CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher presents: background of the study, problem of the study, purpose of the study, scope and limitation, significances of the study, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Technology has rapidly developed. The development of technology demands people to adapt with it. One of the latest technologies that catches people attention is internet. Internet enables people to communicate and get information sources easily. Therefore, internet can be accepted well by people, especially for students.

Internet has facilities that support the academic process. Most of the students and teachers use it to support their academic activity. The students who are in processing of finishing their thesis will need more information. Staff (2001) confirmed that internet can be a suitable vehicle to locate references and collect the data in academic research. It means that students can look for some information and gather the data through the internet in conducting thesis.

Internet provides huge information around the world. Students only need to use a kind of search engine and type any keyword to find some references. Directly, some websites as well as weblog appear. According to Burg (2007, et. al) stated “there are two ways to evaluate the internet sources: First, through a screened database; second, through a popular search engine.” It means that, students can find some sources through the screened database like digital library and through search
engine like Google. Burg (2007, et. al) also stated that there are some web criteria which should be evaluated by students. First, identify the author of the site. Second, look for the information about the place or server on which the document resides whether it is a linked to a federal agency (.gov), a non-profit (.org), or an educational institution (.edu). Third, the accuracy of the sites, it can be seen by the language that the author uses. Last, the currency and coverage of the sites.

Currently, looking for some information on the internet is the simple way that students prefer. Students who live in this era are known as digital native generations are different with the previous generation. They have different way to gather information. As Tapscott cited in Jones (1997) confirms “the New Generation is exceptionally curious, self-reliant, contrarian, smart, focused, able to adapt, high in self-esteem, and has a global orientation...there has been a change in the way children gather, accept and retain information.” The new generation tends to act in haste to obtain the information because they are so curious and focused. They are easy to adapt with the new advancement of technology. They will get the information they need based on their own way. See the phenomenon in this era, almost all of the students prefer to find the information even to communicate instead through internet. That is the only sources which provides information really fast and easy.

Additionally, Prensky (2001a:p2) “Digital Natives are used to receiving information really fast. They like to parallel process and multi-task. They prefer their graphics before their text rather than the opposite. They prefer random access (like hypertext). They function best when networked. They thrive on instant gratification and frequent rewards. They prefer games to “serious” work.” It means that the today’s
students are smarter than students who are born early. They are able to do more than one activity concurrently. They are also conceptive.

Moreover, Byrum (2005) as cited in Cordes (2014) claims, “Modern information seekers want rapid access to information with little effort, and place high value on results that provide feedback on the quality of information retrieved”. Related to those statements which have been explained above, it can be suggested that internet is a tool that provides rapid access to information. Therefore, the researcher wants to discuss students’ perception on the use of internet as reference to support writing thesis.

However, most of the students use internet as tool for communication to gather data. Therefore, the usefulness of internet for students is very immense. From those reasons, the researcher wants to study the students’ perception of the use of internet as tool for communication to support writing thesis.

Normally, students look for some references and information related to their thesis from the books. However, sometimes they do not find books in the library. The restrictiveness of books becomes a weakness of looking for some books in the library. They should know first whether the book is available or not. Library also might not be open everyday and anytime whenever students want to visit. Hence, most of them rely on the internet to get some information and references because they can access the internet wherever and whenever they need without any restrictiveness of time and space. It is one of advantages of internet as sources used in academic process. And many other advantages that internet has in term of writing thesis. Therefore, the
researcher in this study wants to discuss about the students’ perception of the advantage of internet to support writing thesis.

A research which was done by Balta and Ercan (2010) serves as previous study in this research. It was about the use of internet resources by university students during their course projects elicitation at Yasar University of Turk. Their research focused on the way university students gather their course project requirements during the project elicitation phase and how they access the Internet and other resources, and their trends in the literature review using the internet.

Additionally, there was a researcher who has ever researched about internet sources at UMM. It was done by Emilianti (2013) titled “Internet Online Sources Used by The Teachers at ESP Writing Class in Faculty of Teacher Training and Education”. She described about kinds of internet sources that support teachers in ESP writing class at UMM. This research was also conducted to know the reason and its advantages and disadvantages of internet online sources in ESP writing class at Faculty of Teachers Training and Education of University of Muhammadiyah Malang.

Meanwhile, the researcher in this study discuss about the students’ perception of the use of internet as reference and tool for communication to support writing thesis. Moreover, she also interested in discuss about students’ perception of the advantages of internet to support writing thesis. In this study, the researcher will distribute questionnaires to students at English Department of UMM in academic year 2010 who are in processing of finishing their thesis, in order to know their perception.
1.2 Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the study above, the researcher attempts to investigate the following problems:

1. What is the students’ perception of the use of internet as references to support writing thesis at English Department of UMM?
2. What is the students’ perception of the use of internet as tool for communication to support writing thesis at English Department of UMM?
3. What is the students’ perception of the advantages of internet to support writing thesis at English Department of UMM?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study as follows:

1. To identify the students’ perception of the use of internet as references to support writing thesis at English Department of UMM.
2. To find out the students’ perception of the use of internet as tool for communication to support writing thesis at English Department of UMM.
3. To know the students’ perception of the advantages of internet to support writing thesis at English Department at UMM.

1.4 The significance of the Study

After this study has completed, the result of this study are supposed to give both theoretical and practical advantages. Theoretically, this study is expected to be able enrich the previous researches in academic writing at university of Muhammadiyah Malang about internet sources to support writing. It is because the researcher realizes that this topic was very rare to be discussed by students at
university of Muhammadiyah Malang. Practically, the researcher attempts to indicate the students’ perception about the use of internet as reference and tool for communication and its advantages to support writing thesis. In addition, the result of this study is expected to be used as reference for those who are interested in doing similar field of research.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

In this study, the researcher does not investigate all of the students at English Department of UMM, but she only takes students who were in processing of finishing their thesis in academic year 2010 as the population. It is easy to access them and it considers time. Moreover, this study will focus on the internet as a reference and tool for communication that support writing thesis and its advantages.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, it is very important to define some terminologies. Those are as follows:

1) Students’ Perception

Perception is the active process of creating meaning by selecting, organizing and interpreting people, objects, events, situation, and other phenomena (Wood, 2009:68). In this study, students’ perception is the opinion of English departments’ students of UMM in academic year 2010 on the use of internet sources to support writing thesis.

2) Internet as a reference
In this research, internet as a reference means that the sources from the internet that is commonly used by students as information to support students’ writing thesis.

3) Internet as a tool for communication

In this research, internet as reference means that the sources from the internet that is used by students as tool for communication to support students’ writing thesis.

4) Use (verb, *purpose*)

To put something such as a tool, skill or building to a particular purpose (Cambridge Advance Learners’ Dictionary)

5) Advantages (noun)

A good feature or quality that something has (Macmillan Dictionary)

6) Writing

Writing is the activity of creating pieces of written work, such as stories, poems or articles (Cambridge Advance Learners’ Dictionary)

7) Thesis

Thesis is a long piece of writing on a particular subject that is done to earn a degree at a university (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)