

Applying Skill Acquisition in Gaelic Games

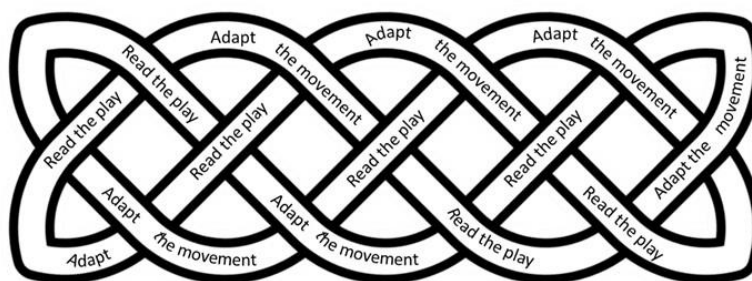
Session Objectives

By the end of this session you will:

- Be aware of how the science of skill acquisition can support the coaches you work with,
- Have tested what you know about skill acquisition
- Be signposted to useful resources in relation to skill acquisition

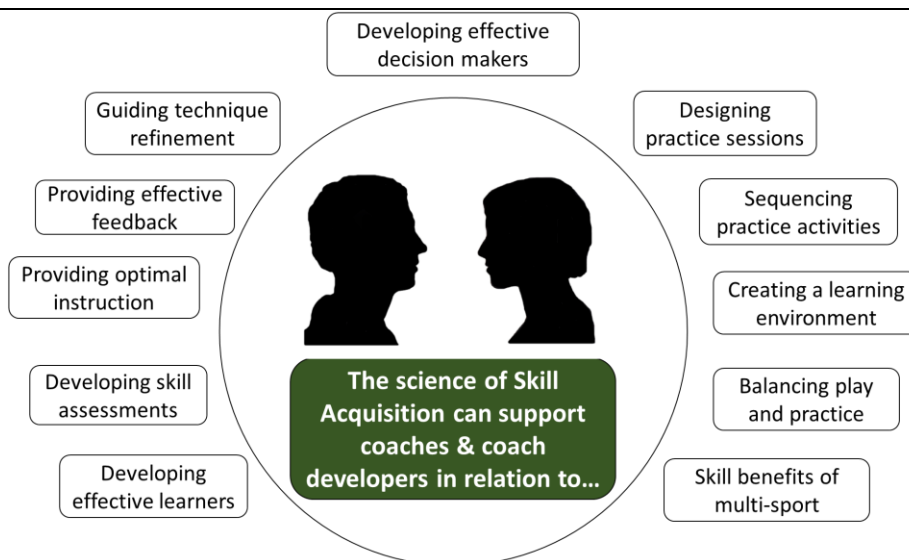
What is skill?

Games present problems for players to solve; for example, a defender faces the problem of how to delay or tackle an opponent in defence, while an attacker faces the problem of how to make more space for themselves or others to create a score. Skill is the ability to solve these problems that the game presents. Defined in this way, skill is the *combination* of a player’s ability to read the play and adapt their movement accordingly.



The speed of Gaelic games means that reading the play and adapting movement are not distinct processes, but instead occur in an interconnected manner, represented here by the Celtic Sailor’s knot. For example, a player perceiving the possibility of carrying the ball up field begins to move forward which reveals new possibilities (e.g., do I continue to run or pass?), which in turn prompts new movements which need to be adapted to the demands of the moment and so on. The Celtic Sailor’s knot also illustrates how skill should not be perceived as a single discrete event, but rather as a continuous cycle of interactions.

Understanding skill as interconnected cycles of reading the play and adapting movement has important implications for the design of training and broader player development.



What key concepts have you met today?

What next steps will you take in light of today's activities?

Find out more

If you are interested in potentially participating in a skill acquisition community of practice (e.g., quarterly (online) meetings to discuss current questions and activities), please scan this QR code and add your email address.

