Motivation in the Educational Process Using Interactive Methods in Self-Defense Teaching

Václav Šimek
Vice-Rector of the University of Social Sciences and Security
Prague, Czech Republic
e-mail: simek@wsnsb.cz
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0158-6432

Introduction. Self-defense education comes into conflict with the psychological barrier associated with fear, shyness and stereotypes about one's own possibilities, and at the same time with the didactic barrier of transferring skills from the training situation to the real context, where fractions of seconds, changing dynamics and emotional load are decisive. Empirical work in the field of motivation and learning shows that more lasting and better learning arises where learning situations meet the need for autonomy, competence and relationality, where timely and specific feedback is available, and where tasks correspond to the optimal challenge with respect to the level of learners [1; 4]. In addition, in the self-defense environment, the way the task is designed and the training environment creates information that the individual perceives, therefore the design of the exercise decides about attention, decision-making and movement realization, which corresponds to ecological dynamics and the principles of constraints-led design [7; 8]. It follows from this framework that the interactive methodology is not a complement but a supporting structure of the curriculum.

Theoretical background 2019–2025. The theory of self-determination anchors work with motivation in three basic psychological needs, autonomy, competence and relationality, the strengthening of which increases internal motivation, quality perseverance and deeper processing of the curriculum even in situations with higher physical and emotional demands [1]. The concept of self-efficacy complements this picture by emphasizing the importance of mastered experience, modeling and targeted feedback for the belief in one's own ability to cope with the situation, while

higher self-efficacy correlates with the courage to enter a challenging situation and with perseverance in the face of difficulties [2]. Growth thinking reminds us that interpreting mistakes as information about the learning process, not as a verdict on a stable ability, opens the way to perseverance and improvement, which is crucial in self-defense [3].

Ecological dynamics describes learning as an emergent adaptation to the limitations of the individual, task and environment, so the instructor modifies the parameters of the exercise, distance, speed and rules so that the required solution appears naturally and that decision-making and perception correspond to real situations [7; 8]. The principle of external focus directs attention to the effect of movement and interaction with the environment, rather than to individual body segments, resulting in more efficient and stable performance [5]. The challenge point theory explains that optimal learning arises when tuning the difficulty and amount of information with respect to the current level of the learner, too easy a task leads to boredom, too difficult to frustration, so a gradual increase in demands and thoughtful variability is desirable [6]. According to Kolb, the experiential cycle of learning in four phases gives the logic of alternating experience, reflection, conceptualization and experimentation and is applied when planning a self-defense lesson, including short reflex loops [12].

Interactive methods in self-defense. Problem-solving situational tasks connect technology with decision-making. A typical lesson is based on a specific context, such as approaching an unknown person in a hallway, moving in an area with limited escape, or contact in a means of transport. The formulation of a clear goal and constraint follows immediately, an example is the protection of the head zone, maintaining a safe distance, verbal de-escalation and retreat. Training takes place in short blocks in pairs and small groups, reflection names transferable rules. The project assignment offers a longer time arc, students prepare micro-educational blocks for a selected target group, such as first-year students in dormitories, with an emphasis on safety rules, legal frameworks and simple prevention procedures [16].

Role-playing and simulation games create an integrative environment where verbal techniques, movement responses and decision-making are combined. Efficiency is increased by a clear definition of roles and rules, a gradual increase in demands and subsequent reflection according to a pre-shared rubric. Peer instruction puts the more advanced student in the role of a mentor, thus strengthening the relational relationship and competence of both parties. The benefit is increased by a short preparation of the mentor and a simple feedback scenario. Station testing inspired by the OSCE model divides a complex skill into several stations with precise criteria, examples of verbal introduction and risk assessment, working with distance and angle, protecting vulnerable zones, escaping from the grip, ensuring a safe distance and calling for help [10; 11]. Digital tools support both motivation and learning. Virtual and augmented reality allow for safe testing of decision-making in scenarios with controlled emotional load, video analysis of short segments provides an objectified mirror of performance, boards with anonymized clips allow for joint reflection without stigmatization. They only make sense if they respect the representative design of situations where the perception of key information, decision-making nodes and time pressure close to reality are preserved [7; 8].

Didactic design, safety and stress management. Didactic design builds on clear learning goals, on the continuous sharing of success criteria and on early feedback loops that achieve greater effectiveness in being specific and linked to the next step of learning [4]. The safety framework requires rules of contact, protective equipment, supervision and the possibility of immediate interruption. The ethical framework requires respect for bodily autonomy, informed consent, and the legal limits of necessary defense and extreme necessity [14; 15]. Work with stress is based on the principles of stress inoculation, the dosage of emotional and situational burden takes place gradually, the training of coping strategies, such as breathing, short signals to redirect attention and simple verbal scripts, reduces the risk of freezing and supports adaptive behavior [9]. Realistic scenarios with professionally prepared role-play actors or advanced students take place at defined intervals and end with a debriefing

with a clear structure, where the person is separated from the performance and where the findings are flipped into the next learning plan [12].

Evaluation of Impact and Measurement of Learning. The mixed evaluation design combines short motivational questionnaires with performance indicators. The basic set includes a scale of internal and external motivation and a sense of competence from the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory family of tools [13], a scale of self-efficacy for coping with risky situations constructed for a specific curriculum, as well as rubric-based performance tests for sub-components of the skill and summative stationary testing, the reliability and transparency of which is based on the principles of OSCE [10; 11]. Reliability is increased by double evaluation by independent evaluators and short cross-training of evaluators, validity is supported by mapping criteria to learning objectives and to real situations. Transparency is ensured by the timely sharing of assessment sheets with learners and the availability of anonymised sample videos. In more advanced groups, measurements of stress resistance, attention management and decision-making times are increasing [9; 12].

Conclusion. An interactive self-defense methodology, built on clear goals and criteria, on representative task design and on continuous cycles of early feedback, strengthens the intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy of learners, increases persistence in the face of difficulties and improves the quality of decision-making in dynamic situations [1; 4; 5]. The interconnection of self-determination theory, principles of motor learning and ecological dynamics makes it possible to design exercises that generate relevant information and lead to desirable solutions, the safety and ethical framework maintains the integrity of the entire process [1; 5; 7; 8]. The curriculum, which combines problem-solving situational tasks, project assignments, role and simulation games, peer instruction, video feedback, the use of VR and station testing, represents a feasible and empirically based way to higher motivation and better results in the field of self-defense [7; 8; 10; 11; 12].

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