# THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WEB BLOG MEDIA TO TEACH READING AT FIRST SEMESTER OF STKIP HAMZANWADI SELONG IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2011-2012

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## ABSTRACT

Reading is an extremely effective means of extending our command of language, so it has a crucial place in classroom in which language learning is a central purpose. In teaching reading, a media is needed; it can make the students motivating and interesting. One of the media used was blog. Blog media can be adopted in any classroom to encourage active learning among students. The problems stated in this study are what extent that blog as teaching media effective in teaching reading at first semester of STKIP Hamzanwadi Selong in the academic years 2011-2012? and how to use blog as teaching media in teaching reading at first semester of STKIP Hamzanwadi Selong in the academic years 2011-2012?

This is a classroom action research. In this study, there were three cycle must be conducted with total of students were 35 students as a research subject. The writer used an observation of students activity and a test to evaluate the students' learning result in reading comprehension in form of multiple choices test that consisted of 20 items which each items consisted of four options

After collecting and calculating the data, the researcher found that the successful percentage of each cycles were: for observation of students learning result got at cycle I (2,7), cycle II (4,6), cycle III (8,0) and the result of students learning evaluation got at cycle I (54,28%), cycle II (68,57%), cycle III (91,42%). Based on the result of data collection, using blog as a media in teaching reading comprehension was more effective than students who were taught by conventional strategy.

**Key Words:** *Blog as a media and Teaching Reading*

## INTRODUCTION

Language is needed by every human as a medium of communication among individuals. Indonesian people use their native language that is their local language and their foreign language English. They communicate using Indonesian among Indonesians and using English with other people around the world. English is very

important for our lives. It is used world widely in sciences, knowledge, and technology as well as education, business, transaction, and other activities in the world.

English is one of the foreign languages for Indonesian students, which must be learnt in school since SMP level until University level. Besides it is also regarded as the first foreign language to be taught at elementary school as a local content.

English teaching involves four language skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. Among four language skills, reading is considered as a language skill that is more important to strengthen the English proficiency of the students, and it is as means of developing knowledge which is useful for the language learners and the life of another importance aspects of learning that may be developed through reading and need to be given at the same emphasizing on developing students' ability in understanding the text.

Reading skill is also very crucial to help the students to understand many kinds of tests that are frequently used to measure their ability such as in final examination test where most of questions are presented in the form of reading text. Furthermore, by reading, the students can get some information and knowledge. Via reading the students can also develop their grammar and structure understanding and enlarge their vocabulary mastery.

Consequently, the ability to read is extremely vital for our students, especially for the junior high school students. However, the students who do not understand the importance of learning to read will not be motivated to learn. Then, learning to read takes an effort, and students who see value of reading in their personal activities will be more likely to work hard than those who fall to see the benefits (Burn, et al., 1996: 5).

Furthermore, the fact shows that many students do not like to read text. It is caused by their lack of vocabulary mastery so that they are anxious to understand the text,

even to get the meaning of the text being read. This condition is caused by many factors such as they are rarely to read, they are lazy to open their dictionary to find the meaning of words available in the text, etc. These problems may affect their ability to have low ability in understanding the text given.

Various techniques have been created to describe the development of learning to read. What is usually stressed within early reading acquisition is the necessity to decode words, either via an alphabetic strategy that reads letter by letter or by decoding whole words via sight, a process that is even more complex for the students whose first language is not the language of schooling. Accordingly, various methods exist for the first phase of learning to read that have to take into account correspondence of graphemes and phonemes, e.g. analytical methods that start with letters/phones; synthetic methods that start with sentences or whole words (www.coe. int/language in education /reading).

The teacher's techniques to teach reading are important factors that may affect the students' ability in reading skill. There are some kinds of techniques that can be applied by the English teacher to develop his/her students' ability in reading skill. The teacher usually has some strategies in teaching-learning process. Teaching strategies are needed in teaching-learning process, especially in teaching reading. When the students are reading Indonesian text, they have mastered vocabulary and structural system, but when they are reading English text, they are demanded to have adequate knowledge of the target language which have different system. Good achievement in reading is important for the students. They will get information and ideas which can enrich their vocabulary and ideas. So it needs to use appropriate strategy in teaching reading, in order to produce good reading ability.

Teaching reading can be done in many ways. The common way usually used by the teacher is reading short story whereas in fact there are other strategies that are more affective. There are top-down strategy, bottom-up strategy, interactive strategy, and teaching reading. It will make students more active in the classroom. The various activities will avoid classroom monotonous. It is very useful for increasing students'

interest and motivation in learning English, so the teaching learning process will run better.

English teaching strategy is changeable. The strategy should be interesting and focus on student-centered. The strategy must be supported with interesting media. Through this media, students are active in learning process, especially in reading comprehension.

In this era, where the university grow anywhere, people will think not only about the university cost but also they will think about what facility and technology that used if they study at there. This assumption appears from their understanding about the importance of facility and technology viewed from education.

It cannot be reject that facility and technology will not separate with education process. One of the booming facilities is the internet. It comes to the campus as a need to poster the quality of learning process and out product but sometime we find the opposite, the effect of this technology is not significant, it did not change the condition of learning to be the better one.

In teaching learning process internet can be used as teaching media and source of learning. The use of media in learning process can raise our learner motivation and creativity. It can give the positive psychology effect to our learner. There are two aspects that are considered influencing the result of learning, they are the method and the media of learning. Both of them support each other. The uses of a certain method influence the media that will be employed.

One of the interesting phenomenon from internet is blog. It can be solution for us to increase the teaching learning process. Based on the above phenomena the writer intends to investigate about the effectiveness of blog in teaching reading.
The Specific Purpose of this Study.

The purpose of this research is to find out to what extent that blog as teaching media effective in teaching reading at first semester of STKIP Hamzanwadi Selong and how to use blog as teaching media in teaching reading at first semester of STKIP Hamzanwadi Selong. Because the use of internet is one of the important aspects in STKIP Hamzanwadi this time to effective the teaching learning process, the lectures must be active and cooperative to use the internet facility.

Theoretically this study motivates STKIP lectures and learners to use internet facility. In this case is the use of blog to refuse the assumption that most of the lectures have low capacity in using technology that possible to use as media or as source of learning.

Technology and information grew significantly, specially the use of internet that facilitates us with the new media. That media is blog, in Indonesia blog is not something new because all of us has known it. The people who used it rise rapidly and cover all of our society level. The use of blog is up also, it can be used for all part of our life, one of its in education field. Blog is a media that full of facilities as a private website or institution. Web blog is media to convey the information online without the limitation of time and space. it is undeniable that there will be an inevitable bllending of multimodal technologies on the web (brook, 2008)and we do recognize the huge importance of his movement in the direction of media integration on the internet (carney, 2009)

In this competition era, the world was pulled by the high competition, so the information will be important in education. Conveying information quickly will support activity in education specially in learning process. As a lecture we need to keep developing our competency. One of the competency alternatives is by using the internet facility in teaching by making blog, because blog as an interactive media can easier us to enlarge our knowledge and our existence.

Blog has many beneficial depend on how we use it and the target that we want to get by applying it. In education, the use of blog develops the competency and the quality

of the lecture. By blog, a lecture can write all of the campus programs. Besides blog can be used as evaluation because our writing can be commented by the other people from the entire angle. That comment can be used to understand the various characteristic of people to see a problem.

The use of blog is beneficial also for the student. Blog ban be used as learning media because the learning material that will be learned in the campus uploaded and presented as a layout page of web. It will be the solution for learning besides to introduce our learner to the technology and information specially internet. Blog has many beneficial for the learners:

To motivate the learners document their idea, experience, feeling, suggestion, and comment. It was important to be trial to express the idea besides to reduce the cost of publication. To be solution of class discussion that always lack of time. Blog can be used flexibly without problem of place and time.

Blog is the effective way to increase the learners' motivation in learning. For example the lecture post a learning material so the learners can blog walking to that blog and the teaching learning will be run more enjoyable. The learning material can be a good content for the development of education.(http://remajakontemporer.blogspot.com)

A. W. Bates (1995) & Wulf (, 1996) stated that the strengths of electronic media are it raises the interaction among the learners or among the learner to the lectures. It deferent with the conventional learning directly in the class not all of the learner dare or have chance to talk, ask, or give suggestion because the lack of  teaching time in the class and will be dominated by some people who has braveness. The shy learner will not get chance to ask or just give comment (loftus, 2001).

Learning interaction with the time and place will be more flexible. The source of learning presented electronically and possible to access by all of the learners via internet, so they can access to the source of learning whenever or where ever they

want (dowling, 2002).

It is potential to reach a global audience. Because the time and place is flexible, the numbers of learners could be covered larger. It is Easy to update of content as well as achievable capabilities. I t is possible for updating the method of teaching the learning material based on the learner peed back.

Reading skill in general is divided in two groups, namely words   recognition skills and comprehension skills. It will be discussed separately.

Muhammad (2005) present a list or word recognition methods as follow: they are first recognition of word as sight word, that means all words that a reader immediately recognizes when he encounters them in our out of context. The second is word from clues. The initial sight vocabulary is usually acquired by symbol with its sound and meaning so that when the word is encountered later, it is recognized in term of word from. Structural analysis, the identification of those part of that from units of meaning or units of pronunciation is structural analysis, which in clouds syllables, compound word, inflectional ending, prefixes, suffixes and word roots. Use of dictionary, when a word encountered is not in the speaking understanding vocabulary to associate sound and meaning with its printed appearance.

In general, reading is a process done by the reader to get the message expresses by the writer through written language. However, it is not simple process as it is. Bake, et.al. (1995) noted that: "Reading is a very complex process in which the recognition and comprehension of written symbols are influent by the perceptual skill, the decoding skills, the experience, the language background, the mind set and the reasoning ability of the reader as he anticipates meaning on the basis of the readers just read.

Many authors and practitioner have given different perceptions of reading.  In teaching and learning activities, reading has been made as the main objective. In addition, at the advanced proficiency level second language, the ability to read

written language at a reasonable rate and it is good comprehension has long been recognized to be important as oral skill.

Reading is a consistent process of guessing, and what are brings to text is often more important than what one find in it. This mean that from the very beginning stage of reading, reader should think to use what they know and understand the unknown elements whether they are in the forms of an idea, or simple word. This can be achieved through a global approach to the written text.

Most accounts of the reading comprehension process focus on three elements: the text being read, the background knowledge possessed by the reader, and the contextual aspects relevant to interpret the text. Practically, reading is an acquired ability, not a natural tendency; it is very complex process of recognition and the interpretation of symbols. Spiro (1980) implied that "Reading is a multilevel interactive process that is text must be analyzed at various levels, with unit of analysis going from letter to the text as a whole. In addition to process the explicit features of text, the reader must bring considerable preexisting knowledge to the reading comprehension process. The interaction of text-based and knowledge-based processes and of levels within each is essential".

In this respect, each word, each well-formed sentence, each well-formed text is said to have a meaning, which is often arranged in the utterance: both the writer and reader. The ability to maximize the interaction between text-based and knowledge-based processes forms a reader with good comprehension skill.

**The Concept of Reading**

Nuttal (1996) the authentic reason for reading is the reader attempt or activity to get information from written language such a fact, ideas, enjoyments. In other word the readers want to get the message from the written text that has been expressed. So, whatever definition we have related to the comprehension, but the main point is that the reader want to get or understand the writers' ideas printed on the text. To get this purpose the reader should be comprehended it, because comprehension is playing

very important role. As we know that comprehension is process of obtaining information from the context by using previous knowledge to interpret the meaning of the text. The readers also should have a capability to identify the text structure to obtain the text comprehensively.

Reading comprehension is a passive process. This is occurred in human brain. The readers should be active to find out the information on the text, otherwise the text will be meaningless. Nuttal (1996) clarified that it is the reason that is responsible to make the text meaningful

Meanwhile, Munshell (1988) stated one can read actively by giving response to the reading materials. The response includes the acting out or role playing of reading, about answering the question, discussing the ideas that has read about, and then answering of the questions, discussing the ideas and impressing the choices from among alternative responses as indicated of comprehension which is in learning the facts or events, giving the passage a title, making inference about author paraphrasing, retelling, summarizing, deciding statements for true or false and so forth.

Another way of someone to read which is greatly influenced from comprehension is the habits of the reader to start practiced from his/her earlier reading activity. These habits will affect the reading skills, because the relationship between reading habit and reading skill too close, that's way the readers can not improve their reading habit only. But the readers must improve their reading skill too. It means that if they want to improve their reading skill, they have to start from using two of important habit i.e. efficient habits and sufficient habits. Efficient habits cannot improve the readers' skills while they start from using sufficient reading habits. It means that the readers start their reading by doing efficient habit, but in starting it they must done sufficient reading habits first since earlier to improve their reading skill. Heilman (1976:6) says that reading habits greatly influence reading skills improvement. Moreover, he says "if as an adult you are inefficient reading habits, it is obvious that more and more reading will not automatically result in improving reading skills.

An interesting teaching and learning process in the classroom is also determined by the application of teaching steps, especially in the teaching of reading. The steps that can be applied are as in the following.

Pre-Reading Activity: There are some benefits of pre-reading activity such as to introduce and arouse interest in the topic, to motivate learners by giving a reason for reading, and to provide some languages preparation for the text. In some cases the language made already has been introduced, or there may be no particular language problem. In any case, language preparation does not mean that the teacher should explain every possible word and structure and the text, but that he/she should ensure that the learners will be able to tackle the text tasks without being totally frustrated by language difficulties (Williams, 1996). In order to help prepare for pre-reading, there are some useful questions which should be taken into consideration by the teacher such as: 1. what knowledge, ideas, or opinion might the learners already have on the text topic in? 2. How can this knowledge be drawn and used? 3. Why should anyone want to read this text, and can the same or similar reasons be generative in the learners

Whilst-Reading Activity: This step draws on the text rather than the learners' ideas to reading. The aims of this phase are to help understanding of the writer's purpose, to help the students in understanding the text structure, and clarify text content (Williams, 1996). In other cases, the learner may be asked to find the answers of question given at the beginning of the text. The short of question that the teacher asks in whilst-reading activity are as follows: 1). what is the function of the text? 2). How is the text organized and developed? 3). what content or information is to be extractive from the text? 4). what may the reader infer or deduce from the text? 5). what language may be learnt on the text? 6). what reading styles may be practiced?

Post-Reading Activity: the aims of post-reading activity are reflect upon what has been read and relate the text to the learners' own knowledge, interests or views. Post-reading activity may also include the reaction to the text and to the whilst-reading activity. Post-reading activity should those contribute a coherent manner to the writing, speaking, and listening skill.

To get the ideas for post-reading activity, the teacher can start thinking to the following questions (Williams, 1996: 39). 1). Do the learners know of the similar situation to the presented in the text? 2). Does the text present a situation that calls for recommendation? 3). Does the text present a situation that invites completion? 4).Does the text presents views that might need to be counter-balanced?

**METHOD**

In this study, the researcher was using classroom action research. Kemmis (1983) stated that classroom action research is a research that wants to examine some ideas in practice to change something in order to get the real result. It could be concluded that classroom action research is a research which examines ideas to increase the learning process. Teaching and learning was done by the researcher event the teacher as an observer. The kind of research which was chosen in this research was participative, where the researcher was involved in it.

The procedures of conducting classroom action research are planning was one of the research steps which were very important to be focused, because the research had run well if the planning was perfect enough. Action is the implementation of all planning which have been planted in planning phase and is done in teaching and learning activity in the classroom. In this phase, the researcher planed to conduct three cycles in which each cycle had some steps to do and it had been held in three meetings for each cycle. The following was the steps of each cycle which had been done by the researcher.

Observation in the classroom action research was the method of collecting the data. Hubbard and Powers in Riadi (2009) mention some kinds of methods such as note taking, students' work and artifacts, interviews, surveys, socio-grams, audio taping, and videotaping, checklist, observation and etc.

In this phase, the researcher observed the learning process and the students' achievement whether it was changed after being taught by using blog media. Learning process was observed by using observation sheet that consisted of some

aspect, indicator and factors that would be observed. In this case, the students' achievement data would be gotten from reading test.

Reflection was the last step on the action research. The aim of this activity was to remember, to see the result of action research based on the sources of the data that was collected by the researcher. After analyzing the learning and observation result, the teacher analyzed the action that had been given to the students.

In this research the researcher used two techniques in collecting the data. The data of the students' achievement was got through reading test and the data of the learning process is got from observation of students' activity. Observation sheet is an observation device that consists of ten aspect and factors that is researched. This instrument only notes *"Yes"* or *"No"* about the indicator that is searched. Getting the data through observation was being conducted by using students' observation sheet instrument. In these instruments consisted of ten aspects and some indicators or factors that would be observed and to know the students reading skill, the researcher conducted reading test.

**Technique of Data Analysis**

The activity of students learning was observed and written by using an observation sheet, and then the data was analyzed by using this formula:

$$A = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Where:
A = Successful Percentage
$\sum x$ = Total of Score is Gotten by All of Students
N = Total of Question Items

Then, the criteria to decide the students learning activity is decided based on conversion guiding on the table below: (Nurkancana, 1990)

Table 1. Criterion Data of Students Learning Activity

| Value | Qualification |
| --- | --- |
| $4,0 < A \leq 5,0$ | Very Active |
| $3,3 < A \leq 4,0$ | Active |
| $2,6 < A \leq 3,3$ | Sufficient |

| 2,0 < A < 2,6 | Low |
|---|---|
| 1,0 ≤ A ≤ 2,0 | Very Low |

Thus, data of the students activity is said complete if it is qualified by the category sufficient, active, and very active.

To know the result of students learning evaluation was analyzed by using this formula and its steps as follows:

a. Mastering is reached if the students get value ≥ 65, scale 0-100.

b. Decided the mastering group learning classically by this formula:

$$KK = \frac{X}{Z} \text{ X } 100 \text{ \%}$$

Where :

KK = Mastering of Learning

X  = Total of Students is gotten score ≥ 65

Z = Total of Students is Observed.

Mastering of group is reached if 85% from total of students get ≥ 65 with scale 0-100.  (Purwanto, 2004).

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This classroom action research was done to know the ability in increasing activity and reading comprehension studying result by using blog as a media. Based on observation and evaluation result, the researcher got a quantitative data to give picture about result of the study.

Based on observation result on students activity as long as learning process of reading  within the class , researcher got the result of some score which was gotten successful percentage with score 80%. Result of this score was gotten from student's attainment on each of indicator in observation sheet and it can be seen in the following table:

Table 2. Students Learning Activity

| No | Information | Total |
|----|-------------|-------|
| 1 | Total of students | 35 |
| 2 | Total of Aspect had been pointed | 10 |
| 3 | Total of Score was gotten | 35 |
| 4 | Successful percentage | 80% |
| 5 | Category | Very Active |

Evaluation Data of Learning Result in Reading Comprehension. After teaching and learning process was finishing and scenario had been arranged, on final cycle was done evaluation and students were given a test in multiple choice form.

Table 3. The Evaluation of Learning Result

| No | Information | Total |
|----|-------------|-------|
| 1 | High Score | 95 |
| 2 | Low Score | 60 |

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the result of the study, the researcher concluded that teaching reading by using blog media was effective to be applied in teaching and learning process. This media was effective to increase the students' reading skill. It was proved by the student learning activity result and the evaluation learning result.

Blog is the effective way to increase the learners' motivation in learning. For example the lecture post a learning material so the learners can blog walking to that blog and the teaching learning will be run more enjoyable.

Blog can be used as learning media because the learning material that will be learned in the campus uploaded and presented as a layout page of web. It will be the solution for learning besides to introduce our learner to the technology and information specially internet. Blog has many beneficial for the learners:

To motivate the learners document their idea, experience, feeling, suggestion, and

comment. It was important to be trial to express the idea besides to reduce the cost of publication. To be solution of class discussion that always lack of time. Blog can be used flexibly without problem of place and time.

Blog raises the interaction among the learners or among the learner to the lectures. It deferent with the conventional learning directly in the class not all of the learner dare or have chance to talk, ask, or give suggestion because the lack of teaching time in the class and will be dominated by some people who has braveness. Learning interaction with the time and place will be more flexible. The source of learning presented electronically and possible to access by all of the learners via internet, so they can access to the source of learning whenever or where ever they want.

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