**Weblog-Based Learning in an EFL Young Learners’ Context: Students’ Perspective**

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**Abstract**  
There has been a deeper appreciation on using technology in English classroom. It is used to create an interesting learning process. Weblog-based learning in classroom is becoming imperative nowadays since the students themselves are growing within digital era. However, this study purposes that many educators are not taking advantage of this unique and fun learning tools for young learners. This study is designed to reveal: (1) the students’ background in using computer and internet to get useful information; (2) the students ‘perception of the use of classroom blog learning as a tool in learning English; (3) the students’ perception toward webblog activity; (4) students’ perception towards the benefits of the weblog as a means of problem solving for learning English. This research applied the descriptive method which attempted to describe the primary students’ response toward the use of weblog. Data obtained from 120 as a total sample of 5th grade students in an Islamic Bilingual School, West Java, Indonesia. Questionnaire and interview were used to collect the data. The findings of the present study indicated that most of the participant showed positive attitudes and willingness to integrate weblog-based learning in English classroom. This technique made them more engaged and excited to learn English. However, factors such as technical problem and bad internet connection on the use of internet could be possible impediments to the use of classroom blog.

**Keywords:** classroom blog, students’ perception, technology, young learners, weblog
Introduction
Teaching a foreign language has been carried out for a long time at all levels of education. One of the languages learnt by the students in Indonesia to communicate among others is English. It is learnt in Indonesia as the first foreign language, since it plays an important role in the international communication and mastering English both written and spoken are absolutely needed. In some big cities in Indonesia, English is considered to be the first foreign language to study by the learners of junior and senior high schools. Moreover, English is also recommended to learn by the learners of elementary schools. The aim of English teaching is to develop students to be able to achieve communicative and discourse competence (The Rule of Ministry of Education Number 22 Year 2006).

Teaching English to young learners in Indonesia refers to teaching English for children especially those of primary school ages. Moreover, according to Alwasilah (2007), there are two reasons why government allows elementary school to have English as ‘Local Content’ to their students: (1) many parents send their children to attend the English courses, especially English for children, and (2) it is assumed that teaching English in Elementary school will create a positive attitude toward English that English is no longer regarded a difficult subject. Similarly, Mustafa (2002) mentions that when young learners are introduced to English since early stage of life they will get sufficient exposure, with sufficient exposure they are expected to be successful language users in the future.

Regarding to this demand, educators both in formal school and language institutions have been trying to formulate a concept of teaching which suit young learners’ need in learning English. In bilingual primary school, the curriculum aims to provide children with a deep understanding of the world around them and stimulate their abilities, capacities and desire to learn. Basically, primary learners in visual support is also very important to help convey meaning and to help children memorize new vocabulary. Therefore, the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) by language teachers such as multimedia technology, audio-visual, software and internet access materials have greatly improved and made the use of these resources in the classroom more practical.

The use of media, particularly Weblog, is part of e-learning because it includes online course content. This attracts young learners’ attention and heightens their curiosity while the teacher is delivering the message. In such a condition, classroom blog is one of internet based learning tools that can be used for mastering language. In teaching and learning English, weblogging is used not only for supporting language aspects such as vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar, but also for studying four language skills. However, some teachers rarely use computer as part of instructional process and they may not see the value of instructional technologies in their particular content area of teaching and they are also not eager to use technology in teaching although the school has already provided it as multimedia room or computer room.

Literature Review

E-Learning and Technology to Young Learners
It has been widely recognized in the research literature that technological change, which not only permits new activities but makes those new activities superior in many important ways
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over the previous method of operation, creates long lasting innovations in society. Web-based education is one of those innovations (Franklin & Peat, 2001). “E-Learning” nowadays is usually used to describe “web-based” learning in literature reviews. Therefore, McKimm, Jollie, Cantillon (2003) point out that web-based learning is often called online learning or e-learning because it includes online course content. Whenever web technology is used in educational setting, it is vital to reflect on how this affects students, courses and institutions (Barr&Tagg, 1995).

Moreover, teachers can modify various materials from websites to support a variety of activities in the classroom to help fulfil their teaching goals. Content free includes specific topic and controlled learning environments. Research shows the use of computer supports and increases young children’s skill in the social, cognitive, language literacy and writing. Therefore, adult guidance for children using computer is associated with increases in abstract reasoning, planning behavior, visual-motor coordination, and visual memory (Primavera, Wiederlight, & DiGiacomo 2001; Nir-Gal & Klein 2004, cited in Gunnewig & McManis 2012). A lot of materials from internet can be specifically downloaded to support an existing topic from the course book. For example, teacher can help children focus on tasks by telling them to look carefully at an action on the screen and observe what is happening by asking them what they need to do in a particular situation presented while using internet.

Classroom blog as one of multimedia technology has enormous amount of interactive content, some of which is highly exploitable in the classroom. The real advantage of weblog- at least from a language learning point of view - is that it offers authentic materials. Weblogging enables teachers to attach the students to the “real life” nature of the English lessons. By creating context from online materials, students can be helped to explore a world of online English learning possibilities.

**Review of Previous Studies on Classroom Blogs in Classroom**

Many developed countries have taken the advantages from technologies and other sophisticated gadgets effectively, especially as a tool to help students learning. Obviously, weblogging is an effective tool for delivery instruction because there are several studies showed some benefits for its used which outweighed the drawbacks of conventional learning. There are three studies related to the present study about classroom blog. These are the study conducted by Lamonica (2010), McGrail and Davis (2011), and Lou, Kao, Yen, Shih (2013). Lamonica (2010) analyses the benefits of blogging in the elementary classroom. This study was carried out--- in a suburban school district outside of Rochester, New York. Caring Community, where this study took place, is an intermediate elementary school that housed 794 students in grades three, four, and five for the 2009- 2010 school year. Her case study revealed the effect of blogging is highly beneficial for elementary students, resulting in increased motivation, strengthened writing skills, and engagement in an authentic activity. She also found that the use of a classroom blog would most certainly be a valuable asset to the classroom because classroom blog is motivating for elementary students.

Second, the fact also found in another research conducted by McGrail and Davis (2011). The finding from their case study was from multiple data sources, such as classroom observation, students and teachers interview, and students and teachers blog writing, to ascertain young
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writers’ perspectives. They found that students ‘bloggers’ reader awareness and appreciation of the reader-writer relationship. Students’ bloggers benefited from emotional and pedagogical assistance, both of which addressed their needs as writers, readers, and learners. Another finding was from the students who enjoyed positive comments from readers. This study showed the findings on the use of online venue as a great potential of interactive technologies and spaces which support teachers and their young learners to develop awareness in communication skills.

A more recent study by Lou, Kao, Chuan, Yen, Ling, Shih, & Chu (2013). They used a quasi-experimental approach and conducted the teaching experiment lasted 10 weeks with three sessions conducted each week. The findings of their study showed that the blog-assisted life education course is effective for higher-grade elementary school students. The students’ information literacy and competence, course satisfaction, collaborative learning attitudes, and attitudes toward blog use are improved. Finally, the students’ life education values are significantly enhanced through the blog assisted instruction in this study.

The studies listed above indicate that there have been several researches done to investigate the utilization of classroom blog. Weblog has not been widely utilized especially in Indonesia. Thus, the present research attempts to see the potential of the technology to promote English proficiency in primary level of education, especially the students’ perception regarding the use of classroom blog in English class.

Weblog-Based Learning and Its Characteristics

Today’s students are growing up immersed in digital media which they use for entertainment, communication and learning. Students without access to digital media face the prospect of being developmentally delayed and disadvantaged. Therefore teacher as a central role in ensuring the successful implementation in education have to work in multifaceted and complex environments. They have to be well equipped with the current technology which reflects in their teaching, especially web technologies in their practice. Another recent web-based application for learning English is the creation use of Weblog, also referred as blogs.

A blog (or web log) is a kind of online diary that has been reported to be a useful tool for language learners for a number of reasons. Blogging as a medium that allows bloggers to record everything and anything they are interested in was first proposed by Barger in 1997. Blogs can be managed by individuals or groups. Text, photos and video clips can be posted at the individual’s discretion. Bloggers can take notes online, leave messages, and share their stories and thoughts; thus, blogs may be like diaries on the Internet, blogs that interactively allow their visitors to leave comments and messages consist of web-based journals that are easily linked and cross-linked in online communities (Goodwin-Jones, 2003) or discrete entries or posts that are created by single individuals, small groups or multiple authors.

In education, blogs are useful since they do not require high Information technology (IT) skills and because they are great repositories for storing data generated in the classroom. Part of the simplicity of using blogs stems from the fact that no specific software is required so that difficulty in creating a blog depends on the level of complexity the owner desires. In order to avoid the use of a programming language, there exist on the net which offer the registered owner a series of templates that will help them to design, delete, rewrite, control comments, etc.
Moreover, teacher may become a personalised and teaching-aid medium. For instance, a class blog enables students and teacher to share their teaching ideas and materials; become regarded as a collaborative discussion space.

![Figure 1. The main page and sample of news on weblog](image1)

![Figure 2. Weblog activities (www.irmasavitri.edublogs.org)](image2)

This research applied the descriptive method which attempted to describe the students’ perception towards the use of weblog as teaching media in learning English subject. In relation to this research, descriptive qualitative method was chosen because this study presented a description about students’ perception on weblog-based learning and at the end built a conclusion based on the data gained. As Gay (1990:189) states that descriptive research involves collecting data in order to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. The data gained from this study were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative was represented by percentage of the data gained. Meanwhile, qualitative analysed was clarified by description of data percentage.
In language learning process, some aspects need to be considered, one of them is perception. Perception cannot be neglected to be an important factor in the process of teaching and learning language for it has a big impact to learner’s learning. As students are the major stakeholders in the learning process, to understand their learning experience, it is essential that their perceptions are considered (Anthony & Walshaw, 2009; Bishop, 2003, Forman & Ansell, 2001; McCullum et al., 2000 in Perger (2009).

To get the data, this study applied questionnaire and semi-structured interview. The questionnaire which consisted of 25 items and comprised of four options each, in the form of Likert Scale which started from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The questionnaire in this study was modified into three sections: (1) comprising of eight items to collect students’ personal and background information (2) comprising of eighteen items to collect the data about the students’ perception towards the use of weblog as teaching media in learning English; and (3) comprising seven items to collect the data of the students’ perception towards the benefits of the weblog as a means of problem solving for learning English.

Interview was used to gain the supporting data the researcher could not get through questionnaire. According to Heigham and Croker (2009) interview can provide important insight into respondents’ experiences, beliefs, perceptions, preferences, and motivations. In this study, the researcher interviewed 20 students using semi-structured interview. They were given 8 questions toward the use of weblog-based learning in English subject. The result of interview was presented, analyzed with the related theory, and summarized.

Population and Sample
The population of this research was the 5th graders in academic year 2015/2016 in one of Primary Islamic Bilingual School in West Java, Indonesia. This study was conducted in February 2016. It involved four classes of students who had English 5 subject. They were 10 to 11 years old, while the remaining 63 were females and 57 were males. The participants of present study were 120 students as a total sample of 5th graders at Salman Alfarisi Islamic Bilingual School. All of them had an adequate background for their views regarding the use of weblog in English subject.

Limitations
Although the researcher has reached its aims, there were some unavoidable limitations. First, because the research was conducted in one Islamic Primary Bilingual School. Therefore, to generalize the results for larger groups, the study should have involved more participants by conducting similar studies across different primary bilingual schools. Another limitation of this study is that the students’ perceptions were collected through a short self-report survey that has only 25 items. The number of items might not been sufficient for students to express their views of classroom blog.

Findings and Discussion
This study is developed based on three main questions: (1) what is the students’ background in using computer and the internet to get useful information. (2) How is the students’ perception towards the use of weblog as learning media in English subject?, and (3) How is the
students’ perception towards the benefits of the weblog as a means of problem solving for learning English?.

The students’ information and background towards the computer and internet

The data of the students’ perception towards the use of Internet were obtained by questionnaire, and it was analyzed through SPSS program to find its percentage, mean, and standard deviation which described the students’ perception towards the use of Internet as learning media to improve English Language skills. The result of the computation of data analysis could be seen at the table 1 below.

**Table 1. Percentage, Mean, and Std. Deviation of the Students’ information Towards the Possession and the Use of computer and Internet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Percentage %</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you have computer at home?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>86.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you have internet access at home?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2. Percentage of the Students’ Use of computer and Internet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Not Often</th>
<th>Not Very Often</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Sd. Dev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I use computer</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I use the internet</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I use computer and internet for my homework</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I use e-mails</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The survey result reveal that a substantial number of male and female students (86.7%) responded that they had computer at home and 81.7% of them also had internet access at home. The findings indicate that computers and the Internet have been an important element in the life of the individual of young age students. In addition, students responded to five items related to their level of frequency to use computer and access internet. Item number 4 shows that 96.7% of students answered “very often” and “often” used computer. In contrast only 30% of students sometimes used computer at home/school. On the 5th item, 33.3% of students declared that they very often accessed the internet and 52.5% of them often used internet. However, 10% of students responded “not often” and “not very often”.

As can be seen on the 6th item, large number of students (14.2% very often and 48.3% of students often) used computer and internet for their homework. The rest of 37.5% of students responded “sometimes” to use computer and internet for homework. This result supports the interview result that student were found to rate the computer and internet for homework as supportive and important. See the following excerpt:

[I get a lot of sources and information from the internet. If I have difficulties in doing my homework, I often search on Wikipedia or Google engine and they lead to the answer, student 7]
[I often browse the internet for homework, especially when the teacher ask me to make a poster, I can find many good photos and pictures, student 18]
[If I cannot find enough information from the book, I sometimes use computer and internet for homework, student 11]

The above comments can be inferred that majority of students often use computer and internet for their homework. They like to use it because the internet is useful and it helps them to get various information and sources to finish their homework. In addition, the Internet is swamped the students with information about anything and everything
The frequency of Students to Use computer and Access Internet

![Bar chart showing frequency of students using computer and internet](chart)

**Figure 3. Students’ information and frequency toward the Use of computer and Internet.**

### Table 2. Percentage, Mean, and Std. Deviation of the Students’ perception towards the Use of Classroom Blog.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Percentage %</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I enjoy learning English through Weblog-based Learning.</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I’m confident when it comes to work with classroom blog at home/at school.</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I want to study English more using classroom blog at home/at school.</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I find the problem of logging in and other technical difficulties.</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I become more motivated in studying English using blog.</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I like studying through images, videos, sounds and playing games in blog.</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I think using weblog in class takes up too much time.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>7</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>.2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I like having my classmate make comment on my work</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I like posting articles, artwork, and photos or clips on the weblog.</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Weblog in learning language is not necessary.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I like the hyperlinks that bring me to the pages with the answers.</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I do not like making comments on my friends’ post.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>When I find bad internet connection, I lose my access to the classroom blog.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Doing homework on the blog is easier than writing it by hand</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I sometimes have difficulty in figuring out what my teachers expect from me.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>65.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Weblog-based learning is more interesting than learning English in the classroom using board, pen, and paper.</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>I find a problem in operating new application on the classroom blog.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>I get many new things and information through weblog-based learning</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Weblog-based learning is useful technique because it gives me a chance to use computer for learning process.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Weblog-based learning is helpful to learn new vocabulary</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Weblog-based learning is important to improve speaking skill</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Weblog-based learning is important to improve listening skill</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>61.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Students’ Perception toward the Use of Weblog

From the table 2, it could be seen that students responded to 25 statements of the questionnaire which revealed their perception of the use of weblog as teaching media of English subject. In the table three, it was obviously found that the highest percentage of the students’ response which showed their positive perception towards the use of classroom blog was the statement number three which stated that “I want or study English more using blog at home/at school” (100% of the students responded that they agree or strongly agree with that statement). The answered on the sixteenth statement showed that 100% of the students agree and strongly agree that weblog-based learning is more interesting than learning English in the classroom using board, pen, and paper. Additionally, other statement showing the students’ positive perception towards the weblog was number1, 2, 5, 10, 14, 16 and 18.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Item 1</th>
<th>Item 2</th>
<th>Item 3</th>
<th>Item 4</th>
<th>Item 5</th>
<th>Item 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 Weblog-based learning is important to improve reading skill</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Weblog-based learning is important to improve writing skill</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Games and videos in weblog are helpful to understand the lesson.</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Image of the table]

**Figure 4. Result of Students’ Positive Perception toward the Process of Learning through weblog-based Learning Technique**

According to Figure 4, considerable numbers of students (48.3% strongly agreed and 35.8% agreed) expressed that they enjoyed learning English through weblogging. There are 11.7% of students who responded “disagree” and 4.2% of them chose strongly disagree. Further, the above figure shows that the majority of the students seemed to be enthusiastic in learning English using weblog. Additionally, other statement showing the students’ positive perception toward the use of weblog-based learning was number 5, “I become motivated in learning English...”
using classroom blog”. (81.7% of the students answered that they “agree” and “strongly agree” with the statement. This finding is supported by the previous study which suggested Lamonica (2010) the use of blog is beneficial for primary learners and that the students’ motivation is higher in learning. Further, it can be observed that the use of classroom blog was the statement number 10, which stated that, “classroom blog is not necessary in learning language” (90% of the students answered that they “strongly disagree” and “disagree” with this statement) with the mean score (M = 1.5) and Std. deviation (SD = 0.9). There was also facts gained from the interview that the students definitely showed their interest in weblog-based learning. Some students commented:

[Yes, absolutely. Weblog is very interesting and fun. It helps me a lot in learning English, especially in writing and reading, student 9]

[I love to learn English through weblog. I feel more motivated in learning English and I think I learn English better than before, student 16]

Moreover, the survey result revealed that the students considered extremely confident when they are working with computer at home or school. 96.7% of students chose “Strongly agree and “Agree” for item number two. This perception result effected their learning, therefore they prefer to work with computer. Item number 14 shows an impressive 91.6% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that doing homework on classroom blog was easier than writing it by hand.

A substantial number of students (70% strongly agreed and 30% agreed) believed that the use of weblog-based learning is more interesting in learning English than the use of classroom-based learning. This result corresponds with the characteristic of young learners and instructional media as the key principle in effective instruction. According to Musthafa (2010) the use variation of instructional activities engage and avoid boredom of the students. In line with Musthafa (2010), Heewon & Kim (2013) defines instructional media as the tools which stimulate students’ interests and help to create effective learning. In addition, students had high means of perception about the statement that weblog is important in learning language. It helps them to learn many new things thus they want to study English more using classroom blog. The interview also indicates that teaching and learning process were not boring and valued weblog-based learning as helpful technique and perceived their process of learning English as positive.

Students’ Perception toward Weblog Activity

Figure six illustrates substantial proof that the students responded positively to the weblog activities. Item six indicates that 81.7% of students answered “strongly agree” and “agree” that they liked posting articles, artwork, photos and clips on weblog. It can be observe that classroom blog is fun for them to use. It is proved that weblog is suitable for primary learners because it is attractive, interesting in appearance. Unlike adults who can learn very comfortably from parts to whole, children tend to learn things holistically (Musthafa, 2010). For young learners, therefore, weblog is fun and easy to learn when they are in their contextual ability. Majority of students responded positively to the blog activity, specifically posting articles, artwork, photos or clip. 93.3% of students loved this activity. The researcher created a personal classroom blog on www.irmasavitri.edublogs.org. It is fully customizable, so the students were easy to post and edit their works.
Figure 5. Students’ Perception toward Weblog Activities

In addition, 74.5% a large number of students in item 8 (48.5% agreed and 26% strongly agreed) indicated that the students liked having their classmates made comments on their work. Item 11 showed that 69.2% of the students-participants responded “strongly agree” and “agree” that they liked the hyperlinks which brought them to the pages with the answer. Only 20.8% of them showed “disagree” response and 10% were “strongly disagree”. Many students realized that most of weblog activities were fun and interesting, as in the comments:

[I like the activities in classroom blog, such as posting articles and pictures. I can share them to my friends so they can read my work, student 1]

[My favorite activity is interactive games in classroom blog, I can personalize the characters and record my own voice, student 15]

It can be inferred from the data that using weblog in teaching and learning provides authentic, interactive and interesting materials, therefore it creates a meaningful learning materials which are served by internet. However, it is found on the item number 12 that 60% of the students answered “agree” and “strongly agree” that they did not like making comments on their friends’ post. Some students reported that they only liked to see their friend work without commenting it. See some of the following excerpt:

[I rarely write comment on my classmates’ post. I just enjoy reading my classmates’ post and I expect my classmate read and comment on my own writing, student 8]

[Well, I don’t think I have to comment on my friends’ posts because they are not interesting, student 14]
I sometimes comment on my friends’ posts if their posts are good and interesting, student 3]

The responses seem to indicate that the students who like to write will probably like to comment on their classmates’ posts. In general, they enjoyed uploading photos, pictures, and their voice relevant to their assignments. They also seemed to enjoy on what their classmates wrote and they liked having their classmate’s read and comment on their own writing. This again supports the idea of blogging activity as a student-centered and meaningful activity.

The Students Benefit toward Weblog

In terms of perceiving the benefit of weblog for language learning is in figure 6. The answers on the item number 19 shows that 60% of students agreed and strongly agreed that weblog is useful because it gives them a chance to use computer for learning. There are 14.2% of students responded disagree and 25.8% of them strongly agreed. This fact can be seen from the students’ background and information toward the use of computer and internet (see Table 1). The majority of students have already experienced in using computer for learning, sending email, using i-messenger, etc. Therefore, they are quite familiar with the use of computer and internet.

![Figure 6. Students benefit toward weblog-based learning](image)

In addition, 88.3% of students answered “strongly agree” and “agree” for item number 25. This perception result effected their learning because video and games are assumed as the media widely used to stimulate interesting topic. It motivates learners, brings the real world into the classroom, and contextualizes language naturally. This statement in line with Stempleski and Tomalin (1990) and Canning (2000) that video as audiovisual learning can give students realistic models and increase awareness so the teacher does the best way to exploit the students’ motivation and guide them into successful language learner.

The survey result in the above figure revealed that weblog is useful to improve the student speaking skill. 73.3% of students chose “strongly agree” and “agree”. 26.7% of them
answered “disagree” and “strongly agree”. The facts of the benefits on weblog were also gained from the interview. See these following excerpts:

[I love to record my voice in voki. It’s really awesome, I can also personalize it by choosing the characters, voice and theme, student 9]

[I enjoy to create my own voki. Even though it’s not homework, I like to record and create story in voice blog or voki and post it to classroom blog, student 2]

This fact can be seen from the materials in classroom blog that the students enjoyed to create voice blog and Voki program (www.voki.com) as a tool which the students create, personalize, and upload their voice to classroom blog. However, only 35.9% of students perceived the benefit weblog for listening.

An impressive 96.7% of students strongly agreed and agreed that classroom blog is important to improve writing skill. Only 3.4% of them disagreed and agreed. Further, a substantial number of students (41.7% strongly agreed and 45.8% agreed) believed that the use of classroom blog is more interesting in learning English than the use of classroom-based learning. The classroom blog facilitates students to get more reference for their writing. The students get reference from the articles and the hyperlink that leads them to the English websites through blog. The benefit of it is also supported by Stanley on Zhang (2009) who asserts that blogs in education has many advantages, such as to provide real audience for students writing, to provide extra reading practice for students, to increase the sense of community in a class, to encourage students participate, and to create an online portfolio.

**Students’ Challenge in Learning English through Weblog**

The questionnaire item on the perceived challenges reveal that the majority of respondents (60%) perceived that the students have problem in operating new application on the classroom blog. 68% of the students agreed and strongly agreed that they found the problem of logging in and other technical difficulties. While 32% of students do not have problem in logging in and technical difficulties. In addition, a large number of students (60.8% agreed and 26.7% strongly agreed) showed that they lose their access when they find bad internet connection. As can be seen in Figure 7, a small number of students (5% strongly agreed and 6.7% agreed) answered that using weblog takes up too much time. The rest of respondents (88.3% disagreed and strongly disagreed) that weblogging wasted their time in English class.
Based on the result in Figure 8, the students find some difficulties during the process of study. The challenges above have the same result gained from the observation and interview. There are some technical problems: first, students had hard time to log in because when all students visited the same website, therefore they had to wait a little bit longer. Some students also have problem when they were introduced to the new application or program on the classroom blog. This caused they had to asked many times to the teacher. The third, some of the students forgot their password when they wanted to post to the classroom blog. The last challenge is from the internet connection. There are times when the internet connection slows down to a crawl. This was also from outside factors that affect connection speeds, such as busy websites or spreading computer viruses. Some of challenges due to technical problems can immediately be solved by the teacher and one IT expert who was in charge to organize and control at the computer laboratory.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The aim of this study is to investigate the students’ responses toward the utilization of classroom blog to learn integrated English as foreign language. The utilization of classroom blog in learning English gained a positive response from the students. It can be inferred from the questionnaire and interview data that mostly young learners nowadays have high level of frequency computer and access internet. This fact is strengthened by the data analysis of percentage of the students who used computer. 96.7% of young learners often used computer and 63.5% of them use it for doing homework. An impressive 85.8% of students often use the internet at home or school. The information of young learners’ background and frequency in using computer and internet strength the fact that the majority of the students responded “agree” and “strongly agree” that using weblog-based learning technique help them to improve them in learning English. In other words, students consider using classroom blog to gain useful
information and knowledge which enable them to enhance their language skills in English and increase learning motivation.

Based on the research findings, Weblog-based learning is highly recommended to be applied in helping young learners to improve their English language skills. It is an effective media to enhance students’ motivation to get engage in the meaningful, contextual activity, and the same time, challenging. More importantly, the teachers are expectedly to be a guide for the students in using classroom blog since it has some problems during the teaching-learning process. Therefore, it is urged that the teacher should design and plan the activities in order to give better guidance in implementing the teaching program and anticipate some technical problems before beginning the English class session using classroom blog since the media can be used only when it is connector to the internet access.

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References


Appendix

Students’ Perception towards Uses of Weblog-Based Learning

QUESTIONNAIRE: Students’ perception towards uses of Weblog-Based Learning.

Dear students,

This questionnaire is part of a research and will help me to collect information. There are no right and wrong answers. Just make sure that your answers show your experience during the use of Weblog-based Learning in English class. Please, read the statements carefully (Your English teacher will read and translate them aloud to you, too). If before, during, after the survey you have any concerns, please talk to your teacher, tutor, or the person who give you this survey.

Section I

Please put a tick in the box below to give information about yourself.

1. Gender?
   □ Male          □ Female
2. Do you have computer at home? □ Yes □ No
3. Do you have internet access at home? □ Yes □ No

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometime</th>
<th>Not Often</th>
<th>Not Very Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I use computer</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I use the internet</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>I use computer for my homework</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>I use e-mails</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>I use internet messenger</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Section II

Please put a tick in the box to state you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Agree with the statements below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I enjoy learning English through Weblog-based Learning.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statement</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I’m confident when it comes to work with classroom blog at home/at school.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>I want to study English more using classroom blog at home/at school.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>I find the problem of logging in and other technical difficulties.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I become more motivated in studying English using blog.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>I like studying through images, videos, sounds and playing games in blog.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>I think using weblog in class takes up too much time.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>I like having my classmate make comment on my work.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>I like posting articles, artwork, and photos or clips on the weblog.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Weblog in learning language is not necessary.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I like the hyperlinks that bring me to the pages with the answers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I do not like making comments on my friends’ post.</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>When I find bad internet connection, I lose my access to the classroom blog.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Doing homework on the blog is easier than writing it by hand.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>I sometimes have difficulty in figuring out what my teachers expect from me.</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Weblog-based learning is more interesting than learning English in the classroom using board, pen, and paper.</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>I find a problem in operating new application on the classroom blog.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>I get many new things and information through weblog-based learning.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Weblog-based learning is useful technique because it gives me a chance to use computer for learning process.

Weblog-based learning is helpful to learn new vocabulary.

Weblog-based learning is important to improve speaking skill.

Weblog-based learning is important to improve listening skill.

Weblog-based learning is important to improve reading skill.

Weblog-based learning is important to improve writing skill.

Games and videos in weblog are helpful to understand the lesson.