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The effects of coaches' Pre-game Speeches on young players' self–efficay

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Abstract

In contrast with the extensive use of coaches' pre-game speeches, there is a lack of research on the effects of such commonly used strategy. Different authors have prompted that the pre-game speech contributes to enhanced athletes' self-efficacy. However, previous results are inconclusive. This study examines its effects on young athletes' self-efficacy in two different quantitative studies. Study 1 compared athletes' self-efficacy beliefs when arriving to the premises and immediately after receiving the coach's speech in a sample of 61 soccer players (male=42, female=19; age range: 10–16) from 6 different teams. Repeated measures ANOVA showed significant results, $F(1, 60) = 27.32$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .313$. However, such differences did not appear when age was added as covariate, $F(1, 58) = 0.08$, $p = .777$, $\eta^2 = .001$. In order to control for the effect of the match itself, Study 2 analyzed the influence of pre-game speeches on eight matches following the same procedure in a sample of ten male players ($M = 16.77$ years old, $SD = 0.60$, range: 16–17 years old) from the same team. Results showed the differences were attributable to the match, $F(7, 98.54) = 7.625$, $p < .001$, rather than to the pre-game speech. According to our results, differences found are due to age and the specific match the players have to face and seems pre-game speeches do not have any influence on athletes' perceived efficacy. Whether such speeches have an effect on other facets should be stablished in future work.

Keywords: coaches' pre-game speeches, self-efficacy beliefs, coaching effectiveness, motivation.

It is generally assumed that coaches have a powerful influence on their athletes, both in terms of athletic performance and the players' personal development and well-being (Horn, 2008). This is even truer when referring to children and young adults, who are in the middle of the process of acquiring sport skills and competence, as well as developing as individuals (Brustad, 1996).

During the last decades, coaching effectiveness (CE) has been the focus of the research regarding the ways that coaches influence athletes. CE regards to «the particular coaching characteristics, competencies, cognitions, practice strategies and techniques, leadership styles or behavioral patterns» (Horn, 2008, p.240). CE includes three main components: coaching knowledge, coaching context and athlete outcome (Côté and Gilbert, 2009). Focusing on the latest, coaching effectiveness regarding athlete outcome concerns to what has been called «the four Cs»: *competence*, *confidence*, *connection*, and *character caring* (Côté, Bruner, Strachan, Erickson, and Fraser-Thomas, 2010). In other words, the outcome of coaching effectiveness refers to the effect of the coaches' behavior on promoting successful performance, as well as on their athletes' self-esteem, perceived ability, motivation, enjoyment and satisfaction (Horn, 2008).

According to Horn's (2008) *Working Model of Coaching Effectiveness*, a coach's behavior exerts a direct influence on athletes' performance and behavior and has an indirect effect through players' perceptions, interpretations, and evaluations. One of the proposed variables moderating the relationship between coaches' behavior and athletes' performance and motivation is athletes' perceived competency (Hollenbeak and Amorose, 2005; Horn, 2008). Perceived competency, or self-efficacy, refers to «beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the curses of action required to produce given attainments» (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). In fact, one of the most universally accepted key determinants of performance outcome in sports is the perception of efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Feltz, 1988; Feltz, Short and Sullivan, 2008).

According to Bandura, there are four sources of self-efficacy perceptions: (1) performance accomplishment, (2) vicarious experiences, (3) verbal persuasion, and (4) physiological state. Maddux (1995) added two more: emotional state and imaginary experiences. However, verbal persuasion is probably the coach's most available method

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for promoting performance outcomes. Through verbal persuasion, coaches can provide sport-specific and positive feedback, which have been shown to increase athletes' efficacy beliefs and reduce negative appraisals (Vella, Oades, and Crowe, 2011). As Hanton, Mellalieu and Hall (2004) recorded from one of the elite athletes who participated in the study aimed at analyzing the relationship between self-confidence, competitive anxiety intensity, and symptom interpretation toward performance they carried out:

> *Being verbally persuaded by your coach is the best protection against any worries or concerns. It's linked to your confidence. . . you don't think negative when you've got positive thoughts in your mind and the coach is saying to you that you are going to do it (Hanton et al., 2004, p. 489)*

Despite the different pieces of research that have analyzed the way coaches prompt the ability to exhibit improved effort and convey performance success expectations through the way they communicate and interact with their athletes (see Amorose, 2003; Coatsworth and Conroy, 2006), only a few have focused on pre-game speeches (Gonzalez, Metzler Newton, 2011; Vargas-Tonsing, 2009 ; Vargas-Tonsing and Bartholomew, 2006; Vargas-Tonsing & Guan, 2007; Vargas and Short, 2011). The pre-game speech is one of the most commonly strategies utilized by coaches (Gonzalez et al., 2011) and almost every team sport coach shares the practice of gathering their players together in order to give them a talk, which can contain information about their opponents, strategies, technical cues, arousing or emotional words, or a combination of all of these. Moreover, coaches would hardly send a team facing an important match onto the pitch without a «pep talk,» such as that the fictional Tony D'Amato performed by Al Pacino gives in Oliver Stone's film, *Any Given Sunday*.

It is believed that pre-game speeches contribute to an athlete's performance though very few studies have explored it and the mechanisms that could be involved. For instance, Botterill and Brown (2002) suggested that pre-game speeches can produce either an increase or a decrease in the athletes' levels of emotion and motivation, and Gonzalez, et al. (2011) proposed pre-game speeches might promote an inspirational effect involved in a transcendence of one's usual abilities.

From a different, though related, point of view, it has been proposed that pre-game speeches could have an effect on athletes' behavior and performance by increasing self-efficacy beliefs that play a role in preparedness for the match (Feltz, et al., 2008). Vargas-Tonsing and Bartholomew (2006) carried out a study with 90 undergraduate students who were, or had been, members of competitive soccer teams. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three experimental conditions: (a) listening to a strategic speech that included informational feedback and instruction, (b) listening to a persuasive plea with no tactical skills information, and (c) listening to a speech concerning their uniform and instructions about staying hydrated. The third condition served as the control group. Individuals were asked to imagine that they were members of a soccer team on the verge of playing a state quarterfinal match against another team that was slightly better in their overall and partial records. The results indicated that the group exposed to an emotionally persuasive speech reported significantly greater team efficacy beliefs than did the informative or the control groups, neither of which were significantly different.

However, when Vargas-Tonsing (2009) replicated her study three years later, contrary results were obtained. In this research, 151 soccer players from different teams were surveyed during a real match selected by the coach and the investigator. Using a brief questionnaire, the participants were assessed when they arrived on the premises, and were assessed again immediately after the coach gave the pre-game speech. The results showed that self-efficacy perceptions did not change. However, the amount of perceived informational content in the pre-game speech, and not the emotional content, predicted the variations in self-efficacy.

The lack of consistent results regarding the effect of pre-game speeches on self-efficacy has been attributed to different factors. On the one hand, coaches might change their talk content according to the competitive setting. Particularly, it has been said that coaches ought to save higher emotional content to the biggest match of the season in order to avoid undermining its impact (Vargas-Tonsing, 2009). The reception of the speech by athletes could also vary according to the importance of the match (Vargas-Tonsing and Guan, 2007). On the other hand, it could be due to studies using either imagined championship or a real match (Vargas and Short, 2011). Studying pre-game speeches under simulated conditions resulted in changes in efficacy beliefs with a preponderance of emotional content over informational talks (Gonzalez et al., 2011; Vargas and Bartholomew, 2006). However, that was contrary to the results Vargas-Tonsing (2009) obtained when using a real life setting in which no self-efficacy changes after the talk were shown.

Moreover, Vargas-Tonsing's studies used young adults as participants. If self-efficacy is the variable influenced by pre-game speeches, it is expected that those who are in the middle of the process of acquiring sports skills and abilities (i.e., children and young adolescents) ought to be more susceptible to competency belief changes (Bandura, 1997). Likewise, self-efficacy beliefs could also be affected by factors such as the season's overall performance or their opponent's competitive edge. Consequently, if only one match is analyzed, the effects of the coaches' «pep talk» might be masked (Vargas, 2009).

Therefore, two different studies were carried out in order to test whether coaches' pre-game speeches affect athletes' self-efficacy beliefs. Study one was designed to evaluate whether the self-efficacy beliefs of children and young

adolescents could be affected by pre-game speeches when faced with a real competition. It is hypothesized that the younger the athlete is, the more malleable competency beliefs are. Therefore, age was partialled out in order to test the influence of pre-game speeches in self-efficacy beliefs. Likewise, several studies have shown gender differences in coach effectiveness (Krane & Williams, 1994; Vargas-Tonsing & Bartholomew, 2006). Consequently, gender was also partialled out in the analysis. Nevertheless, the need for a sufficiently large sample conflicted with the need for regular assessment at different matches, particularly with children. Consequently, an additional study, Study two, was also carried out in order to test the effects of pre-game speeches on self-efficacy beliefs. In this study, a single team was assessed throughout a set of eight matches during a season. The matches included those against strong opponents, where the stakes were high, as well as matches against weak opponents, in which the team played matches requiring less motivation. It was expected that by analyzing a set of different matches, the effects of the coaches' pre-game speeches on self-efficacy beliefs would be revealed.

Study 1

Method

Participants. Sixty-one soccer players (42 males, 19 females, M_{age} = 11.75, *SD* = 1.59, age range: 10–16 years) from a convenience sample of six different teams (four males and two females) voluntarily participated in the study. The participants averaged 5.07 years playing soccer (*SD* = 3.07; range: 2–10 years), 3.31 years (*SD* = 2.35; range: 1–10 years) with their current team, and 1.30 years (*SD* = .53; range: 1–3 years) with the current coach. Six coaches (two females, four males, M_{age} = 29.6; *SD* = 4.7, age range: 25–36) also participated in the study. The coaches averaged 6 years (*SD* = 4.22; range: 1–12 years) of coaching.

Measures. The following measures were used in this study to assess the variables.

Demographic questionnaire. Both athletes and coaches completed a questionnaire in which they were asked about their age, gender, time practicing soccer (time coaching) and time with the current coach.

Self-efficacy questionnaire. Athletes answered a Spanish version of the three-question survey that Vargas-Tonsing (2009) used in her previous research to assess self-efficacy beliefs (α = .86). The questions were translated into Spanish and then were independently back translated again in order to guarantee the accuracy of the original translation. The length of the survey was crucial in obtaining the coach's authorization, while also enabling the athletes to respond to it in a pre-match situation. The questions used a numeric scale, ranging from 0 (*not at all certain*) to 10 (*absolutely certain*).

Procedure. After obtaining the IRB authorization, the researchers contacted soccer clubs to present the research project. Once the managers and coaches had agreed to participate, an informed consent form was sent to parents to explain the research procedure and request their permission for the children to participate. When the consent form was signed, assent was asked to children and then, the demographic questionnaire was given to the children and coaches. The researchers decided with the coaches which particular match was going to be analyzed, with the provision that they should include a match against a hard opponent.

The day of the selected match, the athletes' self-efficacy was assessed twice: first, upon their arrival on the sports premises, and second, immediately after the coach gave the speech.

Research design. The study was a within-subject design; as the subjects are naturalistically observed in their regular matches, no control group is used. Thus, this is a pre-experimental methodology; in order to deal with the threats associated with this design, several covariates were statistically controlled.

Data analysis. Reliability of the instrument was estimated using the test-retest correlation, using the total aggregated score of the Self-efficacy questionnaire before and after the speech. Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's α in both measurements. Factor validity was carried out by exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The three items as well as the aggregated score were normally distributed at the pre-speech measurement (according to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov, K-S, test), but none of them were normally distributed at the post-speech measurement. As a consequence, an unweighted least squares extraction method was selected to carry out the EFA for both pre and post analyses.

The mean and SD of the self-efficacy scores were computed. A repeated measures ANOVA was used to test mean differences between pre- and post-speech measurements. To control confounding variables, gender and age were added as covariates.

Results

Internal consistency and reliability. The internal consistency for the pre and post-speech measurements of Self-efficacy were respectively α = .919 and α = .918. The test-retest reliability was found to be *r* = .933.

EFA. EFA was performed using the correlations between items to statistically determine their underlying factors. At both the pre and post-speech measurements, the KMO test (.758 and .762 respectively), and Bartlett's test of sphericity ($\chi^2(3)$ = 125.81 and $\chi^2(3)$ = 128.98 respectively, both $p <$ .001) supported the adequacy of the data for EFA. Regarding the dimensionality of the Self-efficacy questionnaire, and following the K1 method, only one factor showed up, accounting for 79.34% of the total variance at the pre-speech and 78.86% at the post-speech measurement.

Self-efficacy mean differences. The pre- and post-speech mean scores in self-efficacy beliefs were, respectively 8.58 (SD = 2.01) and 9.07 (SD = 1.86). The repeated measures ANOVA showed significant results, $F(1, 60) = 27.32$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .313$. However, when the covariates are added to the model, this results disappear, $F(1, 58) = 0.08$, $p = .777$, $\eta^2 = .001$. Gender didn't yield significant results, $F(1, 58) = 0.71$, $p = .403$, but age was found to be a significant related variable, $F(1, 58) = 12.62$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .179$. The direction of this relationship was assessed using the correlation between the pre-post speech self-efficacy score differences and age (in years); the higher the age, the higher the pre-post self-efficacy score increase, $r = .110$.

Discussion

According to our results, and contrary to what was expected, self-efficacy beliefs did not change before and after the coaches' speeches. The lack of statistically significant results could be attributed to several factors. First, due to a pre-experimental methodology being used, it's impossible to rule out other alternative explanations that account for this result, although two confounding variables have been statistically controlled. The subject's age appears to be a variable that accounts for the change of self-efficacy beliefs, suggesting that older subjects tend to increase self-efficacy, which is in line with Bandura's (1997) words regarding the development of competency belief and mastery.

The selected match was supposed to be against a hard opponent. Nevertheless, the coach selected the match and there could be differences amongst the coach's opinions, as well as between the coaches and the athletes' perceptions. In addition, an opponent that was too tough might have induced feelings of helplessness and reduce self-efficacy beliefs (Williams et al., 2015). Moreover, the delivery of the speeches did seem to affect the athletes' perceptions of them (Breakey, Jones, Cunningham and Holt, 2009), and even though each coach has their own particular style, anyone can have better and worse days. However, by studying only one match, whether or not there was a competitive edge with the opponent might overshadow the impact of the coaches' talks. Similarly, the season and the team classification might also have reduced the effect of the speeches.

Nevertheless, it is also possible that pre-game speeches do not have any effect on the athletes' self-efficacy. In fact, the results of Vargas-Tonsing's (2009; Vargas-Tonsing and Bartholomew, 2006) research found no differences in the results before and after the coaches' speeches but when perceptions of the speech's content were controlled: participants in the emotionally persuasive pre-game speech group reported higher levels of team efficacy. Nevertheless, the results are contradictory. Vargas-Tonsing (2009) explained such differences by the fact that the coaches might have modified their usual behavior as a result of the intrusiveness of the research procedure. According to our results, the strongest predictor of after-speech self-efficacy is the age of the players. As Vargas-Tonsing (2009) found, there is an overall increase in efficacy perceptions. It could be due to older players are more likely to listen to the coach and care about the speech content and the game in general, but this difference was not significant when age is included in the linear model. Further research comparing different ages should be carried in the future.

In any case, Vargas-Tonsing (2009) proposed a multigame approach to account for the intermatch changes. Thus, Study 2 was carried out to test the effects of pre-game speeches on athletes' efficacy beliefs, controlling for the effect of the match. In this case, only one team was followed up with during a part of the season, assessing efficacy beliefs before and after the coach's speech for each of the matches.

Study 2

Method

Participants. A sample of ten male players ($M = 16.77$ years old, $SD = 0.60$, range: 16–17 years old) from the same team voluntarily participated in the study. The participants averaged 7.46 years practicing the sport (range: 6–12 years).

Measures. The same self-efficacy questionnaire was used in Study 2 as was used in Study 1.

Procedure. After obtaining IRB authorization, the researchers contacted the club to present the research project. Once the manager and coach agreed to participate, the same procedure used in Study 1 was followed in order to obtain parents' informed consent and athletes' assent and to explain the research procedure to the athletes. A set of eight matches was selected, including those that had strong and weak opponents. The set also included regular season matches and playoff matches so that there were matches in which the stakes were lower because the team had already been classified and others in which stakes were high because they competed for the championship.

Data analysis. This was a two within-subjects factor design (8 X 2 Match by Time) study. The sample in this study was rather small and it contained missing data (23.75% of the values were missing, as not all players attended all matches). The ordinary multivariate approach uses listwise deletion for handling missing data which could have left almost no subject for the analysis. In order to address this problem, a repeated measures mixed factorial ANOVA was used. The mixed ANOVA uses all the available data, as the unit of observation is considered one time point per subject. This analysis was used to compare the mean differences on the main outcome: before- and after-speech measures (Time), and over the eight matches (Match). Main and interaction effects were tested.

Results

A multivariate ANOVA equivalent, in order to detect a medium effect size (Cohen's f^2 of 0.15) with α = .05, achieved a statistical power of .94. Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation for the main outcome. The two-way repeated measures mixed ANOVA yielded significant results for the Match effect, $F(7, 98.54) = 7.62$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .351$. However, no significant results were found when analyzing the Time (pre–post) effect, $F(1, 96.55) = 0.27$, $p = .606$, and the interaction effect, $F(7, 96.55) = 1.32$, $p = .251$.

Table 1
Statistical Descriptives for Self-efficacy Belief Scores, Pre- and Post-speech; n = 10, Eight Matches

		Pre		Post	
Match	**Valid n**	***M***	***SD***	***M***	***SD***
1	7	7.52	0.72	7.86	0.90
2	7	8.62	0.76	8.19	0.81
3	7	7.48	1.20	8.14	0.50
4	7	7.86	1.44	8.57	1.05
5	8	8.29	1.16	8.38	0.86
6	8	6.83	0.50	6.63	0.95
7	8	8.33	0.94	8.04	0.58
8	9	8.04	0.54	7.74	0.46

Discussion

According to our results, there are no changes in self-efficacy beliefs before and after the coach's pre-game speech. Once age and gender are controlled for, and contrary to what was hypothesized, pre-game speeches do not seem to have any influence on athletes' perceived efficacy. This was true even though different types of matches were analyzed (i.e., important matches where the stakes were high and those games that were less critical to the team's classification). In fact, our results showed that it was not the coach's talk, but rather the match itself, that influenced athletes' self-efficacy beliefs. In other words, it seems players are affected more by their perception of competence regarding their opponent team and/or the importance of the match they have to play.

In order to control for the effects of age and gender, this study was carried out using a group of players of the same gender and similar age. These players were all older adolescents who had been playing for a long time. This could make self-efficacy beliefs more stable compared to with younger players. Moreover, as Vargas-Tonsing (2009) suggested, the athletes are likely to already have high perceptions of efficacy due to their membership in a high competitive level team. Nevertheless, the lack of significant differences attributed to the coaches' speeches is in agreement with the results obtained in the previous study.

Summary and Concluding Discussion

Coaches use different competencies, practice strategies and techniques, leadership styles and behavioral patterns in order to influence their athletes (Horn, 2008). Verbal persuasion is the coach's most available method and is the rationale for pre-game speeches. Coaches routinely give these speeches to their athletes in order to foster improved performance. However, there is a lack of research about their real effect. Vargas-Tonsing (2009; Vargas-Tonsing and Bartholomew, 2006) suggested that pre-game speeches improve athletes' self-efficacy beliefs, which can be a key determinant in their performance (Feltz et al., 2008). However, the results were not consistent and depended on whether a simulated or real game was analyzed.

Study 1 attempted to replicate Vargas-Tonsing's results to shed further light on the subject. Consideration was also given to the fact that perception of efficacy could have a greater influence on people who are in the middle of their process of acquiring sport-related skills, which is why the sample consisted of children and young adolescents. Our results showed significant differences between the pre- and post-match speeches. However, when age was included as a covariate, no significant differences were detected. Likewise, the extremely high correlation between pre- and post-speech efficacy beliefs showed that the best predictor of athletes' post-coach's talk self-efficacy was their previous level of self-efficacy.

In response to these results, Study 2 was designed. In this study, a multigame approach was carried out. Furthermore, in order to control for the roles of gender and age, athletes from the same team were assessed according to their pre- and post-pre-game speeches for eight matches, including important and less important games. Once again,

there was no difference in the perception of self-efficacy as a result of the coaches' speeches. Conversely, differences found were attributable to the match and not the coach's speech. In other words, athletes have different perceptions of efficacy, which is a function of the opponents they have to face and/or the importance of the match.

Thus, according to our results, coaches' pre-game speeches do not produce any change in athletes' perceptions of efficacy. Whether such talks have an effect on other facets, such as arousal, emotion, and motivation (Botterill and Brown, 2002; Gonzalez et al., 2011), or constitute a liturgy any coach is unable to escape, still remains to be established.

It is important to recognize that this research was not without its limitations, although it offers relevant conclusions. First, the obstacles for dealing with studying the phenomenon of pre-game speeches in natural settings are quite significant. Neither the coaches nor the athletes were prone to devoting time immediately before the match to answering our questions, particularly on a regular basis. This was the reason for using a convenience manageable sample of only six teams in Study 1 and one team in Study 2, and for using a short three-question survey for assessing self-efficacy.

Finally, any analysis of coaching effectiveness needs to adopt a more holistic perspective into the way coaches influence athletes, taking into consideration not only the actions at one particular time, but also the day-to-day interactions in which the coaches influence athletes and the athletes influence coaches. Moreover, athletes' perceptions or interpretations of coach's behavior clearly mediate the relationships between coach's behavior and athlete's self-perception (Horn, 2008). Therefore, further investigation using this kind of global perspective and including the analysis of athletes' perception of coaches' speeches might be more fruitful to understand the influence of coaching behavior on athletes' performances.

El efecto de las charlas pre-partido de los entrenadores en la autoeficicia de jóvenes jugadores

Resumen

En contraste con la muy extendida utilización de las charlas pre-partido por parte de los entrenadores, existe poca investigación sobre los efectos que tiene esa estrategia tan comúnmente utilizada. Distintos autores han señalado que las charlas pre-partido contribuyen a incrementar la auto-eficacia de los deportistas. Sin embargo, los resultados obtenidos hasta la fecha no permiten obtener conclusiones. Este estudio examina los efectos de esas charlas en dos estudios cuantitativos. En el Estudio 1 se compararon las creencias de autoeficacia de los deportistas al llegar a las instalaciones e inmediatamente después de recibir la arenga del entrenador en una muestra de 61 jugadores de fútbol (42 hombres y 19 mujeres; rango de edad: 10-16 años) de 6 equipos diferentes. El ANOVA de medidas repetidas mostró diferencias significativas, $F(1, 60) = 27.32$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .313$. Sin embargo, esas diferencias desaparecían cuando se añadió la edad como covariable. $F(1, 58) = 0.08$, $p = .777$, $\eta^2 = .001$. Con el objetivo de controlar el efecto de propio partido, el Estudio 2 analizó la influencia de las charlas pre-partido en ocho partidos siguiendo el mismo procedimiento en una muestra de diez jugadores varones del mismo equipo (*M* edad= 16.77, *DT* = 0.60, rango de edad: 16–17). Los resultados mostraron que las diferencias fueron atribuibles al partido $F(7, 98.54) = 7.625$, $p < .001$ y no a las charlas. De acuerdo con nuestros resultados, las diferencias encontradas son debidas a la edad y al partido concreto al que se enfrentan los jugadores y parece que las charlas del entrenador no tienen ninguna influencia en la eficacia percibida. Si las charlas pre-parrido tienen alguna influencia en otras facetas, ello debe establecerse en trabajos futuros.

Palabras clave: Charlas pre-partido, Creencias de autoeficicia, Efectividad del entrenador, Motivación

O efeito das preleções dos treinadores antes do jogo na auto-eficacia de jogadores jovens

Resumo

Em contraste com a grande utilização das preleções realizadas antes do jogo pelos treinadores, constata-se que existe pouca pesquisa sobre os efeitos de tal estratégia habitualmente empregada. Diferentes autores têm mostrado que as preleções antes do jogo contribuem no aumento da auto-eficacia dos atletas. No entanto, os resultados obtidos até o momento não permitem fazer conclusões. O presente estudo verifica os efeitos desses discursos nos estudos quantitativos. Desta forma, o Estudo 1 comparou as crenças de auto-eficacia dos jogadores no momento que chegavam as instalações e imediatamente depois de receber as orientações do treinador em uma amostra de 61 jogadores de futebol (42 homens e 19 mulheres; faixa etária: 10-16 anos) de 6 times diferentes. O ANOVA das medidas repetidas apresentou diferenças significativas, $F(1, 60) = 27.32$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .313$. Contudo, tais diferenças desapareceram quando a variável idade foi incluída como covariável. $F(1, 58) = 0.08$, $p = .777$, $\eta^2 = .001$. Com o objetivo de controlar o próprio efeito do jogo, o Estudo 2 analisou a influencia das conversas antes da partida em oito competições fazendo o mesmo procedimento em uma amostra de dez jogadores do sexo masculino do mesmo time (*M* idade= 16.77, *DT* = 0.60, faixa etária: 16–17). Os resultados mostraram que as diferenças encontradas foram atribuídas ao jogo e não as preleções $F(7, 98.54) = 7.625$, $p < .001$. De acordo com os nossos

resultados, as diferenças encontradas são devidas as variáveis, idade e jogo no qual os atletas participaram e parece que os discursos com o treinador não mostraram nenhuma influência na eficácia percebida. Se as preleções antes do jogo apresentam alguma influência em outros aspetos, sugere-se que isto seja investigado em futuros estudos.

Palavras Chaves*:* Conversas antes do jogo, Crenças de auto-eficacia, Eficácia do treinador, Motivação

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