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Tactical lexical knowledge of soccer by age 15 and 18

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## Introduction

According to the theory of the development of lexical knowledge (Lieury & Lorant, 2013), the lexicon is built progressively over the course of life through different stages and experiences. The objective of this study is to measure the effect of age on the size of the football tactical lexicon.

## Method

We tested 164 participants: 82 soccers, aged 15 (U-15) with 10 years of practice and 82 soccers aged 18 (U-18) with 10 years of practice. Both groups are elite soccer in their category. The test consists of answering a selfassessment questionnaire on the degree of lexical knowledge (Deplus S, Grégoire J, Van Broeck N, 2013). The task is to indicate the degree of familiarity and frequency of use in relation to 40 tactical words in football: 1 (I have never heard); 2 (I have already heard, but don't know what it means); 3 (I often hear but don't know what it means); 4 (I know) and 5 (I know and practice it on the field).

## Analyse and results

A t student test was used. The analysis plan includes a VI: Age (U-15 and U-18). The significance level ( ) has been set to 0.05. The main results show a significant effect of age ( $t = -9$  df = 162;  $p < .001$ ). In addition, the results show intersections of word nucleus between groups but also words that appear in one category and not in the other and vice versa.

## Discussion and conclusion

Our results: (i) confirm the effect of age on players' lexical knowledge. U-18 soccers know more tactical words than U-15 soccer. (ii) The most important and original result reveals that soccers lexical knowledge does not appear in a linear manner as in a conventional scheme but is random. These results suggest that lexical knowledge is influenced by other factors. (iii) Finally, these results show that none of the categories reach a knowledge of all the words. Our study suggests that practical coaches work on the lexical knowledge of tactical words to optimize the understanding and performance of players on the field.

## References

Deplus S, Grégoire J, Van Broeck N. Child-friendly Autobiographical Memory Assessment (TEMA) task. Eur Rev Appl Psychol 2013 ;63(3) :159–72  
Lieury (Alain), Lorant (Sonia). Encyclopedic memory: Long-term memory capacity for knowledge vocabulary in middle school, international journal of educational psychology, II, 1, 2013, p. 56-80.

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