

Adopting a TEDDIE Learning Design Model to Plan Blended Teaching Activities: Reflections from a Teacher Trainees' Poetry Lecture

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Abstract. Technology is rapidly being adopted by institutions of higher education as a tool to enhance collaboration and cognitive development during the learning process. There is extensive literature on successful stories on how Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has been applied in various contexts of learning but each classroom context offers specific dynamics and hence requires different approaches of integrating ICT. In this paper the author shares some experiences where she employed blended learning activities for a poetry lecture. She uses the Think, Explore, Design, Develop, Implement and Evaluate (TEDDIE) learning design model to plan and implement online and face-to-face learning activities and presents evidence from the field to illustrate the possibilities of using ICT to support interactive learning in a poetry lecture.

Keywords: learning design; teaching poetry; learning activities.

Introduction

Technology has the potential to address some of the challenges to teaching and learning in higher education (Rambe & Ng'ambi, 2011; Veletsianos, 2010; Garrison, & Kanuka, 2004; Bozalek, Ng'ambi, & Gachago, 2013; Tulinayo, Ssentume & Najjuma, 2018). One of the ways of adapting technology in education is through blended learning activities and indeed several institutions of higher learning in developing countries have taken this approach (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004; Tulinayo, Ssentume & Najjuma, 2018). Moreover, teaching/learning in higher institutions entails unique characteristics that may favor specific information communication technology (ICT) features. For instance, the training of secondary teachers of poetry may require ICT components that encourage engagement, reflection and nurturing higher order thinking skills unlike some fact-based disciplines.

In this paper, I base on the Think, Explore, Design, Develop, Implement and Evaluate (TEDDIE) learning design model (Hodgkinson-Williams, Deacon, Govender & Pallitt, 2018) to illustrate how blended teaching/learning activities can be adopted within the context of teaching poetry to teacher trainees. This model provided a structure for the process of developing face-to-face (f2f) and online activities and how my students responded to the same. As such, the paper is structured along the different phases of the TEDDIE learning model and at each stage different activities and examples are shown.

Background to the teacher-training context

Part of my work as a teacher trainer requires me to introduce trainees to theoretical pedagogical knowledge and to take them through the practical steps of interactive teaching/learning approaches with the aim that they will practice the same after their graduation. As an educational practitioner I lean towards learning theories and approaches that support learner-centered pedagogies. For instance, one of the courses I have taught for several years is entitled 'ELE 3101: Methods of teaching poetry' and I routinely update the course outline to ensure that trainees can achieve creative and innovative pedagogical skills in the teaching of poetry at the secondary school level. Some of these creative methods of teaching involve using blended learning activities whereby f2f lecture activities are integrated with ICT-enhanced events (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004; Van der Merwe, Bozalek, Ivala, Nagel, Peté, Vanker, 2015). The underlying assumption in adopting such approaches is that cognitive development is enhanced when learners are facilitated to own the lesson content through several levels of interaction (Anderson, 2004; Vygotsky, 1978). This assumption requires the adoption of collaborative teaching activities and the use of materials such as hand-outs, images and video clips that can provoke trainees to think together about the subject content.

However, any educator's personal beliefs are largely sustained by the context in which they teach. My educational context is steadily progressing towards advanced methods of teaching and technology is one of the aspects that have been recommended to support pedagogical practices (Makerere University Strategic Plan, 2008). Despite some recognizable positive changes a number of challenges still persist. For instance, the classes have large numbers of students (the current class has above 200), the Internet connection is slow and the Bachelor of Arts with Education programme predominantly employs teacher-centered approaches and is examination oriented. These learning challenges are compounded by the structure of the University curriculum in terms of allocation of lecture time and sitting arrangements which are rigid and can barely encourage collaboration as learners must face in one direction. Perhaps what is more worrying is that trainees will practise the same teacher-centered approaches in secondary schools after university.

An overview of the TEDDIE design rationale

In this presentation I use the Think, Explore, Design, Develop, Implement and Evaluate (TEDDIE) learning design model (Hodgkinson-Williams et al., 2018) to plan a 60 minutes poetry lecture. The TEDDIE model has traces of the Dabbagh

and Bannan-Ritland model (2005) and the Mor and Mogilevsky's Design Inquiry of Learning (DIL) model (2013). The incorporation of these models into one provided an excellent learning design model that takes into account the key aspects of learning/teaching through the different iterative processes of Thinking, Exploring, Designing, Developing, Implementing and Evaluating as summarized in Figure 1 below:

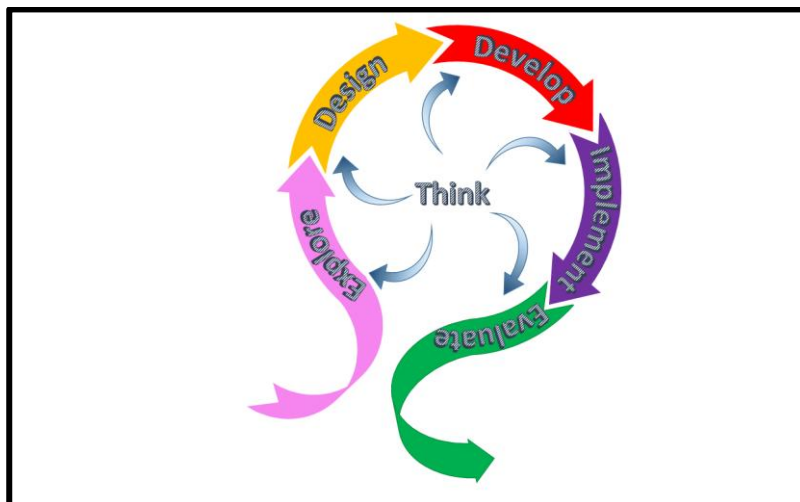


Figure 1: The TEDDIE learning design model Hodgkinson-Williams *et al.* (2018)

The TEDDIE model (Hodgkinson-Williams *et al.*, 2018) was a perfect fit for my learning design because in addition to providing step-by-step guidelines on how to design and develop relevant materials and activities for my context, it also calls on the educator to *think* about the type of learners for whom the lesson is designed. This talks directly to my interest in learner-centered pedagogy because the creation of personas as per this model is premised on the principle that the educator designs the lesson to suit learners' needs, abilities and prior knowledge.

Under the THINK step I present a brief reflection on the learning designs I am familiar with before I describe my identity as a learning designer. In the EXPLORE phase I provide a description of my context with emphasis on the learning gaps, the expected learning outcomes and tasks in relation to the learners, myself as the educator and my learning context. In the DESIGN phase I consider the learning theories that helped me choose appropriate activities that align with my context and the trainees and I choose the learning metaphor of 'participation' (Sfard, 1998) as I elaborate later. In the DEVELOPMENT phase I explain the materials I adapted from different sources in order to enhance collaboration before, during and after the lesson. The IMPLEMENT section illustrates how the pilot lesson was conducted and some of the responses I received from students and colleagues. Finally in the EVALUATE phase I share the responses from one student and from a colleague and I discuss their impact on my learning design. In the conclusion I retrace the journey of my learning design highlighting the lessons I learned and the challenges I faced as a novice online designer.

Thinking like an online learning designer

To try and understand my current experience as an online designer, I have to reflect on my experience as a teacher. My experience first as a secondary school teacher and then as a teacher trainer implies that I am an interpreter and implementer of the curriculum and by default I am deeply involved in designing materials and activities for my lessons/lectures. However, I must add that most of the learning designs I am most familiar with incline towards the traditional teacher-centered approaches where the teacher makes most decisions concerning the course. This involves reviewing the course outline for a given module and reading about the content before preparing the appropriate lecture notes.

The linear process of activities involves underlying principles such as establishing students' earlier knowledge and making first connections. However, these are actions that I rarely give much attention to, as they seem to come naturally with the job. For instance, the content for the Undergraduate programme is developed chronologically meaning that students are expected to be knowledgeable in particular content areas at each level of their study. As a learning designer my approaches are not static and different experiences do influence my teaching/learning strategies. My pursuit for further studies at different points in my career and the technological affordances at my faculty have exposed me to online learning and over the last four years I have endeavored to integrate some basic online activities and materials in my courses.

Clinton and Hokanson (2012) argue that educationists should pay attention to the connection between creativity and instructional design because the former has the ability to arouse interest towards the content. Again as a teacher I am required to be creative or what we refer to as 'improvise' in our context. My creativity is delimited by the availability of resources and the contextual affordances as I expound in the next section about exploration. Hokanson and Miller (2009, cited in Clinton and Hokanson, 2012) in their Role-Based Design (RBD) model suggest four design identities that can help us *think* about creativity and instructional design: the artist, the architect, the engineer and the craftsperson. I mainly identify with the artist archetypal approach although the other approaches also resonate with me to some degree. The metaphor of the artist suits me because I can tap creatively into different ways of designing materials for my lectures in as far as I can get access. Secondly, as an artist I have the license to be imaginative beyond the ordinary. For instance, I can use musical video clips to enhance the interpretation of poetry, integrate Fine Art and Music in my lectures. Thirdly, I *think* that as an artist I can generate novel ideas about the teaching/studying of Literature that other educationists can utilize with time as they solve problems in other contexts. The challenge of being an 'artist' in my educational context is that sometimes one is labeled as a hermit practitioner with no capacity to 'fit' within the traditional teaching practices that are dominated by 'chalk and talk' approaches. That said, I am quick to add that whereas being an artist as an instructional designer encourages diversity in creative learning ideas, I give credence to the parameters within and educational context where one needs specific and perhaps empirical guidelines when

designing materials so that they do not profoundly overstep the contextual ethos.

Hence, I adopted the TEDDIE model (Hodgkinson-Williams *et al.*, 2018) to help me design online activities for my lecture and the time allocated to the processes of exploring the context, design and development of materials and activities helped me to address any emergent gaps during the lesson because I was able to think critically as a designer to prepare appropriate materials.

Exploring the context

According to Dabbagh and Bannan-Ritland (2005) exploration involves examining and recording important information that relates to the educational context and this includes knowledge of the learners and their beliefs and the availability or otherwise of learning materials. In a nutshell the exploration phase investigates the context in which the lecture will be carried out. However it is important to keep in mind that learning contexts are fluid (Tessmer & Richey, 1997) in the sense that they are influenced by different factors. For instance, when working on my online learning design I had to consider the fact that the context included not just the lecture room but also the virtual space over which I had little control. In my context I explored information regarding the learning outcomes, the learners and the instructive tools.

Learning context

My learning context has been partly described in the introduction section of this paper. The lecture for which the online activities were designed is part of the undergraduate teacher-training programme at Makerere University. The specific students who participated in the pilot activities were training to be teachers of English and Literature. The three-year programme is guided by and benefits from the Makerere University Strategic Plan (2008) in general and the College of Education and External Studies (CEES) Strategic Plan (2011) in particular. Both Plans are keen on promoting the utilization of ICT according to their strategic frameworks. For example, the CEES (2011) strategic plan states that "... a lot of headway has been made to encourage students to access information on the different websites. Also the Computer Applications Skills cross-cutting course has been included in all undergraduate programmes" (p. 2). In line with the above strategy CEES has installed ICT equipment in some lecture rooms and these can work as a stepping stone to design and implement learner-centered online lectures. As an example, the interactive smart board in one of the CEES lecture rooms enabled learners to view a file in Google Docs as they all worked on it at the same time in my presence as the instructor, or what is referred to as synchronous learning (Lowenthal, Wilson, & Parrish, 2009). In addition, Internet can be accessed in most rooms at the School of Education either through the use of Ethernet cables or WiFi. For instance, one of the WiFi networks is "MGMT_MTN_Makerere_PMC". Students are provided with passwords and can access and work on the online activities asynchronously (Lowenthal *et al.*, 2009).

The learning outcomes

The particular course from which the current lecture is extracted fits within the teacher education programme described above and it is called 'ELE 3101: Methods of Teaching Poetry'. Specifically the lecture is a single sub-topic of one unit called "Aims of Teaching Poetry" and consequently the topic for this lecture was "The Universal Aim of Teaching Poetry". Before they start teaching poetry in secondary curriculum trainees are supposed to understand the aims of teaching poetry and this is important because it guides them when selecting poems for their classes, hence the learning outcomes are a perfect curriculum fit (Lowenthal *et al.*, 2009).

Briefly, the universal aim of teaching poetry is to help learners explore and explain a sense and perception of life beyond their experiences. Poetry should help to widen and sharpen learners' contact with existence and enable them to gain deeper awareness of the experiences of others and understand their own experiences better. Some of these experiences may be ugly, common, strange, beautiful or even noble but are relatable to learners because they offer ways of viewing about the difficult and unexplainable things in life (Dymoke, Lambirth & Wilson, 2013; Cliff Hodges, 2014). Hence poetry exposes them to universal themes that they may observe in their own or other contexts such as love, death, survival, endurance, personal tragedy, hope etc.

The learning objectives for this lecture were that by the end of the lecture trainees should be able to:

- Explain the universal aim of teaching poetry
- Identify the universal theme in a selected poem
- Select and discuss how a poem of their choice represents universal theme(s) and why this is important for secondary school students.

The learners and the educator

The final year undergraduate teacher trainees of Literature already have some experience of teaching in secondary schools and thus they are familiar with terms such as 'aims of teaching drama/poetry' etc. In addition, their study in secondary school in general and at the university in particular has exposed them to the understanding of poetry, for example, what it is, its features, genres, different poets. They also have an understanding of universal themes in Literature from a core course they undertook during their second year of study called 'Literary Critical Theories'. They have also studied novels, plays and poems where they have discussed themes such as suffering, love, inner conflict and they are able to give some examples from other genres of Literature such as drama: *Oedipus the King* or *Waiting for Godot* and novels such as *Things Fall Apart* or *Grapes of Wrath*. This prior knowledge is necessary to help them understand the universal aim of teaching poetry. In addition, at the age of 21 (average) most students can relate to some of realities portrayed in poetry.

The learners shared the common goal of becoming teachers of Literature and they have studied together for the last three years. Thus, they connected with each other quite easily and built a community of practitioners whereby they

discussed their challenges and achievements as shown in some of their responses in Google Docs (Li, Gray, Verspoor, & Barnett, 2017). The Literature curricula they are expected to deliver after their qualification strongly emphasizes learner-centered learning strategies (NCDC, 2008; 2013; Nambi, 2018).

Lowenthal *et al.* (2009) stress the need for online instructors to receive some form of training because of the immense differences between face-to-face and online learning environments. Accordingly, as the educator I relied on the formal training from the Diploma in Educational Technology programme and my above average computer skills plus my interest in online learning/teaching.

Tools and access

The face-to-face activities for the lesson were carried out in one of the lecture rooms at the faculty. As noted earlier students had access to online resources especially through the Makerere University Electronic Learning Environment – (MUELE) which can be accessed at the University Website www.mak.ac.ug or at mulib.mak.ac.ug. Given their experience as University students they had knowledge on how to access online resources for different purposes. Extra materials included extension cables for some learners whose devices had low battery life. Other materials included handouts of poems and paper for students to develop some ideas about the lesson content.

Designing a learning experience online

The information about learners and the context in the previous section of EXPLORE set the backdrop for DESIGN[ing] appropriate pedagogic strategies. I found the constructivist learning theory most suitable to guide my choice of activities to constitute the online learning experiences, thereby privileging the ‘participation’ learning metaphor over the ‘acquisition’ metaphor (Sfard, 1998).

Learning theories

Constructivism from the perspective of Vygotsky proposes that “human learning presupposes a specific social nature and a process by which children grow into intellectual life of those around them” (1978, p. 88). Consequently, the activities I designed aimed at supporting students to learn from and with each other and my expectation was that they could support the same learning approaches as qualified teachers. My role as an educator was to *design* appropriate activities/tasks and facilitate learning by creating an enabling environment where students could work in groups and to monitor, evaluate and update learners’ contributions (Ertmer & Newby, 2013). In addition, social constructivists contend that learning can only take place when meaning is created from the experiences of the students whereby the educator “specifies instructional methods and strategies that will assist learners in actively exploring complex topics/environments and that will move them into thinking in a given content area as an expert user of that domain might think” (Ertmer & Newby, 2013, p.57). In a bid to facilitate and relate content to their prior knowledge and experiences I *designed* brainstorming activities and whole class discussions. For example, the questions below helped to facilitate discussion:

- What are some of the themes that you have come across in Literature that you think are universal?
- How would you explain the idea of universality in the themes you have mentioned above?
- How do you think the themes relate to secondary school students' experiences?
- Explain the idea of universality in the video clip you watched before the lecture.

Some of the themes suggested by the trainees included: love, suffering, deprivation etc. However some of the answers needed to be clarified further under the facilitation of the tutor, suffering was sub-divided into physical and emotional suffering as opposed to the general meaning of the word. In addition, the trainees were invited to view some images¹ representing characters who are known to them in a bid to provoke their prior knowledge about the meaning of 'universal themes'. The images represented characters such as Okonkwo before the tribunal of elders towards the end of the book (*Things Fall Apart*); Oedipus being banished from Athens (*Oedipus the King*); and Lear donning a crown made from thorns (*King Lear*).

I used the following questions to guide the discussion about the pictures:

- Have you met the three characters before?
- What was their story and setting when you read about them?
- What seems to be happening to each character in the pictures? (*Teacher zooms back to each image and waits for students to respond as she prompts them*)
- Despite the different stories in time and place what do the characters have in common?
- Give examples from current times where someone went through such an experience that is similar to those of the characters above.

Suitability of online learning tools

I considered online tools that supported interactive strategies and these included Google Docs, Word Document, Email and WhatsApp. These tools provided several affordances to the process teaching/learning of the universal aim of teaching poetry. For instance, they provided multiple levels of interaction such as peer-to-peer, learner-teacher and learner to content as trainees interpret poems and relate them to the aims of teaching poetry in an interactive manner. The affordances include: share-ability, read-ability, view-ability, access-ability and permission-ability, comment-ability, write-ability, edit-ability, organize-ability, track-ability and copy-ability (Bower, 2008).

Google Docs is a web-based publishing tool that can provide both teachers and learners editable virtual space for sharing information and knowledge building (Kennedy, Mighell & Kennedy, 2010). In terms of appearance, Google Docs has

¹ The images were downloaded from the Internet for lecture purposes and cannot be used here for ethical/copyright reasons.

similarities with Word Document which is familiar to all the students since they utilize it when writing the mandatory course assignments. The trainees are also familiar with WhatsApp as it is a socio-media platform that they use daily to interact outside the formal curriculum. However, the appearance or formatting of WhatsApp does not offer much space for learners to utilize applications such as formatting in terms of line spacing and other embedded tools as is the case with Google Docs. Nonetheless, WhatsApp was used to send reminders to students as shown in Figure 2 below. I also used Email as a messaging tool alongside WhatsApp to help me make connections with students. This was helpful because some learners had challenges in connectivity hence the different media were a useful reminder to keep everyone on the same page. On the other hand, Word Document may have similarities to Google Docs but its appearance is rigid in the sense that only one learner can work in the document at a given time. Figure 3 shows how students were able to work collaboratively using Google Docs.

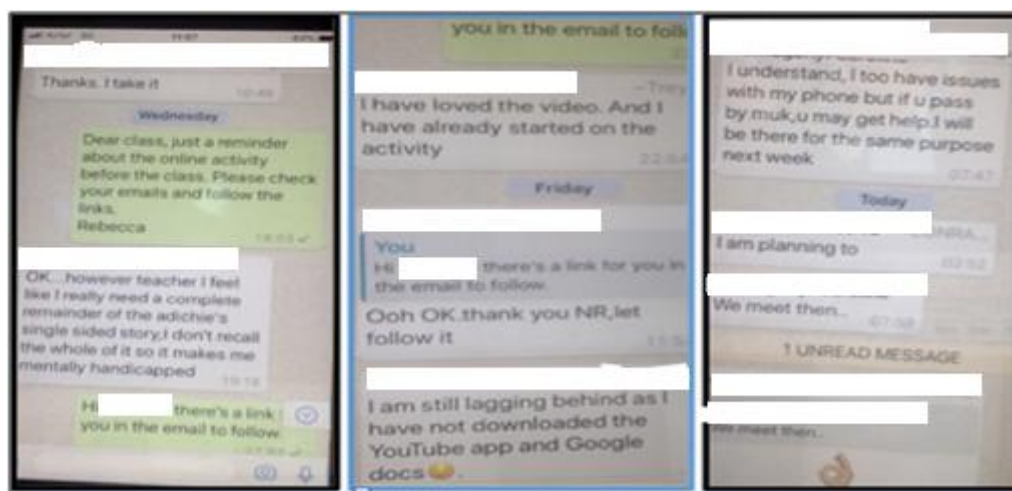


Figure 2: Some of the WhatsApp messages to students

THEMATIC

- Read the poem silently and buzz about it briefly in your groups
- Use features such as 'text color' 'highlight color' to indicate words or phrases that may suggest the universal theme(s)
- Use the 'comment' feature to provide a brief explanation of your theme and why you think it is important to teach to secondary school students

Richard Cory *Edwin Arlington Robinson*

Whenever Richard Cory went down town,
 We people on the pavement looked at him;
 He was a gentleman from sole to crown,
 Clean favored, and imperially slim.

And he was always quietly arrayed,
 And he was always human when he talked;
 But still he fluttered pulses when he said
 "Good-morning," and he glittered when he walked.

And he was always quietly arrayed,
 And he was always human when he talked;
 But still he fluttered pulses when he said
 "Good-morning," and he glittered when he walked.

And he was rich-yes, richer than a king-
 And admirably schooled in every grace:
 In fine, we thought that he was everything
 To make us wish that we were in his place.

on we worked, and waited for the light,
 And went withoSo ut the meat, and cursed the bread;
 And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
 Went home and put a bullet through his head.

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 And went withoSo ut the meat, and cursed the bread;
 And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
 Went home and put a bullet through his head.

3:00 PM Aug 10
 "Social Perception" can be a theme here. We can teach secondary school learners of how other people (the we in the poem) can perceive of an individual (we/you), i.e People learn about others' feelings and emotions by picking up information they gather from physical appearance, verbal, and nonverbal communication.

12:26 PM Today
 There is a theme of appearance vs reality. Richard Cory seems to be perfect, with a perfect life in the eyes of the people on the pavement. However, when he commits suicide, we ask ourselves if things were perfect with him.

2:39 PM Aug 10
 However, when he commits suicide, we ask ourselves if things were perfect with him.

2:39 PM Aug 10
 theme of 'appearance vs reality' especially as seen in 'we thought' and the fact that he commits suicide in the next stanza.

its important to teach students this theme as few people show the public their true natures/struggles.

1:27 PM Aug 11
 The theme of disillusionment is portrayed in this poem. this is clear in the last stanza we the speaker says they worked waiting for 'light', it is even worse that as they hoped for 'light', they kept going without anything(And went without the meat and cursed the bread).

8:05 PM Yesterday
 well,the theme there is a theme of death as an ultimate call for all humanity despite how admirable we seem one would think Richard had it

Figure 3: Learners' collaborative work in Google Docs

Google Docs had additional advantages that favored my learners. It is free, easily accessible via the Internet and does not require any complicated installations on the students' mobile phones and other devices. The comments made by students when offline were saved automatically without the fear of losing their work. In addition, Google Docs provided a better alternative in regard to privacy and accessibility affordances because permissions are limited to different capacities such as editing, viewing and commenting by the invited parties.

Bower (2008) suggests that the affordances of the learning strategies should correlate to the affordances of online technologies. In the table below I summarize the affordances of the tools in line with the learning strategies and the collaborative activities they provided (Kirschner, Strybos, Kreijns, & Beers, 2004).

Table 1: Analysis and summary of learning strategies, tools and their affordances

No.	Learning strategy/activity	Purpose	ICT Tool	Affordance
1	Whole class discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To sustain the learners' attention • To facilitate learners to talk about the content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Images of "known" characters displayed on projector using power point presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole class observation, • View-ability, • Synchronous -ability
2	Group work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make connections with the content • To support learning from one another • To facilitate a communal spirit in class • To test learners' ability to follow online learning instructions and to prepare them for further activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google Docs • Computers • Smart phones • Tablets • iPads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group sharing • Collaborative discussion • Comment-ability • Edit-ability • Track-ability • Write-ability • Organize-ability
3	Accessing the video clip from YouTube	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To stimulate learners' curiosity about the lesson • To invite them into the lesson • To tap prior knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YouTube • Computers • Smart phones • Tablets • iPads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarity with searching for online learning materials • Integrate-ability with other genres
4	Sending/receiving messages about the lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To prepare learners' for the lesson • To draw learners closer to the lesson content and to the teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media • WhatsApp • Email 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused to reach individuals • Track-ability • Reply-ability
5	Explanation/exposition of the universal aim of teaching poetry by the teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To tap into prior knowledge • To emphasise lesson content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power point presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share-ability • Question-ability • Focus-ability
6	Identifying universal themes in the poem 'Richard Cory' by Edwin Arlington Robinson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To facilitate learners to talk about the content/ownership • To assess their understanding of the content through application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google Docs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group sharing • Collaborative discussion • Comment-ability • Edit-ability • Track-ability • Write-ability • Organize-ability

7	Post-lesson assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To test new knowledge by taking the lead to identify poems that depict universal themes • Application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online sites 	Poetry	Guide-ability Track-ability
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Sequencing and pacing of the lecture

I adopted Gagne's Nine Instructional Events to streamline and sequence my lecture in an organized manner (Gagné, Briggs and Wager, 1992). I used Gagne's nine events alongside Bloom's revised taxonomy (Churches, 2008) in order to design engaging and sequential activities and effectively draw on cognitive learning theory activities to support the constructivist theory discussed earlier. The nine lesson events suggested by Gagne *et al.* (1992) include: gaining attention of students, informing students of the objectives, stimulating recall of prior learning, presenting the content, providing learning guidance, eliciting performance (practice), providing feedback, assessing performance and enhancing retention and transfer to the job. Below is a summary of how the nine events were used in this lecture:

Event 1: Gaining attention of students

Activity/strategy/instructions

- Sent an email early in the semester to inform them about online learning activities
- Sent instructions on how to access the video clip (Figure 4)
- Sent an invitation to pre-lesson task via email

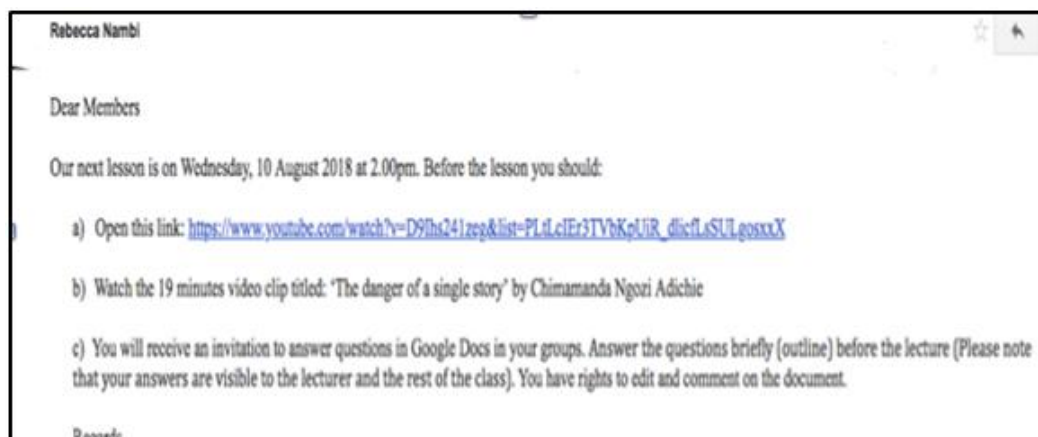


Figure 4: Email message - instructions to access video clip

Event 2: Inform students of the objectives

Activity/strategy/instructions

- Provided learning objectives at the beginning of the f2f session – first slide
- By the end of this lecture trainees should be able to: explain the universal aim of teaching poetry; identify the universal theme(s) in a selected poem;

discuss how a poem of their own choice portrays universal theme(s) and why this is important for secondary school learners

Event 3: Stimulate recall of prior learning

Activity/strategy/instructions

- Analyzing pictures relating to literary characters that reflect universal themes
- Brainstorming
- Group work before the lesson

Event 4: Present the content

- F2f discussions
- Exposition
- Brainstorming
- Examples of universal themes were suggested by students

Event 5: Provide learning guidance

- Learners were guided through different steps to access the video before the lesson and to work in groups to answer questions about the clip
- Working in groups on Google Docs
- Examples provided by both students and the teacher
- Relating content to contextual events
- Refer to Figure 4

Event 6: Elicit performance (practice)

- Students were asked to identify universal themes in a particular poem
- Discussion
- Refer to Figure 3

Event 7: Provide feedback

- Informal assessment during whole class discussions
- Verbal feedback

Event 8: Assess performance

- Written feedback to students' responses
- Take home assignment
- Submit hand-written responses: Take-home assignment – Group work activity: present a one-page write-up of a) the subject matter of the poem you have selected b) discuss the universal theme(s) of the poem that you would teach to a secondary school class of your choice.

Event 9: Enhance retention and transfer to the job

- Formal assessment
- Students selected their own poems and discussed how they reflect universal themes

Poetry in the digital world: some precedents

Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996), Pahl and Rowsell (2012) and Lankshear and Knobel (2011) are some of the renowned writers who advocate multimodality in the study of Literature. They argue for the broadening of literary studies to include the written word plus other modes of communication that a text may imply. These could include images, animations, sounds, music, gestures and movement. Thus the analysis of literary texts such as poems involves reading, producing, responding, analysing and interacting with different modes of communication in addition to written words. This requires “using signs, signals, codes, graphic images” (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011, p. 21) when studying novels plays or poems. The use of images downloaded from the Internet during my lecture was necessary because online resources can also enhance the study of Literature.

Curwood and Cowell (2011) report the preparations, successes and some frustrations when they used online resources to teach a poetry unit to 10th grade English students in their contexts. The takeaway from their experience is that detailed preparation is very important and one should be ready to revisit their methods of online instruction. The online activities for my lesson however unlike the ones prepared by Curwood and Cowell (2011) were mainly meant to provide a platform for collaboration and not “a complex blending of technical elements and ethos” (p.114) mainly due to the fact that the learners in my context are still at the initial stages of learning online. A review of Emert’s (2015) experience when he pairs poetry with technology was also useful in emphasizing the principles of creativity and reaffirming that “Poetry ... invites us to consider the use of available multimedia technologies to deepen students’ understanding and appreciation” (p.64). For instance the images I chose to provoke students’ prior knowledge had the effect of appealing to students’ emotions towards the tragic characters/heroes in the literary texts.

Developing an online learning activity

I relied on Gagne’s nine events of instruction to develop activities for my lesson as indicated in the previous section. However, Salmon’s (2016) five-stage model was crucial in guiding me to develop appropriate tasks at different stages. Salmon (2016) uses the metaphor of a flight of steps to argue that collaboration is *developed* gradually as students and the teacher climb the collaboration steps. In the same way the initial communications with students as discussed earlier helped me not only to attract their attention, but to also build their confidence to share their ideas quite openly. Initially, the responses were few but as they gained confidence I noticed that some of them addressed me directly in their responses especially after I sent reminders to them via social media and e-mail messages (Figure 2 and 4).

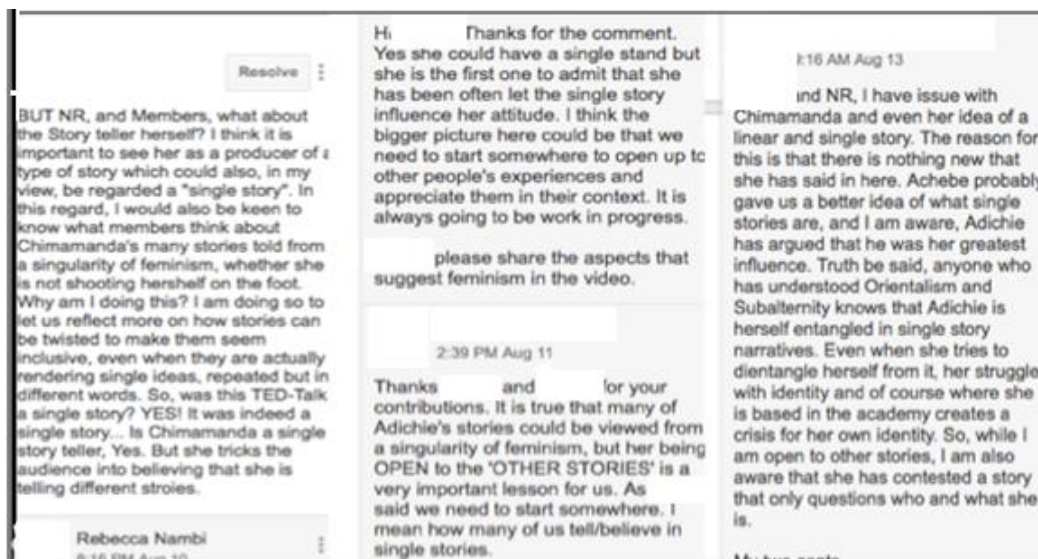


Figure 5: Some of the students' messages that indicate increased collaboration and discussion

The students in Figure 5 above however seem to deviate from the questions they were meant to discuss but nonetheless their contributions indicated to me that they were getting comfortable as a team (Salmon, 2016) and hence I developed more tasks to take the lecture forward. Follow this link to view the dates that show how learners increasingly worked together over time: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HrgeWBjB1gtcUr-Twdyt00RTW6NZDPHNVnhcvv2PVOU/edit?ts=5b73ea81>

Mayer's (2017) principles of how to develop appropriate multimedia materials for online lessons guided me to *develop* materials that appeal to different senses with the aim of sustaining learners' interest in the lesson and focusing their attention on the content. For instance, the images I used at the beginning of the f2f session appealed to the sight sense while the video clip before the lesson relates to the voice principle (Mayer, 2017) and it was useful in creating an atmosphere of integration of other disciplines in the teaching of poetry. Mayer's (2017) principles linked directly to the multimodal nature of literacy studies (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011) and hence the *development* of suitable materials and instructions that led to different levels of interaction (Anderson's, 2004). For instance, peer-to-peer and expert-to-peer collaborations were observed when learners were involved in group work.

Curating and reusing materials was another important aspect to consider under the *develop* phase. For instance it was necessary to download the video clip rather than just viewing it directly from YouTube because some students found it hard to access (Figure 2). In such cases I had to share using WhatsApp media from my computer where it was stored. All lecture materials such as PowerPoint presentation, instructions to learners, and copies of the e-mails were stored in one folder to mitigate the possibility of losing lesson time while trying to locate them on the computer.

Implementing the pilot online learning activity

For my online learning activities to be effective it was necessary to: motivate learners to be interested in the lesson; ensure they had access to ICT tools and the Internet; continually guide learners' online activities and design appropriate materials and activities that were aligned to the lecture content and the language education programme. To a large extent the online activities were successfully carried out because learners consistently participated although there some of them needed more guidance than others. The learners were able to receive the initial email inviting them into the lecture and an observation of their comments reveals that their interest was actually captured immediately as indicated by their comments that included phrases such as "Thanks for the initiative", "I will be waiting" and "Noted with thanks". In addition, the pre-lesson online activity of watching the video clip helped to make the relevant connections and sustain their interest as one of the students in Figure 2 writes. Although some groups were slow in responding to the pre-lecture exercise in Google Docs the flexibility, view-ability and synchronous-ability of Google Docs allowed for students to respond at different times and this in a way ensured the 'life' of the document as work in progress. Follow these links for evidence:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HrgeWBjB1gtcUr-Twdyt00RTW6NZDPHNVnhcvv2PVOU/edit?ts=5b73ea81>

https://docs.google.com/document/d/121tdLdq4I4mn0GozhFsE9K5_rKQUxI23EAuY1qHfqMQ/edit?ts=5b715001

The technological challenges included: weak band width, heavy PowerPoint presentation, weak connectivity to the Internet and the edit-ability of Google Docs that sometimes led to delete-ability. To address these challenges we used different methods to connect to the Internet especially given the fact the School of Education Wi-Fi was overloaded during certain periods of the day. Some learners had to use hotspots on their phones and I had to share my personal hotspot using my phone with some students. In addition, some learners worked as a group on a single device especially during the group work activity when analyzing universal aims in a poem. There were instances when some students accidentally deleted the information in Google Docs and I had to re-insert some phrases of the poem. However like Al-Azawei, Parslow and Lundqvist (2016) recommend there is need to continually train online learners and instructors in how to work collaboratively online.

Evaluating the pilot

In this section I evaluate the general process my pilot online learning activity (Rowntree, 1977). I evaluated my online learning activity by asking one student and one lecturer to make remarks in relation to some specific aspects. I had informal talks with both evaluators about the online activities before I sent them emails regarding the same.

Evaluation from colleague

Aidah² is a colleague in the department and I chose her as an evaluator because of her keen interest in online learning activities and because of the fact that she is familiar with the class I worked with having taught them the previous academic year. I sent her an email and I attached copies of my proposed activities and a PowerPoint version of the lesson (Figure 6). Aidah's feedback raised some major issues that I had to address.

She suggested that I ask students to summarize the contents of the video when we meet for the f2f session. This enabled me to attract their immediate attention in relation to a familiar topic and it gave an opportunity to other learners to catch up. Aidah also commented that when students make several shifts between activities, e.g. from reading to working on the screen then to discussion, there is a danger of losing time. Hence I used group leaders to manage the activities. Finally, she suggested that I needed to remind students to charge their devices before the lesson. I reminded them through a message on WhatsApp. Figure 6 is a screenshot of my communication with Aidah.

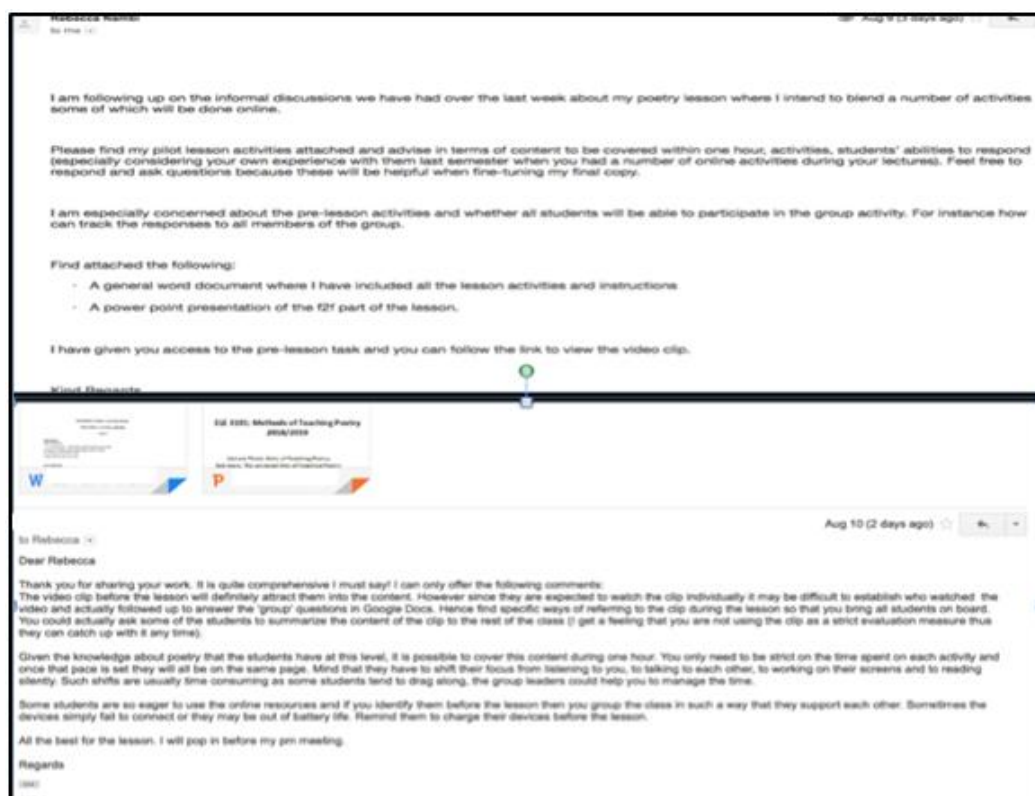


Figure 6: My communication with evaluator one

² Pseudonyms have been used for the colleague and the student.

Feedback from student

Emmanuel appreciated the online activities and in his communication I sense that he could replicate the same in his own classes. His concerns rotated around weak connectivity and this echoes what other students mentioned in their WhatsApp messages. In addition, social media in Uganda is taxed by the government and this implies that the students may fail log in unless they choose to work at the university. In this case, the idea of blending online and f2f activities is vital, for example students can work on the hard copy of the poem if they cannot access it online. See Figure 7 for the evidence of my communication with Emmanuel.

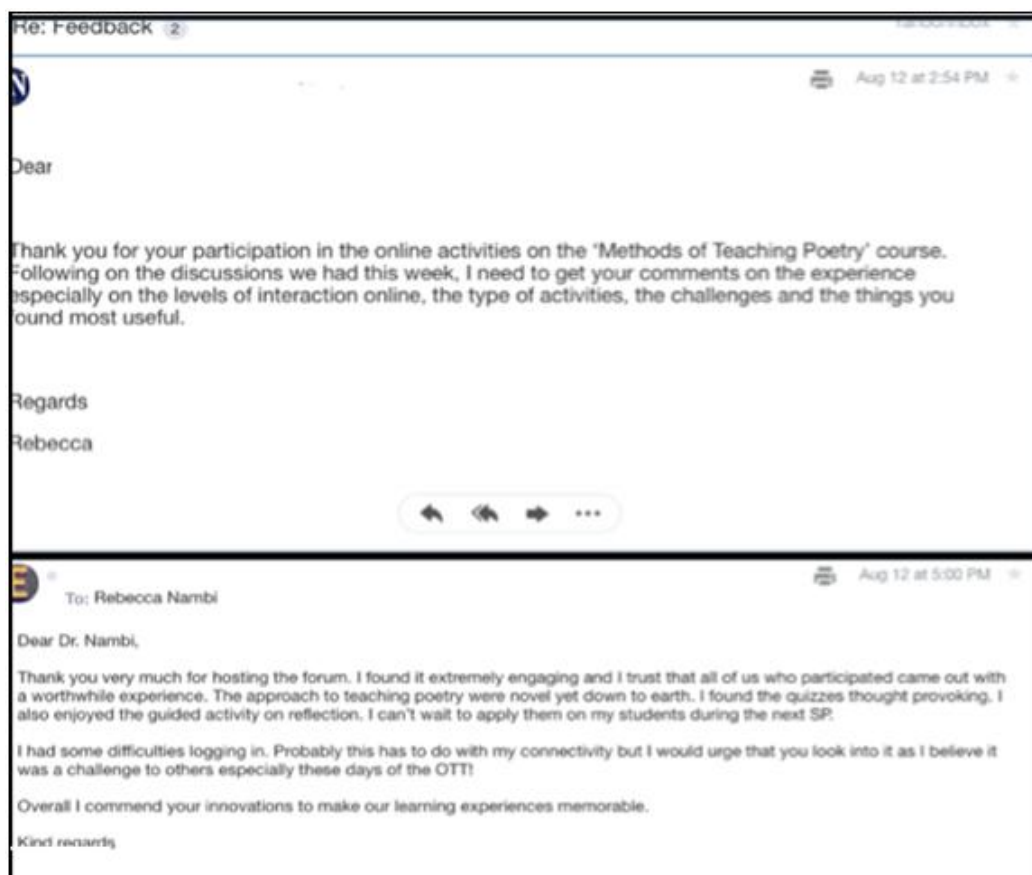


Figure 7: My communication with evaluator two

In addition to the above forms of evaluation, I considered learners' responses to the take-home assignment to determine whether there was any observable change in their work. Figure 8 illustrates that the learners followed the instructions and identified the universal theme of religious hypocrisy in their poem. However a closer look at the poem shows that there is more to it than religious hypocrisy. In the final implementation I had to emphasize the importance of examining the poem as a whole than simply focusing on one part of it.

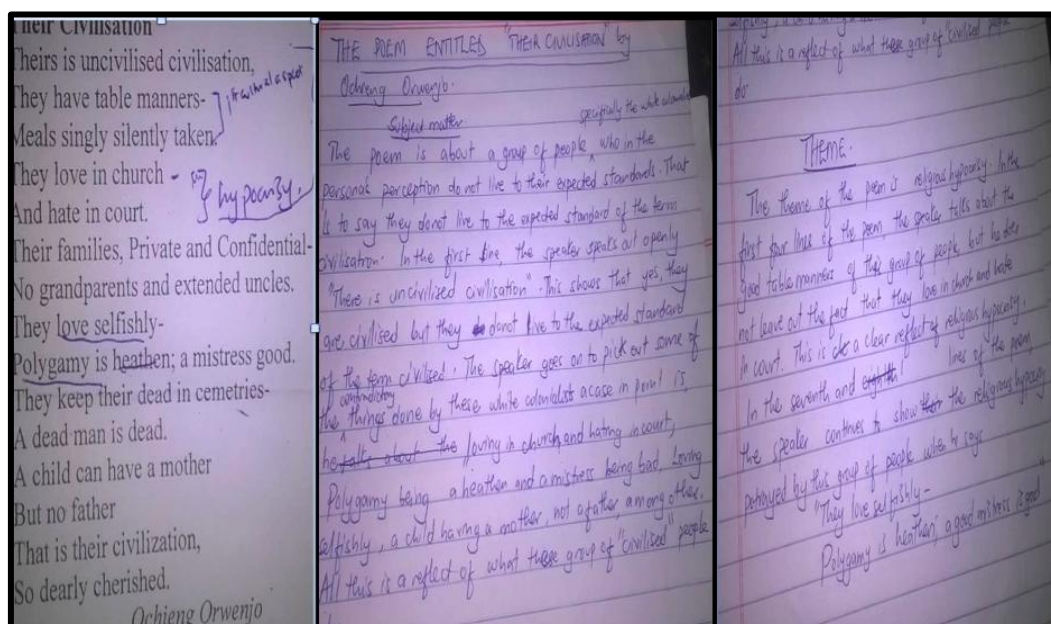


Figure 8: One group's response to the take-home assessment questions

Conclusion

The TEDDIE learning design model provided me with specific language to use when talking about designing online activities, for instance, the need to observe 'precedents', the importance of making '1st connections', the difference between 'models and learning theories'. Before I started this small project I did not realize the intensity of the work until I went through processes of designing my pilot lecture. The intense effort expended towards this lecture is clear testimony that online design needs to be apportioned more attention in terms of training and materials. The TEDDIE model (Hodgkinson-Williams *et al.*, 2018) was useful in defining the scope of my learning design since at each phase specific aspects of the lesson were focused on. Theme 2 which is titled Design provided for me moments of clarity about ways of matching appropriate pedagogical strategies with specific learning theories. This knowledge was readily transferable to my poetry lecture.

The challenges related to adopting the TEDDIE model mainly rotate around the designing process which is quite detailed and requires so many activities on the part of the teacher. For instance, the pilot poetry lecture reported here began almost a week before the actual f2f session and it involved actual online interactions with the students. While this is a good teaching practice as per the constructivism learning theory, it makes the lecture repetitious and demanding for both the lecturer and the students as they go over the same content while using different media. In addition, the focus on collaborative opportunities during the lecture may lead to lack of depth when discussing the content since it is very important to create space for all members to participate as different activities are blended. The key point to learn from this challenge is that lecture activities have to be moderated to suit the available time. Like one of my evaluators, Aidah in Figure 6 above mentioned and they were related more to my educational context than to the adoption of the TEDDIE model. The ICT

challenges such as poor Internet connectivity were addressed quite easily and the major lesson I have learned from this process is that in addition to planning thoroughly for the online activities, the educator needs to always have a backup plan in case things do not work out. The model enables various collaborative learning activities both online and f2f especially in a context where the traditional teacher-centred approaches still abide.

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