

Outcome-based Teaching Approach Applied in Nobel Laureates in Literature: A Synthesis of Best Practice

Yinghong Tang^{1, a}

¹XianDa College of Economics & Humanities Shanghai International Studies University (SISU),
Shanghai, China

^a2111102@xdsisu.edu.cn

Abstract

Due to the unprecedented pandemic, the blended/ hybrid approach was applied in more and more educational institutions because of its mobility, flexibility...etc. In this module, the readings of Nobel laureates in literature are selected, the teaching content and teaching form were aligned with the teaching purpose. The teaching content was based on themes: love, gender relationship, hope and disillusionment, human nature, and disgrace. In this research study, SORS reading strategies questionnaire was used to examine students' reading preferences and instructors could articulate and align the intangible curriculum design based on the questionnaire result (backward design) accordingly.

Keywords

Outcome-based; Nobel Laureates in literature; Academic practice; The instrument Survey of Reading Strategies.

1. Introduction

Numerous facets of human life and the societies of the world have been significantly impacted by the recent rapid advancements in information technology, especially the Internet and the Web; the use of the Internet and information communication technology (ICT) are increasingly incorporated into traditional face-to-face teaching approaches in the field of education [11]. As of 2010, 2/3 of students were using online technologies for instruction in their process of pursuing higher education programs [12]. According to a recent survey by the Higher Education Research Institute, almost half of the teachers incorporated online tools as a supplement to their face-to-face training [3]. Till 2020, due to the unprecedented global pandemic, a lot of students get affected by it and the blended/ hybrid approach as new computer-assisted technology is applied in more and more educational institutions nowadays.

Macdonald (2006) once summarized that there were three genres of blended/ hybrid approach conceptualizations [6]. The first one was about students meeting on campus and engaging in asynchronous online activities. The second one referred to those who utilized synchronous meetings and social network technologies blended with asynchronous work and face-to-face meetings to structure a course. The third one was the most common one that combined campus-based and online students together, increased their autonomy and enabled them to learn much more flexibly. Under this circumstance, both instructors and students began to realize the importance of using the blended/ hybrid approach in their classes because of its mobility, flexibility, convenience, efficiency...etc. Hence, it is quite essential to examine the outcome of the blended/hybrid approach and try to figure out the best practices.

Compared to the traditional face-to-face learning environment, the blended course is a less intensive (time flexible), more discussion and reading-oriented way of continuing literary study. That is, the curriculum is designed in a planned, pedagogically valuable manner; and not just a

combination of computer-assisted online with face-to-face but a trade-off (replacement) of face-to-face time with online activity [7]. Furthermore, the blended/ hybrid approach integrates all teaching materials in a more appropriate and creative manner, and in this way, it goes beyond the advantages mentioned above such as its flexibility, convenience, efficiency...etc. The true advantage of the blended approach integrates face-to-face communication and online text-based exchanges and helps students to complete their learning tasks and hit better teaching targets (outcome).

In this literary module, we applied the blended/ hybrid teaching approach and selected readings of Nobel laureates in literature based on outcome orientation; in that case, the teaching content and teaching form were aligned with the teaching concept. The teaching content was based on themes: love, gender relationship, hope and disillusionment, human nature, and disgrace; and rational use of network resources. The teaching form was the blended/ hybrid teaching approach and courses are then seamlessly operational where the transition between classroom meetings and online component is minimal [6]. The traditional face-to-face learning environment has been used for centuries, and now we combined traditional face-to-face instruction with computer-assisted instruction, which we shifted from content-centred to outcome-based teaching mode to improve students learning results. Moreover, ideological and ethnic elements were integrated into this module as well so that students can perceive life, understand the meaning of life, and cultivate a humanistic spirit.

2. Critical Review

According to Bonk and Graham (2005) that utilizing a blended/ hybrid approach affected teaching outcomes in many different aspects [1]. For example, enabling a blended approach in teaching help with addressing issues of accessing without time and location restriction; moreover, its convenience provided additional flexibility to both learners and instructors to improve their user-friendly experience through a different modality. Furthermore, the blended/ hybrid approach enhances the pedagogy to some extent, instructors could also upload additional resources and supplementary teaching materials online to enhance their teaching performance. In addition, compared with the previous times, the blended/ hybrid approach brought a radical transformation of the pedagogy. Instructors could guide students to construct knowledge through dynamic interactions actively [1].

The blended/ hybrid approach, as a combination of education principal theory and technology, was widely applied in current higher educational institutions, and more and more research was conducted to examine its teaching effect. Rasheed et al (2020) pointed out a research gap that many of the scholars on blended teaching put emphasis on learner traits, grades, faculty member/learner levels of satisfaction, and/or levels of their engagement while seldom of them focused on instructor, program, or institutional reflections regarding the contributions/challenges of design and implementation [13]. During the process of exploring the blended teaching approach, which was applied in higher educational institutions, the majority of scholars were undertaken based on students' experiences and perspectives. Torrisi-Steele & Drew (2013) confirmed that less than 5% of the scholarship on blending teaching approaches in higher education explores the academic practice, such as curriculum design, professional development and training for instruction [16].

Hence, it is quite essential to explore the academic practice from the perspective of the instructors. The strand that is most helpful in articulating the intangibles of practice is routine and decision-making. The instructional practice is well aligned with the mission and the vision of the class to cultivate a high-efficiency class. During the process of implementing the blended teaching approach, instructors have to consider how to design the curriculum and how to deliver it to students to achieve a better teaching effect. Edwards (2011) indicated that

Instructional practice is the performance and enactment of the curriculum [4]. The instructors applied their knowledge of practice in their authentic class and articulated their own teaching strategies through direct experience. In that case, Nespor (2006) addressed that instructional practice is informed by “knowledge of how instruction works with specific kinds of topics, students, resources, and constraints” (p. 67) [10].

Additionally, recent studies focused on the blended/ hybrid approach as a whole in terms of their online component. Mishra et al (2007) once mentioned different elements in the blended/ hybrid approach [8]. Brown (2016) summarized that both external influences and internal influences have an impact on instructors’ academic practice [2]. Technology, academic workload, institutional environment and students could count as the external influences while instructor attitudes and beliefs and instructor learning are internal influences. Based on the internal and external influences mentioned above formed the instructional practice and thus, a synthesis of a good teaching practice was conducted by the interactions among all these factors. Reid (2014) pointed out that the access and the reliability of the technology could be identified as a barrier in academic practices [14]. Thus, the material aspects of technology and students’ study preferences would be examined in this research and in that case to help instructors to align their academic practice to attain better teaching outcomes.

3. Methodology

Brief Background Overview

XianDa SISU is an undergraduate institution that emphasizes applications and has professional and foreign language qualities. Since this literature course is a general elective that students from different university majors can take, intermediate language proficiency is required of the target students. Through the study of this course, students will be able to comprehend the representative works and writing styles of Nobel Prize winners. Students could also elaborate these themes into postcolonial writing and race, realism and novelistic form, the relation to American and British canons, and the sociology and politics of the Nobel. In addition, students are required to finish the discussion assignment under each category. The purpose of the design is to enrich students’ knowledge storage and their fund of enjoyment and develop their critical thinking ability. Moreover, from a skill perspective, it can enhance their comprehensive language use, literary appreciation, and critical thinking skills, as well as their ability to work in groups, communicate, and use technology.

Through the study of the Nobel Prize in Literature, this lesson is intended to examine the global phenomena of English-language novels. Students are required to read works by the following English-language novelists who win the Nobel in different socio-cultural contexts such as the Great Depression, the Cold War...etc. At the moral literature level, students could understand the spirit of bravery, enterprise, wisdom, modesty, fraternity, sincerity, gratitude, and tolerance in literary works. Furthermore, they learn to correctly understand society and life, increase the sense of social responsibility and mission, and develop a scientific attitude toward learning and continuous improvement, as well as an enterprising spirit and love for life and nature.

Students’ participation in traditional face-to-face English literature courses is relatively low, and it leads to another problem since students are unable to integrate their own lives with their reading experiences and develop diverse reading experiences and aesthetics. As a result, they are unable to benefit from this course’s instruction in enjoying and understanding life and its significance. Hence, this whole module was divided into two parts: online and offline teaching. Students were required to read novels before each session and think independently about the meaning underneath reflected in the literature. During the class, they need to pay close attention and were encouraged to express their own critical thinking in class and examine whether their ultimate literary value was in common. If so, what is that value? Is it aesthetic,

ethical, or political? The teaching content was based on themes: love, gender relationship, hope and disillusionment, human nature, and disgrace (as listed below).

Table 1. Reading List: Nobel Laureates in Literature

Love	Rabindranath Tagore (1913)
	William Butler Yeats (1923)
Gender Relationship	George Bernard Shaw (1925) Pygmalion
	Alice Munro (2013) Run Away
Hope and Disillusionment	William Faulkner (1949) A Rose for Emily
	Ernest Hemingway (1954) Hills Like White Elephants
Human Nature	William Golding (1983) Lord of Flies
	Kazuo Ishiguro (2017) Never Let Me Go
Disgrace	Toni Morrison (1993) <i>Beloved</i>
	John Maxwell Coetzee (2003) <i>Disgrace</i>

Since the purpose of this research is to examine the effect of academic practices in blended/hybrid approach, and the literature review indicates that less than 5% of the scholarship on blending teaching approaches in higher education explores the academic practice, such as curriculum design, professional development and training for instruction [16]. Hence, in this research a 5-point Likert questionnaire was applied in the quantitative research to examine students' reading preferences in this literature course. Moreover, the instrument Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) was used to measure adolescent and adult ESL (English as a second language) students whose awareness and perceived of reading strategies [9].

Moreover, the aim of the survey is also to help students improve their reading comprehension skills. Hence, this survey is very suitable for this research study since its validity and reliability are both examined by many scholars. In this survey, all the statements could be divided into three categories: global reading strategies, problem-solving strategies and support strategies [9]. The data will be collected through the survey platform WenJuanXin via WeChat to target participants, and there are 34 students from various major background finished this survey and SPSS was used to make sure their answers are valid and reliable.

Table 2. Reliability/ Validity Global Reading Strategies (GLOB)

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Item
0.839	14

* $0.8 < \alpha < 0.9$ indicates that the reliability of the questionnaire is very good

Validity Global Reading Strategies (GLOB)			
KMO and Bartlett's Test			
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig.
0.59	232.326	91	<0.001

*KMO > 0.5 indicates that there is a certain relationship between the independent variables designed in the questionnaire and the questionnaire is acceptable;

*Sig. < 0.001 indicates that the questionnaire is qualified for factor analysis

Global Reading Strategies (GLOB)

Reading Strategies	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
2. have a purpose in mind	34	2	5	3.29
4. think about what I know	34	2	5	3.76
5. take an overall view of the text	34	1	5	3.59
7. think about the content of the text to fit reading purpose	34	1	5	2.91
9. review the text by noting its characteristics	34	1	5	2.97
13. read selectively	34	1	5	3.35
16. used tables, figures, and pictures to increase understanding	34	1	5	2.62
18. use content clues to increase understanding	34	1	5	3.47
21. use typographical features (bold/ italics) to identify key information	34	1	5	3.21
22. critically analyze and evaluate the information	34	1	5	2.88
25. try to guess the content	34	1	5	3.97
26. re-read the context to increase understanding	34	3	5	4.29
28. check to see the guesses are right or wrong	34	1	5	3.65

In the Global Reading Strategies category, most of the students go with the strategy “re-read the context to increase understanding” (m=4.29), “try to guess the content” (m=3.97) and “think about what I know” (m=3.76) while reading in English. To the opposite, they seldom “use content clues to increase understanding” (m=2.62) and “critically analyze and evaluate the information” (m=2.88).

Table 3. Reliability/ Validity Support Strategies (SUP)

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Item
0.732	9

* 0.7 < α < 0.8 indicates that the reliability of the questionnaire is very good

Validity Support Strategies (SUP)

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig.
0.58	79.072	36	<0.001

*KMO > 0.5 indicates that there is a certain relationship between the independent variables

designed in the questionnaire and the questionnaire is acceptable;

*Sig. < 0.001 indicates that the questionnaire is qualified for factor analysis

Support Strategies (SUP)

Reading Strategies	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
3. take notes	34	1	5	3.41

6. read aloud	34	1	5	2.56
11. underline or circle information	34	1	5	3.88
14. use reference materials	34	1	5	3.59
19. restate ideas in my own words	34	2	5	3.68
23. find relationships among ideas	34	1	5	3.53
27. raise questions and find answers in the text	34	1	5	3.56
29. guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases	34	2	5	4.09
30. translate from English into native language	34	2	5	4.29
31. think about information in both English and mother tongue	34	1	5	3.76

In the Support Strategies category, most of the students go with the strategy “translate from English into native language” (m=4.29), “guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases” (m=4.09) and “underline or circle information” (m=3.88) while reading in English. Meanwhile, they seldom “read aloud” (m=2.56).

Table 4. Reliability/ Validity Problem Solving Strategies (PROB)

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Item
0.668	7

* $0.6 < a < 0.7$ indicates that the reliability of the questionnaire is acceptable

Validity Problem Solving Strategies (PROB)			
KMO and Bartlett's Test			
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig.
0.58	62.206	21	<0.001

*KMO > 0.5 indicates that there is a certain relationship between the independent variables

designed in the questionnaire and the questionnaire is acceptable;

*Sig. < 0.001 indicates that the questionnaire is qualified for factor analysis

Problem Solving Strategies (PROB)				
Reading Strategies	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
8. read slowly and carefully	34	1	5	3.47
10. refocus their attention	34	2	5	3.94
12. adjust reading speed	34	1	5	3.65
15. pay closer attention to what I am reading	34	2	5	3.82
17. stop from time to time	34	1	5	3.03
20. picture or visualize information to help remember	34	1	5	2.82

As illustrated above, in the Problem-Solving Strategies category, most of the students go with the strategy “refocus their attention” (m=3.94), “pay closer attention to what I am reading” (m=3.82) while reading in English. And they seldom use “picture or visualize information to help remember” (m=2.82).

4. Discussion

The purpose of this research was to examine what kind of reading strategies ESL students use while reading; and in that case, instructors could redesign and align the literature curriculum to fit students’ need and attain a better teaching outcome. After analysing the data from the survey, it revealed the ESL students’ reading habits. “re-read the context to increase understanding” (m=4.29), translate from English into native language (m=4.29), guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases (m=4.09), try to guess the content (m=3.97), underline or circle information (m=3.88) are the top five items that most students go with.

To the opposite, seldom students “read aloud” (m=2.56), “use content clues to increase understanding” (m=2.62), “picture or visualize information to help remember” (m=2.82), or “critically analyze and evaluate the information” (m=2.88). Compared with traditional face-to-face literature course, students do not have too much resource in class and now the blended/hybrid approach could enhance and enrich their reading performance by using picture or visualize information to help remember. Moreover, as mentioned above, the purpose of the design is to enrich students’ knowledge storage and their fund of enjoyment and develop their critical thinking ability.

Table 5. The Use of the Reading Strategies

High-Frequency Strategies	Low-Frequency Strategies
re-read the context to increase understanding (m=4.29)	read aloud (m=2.56)
translate from English into native language (m=4.29)	use content clues to increase understanding (m=2.62)
guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases (m=4.09)	picture or visualize information to help remember (m=2.82).
try to guess the content (m=3.97)	critically analyze and evaluate the information (m=2.88)
underline or circle information (m=3.88)	think about the content of the text to fit reading purpose (m=2.91)

Backward Design

In this module, dual dimension assessment is applied in this literature course. Under the outcome-oriented concept, the curriculum assessment is based on the achievement of curriculum teaching objectives should be based on two dimensions: “teaching performance” and “final achievement”. In that case, diverse role-play activities will be held in class, such as imitation and drama. Students have the right to choose to go with “individual assignment” or “group assignment. Moreover, one thing needs to be mentioned that different from traditional course, peer review and self-evaluation are both integrated in this module to guarantee the final grade is more objective and fairer.

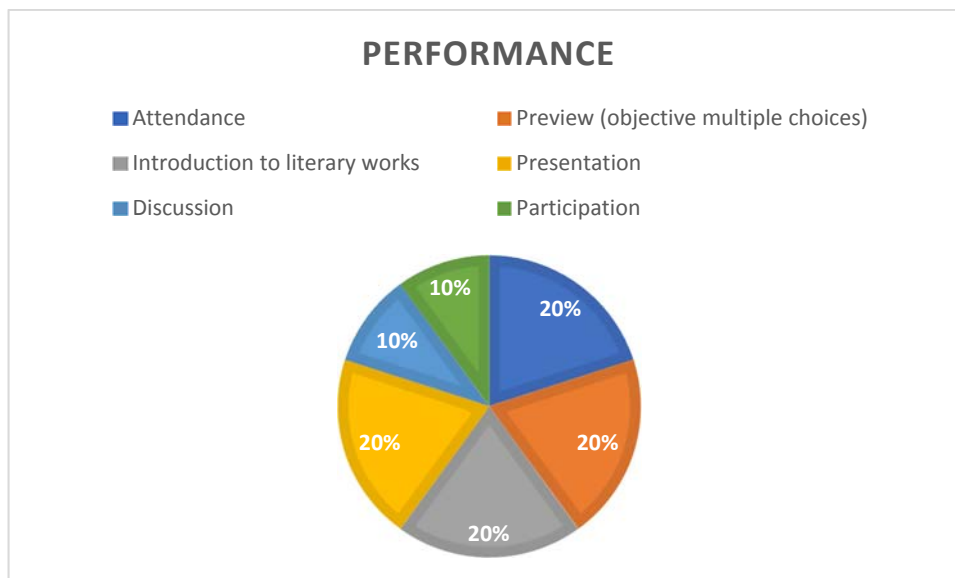


Figure 1. Performance Grading Criteria

Table 6. Assessment (2-dimensional assessment)

Performance	Attendance (20%)	Online: MOOC Platform
	Preview (objective multiple choices) (20%)	Online: MOOC Platform
	Introduction to literary works (20%)	In Class
	Presentation (20%)	Online: MOOC Platform
	Discussion (10%)	Online: MOOC Platform
	Participation (10%)	Online: MOOC Platform
Final Grading Criteria = Performance (60%) + Role Play (20%) + Essay (20%)		

In that case, instructors could re-articulate and align the curriculum and backward design the curriculum in this literature module. The course content is no longer based on their award-winning years' timeline; instead, award-winning works produced in English from diverse socio-cultural background are selected in accordance with a theme, such as family, gender relations, human frailty, technology, and other topics to introduce. Students could learn through class discussion, participation and reflection. Moreover, since every student has different cognitive life experience, and they hold different understandings and opinions towards these literary works; they have right to select the readings that they are interested in to do the presentation and they could do the elaboration research based on their personal interest. The purpose of the assignment is to develop students' research ability. Furthermore, in the process of peer review, they could learn from their peers' presenting and interpretations from different perspectives so that to cultivate their own critical thinking ability.

Additionally, in order to achieve the teaching purpose, the blended/ hybrid teaching approach is applied in this literature course. All the resources and teaching materials are available on MOOC platform. The overall course is divided into 6 modules according to the theme, each module has 2-3 works (in the form of poetry or video clips). Students have two in-class courses and one online course every week and they are asked to watch the recorded content and finish their preview multiple choices task on MOOC platform accordingly. Afterwards, instructors take 5 minutes to introduce a brief overview course process to provide a secure class environment for students. Compared with the traditional instructor-oriented class, the

blended/ hybrid approach enables both instructor and students to engage in and students could feel free to express their idea on MOOC platform.

Evidently, traditional teaching design organizes teaching contents and teaching methods from the discipline knowledge system, while the outcome-based teaching design be backward designed from the element of curriculum teaching objectives. During this procedure, instructors could have reflections, align and articulate the curriculum design in the teaching process. Many changes and attempts have been made based on the experience and reflection. In today's educational environment with such convenient access to information and resources, how to use the Internet for general education courses in literature to break through the limitations brought by traditional teaching and maximize the purpose of serving general education is the direction all the educators have been pursuing.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, with the technology development, the education industry, especially the computer-assisted instruction is booming. Firstly, instructors apply various design and approach in their teaching process and they put emphasis on re-designing the curriculum [7]. The instructor should step aside and supervise the whole teaching process and be able to see beyond what has been done in the traditional classroom. Furthermore, instructors always seek for a better way to articulate pedagogy and now the multiple delivery methods help them on the agile thinking and how to make decisions. In that case to attain the better and more effective teaching goal. Teacher and students interact with each other to deliver content knowledge. After a lot of practice teacher could do the agile thinking faster and faster. Swan (2004) once addressed that learner resources interaction, as the best interaction practices, provides continuous human interaction between instructors and students [15].

In addition, the second helpful strand is objective assessments and Gerbic (2009) indicated that, "assessment is key to participation, ownership and motivation" (p. 35) in a blended course [5]. Self- evaluation and peer review are both took into consideration and enable students to fully engage in and make class flexible and dynamic; students could take the ownership on what they are going to learn. However, due to sample size is quite limited, further investigation will be needed to implement this study. Overall, outcome-based teaching approach are consistent with the teaching purpose and re-design the curriculum in a backward way and offer clear and usable strategies to re-design a course for blended/ hybrid approach. Moreover, since it is a new technology apply in the field of education, if the blended/ hybrid approach continues to expand and become a mainstream for higher education, then it is quite necessary to take the examples of effective course designs and well-supported effective teaching practices into consideration; and align and articulate the curriculum from time to time to fit the teaching purpose.

References

- [1] Bonk, C., and Graham, C. Handbook of blended learning: Global perspectives, local designs, San Francisco, CA: Pfeiffer Publishing, 2005.
- [2] Brown, M. G. (2016). Blended instructional practice: A review of the empirical literature on instructors' adoption and use of online tools in face-to-face teaching. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 31, 1-10.
- [3] Eagan, K., Stolzenber, E. B., Berdan Lozano, J., Aragon, M. C., Ramirez Suchard, M., & Hurtado, S. (2014). Undergraduate teaching faculty: The 2013–2014 HERI faculty survey. Los Angeles, CA: Higher Education Research Institute.

- [4] Edwards, R. (2011). Translating the prescribed into the enacted curriculum in college and school. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 43(s1), 38–54.
- [5] Gerbic, P. (2009). Including online discussions within campus-based students' learning environments. In *Effective blended learning practices: Evidence-based perspectives in ICT-facilitated education* (pp. 21-38). IGI Global.
- [6] MacDonald, J. (2006). *Blended learning and online tutoring: A good practice guide*.
- [7] McGee, P., & Reis, A. (2012). Blended course design: A synthesis of best practices. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 16(4), 7-22.
- [8] Mishra, P., Koehler, M. J., & Zhao, Y. (2007). Faculty development by design: Integrating technology in higher education. (IAP.).
- [9] Mokhtari, K., & Sheorey, R. (2002). Measuring ESL students' awareness of reading strategies. *Journal of developmental education*, 25(3), 2-11.
- [10] Nesper, J. (2006). *Technology and the politics of instruction*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum and Associates.
- [11] Norberg, A., Dziuban, C. D., & Moskal, P. D. (2011). A time-based blended learning model. *On the Horizon*, 19(3), 207–216.
- [12] Radford, A. W. (2011). Learning at a distance: Undergraduate enrollment in distance education courses and degree programs. *Stats in brief*. NCES 2012–154. National Center for Educational Statistics.
- [13] Rasheed, R. A., Kamsin, A., & Abdullah, N. A. (2020). Challenges in the online component of blended learning: A systematic review. *Computers & Education*, 144, 103701.
- [14] Reid, P. (2014). Categories for barriers to adoption of instructional technologies. *Education and Information Technologies*, 19(2), 383–407.
- [15] Swan, K. (2004). Relationships between interactions and learning in online environments. *The Sloan Consortium*, 4.
- [16] Torrisi-Steele, G., & Drew, S. (2013). The literature landscape of blended learning in higher education: The need for better understanding of academic blended practice. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 18(4), 371–383.