

A Syllabus Suggestion for an Undergraduate Kinetic Typography Course

ABSTRACT

The static typography of the past has become kinetic and gained dimensions as a result of the opportunities and needs that have emerged with technological developments. Animated images and kinetic applications are needed both in the field of television broadcasting and in animation, game, and generic designs, all of which have become an important part of daily life. For this reason, kinetic typography and complementary courses must be included in visual communication design education in the curriculum today. In this context, this article aims to develop kinetic typography project definitions to analyze kinetic typography applications and propose a future-oriented typography lesson model. To reach this aim, this research employed a qualitative research methodology and literature review design. Examining the literature on the development and use of kinetic typography both in the national and international contexts, a syllabus has been proposed to be used in teaching the topic, of kinetic typography, at the undergraduate level of graphic design education. Scholars in the field are recommended to examine the syllabus and adapt it to their students' needs.

Keywords: Graphic Design, Education, Typography, Kinetic Typography, Motion Graphics.

1. INTRODUCTION

While the use of static typography maintains its place on packaging, typography, which dates back to ancient times, has changed and developed, like all other fields, through the increasing knowledge and technological possibilities of human beings. Today, the kinetic (moving) typography has been included in our lives in many places and it is used to increase the visual impact in countless areas where text is present, from movie credits to information boards, from advertisements to television programs. For example, the kinetic typography is used in meaning construction by Apple which is one of the world's biggest technology companies [1], mostly because catching the attention of the individuals in a world of inputs everywhere would be easier interactively and dynamically [2]. Besides, kinetic typography has the potential to provide help with learning a language [3] and the products created through kinetic typography are offered to be the final step of the popular 21st-century teaching approach that includes science, technology, engineering, and maths (STEM) [4]. It is impossible that this situation does not have reflections on design education, because, in order to catch the spirit of the time, it is necessary to increase the awareness and competencies of designers in this most progressive area of computer-mediated typography [5]. However, when the curriculum of graphic design education at the undergraduate level in Turkish universities is examined, it is seen that there is not a course giving future designers a chance to acquire the required skills for kinetic typography which becomes the dominant way of design in the computer age. This might cause a lack of proficiency for future artists of design in the modern world. Then it is inevitable for the educational institutions of design to integrate the current trend of kinetic typography into their curriculum. This study aims to present a content proposal for a "Kinetic Typography (KT)" course that can be taught at the undergraduate level.

2. LITERATURE

Fine arts education has evolved from a genius artist who acquired basic knowledge under the leadership of a master during the Renaissance to a customer-oriented education in which tools, techniques, and methods are taught to students in classrooms [6]. In today's understanding of education, goals are the features such as knowledge, skills, attitudes, interests, and habits that are expected to be used by the individual, which can be seen as qualifications to be gained through planned education, and the results desired to be achieved [7]. As in other fields where training is given, the training to be given in the field of KT must have some general and specific objectives. Among these general objectives, first of all, there should be raising awareness about the KT field and what kind of characteristics good examples have and gaining basic competencies on how to create good examples. In addition, when similar course contents are examined, it is seen that at the end of the education given in this course, the student is expected to be able to design fonts, prepare typographic and graphical designs, animate typographic designs, produce different and special animations according to the content of the subject and concepts, and synchronize design, movement, music and sound choreography [8]. Considering the problem of the general lack of typography knowledge of the students in undergraduate education [9], the content of this course, with its theoretical and practical aspects, should be created and organized very well to avoid a similar problem in KT education.

Graphic design is a system, culture, fashion, politics, passion, and idea [10], and the student who receives KT education, which is a sub-branch of it, has to master many independent disciplines simultaneously and give priority to the principles of creative communication. It is only possible thanks to a sufficiently broad, rich in content, constantly updated, and consistent education [11] because KT as a tool (used in visual communication) has an interdisciplinary structure by combining technology, typography, movement, graphic design, music and literary expression[12]. Various layout, drawing (illustration), painting, and typing programs that allow the use of computers and design are the first course subjects for future graphic designers [13], and all these subjects are inevitable for the development in the field of KT. The elements that will support the use of KT in communication can be examined in four categories [12]: i) describing fonts and ideas (typography, form, and depicted meaning); ii) space (structure and framework); iii) time (movement and sequence) and iv) supporting elements (visual punctuation, color, and music). Another source indicates that there are five basic elements to use the visual communication language in the clearest, most effective, and personal way that is light, color, two-dimensional space (space), time/movement, and sound[14]. In addition, if there will be art education or craft education together with art in writing and typography education, it is necessary to examine the handling of these concepts by different periods and movements on an experimental basis [15], which is also true for KT; because the course model to be proposed in the field of KT should benefit from the models that have emerged with the experience gained in the field of graphic design so far. A model showing the relationships between graphic design, designer, and design process is as follows [16]:

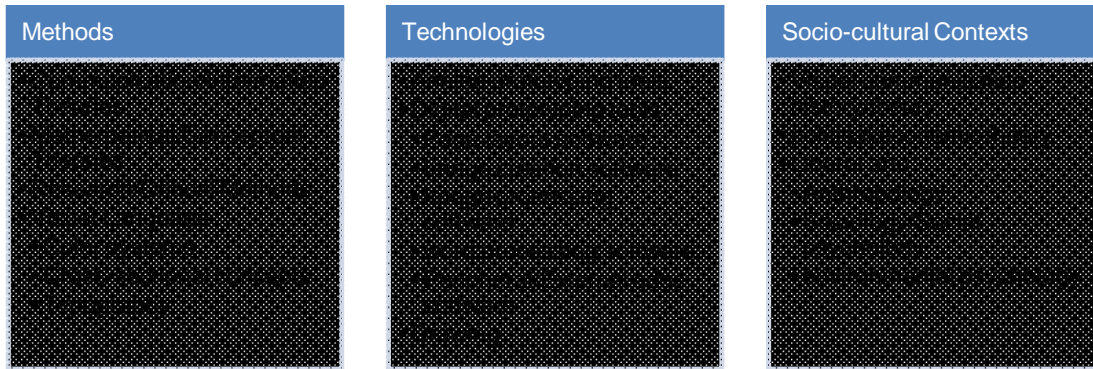


Fig. 1. Tripartite Model of the Fields and Sources of Graphic Design

The design process can be defined as a series of repetitive cycles in which planning and correction occur in independent and discernible stages while special skills and areas of conceptual knowledge are tools for successful design development, and these skills and resources can often be called information resources and defined as teachable academic disciplines [16]. According to Figure-1, the technologies and the interdisciplinary approach support the methods and perspectives of the designer and that is why a new course in graphic design should bring all these elements together to provide the necessary knowledge and skills to the prospective designers. In the light of the information brought together here following syllabus is offered for the KT course in graphic design undergraduate degree (see Table-1):

Table-1 KT Course Syllabus

Week	Topic
1	Introduction
2	The transition from Typography to KT
3	KT Production Processes
4	KT Elements (Font), KT Elements (Color)
5	KT Elements (Light-Camera), KT Elements (Sound)
6	KT-Application 1: A short video study using the elements that makeup KT
7	KT-Application 1: A short video work using the elements that makeup KT
8	KT-Practice 1: Evaluation of the products and providing feedback
9	KT-Practice 1: Evaluation of the products and providing feedback
10	KT-Examination of Good Practice Examples
11	KT-Application 2
12	KT-Application 2
13	KT-Application 2
14	KT-Application 2

A KT course to be created at the undergraduate level should be based on specific goals that can be built on these general goals and should consist of two parts, theory and practice. To achieve these special goals, the students should be informed about the content of the course and the projects to be carried out as the subject that can be covered in the first week. The second specific goal should be to provide theoretical information on the transition process from typography to kinetic typography because designers who are expected to use KT effectively must first understand the emergence process of KT, its reasons, and the possibilities it offers. Accordingly, the subject of the second week can be a theoretical course that provides an overview of the historical development process of KT. Kinetic typography studies should be planned in a fictional sense in terms of the creation of motion graphics, and the software tools required for kinetic typography should be included in the course.

Accordingly, in the third week, it will be an important development to provide future designers with the theoretical knowledge they will need by reviewing the KT production processes. In the next two weeks, examining the elements such as the camera, color, sound, etc. that makeup KT, showing them in software programs, the roles and effects they play in creating KT and specific examples for each can be examined. Besides, a short application project can be made by using these concepts. Although this application is supposed to be small-scale, it will have an important place in terms of program mastery of the students. In the eighth and ninth weeks, a brief evaluation of all the studies would be made, and in the tenth week, it is offered to move on to the evaluation of the best examples in the field such as movie credits, TV broadcasts, and advertisements, internet and music videos that have made a sensation in the world in the field of KT, and discussing the details that make these examples special with the students that can open windows in the future designers' minds. To allow all these theoretical gains to ultimately produce successful products, the remaining four weeks will be evaluated as the application phase and the students will be allowed to create good KT examples in the fields they have chosen, which will be an important period in achieving the purpose of the course. In addition, it may be more appropriate to give this course in the 7th or 8th semesters of undergraduate education.

3. CONCLUSION

Design education has to adapt to emerging fields and trends and train future designers accordingly. Kinetic typography has emerged as a new educational need in this sense because the application and usage areas of KT and the possibilities of creating it are becoming more common and examples appear in many areas of life. KT is almost a new language in terms of design with its time, visual and auditory elements, and the sooner you start teaching this language, the more likely it is to be successful, just like in foreign language teaching. Undergraduate education is a very suitable period for designers to begin to increase their awareness and competence in this developing field, as the graduate education period is when they probably start working in a job, maybe a late period to encounter enough theory and practice.

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