

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consist of background of the study, formulation of the problems, the purpose of the study, significance of the study, limitation of the study, and the definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language learning involves the development of four fundamental skills, which must be balanced to achieve proficiency. These skills are categorized into receptive skills (reading and listening) and productive skills (speaking and writing) [1]. Among these, writing is often considered the most challenging skill, as it requires mastery of grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, and coherence [2]. Compared to listening, reading, and speaking, writing demands a higher level of cognitive effort because it involves organizing ideas logically and structuring sentences correctly. Despite these challenges, writing remains an essential skill for English learners, as it enables them to express thoughts, emotions, and experiences in written form [3].

Writing plays a crucial role in personal and intellectual development. It serves as a medium for self-expression, critical thinking, and communication. Through writing, students can articulate their perspectives, share information, and enhance their creativity [4]. Furthermore, writing helps students develop essential skills such as problem-solving, logical reasoning, and the ability to convey complex ideas effectively [5]. However, despite the benefits, many students face difficulties in writing, particularly in a foreign language like English. These difficulties often stem from a lack of vocabulary, grammatical errors, poor organization of ideas, and limited exposure to engaging writing activities [6].

Based on preliminary observations at SMAN 1 Kutorejo during the teaching practicum (PPL) program, students in class XI experience several challenges in writing narrative texts. First, they struggle with generating ideas and organizing their thoughts coherently. Second, they lack motivation and confidence in their

writing abilities. Third, they have difficulty in structuring their narratives according to the conventions of English grammar. These challenges indicate the need for innovative teaching strategies that can enhance students' writing skills while fostering their engagement and creativity [7].

One suggested approach to these challenges is the use of digital storytelling media. Digital storytelling combines various elements such as text, images, audio, and video to create engaging and meaningful narratives. One platform that supports this approach is Book Creator, a digital platform that enables students to design and publish their own interactive stories. The use of Book Creator in teaching writing offers several advantages: it provides a structured yet flexible framework for storytelling, encourages creativity, and enhances students' digital literacy skills [8]. Moreover, digital storytelling supports multimodal learning, making it easier for students to understand narrative structures and develop their writing skills in an engaging manner.

In addition to improving writing skills, incorporating local culture into narrative texts can cultivate students' empathy and appreciation for their cultural heritage. Local folktales, legends, and traditional stories serve as valuable resources for teaching narrative writing while instilling values of local wisdom. By integrating digital storytelling with local cultural themes, students can develop both their linguistic and cultural competencies. This method is consistent with the culturally responsive teaching, which highlights the importance of connecting learning materials to learners' cultural backgrounds [9].

Furthermore, research has shown that many high school students have low awareness and appreciation of local culture, which can lead to a diminishing sense of identity and cultural detachment. Maharani and Muhtar [10] highlight that incorporating local wisdom into education helps foster students' character development and strengthens their cultural values. Similarly, Astuti, Idris, and Sholeh [11] found that students at SMA Negeri 15 Palembang showed a lack of interest in local history and culture, underscoring the need for integrating cultural elements into learning to enhance their awareness and engagement. Embedding local culture into narrative writing fosters a connection to cultural heritage. Through

local stories, traditions, and values, students recognize the relevance of their culture in the learning process, making the experience meaningful and personally significant. This cultural integration strengthens linguistic competence, promotes empathy, and nurtures respect for local wisdom, contributing to the preservation of cultural identity for future generations.

The effectiveness of digital storytelling in enhancing students' narrative writing skills has been investigated by Indah Amelia and Zulfitri [12], and their research demonstrates its success in improving students' writing proficiency. Indah and Zulfitri aimed to examine the impact of using digital storytelling on eleventh-grade students' narrative writing skills at SMAN 1 Pantai Labu. The study compared an experimental class, which used digital storytelling, with a control class. The results indicated that the experimental class showed significant improvements in narrative writing, with an increase in the mean score from 65.67 to 74.33. This study, however, focused on general narrative writing skills and did not explore the integration of local cultural content or the use of specific digital tools. The current research addresses these gaps by utilizing Book Creator, a specific digital storytelling tool, to teach narrative writing while incorporating local cultural elements and exploring the role of digital storytelling in fostering empathy toward local cultural values.

Based on the discussion above, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of Book Creator as a digital storytelling tool for writing narrative texts about local culture. Specifically, it explores how digital storytelling enhances students' writing skills and fosters their empathy towards local wisdom. By integrating technology with culturally relevant narratives, this study seeks to provide an innovative approach to teaching writing that is both meaningful and engaging for students in class XI at SMAN 1 Kutorejo.

1.2 Formulation of the Problems

1. What is the effect of using Book Creator as a digital storytelling media on students' writing skills in narrative texts about local culture?
2. How is students' empathy towards local wisdom through learning reflections?

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

1. To find out the effect of using Book Creator as a digital storytelling media on students' writing skills in narrative texts about local culture.
2. To explore how digital storytelling with Book Creator influences students' empathy towards local wisdom through learning reflections.

1.4 The Significances of the Study

1. Theoretical

This research is expected to contribute to the development of digital storytelling theory in the learning process, particularly in improving students' ability to write narrative texts about local culture.

2. Practical

The use of Book Creator as a digital storytelling tool in this study can serve as a reference for English teachers in teaching writing skills, particularly narrative texts. Additionally, students can develop their ability to write narrative texts while fostering a deeper appreciation and empathy towards local cultural values.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

By activity, this study focuses on teaching writing using digital storytelling through Book Creator. By content, this research examines the generic structure of narrative texts, including orientation, complication, and resolution. The writing evaluation considers five key factors: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Thus, the researcher focuses on the use of digital storytelling as a tool to enhance students' writing skills. In addition, this study also focuses on enhancing student's cultural empathy based on Hoffman's theory of empathy and supported by local wisdom perspective, which emphasize the importance of understanding and valuing local cultural heritage.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

1. Digital Storytelling: a teaching approach that combines multimedia elements such as text, images, audio, and video to create engaging narratives.

2. Book Creator: a digital tool used to create interactive books that incorporate text, images, and multimedia elements, allowing students to enhance their writing skills.
3. Narrative Texts: a text type with a structure consisting of orientation, complication, and resolution, commonly found in stories such as folktales, legends, and myths, aiming to entertain and educate readers.
4. Local Wisdom Empathy: a sense of appreciation, understanding, and respect towards local cultural values and traditions, developed through storytelling and narrative writing.
5. Teaching Writing: a structured process of guiding students to produce well-organized, grammatically correct, and meaningful written texts.