

Development of Blended Learning Activities in 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World to Enhance Students' Literary Competence

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ABSTRACT

This paper introduces a localized and contextualized module called “LAMDAG” (Literary Awareness to Millennials through Differentiated Activities using specific Genre), a blended learning approach to enhance students' literary competence in 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World. Diagnostic test was conducted to identify the Least Learned Competencies of the students. An FGD and LAC session was held to assess and consolidate the needed literary appreciation skills which were also included in the module. DepEd Order No. 73, s.2012 was the basis for designing the activities which proposed that students need to be assessed on the domains of knowledge, process, understanding, and product/ performance. Quasi research design was utilized in an intact class of 184 Grade 12 STEM students of ASNHS. The researcher constructed a 30-item validated test based on the competencies of the subject for the second quarter. The test was conducted among the intact class of Grade 12 STEM students before and after using the validated module. The researcher adopted the ADDIE model namely; Analysis Phase, Design Phase, Development Phase, Implementation Phase and Evaluation Phase. The literary competence of students has a significant difference before and after being exposed to LAMDAG. The results strongly support Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences which claims that teachers should incorporate all types of intelligence to provide students with the opportunity to learn in a way that fits their educational needs.

KEYWORDS: *Literary Skills, Blended learning, Enhancement, Academic Performance*

INTRODUCTION

Education in the 21st century promotes the skills needed to be prolific members of today's society. According to Medley (2010), it is not enough for learners to acquire the rudimentary skills of reading, writing, and numeracy, but should ripened in themselves the skills that would help them survive with life and drudgery in 21st century communities. Since the new era was ushered in by an intense technological revolt (21st Century Schools, 2008), twenty-first century schools are now becoming more infused with technology – computers. Needless to say that the internet are being increasingly used for the 21st Century instruction at all levels and in almost all subjects.

Along with the implementation of the K+12 Program that brought tremendous changes to the Philippine Education, challenges in teaching the 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World, one of the core subjects in Senior High School, are evident as shown in the performance of the students be it formative or summative. The subject aims to engage students in critical study and appreciation of 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World encompassing their various dimensions, genres, elements, structures, contexts, and traditions which means that the literary competence of the students must be heightened.

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Based from the results of summative and other formative assessments during the researcher's first teaching experience handling 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World in Grade 12 Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) students of Agusan del Sur National High School (ASNHS), San Francisco Agusan del Sur, it was found out that the least learned skills of the students were embedded under literary appreciation like understanding themes, imagery and expression; drawing inferences; predicting outcomes; and drawing conclusions.

Culler (2013) explained that literary competence is not just the process of interpreting the meaning of a literary text that is learned over time but through one's exposure to and cumulative experience with a variety of texts. Therefore, the teacher-centered classrooms are not the most efficiently structured ones for student engagement and there is the need of new teaching methods (Nichols, 2015).

With this, the researcher would like to try the blended learning approach of Sir Isaac Pitman by applying a purposeful fusion of online and offline lesson. According to Abbott (2014), blended learning is generally a practice of using both online and in-person learning experiences when teaching students. With blended learning, students assume greater control and a more active role in their learning.

Since, the researcher designed and developed a localized and contextualized module called "**LAMDAG**" *Literary Awareness to Millennials through Differentiated Activities using specific Genre*, a blended learning approach to enhance students' literary competence in 21st Century literature from the Philippines and the World for the second quarter, the following research questions were answered:

1. What are the least learned competencies of Grade 12 STEM students in the second quarter in 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World?
2. What are the literary skills of Grade 12 STEM students in 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World that need to be enhanced?
3. What blended learning activities can be utilized in 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World infusing the literary appreciation skills?
4. How did the experts assess the module based from the LRMSD tool in terms of:

4.1 Content

4.2 Format

4.3 Presentation and Organization; and

4.4 Accuracy and Recency of Information?

5. What is the students' literary competence before and after having exposed to LAMDAG module?
6. Is there a significant difference in the students' literary competence before and after being exposed to LAMDAG?
7. How do the participants perceived the effectiveness of blended learning in enhancing their literary competence?

Methods

Quasi research design was utilized among the Grade 12 STEM students of ASNHS namely: Copernicus, Descartes, Leibniz and Ptolemy with a total of 184 population. Diagnostic result was the basis of the researcher to identify the least learned competencies. As to ethical issues, the researcher seek an approval from her superiors in school and division authorities. Confidentialities were considered especially on respondents' identity during the conduct of the research.

A focused group discussion (FGD) was conducted among the grade 12 teachers handling the subject in order to identify the embedded literary appreciation skills in each competencies. Learning Action Cells (LAC) were also held through the approval of the principal in identifying what specific blended learning activities will be included in the module.

The researcher constructed a 30 item validated tests based on the competencies of the subject for the second quarter. The test was conducted among the intact class of Grade 12 STEM students before and after using the validated module. Test of significant was used in order to find out if there is an increase of students' literary competence.

The researcher adopted the ADDIE model namely; Analysis Phase, Design Phase, Development Phase, Implementation Phase and Evaluation Phase.

In the analysis phase, problems were identified, goals and objectives were established through pre-test, FGD and LAC sessions. After identifying the least learned competencies of 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World for the second quarter, design phase took place by unpacking the general objectives to specific objectives using the blended learning approach. Development of module was made by incorporating the blended learning activities highlighting literary appreciation based on the least

learned competencies in the second quarter of the 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World using contemporary literary genre. Five experts in language from the Division of Agusan del Sur validated the quality of the content and the educational soundness of the learning module. The validation instrument used was downloaded from LRMS of DepEd portals. In the implementation phase, intact class of STEM tried the validated module. And in the evaluation phase, a post-test was given and an assessment tool was distributed to the respondents to test the effectiveness of the module.

The research was limited only to the enhancement of literary competence through blended learning approach with differentiated activities using specific contemporary genres for the second quarter of the school year 2018-2019 of the subject 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World. DepEd Order No. 73, s.2012 was the basis in designing activities which proposed that students need to be assessed on the domains of knowledge, process, understanding and product/ performance.

Theoretical Framework

The action research entitled, LAMDAG (Literary Awareness to Millennials through Differentiated Activities using specific Genre), A Blended Learning Approach to Enhance Students' Literary Competence in 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World is grounded to the following theories and concepts:

Cognitive Load Theory

This psychological theory observes that the working memory of an individual has a limited capacity and the make-up of the cognitive load and the presentation of the information will affect an individual's understanding of it (Ragland, 2016). There are three groups of cognitive load: they are intrinsic load, extraneous load, and germane load.

The intrinsic load is related to the complexity of the information to be understood. This area is affected by the nature and complexity of the subject matter and the individual's prior knowledge or experience of it. This load can be lowered only by an individual having more knowledge of the material or by reducing the complexity of the information in some way as cited by Garvey of 2017.

The second area is referred to as the extraneous load and centres on the presentation of information. How information is presented will affect the capacity of an individual to understand and interpret it. This load can be reduced by presenting the information in ways that is easier to understand and interpret by users.

The third section is called the germane load. This area of the cognitive structure is designed for knowledge acquisition. Here the data is processed, constructed and placed into schemes inside the memory. According to Kirschner (2002) the construction of suitable schemata is of utmost importance in dealing with complex concepts because they demand more effort to be assimilated.

Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML)

The Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML) of Mayer (2009) also supports this study. It emphasizes the use of two channels, the visual and auditory which can facilitate the integration of new information into existing cognitive structures. When activities are designed for both channels, "meaningful learning" will be realized. The theory underscores the importance of learning (based upon the testing of content and demonstrating the successful transfer of knowledge) when new information is integrated with prior knowledge.

Multiple Intelligences

Another theory that supports this study is Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (Hall, 2014). The theory claims that teachers should incorporate all types of intelligences to provide students with the opportunity to learn in the way that fits their educational needs. He suggests that through the use of multiple intelligences, students are provided with the opportunity to solidify the content in an active learning environment.

Blended learning provides students with a more personalized active learning experience that provides a plethora of opportunities to suit their optimum learning styles (Holland, 2017). The varied tasks in a form of in-classroom and off classroom activities nurture students' skills that also foster their interest in learning the subject. When teachers modify, adapt and create flexible activities, learning is cultivated. Since blended learning is the mixing of different learning environments (Chacrabarty, 2010) it can provide students with an experience that has the potential to integrate several multiple intelligences in various learning tasks.

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Results

Findings herein are based on the results of the conducted research by the subject teacher researcher

herself. Presentation of the findings is presented in tables 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 respectively.

After the diagnostic test, the teachers handling the subject and the researcher identified and summarized the least learned competencies of the Grade 12 Students as listed in table 1 through an FGD.

Table 1. Least Learned Competencies

	Learning Competencies	Codes
1.	Explain the texts in terms of literary elements, genres and tradition.	EN12Lit-IIb-32
2.	Situate the texts in the context of the region, nation, and the world	EN12Lit-IIc-29
3.	Appreciate the cultural and aesthetic diversity of literature of the world	EN12Lit-IIc-33
4.	Distinguish the literary uses of language from the non-literary and understand their use as well as the formal features and conventions of literature.	EN12Lit-IIe-34
5	Identify the figures of speech and other literary techniques and devices in the text.	EN12Lit-IIe-27

After consolidating the least learned competencies as shown in table 1, LAC session was conducted among the teachers in grade 12 handling the 21st Century from the Philippines and World in order to find out what specific literary appreciation skills are embedded in each competencies. A walk through of the teaching guide was also done in order to analyze the literary appreciation skills that were needed by the students.

Table 2. Literary Appreciation Skills

	Literary Skills
1.	Analyzing the in depth characterization
2.	Developing empathy
3.	Identifying literary elements
4.	Interpreting implications to society
5.	Interpreting the symbols used by the writer
6.	Making Inference
7.	Making Predictions
8.	Paraphrasing of what has been read
9.	Understanding the structure of the story
10.	Writing objective summary

Table 2 presents the top priority literary skills to be enhanced by the students as assessed by the subject teachers based from their teaching experience of the subject. They recommended that the identified skills must be integrated in LAMDAG module.

Table 3. Blended learning activities

1.	Flipped Classroom
2.	Social Media Blending
3.	Face to Face
4.	Connected learning
5.	Virtual learning
6.	Simulations
7.	Links
8.	Assessment

Table 3 are the recommended blended learning activities during the LAC session that can be utilized and were included in LAMDAG module.

Table 4. Experts' Assessment of the Module (based from LRMDS evaluation rating sheet for PRINT resources)

FACTORS	Mean	Interpretation
Content	26.6	Passed
Format		
1. Prints	16	Passed
2. Illustrations	24	Passed
3. Design and Layout	16	Passed
4. Paper and Binding	6	Passed
5. Size and Weight of Resource	6	Passed
Presentation and Organization	19.4	Passed
Accuracy and Up-to-datedness of Information	24	Passed

Based from the validation of the experts, the module passed the standards in the evaluation rating score for print materials of LRMDS which means that the module is ready for implementation.

Table 5. Pre and Post-test Results

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-test	184	24.0707	2.04336	.15064
Post-test	184	28.5761	1.67745	.12366

The students' literary competence evidently increased as exhibited in table 5. Going back the CTML theory, it clearly underscores the importance of learning (based upon the testing of content and demonstrating the successful transfer of knowledge) when new information is integrated with prior knowledge.

Table 6. T-test of Pre and Post-test result
One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 0				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	
Pre-test	159.791	183	.000	24.07065	23.7734
Post-test	231.079	183	.000	28.57609	28.3321

The result of T-test clearly illustrates that there is a significant difference in the students’ literary competence before and after being exposed to LAMDAG. The theory of Multiple Intelligence strongly supports the result of this research that varied tasks in a form of in-classroom and off classroom activities nurture students’ skills that also foster their interest in learning the subject.

Table 7. Effectiveness of the Module

	Effectiveness of Blended Learning in Enhancing Students’ Literary Competence	YES	NO
1.	I am interested to learn contemporary literature and its genre.	0.973	0.027
2.	I am enjoying the differentiated activities given both face to face and on-line.	1	0
3.	I am developing my literary competence while learning.	0.978	0.021
4.	I don’t feel any pressure every formative and summative assessment.	0.734	0.266
5.	Blended learning is useful to deepen my understanding in literature.	1	0
6.	I took part in blended learning activities both individual and group tasks.	0.886	0.114
7.	Blended learning is a beneficial approach to students like me who wanted to enhance my literary competence.	0.799	0.201
8.	Blended learning encouraged me to participate both face to face and on-line.	1	0
9.	Objectives of our lessons are achieved.	0.804	0.196
10.	I am expressive in class interaction both off-line and on-line activities.	1	0

Table 7 indicates that statement number 2, 5, 8 and 9 have weighted mean of 1 which means that 100% or 184 of the grade 12 STEM students are enjoying the differentiated activities given both face to face and on-line, blended learning is useful to deepen their understanding in literature, blended learning encouraged them to participate both face to face and on-line and they are expressive in class interaction both face to face and on-line activities. The results strongly supports Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences (Hall, 2014) which claims that teachers should incorporate all types of intelligences to provide students with the opportunity to learn in the way that fits their educational needs.

Conclusion

The FGD of the teachers handling the subject show a positive indication in analysing the five least learned competencies which needs attention and must be included in the module. Literary appreciation skills and blended learning activities are examined thoroughly during the LAC session in order to meet the main objective of this research which is to enhance the students’ literary competence. It further pushed the researcher to use blended learning as it provides students with a more personalized active learning experience that provides a plethora of opportunities to suit their optimum learning styles (Holland, 2017).

On the other hand, the module designed by the researcher passed according to the standards of the LRMDS. The Mean Percentile Score (MPS) of the intact class of Grade 12 STEM students had evidently increased as shown in the findings of this study. This only proves Chacraborty of 2010 that when teachers modify, adapt and create flexible activities, learning is cultivated. Moreover, in the multiple intelligence theory, it is clearly emphasized that mixing of different learning environments can provide students to experience and to integrate several intelligences in various learning tasks. This is the reason why the respondents evaluated the module as an effective one.

Recommendations

The education sector can increase the depth and width of the impact of the blended learning approach not just in literary competence. It is highly recommended that the designed module should be tested to other tracks in the Senior High School Department in order to further evaluate its effectiveness. Looking into the constraints that confront teachers, the Department of Education can help teachers through seminar workshop in the school level and higher level that will address the needs of the students in the 21st century.

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