

UTILIZATION OF BLOG IN LEARNING ENGLISH FOR CIVIL ENGINEERING STUDENTS

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Abstract

The use of blog as a medium in activities learning will give new nuances between lecturers and students. Problems in this study is whether the use of blogs as a medium of presentation material can improve learning outcomes and student activity in English for Civil Engineering subject. Utilization of blogs as learning media has not been done optimally. This is because many lecturers do not understand how and what steps must be taken in utilizing blogs as media learning. This study applied literature review in obtaining data. This study was carried out at the Department of Civil Engineering, Ambon State Polytechnic from August to November 2022. In this paper, the steps for using blogs as a learning medium in lecture activities are described. This study begins with studying various literature and the results of similar studies to get an overview regarding the use of blogs as learning media. After this study was carried out, information was obtained that various problems in the civil engineering department related to learning media could be overcome by using blogs as learning media. In the future, it is hoped that lecturers can utilize blogs as learning media so that they can attract more students' interest and attention.

Keywords: *online learning, media, blog, lecturing, students*

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Introduction

The teaching and learning process is the core activity in education. This process occurs between teachers and students as well influenced by existing relationships process. This causes the method learner learning is also influenced by teaching method of the teacher. Along with the rapid developments in the world telecommunications marked by the era digitalization, especially in the field of technology information and communication, of course the process teaching and learning is also required adjustment or linearity of educational institutions in the use of teaching and learning process method (Harrison, 2005).

Based on this reality, education providers clearly need Information Technology facilities and infrastructure and communication to support activities teaching and learning so they can answer challenges, in particular to improve the

quality of the learning process teach. Nisbet & Shucksmith (2017) stated that the concept of education is increasingly developed and widely adopted lately is based on learning approach and step by step leaving the previous format based on teaching approach. On draft learning approach delivery of knowledge, as well as processes learning is based on multimedia and electronics. Hubackova (2014) and Ja'ashan (2020) in their studies about elearning propose that this concept became known with the term *e-learning* that brings influence of the transformation process conventional education into form digitally, both in terms of content and the system. This concept is an alternative commensurate with the concept of teaching education-based approach.

In addition, the world of education in Indonesia has also experienced many changes. Starting with teacher-centered learning, it develops into student-centered learning. This condition

requires student teachers to have a lot of learning references. However, this is constrained by the lack of print media (dictates, modules, hands-outs, textbooks, magazines, newspapers, and so on) available in schools. This situation is exacerbated by still very little the number of teachers who use the media learning in the form of audio, video, and other ICT-based media.

Nowadays, the process of teaching and learning faces two challenges, the first challenge arises from changing perceptions about learning itself and the second challenge of information and communication technology show remarkable progress normal (Effendi and Wahidy, 2019). Constructivism basically has answered the first challenge with redefining learning as a constructive process that is, information is converted into knowledge through a process of interpretation, correspondence, representation, and elaboration. Meanwhile, Sukendro (2020) explore the use of technology in learning stated that advances in information and communication technology which so rapidly that offers a variety convenience new in learning possible happening shift in the orientation of learning in society. More than that, technology plays a big role important role in updating the conception justifications that were originally focused on sheer learning presenting various kinds of knowledge learning as a guide in order able to do socio-cultural exploration rich in knowledge.

The facts which appeared in Department of Civil Engineering, utilization technology has not been fully realized in learning process. Lecturer still not able to take advantage of the technology in learning activities in the classroom. This matter resulted in the presentation of learning material still taking advantage of the current

conditions happening in the school environment. Lecturer only use the blackboard as a facility in the process of presenting teaching materials.

According to previous observation made by the researcher, there were two obstacles that result in a lecturer not utilizing technology in the learning process in the classroom. The first problem is that some senior lecturers are not aware of the use of technological devices, such as computers, which are currently widely implemented in all fields (Lestiyawati, 2020). The second problem that often arises with regard to the use of learning media, namely the availability and utilization. The availability of media is still lacking so that the lecturers use the media minimally. The media that is often used is print media (dictates, modules, handouts, textbooks, magazines, newspapers, and so on), and is supported by simple tools that are still used, such as blackboards/white boards and chalk/markers. Meanwhile, audio and visual media (audio tapes, television/radio broadcasts, overhead transparency, video/film), and electronic media (computers, internet) are still not used intensively (Wekke and Hamid, 2013). Print media is the media most often used by lecturers, because it is easy to develop and search for from various sources. The fact that is often seen is that some lecturers use makeshift learning media without consideration of learning and student interest in learning.

Based on a survey conducted on students at Civil Engineering Department, Ambon State Polytechnic, most of them had never used ICT-based media; specifically for web-based media, in this case blogs, no students have used blogs as their learning media. Based on the survey results, it can be stated that lecturers have not optimally used blogs as learning media. In fact, the tendency that occurs is that lecturers are still

dominant in using media that does not attract the attention of students so that it makes them quickly bored or bored with the learning atmosphere.

In line with the statements above, Sartono (2016) suggested that many complaints arise from students about the way teachers teach. Many students no longer ignore the learning activities in class. They are more preoccupied with their own business when the teacher is teaching in class, for example by playing with cellphones, telling stories alone with their friends, or some even feel sleepy in the lecture process. Not to mention the problems related to learning evaluation conducted by lecturers at the end of each semester. On the one hand, the learning is still conventional, but on the other hand, there are demands for graduates who are expected to master a foreign language (English) and also master the use of technology. This situation is really cause for concern. It is not uncommon that in reality many students are less motivated in learning and graduates have not been absorbed into the world of work.

Some of the problems that arise in the learning process as mentioned above require the lecturer as a creative learning facilitator to find learning resources that can support the learning process. In this regard, Muttaqien in his thesis (2011) wrote that the development of science and technology is increasingly encouraging various reform efforts in the field of utilizing technological results for learning purposes. When using information technology as a learning resource in the teaching and learning process, students and teachers are challenged to be more creative in processing and digesting learning material. Especially teachers are required to choose and create effective learning media in an effort to achieve learning objectives. Teachers are expected to find solutions to the lack of

availability of learning media in schools and present interesting learning media in the learning they do because choosing the right learning media will greatly impact the meaning of the process and learning outcomes achieved, as stated by Alianto (2017).

In the lecture process, modern learning media will attract students' learning interest following developments in science and technology tend to be more familiar among students so that as a result, students will more easily understand and implement the knowledge gained through learning activities. The tendency in this era of ICT advancement is that students prefer media that is not boring. Learning media that tend to be interesting and not boring are media that take advantage of technological advances. Modern learning media will attract students' learning interest. In addition to attracting the interest and attention of students, learning media that follow the development of science and technology tend to be more familiar among students so that as a result, students will more easily understand and implement the knowledge gained through learning activities. The tendency in this era of ICT advancement is that students prefer media that is not boring.

Learning is actually a process of delivering messages from the giver to the recipient of the message. Closely related to this, Sri Marfuah (2015) in her thesis revealed that the teaching-learning process is essentially a process of conducting communication, namely the process of delivering messages from the source of the message (communicator) through certain channels or media to the recipient of the message (communicant). To convey this message, channels or media are needed, which in this case is ICT-based media because this media plays an important role.

Then, Rahayu (2021) in his article writes that the development of information and communication technology is very rapid and affects various aspects of life. In the midst of ICT advances like today, especially advances in internet technology, it turns out that the use of the internet in education is still not optimal. This is because some lecturers do not understand well the functions of the internet, one of which can be a means to access learning resources. In this regard, Lubis and Hamuddin (2019) argue that learning resources are anything (people, materials, tools, techniques, environment) that support and provide convenience and smoothness of learning activities, and enable interaction between learners and learning resources.

In addition to learning resources, instructional media are also expected to develop following the development of science and technology so that it is more flexible to obtain information that cannot be reached conventionally. This means that the learning media used are not only offline, but also varied with online media. Meanwhile, the learning media commonly used by lecturers is in the form of print media; but as a lecturer, always strives to continuously develop their abilities and competencies, especially in choosing and using various and quality learning media.

The need for the use of the internet in everyday life is increasingly being felt so that tools that utilize the internet network are familiar, both for lecturers and students. Through the internet network, various websites and websites are available that can be used and developed into learning media to overcome various problems faced in learning. It's just that with various types of websites and websites, lecturers are required to be able to choose and determine which ones to take as learning

resources and which ones cannot be used as learning resources.

One of the websites that has been so developed and can be used as a source of learning is a weblog, which is more commonly called a blog. Blog is a web that is so easy to use. Teachers as blog page managers can easily use the features available on the blog, both for uploading subject matter and conducting study evaluations, both of which are carried out online. Mahendra (2016) stated that alternative media that can be used in packaging ICT learning material or content to be more interesting is internet-based learning media, one of which is media in the form of blogs. In their study, Williams and Jacobs (2004) wrote that using blogs as learning media can help students understand subject matter well and is fun.

Blogs as learning media in general can be applied to students in all educational units, from elementary schools to higher education. It is said that because today's students are accustomed to finding and accessing the information they need from various available websites or websites using Google search techniques (search engines). In this regard, Garcia et al. (2010) revealed in their study that most children access the internet by using the World Wide Web (WWW). By accessing this information, they are familiar with the world of technology and can help them with their schoolwork and study.

In the lecturing process in Engineering English courses, the use of blog media can improve the self-quality and competence of a lecturer (Kerawalla et al., 2009). This means that by using blogs, lecturers will be more creative because they are required to upload course material and prepare interactive quizzes, as well as conduct question and answer interactions with students. To do all of this, teachers are required to always be creative and learn a lot.

Regarding the facts that has been elaborated above and the demands for improving the quality of learning in Engineering English courses, the writing of this article aims to: (1) find out some of the problems in the classroom related to learning media; (2) get alternative solutions to overcome problems related to learning media; and (3) knowing the stages in using blogs as learning media, especially for Engineering English courses.

Methodology

The method used in this present study is a literature review. Literature review is a research method that provides a framework related to new findings and previous findings to identify indications of whether or not there is progress from the results of a study through comprehensive research and interpretation of the results of the literature related to a particular topic in which to identify research questions by searching and analyzing relevant literature by using systematic approach (Jesson et al., 2011). Data collection was carried out by reviewing the results of existing similar studies and research and studying the web used as a learning medium. Data analysis was carried out and presented descriptively. The method used in the literature review is through a systematic approach to analyzing data in a simplified approach. Article research design by Randomized Controlled Trials (RCT) by tracing the results of experimental research in Indonesian and English. The articles used in this study are focused on original empirical research articles or research articles that contain results from actual observations or experiments where there are abstracts, introductions, methods, results, and discussions (Hart, 2018).

The steps taken during the process of reviewing the literature in sequence can be stated as follows: (1) conducting

a study to produce information related to several classroom problems related to learning media; (2) conducting studies to provide alternative solutions to address classroom problems related to instructional media; and (3) conducting a study of the stages in utilizing blogs as learning media, especially for Engineering English courses.

Starting from the various problems encountered related to learning media, a solution is offered by utilizing blogs as learning media. Specifically for Engineering English courses, the use of blogs is not only for uploading subject matter and conducting question and answer interactions, but also for presenting online quizzes, in an effort to provide learning to students. Thus, in their daily learning, they are used to answering computer-based English questions.

Results and Discussion

Problems Related to Learning Media

Learning media are very diverse in types and forms, but lecturers are required to have the knowledge and skills in choosing learning media that are appropriate to the learning process to be carried out. Learning media (instructional media) are physical equipment that can be used to convey subject matter to students. Thus, through the selection of appropriate learning media will facilitate the achievement of learning objectives that have been formulated.

In this modern era, learning media is no longer difficult to obtain. Various media can be used to expedite the learning process (Riance, 2021). One of the tools that is often and even familiar among the public and especially students is the internet. The internet has been transformed into a complete, easy and fast source of information to be accessed by anyone and anywhere with a record of being connected to the internet network.

By looking at this situation, it is appropriate for lecturers to be able to look for opportunities by utilizing the internet and one of them is by utilizing existing facilities on the internet as a learning medium. Implementation of learning in schools cannot be separated from various problems. Some of the problems that arise in learning, especially related to learning media, include learning facilities in the form of printed media (textbooks, modules, hands-outs, magazines, etc.) that are available in schools are very limited or lacking. This requires lecturers to be creative and innovate to find and develop learning media other than print media as learning media.

The problem that is also very basic is that the use of the internet is still not maximal to support the learning process, amidst the widespread use of the internet, both by lecturers and students. This is really very unfortunate because the use of the internet is actually more dominant for things that are less useful, and even tends to be used for things that are less positive. Another problem is related to the implementation of learning evaluation. On the one hand, learning is still conventional, but on the other hand, there is a demand for Civil Engineering students to be able to speak English and master technology through blogs. In this regard, it is very good and appropriate for lecturers to use the internet in learning activities, as stated by Wallace (2004).

One of the websites that is so widely known, both by lecturers and students is a blog. Blogs have features that can be used both to support the learning process and to evaluate learning online. Blogs as learning media are managed by the teacher as the owner and manager of the blog. In this research, the researcher uses his blog as a learning tool and media.

Blogs as a Solution to the Lack of Learning Media

Online-based learning is a breakthrough to overcome learning obstacles faced particularly to overcome the limitations of space and time as expressed by Hiltz and Turoff (2005) in their research. There are several types of blogs including: Personal Blogs, Topic Blogs, Health Blogs, Political Blogs, Literature Blogs, Travel Blogs, Business Blogs, Education Blogs, and many other blogs. According to Aydin (2014), blogs can usually be distinguished from the type of writing content.

The researcher found that a blog is a web that is written according to a chronology of time, then displayed in reverse from the chronology of writing (meaning that newer posts will appear on top of older posts). Blog content doesn't have to be in the form of writing, but can also be in the form of images and/or videos. In addition, every blog usually has a comment facility that allows communication, discussion, or even debate between blog visitors and the blog owner or between fellow blog visitors about the posts on the blog.

In other words, in this study, a blog is a web page that contains personal or group posts that are sorted chronologically by time and allows visitors to provide comments. That is, in the blog there can be interaction between blog administrators (lecturers) and blog users (students). Based on the characteristics of the blog above, the use of blogs as a learning medium is quite reasonable (Kristiyanti, 2011). What's more, in this day and age, on average, students and lecturers are very used to opening and using various available websites. It would be even better if the use of the web was applied in the learning process.

Blogs are interactive media between blog page managers (lecturers) and students as blog readers and users.

Declared as an interactive media because through the blog can occur direct interaction between lecturers and students. In addition, blogs are also classified as hypermedia because blogs present interactive quizzes that will be answered by all students. The results of taking the quiz (quiz progress) can be read immediately by each student who has completed the quiz.

Steps to Utilize Blogs as Learning Media

The problem related to many lecturers who have not optimally utilized blogs as learning media is because many lecturers do not understand how and what steps must be taken to utilize blogs as learning media, as stated by Siregar and Frisnoiry (2019). For this reason, lecturers are encouraged to be able to create their personal blogs as blogs for the subjects they teach. After being able to create a blog, lecturers are also required to be able to carry out the stages of using blogs as learning media.

In this study, several steps taken by lecturers to utilize blogs as learning media for Engineering English courses can be described as follows: 1) Lecturers can make lecture plans by using blogs as learning media; 2) Lecturers create blog pages for the subjects they teach. Making a blog is relatively easy and simple. What must be done first is to make sure that those of us who are going to create a blog already have a Google account or have Gmail. Having a Gmail account is the first step to enter a blog. Then, we create a new blog. In creating a blog, lecturers are welcome to give their own blog name; 3) Lecturers socialize to their students that one of the media used in the learning process is a blog. This is intended so that the use of blogs as learning media can be done optimally. Students must know the blog address used and so students are expected to be able to determine what material to read and download. In time, students must also be able to work on learning

evaluations in the form of online quizzes that have been uploaded by the lecturer; 4) Lecturers upload subject matter through blogs in the form of writing, pictures and videos; 5) Lecturers make interactive quizzes and upload them to the blog so students can work on them.

In this study, through blogs, it is not only the learning process that can be carried out, but also an interactive and online evaluation of learning. Through the use of blogs, lecturers can express ideas or ideas, display subject matter that can be downloaded by students, links as references, provide assignments and study evaluations. For this reason, it is very appropriate if lecturers immediately start trying to implement and make blogs as learning media; especially for students of Department of Civil Engineering in terms of providing online-based training, because it is really needed by students as their preparation for the world of work.

Conclusion

Based on the literature review conducted, it can be concluded that problems related to learning media include a lack of facilities in the form of printed media, lack of availability of learning media in schools that attract students' interest, not yet maximal use of the internet to support the learning process amid the widespread use of the internet, both by lecturers and students, can be overcome by utilizing blogs as learning media. However, this is still constrained by many lecturers who do not understand how and what are the stages of using blogs as learning media.

The main step that must be taken is to equip lecturers so that they have the ability to create their personal blogs. After that, lecturers are required to be able to carry out the stages of using blogs as learning media. The stages of using blogs as learning media can be stated as follows. (1) The lecturer makes a blog creation plan; (2) Lecturers create blog

pages for the subjects they teach; (3) Lecturers socialize to their students that one of the media used in the learning process is a blog; (4) Lecturers upload subject matter through blogs in the form of writing, images, videos, PDF, PPT, and so on. In addition to subject matter, lecturers can also upload online-based quizzes.

The use of blogs as learning media can overcome various problems encountered in the learning process. It is suggested to lecturers especially at the Department of Civil Engineering to be able to use blogs as learning media. Through blogs, lecturers can not only upload subject matter and interact with students, but can also conduct interactive and online evaluations of learning.

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