

Watching the technique being performed, I notice the importance of the attacker's movement and balance to the whole technique. In the omote and ura forms, the attacker enters (or initiates) with a forward extension of the arm (grabbing the shoulder/kimono). That forward extension creates a moment of imbalance. The attacker is reaching out, their body weight is committed forward, and their stance is less stable. The defender (uke) uses that moment of committed balance to apply the technique. If the attacker remains too centered and ready, the technique becomes much harder. The attacker's committed forward movement is key to the success of the nikkyo lock.

When it comes to defending, both entrances, irimi (entering straight in) or tenkan (turning), are dependent on timing while keeping control of the imbalance. In the omote version, the defender will often irimi style straight into the defender's space, close in the distance, and secures the wrist/arm before the attacker can recover, going straight in. In the ura version, the defender will tend to turn (tenkan) around the attacker's arm and let the attacker's momentum carry, controlling from behind or the side. The subtlety of the turn is important—it must be smooth, not rushed, so that the momentum of the attacker is used, not so that the turn fights it head on.

Ultimately the element of time and control when the nikkyo lock is actually carried out is what makes the biggest difference. The application of the wrist joint lock can only be done effectively when the attacker's weight is still going forward and their footwork has not yet been planted; this way the uke gets good leverage. An attempt to do it too early and the attacker hasn't committed; too late and they regain their balance and resist. What you can see in the demonstration is the defender moving the attacker's arm down, turning the wrist, and controlling their own body so that they remain stable — keeping a firm center while the attacker is the one who becomes off-balance.

The person in control of the lock isn't a brute but rather he has got the right time and directional force for the work: guiding the arm, rotating the wrist, and then stepping to maintain control and finish the technique. The difference between omote and ura in this case is the direction of movement and entry but the principle is still the same: take advantage of the attacker's compromised balance, enter at the right moment, apply the lock with smooth control.