisation, attention and imagination.

In this way it is possible to seek to vary sensations: of time (speed, acceleration, slowing, fast, slow) of space (high, distant, close, large, small, closed, open) and of energy (which is the result of the contraction or amplification of time and energy factors).

By amplifying the parameters of the environment (time, space, energy) it is possible to awaken (stimulate) the imaginary and emotional dimensions of an individual, so that he or she may find a profound meaning in his or her motivation to act". (B. Vincent, 1991)

This is a pedagogy that amplifies extremes and contrasts, that makes it possible to enter the world of the non-usual, that asks questions, stupefies, changes and incites to action. This pedagogy has been used by many pedagogists for many years: by Itard, Séguin, Montessori and more recently Aucouturier and Lapierre.

*amplifying  
objects...*

The aim becomes: to encourage the awakening of all the person's senses to stimulate him or her to act or react, to halt the proposed activity or cause it to evolve.

Depending on the parameters that are stimulated, Vincent distinguishes different types of amplifying objects or equipment:

*...of: time, space,  
force/energy*

- "of time: balloons, silk scarves, tissue paper, long light tapes;
- of space: wheel-barrows, roller skates, roller board, squares of carpet, mini-trampoline and trampoline;



- of force/energy: balloons, foam rubber balls, parachutes, the aquatic environment, the gym".

J. Turpin and G Bui-Xuan hold that "the ludic dimension is central, adaptation must be viewed in function of what pushes the person to act and it is important to define levels of "conation" (action that stimulates the person to act) that lies at the crossroads of the rationale of the person and that of the activity".

They identify five stages in the evolution of the typical conduct of a person involved in an activity:

- 1) emotional, excessive domination of existing positive and/or negative structural capability;
- 2) functional, attained by abandoning one's own functional processes;
- 3) technical, physical activity is invested with considerable functional capabilities to be integrated so as to reproduce them subsequently;
- 4) of contextualisation, the production rests on placing the integrated functional capabilities into pertinent (functional) relation;
- 5) of creative capacities and skills, in which the structural capacities and the functional capacities are stimulated as far as possible". (J. Turpin e G Bui-Xuan, 1997)

To conclude, Brunet has provided some indications of the didactic type. He says: "that positive feedback is necessary; that the pleasure of acting must be immediate; that the climate must be reassuring; that it is very important that the teacher provide verbal accompaniment; that the personnel rhythms and times of each person must be respected; that facilitating objects must be used. All of this because the handicapped person must be alive at the emotional level". (F. Brunet, 1991)

Clearly, the necessary adaptations in this case are at the methodological level, tending to make the person perceive the pleasure of movement, or frequently to introduce them to it, knowing that we must be able to regulate the emotional cost of a pedagogic situation. For example we must work:

- on how to stimulate the sensory/motor implications typical of activities with objects that have different characteristics;
- on teacher/person-with-handicap relations/communications;
- and/or on the problems that emerge;
- on the relations/communications that arises between the person with the handicap and the group in which he or she is integrated.

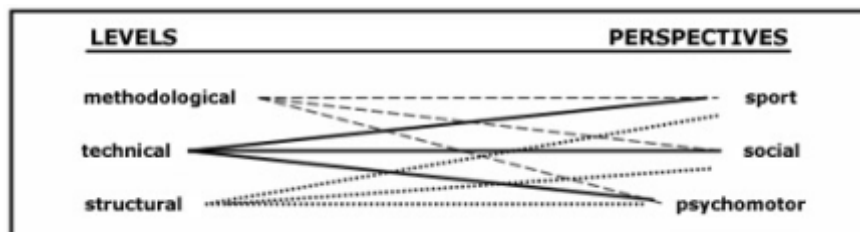
The teacher must develop a critical analysis of his or her behaviour, language, gestures or contacts, that is of all the proxemics and body language that make up the weave of infra-verbal language, so as to:

- stimulate the pleasure of activity, and thus motivate to participation;
- awaken attention and memory;
- help the person to select information;
- stimulate the person's perception of elements in the environment;
- help the person to achieve control of increasingly difficult movements; *goals*
- stimulate personal initiative and the desire to do things, to act and to move.

All those persons with special needs who are unable to practise sport or integrate themselves into a free-time activity must be initiated in an activity of the psychomotor type. It is clear that this is the situation with most problems and difficulties; it undoubtedly relates to the more serious cases and frequently, I would like to stress, to those with mental handicaps. Given the Italian condition of total integration, this situation is very frequently found.

We have spoken of three perspectives: depending on the situation in which we must work, closer to one or other of these, the adaptations will be of the methodological, technical or structural type.

*Three levels of adaptation and three perspectives of activity:*





## 3- THE ITALIAN SITUATION

In Italy during the 1970s, two types of events occurred that influenced the regulations issued by the Ministry for Public Education, with regard to the integration of handicapped pupils in school:

- the so-called "student revolution", which accused the school of being traditionalist and authoritarian;
- the massive increase in industry in northern Italy, which brought about a sizeable migration of workers from southern Italy to the north. The children of these immigrants, uprooted from their cultural context, understandably had difficulty in integrating into the new environment, with consequent learning problems. For this reason, teachers tended to place them in the "special" classes, which existed at that time. The number of these classes increased out of all measure, but the pupils in them were above all socially maladapted children rather than those with handicaps.

Faced with this situation, and pushed by the student movement's loud demands for "an equal school for all", in 1975 the Ministry ordered the closure of all special schools, and ruled that all handicapped children must be integrated into normal schools.

Teachers in the special schools became "support teachers" for those in classes in which handicapped children had been placed.

In later years new circulars were issued regulating the various problems as they occurred, and in 1992 a General Framework Law for the Handicapped brought together all these regulations.

The definition of handicapped persons that was given is as follows:

"The handicapped person is one who has a physical, psychic or sensory disability, stable or progressive, that causes learning difficulties or difficulty in relation or integration, to the extent that it causes a condition of social disadvantage". (1992, Framework Law).

*Thus Italy since 1975 has achieved complete school integration.*

The data given in the table below shows that the largest number of integrated pupils belongs to the category denominated "psychic"; thus for us it is particularly important and urgent to study adaptation as it relates to this level, that is the psychomotor level, in consequence: adaptation from the psychomotor perspective.

Number of integrated pupils, subdivided by the type of lesion (1993/94) MPI (1):

	Kindergarten	Elementary	11/14	14/19	All schools	% of total handicapped
Blind	210	998	797	398	2,403	2.25
Deaf	615	2,622	1,771	1,067	5,715	5.35
<i>Psychic (2)</i>	<i>5,760</i>	<i>40,094</i>	<i>36,973</i>	<i>1,160</i>	<i>83,987</i>	<i>78.71</i>
Physical	1,560	5,272	3,352	4,546	14,730	13.79
Total handicapped people	8,145	48,986	42,893	8,171	106,835	
Total pupils	837,959	2,619,604	1,887,549	2,540,741	7,887,853	

(1) Italian Ministry of Education data

(2) In Italy "psychic" includes mentally handicapped autistic, psychotic, ESN

Total number of integrated pupils in Italian schools (MPI)

Number of integrated pupils (Turin and Province), subdivided by type of lesion.  
(Turin Education Authority)

	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02
Blind	85	93	91
Deaf	178	175	182
Psychic	2,676	2,930	3,194
Physical	586	587	630
Total	3,525	3,785	4,097

In conclusion, I would like to stress that real situations cannot always be so rigidly separated as this search for methodological codification has made necessary, tending towards too-structured a classification.

In reality there is a gradual passage from one perspective to another with the general and common goal of improving the capabilities of handicapped persons, so that each of them can reach a higher level, insofar as this is possible.

It is a progression of experiences that each handicapped person makes within an overall framework, reaching a stage that is adequate for his or her capabilities, in the very appropriate words of Brunet "from motor awakening to the practice of sports is a continuum of experiences centring around the development of the person" (F. Brunet, 1991).

It is also important to consider the extended perspective that are now opening and that required increasing reflections on adaptation criteria. Indeed, from then ICSSPE vademecum, the body of knowledge is determined as follows:

"APA includes an interdisciplinary "body of knowledge" aimed at:

- a) identifying and resolving motor problems during the different stages of life;
- b) developing and using behavioural methods in support of the approach to sport and an active life-style;
- c) promoting innovation and studying systems to potentiate co-operation among home/school/community services.

This definition clarifies that APA does not exclusively concern the population that historically were defined as handicapped or special. Today, the importance is placed on individual differences and interaction with the environment, which take the form of challenges at the physical, mental, social or emotional level, and which influence the achievement of an active life-style and social integration.

Furthermore, APA is not only a term used to describe an interdisciplinary "cross" among different branches of knowledge, but also a theoretical framework for research and strategies for physical activity programmes" (K. De Pauw, 2000).

At present, both the research and the application of APA involves many different types of subjects:

persons with physical, sensory, and mental handicaps; young children; the elderly and the very elderly; those suffering from organic diseases (diabetes, asthma, obesity, anorexia etc.); the socially maladjusted, prisoners, those with terminal illnesses, drug addicts, persons suffering from AIDS.

The list is not complete because, at the operative level, new applications are constantly being added: for example activities for children of different ages who are hospitalised: new perspective also for the adaptations.

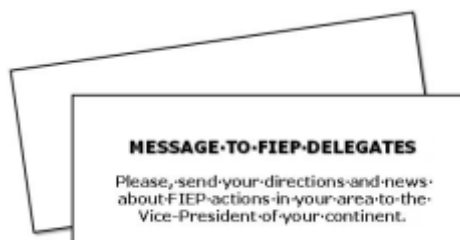
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#### Internet Resources

[www.istruzione.it](http://www.istruzione.it)  
[www.ifapa.biz](http://www.ifapa.biz)  
[www.apaitaliana.it](http://www.apaitaliana.it)



<p>PHYSICAL EDUCATION AS A MEANS OF CULTURAL PROMOTION</p> <p>Stated in World Manifesto of the Physical Education FIEP 2000</p> <p><u>Whereas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For its conceptual inclusion, Physical Education can be considered a means of cultural development;</li> <li>• That the cultural pluralism of nations and regions demand that all the practices respect the cultural diversity, trying to find strategies adapted to the different realities and characteristics;</li> <li>• The 7<sup>th</sup> Article in the <u>International Charter of Physical Education and Sport</u> (UNESCO / 1978) established that "the defense of moral and cultural values cannot be left out of Physical Education and the Sport."</li> <li>• That the conclusions of the <u>XV Physical Education Pan-American Congress</u> (Lima/1995) suggested that people's cultural values and traditions be rescued and preserved through Physical Education and Recreation;</li> <li>• That the 8<sup>th</sup> Article in the <u>3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference of Ministers and High-level Officers in charge of Physical Education</u> and (MINEPS III / Punta del Este / 1999), through the <u>Declaration of Punta del Este</u>, defended the support to a policy that preserves and appreciates sports and traditional games that make up regions and countries' cultural legacy;</li> </ul> <p><u>FIEP concludes</u></p> <p>Art. 9 - Physical Education should always be ethically used as an appropriate form to respect and reinforce cultural diversities.</p>
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<p>A EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA COMO UM MEIO DE PROMOÇÃO CULTURAL</p> <p>Celebrado no Manifesto Mundial de Educação Física FIEP 2000</p> <p><u>Considerando</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Que a Educação Física, pela sua abrangência conceitual, pode ser considerada como um meio de desenvolvimento cultural;</li> <li>• Que o pluralismo cultural das nações e regiões exige que todas as práticas respeitem a diversidade cultural, procurando encontrar estratégias adaptadas às diferentes realidades e características;</li> <li>• Na <u>Carta Internacional de Educação Física e Esporte</u> (UNESCO/1978), no seu art. 7<sup>o</sup> estabelece que "na Educação Física e no Esporte não se pode perder de vista a defesa dos valores morais e culturais".</li> <li>• Que o <u>XV Congresso Panamericano de Educação Física</u> (Lima/1995), nas suas conclusões, sugeriu que sejam resgatados e preservados os valores culturais e as tradições dos povos, através da Educação Física e Recreação.</li> <li>• Que a <u>3<sup>a</sup> Conferência Internacional de Ministros e Altos Funcionários Encarregados da Educação Física e do Esporte</u> (MINEPS III/Punta del Este/ 1999), através da <u>Declaração de Punta del Este</u>, no seu art. 8<sup>o</sup>, defendeu o apoio a uma política de conservação e valorização dos esportes e jogos tradicionais que formam o patrimônio cultural das regiões e dos países;</li> </ul> <p><u>A FIEP conclui</u></p> <p>Art. 9 - A Educação Física, deverá eticamente ser utilizada sempre como um meio adequado de respeito e de reforço às diversidades culturais.</p>
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