CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the study which covers background of the study, research questions, purposes of the study, the scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of key terms, and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background of the Study

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 the classroom have become the center of language practice. Lecturing method in the teaching process where the students merely sit in the classroom and listen passively to what is being taught by the teacher is not suitable anymore with the recent regression towards digital classroom (Liang, 1996; Adams & Hamm, 1996). With the advent of digital technologies, writing pedagogy has also moved into the arena of computer-supported collaborative writing and many people use it as an instructional means to promote a more social view of the writing process in language learning. With the combination of digital technology and collaborative writing pedagogy, this study focuses on digital story as one tool to assist the integration of technology and also collaboration in producing a text.

Collaborative writing projects have gained an increased popularity in the advent of digital technology to support the old lecturing method (Kessler, 2009) and digital storytelling is one of them. Digital storytelling refers to the combination of telling stories with a variety of digital multimedia, such as images, audio, and video as multimedia texts (Lambert, 2010; Meadows, 2011). It has been used since the 1900s and its uses and applications have expanded rapidly, particularly in the field of education (Robin, 2008; Hartley, 2009). There are many types of digital storytelling which have thrived due to the increase in digital resources allowing for self-publication (blogs, social networks, Youtube, etc.). Here, the focus is on
Educational Digital Storytelling, a type produced by students under the supervision of their teachers (Lambert, 2010).

In an education setting, digital storytelling offers a platform for students to engage in the creation of story-based learning that can demonstrate their knowledge and creativity (Sadik, 2008). In relation to that, as a collaborative project, digital storytelling can offer students the opportunity to interact with others, potentially reducing the sense of isolation and perceived “distance” between students and giving them chances to learn and express views in a smaller group (Storch, 2005). Moreover, collaborative writing project fosters consensus-building and task management skills and allows people with different backgrounds and levels of experience an opportunity to come together to create something that is greater than each member can achieve alone (Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009). However, they further states that the selection of digital technology should be considered carefully to ascertain that it can effectively improve the teaching and learning process within the classroom context.

Several studies have been conducted regarding the use of digital storytelling as a collaborative writing project. A multi-site case study conducted in one Australian school by Smeda (2014) proves that DSP has the potential to enhance students’ engagement in innovative and exciting learning environments. Similarly, a study conducted by Park (2014) shows that digital storytelling project can be used to enhance students’ higher-order thinking skills and literacy, thereby increasing collaborative learning. It provides the students with a learning environment to apply communication skills, work collaboratively, and think critically while addressing content and technology standards.

Several studies which have been conducted previously have proven that collaborative writing research has gained prevalence in recent years. However, related studies about collaborative writing project mostly investigated participants in the higher level while the study in junior high school level is still limited. Moreover, most of the previous studies used quantitative method where the researchers analyzed the text produced at the end of the project. Considering this gap, the research entitled “Digital Storytelling as a Collaborative Writing Project
among EFL Learners” was conducted and aimed to investigate how the EFL students in junior high school level in Indonesia work collaboratively to produce a digital story, especially their interaction patterns during the collaborative writing.

1.2 Research Questions

This study generally tries to analyze the student interaction patterns when Digital Storytelling Project was applied in writing activities for eight grade students. It has been specified into the following questions:

1. How do collaborative dialogues help the students to acquire language and create the digital story?
2. What are the students’ responses regarding digital storytelling as a collaborative writing project?

1.3 The Purposes of the Study

Based on the research questions stated above, this study is aimed to:

1. Explore how collaborative dialogues help the students to acquire language and create the digital story.
2. Find out the students’ responses regarding digital storytelling as a collaborative writing project.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

The focus of this study is to investigate how the students work collaboratively during the project and create the digital story. Nevertheless, the context of this study was limited on, especially in 8th grade students of junior high school in one of public schools in Bandung. This study also only focuses on identifying the students’ collaborative dialogue during production of the project and the students’ response of digital storytelling project. Moreover, since it was a little bit difficult to observe the whole groups, this study only focused on two groups as they work collaboratively during the project. The school also only gave two weeks for collecting the data, so this study was conducted only in four meetings. Longer
meetings and bigger scale of observation within the groups may expose better result of the study.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The present study hopefully makes several significances for theoretical, practical, and professional benefits.

1. Theoretical Benefit

The findings of the study can be applied to enhance the theories in English teaching, particularly on integrating writing with the technology and become one of the beneficial references for further studies related to the use of digital storytelling project in teaching narrative text.

2. Practical Benefit

To teachers, students, and readers who are practically interested in applying digital storytelling to teach narrative text, this study can be valuable. For the teachers and the readers, the results of using digital storytelling project give insights of the students’ collaboration in the learning process. For the students, they will be able to enhance their comprehension of narrative text.

3. Professional Advantages

Professionally, the information provided from this study is expected to enhance educator’s reflection towards their current practices. Consequently, the reflections may enable teachers or lecturers to implement this kind of approach in teaching writing for EFL learners with more considerations on their engagement.

1.6 Clarification of Key Terms

In reporting the study, several terms are required to be clearly defined in order to avoid misunderstanding. The definition of the terms in this study are as follows:

1. Digital storytelling refers to the modern expression of the ancient art of storytelling. It is the combination of telling stories with a variety of digital multimedia to create multimodal texts. The digital content that might be used including images, audio, video, and often a narrative voice to create a short
movie, typically with a strong emotional component, thereby giving deep dimension and vivid color to characters, experiences, and insights (Bule & Kajder, 2004; Roland, 2006; Meadows, 2011; Lambert, 2010).

2. In educational pedagogy, the term collaborative writing refers to projects where written works are created by multiple people together (collaboratively) rather than individually where two or more people learn or attempt to achieve the same goal (Speck, 1999).

3. Collaborative dialogue centers on how learners assist one another in reconstructing linguistic forms (Lee, 2008). In the context of this study, collaborative dialogues are divided into two types; LRE and NLRE. LRE (Language Related Episode) is defined as any part of a dialogue where students talk about the language they are producing, question their language use, or other self-correct their language production, while NLRE is defined as any part of a dialogue where the students talk about anything which is not related to the language they are producing (Swain & Lapkin, 2001)

1.7 Organization of the Paper

This paper consists of five chapters. Each chapter is subdivided into subtopics that will further elaborate the investigated issues.

Chapter I is the introduction of the paper. This chapter provides the background of the study, research questions, the purposes of the study, the scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of key terms, and organization of the paper.

Chapter II is theoretical foundation covering related theories that are relevant to the research. The theories are conducted by other experts and researchers with related literature that the writer used in investigating the research problem.

Chapter III is methodology. This chapter presents the methodology conducted in conducting the research. It consists of research design, research population and sample of the research, data collection, research procedures, and data analysis.
Chapter IV is findings and discussion. This chapter reports the findings and discussion of the research generated by analyzing and interpreting the collected data. It provides data collection, data presentation, and explanation of data analysis and result of data analysis.

Chapter V is conclusion and recommendations. This chapter concludes research result and recommendations for teaching process and further research.