

# Unraveling Students' Attitude of Using Blog for Online Learning in Literature Class

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**Abstract** – The Covid 19 pandemic has caused problems and progress in learning. Issues related to the online learning process are faced by educators related to technology use. On the one hand, due to the demands of the situation, the online learning process during the pandemic led to progress in learning using technology. One of them is by using a blog. This study aims to find out students' attitudes related to learning literature by using blogs. 79 students in the English Literature study program, Faculty of Art and Education at The University of Teknokrat Indonesia, were the samples in this study. Some of the benefits of blogs were collected and students interpreted blogs positive. Higher response to the use of blogs as a medium to increase critical thought shows positive regarding the purpose of learning literature. The findings also show that there are several problems faced by students related to the use of blogs. However, the students are interested in developing argumentative skills in writing paper on blog and the internet as a medium of self-representation.

**Keyword**—*blog, critical thought, literature, self-representation, teaching, technology*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic that has knockout the world has impacted the learning process in Lampung province, Indonesia. The absence of students in class makes the learning process a bit hampered because direct instruction, which is usually performed, cannot be executed simultaneously. The learning process that was given in class finally has to be carried out outside or online to reduce the impact of Covid-19 transmission. As a result, universities are required to adapt to the existing conditions. No exception, all universities in Lampung finally oblige students to study online, and the learning process extends. Studies [1][2][3]–[6] on the learning process during the pandemic exhibited a decrease in student interest in the learning process, a decrease in students' abilities in the field they were engaged in, and a decrease in student participation in class. Online learning should actually be done by following the government's call for self-quarantine, physical distancing and social distancing. For this reason, online learning cannot be limited by place and time so that learning can be carried out anywhere and anytime. Teaching using technology is the primary choice considering some barriers faced by lecturers and students, such as lack of time, access, expertise, resources, and support [7][8].

Various teaching media are used so that the teaching process can be carried out accurately. The studies reported that technology makes it more accessible for teachers and students to interact efficiently in the learning process. The

study also revealed that technology for online learning incites communication between students and lecturers, creates the interactive class, assists students to do assignments, allows teachers to give tests, and executes it more immediately to control students. One of the media used in the technology-based learning process is a blog.

Blogs are one of the learning media used in the learning process. Studies [9]–[12] on blogs in learning have been carried out. Several studies highlight students' competence, achievement, opinion, and interaction. Blogs in the learning process have been carried out in teaching English, especially writing skills lessons. Considering this situation, the study of blog is done as this media has been applied in literature class. This study aims to investigate students' attitude of using blog.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### A. Teaching Literature Class

Literature lecturers' prime responsibility is to lead the students into understanding the distinctive purposes, literary works, genres, methodology, and the concept of literary criticisms, ideas and issues. Teaching literature involves contextual learning which enables the students to understand the learning material related to the social, historical, psychological, and cultural contexts [13] [14]. In other words, students are to gain access for multi-disciplinary knowledge related to literature. Teaching literature focusing on enhancing students' creativity in having critical thought is usually done in various ways. Lecturers can execute various discussions through journals, class presentations, class competitions, internships, seminars, video presentations, storytelling, speeches, debates, class performances, dramas, etc. [15][16]. Those activities are recommended for lecturers who supervise in the class and students who attend the subject. The creativity of students to exhibit some reasons, argumentative ideas, forums for discussion and contemporary ideas make students' critical thinking more honed [17]. All these learning media ultimately generate a successful goal in teaching literature.

Lecturers facilitate the students to gather as many as information they need. The need should concern on the discussion of literary works and criticisms by utilizing applications or learning media. This step assists the students in reading in the comprehension of philosophy, politics, religions, morality, culture, and even politics. The work of fictions integrate the universal knowledge of literary criticism and fictions gives chances for the students to grasp, interpret, analyze, and appreciate [18].

There are several ways to make teaching literature effective. First is the selection of the theory that would be discussed in the class, and the second is the selection of literary objects. These two ways should be conducted based on the level of the semester. The third is to develop method of teaching that would impress the students and prevent them from boredom. Thus, the teaching and learning activity in the class would be effective [19]. The use of media technology, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic has involved significantly that the lecturers and students must undergo particular circumstances in the classroom and require cooperation from both parties. Lecturers are encouraged to apply students centered learning in teaching literature. Presentation and discussion become the main activities, however, the use of media such as blog can also be carried out as a classroom activity.

### B. Web-Based Technology for Online Learning

Web technology becomes a helpful search engine for users worldwide by utilizing the existing search engines, millions of beneficial information to help all fields of industry, culture, education, religion, and economy [20][21]. The efficacy and usability of web technology display the first choice when mobile phones have become a culture and ownership for everyone. When the ease of information with one 'click' can be accomplished, people tend to depend on search engines, especially from websites on the internet. With all the convenience and usability, web technology has finally converted a vital tool that helps during the pandemic [22][23]. People have shifted very dependently on getting the information available on the existing search engines. All activities carried out in all fields are finally performed through the means available in web technology.

Implementing online learning is not merely utilizing technology in the teaching and learning process. It also concerns the merging of classical methods and new technology. Web-based technology enables students to adapt to a new way of communication and problem-solving. It has multiple approaches towards online learning, and it also functions as a source of teaching materials, syllabus, instructions, and assignments. Therefore, finding user-friendly software that provides a suitable solution for lecturers' and students' needs.

Advantages of web-based technology include effective interactions between lecturers and students, more affordable and time-saving, flexibility, access to databases and materials based on the discussed topics, self-pacing, and developing personality, values, and responsibility [8]. To improve learning outcomes, lecturers conduct various strategies and asses methods, interactions, questions and feedback, and cognitive capacity aspects [24]. Web-based technology supports teaching strategies and promotes students' social presence. Lectures and students become aware of each interaction and participation in the online classroom. The students are to engage and to demonstrate ability in a virtual environment, which also requires the expression of emotion and group cohesion. They should also be willing to show their creativity and involvement that reflects their performance in the online learning process.

### C. Blog

Blogs are generally used to collect information and news related to a particular topic, as a source of data analysis and as a person's journal [25], as an assessment tool [26], and as

a tool to organize thought and ideas [27]. Everybody who possesses basic computer skills and an internet connection can maintain a blog. The blog has been popular because of the easiness of operating it. Statistics data [28] shows that 409 million people view approximately 20 billion blog pages on the internet every month. The data also shows that in 2021, there will be five million WordPress posts every day. Other statistical data [29] also show that there are approximately 600 million blogs on internet search engines. The data indicates that blogs have been very popular for all internet users to search for data and post something.

Blogs provide several features that make it easier for users to publish writing products, archive articles and interact with users. These features also allow users to perform these activities without any limitations. The flexibility given by users to upload articles, pictures, information, news, photos, sounds, and others is an advantage for using blogs [30]. This advantage causes the use of blogs to continue to grow, especially in Google browser. Every office, family, personal, organization, institution, school and college currently has a blog as a self-presentation tailored to existing needs.

The blog with various benefit is hoped attract reader's interest. By reading blog, the reader is willing or motivated to produce it. The blog media also contains the blog owner's ideas, which can be shaped according to the blog page owner's imagination to beautify and concrete the reading through images. The blog can attract readers' attention to read the writings on the blog page and motivate them to express their ideas by creating the blog page itself.

## III. METHOD

This study applied a qualitative and quantitative approach. The data source is used to analyze students' attitudes towards the use of blogs. Interviews as preliminary research to collect comments about blogs were conducted while the class was running. After the online learning was completed, a questionnaire was administered to obtain information about blogs in literature classes. Questionnaires were given to approximately 93 students, but there were only 79 students who responded consisting of 58 females and 21 males. Questionnaire questions were adopted from different sources [10][11]. Questions on the survey conducted are also based on student opinions collected during interviews and class discussions on blogs in literature class. The questions of questionnaire were divided into four parts: general respondent's data (two open questions), blog information (three yes-no questions), the usefulness of blog (6 Likert scale questions), students' attitude (7 Likert scale questions), the problem encountered in using a blog (four yes-no questions). The procedure carried out in this study is divided into three:

### A. Class Preparation

During the teaching-learning process, the lecturer has introduced the use of blogs in class while explaining the objective of the literary subject. The lecturer obliged the students to read literature class materials in the lecturers' blog. The availability of materials in the blog is also announced in the learning management system that the lecturers applied. The syllabus of the subjects also invited students to submit homework by using the blog. The assignment that the lecturer assigned is as the final project of a quiz, mid or final. The students were then obliged to submit the paper in an

argumentative essay on a blog. The lecturer instructed them to create a blog account, customize their blog, publish their work, and comment on others' blogs. Cause of pandemic conditions, the video of training is given to the students to learn on their own at home. The lecturer can provide comments to the blog updated. The training session aimed to introduce students to blogs to create their blogs and afterward post and publish the written assignments.

### B. Lecturer's Blog

Blogs for lecturers are a source of supporting reading materials used in addition to other materials from books and journals that are required. As a means of support, blogs are mandatory materials that students must have before participating in online learning. The lecturer's blog contains materials that are discussed, but not all the material in one semester is uploaded by the lecturer on the blog. The lecturer motivates the class to apply blogs to assist online learning in literature class. Some classes are using the blog to support the teaching-learning process. The lecturers explain that while opening the class, the students will do some blog works for having material and updating homework and paper. For motivating students to have a blog, the lecture explains how to use a blog by giving the example of the lecturer's blog. Lecturers regularly uploaded the material in the blog and asked the students to read it. By uploading the material in the blog, the lecturers have some advantages for the online learning process. Lecturers can reevaluate the students' understanding of the material by discussing it in the class. The example of lecturer blog is hoped to motivate the students learn the subject, to think critically and to be active and familiar as technology user

### C. Student's Blog

Students are given the freedom to create blogs according to their tastes and creativity in this literature class. Tutorials to create a blog from YouTube are shared so that students learn to create blogs independently. The lecturer frees the title of the blog and the images used. When explaining the tasks on the blog, students are explained an interesting blog according to the fonts and images. Next, students are asked to submit assignments on the blog. Students who have already worked on a blog will be asked to present using the blog they created. Student blogs are also used to upload articles they have created. The best student blogs get appreciation from lecturers at the end of online learning. An example of a student blog can be seen in the following picture (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. One of Students' Blogs

## IV. FINDING

From the three groups of question (the usefulness of using blog, the students' attitude and problems encountered in using blog) given to the students, the data gathered can be explained below.

### A. The Knowledge on Blog

This part of question was applied to check students' knowledge on the blog. There are three yes-no questions given to the students. They are the blog familiarity, the frequency of using the blog, and how the blog assists the students in studying literature. 74 (93.7%) students claim familiarity with blog use. From the data gained (Fig. 2), 49 (62%) students 'sometimes' apply blog and 19 (24.1%) students 'often' apply blog in the literary subject. Surprisingly, 2 (2.5%) students 'very often' use blog and 5 (6.3%) 'always' apply blog.

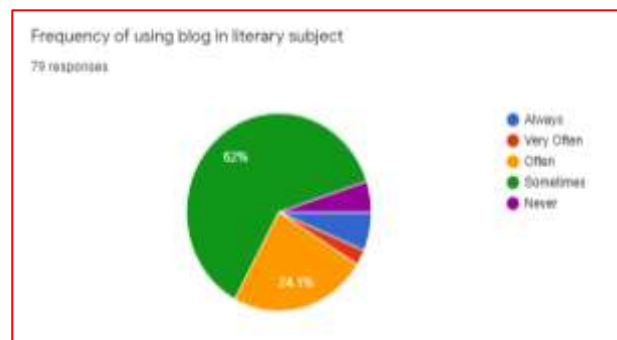


Fig. 2. The data on the frequency of using blog

The data gathered from blog assistance in literature class showed that blogs mostly help students do homework (43.6%). Blogs can also help gain subject material (33.3%), do test (16.7%), and work with team (5.1%). On the other hand, one student did not think that blog assisted him/her in literature class.

### B. The Usefulness of Using Blog

The students' responses on the usefulness of blogs are discussed below (Table I). From the data gathered, the perceived benefits of blogging as a medium to improve critical thought received the highest score (79.8%), followed by enhancing the skill of writing an argumentative essay (74.7%) and improving communication skills (70.9%). The students also responded positive ('strongly agree' and 'agree') for the blog use in improving students' self-presentation (67.1%). Surprisingly, the benefit of the blog to improve grammar and vocabulary received the lowest (62.1%). Additionally, 64.6% of the participants 'strongly agree' and 'agree' to the statement that the blog can improve social networking. In general, the results show that the participants prioritized the enhancement of critical thought.

TABLE I. THE USEFULNESS OF USING BLOG

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
An improvement of communication skills	17.7%	53.2%	27.8%	1.3%	0%
Having an improvement in critical thought	19%	60.8	19	1.2	0%
Writing an argumentative essay	15.2%	59.5	24.1	1.2	0%
Having self-presentation	13.9%	53.2	30.4	2.5	0%
Having improvement of grammar and vocabulary	20.3%	41.8	36.7	1.2	0%
A new way of social networking	15.2	49.4	29.1	6.3	0%

### C. Students' Attitude

The data (Table 2) show that students' responses on blog activities have shown some various result. From 7 questions given regarding students' attitude in using the blog, the findings are listed further. The students showed interest in applying blog as the data showed the highest mark on 'blog use' (70.9%). The second position achieved to the students' response is students' acceptance on the blog. Most of the students appreciated the use of blog as they accepted the blog use for literature class (68.3%), with 10.1% chose 'strongly agree' and 58.2% chose 'agree'.

Overall, students responded positively to the literature. By adding the percentage of 'strongly agree' and 'agree' responses, most students responded encouraging. They believed in the production of essay quality (65.9%), an improvement of motivation (64.6%), and the comprehensibility of blogs (63.3%). On the other hand, students feel insecure in having a blog and choose 'strongly agree' (12.7%) and 'agree' (44.2%). The data of students' confidence showed the lowest. In addition, some of them chose to be 'neutral' (40.5%). Students' confidence correlates with the popularity of the blog as the data showed lower (62.1%). 12.7% of them chose 'strongly agree', and 49.4% chose 'agree'. Finally, there were no students who chose 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' answers.

TABLE II. STUDENTS' ATTITUDE

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Blog technology acceptance	10.1%	58.2%	31.6%	0.1%	0%
Perceived degree of motivation	8.9%	55.7%	32.9%	2.5%	0%
Having confidence	12.7%	44.3%	40.5%	2.5%	0%
Having concern about the comprehensibility	13.9%	49.4%	34.2%	2.5%	0%

Having quality on essay assignment	16.5%	49.4%	31.6%	2.5%	0%
Having interest on blog use	17.7%	53.2%	26.6%	2.5%	0%
The popularity of blog to students' life	12.7%	49.4%	34.2%	3.7%	0%

### D. Problem Encountered in Using Blog

Students responded differently regarding the problem encountered in using blog. Most of them had problem with internet connection (64.6%). Typing problem (55.7%) and computer equipment (59.5%) also bothered the students' activity in creating and uploading argumentative essay. Surprisingly that the students did not think they did plagiarism activity and copied work from other sources as there was only 48.1% who responded 'yes' or 'agree' to the question.

TABLE III. DIFFICULTIES IN USING BLOG

Items	Yes	No
Typing problem	55.7%	44.3%
Getting disconnected	64.6%	35.4%
Computer equipment	59.5%	40.5%
Copying others' work	48.1%	51.9%

## V. DISCUSSION

Blog as a web-based online media can function as a journal/diary for someone. With various features that can be used and loaded, blogs can attract the interest of readers. Furthermore, the reader is willing or motivated to produce it. In the learning process, blogs have several advantages, including improving students' reading and writing culture[11], [31], [32]. The blog media also contains the blog owner's ideas, which can be shaped according to the blog page owner's imagination to beautify and concrete the reading through images. It is hoped to attract the readers' attention to read the article on the blog page. It can also motivate to express the ideas through the creation of the blog page itself. The active interaction can also be carried out through comments or questions that can later be discussed again in class if the problem is not solved. Various sources of information can be obtained by students through blog pages available on the internet for learning materials or interacting with blog users in the world. The lecturer's role is not so dominant in learning. The lecturer can control the students through questions and answers about what they have read. The lecturer makes sure that the students read and understand what they are reading.

The purpose of this research is to capture students' attitudes towards the use of blogs when blogs are an obligation for students' activities in making homework that must be collected online. For this reason, the results from four main part of questioner questions and interview found some positive ones. On first part, the knowledge on blog is found that students actively take a part in literature class by using blog.

The results of the survey given to the student participants are important of blog use for a number of

reasons. First, it appears that the percentage of students who has interest in blog use showed the highest. This means that they like something new for having blog activity in the class. Even though most of the students are from rural area in Lampung province, the students were positive in responding blog assignment. Most of the students submitted assignment in blog. Even though there were higher 'neutral' response, the students actively create blog. From 79 samples, there are actually 41 students who own blog.

The use of blogs in literature class has been proven to be supported by students. There are feeling the usefulness of blogs in improving critical thinking, writing argumentative essays and improving grammar and vocabulary. It is shown from the students' responses on the usefulness of blogs which showed highest score (79.8%) in perception that blog is as a medium to improve critical thought received the highest score. It is supported by Rahman [31], Yang [32] and Huffaker [33] who points out that online technology create community to support individual expression. This proves that online community can motivate and improve students' expression. The prose and literary criticism classes in the study proved to be able to increase students' creativity and express writing in the form of argumentative essays. This can be seen from the interesting and diverse student blogs. Students can produce writings with creativity in making blogs. For this reason, students have a positive opinion that blogs are able to increase creativity in producing good writing with essays that have critical thinking and argumentative. This is supported by the proximity of the blog to thousands of other sources on the internet which provide many sources of books and journals. On the other hand, the response from the students about the useful of blog to improve grammar and vocabulary was not really supported. The data showed the lowest response compared to others, but it still showed higher (62.1%). It means that the automatic checking in blogs has proven to improve students' writing and vocabulary. Both Rahman [31] and Yang [32] support this idea of blog use in improving students' grammar and vocabulary.

Blog acceptance in online learning in literature class can finally be a suggestion that blog activities can be continued with more interesting and fun methods. An existing blog in the early grades with various interesting writings can motivate students in the next grade. Positive responses to improving skills in critical thought, argumentative writing and grammar and vocabulary are the main reasons for the sustainability of blog media in as task-based learning. Another study done in Universitas Teknokrat Indonesia also shows positive response when conducted by task-based learning [34, p. 122] The interviews also indicated that there was 'disappointment' that literature classes using blogs were abolished. Interviews also revealed that students felt happy that they could be more creative in creating blogs. From existing blogs, some students added information about their achievements. This proves that students become more creative. The study revealed that students are encouraged to have self-paced, self-accessed, and self-directed learning environment [35, p. 107]. In addition, student blogs become more interesting because they use interesting pictures in their appearance, although there are some images that are too dominating so that the main explanation becomes blur.

The use of blogs also has some problems for academic life. Blogs can also make it easier for students to copy work from other articles. Through interviews, information was also obtained that by looking at other blogs, students can copy ideas and ideas that are exactly the same as other students. The problem of students on the computer is aimed at the instructions that must be used in making blogs. The lack of understanding of the instructions made some student blogs to be too focused on the pictures. The students' love of blogs is not accompanied by the ability to understand the instructions. It is also acknowledged by students from the existing survey data that they are not familiar with the instructions.

The use of blogs as one of the technology-based media for enhancing and assisting students in online learning can finally be the challenging choice. University must have the purpose to develop confidence in seeking and finding knowledge through real life. Blog activity in today's university need is deeply correlated with the Ministry of Education and Culture's policy, which launched 'Kampus Merdeka' as the latest policy. This policy provides challenges of creativity, capability, character, and student needs in the university curriculum.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The study is based on current condition of pandemic which require students to learn online. The use of blogs in class is also to determine whether students are interested in using blogs because blogs are an outcome in the literary learning process. By creating a blog, students are expected to be able to write quality writing with good grammar and be able to use technology that is being intensively used during the pandemic.

Promoting the use of technology for students who still live in rural areas and are far behind in technology is this study. The blog project in literature is the primary choice because the product in the literature course is an argumentative essay. By writing essays in blogs, students indirectly gain double skills, namely the ability to produce quality essays and use technology more intimately and fluently.

This study has proven positive responses that more than 50% of students agree on blogs. It can improve writing skills in a more communicative, argumentative, and critical manner. Blogs also help in correcting grammar and vocabulary deficiencies in English. The problem of blogging for students stems from an internet connection and computer use because most students live in remote areas. During the pandemic, students return to their hometowns and study online using existing technology.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We want to thank and express gratitude to the Institution of Research and Community Service (LPPM), Universitas Teknokrat Indonesia, for providing the fund and support for this research. We also express great thanks to the Faculty of Art and Education for giving motivation and support.

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