

Facilitating Skills-Learning by Blending Teaching in Clothing Construction Class

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Abstract

This study aims to facilitate the learning of sewing skills by blending teaching methods. The researcher combined film-watching (F), explanation (E), demonstrations (D) and object-observing (O) methods and propose a student oriented teaching model, FEDO model. Under the FEDO blending teaching model, students are allowed to develop their own learning path. Some students prefer to watch and follow the film step-by-step, while other students prefer learning by examining the step-by-step samples. In addition, students with different skill level could accomplish the project efficiently, so it does for the students who miss the class. Teacher demonstration still pay important role for students to see and feel the sewing operations right at the scene that is irreplaceable by the electronic-aid-teaching instrument.

Keywords: Sewing skills, Blending teaching methods, Tactile teaching

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Introduction

Clothing construction class in the college at Taiwan was designed for students to learn the clothing pattern making, to learn the industrial sewing machine and to compose a garment project. Conventionally, explanation and demonstrating were the most adopted methods to teach students learning the sewing skills. The teacher usually first explains and demonstrates how a garment can be composed. Students then imitate teacher's steps and practice the skills. However, according to researcher's over a decade teaching experience, students tend to encounter learning difficulties before put the sewing into practice. First, it's not easy to remember every steps that the teacher has demonstrated. Secondly, it's hard to closely look up and examine teacher's operation since the teacher does not demonstrate face-to-face but teacher-to-group. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to develop a teaching model by blending multiple teaching methods to facilitate college students learning the sewing skills.

Sewing a garment

Sewing a garment involves a series of cognitive processes, which include acknowledgment of the relations among garment pieces, the machine operations, the seam types and the material characteristics. In addition, sewing requires high tactile skills that include controlling the sewing machine, managing the materials tensions and locating the stitches on the proper places. In other words, sewing a garment involves multi-tasks and requires well managing cognitive activities together with the eye and hand activities.

Teaching sewing skills-FEDO model

Because only clothing design majors in the higher education offer the sewing courses, not many researchers pay attention to study how and what teaching strategy could improve the teaching or learning the sewing skills. Based on the literature from sport field(Harrison, Blakemore, Richards, Wilkinson, & Gilbert, 2004), giving instruction of a skill or providing practical problem for student to solve (the tactical instruction) would both significantly facilitate students' skills and learning slopes. This gave the researcher an idea that to provide the skills instruction sheet and explanation how the skills can be applied into a garment would benefit the students learning.

Besides, Reese (2002) indicated that every individual has its own learning style. Some individual would learn best from written language, such as text books, blackboards and class notes, while others like to learn through oral language, such as group discussion, audio-message or lectures. Physical activity and movements aid the tactile/kinesthetic learner. Therefore, researcher also consider the variety of learning styles, while developing a teaching model for teaching sewing skills (Caudill, 1998).

The researcher combines four teaching methods into a FEDO teaching model, while F refers film/audio teaching method, E refers lecture/explanation, D means demonstration and O means observation.

Method

To execute the FEDO model, first, lecture teaching method is used to explain what sewing skill is involved in a project or how a garment should be sewed. Each student also receive an instruction/evaluation sheet describe how a garment project can be processed/evaluated. Second, the researcher takes a film of how a sewing or a garment need be operated. This film allows the teacher stops or repeats the film to explain the sewing sequence as well as emphasize or to remind the “watch out” area. Third, the researcher demonstrate the garment construction and sewing sequence in person. Finally, the researcher provides step-by-step samples that students could closely examine the seam and garment construction. The figure is an outline of this model.

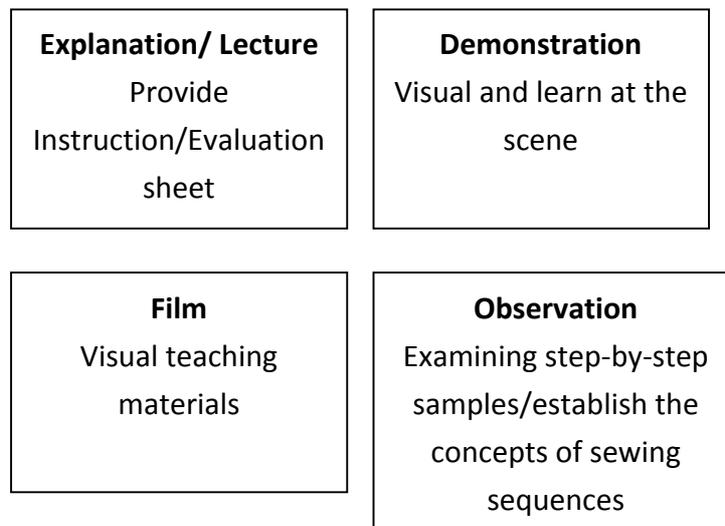


Fig1: FEDO teaching model: A combination of four teaching methods

Conclusion

The researcher had adopted FEDO teaching model for clothing construction class over two years. The researcher has found three advantages.

1. FEDO teaching model allows students develop their own learning path. Some students prefer to watch and follow the film step-by-step, while other students prefer learning by examining the step-by-step samples.
2. Students with different skill level could accomplish the project efficiently, so it does for the students who miss the class.
3. Save teacher's energy from repeatedly explaining the sewing skills that allows teacher to pay more attention to the slow learner.

In addition, this study also found that no matter how convenient of the electronic instrument has been developed now, demonstration by teacher personally still pay important role for students to watch and learn the tactile skills. This finding is also supported by the previous study (Kim & Lundberg, 2016)

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