



Science, Movement and Health, Vol. XXIV, ISSUE 2 Supplement, 2024
September 2024, 24 (2): 249-253
Original article

FORMS OF DIRECT COMMUNICATION IN SPORT

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Abstract

This paper aims at clarifying a series of aspects related to the communication process specific to sports activities. By considering the communication complexity in sports activities, we shall focus only on the specific forms of direct communication. In this sense, we identified and systematized them and we highlighted their manifestation forms in training and competition.

In our opinion, it is also extremely important to emphasize the functional relationship between different types and forms of communication. We think that the activity efficiency depends on the way of managing the various communication forms within a particular activity. At the same time, it is important to accurately identify the direct communication forms used by each factor involved in the communication process specific to sports activities. The utilization of appropriate communication forms in the training or competition activity ensures, on the one hand, the efficiency in sports skill learning and, on the other hand, the efficiency in competition.

Keywords: direct communication, sports activities, means of communication.

1. Stage of knowledge

Although communication is a process highly involved in all types of human activity, the concerns with conferring it the status of science have started in relatively recent times. In 1986, Ross made an inventory of the definitions given to communication (Bortun, 2002). In their turn, Frank E.X. Dance and Carl E. Larson tried to list the definitions proposed by different authors and identified 126 definitions (Fiske, 2003). All the attempts to define the communication process bear the mark of the activity field integrating the author of the respective definition. In sports activities, communication is rather poor in information, probably because the sports phenomenon complexity renders difficult the identification and interpretation of its different specific aspects.

Within each communication process, the message can be transmitted either *directly* or *indirectly*.

The direct message transmission is achieved by using the *primary communication means*, while the indirect message transmission is based on the *secondary communication means* (Abric, 2022).

The *primary means* used in communication are the following:

- *language*, expressed by *words*;
- *face expression*, which includes *mimicry*, *look*, *smile*;
- *gestures*;
- *body posture and attitude*;
- *sensations*;
- *movement*;
- *the nervous impulse*.

2. The purpose of the study

It derives from the complexity of an activity that supposes the interaction, in the training lesson and in competition, of numerous elements of the communication process. If we start from the specificity of each part of the training lesson, from its organization modality and from the way in which the activity is carried out, we can notice the extremely various and complex shades encompassed by the specific communication process. In this context, our study aims to identify the direct communication forms manifested in training and competition, and how they are concretized in these two moments in sports activity.

3. Research methods used

The main methods used in our research were *bibliographical study* and *observation*, which provided us the necessary documentation for understanding the “communication” process associated with the “sports” field.

4. Development of the study

In order to complete our study, we started from the sports activity specificity, from the goal and objectives of the approached field. These aspects establish a series of priorities related to the communication process. Each objective is achieved through specific means developed according to some particular coordinates and conditions. These

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particularities also leave their mark on the communication process, more exactly on the implemented typology and forms.

In sports, the communication elements are firstly represented by the coach and the group of athletes integrated in the activity. At the competition level, the additional elements emerging in the communication process are represented by opponents, referees, supporters and spectators.

By considering the motor character of this activity, determined by the fact that movement, under its different forms, is present all over the training lesson and the competitive event, we can assert that *movement* represents the main communication form in sports. In the training lesson, movements are permanently performed in accordance with the specificity of each part of the respective lesson, new movements are learned and different movements or their outcomes are evaluated.

The communication typology results from a systematization achieved on the basis of some classification criteria. Thus, according to the *modality in which the message is transmitted*, communication can be either **direct** or **indirect** (Bortun, 2002).

Direct communication uses the *primary means* and indirect communication uses the *secondary means*. (Fiske, 2003). This systematization, provided by the communication theory, doesn't fully reflect the reality specific to sports activity, where other communication elements appear, for instance *corporal attitude, personal presence and posture*.

As to the direct means used to transmit the message, we identify many forms of direct communication.

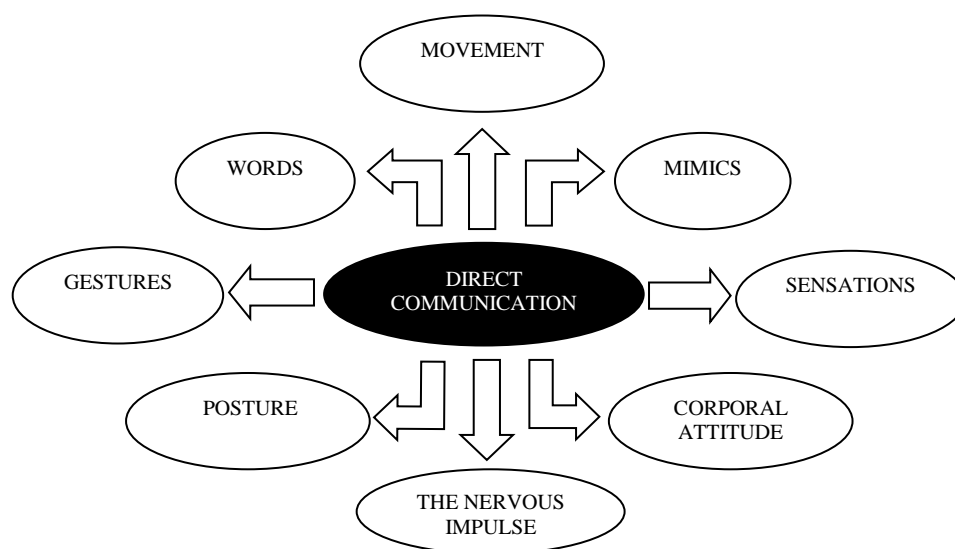


Figure 1. The scheme of means communication (G. Dina)

Forms of direct communication:

- *communication through words (language);*
- *communication through face expression (mimicry, look, smile);*
- *communication through gestures (gestural communication);*
- *communication through sensations (sensations induced by elements from the external environment and sensations generated by your own body) (Dina, 2014);*
- *communication through posture (positioning of the body or its parts in static positions - initial positions of some technical executions);*
- *communication through corporal attitude (positioning of the body or its parts, in motion - within technical executions);*
- *communication through movement (motor communication), in all moments of training or competition;*
- *communication through nervous impulse (Dina, 2014).*

5. Outcomes of the study

The outcomes of this study practically consist of identifying the specific forms of direct communication manifested in the training lesson and in competition. We shall thus notice that the same communication forms, depending on the specific context and on the characteristics of each part of the training lesson, are approached in a particularized way.

Moreover, elements of the specific direct communication are differently associated with elements belonging to paraverbal communication or with other elements of direct communication, such as *gestures, posture or mimicry* (Dancu, 1999).

Direct communication

When identifying the direct communication forms, we have in view the communication process specificity in each of the three parts forming the training structure and, at the same time, we try to take into account the communication specificity in the competitive framework, but also the communication relationships established among the participants, in this context.

As to the systematization proposed by the communication theory and completed by us, we can detach the following aspects related to the concrete forms specific to sports activities:

- *Communication through words (language):*
 - *forms of manifestation in training:*
 - Specific command used to lead training in certain sports (martial arts);
 - Enunciation of the training themes and objectives;
 - Specific terminology associated with the content of each training part;
 - Time-based counting used in some physical preparation exercises;
 - Terminological description, adapted to athletes' level, of all the components approached in the training lesson, but also of the employed means;
 - Correction of some execution mistakes;
 - Work group organization and change of the practice organization forms in relation to each performed exercise;
 - *forms of manifestation in competition:*
 - Communication between the team captain and the main referee in sports games;
 - Communication among the team members during the competitive game;
 - Communication between the coach and his athletes during the statutory rest breaks;
 - Tactical indications transmitted during the competitive game;
 - Teammates' encouragements during the competitive game;
 - Communication between spectators and athletes or other participants during the competitive game;
 - Announcements made by the sports hall or the stadium speaker during the competitive game.
- *Communication through face expression (mimicry, look, smile):*
 - *forms of manifestation in training:*
 - Specific to the commands issued by the coach, it is associated with elements related to the body posture and attitude, being more present in certain sports (martial arts);
 - Used to indicate the action directions during some preparation exercises;
 - Used to express the approval or disapproval associated with specific technical executions;
 - Associated with actions meant to correct some execution mistakes;
 - Associated with the successful or unsuccessful personal or teammates' executions;
 - It expresses the effect of some stressful efforts;
 - Associated with the demand specific to stretching exercises;
 - *forms of manifestation in competition:*
 - Used to express actions associated with tactical indications during the competitive game;
 - Associated with cheating movements (fakes);
 - Associated with referees' actions and decisions;
 - Associated with the actions undertaken by spectators or supporter groups, in order to express their sympathy or hostility.
- *Communication through gestures (gestural communication):*
 - *forms of manifestation in training:*
 - To indicate the gathering place for the group in different training situations or moments;
 - They accompany the explanation and demonstration of some learning actions and have for role to stress the important execution aspects;
 - To indicate some action directions during the exercises;
 - To express approval or disapproval associated with the efficiency or quality of some executions; they are important in the communication specific to some sports played on large fields;
 - Associated with specific execution tasks indicated by the coach;
 - Used by the athletes during some work group exercises;
 - *forms of manifestation in competition:*
 - Associated with actions developed within some tactical combinations meant to surprise the opponent;

- Specific to refereeing, they are used in training by coaches or athletes and in competition by the brigade of referees;
- Performed by spectators or supporter groups during the competitions.
- *Communication through sensations - sensations induced by elements from the external environment and sensations generated by your own body:*
 - *forms of manifestation in training:*
 - Sensations induced by the trainer in the learning process when he touches parts of the body involved in movement for the purpose of correction;
 - Sensations induced by the coach in the learning process when he supports the athlete to prevent accidents;
 - Sensations induced upon contact with opponents or partners, during some exercises;
 - Sensations induced by other elements from the external environment used in training: balls from sports games or equipment elements.
 - *forms of manifestation in competition:*
 - Sensations induced upon contact with opponents or partners, during certain game phases or combat situations in contact sports;
 - Sensations induced by competition elements: the competition surfaces with which the athlete comes into contact during the competition, the balls in sports games, competition apparatus (the quads in artistic gymnastics), or equipment elements (the kimono in judo, the equipment in fencing).
- *Communication through body posture and attitude:*
 - *forms of manifestation in training:*
 - Coach's controlled position and attitude when issuing some commands;
 - Athletes' specific position and controlled attitude in the moments destined to the group organization, especially in certain sports (gymnastics, martial arts);
 - Coordinates defining fundamental or specific positions from which some actions or technical elements and procedures are initiated;
 - Coordinates of some positions – static elements specific to certain sports;
 - Initial positions for the execution of some exercises;
 - *forms of manifestation in competition:*
 - Coordinates of the body posture and attitude through which performers express their determination, self-confidence, apprehension, fatigue, pain etc.;
 - Body posture and attitude associated with referees' interventions and decisions.
- *Communication through movement (motor communication) within:*
 - *forms of manifestation in training:*
 - Athletes' gathering to start the lesson;
 - Actions destined to general and specific warm-up;
 - Coach's demonstration, always associated with the action description;
 - Athletes' execution during the training exercises;
 - Periodical control and verification tests and norms;
 - *forms of manifestation in competition:*
 - Athletes' execution in competition;
 - Refereeing, and which precedes the specific signalizations.
- *Communication through nervous impulse – all the execution command that the brain sends to the muscle that performs the movement, in training and competition:*

The main goal of sports activity is represented by the acquisition of specific movements during the training sessions and subsequently by their expression in competition at an efficiency level as high as possible, in order to achieve the aimed sports performance.

Acquiring the actions, the technical elements and procedures specific to a certain sport represents an extremely rigorous approach, because each specific movement is performed on highly accurate movement coordinates. These strict coordinates ensure the movement framing within the specific regulations limits and confer the stability and efficiency necessary to top level executions, as a main prerequisite for the performance achievement.

Therefore, the movement quality directly expresses the quality and efficiency of both the activity and the communication process it relies on.

In these conditions, motor communication becomes the most important communication form in sports and specific movement is the main landmark through which training and the associated communication process are evaluated in each stage, until the moment of its expression through movement in competition.



6. Conclusions and proposals

- It is essential to identify the specific forms of direct communication that are on the basis of sports activities, in order to know and understand the sports phenomenon from the perspective of the two main planes: preparation activity and competition development;
- The identification of direct communication forms involved in the sports training lesson and in competition, associated with each element of the communication process, has led to the concretization of the specific forms that can be encountered within each activity;
- The knowledge-based forms of specific direct communication lead to the communication process optimization in the training lesson and, consequently, to an increase in its quality and efficiency. The lesson efficientisation is the result of an accurate identification of the deficient aspects in the communication process, aspects that generate negative influences that can be fixed in good time;
- On the other hand, the increase in efficiency of the sports training process represents an important step towards the increase in efficiency at the competitive level.

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