

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Globalization era has made every country more connected. There is no such thing like limitation for each country. Every aspect of education, technology, economics, politics or even social has more sophisticated and better quality. Everything is developing in a big progress. With those progresses, every human is expected to follow the change of the world. Competitiveness from all sectors demand every person to have a higher ability. People who are not able to join the change of the world, will be left behind. One of the abilities that people should have to follow the world's changes is mastering English.

Learning English has become something compulsory for us in this modern era if we want to follow the world's changes. Mastering English is one of the ways for us to know wider about this world. It does not only help you to interact well with other people, but it also helps you to have more chances to learn about many things in effective and sophisticated ways. Bindu (2014) clearly stated that English value has expanded enormously in the past decade due to increasing demand of English language in jobs, growing social mobility and global competitiveness so that English becomes the most widely spoken languages in the world. Ability of mastering English can be very useful for every people, whether it is for the demand in working field or academic field.

Learning English itself requires many things, and there are also some skills to be mastered, namely listening, reading, speaking and writing. Every skill needs to be mastered well in order to have a better English proficiency. From those four skills, Jack and Willy (2002: 303) said that writing is the most difficult skill for second language learners to master. Gaith (2002:1) states that writing is a complex process that allows writers to explore thoughts and ideas, and make them visible and concrete. Writing is also a form of communication in a written way. It enhances students' exploration, ideas, and creativity. With the process of writing, students can have the opportunity to train themselves to think logically, critically and

creatively. As said by Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) that writing is often categorized as the most difficult skill because it needs a higher level of productive language control than other skills both for the first and second language. From this sentence we can know that writing skill is the most difficult skill to be mastered. Because when students write, they will try to invent ideas, then they also should express and process their ideas into writing, and need to organize them well into their writings. Besides that, many students do not feel confident with their own abilities of writing. Many of them have low motivation towards it.

Mastering Writing subject has many advantages for the students, some of them are developing cognitive ability and creativity, improving accuracy in vocabulary and grammar level, developing their critical thinking, and also training them to think logically. With these aspects, it will help them a lot in academic or professional fields in the future. With those benefits stated, writing has to be mastered by students.

With the benefits stated above, it is no doubt that every English learner should be able to write well. However as we know, writing is a difficult skill to be learned whether it is for second or foreign language learners. Students have to be able to organize, construct, create and produce their own writings. Chien (2016: 4) stated that writing is a very important aspect in the teaching and learning of English as Second Language (ESL) as it is a comprehensive skill that helps strengthen vocabulary, grammar, thinking, planning, editing, revising, and other elements. As we know, every skill in learning English is related to each other. With the better ability of writing, it will help students to improve other skills which they need to master as English learners.

The most critical thing to master writing is practicing. Practicing continuously will enhance and improve in every detail of students writing skills. Without practicing, students' sense and thoughts to write will not improve. Practicing writing can be done in many ways. Of course, teachers should give a method which is helpful and effective for students to learn and practice writing. The ways teachers deliver their material, assignments, or the teaching method are really crucial in order to keep students' interest to keep practicing.

One of the ways for writing teachers to make innovative and creative learning process is to combine the learning process with technology. Technology and digitalization has taken a big part of development in educational field. With the help of technology, teaching and learning process can be done in an effective and sophisticated way. Educators will not be replaced by technology. Technology will be the solutions and tools for teacher to make the learning process more fun, and support them with every knowledge needed. Gates (1997) stated that technology is just a tool. In terms of getting the kids working together and motivating them, the teacher is the most important effect. Combining technology and education is a way to make students get more knowledge and skills for their future job. With technological innovation, learning process can be done in anytime and anywhere.

Learning Management System (LMS) can be used to support the learning process. With the help of LMS, the process of learning writing can be done in a more simple and effective way. Using collaboration of face-to-face and LMS, can help students to enhance their writing skills. As we know, people prefer with something instant and simple. With the help of LMS and technology, students will be able to explore the ideas and their creativity through internet. As stated by Sahin (2002: 95-101), blended learning is more effective than conventional methodology because it can improve communication, motivation, skill acquisition and adaptation for the students in teaching learning process. In fact, there are many types of LMS which can be found nowadays. Like *Schoology*, *Edmodo*, *Moodle*, *Google Classroom*, and many more. Then, the LMS the writer uses in this thesis is *Bella*.

Bella is a web-based learning platform that is owned by Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University. Bella was specially made and used early 2020 during the pandemic Covid-19 to allow all students of Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University to have a proper learning process. It is a learning management system in which the design is similar to other web-based LMS such as Schoology, where students and lecturers are given chance to have a conversation, update status and information or share other media in a user friendly and secure environment (Sicat, 2015). Bella has many features that can benefit students writing learning process. Bella itself is very convenient in terms of use. It can be accessed from any gadgets,

like from handphone, tablet, and also computer. Use of Bella gives many benefits to both students and lecturers.

In Bella, students and lecturers will be able to upload-download materials, give and ask feedback, submit quizzes, and many on. With the features in Bella, teacher will be able to monitor everything, form the time students spend for each assignment, and students' attendance. Besides that, students believe that Bella as LMS can make the learning process more interesting and explorative.

The reasons why the researcher chose writing as part of the topic of the study is because writing is a more centralized in students' own abilities. Lecturers can instruct, guide and teach but everything comes from students, from choosing topic, brainstorming ideas, constructing their writings, etc. Using Bella as LMS can help students to have more individual learning. However, the researcher would like to investigate whether Bella is fully utilized by the Writing lecturers as well as the students as a tool to enhance learning. Moreover, the study and research for this case is still limited. Bella is still a new platform to be explored at the university. The researcher wants to find out the perceptions of the students on using Bella as LMS in writing class.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background stated above, the main question of the study is formulated as follow:

“What are students' perceptions toward the use of Bella as LMS in the Writing class?”

- To what extent is Bella useful in the Writing class?

1.3 Objectives of the Research

With the background and main problem stated above, the objectives of this study are;

- To identify students' perceptions toward the use of Bella as LMS in writing class.

While, the subobjectives of the study are:

- To describe to what extent Bella is useful in the Writing class

1.4 Theoretical Framework

- Theory of Perception

In this study, the researcher wants to know students' perception of the use of Schoology in writing class. Schatar (2009) mentioned perception is the association, identification, and the explanation of a sensation in order to figure a psychological illustration. This research will identify students' perceptions about benefits, effects and attitude toward the use of Schoology in writing class.

- Theory of ICT for teaching and learning process

Conrad (1999) stated that Web Enhanced Learning (Schoology) is using the internet as the support or reinforcement material to elevate the quality in the classroom, but still the main focus is face-to-face classroom. Using ICT for teaching and learning process will enhance students' learning chance qualities, whether in term of time, place or materials.

- Theory of Learning Management System (LMS)

Kats (2010) claimed that Learning Management System is a software program which connects with a file that contains an explanation regarding to users, courses and content. LMS provides various of learning activities, whether it is for fully online class or partly face-to-face and online class.

- Theory of Writing

According to Harmer (2004), writing is a way to find thinking of idea, organizing and enveloping idea, and polishing structures sentences into a paragraph. Writing is also a representation of people's feeling that disable produce through speaking but rather express into written. Writing is also a way of communicating in a written way.

1.5 The Significance of The Study

1. English Lecturers

This study has a purpose to make lecturers aware of their students' perceptions towards the use of Bella in Writing class. This study also helps lecturers to know more and deeper about the benefits and challenges of using Bella as LMS in Writing class than face to face class. In that way, the lecturers will be able to make the learning process more effective, simple, and enjoyable.

2. Students as English Learners

This research helps students to explore deeper about the benefits of using LMS, Bella, in their Writing class. In that way, the students will be able to improve their skills they have with the facilities provided in Bella. Besides that, by using Bella as LMS, the learning process can be done anytime, and any place when and where the students like.

1.6 Scope and Limitation

This research is focused on investigating the perception of students on the use of Bella as LMS in writing class. The study conducted on Writing B and C students in English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya. There were total of 33 students in the academic year of 2019 and 2020 who used to using Bella as LMS in learning process in writing class.

1.7 Definition of the Key Terms

2.1.1. Perception

According to Robbin (2003), perception is defined as a process of perceiving something as a result of a reaction to a stimulus on a person after having used his or her sensory to react to it and the result of which is an interpretation or identification of the perceived objects

2.1.2. Learning Management System (LMS)

Learning Management System is an application that can be

seen as information systems that are focused on the processes of communication, collaboration, and educational purposes

2.1.3. Bella as LMS

Bella as LMS is a learning management system which was developed by Widya Mandala Catholic University in early 2020. Bella as LMS is a learning management system that allows users to create and manages everything related to learning process.

2.1.4. Writing

Gaith (2002:1) states that writing is a complex process that allows writers to explore thoughts and ideas, and make them visible and concrete. Writing is also form of communication in a written way. The writing subject researcher mentioned in this study is Writing B and C class of Widya Mandala Catholic University. In this writing C students learn about recount, narrative, compare-contrast, illustration, cause-effect, definition, and classification text.

1.8 Organization of the Research

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction. It consists the background of the problem, research questions, objectives, theoretical framework, significance of the study, scope and limitation, definition of key terms, and organization of the thesis. The second chapter consists of related review of literature. It describes the theories related to this study and related previous studies conducted. The third chapter is research methodology. It explains detailed information about the research design, the procedure of the research, population and sample, stages, data collection technique, instrument, and data analysis techniques. The fourth chapter consists of finding and discussion. The fifth chapter consists of conclusion and suggestion.