

## THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ENGLISH DISCOVERY BLOG IN TEACHING READING

**Suprayitno**

Lecturer of STKIP PGRI Trenggalek

Email: [supra.english@gmail.com](mailto:supra.english@gmail.com)

Jl. Supriyadi 22 KP. 66319 Trenggalek

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggambarkan secara mendetail bagaimana media pembelajaran daring berbentuk blog yang dirancang melalui pendekatan model pembelajaran penemuan (*discovery*) dimanfaatkan dalam mengajar Reading di STKIP PGRI Trenggalek. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan guna mengetahui bagaimana teknologi mempengaruhi proses pembelajaran yang telah dirancang untuk meningkatkan rasa ingin tahu dan kemauan belajar siswa. Melalui penelitian *descriptive qualitative* peneliti mengumpulkan data dari mahasiswa semester 3 yang mendapatkan mata kuliah reading dan diajar menggunakan *English discovery* blog, dan dalam hal ini peneliti menjadi instrument utama dalam pengumpulan data. Data diperoleh melalui pengamatan, wawancara dan kuesioner kepada dosen dan mahasiswa. Data analisis meliputi penghitungan jumlah interaksi antar peserta dan dosen serta penghitungan prosentase hasil kuesioner, analisis kualitatif terhadap hasil pengamatan dan interview. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa sangat tertarik untuk belajar dengan memanfaatkan media daring. Mahasiswa merasa blog yang digunakan untuk belajar cukup mudah diikuti dan secara tampilan mampu menggugah rasa penasaran mereka. Interaksi langsung dengan dosen dan dengan perantara teknologi ini memberikan kesempatan lebih luas bagi mahasiswa dalam belajar *reading*. Beberapa permasalahan yang dijumpai dalam penggunaan media ini adalah terkendala jaringan internet dan sarana untuk mengaksesnya.

**Kata kunci:** *English discovery* blog, pembelajaran daring, pengajaran *reading*

**Abstract:** This research is aimed to describe precisely how an online learning using blog which is designed through discovery learning model approach be used in teaching reading at STKIP PGRI Trenggalek. This research is conducted to know how technology affects the learning process which is designed to appeal students' curiosity and willingness in learning. Through this descriptive qualitative research, researcher gathers the data from the third semester students of English department who take reading lecture and be taught by using English discovery blog. In this research, the researcher becomes the human instrument, the main instrument of the research. The data are gotten through observation, interview and questionnaire which are given to the lecturers and the students of reading class. The data analysis includes the calculation of the students' interaction with other participants and the lecturer, the percentage of the questionnaires' result, and the qualitative analysis on the result of observation and interview. The result of this research shows that students are attracted in learning by using online media. Students feel that the blog used is quite easy to follow and the lay out can appeal their curiosity. The direct interaction with the lecturer and learning through this technology gives larger chance for students in learning reading. However, there are some problems occur during the use of the media such as the poor internet connection and the lack of equipment needed to access the blog.

**Keywords:** English Discovery blog, online learning, teaching reading

## **INTRODUCTION**

Learning English as foreign language is a challenging process that many students encounter for the sake of surviving in the globalization era. The high demand on mastering English language to face the development of science and technology became one of reasons many students force themselves to learn. English exists in the life of every people around the world as the tool for accessing most fields such as internet, banking and travelling (Pasi, 2010). In addition, among the invasion of various information and data through internet have made the English mastery as the priority which cannot be postponed any longer. Being aware of this urgent need, a lot of teachers and educators develop various kinds of educational aid or technology to achieve their teaching goals in the classroom.

Along with the availability of information and communication technology improvement in every field including education, internet has become a part of education. With increasing sources of the Internet and computer-mediated communication (CMC) contexts, observation shows that language learners and teachers need to improve their knowledge of foreign language and language pedagogy by sharing, reflection, evaluation, collaboration, and problem-solving activities (Arnold & Ducate, 2005). It is true that using technology in teaching cannot be separated. Students have often used internet to find vast amount of information for their school's work. However, the way the use it sometimes is not wise since they take for granted everything they find in the internet. To prepare students with collaboration skill which is important for academic and career in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, teachers have combined collaborative group work as main element of instructional strategies and curriculum standards across multiple disciplines (e.g., Bunch, Kibler, & Pimentel, 2012; Koehler, Bloom, & Milner, 2015). Creating learning that integrated collaboration and technology have become the necessary of the current education.

Based on the researcher investigation toward the students in his campus, he discovered that the students would take the piece of information they got from internet as their final answer or solution for their school assignment. It is absolutely not right because they should have comprehended the information, analyzed and reproduced it into something more reasonable and logical to be the final solution of their assignment. Knowing this ignorance in using high technology in learning makes the researcher needs to use teaching media which uses internet as the main tool but still ensures the student to use it in proper way. Therefore, the use of self-created blog to teach is a good step to keep the students use internet in wise and educative way. Realizing there are not many

researches that try to uncover how a discovery blog used in teaching English, so this research is absolutely recommended to be conducted. It is aimed to know how a blog which is designed based on a discovery technique theory is used to improve students' understanding in reading lecture. Besides, this research also has a goal to know how technology can affect the students in learning English for those who especially live in a place which prone to be quite far from the high-tech teaching media.

Based on Balim (2009) learning happen by discovering, in which the priorities of the activities are reflecting, thinking, trying, and exploring. Discovery learning is a method that develop students' potencies that leads to conclusion through self-observation. English discovery blog is a weblog which is designed by managing the display of the material which is arranged based on the discovery technique theory. Discovery technique used because it represents how knowledge is attained by people in natural way. So, by following the order of the material displayed in the blog, students are expected to find the rule or the concept of the knowledge by themselves. The order of the material is initiated by exploring what someone knows about a thing and then continued by what they want to know more about a thing. Second phase explores about what problems arise when someone want to know something, and it is continued by finding bunch of information from various sources. The gathered information is then processed in the fourth phase which is called 'let's prove it', and finally the conclusion can be drawn.

The combination between discovery blog and reading lecture also emerges certain challenges. Most second language learners who are already literate in a previous language, reading comprehension is primarily a matter of developing appropriate, efficient comprehension strategies (Brown, 2007). In addition, the activeness of the student to explore the blog without teacher's supervision, the interaction and discussion among student in an online platform also need careful attention. Whereas, to be online all the time or at any time is not easy. In addition, the comprehension level of students to decode meaning from english reading material is varied among them. These predicted challenges may cause significant effects to the implementation of this blog in teaching reading. These challenges also strengthen the reason why this research is conducted so the researcher can observe and analyze the real condition of all factors deal with the implementation of the discovery blog in teaching reading.

In brief, the research problem of this study can be stated as follow: "How is English discovery blog used to teach reading for the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester students of STKIP PGRI Trenggalek?" and "How does the Discovery blog affect the students in learning reading and how do the students and teacher deal with the challenges during its

implementation?” Based on the statement of research problems above, it is expected that in the end of the research the researcher can gain deep understanding on how the discovery blog is implemented in teaching reading, what effect of the implementation and how to deal with the challenges.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research employs thirty students of third semester taking English Language Education Program at STKIP PGRI Trenggalek, especially those who got Reading lecture. To gain deep and detail understanding to the implementation and its effects, researcher used descriptive qualitative design. In conducting the research, thirty students comprised 13 male students and 17 female students were taught Reading 1 lecture by using English Discovery blog. From the beginning of the semester the lecturer used the blog which had been designed by the researcher. During its implementation, researcher conducted observation, did interview to the students and the lecturer and also shared the questionnaires to both students and the lecturer. The observation is completed with field note and check list for the teaching procedure and students' activity. The observation was done in every meeting for one semester or in another word there are about 12 times of meeting. The interview was done three times, in the beginning, during the implementation and after the implementation. While questionnaire was given in the end of the semester.

The procedure of the research comprises 5 steps, they are planning, data collection, data processing, data analysis and conclusion. In planning the researcher prepares the instrument of the research which will help him as the main instrument in collecting the data. The planning is the starting point to create list of question and activity checklist. Another important part is to finalize the blog design which will be implemented in teaching reading. Data collection is done start from right before the teaching to the end of the teaching. The source of data is mainly the students' participation and their behavior during the class and during online interaction. The way the teacher teaching is also the data that will used to interpret the quality of the teaching. The data processing is the way the researcher reduces the unused data, tabulates the data into categories and makes sure the validity of the data. Data then are analyzed by interpreting them into logical descriptive manuscript and also processed quantitatively. In analyzing the data, researcher also portrays the data into graph or table so it will be easier to understand. Conclusion is drawn by considering the level of agreement shown in the data which have been analyzed so it can be generalized conclusively.

The detail use of the planning product including interview, observation and questionnaire is explained as follows. The interview conducted in the beginning focused on getting information of students' perception about the use of internet in studying, how they use it, how they process the information, what tools they use to get the information and their initial opinion on educational blog. This interview was done with the lecturer of Reading 1, 5 students in private interview and the class members in the form of open Q and A session. Meanwhile, the second interview was conducted after the implementation of the discovery blog reached 6 meetings. It covered the students' responses on what changes they do in using internet for learning, their response to the blog employed, their need or problem during the implementation and their expectation. In addition, the last interview in the end of the implementation asked the students full perception on the blog, the way they interact with friends and lecturer on online platform, their effort in solving problems occurred during the implementation and about lecturer's guidance on the whole process.

To make sure the validity of the students' answers on the interview and to complete the data, researcher did intense observation on the implementation. The observation was conducted in real class while the reading class was conducted and in online platform through the comment section of the blog and learning group online chat. Along with the interview and observation, questionnaires were used to get written data about students feeling, response, expectation and other aspects related to the implementation of the discovery blog.

The collected data are analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The number of online interaction of the students are calculated to see its progress during one semester. The questionnaires' answers are also analyzed quantitatively to know the percentage of the liking on the blog's facility. Further analysis on the observation and interview are done quantitatively to best describe how the blog is used to teach reading and how it is responded or affects the students.

### **RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

The research which has been done for one semester yields several interesting findings. The first part portrays the result which focuses on the lecturer's way of delivering the reading lecture. The second result describes the students' response on the use internet for learning. The third result show the interaction of students that create social presence during the implementation of the discovery blog. The fourth part focuses on the challenges and opportunities as the result of blog implementation in learning. The last

part shows the result the perception of students and lecturer on the use of discovery blog in teaching and learning process.

Lecturer taught the students in the classroom by showing some reading material on the text book. In this section, he also explained about the blog which would be used during the running semester. The introduction to the blog causes a slight noise among the students which finally known because they were never studied by using online platform before. Some students also complained about the tools they needed to use during the lesson. After the class calmed down, the lecturer showed the address of the blog. It contained five main parts, such as 'what do you know', 'what's the problem', 'let's explore', 'let's prove it', and 'let's conclude'. Each part has different function and must not be skipped because they had been designed that way to create student's discovery on the material learned.

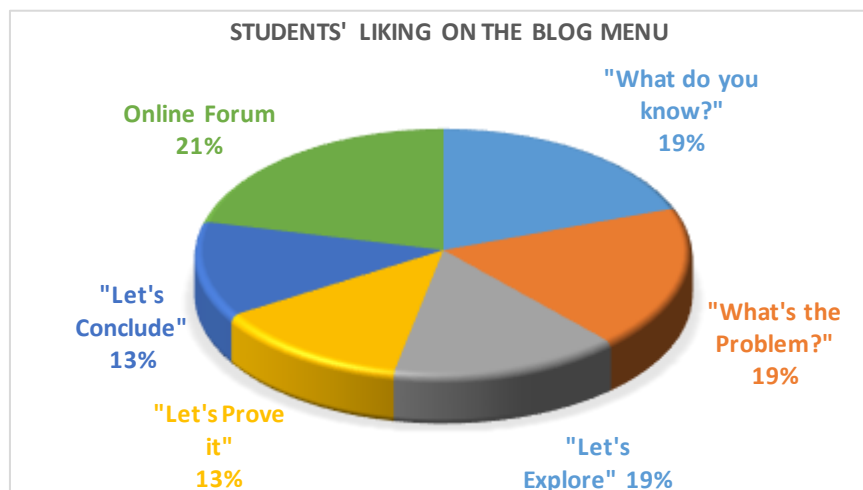
For the first time the students tried to access the blog through their computer and some on their smartphone. It became problem when some students found the internet connection was not good so they got difficulty in accessing the blog. The lecturer had to give students facility on this case, he shared his internet service to students who did not have it, and it worked well. First section of the blog become the introduction on how the blog used. Lecturer asked the students to click start and proceed the instruction shown on the screen. Students must read several passages and then answered the questions. They seemed surprised when they got the score right after they finished doing it. After the simulation, students had got the gist of the blog and understood how to use it to support their study. The next thing the lecturer did was about the online interaction they would have when they were not in the class. it meant that the students could communicate through the facility in the blog. They could use online forum provided by the blog and conducted discussion there. They also could post questions that would be answered by the lecturer through 'asking the lecturer' facility. Since the blog was linked to articles on the world wide web, students did not stick on the blog, but they could read and enlarge their learning through various sources.

Interesting finding showed from the use of blog and it created a positive trend. Students who used to be passive in the class got courage to speak up by posting question in the online forum. Meanwhile, the other students also felt free to help them by giving explanation. From here the peer tutoring could be created. The feedback which was sent by the lecturer through comment box or forum got appreciation from the students and made them feel more comfortable to study. Recent development in collaborative technology, such as computer-mediated communication and social media,



have extended the forms and patterns of collaborative work. This technology has the potential to change human interaction as something easily transmitted, archived, reevaluated, and edited (Warschauer, 1997), all of which lead to new discourse practices, norms, and communicative processes (Dobson & Willinsky, 2009). That become the reason why the interaction of the students in the use of blog increased significantly time by time. Students get a very wide chance to communicate and work collaboratively without leaving their home or it can be done anytime they want. The discussion can be conducted through online forum where the questions, statements or answers can be read by all participants. The remote area will not be a matter in this case, even the absence of the teacher at the time of discussion in progress will not be a big deal since it can be continued in another time.

**Figure 1. Chart of Students' liking on the blog menu**



The figure show how the students liked the use of blog. Online forum got the most liking since it is the place where they could interact and discuss about many problems even they could consult to the lecturer. Menu one, menu two and three got the same percentage on 19%. Those three menus had relatively easy content that made the students like them. While the last two were considered the hardest part of the blog.

The face to face learning was still used in the classroom because the blog was used as support media in teaching reading. The face to face meeting become more live and less tension since the students had got information and material from the blog. Students became more active to ask and discuss during the class. lecturer who also used printed book to teach in the class felt much easier to control and guide the students.

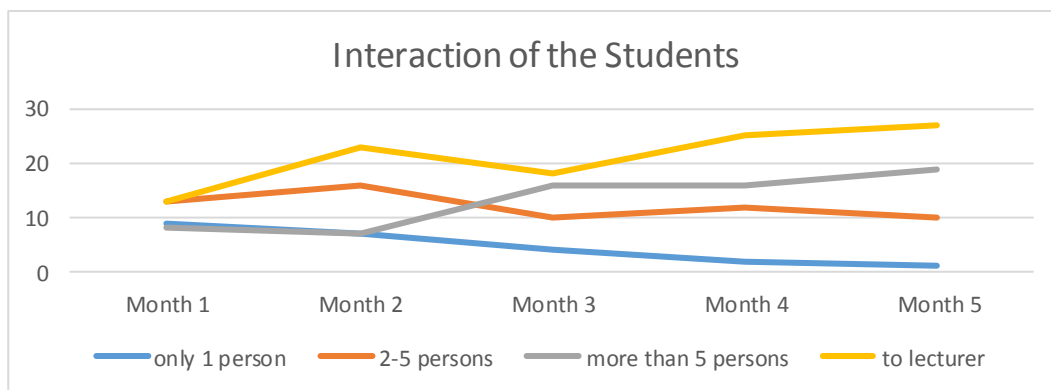
Finding related to the response of the students in using internet provide us interesting information. Most students using internet to find the answer of the questions the received from their teachers. 90% of the sample found internet as another easier

source to find the answer to their academic problem. Only 30% of the students who tried to gather information from various sources and then analyzed them. Most of the students copied and pasted the information they saw for the first time in the internet that they thought had close relationship with the problem. The worst part of this internet using in learning was that the students actually did not learn anything. The availability of the internet ceased the students' critical thinking because they only wanted to get the short cut in completing the assignments. This unwise use of internet discovered through this research shows that the user of internet in Indonesia stood in the bottom part of user. They only used the internet without proper thinking and use it as the ultimate way in solving problem. This must not be neglected by the educators when they found this phenomenon in their classes. The misuse of internet would create decadence on the students now and in the future.

The crucial part of learning through online platform is the interaction which can create social presence. The interaction of students and lecturers in online communication should increase the motivation, collaboration, self-belonging and care about other participants (Satar & Akcan, 2018). The research showed that the interaction of the students needed to be maintained continuously by the lecturer with critical thinking to ensure the affordance of the media used and the stability of the students in learning which must be meaningful and so the social presence can be reached. In this research the students' participation is high, it is proven by the post in the forum and the assessment on every exercise attached to the material in the blog. From thirty students, not all students were actively involved in the discussion. 63% of the participants conducted communication to more than 5 participants. By doing so, the social presence can be achieved. The participation and interaction boasted the feeling of the students to always interact one another. Students helped one another in comprehending the text they had. They discussed about the vocabulary, the grammar and mostly about the grammar of the text. There are 90% of students asked the lecturer about the material in the blog. They asked when they got difficulty in deducting the processed of thinking. It showed that the students could not be let to study completely individual.



**Figure 2. Number of Students' Interaction among Students**



The chart above shows the trend of the students' interaction in the blog through forum and comment box. The trend shows that in the beginning of the implementation the interaction of the students only limited to one participant to 5 participants, but the number of interactions involves bigger number when the implementation on the fourth and fifth month. That positive trend was caused by the need of discussion on the various part of the material on the blog. It was also part of the design of the blog to create such interaction in order the discovery on the rule or concept could be achieved.

Learning in by using new media that required new experience and tools emerged both challenges and opportunities. Based on the observation and the interview, researcher found several challenges which could be categorized into three. The first challenges included in the tool or media used. Students found it quite often that they did not have good internet connection so they could not access the blog when they needed to. Some students also were not well equipped with computer so they had to borrow other friends. It was difficult to deal with because the learning required them to have ample tool to maximize their learning, however, financial obstacle such as this hinder them in getting involved in the learning environment. The price of internet in Indonesia was considered expensive so it made the students complained that they needed to prepared more money to follow the learning style. There was language barrier, too. The students were not very good at English although they were English Language Education student, so it made them hard to comprehend the text in the blog. This language barrier actually was not a very big problem since one of the goal of the blog was to make the students active to find solution through various sources. They could use online dictionary or even translation tool available in the internet. The real problem was in the mental willingness of the students. Another challenge was the time used to do interaction. Although the blog can be accessed online but it was not a synchronous media due to the lack of notification on the students' computer. The students wanted to have a real time discussion but to make it

was a true challenge. When some students were online, the other students were not online, so they needed to wait uncertain time to see the reply or responses from other participants. The lecturer also needed some time to check the messages to reply the students' questions and it sometimes beyond the students' waiting time. It is in line with what (Yuan & Kim, 2014) wrote that dropout problems and insufficient amount of participation in professional online communities or online teaching programs have also been documented as major challenges

Despite of the challenges, there were also promising opportunities. By implementing blog in learning reading, the time allocated by students to learn was increased. It was different from when they only study in the classroom. The students learned not only in the classroom but also when they were outside the classroom. The increasing learning time affected the number of knowledge the students got. Besides, the social presence when they had online interaction also open the chance of peer tutoring which usually hard to happen in the classroom.

Among challenges and opportunities the students and the lecturer felt during the implementation of English discovery blog in teaching reading, the students have strong perception that learning by using this method was good. The students now were aware that internet using was not the only one thing they needed during studying. The information they got from internet needed to be analyzed, processed and synthesized before they used it as the answer of their problem. They also got strong understanding on the material they learned through discovery technique than if they got it by listening the information from lecturer. The process made them know how the concept could be gotten, so this understanding stick on the students' mind deeper than they used to have.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the analysis of the finding the researcher gets the answer of the questions of the study. The implementation of the English Discovery Blog in teaching writing was done in two ways, the face to face meeting in the class and through blog's online communication facility. The blog was used as the supporting media of teaching reading which played a very significant role in building the students' awareness in using internet for learning. Blog gives the students wider chance to deepen their learning since blog gives them additional time discuss the material and prepares the students before the meeting in the classroom. The implementation of discovery blog has shifted the culture of copying and pasting information from internet into experimenting and analyzing information before deducting the core information as the solution of students' academic problem.

Lecturer has to face the complains from students on the lack of facility such as computer and internet. The smoother management of the class also plays significant impact on the success of the implementation of online media in teaching. Time management, ample and constructive feedback from lecturer and giving relevant link for study become lecturer's responsibility in handling the challenges. In brief, English Discovery Blog is a good media used in teaching reading when the students have been prepared well and the management has been adapted with current situation. Challenges and opportunities become unseparated part of leaning that must be faced wisely.

## REFERENCES

- Arnold, N., Ducate, L., Lomicka, L., & Lord, G. (2005). Using computer-mediated communication to establish social and supportive environments in teacher education. *CALICO Journal*, 22(3), 537–566.
- Balim, A.2009. "The Effects of Discovery Learning on Students' Success and Inquiry Learning Skills". *Eurasian Journal of Education Research*.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/298514123\\_The\\_Effects\\_of\\_Discovery\\_Learning\\_on\\_Students%27\\_Success\\_and\\_Inquiry\\_Learning\\_Skills](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/298514123_The_Effects_of_Discovery_Learning_on_Students%27_Success_and_Inquiry_Learning_Skills). Accessed on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2018.
- Brown, H., Douglas. 2007. *Teaching by Principles. An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. New York: Pearson Education.
- Bunch, G. C., Kibler, A., & Pimentel, S. (2012). Realizing opportunities for English learners in the common core English language arts and disciplinary literacy standards. Stanford, CA: Understanding Language Initiative.
- Dobson, T., & Willinsky, J. (2009). Digital literacy. In D. R. Olson & N. Torrance (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of literacy* (pp. 286–312). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Koehler, C., Bloom, M. A., & Milner, A. R. (2015). The STEM Road Map for Grades K–2. In C. C. Johnson, E. E. Peters-Burton, & T. J. Moore (Eds.), *STEM road map: A framework for integrated STEM education* (pp. 41–59). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Pasi, Danilo. 2010. "The English Language And The Globalization", (online), (<http://www.arcos.org.br/artigos/the-english-language-and-the-globalization/> accessed on April 4<sup>th</sup> 2018)
- Satar, H. Muge & Akcan, Sumru.2018. "Pre-Service EFL Teachers' Online Participation, Interaction, and Social Presence". *Language Learning & Technology*, 22, pp. 157–183.
- Warschauer, M. (1997). Computer-mediated collaborative learning: Theory and practice. *Modern Language Journal*, 81(4), 470–481.