

Impact of Weblog to Increase English Essay Writing Ability

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to get the impact of weblogs on English essay writing skills. This study used a quasi-experimental study with a one-group pre-test and post-test experimental design. The sample in this study were students of the English Program at BSI University, Jakarta. 50 students participated in the research process. The treatment process was carried out in 14 meetings and before treatment students were given a pre-test and after treatment, students received a post-test. Data was collected using documentation taken from the results of students' English essay writing tests. The data analysis technique uses a two-sample paired t-test for the mean. The results of the study concluded that the results of the t-test showed $t\text{-Stat} < t\text{-table}$ ($-32.4678 < 2.0095$), meaning that weblogs have a good level of effectiveness in improving the ability to write English essays. Students understand the steps for developing essay writing well. The results of this study have implications for understanding the concept of using multimedia technology for students to write English essays which can lead to easy access anywhere and anytime.

Keywords: *English, Essay, Writing, Weblog*

1. INTRODUCTION

The process of learning to write essays for students often faces bigger obstacles and challenges. The results of an analysis of the Essay Writing course at a private university in Jakarta in the 2022-2023 academic year found several problems with the achievement of low student scores in this course. Problems related to the content of essay writing teaching materials are that there are students who cannot make a thesis statement, students are often confused about determining paragraph transitions, students have difficulty developing body paragraphs, students have difficulty developing stories, there are still structural and meaning errors to connect one paragraph with another paragraph. and low vocabulary development. Meanwhile, the aspect of learning resource facilities provided by lecturers is quite good because it involves interactive multimedia. This means that teachers provide opportunities for students to explore digital learning resources in developing their writing skills.

However, the results of interviews with 20 students at the end of the 2022-2023 odd semester concluded that students liked writing activities on blogs. There are 73% of the 55 students in the class who often read stories on

blogs or write blogs. Thus, this study assumes that blogs can be one of the right media for developing students' essay-writing skills. Moreover, language teaching and learning activities and teachers turn to process techniques to teach writing skills (Thulasi et al., 2015) and writing activities also build social interactions and practices (Mondada & Svinhufvud, 2016). In addition, writing activities also involve the context of the source of writing ideas (Cho & Choi, 2018). Thus, through weblogs, students can express their ideas by writing freely and this can have an impact on developing well-structured writing skills. The weblogs in this study refers to the google classroom as media of journal learning in writing class. It means that the media of learning using internet network.

Many previous studies have proven the positive impact of weblogs on learning to write. Blogging is often used to share knowledge in research and education (Giarré & Jaccheri, 2008; Zandi, Thang, & Krish, 2014; Di Gregorio & Beaton, 2019). In addition, teachers can also use blogs as learning resources (Rahman Sidek & Md.Yunus, 2012). Blogs can provide knowledge about linguistics which is closely related to the writing process Montero-Fleta & Pérez-Sabater, 2010; Spanou & Zafiri, 2019; Syarofi, Kuswahono, & Rizky, 2018). Other researchers have proven that wikis have been an effective tool in increasing the desire to write (Sriwimon & Zilli, 2017; Skains, 2017). Thus, it can be concluded that weblogs can make a positive contribution to improving English essay writing skills. From the findings of the problem and previous research, this study presents a novelty that is different from previous research because the application of this weblog utilizes Google Classroom as a medium for student blog journals to present English essay assignments. Weblogs that are implemented through Google Classroom are a gap in this research. So, students also have no trouble creating their blogs because not all students have the ability to create a blog. In addition, the use of Google Classroom as a form of blog in learning to write English essays is also based on the reason that each student can read all student writing in the comments column and can understand the flow of essay writing well. Students and lecturers, or fellow students can interactively assess the results of English essay writing.

So, the purpose of this research is to get the impact of weblogs on English essay writing skills. The results of this study are also expected to provide benefits for teachers and institutions. Teachers can develop a blog specifically for English writing activities in tertiary institutions so that feedback from English essay writing activities can be more interactive and focus on analyzing essay writing teaching materials. Therefore, the novelty to be

presented is related to teacher innovation in utilizing various technological applications for learning to write. In this case, the innovation used is not only limited to web development specifically for writing learning, but the use of various available technology applications such as Google Classroom is a part that facilitates learning to write.

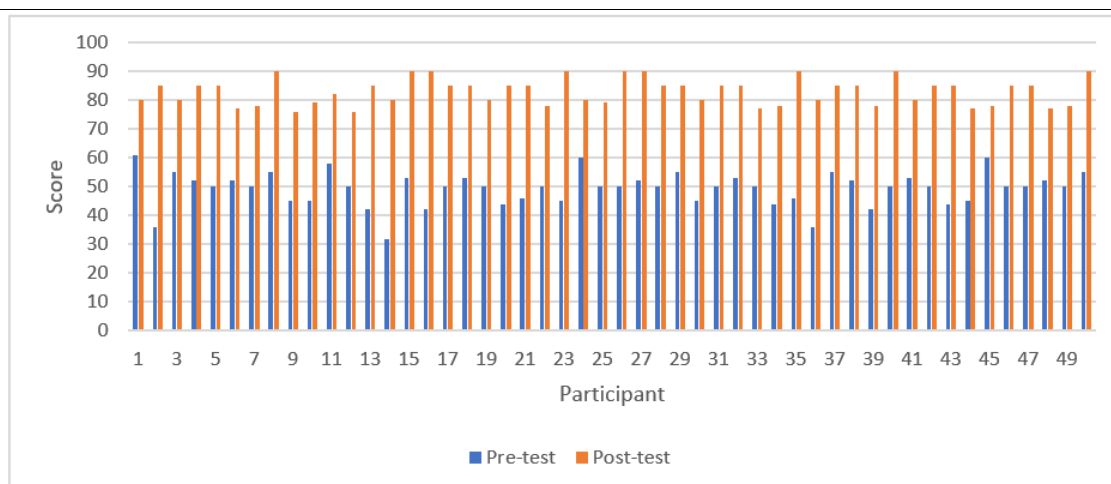
2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used quasi-experimental research using a one-group pre-test and post-test experimental design. The quasi-experimental research was carried out in only one group which is called the experimental group without any comparison group or control group. The research design of the one-group pre-test and post-test design was measured using a pre-test which was carried out before being given treatment and a post-test which was carried out after being given treatment (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The sample in this study was students in English Language Program at Universitas BSI Jakarta. 50 students are participants in the research process. The study was conducted from March - June 2023. The process of treatment was done in 14 meetings and before the treatment, students gave the pre-test and after the treatment, students got the post-test. The data was collected using documentation taken from students' result test of English essay writing. The English essay writing test was analyzed based on the following criteria: (1) organization (introduction, body and conclusion), (2) logical development of ideas, (3) grammar, (4) punctuation, spelling, and mechanics, and (5) styles and quality of expression (Brown, 2007). Technique analysis data used a t-test paired two samples for means. It used to know the students' mastery of grammar learning. Before that, the test data was analyzed the normality and homogeneity to get valid data.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the tests that have been analyzed are presented in the form of tables and graphs, namely 1) a graph of the comparison of the results of the pre-test and post-test, 2) a table of descriptive statistics of the entire test data 3) a table of the percentage comparison of each component of the results of the writing test, and 4) the results of the calculation of the t-test. The following is the graph of the comparison of the results of the pre-test and post-test.



Graph 1. The comparison of the results of the pre-test and post-test

Graph 1 shows that overall (100%), students have increased their English essay writing test results after being given the weblog treatment during the English essay writing learning process. This proves that there is effectiveness in using weblogs for students in writing essays. Meanwhile, the results of the percentage analysis for each component of the English essay writing assessment are presented in the following table.

Table 1. Percentage of English Essay Writing Test Component Between Pre-test and Post-test

Components		Indicators		Pre-test	Post-test
1	Organization	1.	Introduction	20.2%	21%
		2.	Body		
		3.	Conclusion		
2	Logical development of ideas	1.	Content	19.8%	23%
3	Grammar	1.	Construction is simple and complex but effective	23%	23%
		2.	Syntax rules		
4	Punctuation, spelling, and mechanics	1.	Punctuation and spelling	19%	17%
		2.	Writing rules		
5	Styles and quality of expression	1.	Diction (word choosing)	18%	16%
		2.	Useful word, and		
		3.	Choosing and expression, and vocabulary construction.		
Total				100%	100%

Table 1 shows that the lowest component of the English essay writing test assessment is styles and quality of expression for both the pre-test and post-

test. Meanwhile, the assessment component of the English essay writing test which has the highest percentage at the pre-test is grammar and at the post-test is grammar and logical development ideas. So, from the data in this table, it can be said that the problems found at the time of observation related to the content of teaching materials for writing English essays have been resolved properly as seen from the evidence of the highest percentage at the time of the final test. Here is the result of descriptive statistics:

Table 2. Statistic Descriptive of English Essay Writing Test

	Pre-test	Post-test
Mean	49.3	82.96
Standard Error	0.8365	0.6293
Median	50	85
Mode	50	85
Standard Deviation	5.915	4.494
Sample Variance	34.989	20.198
Kurtosis	0.989	-1.149
Skewness	-0.6186	0.1621
Range	29	14
Minimum	32	76
Maximum	61	90
Sum	2465	4230.96
Count	50	51
Confidence Level(95.0%)	1.681	1.264

The average score of the English essay writing test increased quite well from the pre-test to the post-test with an increase rate of 33.66. The highest post-test score was 90 and the pre-test was 61, so there was an increase of 29 points. Meanwhile, the lowest post-test score was 76 and the lowest pre-test score was 32, so there was an increase of 44 points. Overall, the statistics in Table 2 show the positive impact of weblogs on the ability to write English essays. This is also proven by the following t-test results.

Table 3. t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means

	Pre-test	Post-test
Mean	49.3	82.96
Variance	34.989	20.61
Observations	50	50
Pearson Correlation	0.0346	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	49	
t Stat	-32.46785	
P(T<=t) one-tail	4.24828	
t Critical one-tail	1.67655	

P(T≤t) two-tail	8.49656
t Critical two-tail	2.00957

Table 3 concluded that $t_{Stat} < t_{table}$ ($-32,4678 < 2.0095$). It can be said that H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted. It means that weblog is effective to increase students' English essay writing ability. Thus, it can be said that the use of appropriate learning media can have a significant impact on the ability to write English. Moreover, a weblog is the right medium for pouring all student writing. Although in this study the weblog used was not a special blog designed for teaching English essay writing activities. But a weblog is applied to the Google Classroom application as a medium for students to convey various results of assignments to write English essays. However, fellow students can provide an assessment of the results of their friends' essay assignments. Even the peer assessment process that was applied during the treatment also showed an increase in student motivation and effort in mastering grammar, writing style, logical order, and vocabulary development. The use of technology motivates student engagement and participation in writing assignments and increases social interaction and peer collaboration (Williams & Beam, 2019).

Thus, these findings provide a concept about creating a learning environment that is relevant to the needs of students and the right use of multimedia technology can have a positive impact on students while studying. Blogs can be a supporter of a constructivist learning environment (Noel, 2015). Blogs are also a medium that provides a more interesting sense of learning and is the best indicator for creating an effective learning environment (Top, 2012). Moreover, blogs are a type of em 2.0 platform that can be developed as electronic journals for writing activities (Cheng & Chau, 2011). The results of other studies show that Wikipedia is a media source that can develop critical thinking in writing activities (Vetter et al., 2019). Blogs as a medium for learning English as a second language (Ying et al., 2013). Even blogs have the potential to increase reflection, a sense of community and collaboration in the classroom (Halic et al., 2010). From these findings, it can also be concluded that weblogs can be teaching materials that can provide a source of stimulation for language activities (Yundayani et al., 2017). These findings provide an understanding of blogs that can be used as a medium for learning to write. Teachers do not have to create a special blog but can take advantage of other technology applications such as journals for teaching and learning to write English essays.

This study found advantages (positive impact) and limitations (negative impact). The advantages are 1) students can know each other's shortcomings in

their writing, 2) fellow students can provide feedback, 3) students can easily do assignments from the teacher because they can be done anytime and anywhere, 4) students can easily access teaching materials provided by the teacher, and 5) students can find out the results of feedback from the teacher quickly. While the limitations of using this weblog (google classroom) are that the teacher cannot modify the menu because they have to use the menus that are available during the writing class.

4. CONCLUSION

The results of the study concluded that weblogs had a positive influence on students in improving their English essay-writing skills. This can be seen from the development of test results before and after treatment. The results of the t-test show $t\text{-Stat} < t\text{-table}$ ($-32.4678 < 2.0095$), meaning that weblogs have a good level of effectiveness in improving the ability to write English essays. Presentation of weblogs using Google Classroom makes it easy for students to explore and study their colleagues' essay writing. The results of this study have implications for understanding the concept of utilizing multimedia technology for students to write English essays that can lead to easy access anywhere and anytime. However, this research is still limited to the use of weblogs through Google Classroom as a media blog in practising English essay writing skills. Data is also still limited to English study programs. Therefore, future researchers can take advantage of the results of this research for further development related to creating a special blog for learning to write English essays. So, a weblog product that can contain interactive teaching materials and writing exercises. In addition, the results of this study also recommend that teachers in tertiary institutions integrate weblogs in class with interactive teaching strategies.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

SA, has been responsible for the preliminary research process and data collection. SA also teaches essay writing using weblogs. EM, is responsible for

the process of teaching and learning to write essays in class and the data obtained is analyzed up to the preparation of research reports.

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