Information Technology of *Easy English For Children* (Blog Education)

Pandu Seto Dewo Prabowo and Arido Laksono, S.S, M.Hum.

English Department, Faculty of Humanity, DiponegoroUniversity, Semarang 50275

Abstrak

Easy English for Children adalah sebuah blog edukatif yang sengaja dibuat untuk mempermudah belajar bahasa inggris bagi siswa. Sasaran kami adalah siswa SD yang masih sangat awam dalam pelajaran bahasa Inggris. Dengan menggunakan blog ini diharapkan pelajaran bahasa Inggris menjadi lebih mudah dipahami karena blog adalah sebuah media ajar yang sekarang ini lebih mudah diakses oleh siswa di seluruh Indonesia. Dalam final project ini, penulis berusaha untuk memberikan edukasi dengan memanfaatkan media internet dan juga memilih berbagai fitur yang cocok untuk anak anak dengan harapan mereka dapat bermain sambil belajar dan tidak cepat bosan tentunya.

1. Introduction
1.1 Background of writing

Education has long been regarded as a way to improve one's knowledge. Education is very important because it determines many aspects in life. Thus, it is necessary to get the education in the early age, in this case, for children. Moreover, education has some significant roles that should be considered in developing children's intellectual capability. John Dewey states his idea concerning the education as follows:

"Education is a process of renewal of the meaning of experience, that will probably occur in the ordinary association or association between young and adult, may also occur in a deliberate and institutionalized to generate a social sustainability. This process involves the oversight and development of minors and the group where they lived" (1859-1952).

One of the most notable educations is language learning. Learning a foreign language, like English, may be difficult for children. However, it can be accepted that learning English is very important for children. Since English becomes an international language, so it is a great deal for Indonesian to speak English as the way to communicate with foreign people. As Indonesian, learning English may be challenging. Therefore, Indonesian should learn English from early childhood in order to improve their knowledge about English. Then, it is practically possible for them to apply it in their

daily conversation. That is why, in learning it, parents must consider about one of educational aspects that significantly influences the development of children's abilities that is cognitive aspect.

The quotation below is taken from *Educational Psychology* in relation with cognitive aspect :
"The cognitive view of learning sees people as active processors of information. They initiate experiences that lead to learning, seek out information to solve problems, and reorganize what they already know to achieve new learning. Instead of being passively influenced by environmental events, people actively choose, practise, pay attention, ignore, and make many others responses as they pursue goals" (Woolfolk, Anita.1987:235).

Cognitive aspect is related with the ability to think or to make conscious mental processes that are needed in every part of children's education. Benyamin Bloom said that "cognitive is the student intellectual capability of thinking, understanding, and solving the problem." (1956). Based on Benyamin Bloom's theory concerning cognitive aspects which is stated above, the writer hopes that this education blog can be a good example of learning media for the development of children's thinking process. The cognitive aspects can be stated as (1) how do children understand and remember the materials given (knowledge), (2) their capability in understanding the meaning of materials (comprehension), and (3) their ability to make up things and apply materials that they learned in another situation like in their daily life (application).

Children are asked to be able to understand the relation between one part of the materials to the other. It will make them have a more comprehensive understanding about the structure and rules of the materials (analysis). The last one is evaluation. It is the final stage of these aspects where children are capable to give their opinion about the materials in which they learned before. Knowledge is the basic standard to find out cognitive capability belong to the people especially children in learning process as well.
"The cognitive approach also suggests that one of the most important influences in the learning process is what the individual brings to the learning situation" (1987:236).

It should be noted that children are likely attracted to learn by something interesting and funny. Therefore, the writer intends to create a source to help children learn English which is presented in funny and interesting ways. It is done by applying colourful background as a nice visualization for children. There are also some features like pictures pop-ups along with the name beside it both in Indonesian and English.

In doing so, the writer creates interactive materials to learn English by using blog as a medium that can be accessed through the internet. The writer chooses blogspot.com because it is a *user friendly,* meaning that it is easy to access for a beginner. Blogspot.com also has an unlimited bandwidth facility which can make people unworry about the payment or unloading its speed quantity while visiting the blog. So, the students will not find any difficulty to learn from this medium.

1.2 Purposes of writing
The writer intends to create this learning medium to help elementary students to learn English easily through interesting and funny ways. Moreover, the writer thinks

that students should learn as well about the development of technology by learning through the internet.

The writer also intends to create this project to fulfill the requirement as S-1 degree in English Department, Diponegoro University. The writer hopes that this project will assist students to learn and understand English easier.

2. Information Technology Learning and Application

2.1 Information Technology Learning

Information Technology is a technology used for organizing the data including processing, obtaining, compiling, storing, and manipulating data in different ways to produce a quality information, for instance information that is relevant, accurate and timely, which can be used by personal, business, and government. Moreover, it is also a strategic information for making decisions. Below are the quotations concerning the meaning of information technology :

"Information Technology is the study or electronic equipment, especially computers, to store, analyze, and distribute any information, including words, numbers, and pictures" (Oxford dictionary, 1995).

"Information Technology is a set of tools that help you work with information and perform tasks related to information processing"
(Haag & Keen, 1996).

"Information technology is not just limited to computer technology (software & hardware) used to process or store information, but also includes communication technology to transmit information"
(Martin,1999).

"Information technology is any technology that is applied to process and transmit information in electronic form"
(Lucas, 2000).

"Information Technology is a technology that combines computing (computer) with a high-speed communication lines that carry data, voice, and video"
(William & Sawyer, 2003).

Nowadays, it seems that everyone can easily access information through the internet as the development of technology spreads very fast. The internet can also be a medium to learn English for students. Therefore, the writer intends to use this chance to make English learning through the internet. This way of learning can be called as IT learning. IT learning is a method of learning a certain knowledge through particular media especially computer.

Moreover, the writer thinks that students nowadays are familiar with computer and internet access. Thus, learning English through this medium will be very easy for them.

2.2 Application

The writer decides to choose blogspot.com in creating web blog for children learning because this blog is free and easy to update. A blogger (a person who has a blog and organize the blog) might update their blog continously, hence other people who want to visit the blog will get new information. It also can be connected to another website by linking it, such as Youtube, social media (Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, Gmail). Fortunately, blog's templates are available in the internet so people can choose those templates as their preferences or perhaps they also want to create their own template. Webblog is more accessible than electronic

letter (Email), because the post that they create in the blog can be read by people through the world, while email is more personal because the message and information can only be read by people who have its account. In addition, it is possible for people who visit the blog to give a response depending on the posts submitted to the blog by writing a quick comment. It becomes a learning medium to gain an extended knowledge through it. People can also chat with the other people on this blog directly. Moreover, the writer can add certain pictures, videos, animations, and so on that can make children interested and comforted in learning English.

The writer provides some application in the blog that can be used by students in learning English. There is vocabulary section that provides several vocabularies around children's life that they have seen and known, compiled as alphabetical order. Then, the writer also provides pictures for every vocabulary, so students will also know the thing exactly. Next, the writer provides conversation section with funny picture and animation video either. Those pictures are presented with dialogues like greetings friends, in order to make students understand and want to try it in front of people. It enables them to directly practice their conversation with friends or family without feeling ashamed. There is also exercise section which helps students to improve their knowledge and their capability of thinking as a cognitive aspect about what they learned from the previous section, score is also available on it.

The writer wants to give simplicity both in learning and operations through this application. The children are able to use this blog easily. They only have to write down the address "Easy-English-for children.blogspot.com" or they may search straight on the search engine like google to make this blog appear and ready to access. You can see the main menu which children can choose what they want to learn freely in the first page of this blog. If they want to learn vocabularies, they only have to click on alphabet or things around us to learn some vocabularies through the picture presented along with its name in English or Indonesia at once. If they prefer to watch a video tutorial, they only need to click video turotrial in main menu, children can see an interesting video while they are learning on it.

3. Contents

In this chapter, the writer will explain about the contents of this project. There are some aspects that the writer focuses on creating this blog. Since this blog is intended for elementary school students in the first to third grade, so the writer wants to focus on basic learning English which can be learned by them easily, such as vocabulary and daily conversation. The writer also completes the blog with pictures, exercises, and videos. Moreover, the writer wants to know about children's cognitive aspects' development to support their education.

3.1 Vocabulary

Before learning English, students, as first learner, should know about some vocabularies that is usually used in English. By learning these things, students will enrich their vocabulary in practicing their English.

Learning vocabulary is the first thing to do in learning English. The more vocabularies that they learned, the more knowledge they get in order to improve their English, so they might explore it by themselves.

Children can easily comprehend the materials with the interesting way. That is why this blog is designed by considering their criteria who likes something funny and interesting in common.

The writer provides vocabulary learning in this blog by dividing it into alphabetical order. Moreover, the writer gives some examples for each section. For example, students will meet letter 'A' containing some words that have initial 'A', like apple, ash, and airplane. The writer also provides a picture for each example in order to help students understand those examples easily.

3.2 Conversation

Conversation is also important in learning English. People can show how good their English by doing a conversation. It is also useful for them to speak up or have a communication with the natives. At this point, children have to know how to get conversation with other and also know about the expressions after they learned it.

The writer provides very simple conversation in this blog. It is presented by two funny character completed with the expressions in order to attract children's attention with the visualization. They can memorize the conversation and they also can see its translation in Indonesia. For example, the first character begin with "what are you doing?" and the second character answer, "I am playing a music". It gives students example about daily conversation, so they can directly practice it with their friends.

In addition, the writer completes the conversation section like simple animation movie, so students will be interested to learn English. Those animation videos are provided as the example from the vocabulary section. In other words, the animation video contains the conversation about things that has been learned in vocabulary section. The writer provides the animation video to make students feel happy to learn English by using funny and interesting videos.

3.3 Exercise

The exercise is organized to know the children's learning comprehension. There is only a simple step that have to be done before students answer those questions. Students only have to type username before doing the exercise section. The exercise is designed with a simple check point model. It contains simple questions that must be answered by choose and click the best answer depend on children's opinion to go on the next questions. After they have answered a question, the right answer will appear and the score will decide how many question they are able to answer. The writer thinks that this kind of procedure will make students feel like doing the real online quiz. And also, students will learn how to answer those questions suitably.

Then, the writer finds other sources to complete the features for the web blog. The writer decides to choose proprofs.com to create the exercises for the web blog. The writer also creates fan page in facebook.com to spread the information about this web blog in social media. The writer thinks that students can easily ask the writer if they find any difficulties in using the blog to learn English. Moreover, students can also easily tell his/her friends by sharing it via social media like facebook.com and twitter.com.

4. Conclusion

Recently, English seems to become a language that is often used amongs Indonesian. Therefore, it can be said that Indonesian is familiar with English. However, sometimes Indonesian does not recognize that they can learn English through many ways and media. Here, the writer thinks that blog as the right medium for students to learn English.

In addition, the writer provides this blog with some interesting features like pictures and videos so students will not get bored to learn English through blog. Then, the writer also provides online exercise to help students see their understanding about the material preserved.

In conclusion, the writer hopes that this blog can help students improve their knowledge about English. Also, the writer openly accepts any response to make the blog more interactive and better.

5. References

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