

Pedagogical sciences

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**ADVANTAGES OF COSSACK FLANKING IN THE PHYSICAL  
EDUCATION PROGRAM AMONG THE STUDENTS OF A SPECIAL  
MEDICAL GROUP**

**Summary.** *This article focuses on physical education in Ukrainian universities in modern crisis conditions. The significance of the problem is in the factors which reduce the level of motivation of students during the studying*

*process, as well as in finding the solution to this problem. The purpose and objectives of the study are to promote this type of motor activity, such as flanking with Cossack weapons. We have developed the program on flanking technical basic elements mastering for the special medical group students. The expediency of this program implementation in the process of physical education in universities and colleges has been scientifically substantiated.*

**Key words:** *ethnocultural component, higher education institution (university), motivation, flanking, students of a special medical group.*

**Introduction.** Modern Ukraine is getting through hard times. The political, demographic, social and economic crises in which our country found itself were caused primarily by shortcomings in the educational, upbringing and health programs of youth training, which have been occurring throughout the years of the country's independence [1; 3].

The national interests of the Ukrainian people require a revision of current standards in all spheres of life. It is necessary to create the conditions for the revival of Ukrainian strength and healthful mind, which, in the past, made our people strong, unbreakable and at the same time, peaceful and sincere, faithful and respectful to their land and its nature. All this can be found in the ancient traditions, laws and education of Ukrainians, where a significant place was dedicated to physical training and education of the younger generation.

The confirmation to this fact can be found in the works of the following authors [5; 6; 8]. Considering the basics of Cossack pedagogy as part of the educational process of modern youth, we consider it necessary to quote: “The spiritual traditions of the Ukrainian Cossacks have become the basis of their mentality, an integral part of their historical essence. The Cossack pedagogy, which has a centuries-old tradition, combines spirituality and physical training, and is now becoming one of the most effective means of spiritual, patriotic and physical qualities cultivation of children and youth [7].

Finally, as noted in the work "Cossack pedagogy and the educational process" [2, p. 460-461]: "The real revival of Cossackdom in Ukraine will start when the youth join this movement, the youth that strives for the better present and works for the better future. And then the revived Cossackdom will become the broad social, political and cultural movement that will unite all the segments of Ukrainian people and will be able to solve urgent issues which the society faces today in the name of the people and for the people." But to date, the understanding of the priority of the real revival of Ukrainian Cossack traditions in this context has not been achieved.

Taking all the mentioned above as a basis and observing the decline of physical education in institutions of different levels of accreditation, however, we understand that physical education and sports remain one of the few areas where you can really carry out sports educational aimed to train students who will become the able-bodied, physically and morally developed citizens.

Today, the health and physical condition of Ukrainian youth shows a deteriorating trend each year [1, p. 89-90]. And, according to experts, this is not just because of unfavorable environmental, social and economic living conditions, but primarily because of a significant decrease in students' interest in physical development and sports [1, p. 89; 3].

According to various authors' opinions [1, p. 90; 3, p. 355-356; 8], the vast majority of students show a consumer attitude towards their own health. Their culture of individual health maintaining and motivation to lead a healthy lifestyle are low. And this happens despite the fact that nowadays the discipline of "Physical Education" in higher institutions offers a wide range of physical activities, primarily aimed at body improving, muscles strengthening and proper posture correcting. Students are offered various types of fitness lessons, martial arts, sports games, swimming, yoga, but their level of motivation to study continues to fall.

In search of different scientific, methodical and innovative approaches aimed to diversify, improve the program of physical education in higher institutions, to make it interesting and adaptable to different groups of students with different levels of physical fitness, health, gender; and taking into account the motives and preferences dictated by the modern world, we concluded that all the innovations that are now being introduced into the physical education program in educational institutions are mainly borrowed from the Western education system or from Eastern practices. In an effort to adopt from other countries all the best available, we have almost forgotten our own traditions and arts, which are closely linked to the physical development, physical education and physical improvement of every Ukrainian. Thus, we have carefully considered the benefits of using the ethnocultural component in the process of physical education and we decided to offer the art of shashka flanking as one of the types of motor activity.

Flanking is a Cossack dance that amazes the imagination. However, this term is mostly known only to those who are familiar with the Cossacks' skill at arms. Today, this skill is almost lost. As for many years we have been deprived of a unique skill that once brought glory to our ancestors, and our country had many deserved victories.

The term "flanking" etymologically comes from the French word "flanquer" – which means "to defend, to cover, to strike from the flanks". It is believed that the exercises with bladed weapons that look spectacular are flanking [10]. However, this concept is wrong. The fact is that once in hand-to-hand combat cavalymen performed the spear fighting techniques and these actions were called "flanking". But later the lexical error became a stable term and began to denote a set of techniques for skill at arms with cool steel. It is believed that the Cossacks adopted the art of flanking from the mountaineers of the Caucasus. The hypothesis is quite viable, if we remember the Dzhigit, Caucasian dances, which involve weapons. In addition, the shashka in its

structure and method of use is closer to a Circassian knife than to a saber [4, 9]. Over time, shashka in a slightly modified form spread among the Kuban Cossacks, who used to "twist" shashka not to show their tenacity, but to defend and to attack.

Shashka is not the only weapon that can be used for training. The flanking with a whip looks spectacular as well. You can also use swords, daggers, sticks, etc. Substantiating the research topic, it is necessary to distinguish between horting fencing with swords, that is a duel; and flanking, i.e. twisting or rotating one or two shashkas in front, above, on the sides, using different technical elements and varying the speed of movement.

Modern experts agree that the ellipsoidal movements of the blade during the flanking allow you to inflict maximum blows in a minimum time with low energy consumption for a human. The benefits of flanking are significant. The exercises involved in the twist are based on consolidating muscular memory and vision of perspective. During the lesson, a person forces all muscle groups to work. Exercises with shashkas strengthen the elbow and wrist joints, develop spatial orientation and flexibility, significantly develop the spine, chest organs, thereby increasing the efficiency of the respiratory and cardiovascular systems; teach to listen to your body; train attention, concentration and reaction speed. In addition, the right grip is the fine motor skills development and is very useful, especially for those who spend a lot of time at the computer. During flanking, a person allegedly turns off the mind and allows the body to work not mechanically (this is the beginning of learning), but consciously and in harmony with himself.

According to experts, if a beginner starts learning the elements of flanking, his body will rapidly come into an excellent physical shape. You can practice at any age. Contraindications are the diseases associated with coordination. Such undemanding indications for this type of motor activity are caused by the fact that the flanking is not very tiring physically, as it may seem.

It improves, above all, concentration, awareness of action, control over your body and weapons. If you work "with the core", you can do flanking for a very long time - an hour or two, interchanging the phases of tension and relaxation. The main thing is not to hurry but to work out the technique of movements.

The relevance of the chosen topic is due to the lack of research and practical implementation in this area; in this regard - we desire to introduce ethnocultural component into the process of physical education to increase the interest and motivation of students to study, promote a healthy lifestyle, increase the level of psychophysical fitness among young people, form their patriotic and social position.

**Object of the research** - physical education in higher educational institutions.

**Subject of the research** - flanking with shashka or its structural analogues (sports and improvised material).

**The aim of the research** is to develop a program for mastering the technique of flanking basic elements for students of a special medical group and scientifically substantiate the feasibility of its introduction into the process of physical education in higher educational institutions.

**Methods of the research:** analysis and generalization of literary sources; work with information resources, student questionnaires, lesson observation; functional tests and testing; methods of mathematical statistics.

**Methodology of the research:** the substantiated and obtained information has been studied; the health-improving, training and educational influence of flanking with the Cossack weapon has been defined; a program for mastering the flanking basic elements technique for the students of a special medical group has been developed; the polling surveys of students on their health, healthy lifestyle, physical activity, etc have been conducted; the initial level of their physical fitness and functionality has been determined with the help of functional tests and control tests; the expected results of the program efficiency

have been indicated; the conclusions have been formed; prerequisites for further research work have been created.

**Results and Discussion:** Referring to the study conducted on the basis of the Kyiv National University of Construction and Architecture, according to the research plan of the topic: "Improving the educational process of physical education of students with different levels of physical fitness in technical universities" [3, p. 355-359] and basing on the results shown in the tables (see Table 1, 2), it is possible to testify only small dynamics of increase of students' performances according to the existing curriculum: the level of physical working capacity and functional possibilities of an organism of students remained at *satisfactory* level; the level of aerobic capacity, as well as the assessment of the rate of pulse recovery after exercise - *unsatisfactory*. The study concludes that the students have health problems, mainly in the cardiovascular and respiratory systems of the body, as well as certain restrictions in the types of physical activity and exercise. Therefore, to significantly increase their aerobic capacity more training time and individual approach are required.

That is, a rational approach to improving the level of physical fitness and functionality of students of a special medical group at KNUCA with the use of functional tests and the usual types of physical activity, due to reduced hours for the discipline "Physical Education" and constantly reducing youth motivation to study proved to be ineffective.

Table 1

**Comparative analysis of the level of physical performance of students of special medical group in 1 and 2 semesters, (n = 30), [3]**

Indexes	1 semester		2 semester		The difference between The indicators	t-criterion	Probability of difference, $\rho$
	M±m	$\delta$	M±m	$\delta$			
Initial pulse rate, beats/10"	15,53±0,48	2,66	14,73±0,39	2,14	0,8	1,29	<0,2

Pulse after exercise	21,36±0,6 2	3,39	20,5±0,68	3,72	0,86	0,94	<0,2
Pulse after recovery	15,1±0,4 9	2,69	14,63±0,3 6	1,99	0,47	0,77	<0,2
Average heart rate increase (points)	3,9±0,2	1,09	4,63±0,09	0,48	0,73	3,31	<0,001
Average heart rate recovery (points)	3,8±0,2	1,08	4,26±0,15	0,8	0,46	2,4	<0,02

Table 2

**Comparative analysis of the level of aerobic capacity among the special medical group students in 1 and 2 semesters, (n = 30), [3]**

Indexes	1 semester		2 semester		The difference between the indicators	t-criterion	Probability of difference, $\rho$
	M±m	$\delta$	M±m	$\delta$			
Initial pulse rate, beats/10"	16,26±0,5 3	2,89	15,77±0,48	2,62	0,49	0,69	<0,2
Pulse after exercise.	26,8±0,8 3	4,57	24,86±0,65	3,6	1,94	1,84	<0,05
Pulse after recovery	17,8±0,7 1	3,89	15,9±0,48	2,63	1,9	2,23	<0,02
Average distance rating (points)	3,13±0,1 6	0,89	3,93±0,15	0,83	0,8	3,8	<0,001
Average heart rate recovery (points)	2,7±0,16	0,91	2,86±0,13	0,73	0,16	0,8	<0,2

Trying to make the following research more effective and useful for working with students, we have decided to combine the innovative approach with ethnic traditions, which is facilitated by the trend of fitness technologies development. Thus, in fitness, a new direction has recently appeared; it is called ethnofitness, which provides physical activity, its technical features, the development of physical and mental qualities, which, as a rule, are mentally and genetically congenial to a particular nation.



According to the purpose and objectives of the study, a program has been developed aimed at mastering the technique of basic elements of flanking, as well as at the development of psychophysical qualities of students of special medical groups, whose level of physical fitness is low or below the average one. The program consists of two parts: theoretical and practical, and also provides students with the following areas of influence: educational, training and health.

The content of the program includes:

- introduction to the course, acquaintance with the types of bladed weapons and their components, safety instruction;
- warm-up exercises (general development, dexterity and coordination);
- special exercises (imitation, symmetrical and asymmetrical);
- standing positions working off;
- exercises for "hand untying" (warming-up for the wrist and elbow joint for the right and left hands);
- mastering the correct position of the handle in the palm (grip);
- acquaintance and study of "kolobrody" (eights with a blade in different directions) with the left and right hands;
- the same with the steps and squats in combination with body work;
- interception of shashka;
- whips;
- combined exercises with one and with two shashkas (ligaments);
- control standards.

Expected efficiency from the classes:

- 1) general improvement of well-being and increase of the level of physical fitness;
- 2) promoting coordinated and harmonized thoughts and movements;
- 3) the development of communication between the right and left hemispheres of the brain, due to synchronous and asynchronous work with both hands, especially at speed;

- 4) training of attention and coordination with the help of dynamic and moderate exercises;
- 5) the psyche strengthening and increasing resistance to stress;
- 6) improvement of operational thinking skills (quick assessment of circumstances, anticipation, self-awareness in space, accurate movement in space);
- 7) the spiral and wave movements remove muscle blocks, strengthen joint ligaments, develop flexibility;
- 8) the circular movements and twisting of the body have the effect of massage on the internal organs and various muscle groups from the fingers to the muscles of the back and torso;
- 9) muscular memory is trained, which provides clear purposeful actions in case of danger, etc.

**Conclusions.** Having the very limited number of publications on the selected topic, as well as the great potential of research work, we have formed the following conclusions as a prerequisite for further research:

1. To give the priority to physical education (from the standpoint of this topic) of the younger generation, that should take place at all educational levels.
2. To develop training programs for specialists in physical culture and sports in order to implement the tasks of Cossack pedagogy in educational institutions.
3. To consider physical culture, physical education and the desire for a healthy lifestyle as the foundations of Cossack pedagogy, which will significantly complement and strengthen the importance of the discipline "Physical Education" in universities, more fully reveal its purpose and objectives, and encourage students to learn traditional values, to master skills and art related to the ethnic culture of the Ukrainian people.

4. To continue research on how the flanking with Cossack weapons impacts on the physical, functional and psychological and emotional state of students, including the students of a special medical group.

5. To consider the flanking as a part of the system of professional and applied physical fitness of students of technical specialties.

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