

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The first chapter of this thesis consists of Research context, Research focuses, Research Objectives, Research Significance, Research Scopes and Limitations, and Definition of Key Terms

1.1 Research Context

In Indonesia, the importance of education is emphasized in (Law Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System), which aims to raise the standard of education by ensuring that students develop essential competencies. Law Number 20 of 2003, Chapter II, Article 3, emphasizes the goal of education as developing students' potential to become individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, skilled, and capable of making positive contributions to society. Furthermore, Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 22, 2016, Emphasizes the importance of effective learning processes, including enhancing students' writing abilities as part of broader educational objectives. Law Number 20 of 2003, Chapter VII Article 33 Paragraph 3, states that 'Foreign languages may be used as the medium of instruction in certain educational institutions to support students' foreign language skills,' emphasizing the importance of foreign languages in education and encouraging their use to enhance students' language proficiency. These regulations underline the central role of language skills in the educational system.

English has been essential in fostering global cross-cultural connections, acting as a common language that supports communication and understanding across diverse backgrounds, which aids in trade, diplomacy, education, and cultural exchange (Atasheva, 2024). Moreover, English also plays a crucial role in academic fields globally, serving as a common language in education, research, and professional domains (Tiwari, 2020). For example, many academic journals and conferences use English as their primary language, enabling researchers from various countries to exchange their findings and collaborate efficiently. Additionally, most top universities offer programs and courses in English, making it easier for international students to access quality education. In professional settings, English is often the standard language for multinational companies, facilitating communication and cooperation across global teams.

The Indonesian government requires English learning from elementary school to university (Kurniati et al., 2021). Mastering English requires proficiency in its four core skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening (Ali, 2022). Among the four skills above, writing is a fundamental language skill that students must develop when learning a new language (Allen, 2018). Writing skill is a complex ability that involves knowledge, creativity, and intellectual integrity (Gautam, 2019). It requires attention to word choice, coherence, and grammar (Sa'adah, 2019). Writing skills are crucial in English education, playing a vital role in academic and professional communication (Bora, 2023). In addition to these technical aspects, writing also helps students organize their thoughts, structure their arguments, and convey their ideas effectively.

Despite its importance, Indonesian students face significant challenges in learning English writing skills (Ariyanti, 2016). These challenges stem from both external and internal factors. Internal factors that challenge ESL students' English writing skills include insufficient linguistic proficiency, writing anxiety, lack of ideas (Fareed et al., 2016). External factors that challenge students in writing stem from cultural differences between students' native languages and English, large class sizes, limited time for effective instruction, and the need for new teaching techniques to improve students' writing outcomes (Ariyanti, 2016). Cultural differences between Indonesian and English-speaking contexts further complicate the learning process, often resulting in writing that doesn't "sound" appropriate in English. Teachers also encounter difficulties in implementing effective teaching techniques, managing large classes, and allocating sufficient time for the complex writing process (Ariyanti, 2016).

Therefore, to address these challenges, teachers need to implement innovative teaching methods. One of the innovative teaching methods is Project-based Learning. Project-based learning focuses on task-oriented learning, teamwork, student independence, and learner-centered teaching, all while conveying curriculum content (Wiji Lestari & Kurniady Supian Erik Rusmana, 2023). Through this strategy, learners participate in practical exercises that demand the application of their writing skills in meaningful contexts.

Based on the interview with English teacher From MAN Kota Blitar, English teacher already implemented Project Based learning, as reported on the following interview:

“Among the various methods, Project-Based Learning (PjBL) is the most impactful for students. This method allows students to engage in real-world projects, which makes the learning process more meaningful and relevant to them.”

(INT/ET/13/XI/2024/13.00-13.30 WIB)

The teacher believes that PjBL helps students engage in real-world projects while also making the learning process more enjoyable. Interviews with students further support this approach. The students’ state:

“I prefer writing, I like creating stories.”

(INT/ST1/21/XI/2024/09.00-09.30 WIB)

“In my opinion, it's fun. I'm usually not very active in English lessons, but now I realize that English can be enjoyable.”

(INT/ST2/21/XI/2024/09.00-09.30 WIB)

Furthermore, MAN Kota Blitar has demonstrated notable achievements in the field of English, as seen through students’ active participation and successes in various English language competitions, such as essay writing, poetry reading, storytelling, and speech contests. The researcher observed these accomplishments through the school’s official Instagram account, which regularly showcases students’ achievements and activities related to English learning.

This in line with previous research that has explored the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning in developing students' writing abilities. The first previous research was titled "Project-Based Learning to Promote High School Students’ Descriptive Writing" by Ardiana, Ariana, and Eka Irianti. Published in the Journal of English Education and Teaching (JEET), Volume 7, Number 4, in 2023, this study focuses on enhancing students' descriptive writing skills through the use of Project-based learning and observing its impact on their behavior. Conducted as a

Classroom Action Research (CAR) with Kurt Lewin's model, the study involved 23 students from class X IIS 4 of SMA Negeri 4 Takalar over two cycles, each consisting of four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. In the planning stage, the researchers identified the challenges students faced in descriptive writing and selected creating brochures as the project task. The focus was on describing places, aligned with the curriculum. Teaching materials, lesson plans, and tools to support the project were prepared, and a step-by-step guide was developed for implementing PjBL. During the implementation phase, Cycle 1 introduced students to the features of descriptive texts, such as the use of adjectives and the simple present tense.

Students worked in groups to create brochures about local places, with guidance and feedback from the teacher. In Cycle 2, students refined their projects by incorporating feedback and worked more independently, fostering their creativity and critical thinking. Evaluation of the project was conducted through writing tests, observations, and rubrics. Students' writing skills improved significantly, as shown by an increase in mean scores from 65.57 in the diagnostic test to 72.09 after Cycle 1 and 82.04 after Cycle 2. Observations revealed that students became more active, engaged, and collaborative during the project. Writing was assessed using the Jacobs et al. (1981) rubric, which measured content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics. Reflection after each cycle helped refine teaching strategies, leading to better student outcomes. The study concluded that PjBL effectively improved students' writing abilities and fostered a positive learning atmosphere.

The second previous research is titled "Enhancing the Secondary Student's Writing Skills Through Project-Based Learning" by Albert Efendi Pohan. Published in *Cahaya Pendidikan*, Volume 6, Issue 1, in June 2020, the study investigated whether Project-Based Learning (PjBL) improves the writing skills of tenth-grade students at SMA Negeri 21 Batam. This study adopted a quasi-experimental framework, categorizing students into an experimental group that received treatment and a control group that did not. Data were collected using pre-tests and post-tests, focusing on students' ability to write simple recount texts. The analysis, conducted with a one-sample t-test at a 5% significance level, revealed that PjBL significantly enhanced the students' writing skills. The experimental group showed a notable improvement in mean scores, rising from 66.44 in the pre-test to 82.88 in the post-test, while the control group, taught using conventional methods, also improved but to a lesser extent. This finding highlights that PjBL was more effective than traditional approaches in fostering writing skills. In this research, the planning, implementation, and evaluation of PjBL were carefully integrated into the learning process.

During the planning stage, students identified the type of project they wanted to pursue, guided by their interests, needs, and available resources. They designed the steps for completing the project, considering potential challenges and solutions. The implementation stage involved students actively working on their projects, either individually or collaboratively, while utilizing their knowledge and prior experiences. Throughout this process, the teacher played a facilitative role, providing direction, motivation, and continuous feedback. The evaluation phase encompassed an assessment of cognitive, psychomotor, and affective aspects, from

the initial planning stages to the final outcomes. Reflection sessions were held to review the process and results, enabling students and the teacher to provide feedback and identify areas for improvement. This approach allowed students to engage deeply with the learning material, fostering creativity, independence, and significant improvements in their writing abilities.

The third previous research is titled "Students' Perception of Project-Based Learning in Writing Class" by Nurul Fadhillah, Sudjarwo, and Dwiyanah Habsari. Published in the *International Journal of Education and Digital Learning*, Volume 1, Issue 3, in February 2023, this study focuses on the use of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in writing classes and investigates students' perceptions and the benefits they gained. The research employed a quantitative approach with a case study design. The participants were 60 high school students from SMA Qur'an Darul Fatah in Lampung. The data collection methods included questionnaires adapted from Unumeri (2009) and interviews. The findings showed that most students had positive perceptions of PjBL. They agreed that the materials provided by the teacher were clear, interesting, and suitable for improving their writing skills. Additionally, students reported increased motivation and critical thinking, along with improved ability to structure their writing through PjBL activities.

The evaluation process by the teacher played a significant role in this study. Teachers provided clear guidelines for the projects and outlined a systematic process, starting from explanations and exercises to final project submission. They monitored students' progress regularly, ensured students received support to overcome challenges, and gave constructive feedback through platforms like

Google Docs. The findings concluded that PjBL effectively improved students' motivation and writing skills while fostering a positive learning experience.

From the background of the research, there is still limited research examining the use of Project-based Learning in writing instruction in Senior high schools in Blitar. Inspired by the information revealed through interviews, the researchers decided to conduct a study focused on how Project-based learning is implemented in teaching narrative writing to tenth-grade students at MAN Kota Blitar. MAN Kota Blitar has a strong track record of achievement in the field of English, as evidenced by its students' participation and victories in various language competitions. This achievement demonstrates that the school has an effective learning program and provides optimal support for the development of English language skills. This reflects the quality of teaching, learning, and the support of adequate facilities to help students improve their English language skills academically and practically.

1.2 Research Focuses

- 1) How does an English teacher implement teaching writing by applying Project-based learning for the tenth-grade students at MAN Kota Blitar?
- 2) How do the students respond towards writing by applying Project Based Learning for the tenth-grade students at MAN Kota Blitar?

1.3 Research Objective

- 1) To describe how English teachers implement teaching writing using Project-Based Learning for the tenth-grade students at MAN Kota Blitar.

- 2) To describe how do the students respond towards writing by applying Project Based Learning for the tenth-grade students at MAN Kota Blitar?

1.4 Research Significances

This research is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions. The significances are described as follows:

1.4.1 Theoretical Significance

This study enriches the theoretical understanding of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in the context of teaching and learning writing, particularly for senior high school students

1.4.2 Practical Significance

For Teachers:

- 1) The study provides teachers with practical strategies and guidance for implementing PjBL in teaching writing.
- 2) The research encourages teachers to adopt innovative approaches in writing instruction, fostering creativity and engagement among students.

1.5 Research Scope and Limitation

- 1) Grade Level: The study is limited to the tenth-grade students at MAN Kota Blitar and does not include other grade levels.
- 2) Setting: The findings are specific to the context of MAN Kota Blitar and may not be generalizable to other schools or educational environments.
- 3) Data Collection: The study primarily relies on interviews, observation and document analysis, focusing on the teacher's perspective and students' experiences.

- 4) Type of Text: This research is limited to the implementation of Project-Based Learning in teaching narrative text writing and does not cover other types of texts.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

For the purpose of this research, the following key terms are defined in order to ensure clarity and consistency:

1.6.1 Writing

Writing is a process of producing written work that is carried out in a repeated and iterative manner (Rofiqoh et al., 2022). It involves cognitive activities like planning, organizing, drafting, reviewing, and assessing (Shabitha & Mekala, 2023). In this research, writing refers specifically to students' ability to compose narrative texts in English as part of the Project-Based Learning process. The writing activities included vocabulary exploration, idea development based on silent video prompts, individual drafting, presentation, and reflection. This process aimed to enhance students' creativity, communication skills, and understanding of the material.

1.6.2 Project Based Learning

PjBL, or project-based learning, is an instructional approach that focuses on task-oriented learning, teamwork, student independence, and learner-centered teaching, all while conveying curriculum content (Wiji Lestari & Kurniady Supian Erik Rusmana, 2023). In this study, Project-Based Learning refers to a teaching strategy applied by the English teacher at MAN Kota Blitar to support students' writing skills. It involves the use of silent videos as stimuli, followed by structured phases such as project development, presentation and reflection, and evaluation.

PjBL was implemented in a semi-guided format, allowing students to work independently while receiving support from the teacher both in class and through digital communication.

1.6.3 Implementation of PjBL

Krajcik and Blumenfeld (2006) explain that Project-Based Learning (PjBL) involves several stages such as identifying a driving question, planning the project, conducting investigation, creating a product, and presenting it to others. This process encourages students to explore real-world problems and build knowledge through active learning. In addition, Stoller (2006) provides a more detailed sequence of ten steps, starting from selecting a topic, deciding the final product, organizing the tasks, gathering and analyzing information, drafting, revising, preparing, and presenting the project. Moreover, she highlights the use of stimulus (like videos or pictures) to help students generate ideas at the beginning of the project, and emphasizes the importance of reflection as the final step to review what students have learned. In this research, the implementation of PjBL was adapted to the writing class at MAN Kota Blitar, where students used a silent video as a stimulus to write narrative texts. The teacher applied a semi-guided approach, facilitated discussion and brainstorming, allowed students to work independently, and included reflection activities to help students evaluate their writing progress.

1.6.4 Students Respond

Student response refers to how learners react to the learning experience in terms of cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects. According to Nunan (2004), student responses involve how learners process information (cognitive), how they

feel about the learning tasks (affective), and how they behave or participate in classroom activities (behavioral). In this study, student response focuses on three key areas: creativity, communication skill, and understanding of the material.

Creativity refers to students' ability to generate original ideas and express themselves in a unique way during the writing project (Harmer, 2004). Communication skill is defined as students' ability to express their thoughts clearly, both in spoken and written forms, as part of the collaborative process in Project-Based Learning (Stoller, 2006). Understanding of the material refers to students' grasp of the narrative text structure and content, which shows how well they internalize the writing concepts taught during the project (Krajcik & Blumenfeld, 2006). These aspects represent students' cognitive reactions to the use of Project-Based Learning in writing instruction, and are used in this research to explore how students respond to the teaching approach implemented by the teacher.