CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

In the education field, the rapid growth of digital learning technology has been implemented particularly at the undergraduate level. Learning English as a global language through technology has challenged traditional notions of education practices (Shomoos & Ketabi, 2008). As a result, there is an obligatory course for English department students to study (Technology Enhanced Language Learning) TELL. It is a course subject that encourages students to have skills in learning a language supported by technology-enhanced assistance. This can obviously bridge students to experience new technologies (Yang and Chen, 2006). Students are able to increase their opportunities in integrating technology into their learning circumstances. To support this course design, Canvas has been utilized to establish an active learning community among the participating students and faculty (Johannesen, p.8, 2016). Canvas as a platform for learners enables them to see their grade of assignments, form an online discussion and encourage autonomous learning in TELL subjects.

In fact, to succeed in applying Canvas as the main platform for learning TELL is not that straightforward. A similar previous study conducted by Johannesen (2016) informs that conducting blended learning

benefits the students to learn better in the classroom. Therefore, it is noteworthy to expose the use of Canvas in learning TELL for undergraduate students in Tasikmalaya. Referring to previous studies (Chen, 2007) students experienced problems related to learning support, learning interactions, equipment, the arrangement of activity schedules, the activity themes, etc. Implementing Canvas into TELL class generally raises phenomena as well as such learning barriers that require the appropriate solutions. Hubbard (2013) the range and complexity of language learning techniques have become more central factors in language education. In line with this, introducing Canvas into learning TELL, cannot be addressed by simply stating that technology is 'just another tool' (Johannesen, et. al, 2016). For some learners, learning TELL through Canvas can be the distress that needs the appropriate settlement. Concerning those learning barriers, this study is focused on digging out the use of Canvas in TELL class.

Besides those studies, Implementing Canvas into the TELL subject always brings with certain risks and precautions that learners must deal with such as taking the time to introduce the proper use of the Canvas and a plan in case the technology fails (Rubble, 2017). Meanwhile, the research which concerns investigating the challenges of using Canvas for learning TELL is still rarely conducted. In fact, knowing the difficulties in advance can help students be more ready to deal with Canvas in learning TELL subjects. Therefore, referring to the policy of implementing TELL in English class,

this study is going to explore the benefits that students deal with most of the time during the teaching-learning process of using Canvas.

Unfortunately, previous studies only provided incomplete information about the challenges in learning TELL, therefore this study will look further into the obstacles of Canvas as an Internet-based English teaching platform specifically in a TELL class. This study is expected to provide contributions to perform better similar programs in the future. Moreover, this study also aims at revealing facts that several challenges are truly encountered by the students in conducting online learning using Canvas and therefore the teachers are encouraged to find solutions to overcome such barriers. Whether this recent study is a completely conducted result, then valid information was provided to support either for other researchers or institutions that attempt to utilize technology in the teaching-learning process, especially at Siliwangi University Tasikmalaya.

B. Formulation of the Problem

This study focuses on answering the question, "What are the external and internal challenges that encountered by students when using Canvas in the TELL class?"

C. Operational Definitions

To avoid misinterpretation in comprehending this research, there are some operational definitions of each keyword:

1. TELL : The term TELL is broadly used to refer to utilize technology in learning a language. It is one of the course studies concerning encouraging the course takers or students to have the adequate ability in using particular technology to support their language learning process and improve their learning outcomes. In this research, this subject is optionally offered for EFL learners in the English Department of Siliwangi University.

2. Canvas : It is a Learning Management System (LMS) that supports online learning and teaching. It is being used by the English department at Siliwangi University to support the TELL learning process. This enables learners to see their materials, grades, and do online assignments. The flexible virtual classroom and live discussions in term of chat rooms are possible to be conducted well through Canvas. In short, Canvas has been used as a main platform in the TELL class learning process.

3. Challenges : Challenges are situations of dealing with something that needs time and great commitment either mental or physical effort to solve them successfully and surely tests a person's ability at the same time. However, this paper focused on two types of challenges; external and internal only.

External factors The term external factors refers to those obstacles that are extrinsic to the participants. Typically, these barriers are described in terms of the types of resources (e.g., equipment, time, training, support) that are either missing or inadequately provided in teachers' implementation environments.

Internal factors Internal factors are those attitudes, beliefs, and practices that are intrinsic to the participants. They are often more difficult to influence as they include participant attitudes about technology, beliefs about computers, and willingness to change.

D. Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to explore the challenges that the students encountered when using Canvas in the TELL class during the teaching and learning process for one semester.

E. Significance of the Study

It is expected that this study can be useful as follows:

1. Theoretical use

   This study will enrich the literature of applying Canvas as a main platform in a field of blended learning.

2. Practical use

   The result of this study can be used as a valuable reference for EFL learners who deal with similar challenges or other researchers who need valid information regarding the TELL and Canvas in teaching TELL or other classes.

3. Empirical use

   Conducting this research has improved the researcher's information and enriched his knowledge about the challenges and appropriate solutions in utilizing Canvas to support the TELL learning process.