

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In recent years, technology has been making a major breakthrough in people's lives. It has been improving people's lives by making things easier and advanced in the fields of communication, information, transportation, healthcare, and also entertainment. One of the most interesting breakthroughs in the entertainment field is the invention of game. According to Salen & Zimmerman (2004), game is "a system in which players engage in an artificial conflict, defined by rules, that results in a quantifiable outcome" (p. 80).

The purposes of the invention of games are to give the users/players an entertainment that they could actively engage in order to release the stress from their routines or boredom, for leisure, and also for educational or learning purpose.

One of the methods of using games for learning purpose is through the activity of game making, especially in groups (working collaboratively). Group-based game making (or collaborative game-making) provides a learning model where students or learners can work together to create something meaningful for them, which could also facilitate the development of a range of 21st Century Skills (21CS) such as critical thinking, computer literacy, problem solving, etc. (Bermingham, et al., 2013). Furthermore, designing and developing games could address the needs that the learners

require better than simply playing the already-existed games (Brennan & Resnick, 2012; Robertson, 2012).

Existing literature on the role of games used for learning has shown some significant impacts for the learners. According to Dempsey *et al.* (1994), games serve many functions such as tutoring, amusing, helping to explore new skills, promoting self-esteem, practicing skills, or seeking to change attitudes. In addition, simple types of games genre such as adventure, arcade, board, simulations, puzzle and word games could be constructed to achieve specific learning outcomes such as decision making and problem solving (Dempsey, Lucassen, Haynes, & Casey, 1996), and help promote computer literacy skills (Natale, 2002). Blake & Goodman (1999) have also found that using games as a learning medium could motivate the students' preparation for class and help them become acquainted with their classmates that they have not worked with before. Therefore, games could also be used to facilitate students to learn collaboratively with their peers.

According to Lehtinen *et al.* (1999), collaborative or group learning refers to an instructional method where students are encouraged to cooperate on learning tasks. It means that the fulfillment of tasks and problem solving requires group of learners' mutual effort, involving communications and interactions between them. Therefore, collaborative learning supports the idea that learning is a social activity in which knowledge-seeking inquiry is fulfilled through combined efforts of the inquirers.

The reason why the writer conducted this research on group-based game making to learn descriptive writing and the correlations/significance between the students' gender and gaming skill with their interest in creating a game for different writing genres and their difficulty in creating the game itself is due to the fact that the writer wanted to find out the potential of the use of game to enhance the learning process and skill such as descriptive writing skill. The writer would also like to know if games could be designed and used for learning purpose to achieve a specific learning outcome. Even though there is some research on the utilization of game for learning in other countries, such literature is still lacking in Indonesia, and that is why the writer decided to contribute one to it.

1.2 FIELD OF THE STUDY

This research is related to the field of applied linguistics.

1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research focuses on students' attitude towards the use of game for descriptive writing skill. The writer conducted this study in the Faculty of Language and Arts.

1.4 PROBLEM FORMULATION

In this research, the writer formulated a problem related to the students in the Faculty of Language and Arts:

1. What are students' perceptions on group-based game making to learn descriptive writing?
2. Are there any correlations between the students' gender and gaming skill with their interest in creating a game for different writing genres and their difficulty in creating the game itself?

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of this research is to find out:

1. The students' perceptions on group-based game making to learn descriptive writing.
2. The correlations between the students' gender and gaming skill with their interest in creating a game for different writing genres and their difficulty in creating the game itself.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The importance of this research is to find out students' perceptions on group-based game making to learn descriptive writing and the correlations between the students' gender and gaming skill with their interest in creating a game for different writing genres and their difficulty in creating the game itself. Therefore, the writer expected that this study could be used as a reference to the lecturers/teachers, students, and game developers to create and take benefits of the usage of games for learning. Also, the writer also expected

that this study could contribute to the scholarly discoveries of the group-based game making as a way to learn a language skill.

