

Professional paper

THE ANALYSIS OF “JIYU WAZA“ TECHNIQUE

UDK 796.853.24.012.42(497.11)

Srdan Milosavljević¹

Faculty of Physical Culture and Sports Management
Singidunum University, Belgrade, Serbia

Dragan Matavulj

Faculty of Physical Culture and Sports Management
Singidunum University, Belgrade, Serbia

Predrag Lazarević

Faculty of Physical Culture and Sports Management
Singidunum University, Belgrade, Serbia

Jovana Spasović

Martial Arts Instructor
College of Sports and Health, Belgrade, Serbia

Abstract: Jiyu waza is one of the most complex movement structures in real aikido. It entails avoidance of multiple attackers by means of very complex combinations of movement techniques. The exercise of jiyu waza aims at perturbing attacker's balance. Jiyu waza exists in traditional, as well as in real aikido, but with great differences between the ways it is exercised. Its primary form is owed to Soke Ljubomir Vračarević, while the credits for the jiyu waza described in this paper go to Radojica Spasović, a real aikido master 9th Dan. Jiyu waza with slight modifications is used as a model of avoidance of two or more attackers. For the purpose of simplified understanding of complex movement structures, this paper presents a model of avoidance of two attackers, and jiyu waza is divided in two parts. This model includes a defender, as well as two attackers. In order to make the exercise scheme clearer, all three practitioners are at a single step distance, thus forming an equilateral triangle.

Key words: *avoidance, attack, movement, real aikido, jiyu waza, destabilization.*

¹ ✉ smilosavljevic@singidunum.ac.rs

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of its genesis and in all the stages of its development, humankind has been linked to fight, above all the existential one. The fight was first embodied in a struggle for living space, survival and subsistence. Precisely these elements prove that fighting represents one of the most significant factors in human evolution. Man's fighting abilities were perfected above all thanks to the urge for self-preservation. The martial arts and sports available to people today represent a sublimation of man's fighting experience and development. By analyzing the available records, one can note that the first fighting movements exercised by our ancestors in order to defend their lives were actually reactions similar to those of animals (scratching, biting, neck grabbing...). Even then man instinctively felt that the most sensitive spots on their opponent's body were above all head and neck. Therefore, they attacked precisely those body parts of their opponent. It was only later, after the development of upright posture and arm coordination that man increasingly used grabs and locks to knock down their opponent and finish the fight on the ground. Somewhat later, with the development of hand, man started using objects (such as bones, stones and wood) to strike, throw and stab. Fighting for survival led to man's improvement of martial arts moves. Relying on their natural movements and becoming acquainted with human anatomy, man restructured the natural movements into martial arts techniques (levers, throws, strikes...). They realized that there are other vulnerable "vital" parts of their opponent's body (genitalia, stomach, heart...), apart from the aforementioned ones (head and neck), where these techniques can be efficiently implemented. This is how elementary martial arts styles emerged thanks to the evolution and sublimation of man's experience. It is also important to underline that basic martial arts moves (grab, strike, lever, throw), as well as elementary forms of fighting, emerged indigenously almost in all places where man lived (Ćirković, Jovanović and Kasum, 2010).

Everything mentioned above represents the roots of modern martial arts and sports. The difference between certain martial arts and sports is based on the selection of groups of techniques, individual techniques and their interconnecting combinations. One of these is aikido, a martial art where lever and circular movement techniques are dominant moves.

The origins and development of aikido

It is considered that original (traditional) aikido was founded in 1925. Morihei Ueshiba (1883-1969) carried out the systematization and partial modification of various Eastern martial arts techniques. Based on the available records, the roots of the earliest aikido martial art can be traced back to aiki-jiu-jitsu, which was founded in the 9th century in Japan. At that time, the

mentioned skill was just one of many martial arts which could be practiced. It was created by Prince Teijun, the 6th son of the Emperor Seiwa (859-880). His skill consisted of hand strikes which were carried out as sword blows in the gaps of samurai shields. The skill developed slowly until General Saburo Yoshimitsu, the progenitor of various Japanese martial arts and an avid devotee of the medical sciences, modified aiki-jiu-jitsu, creating a system called Daito-ryu-aiki-jiu-jitsu. As an 18-year-old, Morihei Ueshiba studied jiu-jitsu in the Kito School in Tokyo. He also studied aiki-jiu-jitsu in the Daito School from 1911 to 1916. Also, he practiced Kenjutsu (Japanese swordsmanship) in the Yagyū School. After the Daito School, he studied jiu-jitsu in the Ashinkage School in 1922, and in 1924 he studied jūjūjitsu (spear fighting). Even though he knew many martial arts, he was essentially dissatisfied with all of them due to the excessive violence associated with them. He came to the idea to create a style of fighting which could lead to the opponent's defeat without harming him. In other words, he wanted to prove to the opponent that the use of physical force is senseless. In accordance with this idea, in 1925 he created his very own martial art - aikido. Until the year 1948, aikido was an art practiced by relatively few people, as Ueshiba did not wish a large number of people to master an art which could be abused. Only after 1948 did aikido spread around the world. At the very end of Ueshiba's life, several styles of this art were formed, although with very little difference between them. The aikido which was founded by Ueshiba was mostly continued by the following martial artists: Hiroshi Tada, Tadashi Abe, Morihiro Saito, Moriteru Ueshiba, Yoshimitsu Yamada, and his son Kisshomaru Ueshiba who is the figurehead of the Aikikai Federation. Ueshiba's student Gozo Shioda (1915-1994) founded the Yoshinkan Institute for Aikido, today called the IYAF (International Yoshinkan Aikido Federation) which is the most prestigious school of aikido. This school produced the famous martial artists Tsutomu Chida, Kancho Inoue, Takashi Kushida and Sieshi Tekada. One of the students of Morihei Ueshiba in 1930 was also Master Kenji Tomiki who made an attempt to connect aikido and judo, and is thus considered to be the founder of the modern style of self-defense in judo. Other famous styles are the following: Daito-ryu (Nakamura), Yoseikan (Mochizuki), Harai style, Takeda-ryu-takeda and Tendoryu (Kenji Shimizu). Today aikido attracts a great number of practitioners of all ages (Milosavljević, Matavulj and Lazarević, 2014).

The origins and development of real aikido

Real aikido is an authentic martial art which ensued from traditional aikido (Milosavljević, Matavulj and Trunić, 2013). The mentioned defense martial art was founded by Soke (soke: founder of the martial art) Ljubomir Vračarević. Soke Vračarević studied with the greatest masters of the age, including: Kishomaru Ueshiba, Gozo Shioda, Tsutomu Chida, Kenji Shimitsu,

and Hiroshi Tada. He came to the idea of founding his own aikido style by desiring to remove all religious elements and elements of mystification from aikido, especially insisting on style efficiency. This is an authentic Serbian martial art (Milosavljević & Vračarević, 2011), and the main features and attributes of this art in regards to aikido are the existence of strikes which in the majority of cases are inflicted upon the attacker's vital areas prior to the realization of the lever technique. The system of training real aikido, as the name itself implies, puts an emphasis on a real attack by the opponent. The founder of real aikido created training sessions which aimed to master the defense techniques which would be applied in real life situations (Vračarević, 2007). Real aikido is used in the special training processes of army, police and bodyguards. Soke Ljubomir Vračarević used real aikido techniques to train security service members and bodyguards in Zimbabwe, Libya, Macedonia, Republika Srpska, Kazakhstan and Slovenia. Real aikido courses were held for members of special units all over the world, and especially mentioned should be working with the Russian Alpha unit, for which Master Ljubomir Vračarević received a high military decoration from General Fetisov. The following also passed through the real aikido training programs: the special units MČS, MVD, Wolf commando units and the special units for presidential security. Along with the application of this martial art for the training of special units, it was also implemented in the training of bodyguards and protective security services according to IBSSA standards, and licensed martial artists are at the moment securing around 80 heads of states all over the world. One of the most important activities of real aikido is working with children, which is carried out via a special program called "Playing toward Mastery". The program has been adapted to the psychological and physical attributes of children between the ages 5 and 12 and has produced excellent results. Today, real aikido is practiced by the very young as well as the elderly, so the number of practitioners is assessed to be around 15,000 in some 200 clubs all over the world.

The subject of this paper is the martial art of real aikido, whose efficiency largely depends on the quality of the realization of movement techniques.

The aim of this paper is a detailed analysis of the "jiyu waza" technique.

Movements in real aikido

When it comes to real aikido, practically none of the combinations of defense techniques is performed statically. The dynamics and quality of selection of technique combinations are primarily embodied in the best possible utilization of the force of the attacker who initiated the attack. Most combinations of techniques which utilize the attacker's force to put him under control are impossible without adequate and timely movement. Movements used in real aikido, although seemingly similar to traditional aikido, are largely different

from other sports and martial arts. Therefore, the classification of movement techniques in real aikido, just like the names of individual movement techniques, has no resemblance to other martial arts and sports. It is very difficult to make the classification of movements, i.e. their division that would be generally accepted in martial arts and sports, because specific demands are the very reason why the movements in certain martial arts and sports differ from each other (Mudrić, 2005). Complex movement “step, turn, small turn” contains several simpler movements used in real aikido, so it is important to clarify individual movement structures that constitute it. “Step, turn, small turn” from left posture is performed in the following way: the exerciser makes a semicircular move forward by 180 degrees with their right leg, setting it in front of their left leg, which represents the “step”. Then, they make a semicircular move with their left leg by drawing the leg toward their back by 180 degrees, which corresponds to the part of the movement called “turn”. In the end, they rotate around their axis by 180 degrees, whereby the rotation axis is on the exerciser's heel, which corresponds to the movement part called “small turn” (Matavulj, Milosavljević, Lazarević and Ivanovski, 2014). This movement, and especially its final part, the “small turn”, represents the moment when the person defending themselves by means of this movement combination and other individual techniques perturbs the attacker's balance by using the force they used to perform a strike, push, etc. The described movement, either complete or its individual parts, together with sliding movement to the side, represents the backbone of movements used in the realization of jiyu waza.

Jiyu waza

Avoiding multiple attacks or jiyu waza is one of the most complex movement structures studied in real aikido. As its name implies, it refers to the avoidance of multiple attacks by means of very complex combinations of movement techniques, which aim at perturbing attackers' balance. Jiyu waza exists in traditional, as well as in real aikido, but with great differences between the ways it is exercised. When it comes to the jiyu waza exercised in real aikido, it is important to underline that its primary form was established by Soke Ljubomir Vračarević, while the credits for the jiyu waza described in this paper go to Radojica Spasović, a real aikido master 9th Dan. Jiyu waza with slight modifications is used as a model of avoidance of two or more attackers. For the purpose of simplified understanding of complex movement structures, this paper presents a model of avoidance of two attackers. Also for a simpler overview and understanding, jiyu waza is divided in two parts. The jiyu waza model described in this paper includes a defender, as well as two attackers. In order to make the exercise scheme clearer, all three practitioners are at a single step distance, thus forming an equilateral triangle.

Part 1

The 1st attacker is in left posture. They then make a “full step forward” movement, switching to right posture, at the same time performing a “right hand straight forward” strike, trying to strike the defender’s trunk straight forward with the front of their fist. The defender is in right posture and maintains the characteristic real aikido guard, after which he begins the “step, turn, small turn” movement. As soon as the attacker initiates the strike, the defender steps forward with their left leg, lifting their left elbow up to their shoulder, and keeping the back of their left hand at the height of their chest, thus making contact with the attacker’s right forearm using their left palm. When this is over, the defender continues realizing the aforementioned movement, which finishes with a somewhat greater change of angle at small turn so that the defender ends up in right posture facing the second attacker when the movement is over. During that time, the first attacker makes a “full step forward” movement, switching from right to left posture, and then making a “turn on foot” by 180 degrees, after which they find themselves in right posture.

Part 2

The defender is in right posture and the 2nd attacker in left posture. The 2nd attacker makes a “full step” movement, reaching right posture while simultaneously striking the defender’s trunk straight forward with the front of their right fist. The defender makes a “semicircular step forward with left leg”, avoiding the 2nd attacker’s strike, after which they find themselves behind the 2nd attacker’s back. The defender places their palms on top of the 2nd attacker’s chest, drawing them toward their right hip, thus fully destabilizing the 2nd attacker. While doing this, the defender does not interrupt the aforementioned movement. The moment of full destabilization of the 2nd attacker coincides with the second part of the “step, turn” movement – i.e. with the “turn”. Upon finishing the “step, turn” movement and fully destabilizing the attacker, the defender is in left posture, performing “sliding movement” with their left leg in the opposite direction by making a step to the right by about 45 degrees with their left leg first, and then stepping straight forward by half a step with their right leg in order to parallel their feet. It is important to underline that while performing the “sliding movement” with their left leg in the opposite direction, the defender passes between the 1st and the 2nd attacker, thus removing themselves from the attack line of the 1st attacker, and then, as described above, makes a step forward with their right leg, reaching a parallel position which coincides the 2nd attacker’s attack, thus representing the end of the full jiyu waza cycle. When all this is over, the 1st and the 2nd attacker, as well as the defender are at the corners of an imaginary equilateral triangle, in opposite positions to the starting ones.

The described movement structures which together comprise jiyu waza can be continued uninterruptedly and a greater number of repetitions can be executed.

CONCLUSION

Real aikido is an authentic, defensive and flexible martial art which ensued from traditional aikido. It was founded by Soke Ljubomir Vračarević who studied with the greatest masters of the age, some of which are the following: Kishomoru Ueshiba, Gozo Shioda, Tsutomu Chida, Kenji Shimitsu, and Hiroshi Tada. He founded his own aikido style because he wished to remove all religious elements and elements of mystification from aikido, especially insisting on style efficiency. This is an authentic Serbian martial art. The main feature and difference of this art in comparison to traditional aikido is the existence of strikes which in the majority of cases are inflicted upon the attacker's vital areas prior to realizing lever techniques. The system of training real aikido, as the name itself implies, puts an emphasis on a real attack by the opponent. The founder of real aikido created training sessions which aimed to master the defense techniques which would be applicable in real life situations.

One of the elements of this noble martial art which is gradually learned and mastered is jiyu waza, which undoubtedly represents one of the most complex movement structures studied in this martial art. It entails avoidance of multiple attacks by means of very complex combinations of movement techniques. The execution of jiyu waza aims at perturbing attackers' balance.

Jiyu waza exists in traditional, as well as in real aikido, but with great differences between the ways it is exercised. Its primary form was established by Soke Ljubomir Vračarević, while the credits for the jiyu waza described in this paper go to Radojica Spasović, a real aikido master 9th Dan. Jiyu waza is used as a model of avoidance of two or more attackers. For the purpose of simplified understanding of complex movement structures, this paper presents a model of avoidance of two attackers, and jiyu waza is divided in two parts. The jiyu waza model described in this paper includes a defender, as well as two attackers. In order to make the exercise scheme clearer, all three practitioners are at a single step distance, thus forming an equilateral triangle. Minimum modifications of the movement structures used to describe the avoidance of two attackers' attacks are enough to restructure it and implement it in fight against more than two attackers, which represents not only a part of higher ranked practitioners' training, but is also included in compulsory examination program for higher ranks.

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