UNIVERSITÄT
BERN

Philosophisch-
humanwissenschaftliche Fakultät

Institut für Sportwissenschaft

Kolloquium *„Berner Gespräche zur Sportwissenschaft“*

Montag, 30.09.2019, von 16.15 Uhr bis 17.45 Uhr
Hörsaal C001 (Universität Bern, ZSSw Gebäude C, Bremgartenstr. 145, 3012 Bern)

Balancing specificity and generality in motor learning can transform lives of beginners and elite performers in sport

Prof. Dr. Keith Davids is Professor of Motor Learning at Sheffield Hallam University, UK. He coordinates an applied scientific research group investigating sport performance, skill acquisition, expertise and talent development, from an ecological dynamics rationale, with reference to pedagogical practice and sport science support. His research has been published in journals in Sports Science, Psychology, Behavioural Neuroscience, Sports Pedagogy, Physical Education and Movement Science. He has held academic positions in the UK, Finland (University of Jyvaskyla, Finnish Distinguished Professor), New Zealand (University of Otago) and Australia (Queensland University of Technology). He consults with many sports organisations and national Institutes of Sport in Australia, New Zealand, and England, KIHU (Finnish Olympic Research Committee) and Singapore (Physical Education and Sports Teachers Association).

The Skill Acquisition research group at Sheffield Hallam University applies key ideas of ecological dynamics to better understand motor learning, practice and talent development in sport. An ecological dynamics rationale can transform lives of sport participants by alleviating problems identified with traditional pedagogical practices demanding early specialization in one sport, predicated on the key tenets of the deliberate practice approach to acquiring expertise. In contrast, ecological dynamics proposes that sport practitioners need a more nuanced balance between specificity and generality of training for athlete development and performance preparation. The implication is that sport practitioners need to view themselves as designers of affordance landscapes (termed opportunities for action by James Gibson (1979)), with learning designs being most effective when scaled to each individual’s current capacities, abilities and skills (known as effectivities). This presentation discusses how well-documented emotional, psychological and physical problems associated with early specialization can be mediated by an individualized balance between specialized sports training and more diverse and varied physical activities and experiences to enrich athlete learning and performance.

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