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Home Economics Vocational Education

Melba Nisewanger
Iowa State College

ANTE SCRIPT

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By MELBA NISEWANGER

"Every Home Economics teacher who is teaching clothing construction work with seventh grade girls is confronted with several questions regarding the problem of basting. Should students be taught to baste from the beginning of their construction work? Should they be taught to baste on all construction processes? If there are certain construction processes in the making of which they should use basting, what are these processes?"

During the year 1925-26, Margaret McPheelers carried out an experimental study with a group of 48 seventh grade girls as her graduate problem, to determine the value of basting in garment construction. The girls were enrolled in three different classes, taught by college students under the supervision of staff members of the Home Economics Vocational Education Department. This group was selected because they had had no previous school experience in clothing construction, and would therefore be most evenly balanced as regards technical skill. The girls were divided into two groups. Throughout the experiment Group I basted on all samples and clothing processes in the construction of a simple butcher's type apron and a plain kimona dress. Group II did not baste with either samples or clothing construction processes, but pressed with an iron and used pins, instead. These problems were chosen because they are very frequently given to girls taking their first work in clothing courses.

In dividing the girls into groups, an effort was made to have both groups about equal in ability, as far as could be determined by scholastic records, age, general health, vision and previous sewing experience. All samples were cut by Miss McPheelen from a firmly woven piece of percale. In addition, all teaching was done and all time records were checked by the same person, so that conditions might be standardized and controlled as far as possible.

In each of the two problems chosen for the experiment, the construction processes that enter into the making of the garment were selected. Samples were cut one-half the size of the original processes, and the processes worked out separately on the samples before construction of the garment was begun.

The processes constituting the making of the apron were worked out in sample form as follows:

Sample 1—a one inch hem made on a strip of material 36 inches wide.

Sample 2—a one-fourth inch hem on an inner curve that would approximate the size of the arm curve on the butcher's apron.

Sample 3—an outer curve one-fourth inch hem.

Sample 4—a set-on pocket. This pocket was similar in design to one set on a plain butcher's apron.

Sample 5—a French seam made on an under arm seam similar to the seam that would be made on a kimono apron.

Sample 6—a shoulder seam.

Sample 7—a two and one-half inch neck facing.

Sample 8—side gathers finished with bias tape. This would correspond to the gathers at the waist line where fullness is desired at the side of a straight line dress.

Sample 9—Neck finished with bias tape.

Sample 10—Collar attached with bias tape.

Directions were given to the class by Miss McPheelens before the processes were worked out on samples. Group I worked on sample basting. Group II pressed with a hot iron and used pins. Results were based entirely upon speed and quality of the work; the time record including only the time spent in actual construction. At the beginning of the experiment, each girl was given a number, and as each sample was finished her number and the time record were written on a piece of adhesive tape and attached to the sample. Although directions for new processes were given to the entire group at the time the majority were ready, each girl was required to finish one sample before beginning another.

After all samples were completed, they were graded by the eight supervisors of Home Economics Vocational Education and one teacher of clothing. The points considered were (a) neatness, (b) construction, (c) spacing. A score card, worked out by Miss McPheelens, was used for grading, and each grader handled every sample three times, grading on one point at a time, and recording the score before grading on another point. The best sample rated as five, the next four, then three, two and one. A table was then made, showing the comparison of ratings for speed and quality of work for the two groups.

An analysis of the table worked out following the rating of the samples shows that with all samples the group that did not baste required less time than the group that basted, although in several instances there was only slight difference. With all samples excepting the inner and outer curve and the fitted neck facings, the group that did not baste seemed to do a better quality of work. The results of this experiment seem to indicate that it may not be necessary for girls of the seventh grade, whose average age is from twelve to thirteen years, beginners in sewing, to baste in sewing processes on percale and similar materials, on such processes as a hem on the straight of the material, a set-on pocket, a French seam, bias neck finishes around the neck, and a collar attached with bias facing.

Before definite conclusions are drawn, however, this experiment should be repeated with a larger group, using different construction processes and different materials.

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