CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, research questions, purpose of the study, the scope of study, the significance of the study. This chapter ends with the limitation and overview of this thesis.

1.1 Background of the Study

Writing is one of language skills that people should master. Though people have learned writing for a long time as long as they study at schools, they do not absolutely master it. In several observations teachers found that students make less progress in the writing instruction than other skills. Accordingly, the way of teaching writing becomes an important issue on language instructions.

Hyland (2002: 23) asserts that "*writing is learned, not taught, and the teacher's role is to be non-directive and facilitating, providing writers with the space to make their own meanings through an encouraging, positive and cooperative environment*". The teacher needs to facilitate the students guidance and meaningful contexts. The meaningful context can be gained from the provision authentic L2 in the learning activities (Hyland, 2003). In line with this view, Williams (2005) suggests that teachers involve authentic texts as rich input during the process of L2 writing instructions. One of simple ways to provide authentic texts as the input for the students is connecting them to internet. According to Oxford (2006), connecting the students to internet in an appropriate task is the best way to expose them to authentic L2 resources. Internet also promotes motivation (Warschauer, 1996 & 2000; Gruba, 2004b).

For language learning, internet provides many benefits such as providing intrinsic motivation to students, giving authentic material resources, and improving reading and writing skills (Singhal, 1997, Muechleisen, 1997 and Warschauer, 1998). One of language learning programs utilizing internet, which is also a good practice for L2 exposure (Oxford, 2006) and student-centered learning is WebQuest (Simina & Hamel, 2005). In this case, WebQuest has fulfilled one of requirements that Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) activities should feature the unique technology-mediated tasks in which learners can engage for language acquisition (Chapelle, 2001). There must be a strong reason for using computer in a learning task (Chapelle, 1997). In other words, when a writing task can be delivered in traditional writing activities without engaging to internet then there is no reason for using that technology. It is necessary to look into Second Language Acquisition (SLA) principles that make language teaching effective in technology-integrated language learning. Furthermore, Chapelle (1998) suggests that the design of task should give opportunities for students to receive input, to engage in interaction, and to produce output.

Regarding Chapelle's requirement, WebQuest with focus on writing activities provides authentic resources for reading (as the input), elicits interaction in completing collaborative task, and encourages output to produce final task (Hamel, 2005; Perez-Torres, 2005). In addition, as a pedagogical strategy, it provides the students a chance to use the target language in form of reading web pages which can develop students critical thinking and writing production of task (Dudeney, Gavin & Hockly, 2007).

WebQuest is "*an inquiry-oriented activity in which some or all of the information that learners interact with comes from resources on the Internet*" (Dodge, 1995). To complete the main task of

a WebQuest, students will use information from various sources. They use the information to form their own opinions and share them with their group members to create a final project.

Learning strategy such as WebQuest fosters learner-centered learning, scaffolding, social-interaction, and authentic context (Simina & Hammel, 2005), task-based, (Warschauer &Healy, 1998), and collaborative learning (Meskill, 2003). Therefore, WebQuest is potential strategy for task-based instruction in writing classroom (Stock, 2002), especially for EFL learners (Hanson & Smith, 2003). The most important thing in both WebQuest and task-based instruction is the task completion (Dodge, 1998). The completion will be successful if proper scaffoldings are available in the WebQuest (MacGregor & Lou, 2004) which are constructed in WebQuest elements. The elements for good WebQuest consist of motivation (scenario and study guide in form of guiding directions) and authentic resources. These elements give opportunity for the students to collaborate in writing project (Yodder, 2005). Therefore, the research attempts to examine how the scaffolding as such provided in WebQuest is able to help the students in writing activities.

1.2 Research Questions

This study is set out to examine how the scaffoldings provided in Webquest facilitate students accomplish the task. Therefore, the study is guided with following questions:

1. How do the guiding directions in WebQuest stages help the students accomplish the writing task?

2. How do the links provided in the WebQuest facilitate the students accomplish the writing task?

3. How does the student collaboration during WebQuest activities help the students accomplish the writing task?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The study examines the feasibility of WebQuest to provide scaffolding to facilitate secondary L2 students in writing activities. Following the purposes of the study:

1. To investigate whether the guiding directions in the WebQuest stages help the students accomplish the writing task.

2. To investigate whether the links provided in the WebQuest facilitate the students accomplish the writing task.

3. To investigate whether the student collaboration during the WebQuest help the students accomplish the writing task.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The analysis focuses on how the scaffoldings provided in the WebQuest give assistance to the students during their writing task completion. The scaffoldings are in form of guiding directions, resources links, and student collaboration emerges in the WebQuest activities.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

The result of the study is significant for the teachers, writing instructions, and other researchers. The study is useful sources for the English teachers in using WebQuest for language learning. It also provides information about the practice of writing instruction using WebQuest in language learning class. For other researchers it provides some informative input to to conduct other investigation in the same field with further or other interest.

1.6 Thesis Overview

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 defines introduction of the study. Chapter 2 is a review of theories of L2 writing activities and theories of practice of computer-aided writing. Those theories are the basic assumption to do this research. Chapter 3 delineates aspects related to the methodology of the study. It describes the research design, participants, and research procedure and data collection method. It ends with data analysis and instrument used in the study. Chapter 4 provides findings that are described based o the data collection method. It presents data obtained from the observation, interview and document text including the analysis of the findings. Chapter 5 presents the conclusion of this research and recommendation for further research.