



Blending a class video blog to optimize student learning outcomes in higher education



Mei-hui Liu

Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, Tunghai University, No.1727, Sec.4, Taiwan Boulevard, Xitun District, Taichung 40704, Taiwan, ROC

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 11 October 2015

Received in revised form 18 March 2016

Accepted 23 March 2016

Available online 25 March 2016

Keywords:

Class video blog

Student learning outcomes

Speech proficiency development

Willingness to communicate

ABSTRACT

This exploratory study investigates whether blending a class video blog into face-to-face instruction may simultaneously enhance university students' actual learning performance and affective outcome. Research as to the effects of such a pedagogical approach remains less studied in the extant literature. This yearlong investigation collects multiple data sources from 42 university freshmen in an experimental group (EG, $N = 21$) and a control group (CG, $N = 21$). Results indicate that the EG statistically outperforms the CG in oral proficiency development after the interventions. While there is no significant difference between the two groups in terms of overall and outside-class willingness to communicate in the target language, it appears that the CG perceives more in-class willingness at the end of this study. Qualitative data sources reveal the EG's positive attitude toward joining this shared blog platform and several concerns raised by some of these learners during the learning process.

© 2016 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

The ultimate goal of educational change in school education is to enhance student learning outcomes (Fullan, 2007). With the advent of new considerations in instructional design and implementation, a multitude of emerging Web 2.0 technology applications enable ubiquitous features to support teaching and learning (De Wever, Hämäläinen, Voet, & Gielen, 2015; Hsu, Ching, & Grabowski, 2014; Means, 2010). Means (2010) stressed that "how to implement technology in ways that produce student learning gains is integral to efforts to use technology as a lever for education change" (p. 287). Echoing the above standpoint, researchers and practitioners have envisioned the potential of blogs, one of the most widely adopted Internet-facilitated tools, to play both pedagogical and social roles in higher education settings (Deng & Yuen, 2009; Tess, 2013).

A bank of empirical studies has been conducted to document the impact of blogging on student learning experience primarily with respect to performance and/or affective outcomes (Lee & Bonk, 2016; Sim & Hew, 2010). Some researches on performance outcomes generally covered issues relevant to fostering reflection, critical thinking, and knowledge construction among learners. Other researches into affective aspects revealed learner attitudes/perceptions, learning engagement, and a sense of community in blog-based learning environments. Most of these studies employed textual blogging in various courses (e.g., Tang & Lam, 2014; Yang & Chang, 2012, among others) or teacher education programs (e.g., Chou, 2011; Pavo & Rodrigo, 2015, among others). While a few researchers have started to infuse audio or video blogs into language education (e.g., Hung, 2011; Shih, 2010; Sun, 2012), the

major focus of these investigations was to create additional opportunities for oral practice among undergraduate learners outside class meetings. In the past decade, researchers tended to conclude the promising implementation of blog-enhanced pedagogies by typically relying on self-reported questionnaires or interviews. A paucity of empirical studies employed an assessment mechanism to provide more evidence when documenting students' actual performance outcomes (Lee & Bonk, 2016; Osman & Koh, 2012; Sim & Hew, 2010). Furthermore, when investigating the effects of blogging on learning performance, previous researchers mostly documented the same class(es) of students' self-perceived experiences instead of comparing their achievement outcomes with those of students mainly receiving in-class instruction (Golonka, Bowles, Frank, Richardson, & Freynik, 2014; Sim & Hew, 2010).

To fill the literature gap, the overall purpose of this yearlong study is to explore the effects of blending a class video blog into optimizing undergraduate students' learning outcomes in a case course (i.e., oral training course). The exploration in particular reveals whether these students partaking in this blog-enriched instructional module may outperform other students without video blogging experience in the development of their speech proficiency and willingness to communicate (WTC) in the target language. Also included is how these students perceive their video blogging experience. Such an investigation not only counts on the participants' self-reported data but also refers to an oral proficiency test to assess their learning achievement. The following research questions are addressed:

1. Do undergraduate students who engage in class-based video blogging show a higher level of speech performance than students who do not?

E-mail address: mliu@thu.edu.tw.

2. Are these students with video blogging experience more willing to communicate in the target language than are their counterparts?
3. How do these students perceive this video blogging experience?

2. Related literature

As previously noted, educational researchers implemented blog pedagogy to enhance performance outcomes, affective outcomes, or both aspects. This section will expand [Sim and Hew's \(2010\)](#) literature review by covering the empirical studies on employing textual blogging and audio/video blogging in higher education. The essence of methodology or findings derived from these studies, merits or limitations, will serve as the baseline information to which this research may refer.

2.1. Textual blogging for enhancing learning outcomes

Previous studies drawing conclusions from self-reported data (e.g., surveys/questionnaires, individual interviews, and/or focus group interviews) recommended the effects of textual blogging experience on student learning outcomes. Some researchers tended to focus on issues in relation to learning performance (e.g., [Ching, 2012](#); [Chou, 2011](#); [de Andrés Martínez, 2012](#); [Goktas & Demirel, 2012](#); [Halic, Lee, Paulus, & Spence, 2010](#); [Hramiak, Boulton, & Irwin, 2009](#); [Mansor, 2011](#); [Tang & Lam, 2014](#)). For instance, [Halic et al. \(2010\)](#) significantly promoted students' reflective thinking and enhanced their understanding of subject matter knowledge when blending personal blogs with face-to-face instruction. Similar findings were depicted in teacher education research using blogs to assist preservice teachers' professional development and field practice ([Chou, 2011](#); [Hramiak et al., 2009](#)). Integrating tutor and learner blogs, [Goktas and Demirel \(2012\)](#) delivered computer course content to prospective teachers who were grouped into different teams managing individual blogs to present their learning tasks or assignments. These blogs provided opportunities for the participants to practice applying contemporary technologies, gain real experience, and support future classroom practice. In a class blog, students of [Mansor \(2011\)](#) developed their expression of thoughts, learned and shared each other's knowledge, and boosted their understanding of concepts that they learned in class. [Tang and Lam \(2014\)](#) built an effective online learning community using a class blog that fulfilled the design objectives of teaching portfolios. The students' active participation and high quality interaction made their learning process meaningful and sustainable. When incorporating class blogs into face-to-face language instruction, [de Andrés Martínez \(2012\)](#) fostered Spanish learners to use technology-enhanced strategies to collaborate with peers, cultivate learner autonomy, and further develop metacognition, while [Ching \(2012\)](#) created cooperative learning opportunities among peers during blog discussions that hence contributed to learners' business English vocabulary learning.

Another strand of studies specifically attended to learners' perceived affective aspects (e.g., [Cakir, 2013](#); [Garcia, Brown, & Elbeltagi, 2013](#); [Miceli, Murray, & Kennedy, 2010](#); [Pardamean & Susanto, 2012](#); [Yang & Chang, 2012](#)). [Yang and Chang \(2012\)](#) found that interactive personal blogs had a greater impact on learning engagement than did isolated blogs among a class of students. However, these participants showed positive motivation to learn from peer work, regardless of whether the blogs were interactive or solitary. [Cakir \(2013\)](#) examined factors affecting student engagement in a pre-service teacher education program employing personal blogs to expand in-class discussions about technology integration. It was found that student motivation, reasons to use blogs, and the level of challenges determined students' engagement in blog use. [Miceli et al. \(2010\)](#) revealed that blogs played a significant role in promoting language learners' participation and interaction which further nurtured a sense of class community. Assessing user acceptance toward blog technology, [Pardamean and Susanto \(2012\)](#) stressed that social influence and performance expectancy had significant relationship with behavioral patterns, while effort expectancy did

not. There was no significant relationship between behavioral intention and actual use, due to a low interaction level among students on the blog. [Garcia et al. \(2013\)](#) tested connectivism as a learning theory for using a collective blog model from both staff's and students' perspectives. The findings showed that the creation of a blog network only appeared to occur fully when students were actively engaged and willing to learn.

The other school of researchers depicted the impact of textual blogging on both performance and affective outcomes in a single study (e.g., [Goktas & Demirel, 2012](#); [Kang, Bonk, & Kim, 2011](#); [Lee & Bonk, 2016](#); [Xie, Ke, & Sharma, 2010](#); [Yang, 2009](#)). [Kang et al. \(2011\)](#) blended tutor and individual blogs with off-line classes that helped reconceptualize students' values of collaboration and networks, and this pedagogy in turn enhanced the participants' reflection and knowledge sharing. [Xie et al. \(2010\)](#) reported the effects of two different blog leader styles on the quality and quantity of student posts and peer feedback; those styles influenced the development of students' deep thinking accordingly. In the teacher training field, [Goktas and Demirel \(2012\)](#) found that the participating prospective teachers perceived using personal blogs as an important tool both to change their perceptions of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in a positive way and to familiarize them with infusing relevant technology. Very recently, [Lee and Bonk \(2016\)](#) employed personal blogs to promote inservice teachers' critical reflections on ICT application in a graduate course. The findings showed that blogs positively contributed to students' emotional closeness with peers and that peer relationship became intense after the online interaction and knowledge construction. Yet, student teachers of [Yang \(2009\)](#) had a lower level of knowledge construction in that they mostly posted descriptive rather than critical reflection entries on a class blog, despite their active engagement in online interaction and discussion.

In the extant literature, a few empirical studies have attempted not to solely rely on self-reported data but to further employ other data sources (e.g., exams/tests, coding results of posted assignments, or assignment evaluation scores) when discussing the potential of textual blogging with respect to performance and/or affective outcomes (e.g., [Arslan, 2014](#); [Bae, 2011](#); [Ellison & Wu, 2008](#); [Harland & Wondra, 2011](#); [Kitchakarn, 2012](#); [Xie, Ke, & Sharma, 2008](#)). For example, [Xie et al. \(2008\)](#) investigated blog-based journaling experience in an experimental group receiving peer and instructor feedback and a control group without exchanging any feedback with others. Two sample journals were coded and the results showed that statistically the experimental group performed lower level of reflection than its counterpart. The failure of this experiment may be attributed to the poor quality of peer feedback in paired blogs managed by individual learners. Referring to the analysis of summary writing tests and a questionnaire, [Kitchakarn \(2012\)](#) found that language learners improved their writing competence in a blog-enhanced learning environment. Students kept preferable attitude toward writing practice in personal blogs because doing so made learning relaxing and increased their motivation to write more freely. Furthermore, [Harland and Wondra \(2011\)](#) employed an experimental-type design by coding the depth of preservice teachers' reflection on clinical experiences in two groups receiving different treatments. Four categories of reflection (from the non-reflective level to the highest level) were analyzed, including descriptive, understanding, reflection, and critical reflection. In comparison with the traditional group using paper-based reflective reports, those participants completing blogs showed higher levels of reflection in their writing. [Arslan \(2014\)](#) investigated two groups of prospective English teachers' writing processes via either personal blogs or paper-based portfolios. As revealed in surveys and an analysis of participants' essays, both groups significantly improved their writing skills and competence. Without comparing the two groups' performance, the author concluded that the participants held positive views of both portfolio keeping and blogging as effective tools in this writing task.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/357686>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/357686>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)