

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the background of the study, research questions, research objectives, significance of the study, definition of terminologies, and organizational structures of the study.

1.1. The Background of the Study

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) influences people in acquiring languages and enriches a means of input and information exchange. From this point of view, ICT becomes a culture which is embodied in today's society and affects many aspects of life, including the education field. People not only can share texts, pictures, videos, or files but also can edit, modify, or even manipulate it before sharing the information. This leads technology to influence learning styles and how people use it to support their language learning.

Technology offers diverse opportunities for learners to get more exposures to the target language. In other words, writing activities in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) could be more varied. Students produce and deliver information they write in many ways. They can share their writings or get input from many sources. Apart from that, students have the freedom to express their interest and creativity by finding many things they want to know through technology. In fact, they can learn outside the classroom through flipped classrooms or blended learning.

The Web 2.0 provides more features of interaction between users than Web 1.0. Web 2.0 technology offers collaboration, communication, and information sharing. Unlike the first generation of Web 1.0 that offers features to watch the content passively (Choudhury, 2014), Web 2.0 allows users to interact with each other, collaborate together, and take the controls (Choudhury, 2014). In Web 1.0, the web serves as a passive role where users cannot interact with the website although information can be exchanged. The purpose of the Web 1.0 era is only for delivering information and it can be defined as a read-only web (Berners-Lee

in Aghaei, Nematbakhsh, & Farsani, 2012; Choudhury, 2014). Meanwhile, Dougherty in Choudhury (2014) defined Web 2.0 as a read-write web where users can read the information and write on the website to interact with other users. The examples of Web 2.0 include social media sites, social networking sites, wikis, blogs, video sharing sites, web applications, and so on. Therefore, Wang and Vásquez (2012) stated that the effective integration of Web 2.0 technologies is identified as an important future direction for the language learning.

A blog is one of the examples of Web 2.0 that can be used to share information and to communicate between users. It refers to *web log* which share information published on World Wide Web (Aydın, 2014; Kuimova & Zvekov, 2016). Photos and videos can be attached into blog entries together with texts. Other than that, web links can be added to redirect to other sources. Almost all posts in blogs are displayed in reverse chronological orders based on the date the posts are created. In other words, the newer posts appear first. According to Wang and Vásquez (2012), blogging is one of the most widely studied Web 2.0 tools.

A blog can be integrated into classroom activities. Writing on a blog could encourage students to write in public places. Other than that, materials uploaded on the blog are accessible anywhere and anytime. Students could study the paperless materials for several times. In addition, each student can see their peers' work by using blogs. They can give comments and feedbacks. These activities promote peer-review and collaborative learning (Pham & Usaha, 2016). Meanwhile, blogs provide facilities where students could add pictures and videos. The students' creativity has the right place to be expressed. They convey the text with their own pictures, photos, or videos. Apart from that, the blog would exist for a long time so that it could be a memento for the future.

Issues arise in the use of online technological tools. The spirit of incorporating technology in language learning has some inadequacy in the teachers' practice for adopting such tools (Shahrokni & Sadeqjoola, 2015). Teachers who are motivated to use technology are constrained because of their inability to use tools. As the results, it influences their performance in using tools to teach language for students. For instance, in a study of Indonesian EFL teachers' perceptions in using online technologies, Son, Robb, and Charismiadjji

(2011) found that the teachers did not have enough capability to apply the online technologies in classrooms. Apart from that, the fact that blogs are one of the media that can be opened by everyone interprets the importance of paying attention to the risk of openness so that students can deal issues of using online media.

There are a number of previous studies conducted to explore the implementation of a blog in language learning. Some studies focused on learners' perceptions (Gunduz, 2016; Koç & Koç, 2016; Zarei & Al-Shboul, 2013) and teachers' perceptions (Ocak, Gökçearslan, & Solmaz, 2014) towards language learning through blogs in EFL classrooms. There are also studies about teachers' beliefs in blog integrations (Colwell, 2016). Other studies investigated the experiences in learning through blogs (Güttler, 2011; Sidek & Yunus, 2012) and their motivation (Deng & Yuen, 2012). Other studies also investigated the blog integrations in language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

In listening classes, several studies about blogs integration have been conducted. Some studies focused on extensive listening with foreign language podcasts (Alm, 2013) and learners' motivation for listening as well as on their listening comprehension ability (Shiri, 2015). Another study focused on the criteria, content topics, attitudes toward it (Alshaikhi & Madini, 2016). Sejdiu (2017) investigated the effectiveness of multimedia technology on listening skills.

In speaking classes, some studies were conducted to investigate the voice blogging in EFL classrooms. Kleanthous and Cardoso (2016) investigated the impact of the use of blogs on spoken language development in ESP contexts. Huang (2015) investigated the stages of blogging that students went through and their perceptions of the class's voice blogging activities. Hsu's study (2016) focused on the complexity, accuracy, and fluency in voice blogging. Hung and Huang (2016) investigated the usefulness of blogs in evaluating EFL learners' oral performance and explored their reactions toward using blogs as a learning and assessment tool for English-speaking performance.

Some studies focused on the blogs integration in reading classes. Hsu and Wang (2011) and Yakut and Aydın (2015) conducted a study about the impact of using blogs on reading comprehension and learning motivation. Joint reading

through blogs was studied by Behjat (2013). There are also studies focus on intensive reading (Soufi, Saad, & Nicolas, 2015) and extensive reading (Chew & Lee, 2013). In assessment, James (2007/8) studied the students' perceptions on a reading journal blog for the assessment task.

The blog integrations are also studied in writing classes. Some of those studies focus on students' writing results such as word-choice, complexity, grammatical accuracy, length composition, content, style, and mechanics (Ciftci & Kocoglu, 2012; Hajiannejad, 2012; Miyazoe & Anderson, 2010; Shih, 2011; Sun, 2010). Another study focuses on the effect of online blogging on students' individual and group writing skills (Alsamadani, 2018). There is also a study about how collaborative dialogues on blogs are developed on students' academic writing knowledge and negotiate their writer identities (Sun & Chang, 2012). Students' incorporation of blog-based peer comments into revision is studied by Pham and Usaha (2016). Moreover, Akdag and Özkan (2017) covered the related study by investigating the positive and negative effects of blogging experiences in writing.

The above description shows that many studies of blogs have been raised as the main topics. The previous studies are mainly focused on the students' attitudes, effects, perceptions, experiences, collaborative dialogue, and peer comments on blogs integration. However, scant studies have addressed the teaching process of the blog integration in writing classes by using scientific approach in Indonesian 2013 Curriculum. Therefore, the teachers' practice in the process of teaching writing using blogs will be explored in the present study. This study focuses on the Indonesian teacher's practice in integrating a blog into learning activities, especially in a writing class. This study also tries to figure out challenges or barriers that the teachers may encounter during the learning process. Other than that, the students' writing results are analyzed to know how students put their works on blogs. Therefore, the study is aimed to find out the current state of technology usage in an EFL writing classroom.

The results of this study are expected to enrich references to future researches on the blog integration in writing classes, especially in Indonesian 2013 Curriculum. In short, this study explores how a blog is integrated in an EFL

class, especially in teaching writing skills in Indonesia. Possible challenges the teacher encounters in integrating blogs in language learning are provided in this study. Other than that, the students' writing results that are analyzed in this study give possible information about how students write, arrange, and put their works on blogs.

1.2. Research Questions

In line with the background of the study, this study answers these research questions.

1. How does the teacher integrate blogs into teaching writing based on the scientific approach in Indonesian 2013 Curriculum?
2. What are the teacher's perceptions in integrating blogs into the EFL writing class?
3. How are the students' writing results posted on blogs?

1.3. Purposes of the Study

Based on the research questions, objectives of this study can be seen as below.

1. To investigate the teacher's practice in integrating blogs by using the scientific approach in a writing class based on Indonesian 2013 Curriculum.
2. To identify teacher's perceptions in integrating blogs into an EFL writing class.
3. To know students' writing results posted on blogs.

1.4. Significance of the Study

This study gives possible significance. First, it may enrich the data for the future research which is related to the blogs integration in the scientific approach, especially in writing classes. Second, this study contributes to investigate the teacher's perceptions in blogs implementation in a writing class, so that the future research can avoid the same barriers. Third, this study gives information about learners' writing results on blogs, so that the teachers might have more consideration in deciding writing activities.

1.5. Definition of Terminologies

1.5.1. Blog

Blog is short for *web log* which share information published on Internet. It has the characteristics of Web 2.0 where the users can have interaction one another in the blogs by using comments.

1.5.2. Writing

Writing is an activity of creating works based on sequenced letters, words, or symbols in a surface to produce written works.

1.5.3. Scientific Approach

Scientific approach deals with the way students acquire knowledge in logical ways using organized methods of science. The processes cover *observing*, *questioning*, *experimenting*, *associating*, and *communicating*.

1.6. Organizational Structures of the Study

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 contains an introduction which covers the background of the study, research questions, research objectives, significance of the study, definition of terminologies, and organizational structures of the study. In Chapter II, there is a literature review which covers relevant studies and related theories. Chapter III explains the research methodology used in this study which covers research design, participants and settings, data collection, and data analysis. Chapter IV presents research findings and discussions. Chapter V covers the conclusions, limitation, and recommendations.