

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

There are four skills in English, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Javed et al, 2013; Khamkhien, 2010; Su et al, 2018). Writing ability is very important for every student in learning English. By having the ability to write, students can communicate ideas, thoughts, feelings, and emotions in written form. Nunan (2003) explains that writing is a very complex cognitive activity in which the writer has to show control of variables simultaneously, at the sentence level, it includes mastery of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, spelling and letter formation, also beyond and in sentences, writers must be able to organize and integrate information into cohesive and coherent paragraphs and texts (Durga and Rao, 2018).

English language learning, particularly in writing skills, plays a crucial role in student development. Writing is not merely about constructing sentences; it involves organizing ideas, using appropriate vocabulary, and understanding the correct structure of texts. One type of text commonly taught in secondary schools is the recount text, which aims to retell experiences or events that have occurred. Recount texts are characterized by their chronological structure, where events are presented in the order they occurred, and they often include personal reflections or evaluations of the experiences (Derewianka, 1990). This type of writing not only helps students practice narrative skills but also enhances their ability to

writing instruction should be given considerable attention in English language teaching, particularly in secondary education.

At SMPN 3 Percut Sei Tuan, teaching strategies used in the classroom are mostly traditional and teacher-centered, which do not encourage active student participation. This lack of engagement can hinder students' ability to improve their writing skills and adapt to modern educational demands. Therefore, it is important to explore students' perceptions of their teachers' strategies in teaching writing. Understanding how students view these methods can provide valuable insights for them.

In an effort to enhance students' writing skills, various teaching methods have been implemented. One increasingly popular approach is Problem-Based Learning (PBL). PBL is an instructional method that uses complex, real-world problems as a context for students to develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaborative skills. In PBL, students work in groups to identify learning objectives, research relevant information, and devise solutions to the problems presented. This approach fosters active engagement in the learning process, encouraging students to take ownership of their education (Barrows, 1996; Dastgeer & Tanveer, 2015). By integrating PBL into writing instruction, educators can create a more dynamic learning environment that promotes deeper understanding and retention of writing concepts. Research has shown that PBL can lead to improved academic performance and greater student satisfaction (Savery, 2006).

In addition, PBL encourages students to engage with the writing process actively, allowing them to explore different perspectives and collaborate with peers to enhance their understanding (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). This collaborative approach not only improves writing skills but also fosters a sense of community among students, which can further enhance their motivation and engagement.

Despite the proven effectiveness of PBL in various contexts, students' perceptions of this method require further investigation. Student perception can significantly influence their motivation and learning outcomes, making it essential to understand how students view and experience their learning with PBL in writing recount texts. Understanding students' perceptions can help educators refine their teaching strategies and create a more supportive learning environment that meets the diverse needs of students.

The implementation of PBL in writing, particularly for recount texts, can address several challenges that students face. Many students struggle with organizing their thoughts coherently and expressing their experiences in a structured manner. This difficulty is often compounded by a limited vocabulary, which hinders their ability to articulate their ideas effectively. Traditional teaching methods, such as rote memorization and direct instruction, may not adequately prepare students for the complexities of writing recount texts.

Recount texts serve multiple educational purposes. They allow students to engage with their personal experiences, fostering a sense of ownership over their writing. By recounting personal stories, students can connect emotionally with their writing, making the process more meaningful. This connection can lead to

increased motivation and engagement, as students are often more invested in writing about their own lives than in writing about abstract topics (Murray, 2003). Furthermore, recount texts help students develop critical thinking skills as they reflect on their experiences and consider how to present them in a coherent and engaging manner. The ability to reflect on personal experiences and articulate them effectively is a vital skill that extends beyond the classroom, preparing students for future academic and professional endeavors (Graham & Perin, 2007).

The teacher observed that most students showed low enthusiasm in participating in writing activities, especially in writing recount texts. During the lessons that used traditional methods where the teacher dominated the explanation and students were mostly passive listeners the level of student engagement was noticeably low. Most students simply listened to the teacher without asking questions or showing any real interest in the material being discussed.

In writing activities, students tended to work individually and rarely engaged in discussions or shared ideas with their peers. Collaboration among students was almost nonexistent, as each student focused only on completing their own task. Some students even showed passive behavior, such as delaying their work, copying from their classmates, or completing the writing assignments without genuine effort. The teacher realized that the traditional method did not provide enough space for students to think critically, solve problems, or express their thoughts actively.

This situation led the teacher to believe that the traditional approach was less effective in improving students' writing skills, particularly in fostering active engagement and teamwork.

When the student was asked about their experience writing recount texts in English, they explained that they often had trouble finding the right words to use. They also said they were afraid of making mistakes in grammar, which made them nervous when writing. Another problem they mentioned was that their ideas sometimes didn't flow smoothly, making it hard to write a clear and well-organized story. Because of these difficulties, writing recount texts felt challenging and stressful for them.

This response shows that student struggle with similar issues when writing in English, such as choosing the correct vocabulary, using proper grammar, and arranging their thoughts in a logical way. These problems can make writing seem harder than it should be. The research aims to see if using problem-based learning (PBL) in the classroom can help students at SMPN 3 Percut Sei Tuan Medan overcome these challenges. By using this method, the study hopes to make writing recount texts easier and more enjoyable for eighth-grade students.

This study aims to explore the perceptions of Eighth students at SMPN 3 Percut Sei Tuan regarding the implementation of PBL in writing recount texts. The research employs a qualitative research design, involving 20 students to gain in-depth insights into their experiences and perceptions. By understanding students' perspectives, this research hopes to provide deeper insights into the effectiveness of this method and offer recommendations for better curriculum

development in the future. The insights gained can inform future educational practices and curriculum design to better support student learning outcomes. By fostering a positive perception of PBL and addressing the challenges students face, educators can enhance the effectiveness of writing instruction and ultimately improve students' writing skills. Therefore, the researcher intends to conduct research under the title “Students' Perception on Problem-based learning in Writing Recount Text at eighth grade of SMPN 3 Percut Sei Tuan”.

1.2 Problems of the Study

Based on the research background, this research focuses on students' perception on the use of problem-based learning in learning writing recount text. The problems of this research are:

1. What are students' perceptions on the use of Problem-Based Learning in learning writing recount text at 8th grade of SMPN 3 Percut Sei Tuan
2. What factors make students realize their perceptions on the use of problem-based learning in learning writing recount text at 8th grade of SMPN 3 Percut Sei Tuan as the way they do?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based in the problems of the study, the objectives of this research are:

1. To describe students' perceptions on the use of Problem-Based learning writing recount texts at 8th grade of SMPN 3 Percut Sei Tuan.
2. To find out students' perceptions of the use of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in writing recount texts and to explore the underlying reasons what factor make students choose specific answers

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study was limited to exploring students' perceptions of the use of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in writing recount texts based on Catherine's (2009) theory of perception. It focused on students' responses to and experiences with the implementation of PBL in the writing classroom, particularly in the context of recount text writing. Furthermore, this study examined the factors influencing students' perceptions of Problem-Based Learning based on Robbins' (2005) theory, which includes perceiver, target, and situational factors.

1.5 Significances of the Study

This research aims to provide further information or references about students' perception of developing English writing skills using the problem-based learning. Practically, this research is intended to benefit:

a. Theoretically

This research aims to provide meaningful insights into students' perceptions of using Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in writing recount texts. It offers a new perspective on how PBL can be applied effectively in the teaching and learning of writing. The findings are expected to be beneficial for teachers, students, and other readers by deepening their understanding of how PBL can support the development of writing skills, especially in constructing recount texts.

b. Practically

Besides its theoretical contribution, the researcher hopes that the findings will have practical value for teachers, students, and future researchers.

1) English Teacher

Educators can gain insights into effectively integrating PBL into English language teaching. The results of this study can assist teachers in designing engaging activities that utilize PBL features to enhance students' English writing skills.

2) Students

Understanding students' PBL preferences and challenges can help build various strategies to effectively improve English writing skills. This knowledge guarantees that educational resources align with students' verbal learning habits and preference.

3) Other researchers

This study can provide useful insights and contribute to other researches who are exploring similar topic.