

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background

This study examines the effects of utilizing Twitter to engage EFL students in opinion writing at State Islamic University Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung and exploiting the pros and cons of Twitter to engage EFL students in writing personal opinions. This study is based on EFL students' lack of confidence and the cluelessness of their writing flaws, making it difficult for them to express themselves clearly. With their concerns, EFL students employ social media to help them develop their writing skills, especially when writing about their own opinions.

Social media has a significant move in disseminating information and writing personal opinions. Social media can spread information to many parties, and the message is not controlled. That is, social media shifts other media such as newspapers or magazines in forming opinions because social media has no boundaries, no control, spreads quickly, and is easy to access. Twitter is a common social media platform among EFL students since it allows them to express their opinions and share information. Following Steckenbiller (2016), microblogging on Twitter allows users to express themselves in real-time by publishing tweets with a limited character capacity (initially 140, but now up to 280 and enhanced by features such as hashtags, mentions, and replies, users can network and dialogue with other Twitter users).

This research focuses on EFL students who use Twitter to express their thoughts and ideas on various topics. Language is essential for its users when it comes to social media, including Twitter. Because language conveys thoughts, ideas, and emotions to others in day-to-day life, it is essential to develop communication skills to learn English. Writing has become the most difficult language skill to learn, as it demands a writer to possess unique abilities to transform words into meaningful sentences. Additionally, the written form should convey the idea clearly and be reader-friendly or straightforward to comprehend. Writing serves various purposes, including

producing stories, self-expression, knowledge dissemination, and persuasion. Similarly, Harmer (2004:25) stated that writing is a technique or strategy for developing language and expressing one's thoughts, feelings, or judgment.

According to the observations and experiences when enrolled in university essay writing classes, EFL students experienced several difficulties while learning to write. First, the researchers assumed that EFL students lack confidence in practicing writing skills and that most lecturers do not employ writing tactics or new technologies to aid EFL students' writing efficiency. Second, they were unaware of their errors in writing, particularly in writing opinions, and hence are unable to remedy them in the subsequent writing task. Brown (2007:329) points out that writing presents several difficulties since most students lack confidence in their writing abilities, writing is boring, and they cannot express themselves. Due to the multiple difficulties that EFL students experience, this study will involve EFL students using Twitter to improve their opinion writing.

This study uses Twitter as a means of communication. Tess (2013) classifies Twitter as the social media that was not explicitly designed to assist educators and other learning-related activities, their accessibility for networking and content sharing makes them well-suited for this purpose. Twitter shares information in short bursts, whereas Instagram shares the best images and videos with followers and communicates and engages with influencers. As opposed to Facebook, Twitter provides the potential to reclaim some of the anonymity that users have previously sought in online communication settings. Huberman, Romero, and Wu (2009) stated that users are not required to submit personal information to meet 'friends,' as a result, the site places less emphasis on 'who you are,' and more emphasis on what you have said (cited in Hughes et al., 2012). Because of the reduction in social pressure brought about by anonymity, the motives for using Twitter may be different from those for using Facebook. For Romadhon, Indriani, and Setiawan (2020), Twitter may be utilized in education as a social network or a medium. The educator may exchange links, converse, and establish relationships with the other person through Twitter.

Some research has been undertaken to determine how EFL students with writing difficulties utilize Twitter. To begin, Juniardi and Utami (2018) used Twitter as a new medium to assist students in improving their writing abilities after having trouble developing their writing. Second, Romadhon et al. (2020) found that using Twitter for student writing might help students enhance their English writing abilities. They used Twitter as a learning medium that encourages instructors and students to take an active role in their education. Ekinici (2018) shared their study motivating EFL students to write using Twitter. The current research is decided to undertake similar research due to several previous studies that have been mentioned. Meanwhile, this research will examine the effects of using Twitter to engage EFL students at State Islamic University Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung in opinion writing. It will determine the difference between the pros and cons of using Twitter to engage EFL students in writing personal opinions.

## **B. Research Questions**

This study examines the effects of using Twitter to engage EFL students in opinion writing. As a result, there are three questions about the ability of EFL students in writing opinions before and after engaging them in writing opinions on Twitter, which are as follows:

1. How is the writing ability of EFL students towards personal opinion writing before using Twitter?
2. How is the writing ability of EFL students towards personal opinion writing after using Twitter?
3. What is the significant difference before and after EFL students use Twitter in personal opinion writing?

## **C. Research Purposes**

Based on the three questions above regarding the ability of EFL students to write opinions before and after involving them in writing opinions on Twitter, this study aims to determine in advance the writing ability of EFL students towards writing personal opinions before using Twitter. Second, to find out the writing ability of EFL

students towards writing personal opinions after using Twitter, and finally to find out the significant difference before and after EFL students use Twitter in writing personal opinions.

#### **D. Research Significances**

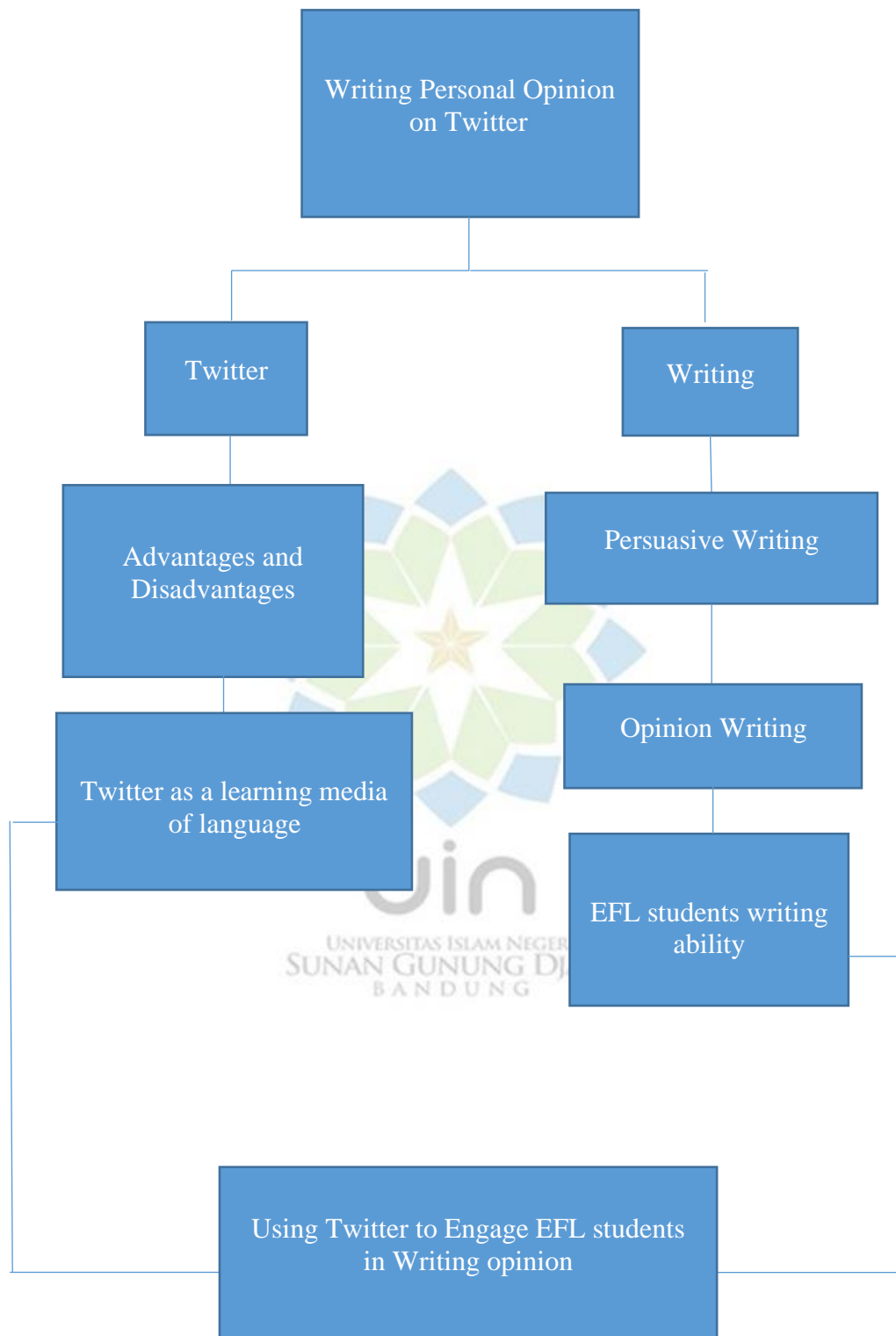
The findings of this study are expected to provide helpful information and suggestions for many people. For starters, this study can motivate EFL students to use Twitter to express their thoughts and converse in English both within and outside of the classroom. Furthermore, these research findings are essential for lecturers or educators to investigate social media or technology better regularly utilized by EFL students. Moreover, it hopes that this research is used as a reference by other researchers dealing with similar topics.

#### **E. Research Scope**

This study focuses on using Twitter to engage EFL students in writing opinions. As a result, it leads to the scope of this research, which includes terms like subject, object, and location. The subjects of this study were fourth-semester enrolled in the Department of English Education. Besides that, the object of this study is to use Twitter to involve EFL students in writing opinions. At last, this research is conducted in one of Bandung's universities, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.

#### **F. Conceptual Framework**

This study focuses on using Twitter to engage EFL students in writing opinions. As a result, it continues the conceptual framework upon which this research is set up. This conceptual framework describes the relationship between several ideas in this study, such as writing an opinion and Twitter as a language learning tool. The link of each note is depicted in **Figure.1.1**.



**Figure 1. 1** Conceptual Framework

Writing is an essential skill in this field of research. According to Urquhart and McIver (2005), writing is a recursive process, which means that students modify the entire process, frequently shifting back and forth between stages. It is also argued that all sorts of writing intend on the reader, purpose, and opportunity and that effective writing serves the author's intent while simultaneously meeting the reader's demands. Writing is seen as a challenging skill to perfect due to its complexity. Following Richards and Renandya (2002) in Ratnaningsih (2016), writing is the most challenging skill for second or foreign language learners to acquire. Furthermore, writing is challenging to master since there are many different types of writing. The four types of writing are expository, descriptive, narrative, and persuasive (Brown, 2007).

This study exploits EFL students writing opinions. Although there is a distinction between persuasive and opinion writing, opinion writing is included in one writing style, namely persuasive writing. Persuasive writing, often known as the argument essay, uses logic and reason to prove that one point of view is correct. According to Siregar (2020), persuasive writing consists of arguments and reasons to persuade someone to believe in something that the author believes in or believes is true. When individuals read persuasive writing, the author takes a stand and intends readers to accept their point of view as fact. It varies from the previous explanation of persuasive writing, whereby someone expresses their opinion using facts and logical argument. Opinion writing is written from a viewpoint. The author will convey personal opinions and provide evidence to persuade the reader to agree with them in their writing. For Setiawan and Mulyadi (2021) writing an opinion essay requires students to provide numerous reasons or opinions on a topic to defend the statement.

The study examines the use of Twitter in opinion writing. Twitter is a well-known application that individuals use in their daily lives to communicate information. Said (2015) defines Twitter (microblogging) as a social messaging network that allows users to send brief, instantaneous messages to others. It implies that Twitter is a means for sharing ideas, thinking, and communicating with individuals worldwide. Twitter users can create and share straightforward content with others. It can be giving a

viewpoint, sharing an experience, telling someone about something, or creating human communication.

With the many uses of Twitter, the weave cannot be separated from its advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantage of Twitter is the 140 to 280-character limit, which limits the ability to communicate in detail. However, this limitation of writing on Twitter can increase user creativity because 140 characters is not a barrier to expressing something meaningful. The challenge is to encourage users to be creative to produce meaningful and influential posts. Romadhon et al. (2020) points out that 140 characters can increase the creativity of users to write, that makes Twitter a tool for language learning.

Based on the beneficial effects of using Twitter as a language learning tool, this study will explore the use of Twitter to engage EFL students in opinion writing. Borau et al. (2009) believe that language learners could use Twitter to gain exposure to the target language and practice expressing themselves in the target language. Dunlap and Lowenthal (2009), as cited in Plutino (2017), believe that Twitter's practical benefits as a language learning tool may fit into teaching assistant activities in a formal learning context, in or out of the classroom, or learners undertake self-directed activities. It enables learner-centred language learning activities by choosing whom to follow and what subjects to focus on depending on their interests.

## **G. Hypothesis**

The hypothesis in this research is an alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) and the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) were used in this research. Since the hypothesis is a temporary theory, it must be tested.

The following is the research hypothesis:

$H_a$ : There is a significant difference using Twitter (X) to engage EFL students in writing personal opinion (Y).

$H_0$ : There is no significant difference using Twitter (X) to engage EFL students in writing personal opinion (Y).



## **H. Previous Studies**

This study explores the use of Twitter to engage EFL students in writing opinions. Several research results related to this study indicate the use of Twitter for writing skills. Previous studies are pertinent from both non-Indonesian and Indonesian contexts. The following are some of the previous studies.

Previous studies from non-Indonesian context are relevant to the use of Twitter in writing. For example, Ekinici (2018) focused on Twitter to motivate EFL students to write. This study involved experimental and control groups it revealed that using Twitter had a positive effect on the writing success of Osmaniye Korkut Ata University's prep EFLs. Meanwhile, Said (2015) employed an experimental-control group design to investigate Twitter's influence on EFL writing, specifically if Twitter influenced ideas, content, organization, voice, and style. The research was conducted at a female branch of Qassim University in Saudi Arabia. It concluded that the implementation of Twitter could increase ideas and content, organization, voice, and style. The use of Twitter to write on EFL students at the university is an apparent link between past research and current research in the current study. The contrast is that this current study uses a pre-experimental design and focuses on using Twitter to write opinions.

Several previous studies in Indonesian have also been conducted to determine the writing difficulties of Indonesian EFL students using Twitter. Juniardi and Utami (2018) initially applied Twitter as a new medium to assist students in improving their writing skills because they were having difficulty developing their writing. The study concluded that students can effectively use Twitter for their writing class learning activities. Writing on Twitter allows students to diversify the content of their writing while also demonstrating mastery of the syntax used. As a result, Twitter helps students develop more powerful English writing abilities. Next, Romadhon et al. (2020) used Twitter as a medium for students to write short stories. The study shows that using Twitter to improve students writing skills is beneficial because it hones students thinking by creating fairy tales in English. Students are educated in



independent learning/learning responsibilities, active and collaborative problem solving, determining learning methods, ICT skills, and foreign languages using Twitter as a learning medium. The present study uses Twitter to engage EFL students in writing opinions, whereas previous research used Twitter to improve students writing skills. Most of these studies have used a variety of research designs to determine the improvement of students' writing skills through Twitter as a medium. However, this study uses a pre-experimental design and investigates the impact of using Twitter to engage EFL students in opinion writing. Due to the research design and different research focus, there is a gap between current and previous research.

