

Application of Experiential Teaching in Free Combat Courses in Colleges and Universities

Xiaodong Chen

Physical Education Department of Zibo Vocational College, Zibo, China

Abstract: Free combat is an important part of physical education in colleges and universities. However, traditional teaching methods tend to focus on theory and neglect practical application, leading to a lack of enthusiasm and participation from students. In recent years, experiential teaching has been widely used in physical education, providing a more engaging and effective way of learning. This paper explores the application of experiential teaching in free combat courses in colleges and universities, analyzing its advantages and challenges. Through case studies and empirical analysis, the paper provides insights and recommendations for the implementation of experiential teaching in free combat courses.

Keywords: *Experiential teaching, Free combat, Physical education, College, University*

Free combat is a popular sport among college students, which not only helps to enhance physical fitness but also cultivates mental toughness and team spirit. However, traditional teaching methods in free combat courses tend to focus on theory and neglect practical application, leading to a lack of enthusiasm and participation from students. In recent years, experiential teaching has been widely used in physical education, providing a more engaging and effective way of learning. Experiential teaching refers to a teaching method that emphasizes practical experience and active participation of students, aiming to facilitate deeper understanding and long-lasting memory retention. This paper explores the application of experiential teaching in free combat courses in colleges and universities, analyzing its advantages and challenges, and providing insights and recommendations for the implementation of experiential teaching in free combat courses.

Advantages of Experiential Teaching in Free Combat Courses

1. **Enhancing practical skills:** Experiential teaching provides students with more opportunities to practice and apply what they have learned in theory. In free combat courses, experiential teaching allows students to practice various techniques and strategies in a safe and controlled environment, which can enhance their practical skills and confidence.
2. **Promoting teamwork:** Experiential teaching encourages collaboration and teamwork among students. In free combat courses, students can learn to work together to achieve common goals, such as winning a match or mastering a difficult technique. This can help to cultivate team spirit and improve interpersonal skills.
3. **Stimulating interest and motivation:** Experiential teaching can make learning more interesting and engaging for students. In free combat courses, experiential teaching can provide students with a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction through the mastery of new skills and techniques, which can stimulate their interest and motivation in learning.

Challenges of Experiential Teaching in Free Combat Courses

1. **Safety concerns:** Free combat courses involve physical contact and potential risks of injury. Experiential teaching may increase the level of risk if not properly managed, which may lead to safety concerns for both students and instructors.
2. **Time and resource constraints:** Experiential teaching requires a higher level of preparation and organization, which may consume more time and resources than traditional teaching methods. In addition, the availability of suitable facilities and equipment may also be a challenge in implementing experiential teaching in free combat courses.
3. **Assessment and evaluation:** Experiential teaching may present challenges in assessment and evaluation, as it involves a more subjective and qualitative approach. It may be difficult to measure the effectiveness of experiential teaching in terms of learning outcomes and student performance.

Object and Method of Study

1. **Object of Study:** 458 students (376 female students) from the 2022 option of martial arts at the South Campus of Zibo Vocational College who chose the free combat option.

2. **Research Methods:**

A. **Literature review method:** A large number of literature related to sports reform, reform of free combat teaching in universities, principles of experiential activities, and teaching theories were reviewed to understand the current research status, providing a theoretical basis for experimental and comparative analysis.

B. **Interview method:** Interviews were conducted with relevant experts, professors, and teachers who conducted free combat tests, as well as some students.

C. **Teaching experiment method:** This experiment used a class comparison method. Eight option classes (about 30 students per class) voluntarily enrolled in the free combat class of the 2022 level were randomly divided into two groups. The two groups used the same universal textbooks and implemented teaching and assessment separately. In terms of teaching methods, the control group adopted a traditional teaching mode of explanation, demonstration, imitation, practice, and consolidation and improvement. The experimental group adopted an experiential teaching method. At the beginning of the teaching stage, the teacher briefly explained the basic essentials and requirements of free combat movements and conducted simple teaching. Then, the teacher purposefully and consciously arranged and organized students to practice with the help of target pads, leg pads, or partners. After a certain amount of practice, the students were gathered for experience sharing and discussion, and specific examples of the

advantages and disadvantages of the movements were explained and corrected. Then, the practice continued to improve and consolidate the movement techniques. The experiment lasted from January 2022 to July 2022, with one class per week for a total of 16 weeks.

3. Results

Before the experiment, a difference test was conducted on the specialized qualities of the two groups of students, and no significant differences were found, indicating that a comparative teaching experiment could be conducted. After the experiment, it was observed from the final exam scores that the free combat scores of the experimental group students had significantly improved, and there was a significant difference between the basic free combat technique scores of the experimental group students and those of the control group students. The experimental group students were more adept at using leg techniques and had a stronger purpose in their techniques. Therefore, it can be concluded that the teaching effect of the experimental group using the "experiential teaching" method was better than that of the control group based on traditional teaching methods, indicating that this teaching method is feasible and effective.

4. Analysis

A. Combining education with entertainment to improve students' self-consciousness and motivation. University students attending physical education classes are different from middle school students. Middle school students are satisfied with running, jumping, and playing ball, while university students have their own consciousness and choices. If they encounter something they like, they will be very involved and serious in class. If they encounter something they don't like, they will not be willing to put in the effort and just want to get by. Therefore, self-consciousness and motivation will be one of the main factors affecting university students' participation in physical education classes. Due to the large-scale teaching reform in our school, students choose which sports to participate in for their physical education classes through the internet. Therefore, in both the experimental and control groups, students from the same grade but different majors and colleges attend physical education classes together. The "experiential teaching" method and means are used to stimulate students' self-consciousness and motivation to participate in exercise by increasing their excitement and direct interest. Although the traditional free combat teaching method has played a leading role for teachers, it neglects the main role of students. When students from different majors and colleges attend physical education classes together, some may know each other, while others may not. Therefore, traditional teaching methods can make students feel depressed and the classroom atmosphere dull, leading to an embarrassing situation where "students like free combat, but not free combat classes."

In "experiential teaching", the teacher uses purposeful, planned and conscious auxiliary equipment to conduct teaching in accordance with the organic links of the teaching content. In the teaching process, students from different majors and colleges can exercise with people they know, and also get to know students from different majors and colleges by practicing free combat techniques during exercise time. Under the guidance of the teacher, a classroom is created where the teacher and students jointly explore knowledge and respect students, considering them as the masters of the classroom. This creates a pleasant learning and exercise environment for students, maximizes their learning motivation and improves their self-consciousness and motivation to learn. During the

practice, the teacher can answer questions based on the students' different levels and interests, forming a classroom where the teacher and students discuss together. The teacher can explain the teaching from different students' progress or interests, such as emphasizing the force of the movements or the accuracy of the hitting positions, allowing students to grasp different technical styles of free combat techniques in the "experiential teaching". The traditional and dull basic technique training and simulated combat action learning has been transformed into a learning process of mutual discussion and encouragement between students and teachers, which not only deepens the memory of free combat techniques, but also arouses students' subjective initiative. In summary, "experiential teaching" creates a relaxed and enjoyable learning environment for students, transforming their previous "difficult to talk about" or "blind imitation" learning methods into ones where they can expose themselves to peers or teachers without reservation, and receive initial affirmation, answers or corrections, thus achieving the purpose of further strengthening their movements.

B. Active participation by students and their willingness to accept free combat. In "experiential teaching", the teacher inspires, motivates, and helps students to master the theory and techniques of free combat through a process of learning, experiencing, relearning, and re-experiencing. For example, in teaching the high side kick basic technique, the teacher first provides concentrated explanation, learning, and simple exercises, and then students use leg targets for practical sparring. The student holding the target must not only hold it carefully but also point out the shortcomings and make appropriate corrections to the sparring partner. Through self-experience and practice, students can correctly grasp the knowledge and understand the importance of first swinging the leg sideways and raising the knee, then rotating the hip and swinging the lower leg horizontally to kick with force. During student sparring, the teacher increases the amount of guidance for different student groups, increases the practice density, and effectively corrects students' wrong movements. This enables students to not only correctly master the technical requirements of free combat techniques but also arouse their initiative to participate, allowing them to learn and exercise on their own in the "experiential teaching". Therefore, even without the teacher's guidance after class, students can review the content learned in class well and achieve good academic results.

C. Applying what one has learned. In "experiential teaching", the teacher analyzes attack and defense movements by breaking down the combination movements and explaining their offensive and defensive meanings. This approach is known as "explaining the move, breaking down the move, and analyzing the move," and it strengthens students' awareness of fitness and self-defense. Then, students experience the purpose, meaning, and application methods of free combat movements again during sparring, which helps them to understand the technical essentials of free combat movements. For example, in the teaching of "stepping back to block and hook punch," the teacher explains that the purpose of stepping back is to lower the opponent's attacking force and increase the success rate of blocking. Through this explanation, students learn the basic forms and movement methods of attack and defense elements (such as the basic form of the movement, the use of footwork, the amplitude, and direction of the movement, etc.), which forms a certain intuitive understanding in their minds. Then, during sparring, with the help and encouragement of the teacher and fellow students, students engage in experiential exercises: firstly, they are encouraged to use the leg target to

practice the amplitude and direction changes of the movement, which helps them to master the timing of stepping back and blocking; secondly, they are encouraged to use the target held by their sparring partner to simulate attacks and practice the blocking and hook punch movements; thirdly, students can also engage in some free, practical sparring exercises, which helps them to understand the essentials of defense and counterattack in free combat, thus achieving the goal of applying what they have learned and consolidating and improving their free combat skills.

D. Encouraging free learning and practice is beneficial for unleashing students' imagination and creativity. In traditional teaching modes, students follow a structured learning and exercising regimen under the guidance of teachers or student leaders, which often suppresses their creative thinking. In "experiential teaching", teachers organize group exercises that allow students to apply techniques while also creating new movements that are similar or different from the original ones. For example, during the practice of side kicks, some students may "play" with pad stepping side kicks or jumping side kicks, which allows them to expand their learning and exercising beyond the original teaching schedule. In summary, "experiential teaching" strives to create a relaxed and enjoyable classroom where teachers and students share the experience of exploring free combat. Students are the masters of learning, exercising, and exploring, and they fully utilize their imagination and creativity during the learning and exercising process, which enhances their interest in learning and their fighting spirit.

E. Here are some suggestions for implementing "experiential teaching":

- (1) Establishing an equal, coordinated, and enjoyable classroom is the prerequisite for "experiential teaching".
- (2) Improving teachers' free combat literacy and skills is the foundation for achieving students' enjoyable experience. During sparring, teachers should increase their guidance and correction to students, correct their mistakes, and encourage students to experience joy and engage in creative thinking.
- (3) When implementing "experiential teaching", teachers should organically decompose free combat movements and combine them with complete experiences.
- (4) When pairing up students, consider their willingness to pair up, and it is better to let them form pairs freely and exchange partners organically, which makes sparring a true mutual encouragement and evaluation experience.
 1. Safety should be the top priority in implementing experiential teaching in free combat courses. Strict safety rules and regulations should be established and enforced to ensure the safety of students and instructors.
 2. Adequate resources, including facilities and equipment, should be provided to support the implementation of experiential teaching in free combat courses. Colleges and universities should invest in the construction of new facilities and the purchase of new equipment to create a safe and suitable learning environment for students.
 3. Instructors should receive training and support to effectively implement experiential teaching in free combat courses. Colleges and universities should provide professional development opportunities for

instructors to learn about experiential teaching methods and strategies.

4. Assessment and evaluation should be conducted to measure the effectiveness of experiential teaching in free combat courses. Colleges and universities should develop appropriate assessment and evaluation tools to measure learning outcomes and student performance.

CONCLUSION

In recent years, the popularity of free combat courses in colleges and universities has been increasing. The implementation of such courses has become an essential way for students to improve their physical fitness and self-defense abilities. However, traditional teaching methods often fail to fully engage students in the learning process and restrict their creativity and imagination. Therefore, the application of "experiential teaching" in free combat courses has become a popular teaching method.

Experiential teaching is a student-centered teaching method that emphasizes practical experience and active learning. In free combat courses, experiential teaching focuses on the practical and experiential aspects of learning, allowing students to actively participate in the learning process and retain what they have learned. Experiential teaching involves various activities, such as decomposition of free combat movements, group exercises, and sparring, which enables students to learn and practice the fundamental movements of free combat in a relaxed and enjoyable environment.

During the decomposition of free combat movements, teachers explain the technical essentials of free combat movements by breaking down the combination movements and explaining their offensive and defensive meanings. This approach is known as "explaining the move, breaking down the move, and analyzing the move," and it strengthens students' awareness of fitness and self-defense. Through this approach, students learn the basic forms and movement methods of attack and defense elements, which form a certain intuitive understanding in their minds.

Group exercises in free combat courses are essential for students to master the technical essentials of free combat movements. Teachers organize group exercises that allow students to apply techniques while also creating new movements that are similar or different from the original ones. This approach enables students to expand their learning and exercising beyond the original teaching schedule. During these exercises, students can explore their own creativity and imagination, leading to the development of new techniques and combinations.

Sparring is an essential component of free combat courses, which allows students to apply their learned techniques in a controlled and safe environment. During sparring, students actively apply their techniques and engage in realistic combat scenarios. Teachers increase their guidance and correction to students during sparring, correct their mistakes, and encourage students to experience joy and engage in creative thinking. When pairing up students, it is better to let them form pairs freely and exchange partners organically, which makes sparring a true mutual encouragement and evaluation experience. Through sparring, students not only improve their technical skills but also enhance their self-directed learning and self-improvement abilities.

The creation of a relaxed and enjoyable classroom environment promotes students' creativity and imagination, which enhances their interest in learning and their fighting spirit. Experiential teaching allows students to actively participate in the learning process, which improves their retention of knowledge and strengthens their self-confidence. By actively participating in experiential teaching, students gain confidence in their abilities and develop a positive attitude towards physical fitness and self-defense.

In conclusion, the application of "experiential teaching" in free combat courses in colleges and universities is an effective teaching method. This approach not only improves students' technical skills but also enhances their self-directed learning and self-improvement abilities. By actively participating in experiential teaching, students gain confidence in their abilities and develop a positive attitude towards physical fitness and self-defense. Therefore, we recommend that colleges and universities should continue to promote the application of "experiential teaching" in free combat courses to improve the quality of teaching and enhance students' physical and mental health.

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