



**RESPECTING TAEKWONDO: AUTHORITY, HIERARCHY, AND
INTERACTIONS WITHIN THE DANISH CLUB SOOBAK**



Culture, Communication and Globalization

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Abstract

This research project investigates the interactions that form the social settings of a taekwondo club in Denmark, with a focus on the interactions amongst the members of the club. By examining the way they communicate, how they learn and teach, and social cohesion, this study aims to uncover the mechanisms behind how the members of the club shape their community of practice and the idea of imagined communities. The main question guiding this research is: How do the people of Aalborg Taekwondo Club – Soobak interact? By means of qualitative methods of interviews and observations, this study investigates the lived experiences of the members of the club and uncovering how they act together and form relations. Making use of the concepts of imagined communities and communities of practice, this study aims to furthering these concepts by showing how this community acts collectively, shares knowledge, and uncover the cultural exchanges within such settings. The findings of this study could help in comprehending social interactions and offer a deeper understanding of how a taekwondo club in Denmark acts as a basis for future research.

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Introduction

How people interact differs. The people who are around and the place one is in changes how one acts. Communities of Practice serves as a framework for understanding the complexities of social interactions. Imagined Communities was an attempt to forge the concept of nationalism and encompasses the many parts that lead to interactions. These two concepts combined work to comprehend the social interactions people make.

This project delves into the world of taekwondo in a club in Denmark. Taekwondo, originating from Korea, is a martial art which has become a popular sport all over the world. The club is based in Aalborg and is called Aalborg Taekwondo Club – Soobak. It will serve as the basis for an investigation into how people who are part of the club interact with one another. The shared passion of taekwondo is why they gather in the first place for a common purpose.

The problem formulation of this study is: How do the people of Aalborg Taekwondo Club – Soobak interact? By investigating the social dynamics, learning, and way of being in the club, this project seeks to explore why and how people of the club act collectively, engage with one another, and share their knowledge. In doing so, this project also aims to understand what lies behind the interactions and how they construct a sense of belonging and imagined community.

The concept of communities of practice pertains to the idea of people acting together. They seek to learn and understand. The collective idea of doing something together is what binds people. What they do is subordinate, but the interactions they form over what they do is meaningful. The community people shape by interacting has similar goals, an idea of how to do things, and a sense of responsibility to one another. Through the investigation of the interactions within the taekwondo club, this project will gain valuable insights into how the people of the club functions in its entirety and how knowledge is obtained and conveyed.

Additionally, the concept of imagined communities will be applied. Imagined communities involves the idea that people perceive themselves as part of a larger collective despite distance between one another. They are imagined insofar people may not see nor know the other members yet feel bound to people they hear of on the periphery. Thereby, the project will gain insight into how people see themselves as a part of another nation than Denmark through the sport of taekwondo.

By interviewing and observing, this project will seek to explore the experiences of the club members. By exploring their experiences, this project will ascertain how the members of the club come together to shape taekwondo in the image of their community and forge relations with others whilst engaging in the practice.

Through the investigation of the interactions within the club, this project aims to contribute to the theories of imagined communities and communities of practice. Furthermore, the findings of this project may enlighten others in sense of how martial arts or sports clubs could have inclusive communities and gain an understanding of how people share knowledge and uncover the cultural exchanges that occur within these types of clubs.

In the following sections, theoretical frameworks will be established for the two concepts of imagined communities and communities of practice to begin examining the taekwondo club. Then, the methodology of the project followed by the analysis of the interviews and observations and what they mean. By doing so, this project seeks to aid in the contribution of knowledge of how the members of the taekwondo club form imagined communities and communities of practice in which they thrive within the context of a taekwondo club here in Denmark.

Theoretical Framework

This section aims to focus on the theories of Imagined Communities by Benedict Anderson and Communities of Practice by Etienne Wenger. These two theories will be the lenses with which the project will be tinted.

Imagined Communities

Benedict Anderson (1991) writes about the ‘Imagined Communities’ as a form of understanding for nationalism. The theory comes from the idea that a nation is an “imagined political community” which is “inherently limited and sovereign” (Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, p. 6). Thereby, a nation has its own borders, own authority, own political setting, and the likes. The facet of ‘imagined’ arises from the perception that people within the limitations etc. of the nation are unified. However, it is not necessary to have interacted with everyone in a nation to feel a sense of unity. This is because the limitations also entail a prescription for how one is imagined to be.

To this end, culture has an immense role. Culture is essentially a pattern of behaviour that a group of people, or a collective, use that is in common. Geert Hofstede (1997) states that “[...] Culture is the collective programming of the mind” (Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind, p. 1). Thereby, a group of people could utilise a certain set of behaviours which forms their interactions. Yet, this also diversifies them from their surroundings. Others who do not do as they do have a different culture. In turn, this makes for certain clashes in behaviour. Returning to the national perspective, this is what helped cause nationalism in the first place. Anderson (1991) points out that:

Cultural diversity was essential to the construction of nationalist visions of the world. Nationalists had to affirm and celebrate the differences of their own national culture in order to stress the exclusiveness and uniqueness of their own national identity (p. 140).

The reflection in the other as being different from oneself was what set the wheel in motion. This is the vital role of unity which is employed in what constitutes a nation.

On the note of unity, language plays a vital role in uniting a nation. Anderson (1991) spoke of “print-capitalism” as being the foundation “[...] to sustain imagined communities – ones that could span territoriality and be vernacular” (p. 36). They draw on the emphasis of the Bible in Europe as being demarcated by Latin as the main language and spread the understanding of a common language in this way. However, the vernacular and Latin in general

Europe would cause issues, as people would not know how to speak Latin, let alone write it. Thus, the *national* ideals of language were sustained by their own 'print-capitalism', which led to languages being used in borders. This is a given concept on the founding idea of nations.

Remaining on the topic of language, the imagined community of a nation becomes clear when pondering the distance between people. Anderson (1991) elaborates on the use of language as partly having started as innately "sovereign" and as a form of "deep, horizontal comradeship" (p. 7). The initial use of printed newspapers and books formed imagined communities. People would have a sovereign understanding of unity with people within a limited border, but the printing of language would create an idea of unity through reading. One would imagine that others who would read the printed material would share the common sovereignty, as the printed paper would be the same for everyone. Therefore, it would be understood that the reader is one of many others within a certain setting, a nation, that reads and understands the paper. Thus, an *imagined community* is conceived in the minds of the readers, as they partake in an activity that they perceive is shared for others within a limited setting.

Furthermore, the idea is that the newspaper is mass produced and that everyone reading it at once has an idea of an imagined community of fellowship that inspires nation-ness. If we transfer that into taekwondo, the wording for the sport is one thing, but the entirety of the sport is a cultural artefact pertaining to South Korea. Following this trail of thought, one could consider taekwondo a global cultural spreading of Korean origin. That does raise the question as to how and why e.g., people in Denmark decide to partake in a cultural artefact of Korea.

The act of being able to communicate and be communicated to via a language is in part what forms a sense of national unity. Furthermore, Anderson (1991) mentions the impact of national anthems as being congruent with inspiring a sense of nationalism. Anderson points out that the words and tunes of a national anthem are not the main point. The main point is that they are meant to be sung in unison and create "simultaneity" (p. 145). The act of singing the words together and in plenum with strangers inspires a sense of nationalism. Taking this example, national anthems are seen played before important sports events, such as the football world cup.

The combination of sport and nationality through national anthem shows a sense of "comradeship" that Anderson (1991) mentions (p. 7). Taking root in the football example, think back to or picture how they tend to stand on the football field. They stand in line facing the

same direction side-by-side. They sometimes have their children with them. They are singing the national anthem. They themselves might not be good at singing, nor are they giving a concert, but the crowd who wishes to cheer for that team sings along. The crowd cheering for them is usually of the same nationality. Therefore, sports and national anthems are grand for showcasing the example of unity through the imagined community of language use and ‘simultaneity’.

At those larger global events of sports, one finds the idea of nationalism a necessity. Take the Olympic Games for instance. Each country has a set of trained and talented people within each sport to compete against others from other countries. The prestige and honour gained from the test of mettle and prowess solidifies the nationalism. Anderson (1991) writes about how Olympic sports “contribute to the cementing of a sense of national community” (p. 149). Thus inferred, the community of a sport does indeed impact the national image that is shown to the rest of the world, but particularly the inward reflection through the imagined community. People feel a stronger pride and sense of connectedness through mentioning a gold medallist from the Olympic Games. Thereby, nationalism is certainly a part of sports on the larger scale.

Regardless of how far and wide the sports and competitiveness may go; the idea of nationalism is limited. Some are inside; others are outside. The distinction between these is what makes one part of the imagined community. Therein, culture has been seen to make a prominent step forward insofar the dimensions that are part of culture define membership or not of the nationality. Granted, the culture may vary, but the general overarching culture of a nation is held to some ramifications. Language has been described as a meaningful form of identification and reflection of how it is to be of the same nationality. The unity which language creates between its communicators is profound. The communication is what brings people together and that languages differ from one another means the understanding of words from a language are pivotal to a sense of belonging of that nationality.

As language unites people, sports are also seen to unite people. Particularly when competing with other countries. Internal competition is important, but external representation of where one hails from is more important. Furthermore, the representation disregards national disputes as there are common ‘enemies’ in the external. This is in part due to cultural differences. Thereby, imagined communities forge a strong sense of belonging. This sense of

belonging is something people may cling to for a sense of identity regardless of where they are. Belonging to a nation and the people pertaining to it is *imagined*.

As imaginary as the community may be, one sees nationalism manifest itself through culture in what communities do. Although, other communities may replicate other imagined communities do as either to copy or to learn new ways of doing things, such as taekwondo 'coming' to Denmark. To conclude this point of South Korean nationalism through taekwondo, a quote by Ernest Gellner appears in Benedict Anderson's (1991) writings: "Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it *invents* nations where they do not exist" (p. 6). Of course, Benedict Anderson is writing in a time where they are one of the people trying to pinpoint where, how, and when nationalism occurs from a theoretical stand, so moderation is required. However, this citation bolsters the point of South Korean nationalism through the community of each club. Yes, people may be in e.g., Denmark, yet that does perhaps not mean that people feel a sense of unity with South Koreans whilst attempting to practice the *national sport of South Korea* or follow the guidelines of organisations situated in South Korea. One does clearly not escape the memoir that taekwondo is an artefact a club has borrowed and re-imagined in their community of practice to learn from and have others learn.

Communities of Practice

In this section, Etienne Wenger's book on Communities of Practice is elaborated upon. Wenger writes a lot about Communities of Practice and covers many aspects. For the focus of this project, what Communities of Practice are will be the introductory section. Then, the part of 'Practice' will be defined. There are five chapters to this part, yet the focus will lie in 'The Concept of Practice', 'Meaning', and 'Community'. The other part and chapters of the book would pull the study into another direction. The focus is to understand how people interact with one another as part of a taekwondo club. The other chapters would start to delve into dimensions of identity creation and how learning is a central point that binds everything. Even though the point of learning will be used here, it will not retain the focus the later chapters in the book have. This is because the first two chapters should be sufficient to explain the 'how' of the club interactions.

Defining Communities of Practice

There are many parts to constitute the whole of a community. The essence of a family is a good example to work with. Etienne Wenger (1998) points out that a family works together through many obstacles in life but are also the primary role of interaction with other people (p. 6). The past, present, and future of interactions with the community that is the family develops learning of how to act with one another. As families develop, one might see new patterns of all shapes and forms occur. However, the point is that the practice of those new things become a part of how the family acts.

As mentioned, families function as communities. Yet, the description of the family does not prevent such a community from occurring other places. The time spent with a community, or the participation in the community, develops learning for all participants as they experience things together. Yes, there is an underlying matter of subjectivity, but the community aspect of development over a common "enterprise" (Wenger, 1998, p. 45), a certain place, an idea of what is meant, all form to create learning within the individual (Wenger, 1998, p. 5). These aspects of a community of practice show that the configuration of such constellations can occur at any social interactive place. The aspect of constant learning is what defines the community of practice and drives it ever forward as a unit.

As with the root definition of communities of practice, the family, or community, dynamics may change. Yet, the perseverance of the commonality of people in the community, albeit strife and conflict come under this scope as well, helps in defining what the community

of practice is and how they interact. The community of practice is not a static institution nor is it an effervescent or ephemeral feeling. It is a mixture of the two that creates a feeling of belonging, community, social life, and connectivity. Wenger (1998) claims that the enterprises of which people strive for together are what bind them. The connectivity of the community creates a place of learning (p. 45). Within the process of learning, practices arise amongst them. Thereby, communities of practice are based on the constant learning. On the premiss of what makes communities of practice work together, Wenger (1998) writes:

“As we define [enterprises of all kinds] and engage in their pursuit together, we interact with each other and with the world and we tune our relations with each other and with the world accordingly. In other words, we learn” (p. 45).

The emphasis that people strive to accomplish enterprises together stipulates the connectivity of people in communities. One may seek to work on an enterprise, yet working and reflecting with others on how to accomplish these enterprises is what shapes communities of practice. Learning from one another and understanding what others have experienced whilst also seeking to further experience things together or simply as a part of the community of practice is what shapes the community. The theory of communities of practice is therefore based around the dimension of learning.

However, some may argue that learning is something people do individually. Yet, understanding what others have experienced and reflecting upon our own experiences paves the way for a common idea of how to further strive for the enterprise the community of practice is working on together. Each individual person may have multiple enterprises they seek to work on. Yet, the focus of one community of practice is somewhat set, although a sense of ‘membership’ does not entail that one must indefinitely be bound to that community of practice. For instance, being part of a family is (hopefully) something everyone is familiar with. Yet, so is having friends, a workplace, an institutional place of learning (school, university, etc.) and so on (Wenger, 1998, p. 6). Therefore, learning is something one mainly does by participating in communities of practice.

The Concept of Practice

To define the concept of practice, we must understand that individuals who are together in a struggle for something come to form a community. What they do together in their struggle is shaped through interaction with each other (Wenger, 1998, pp. 45-6). By communicating their struggles, ideas of what to do are made. Thus, *practice* occurs. Therefore, it is also understood

that a community that revolves around a practice in pursuit of an enterprise is highly social. Regardless of the outcome of the practice, the social aspect of the community is what binds it together. The achievement of overcoming struggles together and through communication is what is worth remembering. In their book, Wenger (1998) writes about a group of people simply being together at a certain location, a job, to earn a living. The job seems rather mundane. However, when asked about “what they thought they would remember about [the] job later in life, the response was almost always: the people” (p. 46). Thus, the power of a community that occurs over any enterprise or struggle is generally a profoundly impactful social life through interaction.

The Concept of Meaning

To grasp the concept of meaning, one must attempt to see the larger picture. Wenger uses the metaphor of a painting (Wenger, 1998, p. 51). How the painting starts, the idea that is put into it, the illustrations that are painted onto the blank canvas; all this matters to define the *meaning*. The communicated value from the painter to the viewer of the painting is the meaning. Granted, individuals may defer various meanings, but the attempt to communicate through a connection of tools and instruments in a collective setting to provide knowledge are what define the creation of meaning. Wenger (1998) connects practice to meaning by stating, “*Practice is about meaning as an experience of everyday life* [Italics from source]” (Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity, p. 52). To further define what meaning is, Wenger refers to ‘Negotiation of Meaning’, ‘Participation’, and ‘Reification’.

Negotiation of Meaning

Meaning is understood as something which is negotiated between people. The idea is that people actively experience the world and communicate the meanings they gather from it. In turn, this forms their relations to others. Amongst the relations to others, there is also a sense of historical context insofar the world has been around longer than the people currently negotiating the meaning of what they experience in the world. Thereby, the negotiation of meaning is about people fathoming and interpreting the world as they experience it. The constant reflection of the world that is generated through communication with others instils the idea of meaning in others within the community. Wenger (1998) points out that, “Negotiated meaning is at once both historical and dynamic, contextual and unique” (Wenger, 1998, p. 54). This is because the fact that people constantly negotiate the meaning of things entails the temporality of both the people and the negotiated thing. This is understood whilst also

acknowledging that every case, although seemingly similar or repeated negotiation occurs, each negotiation is different.

Participation

Participation entails that the involved parties gain something by taking part in the event or enterprise. One may perceive participation as merely a form of engaging with others in sense of conversation or an activity together. Yet, the participation in something does not always involve others to be there directly. This could be referred to the theory of Imagined Communities with people reading things all throughout a country. Everyone reading the newspaper are probably sat alone or at least not attempting to interact with others. However, the action that is to decipher the information on the newspaper is a social engagement. Therefore, being part of a community of practice does not require the conventional ideas of ‘participating’ as physical presence or direct interaction. We all bear with us a mark of our community of practice. I am a student whilst at university, but I am also a student whilst at a conference in another city regarding taekwondo. The direct participation in a community of practice is not limited by the physicality nor the direct interaction with other members. Wenger (1998) thought, “[...] What I take to characterize participation is the possibility of mutual recognition” p. 56. We recognise each other insofar we can negotiate meaning. Yet, we also participate and recognise ourselves when e.g., picking up a leaflet on a taekwondo event. Why would I do that? Because I feel as though I am a part of that community of practice. Thus, participation is something we do with our entire being to engage in a community of practice.

Reification

Reification is a form of consolidation of practices. It is to bring abstract information and guidelines to something more tangible. This is with the purpose of better explaining to others what oneself or the community of practice means. Referring to meaning, reification also aids in the negotiation of meaning. It does so by subsuming information that might be difficult to explain outside the community of practice and elicits a better negotiation of meaning to perform better practice. Wenger (1998) mentions the abstractions of “democracy” or “economy” as daily uses that by themselves mean very little (Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity, p. 58). However, the meaning that is communicated by mentioning ‘democracy’ or ‘economy’ is immediately understood by others to some degree. Thereby, it is also easy to implement the reified abstraction into everyday talk. This is done by mentioning “democracy took a blow during a military coup” (Wenger, 1998, p. 58). Here, it is understood that the common definition of ‘democracy’ is contested by some military dealing. The point is that the

‘democracy’ is not a tangible object but an expression of how people act together. Although, ‘democracy’ is understood as if it were tangible since the military coup did something to it. It is an action within abstraction, yet the point is made clear to those in the community of practice.

The Concept of Community

To define the concept of community, Wenger points to three parts. These are mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire (Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity, 1998, p. 73). These three points will now be elaborated upon:

Mutual Engagement

A community forms because people engage with one another and understand each other mutually. Thus, the mutual engagement forms actions that become the practice of the community (Wenger, 1998, p. 73). Therefore, being part of a community of practice is mutual engagement. A member of the community of practice is actively involved with the co-creation of the practice, not merely a ‘member’. The active participation in the community is therefore necessary. Furthermore, one’s connections with the other people beforehand is somewhat irrelevant for the community of practice, as people in the community aim to form a goal of their collective own to strive for. Thus, the interactions between people are focused on the setting they shape together. However, the common goal may derive from people inadvertently or advertently seeking to form a community. The struggles of an individual are communicated and worked on in common. As Wenger (1998) mentions, “It is because they sustain dense relations of mutual engagement organized around what they are there to do” (p. 74). The relations they make together are based on the mutual engagement of being part of the community of practice.

Joint Enterprise

Thus, when people aim to sustain dense relations, they consistently negotiate how to perform the practice. The negotiation of what the community will do as practice is part of their joint enterprise. Furthermore, the negotiation of how to obtain the enterprise which they seek together, thus their ‘joint enterprise’, also helps garner an understanding of what the enterprise is. By negotiating what the joint enterprise is, the individuals of the community of practice become intertwined. Having come to shape their joint enterprise, they form a constellation of people whom they know how to engage with. Thereby, the people of that community of practice know who to approach for what and how they can obtain their joint enterprise (or goal) by working together (Wenger, 1998, pp. 77-8).

Shared Repertoire

Through working together, the community of practice gains experiences. Everything the community of practice shares in their experiences facilitates more mutual engagement in pursuit of their joint enterprise (Wenger, 1998, pp. 82-3). Put simply, a group of people can refer to something that has happened or been communicated between the participants of the community. This allows for further growth of the community of practice and shows diversity, as the community continues to grow through their practices. The shared repertoire is essentially what the community of practice has experienced in common. It is a foundation for future conversations and an understanding of the past which has been lived together. Furthermore, the community of practice may come to quickly understand one another based on the shared repertoire. This is because the negotiated joint enterprise fosters conversations on topics and/or relations that have been a part of the community. It is part of the common experience and shared relations between the people within the community of practice.

Literature Review

This section will be focused on literature review. Analysis of texts regarding the problem formulation will be found and addressed. However, this project lies within quite a few categories. The paradigms of nationality, communal belonging, martial art/sport are the crosshairs with which the literature is found. The aim is to find literature that covers these paradigms to some extent and review other literature.

Role of Sport in International Relations:

From the realm of international relations, sports have been found to be pivotal in the creation of national identity and national pride. Athletes from a country can compete on international scales to bring glory and medals back with them as vestiges of honour for their endeavours. A major sporting event held every four years is the Olympic Games (OG). Although traditionally Greek by origin, the OG have for decades been held on an international level with the hosting city varying from year to year. The peak of athleticism is often revered under such events. Granted, OG is a premiss of peak performance participation, yet the community it inspires through its practice is great. As Victor Cha (Role of Sport in International Relations: National Rebirth and Renewal, 2016) notes, the OG have played a massive role in the international relations dynamic for a long time. Cha (2016) further mentions, “the two Koreas have used sport to vicariously experience dreams of unification” (p. 141). The unification through sports between two countries so closely intertwined shows that sports play an important role in setting political issues aside and inspire closeness and competitiveness in games of athleticism.

Thus, the sense of community this describes is based on a larger scale than the average club. This proves a point insofar of an imagined community and the honour the athletes bring, but do not delve into the intrinsic dealings of the athletes. The overreaching idea sports are used for glory of the country from which they live is a more outward-looking purview. The idea that sport may unify cultures brings us to the point of taekwondo in Denmark. There is an obvious route between nationalism being inherent in the sport and the application of such a sport. The members of the community in which the sport is used may find themselves between cultural ideals and norms in which they must accommodate the potential offset.

Development of-through sport:

Jae-Pil Ha, Karam Lee & Gwang Ok (2015) mentioned that competing in multiple sports has brought more national pride to South Korea (p. 1262). This shows that sports and nationalism in terms of teams within the sport plays a significant role regarding Communities of Practice

and how they affect or are affected by the Imagined Community of the nation. Of course, this account measures the width of recognition the country imagines in boastfulness for itself of national pride, not so much the sport itself. Thus, if they win medals on a global basis within football, the national pride is bolstered through the sport, but there is not a particular ownership nor origin that would state that football is inherently Korean. Whereas taekwondo, with even the wording, remains true to its national origin and still maintains the roots of teaching from Korea (Ha, Lee, & Ok, 2015, pp. 1262-3).

Jae-Pil Ha, Karam Lee, and Gwang Ok (2015) state that South Korea has a kinship with sport insofar it has “maintained the ‘development *of* sport’ approach” (From Development of Sport to Development through Sport: A Paradigm Shift for Sport Development in South Korea, 2015, p. 1263). Thereby inferring that the national goal is to foster and nurture elite performance within sports to compete on an international premiss to win medals and, in a sense, secure national pride and national recognition in the world. The authors state that South Korea has been critiqued on the ‘development of sport’ approach and aim to have sports become a part of having a good life, by creating an approach of ‘development through sport’ (page 1263).

Acknowledging the national venture of change within how sport ought to be viewed or allowing for multiple variations, we see that the community of practice approach undergoes a change. If a sports club in South Korea were to focus intently on creating the next world champion, chances are the community of practice is teaching a thought process that might squander personal life or other things, as the sport becomes as the main objective in life. Seeking a development through sport approach, as the authors name it, would alter the community of practice of the clubs to be less of a controlling phenomenon and more of a pleasant venture as a past-time or objective that one can seek alongside other life choices.

Furthermore, the development through sport alters would inferably alter the communities of practice in the clubs to become more amicable. People might join for other reasons than to particularly excel at the sport on an international, or even Olympic, scale. Jae-Pil Ha, Karam Lee, and Gwang Ok mention:

Domestically, numerous sport for development (SFD) programmes and initiatives are currently facilitating such social improvements as reinforcing social integration and inclusion, promoting tolerance and non-discrimination, advocating healthy lifestyle among others (From Development of Sport to Development through Sport: A Paradigm Shift for Sport Development in South Korea, 2015, p. 1263).

The domestic change to seek change in how sports is conducted would most certainly have borne an impact on how the community of practice is in the clubs. Thereby, the imagined community also plays an integral part in this. As the article here states, the national pride and domestic concepts are important. However, the interplay between the nation itself, therein the imagined community, we also see that the community of practice is implicitly impacted and sought to be made changes to, as the elitist approach of making everyone the best on a worldwide spectrum has received critique.

The change to development through sport in South Korea also aids others in the wider area of benefit. As the theory of community of practice states, people enter a community of practice to learn and create a community in which their identity is formed by themselves and others. To this end, Jae-Pil Ha, Karam Lee, and Gwang Ok (2015) have pointed out that:

Most of these programmes are targeting those at risk and vulnerable circumstances (e.g. youth, ethnic minorities, women, and people with disabilities). For instance, with the rapid increase of immigrants and foreigners in Korea, assistance for their adaption into a new society has become a critical issue (2015, p. 1263).

This leads to the idea of the taekwondo club in Aalborg, Denmark. As they pointed out, the idea of sports clubs could help people feel part of the culture. Gain a sense of community. The stating of ‘adaptation’ is of utmost interest. From a slightly philosophical standpoint, one could consider that being born and raised in a certain culture and place means that one has had multiple occasions throughout one’s life to establish a community and an identity of oneself and one’s belonging within the community. When one e.g., arrives in South Korea and feels a perhaps limited sense of belonging, a community could quickly change such a setting. As we see by this statement, a community of practice, which is understood as being somewhat omnipresent to human existence in plenum, can aid in making one understand some of the others from the culture/country and help one find a way in which to establish oneself in the life of the new place. Thereby, the change of approach in South Korea is commendable.

Yet, bringing it back to the Danish perspective, it is fascinating that a community of practice within a sports/martial arts club of taekwondo, which is originally Korean, becomes a part of the everyday lives of people in Aalborg. With view back to the article, we find that people might join the taekwondo club in hopes of finding others who practice the same sport as they are used to elsewhere and find a community through that. Thereby, community *and* practice become important to one another.

This literature review has found that investigations into clubs is mainly taken from an elite athlete perception. The focus is generally distant from the average club member's understanding of the sport or the community that binds the club. Focus on elite athleticism does account for some form of community of practice and imagined communities investigation yet is still viewed from afar. Thus, the literature on this topic is viewed from a more statistical viewpoint.

The dimensions of nationality through imagined communities are visible through the elite athleticism focus. As described, nations utilise sports as means to acquire international recognition. However, those goals are more suitable for international relations purposes and are thus merely reviewed in the sense of understanding how athletes become national artefacts.

Methodology

Research Design

The methodology will begin with research design to present a frame for the paper.

This paper will be conducting qualitative research. The research design will be based around physical presence and communication within the TKD club. Therefore, the research will be using the two idioms emotionalism and naturalism. The research design mainly follows David Silverman and their way of understanding qualitative research. Following the premiss of the particular TKD club, it is evident that it is a case study. As Bryman (2016) mentions, a case study can be conducted on a single school, family, organisation or the likes (p. 60). This is true for this study. Particularly, Bryman's notion of an '*exemplifying*' case study is relevant. They state that it is a study in which a particular few examples are set by a few people and tells of the club one is a member of (Bryman, 2016, p. 62). This, this study fits neatly into the categorisation as an exemplifying case study.

To research how people act as part of a TKD club, interviews and observations will be conducted. The aim is to understand the subjective understanding of individuals within the club and how they perceive interactions and the general community of practice and possible ideas or artefacts of nationalism via imagined communities. The observations will allow for a visual understanding of how the actions are manifested. As I, the researcher, am a member of the taekwondo club, I hope to shed light and aid in the process of understanding of what certain interactions mean. This means the research will be participant qualitative research.

Ontology

Constructionism as ontology implies that social actors, or people, are the ones who actively construct culture or organisation (Bryman, 2016, p. 67). Thereby understood that the interactions between people construct their reality. Constructionism is to see that the individuals are the ones who make their own reality. An organisation or culture cannot completely encompass the fluidity of the individuals. Their daily interactions form how they perceive reality. Therefore, the investigation of people's understandings of interactions enlightens one about the social construction of the reality they share. This is important for the research of how people in a taekwondo club act and is, thus, the chosen ontology.

Epistemology

Interpretivism is to have the researcher understand and interpret the actions of the researched individuals. The philosophy states that people apply meanings to actions and understand other actions by their own meanings. Therefore, it is necessary to have the researcher interpret their general meanings which they apply to actions to make sense of their reality (Bryman, 2016, p. 64). Interpretivism investigates the interpretations of the individuals through the interpretation of the researcher. Furthermore, the interpretations must then be applied to the research “framework” to corroborate academic findings (Bryman, 2016, p. 65). Seeking to understand how people of a TKD club act would, thus, have use of the epistemology of interpretivism.

The Emotionalist Method

The emotionalist method means to understand feelings of subjects. These feelings are not to be inferred directly as experiences but more as “*representation[s]* or *account[s]*” (Silverman, 2011, p. 168). This is because each individual subject understands an event of something that has happened or tends to happen. Although, it is created as part of the subjects’, or interviewees, opinions on an event and then told as having happened as such. Therefore, one must be critical of the information gathered through e.g., interviews, as these are ‘representations or accounts’ of reality, not necessarily the entirety.

There is also the understand of emotionalism that the subject understands the relation with the person they are talking to in a certain way. This means they would shape what they say to befit the understanding of the other person. In terms of this project, if people of the club were interviewed by someone from outside the club, they might not elicit details they would to people inside the club, as there is some understanding that can be difficult to decipher. On the other hand, the perception that people would give detailed instances of happenings means that I, as the interviewer, must be aware of what people outside the club do not know and inquire about such terms. In the words of Silverman (2011):

“[...] Interviewer and interviewee actively *construct* some version of the world appropriate to what we take to be self-evident about the person to whom we are speaking and the context of the question” (Interpreting Qualitative Data, p. 169).

Following the emotionalist trail of thought, the person being interviewed describes the world through their own account. This is important to the researcher as it helps understand the intersocial mechanisms that create the world from the person’s point of view. Therefore, it is

important to have open questions to which the interviewees can freely describe the world as they view it.

There to, it is important that the interviewee feels comfortable in the setting. As Silverman (2011) points out, positivism states that veering off the interview questions is “a possible source of bias” (Interpreting Qualitative Data, p. 174), emotionalism could benefit from it. Interviewees could cover multiple points or take the conversation in another direction, which means the interviewer ought to be prepared to alter the questioning to fully understand and encompass the interviewee’s understanding of the world as previously mentioned as important.

Furthermore, the idea of emotionalism is to understand the subject and their idea of the world. Therefore, it is important to let the interviewee feel free to explain their experiences. The interviewer and interviewee must also come to the interview as peers (Silverman, 2011, pp. 175-6). The reason for viewing each other as peers is so the collected data shows an authentic representation of their view on reality. Thus, my membership of the club accounts for a familiar face during the interview. The interviewees might easier regard me as a peer than someone outside the club.

The emotionalism method also suggests open-ended interview questions. Thereby, the interviewee is free to talk about what they want. However, as Silverman (2011) notes, the issue in being a passive interviewer and only every so often sounding acknowledgement through brief agreeing statements might cause an odd conversational flow (Interpreting Qualitative Data, p. 177). The passiveness of the interviewer could make the interviewee feel that they *must* continue talking or find more to talk about on their own unless further questions are asked. However, I see it fit, also with my knowledge of TKD, that I might understand and connect the dots for or with them in the conversations, so they do not feel this possible pressure of holding a seeming monologue. I would also like to add brief follow-up questions for own noting, such as “how so?”, to further understand their views (see appendix 7).

The Naturalist Method

The naturalist method aims to regard things as they occur and retain a passive role. Thereby, the method does not try to imply meaning based on assumptions onto the happenings but aims to describe them through observations (Silverman, 2011, p. 23). Naturalism is based on the actual happening and seeks to uncover the meaning of actions and interactions (Silverman, 2011, p. 152). From observing naturally occurring phenomena, naturalism aims to understand

the “abstraction” from everyday life (Silverman, 2011, p. 444). This ties well with the community of practice idea that everyone acts differently based on which community they are interacting with.

Furthermore, the open and free interaction with other members of the TKD club might showcase some different interactions from their usual interactions with others outside the club. It is most likely to be seen that people show the way of taekwondo. However, most importantly, they will show the way of taekwondo in the club. This means the observations will aid in explaining the community of practice *and* the imagined communities.

As naturalism seems awfully close to ethnography, I would like to clarify. The naturalist method of this project is to make the observations of interactions in the club. It is not to delve into the channels of ethnography. As Silverman (2011) points out,

“naturalism is a model of research which seeks to minimise presuppositions in order to witness subjects’ worlds in their own terms. It is particularly associated with early forms of ethnography” (Interpreting Qualitative Data, p. 470).

Therefore, I would like to stipulate the project will be focusing on naturalism rather than ethnography, as this is the desired way of research.

Open-Ended Interviews

For this project, open-ended interviews will be used. The purpose of this is to allow the interviewed person the comfort of simply explaining as they desire. The point of the interviewer is simply to instil a direction of conversation (Silverman, 2011, p. 162). As for how the interviewer approaches the interviewee, my club membership as researcher allows for a friendly perspective. As a member of the club, I am known, and people know me from the socialisation in the community of practice. Therefore, the people I interview will not be met by a stranger and, hopefully, be more open to talking about their feelings.

When approaching the people for interviews, they are aware that there is a transition from club member or friend to research. Naturally, this may make the people less open to questions, but the hope is that the trust through a shared community of practice and imagined community will nonetheless enable the interviewee to speak. Furthermore, the emphasis of the research for this project would possibly introduce a more focused point of conversation alongside a willingness to tell of experiences.

Interview Guide

The questions are created in coherence with the theoretical lenses. The focus lies upon the community of practice dimension. These are to understand the affiliation of the interviewee and the other in the club alongside their interactions. Their understanding of the community of practice is obtained through different phrasing and questions. This is done to avoid coaxing the theoretical lenses onto their worldview and simply cater to the feeling of an average conversation, aside from the given research topic. Through their descriptions of their experiences, their answers will most likely also include ideas of the imagined communities theory. Particularly, two questions will cater to the Korean/Danish culture of the TKD club to encompass both theoretical lenses.

As per the emotionalist understanding of interviews and the open-endedness of the questions, the questions may be replaced or omitted as they could be otherwise answered. Furthermore, questions investigating possible brief answers, such as “how so?”, may be implemented in connection to another answer an interviewee could give. Therefore, the questions asked may immensely differ from the interview guide based on given answers. This also ties greatly into the interpretivist ontology insofar my role as researcher also offers me the stance of being present in the moment and re-thinking my approach.

Interview Setting

As members of the TKD club, the idea is to utilise the office within the club. This is done for optimisation purposes for both interviewer and interviewee. As the office is within the club, yet secluded, it offers a space in which the setting can be understood to be an informative conversation rather than general chit-chat. It is therefore pertinent to mention that the setting will probably impact the way in which the interviewees, and the interviewer, perceives the conversation. Hopefully, the membership of me, the researcher/interviewer, will aid in making the setting seem safer and more kind than were the interviewee and I estranged.

Alternative settings for interviews could be considered. As mentioned, I shall strive to conduct them in the same space. My particular fondness of the given setting is the practical approach: this is our community of practice physical place and this is mainly how we know each other. Alternative settings could be other public or private spaces. I will allow for flexibility in my schedule to cater to the schedule of the interviewee.

Interview Participants

The interview participants had a simple criterium: be a member of the TKD club in Aalborg. As it is participant-based research, I aimed to use my background knowledge of individuals and their experiences to ask them for interviews for this project. My pragmatic insight into the club allows for this type of research to be conducted. However, some might argue that this taints the research. For the purposes of this project, I will argue that it does not, as I have clearly stated that interpretivist ontology is used, social constructivism epistemology is acknowledged, emotionalist interviewing will be conducted, and that the research design is participant-based research. All these things lead to me being a member and understanding both the research point of view but also the club member point of view *quod erat demonstrandum*.

Consent Form and Anonymity

For ethical concerns, a consent form is given to the interviewees prior to the interviews (Appendix 8). This is to prove, in writing, that the interviewee has consented to participating in the research of this project. Alongside the consent form, an information sheet is provided for them to read. This is to aid their understanding of the project and who I am, other than a fellow member of the club.

Furthermore, anonymity was given to the interviewees. This was to ensure that they did not have to feel they must contort their words or omit certain responses due to their direct connotation to them. This refers to the point of the setting, in which a comfort and calmness is hopefully instilled in the interviewee. For the observations, the pictures were taken during a training session and have people who did not want to be a part of the pictures removed.

Observations

As for the naturalist aspect, observations are used for this project alongside the interviews. The observations are made of a training to illustrate the proceedings of a training. From the researcher being part of the community and having a certain amount of knowledge about it, the observations are used to examine the interactions that occur between people. This is something Bryman refers to as possibly necessary, as someone not knowing of the behaviours might not fully comprehend the happening (Bryman, 2016, p. 271). There is also the aspect of whether something need be interpreted. This is almost a certainty. Viewing a training session in pictures, or even in person, can be confusing if not understanding how the members act as practicing taekwondo. Therefore, the analysis will aptly be done regarding my interpretivist stance for the reader. As we are dealing with pictures, I would like to address that the observations therefore

differ from recordings of a period or even specific recordings during interactions (Bryman, 2016, p. 273). This study seeks to showcase the events from a training and explain the interactions between the people as the researcher was present. Thus, the observations made might be considered ‘ad libitum sampling’ (Bryman, 2016, p. 274).

Research Criteria

As for the qualitative research criteria, Alan Bryman’s (2016) book on Social Research Methods will be used. In this, they state that there are three “most prominent criteria” and these are:

- Reliability
- Replication
- Validity

Reliability

The question of reliability is whether the study is repeatable (Bryman, 2016, p. 41). I would mention that people are different. This may be obvious, but even if I had chosen to interview other people of the club, the outcome may have varied. It is not to be specifically known. Yet, the study will still provide some form of credibility considering the research question of how people within the club interact. However, one could argue that the interviews and observations I have made and analysed are highly reliable yet unrepeatable in a way. The individuals and how they act as part of the club are particular to them and what they do together. Thereby, the reliability of the study is high, yet had the study been conducted at an earlier or later time, the study is bound to witness a change. I find the reliability of the study good, nonetheless. This is due to the emotionalist and naturalist approach alongside the ontology and epistemology. Everyone creates their version of the happenings. Thus, the interpretive understanding is that this is true to them. Therefore, the reliability of the data is arguably a stalwart foundation and deemed highly reliable, as it is an account of their perceptions of the happenings in the club and defines *their* understanding of interactions.

I would say that the study is repeatable. As argued, the outcome is bound to vary, yet the importance lies in understanding the individuals and their understandings of reality.

Replication

For this criterion, understanding the parameters is necessary. Bryman 2016 states that replication is the ability to conduct the same research again (Social Research Methods, p. 41).

As the researcher, I am a part of the TKD club. Thus, entry and access to data collection are vastly greater than that of an external investigation into the club. Furthermore, the connections with the people of the club are rather important in this relation. Focusing on a particular TKD club is most replicable. The result may very much vary, as clubs differ. Even within the borders of Denmark we find a great variation in how clubs function and interact. This does not necessarily mean the replicability of the study is distorted, but one should make note of such change, nonetheless.

Therefore, it is important to state that another club would almost certainly find the outcome to be different, yet the process highly replicable. Thereby, replicability of this methodology is most probable if followed.

Validity

Regarding validity, there are multiple to choose from. I have chosen ‘external validity’ as it suits this study. The idea of external validity is quite simple. Can the research that is conducted on a set amount of people be applied to those not researched (Bryman, 2016, p. 42). For this study, it refers to whether the people observed and interviewed share the same concepts of the reality of the club as those who are not a part of the research. To answer this question, I must refer to how I chose to interview and observe people. I would refer to what is already written yet shall also indulge an explanation here. I have chosen to observe the people I observed as they were available and willing, and no issues seemed to arise as such. A concern for the research was that some groups have people under the age of 18 and the ethical considerations would thereby be in question and parental acceptance would have to be in order. This was chosen to be avoided.

As for the interviews, I understand, to some extent, how the club functions. Thereby, I somewhat understand who knows what and to gather information from people with various opinions and views on the club to aid in facilitating a proper study of realities on the happenings of the interactions within the club. Thus, the study is primed to be externally valid and provide insight into the social mechanisms of the club.

Limitations

Given the research design of this project, some limitations arise. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge and subsequently address a dimension of the taekwondo club. The club has multiple ‘teams’ that comprise it. The teams are Mon-Team (4-8 Years of age), Junior (9-14 years of age), Senior (15+ Years of age), Fighting, Technique, and Old Boys (30+ Years of age).

As we see here, there are multiple teams for people to join. When stating that these are ‘teams’, I would like to bring the attention to that Mon-Team, Junior, Senior, and Old Boys are all considered ‘basic training’. This means the core understanding of taekwondo. Technique and fighting are the competitive team categories of the sport. As a pragmatic consideration, the group focused on here in this research is the Old Boys. Despite the name, anyone can be a part of it if they are over 30 years old. The training should comprise basic training and showcase sufficient information regarding how people interact as part of a taekwondo club.

The team paradigms of technique and fighting are primed to be more focused on tournaments. As a club need not focus on these two dimensions of taekwondo, I found them unsuitable for this project, yet will admit they could be interesting for a study of their own, or even comparative case study. I digress, they were not chosen due to the training format.

Method of analysis

The chosen method of analysis was thematic analysis for the interviews. With the interviews having been transcribed, the coding of the collected data was able to be accomplished. This would allow for themes, hence the thematic analysis. To find the codes, the collected data of interviews was visited and re-visited by the researcher multiple times to uncover and ascertain extracts. Bryman writes about these codes and subsequently themes in his book.

To Bryman, a theme can be viewed as the equivalent to a code or regarded as something containing multiple codes and meanings within it. This research aimed for the latter (Bryman, 2016, s. 584). I did not want codes to define themes, as I believe the codes that are developed from the texts were individually valuable and played together into a higher unity of a theme. The themes were then also easier to analyse, as referring to the codes and related citations from the interviews was simple for both researcher and hopefully reader.

Bryman also realised that thematic analysis has never fully been understood and aimed to, via extensive research, to lay foundation to some comprehensive research upon it. The research initially indicated that the researcher categorises the data. How this is done will be elaborated upon later. As mentioned before, themes entail codes from the transcripts and are related to the problem formulation. Lastly, themes aid the researcher in reaching theoretical understanding of the transcriptions by being connected to the theoretical lens of the study and relating to the problem formulations eventual answer (Bryman, 2016, s. 584).

Coding and indexing are made whilst analysing the data amongst the interviews in an iterative process (Bryman, 2016, s. 585). This refers to the process of visiting and re-visiting

the interview transcripts. The idea of indexing is to gain an overview of the codes in which I could then analyse them in sense of a theoretical theme. For the process of finding the codes and indexing them into themes, some useful steps are considered.

The tools for creating themes for thematic analysis are repetition, indigenous typologies, metaphors and analogies, transitions, similarities, and differences, linguistic connects, missing data, and theory-related material (Bryman, 2016, s. 586). Starting in the aforementioned order, repetition is an indication that a certain opinion or issue recurs throughout the interviews. The consistent mention of something provides a basis that it may be valuable to investigate. However, this is debated to not alone be a valid reasoning for creating a theme, merely a useful tool for it.

The indigenous typologies are whether indigenous, or local, language occurs. From the point of this study, I chose to include the mentions of not only local understandings, but also Korean wording or taekwondo-specific terminology.

Metaphors and analogies are rather explanatory. Usage of metaphors and analogies hint at abstract explanation to the researcher and determines a point being made through the abstract. This may be understood in a form of punctuation from the interviewee's perspective.

Transitions and linguistic connectors are about the natural rhetoric of the interviewees. Do they change the topic in a natural way or are they hinting at something? The linguistic connectors are issues of "because", "due to" or the likes. Anything that may rouse suspicion of a specific reasoning that the interviewee is attempting to get across.

Similarities and differences are immensely impacted by the iterative process of revisiting the collected data. Viewing the data and finding that there are similarities can prove a common point for the interviewees and the general understanding of how people interact within the club. However, so do the differences between them. The differences may indicate a varying view in opinion between the interviewees but also ameliorate or exacerbate the dichotomy and community of people within the club.

Missing data is the contextual understanding of the interviewees either avoiding the question or omitting details. This requires the thorough investigation of the transcripts and the emphasis they place and where details are lacking or even open admittances to being unwilling to disclose certain issues.

The theory-related material is rather self-evident. If I, the researcher, find any citation from the interviewees to be pointed in the approximate or exact direction of the theories, the codes are part of the theoretical themes.

These tools helped the analysis insofar themes were easier to identify. Thus, they are what this project will understand as co-creating themes that will be used to analyse and the codes of text from the interviews will be simultaneously referred to. However, simply the creation of themes is not enough. I have had to explain how and why the themes are pertinent and relevant in accordance with each other and the problem formulation (Bryman, 2016, s. 587).

For the analysis of the interviews, I used an iterative process. The interviews were firstly read multiple times to gain an overview. Once an overview had been established, many parts that were deemed relevant for the analysis were transcribed. During this procedure, some codes appeared. The interview codework (Appendix 6) was the formulation process of codes and they were constantly reworked as the interviews were read over and over. Eventually, the codes were formed, and the extracts of transcripts were placed into the categories for analysis.

The observations were also part of an iterative process. I perused the pictures that were taken and tried to find some that were not already covered by others. The idea was to forego repetition through too similar pictures. When analysing, the pictures were put into order of how the training went.

Analysis

This part of the study is divided into the interview analysis and the observation analysis. Choosing to analyse the interviews first is to gather an understanding of what the people say as part of their membership and to understand their viewpoints firstly. The second point is then an interpretation of the observations that were made and will be referred to. This is to visualise the interactions between the club members and to refer to the interview findings as a basis understanding.

Interviews

This section will present the findings of the project and analyse them. The tools of the method of analysis have been applied to some extent but will not necessarily be explicitly referred to. The findings will be examined in a beginning order from the 'Interview Codework' (appendix 6). The Interview Codebook was made to compile the information gathered from the extracts. The codes of bias, understanding the techniques, ethos, systematic hierarchy, and acculturation were made. A structure is made from the various extracts found in those codes and related to the theory to answer the problem formulation. The codes will be sectioned off to simply form an overview of the analysis. It is not to state that they are incoherent. It is merely for sake of order and understanding of the process.

As mentioned in the Method of Analysis, the codes are part of themes. The themes are developed based on the theories. The Community of Practice theory stipulates some frames themselves which have been used. The Imagined Communities theory is a bit vaguer to pinpoint. However, the idea of unity is central to the theory. Furthermore, the dimensions of sport, culture, and nation are entities that play a role in the theory and have therefore been implemented for the themes. Here is a list of the codes and the themes they pertain to:

Bias – Shared Repertoire + The People + Joint Enterprise

Understanding the Techniques – Reification + Mutual Engagement + Joint Enterprise + Negotiation of Meaning + Shared Repertoire

Ethos – Joint Enterprise + Mutual Engagement + The People

Systematic Hierarchy – Reification + Unity by Culture + Participation + Mutual Engagement + Negotiation of Meaning

Acculturation – Unity by Sport + Culture + Nation

For the analysis itself, these will not necessarily be consistently referred to but will be mentioned intermittently when necessary. They will be tied together at the end of the analysis.

Bias

Starting off with the interviews, these provided many good insights to how members of the club interact with one another. Initially, I find it interesting to regard the points of two of the members and how they entered. It was due to people already part of the club. One member mentions “[A study mate's colleague] was so obsessed that I had promised I would come to a given training. But I think it was very pleasant and that was it” (Appendix 3, page 1). Here, we see members of the club actively approaching others in their network to join the club and be a part of it. This may not seem like much but consider the community of practice functionality here. Would a member who is not thriving in the club actively seek out new members? I would dare to say that is highly unlikely. Thus, ‘networking’ new members to the community of practice seems a good way of describing the health of the community of practice, even if this was some years ago. The foundation it builds upon, referring to shared repertoire, would surely only develop with such people in the community.

For the second example, the interviewee mentions “[My wife] lured me in to train taekwondo and I just enjoyed standing in line. It suited me” (Appendix 4, page 1). We see how this interviewee’s wife brought attention to the club. This shows that it is not only a social activity insofar people attempt to get others to join via their networks, no, they also gain a new member of the community of practice via their close relatives. Furthermore, the mention of “it suited me” is an understatement considering the same interviewee has been a part of the club for 38 years (Appendix 4, page 1). These two examples were set under the code of ‘Bias’. Whilst coding, this seemed a good term to use for the code. Bias would normally be attributed a negative connotation, yet here it refers to their preferences and understanding their views on their club membership.

Furthermore, the idea of bias entails the shared repertoire, meaning the history they commonly share in the community, the people, as a foundation of preference in one instance, and joint enterprise, as the foundation of preference in the other instance. That being stated, it is apt to continue with why the club and being a part of the community of practice is regarded as good to the members. One interviewee very directly states “the community is a large part of [what I enjoy most about being part of the club]” (Appendix 3, page 1). To elaborate briefly on the square brackets, it is because I asked a question which they answered to. To provide context, it was added as such. Digressively, the community plays a large role for the member shows

that the community of practice is so much more than merely ‘a sport’ or ‘hobby’. It seems that it is also a hub where these people can gather and be together doing something which they enjoy. Another extract mentions "yes, [it is the continuity of the other members that provides a feeling of community and comradeship] (Appendix 1, page 4). Hereby, it is made clear that *continuity* plays a role in the community. It is not only that people are there to do taekwondo and then leave every so often, no, this member points out the consistent mutual engagement from other people as being important.

This points to the sustained community that they can engage in as pivotal to their interactions in the club. One extract goes “it is the relations [or communities (*fællesskaber*)] I have made in the club [that make me stay here]” (Appendix 2, page 1). In conjunction with the former extract, this stipulates the import of the relations they have to each other in the club. Another extract goes "I can get the training whether I am kicking the air or whether I am lifting myself up with weights. It does not matter, but the people are now” (Appendix 2, 1). Thereby, the emphasis is thoroughly on the interaction with others through the club and the joint enterprise that is taekwondo. They bond over the exercise they get by participating in the community of practice. Thus, returning to ‘bias’, it is most certainly a preference that people are part of the club for exercise whilst maintaining the relations to the other people within the club.

As with most things, time spent together doing something together will eventually create a bond as the theory of community of practice hints so often at. An extract states “I have known some members for many years – I am friends with them privately” (Appendix 4, page 1). Through this, we find that it appears to be the endurance of a sustained community and engagement in it that gives the members something in return. As stated in the extract, it is friends, or friendship. This may not be an answer to how people directly interact with one another as part of a taekwondo club, but it does bear significance. It supports the overarching idea of a community of practice in which people might find like-mindedness from others via the practice.

That the members become friends and care for one another is a part of the answer to how people interact. Yet, how does it manifest for the members? An extract mentions “You get to know people and [...] you start to get some common jokes with them” (Appendix 3, page 1). This feeds directly into the shared repertoire, as it is a lived experience which they share. If it happened at a certain training session, the members could reflect upon it at another point and bolster the community. Thus, even jokes are important to the collective experience. Another mention is “people who notice ‘hey, you were not at the training on Tuesday. Were you sick?’

[...] It was such a great motivating factor that kept me going” (Appendix 3, page 1). This quote illustrates the attentiveness of the members to one another. The essence of this is that people show care for another person. If we divulge, people perhaps start to see the training as requiring certain people, particularly if they continuously show up as a routine. Once the pattern breaks, it is noticed, causing the extract response above. As it was mentioned in an interview, the emotionalist approach states that this is most definitely a vital part of the answer to the problem formulation. People engage in levels of interaction that go beyond simply the practice itself but starts to become private.

On the note of relations in the club becoming private, we may see that people engage outside the club. Thus, community of practice becomes something which is a state of mind activity that exists beyond a certain frame. The mention is “we started training together and then, as time went on, got to become better acquainted and lastly friends. And now we see each other outside the club for dinners every now and then and board game nights, going for a walk, and doing other sports, so it is so lovely” (Appendix 2, page 1). Thereby, the relations they have to each other are furthered beyond the realm of the club as a physical dimension. There is mentioned a natural progression through stages of acquaintance. Yet, the point is that the people within the community may prosper to develop beyond it.

The people of the club being pleasant to be around for others is important. It is so important that it may change the way they regard the training. An extract goes “and there are some lovely people who create a frame for you to exercise with whilst having fun” (Appendix 3, page 2). Thereby, the other people in the club and the interactions people have over the practice they do fosters ‘fun’. Without delving into the discourse too much, it is fascinating that the interviewee mentions it as such. Are the trainings otherwise too serious? Do the people of the club make it ‘fun’ or bearable and pleasant? A following extract supports it with “[you only continue doing what you do] if you are being supported and find it enjoyable to come” (Appendix 3, page 2). This extract puts the fun into perspective. Not only is it whether the people of the club are continuously around, the others provide support from this member’s viewpoint. Interpretively, the trainings are bearable through the interactions with others providing information on progress within the practice. Thereby, we might invoke this as negotiation of meaning and joint enterprise. The member is obviously seeking aid from others but also wanting it to be enjoyable. If the people of the club do not understand what is going on, I would wager they would not find it enjoyable. At the same time, the aid from others points toward a negotiation. This negotiation would probably come in form of showing a move,

thinking it is correct, and sparring with others about how and why it is or is not correct. Hence, negotiation of meaning.

Speaking of negotiation of meaning, the help the members of the club provide for each other is a vast part of the community experience. An extract goes “nobody would ever think to say ‘I will not [help] you’ or ‘you just have a lower belt; suit yourself’ – nobody [here] would ever think of doing that. I would not want to be a member of such a place anyway” (Appendix 3, page 3). This statement is powerful for multiple reasons. Let us dissect. There is a dimension of belt rank which we shall engage with later. For now, not wanting to help others is something this member finds important. One could imagine this would be valid for many others, as the denial of help from others in a community of practice seems odd. There is an understanding that the people of the community are there to help each other. Thus, it becomes unthinkable that people would deny helping one another, particularly in a joint enterprise about learning a sport or cultural artefact. The latter part points to definite disapproval of such behaviour, would it occur. This proves that the club community is fragile in this regard. It also shows that the club community is bound around behaviour of helpfulness and inclusiveness.

On the note of helpfulness and inclusiveness, it is worthwhile now to investigate the team dynamics. As mentioned, the teams constitute various types of learning of taekwondo. However, it is also important to note that this will inevitably have some people gravitate more towards them than other teams. On a participant base, I find it worthy to mention that one can be a part of multiple ‘teams’. The team definition is purely to state the learning goal. One is not bound to the team. An extract goes:

“I know that there are some who are here because they thoroughly enjoy doing technique. For example, and they become good at technique. Though, I do not think they see others from the club outside the club as such. Yes, so, one is only friends in the club and then others are more so acquaintances instead” (Appendix 2, page 2).

Here, the focus on club membership from the interviewee is that people who focus intently on a certain dimension of taekwondo will not necessarily engage with others to create and retain relations. As the extract points out, people “thoroughly” enjoy a certain dimension of taekwondo. This fondness of a certain direction of the sport seems to be with the intent of improving one’s talent. Subsequently, the focus goes to how those people may become reclusive in social terms whilst part of the community of practice and expand the dimension

and team in that regard. As part of the community of practice and on a team would surely influence the motivation of others, as per negotiation of meaning and joint enterprise.

Accounting for people being interested in certain teams over others, one of the interviewees has two extracts for this topic. The first is “I have a closer relation to those who are here [Old Boys morning training on Sundays]” (Appendix 1, page 1). The interesting part here is the connection they feel with this team. There is not necessarily a mention as to why or how, but the preference is stated. The second is “I am closer with this team than any of the others, because it is some older members” (Appendix 1, page 1). Thus, an answer is provided. This comment may bind back to the other extract of the continuity of the members, yet the focus is on older members. Whatever one’s preference is for a team, the negotiation of meaning is surely renegotiated amongst the team members as they continuously (mutually) engage in the practice.

In extension and leaning towards the ‘Understanding the Techniques’ code, one must consider the structure of a taekwondo club. There are instructors and what I will call practitioners, as the Danish word is ‘udøvere’. An extract is “[The relation to the trainer] means something to me – That I have chosen to hang around (remain a member of the club)” (Appendix 1, page 1). This is important for the bias code. The people of the community that one is a part of for the practice is important. Yet, as the extract shows, ‘the relation to the trainer’ is also an important factor. If we consult the idea of the joint enterprise of taekwondo, the relation to the trainer may be a part of this. One dimension of ‘liking the trainer’ is that the trainer is a good person, which is subjective. However, the other dimension is that the understanding of the joint enterprise, namely taekwondo, does not suffer in the one’s understanding of it when the instructor is instructing. Furthermore, this is obviously pointed out to be a vital part of the interviewee’s membership of the club.

Understanding The Techniques

As for the understanding of techniques, we shall start from the instructor perspective. How the instructor regards the practitioners bears import to the club understanding. An extract states that “I would like to include the pupils into the training because I feel it is the best way they can develop” (Appendix 4, page 2). As we see, this shows the instructor role is believed to be a form of inclusion of the practitioners. Thereby, the instructor aims to have the practitioners become a direct part of the instructions and teaching them about the sport. This also opens the floor to negotiation of meaning. Another extract somewhat supports it by going “Because I

want people to actively think about ‘how’ often. I mean, how things work, because that is how I learn things best, so I get some good ‘aha’ experiences [...]” (Appendix 3, page 3). This resonates the idea of having the practitioners become a part of the instructing. Having the practitioners reflect upon what they are doing means the members of the club are interacting with one another to learn together. The ‘aha experiences’ are expressive but also telling that an epiphany is struck. The epiphany would most likely occur through direct conversation with the practitioners about the way of taekwondo.

Continuing upon the concept of having practitioners gain something from the training, the idea of what one might achieve in the training is considered. An interviewee stated, “Give them simple exercises so they get success from it” (Appendix 1, page 2). This connotes to the idea of simplicity being the best tool. For the sake of a community and growing relations, considering ‘simple’ exercises to achieve ‘success’ is rather important. One could imagine that, with enough repetition, simple exercises could be built upon more and more. Thus, the continual engagement with each other forms a shared repertoire. Therein, not only are the ‘simple exercises’ most likely expanded, but the ways in which the members learn them are expanded to the relations they have. This would to some extent mean that the practice and the members of the club interacting together furthers both the community and the practice.

Simple exercises seem to be a grand idea of instructing. The success from the simple exercises would grant a boost to engaging in the practice again. Yet, an extract furthers it by stating “There are often some ergonomic explanations and then I try to get people to think about: what do you give or lose by the different movement patterns?” (Appendix 3, page 2). This is essentially furthering the idea of ‘simple exercises.’ However, the instructor side of things is that they actively have people consider why the technique is supposed to be as it is. This negotiation returns to the reification of how taekwondo has developed over time. Would the technique be filled with flaws, it would most likely have been removed. Yet, the perseverance of a technique means it is worthwhile. The instructor emphasising this for the practitioner and having them reflect upon it means the practitioner would develop their own understanding of it, but jointly, the enterprise would be reified.

When it comes to showing support and inclusiveness in the club, the instructors seem to be understanding of the practitioners. An interviewee was answering whether the club was inclusive and supportive and turned the question as such, “otherwise, it is me who looks the other way with the pupils – It is me who should support them” (Appendix 4, page 1). The

interviewee was aware that the club was supporting and including them but noted the instructor role. In relation to the interaction between the members of the club, this denotes a role of caretaking as an instructor. That they are aware of the practitioners and wish to support them in learning seems natural. However, the mention of it must mean the instructor is able to alter their way of instructing based on events happening during a training session. Considering the supportiveness of the instructors to the practitioners, an extract states “An informal role as instructor is to ensure that people learn their syllabus and give them some ---- from their graduation – otherwise they will never move on” (Appendix 4, page 2). This shows that the supportiveness and care that the instructor gives seemingly goes beyond the training session. The instructor is not only aware of what the practitioners lack in the training session but also manages to consider the syllabus for graduation. This oversight and willingness to help surely aids the engagement of the community of practice. As denoted in the end of the extract, there is also a form of concern that the practitioner ‘will never move on’. This shows that the instructor is supporting them. However, from a club perspective, it could be considered that a member might not enjoy the taekwondo as much if they do not get success from it.

The understanding of taekwondo seems to be rather focused on the syllabus for graduation, as mentioned above. Yet, the learning from within the community provides possible external use. An extract mentions “I understand that the stances one learns to walk up and down the floor can actually also be used to specifically beat down what would be an attack upon yourself” (Appendix 1, page 3). Thereby, the members of the club are learning that the specifics of what they practice in the club may also be engaged in to defend themselves outside the place they learn them. This extract illustrates that the extent of the club is not merely a ‘sport’ but can also aid in feeling more secure about being able to pacify an aggressor. I think it is worth noting that the mention does not state to be aggressive, simply to eliminate a potential threat. Thus, taekwondo finds a potential usage beyond the training and the syllabus garners meaning beyond simply for graduation.

Accounting for taekwondo being about using the body to perform certain techniques, it is questionable to which extent one relies on others to learn about it. This is meant in terms of the instructor telling one what to do and then performing them against no one. However, an extract mentions that “even though taekwondo is an individual sport, it still – people still help each other in many exercises” (Appendix 2, page 3). Thus, the trainings may be primarily about oneself, yet understanding how and why a technique is useful often requires an ‘opponent’ or other. For the spirit of the club, this also means that people engage with each other as a part of

the training. They do so to understand the techniques. Another mention is “we often stand two-by-two across from each other and we occasionally fight every now and then against each other” (Appendix 2, page 3). Hereby, the necessity of the ‘opponent’ is required. Otherwise, learning techniques is one thing, but putting them into practice against someone another. The engagement two-by-two also indicates that the members of the club interact on what is likely to be a friendly basis to help each other in understanding how the techniques work and why they are effective. This may very well refer to the instance of ‘aha experiences’, as members engage with each other and most likely learn through doing so.

Progression within taekwondo shows itself within the club. The syllabus is important, and instructors play a large role in aiding the understanding of the techniques. Yet, how may the practitioners engage with each other. One of the interviewee’s mentions this:

It could easily be a practitioner who has been doing it for a few more years, who walks up to a new person, even though not in a trainer role, one can definitely give feedback and say “try doing this exercise instead” and “try doing this technique this way instead” or “the draw comes from the shoulder instead” (Appendix 2, page 3).

Thereby underlining one aspect of how people act as part of a taekwondo club. The attention to detail of time one has been ‘doing’ taekwondo is interesting. This indicates that the idea is more that a club member, who might be new to the club, could instruct others. Belt degree and experience does not change just because one switches club. Thus, the learning of techniques and negotiation of meaning can transmit between practitioners who are not instructing, yet still instructing others to the best of their knowledge. It also shows development amongst practitioners insofar they facilitate learning between them.

Ethos

As for the Ethos code, it is obvious that some interviewees have mentioned certain ways of being a part of the club. In reference to the abovementioned, one’s current position in the community, such as instructor, is not really relevant as part of the teaching process. At the very core of this argument, we see that the reification of the techniques are passed on by fellow members. An extract mentions “That is also what I have experienced; everyone who becomes experienced in the club starts to do—starts sharing the knowledge they themselves have gotten” (Appendix 2, page 4). Thereby, the knowledge one has accumulated about, say, a certain technique or part of taekwondo becomes solidified. The instructing from members to member

as part of the club is important to the understanding of it. Members are actively transmitting the knowledge of the sport which they have gathered despite belt degree.

When it comes to teaching others as practitioners, not instructors, some interviewees mentioned a certain code of conduct. The mention of conduct states "We sometimes experienced being put into groups, then trying to walk a taeugk. If a mistake is made, we intervene and comment on it matter-of-factly, of course" (Appendix 1, page 3). For clarification, a taeugk is a certain pattern of techniques put together. The patterns can be difficult to remember, particularly when first encountered. There are multiple of these and are attributed certain belt degrees. Digressively, the interaction between the members of the club as being part of a smaller team to identify mistakes aids in the building of how the community is supposed to conduct itself. As stated in the extract, the practitioners will intervene and comment. This act itself means the mutual engagement and negotiation of meaning is reflected upon by the members. Note that the lack of the constant supervision of the instructor when in the groups leads to they themselves having to solve any issues that occur. Naturally, the instructor is able to be summoned if necessary, yet the smaller group is to negotiate amongst themselves. As for the imagined communities, one could ask whether this dimension is a particularly Danish perspective. We shall see about this later. However, the intervening and commenting delineates a certain pattern of behaviour, or culture.

Continuing the note of club culture, it is obvious that the members are aware of certain things. Whether they consider them to be the foundation of how they actually view the club is questionable. Yet, they make the points. Another extract points out that "one should not be mean towards others, but that is a part of the community that is supposed to be" (Appendix 2, page 2). The slightly biblical connotation in this extract made it a highly relevant theory-related material. It is blatantly obvious that this interviewee subsumes 'being a good person' is something that is 'supposed to be'. The obviousness that comes across in this comment takes the intangibility of how to interact with others of the club to something slightly more tangible, yet with the moral question of what that is. Nonetheless, the idea of 'not be[ing] mean towards others' states the interactive level of the club. Furthermore, another extract mentions "If you do not want to be a part of the community; that works as well" (Appendix 2, page 4). It is a slight oxymoron insofar even not wanting to be a part of the community is actually engaging with the community. The willingness to omit the community to do the sport is allowed, according to this interviewee. Following this trail of thought, the club seems to be *very* inclusive and supportive re the interview guide.

Regarding the supportiveness and inclusiveness of the club, the designated outline of how the club should act has been underway a while. Considering that the taekwondo club as an institution, someone must set some regulations. This does not exclude the taekwondo club. An extract goes “I, definitely, as board member and active member of the club through many years, wanted to have a community where, or a club, where everyone can join, regardless of how you are as a person” (Appendix 2, page 2). The willingness of a member of the club to see that people could be a part of the club ‘regardless of how you are as a person’ is incredibly inclusive. Furthermore, the interchange between ‘active member’ and ‘board member’ shows a general consensus of the idea. Granted, this is one person, yet the groundwork or ethos of how people should act as part of the club is set. The person who wishes to engage with the community of the club may do so. As another extract states “It is just a case of whether people are willing to be a part of the community” (Appendix 2, page 4). Thus, it is a decision each member can make. Be a part of the club or not. This would allow people to join at their own rate and pace. Therein, the members of the club are directly a part of creating the club dynamic through their mutual engagement.

Regarding the sport, we also see that a social interaction is inevitable. Without delving into the same topic too much, an extract mentions “we do a two-step fight with each other, so it is actually a rather social sport, and we speak English” (Appendix 2, page 3). The ‘two-step fight’ requires that two people interact. The interaction is about the practice. Yet, as already analysed, people may diverge from the practice to socialise in other ways. The mention of the ‘social sport’ piques interest as a reflection of the interviewee. There is apparently some idea that a sport such as a martial art would be reclusive by nature. That is not the case – and is stated so. Considering the imagined community, Denmark is the country in which the club resides, and Danish is the national language. This only makes for ‘and we speak English’, as the linguistic connector indicates, fascinating. It is not described to which degree, yet the inclusiveness of the sport is not limited to Danes or Danish speakers.

Systematic Hierarchy

When it comes to comprehending one another, the club is highly social. Even with the consideration of language to encompass a broader scope of people, we see that people include one another and teachings go both ways between instructors and practitioners. Leaning into the Systematic Hierarchy code, belt degree is seen to play a role. An extract states “I think it is important to spend time to convey and that one has a responsibility, I believe, if you have a black belt, to help others within the club” (Appendix 4, page 4). Here, we see that belt degree

is tied to the way the club functions, hence Ethos code. The responsibility that is mentioned posits a form of conductance. One might be a member of the club, yet the imperative significance of your belt degree seemingly plays an important role in the engagement in the community. Thus, the interactions are seen to be bound by which ranking in the club one has as well as the social interplay. Speaking of social interplay, another extract mentions “you have an equality regardless of what rank one has” (Appendix 4, page 2). Again, the ethos of the club is clear for this interviewee. It plays well combined with the previous mention of everyone being welcome.

As taekwondo is a somewhat recent sport to Denmark, it is still rather bound to South Korean culture. One of the interviewee’s picks up on the development of the sport with their knowledge of the history. They say that “[The sport] is not so much ‘leg-bone’, because people would not come for that” (Appendix 4, page 3). The reference to leg-bone is that one would, back in the days, harden the muscles and bones by repeating slight impacts on the body to increase durability. The issue that comes forth here is that this approach to taekwondo would scare people off the trainings. Hence, the interviewee is aware of this and mentions it. Although, if the instructor were to put this form of training on schedule, the practitioners would perhaps attempt to understand why, despite perhaps not enjoying it. It comes in the last form of ethos to analyse here with “and then I think that one should show respect to the teacher. And I think this permeates” (Appendix 1, page 4). Thereby, the understanding that the teacher, or instructor, instructs in their way of knowing the sport, one must still show respect. This shows yet another form of interaction between the members of the club. The permeation of respect is most likely meant as being relevant to all teams. We understand that the practice is what we enjoy and are there for. Thus, if you enjoy the teams you are on, show respect for the instructor.

Moving on to the code of systematic hierarchy, taekwondo has a form that resembles a sort of rank-and-file system. An interviewee mentions “It is a bit like entering the army” (Appendix 1, page 3). Thereby, the interviewee is using a metaphor to make sense of the situation of the club dynamic. It is obvious that the interviewee is perceiving the club as rather hierarchical. This also plays into the continuous mentions of respect and ranking within the club. The interviewee continues the description by saying “the trainer is the sergeant, so you just do what is said” (Appendix 1, page 3). This aptly describes a version of interaction within the club. The notion is that the interviewee perceives the trainings as a form of “tell and do” scenario. This also ascribes to the idea of instructors and practitioners being dissonant. Thereby, we can extend the analysis to that some people perceive the club dynamics as equal and free

for all to talk whilst also having a dimension of respect through doing what the instructor asks. The metaphor of being in the ‘army’ reflects the culture pertaining to both. There might be a similarity between the two.

Regarding the respect and metaphor of taekwondo, there is a limit to the situation. One’s belt degree and officiality pertains to taekwondo. Thereby understood that there is a limitation of where and when. Whilst interviewing one of the interviewees, they said “yes. Your degree is bound to the dojang, not out here, I believe” (Appendix 4, page 2). The interviews are conducted within the club, but in the office. Thereby, this is a valuable statement and ode to the confines of taekwondo in their regard. The dojang, the place where the practice traditionally takes place, is the dimension in which taekwondo bears a value. They furthered this argument by stating “I think it absolutely alright to be called ‘Sabum-Nim’ in the dojang, but out here I am just (normal name)” (Appendix 4, page 2). The honorary title of ‘Sabum-Nim’ is what the interviewee believes they should be called within the dojang. Again, outside the dojang, the normal name of the person is to be used. This shows that the interactions between the members of the taekwondo club vary in this degree. The title is to be used to show respect of the belt degree the person has, whether they are practitioner or instructor.

Pertaining directly to theory-related material, some of the interviewees were well aware of the hierarchy in the club. An extract simply goes “we have a formal hierarchy” (Appendix 3, page 3). This means the members of the club are probably aware that they must respect the authority of each other in the club at certain times. The instance of ‘formal’ means it is openly negotiated. This plays into the joint enterprise of the community of practice. For dissonance and counterpoint, another extract points out that “some people maintain the hierarchy more than others” (Appendix 3, page 3). This must pertain to certain difficulties that sometimes arise within the club. The interactions are omitted, yet the omission is interesting. The club dynamics are obviously shaped by the contrast in which the respect to hierarchy varies. What the interviewee meant by this is obscured. Although, the hierarchy of the club is compromised by some, the interviewee obviously insinuates.

The belt degrees that taekwondo has are a description of the knowledge they supposedly have. It is meant for the instructor to either mention the belt degree or to directly say to someone to do a certain technique and the practitioners are supposed to understand. An extract mentions that “I feel that one gets an offer of a belt degree that is apt. It means a lot in form of hierarchy here in the club” (Appendix 1, page 2). Thereby, the knowledge one has of taekwondo is also

delineated by the belt one has. The hierarchy seemingly depends upon this signification of rank. Returning to the metaphor of the army and sergeants, this makes sense in that regard. Another interviewee states some uncertainty about the hierarchy in form of "I am not completely certain about the informal but the more stripes one has on one's belt, the higher the ranking in the club, usually" (Appendix 2, page 4). As some may be familiar with, martial arts have belt degrees of various colour coordination. However, the stripes described here are equally important to the complete belt colouring. It shows aptitude and skill just as well. Therefore, the extract points to the addition of these stripes as important. The hierarchy of taekwondo is permeated by the colour codes of the ranking system. As mentioned, this also underlines the knowledge one is supposed to have compared to the rank.

Along with the belt degree stating what you know, there is also a form of respect and responsibility that accompanies it. An extract mentions that "[the belt degree you have says where you are and the higher degree you have, the more you are obliged to guide others] is the philosophy of taekwondo" (Appendix 4, page 4). This first part refers to what has already been stated about belt degrees. The level of your belt is bound to the knowledge of taekwondo. However, the 'obligation to guide others' is a hierarchical idea of how the club members are supposed to interact with one another. We see that the responsibility of the black belts is bound to, in this case, the philosophy of taekwondo. This leans into the acculturation code insofar there appears to be a mention of the philosophy. As we know, taekwondo originated from South Korea. Thus, the philosophy must also originate from there. Therein, the club members of the club in Aalborg are also somewhat affected by this philosophy in their interactions. However, on the other hand, it is questionable how much the culture accompanies the philosophy. One of the interviewees sums up the point of the cultural aspect quite neatly:

"Our club has definitely developed some form of classical Danish association life (foreningsliv) directly regarding that it is not as hierarchical in the end. We must, jointly, decide and make a club that the community is happy about" (Appendix 3, pages 3-4).

This pertains to both theories. The interviewee is aware that taekwondo has ties to South Korean culture. However, they also reflect upon the interactions within the community *and* nation that they are in. The integration of the sport into the local area has created a community. Yet, it is not separate from it. The community of practice within the club must apparently jointly discuss how it is pleased to conduct the practice. On the other hand, the imagined community of South Korea blends in with the Danish culture, the 'foreningsliv'. The interviewee mentions

that the sport is hierarchical but is conflicted by the community of practice. This pertains to the wholistic view of the nation and culture in which the club is bound, namely Denmark and Danish. Although, the roots of the sport are not neglected even though they are to be discussed and altered to make the people 'happy'.

Acculturation

Noting the blend of Danish and Korean culture, we move onto the acculturation code. The previous mention states that the Danish culture has in some way infiltrated taekwondo in the club. The community of practice seemingly aims for a Danish culture over a Korean culture. However, some state that "I think [club dynamic] is a mixture of [the Danish and Korean culture]" (Appendix 1, page 2). Therein, it supports the previous mention insofar there is a mixture. Yet, it does not state how widespread the Danish culture is. When asking the interviewees about whether they felt a part of the South Korean culture or not, the answers were mainly leaning towards a no. The most optimistic one of the South Korean culture was "to some extent, yes, [I feel part of the South Korean culture], but not incredibly much" (Appendix 3, page 3). As can be duly noted from the extract, there is a limit to how much one feels a part of the South Korean culture. Accounting for the setting of the interview, it should be worthwhile mentioning that taekwondo is mainly what binds these interviewees to the Korean culture.

The two previous statements were personal views on their subjective identification to the nation of South Korea. Accounting for the club in general, is perhaps a different view. One could perhaps identify subjectively more so to the Korean culture than other members. Granted, the main thing the community of practice is there for is taekwondo. Considering the origin of taekwondo, we can see that the imagined communities are between Denmark and South Korea. Yet, what binds them? An extract mentions "No, I do not feel [that we are part of the South Korean culture]" (Appendix 2, page 3). The inclusive 'we' as a part of the South Korean culture shows the view of the club in general. The underlying tones aside, this means the club and the interactions they perform together have become distanced from Korean culture. In a way, one could ask to which limit this is meant. Although, this brings forth an idea of a Danish or even local form of taekwondo. Thus, the cultural artefact that taekwondo is becomes compromised. One could perhaps say that the idea of understanding that taekwondo and South Korea are almost one and the same is old fashioned. It appears to be obvious that the club members seem to perceive that taekwondo has been severed from South Korean tradition.

However, the learnt trait of respect for one another through the ‘do’ of taekwondo somewhat remains. Yet, we must consider this distancing from South Korea. The way people interact with one another is obviously not the same as it used to be or is idealised as a form of Korean heritage. An extract states that “[the taekwondo we practice today] is not as Eastern [as it used to be]” (Appendix 4, page 3). Here, we see reification insofar taekwondo is mentioned as a noun and is subsequently split from its ‘Eastern’ origin. We could consider the abovementioned extract of ‘leg-bone’ where taekwondo was apparently taught in a harsher way than it currently is. This understanding insinuates that the club interactions are based around the conceptualisation of the sport and techniques. Thus, the taekwondo that the club performs today is not done in the same spirit as was ‘supposedly’ taught re this interviewee’s reflection.

Thereby, the interactions between the club members appear to be arguably ‘Western’ (by contrast to ‘Eastern’) or Danish. An extract specifically mentions that “it is the Danish [culture in the club]” (Appendix 4, page 3). This explicit statement of the Danish culture in the club is telling of the acculturation, hence the code name. Taekwondo seems to be understood in its entirety and suited to the country and locality. This is seen insofar there is the Danish culture in the club. This may be done to accommodate the Danish culture which surrounds the club. Thus, the techniques and understanding of taekwondo are brought into this club and shown. However, the interactions are tailored with the Danish culture to befit the people of the club.

To this extent, taekwondo also bears the language of Korean with it. We speak Korean in the club and must understand the techniques as they are pronounced and written. Thought, for humour, one could imagine the unintended butchering of the Korean language as Danes and others attempt to pronounce them without learning Korean, at least not as a first language for many. Digressively, the Korean is spoken throughout the club and reified to form an understanding between the club members. This interaction is contrasted by one of the interviewees stating “I do not actually know what good it does to speak Korean” (Appendix 2, page 3). There is a point here. Korean is brought with the art of taekwondo. We still speak the words to the best of our ability to pay homage and respect to the origin of taekwondo.

However, how much does this reasoning weigh up against learning about taekwondo in Danish or English, as is spoken in the club? The interactions between the members would supposedly be easier. One could imagine it would leave plenty of room for negotiation. Yet, we stick to the concepts and practices that were provided from when taekwondo came to Denmark.

The same interviewee reflectively mentioned "I suppose it is so we get a common understanding of some concepts, but it could just as well be in Danish, I would say" (Appendix 2, page 3). This points directly to the reification of a community of practice. It would seem this statement is an answer to the previous. We see that the 'common understanding' is deep. What is most likely inferred is that the Korean has been developed and categorised over time. Were each club or just Denmark to call the techniques something in Danish, the meaning might be altered. Thus, the understanding is probably also understood on a global level. If a person graduates to a degree and needs to know a certain level of knowledge but fails to understand the words, the degree is in part misguiding.

Thus, the community of practice defines a sense of importance to the language, therein imagined communities. As this reflective extract goes, we can see that Korean is useful as a global language for it for the purpose of communication. Returning to the point of the interactions within the club and subjective feeling of Korean culture, an extract points out "[...] the slight 'pseudo-Asian' culture we construct here in the club has nothing to do with the real Asian culture" (Appendix 2, page 3). This refers to the Danish and Korean culture being part of the club yet not defining a connection between the two. The understanding follows that taekwondo is apparently something which has been learnt and understood as a concept that does bear semblance to South Korea. Although, the culture of taekwondo is fluid compared to the techniques, which are defined and redefined amongst practitioners. The sense of belonging to South Korea is, with this extract, far gone. It is but a silhouette of the culture. The club may imitate what culture from South Korea they understand is part of taekwondo, yet the culture beyond the defined parts is Danish.

For the contrast of this mixture between Danish and South Korean culture, two extracts play important roles. They showcase cultural differences between the nations and how they are conducted. The first extract mentions "There is some of this 'respect for tradition' thing that comes from the South Korean culture" (Appendix 3, page 3). The very distancing way this is stated shows that the understood Korean culture merely plays in the background of the club interactions. There is a sense of respect, but the members are not inundated by it. The other extract points out that "people who have authority also have to show that they have earned it to some extent, which I think is Danish at the same time" (Appendix 3, page 4). Therein, the showing of respect is contested and giving context in shape of Korean and Danish culture clashing. There was a prior extract stating that Danish culture has a flat hierarchy, which is prevalent here. Thus, the members of the club must interact based on understanding the respect

and tradition of taekwondo whilst simultaneously adding the Danish culture to it by querying that respect.

To end this code of acculturation, some extracts in the regard of Danish and Korean culture raise an issue. The first extract says, “when I started – since then, taekwondo has become highly Western-orientated” (Appendix 4, page 3). The interviewee has 30+ years of experience with the sport, but this provides a chronological idea of how the sport developed. What is meant by ‘Western-orientated’ is unknown, but the fact that taekwondo, since its arrival, has changed is unique. The second extract states “I actually think we should just switch over to speaking Danish” (Appendix 2, page 3). The switch of language would certainly entail the ‘Western-orientation’ of taekwondo that has changed over the past years. The change of language to conduct the sport in would make interactions easier but possibly harm the idea of the sport and how it is supposed to be conducted. Therein, there is an understanding that taekwondo is a strict form of rule following and the interviewee is showing the Danish culture vis-à-vis wanting to deconstruct the form. The last extract is “so it is called ‘frontspark’ (English: Front Kick) instead of ‘ap chagi’” (Appendix 2, page 3). This is to show that we do in fact use the very Korean words for the understanding of the techniques. When some says to perform an ‘ap chagi’, particularly for graduation purposes, we *must* know what that means and how to perform it properly. As can be seen by the three languages in play in the extract, the change between them is rather large and would interfere with collective understanding of taekwondo on a global level.

Sub-Conclusion

The interviews showed many interesting aspects of how the members of the taekwondo club interact. The main idea of taekwondo seems to be that there are certain techniques that need to be learnt and understood. Furthermore, there is a respect for each other and the tradition that must be upheld. The instructors and higher graduates bear the role of teaching those with a lower degree. However, the club members must also interact and learn from each other regardless of their belt degree. Thus, the hierarchy of taekwondo does play into the community of practice of the club, but it does not define how people are expected to act entirely. There is an element of Danish culture on the side that contests the hierarchy and seeks to enforce local culture onto taekwondo. Thereby, the club interactions are flavoured by the two (or more) cultures and transformed through the negotiation of the members. The sport itself hailing from South Korea does bear importance to some degree. There is an understanding that the culture is an inherent part of the practice, yet the practice may be communicated in other ways. The

imagined communities that the members of the club are associated with through the community of practice are understood as having an influence, albeit perhaps small, on their lives. Thus, the participation in the club maintains a form of acculturation in sense of people with a different culture to Korean culture to understand what Korean culture means. That does not mean it is strictly used all the time but is certainly a part of the practice. Thereby, imagined communities and community of practice combine to define the framework for the interactions of the members of the club.

Observations

This section will focus on the observations made during the study. The pictures will be referred to throughout the analysis of them. This section has been done after analysing the interviews. This is to provide some background for the observations alongside my own knowledge of the club. The observations will aid in understanding how the club interactions occur and what they might mean. This is to provide a further analysis and grant the reader an understanding of how taekwondo fluctuates between the Danish and Korean culture.

The analysis will happen in chronological order. To this end, the pictures that serve as observations have been placed into the appendix ranking page 1 as the start and page 10 as the end. These pictures will be referred to underway.

Looking at the first picture (Appendix 5, page 1), we see the traditional line-up of taekwondo. At the very ‘front’ of the dojang, we have the instructor. They are stood in the centre and usually call into rows of four by graduation order. Thus, the tradition of respect is furthered through the belt degree and respect to the instructors. Furthermore, one might quickly notice that all of them are wearing different outfits. This type of outfit is called a dobok. The belt degrees ascribe a position in the figuring out of rows. An anecdote to this is that it always takes a moment for the lines to form. The reason is that some of the belt degrees, particularly the black belt degrees, have multiple ‘snips’ or levels to them. Therefore, it is not only about the colour of the belt, but the snips. There is a particular ruling about divisions that continues. If people have the same rank, day of graduation is important as the longer you have had the belt defines where you stand in the hierarchy. This is a fun activity at the beginning of a training as people rush to find their placement. It provides a form of bonding over the practice and participation in it.

Continuing with the clothing, the keen eye may discern three types of dobok here. Those who are not black belts have a completely white dobok. Black belts have a black seam around the neck. The instructor has a blue top part. These are all tied to hierarchy of the belt degrees. Beneath black belt, one is a ‘geup’ degree. At black belt, one is ‘dahn’ degree. These all form the ceremonial relations that are tied with the practice of taekwondo. As they mentioned in the interviews, there is a showing of respect. In this moment of the picture, they have initially greeted each other – instructor and practitioners. Furthering the notion of respect, we see that the dobok the instructor wears has a blue top. This has to do with the instructor paying respect

and honouring his grandmaster who taught him taekwondo. Therein, we see that hierarchy and respect also influences choice of dobok.

At this moment, the instructor has told them to face the flags and is about to ask them to salute the flag with a hand over their chest. Thereby, we see how the imagined communities enter the scene. These two flags on the picture are always present in the dojang. Having been to a few dojangs and tournaments now, I can say that they must be present for a dojang. The Danish flag is there to show the nationality of the country within which the dojang is. The Korean flag pays tribute to South Korea. However, that is not the end of relevance for the flag. There are series of taekwondo that show the techniques one learns. These are the taegeuks. Each of these are represented with a natural symbol, such as fire, and have a deeper meaning and story to them. They are set to be representations of the techniques. The connection to the flag is that the black lines surrounding the red and blue circle bear a connection to the taegeuks. Thus, the sport of taekwondo is inherently bound to the nationalist ideal of South Korea. That the people of the club salute the flags each time at the start and end of the training shows the said respect.

Moving onto the second picture (Appendix 5, page 2), it shows the part of warming up. There were more exercises, but this captures the interactions between them nicely. They performed a plank for three minutes. During this time, they joked about how difficult it was, what they had done the day before as a funny excuse, about the day's training, and about other training sessions or jokes from before. Thereby, we find that the shared repertoire between them blooms even whilst warming up. As the instructor may have been harsh in their shouts up until this point, the conversation was mild and pleasant. Everyone was smiling and included if they wished. This shows a semblance of the interviews. Regardless of who one is, everyone is welcome. The conversations are easier to partake in if one is willing and has experience with the community. This refers to the mutual engagement and how, over time, the commonalities between them grow and form a community beyond that of the dojang. However, the sport is what binds them to this two-hour training on a Sunday morning.

The third picture (Appendix 5, page 3) shows the first line performing techniques. A quick look shows that the techniques are the same. The instructor was telling them to perform a technique. The technique was said in a mixture of Danish and Korean. In English with the Korean words in italics it could be “step back into a *long stance* with a *double lower blocking*”. This shows that there is some understanding of Korean. As taekwondo is what they have as a

joint enterprise, we see that the Korean language is not fully learnt to be a part of the community. An explanation could be that the taekwondo is what they are there for and not to learn Korean. Thus, the lack of completely Korean sentences when explaining techniques might make more sense. However, this is not a known answer. Yet, it does refer to the idea of the club just speaking Danish instead. By the example of how the instructor would say what to do, the words are a blend of Danish and Korean. The members of the club have to learn not only how to draw the technique but also the Korean phrasing of the technique. Yet, this also contributes to a certain amount of effort put into learning taekwondo.

As we see on the picture, the instructor has left the sight of the practitioners, yet they look straight ahead. When the instructor gives an order to perform a technique, one must perform it and wait until the next technique is mentioned. Thereby, we see what one of the extracts refers to by the metaphor of being in the army. There is a strict understanding that, once the instructor has said to bow and perform something, there is a continuation of obedience until the instructor gives the order to relax or stand down. Aptly moving on to the fourth picture (Appendix 5, page 4), we see the instructor has reached the front of the dojang again. Now, the practitioners are still stood in the direction they were already in whilst the instructor demonstrates the technique and how to draw it alongside its importance. This shows multiple threads back to the interviews. The dimension of instructing requires knowledge, which comes with the belt degree. The instructor must also have rapport to some extent with the practitioners for this. Furthermore, the practitioners are lightly turning their heads to regard what the instructor is instructing.

During the break (Appendix 5, page 5), the members of the club have time to socialise. As we see on the picture, two of the practitioners fell into conversation whilst deciding by themselves to sit on their legs as they do. They are also facing toward where the instructor would stand when the session continues quickly resume training. Their conversation was about the techniques. As one might notice, they are black belts, but they are not the instructor. Thus, this shows the learning amongst the practitioners and sparring to negotiate meaning. They do this to assess whether what they understand is reflected and resonates with another member. If it is sound, it is accepted. If it is not sound, it is told how to change. If they are in doubt, the instructor is within reach. Thereby, the interactions of the members of the club are continuously providing insight into taekwondo. Yet, on a communication basis, this interaction also leads them to associate with one another. As one some of the extracts mention, the participation in the club makes for friends in the long run. The sustained contact with one another provides a

basis on which they can get to know each other. Referring to the second image (Appendix 5, page 2), we also saw this there. The instructor does not shy away from this interaction either.

As for the sixth observation (Appendix 5, page 6), I had asked these two for a picture. They were enjoying a conversation about previous experiences. Thus, the interaction was not necessarily about the training. It was of course taken during a break. On the surface, this may not mean too much. However, they were interacting through the community of practice about things outside the community. Furthermore, when asked whether a picture could be taken, they happily obliged. For some deeper level, I, a yellow belt at the time, walked up to them not knowing them all too well. Yet, they were willing to engage in a picture. This interaction shows that even though I am unable to participate in the training per usual, I was naturally able to intervene and communicate with them anyway. This shows that the members of the club are welcoming and open. To disclose of bias, I would like to mention the instructor had mentioned I would be there taking pictures for a project. Although, they would not have to oblige, it was purely a notice. Thus, the idea of interaction between members of the club still somewhat stands.

As a slight sidenote to their doboks, the badges on their left side indicates which club they belong to. This is a form of club belonging to show outside the club as well as inside. It does not mean that people are not welcome in other clubs. On the contrary, it actually means that people may identify where others are from and to slightly verify that they are a paying member of a club under the Danish Taekwondo Union (DTaF). Thereby, we see that the two actually hold different memberships. The blue belt has the Aalborg Taekwondo Club badge and the black belt has the Viborg Taekwondo Club badge. This means that club interaction within the taekwondo club extends to other clubs in form of training. This shows the inclusiveness of the club. It represents the sense of unity through sport.

In the seventh observation (Appendix 5, page 7), we see the instructor partaking in the instructions. The instructor continued walking the taegeuk, the series of techniques, with them. The instructor thereby extended the expertise and care for the practitioners insofar they are not only instructing, not just helping on the side, but actively participating in the activities. This aids in furthering the understanding of how the techniques are done but also forms more of the respect. I would like to elaborate that they would continue walking the taegeuk at the pace of the instructor. This means the normal pace of the taegeuk would be broken, but the instructor would describe the techniques as the practitioners might find them difficult or some the

instructor found the practitioners had done wrong. This interaction between instructor and practitioners shows the care that the interviewees spoke of regarding taking care of the practitioners and ensuring success.

As for the angle of the picture, I find it possibly important to clarify the background. There are various types of equipment in alcoves along the wall. These are all to aid in the training sessions. They are usually necessary when instructing in how to perform kicks and punches on targets. There are a multitude of ways they can be utilised. In the left corner near the windows we see an area that thrives during training sessions. The two wooden platforms are where the practitioners put their bags and personal belongings. It is also where water bottles are kept. This serves as a hub for interactions between members during the breaks.

Regarding respect, the eighth observation (Appendix 5, page 8) shows this delicately. When the instructor is instructing and gives an order, everyone waits until the next step. In this instance, we see that one of the practitioners has asked about a certain technique. The instructor has left the 'post' at the middle-front of the dojang and walked right up to the practitioner to elaborate on the technique. The important thing to note here is that the practitioners are maintaining their given stance. Even the one who asked. The instructor takes their time explaining the technique to the practitioner. The joint enterprise means that everyone may turn and either acknowledge that it is correct or learn from the question posed. The sway the instructor has on the practitioners shows the respect they referred to in the interviews. Whether this is a Danish or Korean cultural aspect is a large question. However, given the situation, it is most likely to be said that it is a Korean culture in charge here, as the respect for the instructor accompanies the belt degree, the setting, the practice, the flags, the establishment (the dojang), and their common goal.

However, if we look to the ninth observation (Appendix 5, page 9), we see that there is a sense of unity amongst them which comes from the sport. As they have concluded the training session, they come together to take a selfie. Therein, the respect and understanding for each other which was maintained throughout the training session evaporates in a way. There is more of a communal spirit about it than an instruction to do so. It is something the instructor asks for, but the practitioners willingly partake in the photo. Thus, the interaction between them is that they have exercised and performed taekwondo together yet are now commemorating their time together with a photo. They have not yet changed out of their dobok, so their representation of taekwondo has not concluded. Account for their badges they wear and the

belts they have on combined with the dobok, we find that the Korean culture still resonates with them on their commemoration. The picture being taken in front of the flags is generally the place to have pictures taken. Whether the members of the club are aware of the nationalism involved in doing so is unknown. Yet, the importance of the flags for a dojang quickly shows to those who view the photo that it most likely has something to do with taekwondo.

Continuing the communal spirit, this training session on Sundays often, if not always, ends with a breakfast together. Looking at the tenth observation (Appendix 5, page 10), we see that they are sat around two tables with chairs and enjoying food together. It should be noted that this is something they rushed out of the dojang to set up. The tables and chairs were moved around. Food was obtained from the fridge. The day's menu of bread was explained by those who bought it. The coffee was made by one person. People could have changed out of their dobok into other clothes. All these things show that the interactions between the members of the club, particularly these training sessions, are bound around an idea of community. Whether it be an imagined community that they are all from Denmark, share the same culture, have a mix of Korean sport and Danish food, does not matter. They seem to enjoy the company of each other and add more to the value of the community of practice through their unity.

As I was invited to join them for breakfast, I can say it was unexpectedly welcoming. Food was passed around so freely. Coffee or water was served. Anything one wanted to say could be the new topic. Everyone was keen simply to engage with one another. Even as the outlier, I found that whenever I said something, it resonated and got a response from the others. Therein, the community of practice extends beyond the single joint enterprise of taekwondo and encompasses more of the aspects of friendship and sustained interaction with other members which was described in the interviews.

Sub-conclusion

The observations showed the many sides to a training session. Even though a training session may be rigid in sense of attempting to understand and perform taekwondo, we see an immense care for each other and respect that permeated the entire time spent in the club. The training of taekwondo is taken seriously and with the respect that is commanded by and for the instructor. However, respect goes both ways. Time is taken for each other to understand the techniques, be this time through the interactions between practitioners or including the instructor. Everyone seems to be able to acknowledge the importance of improving at

taekwondo. Therein, the community of practice grows with the interactions held between the members of the club.

People also interacted about things beyond the practice of taekwondo. We find that the members of the club enjoy the company of each other. This is seen whilst enduring planks, in the sporadic breaks, and particularly after the training has ended. The idea of the community in which people may thrive together whilst acknowledging that they share common values resonates the imagined communities. This is particularly furthered by the significance of the doboks, the practice of taekwondo itself, and the unity that they make by being together. Their shared interactions form a meaning within the club and creates a form of taekwondo particular to this club.

Discussion:

The question of how people act as part of a taekwondo club is based upon dimensions of sociality, tradition, ambitions, and a sense of community. When describing community, we should think about the idea of interactions. As the analysis shows in both the interviews and observations, the people of the taekwondo club in Aalborg showed that training and respect can go together. To this end, the analysis also shows that the club members can somewhat distinguish between the intrinsic respect which taekwondo in its base form almost demands of the members and the local social life and culture of the area in which the club is found. Thereby, we firstly see that the community of practice is highly engaged about taekwondo insofar learning as a collective effort. The interactions between the members of the club show that taekwondo is a main priority. They converse about techniques. They attempt to reach a deeper understanding of the sport. In doing so, they simultaneously develop bonds with the other members of the club. Therein, the joint enterprise or ambition that they share, namely taekwondo, is a binding factor to their membership of the club.

As community of practice also dictates, the continual engagement with each other forms a shared repertoire. These shared experiences and understandings they shape between them further their knowledge of taekwondo whilst also binding strands of knowledge to moments shared with each other. Thereby, the taekwondo club benefits overall from the interactions that are made within the club. Secondly, the interactions are based around the principles that taekwondo bears with it. Hailing from South Korea, the analysis showed that the members of the club find the presence of another culture palpable. The references were tied to a comparison between countries. The interviews showed that respect and hierarchy were synonymous to South Korean culture. Meanwhile, a flat hierarchy and being able to question a higher belt degree was a Danish cultural aspect. Thus, the imagined communities or nations of Denmark and South Korea were interlocked. The cultural mixture within the club is seemingly based upon the two cultures and how they have been integrated into the culture of the club.

On the note of cultural mix, it is interesting to note that it is either mixed or Danish. One of the extracts showed that there is a certain form of military hierarchy. In a way, it seems that a military has a hierarchy all its own that transcends nations. There is a format in which orders are barked out and picked up. The respect and understanding that comes of that is supposedly, to the interviewee, a part of taekwondo. Considering this for the members of the club and how they interact, there must be an idea of accepting to be controlling or controlled

by someone with a higher authority. To this degree, one could debate that the members of the club experience taekwondo as something wherein they place a trust in those educating them. From a military perspective, the orders given are supposedly coming from someone with prowess and an oversight. A form of manageability of the troops. Combining this to taekwondo does indeed require a certain amount of trust.

However, combining the military concept and the taekwondo club questions the cultural impact within the club. Evidently, the interviewees believed it was chiefly Danish culture. South Korean culture plays a lesser role. Yet, the extent to which the cultures are understood as pertaining to the military concept is unknown. Furthermore, one could imagine the tailoring to the local culture alongside the military concept shows room for difference within the club. There is a space here in which people can switch between ways of acting based on who, what, and when. As the observations proved, there is a large amount of respect shown during the session. Less so during breaks or after. In this sense, respect is to adhere to what the instructor is saying and being attentive to commands and instructions. The mix of cultures blends somewhat with the military concept.

The observations showed this mixture of cultures. From the dobok and the flags to the conversations during training and the meal they shared afterwards; the members of the club can accommodate both understandings of culture. Even though they might perceive one culture to be strict and the other to be loose, they manage to switch between them and understand the limitations of which the reach the cultures have should abruptly end and the other begin. We see this insofar they enter the dojang by bowing and resuming 'normal' names outside the dojang. As uncovered, the limitations of taekwondo are not completely bound to the dimension of the dojang, but they certainly start to falter there.

Yet, when we consider the practice in their everyday life and the meaningfulness taekwondo plays for them, we find that the members of the club enjoy what they share. The people of the club are thus agreeing to share what they know and forge more knowledge together. The enterprise grows. On that note, the interviewees mentioned a sense of inclusiveness and support. People of all walks of life may join the club. The only condition for being a part of the community the club has is to have the will to participate. The participation with other members is also what forges what they understand by taekwondo. The observations showed that the members of the club show supportiveness by listening and giving feedback. Attentiveness to minute details. Respect and space for each other to grow as members of the

club but also as taekwondo practitioners. There is an understanding that the people are what make taekwondo enjoyable.

The great question of whether Danish or South Korean culture is at play was answered in two ways. It is just the Danish culture, or it is a mix of both South Korean and Danish culture. Taking a slightly philosophical stance on this, one cannot be entirely certain what defines one culture or another. Where is the limit? The members did elaborate insofar South Korean culture inspires respect and Danish culture counters it. Considering the imagined communities theory, cultures are a way to define a pattern of behaviour. To this extent, one could agree that Danish culture is prevalent. The interactions the members of the club make are of understanding each other as equals. Yet, there is a relevance to the belt degree and the hierarchy which permeates the sport. Thus, it is questionable to state that the club has a Danish culture. Digressively, the interviews mentioned the words used in taekwondo to be South Korean. Therein, the intrinsic value of nationalism, as the imagined communities tells of, is instilled via use of language.

The use of Korean within the club tailors the experience to become influenced by South Korean culture. As the extract of resistance to this goes, they could indeed resort to speaking Danish or English. However, it would take away a fundamentality of understanding that people who do taekwondo understand. The reification of techniques to words that are Korean further the understanding. For the interactions between people, this leads to putting more effort than usual into learning the techniques. That improves the metaphorical journey which the members of the club embark upon together and leads into their shared repertoire or experiences.

The way in which people interact with one another in the club changes dependent on the setting. The analysis has shown that the members perceive a sense of order that must be withheld. There seems to be a keen interest in maintaining a form of structure to taekwondo. The members of the club appear to view this as either Korean culture still permeating taekwondo or a general decency for each other. Either way, it seems to be a code of conduct that people understand the necessity of respecting others in form of listening and following orders. On the contrary, they also see it fit that they can intervene and ask questions when necessary. The impulse to question authority and to require an explanation also appears. This is regarded as an opposition to the natural hierarchy of taekwondo. This is perceived as being Danish culture. These two aspects are how the members of the club change in their interactions with one another.

Thus, the cultural mixture of the club is prevalent in the interactions people of the club make. The South Korean culture is described through respect. Pay attention to authority, follow instructions, being attentive, and understanding of placement within the club. The Danish culture is described as the ability to question things, make jokes, talk about personal life, and having fun. The constant flux of how the people of the club interact is seen as something they understand collectively. They negotiate the meaning of their joint enterprise and gain a shared repertoire. This is what makes the experience of taekwondo all the more enjoyable. The people of the club are the essence of what keeps people continuously showing up for taekwondo, as it is the social life that comes with the sport that matters. Therein, the participation in the club instils mutual engagement from the members. Through the understanding of events together, they form a shared repertoire of collective experiences which serves to reify taekwondo and consolidate their relations with one another.

The sport itself takes hold over them in sense of culture. The sport requires they wear a dobok and show their belt degree. These are essentials for the sport and shape the understanding of what is passed down as knowledge through tradition. These artefacts form the interactions they have within the club – or even in other clubs. The conformity of the sport under a common language and tradition in sense of clothing and rituals brings the clash of nationalisms into the mix. The members must learn what is to many of them a new language and the reasonings for techniques. The regulated clothing is a sign of adherence and respect to the sport. Even though rebellion against the system of taekwondo emerged, acceptance of the cultural mix was accepted, although changing slowly over the years.

In gaining knowledge of the interactions people make as part of the taekwondo club, the idea that these interactions over a practice, namely taekwondo, is something which may aid in understanding how other clubs function and how people in general interact about a specific goal. We have seen how community is important to people. It is something which they strive to be a part of to some extent. The interactions they make with one another are tailored around the practice. The practice may indeed demand the members of the club to act accordingly in certain situations, yet the people are able to thrive whilst doing so. The concern they show for one another comes across through asking about personal life or noticing the absence of others to passing knowledge on in comprehensible formats.

Conclusion

People of the taekwondo club interact through various lenses. They find joy in the community in which they can meet with other people who share a common interest. The continued exposure to each other solidifies relations and provides instances for reflection and remembrance. They partake in a sport which requires them to show respect whilst also allowing them to develop. They can choose whether to be a fully-fledged part of events or just to practice the sport. The people of the club seem to help each other as if they were a family. The extensions of relations to others can develop beyond the limitations of the club. The people of the club wish to learn and pass on knowledge. Be they practitioners or instructors. A sense of community is shaped through their interactions.

The belt degree and knowledge aids in the structure of the club and how interactions occur. The sport instils a sense of respect and authority which members of the club uphold. This shapes the interactions. However, the allotted time for upholding authority and respect are attributed to certain happenings and places, such as the dojang. This fluctuation is ascribed to the mixture of Danish and Korean culture within the club. The one exerts respect and authority whilst the other questions and disrupts the continuation of authority.

The taekwondo club seems to build upon the collective. They seek to obtain knowledge. Once obtained, they wish to distribute knowledge to the other members. They seek to use their own experiences to help others learn taekwondo. Therein, they also relate to others through a scope of friendship within the club. Whether there for the practice of taekwondo or the communal form of exercise, they interact with the other members and enjoy these interactions. Thus, the taekwondo club fosters a community in which there is growth and cultural exchanges encompassing the interactions they create.

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