

The Use of Blogs in English Classes for Medicine-Related Majors

Min-Chen Tseng*

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of weblogs in English classes for medicine-related majors. A weblog, or blog, is an innovation of the Internet. It is authentic, and it provides students with a real-world activity. Did students form positive or negative attitudes toward using blogs? What were the advantages and disadvantages of using blogs? A total of 55 Taiwanese students majoring in Medical Image & Radiological Sciences, and Respiratory Care participated in this study. The materials in use were a tutor blog, learner blogs, and a questionnaire. The results show that students formed positive attitudes toward blogs, especially the tutor blog. The major advantages were writing practice, free writing, and peer learning, whereas the disadvantages were the accuracy of content, passive behaviors and distractions. The findings and conclusions from this study may serve as suggestions for teachers who intend to introduce blogs in English classes. The ultimate goal was to explore the effectiveness of blogs in language learning and teaching.

Keywords: Weblog, Tutor blog, Learner blogs

* Assistant Professor, Language Center, Chang Gung University, E-mail: jane0412@mail.cgu.edu.tw.

1. Introduction

With the increasing use of computer technology and networks, the Internet is one of the greatest inventions that shape language learning and teaching. The Internet is significantly expanding learning opportunities and leading students to connect with the world, especially for EFL learners. Many Internet tools, email, discussion forums, and chats are familiar to many language teachers and learners. A recent innovation, the Weblog, provides students with a real-world task and learner-centered environment where they have autonomy, extensively use their previous knowledge, and add new ones. This study intends to shatter the myths of using Weblogs in language learning, and to demonstrate how the uses and benefits of blogging to EFL learners, especially the medicine-related majors.

English is an extremely important capacity for medicine-related majors, because most of textbooks, medical charts, medicine, and instructions of equipments and machines are written in English. Many lectures, conferences and speeches are given in English. Also, according to the online database of Chinese Journal of National Central Library, a few articles were discussing the English courses for medical students. The study will contribute to enhancing the English education for medicine-related majors in Taiwan.

2. Review of the literature

Computers have been used in writing classrooms for a long time. Originally the use of computers in the teaching of writing has been restricted to word processing. It is easy for teachers to make corrections and for students to make revisions. Later, some editing programs provided additional functions such as spelling checkers, and readability scores that helped students with textual errors. However, the use of computers in composition teaching has grown dramatically as new software programs and teacher-designed computer exercises are created. The programs and exercises that prompt the student writers to compose, revise, and offer suggestions for improvement have now become available.

The blog is one of the new innovations of the Internet. It can be traced back to the mid 1990s. The term "weblog" was coined by Jorn Barger in 1997. The short form, "blog," was brought by Peter Merholz, who broke the word *weblog* into the

phrase *we blog* in his 1999 personal blog. This was quickly adopted by people as both a noun and verb (Wiki, 2007). The popularity of weblogs increased as free blog software began being offered (Blood, 2000).

A blog works as an online journal and the content is traditionally personal. Blog users can update the content at any time as long as they can access the Internet. The layout of blog is usually user-friendly. It allows users with little or no computer background to create, design and maintain their blogs (Pinkman, 2005). The definition of weblogs given by Wiki Encyclopedia is as follows:

“A blog (a portmanteau of web log) is a website where entries are written in chronological order and displayed in reverse chronological order. “Blog” can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs.”

Blogs can be used in various fields, purposes, and functions. In a school context, edublogs (educational blog) are being used by more and more educators and students. Downes (2004) states that “the Web is by now a familiar piece of the educational landscape, and for those sites where personal publishing or chronologically ordered content would be useful, blogs have stepped to the fore” (p. 18). The edublogs have been utilized as a unique tool that offers educators infinite opportunities to elevate their pedagogical practices.

Campbell (2003) specifically points out three types of blogs used in EFL classes:

- (1) The tutor blog: it gives daily reading practice for students since the teacher can post handouts and a syllabus, or provides some websites related to lectures for students to read. It also can encourage students to give comments to tutor’s blogs or their classmate’s blogs, and do some online verbal exchange.
- (2) The learner blog: The blogs can be used as journals for writing practices, or for personal expression. Students can develop a sense of ownership that they are the masters of their own blogs, and they can gain the experience of exchanging comments with their teacher or their classmates.

- (3) The class blog: students could have joint access and publishing rights to create and maintain their class blog. All the posts and messages are transparent and can be commented on by other students, tutors and friends.

The advantages of using a blog in language teaching can be divided into the following categories. The first one is simplicity. The most appealing aspect of using a blog is the ease of use. Blog users do not need to know how the blog is designed or programmed. Most blog hosting websites allow blog users to choose the template and publish their blogs within seconds. The user-friendly design attracts users to post information or maintain their blogs on a constant basis (Holmes, 2005). The second advantage is discussion. A blog is the space to jump-start class discussion by asking students to post questions or discussions before class, or students might be asked to follow up an unfinished in-class discussion. Teachers can foster class discussion and interaction (Holmes, 2005). The third advantage is a record. Students can submit their paper, assignments or notes on their blogs. They can observe their writing over time. Teachers' handouts and comments can be viewed by all the students. The handouts can be read before or after the classes. Students do not need to worry about missing teachers' notes in the class, and they can focus on the content instead of immediately copying down teacher's notes from the black or white board. The last advantage is grading. A blog provides a color code system of correction. When correcting students' assignments, a teacher can quickly alter the color of particular mistake (Johnson, 2004). Also, teachers can correct students' writing at school or home as long as they can access the Internet. They do not need to carry a heavy bag of students' compositions to school or home.

Despite the advantages, blogs also bring some disadvantages. The first disadvantage is the teachers' workload when making corrections. As students can post a lot of messages or comments on the blogs, it increases teachers' workload to correct all the students' writing. In Taiwan, the English classes are usually large classes. The teacher has to spend a lot of time correcting mistakes. The second disadvantage is privacy. A blog is a place for students to express thoughts and comments, and it is also a place that everyone can browse. Some students post diaries, personal information, photos, and they could carelessly leak private matters to the public. It is very important for the teacher to mention privacy issues in the beginning of the class. The third disadvantage is outside disturbance. Blogs are publicly accessible. Strangers are able to leave messages or read learner blogs. There

is no limitation or restriction to block those who intentionally leave inappropriate and annoying messages. The fourth disadvantage is language in use. Written language is the blog's bread and butter. The language used on-line is a deliberate, playful and sometimes excessive way of expressing themselves. Linguists have shown that the way we use language on the net is closely related to the social context. It means 'register'. They have found that language used in specific social contexts is mostly influenced by social norms and conventions, and also by the medium (Wallace, 1999). The fifth disadvantage is plagiarism. Students post a lot of information on their blogs. It is important to teach students to value copyright issues. Otherwise, some students might just be lazy and copy and paste something that they did not write themselves. The last disadvantage is time-investment. A significant number of hours need to be invested in order to maintain a successful blog. Many blogs fail because it is difficult for people to find time to update a blog everyday (Wiebrands, 2006). It cannot be guaranteed that all students want to maintain their blogs. If it is one of the class requirements, some of the students might find it a burden to have their own blog.

To investigate how blogs help students in learning English, and their attitudes toward using it, the present study would answer the following research questions:

- (1) Did students form positive or negative attitudes toward tutor blog?
- (2) What were students' attitudes toward learner blogs?
- (3) What were the advantages and disadvantages of using blog in language teaching and language learning?
- (4) What were the difficulties and benefits students encountered in using a blog?

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

A total of 55 students majoring in Medical Image & Radiological Sciences, and Respiratory Care participated in this study. The required freshmen English class met for two hours a week. Participants had to take a school-wide GEPT-style online test

Table 1: Summary of Statistical Analysis of the GEPT-style Online Test Scores

Summary of Statistical Analysis	Results
Number of Participants (<i>N</i>)	55
Mean (<i>M</i>)	110.11
Standard Deviation (<i>SD</i>)	23.75
Median (<i>Mdn</i>)	112.59
Lowest score	62.97
Highest score	156.63
Total score	240

at the beginning of every semester. Table 1 shows the summary of their test results on the GEPT-style online test in the first phase of High-Intermediate Level. The mean score for the GEPT-style Test was 110.11 (The highest score = 156.63, the lowest score = 62.97, the median score = 112.59). The first phase of GEPT-Style test included two sections: listening and reading comprehension. The mean score for the listening comprehension section was 55.78, and it was 54.33 for the reading comprehension section. The table indicates that the participants' English proficiency levels ranged between Intermediate and Higher Intermediate.

3.2 Materials

At the beginning of the semester, participants followed the instructions on the Blogger hosting service website (<https://www.blogger.com/start>) and set up a personal English blog. The reason this website was chosen because they provided Chinese instructions and had user-friendly procedures. It was the first time for most of the participants to set up English blogs. The Chinese instructions provided user-friendly layout and it was easier for participants. They also could choose

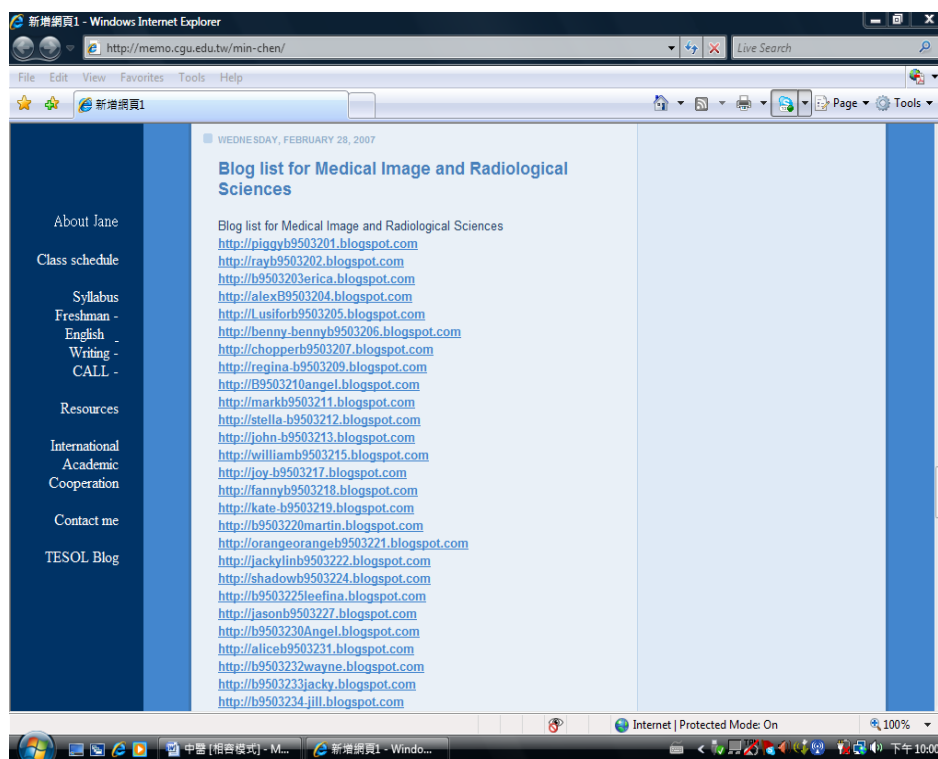


Figure 1: A screenshot of tutor blog.

English instructions if they preferred. Nevertheless, the participants were requested to construct the layout of their blog and post messages in English.

A tutor blog and learner blogs were used in this study. Figure 1 shows a screenshot of the tutor blog (for detail, please refer to the website <http://memo.cgu.edu.tw/min-chen/>). The tutor blog listed the entries for learner blogs. This way, it was easier for the teacher to give scores, and also their classmates could visit each other's blogs.

3.3 Procedure

In the introduction of the English class, students were told that they had to maintain their English blogs for the whole semester. After students set up their blogs, they gave their blog addresses to their teacher, and the list of all students' blogs would be posted on the tutor blog. Students were evaluated at the end of every month in accordance with the content of their blogs. The content could be notes from classes, the answers to questions in the textbook, poems, articles, news, novels with their reflections, diaries, and comments given to their classmates' blogs. Students were told it was very important to identify the source of their materials, and to

respect the copyright of others. At the end of the semester, a questionnaire was prepared for students to fill out.

3.4 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire, *The Use of Blogs in the Language Classroom*, consisted of 25 multiple-choice questions and nine open-ended discussion questions (See Appendix I). Four parts were illustrated in the questionnaire. The first part included basic information about the participants, such as their GEPT scores, and experiences in using the Internet. In the second part, there were ten questions, regarding the use of the teacher's blog in English class. In the third part, fifteen questions were designed to elicit participants' attitudes toward learner's blogs. The last part contained nine open discussion questions for participants to give their opinions about the advantages and disadvantages of using blogs in learning English.

The questions in the questionnaire were quantified by a Likert-scale of 1 to 5 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree Nor Disagree, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Disagree). The reliability of each question was determined using Cronbach's alpha. From Q1 to Q25, the Cronbach's alpha is .91. From Q1 to Q10, Cronbach's alpha is .90. From Q11 to Q25, Cronbach's alpha is .85. The questionnaire reached a high reliability.

3.5 Statistical Analysis

The data were computer-analyzed using an *SPSS, 10.0* Program (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for Windows and *Microsoft Excel*, version 2000. A reliability test was used to verify the reliability of the questionnaire, and a *t*-test was conducted in order to determine the results.

4. Results

The results of using blogs in English class were divided into two parts: the blog and the questionnaire. In the blog section, the numbers of blogs students made were statistically calculated. In the questionnaire section, students' attitudes toward tutor blog and learner blogs were also statistically analyzed, and the answers of open discussion questions were synthesized into different categories.

Table 2: Numbers of Learner Blogs

	March	April	May	All
Mean of blogs	5.02	3.71	5.05	13.95
SD	3.48	2.54	3.86	7.55

Table 3: Summary of Mean Scores of the Questionnaire

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13
M	3.85	3.85	3.93	4.20	4.20	3.65	3.95	3.69	3.75	3.67	3.67	3.82	3.33
	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25	
M	4.22	3.91	4.02	3.15	3.31	3.75	3.71	3.84	3.82	3.62	3.44	3.47	

4.1 The Blogs

Table 2 shows the numbers of learner blogs that participants made during the whole semester. In March, the mean number was 5.02. It means that each participant updated at least five posts up to their blogs. In April and May, the mean number was 3.71 and 5.05. The midterm week was in April, and thus the numbers of blogs was lower compared with the other two months. In May, the mean number increased because it was the last score for blog assignment. Participants put more effort on it. Overall, participants made 13.95 blogs in one semester.

To look at the content of learner blogs, it included diaries, songs, video clip, poems, news, notes from class, movies, and reflection. Because of the popularity of camera-embedded cell phones and digital cameras, participants used a lot of photos to help illustrate their posts. However, they were only given scores on something they wrote. Photos, pictures and clips of films were not necessary.

4.2 The Questionnaire

From the results of the questionnaire, Table 3 lists the mean scores of the twenty-five multiple-choice questions. The highest mean score was Q14, in which participants were asked if a blog was a place where they put some pictures and photos. The second highest one was Q16, which asked the participants if they browsed their classmates' blogs and learn something from them. The third highest one was Q7, in which participants recognized the use of blogs in English class. On the other hand, the lowest mean score was Q17, in which participants thought when

Table 4: Results of Participants' Attitudes Toward Tutor Blog and Learner Blogs

	N	M	SD	P-value
All	55	3.75	.42	
Tutor blog	55	3.87	.55	.000***
Learner blogs	55	2.20	.26	

they made mistakes, their classmates would not be able to tell them. The second lowest one was Q18, which participants expected more feedback from the teacher. The third lowest one was Q24 which participants were asked whether their blogs looked professional or not.

In the questionnaire, Q1 to Q10 were regarding participants' opinions toward tutor blog. The mean score was 3.87. From Q11 to Q25, the questions were about participants' attitudes toward learner blogs. The mean score was 2.20. The average score for both of the tutor blog and learner blogs was 3.75. See Table 4 for the results. Comparing the tutor blog and learner blogs with a t-test, a significance appears. It means that participants like the tutor blog more than their own blogs. The difficulties they encountered were illustrated in the open discussion questions.

In the open discussion questions, nine questions were included. The participants were asked their opinions toward the advantages and disadvantages of using blogs in learning English. The answers were synthesized into different categories. Table 5 shows the percentages and rankings.

About 34.5% of the participants thought that the merit of blogs was to give participants opportunities to practice writing. The second advantage was free writing. Participants could write down whatever they wish. A blog was also a good tool for peer learning. Because participants had to post their messages on the blogs, their classmates could read their posts. One benefit was that they could check whether people were copying their articles since it happened before that one classmate copied the work of others and the student was being caught. The other advantage was convenience. Participants could maintain their blogs whenever they were in the mood or inspired. They could just go online at anytime and write down their thoughts. Since blog was not used by many teachers, participants found it interesting to create their English blogs. Their assignments, homework, or personal work were not just presented on paper but on blog. The last advantage was participants could read the

Table 5: Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Blogs in Learning English

Advantages	Percentage	Ranking
Practice writing	34.5%	1
Free writing	15.5%	2
Peer learning	13.8%	3
Convenience	13.8%	3
Interesting	12.0%	4
Teacher' notes, announcement and related information	8.6%	5
Disadvantages	Percentage	Ranking
Lack of feedbacks and corrections	31.7%	1
Passive behavior	24.4%	2
Distraction	9.8%	3
Poor English	9.8%	3
Computer problems	9.8%	3
No topics	7.3%	5

teacher's lecture notes, announcement, or related information at any time. Some participants did not have enough time to take notes in class. With the teacher's blog, they could write down the notes or double check them after classes.

Regardless the advantages of blogs, they also bring some disadvantages (see Table5). The first one was lack of feedbacks and corrections. As participants practiced writing on their blogs, it was difficult for the teacher to make corrections one after another, especially for a large class. The amount of workload for the teacher was high. But the participant thought it was better for the teacher to give them feedbacks or made corrections of each post. The second ranking was passive behavior. Most of participants did not form a habit of practicing English on daily basis. They constantly forgot their blog assignment until the teacher reminded them. Next, when participants got online and worked on their blogs, they found themselves easily distracted. They were surfing on different web sites, and forgot to come back to work. Also, low-level students found that it was difficult for them to write posts and read others' posts. The other disadvantage was computer problems. Sometimes the network was down, and sometimes participants' computers had viruses. The last disadvantage was topics. Some participants thought they needed topics given by teacher, and then they could know what to write.

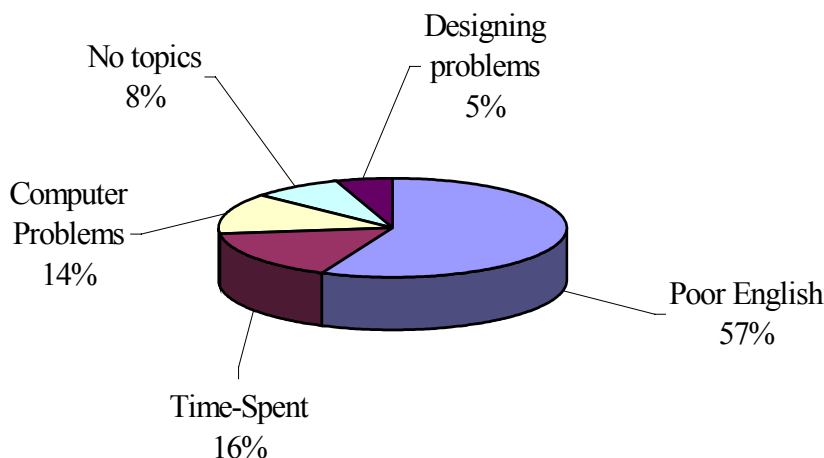


Figure 2: Difficulties of creating blogs.

After knowing the opinions about using a blog for learning English, participants were asked about the difficulties they encountered. The difficulties were divided into five categories. See Figure 2 for the results. Over half of participants thought their poor English was a big problem when they were creating their blogs. It took a long time for some participants to write one post. How to upload their messages and reply to others' messages were also big problems. The least difficulty was that participants spent too much time designing the layout, and ignored the main purpose of practicing writing.

Participants were also asked whether they replied to their classmates' messages. Approximately 70% of them said yes, while 30 % of them said no. The content of their replies included encouraging with each other and mutual interactions. Other than that, what did they learn from their classmates? Figure 3 shows the results. About 41% of participants have learnt new words, phrases and sentences from their classmates. They were amazed that some of their classmates could use some new words and sentences that they did not know. They thought they were at about the same English proficiency level. This attitude of competition motivated them to look up words in a dictionary and pick up the words immediately. Almost 21% of participants appreciated the layout and design of the blogs created by their classmates. Except for the content of the posts and messages, they would like their blogs to look beautiful and professional. About 13% of the participants thought from reading others' blogs, they received an opportunity to get to know their classmates,

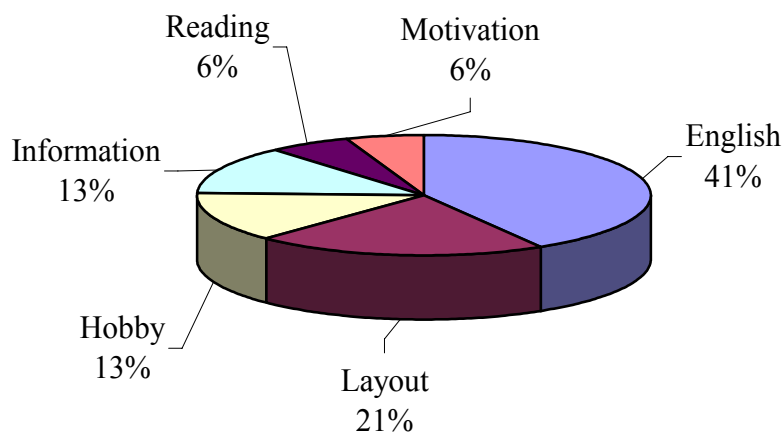


Figure 3: What participants have learned from their classmates.

their hobbies, and their mood. The other 13% of participants could pick up new information provided by others. Six percent of the participants thought reading others' blogs could increase their reading ability. The last 6% of them thought their blogs were not good enough and they had to spend more time studying English. They hope they could make their blogs as good as their classmates'.

5. Discussion

From the results of questionnaire, the mean score for tutor blog was 3.87, but it was 2.20 for learner blogs. Overall students formed positive attitudes toward using tutor blogs in the English class. They could review lecture notes, or the answers in textbooks after school. Also, the teacher would post announcements or related information with the content of the textbook. Students found it was fairly convenient to browse the tutor blog. However, for learner blogs, the mean score was not as high as the tutor blog. Students were not satisfied with their blogs. The major reason was their poor English. It took them a lot of time to maintain their own blogs even though they were told that the range of the content could vary.

As for the advantages and disadvantages of blogs, the blog was a good interface to practice writing. Participants could write down everything on their mind. Free writing was also an advantage. They could write freely without any constrictions. Also, they could read from their classmates' articles, and learned something from one

another. About the disadvantages, lack of feedbacks and corrections was the biggest one. Possible solutions of giving students feedbacks or making corrections on each of their posts are suggested as follows:

- (1) Teaching assistant: A TA could share the workload with the teacher. He/she could make some corrections for the teacher.
- (2) Free writing: Free writing was to write freely without concern for grammar, punctuation...etc. Letting students write at their own pace.
- (3) Peer correction: Students were encouraged to do peer corrections. They can help with each other to the mistakes they make.
- (4) Common mistakes: Students usually made common mistakes. The teacher listed the common mistakes or sample mistakes, and explained them in the class.
- (5) Writing correction software: Some software provides the functions of correction. Copy students' articles and paste them into the software for checking mistakes.

In answering the question "*What were the difficulties and benefits students encountered in using a blog?*", 57% of the students reflected that English is the major difficulty when they maintained their blogs. This answer indicated that our students are not confident with their English ability even they have been practicing English for more than six years before they entered university. Blogs are the places where students can create their own works in a less stressful way, but they are still nervous with using English to express their thoughts. This result strongly suggests that, in addition to blogs, there should be more medium or places where students can practice English out of classrooms, no matter in written or spoken forms. Another difficulty was the amount of time. Because of the heavy load of courses, participants had to invest time in maintaining their blogs. However, in accordance with the instructions of blog assignments, participants were told that they could post any English material from different subjects. It was noted that many participants wrote something about their autopsy class, and Chinese herbal class. Peer learning benefits participants the most. Participants could learn English from their classmates' blogs. The language input was not merely from the writing teacher. The topics and content aroused mutual interests. The merits of blogs were exploited in this way.

6. Pedagogical Implications

The results in this study suggested that students formed positive attitudes toward the use of blogs in the English class. A blog has the potential to be implemented in the English classes. The pedagogical implications of this study are as follows.

- (1) Portfolio Assessment: Blogs can be used as online portfolios. On the blogs, students can post their homework, assignments, articles...etc. At the end of semester, students can review all the work they have been doing for the whole semester. In this way, they can monitor the progress and examine the weakness and strengths of learning.
- (2) Avoid copying from other students: A blog is a public place for everyone to visit. It can prevent students from copying work from classmates, senior schoolmates, and any websites on the Internet. The student whose work is being copied will soon notify the teacher. If a teacher suspects the originality of a student's work, he/she can copy a part of the student's work and "Google" it.
- (3) Peer learning: Students mentioned that they could learn a lot from tutor blogs and learner blogs. Blogs are regarded as good sources of peer learning. A class worksheet can be designed to ask students to list the new words, phrases or sentences from their classmates' blogs.

7. Limitations and further research

Two imitations in this study merit attention. The first one is the small number of sample size. The numbers of participants could be increased and students from different majors, different English proficiency levels, or even different schools could be compared in future studies. Second, if the messages or articles that participants write on the blogs could be corrected or checked, it is of interest to see whether the results would be different.

8. Conclusion

The Internet is one of the major innovations of the twentieth century. It has had a profound impact on language teaching and learning. Apart from classrooms, students need more opportunities to practice English. The study found that students formed positive attitudes toward using blogs in English classes. It proves that blogs

can be popular in the language classrooms, especially for Taiwanese students who learn English as a foreign language. On the other hand, the study provided teachers with insights into the disadvantages (e.g. lack of feedbacks and correction, passive behavior, and distraction) and difficulties (e.g. poor English, time-spent, and computer problems) of using blogs in language teaching. By solving these disadvantages and difficulties, I hope to improve the efficiency of English teaching by using blogs and students will be more willing to write, and share their blogs with classmates and people all over the world.

Appendix A : The Use of Blogs in the Language Classroom

Instructions:

1. This questionnaire is to investigate the use of blog in the language classroom.
2. Any of your personal information is confidential.

Part I. Basic Information

1. Major: _____
2. Gender: Male Female
3. Age: _____
4. How often do I visit the tutor blog? _____
5. How many hours do I spend on the Internet _____
6. Do I have my blog? No Yes (Number of blogs _____, Chinese blogs _____, English blogs _____)

Part II. Tutor Blog (Please put a ✓ in the box)

No	Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I think it is fast and convenient for the teacher to use blogs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	I think the tutor blog is professional and beautiful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	I think it is a trend to use a tutor blog.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Blogs can save the use of printing paper.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	I can download the lecture notes from tutor blog at anytime.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	English blogs can enhance my motivation in learning English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	I can accept the use of blogs in language teaching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	I can ask questions to the teacher on the tutor blog.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	I suggest that other teachers can use the tutor blog?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	It is fast and convenient for the teacher to post announcements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part III. Learner Blogs (Please put a ✓ in the box)

No	Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
11	I am glad that I have my own English blog.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	On my blog, I can post anything I want.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	My blog looks very professional.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	I post photos or clips of films on my blog.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	It is fast and convenient to update information on the blogs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	I can visit and learn something from my classmates' blogs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	If I have some grammatical errors, my classmates will tell me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	If I have some grammatical errors, my teachers will tell me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	When using blogs, I cannot copy from others' work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	I wish I could see more English blogs built by others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21	I agree that teacher posts the common mistakes we make on the blogs. We can learn the same mistakes together.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	I think it is simple to use blogs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23	I think it doesn't take a lot of time learning how to use blogs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24	Without an English or composition class, I will still use my blog.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25	I recommend others set up English blogs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part IV. Open-discussion Questions

1. What do you think that the advantages of using blogs in language teaching?

2. What do you think that the disadvantages of using blogs in language teaching?

3. What do you think that the advantages of using blogs in language learning?

4. What do you think that the disadvantages of using blogs in language learning?

5. What are the difficulties of building up English blogs?

6. Do you leave messages to your classmates? No Yes

If yes,

the number of messages? _____ What the content is about? _____

7. What have you learnt from your classmates' blogs?

8. How many articles did you post?

March _____ April _____ May _____ Total _____

9. What do you think of maintaining an English blog?

References

- Blood, R. (2000), *Weblogs: a history and perspective*, Retrieved July 12, 2007, from http://www.rebeccablood.net/essays/weblog_history.html
- Blog. (2007). In *Wikipedia: The Free Online Encyclopedia*. Retrieved July 12, 2007, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weblog#1983-1990_.28Pre-HTTP.29
- Downes, S. (2004), "Educational blogging," *Education Review*, 5 (1), 14-26.
- Holmes, J. A. (2005), *Web logs in the post secondary writing classroom: A study of purpose*, Unpublished master's thesis, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina.
- Johnson, A. (2004), "Creating a writing course utilizing class and student blogs," *The Internet TESL Journal*, 10(8), Retrieved July 12, 2007, from <http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Johnson-Blogs/>
- Pinkman, K. (2005), "Using blogs in the foreign language classroom: Encouraging learner independence," *The JALT CALL Journal*, Vol. 1. No.1, 12-24.
- Wallace, M. P. (1999), *The Psychology of the Internet*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wiebrands, C. (2006), "Creating community: The blog as a networking device," in *ALIA 2006 Biennial Conference*, Perth. Retrieved July 12, 2007, from http://espace.lis.curtin.edu.au/archive/00001015/03/Click06_Wiebrands_blogging.pdf

部落格應用於英語教學之成效研究： 以醫學相關科系為例

曾敏珍*

摘 要

本研究之目的在於探討部落格應用於英文課程之成效。近年來部落格在國際網路中興起，提供學生一種與現實生活息息相關的英語學習活動。然而學生對部落格的態度是正面還是負面呢？本實驗共有五十五位醫學相關科系學生參與。實驗結果顯示學生對部落格保持正面態度，特別是對教師部落格。應用部落格的主要優點為書寫練習、自由式寫作和同儕學習；反之，缺點為部落格內容之文法正確性、被動提醒和易被其他網站吸引而注意力分散。本研究結果對使用部落格於教學中之英文老師提供具體之建議，進而有效的利用部落格，以增加英語教學與學習之成效。

關鍵詞：部落格、教師部落格、學生部落格

* 作者為長庚大學語文中心助理教授，E-mail: jane0412@mail.cgu.edu.tw。