How is video used within physical education?

At present, there is limited research data on the use of video within physical education. However, anecdotally, it appears that some, if not many, physical education departments are using video as a teaching tool and its popularity is growing due to technological advancements. This section will explore some of the ways in which video is used within physical education lessons and the discussion will be supported with the application of research.

Video analysis

Through discussions with teachers and observations of lessons, it appears that physical education teachers apply video analysis within practical lessons to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of movement patterns. The idea is that by observing a video clip of a peer or themselves, a learner will be able to gain a greater understanding of the movement pattern and its effects on performance.

Concerning the main barrier to using video in physical education

Through interviews with physical education teachers in the south of England, it appears that teachers are keen to learn more about how to use video within their lessons and that they feel there are benefits to pupil learning. However, there was a common concern that was raised, which is whether or not there was the time to set up equipment. Some teachers even expressed concern that pupil physical activity time be reduced due to the lengthy set-up time. Some teachers described the process of setting-up, which included setting up a tripod for the camera, positioning the camera appropriately, connecting the camera to a laptop, allowing time for the laptop to load up, connecting the laptop to a projector and selecting the appropriate functions for the video software.

Overcoming the main barrier

A key technological advancement in the last few years, which should significantly reduce set-up time, is the development of tablet devices. Although there is a cost to these devices, there are many benefits to investing in them. Most tablet devices include a built-in camera, which can be used to record practical performance in video format as well as producing still images. For a teacher, this means that they do not have to set up a camera, which then may have to be connected to a laptop for analysis purposes. A tablet device could simply be taken to the lesson and, within seconds, used to record pupils' practical performances. Some teachers argue that portable video camcorders or even digital cameras have similar benefits if they are easy to use and have the same familiarity as a tablet. However, it is important for the teacher to ensure that they have the appropriate software such as video editing or play back so that they can view their video recordings in a compatible format. These devices allow teachers to easily view pupil performance on a variety of applications (apps). This last benefit is very significant, as apps add another layer of use to tablet devices and could help to enhance pupil learning and engagement substantially.

Future uses of video within physical education

At present it appears that video is being used in physical education as a tool to enhance pupil knowledge and understanding of movement patterns and to enhance their performance of movement patterns. Video is also being used to improve pupil self-confidence in physical performances either of themselves or peers.

Video analysis could also play a significant role in helping pupils to understand tactics and principles of play for practical activities. For example, a game could be filmed and sections of the game analysed to highlight certain tactics and/or principles. While attending a section of a game of football, a teacher could ask the pupils to observe and describe how a defensive player provided cover to assist a team member. This may enable the pupils to see the key principles of 'action'.

In addition, video could be used to support teachers' assessments of pupils. Video recordings of pupils' practical performances could be performed during a unit of work. This would enable a teacher to clearly observe pupils' progress and achievements, helping the teacher to produce more accurate and evidence-based assessments. The key to this use is to capture video that enables the teacher to conduct assessments in an efficient manner, otherwise a huge amount of time could be spent on observing video footage that may not support assessments.

To summarise, it seems that there is a benefit to learning when applying video technology within physical education lessons. With the development of tablet devices, it is hoped that video can be used more effectively by teachers and that some of the future uses can be applied successfully.