Implementation of Project Based Learning Though Merdeka Curriculum in Teaching Speaking Skills

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Abstract

Based on the phenomenon of new policy changes in Indonesian education, namely implementing an independent curriculum with the characteristics of a Project-Based Learning (PjBL) method. This study aims to describe teachers' perceptions in implementing Project Based Learning (PjBL) through Merdeka Curriculum using social media in teaching English speaking skills. The research design of this study is descriptive qualitative. The data collection of this research were interview, observation, and documentation. The data analysis technique used was Miles & Huberman (Display, Reduction, and Conclusion). The results showed that the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) through the Merdeka Curriculum in private vocational high schools has been implemented but not optimal because it has several obstacles related to implementation time, student motivation, and lack of facilities needed. However, the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum has a very good effect on teachers and students by implementing a learning process that focuses on students' ability to realize Speaking Skill teaching using Project Based Learning (PjBL) in accordance with the Merdeka Curriculum.

Keywords: Merdeka Curriculum, PjBL, Speaking, Teaching

1. Introduction

In early 2020, the Ministry of Education and Culture announced the Merdeka Belajar policy to modernize higher education in Indonesia. Its strategy intended to close the gap between higher education, business, and industry (Maipita et al., 2021). The Ministry desires to develop human capital that is prepared for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4.0). Designing an innovative program of Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (hereafter, MBKM) or "Freedom to Learn-Independent Campus" program is aimed to grant campus autonomy through several liberating policies for higher education (Krishnapatria, 2021). Merdeka Curriculum encourages students to have the freedom to learn. It helps students explore their thoughts and ideas. Especially English is a compulsory subject, which has four language skills namely listening, reading, speaking, and writing that must be learned by the students from schools up to university students.

The new curriculum characterized by constructivist learning entails more student-centered, interactive, and collaborative teaching-learning activities (Norawati & Puspitasari, 2022). This curriculum is characterized by (a) Project Based Learning (PjBL) for character building and soft

skills that fit the profile of Pancasila students profile, (b) Concentrate on the essentials to allow enough time for in-depth study of fundamental skills like literacy and numeracy, (c) flexibility for teachers to adapt material and situations locally and (d) provide differentiated instruction based on students' ability (Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2022). It suggests that students-teachers are given the opportunity to participate in real problem solving and knowledge construction in an authentic professional context. Besides, the need to link what is learned in class with real-world experience is an inevitable issue in teacher education.

According Almulla (2020) found that the Project Based Learning (PjBL) method improves student engagement by enabling knowledge and information sharing and discussion. The students' speaking skills improved by using Project Based Learning (PjBL) method even though they did not publish their video projects on Instagram (Juliani et al., 2019). On the other hand, the use of the Project Based Learning (PjBL) approach via interactive learning resources is ideal for academic learning. Utilizing media during the learning process can benefit students by presenting pertinent and engaging material, facilitating data interpretation, and condensing knowledge (P. P. Sari & Ardianti, 2021). Interactive learning media can also help students in learning and improving English speaking ability easily.

The new formation of learning habits using learning media in Pandemic Covid 19 in the shape of social media is a new era. The opportunity for the development of the internet and technology is gaining momentum learning independence (Ningrum, 2022). The kinds of social media that have become the trend in Indonesia are Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, and Instagram (Woods et al., 2019). With social media, teachers and students can interact in learning activities anywhere and anytime, not limited to space and time. The use of social media is more relevant for students in the era after the Covid-19 pandemic (Pujiono, 2021). Social media fulfills the criteria as learning media which can be utilized or used by educators in teaching and learning language.

Based on the phenomenon of new policy changes in Indonesian education, namely implementing an independent curriculum with the characteristics of a Project-Based Learning (PjBL) method. And the essence of project-based learning and learner creativity are mutually sustainable. If one can apply these two things simultaneously to improve English speaking skills, it will lead to innovative learning renewal using social media as a learning media. So this research focuses on discussion, among others; how the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) using social media as learning media at Private Vocational High School in terms of the Merdeka Curriculum; and what obstacles teachers face in implementing the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) using social media as a learning media at Private Vocational High School.

2. Method

In this study, the researcher conducted descriptive qualitative research. Qualitative research is a type of scientific research. Data is information collected by researchers to answer research questions. This type of research data focuses on qualitative research data, which is in the form of words, sentences, and oral, not in the form of numbers. Numerous sources of data can be used in qualitative research. According to Mack et al., (2005) these types of data are field notes, audio (and sometimes video) recordings, and transcripts. The data in this study were collected from sources/informants. The main data came from in-depth interviews with teachers, supporting data came from teachers who offered extra background information on students' using blended

learning, as well as documentations. The data will be collected 04 April – 06 May 2023. The data were analyzed based on the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles & Huberman, (1994). The process analysis is done through 4 stages namely; data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and data collection from the interactive cycle process.

3. Finding and Discussion

3.1 Finding

3.1.1 The Teachers Perception of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) Method

The Project-Based Learning (PjBL) approach involves utilizing intelligence from within the individual, from groups of people, and from the environment to solve meaningful, relevant, and contextual problems. Based on the result of the interview, the researcher found the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) Method are active and creative learning. As stated by one of the teachers:

Tabel 1 The Teachers Perception of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) Method

T-L	*Project-based learning, which is an effective learning model that focuses on creative thinking, problem solving, and interaction between students and their peers to create and use new knowledge*
T-N	*A learning model that allows students to work independently or in groups to produce project results that originate from everyday life problems*

The researcher discovered from Teacher "L", that the PjBL method is active learning. It can be explained that the activity model in Project Based Learning (PjBL) is in the form of conveying ideas or opinions, listening to other people's views, and reflecting their ideas to others involving projects by creating and using new knowledge. The resulting projects are sourced from real-life problems making students work independently and in groups so as to improve students' ability to solve project-based problems, gain new knowledge and skills in learning, and make students more active.

3.1.2 The Project-Based Learning (PjBL) Method as Characteristics of Merdeka Curriculum

The change in the educational paradigm in the Merdeka Curriculum has encouraged the application of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) method as one of the main characteristics. In this study, the researcher found that the teacher explained how PjBL became integral in designing learning experiences that were more contextual, interactive and fostered 21st-century skills in students.

Tabel 2 The Project-Based Learning (PjBL) Method as Characteristics of Merdeka Curriculum

T-M	*Based on the aim of Merdeka Belajar, which is providing wider opportunities for students to explore their individual interests and talents, project work or PjBL is an appropriate method for exploring children's abilities or talents which includes complex tasks based on problems as a first step. in collecting and integrating new knowledge based on experience in real activities.*
T-N	*This PjBL method guides students to carry out design activities, solve problems, make decisions, carry out investigative activities, and gives students the opportunity to work independently or in groups. So this method is suitable as a character in the Independent Curriculum which aims to explore students' potential or skills.*

Based on the result of in-depth interviews about the Project Based Learning (PjBL) method, most of the informants knew about the PjBL method in the Merdeka Curriculum. Forms of activities carried out with teaching by emphasizing students exploring, assessing, interpreting, synthesizing, and information to produce various forms of learning outcomes. This is consistent with making Project-Based Learning (PjBL) the centerpiece of the Merdeka Curriculum and ensuring that students are capable of and prepared for moving on to the next level of education through Project-Based Learning (PjBL). Another form that can be applied is for students to carry out activities to design, solve the problems, make decisions, carry out investigative activities, and provide opportunities for students to work independently or in groups.

3.1.3 Implementing The Structure of The Project Based Learning (PjBL) Method in English-Speaking Skills

In this interview, the researcher discusses the results of implementing the Project Based Learning (PjBL) in English teaching in the Merdeka Curriculum. The focus is on revealing the various approaches, practical steps, and their impact on learners' English proficiency and holistic skills. In-depth analyses will illustrate the effectiveness and challenges of implementing PjBL in the context of innovative and contextualized English language learning.

Tabel 3 Implementing The Structure of The Project Based Learning (PjBL) Method

in English-Speaking Skills

T-K	*The structure of teaching implementation using PJBL adapts the steps contained in Project Based Learning, namely:* *1) Determining basic questions (start with essential question)* *2) Prepare a project plan (design project)* *3) Arrange a schedule (create schedule)* *4) Monitoring students and project progress (monitoring the students and progress of project)* *5) Assessment of results (assess the outcome)*
T-L	*Just like other subjects, it starts with determining the project and ends with evaluation and presentation*

Based on the results of in-depth interviews regarding implementing the PjBL method in English speaking learning, some respondents knew how to implement the PjBL method. The stages that have been carried out are determining basic questions (starting with essential questions), developing project plans (designing projects, compiling schedules, creating schedules), monitoring the students and the project's progress, and assessing the outcome. However, there are still obstacles, namely time-consuming implementation, so some do not apply it in learning.

3.1.4 The Development of The Project-Based Learning (PjBL) Method in Teaching Speaking Skills

This study interviewed educational practitioners to gain insight into developing a Project-based Learning (PjBL) model in teaching English speaking skills. The aim is to detail the implementation strategy, challenges, and results in shaping students' communicative abilities. The researcher found that teachers developed the Project Based Learning (PjBL) method according to students' abilities.

Tabel 4 The Development of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) Method in

Teaching Speaking Skills

T-M	In the Procedure Text material in the TKR class, researchers ask students to make a "Procedure Text" video in the form of automotive material that they have studied and upload it to their respective Instagram. Examples of how to change tires, change oil, or other automotive installations.
T-N	In Class 11 Procedure Text material, I will group students and ask students to make posters that suit their respective majors. Like in the TKJ Department, researchers asked students to make steps to turn off the computer in the form of a poster.

The form of response received is students becoming more active; some students feel enthusiastic about learning and can solve problems. Another impact is to make students more focused on doing something in the form of activities in learning, such as making posters applied in the automotive field and carrying out tasks well.

The application of Project Based Learning (PjBL) is expected to improve students' English skills because students can explore their ability to produce a project (authentic material) in English lessons, because students are encouraged and motivated to be able to create and produce a project that students explore themselves, collaborate with peers in a group, which in the end they communicate in the form of a display of project work that can improve English skills.

3.1.5   Achievements Learning Outcomes (*Capaian Pembelajaran*) in English-Speaking Skills

This research describes the learning outcomes in the development of a Project-Based Learning (PjBL) method in teaching English speaking skills to students. The focus is on analyzing this approach's design, implementation, and results in improving students' oral communication skills. Through in-depth studies/ interviews, this research found benefits, challenges, and recommendations for using PjBL in teaching English that focuses on aspects of speaking.

Tabel 5 Achievements Learning Outcomes (Capaian Pembelajaran) in

English-Speaking Skills

T-K	Learning Achievements (CP) are met in a way that I will not leave out the initial material, if the material has not been covered well. 70% of students can understand it, so I will apply the PjBL method in class.
T-N	Adapted to each major. To make student project learning more enthusiastic and bring out student creativity

In this study, it was discovered through interviews that all participants had determined learning outcomes that were evaluated. The Project Based Learning (PjBL) method was used to carry out learning activities, following the structure or steps of this method. The focus of English learning was on improving skills in listening, speaking, reading, viewing, writing, and presenting in an integrated manner across different types of text. The challenge for teachers was to create a module that suited students' abilities in each department, ensuring that they met the learning outcomes. The module is developed from the Learning Outcomes (CP), implementing the Flow of Learning Objectives (ATP) and targeting the Pancasila Learner Profile.

3.1.6   The Students' Motivation and Skills in English Speaking Skills

In interviews with informants, researchers found and analyzed the impacts of using the Project Based Learning (PjBL) method on students' motivation and learning skills. It affects the level of student motivation in the learning process and develops essential skills such as problem-solving, collaboration, and creativity.

Tabel 6 The Students' Motivation and Skills in English Speaking Skills

T-K	....with this learning students with higher abilities will motivate students with less ability to actively participate in completing the project. Students' sense of self-confidence and independence as well as responsibility in their learning also emerge from the projects they work on. So that students' creativity and innovation can be formed to complete the project
T-N	Yes, it has an influence because it increases students' creativity, such as making posters using Canva

Based on the result of in-depth interviews, the researcher found that students were more motivated to work and could increase their creativity. Increasing motivation is in the form of students working together to achieve goals. With this learning, students with higher abilities will motivate students who are less active in completing projects. Students' self-confidence, independence, and responsibility for their learning also emerge from the projects they work on. Aghayani & Hajmohammadi, (2019) investigated the impact of PjBL and showed that Project Based Learning (PjBL) significantly influences students' abilities. In addition, the findings suggest that the project-based learning approach does help learners to improve and promote their abilities in a collaborative environment. So that students' creativity and innovation are formed to complete the project.

3.1.7   Obstacles in Implement Project Based Learning (PjBL)

In the growing digital age, education has undergone significant changes. One important change is the introduction of Merdeka Curriculum in Indonesia, which encourages the implementation of Project Based Learning (PjBL) with the use of social media as a teaching tool. This research aims to identify the obstacles faced by teachers in implementing this learning method, particularly in the context of teaching English speaking skills.

Tabel 7 Obstacles in Implement Project Based Learning (PjBL)

T-L	Learning using the PjBL method requires thorough preparation because there are several important things that need to be understood, namely time constraints, costs and facilities that must be met. Meanwhile, schools have not fully provided all the facilities needed for PJBL method learning
T-N	students rarely pay attention

The result of the interview revealed several obstacles faced by teachers in implementing Project Based Learning (PjBL) using social media in English language teaching. One of the main obstacles is the long time in the implementation. Teachers had difficulty in encouraging students to be collaborative so that it took a long time in applying the Project Based Learning (PjBL) method to produce meaningful projects. Furthermore, the number of ways that are implemented and take a long time makes students lose interest in the learning process. In addition, the school has limited support and resources. The school does not have supportive facilities or adequate resources to implement Project Based Learning (PjBL) effectively.

3.2 Discussion

Project-Based Learning (PjBL) method is a method that allows students to be able to work independently or in groups in producing project results that originate from everyday life problems. They solve complex project problems with accurate product results, develop and enhance students' skills in managing materials or tools to complete assignments, and enhance student collaboration (Baharullah et al., 2022). Forms of activities carried out with learning by emphasizing participant students carry out exploration, assessment, interpretation, synthesis, and information to produce various forms of learning outcomes. This is in line with making project-based learning the main character of the independent curriculum and project-based learning will have the ability and readiness to go to school at the next level (A. M. Sari et al., 2023).

The application of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) method in Merdeka Curriculum also includes a problem solving approach, in which students are encouraged to face real problems as the first step in learning. Development of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) method in teaching students' English speaking skills is a good response. This encouraging result is in line with the findings of Fitria & Pattiasina, (2022) who found a positive effect of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) on English learners. In line with Wuntu et al., (2022) who found an increase in students' speaking skills in report project procedure text. In accordance with the study of Aghayani & Hajmohammadi (2019) investigates the impact of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) and shows that Project-Based Learning (PjBL) significantly affects students' abilities. Teachers also face challenges in implementing Project Based Learning (PjBL) using social media.

In addition, researcher found the challenges faced by teachers namely, (1) The lengthy implementation process is one of the key challenges. Because teachers had a hard time getting their pupils to work together, the PjBL approach took a long time to use in order to produce projects that were worthwhile. (2) Students become disinterested in the learning process due to the numerous methods that are used and take a long time. (3) The school also has few resources and supports. The school lacks the necessary resources and enabling infrastructure to successfully adopt project-based learning (PjBL). Another challenge is that it takes a long time and process to make the video, the dominance of super-active students, and there is the influence of the mother tongue in English (Hastuti, 2020).

4. CONCLUSION

At the end of this thesis, the researcher will present some conclusions that can be drawn and suggestions based on the findings of the research. In general, the researchers conclude that the implementation of Project Based Learning (PjBL) through the Merdeka Curriculum using social media in learning English language skills at Private Vocational School is good but not yet optimal. Beside the use of projects with social media in the Merdeka Curriculum can be an effective tool for improving students' speaking skills, motivating them to learn, and developing skills that are relevant in the digital age. However, special attention needs to be paid to supervision and guidance to ensure social media is safe and effective use.

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