



Designing Online Instructional Scenarios to Support Blended Learning in Upper Secondary Schools: A Case Study in Literature Education

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Abstract

By employing theoretical and case study research methods (with a focus on Literature education), this paper aims to develop a model of an online instructional scenario (OIS), which concretizes a face-to-face lesson plan into a structured plan suitable for online learning environments. The construction of an OIS enables teachers to conceptualize the overall alignment between in-person and online instructional activities. Additionally, it serves as a reference for school administrators to assess the extent and effectiveness of online teaching implementation by subject teachers.

Keywords: online teaching, online instructional scenario, management of online teaching

1. Introduction

Successfully implementing digital transformation in education is currently one of the key priorities of the Ho Chi Minh City Department of Education and Training. As outlined in Decision No. 271/QĐ-SGDĐT dated February 10, 2023, the integration of online teaching is not only a concrete measure but also serves as a key indicator for evaluating the outcomes of digital transformation in the educational sector. More significantly, the city's education system has set a strategic objective: by 2025, at least 35% of the general education curriculum at the upper secondary level should be delivered through online formats. This is both a meaningful and timely goal in the context of ongoing digital advancements.

However, one of the pressing challenges lies in how teachers can effectively organize and implement online instruction, and how educational administrators at different levels can systematically assess the feasibility and quality of such implementation. At present, there is still no unified or standardized procedure for developing online lesson plans, resulting in a lack of quality assurance in the instructional content provided online (Nguyen, 2018) ^[3].

Various factors influence this situation, yet within the scope of this paper, we focus specifically on the concept of the online instructional scenario (OIS). When appropriately designed and applied, the OIS can serve as a foundational tool for evaluating the proportion and effectiveness of online instruction currently being implemented in upper secondary schools. This study proposes a model for designing OISs based on the instructional characteristics of the subject Literature at the upper secondary level.

2. Content

2.1 Characteristics of online learning supporting face-to-face instruction

According to Circular No. 09/2021/TT-BGDĐT on the management and organization of online learning, online instruction in Vietnamese secondary schools can be categorized into two primary modes:

a) Fully online instruction (Substituting face-to-face instruction)

Description: Teachers record video lectures covering an entire topic, prepare complete digital learning materials and assessments, and then package the content using standardized formats (e.g., SCORM).

The entire package is uploaded to a learning management system (LMS), such as K12Online or VnEdu. Students use their accounts to access the LMS, view the lessons, download materials, and complete assessments independently. Their performance is recorded and counted as formal assessment results, equivalent to traditional in-class testing.

Advantages: Flexible in terms of study time, rich learning resources, and the possibility of reusing the learning modules. **Disadvantages:** Requires significant initial investment from teachers in both content and design. Students do not have direct interaction with teachers to ask questions during the learning process.

b) Online instruction supporting face-to-face teaching

Description: Teachers prepare relatively simple learning tasks, typically comprising one or several small activities related to the topic. These tasks, along with instructions and resources, are uploaded to the LMS. Students complete them before and/or after face-to-face class sessions.

Advantages: Preparation is straightforward and less time-consuming. Students are encouraged to engage with the lesson before class and have the opportunity to discuss and clarify during in-person sessions.

Disadvantages: Requires thoughtful instructional design to ensure coherence between online and in-person phases.

Both models possess relevant features that can be effectively applied in today's teaching context. However, considering the readiness of educational institutions, the digital infrastructure, and teachers' competencies in Ho Chi Minh City, we argue that online instruction supporting face-to-face teaching is currently the more practical option.

Based on this approach, we propose the following three-phase model for blended instruction:

Pre-class Self-Study Phase: Students engage in online learning activities assigned prior to the in-person lesson to achieve one or more of the learning objectives.

In-class Instruction Phase: Teachers conduct face-to-face lessons to address the majority of the learning objectives. Homework tasks are assigned via the LMS for follow-up.

Post-class Self-Study Phase: Students complete more advanced or comprehensive learning tasks online to meet the remaining objectives of the topic.

2.2 Principles for designing online instructional scenarios

According to Kurilovas and Zilinskiene (2013) ^[4], an online instructional scenario (OIS) refers to a structured set of learning activities conducted in a virtual learning environment, utilizing specific instructional units. More specifically, it is a system of learning tasks implemented online using appropriate digital learning resources, designed to help students achieve targeted learning outcomes.

Le Duc Long (2019) ^[2] further elaborates that OISs—depending on the instructional mode (supportive or fully online)—can be presented in various forms. However, they must reflect the pedagogical closeness of traditional classroom teaching, while simultaneously leveraging the richness, interactivity, and engagement potential of digital resources.

Based on these insights, we propose the following principles for effective OIS design:

Alignment with curriculum and learning objectives

To evaluate the proportion of learning content transitioned

online, the simplest approach is to quantify how many learning objectives are addressed through online instruction. Therefore, online content must align closely with curriculum standards and the defined learning objectives of each topic (as outlined in textbooks or syllabi). Teachers must select the appropriate content and objectives for conversion into online tasks during different phases of the blended learning process.

Inclusion of specific activities and clear instructions

Each objective should be embedded in one or more concrete learning tasks. OISs must provide detailed guidance to students regarding what to do, how to work with specific resources, the duration of the activity, and the expected outcomes. The more detailed the instructions, the more effective the learning process becomes.

Integration of assessment and evaluation mechanisms

At the end of each activity, teachers should integrate suitable forms of assessment—such as multiple-choice questions, short answers, essays, or product submissions. These tools must be compatible with the technical functionalities of the LMS to ensure optimal performance. Assessment results can be used to verify students' achievement of learning objectives and serve as essential evidence for school administrators to evaluate the level of online learning implementation.

Optimal use of the LMS's technical features

Each educational institution has the autonomy to choose an LMS that best suits its operational conditions. Thus, LMS features vary significantly across schools. Teachers must understand the specific capabilities of their LMS to tailor online tasks appropriately. For example, some systems support SCORM-compliant e-lessons, while others do not. Some offer advanced quiz options, whereas others are limited to basic question formats. Familiarity with LMS functions helps teachers design effective, engaging, and resource-efficient OISs.

2.3 Designing online instructional scenarios - A case study in Literature

Literature is a subject characterized by the necessity for both teachers and students to engage directly with texts, including both those found in textbooks and supplemental materials. As such, organizing learning activities within an online environment can significantly reduce the amount of in-class time required for tasks such as reading comprehension (knowledge formation), text creation, and developing visual learning products (e.g., concept maps for practice and reinforcement). This characteristic allows teachers to address multiple learning objectives during the pre-class and post-class self-study phases of instruction.

Based on this rationale, we propose the following steps for designing an online instructional scenario (OIS) in the context of Literature education:

Step 1: Select learning objectives for pre-class and post-class self-study phases

In the pre-class self-study phase, teachers can select learning objectives that only require students to operate at the recognition or recall level of Bloom's taxonomy. These objectives can often be met through independent reading of the textbook or instructional materials. This stage is akin to the current "preparation for a new lesson" but is conducted

within an LMS environment.

For the post-class phase, teachers can increase the cognitive complexity of the tasks (e.g., comprehension, application), as students at this stage have already participated in the face-to-face lesson and acquired the necessary foundational knowledge and skills. It is important to note that only up to 35% of the total learning content should be delivered through online means, in line with policy guidance. Therefore, teachers should avoid attempting to transfer too many instructional elements onto the LMS.

Example: In most Literature lessons, there is a preliminary section dedicated to linguistic and literary knowledge. This portion generally requires only basic recognition-level cognition. Students can read and identify key information independently, which lays a foundation for more complex text analysis later. Hence, teachers may upload this section to the LMS with an accompanying task, such as: "Read the Literary Knowledge section and complete the associated multiple-choice quiz." The percentage of correct answers can be used to evaluate student engagement with this activity.

Step 2: Prepare digital learning resources appropriate to the task

The process of digitizing learning materials should be conducted using suitable tools and software. Digital resources may include videos, audio recordings, infographics, mind maps, multiple-choice question sets, open-ended exercises, etc. All resources should meet the standards of academic integrity, pedagogical relevance, and legal compliance, avoiding potential conflicts related to content accuracy or copyright.

Step 3: Design the sequence of online activities (pre- and post-class self-study)

Due to the nature of online learning, teaching methods and techniques during the self-study phases must be carefully

selected to align with the learners' conditions and contexts. Basic instructional strategies may include: answering questions, participating in educational games, constructing concept maps, or completing short assignments. These activities must also be compatible with students' available technology (devices, internet bandwidth, etc.).

Each online task should correspond to one or more learning objectives. Teachers must allocate a reasonable amount of time for each task to prevent student overload. The time allocated, combined with the associated learning objectives, also serves as a basis for calculating the percentage of content transitioned to online formats within the topic.

Step 4: Design the sequence of in-class learning activities (face-to-face phase)

This phase mirrors the lesson activities already planned by the teacher. However, teachers should integrate the results of students' pre-class online learning into the structure of classroom activities. Likewise, any learning task that requires more time than the classroom allows can be transferred to the post-class online phase.

An illustrative online instructional scenario model based on the above design principles:

Topic: Land and People (Short Story)

Instructional Focus: Reading Comprehension – Literary Text Analysis

Delivery Format: 2 face-to-face periods, 1 online period

1) Learning objectives

Recognize and analyze key narrative elements such as characters, storyline, narrator, narrative perspective, narrator's voice, and character dialogue.

Analyze and evaluate the ideological theme and the message conveyed by the story through its artistic structure; identify textual evidence that supports the theme.

2) Instructional scenario content

Phase	Objective(s)	Content	Activities	Learning Materials	Duration
Pre-class	(1), (2)	Literary Knowledge	- Students read the "Literary Knowledge" section in the textbook. - Complete a multiple-choice quiz on LMS about short story features.	Textbook (Literature 10, Vol. 2, CTST Curriculum, p. 59); Infographic; 5 MCQs on narrative elements	10 minutes
	(1), (2)	"Bông chanh đỏ" (Excerpt)	- Students read the excerpt from Đất rừng Phương Nam in the textbook. - Complete LMS quiz on story content.	Textbook (Literature 10, Vol. 2, CTST Curriculum, p. 62); 5 MCQs on plot, characters, key events	15 minutes
In-class	(1), (2), (3), (4)	Theme, Characters, Plot, Message	- Teacher checks students' prior knowledge (from the online phase). - Facilitates in-depth analysis activities on genre features and story content.	PowerPoint presentation	90 minutes
Post-class	(4)	Meaningful message writing	- Students write a short paragraph on a meaningful message (e.g., about nature or Southern Vietnamese culture) derived from the story. - Submit via LMS. - Teacher provides feedback via LMS or in the next class session.	Rubric for paragraph assessment	20 minutes

3. Conclusion

Through the application of theoretical research and a case

study in the subject of Literature, this paper has proposed a model for designing online instructional scenarios (OISs) that

aligns with the current needs of online teaching in secondary education. Based on this model, teachers can systematically monitor and manage the online teaching process; school administrators are provided with a reliable framework to assess the extent to which instructional content has been transitioned from face-to-face to online formats.

The proposed OIS model also enables alignment between instructional objectives and digital pedagogical methods, while supporting the documentation and centralized storage of evidence regarding both teaching and learning in virtual environments.

This study offers a conceptual and practical foundation drawn from theoretical frameworks and real-world experience. However, it has not yet been empirically validated through field implementation. In future research, we plan to conduct experimental studies in real school settings across various subjects and educational content areas to further refine and enhance the proposed OIS model.

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