CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Research

In learning English there are four skills that should be mastered by students, one of them is writing. Nunan (2000:88) said that writing is the mental work of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express them, and organizing them into statements and paragraphs that will be clear to the reader. Besides developing students imagination and idea, in writing the students also consider the choosing of theme, content, and vocabularies so that the reader of the text can comprehend the content and the purpose of the texts.

Writing is important for the students. The students should know how to write in a good structure and content, because most of the exams to measure their knowledge focus on writing ability. Harmer (2004:3) states that most of exams, whether they are testing foreign language abilities or other skills often rely on the students’ writing proficiency in order to measure their knowledge. Another study said that writing is a basic language skill, as important as speaking, listening, and reading (Harmer 2006:79)

In addition, writing skill is important because it determines students’ success in learning English. On the other hand, writing skill is one of the indicators which can be used to measure students’ English ability. This idea is
further supported by Kingston et al. (2002:3) who stated that the achievement of students while learning English is measured by the productive skills, particularly their writing performance.

There are many kinds of teaching methods in teaching writing. One of them is project-based learning method. This method uses a problem as the first step in collecting and integrating new knowledge based on their experiences in real activity. The students should investigate the problem. The students can collaborate with other students sharing their ideas before they are doing writing individually. This method also can guide students to write their job or thinking systematically.

Project-based learning is concerned with the learning activity based on real world problems and challenges that require students to work as a team through meaningful activities and result in a final product, Simson (2011). Stoller (2002) adds that project work is a part of cooperative learning. It allows students to work on their own, in a small group, or as a whole-class. Throughout the process, the students share their ideas, resources, and expertise.

Based on preliminary study in vocational high school in Purwokerto, the technique that used for teaching writing is lecturing. The teacher does not use the method that can influence the students’ writing skill. The teacher does
not know the students’ ability in writing. This research wants to proof the effectiveness of project based learning method in teaching writing. Therefore, this research chooses the title “The effectiveness of project based learning method in teaching writing personal letter” (An experimental Study on Eleventh grade students at SMK Bakti Purwokerto, in academic year 2015/2016)

B. Reason for Choosing the Topic

1. Writing as a basic skill of learning English needs appropriate technique to teach, especially in vocational high school.

2. By using “project-based learning”, it will be easier to guide the students to practice writing. Thus, they will get good paragraph writing.

C. The problem of the Study

The problem of the study “is Project Based Learning Method effective for Teaching Writing on XI grade Students of vocational High School?”

D. The Aim of the Study

1. To know the ability of the students in writing skill at eleven grade students of SMK Bakti Purwokerto
2. To find the effectiveness of project based learning method in teaching writing of students at SMK Bakti Purwokerto

E. The Contribution of the Study

The writer hopes that this study can give contribution for:

1. Teacher

The teacher can get the information about the teaching method especially in teaching writing. Then, this research will be valuable to give reference to the teacher in teaching learning process.

2. Researcher

The result of this study will be input for the researcher to develop the teaching learning in English subject. Also the researcher will get scientific data of the students’ English writing mastery, and it will be able to formulate new plans based on the findings.