

APPLIQUE AS A MEANS FOR MEN'S KNITWEAR DECORATION

Liudmyla Melnyk, Olena Kyzymchuk*, Svitlana Arabuli
Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design, Ukraine

ABSTRACT

Today's to look stylish, to meet modern trends, to have a beautiful appearance are the tasks that are relevant not only for women but for men also. Men's fashion is much more conservative and therefore has remained faithful to the classic suit for a long time. But the reality makes adjustments. Men's wardrobe has got images for work, rest, meetings with friends. In the upcoming autumn-winter season, men's clothing becomes more casual: free-cut products, cozy soft knitwear, which differ in particular decoration. The most effective and unique clothes' decoration can be created by an applique that has a long history and has undergone a transformation from a means of repairing clothes to a contemporary type of creativity. The possibility of using different (by colors, structures, surfaces, etc) materials for applique opens up unlimited space for the embodiment of any fantasy, and therefore it is very popular with modern fashion designers. The paper presents a result of design work for creating a collection of men's knitted cardigans with unique abstract appliques.

Key words: applique, abstractionism, knitwear, men's clothing, cardigan

INTRODUCTION

Men's fashion is no less important segment of the clothing industry than women's one. It does not exist only but also is developing every year, offering men outrageous trends and laconic things. Today's men, despite stereotypes, spend more and more time on appearance. Men's fashion clothing gives every man the opportunity to create their own style and image. Every year designers present exclusive trends that set the rhythm and offer men the best styles that emphasize character, individuality, charisma.

The unpredictable isolation of 2020, as well as the restrictions in 2021 due to the continuous pandemic, have changed our lives in many points. Fashion has also evolved, as evidenced by the trends of the autumn-winter season. Designers are experimenting with men's wardrobes, creating for example spacious oversize coats or cozy knitwear. Thus, in men's clothing for the autumn-winter 2021/2022 season, knitted polo shirts, vests, turtlenecks with geometric and abstract prints of gray, yellow, beige colors are relevant among traditional suits (Fashionable men's clothing, 2021-2022). In the collections of the upcoming season, designers have focused on creating abstract patterns in both leisurewear and casual wear. Both monochrome patterns resembling wide brush strokes on a canvas, and color blocks of various geometrical forms are used.

Any design collection originates from an idea. Anything from nature to humans themselves can be an inspiration. Designers look for inspiration in the fine arts often. Abstraction is one of the popular trends. It is one of the currents of avant-garde art. In the early XX century, Henri Matisse and several other young artists revolutionized the Paris art world with "wild", multi-colored, expressive landscapes and figure paintings that the critics called Fauvism. With his expressive use of color and his free and imaginative drawing, Henri Matisse comes close to pure abstraction. Irrationalism, a declination from the illusory-subjective image, an absolutization of pure impression, and artist self-expression through geometric shapes, lines, colored spots are the main characteristics. The raw language of color as developed by the Fauves directly influenced another pioneer of abstraction, Wassily Kandinsky. Kazimir Malevich, Piet Mondrian, Frantisek Kupka were founders of abstraction as well.

The Ukrainian market of men's knitwear is represented by sweaters, cardigans, vests, most often plain or decorated with a colored stripe, sometimes embossed pattern, and do not always correspond to current fashion trends. The development of men's knitted cardigans that meet modern fashion trends is the main goal of this work.

THEORY

People have long created various patterns and drawings, which allowed them to decorate and diversify clothing and household items. Today a wide range of technologies, methods, and technics are used for this purpose while bright, interesting, and unique textile products are created.

The knitting allows obtaining a pattern during the manufacturing without additional technological operations. The loop is the smallest element of the pattern, so it is possible to create patterns from the smallest ones to those that mimic handwork by changing the gauge of the knitting machine and the yarn's linear density. The patterns are resistant to mechanical action and weather conditions, and their quality largely depends on the quality of raw materials. Modern knitting equipment allows creating a pattern in a certain part of the items or along its entire length (Kyzymchuk O. et al., 2021). This method is mostly used for outerwear production.

Embroidery is the oldest way to decorate textiles, which has developed and improved over the centuries. It has got special traditions and many techniques (Susak K.R., Stefiuk N.A., 2006). Today, machine embroidery is widely used in the clothes industry. Drawings and inscriptions are high-quality, clear, resistant to external influences, durable. Modern embroidery machines could be used for two stitches types: smooth and cross-stitch. This is a separate technological stage with specialized equipment, additional labor and material sources.

Color printing is usual way to decorate knitted items especially T-shirts, blouses and tops. There are number of printing methods which could be used such as block, roller, screen, and heat transfer printing. These methods are used as a separate technological stage (Sharma E., Paul S., 2015) and requires additional technological equipment as well. The pattern resistance to external influences, their durability, brightness, and color saturation depend on the printing methods. Some of them allow creating large images.

Patchwork is another of the most ancient ways of textiles finishing (Wu X. et al., 2012). It appeared due to the presence of small pieces of material during the cutting of the fabric, the combination of which created unique compositions. It involves sewing together pieces of fabric into a larger design. The larger design is usually based on repeating patterns built up with different fabric shapes. These shapes can be different colors as well. They are carefully measured and cut, basic geometric shapes making them easy to piece together. Patchwork does not cost too much, as you can use various leftover fabrics and even old things that are out of fashion. With this technique, it is possible to use a traditional cut and to apply also folklore motives.

Quilting is a much broader concept than patchwork, as it complements the patchwork with stitching. Thus, the products made in this technique always consist of several layers and have got relief. Generally, quilting includes patchwork, embroidery, and applique. The sewing techniques of piecing, appliqué, and quilting have been used for clothing in diverse parts of the world for several millennia (Deacon, D.A. and Calvin, P.E., 2014) and a wide range of quilting styles and techniques have uniquely evolved around the globe.

Applique as a technology has a long way of its development, during which it was enriched with various means of fixing on various surfaces (for example, gluing, sewing, substitution, etc.). References and encyclopedias characterize the applique as a technique of plot or ornamental compositions on paper, cardboard, canvas by gluing or sewing colorful pieces, paper, fabric, leather,

and other materials that create the image conceived by the artist. The textile applique occupies a proper place among many types of decorative and applied arts (Seiler-Baldinger A., 1994). It is ornamental needlework in which pieces or patches of fabric in different shapes and patterns are sewn or stuck onto a larger piece to form a picture or pattern. It is commonly used as decoration, especially on garments. The emergence and development of this art form were initially caused by utilitarian needs such as repairing clothes, but over time applique has transformed into an exciting form of creativity (Triston J., Lombard R., 2015). The applique is sewn ornaments that were applied to individual elements of already sewn clothes. Threads, ribbons, lace, velvet, ribbons, leather, fur were used as a material for applique. In contemporary applique, the emphasis is now on surface embellishment and decoration/ Wide ranges of colours, textures and materials can be innovatively combined to create individual and personal textile artworks.

The idea of using applique for the men's clothes decoration is embodied in the Master`s thesis of Valentyna Shahman. A collection of men's cardigans has been developed, which are decorated with a stylized applique based on the painting "Upward" by W. Kandinsky (Fig. 1). The use of geometric shapes in the knitwear decoration is always a win-win situation. The pattern of geometric shapes can both emphasize a particular part of the body and hide flaws. Therefore, geometry has been and will always be the most favorite ornament for clothes decoration.



Figure 1: Wassily Kandinsky, *Upward*, 1929.

In general, a cardigan has the purpose of warming. Therefore, it is advisable to choose a cardigan length similar to the length of the coat or jacket. The maximum length of a classic men's cardigan can reach the middle of the thigh. Button cardigans are more of a classic style, and buttonless or/and hooded cardigans are casual. It is safe to say that a cardigan can be an integral part of a man's wardrobe.

METHODS

The applique was chosen as a decoration method for a collection of men's knitted cardigans. As mentioned above it allows creating a pattern from many parts, different by colors and textures. A unique and interesting effect can be achieved even by using textile remnants.

The invisible fleecy fabric was chosen for men`s cardigans manufacture. Invisible fleecy is a plain plated structure composed of a face and binding yarn with a fleecy backing yarn tucked into the technical back at every fourth wale to mesh only with the binding yarn (Spencer D., 2001). The face yarn prevents the arms of fleecy tuck been visible between the wales on the face, which would spoil its clean appearance. The characteristics of the fabric are given in table 1.

Table 1: Characteristics of knitted fabric

Interlooping	Raw composition		GSM, gr/m ²	Thickness, mm	Number per 100 mm		Shrinkage, %
	Cotton	Lycra			wales	courses	
Fleecy	95	5	260	0,70	148	218	1-2

Fleecy and plain knitted fabrics, as well as artificial leather, were used for applique.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

All models of the collection of men's knitted cardigans (Fig. 2) are offered with a straight silhouette without fastening - unbuttoned. A length is to the knee line, the sleeves are long. This silhouette allows creating the appliques of different sizes: from smallest placed in different parts to those covering the whole product. The difference between the models is in the neckline design: hood, stand-up collar, without a collar; in presence or absence of pockets; in appliques shape and placement (Fig. 3): on the back or front, pockets or sleeves. A feature of the model 1 cardigan (Fig. 2.a) is the hood, which can be laid out as a shawl collar. While its front side is formed by the reverse side of the fleecy fabric different in color and texture from the main item and resonates with stylized ornaments.

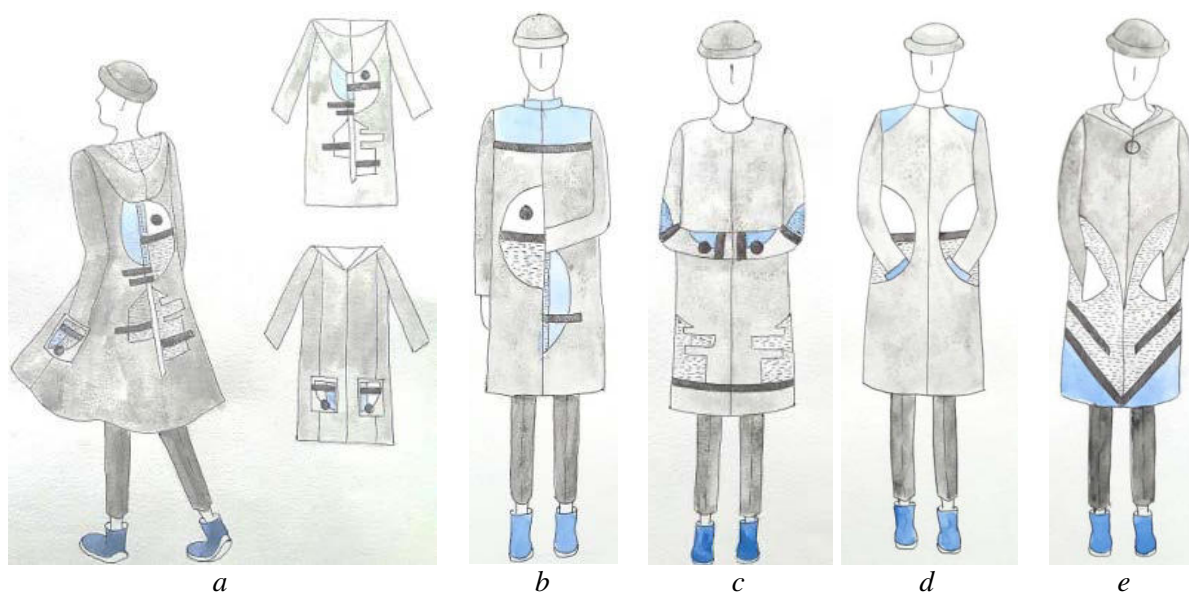


Figure 2: Collection of men's knitted cardigans

According to Pantone, gray (Ultimate Gray) is one of the fashionable colors for 2021, so the collection is made in gray, as the most relevant in the coming season. It is symbolizing reliability, self-confidence and actions confidence. Light gray, white and blue colors are used for the appliques, which stand out and become accents on the main fabric.



Figure 3: Appliques on products

One of the most important tasks in the creation of this collection was the selection of knitted fabrics. Firstly, the main fabric must be stable, maintain its form and shape during using and not impede the movements of a potential consumer. Secondly, the fabric must have good heat properties. At the same time, the main fabric shouldn't have reliefs at the surface, since this will interfere with the applique application. Thirdly, the fabric should not unravel easily. That is why invisible fleecy fabric with an elastomeric thread content (Table 1) was chosen as the main for the collection's production. This is a single knitted fabric with a smooth surface on the front side. An elastomeric thread improves relaxation characteristics, namely, reducing residual deformation. In addition, the elastomeric thread increases the density of the knitted fabric, which improves the heat properties and reduces the unraveling. This fabric has got different textures and colors at the front and back fabric's sides. This allows creating an additional decorative and color effect for example at the cardigan's hood. In addition, decorative effects on the front parts of models 4 and 5 are also made through the use of the backside of knitted fabric.

The creation of the applique also deserves special attention. Its elements for different models have different sizes and complex shapes, and sections of applique details are placed not only along with courses and wales but also diagonally to them. It should be noted that knitted fabric is more stretchable compared to woven fabrics and areas with overstretched seams may appear during sewing on appliqué details. In addition, another problem arose during applique application, namely delamination and displacement of the backing yarn on the backside of the fabric. Two solutions were proposed to solve problems:

1. to use a doublerin for both applique details and product parts where applique will be placed but it significantly increases the rigidity of the product;
2. to use the third layer - thin non-woven fabric, which is sewn to the main fabric from the product inside in the places where the applique will be placed.

The men's cardigans are decorated with stylized appliqué placed at different parts, that is, depending on the position, it could have different extensibility, during use. That is, the method of the applique attaching must provide good stretchability. Since these products are the subject for individual manufacturing, it is recommended to use the second method: to lay the non-woven fabric on the backside of the product part, and then after applique sewing to remove (to cut) it along the edges and, if possible, between the seams.

CONCLUSION

The creativity of a new range of products actuals not only for women's fashion. Every day, men are increasingly looking at new trends and demanding non-standard clothing solutions. For this purpose, the idea of creating the men's knitted cardigans of small batches, decorated with applique, is proposed. It allows the use of small pieces of cloth as well as inter-pattern waste of mass production. This work offers a collection of men's knitted cardigans decorated with appliques in the abstract style, inspired by W. Kandinsky's work. The main tasks solved during the development of the collection are the materials choice and the method of fastening the applique elements.

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