



PRACTICAL DEMO

WHEN INTERPERSONAL DISTANCES AND RELATIVE VELOCITIES RULE A PLAYER'S DECISIONS AND ACTIONS!

Pedro Passos

Faculdade de Motricidade Humana/Universidade de Lisboa

This practice session will be supported on a behavioural methodological proposal to train team sports. Players behaviour in team sports are driven by two main goals: i) to face the opponents, players should behave as a 'unit' (or sets of subunits) creating interpersonal synergies; ii) explore the landscape of possibilities of action that emerge during the course of a competitive match due to changes in players relative positions. The concept of task representativeness could be a 'common ground' to improve interpersonal synergies formation as well as to drive the players to accurately explore these landscapes.

I turn to an idea previously presented by Araújo and colleagues ([Araujo, Davids, & Hristovski, 2006](#)) where the authors suggested an association between the stages of learning ([Newell, 1986](#)) clearly inspired on Bernstein ideas ([Bernstein, 1967](#)) with the issues related with perceptual attunement of perception and action couplings ([Gibson, 1979](#)). Issues, associated with prospective information, which are crucial to manage interpersonal distances and relative velocities within a competitive match. To this initial idea, and with the purpose of having a 'tool' to manage a practical session, I added the concept of task representativeness ([Araujo, Davids, & Passos, 2007](#)).

Due to the difficulty on how to measure task representativeness, for this methodological proposal I suggested to arbitrarily classify representativeness, concerning the degree of interaction between players within a task. From a practical perspective, this behavioural methodological approach is composed with three levels as follow:

- i)** soft interaction, no interaction or passive interaction among opponents. It creates the conditions for players actively explore how to coordinate with the others, without being (strongly) disturbed by the opponents. Players become perceptively more apt (attuned) for the main sources of information in the game;
- ii)** medium interaction, a few contact is allowed and the possibility of recovering ball possession is open. The time to decide and act decreases, which demands a better control of perception and action to succeed;



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iii) full interaction, all the possibilities of action are open (similar to a competitive match situation). Being fast it is not enough! Decisions and actions accuracy is crucial. Optimization of perceptual skills to adapt to the dynamics of the environment is required.

Some clues on how to 'navigate' on this methodological proposal. First, identify the stage of learning of the players, and then set the task representativeness accordingly. Be aware that the constraints that continuously act on the player's perception and action systems demands that movement patterns need to adjust continuously.

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