

Dynamic Variations in Achievement Goals and in Their Patterns of Synchronization in Combat Sport: A Quantitative and Qualitative Idiosyncratic Study

Gernigon, C.¹, F. d'Arripe-Longueville¹, D. Delignières², & G. Ninot².

1. Institut National du Sport et de l'Éducation Physique, Paris;

2. Université de Montpellier, France

Based on Nowak and Vallacher's (1998) dynamic approach to social psychology, the present study was conducted to capture how mastery, performance-approach, and performance-avoidance goals (Elliot, 1999) vary and are interrelated during a practice judo match. Two male national level competitors of judo had a practice match together. They were instructed to maintain flexibility and not refuse to be thrown. Immediately afterward they watched a videotape of their fight. While watching the video, they had to continuously express on a computer their moment-to-moment level of goal involvement, in regard to a single item adapted from Elliot and Church's (1997) achievement goal questionnaire. This procedure adapted from Vallacher and Nowak (1994) was renewed for each goal. Individual self-confrontation interviews (Theureau, 1992) based on the video images were then conducted to record the participants' verbalizations about what they experienced during the action. Multivariate and univariate analyses of variance ($p < .05$) revealed important differences in the scores of each variable, at different moments of the fight. Cross-correlation analyses also showed important variations in the patterns of synchronization between mastery and performance-approach goals ($-90 \leq r \leq .97$), mastery and performance-avoidance goals ($-.89 \leq r \leq .91$), and performance-approach and performance-avoidance goals ($-.87 \leq r \leq .88$), at different moments of the fight. Qualitative data analyses suggested that changes in the level of goal involvement depended on outcomes of previous actions and emerging attack opportunities.