IMPROVING THE TEACHING AND LEARNING QUALITY BY DEVELOPING AUN-QA BASED COURSE OUTLINES

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Abstract: The primary purpose of this article is to provide detailed process in developing AUN-QA based course outlines as a way to improve the quality of teaching and learning. AUN-QA which stands for ASEAN University Network Quality Assurance is selected due to its recognition of raising academic standards and enhancing education, research and service among AUN university members (AUN-QA guideline, 2010). It is a research and development study which is conducted through the following stages: (1) research and information collecting from AUN-QA guideline, the teaching and learning present condition of English Department, State University of Malang and the course outline models; (2) planning the arrangement of questionnaire items and its distribution to students; (3) developing AUN-QA course outlines; (4) validating the products by AUN-QA and curriculum experts; and (5) trying out the products to the students.

Key words: AUN-QA course outlines, research and development.

Abstrak: Tujuan penulisan artikel ini adalah menberikan gambaran mendetail proses pengembangan Rencana Pembelajaran Semester (RPS) berstandar AUN-QA sebagai salah satu cara memperbaiki mutu belajar mengajar. AUN-QA (*Asean University Network Quality Assurance*) dipilih sebagai acuan baku mutu karena upaya badan tersebut dalam meningkatkan kualitas akademik, mutu pendidikan, penelitian dan pengabdian masyarakat di antara universitas-universita anggota ASEAN (*AUN-QA guideline*, 2010). Metode penelitian ini adalah *Research and Development* yang dilakukan melalui tahapan berikut: (1) mengumpulkan informasi terkait dengan kriteria AUN-QA, keadaan PBM di Jurusan Bahasa Inggris, Fakultas Sastra, Universitas Negeri Malang, dan juga model RPS; (2) menyusun kuesioner dan menyebarkannya ke mahasiswa; (3) mengembangkan RPS berstandar AUN-QA; (4) memvalidasi RPS oleh ahli kurikulum dan ahli AUN-QA; dan (5) uji coba hasil revisi RPS ke mahasiswa.

Kata-kata kunci: Rencana Pembelajaran Semester, AUN-QA, *research and development.*

Based on our teaching experiences so far, it would be quite impossible to come to the class empty-handed without having some preparations or activities to be done in the classrooms. It means that coming to the class needs some preparation before-hand in terms of planning what the teach-ers and the students need to do in the classrooms. The planning itself involves many kinds of decisions that both teachers and students need to implement in the classrooms, such as objectives, resources, activities, timing, assessments, and other aspects of the lesson. Richards and Renandya (2002) argues that planning is often viewed as a key aspect of teaching a successful lesson. In addition to the cours-es taught at English Department, we are on the opinion of

formulating and plan-ning course outlines contribute to the suc-cess of teaching and learning since it has crucial roles as learning management, learning contract, permanent record, and learning guide during the teaching and learning processes. Moreover, many insti-tutions consider the formulation of course outlines as a statement of educational in-tent and direction which provides their learners with clear, concise, accurate and available information related to the course content and administration.

Course outlines becomes the learning management for the institutions due to its characteristics in managing the teaching and learning processes. It also happens to be the learning contract which binds the students and the instructors in the course. Both sides might exploit course outlines as the formal documents in solving the formal dispute during the teaching and learning processes. As it is used as formal document, course outlines apparently are the permanent record which provides the description of the course content, the model of delivery, the institution and its policies, the assessment and many others. Course outlines for learning guide serves as the direction of learning processes to arrive at what is expected for both the teacher and the students. Those functions are derived from Parkes' and Harris' ob-servation (2002) to a number of course outlines that formulates and categorizes several purposes of writing course out-lines. Summarized by Grunert (1997), several principles in creating a learner-centred course outlines have been formu-lated, basically they function in; (1) estab-lishing contact between the instructor and the students; (2) acquainting the students with the logistics of the course; (3) de-scribing the belief of educational pur-poses; (4) contributing to the success of teaching and learning; (5) fostering higher order intellectual capacities; and (6) im-proving the quality of teaching and learn-ing.

One of the functions in writing course outlines is to improve the quality of teach-ing and learning, especially in higher edu-cation which is expected to assure its quality and to demonstrate its quality. Having grade "A" for BAN-PT accredita-tion (*Badan Akreditasi Nasional Perguru-an Tinggi*), it is necessary for English Department, Faculty of Letters, State Uni-versity of Malang to progress its accred-itation into AUN-QA (Asean University Network Quality Assurance). AUN-QA is chosen as the benchmark for quality assur-ance because of its recognition in raising academic standards and in enhancing education, research, and service among AUN university members. Therefore, this article is intended not only to elaborate the results of the research conducted prior to the development stage and to describe the products of the course outline develop-ment but also to convey the students' re-sponses to the developed course outlines. Employing the characteristics and the cri-teria set by AUN-QA system, the devel-opment of the course outlines were con-ducted in two subjects; Introduction to Literature and Introduction to Linguistics. In addition to those, this article is present-ed as the result of a research funded by BOPTN DIKTI.

METHOD

The procedure used to develop the course outlines for the two aforemention-ed subjects was adapted from Borg's and Gall's Research and Development design (1983) which consists of research and information collecting, planning, develop-ing preliminary form of product, main product revision, main field testing, opera-tional product revision, operational field testing, final product revision, and finally dissemination and distribution.

However, the real steps implemented in this research and development design is conducting research and information col-lecting, planning, developing primary form of product, expert validation, and re-vision. The stages conducted in research and information collecting are as follows: (1) analyzing the guideline for AUN-QA, (2)

finding out the gaps between the AUN-QA guideline with the condition of English Department, and (3) obtaining information related to the course outline models. Planning stage deals with the arrangement of creating the questionnaires based on AUN-QA criteria and the distribution of the questionnaires to the students. Then, the development stages involved the process of developing course outlines for the two subjects based on the course outline model and the result of the questionnaires. After developing the course outlines, the products were validated by AUN-QA expert from BPMA UI (*Badan Penjaminan Mutu Akademik Universitas Indonesia*) and a curriculum expert from State University of Malang.

Applying the expert validation on the developed products, we revised the course outlines based on their inputs and suggestions. Not only the revised products but also the questionnaires were provided to the students for their responses on the course outlines based on AUN-QA criteria.

The instruments used were questionnaires to twenty six students of Introduction to Linguistics and twenty eight students of Introduction to Literature. However, the number of the students in Introduction to Linguistics were twenty two students and there were twenty four students of Introduction to Literature who returned the questionnaires for the revised products. They were to judge or give comments and opinions on the course outlines that they had in the class for the subjects mentioned. The questionnaires contained some questions which reflect the criteria of AUN-QA and they were to give the answers of "Yes" or "No" for the formulated questions.

RESULTS

Based on the teaching and learning standards and criteria set by AUN-QA guideline (Suharmanto, Zen, dan Hidayati,

2013), the gaps found out between the criteria and the teaching and learning condition in English Department are as follows: (1) a need to include the teaching learning and assessment strategies, quality indicators, and methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of learning in the program specification, (2) a need to have curriculum map showing a balance proportion of content, skill, and specialist courses outlining a clearer ex-pected learning outcomes for students to achieve, and (3) a need to conduct didactic methods in the process of teaching and learning shown through course outlines. It also includes internal standards and proce-dures covering the whole aspects of stu-dent assesment by implementing the va-rious methods of assesment as well as in-volving students in the process of assess-ment.

To ensure the results of gap analysis, the researcher created questionnaires to find out the students' opinions and comments on the course outlines given in the beginning of the semester before the development of AUN-QA based course outlines. The aspects questioned are course information, course description, study program learning outcomes, course learning requirements, learning resources, learning activities, evaluation and earning credit. Each aspect has several criteria to be written in the course outlines as described in Table 1 (see appendix). The table also indicates students' responses (46 students) of the course outlines developed based on AUN-QA criteria.

The students' responses to the questionnaires distributed, before the product development, to 54 (fifty four) students in two subjects; Introduction to Linguistics and Introduction to Literature were analyzed from the questionnaire items. As a comparison, the students' responses to AUN-QA course outlines were also presented. Table 1 indicates improvement of the course outlines in terms of fulfilling AUN-QA criteria as shown through an increase percentage for each item. How-

ever, the analysis is focused on the items which got the lowest percentage of "Yes" responses as presented in Figure 1. The result of the questionnaires supported the ideas of developing the course outlines in terms of there are some aspects that need to be improved. Moreover, the re-sponses also confirmed the result of the gap analysis done previously in comparing the criteria from AUN-QA guideline with the condition of teaching and learning process in English Department. Based on those facts, we develop a model of AUN-QA based course outlines to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Table 1 also illustrates that the course outlines de-veloped have fulfilled and reflected the criteria of AUN-QA standards.
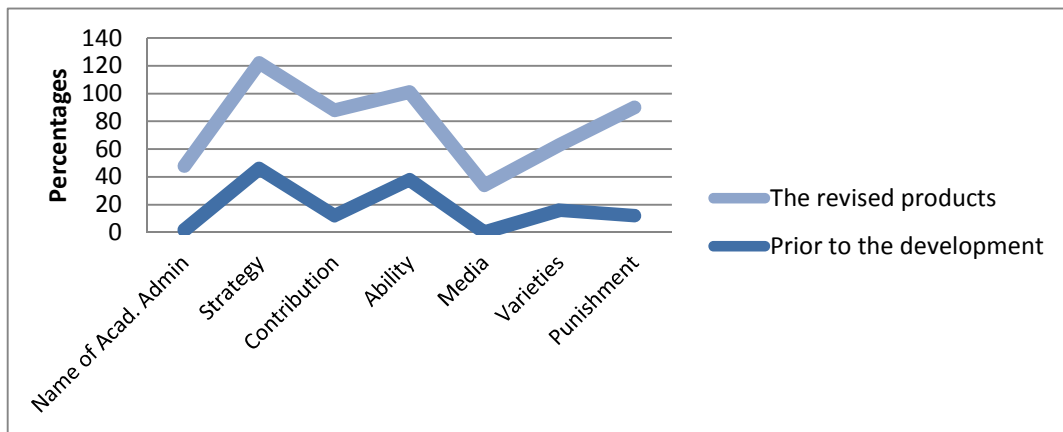

Figure 1: The Students' Lowest Responses on "Yes" Percentages for the Questionnaires

DISCUSSION

This part details the result of the stu-dents' responses on the questionnaires prior to the development stage, the devel-opment of AUN-QA based course out-lines, and the students' responses to the revised products. In addition to those, the expert judgment both from AUN-QA ex-pert and curriculum expert are also pre-sented.

The Students' Responses Prior to the Development Stage

The questionnaires consist of seven items asked to the students in relation to the course outline distributed in the begin-ning of the semester. Table 1 clearly shows the aspects asked in the question-naires along with the criteria. The stu-dents' lowest responses vary according to the criteria from the existing course out-lines in English Department taking Intro-duction to Linguistics and Introduction to Literature classes. The description of the students' lowest responses is as follows.

From the existing course outlines, the course information provided did not show approval date in terms of the month and the year that the course outline is ap-proved for distribution. Moreover, the name of academic administrator approv-ing the course outline got the lowest re-sponses. It means that the existing course outlines did not indicate approval whether the head of department or course coordi-nator(s) responsible for the course. The approval date is intended to guarantee the quality of the course outlines. The existing course outlines also did not outline the major learning strategies in the course description. Though, it was in the lowest responses, it got the highest responses from the students. It might indicate that actually the students were in doubt whether the course description clearly depicted the learning strategies that they would have throughtout the semester.

As regard to the study program learn-ing outcomes reflected from the existing course outlines, they did not formulate the contribution of taking the subjects to the study program's learning outcomes. It happens because there were no items indi-cating this aspect as the document outlines

course information, learning objectives, learning materials, learning activities, evaluation, references, and meeting schedule. Each part did not identify the significant relationship between the course and the expected learning outcomes. Similarly, the existing course outlines did not provide any information related to the students' ability after taking the subjects as it is proven by the lowest responses for this aspect.

In terms of the learning resources, the existing course outlines did not include varieties of learning resources in the form of software, media such as DVDs or CDs. The learning resources are always in the form of printed resources such as journals, books, articles or handouts. Meanwhile, the learning activities stated on the existing course outlines are more to the meeting schedule which provided the topics for each meeting. The varieties of learning activities are not explicitly verbalized and formulated. In relation to the teaching and learning activities, the course outlines rarely mentioned the "punishment" for students who are not able to fulfill the requirements in getting grade or in passing the courses. After finding out the result of the students' responses, we develop the course outlines.

The Development of AUN-QA based Course Outlines

Based on the gap analysis found between AUN-QA criteria and the result of the questionnaires, it is pivotal to develop AUN-QA course outlines to fill in the gap and to fulfill the standards of AUN-QA. As course outlines are set of instructional materials based on the aims and objectives that have been established for certain program, there are some dimensions need to be examined. Richard (2001) outlines the following dimensions for course developer, they are: (1) developing a course rationale, (2) describing entry and exit levels, (3) choosing course content, (4) sequencing course content, (5) plan-ning the course content, and (6) preparing the scope and sequence plan. A course ratio-nale is a starting point in course devel-opment as it is a brief written description of the reasons for the course and the na-ture of it. In addition, knowing the level at which the program starts and the expected competencies the learners might have, becomes the consideration in developing a course. The course content is planned and formulated based on the planners' assumptions and belief; in which later on it is referred as the statements of the aims and objectives for the courses. After se-lecting and choosing the course contents, course developers need to address the dis-tribution of content throughout the course which is related to the breadth and depth of the items coverage in the course.

Adapting Richard's (2001) dimensions along with adapting the existing course outlines, we develop AUN-QA based course outlines for Introduction to Lingustics and Introduction to Literature with the following aspects: (1) course information, (2) course description, (3) study program learning outcomes, (4) course learning requirements, (5) learning resources, (6) learning activities, and (7) evaluation and earning credit.

Course information contains the information of the course such as the course title, course owner, course code, course hourse, academic activity level, prerequisites, name of person preparing the outline, approval date and name of academic administrator. Course title refers to the name of the course; course owner refers to the school or deparment that normally offers the course; course code refers to the code of the course which is nor-mally assigned by the Registrar's Office; course hours refers to the number of hours usually required to achieve course learn-ing requirements; academic activity level tells the program level indicating the term in which students in a given program normally enroll in the course; and pre-requisites refer to the course number of any courses that students must complete prior to registration for the course. To ensure the

relationship of the course with the study program's learning outcomes, the course outlines shows approval date and name of academic administrator who approve the outline. The persons can be either the head of department or course coordinator who is responsible for the course to indicate approval of course out-line for use.

The next aspects are course descrip-tion, study program learning outcomes and course learning requirements. Course description, basically outlines the general purpose, rationale or aim of the course and provides an overview of the topics to be addressed, the knowledge and skills to be learned, and the major learning strategies and activities. Then, study program learn-ing outcomes identify the significant rela-tionship between the course and the study program learning outcomes which are ex-tracted in competencies. Course learning requirements provide clear statements of the required learning that is to be achieved to successfully complete the course. The requirements point out what students must be able to demonstrate at the end of the course to receive credit.

The next aspects described in AUN-QA course outlines are learning resources, learning activities, evaluation and earning credits. Learning resources specify any resources that are required for all course sections. It may list learning resources that are recommended or useful for teaching and learning activities, including printed materials, software and hardware, and media (DVDs or CDs). Learning activities provide guides to the course and describe significant learning activities which ac-complish the goals to: (1) help students acquire, practice, and achieve the course learning requirements, (2) provide a con-text for assessing students' perfomance, (3) provide opportunity for students to re-ceive ongoing, constructive feedback to promote improvement and progress. Fi-nally, clear statement of evaluation and earning credits which provide evidence whether the students have achieved the learning as expected in the course. It should provide several methods of assess-ment such as peer-assessment, self-assess-ment and teacher assessment. Moreover, the information in this part ensures a level of consistency in the evaluation of learn-ing.

The Expert Judgment

Along with Borg's and Gall's Re-search and Development design (1983), expert validation becomes one of the key points in R&D cycle in which the product of the research is validated before being tried-out or implemented. As regard to this fundamental step, the course outline of *Introduction to Literature* and *Intro-duction to Linguistics*, as the primary form of product, were carefully examined and validated by two experts in different ex-pertise; AUN-QA and Language Curric-ulum perspectives.

As the result of particular academic networking with BPMA (*Badan Penja-minan Mutu Akademik)* University of Indonesia, Prof. Dr. Ir. Sulistyoweni Widanarko representing AUN-QA expert has been made to involve in a thorough scrutiny on how both course outlines em-bodied AUN-QA components, principles, and demands. While Prof. Utami Widiati, M.A., Ph.D. as the curriculum expert of State University of Malang was asked to validate over the course outlines in pur-pose of seeking whether or not the content and organization of course outlines cor-respond to English Department curric-ulum.

The AUN-QA expert found out that the two course outlines have principally reflected AUN-QA quality standards espe-cially in terms of the way they structured (1) study program learning outcomes, (2) learning requirements, (3) various learn-ing activities involvement, and (4) mul-tiple assessment techniques. Nevertheless, the expert emphasized the direct corres-pondence between learning outcomes and

learning activities within the course outlines. In other words, the course outlines should straightforwardly demonstrate a parallel relationship between them indicating that particular activity is about to achieve particular learning outcome. This direct connection mainly aims at providing practical contribution as well as empirical evidence toward the success of the teaching and learning process seen from how certain learning activity is able to attain the outcome of learning.

Furthermore, it is obvious that assessment procedures has turned out to be the ultimate point in assuring the quality of teaching and learning as it is explicitly mentioned in AUN-QA documents. In addition, the aforementioned gap analysis result confirmed that AUN-QA demands teachers and course planners to underscore the elaboration of various methods and procedures of assessment as well as involving students in the process of assessment. It became the reason for AUN-QA expert to focus on the aspect of assessment procedures among the checklists.

The curriculum expert, on the other hand, has provided a fruitful feedback from different angle. Exploring the two course outlines, the expert mainly re-veal-ed the importance of consistency es-pe-cially between *course learning require-ment* and *the description of learning activ-ities* for the fact that the two components have to be well-elaborated. In other words, since the statements of course learning requirement become the basis for developing and designing learning activ-ities, the need to use consistent working terms is central to create a well-organized course outline.

Above all, both experts agreed that in terms of contents and organization, the two course outlines have covered all as-pects that the course outline should deal with. It generally sketches out the course information, course description, study program learning outcomes, course learning requirements, learning resources, learning activities, evaluation and earning credit.

The Students' Responses of the Revised Products

To get the students' responses of the revised products, we distributed questionnaires consisting of similar items asked in the questionnaires prior to the development stage as shown in Table 1. In addition, figure 1 points out the students' lowest responses which vary according to the criteria from the developed course outlines. The data shows that there is an increase of responses to the criteria for AUN-QA course outlines in comparison to prior and after the development stage.

The most noticeable aspect that remains in the lowest aspect among all those mentioned in figure 1 is the use of media. The questionnaire clearly states that many kinds of resources should be employed during the teaching and learning activities, such as printed materials, online materials, software, and media such as DVDs and CDs. During the process of developing course outlines, the attention to look for appropriate materials such as software to support the learning activities becomes the problems. The focus is directed to the way the learning activities are supposed to be done to cater the students' need.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS
Conclusions

To sum up with, this research and development study has undergone several stages that primarily elaborated information collecting, planning, developing, validating, revising, and try out.

The research and information collecting were expected to figure out AUN-QA quality standards by conducting document analysis that initially found out not only several key points of quality, but also gaps the Department needs to fulfill which were (1) to include the teaching, learning and assessment strategies, quality indica-tors, and methods for improvement in the program specification; (2) to have curriculum map showing a balance proportion of content, skill, and specialist courses along

with their expected learning outcomes; and (3) to conduct didactic methods in-volving the various methods of assesment. In attempt to reassure the gap analysis, AUN-QA based questionnaires were dis-tributed to 54 students of *Introduction to Literature* and *Introduction to Linguistics* class. The result pointed out several as-pects of the existing course outlines that demanded for improvement, namely name of academic administrator, learning strat-egies, the course contribution to learning outcomes, required learning ability, learn-ing media, varieties of learning activities, and punishment system.

Using the result of gap analysis and questionnaire, the course outline model was then developed. The AUN-QA based course outlines for *Introduction to Lin-gustics* and *Introduction to Literature* contain the following aspects and sub as-pects: (1) course information (title, owner, code, hours, academic activity level, pre-requisites, lesson planner, academic year, approval date, and authority approval), (2) course description (general purposes, to-pic overviews, knowledge and skills to be learned, learning strategies and activities), (3) study program learning outcomes (the formulation of ELO and its relationship with the course), (4) course learning re-quirements (students' required learning, ability, and final achievement), (5) learn-ing resources (required and recommended resources, printed, online, and software materials, media), (6) learning activities (schedule to do practice, to achieve re-quirements, to assess performances, and to get feedback, varieties in learning active-ities), and (7) evaluation and earning credit (self, peer, and teacher assessment, systematic record, weighting, earning cre-dit process, and punishment system)

The expert validation identified the importance of good elaboration of ELO and learning activities in addition to con-sistency of working terminologies being used in every aspect of the developed course outlines. By considering the ex-perts' inputs and suggestions, the products were revised and gradually implemented. After few weeks of implementation, the questionnaires were distributed to the stu-dents to gain responses. The result showed that there were significant progresses es-pecially in terms of exploration of learn-ing strategies, learning contribution to ELO, and varieties of learning activities.

Suggestions

Referring to the conclusions of this research and development study, it is hy-pothetically suggested further implement-tation of the revised products within the longer period of time or the exact whole semester, so that the complete depiction including strengths and weaknesses of these AUN-QA based course outlines can be portrayed.

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APPENDIX

Table of Aspects and Criteria Stated in the Questionnaires

NO	ASPECTS	CRITERIA	Number of "Yes"	%	Number of "Yes"	%
1.	Course Information	• Course title	54	100	46	100
		• Course owner	39	72	44	95
		• Course code	51	94	43	79
		• Course hours	54	100	46	100
		• Academic activity level	49	90	46	100
		• Prerequisites	36	66	41	89
		• Name of person prepareing the outline	53	98	46	100
		• Academic year	46	85	46	100
		• Approval date	2	3.7	42	91
		• Name of academic administrator approving the outline	**1**	**1.8**	**40**	**86**
2.	Course Description	• General purposes	50	92	45	97
		• Overview of the topics	54	100	46	100
		• The knowledge and skills to be learned	51	94	42	91
		• Learning strategies	**25**	**46**	**35**	**76**
		• Learning activities	46	85	42	91
3.	Study Program Learning Outcomes	• The formulation of expected learning outcomes	40	74	35	76
		• The relationship of the course with ELO	**7**	**12**	**35**	**76**
4.	Course Learning Requirements	• The students' required learning	**21**	**38**	**29**	**63**
		• The students' ability	22	40	36	78
		• The students' final achievement	40	74	41	89
5.	Learning Resources	• The list of learning resources	43	79	43	93
		• Recommendation of learning resources	44	81	43	93
		• Printed materials	51	94	45	97
		• Online materials	30	55	38	82
		• Software materials	1	1.8	19	41
		• Media (DVDs, CDs)	0	**0**	16	**34**
6.	Learning Activities	• The learning schedule to achieve the objective of the lesson	54	100	44	95
		• The schedule to do the practice	51	94	44	95
		• The schedule to achieve the learning requirements	48	88	45	98
		• The schedule to assess the students' performance	43	79	36	78
		• The schedule to get feedback	28	51	32	69
		• Varieties in learning activities	**9**	**16**	**22**	**47**
7.		• The components in assessment	52	96	40	86

NO	ASPECTS	CRITERIA	Number of "Yes"	%	Number of "Yes"	%
	Evaluation and Earning Credit	• Self-assessment evaluation	46	85	43	93
		• Peer-assessment evaluation	43	79	43	93
		• Teacher-assessment evaluation	21	38	45	97
		• Systematic assessment records	30	55	38	82
		• Weighting	46	85	44	95
		• The process of earning credit	45	83	44	95
		• Punishment system	**7**	**12**	**36**	**78**