

THE INFLUENCE OF NEUTRAL MASK ON ACTORS

Abstract

Neutral mask exercise has been a widely used technique since its invention by Jacques Lecoq in the early 20th century. However, exactly how it operates in an actor/actress's mind has remained mystery in pedagogy. This study tried to unveil the mechanism of neutral mask exercise to several cognitive and behavioral functions by exploring its effect on novice through experimentation. 32 participants who had no prior knowledge of neutral mask were recruited to join a one-hour neutral mask session, during which their attention, temporal discrimination and disinhibited behavior were studied. Results showed that there is an effect of neutral mask exercise on modulation of inhibition of return (IOR), executive control, and enhanced temporal discriminability. The mechanisms regarding oculomotor response and interoceptive awareness were discussed respectively, and the possibility of these effects towards embodied movement is explored.