CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of The Study

Education had an essential role in creating quality human resources. It provided a foundation for personal development, opens doors of opportunity, and increases the capacity of individuals to participate in society actively. Humans not only understood the existence of education as a meant to achieve intellectual and skill needs but also understood that education had noble values that must upheld by every human being (Sylvia et al., 2021). Providing equitable and quality access to education would help progress in various fields. Thus, its role was not only limited to knowledge transfer but also to character building, improving the quality of life, sustainable development, and made an economic contribution to society through education (Abrams & Severson, 2019).

It was about knowledge transfer and experience; it should prepare individuals to participate actively in democratic societies. Education and curriculum were related concepts (Ramadani et al., 2021). It was because the curriculum is one of the main instruments in the education system that shaped and directed the learning process. The knowledge essential for each topic should be outlined in the curriculum, and then suitable activities should be developed based on the student's needs, interests, and contributions (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018). It needed to be updated and

adjusted regularly to stay relevant. It ensured that students were given access to the latest information and preparation taking place in the world.

The curriculum in Indonesia had undergone significant development over the decades, reflecting the country's education evolution. According to (Iramdan & Manurung, 2019), its history started from the 1947 Curriculum, 1952 Curriculum, 1964 Curriculum), which then underwent various changes in the New Order era, including the 1968 Curriculum, 1975 Curriculum, 1984 Curriculum, 1994 Curriculum, and the era of Reformation Curriculum 2004 Competency-based Curriculum (CBC), 2006 Curriculum. The 2013 curriculum was one of the critical milestones in Indonesian education. It introduced a more skill- and understanding-oriented learning approach and various concepts such as the Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP).

However, the development of education in Indonesia did not stop there. The government was working to improve the education system. One significant step was to introduce an independent curriculum in 2020. This curriculum emphasized the freedom of schools to design and develop curricula according to local context and potential. The independent curriculum had three main characteristics: the development of soft skills and character, a focus on essential materials, and more flexible learning (Badeni et al., 2023). It was in line with the vision of Indonesian education to create a more comprehensive, creative generation that was ready to compete in the 4.0 era.

According to (Fitra, 2023), teachers faced problems in implementing the curriculum, such as teachers were faced with the challenge of designing lessons that suit the abilities of diverse students, difficulties in implementing lesson plans for students because they have different levels of knowledge and interests, teachers who were challenged in using technology and learning media because some platforms were still new, problems managing classes in which students had interests and diverse abilities and teachers who had difficulty measuring students' talents and skills in depth. This was due to the lack of time to conduct diagnostic tests and the short formative and summative assessments in one semester. It was difficult for teachers to give students the right grades.

The independent curriculum was closely related to various innovative learning models such as Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Project-Based Learning (PjBL), Discovery Learning (DL), and Inquiry Learning (IL) (Qamarya et al., 2023). These four learning models had similarities in active, collaborative, and student-centered learning approaches.

This research focused on aspects of Project-Based Learning (PjBL). Project-based learning (PjBL) was an instructional model strongly emphasizing student-centered learning through hands-on projects. It could also be an essential approach in promoting 21st-century learning and skills in the future-oriented. This approach allowed students to take ownership of their learning and achieve tangible outcomes, often in real-world projects or

student-created works (Palupi et al., 2020). Teachers must master the learning model chosen from the independent curriculum. It was so that learning becomes creative and innovative as needed. To foster student learning, teacher must create an environment that encouraged the generation of innovative ideas, as this was fundamental to intellectual growth (Isdianto, 2011).

The reality of learning needed to be adopted by the Ministry of National Education was the freedom to learn, which was in line with the demands of current developments. It meant that the learning approach had to be flexible and student-centered, allowing them to learn at their own pace and style (Zama & Endeley, 2023). Schools were indeed educational institutions that had to continue to adapt to current developments to prepare their graduates. So that they would be able to compete and maintain the quality standards of graduates later, it was essential to apply methods such as Project-Based Learning. This method involved students actively learning, often working on projects directly relevant to the real world. It helped students understand academic concepts in a broader context but also helped them develop essential skills such as teamwork, time management, and critical thinking. Thus, approaches such as Project-Based Learning could help schools achieved the goals of teachers and schools in preparing graduates who were ready to face the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

Based on the description above, the author is interested in examining the ways and the reason from application of Project-Based Learning faced by SMA Free Methodist Medan class X teachers. By understanding the application, the author wanted to provide input that can help teachers apply PjBL successfully.

B. The Problem of the Study

Regarding the background of the study, the problem of this research could be specified as follows:

1   How did the English teacher apply Project-Based Learning in the classroom?

2   Why did the English teacher apply Project-Based Learning in the classroom?

C. The Objective of the Study

Based on the problem of the study, the objectives of the study were:

1   To analyze the application ways of Project-Based Learning by English teacher in the classroom.

2   To inform the reason for applied Project-Based Learning in the classroom.

D. The Scope of the Study

This paper focused on analyzing Project-Based Learning in the independent curriculum that teacher used in teaching speaking in the

classroom. The study (Krajcik, 2014) to provide a comprehensive overview of the practical implications of the characteristics used by the teacher in the independent curriculum in the context of Project Based Learning. So, it offered valuable insight for educators or readers to evaluate and achieve goals relevant to the topic of this paper.

E. The Significances of the Study

The findings of this research were expected to provide theoretical and practical information for teachers.

a. Theoretically

The result of the research could be a reference for an improved understanding of Project-Based Learning based on the independent curriculum.

b. Practically

The results of this study could provide a practical view of teacher application in Project-Based Learning. This research could be used for practical recommendations to help teachers create more engaging and effective project-based learning experiences for their students.