

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

As described in the regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia no. 47 of 2023 article 15, a vocational high school is a school designed to prepare students or graduates to have expected work competencies. According to Scott (2015), the key competencies for life and work in the 21st century are problem-solving, reflection, creativity, critical thinking, metacognition, risk-taking, communication, collaboration, innovation and entrepreneurship. On this basis, the development of teaching and learning in vocational high schools must be adapted to the conditions and needs of the workplace.

There are several teaching methods suggested in the current curriculum Learning and Assessment Handbook. One of the methods that can meet the needs of vocational high schools is the project-based learning method. Here and forth the project-based learning method will also be called PBJL (*Panduan Pembelajaran Dan Asesmen Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Pendidikan Dasar, Dan Menengah*, 2022). According to Chiang & Lee (2016), PjBL is one of the effective method for vocational education, which emphasizes the integration of various disciplines and practical skills based on industry needs. PjBL has the benefit of assisting students in collaborating with peers to find solutions to challenges in real-world scenarios. Project-based learning method is an instructional approach that encourages students and teachers to explore in depth the concepts, insights, and disciplines of a field of

study. The project serves as a means, while the main objective is to acquire knowledge and cultivate a deep understanding of the subject matter (Larmer et al., 2015).

Several previous studies showed that the PjBL method has a positive effect on the language teaching and learning process. Research conducted by Levine (2004) reveals that the most recognized benefit of implementing projects in foreign language classes is the improvement of language skills. In implementing projects, students are encouraged to carry out communication in order to at completing authentic activities. Therefore, they have the opportunity to use the target language in a relatively natural context. Likewise, research by Sari et al. (2021) shows that the teachers believe that project-based learning (PjBL) improves reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. This approach strengthens student engagement, encourages creativity, builds self-confidence, and fosters a sense of responsibility. Similarly, Kavlu (2017) stated that by applying PjBL method, students not only improve their language skills, but also their social communicative skills. Besides, PjBL also shifts students from standard class monologues and dominant memorization systems towards modern real-life contexts and analytical, critical, and synthesis thinking. Through PjBL, students are directed to work on a project within a certain period of time. The project engages them to communicate, solve real-world problems, or answer complex questions. Futher, the research by Amalina et al. (2023) convey that students will be more motivated and enthusiastic in the learning process because they do new things that they can feel, see, and make (learn in real-life conditions). Students also become self-regulated learners through individual or small group projects.

The success of learning cannot be separated from the role of a teacher. Teachers are one of very important educational beings who is at the frontline of education. They are widely involved in various teaching and learning activities and also the main executors of the concept and educational theory (Sartika et al., 2022). According to Alsubaie (2016) a teacher is an important figure in any educational development effort because they have the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies and they are responsible for implementing learning concepts in class. Therefore, it is important to know how they perceive the concept or theory of PjBL method because it will certainly reflect or influence their practice in class. As stated by Bonner (2016), perception and behavior greatly influence each other, practice without regard to perception can cause problems. If teachers' perceptions are fundamentally lacking or wrong, they may experience a lack of power to explain.

However, there is only a small amount of research that discusses teachers' perceptions of PjBL methods in the terms of objectives, principles, or teachers' roles. Therefore, based on the explanation above, the researcher intends to conduct research under the title 'Vocational High School Teachers' Perception of Project-based Learning Method in English Language Teaching: The Case of SMKN 26 Jakarta'. The teachers' perceptions of PjBL method are important to know because they are the ones directing the learning process. Their understanding of the PjBL method reflects their teaching practice in the classroom and affects the level of achievement of learning objectives.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the research background, this research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How do the SMKN 26 Jakarta English teachers perceive the objectives of project-based learning method?
2. How do the SMKN 26 Jakarta English teachers perceive the principles of project-based learning method?
3. How do the SMKN 26 Jakarta English teachers perceive the roles of a teacher in project-based learning method?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Based on the background of the study above, the purpose of this study is to investigate the SMKN 26 Jakarta English teachers' perceptions regarding the Project-based learning method.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is limited to finding out and describing the SMKN 26 Jakarta English teacher's perception of the project-based learning method by interviewing to gather in-depth insights about the issue. The term perception in this study refers to the teachers' understanding of the PjBL method.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings are expected to contribute to the following parties:

1. For an English teacher

The result of the research can be used by English teachers as input in the English teaching and learning process in Vocational High Schools to apply PjBL method. Teachers may also evaluate the teaching and learning process of PjBL method by gaining knowledge of their perceptions about the method.

2. For School

The result of the research provides information for the school to evaluate the teachers' need for teacher professional development training regarding PjBL method.

3. For the researcher

The findings of this study are intended to provide valuable input for future researchers on the same issue.

