

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter presents background of study, research of question, the purpose of the study, significance of the research, scope and limitation, and definition of the key terms.

A. Background of the Research

One of the suggested learning models in accordance with the recent curriculum is Project-Based Learning. Regulatory support for the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* is carried out based on the policy of Minister of Education and Culture No. 5 of 2022 (Graduate Competency Standards in Early Childhood Education, Basic Education Levels and Secondary Education), Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 7 of 2022 (Content Standards for Early Childhood Education, Basic Education Levels and Secondary Education) Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 16 of 2022 (Process Standards for Early Childhood Education, Basic Education Levels and Secondary Education), Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 21 of 2022 (Assessment Standards for Early Childhood Education, Basic Education Levels and Secondary Education), Minister of Education and Culture Decree No. 56 of 2022 (Guidelines for Curriculum Implementation in the Context of Learning Recovery).

One of the concepts for implementing the *Kurikulum Merdeka* is implementing a Project-Based Learning process (PjBL). Guo et al., (2020) explained that PjBL is meaningful learning because its orientation is to complete contextually based projects. PjBL has three flow stages that must be considered, namely initiation, development and conclusion (Sulistiyati et al., 2021).

The principle of implementing *Kurikulum Merdeka* is carried out based on the needs of the students. This process aims to create inclusive and enjoyable learning (Yarsama, 2022). Learning in the *Kurikulum Merdeka* is designed to be more flexible and oriented to context, cultural context, school mission and children's needs (Festiyed et al., 2022). Apart from that, another principle that needs to be considered is the environmental context as a supporting aspect of learning that is friendly and relevant to the achievement of children's competencies. In line with the statement by Nafisa et al., (2021) that good education will increase the knowledge and competence of Indonesian society, which is increasingly competitive. And the way that learning is implemented in Vocational High School differs from the way that learning is implemented in Senior High Schools. Teachers in Vocational High School must be able to create teaching methods that result in elements of work skills. The teachers' reluctance and lack of imagination in coming up with strategies to make studying more engaging and enjoyable is one of the most serious issues with teaching and learning English at Vocational High School.

The characteristics of the implementation of the learning process in Vocational High School (*SMK*) are few. In contrast to the implementation of high school learning, Vocational High School prioritize job skills, so teachers must be able to develop a learning model that is more effective and can produce aspects of work skills. Therefore, the learning strategy chosen by teachers must be able to build creativity, independence, comfort, pleasure, and provide them with the opportunity for students to find out actively. One of the learning strategies centered on students who are able to increase students' curiosity and present challenges in learning

is the Project-Based model. Through this model, students be able to work directly in a learning project in accordance with basic materials or competencies to be taught.

The focus of this research identifies the stages of implementing Project-Based Learning which include the initial (planning), development (implementation) and conclusion (evaluation) stages. The benefits of this research can be used as evaluation and input to schools, especially SMKN 1 Boyolangu in implementing PjBL according to the *Kurikulum Merdeka* concept.

Some previous studies related to the use of Project-Based Learning were conducted by researchers, such as Belmeki Asma, et al (2021), observed the effects of teaching secondary education students using PjBL and the results revealed that English projects are not properly dealt with. While pupils need more support and motivation, teachers prove to be lacking the necessary skills, training, and guidance. Hongcheng Jiang, et al (2021), also revealed that the construction of the Project-Based Learning is helpful to the connotation development of Higher Vocational Project-Based curriculum reform, and plays a positive role in promoting the research of teaching quality evaluation of Higher Vocational Project-Based curriculum.

For the further research, Ratih Apri Sari, et al (2021) also conducted research which shows that all the teachers who have been interviewed have a positive perspective towards Project-Based Learning. They prefer to use PjBL to improve students' English skills, build student motivation, build student confidence and sense of responsibility, and make students more active and creative. Meanwhile, a research that conducted by Katja Heim (2022) found out that with the PjBL the EFL students became familiar with a relevant topic of EFL

lessons, the structure of projects and tasks, the digital environment as well as the genres being produced during the process of learning. This research also suggest that teacher should not to work on this way solely in English lessons, rather to also include this type of format in teacher education in order to narrow a Theory-Practice gap in ELT. Fauziah and Nurita (2021) examines teachers' perceptions of Project-Based Learning.

The results of their research show that PjBL is perceived by teachers as having several advantages in the process learn how to teach. In the context of English as a foreign language, Ramadhani, and Fitri (2020) in this study found that Project-Based Learning can be effective replace conventional classroom learning. Student improvement in accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and understanding.

Previous studies have examined a lot about teachers' perceptions of Project-Based Learning, but so far researcher have not found about how teachers practice in implementing it, especially in learning English at Vocational High School (*SMK*). This study will be important for three reasons. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the literature for further improvement and further studies relating to the main problems in the application of learning models. Practically speaking, this research is expected to provide information about how to implement Project-Based Learning in teaching English. Professionally, this research is expected to encourage English teachers to apply Project-Based Learning in the teaching and learning process of English in Vocational High School.

B. Research Problems

Based on the background of the research above, the researcher determined the problem of the study that becomes the concern of the research. The problem of the research are:

1. What types of projects carried out by the English teacher in implementing PjBL for students at SMKN 1 Boyolagu?
2. What are the teachers' difficulties in implementing PjBL for English learning at SMKN 1 Boyolagu?
3. How is the process of implementing PjBL carried out by teachers at SMKN 1 Boyolagu?
4. What are the lessons learned by the teacher after implementing PjBL at SMKN 1 Boyolagu?

C. Objectives of the Research

The objective of this research are:

1. To find out the types of projects carried out by the English teacher in implementing PjBL for students at SMKN 1 Boyolagu.
2. To find out the teachers' difficulties in implementing PjBL for English learning at SMKN 1 Boyolagu
3. To find out the process of implementing PjBL carried out by teachers at SMKN 1 Boyolagu
4. To find out the lesson learned by the teacher after implementing PjBL at SMKN 1 Boyolagu.

D. Significance of the Research

Information on the results of this research can provide benefits to teachers, students, and further researchers.

- a. For teachers

This research can determine what type of Project-Based Learning is being carried out, the processes that need to be carried out, and what lessons can be taken as evaluation

material by teachers in implementing Project-Based Learning in school

b. For students

It is hoped that this research can provide input for students improve their learning outcomes by paying attention to factors within and outside students that can influence their learning outcomes at school

c. For further researcher

If other researchers want to research the same field, they can benefit from this research as reference material.

E. Scope and limitation of the Research

The concept that will be examined in this research is teacher's practices in Project-Based Learning and focused in the implementation of English learning. The focus of this research identifies the stages of implementing project-based learning which include the initial (planning), development (implementation) and conclusion (evaluation) stages.

F. Definitions of Key terms

1. Project-Based Learning (PjBL)

Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in learning English by vocational high school students involves an instructional approach where students engage in hands-on projects related to their vocational field while also integrating English language learning. In this context, PjBL is tailored to the specific needs and interests of vocational high school students, preparing them for future careers that may require proficiency in English. Projects are designed to reflect the demands of the workforce, requiring students to communicate, collaborate, and problem-solve in English while

addressing authentic challenges and tasks relevant to their chosen career paths. Teachers serve as facilitators, guiding students through the project process, providing language support, and fostering a collaborative learning environment where students actively participate in their own language and vocational skill development.

2. Teachers' Practices

The implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) by teachers in vocational high schools involves several key steps and strategies to effectively integrate project-based approaches into their teaching practices. In implementing, teachers carefully select projects that are relevant to students' vocational interests and future career goals. Projects should integrate English language learning with vocational content and provide opportunities for students to apply language skills in authentic contexts. Teachers establish clear learning objectives for each project, outlining the specific language skills and vocational competencies students will develop. And throughout the project, teachers serve as guides and mentors, offering guidance, encouragement, and support to students as they work through challenges and obstacles.

3. Vocational High School

The term vocational high school, often abbreviated as VoTech or VHS, is an educational institution that focuses primarily on providing students with practical skills and training related to specific trades, professions, or vocations. Unlike traditional high schools, which offer a general education curriculum, vocational high schools offer specialized courses and programs designed to

prepare students for careers in fields such as automotive technology, cosmetology, construction, culinary arts, healthcare, information technology, manufacturing, and various other skilled trades. The goal is to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and certifications needed to enter the workforce directly upon graduation or to pursue further education in their chosen field, such as through apprenticeships, technical colleges, or specialized training programs.

