THE SEMINIUM METHOD

Filippo Casarotto
University of Verona
filippo.casarotto@univr.it

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ABSTRACT
The Seminium Method is a pedagogical approach to Physical Education built on three integrated pillars: communicative didactics, orientative didactics, and the conscious use of digital tools. It aims to enhance motivation, inclusion, and soft skills by combining cooperative learning, social-emotional learning, mediated learning, and instructional design (ADDIE; Gagné). It includes a 3-hour communication module and year-long routines: anticipatory rubrics, guided reflection, and digital micro-learning. An anonymous end-of-year survey (N=200) showed positive perceptions of collaborative activities (83.0%), a high sense of inclusion (89.0% “always/often”), and perceived benefits of anticipatory assessment (93.5%). Most students would recommend the approach (88.0%). Preliminary results suggest that integrating communication, guidance, and digital supports can strengthen engagement; future studies should adopt pre/post measures and comparison groups.

KEYWORDS
Physical Education; motivation; inclusion; communication skills; formative assessment; digital competence; cooperative learning.

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1. Introduction

Over the past few years, awareness of the importance of stimulating students' curiosity has grown considerably, turning them from passive spectators into active protagonists of their own learning process. Despite this emerging awareness, Physical Education often remains a marginal subject in the educational ecosystem, characterized by low levels of intrinsic motivation among teenagers [1].

Systematic observation, both as a teacher and as a parent, reveals a worrying phenomenon: students' enthusiasm for Physical Education is frequently weak. This observation prompted an in-depth research into how a vital discipline can authentically convey passion and meaning to Twenty-first-century students [2].

The contemporary educational context is characterized by a rigidity of values in which many students remain anchored to the idea that school value is measured primarily in grades and performance, rather than in personal discovery and holistic growth [1]. This limited perspective frequently extends to families as well, who tend to evaluate the educational pathway according to the same restrictive parameters [1].

The response to this issue gave rise to the Seminium Method: an orientative teaching approach that guides students not only in physical activities but also in the conscious discovery of themselves and their potential. The term itself "Seminium" evokes this philosophy: a didactics that does not stop at traditional assessment, but sows possibilities, stimulates curiosity and opens new developmental perspectives.

2. Objectives

This article describes the Seminium Method and presents a first descriptive account of its reception through an anonymous end-of-year questionnaire. The operational objectives are: (a) to make the three methodological pillars explicit; (b) to detail the teaching and assessment routines; (c) to document students' perceptions of collaboration, inclusion and the usefulness of anticipatory formative assessment.

3. Theoretical Foundations

Pedagogical innovation is a process that requires overcoming entrenched prejudices and recognizing the need for alternative teaching paradigms. The Seminium Method sits within this transformative perspective, rooted in well-established learning theories and empirically validated educational practices.

The method integrates derived elements from multiple theoretical frameworks: cooperative learning, which emphasizes peer collaboration as a mechanism for constructing knowledge [3]; advanced Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), which provides tools for optimizing conscious communication (NLP is referred to as a set of operational communication techniques, without assuming it as an explanatory theoretical model) [4]; social-emotional learning (CASEL), which recognizes the importance of emotional and relational development [5]; the Feuerstein method, based on cognitive modifiability and reciprocal teaching [6]; Gagné's Nine Stages of Instruction, which systematically structure the learning process [7]; and the ADDIE model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation), which provides a systematic framework for curriculum development [8].

4. Structure and Methodological Pillars

The Seminium Method rests on three complementary and interconnected methodological pillars, each designed to address specific aspects of student development within physical education.

4.1. First Pillar: Communicative Didactics

Foundations and Rational

Communication is a central element of the contemporary educational experience. Twenty-first-century adolescents communicate through new codes and at new speeds, often characterized by fragmentation and superficiality. The role of school, in this context, is to transform this natural communication into a conscious, intentional and effective competence.

The first pillar, communicative didactics, is based on a fundamental insight: “What you say is right, but it is how you say it that makes the difference.” This principle emphasizes the importance of congruence between content and expressive form, between message and mode of transmission.

Operating Principles

The communicative didactics of the Seminium Method structures its intervention around five core principles:

- **Responsibility:** developing awareness of the communicative consequences of every interaction;
- **Attention to others:** cultivating empathic perception of the message receiver;

- **Active listening:** practicing listening that is not passive but participatory and reflective;
- **Congruence:** ensuring alignment between verbal and non-verbal language;
- **Flexibility:** dynamically adapting the message to the context and the receiver.

Practical Implementation

The initial module of the Seminium Method consists of a targeted three-hour training in which students acquire instrumental skills to concretely improve their communication abilities. Implementation takes place through hands-on workshops in the gym, for example by having small groups lead the warm-up.

In these experiences, students directly experience both the difficulty and the effectiveness of giving clear commands, dynamically managing the group, and adapting to the feedback received. This training is valuable not only in the sports context but also for students' future professional lives, developing soft skills that are essential in the contemporary labour market.

4.2. Second Pillar: Orientative Didactics in Physical Education

Pedagogical Conceptualization

Orientative didactics applied to Physical Education is the second pillar of the Seminium Method, based on experiences aimed at fostering self-discovery and group dynamics. This pillar differs from traditional physical education, which often emphasizes performance and technical evaluation, in order to embrace an orientative and formative perspective [1].

The concept of orientation in physical education is not limited to career guidance but extends to life orientation: helping each student discover their own talents, inclinations, strengths and improvement areas [2].

Learning Experiences

Through structured practical and reflective activities, each student has the opportunity to:

- Recognize their own strengths and areas for personal improvement;
- Develop leadership and collaboration skills in authentic contexts;
- Deeply understand the importance of teamwork and shared responsibility;
- Experience different roles (leader, participant, reflective observer).

In this way, physical education is transformed from a merely technical subject into an opportunity for an integrative life orientation: not only athletic, but also social and personal.

Practical Case: Learning Unit on the Warm-Up

A concrete example of the application of orientative didactics is the Learning Unit (U.D.A.) focused on the warm-up:

- Students, divided into groups of three (informed in advance through a digital platform), take turns leading the warm-up for the whole class;
- During the activity, they must communicate clearly and apply the specific communication techniques acquired in the first pillar, using visual anchors and cooperating to make the exercise succeed;

- The teacher takes the position of observer-facilitator, supporting the groups and following individual students in their process;
- At the end, a structured metacognitive reflection is held with the group that led the activity, to identify what worked in the communication and to offer constructive suggestions on how to improve on future occasions;
- The expected competences are explained to students in advance, allowing them to prepare consciously and to self-assess their performance.

Educational Impacts

Students report a positive perception of the class climate, as they dynamically alternate between the role of leader (with its responsibilities) and that of participant (with the experience of having to follow instructions).

Pedagogical research shows that this experience fosters the development of fundamental transversal competences [9]:

- Concrete development of leadership and group-management skills;
- Integrated practical application of communication techniques;
- Experiential learning of collaboration and decision-making in real contexts;
- Greater awareness of the effort required to lead and to be listened to effectively.

4.3. Third Pillar: Conscious Integration of Information and Communication Technologies

Rational and Framework

The third pillar of the Seminium Method concerns the strategic and conscious integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), in line with the European Union's DigComp 2.2 and DigCompEdu competence frameworks [10] [11].

The use of ICT is not an end in itself but instrumental to achieving the pedagogical objectives set by the preceding pillars. Digital technologies, when integrated with educational intent, become facilitators of learning and tools for inclusion [10].

Technological Implementation

The integration of ICT in the Seminium Method is achieved in multiple ways:

- *Accessible Institutional Google Site*

  A Google Site is set up, accessible exclusively to authenticated users of the school, where students receive the teacher's communications in two modes: visual and auditory. This support is particularly valuable for students with Personalized Learning Plans (PDP), Special Educational Needs (BES), Specific Learning Disorders (DSA) or Individualized Education Plans (PEI), since it anticipates content, reduces school-related anxiety and significantly strengthens instructional communication [12].

- *Data Collection and Group Formation*

  In the first lessons, through the digital platform, the teacher:

  → Explains to students the school context of Physical Education and the specific rules, and collects their informed consent through QR code;

  → Administers sociometric tests to form evenly balanced and functional working groups;

  → Collects structured data on students' sporting activities via Google Forms.

- *Advance Visualization of Content*

  The Google Site makes it possible to anticipate lessons by visually showing the theoretical-practical notions and the exercises that will be performed in the gym, facilitating mental preparation and reducing uncertainty.

- *Publication of Working Groups*

  Subsequently, based on the sociometric test data, the working groups (made up of three students) for the assessed activities of the following two months are published, ensuring transparency and involvement.

5. Methodology

5.1. Development Process

The implementation of the method was preceded by a systematic process of stakeholder engagement. Preparing students for this new teaching approach

was essential, with families also actively involved to foster acceptance and a conscious sharing of the methodological principles.

The teacher operated according to the paradigm of the “cultivator of potential”: not merely an evaluator, but an active guide, a constant stimulus and an emotional support, so that every student could discover and let their abilities blossom, according to their own pace and characteristics.

5.2. Experimentation Context

The Seminium Method was tested and developed over two academic years at an upper-secondary technical school, involving a total of 9 classes. At the end of the programme, an anonymous online questionnaire was administered to collect students’ perceptions of the teaching intervention and its effects on motivation, classroom climate and the development of transversal competences. Students’ ages range from 14 to 19.

The questionnaire has an exploratory purpose and was not subjected to psychometric validation procedures, consistent with the descriptive aim of the study.

200 of 218 eligible students responded (response rate 91.7%), from first-, second-, third-, fourth- and fifth-year classes; data were collected anonymously, after providing information and obtaining informed consent, with no evaluative consequences for academic performance. The research design is descriptive–exploratory and takes the form of a cross-sectional observational study of students’ self-reported perceptions.

5.3. Data Collection Instrument

The Seminium questionnaire consists of 12 closed items, organized on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = somewhat disagree; 3 = somewhat agree; 4 = strongly agree). The items were constructed to cover, in essential terms, the main theoretical dimensions of the Seminium Method, with simple wording accessible to secondary school students.

The dimensions explored are:

- General motivation towards Physical Education lessons.
- Perceived inclusion in physical activities.
- Collaboration and group work.
- Assessment transparency and formative assessment (advance rubrics, feedback, self-assessment).
- Specific motivation and engagement during Seminium Method activities (e.g., leading the warm-up, group activities).
- Communication skills and leadership (speaking in front of peers, leading the group, giving clear instructions).
- Digital support and anticipation (usefulness of the site, of the advance materials, of the QR codes).
- Overall outcomes and satisfaction with the approach (perceived usefulness for one's own growth, willingness to recommend the method to others).

Each dimension is represented by one or more items; for the descriptive analyses, both response frequencies for each item and – where relevant – simple means over sets of conceptually related items were considered. Data

processing was carried out by calculating percentages and frequency distributions, without inferential procedures, consistent with the exploratory nature of the study.

6. Results Obtained

6.1. Measured Impact Dimensions

The application of the Seminium Method produced self-reported indicators of impact across multiple dimensions of the educational experience:

- Motivation towards physical activity: perceived growth in interest and voluntary participation;
- Depth of learning: consolidation of motor skills associated with richer conceptual understanding;
- Development of transversal competences: students' reported increase in leadership, collaboration, communication and critical-thinking skills;
- Reduction of resistance: marked decrease in reluctance towards Physical Education.

6.2. Assessment and Rubrics

Assessment is framed in a formative way: rubrics are shared with students in advance and used as a tool for orientation and feedback. Classroom interaction includes recurring moments of clarification of criteria, self-assessment and peer feedback, consistent with the literature on the effectiveness of feedback for learning [13].

Table 1. Observed competences and descriptors (example of a concise rubric).

Macro-areas / competences	Descriptors (examples)
A. Specific vocabulary	Being able to use the specific vocabulary of Physical Education.
B. Collaboration	Maintaining a collaborative attitude during the proposed activities.
C. Responsibility	Taking on responsibilities and roles in group work.
D. Respect	Accepting and respecting classmates.

6.3. Questionnaire Results

The results reported are descriptive and based on students' perceptions (N=200). Collaborative activities in the gym were rated as "quite effective" (48.5%) or "very positive and stimulating" (34.5%); 10.0% judged them "not very effective" and 7.0% "I did not like them". The analyses confirm an overall positive evaluation of the Seminium Method by the students (Figure 1).

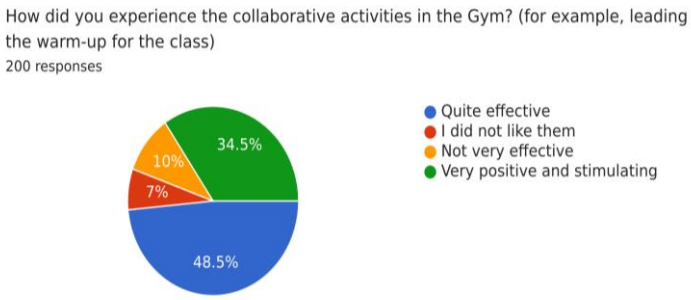


Figure 1. Evaluation of collaborative activities in the gym (anonymous questionnaire, N=200).

As for the sense of inclusion in motor activities, 89.0% answered “always/often” (25.5% and 63.5%); 10.0% “rarely” and about 1% “never” (Figure 2).

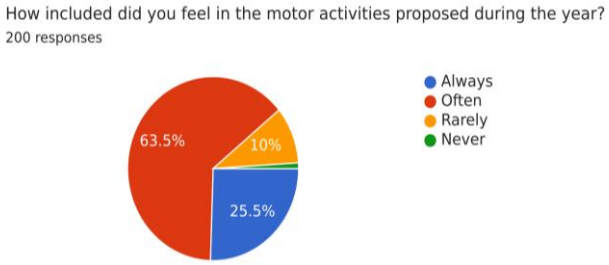


Figure 2. Perceived inclusion in motor activities (anonymous questionnaire, N=200).

The assessment approach with advance rubrics and didactic mediation was perceived as “very effective” by 52.5% and “quite effective” by 41.0%. Residual shares indicated “not very effective” (about 5.5%) or “I don’t remember/I did not pay attention” (about 1.0%); no relevant responses emerged for “not effective at all” (Figure 3).

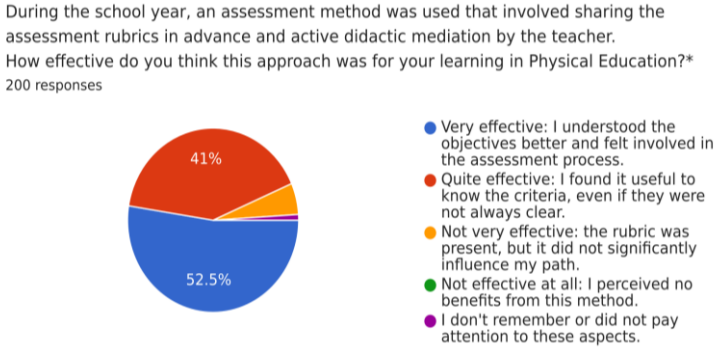


Figure 3. Perceived effectiveness of formative assessment with advance rubrics (anonymous questionnaire, N=200).

Finally, 88.0% would recommend the approach to other students (43.0% “absolutely yes”; 45.0% “probably yes”); 8.5% answered “I don’t know” and a residual share (about 3.5%) “no” (Figure 4).

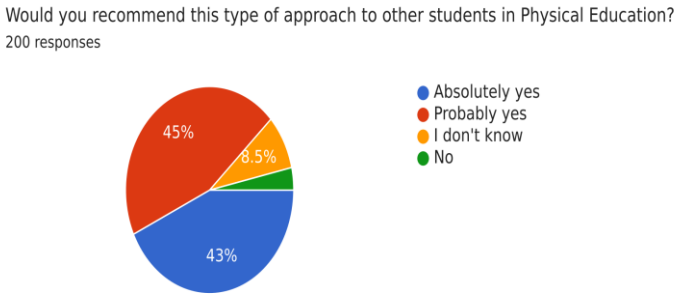


Figure 4. Willingness to recommend the approach to other students (anonymous questionnaire, N=200).

6.4. Student Feedback

The anonymous end-of-year questionnaire, administered via Google Forms, confirmed the overall effectiveness of the teaching intervention, showing:

- High levels of satisfaction and active engagement;
- Positive perception of the class climate as more inclusive and collaborative;
- Recognition of the method’s relevance for developing future skills;
- Broad adherence to the principles of communicative and orientative didactics.

7. Discussion

As regards collaboration, 83% of students judged the group activity in the gym "quite effective" or "very positive and stimulating", while only a minority perceived it as not very effective or disliked it.

As regards perceived inclusion, 89% of the sample state that they feel "always" or "often" included in motor activities, indicating that the cooperative structure and the rotation of roles help reduce situations of exclusion or marginalization.

The dimension of assessment transparency is also strongly appreciated: formative assessment supported by advance rubrics and moments of clarification is considered "very effective" or "quite effective" by 93.5% of students, confirming the orientative role of assessment in making goals and criteria clearer.

In terms of overall outcomes and satisfaction, 88% of students state that they would recommend the Seminium Method to others ("absolutely yes" or "probably yes"), while only a marginal share expresses a negative or uncertain judgment.

These data, although based on self-perceptions and on a four-point scale with no neutral value, indicate a clear tendency towards a positive evaluation of the experience and suggest that integrating communicative and orientative didactics with digital support may be an effective lever for improving motivation, class climate and the sense of self-efficacy in Physical Education lessons.

The perceptions collected indicate that students recognize the value of cooperative activities and of clear assessment criteria. In the literature, structured cooperation and work on relational competences are associated

with better social and academic outcomes and a more inclusive climate; similarly, feedback and explicit criteria can increase awareness and self-regulation.[13-14-15]

In the Seminium Method, the interweaving of communication skills, orientation and digital supports appears to foster motivational conditions (autonomy, competence and relatedness) that Self-Determination Theory[2] considers central to engagement. The use of digital resources, if designed in an accessible and targeted way, can reduce ambiguity, support self-assessment and promote digital citizenship skills.[16-17-18]

7.1. Pedagogical Innovation and School Context

The Seminium Method therefore represents a coherent response to the challenges of contemporary teaching, particularly within the motor disciplines. In a historical moment marked by widespread demotivation towards physical activity among adolescents, the proposed approach offers a valid alternative to the traditional performance-centred model.

The centrality of the person in the methodological development is not a random choice, but reflects well-established evidence from pedagogical and psychological research confirming that self-determination, perceived competence and belonging are critical factors of intrinsic motivation[5][19].

7.2. Implications for Educational Practice

The Seminium Method does not propose a mere technical modification of traditional teaching, but a paradigm shift in the teacher–student relationship. The teacher is not primarily an evaluator, but a facilitator of human development and a “cultivator of potential”.

This perspective is particularly relevant for contemporary school contexts, where the personalization of learning has become an explicit priority in national and international education policies[20].

7.3. Limitations and Future Developments

Although it produced encouraging results, the present approach has some limitations that suggest paths for future research:

- Limited sample: the experimentation was conducted in a specific context; generalizations require replication in different contexts;
- Self-reported assessment: the end-of-year questionnaire is a subjective measure; future research could include structured observations and evaluations based on concrete performance;
- Longitudinality: a longitudinal study would make it possible to assess whether the positive effects persist over time and whether they influence students’ later choices regarding physical activity;
- Transfer of skills: further research could investigate whether the soft skills developed in the motor context transfer positively to other disciplinary areas.

8. Conclusions

The Seminium Method is an innovative teaching proposal that effectively integrates physical education, conscious communication and digital tools in a coherent and theoretically grounded framework.

Its main strength lies in the centrality of the person: not merely assessment, but the intentional sowing of possibilities and the meaningful construction of life skills. Students are not passive recipients of motor information, but active protagonists in discovering their own potential and developing skills essential for their personal and professional future.

The two-academic-year experimentation has concretely shown that this methodological approach is feasible, acceptable to students, and associated with positive perceptions.

We invite the school community—teachers, educators, researchers and policy makers—to experiment with and adapt the Seminium Method in their own contexts, sharing practices, results and innovations with the wider educational community. Only through this collaborative and reflective process can our understanding of the possibilities of contemporary teaching expand and deepen.

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