

Blogging: The Possibilities and Beyond

M.A. Razali¹, N. Zainol², S.R. Mohamed Apendi³, P.D. Ab.Rashid⁴, A.Azmi⁵ F.N. Tazijan⁶

Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management
Universiti Teknologi MARA Pulau Pinang
Malaysia

⁶Academy of Language Studies Universiti Teknologi MARA Pulau Pinang
Malaysia

¹mohamad080@ppinang.uitm.edu.my

²noorliza690@ppinang.uitm.edu.my

³sitirohimi709@ppinang.uitm.edu.my

⁴putri.dahlia@ppinang.uitm.edu.my

⁵azila.azmi@ppinang.uitm.edu.my

⁶farina762@ppinang.uitm.edu.my

Abstract Blogging has been one of the phenomenal practices in the technology enabled language teaching. As far as language writing is concerned, many positives out comes have been discussed, however, in terms of the effectiveness of blogging in generic subjects are not being discussed widely. In the culinary teaching, future chefs are focused to hands on skills or more to cooking skills. As such, writing skills are not being emphasized, although, these future chefs are required to write about food review, restaurant reviews, recipes, tastes and many more. In order to assist instructors, blogs were introduced to these future chefs in their culinary classes. Over a period of a year, blogs were used as a tool to help future chefs express their culinary palate instead of the traditional way of 'hand in' classroom assignments. This research seeks to investigate lecturers or instructors' point of view using blogs as a technology tool in the culinary field. Improvements, effectiveness, advantages and disadvantages are discussed to help using technology enabled learning in the culinary setting. It is hope that by using advanced blogging will help future chefs to record their passion towards gastronomy field easier and made available to be shared with others.

Index Terms— Blogging, Culinary, Improvement, Effectiveness, Improvements

I. INTRODUCTION

Blogging has become one of the emerging trends in this digital classroom era [4] in [9]. The practices of blogging normally focus on to shared values and goals. Whereby, with the technology advancement blogging is acknowledged as the ability to speak freely to a large audience with no limiting authority or editorial control [3]. The digital learning is seen as a new platform for the undergraduates these days. With the numerous ways of communication and collaboration, blogging is seen as one of the popular digital or virtual method in writing classes.

Blogging is similar to online journal where a blogger will post his or her recent activities to be shared with other netizens. Interestingly, the readers of the blog are allowed to view and comment on the postings, which allow blogging to be

interactive. [12] Blogging can be defined as a special kind of website which is updated frequently with new postings and published in reverse chronological order where the most recent posting is on top of the page. The most explicit definitions of blogging come from the firms who form it, created as marketing pitches, proposed to clarify why people should try their service and thus the practice embedded. As aforesaid, Blogger described its product as “an automated weblog publishing tool,” with their tagline became “push button publishing” [3]

From the services to the media, bloggers to researchers, people reliably used blogs as a diaries and journals. Somehow rather, educational blogging is no longer new in tertiary education [10], although food writing using blogs is new. The bloggers requires students to spreading ideals of good taste such write and express meaningfully a sense of invitation towards the taste of the food, atmosphere, scenery and all sorts of character in the culinary setting to their readers'. Usually, bloggers need to have a good writing skill to express their comments to those dishes which they particularly liked or disliked and they must be able to talk about all the dishes they tried.

As such [2] illustrate food bloggers as, 'essentially food enthusiasts, as they engage with food and cooking at a level beyond that of other people, and devote large amounts of time to blog about it'. In blogging about food, they are engaging in what could be described as “serious leisure” [11]. In any organized and established community, members of the food blogging community both food bloggers and food blog readers take on various, and sometimes multiple, roles: they may be community leaders, organizers and record-keepers. Moreover, they may take on less active roles as 'rank and file' community members and they may be lurkers. Their level of professionalism varies from amateurs or hobbyists, through to Pro-Ams [7] and professionals. Their reasons for blogging about food also vary across a spectrum of motivations, from intrinsic to extrinsic. These motivations can be related with their ambitions or aspirations for blogging.

Perhaps, food blogs in food writing, can be used as a 'transformational technology for teaching and learning' [13] in the culinary setting. Such the blogger's can show others what they ate, post picture of every course brought to the table and include videos in their blog post. The importance of these visual illustrations represent the greatest impact on haute cuisine –'molecular gastronomy'–a scientific approach to the culinary arts, which is successive emphasis on creativity and originality. The ingredients and techniques used, as well how these dishes are presented, often defies description using traditional culinary vocabulary and descriptions [1].

Food bloggers may wish to become professional food writers or community leaders, or they may blog as a means to share recipes with friends and family in their personal networks [8] They may also blog mainly for a sense of self-satisfaction and to document their cooking practices. Or, if they have specific interests or food ideologies, they may use their blog as a forum to share essential food related information.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study aims to explore culinary instructors' perceptions of using the blog as a learning tool, to recognize the flaws of collaborating via the blog, and students' perception of using blogs as food review and restaurant review.

3. METHODOLOGY

A qualitative and semi structured interview was carried out for this research. The culinary students were asked to create food writing blogs as part of the assessment in their food writing subject. The written assignment was replaced with food writing blogs. The students need to publish their blogs after a food taste at a local diner with their classmates and instructors. Once dined, the students will write a report of the food and restaurant reviews. Feedbacks from friends were not assessed. Students were not given any exposure o blog writing, however, they were taught on how to report on food review and restaurant review by their instructors. 35 students and 5 instructors were involved in this study.

I. DISCUSSION

Questions were asked via interview sessions and questionnaires were given to the instructors on the feedback of writing food blogs. Students were found to be enthusiastic and motivated to publish their blogs mainly because they receive feedbacks from other readers and also their peers. Strings of dialogue or feedback from their peers have showed positive outcomes as student continue to blog even after completing their course.

4.0 FINDINGS

Questions were asked via interview sessions and questionnaires were given to the instructors on the feedback of writing food blogs. Students were found to be enthusiastic and

motivated to publish their blogs mainly because they receive feedbacks from other readers and also their peers. Strings of dialogue or feedback from their peers have showed positive outcomes as student continue to blog even after completing their course.

4.1 CULINARY INSTRUCTORS' PERCEPTIONS OF USING THE BLOG AS A LEARNING TOOL

The instructors were asked on the advantages and disadvantages of using blogs instead of the classroom written assignments. The instructors indicated that the multimedia components in blogs have made the written assignment more attractive and the media features. The media features such as photos, videos, lay out and themes have eventually motivated and inspired the students to write better and more on their review compared to the normal written hand- in assignments.

Some of the samples of students' review.



Research Question 1: Perceptions on the Usage of Blogs

Findings from the interview sessions were mainly about the students' motivation, language, skills and effectiveness of using blogs in food writing class.

One of the interviewed instructors indicated that blogs allow instructors to integrate comments and feedback to the students.

My students will ask for comments from me and feel excited when I post comments in their blogs. The feeling of appreciation and a sense of 'gloat' when I have written good comments to them, where they eventually will compare to their friends. I don't see this feeling or positive motivation in the written assignments.

Another instructor commented on the authenticity of the reviews. The issue of plagiarism arises and instructors were constantly checking on the students' work originality.

Using blogs make it easy for me to check on the plagiarism side. I can easily run the program, as I can take the students' work and test it out. This save my time and helps me to grade my students' faster.

Instructors also commented on the skills students acquired. Some students can easily produce blogs with high end lay out and music while some, were novice in blogging. This too can influence instructors' grade. This is one of the drawbacks of using blogs in the classroom as having this advantage, it can influence the grades.

Other issue such as the medium, which is using English Language, has improved tremendously by using blogs. Spelling and grammar errors were not apparent. The only drawback is the internet language such as googling, foodorgasm have resurfaced. Apart from that, the reviews were pleasant readings.

Another instructor pointed out on the effectiveness of using blogs. Students were too passive in contributing their ideas, instead using pictures or media features to 'cover up' their work.

Some of my students wrote blogs with minimum sentences. Most of them have pictures and caption accompanying the pictures that have been described as the review. When asked, they said it was a last minute work. I was disappointed.

Research Question 2: Recognize the flaws of collaborating via the blog

Below are some of the flaws that have been highlighted by the instructors.

Constant monitoring of blog is require.

Demotivated learners as they tend to put in more pictures and videos.

Plagiarism.

Negatively affects them, with the feedbacks and comments from the peers and instructors.

May have effects literacy such as spelling, internet Language.

Costly.

Lack of paying attention to instructors as they already have background knowledge.

Poor internet connectivity.

Research Question 3: Students Perception of using blogs to write food and restaurant review.

The following table is a survey done to collect students' perception of using blogs to write their food review and restaurant review. Majority of the students agree that using blogs help them to write better and motivate them to read their peers' blogs.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total	Weighted Average
Using blogs gave me more freedom and control of my own learning.	23.53%	67.65%	8.82%	0.00%		
	8	23	3	0	34	1.85
I often developed a plan and found the	11.76%	76.47%	11.76%	0.00%		
	4	26	4	0	34	2
I was able to monitor my own progress by revisiting my	29.41%	55.88%	14.71%	0.00%		
	10	19	5	0	34	1.85
I found peer comments	17.65%	82.35%	0.00%	0.00%		
	6	28	0	0	34	1.82
I found blog assignments	17.65%	73.53%	8.82%	0.00%		
	6	25	3	0	34	1.91
I felt comfortable sharing my ideas and interacting	23.53%	70.59%	5.88%	0.00%		
	8	24	2	0	34	1.82

5. DISCUSSION

Using blogs in food writing class is seen as new and innovative way of assessing students' writing skills. [5] claimed that blogs provides opportunities for diverse perspectives, both within and outside of the classroom. With this in mind, students tend to be more creative when reporting on their food and restaurant reviews. With media features, such

as video, sounds and lay out, they are more motivated to work on their reviews. This allows sharing and access to different opinions. Instructors and students view blog in food writing as a tool to facilitate the teaching and learning of food writing and review. The results also indicated drawbacks of using blogs as students tend to be passive, plagiarisms and constant feedbacks or monitoring to and fro by peers and instructors.

REFERENCES

- [1] 1. Brien, D. L and Wessell, A. (2014). Food bloggers and the democratization of taste. 26: Taste and, and in, writing and publishing
- [2] Bishop, J. & Hogget, P. (1986). Organizing Around Enthusiasms: Patterns of Mutual Aid in Leisure. London: Comedia Publishing Group.
- [3] Boyd, D. (2006). "A Blogger's Blog: Exploring the Definition of a Medium." *Reconstruction* 6 (4).
- [4] Chan and Rigway. (2008). Students' perception of using blogs as a tool for reflection and communication.
- [5] Ferdig, R. E., & Trammell, K. D. (2004). Content delivery in the 'blogosphere'. *T H E Journal*, 31(7), 12-20
- [6] Gallegos, D. (2005). Cookbooks as manuals of taste. In *Ordinary Lifestyles: Popular Media, Consumption and Taste*, eds. D. Bell and J. hollows, 99-110, maidenhead: Open University Press.
- [7] Leadbeater, C., & Miller, P. (2004). *The Pro-Am Revolution: How enthusiasts are changing our economy and society*. DEMOS.
- [8] Lofgren, J. (2013). Changing taste in food media: A study of recipe sharing traditions in the food blogging community. Master's thesis, Queensland University of Technology, Australia.
- [9] Schellens and Valcke. (2006). Fostering knowledge construction in university students through asynchronous discussion groups. *Computetr and Education* 46, 3476-370.
- [10] Song, H.S.Y & Yuen, M.C. (2008). Educational blogging: A Malaysian university students' perception and experience. In *Hello! Where are you in the landscape of educational technology?* Proceedings ascilite Melbourne2008. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/melbourne07/procs/song.pdf>
- [11] Stebbins, R .A. (1992). *Amateurs, Professionals and Serious Leisure*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- [12] Tazijan, F.N., Ab.Rahim,S., Razali M.A, Zainol, N., Rezo, K.A., & Zulkifli, F.A. (2015). Introducing blogs in food writing. *Asian Journal of Education and E-Learning*
- [13] Williams, J. B., & Jacobs, J. (2004). Exploring the use of blogs as learning spaces in the higher education sector. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 20(2), 232-247. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/ajet20/williams.html>