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English Composition I. Achieving Expertise

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1 Review: Coyle, Daniel. "The Sweet Spot." *The Talent Code: Greatness Isn't Born, It's Grown; Here's*
2 *How*. Ed. Bantam Dell. New York: Bantam Books (Random House), 2009. 11-29. eBook.

3 The nature-nurture dilemma remains open and there are several authors (Colvin; Gladwell;
4 Syed) offering different perspectives to address it (Marshall). This is the case of Daniel Coyle's book,
5 *The Talent Code: Greatness is not born, has grown; Here's how*. The book allows us to accompany the
6 author on a trip to numerous places around the world to find out the behavior that seems to
7 differentiate to several individuals, whose common denominator is having an unusual talent and the
8 author shows us his statements on how achieve this type of talent in various areas.

9 While reading "The Sweet Spot", the author tells when he met Brunio, a soccer player with
10 eleven years old in Sao Paolo, Brazil, and also when he met Jennie in Dallas, United States; "She is
11 trying to hit the big finish, in which she turns the word time into a waterfall of note", Coyle says
12 about her (13). Around how the practice of Brunio and Jennie is, Doyle gives a plethora of details
13 and writes with enthusiasm, letting glimpse that is really important the mode they both do it. The
14 concern of Doyle is the approach in which those talented characters are performing their practices to
15 improve their development and believes the secret is that they are doing it in a very unique way, it is
16 a "deep practice" as Coyle call it, and these type of deep practice seems to lead them to learn and

advance faster. “The more scaffolding we build, the faster we learn.” Coyle referring to the statement by Bjork about how the brain is built (19). In fact, this is the core of the answers Coyle seeks and cites Bjork again (19): “It's all about finding the sweet spot . . . There's an optimal gap between what you know and what you're trying to do. When you find that sweet spot, learning takes off.”

Coyle makes know how the deep practice has been conducted successfully in other areas, benefiting not only one but many people, as the case of Edwin Albert Link (20-24) from New York, United States, whom with his simulator gave to pilots the opportunity “to practice more deeply, stop, struggle, make mistakes and learn from them” as Coyle says, and the last substantiation from this chapter is the one about the soccer coach Simon Clifford from Leeds, England, who after traveling to Brazil initiated a school of Brazilian soccer based on *futsal*, a physical activity six times more intensive (28) than normal soccer practice's, and after 4 years already has achieved outstanding figures as the case of defender Micah Richards, who now plays for the national team in England.

However we can find, among Coyle's lines, some fragments that also attract our attention but in another different fashion,

Deep practice is a strange concept for two reasons. The first reason is that it cuts against our intuition about talent. Our intuition tells us that practice relates to talent in the same way that a whetstone relates to a knife: it's vital but useless without a solid blade of so-called natural ability. Deep practice raises an intriguing possibility: that practice might be the way to forge the blade itself (19).

36 Based on the given evidence, Coyle settled that the deep practice might be the way to
37 overcome the shortage of innate ability.

38 Once the above mentioned, it is understood that Coyle comes to contradict himself when he
39 says “Trying to describe the collective talent of Brazilian soccer . . . (14)” establishing thus an
40 association between talent and nations, but however, in the above paragraph he states that anyone
41 involved in the deep practice can accomplish a sharp talent.

42 Although Coyle’s assert is not categorical, the warning is that any causal relationship based in
43 an observational study, rather than in controlled experiments with confounders isolated, should
44 always be avoid. Furthermore, any cause-effect or generalization should not be considered due to the
45 limited scientific value of the evidence (Davids and Baker).

46 This review of The Sweet Spot has shown the initial map courses by which the author will
47 lead us through the entire book. Coyle, with a nice language, tries to show in a relaxed way the
48 claims about his findings as a sports coach in a book with a pseudo scientist tinge. The given
49 explanations based on three cases; Brunio, Jennie and Micah must be considered anecdotes, but no
50 one of them is neither a chicken of the poultry house from any university nor an Everest size talent.

51 Nevertheless, as any book, is very worthy being read and enjoyable.

(Words Count: exactly 800 words plus 98 in References)

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