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Doemland J H: Language and performance: An NLP meta-model analysis of performance descriptions by elite canoe-slalom athletes. Dissertation Abstracts International 61(10-B), The Sciences and Engineering: 5267, 2001.

Abstract: Research investigating performance enhancement in sport psychology has primarily focused on theory and practice related to cognition and behavior. Little attention has been focused on the mechanisms responsible for those cognitions or behaviors. One such possible mechanism, language, was addressed in this research. The relationship between an athlete's cognitive model of performance, as expressed through language, and level of athletic achievement was examined. The hypothesis under study was that a positive relationship would exist between the level of attained athletic achievement and degree of representational organization present in verbal performance descriptions, as measured by the neurolinguistic programming (NLP) meta-model. Existing transcripts of verbatim interviews describing the use of imagery in canoe-slalom performance by 12 elite canoe-slalom athletes (6 of whom were world ranked) were analyzed using the NLP meta-model. Individual interviews were treated as case studies of performance descriptions, providing data for qualitative interpretation and statistical analysis. Qualitative interpretations included in-depth text analyses illustrating the application of the meta-model in assessing the representational organization of performance models. Quantitative analysis included univariate and multivariate analysis of 13 linguistic patterns, goal statements, and level of athletic achievement. Gender was examined to determine significant differences in the linguistic performance models of males and females, and if these differences could explain the relationship seen between level of athletic achievement and representation organization. Results indicated that world ranked athletes generated a statistically significantly greater number of well-formed goal statements than non-ranked athletes. No other significant differences emerged between world ranked and non-ranked athletes. Analysis of gender differences revealed that male athletes utilized more global generalizations and disassociated points of view when linguistically representing performance models than their female counterparts. Qualitative findings suggested that the effect of meta-model violations on linguistic representations of individual performance models varied, ranging from the expected limitations to sophisticated adaptations. It was found that the sophisticated adaptations enhanced the functional qualities of performance representations, nullifying the proposed limitations imposed by meta-model violations present in the model. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2005 APA, all rights reserved).

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