

The Assembling of PLE among English Language Learners

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Abstract

This paper elaborates the concept of PLE (Personal Language Environment) that has become an e-learning strategy which means the learning strategy by using online technology. Learners can decide the time, goals and the contents that they want to achieve because they act as the subject of the learning process itself.

We would like to discuss about the definition of PLE, the characteristic of PLE, the significance of PLE and how the application of PLE in English Language Learner is extremely useful for them to use the language maximally.

Keywords: Personal Language Environment, e-learning

Introduction

Personal Learning Environment is known as a particular way that can be used by web users or students to help them to learn about something with very easy access that common at today's era (Sulisworo, 2013). Therefore they can decide wherever the place they want to learn, control and manage their own time, way, content and goals that they wanted before because they act as a subject of that teaching learning process itself. It means that the web users or the learners are also can be defined as a teacher and also as the learner.

To know about PLE, means we also have to know the term of World Wide Web. It is one of a source which can produce learning experiences more rather than class room learning. Constructivist learning models describe the value of learners making meaning of their own experiences (Wilson and Lowry, 2000). Learning through web is a learning process that is very potential to create constructivist learning environment.

The term “Web 2.0” has been used to describe this evolution of the web from an information source to a “read/write” medium (O'Reilly, 2005). The development of Web 2.0 technologies has given learners a large collection of tools, sometimes called social software, for creating, organizing, and making meaning from content (chapters 2, 7, 9, 18). Social software has a long history, and can be defined simply as software that supports group interaction (Allen, 2004). From the term of web 2.0 then it is developed to be PLE.

The PLE is a somewhat new and evolving construct, has gone through at least one hype cycle, is not yet fully understood, and is potentially disruptive with unfulfilled potential (Martindale & Dowdy, 2010). PLE firstly mentioned at the annual JISC-CETIS (Joint Information Systems Committee--Centre for Educational Technology Interoperability Standards) conference in 2004 (Schaffert & Hilzensauer, 2008). By using a new technology of PLE web users or learners now can access the web content easily, they can learn about anything that appropriate with their own thinking, organize and share it with their own understanding of the content. That is why the concept of PLE is one of the greatest ideas to provide learning experiences through the web access.

Discussion

Definitions of PLE

PLE is an environment where people and communities, and tools and resources, interact in a very flexible way. It promises to learner an important result of learning and the quest for independent learning that incorporates largest collection of tools under the control of an individual. PLE is new teaching methodologies for successful learning to occur where teacher ought to rethink her approaches, realign her methodologies, and move beyond restrictive, teacher-controlled environments to learner-driven collaborative spaces.

According Elliot PLE represents a paradigm shift an easy-to-use environment based on the idea that learning is a continuous and ongoing process being provided by number of resources and individuals. It seeks to provide tools to support learning of an individual learner which takes place in many contexts and situations. A PLE is a place where learner constructs knowledge socially with the help of knowledgeable peer mentors and teachers (McLoughlin & Lee, 2010;

Drexler, 2010; Sulisworo, 2014). Here, the role of teacher is to insert scaffolding in learning plans of a learner, assist her in taking control of her learning, and help her realize her learning goals (Shaikh & Khoja, 2011).

Väljatga& Laanpere (2010), Attwell (2009), and Wilson (2008) argue that an effective PLE

- 1) must address deeper educational issues,
- 2) support realization of learning objectives through the formulation, reuse, and repurposing of learning plans,
- 3) provide ways of controlling the technological infrastructure,
- 4) recognize teacher and learner inhabit the same system, and
- 5) maintain the technological shift in the locus of control from institutional centralized delivery to learner-driven inquiry.

Characteristics of PLE

Attempting a brief outline of the views of Chatti et al (2010), Martindale & Dowdy (2010), Drachsler et al (2009), Severance et al (2008), Jafari et al (2006), Johnson & Liber (2006), Lubensky (2006), and others, PLEs present certain basic characteristics:

- PLEs are open systems that are controlled by individuals and function independent of the educational institution. They do not obey any standards and do not require the existence of a centrally controlled data storage space but take advantage of the knowledge which is distributed among various sources and communities. In this sense, PLEs do not share the concept of system administrator. Users should be able to create/discover the capabilities of the system themselves.
- PLEs are customizable, as they allow the user the use of a variety of web 2.0 tools, digital resources and digital services to which the individual currently subscribes (including the institutional VLE). The users can create connections with any systems and services they are interested in themselves and arrive at knowledge through aggregation, linking and metadata tagging.
- They concentrate all the tools users need in one place/environment and simplify their management. They also allow interconnection with other personal spaces for effective knowledge sharing and collaborative knowledge creation. Thus, users can cooperate with others

building a temporary ecosystem without attaching themselves to a formal organization or institution.

- They promote informal and lifelong learning: Learning does not end when a course ends—like in an LMS—In PLEs learning continues and can connect formal, informal, and lifelong learning opportunities in a learner-centered way. They are a Bottom-up approach that is dictated by the users' needs. Therefore, it becomes clear that PLEs represent a turn from the model where users simply consume a piece of information to a model where users become autonomous and create links with a variety of sources which they select and organize themselves. The principal philosophy of PLEs is the learner-centred approach since they are based on Informal learning and constructivism and on social constructivism or “connectivism,” in particular (Siemens, 2005), assigning the user the basic role of knowledge building, via the creation of communities and the creation, remixing and sharing of resources. Thus, they become a digital substitute of the natural environment where users learn outside institutional space. The informal way of learning that people use in their everyday life, through study groups, discussions or collaboration with peers (peer networks or communities of practice), can be simulated by social networks and PLEs and substitute managed learning that takes place in a VLE (Martindale & Dowdy, 2010). And than what should be in a Personal Learning Environment A PLE should contain:

- 1) content,
- 2) context,
- 3) connections,
- 4) collection,
- 5) communication,
- 6) community,
- 7) collaboration,
- 8) creation

PLE may contain accessing, aggregating, manipulating, and analyzing knowledge, or in other words, a PLE may provide the facilities of reading, noting, thinking, and writing. Wilson (2008) found that in order to facilitate learning processes, PLE should provide analysis, synthesis, abstraction, and critique components.

Conclusion

The students who use the distance education should be a practice that allows for a balance between individual needs and respected educational processes. There are some factors to influence the process, including environmental, cognitive, emotional, cultural and socioeconomic. For students, before starting a PLE, it's important to know how they are affected by the instructional design, and understand the very processes of teaching and learning. This should be the main strategy to achieve the necessary flexibility in the choice of tools and services for learning.

(Bidarra et al., 2010)

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|--|---|
| Created/assembled by student; Identification of the student with the environment (tools, resources, outfit); Authoring ability and collaboration are vastly supported; Availability of online content indefinitely; More collaborative and social. | Requires higher management attention given the large number of tools/resources available; Possible scattering and waste of online resources; May lack a proper integration with the institutional Virtual Learning Environment. |

Advantages

1. YouTube is a good way to broadcast your own videos to the whole world.
2. YouTube is useful for giving feedback on news and keeping track on your favorite videos and broadcasters.
3. Important things like the news are normally uploaded onto YouTube too. This mean it's useful to easily keep up with the news.
4. You can contact other you tube users easily.

Disadvantages

1. Some videos can sometimes be inappropriate without warning.
2. If children can access YouTube, you probably need a parental block.
3. YouTube servers are not always online which causes big problems all over the world.

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