CHAPTER IV
DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

This chapter discusses in more details the research findings of the study and the discussion dealing with the data investigated and collected from the interviews and document study. The issues to be discussed here are the ones already stated in the previous chapters. These centre on how the English syllabus of West Java Province version agrees with The School-Based Curriculum and what the teachers’ perceptions towards the existing syllabus are. The data gathered from documents and interviews will be presented separately and followed by the analysis of the main points of all.

4.1 The Relevance of the English Syllabus to the School-Based Curriculum of the Vocational High School.

In Chapter II, the definition of ‘curriculum’ and ‘syllabus’ given by several specialists have been widely elaborated. The main point of the difference between the two terms is that ‘Curriculum’ has a wider scope with the main concerns are purposes, content, methodology, and evaluation. Syllabus, on the other hand, merely deals with content, viz. what is to be taught and how this is staged.

In the guide book of ‘Teknik Penyusunan Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan Dan Silabus Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan’ issued by BSNP (Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan), the ‘syllabus’ is mentioned as one of the components of KTSP (2006 Curriculum). It is stated as follows:

KTSP is an operational curriculum developed by and implemented in its level of education. KTSP consists of the goals of the education, structure and contents of curriculum, education calendar, and a syllabus. (KTSP adalah kurikulum operasional yang disusun oleh dan dilaksanakan di masing-masing satuan pendidikan. KTSP terdiri dari tujuan pendidikan tingkat satuan pendidikan, struktur dan muatan kurikulum tingkat satuan pendidikan, kalender pendidikan, dan silabus)
From the definition above, there are four main components of the School-Based Curriculum or KTSP and a syllabus is one of those components. An EFL syllabus of a Vocational High School is one part of the curriculum which should be developed by the Vocational High School members. The development of The School-Based Curriculum should refer to the National education standard consisting of standard of content, process, graduates competency, teachers, facilities, management, and assessment (UU RI No. 20/2003 and Peraturan Pemerintah No. 19/2005).

This study was focused on how the existing English syllabus agrees with The School-Based Curriculum in terms of objectives, philosophy and contents, approach or methods of teaching and assessment. In addition, the standard of graduates’ competence for English subject in Vocational High Schools will also be reviewed. Then the analysis of the English syllabus implemented in the school referring to the principles stated in the guide book.

**4.1.1 Principles**

As stated previously, the English syllabus applied in the research site is the syllabus developed by the Vocational English Teachers Association of West Java Province (MGMP Bahasa Inggris Propinsi Jawa Barat). It follows the narrative model of syllabus and covers the components of Objectives, Standard of Competence, Basic Competences, Learning materials, Indicator, Learning Experience, Evaluation, Time allotment, Scope of learning, and resources. The format of syllabus could be developed into narrative model or in the form of a landscape table (BSNP, 2006).

In addition, BSNP has defined several principles of syllabus development namely, (1) scientific, (2) relevant, (3) systematic, (4) consistent, (5) accountable, (6) actual and contextual, (7) flexible, and (8) comprehensive. Referring to the first and the second
objectives, the materials or the contents and the learning experience described in the syllabus are considered to be scientific and relevant due to the following reasons:

1. The syllabus was developed by the English teachers of vocational schools, so it is assumed that they are very responsible for their students. Besides, the process of the development was done in a long process before it was published as it was stated by one of the teachers in the research site. In line with this, a respondent said that

‘Silabus ini dibuat oleh guru-guru SMK terutama yang menjadi pengurus inti dari MGMP Jawa Barat melalui beberapa kali pertemuan sampai dicapai suatu keesepakatan.’ (R#1)

2. The selected materials are organized and arranged in relation to the basic competences stated in the curriculum.

In terms of systematization and consistency, the components in the syllabus are arranged in a consistent and the same way for each topic of materials (see Appendix 1B). However, the component of ‘Indicator’ is placed after the topic of material, followed by the component of ‘learning experience’ and it only has one indicator for each basic competence. This could be interpreted that the teaching activities or learning experience is developed based on the indicator rather than on the material to achieve the basic competence. This is not in line with the statement in the guide book that an indicator is a reference of achieving the basic competence that must be performed by the learners and evaluated by the teachers (BSNP, guide book). It was also stated that one basic competence must have more than one indicator. However, there is only one indicator for each topic of material.

The component of learning experience is stated in the same expressions for all topics of material, they are: ‘understanding oral interpersonal and transactional message, re-expressing it orally, reading the text carefully and rewriting it’. Logically, the different topics of material should not always be presented or practiced in exactly the same way and activities but they must give different experience to the students. In addition, the component of
evaluation for all the indicators is also the same namely multiple choice test, written test, and practical test. In this case, the teachers should consider carefully the kind of test which is appropriate to achieve the basic competence. In other words, there is flexibility for the teachers to determine the most suitable type of evaluation he will carry out. It needs high creativity from the teachers as the implementers of the syllabus.

The other component to be covered in the syllabus is the resource. The syllabus has only mentioned one kind of book resource with the same title ‘Modul Bahasa Inggris level Novice’ for the tenth graders, ‘Modul Bahasa Inggris level Elementary’ for the eleventh graders, and ‘Modul Bahasa Inggris level Intermediate’ for the twelfth graders. This may indicate that the book called ‘Modul Bahasa Inggris’ is the most appropriate resource to be used accompanying the existing syllabus. There are many resources that the teachers can use, a text book or they can make use of her/his own. Teaching materials are a key component in most language programs that generally serve as the basis for much of the language input learners (Richards, 2002). Therefore the syllabus should not only mention one kind of book to be the resource.

4.1.2 Objectives and Contents

The objectives stated in The School-Based Curriculum show the overall aims of the vocational high schools that could be achieved by determining the objectives of each subjects provided in the curriculum structure. Basically, there are two main points stated in the overall aims of vocational high schools. The first is preparing students to become skillful workers; and the second is preparing students to be able to continue to higher education according to their specialization.

As far as objectives are concerned, it was stated in the syllabus document that there are several kinds of “tujuan”, some are seen to be long term called aims and some others are
short or medium term called objectives (Taba, 1962 cited in Supono, 1999). The following ‘tujuan’ are the aims of the English subject to be achieved within three years of study:

1. To enable the learners to master knowledge and skills of English in order to support the achievement of specialization program competency.

2. To enable the learners to implement their knowledge and skills of English to communicate orally and in written at the Intermediate level.

Regarding the aims above, it seems that the English syllabus generally focuses on the reading, speaking and writing skills. The learners are expected to master the knowledge of Language in order to be able to apply it in the speaking and writing skills. The aims indicate that knowledge of language becomes a very important aspect required to be taught. Krashen (1982) cited in Nunan (1988) suggests that knowledge of linguistic rules is the outward manifestation of one psychological construct (learning) while the manifestation of these rules in use is the manifestation of another construct.

The one year purpose or the objectives for each level are stated in the same expressions “Use English for communication, among others are to listen, express, give opinions, give information, develop students’ logics and thinking competence”. Since the objectives for different level are expressed in exactly the same statement, this may indicate that the learners are expected to do some repetitions to be more competent in what they already learnt in the previous level.

However, referring to the contents in the syllabus, it is not really a repetition. In this case, those statements seem to be ambiguous. Mager (1962) cited in White (1988) states that ‘Objectives’ should be expressed in behavioral terms which are specific, unambiguous and measurable. Therefore, it needs to be rewritten in a clearer expression.

In teaching, one must teach something to someone, someone being the students and the something being the content. Content might be described as the knowledge, skill,
attitudes, and values to be learned (Nichol, 1978). It may be sequenced according to the order in which events occur in the real world, but it may also be sequenced according to when learners are most likely to need it outside the classroom (Richard, 2001). According to Hammer (1983) cited in Marjito (2007), the contents of a syllabus is influenced by three main areas: needs, situation, and students.

The existing English syllabus was developed by MGMP Vocational English teachers of West Java Province therefore it was designed to be implemented in Vocational High schools, especially in West Java regardless the study program or the specializations provided in the schools. In other words, the syllabus is not specifically intended for the students of Vocational High School of technology and industry but it is also intended for the students of other vocational high schools.

Having learned carefully the contents of the syllabus, especially the Main Instructional materials, most of them are considered suitable for the students of both technical and non-technical vocational high schools to support their future professions. The selection and the scope of the materials are in accordance with the students’ condition and working environment. However there are a few of them seem to be unsuitable for and are not needed by the students of Vocational High School of technology and industry, for example the material with the topic of Expressing Sympathy and Telephone Handling. These two kinds of language functions do not meet the students’ needs so they should be replaced by other materials which are suitable or needed by any group of vocational education. Ideally, the content should satisfy the criteria of validity, significance, interest, and learnability (Nicholls & Nicholls, 1982:51).

Regarding the situation, Marjito (2007:58) further states that the syllabus designer should consider carefully the situation in which the teaching and learning activities take place. The size of the class in vocational high schools is considered to be large with 36
students in each class while the teaching hour for each meeting is only two hours of 45 minutes. Considering this situation, to improve students’ speaking skills, the teachers should creatively plan the effective class activities. Meanwhile, in line with the students’ background, the English competence of the Vocational High School students is generally lower than that of the students of general schools (Supono, 1999:77).

As far as the type of the syllabus is concerned, the Main teaching materials seem to be functionally oriented but when the careful examination of the description of material, the role of grammatical structure is very prominent. Take a look at the example below:

- Main Learning Material: **Describing things**

- Description of material:

  * Vocabulary for description:

    1. Adjectives of quality
    2. Adjectives of size
    3. Adjectives of shapes
    4. Adjectives of age
    5. Adjectives of origin
    6. Adjectives of substance

* Grammar:

    1. Linking verbs
    2. There + be + existence
    3. There is + UN / Sing CN
    4. There are + Plural CN
    5. Preposition of location: at, in, on

The example suggests that the underpinning idea is to teach the sentence pattern ‘There + Be + Noun’. The functionally topic is realized through vocabulary items used in this structure. Another example can be seen in one of the materials selected for ‘Elementary level’ as follows:

- Main learning material: **Guest Handling**

- Material description:

  * Vocabulary
1. Words and expressions used in Handling Guests, for example:
   ‘What can I do for you, Sir?’
   ‘We would like to offer you a special floor’

* Grammar
1. Constructions with ‘too + adjective (+ for agent)’
2. Constructions with ‘adjective + enough (+ for agent) + to infinitive.

The problem of this example is similar to the previous one. The topic is functionally oriented but the underpinning idea is also to teach the sentence patterns. In any case, the guiding principle of this topic remains structural with the function something attached to the topic, but not quite acting as the guiding principle. There are still some similar cases as the above examples.

From the description above, The School-Based Curriculum recommends an active learning approach or Learning by doing which may then suggest that it tends towards a process-orientation. An active learning approach is compatible with Objectives Model and the Objectives Model put the emphasis on the content or what to teach (Tyler cited in Brady, 1987). The School-Based Curriculum and the EFL syllabus basically follow the objectives model or the means-end model. The syllabus specifies what is to be achieved by stating the objectives which then broken down into standard competences and indicators. The first step of stating the objectives is the most critical, because the other steps follow from, and are determined by, the first step (Brady, 1983).

4.1.3 Approach

In order that the students master attitude, knowledge, and skill, the mastery learning approach is adopted in The School-Based Curriculum. The students are demanded to be competent and work professionally. Therefore the learning approaches the students need to do is learning by doing which is developed into production-based teaching and Individual learning which is implemented by modular system.

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Given that the ultimate goal of English is to enable the students to communicate in English, and the approach recommended is active learning, it might be assumed that the approach is Communicative Approach. In its implementation, the adoption of Communicative approach should involve changing the roles of teachers and students. Teachers are supposed to provide situations for the students in which they can use the target language, i.e. English, for communication. Then, through various activities the students can learn from each other to develop their communicative competence.

On the other side, however, the syllabus spells out the methodology or how the materials are to be presented which is expressed in the component of ‘learning experience’, so it also tends towards a process-orientation. From the principle of the approach recommended in the curriculum, it indicates that the curriculum acknowledges that the students are unique individuals who should be treated individually. There is an emphasis on student autonomy and students generating problem to be solved. The teachers, in this context and as far as EFL is concerned, are responsible for exploring the students’ capacities as individuals and assisting them to develop their capabilities to the optimum with reference to the materials outlined in the syllabus by means of various communication activities.

### 4.1.4 Assessment

It is stated in the School-Based Curriculum that the assessment of the students’ achievement is carried out during the teaching and learning process to measure the level of students’ competency of certain skill. This assessment system is applied considering that in vocational high schools the students must learn practical work more than theoretical concepts. However, it is also stated that adaptive subjects, including English, should also apply this system of assessment. It proves that English teachers are demanded to force students to practice using English more than learn the knowledge of language.
In terms of assessment procedures, the syllabus gives some alternatives for evaluating the students’ learning achievement, namely: written test or paper test and practical test. The written or the paper test might be to test the knowledge or to assess the students’ competence in reading and writing skills, whereas the practical test should be done when assessing students’ competence in listening and speaking skills.

The students’ assessment should be conducted when the basic competence has been covered. At the end of the three year course of study, there is the so called National Examination. English is one of the subjects tested in the National examination which determines whether or not the students are considered successful or passed.

4.1.5 The Standard of Competences

The standard of competences of Vocational High School in terms of language which is the ultimate goal of English language is to be able to communicate both orally and in written politely and effectively. It is stated that the standard competence of the graduates for Novice level or the tenth graders, Elementary level or the eleventh graders, and Intermediate level or the twelfth graders include four skills of language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The graduates are expected to be competent to understand oral text in terms of requests and instructions related to daily life, jobs, and professions. This statement of competence indicates the skill of listening should be mastered by the graduates. For the speaking skill the graduates should be competent to express orally formal and informal request and instructions in terms of daily life, jobs, and professions. Regarding the Reading skill, the graduates are expected to be competent in understanding written texts about requests and instructions in terms of daily life, jobs, and professions. As for the Writing skill, the graduates should be competent to write texts about request and instructions in terms of daily life, jobs, and professions.

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Referring to the standard of competences of vocational high schools, some points are noted as follows:

1. Four language skills are equally stressed to be mastered by the learners.
2. There are two kinds of texts, interpersonal and instructional
3. Learners should know how to use formal and informal language.
4. Two main functions of language: requests and instructions.
5. Three main concerns: daily lives, jobs, and professional contexts

The standard of graduates’ competence is the competence qualification of graduates that should cover the three aspects: attitude, knowledge, and skills (BSNP, 2006).

As far as time allotment is concerned, for achieving the above standards according to the curriculum structure there are 440 periods which should be broken down into three years of study and distributed into two semesters a year. Compared to the time duration of other adaptive subjects (Mathematics, Natural Science, Social Science, and Entrepreneurship), the English subject is the highest. This indicates that English is considered as an important subject for the students of vocational high schools.

4.2 Teachers’ Perceptions towards the Existing Syllabus

To know what the teachers perceive about the English syllabus implemented in the research site, the data was gathered by interviewing four English teachers in the school. To ease of discussion, only salient points gained from the interview will be discussed. They are classified into the teachers’ understanding about The School-Based Curriculum called KTSP, the English teachers’ points of view about the existing English syllabus, teachers’ expectations and suggestions. (The complete transcription of the interview is shown in the Appendix 3)
4.2.1 Teachers’ Understanding about School-Based Curriculum

In general, the information about the new curriculum has been understood especially by the respondent teachers because there has been a workshop on the curriculum socialization conducted by the school. As a vocational school, the School-Based Curriculum development has been conducted in the research site especially the curriculum of productive subjects which have to be different from other vocational schools.

The answers to the questions given by the respondent teachers are as follows:

Q #1: What do you know about the School-Based curriculum?
   R1: A set of teachers’ administration to conduct the teaching.
   R2: A curriculum which is developed by the school.
   R3: It is a school-based curriculum to replace the competency-based curriculum.
   R4: A curriculum that is based on the school needs.

Q #2: Where did you get the information about KTSP?
   R1: From workshop, a book, and friends.
   R2: From a one-day workshop on KTSP dissemination.
   R3: From my friends and a workshop conducted by the school.
   R4: From the KTSP socialization and vice principal.

The Q#1 indicates that all the teachers can identify the definition of KTSP or school-based curriculum. What has been stated by all respondents is in line with the definition given by BSNP (2006) that school-based curriculum is an operational curriculum developed in each unit of education consisting of the objectives, structure and contents of the curriculum, education calendar and the syllabus.

In terms of information of The School-Based Curriculum (Q#2) spread out around West java, all the respondents have already known the curriculum through some noted resources, such as book, internet, friends, and policy makers. They also gained the information from noted socialization, such as workshop, seminar, and KTSP socialization. Even, one of them obtained the information from the vice principal who is responsible for the curriculum development affairs.
4.2.2 The Clarity of the Existing Syllabus

This section discusses the syllabus implemented in the research site is the syllabus developed by the English teachers of Vocational high schools in West Java Province who are actively involved in the organization activities. Two of the respondents have been using the syllabus for about two years, whereas the other two have only used the syllabus for only one year teaching at the tenth grade.

Based on the guideline book from BSNP, the syllabus could be developed by the teachers individually or in groups, or MGMP team. As the implementers of the teaching process, teachers are the appropriate person to develop their own syllabus as it is required by the curriculum policy. This notion is in line with what Hargreaves (1989) also cited in Wang & Cheng (2000) believes that a change in the curriculum is not affected without some concomitant change in the teacher, because it is the teacher who is responsible for delivering curriculum at the classroom level.

In addition, based on the responses gained from the interview there is only one English teacher who actively involved in the syllabus design. The other English teachers know the syllabus only when it has been ready. By the policy of the school-based curriculum, the school and the teachers have to develop their syllabus referring to the school and the students’ condition. This is in relation to White’s statement (1988) that it is the teacher who knows about the condition of the students and the clarity and development of a syllabus.

Each vocational school has its own characteristic with different types of specialization. The vocational high schools of technology and industry for example have different condition from the vocational high schools of business and management. However, since there is only one type of English National Examination for vocational high schools, the EFL learning syllabus is designed to be applicable for all types of vocational schools. This is
realized by the teachers as shown in the response given by the respondents to the following question.

Q# 1: ‘Do you think that the existing syllabus is appropriate to the condition and potential of the school environment? Explain!’

Answer: Kalau untuk siswa SMK secara keseluruhan iya, tapi bukan khusus untuk SMK Teknologi karena kan masih ada Ujian Nasional yang soalnya sama untuk semua jenis SMK jadi tidak mungkin silabus dibuat berbeda-beda kalau toh Ujian akhirnya sama (R1, R2, and R3).

The response above indicates that since the persons involved in the syllabus design are the teachers of vocational high schools, they have well understanding about the condition of the students of vocational schools in general or in other words, the teachers know how they see others and the world around them (Hybels, S. et al, 2004:235), but when they have to refer to the individual school, the case will be different.

To facilitate the students’ needs of English for specific purposes, according to the students’ specializations, teachers should provide suitable materials with the students’ field of study.

Q#2 : What should the teachers do to adapt the syllabus with the school conditions?

R1: Untuk bisa memasukkan materi keteknikan, semestinya guru bisa memberikan bacaan-bacaan yang sesuai dengan bidang atau jurusan siswa masing-masing.

R2: Saya kadang-kadang untuk pelajaran ‘Reading’ memberikan bacaan yang berhubungan dengan keteknikan, ya untuk memperkenalkan mereka tentang istilah-istilah keteknikan.

R3, R4: Iya, guru harus berupaya mencari bahan bacaan atau materi yang berhubungan dengan jurusan mereka tapi juga sesuai dengan silabus yang ada. Repot juga deh.

All the findings above show that the respondent teachers said that they prepare reading texts related to the students’ specialization but they should also consider the topic of material in the syllabus. By giving authentic materials the students are introduced with technical terms they often find in their productive subjects. This is in line with the goal of
ESP itself, namely to teach language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learners’ reasons for learning Hutchinson & Waters (1987).

A syllabus should be developed into the so-called RPP which stands for Rencana Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran or teaching implementation plan, therefore the syllabus must be clear enough for the teachers to make the teaching plan. Here are the respondents’ answers about the clarity of the syllabus.

Q#3: Does the existing syllabus make you easy to make a lesson planning to be used in the teaching and learning activities?

Their responses reveal that they did not have any difficulties when they have to make RPP based on the existing syllabus. The description of material is clear with some examples of expressions. However, one of them said that she (R3) usually only looked at the topic of material and the indicator which means that she did not pay attention to other components.

Regarding the scope and sequence of materials in the syllabus (question#4):

“Do you think that the main materials and the sequence are in accordance with the students of vocational schools in achieving the defined competence standard? What’s your reason?”

The respondents stated that the order or the sequence is also acceptable referring to the level of simplicity and the basic competence. They also state that the topics of material are considered enough as far as the exercises and activities are varied except one material to be included because of the final examination coverage.

The statements above indicate that the respondents agree that the scope of the materials covered in the syllabus has been matched with the condition of the technical school students although they look simple. This statement is in line with Gatehouse (2001) Anthony’s statement (1997) that the teaching of ESP is accorded with the nature of the learners’ needs.

Q#6: How much can the materials in the syllabus be covered?
R1, R2: Pencapaiannya, ya mungkin sekitar 90 persen tapi tergantung jadwal juga, maksudnya kalau banyak libur yang jatuh pada hari dimana ada jadwal B.Inggris atau ada kegiatan-kegiatan yang tidak diprediksi sebelumnya, pencapaiannya kadang-kadang kurang dari 90 persen.

R3: Untuk kelas X biasanya dapat dikatakan 100 persen artinya seluruh materi yang tertuang dalam silabus dapat dicapai.

R4: Ya antara 80 sampai 100 persen tergantung dari jadwal kegiatan sekolah dan kemampuan siswa.

The findings above denote that regarding the coverage of materials, the teachers stated that they can usually cover less than 100 percent of the contents of the syllabus. It depends on the activities and the students’ abilities except for the tenth graders. This is in accordance with the statement that English teachers have freedom to decide the time allotment in accordance with the scope of the teaching materials, to choose and develop the themes into sub-themes in regard to the students’ needs Supono (1991).

About the component of ‘indicators’ (question#7), two of the respondents stated that in general the indicators in the syllabus are in line with the basic competences. Some other mentioned that there are some indicators do not agree with the basic competence. While the other one respondent never paid careful attention to the correlation between indicators and basic competence.

As far as the time allocation is concerned (question#7), the respondents expressed similarly that they adjust themselves with the condition of their students in the class and the competence to be achieved. It can be more than the time allocated in the syllabus but it can be less. They further claimed that the time allocation is sometimes confusing and most of them are not appropriate.

The four respondents agree that all the skills can be implemented whether in an integrated way or separately, however they put their focus differently although their orientation is the national-examination. The language skills tested in the National
examination are listening and reading, whereas speaking and writing skills are evaluated during the learning process.

As far as the principles of school-based curriculum is concerned, the respondents were completely aware that the syllabus they are using cannot be said as a real school-based syllabus because the syllabus is not intended only for certain type of vocational high school.

Finally, the respondent teachers agree that the existing English syllabus needs to be revised and they suggest that the syllabus be improved every year involving more teachers in the schools in order that the syllabus is applicable for any other kinds of vocational high schools. Supono (1991).