

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the research, problem of the research, object of the research, operational definition of the term, significance of the research and scope of the research.

1.1 Background of the Research

English is a foreign language included in the learning curriculum in school level. Richard and Schmidt (2010) stated English is learned at school in order to communicate with foreigners or for reading printed materials in the language. In addition, it is one of the important subjects that should be mastered by the students. It focuses on four language skills, namely: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The productive skills of writing and speaking are different in many ways. However, there are a number of language production processes which have to be gone through whichever medium we are working in (Harmer, 2007). The productive ability that students are required to be skilled in learning foreign languages is aimed at conditions where students can engage in an interaction to express and share opinions in communicating clearly and successfully. This productive ability can be in the form of student writing skills. In fact, the productive ability of students writing about foreign languages is still relatively

low, this is due to lack of and limited interest, confidence, ideas, vocabulary and knowledge.

Writing skill is very significant because nowadays, people use not only verbal communication to communicate with each other, but also non-verbal communication. In other words, writing is an essential form of communication and is used as a means of communication to connect people regardless time and places. A good writing skill enables students to convey their thoughts and communicate their ideas so that those can be well-perceived by others. Hence, writing is one of the most prominent skills which must be mastered by the English language learners. Writing skills are relatively more difficult compared to the other skills, since it has several issues and difficulties which do not exist in the other skills (Brown, 2004). For many students and teachers, writing is a very difficult skill to learn. Writing is a complex activity, students tend to feel writing is difficult and which make them bored in writing class. It becomes a challenge for the teacher on how to make the students to be competent in writing. Innovative teaching writing method should be implemented to make the students can write well. The teacher's task is to present an active and creative learning process, because basically students really need teacher guidance in the learning process of foreign languages. In the writing lesson the initial stage that the teacher must do is actively provide information. So that, students get more information or ideas. So students need topics that allow them to generate ideas, find forms to fit ideas, and take risks. This means that before writing students must have ideas which are then written in writing.

Based on the information from the English teacher of SMP Negeri 1 Kencong, the Minimal Completeness Criterion (KKM) in writing that determined by the school is 70. Moreover, from students' writing descriptive paragraph score on pretest of 8E class that has been shown 54.8% (17 out of 31) students who could not pass the KKM which determined by the school and it was categories as low.

There were difficulties in teaching and learning process of writing. It was caused by several factors. First, the difficulties in writing was the students are not capable to make a good paragraph in writing. They had problems in organizing ideas of what they were going to write. Second, most students thought that writing is a difficult skill. They were confused to transform the ideas from their minds, so they need much time just to think what they were going to wrote. They were also having poor vocabulary and lack knowledge of grammatical rules.

Due to the problems which aroused in the teaching and learning process of writing, it is clear that there is an urgent need of an instructional technique which could overcome the problems of writing. Hence, the researcher looked for an appropriate way which could solve it. The researcher noticed that the use of Project based-Learning (PjBL) in the English instructional process has become more popular and taken into account recently. Simpson (2011) PjBL had a significant effect on the development of the low and medium ability groups of students, the high ability students showed progress in speaking and writing, but not for their listening and reading skills. Because of that, the researcher reckoned that there was a possibility to improve the students' writing skills through the implementation of Project-based Learning, since it is potentially motivating,

empowering and challenging the students. Project-based learning focusing in create the product. The result of the product is like model, poster and display. Project based learning in this study will make a poster which related on students writing project.

Based on the explanation above and the factors which contributed to writing difficulty at 8E grade of SMP Negeri 1 Kencong Jember, the researcher is interested to conduct a research using project based learning strategy as one of the effective treatments to improve students' writing skill. In this study is focusing on writing descriptive paragraph, based on the preliminary study that the researcher has been conduct that subject was still low.

1.2 Problem of the Research

In general it can be stated that the problem of the research is prepared to provide information about the problems that want to be studied in a study. Based on the background above, the problem of the research that discussed in this study was : “How can project based learning improve writing descriptive paragraph of the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Kencong in 2019/2020 academic year?”

1.3 Objective of the Research

Based on the background above, the objective of the research is : ”to know how project based learning can improve writing descriptive paragraph of the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Kencong in 2019/2020 academic year”.

1.4 Operational Definition of the Term

In this research, it needs to formulate operational definition that is related directly to the term and variables of the research. The function of the operational definition is to make the same perspective between the writer and the reader about the variables of the research.

1) Project Based Learning

Project Based Learning is a strategy for teaching and learning uses activities or project as technique. Students work individually or collaboratively in groups to identify what they need to learn. They can learn the materials and solve the problems by doing a project.

2) Writing Ability

Writing Ability is the students' competency in writing short paragraph and it is indicated by writing scores covering the aspects of contents, organization, vocabulary, and grammar.

3) Descriptive Paragraph

Descriptive Paragraph is a paragraph which expresses a particular person, place or thing. To inform the reader about picture or visualize what is being written about.

1.5 Significance of the Research

The result of the research is expected to be useful for all the following people who need references for education, especially for who related bellow:

1) The English teacher

The findings of this technique can hopefully be used as a reference to improve the quality of the English teaching and learning process.

2) The Students

It is expected that this research is able to attract the student interests towards studying English and improving their writing skill.

1.6 Scope of the Research

The research focuses on building students' writing descriptive paragraph through Project Based Learning. The subject of the research is Junior High School Students.

