Review the classifications of skills, to include the differences between individual, coactive, and interactive skills.

Many theorists have tried to analyse the range of skills applicable in sport. Different activities require different types of skills as they have different requirements. Skills need to be categorised, so that teachers can adapt their teaching style for different skills. Many things affect skills, for example, whether the movement has a recognisable beginning and end, the effect of the surrounding environment, and the precision of movement. Skills that have common characteristics are grouped together. There are many ways of classifying skills, for example 'Classification continuums'. Continuums are affected by individual interpretation. Skills can be classified on a scale depending on their role. Different classifications are used, depending on the purpose. 'Classification is often seen as a starting point for the planning of teaching strategies and approaches to learning. A combination of methods may be used in order to identify the range of requirements of the skill'.

(Advanced PE for Edexcel -2000)

The effect of the environment can be measured by continua's. Barbara Knapp (1963) called these open and closed skills. Knapp said that skill is 'The learned ability to bring about predetermined results with minimum outlay of time or energy, or both'. Sports such as netball and hockey involve open skills, as the surrounding environment is consistently changing. These skills require adaptation each time they are performed. An open skill is never performed the same twice, namely, in a game of netball or basketball. Team mates/ opposition may move around in the space, so your movements need to be adapted, for example, a tackle in a football match. Every time you perform the skill, you will have to change the way you play, as people will be in different places around the pitch. You want to get the ball to a player in your own team. The skills are predominantly perceptual, you must use your previous knowledge. The environmental conditions could mean the opposition, the team, the weather, pitch conditions etc.

CLOSED	**Skill category**										**OPEN**
	0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**

(Knapp's open -closed continuum-1963)

Closed skills take place when the performer knows exactly what to do, and when. The environment does not effect the skills, and set patterns are followed. The skill is pre-learned. There is a clear beginning and end. The performer can plan, nothing has to be changed when you perform the skill, for example a gymnastic routine. Once learned, the performer will go through a pre-learned sequence. In gymnastics, the environment does not affect the gymnast doing a headstand, therefore, it is a closed skill.

The gross and fine continuum demonstrates the precision of movement. Gross motor skills involve all the major muscle groups. They involve large muscle movements, which are not precise at all. An example of a gross skill could be a game of rugby.
A fine skill is a very intricate movement, which uses only a small muscle group. The movement is usually very precise, and involves high levels of hand and eye co-ordination, an example of where a fine skill is used could be a pass in football, or in a golf drive. It usually involves a high degree of hand/ eye co-ordination.

Gross…….Fine

(John Honeybourne- 2000)

Self-paced and externally paced skills focus on the timing of movements. In a javelin throw, for example, the performer controls the rate at which the skill is executed. This therefore, is a self paced skill.
The environment controls an externally paced skill. An opponent, official, time, or a whistle are examples of things that control the rate at which the skill is performed. An example of an externally paced skill is receiving a tennis serve, or a sprint start.

SELF PACED	**Skill category** **0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10** ***(Pacing continuum-Edexcel- Heinemann-2000)***	**EXT PACED**

Discrete, serial, and continuous continuums are concerned with the definition of the beginning, and end of the skill. A discrete skill is a well-defined action. These skills can be repeated, but the performer must start again. It is a single and specific skill, and can be practised on its own. It involves a single execution to complete the skill, for example, a penalty kick, or a cartwheel.
A continuous skill, has no obvious beginning and end, it continues from element to element, and the skill can be performed for as long as the performer wishes. It is a repetition of movement patterns. An example of a continuous skill could be cycling, you cannot really see where one rotation of the wheel finishes, and where the next starts.
A serial skill is slightly like a discrete skill, as it has several discrete elements which are put together to make a sequence of movements. For example, in a ten-bounce trampolining routine, you perform many separate movements, but make them into a routine, you may do a seat drop, followed by a half twist to seat drop.

Skills can be performed alone or alongside others, with participants directly involved, or competing together, but without direct confrontation.

Individual skills are those performed in total isolation. An example of this could be a solo dance routine, or a diving competition.
Coactive skills are those skills which are performed at the same time as others, but without direct confrontation, for example in a 100M sprint, you run along side others, but they cannot do anything to slow you down or speed you up (they cannot influence others). Psychological factors can influence people. For example, if in a 100M sprint event, your opponent speeds up, this is likely to have an effect on you. You will find that you start to speed up.
Interactive skills are very different, this is a skill where you perform the skill in direct confrontation with other performers, like in a game of basketball. You perform the skill in active opposition.
Each of these skills has different performance requirements. Individual and coactive skills are often pre-learned, although this is not possible for interactive skills, as a game situation is never the same. You need to adapt to the environment.

Closed…….Open

Self Paced……Externally Paced

Discrete……..Serial

(Profile of skill requirements of a rugby tackle)

(Edexcel- Heinemann- pg. 106. Year 2000)

This essay has explained how skills are classified into different groups, depending on their characteristics. Due to the many ways of classifying skill, an analytical approach is needed. This is why these continua's exist
Frank Galligan et al. said, 'Classification is often seen as a starting point for the planning of teaching strategies and approaches to learning'.
I think that continuums are a lot of help to athletes and teachers. The reason for which we classify skills, is to optimise the learning, development and performance of sport. Teaching styles can be adapted for different skills due to these continua's. The teacher may decide to teach a skill in sub routines, for example, a lay up in basketball, as this may optimise the class's performance.
The criticism of these continua's can only be that there is room for individual interpretation. For some people, a certain skill could be classified as an open skill, but for some, it could be considered as a closed.

Word count: 1,207

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