

Manifold aspects of teachership:

Technique, skill, way of life



Sim Uu Taekwondo
심우태권도

Thesis for 6th dan

**Jari Hintsanen
Manse Taekwondo
Finland**

September 2021

Mentors:

**Benny Faarvang (7th dan), Denmark
Henri Nordenswan (6th dan), Finland**

Contents

Introduction	2
1. A possible frame of reference for taekwondo.....	4
2. The teachership opens phase by phase	5
3. Teaching ability and knowledge as the core of teachership	8
4. Demands of the teachership.....	9
5. The teacher continues the tradition	11
6. The personal perception stays in the mind	12
Conclusion.....	14
Sources	16

Introduction

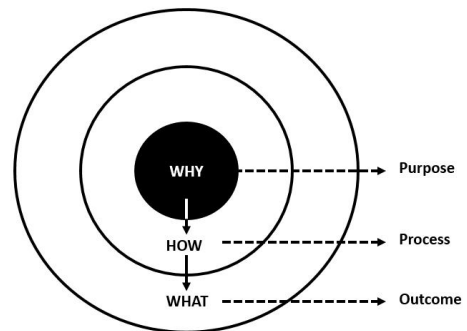
According to a Finnish professional martial arts teacher Ilpo Jalamo (2011) “in the martial arts the teacher, student and their trends form the exceptional and sensitive wholeness which includes features not prevailing western sports training. Traditionally, in the martial arts a teacher has been seen as the trainer, father figure and mental guide.”¹ In Asian traditions, the teacher has achieved something in his/her life, as a human being, that a student who follows him also wants to reach. In addition to individual techniques, the teacher has ability to reveal for a student a wider understanding to the martial arts. One of the main tasks of the teacher (*sabumnim*) is to transmit the frame of reference, the tradition of the specific martial art in question to his/her student. Within this tradition, the student learns to comprehend and to interpret his/her experiences.²

While studying martial arts for the past decades, I have found the idea of “pen and sword in accord” (*Bun bu ichi*) fascinating. According to this principle, the way of traditional Japanese martial arts (*budo*) and the way of arts (*geido*) are basically the same. Hence, if we find the core principle of one skill (art), we have the possibility to employ that principle in other forms of arts; maybe even in our everyday life. In my own practice, physical training, reading (studying) and writing have all become essential and mutually supporting methods. I believe that it is important to holistically practice one’s body-mind but also to reflect and comprehend what one is doing. My way of thinking is lateral and horizontal; I seek broader principles and interconnecting factors between diverse phenomena and perceptions. Benefits of such a comparative approach often expand beyond the specific issue addressed. In this short thesis, I use this same approach while aiming to examine and elaborate the varied aspects, perceptions and challenges on the path of gradually developing teachership, possibly leading towards mastership in taekwondo and perhaps, even in the shared principles of martial arts in general.

¹ Jalamo & Talonen 2011, 101. The first taekwondo black belt received by a Finn was awarded to Ilpo Jalamo (b. 1954), after a couple of months of training during his visit in South Korea in the fall of 1977. Jalamo states that the primary purpose of the belt was to increase credibility if he had started taekwondo in Finland. At that time, he had the 2nd Dan karate he had received in Japan. Kukkiwon’s management had noticed that taekwondo was missing from both Finland and our eastern neighbor. However, Jalamo focused on karate (nowadays he has 7th Dan, Yuishinkai-karatejutsu). Taekwondo started in Finland in 1979 by Hwang, Dae Jin. (Hintsanen 2014, 58, 59-60).

² Klemola 2004, 126. Timo Klemola, PhD (b. 1954), academic researcher who has a karate background for almost 50 years, has significantly influenced my thinking (also reflected in this thesis) about the philosophy of martial arts through his numerous books and studies. He was also the supervisor of my MA thesis in sports philosophy in 2006.

In Finland, some martial teachers and researchers examine the role of a martial arts teacher, at least, as instructor, coach/trainer, teacher and master.³ The instructor is a person who usually directs the progress of trainings. So s/he knows *how*, for example, techniques have to be carried out and how the training has to be done. The trainer (coach) creates the coaching programmes, corrects and directs techniques, takes care of competitive objectives (e.g. for a match) arranging the sensible conditions for the practice; hence s/he knows *what* has to be done. Occasionally and overlappingly, the teacher can have the above mentioned roles, but even more importantly, s/he tries to mentor students more holistically (e.g. the manners, attitudes). S/he may extend the teaching beyond the skill and techniques towards a purposeful attitude of life and healthier way of living, among others. S/he understands wider principles and searches for the purpose of the doing (*why*).⁴



These definitions presented above are merely indicative and so they can vary or/and overlap depending on the individual. While one can take the role of the instructor, the master level will be gradually reached. In taekwondo belt system, 1-3. Dan are still student degrees (*kyosamnim*), 4.-6. Dan represents the teacher degrees (*sabumnim*) and only the 7.-9. Dan are master degrees (*kwanjammim*).

In Korean, the suffix “*nim*” is a gender neutral expression which indicates respect and social status. According to the Kukkiwon’s guidelines, at the highest master degrees, a temporal waiting time between each degree and minimum age are demanded, along with required skills. In other words, a young student cannot reach the highest Dan levels even if his/her technical level might be outstanding for the required level. For instance, one should be at least 44-years-old for 8th Dan and 53-year-old for 9th Dan. Yet, it is important to take into account that such demands for the master levels inevitably vary in regard to different martial arts, styles and countries.

³ Jalamo & Talonen 2011, 104-105.

⁴ The point of view here is the framework presented by Simon Sinek (2009): *Start With Why - How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action*.

1. A possible frame of reference for taekwondo

In Korean, three different expressions refer to martial arts: *moosool/musul* (무술), *mooye/muye* (무예) and *moodo/mudo* (무도), roughly translated as technique, skill and principle or a way of life (see Table 1). In all these three words, a basic syllable is *moo* (무) which can be considered as their root word. *Moo* (무) is based on a Chinese character *wu* (武) that is usually associated with war and hence used to indicate words and concepts related to military and/or warlike conditions. When examined more closely though the character holds more detailed meanings: the character consists of two radicals,⁵ *a spear* (戈) and *to stop* (止). Read together they in fact mean a stopping of a weapon or finishing of violence. Although it is not incorrect to translate *moo* as a soldier, battle skill or warlike, it is important to be noted that the implicit significance is a thought of ending violence. Hence the intrinsic notion of the concept can be interpreted as indicating more towards defending than aggressive action. Despite that Japanese *bu* (武) has intricate genealogy and interpretations of its own, it can be considered as an equivalent concept for *moo*.⁶

I propose that one possible frame of reference for taekwondo – and for a gradually deepening teachership – can then be gained through a comparative approach based on these above mentioned three concepts.

Korea	Japan	China	Significance
무술 moosool / musul	武術 bujutsu	武術 / 武术 wushu	Technique
무예 mooye / muye	武芸 bugei	武藝 / 武艺 wuyi	Skill
무도 moodo / mudo	武道 budo	武道 wudao	Way of life/principle
무도인 moodoin	武道家 budoka	武道家 wushujia	Trainer/enthusiast

Table 1: The separate aspects of Taekwondo and their equivalents in Japan and China (Hintsanen 2014, 131; see also Moenig 2017, 199–201.)

⁵ A Chinese radical (Chinese: 部首; pinyin: bùshǒu; literally: 'section header') is a graphical component of a Chinese character under which the character is traditionally listed in a Chinese dictionary.

⁶ Lewis, Sanko 2011; Johnsson 2017, 3-6. Lewis has completed a PhD in taekwondo at Kyunghee University, he has a 5th Dan in ITF Taekwon-Do, a 4th Dan in Hapkido. John A. Johnson (PhD) is a professor at the Department of Taekwondo, College of Physical Education at Keimyung University. He has lived in the Republic of Korea for two decades and studied Korean martial arts for 35 years.

2. The teachership opens phase by phase

These three different terms are interdependence and the good final result is based on their interaction. Technical, realistic practice (*moosool/musul*) should, however, include a moral aspect (*moodo/mudo*) which brings forward a softening dimension. Yet mere *mudo* without a skill and technique would lack concrete abilities to develop further. On the other hand, technical know-how is never enough alone for a holistic teachership. As a teacher, one should comprehend broader, dominating principles underlying behind techniques so that any kind of doing would be skilful and creative (*mooye/muye*). For me, trying to understand such principles are essentially connected to the teachership in taekwondo.

These three terms can also be perceived to represent three different stages of learning building towards more in-depth teaching abilities. The practice starts from the techniques (*moosool/musul*) and during years of devoted practice, the growing control of techniques will become ever more skilled, creative and even aesthetic (*mooye/muye*). Eventually, such training itself and walking along the path (*do*) gain more significant roles; the doing becomes a way of life (*moodo/mudo*) for a teacher of martial arts. Johnson (Figure 2) calls this taekwondos's pedagogy.⁷



Figure 2 Taekwondo pedagogical process depicted as a hierarchical structure (Johnson 2017, 5).

Another comparative perspective for these concepts can be gained through a traditional Japanese learning model (*Shu Ha Ri*), related to Japanese martial arts and elucidating a learning curve of a student based on three stages. According to Japanologist and martial artist Karl F. Friday, a skill, a

⁷ Johnson 2017, 3–13; Johnson 2018, 1645–1646.

technique or a thematic entity in martial arts can be gradually acquired in three phases of ‘to preserve’ (mamoru / shu), ‘to break’ (yabureru / ha) and ‘to separate’ (banareru / ri). At the same time, *shu ha ri* indicates how a beginner advances toward mastership.⁸ For T.K. Chiba, aikido master (8th Dan, *Shihan*), skill is learned by imitating the teacher “slavishly” at the 1st stage (*shu*, “retains”, “it follows”) in other words, a student learns from tradition. To copy something from someone you consider a master is an act of respect to that master and a natural thing to do if you want to learn something. At the 2nd stage (*ha*, “to loosen”, “to differ”), the skill will be applied for searching the new points of departure for the previously imitated training. For the 3rd stage (*ri*, “to go away”, “to separate”), the skill has been learned and it can hence be intuitively adapted.⁹ In Figure 3, the principle (or process) is rectilinearly shown (an ideal), but however, it does not always proceed this rectilinearly (in practice).

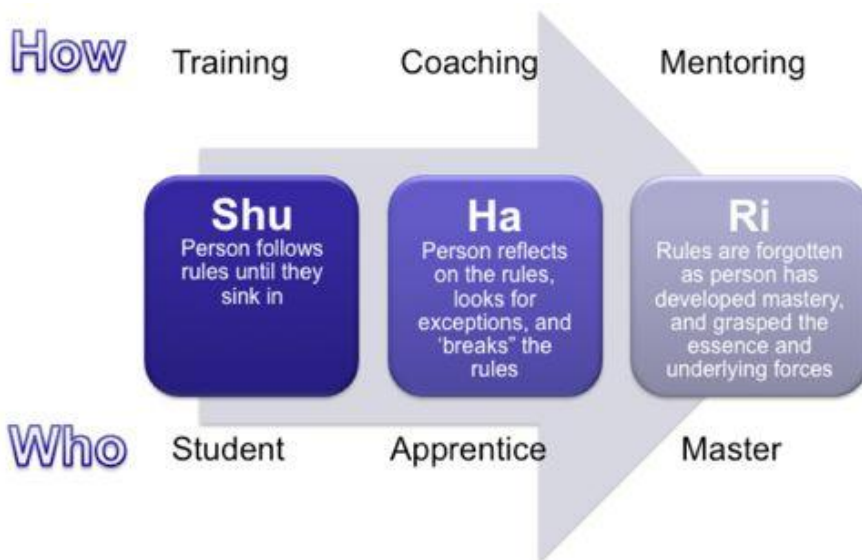


Figure 3 Shu-Ha-Ri (by Avantica Company, 2016)

Forms (e.g. *kata*, *poomsae*) formulate the especially and important pedagogic type which is common among the traditional Asian martial arts (and their global derivatives) in which they are used strong as a pedagogics of the body in the developing of oneself, a body-mind and culture.¹⁰ “By learning through *kata* we imitate and honour the past masters (*shu*); through repetition and disassembly we come to appreciate the purpose for which they were created and learn more about

⁸ Friday & Humitake 1997, 107–108.

⁹ Chiba 1989. In the article, Chiba describes a very traditional concept of the road (*do*), strongly colored by Zen Buddhism.

¹⁰ Jennings et al. 2020, 63.

the creator and perhaps embody some of their characteristics (*ha*); by changing the kata to suit us we introduce our individual philosophies to the mix (*ri*).”¹¹

According to Johnsson “Kang and Kim [2005] established that shuhari is found in Korean martial arts. Students begin by following their instructors’ methods and techniques precisely (i.e., observe and emulate their instructor) at the shu level. TKD students must thus emulate their teachers’ physical motions to learn the art’s physical skills during the musul stage. Students enter ha when they experiment and establish a more personal method of performing the art (i.e., to break away from their instructors’ methodologies). Consequently, ha resembles the muye level of the TKD pedagogical process, since both call for personal interpretations of the art.”¹²

What is mastership? Based on Hubert L. Dreyfus’s perception (western model of skill acquisition), the master (an expert) does not draw their actions on rules or tight guidelines but s/he has intuitive situation consciousness (a holistic observation) which is based on tacit knowledge and deep comprehension. The master reacts flexibly according to a situation and uses an analytic approach only in new or problematic situations when acknowledging the limited possibilities.¹³ “In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert's there are few.”¹⁴

Skill Level/ Mental Function	Novice	Advanced Beginner	Competence	Proficient	Expert
Recollection	Non-Situational	Situational	Situational	Situational	Situational
Recognition	Decomposed	Decomposed	Holistic	Holistic	Holistic
Decision	Analytical	Analytical	Analytical	Intuitive	Intuitive
Awareness	Monitoring	Monitoring	Monitoring	Monitoring	Absorbed

Table 2. The Dreyfus model of skill acquisition is a model of how learners acquire skills through formal instruction and practicing (1986, 16–36).

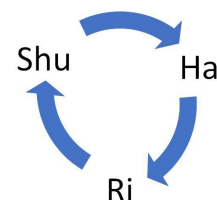
¹¹ Jennings et al. 2020, 68.

¹² Johnsson 2017, 8.

¹³ Dreyfus & Dreyhus 1986, 30–36; Dreyfus 2004, 177–181.

¹⁴ Suzuki 1970/1998, 21.

Commonly known a Japanese notion about *shoshin*, “the beginner’s mind”, emphasizes how the teacher is always a student too.¹⁵ The starting point for learning a skill is always this state of mind. However, the same state of mind is important at the highest levels of skill. Training is continuous studying: proceeding as a teacher on the same road together with the students even though one’s perspective and aims can be different and on a different level. The road of practise is endless and skills cannot be completely learned. Hence the teacher’s authority is directly based on his/her active mental and physical training which ensures maintaining, deepening and broadening up one’s abilities.¹⁶ The previous frame of reference (*Shu Ha Ri*) can be now described adapting "the beginner's mind" circle-shaped.



3. Teaching ability and knowledge as the core of teachership

Usually, training is the most physical during the 1st-3rd Dan. The focus lies on improving techniques (the control of movements, the production of power and physical speed) in order to gain sufficient technical know-how and basic understanding about the core principles of taekwondo. At least formally, a student becomes a teacher when s/he achieves the 4th Dan and the primary interest changes from one’s own training into mentoring and teaching the practice of others. At this stage, at the latest, the significance of teaching ability cannot be underestimated and it should be developing in interdependence with – and beyond – physical performing.

Because in Finland, the majority of teaching in martial arts relies on a voluntary approach, teachers may occasionally need to prioritize students’ development instead of their own training. Yet, after awhile, some of these students can share the responsibilities of directing training. In turn, this opens up new possibilities for a teacher to reconcentrate on one’s practice which leads to the deepening of knowledge and skills. Time used for him/her own training enables a teacher to gain and compare the varied perspectives of martial arts and to reflect one’s own path. While so doing, one achieves more versatile insights, develops mental properties and more diversified teaching. As a result, this may lead to the possible development of an individual training and teaching style.

A taekwondo teacher is obliged to promote his/her insights and style of taekwondo. Therefore the details and emphasis of taekwondo practice may differ from a teacher to another. However, if one’s

¹⁵ See e.g. Suzuki 1970/1998.

¹⁶ Klemola 30.11.2017.

own basis of knowledge is narrow or insufficient, it will not necessarily support long-term teaching. In other words, it is believed to be important that teacher should keep expanding and deepening his/her comprehension through continuous examination and refinement.¹⁷ Teaching and teachership do not signify any specific perfection attained. Quite the contrary, a teacher (usually) also has a teacher(s) and/or a master(s). It has been suggested that teach is to learn twice: first, learning a matter (e.g. a specific technique or a principle) to oneself, and second, to learn to teach it to another person.

One of the main challenges then is to find a feasible balance between traditions and adaptations to the contemporary needs. It is essential to hold on to meaningful traditions and the original root of martial art yet cultivating new branches with careful consideration. The final result should *not* be a situation in which the teacher pretends to teach and the students pretend to practise something which distantly resembles the original form of martial art in question.¹⁸

Another challenge in Finland is the lack of a strong connection with one's own teacher. This is perhaps due to the previous deficiency of high ranking taekwondo masters and hence, concrete role models of teachership. This has likely caused the currently prevailing unclarity about "teachership" for some of us. When a close teacher-student interrelation is missing, one has had to seek teachership from him/herself which in turn, sets more mental and practical challenges. On the other hand, a search for his/her own mode of teachership and acknowledging one's learning curve as "a student of teachership", is nonetheless a inevitable method on the growing process.¹⁹

4. Demands of the teachership

In martial arts and/or combat sports, it is expected that besides knowing techniques and movements, a teacher also has the ability to demonstrate and use them. Such capabilities are not necessarily expected of a coach of many other sports (e.g. football, ski jumping) although they are usually active enthusiasts and previously trained experts of the sport in question. A coach can have strong knowledge about useful methods for training but s/he is not necessarily requested to demonstrate an actual performance him/herself.

¹⁷ Kukkiwon 2006, 102–103; Nordenswan 21.3.2012, email conversations (Hintsanen 2014, 124–125). See also Faarvang 2016, 17.

¹⁸ Jalamo & Talonen 2011, 43.

¹⁹ Nordenswan 21.3.2012, email conversations (Hintsanen 2014, 124–125).

However, it could be asked, as Benny Faarvang pointed out, whether such expectations are fair in martial arts? While we keep assuming that the master or high ranked remains on an advanced level compared with ourselves, we should acknowledge that aging inevitably has an impact on everyone. Hence it might be relevant to reconsider if and when our anticipations on continuous physical abilities become unjustified.²⁰

The main role of a sport coach is to inspire and to motivate an athlete to continuously improve and develop their physical performances. Besides this general aim, a teacher in martial arts can also set different challenges for a student in order to find out his/her character and attitude. These roles might be overlapping and interchangeable too, because a teacher of the martial arts may also hold a position as a sport coach (for example, as a coach of the taekwondo team for the next Olympic games).

In addition to the technical know-how, a teacher martial of arts faces expectations and demands regarding his/her everyday behaviour and set of values. Consciously or unconsciously, students usually perceive their teacher as a role model, transforming him/her as the yardstick of the martial art in question. Especially in case of an experienced teacher, this kind of position as a role model can have a very strong impact on the students – even in terms of a general attitude and way of thinking. A teacher may hold a more significant position that him/herself realizes because, to a certain extent, “students are their teacher’s mirror image.”²¹ This leads to rising a level of responsibilities for a teacher. For example, taekwondo includes techniques that can be used for self-defense as well as attack, in other words, to harm a person. This includes an important ethical element about using the skill - and especially not using it.²²

The expectations in a teacher-student relationship (especially at the level of apprenticeship) can greatly vary depending on, among others, different levels of motivation, aims and possible time available for practicing. While a student may take an interest in martial arts training according to his/her schedule and based on personal life situation, the teacher can have hopes for a devoted

²⁰ Faarvang 2016,16 & 3.3.2020, email conversations.

²¹ Kukkiwon 2006, 102; Kukkiwon Taekwondo Academy 2010, 50–51; Jalamo & Talonen 2011, 101.

²² Faarvang 2016, 8.

student, even keen to practice for a lifetime. Such differences in anticipations can cause remarkable challenges.²³

Even though sports training has changed in a more professional direction, the Finnish physical education and sports culture continuous to be strongly based on voluntary work. Taekwondo training in Finland is mainly organized by associations, societies and clubs, partially supported by governmental funding systems. Hence, Finnish taekwondo-teacher is usually not a paid professional but a voluntary enthusiast whose teaching is based on personal calling; initiative for teaching is based on one's own interest, not on making a living. This does not exclude teaching for some monetary compensation but the core meaningfulness lies on a mental bond to the martial arts in question, in other words, an internal desire. If teaching derives from such an inherent passion, the teacher can probably choose the goals of teaching more freely. Especially so, if s/he does not necessarily need to adapt his/her teaching to constantly respond to trainees' wishes as paying customers, in particular, in a professionally working *dojang*. Therefore, a teacher does not personally need to gain growing popularity or attract groups of new trainees to support one's income. Yet economic realities, for example, in terms of maintaining a privately owning training space, as some clubs and societies do, set demands covering the everyday costs, even if teaching would remain an unpaid practice.²⁴

5. The teacher continues the tradition

One of an experienced teacher's core tasks is to pass on the frame of reference, through which a student learns to comprehend and to interpret his/her experiences about the martial arts. This kind of general level of teachership is not necessarily acknowledged in many common, "western" sports (e.g. football, ice hockey). Rather, a coach/trainer primarily concentrates on being a technical adviser who demonstrates and/or explains the correct way of performance (*what/how*) and trains a student in the different technical sectors of the skill.²⁵

An experienced teacher acknowledges his/her own core abilities, interests, and motivations (*why*) and employs them as the concrete basis for practicing and teaching. Both peers and students may sense the abilities of this kind and possible charisma. Consequently, inspiring teachers do not need

²³ Jalamo & Talonen 2011, 102.

²⁴ Jalamo & Talonen 2011, 102; Nordenswan 21.3.2012, email conversations (Hintsanen 2014, 124–125).

²⁵ Klemola 2004, 126.

to provide other, external benefits or attractions (e.g. highly equipped training space) because they offer something which has a significant value itself to a student. Rather, inspiring teachers can offer purpose and possibilities for realizing it. The purpose will be found, it is not invented.

It is important to acknowledge that Asian martial arts have not always been taught to masses. In addition, the distribution of knowledge has been more limited than nowadays, when several methods enable us to share information to each other in written and visual forms. Before modern times, teaching was based on a close interrelationship between the teacher of martial art and a student, and hence on a direct transmission of traditions and technical skills. In Japanese martial arts, this practice deriving from Zen-Buddhism is known with a term *isshin-denshin* ("from the mind to the mind" transmission of information). The written or verbal instructions have been secondary ways of learning, compared with a student's immediate personal experience and understanding which were considered more important.²⁶

The term *sensei* which denotes 'a teacher' in Japanese, literally means "the generation which precedes". This is no coincidence because of the prevailing Confucianism in East Asia, and more importantly, its emphasis on respecting age and experience, which in turn, further strengthens social hierarchical order. Hence, closely defined norms have been set, for instance, for teacher-student relationships. The one with longer a path of life has inevitably gathered more life experience. Therefore, s/he may then be an example to a younger person in general. *Sensei* is still a title to be earned in Japan.²⁷ However, in Taekwondo it is technically possible to reach the first teacher level (4th Dan) in a quite young age nowadays. In South Korea, for instance, it is possible for a person in their mid-twenties to graduate from a university (BA) as a taekwondo teacher.²⁸ In practice, a student of taekwondo may have a shorter experience in training martial arts than his/her teacher, yet simultaneously be older than the teacher in question and hence have more life experience.

6. The personal perception stays in the mind

Traditional Confucian pedagogy emphasises learning through following a model pattern and/or through a ritualised practice, and has also modified Korean martial arts teaching. A major aspect of

²⁶ Friday & Humitake 1997, 104–105; Lowry 2006, 141; Jalamo & Talonen 2011, 45–47.

²⁷ Jalamo & Talonen 2011, 45–47, 103; Lowry 2006, 141

²⁸ Moenig 3.4.2020. Udo Moenig is an associate professor at Youngsan University. He researches in the fields of Asian Studies with a focus on martial arts related issues, such as history, philosophy, and the technical aspects of martial arts. As a young man, he studied various martial arts and began taekwondo in 1979.

teacher's role has been to function as an example and a guide, not to explain or import information, as is commonly understood in the modern "western" pedagogies. In a traditional teaching approach, the teacher directs a student through a gradual, non-linear process in an effort to assist him/her to internalise the central guidelines of the doctrine and to create favourable conditions for adopting certain skills. The main expectation is then, that gradually, a student will develop intrinsic understanding.²⁹ Non-linear pedagogy emphasises, in particular, implicit (unconscious) learning. The core idea is that every learner is different from others. Therefore, an individual point of view works as the basis for a teaching of skills.

Such teaching method can be efficient in a sense that it compels the student to think and to seek independently. When an answer is found through the student's own "perception, it will probably last more profoundly in one's mind than readily scrutinized information."³⁰ However, the most Korean taekwondo schools, for example, are today teaching by repeating the matter over and over again until it is in your backbone, but you do not necessarily understand what it means. It seems that some of the teachers of Kukkiwon do not often exactly urge you to think for yourself. They rather ask you to repeat the technique habitually, in the way they want it, and if you try to develop your own style, they might be correcting you to avoid making mistakes.³¹ Similarly in Japan, including Japanese martial arts, independent thinking is not encouraged, rather, it is not allowed. It is usually required that the exact forms and styles which are related to the skill in question are to be followed. Referring to the above mentioned three levels of the skill (*shu ha ri*), the Japanese generally think that a westerner may learn the first level, perhaps even partially the second, but not the third level.³²

At the same time, for instance, European enthusiasts have apparently got used to teaching based on detailed explanations and an analytical approach which does not require one to look for solutions by him/herself. However, the modern trainers of martial arts around the world can also be impatient and short-sighted because they are accustomed to continuously have new movements, exercises, thoughts and trends available – in martial arts too. Hence they might not be keen to focus on basic training which forms the core of further advancement. Nevertheless, some enthusiasts are interested

²⁹ Jalamo & Talonen 2011, 45–47; Lowry 2006, 141.

³⁰ Jalamo & Talonen 2011, 40.

³¹ Faarvang 3.3.2020. email conversations.

³² Klemola 30.11.2017.

in simple and straight-lined practice as long as it corresponds to their needs (for example, as a starting point for self-defence or as fitness training).³³

Conclusion

Today it is possible to both teach and receive instructions in martial arts through varied distance teaching methods.³⁴ As the consequence of the global situation (March 2020–September 2021; Coronavirus COVID-19) has increased the popularity of such teaching forms. If this way of teaching becomes a common trend, I believe it will inevitably result in somewhat superficial teaching and narrowing down the scope of knowledge and skill set to be transmitted. Technology is not yet a useful tool to replace all social contacts with digital ones. It has become clear that not all things (such as tacit knowledge) that work in the analog world may necessarily work in the electronic one. They don't work there because we're ultimately humans, not robots. Of course, distance learning can act as a support, such as videos, but it cannot completely replace traditional teaching. When teaching is not based on the physical presence and interrelation of the teacher and student, some basic elements of effective teaching (the small gestures, subtle expressions, tone of a voice, body postures and movements) will be excluded. It is difficult, even perhaps impossible, to transfer feeling, atmosphere and enthusiasm. Likewise, spontaneous reciprocity remains totally missing. The effective transmission of skills from a teacher to a student happens from an experienced body-mind to a body-mind learning the skills in question. As has been discussed above, this is considered as the most important method of teaching in many Asian traditions in which the teacher does not necessarily orally explain much, but rather seeks to transfer his/her own skill by doing and showing him/herself. In addition, the teacher also communicates through a tactful touch (e.g. for correcting body positions). It is difficult to share the information on an experience and body, the instructor cannot always tell about its solutions or cannot describe their grounds to one another. Such transfer tacit knowledge between humans based on multi-channel sensory information is not (at least, yet) transmittable through technological / digital means. For this reason, the physical presence of a teacher remains essential.³⁵

³³ Jalamo & Talonen 2011, 113.

³⁴ See e.g. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RMjJDjle3c&feature=share> : Taekwondo basic physical strength. Kukkiwon Dispatch Master Jung-Hyuon Cho of Finland.

³⁵ Inspired by Timo Klemola's recent blog. 3.4.2020.

Martial arts, such as taekwondo can not be learned from books or videos alone, but requires a teacher (instructor). Basically, a teacher should continue to practice more than his/her students, one way or another. It is, of course, a tough requirement, especially if you are fighting against aging at the same time, but that will ensure how the teacher can have something timely and relevant to say, teach and give, in continuously shifting societal context for students with varied and changing aspirations. Yet, this does *not* imply that the teacher should respond to all the needs or his/her training should be only physical all the time. Due to his researcher background, Klemola encourages for a more holistic approach, “teaching through studying and researching.”³⁶ Such teaching based on continuous research also includes investigating - without forgetting healthy criticism – the tradition in question more broadly, unearthing any materials that can be found. This builds towards a comparative approach and hence, more nuanced understanding about the tradition / line of tradition that one is studying / practicing. Even more importantly, it directly contributes to my personal quest for developing my vision of teachership further and is therefore an essential part of my on-going path as a teacher.

Above has been demonstrated a possible frame of reference for taekwondo: the stratified pedagogy leads a student learning techniques (*musul*) to a personal expression of taekwondo (*muje*) to a way of life (*mudo*). Meanwhile it is one possible model for the taekwondo pedagogy which also allows the teacher to analyse his/her teachership.

Finally, it should be noted that “many Asian form-based martial arts are commonly practised into deep old age, which further highlights how these martial arts can act as vehicles for self-cultivation by constantly addressing the basics of one’s art through its stances, steps and strikes that unify consciousness and movement through breath, emotion, metaphor and visualization with somatic feeling.”³⁷

³⁶ Klemola 30.11.2017.

³⁷ Jennings et al. 2020, 65.

Sources

- Avantica Company (2016). Don't Stay in the 'Shu' box: Agile is not a Recipe. Available: <https://www.avantica.com/blog/2016/11/17/dont-stay-in-the-shu-box-agile-is-not-a-recipe-4>
- Chiba, T.K. (1989). Structure of Shu, Ha, Ri, and Penetration of Shoshin” *Sansho*, Vol. 6, No 2, Winter. Available: <http://www.aikidosphere.com/kc-e-shu-ha-ri>
- Faarvang, Benny (2016). *Taekwondo. Including Martial Art or A sport Divided?* Thesis for 7th dan. Faarvang, Benny (3.3.2020). Discussion by e-mail.
- Dreyfus, Hubert L. & Dreyfus, Stuart E. (1986). *Mind over Machine: the power of human intuition and expertise in the era of the computer*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Dreyfus, Stuart E. (2004). The Five-Stage Model of Adult Skill Acquisition. *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society*, Vol. 24, No. 3, 177–181.
- Hintsanen, Jari. (2014). *Taekwondo – jalan ja käden tie*. [Taekwondo – the way of foot and hand]. Tampere: Tammerprint (own publication).
- Jalamo, Ilpo & Talonen, Jyrki (2011). *Renkaita vedessä. Ajatuksia kamppailutaidoista*. [Annular waves in the water. Thoughts on martial arts]. Turku: Ilpo Jalamo & Jyrki Talonen.
- Jennings, George, Dodd, Simon & Brown, David (2020). Cultivation Through Asian Form-Based Martial Arts Pedagogy. In Lewin, David & Kenklies, Karsten (edit.) *East Asian Pedagogies. Education as Formation and Transformation Across Cultures and Borders*, 63–77.
- Johnson, John A. (2017). From technique to way: an investigation into taekwondo’s pedagogical process. IDO MOVEMENT FOR CULTURE. *Journal of Martial Arts Anthropology*, Vol. 17, no. 4, 3–13, DOI: 10.14589/ido.17.4.2
- Johnson, John A. (2018) Taekwondo and Peace: How a Killing Art Became a Soft Diplomacy Vehicle for Peace. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 35:15–16, 1637–1662, DOI: 10.1080/09523367.2019.1618838
- Kang Y.W., Kim Y.S. (2005). Interpretation of Yaburu-Haburu-Hanareru in Oriental Martial arts. *Korean Journal of Physical Education – Humanities and Social Sciences*, vol. 44, no. 2, 39-49 [in Korean].
- Klemola, Timo (2004). *Taidon filosofia – filosofin taito*. Tampere: Tampere University Press.
- Klemola, Timo (30.11.2017). Muutama lyhyt huomio taidon opettamisesta. [A few short points about teaching the skill]. Available: <https://visiot.terapiakortit.com/2017/11/30/muutama-lyhyt-huomio-taidon-opettamisesta-251/>
- Klemola, Timo (3.4.2020). Lyhyt huomio siitä, miksi etäopetus on vain korvike [A brief note on why distance learning is just a substitute]. Available: <https://visiot.terapiakortit.com/?p=387>
- Kukkiwon (edit.) (2006). *Kukkiwon Textbook*. Second edition. Seoul: O-Sung Publishing Company.
- Kukkiwon Taekwondo Academy (2010). *Taekwondo Instructor Course Textbook*. Seoul: Kukkiwon Taekwondo Academy.
- Lewis, Sanko (2011). Martial Technique, Martial Art And Martial Way. *Totally Tae Kwon Do*, Issue 24 December, 23–25. <http://www.totallytkd.com>. Available: <http://sooshimkwan.blogspot.com/2010/12/moosool-mooye-and-moodo.html>
- Lowry, Dave (2006). *In the Dojo*. Boston: Weatherhill.
- Moening, Udo (2017). *Taekwondo: From a Martial Art to a Martial Sport*. London: Routledge, CPI Group. Published for the 1st time in 2015 by Routledge, London.
- Moening, Udo (3.4.2020). Taekwondo studies at Korean universities. Discussion by e-mail.
- Nordenswan, Henri (2012, 2013). E-mail & discussions about the subject.
- Sinek, Simon (2009): *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action*. Penguin Book, UK.
- Suzuki, Shunryu (1970/1998). *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind: Informal Talks on Zen Meditation and Practice*. Weatherhill: Hong Kong.