# Designing Blended Learning Materials for Functional Texts in Fiction Study

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#### **ABSTRACT**

In fiction study traditional class is complicated. It always challenges to teach students fiction. They do not appreciate literature pieces as much as teacher used to in those good old days. It notices that students these days do not read many literature pieces or getting students to read the text before class. This happens also in Elements of Prose class in English Department at UIN Sunan Kalijaga. One solution to this problem that is discussed in this study is mixed method between face to face-classroom with online learning that is called blended learning. Blended learning goes beyond barriers of time, location, and culture and has created many enhanced opportunities for learners and instructors. It is effective because it allows students to read e-book versions and in classroom time, they are more focus and active on meaningful activities related with their learning materials.

Keywords: Fiction Study, Traditional Class, Mixed Method, Blended Learning

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

In recent years, millennial generation or generation 4 have been using internet in their lives. They use IT for everything like to find out new place, to learn new skill, or even to play games. This can also happen in pedagogy world, the continuously development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is used in learning process to make them more interesting for the 4 generation. *Online learning* is defined as the use of Internet to access learning materials; to interact with the content, instructors and other learners (Ally, 2002 cited in Anderson, 2008). Many researches have been conducted in relation to online learning, their dimensions and variables having impact on the online learning. Furthermore, it is compared with traditional face-to-face instruction. One of the most important debates is about whether students can learn better at the online learning environment compared to traditional classroom environment.

In fiction study traditional class is complicated. It always challenges to teach students fiction. They do not appreciate literature pieces as much as teacher used to in those good old days. It notices that students these days do not read many literature pieces or getting students to read the text before each class are difficult. Very often, during literature period teacher had to confront students who did not read the literary pieces that they were told to do so. As a result, maybe the 'spoon-feeding' technique had become so imbibed in them that they automatically expected teachers to go through the text with them line by line. This is time-consuming and makes it difficult to have many interesting reader-response activities that will help them engage with the text than sometimes it has to force these students to read through reading aloud activities, and such activity is very time consuming. Another solution for this problem is mixed method between face to face-classroom with online learning that is called blended learning. Blended learning goes beyond barriers of time, location, and culture and has created many enhanced opportunities for learners and instructors. In other words, blended learning endeavors to purposefully and seamlessly integrate between online and traditional learning in order to create a distinct, new approach with its own merits (Picciano, 2006; Allen, Seaman, and Garrett, 2007). Therefore, blended learning represents a new educational paradigm (Garrison and Vaughan, 2008). The pedagogy of a blended learning environment is "based on the assumption that there are inherent benefits in face-to-face interaction as well as the understanding that there are advantages to using on-line methods" (Clark and James, in Vernadakis et. all, 2012). Blended learning is a mix of the traditional face-to-face and the on-line learning so that instruction occurs both in the classroom and on-line. It is essential to point out that the online component becomes a natural extension of the traditional classroom learning. It has been acknowledged that blended instruction is an emerging trend and it is trying to give students the advantages of each method.

Blended learning has been implemented with various designs and has shown a considerable positive effect on the learning process. Harvard Business School faculty DeLacey and Leonard (2002) reported that students not only learned more when online sessions were added to traditional courses, but student interaction and satisfaction improved as well. Obviously, the most common purpose of blended learning is the ability of combining the best of both worlds; traditional and online learning (Young 2002; Graham, Allen, and Ure 2003). Young (2002) points out that not all students learn the same way, therefore the traditional approach is not ideal for all students. Blended learning

provides more guidance to online learning by integrating face-to-face learning with distance learning, while it provides flexibility and accessibility to traditional learning by incorporating online learning.

In regard with these matters, the materials for the blended learning need to be developed to meet the students' needs. The materials deal with the materials for online learning toward the fictional studies such as novel, short stories, serious novels and popular novels, and the elements of these fiction works. Therefore, this paper aims to reveal how implementation of the blended learning materials to help the students learn fiction study in English department in Cultural Sciences and Adab Faculty of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

# **Blended Learning**

# a. Theory

The terms of "blended learning", "hybrid learning", "technology- mediated instruction", "web-enhanced instruction", and "mixed-mode instruction" are often used interchangeably in research literature (Martyn, 2003). Although the concepts behind blended learning first developed in the 1960s, the formal terminology to describe it did not take its current form until the late 1990s. The term "blended learning" was initially vague, encompassing a wide variety of technologies and pedagogical methods in varying combinations (some making no use of technology whatsoever). In 2006, the term became more concrete with the publication of the first Handbook of Blended Learning by Bonk and Graham. Graham challenged the breadth and ambiguity of the term's definition, and defined "blended learning systems" as learning systems that "combine face-to-face instruction with computer mediated instruction" (Graham and Bonk, 2006). In this study blended learning is viewed as the combination of face-to-face and digital learning. Blended learning extends learning to go beyond the classroom and provides opportunities for reflection, interaction and further engagement with the learning material. In a blended working atmosphere the students learn through digital communication and dialogue with both students and teachers, they also learn from using programs on their computers.

Blended learning definition refers to an integration between online activities and traditional face-to-face class activities. Graham, Allen, and Ure (2005) documented three definitions: combining instructional modalities or delivery media, combining instructional

methods, and combining online and face-to-face instruction. The first two definitions are too broad because they include most courses, which use at least two instruction methods or modalities (face-to-face lecture and textbook readings). The last definition, which combines online and face-to-face instruction, can be implemented in three ways: providing online materials similar to the course contents, providing online materials as supplementary resources, and replacing portions of the face-to-face contents with online materials. Sharpe et al. (2006) observed that the most common type of blended learning is the provision of supplementary resources for courses that are conducted along mainly traditional lines through an institution-supported virtual learning environment. Moreover, at the 2005 Sloan-C Workshop on Blended Learning, the participants adopted the definition of blended learning where a portion of face-to-face e time is replaced by online activity in a planned, pedagogically valuable manner (Laster et al. 2005; Picciano 2006). Garrison and Kanuka (2004) stated that "blended learning is the thoughtful integration of classroom face-to-face learning experiences with online learning experiences." In addition, they explore the benefits of blended learning in higher education with respect to administration and development characteristics that those benefits are policy, planning, resources, scheduling and support. Their results indicate that blended learning can lead the process for redefining higher education institutions as being learner-centered and facilitating higher learning experience.

Innovations in technology have influenced teaching and learning, as shown in studies that have demonstrated the effectiveness of blended learning. This effectiveness is primarily related to the quality of the learning experience, which is defined by Wend (2006) as the variety of experiences within the university's concerns wherein students perceive and interact; thereby in turn affecting their learning opportunities. In order to provide quality experiences for learners, some important elements have to be managed, such as technology, the structure of the course, the instructor, technical support, assignments (Lionarakis and Parademetriou 2003), student engagement (Oliver and Herrington 2003) and learning flexibility.

## b. Design

Blended learning is an instructional methodology that leverages technology to provide a more personalized approach to learning, giving students control over the time, place, path and pace of their learning. The Clayton Christensen Institute, one of the most well-known thought leaders on blended learning, defines it as a formal education program in which the students learn in part through online learning, and partly in a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home. The modalities along each student's learning path within a course or subject are connected in order to provide an integrated learning experience. According to the Christensen Institute (in Broke, 2017), there are four models that are most commonly implemented in schools today:

## a) Rotation Model

This approach entails students working in a number of different activities or centers, including whole-group instruction, small group instruction, peer-to-peer activities, pencil and paper assignments, as well as individual work on a computer or tablet. Within the rotation model, there are several different implementation settings:

Station Rotation: Similar to the classroom centre rotation, students work through a circuit of activities in the classroom (or classrooms) during one or more class periods, with at least one of these activities involving instruction via technology.

Individual Rotation: Students work through some or all of the classroom centers based on an individualized prescription determined by the teacher with the help of a technology-driven assessment tool. Lab Rotation: the students work on individualized, online instruction in a computer lab. Then, typically, the teacher will use data from students' progress in the lab session to inform whole- or small-group instruction in the classroom. Flipped Classroom: the students receive the primary instruction (similar to the whole group instruction) in the form of online learning outside of the school day. The core lesson is provided via technology as "homework," and then students apply the skill through assignments and projects during class time with the teacher's support.

## b) Flex Model

The students learn on-site in a brick-and-mortar setting using an online instructional tool as the backbone of the course or subject, with the teacher providing support as necessary. The students' instructional paths are customized and fluid, and the depth, frequency and manner of the teacher's support can vary based on each school's implementation model.

#### c) A La Carte Model

The students receive instruction in particular courses entirely online. Teacher's support for the A La Carte model is via an online instructor who is not located at the student's brick-and-mortar school or learning centre.

#### d) Enriched Virtual Model

The students are required to have face-to-face learning sessions with their teacher, but then complete the rest of their coursework remotely, outside of the brick-and-mortar school. Although students may not meet with their instructor on a daily basis, there are formal, regularly scheduled instructional sessions (unlike optional office hours).

## **Fiction Study**

Fictions are built on the tension between conventions and such inventions famous adagio in literary studies. Through existing conventions literary learners acquire various forms and frameworks governing the genre of literary texts (for example, imaginative prose, poetry, and drama). Knowledge of the inner structure of literary works is what enables readers of educated literature to be able to read and build patterns in the literary works they read. In the world of stories for example there is the term story grammar which can guide the reader to understand and enjoy the story.

In addition, through knowledge of literary conventions, educated literary readers actively contribute meaning by building interconnection from what they read with their life experiences (text to life connection); or the same readers also associate literary works that are being read with other texts that have been read (text to text connection); or the readers bring the background of their experience and knowledge of various things into the process of interpreting the literature they are enjoying (life to text connection). The ability to build patterns and develop networks of meaning is vital for the formation of the habit of reading and experiencing literature, and this ability can be taught and cultivated through well-guided literacy activities in the community of readers, experience and interpreters of the literature.

Teaching English literature as a foreign language has a long history that allows it to gather relatively comprehensive experience. From the accumulation of this experience, the field of Teaching English Literature as a Foreign Language has systematically developed an understanding of why literature needs to be taught. Carter & Long (1991) and Lazard

(1993), for example, propose three main reasons why English literature as a foreign language needs to be taught, and every justification of this teaching has different teaching goals. The three types of justification in question are: (1) cultural reasons, (2) language-literary reasons, and (3) reasons for self-development as readers and writers.

Literature teachers who adhere to a cultural model respect literature because literature is full of accumulated wisdom - "the best that has been thought and felt within a culture" (Carter & Long, 1991: 2). Therefore, English-language literature in the context of foreign languages, in this case, is expected to encourage participants' understanding and appreciation of the cultural and ideological values contained in the literary texts they read. While cultural models support the teaching of English literature because of its potential to facilitate students in understanding and appreciating the content of cultural and ideological values in literary texts that are read by participants, proponents of "literary language" see literary language as an authentic locus can function as a vocabulary learning resource and various aspects of English structure. From the experience of transacting with this literary text, it is expected that students will later gain insight that enables them to think and speak as sophisticated as literary writers. Or in the language used by Carter and Long, it is expected that later literary learners will be able to tap into ways in a text in a methodological way (Carter & Long, 1991: 2).

While each of the two previous models propose "cultural and ideological values" and "the potential value of qua literary models for learners" to show the importance of teaching literature, proponents of the personal growth model believe in the need to encourage students to approach literature as works aesthetics and doing aesthetic reading. By reading aesthetic literature it is expected that the students can enjoy literary reading by involving themselves physically with all of the contours of their emotions. And, from this aesthetic experience, it is expected that there will be a growing love for reading literature so that, henceforth, this "love-reading" feeling encourages students to grow into independent readers and lifelong learners.

Synthesizing ideas from various sources, Musthafa (2015) identifies four literary teaching approaches that have been commonly used in teaching English as a foreign language: language-based approach, literature as content, literature for personal enrichment, and literature as a resource for empowerment.

## a. Language-based approach

Based on the assumption that studying English-language literary texts can help integrate the syllabus of language lessons and English literature, the English literature study program that adheres to this approach will focus the contents of the lecture on the analysis of stylistics used by writers of literary works that students read. Thus, the English literature study program that carries the mission of encouraging students to utilize the knowledge of literary text-style to weigh quality and appreciate the literary work they read.

Proponents of this "literary-based approach" model might use literary texts to teach certain registers (for example, when found in literary criticism), and writing styles of certain authors. Thus, the focus is on the study of texts, and students are encouraged to treat literary texts as a capital for learning English. At this stage, to the extent that these students learning English literature are facilitated in understanding and appreciating the literary works they read, the matter of teaching English language and literature can be considered wrong.

## b. Fiction as a field of study

As reflected in the meaning of the phrase a field of study above, this approach treats literary text as the main material for learning English. Using literature as a field of study, English literary instructors involve students in the activities of reading a collection of texts (literature text sets) and literary criticism that are relevant and related to the text being read. The field or topic of study, in this model of literary learning approach can be organized into genres of literary texts (such as imaginative prose, poetry and drama), styles-expressions of literary rhetoric, history and characteristics of movements / babakan of literature, and other categories.

Treating literature as a field of study means focusing on literature as a body of knowledge that includes details such as genres and sub genres of literary texts, the characteristics of certain literary periods, and formal features of literary texts that fulfil certain literary rounds. The English literature study program that takes the option of this kind of learning approach directs students to become literary scholars in English as a foreign language.

#### c. Fiction for personal enrichment

Underlying this learning approach is the assumption that literary work is an accurate tool to provoke the disclosure of personal experience, the fluctuations of feelings, and the opinions of learners as literary readers. Teaching material in this model of literary learning approach can be chosen based on the predictability of its relevance to the learner's interests and experience as well as the level of understanding ability. And organizing it into literary learning sessions can be done thematically along with non-literary material that discusses similar topics.

Literary texts, in this learning approach, are treated primarily as a vehicle for the development of individual participants, especially as readers and writers of literary texts. Theoretically, such treatment is not wrong. However, in its implementation in class, the learning approach of English literature may experience obstacles, especially when the instructor does not understand correctly about the methods and techniques of developing literacy skills in literary texts, and forms of task design - which ultimately control the achievement of goals literary literacy instructional.

## d. Fiction as a resource for empowerment.

Using literary text as capital means treating literary text as a locus to invite the highest personal response from students as literary connoisseurs. Literary text is used as a tool to involve students inwardly; literary works are used as "charmers" to invite readers' inner-born involvement. Unlike treating literature as a field of work that tends to exclusively focus all energy on the acquisition of knowledge about literature (for example, the accumulation of facts about the context of the birth of literary works, titimangsa (time), author, literary titles, etc.), treating literature as capital aims to instil capabilities enjoy literary work and love literature. In the reality of practice in class, positioning literary texts as capital for empowerment can mean showing students of literary learning how lecturers as literary instructors enjoy literary work and how these sophisticated literary lecturers develop. The challenge here is whether lecturers of English literature as language foreigners in Indonesia are able to convincingly introduce the subtleties of literature ("ways with literature") so that students can develop genuine interest in reading-and-writing literary texts, and develop skills that are useful in processing literary experiences and responding with literate way.

#### **METHOD**

In Cultural Sciences and Adab Faculty of UIN Sunan Kaljaga every lecturer or student of English Department has free internet access every day when he/she is in campus area. Most students and lecturers realize that the potential of the internet for education and understand the effort involved in effectively utilizing this valuable resource. The needs of materials that can meet the students' needs and use Internet as one of the resources to support their learning lead the researcher to develop the appropriate materials.

Therefore, this study uses research and development design by Graves that emphasizes on the designing the language course where, here, a blended course about "Elements of Prose" is developed. The participants consist of 37 undergraduate students enrolled in the "Introduction to Literary Theory" course in the English Department of Cultural Sciences and Adab Faculty at the Islamic State University of Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. The participants ranged in age from 18 to 22 years old.

There are some steps of designing the materials by Graves. This study adapts some steps that are important to be done in developing the blended learning materials of functional texts. The steps can be seen in the framework below.

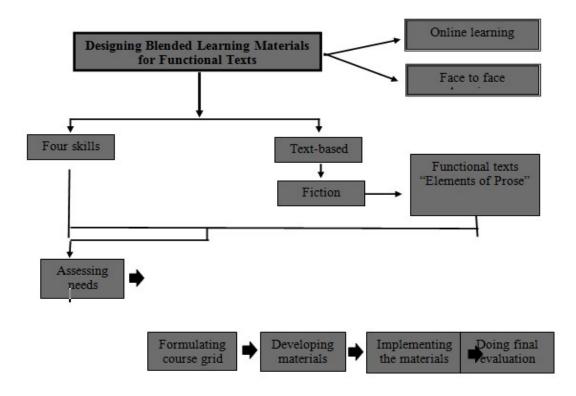


Figure 1. Developing materials' procedure

There are two aspects that make the design by Graves be able to be used in this research. The first aspect is that there is no hierarchy in the processes and no sequence in their accomplishment. The course designer can begin anywhere in the framework, as long as it makes sense to begin where the researcher do. It will depend on the researcher's beliefs and understandings, articulated or not, and the reality of the context and the background knowledge of the students. The researcher, here, starts to develop the materials by doing these steps, as follows.

## a) Doing needs analysis

This step is done by using pre-test. This test aimed to gather information about the students' abilities, attitudes, and preferences before course. It is also done in order to make decision about what will be taught, how it will be taught, and how it will be evaluated.

# b) Formulating course grid

The course grid or syllabus is the product of organizing a course (Graves, 2000: 6). The course grid can be formulated by gathering the information about the students' needs and learning goals and objectives. The course grid consists of several points, such as philosophical background of the course, materials that will be taught, methods and strategies, basic competency, indicators, source and evaluation. It is arranged to help the students understand the contents of the course and what functional texts that will be learnt by them in one semester.

## c) Developing materials

Materials development is the planning process by which a teacher creates units and lessons within those units to carry out the goals and objectives of the course (Graves, 2000: 149). There are some points listed by Graves (2000) in developing the materials, such as learners, learning, language, social context, activity, and materials. These points are put together in developing the materials.

#### d) Implementing the materials

This step is done to know the students' reaction toward the developed materials. Graves (2000) explains the implementation of the materials as assessing the students' learning by using the designed materials before they evaluate the materials in the next step.

## e) Doing final evaluation

The final evaluation that is used in this research is post-test. It is done know the appropriateness of the materials after implementing it to the students. Graves (2000) also stated that there are four major purposes for assessing learning in designing the materials; (1) assessing proficiency that is done in pre-test and post-test, (2) diagnosing ability/needs that is done in pre-test and during course or implementing the materials, (3) assessing progress that is done in implementing the materials, and (4) assessing achievement that is done in post-test.

Therefore, the majority of lecturers believe that the Internet resources has helped to improve curricula and teaching methods. In addition, they urge for new technological methods to be supplemental to traditional classroom teaching and not as a replacement. That is why in this study, the researcher reveals to design blended learning materials that combine face to face with online method work to play together in the materials' activities and contents.

Besides, the reasons for designing the blended learning materials for functional texts such as Elements of Prose play a major role in determining its success, and it is vitally important that lecturers, administrators, and students understand why blended learning is being implemented. Regardless of how blended learning is implemented, a consensus must be reached to avoid the perception of another initiative being adopted without their input. Most of all, educators who are tasked with implementing blended learning must have ownership and feel that blended learning is enhancing their instruction, not working against it. It is essential that these lecturers perceive they either have the skills necessary to implement blended learning or they are provided with the necessary professional development to foster the skills.

#### FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Internet access has been available to the all of academic community in UIN Sunan Kalijaga since 2005. In December 2012 there were approximately 2000 Internet users in this university. Importantly, the number of the Internet users has jumped to 5000 in 2007, which is nearly one-third of the population. One reason for the growth is that about 60% of the population is comprised of young people who are 20 years old or younger, and they are adapting to new technologies faster than expected. It is estimated that Internet use will continue growing rapidly in UIN Sunan Kalijaga, which raises an issue of providing new learning strategies that include use of technology.

For the purpose of this study the "Elements of Prose" course is redesigned and developed in a blended course format (part online, part face-to-face) according to Broke (2017) flex-model of didactical components in a blended learning arrangement. This model includes three components that need to be taken into account a) a content component that makes learning material available to the learner b) a communication component that offers interpersonal exchange between learners or learners and tutors and c) constructive component that facilitates and guides individual to actively operate on learning tasks (or assignments) with different degrees of complexity (from multiple-choice to projects or problem-based learning). In designing the blended course, formal and informal data gathered from the students who had already taken the course, were examined. Then the instructors specified the desired outcomes of the course in terms of goals and objectives. At the end, the content, the practice items and the assessment instruments were determined based on the course basic goal and objectives. Below how the step in blended learning course in the classroom is described.

Step One, presentation of lecturer to the student about the blended learning in the first meeting of classroom. The online component is delivered using the asynchronous course management system (e-Class). E-Class includes course description, course schedule, documents (course content), announcements, forums, links and student papers. The course duration is 14 weeks, and the students meet for a 100-minute lecture with the instructor 2 times, at the begging and at the end of the semester. The course commences with a 100-minute Face to Face lecture where the learners have the opportunity to meet each other and the instructor. In this face to face introductory session students are presented with the learning objectives of the course.

The students have website that they use when they have online class like the web below:



Figure 2. One of Webs Used in the Blended Learning "Elements of Prose" Course

The blended learning course requires self-paced learning time since the course content is online, resulting in a major reduction in classroom lecture time. The students are expected to log into the course individually from home, work or a University computing cluster, whichever is most convenient, and read that week's course material, download resources (such as lecture transcripts and journal papers), and follow instructions to complete tasks that can be seen in the picture below.



Figure 3. One of Materials That Students Have in the Online Course

Step two, the lecturer gives topics in disscusion when they have meeting in the classroom. Assignments emphasize on practical application and authentic tasks all complemented with textbook readings. The blended course is structured to include (including) bi-weekly online assignments

focusing on active-learning exercises Weekly quizzes and self-evaluation questions are given online. One of the assignments the student has is in online course.

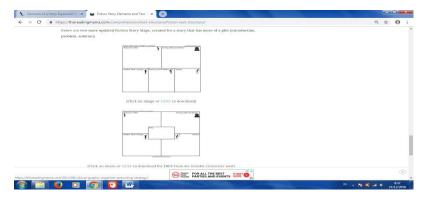


Figure 4. Online Evaluation Task

While in online phase the students can communicate and interact with the instructor and with each other by e-mail or over forums. The students are expected to post their comments regularly in an asynchronous online forum and to comment on and generate ideas with other students while the instructor coordinate the procedure. Topics of discussions are related with the concepts introduced in the course's modules. All contributions are graded. Students' evaluation is based on their performance to the two weekly assignments and to an exam paper at the end of the semester and also to their participation in a weekly discussion concerning the thematic area of the week. To evaluate the effectiveness of the web-based component of the blended course, the course is taught simultaneously with a traditional course in which passive lectures are used to cover material in the online assignments. Both courses receive the same active-learning activities.

Step three, in face to face the course discuss what the students have done in out of the class. They discuss the assignment about the elements of prose after understanding the online course. In the picture below how one of groups student presents about the elements of prose that they have discussed before in online class is described.



Figure 5. One of groups presented their discussion in face to face class

The improvement in course outcomes due to blended learning has been partially attributed to a more strategic use of classroom time. Blended learning is effective because it questions the traditional lecture-based teaching model, allowing classroom time to focus on more active and meaningful activities. This has been corroborated by Delialioğlu (2012), who found that problem-based, rather than lecture-based, blended learning has higher levels of student engagement. Online activities can be used to either reinforce learning undertaken in the classroom, or they can serve as a basic introduction to topics before they are covered in more depth in class.

Overall, the findings reinforce the view that a blended learning environment promotes student-centre learning in fiction study class by empowering students to take more responsibility for their learning and to increase the involvement and participation necessary for that learning. Results supporting higher learning performance by the students might be affected by the more active classroom teaching approach utilized in the blended format. A blended course model may actually lend itself to more active learning due to students becoming more responsible for learning content on their own time, while classroom time is spent with application of newly acquired knowledge. This environment demands a more thorough investigation.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research represents the designed materials of functional texts in blended learning course. This finding is also consistent with other studies in the literature which indicate that student's performance in blended courses is equivalent or slightly superior to traditional courses. The approach of blended learning is an approach currently gaining more and more territory and recognition and thus appears as an alternative teaching practice that can be applied directly to assist students to improve their performance.

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