

Effects of External and Internal Focus of Attention in Motor Learning of Children with Cerebral Palsy

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Abstract : The purpose of study was to examine the effects of external and internal focus of attention in the motor learning of children with cerebral palsy. The study involved 30 boys (7 to 12 years old) with CP type 1 who practiced throwing beanbags. The participants were randomly assigned to the internal focus, external focus, and control groups, and performed six blocks of 10-trial with attentional focus reminders during a practice phase and no reminders during retention and transfer tests. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) with repeated measures on the last factor was used. The results show that significant main effects were found for time and group. However, the interaction of time and group was not significant. Retention scores were significantly higher for the external focus group. The external focus group performed better than other groups; however, the internal focus and control groups' performance did not differ. The study concluded that motor skills in Spastic Hemiparetic Cerebral Palsy (SHCP) children could be enhanced by external attention.

Keywords : cerebral palsy, external attention, internal attention, throwing task

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