A STUDY ON STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES IN CREATING A BLOG

A RESEARCH JOURNAL

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A STUDY ON STUDENTS’ EXPERIENCES IN CREATING A BLOG

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Abstract: This research investigates students’ experiences in creating a blog. The method of this research is a descriptive research. The participants were third student of English Education Study Program, Languages and Arts Education Department, Teacher Training Education Faculty of Tanjungpura University Pontianak. The data were collected by giving 23 questionnaires and 10 interviews. The data were analyzed by (arikunto). The data shows that 43% students are familiar with blog before they enrolled ICT-1 class, most students said that they created blog only as a requirement to do assignment in ICT class with point of Agree 53%, students stated that they used facility available in the internet to make their blog interesting with point 53% of Agree and 34% Strongly Agree, About 53% student stated that lack of ability in designing blog was the problem, about 74% students said that creating blog in ICT-1 class was the first time to them, was the bad quality of infrastructure such as the bad quality of hotspot and the power problem in campus with percentage point for each statement were 53% and 49%, supported by the result of interview, the result of this research is most students said that blog help them in learning.

Key Words: Students’s Experiences, Creating, Blog
The development of technology now has taken a large role in daily life. It is rapidly changing the way people deal with something especially in communication. Most people are now familiar with technology in order to communicate with others. As a thing that grows faster, technology, especially computer and internet has a role as an educational tool and become the newer style of learning.

The facility of computer and Internet access has given a contribution to the development of education. Particularly, the model of learning which use internet in study, is now growing popular to the people and preferred by those who want to get flexibility in regard to time and place particularly in their study.

There are some uses of internet in study. Firstly, internet can be used to retrieve and access information. It is a readily available world of information for the language learner. Internet is a valuable resource to both language teachers and learners. It facilitates the use of the specific language in an authentic setting. Secondly, the Internet can be used to acquire information from language resources for a variety of purposes. For example, students can access current information from countries around the world. They can obtain geographical, historical, social/cultural, economic, and political information from the countries in which the target language is spoken. Through these experiences can allow learners to participate in the culture of the target language, which in turn can enable them to further learn how cultural background influences one's view of the world. Internet also serves as a medium for experiencing and presenting creative works. While students can peruse the information on the Net, they can also use it as a platform for their own work such as essays, poetry, or stories. Students therefore become not only consumers of content, but in fact generate the content (Singhal, 2007).

Teaching Learning with ICT class is a subject which has been implemented in English Study Program in FKIP Tanjungpura University. This class typically applied the role of computer and Internet in process of teaching learning.

In process of English teaching and learning, the used of blog specifically has some benefits. It enables students to expand their language study and learning community beyond the physical classroom. In addition it motivates students to engage in meaningful written communication appears to increase. Thus, in English teaching and learning blog has good effect toward students’ language learning (Blackstone et al, 2007).

There were two classes of Teaching Learning with ICT-1 provided for the third semester students, and there was a class which was used as the subject of this research, it is Teaching Learning with ICT-1 class A. In this class, the students are requiring to create a blog page as a requirement in joining this class.

Knowing the students’ experience in creating blog was an interesting part to be analyzed since it becomes the first step for students before using blog. Therefore, the researcher was interested in analyzing the students’ experience in creating a blog since it is known that the skill in creating blog was not teach formally in classroom by the lecturer. That is why the researcher needs to find out what experiences did the students get when they create the blog.

The students’ experiences to be described in this research consist of three parts, every parts has different focuses. The first part focuses on interest when creating a blog. It covers four statements which ask students’ basic
information about blog. The second part covers seven statements which ask around the experience when creating a blog. The last part covers ten statements which ask problems that students may get during creating a blog. To come to this point the researcher has to use the most appropriate technique to be applied in this research. The form of research used by researcher is descriptive research. This method is chosen for describing the students’ experience of creating blog. The researcher conducted a survey to English students of ICT class to get the information about this research focus. However, with the large number of students in ICT class the data is collected through sampling technique.

METHOD

The method used by researcher is descriptive research. The reason why she used this method is because descriptive method can describe the events that happened systematically and accurately. Cohen, Manion, & Morrison (2002, p. 169) claim “many educational researches are descriptive; that is, they set out to describe and to interpret what is”. Therefore, this research will use descriptive research since it tries to describe how the students experiences in creating blog in learning English in ICT-1 class. The result of the observation, then, will be presented in qualitative and quantitative form.

The participants of this research were 23 students of Teaching Learning with ICT-1 class in English education study program at FKIP Tanjungpura University. Teaching Learning with ICT-1 class is a new subject which has been implemented for the first time in 2009 in English Study Program in FKIP Tanjungpura University. This class typically applied the role of computer and Internet in the form of online discussion forum to complement the classroom learning.

The techniques of data collecting in this research are direct and indirect technique. As a direct technique, interview will be administered in this research, while as indirect technique, questionnaire will be administered. The questionnaire is divided into three parts. Part A (4 items), part B (7 items), and part C (10 items). Each part represents different contents. Part A focuses on students’ interest in creating blog. It contains 4 items which asked about students’ interest in creating blog. Students’ interest is about their basic background of technology. The students will be asked to give their response around their background about ICT, such as what they know about ICT. Part B focuses on process of creating the blog. It contains 7 items which asked about the process and activity in creating blog. This part is divided into two specific contents, they are utilizing and evaluating. Utilizing covered statements about their experiences in utilize the available facilities in internet, while evaluating covered statement about their opinion after utilize the facility in internet to be included in their blog. Further part C tries to describe the problems that students may find in creating blog. The problem is divided into two, self attribute and infrastructure.

The following table of specification will categorized the questions division based on the contents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Item number</th>
<th>Total items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Creating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Utilizing</td>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Evaluating</td>
<td>10-11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After the questionnaire has prepared, interview is conducted. Interview is particularly useful to get the additional information.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

1. The Students’ General Interest of Creating Blog

The definition for this students’ general interest of creating blog was to analyze the students’ general interest in creating blog and contained 4 statements. Students’ interest is about their basic knowledge of technology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part A Interest</th>
<th>The statements</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (%)</th>
<th>Disagree (%)</th>
<th>Neutral (%)</th>
<th>Agree (%)</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I have any idea about blog before</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I know about blog from ICT class</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I think that knowing to design blog is interesting</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I created blog as a requirement to do a assignment in ICT class</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the questionnaire in data collection, most students generally reported agree that students’ knowledge about blog in general is enough with point of agree is 43%. It indicates that the students have any idea about blog before join ICT class. Although they have idea about blog before, it doesn’t mean they know about blog. The result 33% of the students reported agree with the statement 2. It means that they know about blog from ICT class. From this point it can be concluded that the students know about ICT just when they enrolled the ICT-1 class.

The results of interview were included to support this result:

“Yes. When I was in Junior high school” (interview: student 1)

“The first time to know blog was in senior high school” (interview: student 2)
“Yes I was familiar with blog and know it when I was in senior high school” (interview: student 8)

Based on the interview, it can be seen that all students were familiar with ICT before. The students who took interview answered that they knew ICT even from junior high school. It is because the technology especially internet have present already at school. Automatically, they were become familiar with blog. Almost half of the students was interested knowing to design blog as appeared in statement 3 with the obtained point agree 49%. Nevertheless, the point percentage shows that most students designed blog only as requirement to do an assignment in ICT class (statement 4), not as a mode of English learning with point agree obtained was 53%. In order to prove this statement, some interview data were included in this research.

“At the time, it is just assignment for me” (Interview: student 7)

“To get a score” (Interview: student 8)

Getting information about students’ knowledge of ICT is important as basic for researcher to know how far the students are interested in creating blog especially as a model of learning. The students who did not have interested about ICT and have no information about seemed not to enjoy creating a blog as a mode of learning. They just create blog as the requirement to enroll the ICT class.

2. The Students’ Experiences in Creating Blog

The students’ experiences in creating blog were mainly discussed in this research. Basically, in an educational field blog was used as media in learning English. Students who were perceived that blog help them in learning English will make an effort to make their blog useful and interesting whether from the content or view of the blog whereas the students who perceived the blog as requirement in order they can enroll the ICT class are not interested enough in creating blog. The table below showed the students’ experiences in creating blog.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>The statements</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (%)</th>
<th>Disagree (%)</th>
<th>Neutral (%)</th>
<th>Agree (%)</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Part B Creating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I used facility available in the internet to make my blog interesting</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I provided link to others site</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I provided my own ELT articles</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on the above table, it was clearly seen that most students generally reported agree for statements number 1 until statements number 7. Initially, the students agreed with statement which said that “I used facility available in the internet to make my blog interesting.” As a web based space for writing, the content of blog should become the first thing that needs more attention. Nevertheless, most students stated that both content and view were important in creating blog. In fact, only two students agreed that view of blog is more important. Moreover, the researcher asked the students’ opinion regarding this statement. Their answers were:

“I think both are important. But the important thing is to make it balance”  
(interview: student 2)

“Both. If the contents are wonderful, visitors may visit your blog, and it will be great if it is supported by wonderful design” (interview: student 4)

Particularly, the students who stated that they used the facility available in internet realized that the facility applied in their blog also give influences on their blog page. Nevertheless, even as a personal journal writing, it does not mean that they provide their own article writing. Most students stated that they provided their blog with ELT articles taken from other sources with percentage of answers is 67%, a high percentage if compare with the statement 8 that only 17% students provide their own ELT articles. The same thing also showed from statement 9 that most students provide ELT video taken from other sources.

Finally, regarding the students’ experiences in creating blog, most students stated that it was easy for them to create blog although it was not guarantee that the students enjoyed creating blog as a mode of English learning. It was proved from the result of interview below:

“It is interesting for me to create blog, but not for academic purposes”  
(interview: student 4)

3. The Problems in Creating Blog

The students’ experience in creating blog also touched with the problem they found during the process of creating blog. The table below show the problem which were specified into two, they were problem from the students itself and from infrastructure.
Table 4: The Problems in Creating Blog

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>The statements</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (%)</th>
<th>Disagree (%)</th>
<th>Neutral (%)</th>
<th>Agree (%)</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I think it was difficult to create blog</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have difficulty caused by infrastructure:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>the unavailability of computer/laptop</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>the unavailability of hotspot in campus</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>the bad quality of hotspot in your campus</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>the power problem in your campus</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>the power problem at home</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>the unavailability of modem/hotspot at home</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have difficulty caused by skill:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>lack of ability in designing blog</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Never get any training to design blog</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>the first time to design blog</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The students’ skill of IT was one of the requirements to know how to be involved in internet based learning especially in blog. Having no skill and knowledge about IT of course wreaked an obstacle for students in creating blog for learning. Besides, in globalization era, the demand that the students were required to use the media with higher order skills is appeared along with the fact that now in today’s education the involvement of technology are widely used.

Nevertheless, the statement of “the first time to design blog” in fact become the major problem come from students itself. About 74% students stated that creating blog in ICT class was their first experience. Besides, lack of ability and idea
about what content should be published also becomes the problem in creating the blog. Developing the information, the researcher asked the students about the major problem in creating blog which caused by skill.

“To design the blog theme” (interview: student 7)
“My difficulty is I lack of knowledge of designing blog especially in html/JavaScript code” (interview: student 3)
“Find the suitable/interesting theme and lack of idea to write” (interview: student 9)
“I think the basic difficulty is how to make my blog look interesting and how to present the materials for my blog” (interview: student 1)
“The basic difficulty when I was creating my blog is just on the idea to make it as good as possible” (interview: student 2)

Problem that may come outside of the students itself was the problem cause by infrastructure. Based on students’ answer, difficulty of creating blog came from the unavailability of hotspot in campus and the bad quality of hotspot in campus. These statements had the high percentage if compared with another problem of infrastructure. According to them, the accessibility of internet is important and become the first sources to support them in creating the blog. In order to prove this statement, some interview data were included as below:

“I have difficulty caused by infrastructure” (interview: student 5)
“Laptop and internet access” (interview: student 6)
“The basic difficulties are the lack of internet access and lack of writing ability” (interview: student 10)
“Bad wireless provided by the facilities” (interview: student 4)

Discussion
This research was done to find out students’ experiences in creating blog as a mode of learning English in ICT-1 class, which was provided for students of English Education Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Tanjungpura University. The students of ICT-1 class were the third semester students of Teaching Learning with academic year 2010/2011.

In view of theoretical framework, the use of blog with language students learning English can bring some advantages such as offers a new and creative means of learning and enables student to move from the traditional role of a passive learner into one who encourages independence in the learning process. According to Du & Wagner (2007), in educational settings, the effective use of blogs enables knowledge sharing through connecting learners to contexts beyond the classroom.

Besides, according to Noytim (2010), the archiving feature available at many blog hosts can also facilitate the recording of learners’ learning experiences. Other study also showed that EFL students perceived blogging as more than a means of learning; it was also a means of self-presentation, information exchange, and social networking. In addition, the sense of ownership in the blogging process encouraged students to write freely and promoted self-expression, self-reflection, and construction of knowledge collaboratively.

Students’ interest covered some statements which asked students to give their response around their background information about blog in general. Four statements were appeared in this part. For first and second statements stated whether they know about blog before taking ICT-1 class or after they enrolled the ICT-1 class. The amount of students who chose “Agree” for statement 1 is high rather than statement
2. With the point percentage calculated by researcher, about 43% students knows blog before they enrolled ICT-1 class.

Next, the third statement of part A asked students’ opinion about whether or not they interested in creating blog. Last, the fourth statement asked students’ motivation in creating blog. The aim is to know their response whether their purpose of creating blog is only requirement to do assignment in ICT class or not. For the third and fourth statement, in fact most students said that they created blog only as a requirement to do assignment in ICT class with point of Agree 53%.

Regarding the students’ experience in creating blog, some statements were covered which asked students to give their response around their activity during creating blog for learning English. There were 7 statements in this part. First statement stated their planning to make their blog looks interesting by using facilitates available in the internet. The next four statements are the more specific statements about what contents of learning English will be included in the blog such as provided link to other sites, ELT articles, and ELT video. Further, the rest two statements asked about whether or not they enjoyed creating blog as a mode of learning English.

Based on the results of analysis, problem that come from self attribute shows high percentage rather than the problem that come from infrastructure. About 53% student stated that lack of ability in designing blog was the problem. From this point, it can be concluded that not all students were experienced in creating blog. It is proven that about 74% students said that creating blog in ICT-1 class was the first time to design blog. Regarding the problem of infrastructure, most students pay more attention only on two statements, such in statements 15 and 16. According to them, the bad quality of hotspot and the power problem in campus are the major problem of infrastructure. Each statement obtained the high percentage point which was 53% and 49%.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusions

Based on the result of data analysis, 43% students are familiar with blog before they enrolled ICT-1 class and most students said that they created blog only as a requirement to do assignment in ICT class with point of Agree 53%. In connection of using blog in ICT-1 class, there was an effort done by students to provide their blog with useful contents although some content were adopted from other sources. Besides, students stated that they used facility available in the internet to make their blog interesting with point 53% of Agree and 34% Strongly Agree. About 53% student stated that lack of ability in designing blog was the problem. From this point, it can be concluded that not all students were experienced in creating blog. It is proven that about 74% students said that creating blog in ICT-1 class was the first time to them. The major problem of creating blog was the bad quality of infrastructure such as the bad quality of hotspot and the power problem in campus with percentage point for each statement were 53% and 49%. In addition, the use of the blog could be considered as a positive influence on the process of English language learning. Supported by the result of interview, most students said that blog help them in learning. Although not all of them were satisfied in learning with blog which is caused by the lack of supporting facilities such as internet network.

Suggestion

Based on research finding and conclusion, the researcher advances suggestion as follows. (1) Considering students’ interest that they created blog as a
requirement to do assignment in ICT- 1 class, it would be better if students are introduced first with technology-based learning as well as its objectives, including how to create and blog well before the learning is started. The aim is to produce better learning process. (2) Power facilities and the internet network (hotspot) must be provided to support classroom with learning model like blog, especially when they are at campus, so students can extend the area where they access the internet, rather than at home. The aim is to make students participate in the learning easily. (3) The lecturers are supposed to appear more often and inspire students by using words of encouragement or offering higher score for the most participated students in blog.

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