

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Research Background

The paradigm of education has shifted significantly from teacher-centered instruction toward learner-centered approaches that emphasize creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving (Putri et al., 2020). This transformation aligns with global educational trends that encourage students to become active participants in constructing their own knowledge. This shift towards students-centered learning education fosters an environment where students are not passive recipients of information but instead engage in inquiry, critical thinking, and peer collaboration. As a result, classroom dynamics become more interactive and personalized, catering to diverse learning styles and interest. Teachers now serve more as facilitators or guides, shaping experiences that promote autonomy and intrinsic motivation.

To make this transformation succeed, teachers should provide the strategies on preparing the students to engage in inquiry, critical thinking, and peer collaboration. Zulyuzuri et al. (2023) stated that students need to be able to think creatively in order to grow as individuals, find new concepts, and advance their knowledge and abilities. Thinking skills are the processes or deciphering of students' ideas that result in new concepts or data that can address questions (Mursidik et al., 2015 in Zulyuzuri et al., 2023). Building on this area, effective teachers can incorporate activities that foster curiosity and create a classroom environment that values diverse perspectives and promotes peer collaboration and collective problem solving. By integrating these strategies, teachers not only facilitate deeper

understanding but also empower the students to be capable of applying their critical thinking skills to the real-world challenges.

Encouraging inquiry and critical thinking, student-centered learning is essential for building 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills. Through investigation, teamwork, and reflection, it will encourage the students to take charge of their education. Students are prepared to succeed in the real-world challenges by emphasizing on problem solving, creativity, communication, and digital literacy. Furthermore, Nurdihayat et al. (2024) emphasize that teachers must be able to create meaningful and genuine learning activities that include technology, employ formative assessment techniques that give students immediate feedback, and encourage reflective practice that develops self-awareness and self-regulation. Overall, these approaches contribute to creating an inclusive motivating, and effective learning atmosphere that prepares the students to meet the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Teaching English to young learners requires a developmentally appropriate and engaging approach that fosters both language acquisition and engaging positive attitude towards learning. Effective methods often incorporate age-appropriate activities such as games, song, storytelling and visual aids to enhance vocabulary, pronunciation and comprehension skills. In addition, English is currently the most extensively used language for worldwide communication (Rao, 2019, as cited in Purnawan et al., 2022). English is also the dominant language in scientific research, technology, and academia, enabling the dissemination of knowledge and ideas worldwide. In term of education, there are four educational skills that the students should master in order to learn English. English is taught at all educational levels in Indonesia and is regarded as a foreign language. However, there are numerous

issues with the teaching and learning process as it is considered as a foreign language.

Lila et al. (2023) stated that one of the difficulties faced by English teacher in Indonesia is the students who are less proficiency in English typically have unfavorable attitudes toward studying the language. They also added that inadequate training and professional development have also led to the emergence of another issues: teachers' lack of proficiency in teaching methods, strategies, and techniques. Therefore, teachers must adopt creative teaching techniques and meet the demands of their students (Pujiati & Tamela, 2019, as cited in Paragae, 2023).

Regarding to the problems in teaching English, also the education shifted from teacher-centered learning to student-centered learning which the students construct their own new knowledge by themselves. This has to do with a strategy that is thought to be in line with the constructivist approach. According to Vygotsky (1978), learners acquire new knowledge most effectively when they collaborate with peers or guided support from more knowledgeable others with their zone of proximal development, which bridges their current understanding and potential development. Therefore, implementing student-centered strategies that promote collaboration, active engagement, and scaffolding can enhance language acquisition by allowing students to actively participate in meaningful learning experiences.

Project Based learning is one of the applicable teachings and learning model which is based on constructivist learning theory. Project based learning is centered on activities that aim to create learning outcomes through project work. According to Harun (2006), it is seen as a strategy and a way to acquire 21<sup>st</sup>- century skills.

The model encourages authentic learning through projects that integrate multiple disciplines, enhance critical thinking, and promote meaningful engagement. In primary education, where curiosity and exploration are dominant traits, the adoption of PjBL is considered an innovative way to cultivate foundational competencies such as communication, teamwork, and independent learning.

Pertaining to the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL), students are expected to be more independent in the learning process, in which it occurs when the students are not presented with a lesson in the final form but instead require students to actively participate and engage in constructing their own understanding. Project-Based Learning is a constructivist teaching approach that is increasingly popular in education, as it allows students to actively participate in problem solving through hands-on engagement (Krajcik, Blumenfeld, Marx, & Soloway, 1994; Dopplet, 2003; Frank & Barzilai, 2004 as cited in Kizkapan & Bektas, 2017). Project Based Learning can enhance students' motivation to learn, as well as develop their problem-solving abilities, teamwork and communication skills (Zhang & Ma (2023).

Many researchers showed that PjBL is an effective strategy to increase the students' participation and achievement in learning English. Widiyati & Pangesti (2022) investigated the use of Project based learning in reading and teaching speaking skills. The researchers found that the implementation of Project Based Learning in teaching reading and speaking skills could improve students' enthusiasm, creativity, and motivation. Furthermore, Project Based Learning promoted active involvement of the students and cooperation among others.

Another study is conducted by Rahman et al. (2025). This study was designed to investigate the efficacy of Project-Based Learning in enhancing writing skills. The study employed mixed method approach which incorporated quantitative regression analysis and qualitative interviews to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of Project-Based Learning on writing performance. The findings showed that the implementation Project-Based Learning promotes skills development and foster a sense of purpose and motivation among students, which is essential for the achievement of higher levels of writing proficiency.

The researcher carried out a preliminary observation at Bali Kiddy Primary School, located at Teuku Umar Barat Street No. 235, Kerobokan, Bali. This school follow the Merdeka curriculum but offers an education that exceed the minimum standards set by the national accreditation authorities, incorporating additional subjects known as international basic subjects. Based on the preliminary observation, the researcher discovered that Bali Kiddy Primary School employs project-based learning as a teaching method, particularly in English for young learners. This approach has led the local school community to view project-based learning as an effective strategy for the teaching and learning process.

The preliminary study, however, revealed more than the presence of the approach. It revealed that the way in which PjBL is planned, carried out, and above all assessed at the school had never been documented. The teachers described the projects readily, but the criteria by which the projects were judged existed largely in the teachers' own practice rather than in any recorded form, and the students had never been asked what the projects gave them or what the projects cost them. The site therefore presents a developed but undocumented practice, and it is this



combination that makes it worth investigating. Three further features of the site reinforce the choice. English is taught there as one of the international basic subjects rather than as a peripheral subject, so that project work conducted in English is feasible; PjBL is a school-wide instructional identity rather than an occasional activity, so that the practice observed is sustained rather than exceptional; and the fifth grade is divided into four parallel classes, each with its own English teacher, so that four teachers working under identical curricular and institutional conditions may be compared with one another.

In conclusion, in accordance with the facts above, it is really important to conduct research to investigate the implementation of Project Based Learning in teaching English. Within the framework of Merdeka Curriculum, the use of PjBL is highly recommended because it aligns with the curriculum's emphasis on active, student-centred, and meaningful learning experiences (Noer, 2025). Implementing PjBL effectively can enhance student motivation, deepen understanding, and develop lifelong learning skills, making it a vital approach supported by Merdeka curriculum to improve educational outcomes. Bali Kiddy Primary School has been implemented PjBL in English classes and is viewed positively by teachers, students, and the community. However, so far, there is limited research on how teachers plan, implement, and assess PjBL in their instruction, from both the teachers' and students' perspectives for its strengths and weaknesses. Understanding these practices is crucial to optimize the effectiveness of PjBL and ensure its successful integration within the curriculum. Therefore, the researcher is highly interested and motivated to conduct research entitled “The Implementation of Project Based

Learning in English Classes in Bali Kiddy Primary School Regarding Strengths and Weaknesses from the Perspectives of Teachers and Students”.

## **1.2 Problem Identification**

The problems identified in this study are derived directly from the research background. Each of the problems below is stated together with the passage of the background from which it follows, so that the line running from the background, through the problem identification, to the research questions.

In primary school English classrooms, especially at Bali Kiddy Primary School, there is limited documentation on how Project-Based Learning (PjBL) is planned, implemented, and assessed. Furthermore, teachers’ perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of PjBL is need to explored to see the experiences or insights on its plan, implementation and assess. Similarly, students’ perceptions is needed to conduct to see if the implementation of PjBL is in line with the Merdeka curriculum framework.

## **1.3 Research Limitation**

In this study, certain limitations are necessary to narrow the scope of the discussion. Especially, the researcher focuses on examining the implementation of Project-Based Learning strategy used by teachers in teaching English in Bali Kiddy Primary School. To ensure a clear and focused explanation, this research was restricted to investigating how teachers plan, implement, and assess the Project-Based Learning strategy. Additionally, it aims to understand teachers’ perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of PjBL implementation, as well as students’ perspective on its strength and weaknesses.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

This study focuses on examining the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in English language teaching at Bali Kiddy Primary School, emphasizing how the approach is perceived and experienced by both teachers and students. The research aims to explore:

1. How do teachers plan Project-Based Learning in English classes?
2. How do teachers implement Project-Based Learning in English classes?
3. How do teachers assess Project-Based Learning in English classes?
4. How do teachers perceive the strengths and weaknesses faced during the application of PjBL in English classes?
5. How do students perceive the strengths and weaknesses faced during the application of PjBL in English classes?

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

As mentioned in the background of the study, the primary goal of this research is to examine how Project-Based Learning is implemented in fifth grade of primary school. Specifically, this study will focus on:

1. Investigating and describing the plan of the activity using Project-Based Learning in teaching English for grade 5 at Bali Kiddy Primary School
2. Investigating and describing the implementation of Project-Based Learning
3. Investigating and describing how do teachers asses the activity using Project-Based Learning



4. Investigating and describing the perception of teachers on the strengths and weaknesses of Project Based Learning implementation in teaching and learning process
5. Investigating and describing the perception perceive the strengths and weaknesses of the project given

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions to the development of knowledge and educational practice, particularly in the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in primary English classes.

#### **1.6.1 Theoretical Significance**

The study enriches theoretical understanding of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) as an instructional model that integrates active, collaborative, and contextual learning within the framework of English language education at the primary level.

#### **1.6.2 Practical Significance**

1. For teachers

This study provides concrete insights into the strengths and weaknesses of implementing PjBL, helping them refine lesson planning, classroom management, and assessment strategies to improve student learning experiences.

2. For students

The findings can indirectly enhance the quality of English learning by promoting teaching practices that foster creativity, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking through engaging project-based activities.

3. For future researcher

The study opens opportunities for further investigation into PjBL's long-term impact on students' linguistic competence, motivation, and intercultural understanding, encouraging deeper exploration of innovative teaching models in Indonesia's educational context.

