

Teaching Taekwondo Through Mosston's Spectrum of Styles

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The spectrum offers flexibility in teaching various aspects of martial arts content.

Over the past three decades, the martial arts have enjoyed increasing popularity in the United States due in part to action films, professional wrestling, mixed martial arts, and ultimate fighting (Skidmore, 1991). This increasing interest has led to the transformation of martial arts from a spectator sport to a viable recreational pastime in which people of all ages can participate (Kozub & Kozub, 2004). With this social change in mind, Winkle and Ozmun (2003) suggested that martial arts should become a regular activity in the physical education curriculum because they can enhance students' health-related fitness, performance-related fitness, self-concept and esteem, and cognitive ability.

Nevertheless, physical educators may have difficulty in teaching martial arts for two reasons: (1) they have little pedagogical content knowledge and experience in teaching martial arts because physical education teacher education programs rarely prepare teachers in them, and (2) there is the perception that martial arts can be dangerous and difficult to teach. Therefore, the purpose of this article is twofold: (1) to provide physical education teachers with a rationale and background for teaching taekwondo by focusing on the physical, psychological, and possible multicultural benefits of martial arts, and (2) to describe how Mosston's spectrum of styles (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002) can assist in teaching taekwondo.

Mosston's spectrum of teaching styles, which ranges from the command style to the self-teaching style, aims to make teachers competent in a comprehensive pedagogical structure, regardless of content, in order to increase teachers' conceptual and practical pedagogical knowledge (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002). Because the main purpose of this article is to connect this pedagogical tool, Mosston's spectrum of styles, to its use in teaching taekwondo, content knowledge about taekwondo is considered prerequisite for teaching it. The author believes that this article will also help physical educators who are familiar with other martial arts to employ Mosston's spectrum of styles in teaching those forms.

Benefits of Taekwondo

Evidence suggests that practicing the martial arts has beneficial effects on health- and sport-related physical fitness, specifically on anaerobic power and capacity (Melhim, 2001), endurance (Pieter, Taaffe, & Heijmans, 1990), body composition (Toskovic, Blessing, & Williford, 2002), muscular strength (Falk & Mor, 1996), and children's flexibility and balance (Violan, Small, Zetaruk, & Micheli, 1997). The psychological benefits of martial arts have also been documented for managing anger and releasing pain (Focht, Bouchard, & Murphey, 2000); and for dealing with resistance, coping with aggregation and vulnerability, increasing self-esteem and self-confidence, and decreasing sleep disturbance and depression (Weiser, Kutz, Kutz, & Weiser, 1995).

Other research on martial arts has concentrated on both cognitive and affective development. Cognitive benefits of martial arts include the learning of movement and physics concepts "such as directions of movement, proper striking surfaces, the

advantages of leverage over muscle, and situational awareness" (Michaelson, 2000, p. 12). Some martial arts involve tactics that help maximize cognitive engagement when individuals know the inherent strategies in these sports; consequently, Kozub and Kozub (2004) suggested that the martial arts could be easily taught using the teaching games for understanding approach. The beneficial affective aspects of martial arts emphasize promoting respect, responsibility, and self-regulation (Lakes & Hoyt, 2004; Law, 2004). In addition, Banks (2006) proposed that a self-defense course can develop positive attitudes toward physical education.

Learning a Different Culture Through Taekwondo

The national standards for physical education (National Association for Sport and Physical Education [NASPE], 2004) suggest that students need to understand the concept of physical activity as a microcosm of modern culture and society. The emphasis, especially for sixth through eighth grades, is placed on recognizing "the role of games, sports, and dance in getting to know and understand others of like and different backgrounds" (NASPE, 2004, p. 42). Thus, it is important for students to acknowledge the relationship between culture and sports.

In addition, sport education, one of the physical education models, aims to create "the literate sportsperson [who] understands and values the rules, rituals, and traditions of sports and activities as well as physical skills" (Siedentop, Hastie, & van der Mars, 2004, p. 8). Therefore, teaching culturally different meanings of sport should be a part of one's physical education. This can be promoted by teaching diverse sports, such as taekwondo, and their cultural meaning. Taekwondo also can encourage interdisciplinary learning by utilizing knowledge in various fields, such as social studies, science, arts, and sport.

Sports are not a simple phenomenon in modern society. Instead, sports are a product of complex cultural processes. All around the world, sports have the same general format. However, the connotative meaning of sports can differ depending on culture, as human beings have various beliefs and values in different cultures. That is, sports are influenced by the sociohistorical background in a given culture and simultaneously influence cultural identity (Tomlinson, 2005). In this sense, we cannot understand the structure and the meaning of sports without understanding the cultural context. Therefore, we need to see sports in relation to their cultural context in order to develop an accurate understanding of them.

Korean Culture and Taekwondo. As already mentioned, most physical educators worry about their lack of knowledge and experience in teaching martial arts. Therefore, this section will introduce basic information and content on taekwondo, a Korean martial art, in relation to Korean culture to help physical educators teach taekwondo within its cultural context in their classes.

Traditional Korean culture has been formed on the basis



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As students perform each posture, the teacher provides feedback individually in the command style.

of the philosophy of *Han*, literally meaning "one" in the sense of a whole. *Han* implies that "mind and body are not separable from each other in a human being, nor separable are heaven, earth and human being because they are destined to be in unity and in harmony" (Lee, 2001, p. 37.). This traditional Korean philosophy has served to create the principles of taekwondo. Thus, the training of taekwondo means not only practicing the highest skill of taekwondo technique but ultimately reaching the state of mind-body unity and of heaven-earth oneness.

Another Korean philosophy called *Hongik-ingan* stresses the cooperation between human beings and the harmony between human beings and nature (Lee, 2001). This idea also influences taekwondo training, which concentrates on a close coordination with others and on developing respect for the life of all living things. Bowing is a significant sign of gratitude and respect in taekwondo. Bowing signifies not only respect for your instructors or superiors, but self-respect, respect for the art, and respect for the lives of others (Tedeschi, 2003).

To teach the essential nature of taekwondo, teachers should approach it by teaching the more traditional and holistic aspects of martial arts. This approach focuses on teaching different cultural beliefs and values, such as building confidence and self-esteem, making contact with oneself and one's fears, and showing respect and concern for others, as well as teaching physical skills. In this way, students will learn human diversity through mental training in a martial art from a different culture.

Using Mosston's Spectrum of Styles to Teach Taekwondo

Taekwondo consists of five core activities: practice of fundamentals, forms, self-defense, sport sparring, and breaking (Tedeschi, 2003). The rest of this article will introduce les-

son plans for teaching four of these in grades four through eight (the exception is breaking, because it is too dangerous to teach in a public school class). Mosston's spectrum of teaching styles is employed to implement this cultural physical education class because it is a powerful framework for delivering instruction in school (Byra, 2002).

Mosston's spectrum is a universal teaching tool that can be employed to reach a variety of educational purposes (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002). Under the assumption that all teaching styles are beneficial, Muska Mosston developed the teaching spectrum from style A (the command style) through style K (the self-teaching style). Who makes decisions in the three stages of teaching—pre-impact, impact, and post-impact—determines the teaching style. In style A, the decision maker in all three stages is the teacher, but the decision-making responsibility shifts from the teacher to the students as the style shifts from A to K.

Teaching "Practice of Fundamentals" Using the Command Style (Style A). As Mosston & Ashworth (2002) suggested, taekwondo is a good example of content that needs the com-

mand style, because the manner and rituals of taekwondo are probably unfamiliar to most students outside of Korea. At the beginning of the command style taekwondo class, lineup is more important than in most other physical education units because order and unity are considered centrally important in taekwondo. Perseverance, self-control, and respect for the teacher are also significant moral values in taekwondo. Therefore, when the teacher is speaking, students should stay still in order to develop perseverance and self-control, and to show respect. Teachers should explain these important moral values in taekwondo, as well as give information on the purpose of the command style, at the beginning of the class. A very good strategy is for the teacher to teach the *Cha-ryot sogi* posture (see "Command Style Scenario" in the sidebar) at the beginning of the class, because students cannot move and talk in this position. The teacher can gain students' attention whenever he or she shouts "*Cha-ryot*" in the midst of the class.

Basic taekwondo terminology and postures are taught best through the command style. Several examples of basic

Command Style Scenario

After explaining what command style is, the following exchange might occur:

Teacher: "We will learn attention stance and ready stance through the command style, style A. Attention stance is *Cha-ryot sogi* in Korean. Repeat after me, *Cha-ryot sogi*."

(Students verbally repeat.)

Teacher: "Fist of all, place your feet together."

(Students follow.)

Teacher: "Your arms should be placed at your sides."

(Students follow.)

Teacher: "At attention stance, you should keep your head straight and look straight ahead."

(Students follow.)

Teacher: "The most important thing is that you should remain still in this stance. You cannot move at all."

(Students follow.)

Teacher: "My direction will be *Cha-ryot*. So whenever I say *Cha-ryot*, you should do this posture and not move. This is our most important taekwondo class rule, okay?"

Teacher: "Ready stance is called *Joon-bi sogi*. Repeat after me, *Joon-bi sogi*."

(Students verbally repeat.)

Teacher: "Like the attention stance, I will say *Joon-bi*. Then you should do the ready stance. Ready stance starts from the attention stance. The first step is to move your left foot to the side about shoulder width, or about two feet. Step out.

(Students follow.)

Teacher: "At the same time, you make your hands into fists and bring those hands to your solar plexus, and down in front of belt level."

(Students follow.)

Teacher: "You have to look straight ahead in this posture as well. Let's try. *Cha-ryot*."

(Students assume attention stance.)

Teacher: "*Joon-bi*"

(Students move into ready stance from attention stance.)



Attention Stance



Ready Stance



The class starts and finishes with bowing, because respect is a very important value in taekwondo.

taekwondo terminology appear in Table 1. Students repeat out loud the taekwondo terminology following the teacher's direction. The teacher also explains how to perform each posture, and the students do so at the teacher's direction (see sidebar). Teachers should provide appropriate feedback individually to the students while they perform each posture.

One objective of the command style is to present values to the students as well as information about how to perform each posture (McCullick & Byra, 2002). For example, in a taekwondo class, a teacher should start and finish the class with bowing, because respect is a very important value in taekwondo. Therefore, informing the class why the teacher and students should bow to each other is more valuable than explaining the mechanics of bowing, such as leaning the waist 45 degrees or keeping the arms at the side. Tying the belt and meditation postures in taekwondo also can be taught using a command style. Finally, the most important factor that determines the success of the class is the teacher's confident attitude in teaching taekwondo. Some students might already have better understanding and skills in taekwondo than the teacher. However, it is essential to remember that the core of the class is the teaching of moral values as well as skills.

Teaching "Practice of Fundamentals" Using the Reciprocal Style



One student in each pair holds a task sheet and coaches the other student as they practice the front kick. This use of the reciprocal style of teaching increases the individual feedback that each student receives.

(Style C). What was learned through the command style can be practiced through the reciprocal style. One objective of the reciprocal style is to emphasize the social relationships between peers by having them work together (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002). Sometimes, however, negative social interactions such as abusive, impatient, or crude comments can occur, and these should not be tolerated. Another potential problem is if the observers ignore their partner's performance because of their skill differences. However, in a taekwondo class, there are unlikely to be skill differences between performers and observers, because the activity is probably new to both of them. An advantage of using the reciprocal style in taekwondo is that the observer plays the role of teacher by providing direction as well as feedback, making it possible for more students to get individualized attention. A sample task sheet for the reciprocal style appears in figure 1.

Teaching "Forms" Using the Self-Check Style (Style D). Forms (*Pumsae*) are solo exercises in which students can practice a predetermined pattern of taekwondo movements and techniques without real opponents (Tedeschi, 2003). This characteristic makes it ideal for the self-check style. Forms are used to practice basic motions and combinations, emphasizing speed, fluidity, timing, power, strength, endurance, and proper breathing (Tedeschi, 2003). Once forms are memorized

Table 1. Basic Taekwondo Terminology

Posture	Meaning	Teacher's Direction
Cha-ryot sogi	Attention stance	Cha-royt
In-sa	Bow	Koung rye
Joon-bi sogi	Ready stance	Joon-bi or Baro
Gyo-ru-gi sogi	Fight stance	Gyo-ru-gi joon-bi
Ap cha gi	Front kick	Yelling "Aiyah"
Ki hap	Yelling	Yelling "Aiyah"
Bal ba gweo	Switch feet	Bal ba gweo
She eo	Relax	She eo

Figure 1. Reciprocal Style

Name: _____ Task Sheet # _____
 Class: _____ Date: _____

To the Performer

Perform bow and fight stance five times, and front kick 10 times from the right and left sides. If you have any questions, ask your observer.

To the Observer

1. Provide the direction for the performer.
2. Compare the performer's performance with the criteria listed below.
3. Offer feedback after each task.
4. Remember to offer positive feedback to the performer first, then use corrective comments.
5. At the completion of all the tasks, switch roles with performer.

Sample verbal feedback:

1. "Well done, but keep your arms at your sides when you bow."
2. "Although you bent your knee correctly, your left elbow is too far away from your body" (fighting stance).

Task & Criteria

Task	Criteria	Common Errors
Bow	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. From the attention stance, bend at waist 45 degrees. 2. Stay for a while (count one one-thousand). 3. Keep your arms at your sides. 4. Return to attention stance. 	Arms moving
Fighting Stance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start from ready stance. 2. Turn both feet 45 degrees to the right (left) and step back with your right (left) foot. 3. Your feet should be shoulder-width apart with your weight equally distributed. 4. Slightly bend your knees. 5. Your elbows are bent at a 45-degree angle and a few inches away from the body. 6. Right (Left) hand in fist, comes up under chin, fingers to face. 7. Left (Right) hand in fist, comes up in front of right (left) hand by the left (right) shoulder, fingers to face. 	Bending the knees
Front Kick	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start from fighting stance. 2. Raise your rear knee up parallel with floor and point toward your target. 3. The knee of your supporting leg should be slightly bent. 4. Extend your kicking foot to the target and strike. 5. Bring your kicking foot back to your knee. 6. Return foot back to starting position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance • Supporting leg level

and deeply embedded into one's being, they can be used as moving meditation for refining one's spiritual qualities. Like other skills, forms can also be practiced through the reciprocal style.

The role of students in a self-check style is to work independently and to check their own performances, as forms are solo exercises. Through independent practice with a self-check style, students can develop the ability to assess and

correct their practice, which are essential skills necessary in most aspects of adult behavior (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002). A teacher needs to have extensive knowledge of forms to use the self-check style in the class, because the role of the teacher in the self-check style is to provide a criteria sheet and to answer the students' questions. Figure 2 gives a sample task sheet for *Taeguk 1 Jang*, the first step of forms. Forms are graded in terms of their difficulty and are usually selected

Figure 2. Self-Check Style

Name:
Class:

Task Sheet #
Date:

To the Student

Practice *Taeguk 1 Jang* 10 times. Focus on the order of moving the first five times, and concentrate on skill cues later. Keeping the order of moving is as important as the skill cue. Provide performance feedback.

Skill & Order	Skill Cue	Common Errors
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start from basic ready stance. 2. Turn into left 90 degrees with left walking stance and left low block. 3. Right walking stance with right lunge punch (middle). 4. Turn 180 degrees clockwise into right walking stance with right low block. 5. Left walking stance with left lunge punch (middle). 6. Turn into left 90 degrees with left front stance and left low block. 7. Maintain previous stance and right reverse punch (middle) 8. Turn into right 90 degrees with right walking stance and left inside block (middle). 9. Left foot steps forward with left walking stance and right reverse punch (middle). 10. Turn 180 degrees counterclockwise with left walking stance and right inside block (middle) 11. Right foot steps forward into right walking stance and left reverse punch (middle). 12. Turn into right 90 degrees with right front stance and right low block. 13. Maintain previous stance and left reverse punch (middle) 14. Turn into left 90 degrees with left walking stance and left face block. 15. Right front kick (middle), into right walking stance and right lunge punch (middle). 16. Turn 180 degrees clockwise into right walking stance and right face block. 17. Left front Kick (middle), into left walking stance and left lunge punch (middle). 18. Steps forward into right front stance and right lunge punch (middle), Kihap. 19. Turn 180 degrees counter clockwise and back to basic ready stance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ready stance: feet 2' apart. Look straight ahead • Low block: Twist forearm (outward and downward). Palm facing downward • Lunge punch (middle): straight punch executed with the lead hand. Fore fist rotating about 90 degrees • Inside block: Forearm (vertical or slightly forward angle, bent about 90 degrees at the elbow) • Face block: Block upward from underneath the blow using a rising motion. Forearm slightly above and in front of the head • Front kick: Raise knee up parallel with floor. Extend kicking foot to the target 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feet too far or not enough apart • Arm too bent for inside block • Balance for front kick
<p>Feedback</p>		

Figure 3. Divergent Discovery Style

Problem: Your classmate is faced with a thug on the street, who attacks him or her. Your friend has no idea of how to defend himself or herself.

Task: With your partner, design possible self-defense skills that could help your classmate with this problem. The thug will attack your friend in the following ways. Provide as many solutions as possible for each way.

1. From the fight stance, the attacker shifts the lead foot forward and delivers a lunge punch.
2. From the open stance, the attacker delivers a fast lead-rear punch combination.
3. From the fight stance, the attacker delivers a rear front kick (middle or high).
4. From the open stance, the attacker grabs your wrist as you execute a lunge punch.

based on one's skill and rank (Tedeschi, 2003). *Taeguk 1 Jang* is the first and easiest form to learn.

Teaching "Self-Defense" or "Sporting Sparring" Using the Divergent Discovery Style (Style H). Learning self-defense promotes cognitive development, as already noted, because of the rapid decision-making that it requires. Kozub and Kozub (2004) proposed the use of the teaching games for understanding approach for cognitive development of tactical thinking in martial arts. Another approach for cognitive development is the divergent discovery style, where the purpose is "to discover divergent (multiple) responses to a single question/situation, within a specific cognitive operation" (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002, p. 247).

Self-defense practice involves "training in specific unarmed techniques designed to protect oneself or other" (Tedeschi, 2003, p. 19). Self-defense practice combines and refines basic skills, including attack and defense skills, in a realistic context. The divergent discovery style allows students the opportunity to create multiple uses for their defense skills (Hall & McCullick, 2002). In this style, students discover how to apply various defense skills to meet different attacks in hypothetical situations. A sample task sheet for the divergent discovery style appears in figure 3. This sample task assumes that students face a thug in a self-defense situation. If the physical education teacher believes that this is not appropriate for teaching in class, they may substitute a sparring scenario. In other words, they simply replace the "thug" with a "sparring partner." The sparring partner initiates the same four attack scenarios listed in figure 3, and the defending student tries to discover diverse defensive skills as well as counterattack skills.

Additional Considerations

Mastering a martial art is a complex, long-term process that may not produce immediate benefits. Therefore, physical educators should concentrate on presenting martial arts as a lifelong activity, or at least introducing the subject to those who may know nothing about it, rather than expecting students to master the skills in class. For example, in taekwondo, students begin with learning basic punching, kicking, and blocking skills. As they learn such basic skills, they start combining them into patterns of movement. Teachers do not have to teach students all the advanced movements of taekwondo in class. Teachers may teach only

basic punching, kicking, and blocking skills in class, and then introduce students to various ways to participate in taekwondo outside of school.

Winkle and Ozmun (2003) have suggested three instructional strategies for martial arts that teachers can use. In addition to serving as the primary skills instructor, teachers might invite a martial art instructor from the community, or use video and printed materials. In addition, a field trip to a *dojang* (where one learns and trains for taekwondo) is a way to introduce the martial arts. Another suggestion for inexperienced teachers is to invite students' parents who have knowledge of martial arts from their own culture. Bell and Lorenzi (2004) suggested that one way of incorporating multiculturalism with language learning is to provide students (or parents) from other countries an opportunity to explain a game or recreational activity from their (or their parents') native country. Therefore, for example, Korean parents who know taekwondo might teach taekwondo skills and Korean culture in class.

Finally, the importance of the relationship between culture and sports should be stressed. This aspect is important to competency, which has been suggested as crucial to continued lifelong participation in physical activity. Modern sports rapidly spread with colonization, the propagation of religion, and the transition to industrial capitalism (Hargreaves, 1982). In this process, many traditional sports are losing their essential nature, which should be preserved. Mosston's teaching styles provide an excellent means of focusing on teaching the traditional moral values of taekwondo such as respect, order, unity, and self-control, in addition to the physical skills.

Although this article has suggested a few introductory lesson examples, many other possible lesson plans exist for teaching the martial arts. In addition, Mosston's spectrum of teaching styles is useful for teaching many other traditional sports from different cultures.

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