CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes several things that encouraged the study. It consists of the study's background, formulation of the problems, operational definitions, aims, and significance.

1.1 Background of the Study

The development of this era, which continues to grow, has made many changes in the world of education. In recent years, many educators have switched their curricula from using traditional teaching approaches to project-based learning (Virtue & Hinnant-Crawford, 2019). One is in higher education, which has used project-based learning as a student-centered teaching methodology. This is consistent with the viewpoint of Pan et al. (2021), who said that universities have shifted from conventional teaching methods to student-centered teaching in pedagogy, which focuses on applying and reflecting knowledge. This educational transformation aims to provide students with experience and opportunities to increase their knowledge and skills through complex project-based assignments.

Project-based learning in higher education gives students practical skills like knowledge and professional abilities (Vogler et al., 2017). Besides that, there are also soft skills that can be honed when using project-based learning, such as teamwork with group members, time management and project management, which regulates how this project can be completed on time and according to provisions, communication skills that can indirectly improve communication skills both with the teachers or with group members, and interpersonal skills that will improve during project work (Sang & Van, 2016). Furthermore, according to Sora et al. (2021), project-based learning is an actual procedure. It explains how educators and learners will collaborate in the future and behave in comparable settings. As a result, project-based learning helps students overcome obstacles in the real world and equips them with skills relevant to their future employment.

Students can identify, organize, and implement projects in project-based learning by working in groups or independently. However, collaborative or group learning will be far more beneficial in raising student accomplishment and learning than individual learning (Handrianto & Rahman, 2018; Zhang et al., 2015). Furthermore, the problem of learning outcomes in projects carried out collaboratively or in teamwork has a higher risk than in individual projects (Handrianto & Rahman, 2018). Some factors that cause the collaboration process to fail are low collaboration skills, differences in opinions or ideas, time constraints or different schedules, and lack of communication.

In higher education, project-based learning is nothing new. Several academic institutions, such as Twente University in the Netherlands and Aalborg University in Denmark, have made project-based learning a teaching methodology (Shpeizer, 2019). In addition, project-based learning is widely used in higher education in Indonesia. One is the English Education Department at Siliwangi University, which uses project-based learning in Grammar in Multimodal Discourse class. In the Grammar in Multimodal Discourse class, students create a project by creating a mini-research by analyzing multimodal collaboratively. Through the integration of project-based mini-research in the Grammar in Multimodal Discourse class, there are various perspectives from each student's points of view. This has become a central issue that is urgent to understand regarding the extent to which this approach can be initiated effectively. These students' perspectives can provide important empirical data to begin the success of this innovative teaching method. Moreover, the students' perspectives can also be identified to find the challenges and opportunities from this approach.

Other researchers have conducted much research regarding project-based learning in higher education. One is research on project-based learning in higher education conducted by Guo et al. (2020), which focuses on student outcomes and measures. Their study found four categories of project-based learning outcomes: affective, cognitive, behavioral, and artifact performance outcomes. Additionally, the research on project-based learning in the

Indonesian context, especially in higher education, has also been widely carried out, such as the research conducted by Amin and Shahnaz (2022), who explained the advantages and difficulties of project-based learning. The results listed seventeen advantages and six difficulties of using project-based learning. Not only that, Rachmawati et al. (2024) also explained the use of project-based learning in higher education, which can stimulate students' skill development. Based on previous studies, it can be said that project-based learning enhances the learning process. Previous studies were different from current studies regarding participants and procedures. This research focused on the challenges and opportunities faced using project-based learning in the Grammar in Multimodal Discourse class. Specifically, this research is conducted to explore how students express their voices and opinions about the extent to which project-based mini-research can be integrated. Therefore, this research aims to find the challenges and opportunities of using project-based learning in creating a mini-research in the Grammar in Multimodal Discourse class.

1.2 Formulation of the Problems

The research questions in this study are: "What are the challenges and opportunities of project-based mini-research in the Grammar in Multimodal Discourse class?"

1.3 Operational Definitions

1.3.1 Project-Based Learning

Project-based learning refers to the learning approach in the Grammar in Multimodal Discourse class. This learning approach assigns students to work on projects through real-life situations.

1.3.2 Mini-Research

Mini research or small scale in this research context is similar to the concept of project-based learning, where students can explore a particular topic in the context of a small research or directed project

1.3.3 Grammar in Multimodal Discourse Class

Grammar in Multimodal Discourse is a course studied in the 6th semester of the English Education Department, Faculty of Educational Science

and Teachers' Training, Siliwangi University. This course was designed for 16th meetings and is a continuation of the previous courses, namely Foundation of Functional Grammar (FFG) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in teaching English. According to Abdullah (2019b), this course aims to explore how representational, interactive, and compositional meanings are interpreted multimodally within a repertoire of semiotic modalities and resources.

1.4 Aims of the Study

This study aims to find the challenges and opportunities of project-based mini-research in the Grammar in Multimodal Discourse class.

1.5 Significances of the Study

In this research, I expected to generate beneficial results in three ways, which are:

1.5.1 Theoretical Contribution

This research can provide a theoretical contribution by exploring students' perspectives regarding the challenges and opportunities of project-based mini-research. So, this research can provide additional information and be used as a reference for project-based learning.

1.5.2 Practical Contribution

Through this research, we can make a practical contribution by providing insights that can be used by educators and practitioners in developing more effective project-based learning strategies by considering collaborative aspects. The research results can provide insight or recommendations for parties applying the same method in an educational context.

1.5.3 Empirical Contribution

This study provides objective evidence of empirical insights for researchers into the challenges and opportunities during the course creation of a project, especially in a Grammar in Multimodal Discourse class.