

Learning Local Culture Becomes More Effective with Online Cultural Blogs in the New Normal Covid-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

This research examined the concept of learning the local culture of the community based online cultural blog in English for Tourism lecture in the new normal era. The lecture was closely related to the student's ability to master cultural knowledge, especially local culture, tourists, tourist attractions, and community economic activities and students were expected to be able to interpret this. During the current new normal covid-19 pandemic, all lectures were recommended not to meet face to face as an effort to prevent the transmission of covid-19. Lecturers must have a learning concept that was able to stimulate students to remain active and creative while taking distance lectures, especially in English For Tourism lectures, in which there was a lot of material that must be conveyed by lecturers to students. One of the learning concepts that was considered appropriate for teaching English for Tourism courses in the new normal era as it was today was the concept of learning based on Online Cultural Blog. It was an online blog whose contents were in the form of matters related to tourism culture. While the blog itself stood for web log, which was a web application in the form of writings (which were loaded as posts) on a web page. The content in this blog was expected to be able to help students became more enthusiastic in understanding the material in the English For Tourism course, which was mostly related to tourism culture. Therefore, learning objectives were still achieved even though they were not carried out face-to-face with students in the new normal era.

Keywords: Online Cultural Blog, English For Tourism, Learning Concept, New Normal

INTRODUCTION

Learning English in Indonesia still faces various problems. The main problem that is currently being experienced is related to the covid-19 pandemic. English learning, especially in universities, has also been affected by the pandemic. The Indonesian government has urged residents to stay indoors and isolate themselves. One of them is that the Indonesian government implements the PSBB regulation which stands for Large-Scale Social Restrictions made in the context of Handling COVID-19. This is done with the hope that the virus will not spread more widely and that healing efforts can run optimally. In this social distancing effort, the Indonesian government has also restricted activities outside the home such as educational activities that have been carried out through online learning.

The online learning process in order to be successful requires cooperation from various parties, both from students, lecturers, and the environment. The correct learning concept, especially in this case, learning about local culture is needed by lecturers of the English for Tourism course so that the distance lecture process can run effectively and successfully. Cultural learning is very beneficial for the meaning of the process and learning outcomes for students to gain contextual learning experiences and perceptual materials to understand the concept of knowledge in their local (ethnic) culture. ^[1] In distance

learning students can become less active in conveying their aspirations and thoughts, as a result saturating learning occurs. A student who experiences boredom in learning will experience progress in learning outcomes. Therefore, an impetus is needed to motivate students to be enthusiastic about learning so that they are able to absorb lecture material well. This was also experienced by students of English literature at UMN Al-Washliyah when participating in distance learning in the English for Tourism course. They feel bored and not excited when the lecturer delivers material about local culture. The material is basically very interesting and important to learn, but the learning concepts used by lecturers still cannot make students enthusiastic and eager to follow it. The appropriate learning concept used by lecturers to convey material about the local culture of the community's economy in distance lectures, in this case the English for Tourism course, is to use "BOBA" (Online Culture Blog). A blog is a cross between someone's diary and a list of links on the internet.^[2] So "BOBA" is an online blog in which it examines various things about culture. In the world of higher education, researchers and educators have been inspired to use blogs as a learning medium since 2005.^[3] Blogs and their features have the potential to be used as a means to achieve the main goals, namely: helping students develop knowledge in their chosen field; facilitate students to develop critical thinking techniques, logical, communication skills (oral and written); and encouraging students to be independent thinkers and learners who are able to work together. Thus blogs can be used as a learning tool, especially in this case, interactive learning of local culture because the design can be made attractive. So that learning becomes more attractive and creative even though it is carried out remotely.

METHODS

The method is an attempt to find, develop, and test the truth of knowledge, so that a scientific work (from a study) can

achieve what is expected with precision and direction by using the scientific method.^[4] While the research method is a general strategy adopted in collecting and analyzing the necessary data, in order to answer the problems at hand.^[5] This research is a quantitative study with an experimental approach. Experimental research is research in which the researcher deliberately generates an event or situation, in other words, experimental research is a way to find a causal effect between two factors that are deliberately caused by the researcher by eliminating or reducing or setting aside the factors that can be annoying. Experiments are always carried out with the intention of seeing the results of a treatment carried out by researchers.^[6] In other words, an experimental research in principle can be defined as a systematic method to build relationships that contain causal-effect relationships.^[7] The experimental design in this study is Pre Experimental Design. This design is said to be a pre-experimental design because it has not is a serious experiment because there are still external variables that influence the formation of the dependent variable. The form of the Pre-Experimental Designs in this study is One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design (One Group Pretest-Posttest), in this design there is a pretest before being treated. Thus, the results of treatment can be known to be more accurate, because it can compare with the conditions before being treated. Given that the UMN Al-Washliyah English Literature students in the English for tourism class are small in number, this research design is appropriate to be used to obtain research data. Data collection is a very important step in research, because the data collected is used to test the hypotheses that have been formulated. In general, there are several data collection methods in this study, namely:

a. Questionnaire Method (Questionnaire)

The questionnaire is a data collection technique that is done by giving a set of written questions to the respondent to

answer, which can be given in person or by post or the internet. There are two types of questionnaires, namely closed and open. The questionnaire used in this case is a closed questionnaire, namely a questionnaire that has provided the answer, so that the respondent only needs to choose and answer directly^[8]. This questionnaire is addressed to students of English literature at the Muslim Nusantara Al-Washliyah University Medan to determine student responses to the concept of learning about local culture.

b. Test Methods (Pre-Test and Post-Test)

A test is a series of questions given to students to get answers from students in oral form (oral test), in written form (written test), or in the form of action (action test). In general, tests are used to measure or assess student learning outcomes, especially cognitive learning outcomes with regard to mastery of teaching materials in accordance with the objectives of lectures and teaching. In fact, tests can also be used to measure or assess learning outcomes in effective and psychomotor fields.^[9] This means that the test is a series of questions, or exercises that are used as a tool to measure the skills, knowledge, or abilities possessed by an individual or group. In this study, researchers used a learning outcome test which was used to measure the extent to which students' abilities after studying material on the local culture of the community's economy through the online culture blog "BOBA" in English for tourism lectures. Researchers will assess the learning outcomes of local cultural materials by using tests in the form of essays. The essay test is a question that requires students to answer it in the form of describing, explaining using their own words. The test questions given consisted of 5 items.

c. Documentation Method

Another way to obtain data from respondents is to use the documentation method. This method is done by investigating written objects such as official

documents in the form of letters or other evidence. This method is used to obtain written data or images about the list of names of students who are included in the research sample class, photos of student activities during the learning process, and data on the value of daily assignments from the class used as the research sample.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Before researchers give post-test questions to students who are used as research samples, the researcher first validates the experts so that the post-test questions given in the study can be known for their validity. There are two validity tests, namely the empirical validity test and the expert validity test. The expert validity test used 3 experts, namely 2 experts from the UMN Al-Washliyah English Literature lecturers and 1 expert from the UMN Al-Washliyah English language education lecturers. The question is validated and declared fit or not to be used as a research instrument. After carrying out the validity test of the expert research team, the post-test questions were tested by determining whether or not questions number 1 to 5 were valid for empirical validity. In accordance with valid rules, the question will be declared valid if $r_{count} > r_{tabel}$. By looking at the table if we take as many as 10 respondents using $\alpha = 0.05$ then $r_{tabel} = 0.632$. The pre-research test in this study was the class homogeneity test. The class that will be used as the previous research sample is tested for homogeneity first to find out whether the class is homogeneous or not. For the homogeneity test, researchers used the mid-semester average value of English for tourism obtained from lecturers who taught courses. Based on the test results, it can be seen that the significance value is 0.659, because the significance value is more than 0.05, namely $0.659 > 0.05$ so that the data can be said to be homogeneous. So the class used as research is a homogeneous class. Because the class is homogeneous, a study can be carried out.

The normality test in research is used as a prerequisite for the t-test. In this study, the data must be normally distributed. If the data are not normally distributed, the t-test cannot be continued. A distribution is said to be normal if the significance level is > 0.05 , whereas if the significance level is < 0.05 , the distribution is said to be abnormal. In this study, the collected data was in the form of student post-test data which was then analyzed by the researcher. And the analysis results show that the data is normally distributed.

After the normality and homogeneity tests have been carried out, a hypothesis test can be used, namely the t-test which is used to determine the effect of using online cultural blogs on student learning outcomes about local economic cultural materials in English for tourism lectures. The hypothesis test used in this study is a parametric statistical test, namely the Independent sample t-test. This test is used to make a decision whether the hypothesis is accepted or rejected.

The results of the t-test analysis (t-test) on student learning outcomes note that the value of *t-titung* is 3.267 with a significance of 0.002. The significance value indicates $0.002 < 0.05$ so that H_0 is rejected. Based on the above analysis, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted. This shows that there are differences in learning outcomes after being treated with cultural online blogs on student learning outcomes. It can be seen from the post-test average score after treatment with online cultural blogs is 85, it can be concluded that online cultural blogs have an effect on the learning outcomes of the local culture of the community's economy.

CONCLUSION

The online cultural blog (BOBA) is effectively used in learning the local culture

of the community's economy in English for tourism lectures for English literature students of UMN Al-Washliyah. Researchers have several suggestions regarding the research that has been carried out, namely:

- 1) As reading material in order to increase knowledge, especially about online cultural blogs in learning local culture
- 2) As a reference material for further research on learning media relevant to technology

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