Introducing Blendspace for English Language Teaching (ELT)

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ABSTRACT
Teaching and learning is part of educational process in getting information and knowledge. It can be done formal and informal way. Since the traditional method used in teaching, sometimes, makes students and learners feel bored, many teachers and lecturers attempt to find solution to cope with this situation, especially in ELT. The role of teachers and lecturers as facilitators and educators encourage them to create two ways communication in teaching languages. They try to integrate the use of technology with the materials for ELT to make the teaching and learning process becomes more interesting and interactive. Based on the review of literature, a workshop for English teachers and lecturers was undertaken. The workshop involved 11 Postgraduate students who have already become English lecturers in their institutions. The presenter spent one hour presentation to introduce blendspace and asked them to connect their laptops with internet during workshop. Then, the presenter gave models or examples of two lessons presented by using blendspace. After workshop, the presenter assigned them individually to make their lesson by using blendspace application.

KEYWORD: Teaching, learning, blendspace, workshop,

In fact, technology becomes more and more popular in our daily lives. We cannot avoid the use of technology in modern era because its role influence our way of thinking and support the information that is rapidly growth day by day, especially in education field. It has been stated in the textbooks (e.g., Arnó Macià, E 2012; Alvine, 2000; Bates, 2005; Dudeney 2012) that technology, education, and language are interlinked one to another. Related to innovation to learn technology in ELT, one of the English textbook writers states that “In this early part of the 21st century the
range of technologies available for use in language learning and teaching has become very diverse and the ways that they are being used in classrooms all over the world have become central to language practice,” (Moterram, 2013: 5).

It is also supported by the study that is conducted by Sabzian and Gilakjani (2013). They reveal the benefits of the incorporation of technology into the classroom, elaborate successful technology integration into the classroom, discuss factors contributing to teachers use of technology, teachers use of learning theories, examine constructivist perspective, and investigate constructivism as a structure of educational technology. In conclusion, the technology utilized in the classrooms based on the constructivist method, students are engaged in activities that they can structure the instruction to satisfy various levels and methods of learning. They also can extend the variety of resources which are presented to students. This allows the technology to be more than one method of offering information. Technology then becomes the method through which information is depicted and realized.

Other research done in ICT that is connected with language teaching(e.g., Judson, E. 2006; Liu, M., & Huo, H. (2007); Bates, 2005; Sabzian, Fauziah and Gilakjani, A.P. 2013), they state the beneficial impact of using technology in language teaching classroom towards students. Therefore, the writer or the present researcher attempt to insert the use of ICT in English Language Teaching as the solution in creating an interesting situation because some students feel bored with traditional or conventional teaching method.

A lot of applications in internet that can help teachers in finding alternative media to deliver the lessons for their students. One of the alternatives is Blendspace. It is an internet-based technology application and it is an easy-to-use platform for creating multimedia lessons that kids can access online by using a drag-and-drop
interface. We can organize videos, text, links, images, and quizzes into cubes, then organize them to create lessons, or "canvases," for our students to complete independently. Content can be pulled from YouTube, Google, Flickr, and other online sources, as well as your own computer, Dropbox, or Google Drive.

In other words, Blenspace is a tool which purpose is to facilitate the creation of classroom material in a digital way, in case your school has all the facilities to use technological devices this can be a new way of making more interesting class, and in case the school do not have the facilities then we can apply our idea by using Facebook to distribute the links which later can be used for our students as a guide at the time of evaluating them.

Based on the review of literature, a workshop for English teachers and lecturers was undertaken. The workshop involved 11 Postgraduate students who have already become English lecturers in their institutions. The presenter spent one hour presentation to introduce blendspace and asked them to connect their laptops with internet during workshop. Then, the presenter gave models or examples of two lessons presented by using blendspace. After workshop, the presenter assigned them individually to make their lesson by using blendspace application.

**WORKSHOP PROCEDURE**

The project was aimed to provide teachers with the importance of the blendspace as internet-based media. The workshop was developed by using five stages. They are Begin with the End in Mind, Craft the Driving Question, Plan the Assessment, Map the Project and Manage the Process.

**Begin with the End in Mind**

The project was intended to make available materials that can be used to teach English by using blendspace.
Craft the Driving Question

The driving questions that were used to guide the implementation of the material development project were stated as follows:

1) What is Blendspace?
2) How can English be taught by using blendspace?

Plan the Assessment

The aim of the materials development project was informed to the assessment. The assessment was determined on the basis of the completion of the individual project conducted by each of the students. Each of students had to do a worksheet related on blendspace and submit their report via online on www.blendspace.com.

Map the Project

To ensure that the project can be achieved, the project was divided into smaller tasks, which include:

1) Conducting workshop to see demo on how to use blendspace
2) Doing worksheet on Blendspace
3) Determining the titles of the individual project;
4) Planning the individual project in the form of outline;
5) Writing a lesson plan before teaching and setting the time allotment
6) Practicing by using blendspace
7) Presenting the result in front of the class and submit

Manage the Process

In order to achieve the aim, the project assignment was managed a fully-controlled fashion:

- First of all, in one of the class sessions, the group of S3 English teachers were given explanation about the workshop and have account to get internet access.
• When the titles were confirmed, the teachers were ask to develop course outline or lesson plan of what they are going to teacher, e.g. poetry, drama, or other lesson.

• The participants of the workshop o Blendspace were asked to do worksheet.

• Then, the teachers were asked to develop practice their lesson plan by using blendspace as the medium in teaching their lessons.

• Asking the teacher to have presentation in front of the class as a kind of micro teaching. The final product of a lesson can be seen online on www.blendspace.com.

CONCLUSION

The workshop equips English teachers with another internet-based application for the teaching of EFL by using blendspace. It is very easy internet-based application to teach English in several minutes without having some difficult preparations. However, these teachers may get some insight from the workshop and how materials are developed and presenting by using ICT media as the alternative ways in delivering their lessons so that they can prepare their own materials which conform to the needs of the group of students. It is expected that both English teachers and EFL students can take the advantage of using the internet-based application for indoor or outdoor teaching learning activity, so that they can learning English more effectively.

REFERENCES


