CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this section, background of the study, purposes of the study, research questions, significance of the study, organization of the paper, and clarification of main terms are presented to give brief description about the present study. Finally, the major points are summarized in summary subsection.

1.1 Background

A good English communication skill is demanded (Richard, 2006; Oommen, 2012) since English language is widely accepted as the means of international communication. Therefore, current approaches to language teaching integrate language skills (Brown, 2001; Hinkel, 2010) because the students need to use language skills in integration to be able to communicate (Tajzad & Ostovar-Namaghi, 2014).

The integration of language skills is also important because in a real life communication, language skills are integrated. For example, in an interaction, people send and receive messages (Brown, 2001; Harmer, 2007; & Hinkel, 2010) that thus requiring speaking and listening skills or/and writing and reading skills in the interaction. Furthermore, research in language teaching and learning showed that the integrated instructions were more effective than the separated instructions (Hinkel, 2010). However, most professionals of second and foreign language teaching teach language by not integrating four language skills such as teaching only speaking skill without involving other language skills (Hinkel, 2010).

Moreover, teaching strategy has now shifted from teacher-centeredness to learner-centeredness. Learner-centered teaching is more preferable to teacher-centered one (Harmer, 2007) because learner-centered teaching gives students a

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sense of belonging (Brown, 2001) and responsibility to their learning that thus intrinsically motivates the students (Brown, 2001). It also integrates language skills since the language skills integration is one of the principles of learner-centered teaching (Kumaravadivelu, 1994, as cited in Poudel, 2014). Therefore, nowadays English language teaching should be learner-centered.

In addition to good communication skill, teaching and learning in this century is expected to train students to develop the other 21st century skills of critical thinking/problem solving, collaboration, and creativity. Thus, teaching method should provide activities for the students to develop the skills.

Considering that English language teaching should integrate language skills, be learner-centered, and train the 21st century skills, project-based learning, henceforth PBL, can be used. That is because PBL is instructional strategy based on project that leads to the authentic integration of skills (Desiatova, 2007; Harmer, 2007; Stoller, 2002; Turnbull, 1999, in Bilash, 2009). Also, it is student-centered (Bell, 2010) and can be a strategy to develop the 21st century competencies of critical thinking/problem solving, collaboration, creativity and communication (Bell, 2010; Buck Institute of Education, n. d.; Malaysia Ministry of Education, n. d.; Ravitz, J., Hixon, N., English, M., & Mergendoller, J., 2012).

In fact, in Indonesian education context, PBL is one of methods suggested by Curriculum 2013 to be implemented in all subjects including English subject and all level of education from primary to secondary (Regulation of Ministry of Education and Cultures No. 65, 2013). Therefore, according to the regulation, the teachers in Indonesia generally should use PBL as one of teaching methods.

Moreover, PBL offer many advantages. In general education, PBL motivates students to learn (Bas & Beyhan, 2010; Beckett, 2002; Castaneda, 2014; Chang, 2014; Fragoulis & Tsiplakides, 2009; Guo & Yang, 2012; Hilvonen, 2010; Mapes, 2009; Mayers, Nastu, 2009; Omar, Taib, & Basri, 2012; Purnawan, 2008; Railsback, 2002; Scholastech, n. d.; Tamim & Grant, 2013), makes them engaged (Center of Excellence and Leadership of Learning, 2009; Chang, 2014;

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Fragoulis & Tsiplakides, 2009; Klein et al., 2009; Tamim & Grant, 2013), develops problem solving and critical thinking skills (Bas, 2011; Beckett, 2002; Center of Excellence and Leadership of Learning, 2009; Chang, 2014; Hatch, 1921; Mapes, 2009; Nastu, 2009; Project Handbook, n. d.; Purnawan, 2008; Railsback, 2002; Simpson, 2011; Tamim & Grant, 2013; Wolff, 2002), provides real-life situation (Boss, 2011; Desiatova, 2007; Fried-Booth, 1997, as cited in Moss & Duzer, 1998; Railsback, 2002), etc.

In the context of EFL language teaching especially, PBL can improve four language skills (Beckett, 1999, as cited in Beckett, 2002; Fragoulis & Tsiplakides, 2009; Poonpon, 2011; Sanders, 2000; Simpson, 2011; Wang, Teng, & Lin, 2015), develop content knowledge (Center of Excellence and Leadership of Learning, 2009; Chang, 2014; Fragoulis & Tsiplakides, 2009; Gulbahar & Hasan, 2006; Guo & Yang, 2012; Mahrova, 2010; Omar, Taib, & Basri, 2012; Purnawan, 2008; Tamim & Grant, 2013; Vicheanpant, n. d.), develop communicative competence (Fragoulis & Tsiplakides, 2009; Nastu, 2009; Project Handbook, n. d.; Purnawan, 2008; Tamim & Grant, 2013), develop students' social and collaborative skills (Beckett, 2002; Center of Excellence and Leadership of Learning, 2009; Desiatova, 2007; Fragoulis & Tsiplakides, 2009; Hatch, 1921; Nastu, 2009; Project Handbook, n. d.; Purnawan, 2008; Railsback, 2002; Sanders, 2000; Simpson, 2011; Tamim & Grant, 2013; Xu & Liu, 2010; Wang, Teng, & Lin, 2015; Wolff, 2002), etc.

Considering the aforementioned description, PBL is considered a good teaching method to be used in EFL teaching. Unfortunately, PBL has not been implemented widely. Ravitz (2003, as cited in Tamim & Grant, 2013) states that teachers might find it hard to implement PBL in their classroom even "after participating in professional development workshops" (P. 75).

Considering the above description, a study on PBL with the integration of four language skills will be conducted. This study aims to explore PBL that will be implemented to an EFL class of eleventh graders at a vocational high school in

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Cimahi, Indonesia. This study will especially focus on how the PBL integrates four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Furthermore, this study also aims to explore the benefits and challenges that are encountered by the students.

Many studies have been conducted to investigate the potential of PBL in teaching and learning of many subjects including English in many levels of study. However, research on PBL in EFL context in vocational high school in Indonesia is still limited. Also, research on PBL that investigates the integration of language skills is still rare. Therefore, this study will investigate how PBL integrates the four language skills in a vocational high school in Cimahi, Indonesia.

In addition, most previous studies that have been conducted applied a single topic/theme that was all groups worked on the same topic/theme. Therefore, in this study, multi topics/themes will be applied so every group works on different topics/themes. Topics in this study will be decided by the curriculum which means that the topics will be according to the syllabus. Meanwhile, the themes will be decided by the students.

1.2 Purposes of the Research

This study aims to explore how PBL integrates four language skills in an EFL classroom and to discover benefits as well as challenges encountered by the students.

1.3 Research Questions

Relevant to the aforementioned purposes of research, the research questions are formulated as follows:

a. How does PBL integrate four language skills?

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b. What benefits and challenges do the students gain?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is significant from the following perspectives:

Theoretically, the results of this study will enrich the literature of EFL teaching and learning regarding PBL. It will especially enrich the literature regarding PBL and the integration of four language skills. Moreover, the result of this study in terms of implementing multi topics is relatively new information within the respected literature. Also, the findings of this study will enrich the literature about PBL in vocational high school context.

Practically, the results of this study can inform teachers or education practitioners about the practice/the implementation of PBL especially relating to four language skills integration and 21st century skills training. Thus, it can be information of options to EFL teaching and learning strategies.

As for policy makers/stake holder, the information from this study can be consideration of continuing or terminating the implementation of PBL and can also be consideration for future teacher training.

Lastly, future researcher can use the information from this study to do similar or related research.

1.5 Organization of the Paper

This paper will state the background of the study up to the conclusion of this study in several chapters:

CHAPTER I describes the background, the purpose, the research questions and the significance of this study, the clarification of main terms, as well as the organization of the paper.

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CHAPTER II presents the theoretical foundation of this study namely the definition and history of PBL, the characteristics of PBL, the cooperative learning as an integral part of PBL, the implementation, the benefits, and the challenges of PBL, the integration of four language skill, and related previous studies.

CHAPTER III presents the research methodology that will be used in this study covering the research design, the setting and the participants, the data collection, the implementation of the study, and the data analysis of the study.

CHAPTER IV presents and discusses the results of this study.

And finally, CHAPTER V presents the conclusions drawn from this study and the recommendation that can be suggested.

1.6 Clarification of Main Terms

To avoid misconception of several terms, several main terms are clarified as follows:

    a.   Project-Based Learning (PBL)

A PBL is defined as learning that is based on a prolonged task that integrates language skills work (Desiatova, 2007) through a variety of cooperative tasks such as developing a research plan and questions, and implementing plan through empirical or document research that includes collecting, analyzing, and reporting data orally and/or in writing (Beckett, 2002).

    b. EFL

EFL refers to English as a foreign language that is English in the context that does not provide ready-made context for communication for students outside of classroom (Brown, 2001).

    c. Four language skills

Four language skill are listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills. (Brown, 2001; Howatt & Widdowson, 2004, as cited in Hinkel, 2010)

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d. Integrating four language skills

Integrating four language skills means that teaching the four language skills in conjunction with each other for example by providing activities that relate listening and speaking to reading and writing (Richards, Platt, and Weber (1988), as cited in Hinkel, 2010).

1.7 Summary

In this chapter, the background, the purposes, the research questions and the significance of this study have been described. As it has been described earlier in this chapter, on the basis of the demands to the EFL teaching and of the potentials of PBL can offer, this study will be conducted focusing on the integration of four language skills in PBL. This study also will investigate the benefits and challenges that the students experience from the implementation of PBL with the integration of four language skills.