CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the research, including the background, research problem, objectives, scope and limitations, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background

Learning a language involves mastering its use for communication through listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In Indonesia, English is considered a foreign language and is typically taught in schools and higher education institutions (Harmer, 2009).

English comprises four key language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. To actively use English, students need to master all four skills. However, writing is often considered the most challenging. Tribble (1996) mentions that mastering the skill of writing is challenging and only a few people become proficient in it.

Writing poses a particular challenge for students because it requires generating ideas, having a sufficient vocabulary, and possessing a good command of grammar. Andriyani (2017:2) highlights that writing demands mastery of grammar, vocabulary, and the ability to use mechanics such as spelling and punctuation.

Despite its difficulty, writing is essential for developing English proficiency. The challenges include having enough vocabulary, good grammar, understanding writing organization, and using mechanics like spelling, punctuation, and

capitalization. Additionally, students must students must think critically to organize words into sentences and sentences into paragraphs to create coherent texts.

Currently, Indonesian education employs two curricula: the 2013 curriculum and the Merdeka curriculum. At SMK Negeri Op TTS, the 2013 curriculum is still in use. Students are required to learn various text types, such as analytical exposition, report, explanation, recount, discussion, descriptive, narrative, news items, procedure text, and review text. In the second semester of grade 10, students are anticipated to be capable of write procedure texts, which are essential for understanding how to create and apply steps to produce a product. Many students struggle with writing procedure texts, particularly with the "steps" involved in making a product.

An interview with an English teacher at SMK Negeri OP revealed several difficulties faced by tenth-grade students in writing. They include a lack of ideas, confusion in organizing thoughts, and frequent errors due to insufficient vocabulary and grammar. Therefore, it is crucial to enhance writing skills to allow students to articulate their ideas effectively in written form. Teaching writing should guide students to articulate their ideas according to the appropriate rules for every communicative situation. The writing process involves composing words into sentences and sentences into paragraphs to create coherent texts.

An appropriate writing technique can significantly aid instructors involved in teaching writing. One such technique is the "clustering technique," which helps organize ideas and encourages active student participation in developing their ideas. Coffin (2005:37) describes clustering as a technique that provides a visual depiction

of concepts. There are two kinds of clusters: exploratory clusters, where students explore a subject and their knowledge about it, and planning clusters, where students organize and outline a text and generate supporting ideas. Planning clusters can help narrow and focus the scope of a paper topic by organizing subtopics.

Inspired by these ideas, the author is decided to do a study titled "The Use of Clustering Technique to Improve Writing Ability of First-Year Vocational School Students in the School Year 2023/2024."

1.2 Research Problems

The problems of this research are:

1. In what way is the clustering technique applied to enhance the proficiency in writing procedural texts among tenth-grade vocational school students during the 2023/2024 academic year?

2. What is the level of proficiency in writing procedural texts among tenth-grade vocational school students in the 2023/2024 academic year after being instructed using the clustering technique?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study are:

1. To determine how the clustering technique is implemented to increase the ability to write procedure texts among tenth-grade vocational school students in the 2023/2024 school year.

2. To assess the level of skills in composing procedure texts among tenth-grade vocational school students in the 2023/2024 school year after receiving instruction with the clustering technique.

1.4 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This research centers on utilizing clustering techniques to enhance writing skills of tenth-grade students (X ATPH) at SMK Negeri Op during the 2023/2024 school year. The study specifically examines the application of the clustering technique to enhance students' ability to write procedure texts and evaluates their writing ability after being taught using this technique.

1.5 Significances of the Study

The anticipated outcomes of this research are expected to provide advantages to both individuals and institutions in the following ways:

1. Theoretical Benefit

    a. The research can offer significant contributions to the English teaching and learning process.

    b. The findings are anticipated to inspire students in their English studies.

2. Practical Benefit

    a. Students

        1) The study aims to improve students' ability and learning achievement through innovative learning techniques.

        2) It helps students find motivation for learning English.

    b. English Teachers

        1) The study offers teachers insights into creative teaching methods, particularly using the clustering technique, to create engaging learning experiences.

        2) It aims to enhance teachers' teaching skills.

c. Researchers

1) The research serves as a foundation for scientific, creative, and innovative thinking and helps bridge theoretical knowledge with real-world classroom situations.

2) The research provides valuable experiences, especially in language education, which are useful for the researcher's future career as an English teacher.