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Methodological observation in sport: Current situation and challenges for the next future

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Observational methods applied to sport are scientific procedures that reveal the occurrence of perceptible motor behaviours, allowing them to be formally recorded and quantified. They also allow the analysis of the relations between these behaviours, such as sequentiality, association, and covariation. In many situations observational methods are the best strategy, or even the only strategy possible.

Assessment in natural sportive contexts through observation is unquestionably complex. In all settings we find a range of behaviours which form a pyramid structure. Starting from the top of the pyramid, we can break down daily sportive life into different situations such as school, leisure, competition, etc., revealing a tree structure with a hierarchical subdivision of situations in which behaviours that tend towards molarity interact with their natural contexts. Towards the base of the pyramid, the perceptible motor behaviours are increasingly molecular.

Key words: methodological observation, sport, behaviours