



# KEYNOTE SPEECH

## **SO YOU THINK THERE IS NO THINKING IN A CONSTRAINT-LED APPROACH?**

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The Environmental Design Principles have been proposed as guidelines for practitioners and aim to act as a bridge between the theoretical underpinnings of Ecological Dynamics and practical applications via a Constraint-Led Approach (Renshaw et al, 2019). The four main ideas are: (i) Intentions (ii) Representative Learning Design (iii) Repetition without Repetition, and (iv), Constrain to afford. Whilst the last three concepts have received extensive attention to support practitioners, so far (apart from theoretical papers), relatively little focus has been directed toward intentions in pedagogical applications. This neglect is somewhat surprising given that intentions have been described as being an exceptional boundary condition in the production of a goal-directed behaviour (Kugler and Turvey, 1987). That is, in the potential hierarchy of constraints that shape self-organising behaviour, intentions are numero uno! In sports performance, intentions are definitive in setting up a perception system to “resonate” (Gibson, 1966) to the information appropriate to undertake a desired action. Intentions can be considered as having two parts: first, they have a 'target' goal (the overall performance outcome), second is the 'manner' in which performers wish to prosecute that outcome. Goal-directed performers will *pay attention* to the information that has the most valence, emphasizing the central role of consciousness in ecological dynamics accounts of skill learning. In this presentation, I will explore how an understanding and awareness of the role of intentions can inform and enhance practice designs in sport and Physical Education. These ideas highlight the importance of co-creation of practice sessions to ensure alignment between the intentions of support practitioners and performers.