

Japanese Stick Fighting – A Sports Technology View

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Keywords: Japanese stick fighting, sports weapon, systematic review

Introduction

“Understanding a style’s movements and concepts cannot be achieved without understanding of the physical properties of its weapons” (Wetzler, 2015, p. 27). The stick is one of the oldest weapons of mankind. Over the centuries methods of fighting with a stick and the physical properties of the stick were developed. Today the stick is, from a sports perspective, a sports weapon. The objective of this study is to provide an overview of literature about Japanese stick fighting in German and English and how the stick is described from a sports technology view.

Method

A systematic literature review (Xiao & Watson, 2019) was conducted, and the content of the included literature analysed to gain information about the technology and the description of the stick. A typology for the found literature was developed (Adamzik, 2019) to show where to find information about Japanese stick fighting and as a basis for further research.

Results

The systematic literature review resulted in 158 texts containing information about Japanese stick fighting. These texts were grouped in eight categories in the developed typology. Half of the found texts are in the category of physical education. At the same time the stick is mainly described as a weapon for fighting or self-defence. Sport is just mentioned in one source in connection with Japanese stick fighting. Four types of sticks are mainly described in the analysed literature (bo, hanbo, jo, tanbo). They differ in length (about 180 cm, 90 cm, 120 cm and 30 cm) and the “bo” also in diameter and form (cross section, tapered ends). For the material oak, bamboo and loquat are most often mentioned. As for the process of making a stick for fighting purposes, little information is given.

Discussion

Literature containing information about Japanese stick fighting can be found in a variety of disciplines. A look into other fields of research than sports technology is necessary. The stick used in Japanese stick fighting is mainly seen as a weapon. Its dimensions, form and material are described in the analysed literature, but scant information exists of the process of preparing a stick for (sports) fighting.

Literatur

Adamzik, K. (2019). *Textsorten und ihre Beschreibung*. <https://archive-ouverte.unige.ch/unige:113921/ATTACHMENT01>

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