CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter is intended to provide an overview of study, theoretical framework, and previous study preceding to this research.

A. Background

Compared to other language skills, writing is the most challenging skill to acquire especially in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) [Dueraman, 2012; Phuket and Othman, 2015; Widiati, 2006]. It is because writing skill is not the skill that develops automatically even for a native speaker, hence, mastering English writing skill becomes a very difficult task for EFL learners (Phuket and Othman, 2015). Writing requires more careful and proper composing of ideas through words (Haiyan and Rilong, 2016). According to Lin (2016), writing in English requires knowledge of the content that the writing is to address, knowledge of English language for the text construction, knowledge of the process on how to construct the text, knowledge of the genre text, and knowledge of the context.

Moreover, in the context pf Indonesian teaching EFL, theories and strategies in teaching writing, which are developed from theories of writing in the West (where English becomes the first language/L1), need to be explored and reconceptualized to fit the needs of the teaching and learning (Dueraman, 2012; Phuket and Othman, 2015; Widiati, 2006).

In Indonesia, English is only taught at school with a very limited time allocation devoted to teaching this subject. Further, many school teachers tend to regard writing as one of the first issue to cut off, or to consign into mere homework (Widiati, 2006). In other words, the time relocated for writing is considerably inadequate, hence, writing receives insufficient attention in the classroom context.

However, with the introduction of 2004 and the renewal 2013 English Curriculum, writing gains its momentum to be taught more intensively in school level by being oriented to the production of various types of genres including descriptive, narrative, report, procedure, and recount texts (Depdiknas, 2003; Depdiknas, 2013). The genre-based approach is considered one of the fruitful ideologies that has already gained attention from educators around the globe (Thompson, 2014, in Mingsakoon and Srinon, 2018), and recount text is one of the genre-based texts which specify on telling past experiences in sequence. Thus, recount text fits well with the urge that the learners should be encouraged to engage in a fun writing process (Randaccio, 2014), which in writing recount is by reflecting entertainments, showing opinions or feelings of being relaxed about the events through life experiences (Mingsakoon and Srinon, 2018). EFL learners in Indonesia are expected to be able to construct spoken and written forms of simple recount text with correct procedure in order to develop skills in L2 writing (Widiati, 2006; Firza and Purwati, 2017).

A number of genres of text are taught in school in Indonesia. One of them is recount text. EFL learners in this country are expected to be able to construct

spoken and written forms of simple recount text with correct procedure in order to develop skills in L2 writing (Widiati, 2006; Firza and Purwati, 2017). Recount text fits well with the urge that the learners should be encouraged to engage in a fun writing process (Randaccio, 2014), which in writing recount is by reflecting entertainments, showing opinions or feelings of being relaxed about the events through life experiences (Mingsakoon and Srinon, 2018).

In terms of developing Indonesian students' recount text writing, it is potential to integrate ICT to the classroom activities (Kim, 2018; Girmen et al., 2019). One of the options is through Digital Storytelling. Digital storytelling (DST) could become one of the alternative medias to overcome the challenges in the teaching learning process of EFL writing (Kim, 2018). There are many different definitions of DST but in general, they all revolve around the idea of combining the traditional storytelling method with a variety of digital multimedia (Girmen et al., 2019; Kim, 2018; Robin 2016).

Digital stories integrate the mixture of multimedia such as digital graphics, text, recorded audio narration, video, and music to deliver a specific topic (Girmen, et al. 2019). According to Kim (2018), Digital storytelling is potential to be a powerful learning tool for students at all ages and grade levels who are assigned to create their own stories. Thus, the utilization of digital storytelling in teaching learning writing recount text stimulates the creative talent of the students as they begin to seek for some ideas, do some research, collect data and information from internet or books in order to build a deep content while

analyzing and synthesizing a wide range of information and opinions in order to tell stories of their own.

A number of studies regarding the use of digital storytelling for educational purposes had been conducted. A study by Kim (2018) explored the effect of implementing digital storytelling in L2 students in an EFL college classroom on their writing ability development. The experimental study revealed positive results indicating that students' engagement in the DST activities improved their writing skill at a statistically meaningful level. Likewise, Abdel-Heck et al. (2014) confirmed the effectiveness of using digital storytelling instruction in enhancing EFL narrative writing and critical thinking skills among EFL students in their study. Vivitsou et al. (2017) studied some school teachers' practices on using DST as the teaching method aiming for student-generated stories in video format which resulted in the construction of formal and informal, natural and technological environments to organize student work and aim for freer learning in digital storytelling activities.

In this research, the researcher is interested to investigate the use of DST in teaching and learning recount text in junior high school context. According to Lin (2016), Writing is a productive skill which is meant for communication to deliver messages in the forms of letters and symbols. As the students' engagement in learning plays very important role in the process of teaching learning English in the classroom, the teacher should keep maintaining the instructional design to be enticing (Widiati, 2006). One of the ways to achieve it is by giving them communicative activities where they can feel free and are not limited by their own

fears. They should be given a space to show their own voices, ideas, and feelings in order to master the language effectively especially in writing (Haiyan and Rilong, 2016). Thus, applying DST method in teaching recount text for junior school level is adequate to build the young students' writing habits in order to reach the target language.

Furthermore, it is important to investigate more about the use of DST in teaching learning EFL writing, particularly in classroom context of writing recount text. Thus, the researcher is eager to conduct a research with the title *"The Use of Digital Storytelling in Teaching Writing Recount Text"*.

B. Research Questions

The researcher formulates the problems of this research as follows:

1. How is the implementation of digital storytelling in learning writing recount text?

2. How is the students' writing progress after the implementation of digital storytelling?

3. What are students' response to the use of digital storytelling in learning writing recount text?

C. Research Objectives

The study intended:

1. To investigate how digital storytelling is implemented in teaching and learning writing recount text.

2. To find out the students' writing progress after the implementation of digital storytelling.

3. To find out students' response to the use of digital storytelling in learning writing recount text.

D. Significances of the Research

The study is significant at least in two areas that include:

1. Theoretically

   The results of this study can provide a wider insight and strategy in teaching writing in EFL classroom context through the utilization of DST media for the readers, and particularly for the educators.

2. Practically

   This study can be an alternative strategy in teaching English as a foreign language, especially related to text-based instructional design. The use of DST can be an interesting and challenging activity that assists students to keep writing and improving their language skills.

E. Rationale

EFL writing courses are designed in ways that combined process and genre approach to writing they do not turn out to be successful. Thus, some modifications are made to the courses by adding a "writing for fun" module, enabling students to be involved in interesting activities as they are doing their writing tasks (Randaccio, 2014). Once these changes are made, the writing courses turn out to be more successful that before. This phenomenon underscores the importance of local exigencies, such as preferences for a certain kind of teaching approach, to be taken into consideration on order for EFL writing to be successful (Bhowmik, 2009).

Recount text according to Anderson (2002) is a kind of text which specifies on telling past events or experience by telling the events of the story in chronological order. It has a purpose to retell events to either inform or entertain the audience. Knapp and Watkins (2005) also say that a recount is a sequential text that does little more than sequencing a series of events. It is the simplest type of narrative genre. A recount is different from a narrative text in terms of the problems in the sequence of events. Another view comes from Recount can be in the form of letters, newspaper reports, conversations, speeches, television interviews and eyewitness account.

Digital storytelling is a technology application which can help teachers to improve students' learning interest and help teacher to overcome some of obstacles in learning activities. As states by Kim (2018) that students nowadays are the first generation to grow up surrounded by digital technology. During their daily lives those students have been routinely operated the computers, electronic games, digital music players, video cameras, and mobile phones. Thus, by using digital storytelling, both teacher and students can have fun classroom activities, especially in developing the writing skill of the students (Kim, 2018).

Furthermore, DST can be an effective pedagogical tool to enhance students' motivation since it provides students a conductive learning environment to construct a text through collaboration, reflection, and interpersonal communication (Robin, 2016). Robin also confirms that digital storytelling merges four students-centered learning strategies, which are students' engagement, reflection for deep learning, project-based learning, and the effective

integration of technology into instruction, to encourage the students use multimedia software tools as well as others technology skills to create digital stories based on given educational issues material.

F. The Previous Studies

There are some previous studies taken by some researchers around the world in EFL contexts showing the effectiveness of using digital storytelling as a part of classroom medium in learning writing skills in English.

Sadik (2008) conducted a research study on DST as an integrated approach for engaged student learning. The result of the study showed that the digital story projects implemented by Egyptian teachers supported students' understanding of specific content in an academic course. In addition, the result illustrated that teachers are willing to use digital storytelling for teaching content and to provide more effective instruction. Heo (2009) also conducted the same research. Heo conducted an experimental study to show the effects of digital storytelling on pre-service teachers' self-efficacy and professional disposition. There is also Li (2007, in Yuksel 2011) who also conducted a research used digital storytelling as its tool. Li investigated the use of digital storytelling to integrate multimedia technologies into higher education. By this research, Li found that digital storytelling can improve students' learning skill.

Yamac and Ulusoy (2016) had conducted a research which specifically found the goodside of digital storytelling in teaching writing. They investigated the effect of digital storytelling in improving students' writing skills. This research found that digital storytelling enhanced students' ideas, organization,

word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions in terms of writing quality. They also found that digital storytelling also offers new opportunities for students to create meaning through multimodal text. The similar study regarding the use of digital storytelling in improving students' writing skill had also been conducted in Indonesia. Ningsih and Fitrawati (2014) had conducted a study entitled Teaching Writing a Descriptive Text Through My Story Maker Media in Junior High School. This study found that digital storytelling can successfully motivate students in learning, this media also help the students to find and gather their ideas about what they are going to write.

A study conducted by Smeda, Dakich and Sharda (2014) found that digital storytelling ability to personalize students' learning experiences supported student diversity, improved students' confidence and enhanced their social and psychological skills. It is proved in the study that DST is a powerful tool to integrate instructional messages with learning activities to create more engaging and exciting learning environments. DST becomes a meaningful approach for building a constructivist learning environment based on recent teaching-learning principles. Thus, Smeda et al. believe that DST approach has the potential to enhance student engagement and provide better education outcomes for learners.

Another study by Foley (2013) showed that first and second grade students who participated in digital storytelling began to perceive themselves as more competent writers, were motivated to work on and complete their stories, and felt empowered by using computers to enhance their stories with multimedia. In addition, some students were able to use the digital storytelling assignment to tap

into other creative talents such as creating their own visual images, taking photographs for their stories and adding colors, transitions and recorded narration.

In another occasion, Vivitsou at al. (2017) conducted a research regarding the use of digital storytelling in two schools in Beijing and two in Helsinki. During project implementation, Chinese and Finnish teachers introduce digital storytelling as a technology-enhanced method into their practices aiming to guide and support their students into building and sharing digital stories with peers in the classroom and online. In the Finnish case the teachers choose to work on environmental themes, while in the Chinese teachers focus on themes from natural sciences and comprehensive study, and everyday life and traditions in China. The findings show that the teachers use formal and informal, natural and technological environments to organize student work and aim for freer learning in digital storytelling activities. Also, different aspects of collaborative work are used to facilitate and, mainly, structure student work and development.

In reference to the reviews of some studies on DST in some different contexts presented above, it can be concluded that the use of DST is proved to be effective to improve students' writing skills since its flexibility in use makes it appropriate for every level of students' proficiencies, ages, and also contexts. However, this research focuses specifically on the implementation of DST in classroom settings specifying in teaching-learning writing recount text to EFL learners in junior high school to portray the effectiveness of DST for EFL writing in the Indonesian context.