

## CURRENT GUIDELINES OF TRAINING PARTICULAR TO VOVINAM VIET VO DAO PRACTITIONERS

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**Abstract:** To understand the current orientation directions regarding the specific training of martial arts practitioners, particularly the Vovinam Viet Vo Dao style, we must understand the traditional aspects of how this sport discipline has evolved and the requirements of its training practice over time. Vovinam Viet Vo Dao techniques aim at achieving a perfect synthesis of body, mind and nature, the emphasis being on one's inner strength, on one's spiritual power, on one's internal energy of the body. The purpose of this paper is to identify the guidelines in preparing the practitioners of modern martial arts style, namely the Vovinam Viet Vo Dao style. Due to the strong competitive feature significantly in recent years, but also to the organization of wide competitions and the promotion to higher grades exams taking place internationally, it is necessary to organize and conduct the training so that to focus on methodological modern guidelines of sports training.

### **Introduction**

In order to understand the current orientation directions of the specific training of martial arts practitioners, particularly the Vovinam Viet Vo Dao style, we must understand the traditional aspects of how this sport discipline has evolved over time and the requirements of the practice instruction.

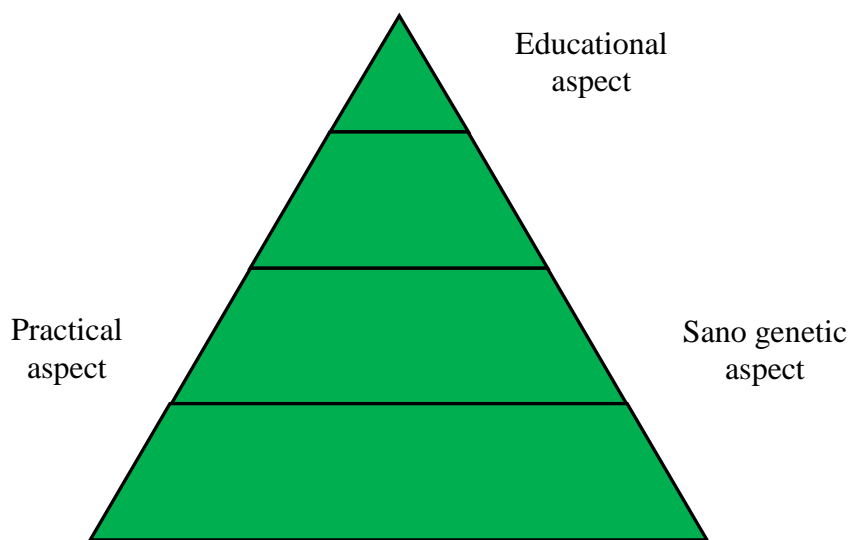
Vovinam Viet Vo Dao techniques aim at achieving a perfect synthesis of body, mind and nature, the emphasis being on one's inner strength, on one's spiritual power, on one's internal energy of the body by creating the "triple value" (figure 1) [1, 2, 3, 4].

1. moral value – educational character, aspect.
2. physical – technical value, practical aspect, self – defense and competition.
3. energy value – the unification of the physical body with the universal energy; mastering the energy and physical body, specific elements to maintain and even obtain health.

From this perspective, the martial arts are a blending of three distinct categories:

1. elements of self – defense
2. elements of morality and philosophy
3. specific elements to maintain and improve health; establishing harmony between what we think, what we do and how we feel.

The elements of morality and philosophy are the educational feature of the practitioner, based on one's methods and means of external discipline. Learning respect for oneself and others. Learning, understanding and respecting the moral principles underlying this style.



**Figure no. 1 Martial arts system**

### **Material method**

The purpose of this paper is to identify the guidelines in preparing the practitioners of modern martial arts style, namely the Vovinam Viet Vo Dao style.

In carrying out the work I have used the following research methods: studying the bibliographic material, the graphical method.

### **Discussions**

Martial arts are a particular emphasis on the connection between morality and practice, and this bond is formed by understanding some basic instruction principles.

However, there is a theoretical basis that the athlete must appropriate and prove in order to have access to higher levels, which comes to show the great importance that is given to the moral aspect of martial arts practice, which is reflected by:

1. Striving to attain the highest technical level in martial arts and discover the purpose of martial arts.
2. Respecting the discipline of martial arts and helping develop the style.
3. Living in harmony with others, respecting elders and peers.
4. Knowing the rules of VovinamViet Vo Dao style and keeping intact the honor of practicing martial arts.
5. Complying with all styles of martial arts, using force only in self – defense and in defense of justice.
6. Working hard for conquering himself personally and technically.
7. Living with honor, humility and nobility.
8. Developing one’s personality, so to overcome all obstacles in life.
9. Developing a robust and healthy judgment and acting wisely.
10. Having self – confidence, self – control and good will, evaluating constantly themselves to achieve new performances.

These principles are the most important aspect that makes the difference between art and sport, from here there is expected the beginning of respect for oneself, for those you teach, what one does for all those around. The greeting is a real value in the idea that it is the most direct form of simple gratitude and effective content for what one gets.

In Vovinam Viet Vo Dao style, the fight starts with the ceremony greeting, from a sitting position, which is generally used in special occasions and there is also the standing bow greeting, the most often used. Regarding the greeting, the hands are close and their position differs depending on the philosophy of the practice method. Then the greeting has also the value of recognizing the practitioners of the same style, less conclusive today, but with great value in the past to prevent from fratricidal struggles.

In other known forms of greeting, the salutation is identified by sticking hands in front of the chest and equalizing the Yin and Yang

energies, by tightening one's fists, bonding one's arms body, trunk lean forward, lifting one's right fist, sticking the unfolded palm of one's left hand at the chest height, lifting one's right palm on the heart.

The greeting is sacred, and through this the participants thank in advance for the gifts that they will get, meaning the the technique, the partner, etc. So they thank for everything that they got and show their respect for them, but also for all that they will receive.

The greeting of VovinamViet Vo Dao style is the theoretical essence, the physical form, one's right hand on the heart, reflecting the principle of this style "*iron hand, good heart*" [1, 5 4].

In the past, due to harsh conditions, this style was practiced outside, in nature. Nowadays everyone is looking for covered halls as luxurious and elegant.

The training hall called Dojo is regarded as "the path location" and not just as a gym. Here the practitioner comes to meet his particular way, to travel the road to wisdom.

The respect for the hall (Dojo) is special. The practitioners welcome every time, both incoming and outgoing. The students come specially equipped with the proper attitude, they act on principle.

The clothes, cares, daily problems, everything is left at the entrance.

In the hall there are rules, written or unwritten but understood by observation, to be followed very strictly. The head of the room has his own place on a bench, a chair that nobody is allowed to sit. It is the place of intimacy and silence. Just as, in formation, on the left side there are the assistants and the high grades and the lower grades are aligned on the right side.

Trainer, coach, teacher, master, either way, under any name, but in that order, is leading a training room, a workout hall. Among these names, there is a difference of grades given by a certain person or, as we have seen above, by the type of courses completed in this field.

The instructor has a role in educating and training young people as future fighters, both physical and moral education. The respect for instructors and masters is very special.

The self – defense elements are determined by the technical level reached by the student, and the real ability to cope with a possible physical or mental aggression, by specific technical elements of self – defense.

At certain times, the instructor or coach nominates the students that he considers ready to submit verification exams in order to obtain a

higher grade. Between exams there is a minimum period of time which is six months for children in the first years of practice and then a year, but not a maximum period. If the instructor believes that the student is not ready, then he or she will wait until the next exam.

The recognition of technical and mental progress of the practitioner is reached following the examination by providing degrees, so often visible through the belt worn around the abdomen.

Generally, in all martial arts we have to do with three levels of evolution. We have the beginners, then the advanced grade, followed by the master or expert grade.

The first stage means grades to the Black Belt, regardless of style or practice. In some styles there are colored belts, starting from white to darker and darker colors, ultimately obtaining the Black Belt, so that the practitioner could paint the same belt, if he/she wishes to keep it. The philosophy is that the student starting from the level of bud, flower, passes through the fruit stage and then he reaches the ripened fruit stage. In other styles, there are added only colored stripes on the white belt.

The second level is usually between the Black Belt including and the 4th Dang of the Vietnam styles, Dang signifying the same idea of grade or level. Here we are dealing with advanced practitioners. Normally they should have around twenty years of practice to be able to reach these higher levels.

From the 4th Dang someone is recognized as a candidate for the master grade and then recognized as a master from the 5th Dang. Normally, every country, every style, shows one single master or master candidate.

The self – defense in turn can be divided into two categories, self – defense against moral-energy aggression and self-defense against physical aggression.

The self – defense is "a set of techniques (resulting from one or more combat sports) so one could be saved in case of danger" [6].

Self – defense - all the means we have available, own or incidental means that allow the safeguarding in the easiest way in case of real danger. The efficiency in case of aggression:

- takes into account both our physical and technical possibilities and the ability to manage the situation favorably.
- the main objective is victory as simply obtained, and not how.
- the lack of any obvious moral rules, both for the opponent and for us.

Martial arts competition takes place in two separate samples:

- Technical sample including traditional and simple weapons
- Struggle – half contact for children and juniors and full contact for seniors

The competitive struggle of VovinamViet Vo Dao style (THI DAU), is made with full protection, aiming at checking the technical level reached by the practitioner and not hurting one's opponent or even oneself.

The unification of the physical body with the universal energy. Mastering energy and physical body, specific elements to maintain and even obtain one's health.

The influence of martial arts on health is very studied by experts. Since ancient times the masters have created specific forms to maintain or obtain health. At the beginning these were called breathing and exercise forms for the human body and had great importance in the practice of each style for one's body recovery after workout, especially in the practice of a certain age.

Moreover, the Western conceptions of health say that the individual must strengthen defenses against disease and death, by exercising the body and preserving the physical strength.

Since ancient times, the martial arts masters, besides the fighting techniques, had to have very good knowledge of medicine. So, they studied and got to know very well the traditional medicine. Over time, there has been established a very close connection between martial arts and traditional medicine, knowing perfectly the two is defining for a true master.

Working on the human body, it is normal to have to know this perfectly, to know exactly its weaknesses, but also to know how to give a possible first aid.

Centuries ago, the martial arts were practiced at a level much tougher than today and it was evident that the masters had to intervene often in injuries like sprains, strains, fractures.

Also the actions on the vital points had to be the preserve of the masters, who had to know very well the physical and energetic body in order to use during the combat the attacks on the vital points, but also to prevent, control, or treat any such attack.

The vital points could be divided into two categories, namely the vital anatomical points and the vital points of energy.

In order to act effectively on the body in general, the traditional medicine is made up of two large sides, existing as a whole, not being effective one without the other.

**Knowledge of the physical and energetic body.** From the physical point of view, we have the muscular, skeletal, circulatory system, knowledge of internal organs, knowledge of even overall body awareness.

It is necessary for the individual to be able to express oneself, to succeed in a technique, since many methods are based on knowledge of the body and how this works.

**Knowledge of the energy body.** Here there are some differences between the Eastern and the Western design. In West there are still live dispute between those who accept the existence of the energy body with all its implications and the skeptics who "do not believe until they see." They all agree with the existence of the nervous routes and that sometimes, the energy points are located on these routes, which means there is indeed an effect. But nothing more, skeptics consider. Those who accept the existence of the Oriental design, are still considered visionaries.

However, in East, things are different. Medical experts believe that the "khi, chi, qi" energy is responsible for the life and health of an organism. The existence of the routes, the meridians, is a good that "belongs" to the Orient for over four thousand years. Acupuncture is the one who brought information in West about the Oriental design.

**Methods of actions.** Obviously, to be able to talk, one should first study, then will know what to do and then talk. That is why there is said that the practice of traditional medicine, acupuncture, supposes a period of twelve years of study. The graduation exams are very tough, the candidate must exactly find the acupuncture points on a mannequin marked with those points, but the mannequin is covered, with a thin wax layer, not to see the points. It should be noted that the points have a pinhead size.

Besides acupuncture, we have the practices of energetic gymnastics and massage which also require a long period of study. The exams consist of very difficult tests, the candidates must demonstrate exceptional qualities.

The knowledge of medicinal plants and the ways to use them is another very important area and appreciated by the experts of Oriental

medical practices. In practice, they insist that in every area, country there are medicinal plants to be cure for any disease occurred there.

We do not say it would not be enough medicine today, but it is a way to be closer to nature, closer to which the nature gives us. One way to be more careful with the fact that, most often, all we want exist around us. We should look around and not necessarily elsewhere.

The effect of medicinal plants on the physical body is recognized worldwide by all peoples since ancient times. What is perhaps less known is that the plants have very good results on the energy body. This is exploited by masters working hard martial energy practices. Therefore, it is very important that there is no practice by ear, hearsay, from books or under the guidance of the uninitiated persons. The secret of a successful practice is to know how to profit, to learn from the experience of others and not experimenting on oneself. When that experience exists.

It can be said that it is very important that sometimes look back into the past, to traditional values that have made humanity to resist so far. After all, having basics knowledge about one's body, about the microuniverse in which people live, is a cultural factor that should be part of every personal culture of each human being. That is actually what masters want to teach us, masters of any style. These things are perfectly normal and of common sense.

The competitive struggle of the VovinamViet Vo Dao style (THI DAU), is made with full protection, aiming at checking the technical level reached by the practitioner and not hurting one's opponent or even oneself.

The traditional weapons work only after the student demonstrates his willingness to be on a path to martial arts and not only his desire to impress the others.

## **Conclusions**

Due to the strong competitive feature significantly in recent years, but also to the organization of wide competitions and the promotion to higher grades exams taking place internationally, it is necessary to organize and conduct the training so that to focus on methodological modern guidelines of sports training [7, 8].

- using programs and plannings sports preparation (macrocycle, meso cycle, microciclu, lesson plan);
- using video analysis techniques;



- decomposition of movement in subassemblies and parts by using methods and means of other sports fields for learning and enhancing them;
- paying attention to each factor of preparation in order to achieve an effective sports training;
- determining the dominant motric skills and their possible combinations in Vovinam Viet Vo Dao style (speed under force, expansion, anaerobic endurance, mobility, coordinative capacity), along with finding the most effective methods and means for teaching and developing the students;
- using the traditional weapons (short stick, wooden sword) at younger ages (8-10 years) to be familiar with the specific motor skills of handling them;
- establishing the role of the psychological preparation in the martial arts and define the fundamental constituents (mental training, withdrawal of senses, visualization, concentration, meditation, contemplation).

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## **ORIENTĂRILE ACTUALE ALE INSTRUIRII SPECIFICE A PRACTICANȚILOR DE VOVINAM VIET VO DAO**

**Cuvinte cheie:** instruire, Vovinam Viet Vo Dao, practicanți

**Rezumat:** Pentru a înțelege direcțiile actuale de orientare în instruirea specifică a practicanților de arte marțiale stilul Vovinam Viet Vo Dao, trebuie să se înțeleagă aspectele tradiționale privind modul în care a evoluat această disciplină sportivă și cerințele practicii instruirii de-a lungul timpului. Scopul tehnicii Vovinam Viet Vo Dao este de a sintetiza perfect între corp, spirit și natură, accentul punându-se pe forța interioară a individului, pe puterea spirituală a acestuia, pe energia internă a organismului. Scopul lucrării este de a identifica orientările moderne în pregătirea practicanților stilului de arte marțiale Vovinam Viet Vo Dao. Datorită caracterului competițional pregnant din ultima perioadă și a organizării de competiții de anvergură, dar și examenele de promovare la gradele superioare care se desfășoară la nivel internațional este necesar ca în organizarea și conducerea pregătirii să se pună accent pe orientările metodologice moderne de pregătire sportivă.

## **UNE DES LIGNES DIRECTRICES ACTUELLES DE FORMATION SPECIFIQUE DES PRATICIENS VOVINAM VIET VO DAO**

**Mots-clés:** formation Vovinam Viet Vo Dao, les praticiens

**RÉSUMÉ:** Pour comprendre l'orientation actuelle de la formation des praticiens spécifiques d'orientation des arts martiaux de style Vovinam Viet Vo Dao doit comprendre les aspects traditionnels de la façon dont a évolué cette discipline sportive et les besoins de formation de la pratique au fil du temps. Techniques Vovinam Viet Vo Dao objectif est à la synthèse parfaite du corps, de l'esprit et de la nature, l'accent sur la force intérieure de l'individu, la puissance spirituelle de celui-ci, l'énergie interne du corps. Le but de ce document est d'identifier des lignes directrices pour la préparation des praticiens de style arts martiaux moderne Vovinam Viet Vo Dao. En raison de la forte concurrence récents et des compétitions toute l'organisation, et les examens de promotion à des grades supérieurs qui se déroule au niveau international est nécessaire pour organiser et mener la formation de se concentrer sur les orientations méthodologiques modernes pour la formation sportive.