

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the problems of the study starting with the background of the study, which describes the issue of the new curriculum policy, overview of the English teaching program condition in a vocational school and the reasons to conduct the study. The purposes of the study, the statements of the problems, the significance of the study, the scope of the study and the organization of the paper will be discussed afterwards.

1.1 The Background of the Study

School-Based Curriculum or KTSP is considered to be a new phenomenon of curriculum development since the policy concerning the development is different from the previous ones. The development of previous curriculum was completely done by the government through the Centre for Curriculum and Educational Facilities Development (*Pusat Pengembangan Kurikulum dan Sarana Pendidikan*) of the National Education Department, the schools can only implement it. On the other hand, by the School-Based Curriculum (KTSP) policy, the curriculum should be developed by the school components in accordance with the principles stated by BSNP (*Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan* or The Council of National Education Standard). In other words, through The School-Based Curriculum policy, each unit of level of education has got authority to develop their own curriculum and design the syllabus. The school principals or the vice principals on curriculum development affairs have to motivate and give chance to teachers to take part in the development of curriculum or syllabus design.

After the declaration of The School-Based Curriculum policy, the Subject Teacher Association known as MGMP (*Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran*) of English teachers at Vocational High Schools in West Java initiated to design English Syllabus for Vocational High Schools. The syllabus that has been implemented in some vocational high schools in West Java and the State Vocational High School 1 (*SMK Negeri 1*) Cimahi is one of the schools implementing the syllabus.

Vocational education is considered as a typical education where the system of education is different from the education system of general schools. The students of vocational high schools are prepared to become workers, though they might also be able to continue their study to higher levels of education. In other words, the programs of learning in vocational schools are focused on developing the students' practical skills in various fields of study in accordance with the fields of jobs available in society. This is in line with the statement mentioned in the curriculum document, 2004 edition, which states that as one of the institutions preparing work forces, vocational high schools are demanded to be able to produce graduates expected by industries or the world of employment. Work forces or man powers needed by industries are the human resources who are skillful in their field of jobs.

To meet the industrial needs of work forces, education programs in vocational high schools should be designed in such a way that the learners master competency and skills as required by industries in any field of jobs when they graduate. The government through the Ministry of Education always does improvement and development in any areas of vocational education. However, the quality of the graduates is not completely the responsibility of the government but the school community plays very important roles. The empirical study has shown that most vocational schools' graduates are still unable to adapt themselves to the changes and the development of science and technology (curriculum document, 2004). This finding may indicate that the learning process in the schools has not been able to develop the

learners' competence. It might also indicate that some of the vocational schools' graduates could not meet the work requirements or the industrial demands.

The quality of the school graduates is closely related to the implementation of the teaching and learning process which may be influenced by several aspects such as curriculum, teachers, learning process, facilities, school management, environment climate and industrial liaison. Curriculum does not only play as the document showing the directions, aims, and philosophical foundation of the education, however, it must be used as the instrument for evaluating the school program. Consequently, it must always be developed to adapt the development of science and technology.

English becomes one of the subjects taught in vocational schools, as well as in other education program, of which the curriculum has been developed several times. There were 1984 curriculum, 1994 curriculum, 1999 edition curriculum- considered as the revision of 1994 curriculum, 2004 curriculum known as competency-based curriculum and the School-Based Curriculum. The newest government policy concerning curriculum called KTSP (*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan*) or School-based curriculum was firstly launched in academic year 2006/2007 and socialized to teachers in most junior and senior high schools level. It was declared that this policy should be initiated gradually since then and the government through the Ministry of National Education expected that in 2010, all levels of education should have implemented the new policy started from 2007. The declaration of the Regulation of National Education Ministry No. 22, 23, and 24 2006 indicates the new reform of curriculum in Indonesia (Kompas, 01 September 2006).

1.2 Statements of the Problems

Referring to the background described above, the research problems have been formulated in the following questions:

1. To what extent does the English syllabus developed by the MGMP of West Java Province agree with the School-Based Curriculum of the Vocational High School in Cimahi?
2. What are the teachers' perceptions of the existing English syllabus for the vocational high school?

1.3 Objectives of the study

Based on the statements of the problems above, the objectives of the study are stated as follows:

1. To investigate how the English syllabus developed by the MGMP team of West Java province agrees with the School-Based Curriculum of the Vocational High School in Cimahi.
2. To identify the teachers' perceptions of the existing English syllabus applied in the research site.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to contribute and give some beneficial to Vocational High School English teachers to think about the improvement of the English syllabus in vocational high schools. The findings are hopefully able to provide some useful information to the training institution, Technical Education Development Centre (TEDC) Bandung, about the curriculum and EFL syllabus development for vocational high schools which may help the institution to provide better and more appropriate training programs for Vocational High School English teachers. Additionally, the study will also give contribution to the improvement of the English teaching at the research site and other vocational high

schools, and give input to other researchers who want to carry out another study in the same field with certain interest.

1.5 Scope of the study

To avoid over claimed results of the study, this study is limited to the investigation of how the existing English syllabus of the Vocational High School agrees with the School-Based Curriculum developed by the state vocational high school, Cimahi. The syllabus investigation was only specified to the English syllabus applied in the eleventh grade and the perceptions of the English teachers towards the syllabus they have been implemented in the school. The result of this study is expected to give contribution to the improvement of the English teaching at the research site and other vocational high schools.

1.6 Clarification of Terms

A number of terms used in relation to this study need to be defined in order to avoid misunderstanding, misinterpretation, or ambiguity. They are defined as follows:

EFL in this study refers to the English teaching and learning program conducted at the vocational high schools. Syllabus in this study refers to the English syllabus developed by the MGMP team consisting of English teachers of vocational high schools in west Java province. It was published in September 2006 and applied in the research site since then.

Vocational High School in this study refers to the secondary high school with special attention to vocational education providing technical and engineering skill programs. The School-Based Curriculum refers to the school document and program developed by the Vocational High School 1 in Cimahi.

Relevance in this study means the correlation between the EFL syllabus and the vocational high school-based curriculum. Teachers' Perception means what the respondent teachers think and perceive about the English syllabus they apply at the research site.

1.7 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis was organized in five chapters. Chapter One gives general description of the introduction to the background of the study, the statements of the problems, the research questions, the objectives of the study, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, and the thesis organization. The theories related to the study are presented in Chapter Two. Chapter Three discusses research methodology which gives description about research design, data collection and data analysis. Chapter Four shows the findings and discussion. Finally, chapter Five proposes conclusions and suggestions derived from this study.

1.8 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has elaborated the background of the study. The problems and the purposes, the significance, the scope of study and the organization of the thesis are also included in this chapter. The next chapter discusses the literature review of related theories to research findings.

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