

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

Success in writing academically cannot be achieved instantly. In order for learners to master writing skills, they should acquire writing techniques such as choosing right words and phrases, following the proper structure of writing; mastering vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and many more (Pratiwi, 2016). The success of English Foreign Language (EFL) students depend on them becoming proficient in English. Thus, their ability to write is one of the skills needed for proficiency (Jones S. J., 2006). Besides, learners are required to do many writing practices, understanding the theories of writing, and reading various written references. Therefore, to reach those skills, students need to learn writing from the basics with an engaging and exciting method, and one way of doing that is through creative writing in weblogs.

In creative writing, there are many other types of products called genre; it is divided into two: non-fiction and fiction (Earnshaw, 2007). The students are free to write anything such as in non-fiction they can write a personal essay, articles, biography, and so on. Another genre of creative writing is fiction, like short stories, novels, poetry which is for students who are expert in arts and literature. These types of creative writing nowadays are easily accessible through the use of the internet. This advantage of using the internet and free websites should be applied as a language learning method.

According to Dharma (2016), learning writing can be done in two methods. The first one is called the traditional or offline method, in which students write a topic and submit the papers to be reviewed. This learning method is often overly dependent on teachers because the students need to receive feedback on their writing drafts. This type of learning might be ineffective for a large group of students and lead to boredom as learning often uses the old method. All the more, not all of the students' writing will get the feedback and assessment from the teacher and their classmate; consequently, the lack of feedback occurs. The second method is to utilize the Information Communication Technology (ICT)

development in learning (Dharma, 2016), such as using a weblog as a media in writing class. The use of weblogs has developed and become more popular with young students nowadays, as technology and modern lifestyle has been improved and advanced in time. Currently, weblogs are used for academic learning, where students exploit them as media to post their writings.

Weblogs (blogs) are personal web pages written in chronological order and maintained through a specific software that helps their administration (Mora & Espinosa, 2007). This media has been used in some subject; one of them is in Introduction to Creative Writing Subject 2019 of English Education Study Program, Universitas Jambi (UNJA). In this subject, fourth-semester students were asked to post their writings through the weblog. In the learning process, students are taught both non-fiction and fiction in creative writing.

There are several reasons why the researcher conducted this study. First, although creative writing is an optional subject that only students who have a strong interest in arts and literature that will take this subject as their credit point, the students are expected to motivate in this learning and have the excitement to escalate their writing skills as they chose this subject themselves. Nevertheless, it is not sure whether the students feel that way. So, a review is needed to understand how students felt about using a weblog as writing media to improve students' writing skills in many aspects. Second, the students need to learn writing from the basic first with engaging media. They should learn the topic and genres they feel enjoy to write. Creative writing has many genres, which they can choose to write things such as poetry, short stories, autobiography, and many more. Which hopefully, the writing process itself becomes a habitual for them, which aims to make writing familiar to the students, then they can develop their writing to a higher level by themselves. Then, they produce a portfolio of written products at the end. Third, the researcher has experienced the advantages of using the weblog in Journalism Course 2019 of English Education Study Program, UNJA. In this class, the lecturer used a weblog as a medium for students to submit the products of their writing. The researcher and other fellow students expressed that writing on weblogs is more convenient to use as they could access the media whenever and wherever they wanted through smartphones, computers, and

laptops. Moreover, students were motivated to finish and reviewed their projects because they wanted to display good quality of writing to online readers. However, it still necessary to find out these facts by researching other students who have similar experiences. Fourth, It is unfortunate if students' writing is only displayed in the classroom while there are opportunities to show their ideas to be read by a wider audience so that they can have a more organized portfolio. As I agree with Jones (2006) mentioned: *"Students have the possibility of writing for a broader audience, not just to members of their class."*. Hopefully, the use of weblogs in writing classes can be used familiarly.

This research observed deeper into what they think about the use of weblog and also how the weblog increases their writing skills to the next level. Moreover, the research provided a correlation between the use of weblogs and their writings and how the students developed their abilities and creativity using weblogs. Based on the explanation above, the researcher's point of view was to investigate the Universitas Jambi's students' perception of creative writing using the weblog. Thus, this study is entitled: **A Study of Students' Perception of English Creative Writing Using the Weblog.**

## **1.2. Research Questions**

Based on the statements of the background above, this study investigated the following questions:

- 1) What are the students' perception of English creative writing using weblog?
- 2) How does using weblog help the students in improving their writing, reading and other skills?
- 3) What are the advantages and barriers in using weblogs in English creative writing subject?

## **1.3. Purposes of the Study**

Based on the formulation of the research questions above, the purpose of this study is to explore the students' perception of creative writing using the weblog. Also, this study investigated how weblog can assist the students in improving their writing skills. Finally, to understand students' point of view of the

advantages and barriers in using weblogs in Introduction to Creative Writing subject.

#### **1.4. Limitation of the Study**

The researcher focused on investigating students' perception of creative writing using the weblog. The researcher limited the sample on the study, which consists of a class of sixth-semester students batch 2017 that have completed the Introduction to Creative Writing course in the fourth-semester of the English Education Study Program, UNJA.

#### **1.5. Significances of the study**

This study is expected to be useful for several elements, especially in the English learning process. The significant of the study as follows:

1. For the Student

The students will know the benefits and barriers towards the habit of creative writing using a weblog to enhance their writing skills and know-how others improved their writing skills. Then, the student wants to use blogs as a first step to build their literacy (actively reading and writing).

2. For English Lecturers

This will help English lecturers to understand students' perception of using weblog in teaching and learning, especially in writing. Also, how writing on weblogs impact on the students' writing performance so that they can use a weblog as a writing media in the technology era.

3. For the Researcher

The researcher has a strong interest in weblogs and writing—as the researcher is an active weblog user who also actively publish her writings in this media—this research will help the researcher to understand about the use of weblog in writing. Furthermore, as an English Education Students, the researcher is expected to become a teacher in the future. Hopefully, this research will provide answers when she needs to teach writing to help students improve their learning in the digital era with enticing media.

4. For Future Researchers

Hopefully, this study can be useful to other researchers who want to conduct a study that is related to the same area.

## **1.6. Definition of Key Terms**

**Perception** is the interpretation of the understanding of a given situation, person, or object (Ballinger, 2019).

**Writing** is one of the productive skills which produce a written product or information, besides reading, speaking, and listening as the four language skill to master in learning English (Spratt, Pulverness, & Williams, 2005)

**Creative Writing** is non-formal writing in which the writers choose their own material and forms. Writers use their imagination, ideas, and experiences to express their own feelings and thoughts, even it is irrational (Dell, 1964).

**Weblog** or Blog is a personal web page written in chronological order and maintained through a specific software that helps their administration (Mora & Espinosa, 2007). Moreover, this online platform contains online personal reflection, comments, and often hyperlinks, videos, and photographs provided by the writer.

**Digital Fluency** is the way people become comfortable using technology as they regularly use it in their daily life (Huffaker, 2004).