The Characteristics of Sensory Modalities Involved in Imaging by Athletes

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Abstract
A study was conducted to investigate the relationship between imagery sense modalities and the frequency of imagery use, the period of sports participation, gender, skill level, and the style of imagery, in an attempt to clarify the characteristics of athletic imagery that might be useful for mental training. The 304 subjects (236 male and 68 female) used in this study belonged to a university physical education department all and had sports experience. SMI-S was used for measuring the sense modalities of imagery. SMI-S has 14 items which can measure the vividness of imagery involving the visual, acoustic, tactile, kinesthetic, taste, olfactory and somatosensory systems. The answers were rated by five steps. The attributes of each subject were assessed on a skill level by 6 steps, and the style of imagery and the frequency of imagery use by 3 steps. The study procedure required the subjects to first complete a face sheet to clarify the various attributes. Then, using the method of gradual progression, relaxation was practiced for about 30 minutes. Finally, the SMI-S was carried out. The results showed that athletes who usually used imagery and endorsed the experienced image had vivid kinesthetic imagery, and it was confirmed that kinesthetic imagery was related to skill level. From these findings, it was considered that kinesthetic imagery, as feedback information, affected the results of training, and was therefore the most important form of imagery in mental training.

Key words: sensory modalities of imagery, kinesthetic imagery, style of imagery, frequency of imagery use, skill level.