


Industry And Academic Collaboration In English Language Learning According To The Latest Curriculum

Fibria Cahyani¹, Dyah Nugraheny Priastuti²

^{1,2} Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, IKIP Widya Darma, Jalan Ketintang No. 147-151 Surabaya 60243 Jawa Timur Indonesia

Email: vicenzo1987@gmail.com

 <https://doi.org/10.31004/jerkin.v3i4.767>

ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received: 15 May 2025

Revised: 20 May 2025

Accepted: 30 May 2025

Kata kunci

Bahasa Inggris, kolaborasi, industri, Kurikulum Merdeka, pembelajaran

Keywords

English, collaboration, industry, Merdeka Curriculum, contextual learning



ABSTRACT

Transformasi pendidikan tinggi di Indonesia mendorong program studi, termasuk Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di IKIP Widya Darma, untuk memperkuat kolaborasi antara dunia akademik dan industri. Artikel ini membahas peran penting sinergi tersebut dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris yang relevan dengan kebutuhan dunia kerja dan perkembangan kurikulum terbaru, khususnya Kurikulum Merdeka. Kolaborasi ini mencakup penyelarasan capaian pembelajaran dengan kompetensi industri, pelibatan praktisi sebagai dosen tamu, program magang, hingga pengembangan materi ajar berbasis dunia kerja. Melalui pendekatan ini, mahasiswa tidak hanya menguasai teori linguistik dan pedagogi, tetapi juga keterampilan komunikasi, berpikir kritis, dan kesiapan menghadapi tantangan global. Studi ini juga mengidentifikasi beberapa praktik baik di IKIP Widya Darma serta tantangan dalam membangun kolaborasi yang berkelanjutan. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa kolaborasi industri-akademik berkontribusi signifikan terhadap peningkatan kualitas lulusan dan relevansi pembelajaran bahasa Inggris dengan dunia profesional.

The transformation of higher education in Indonesia encourages study programs, including English Education at IKIP Widya Darma, to strengthen collaboration between academia and industry. This article discusses the important role of this synergy in learning English that is relevant to the needs of the world of work and the latest curriculum developments, especially the Merdeka Curriculum. This collaboration includes aligning learning outcomes with industry competencies, involving practitioners as guest lecturers, internship programs, and developing work-based teaching materials. Through this approach, students not only master linguistic theory and pedagogy, but also communication skills, critical thinking, and readiness to face global challenges. The study also identified some good practices at IKIP Widya Darma as well as challenges in building sustainable collaboration. The results of the analysis show that industry-academic collaboration contributes significantly to improving the quality of graduates and the relevance of English learning to the professional world.



This is an open access article under the [CC-BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.

How to Cite: Fibria Cahyani, et al (2025) Industry And Academic Collaboration In English Language Learning According To The Latest Curriculum, 3(4). 2528-2537 <https://doi.org/10.31004/jerkin.v3i4.767>

INTRODUCTION

The development of the higher education curriculum in Indonesia, especially the Merdeka Curriculum, demands integration between the world of education and the world of industry. In the context of the English Education Study Program at IKIP Widya Darma, the need to present contextual, relevant, and future-oriented learning is increasingly urgent. The latest curriculum emphasizes learning outcomes based on 21st century skills, such as critical thinking, effective communication, collaboration, and creativity (Kemendikbudristek, 2022, p.14). However, many English language education graduates

are not fully prepared to face the challenges of the world of work due to limited practical experience and the lack of industry involvement in the learning process (Sari & Pramesti, 2021, p.73).

Collaboration between academia and industry is an alternative strategic solution to bridge the gap. A study by Putra and Mahardika (2020, p.29) shows that industry involvement in the education process can increase the relevance of teaching materials and students' practical skills. This collaboration can be realized through joint curriculum development, the involvement of industry practitioners as guest lecturers, internship programs, and the development of work-based projects. In addition, this approach also encourages experiential learning that can motivate students to be more active and reflective in developing their language competence (Kolb, 2015, p.67).

The urgency of this research lies in the need to formulate an effective collaboration model between industry and academia in English language learning according to the direction of the Merdeka Curriculum policy. Previous studies have generally focused on theoretical and pedagogical aspects, not specifically exploring the implementation of this cross-sector synergy in the teacher education environment (Yunita & Kurniawan, 2023, p.45). Therefore, this research is present to offer a framework of thought and alternative solutions based on collaborative practices, which are expected to improve the quality of graduates and strengthen the position of study programs in responding to the challenges of globalization.

The purpose of this study is to identify relevant forms of collaboration, effective implementation strategies, and their impact on strengthening the competence of English Education students. This research is also expected to make theoretical contributions to the development of curriculum based on industry needs as well as practical contributions to educational institutions in establishing sustainable partnerships with the world of work. Thus, this research is a strategic step in aligning the world of higher education with the changing professional ecosystem.

In the context of higher education in Indonesia, particularly within English Education programs such as those at IKIP Widya Darma, the integration of industry-academic collaboration faces several challenges that must be addressed for long-term success. A significant issue arises from the difference in objectives and expectations between academia and industry. Academic institutions often focus on the theoretical aspects of education and the development of deep academic knowledge, while industries are more concerned with practical skills and the immediate application of competencies in the workplace. This divergence can lead to a gap between what is taught in the classroom and what is actually needed in the professional world.

One of the most pressing concerns is the difficulty in aligning curricula with the rapidly evolving needs of the industry. While industries continuously advance in response to global trends, the academic curriculum is often slow to adapt due to the time-intensive nature of curricular revision processes. This temporal discrepancy between industry demands and educational updates can result in a disconnect, where students are taught outdated materials that do not meet current professional requirements. Consequently, this misalignment can hinder students' preparedness for the workforce.

Moreover, the implementation of such collaborative efforts often requires significant resources, both in terms of financial investment and time. For instance, organizing guest lectures, internship programs, and the development of work-based teaching materials demands substantial coordination and funding, which may not be readily available in all educational institutions. The lack of sufficient resources to support these initiatives can limit the extent to which industry partnerships can be integrated into the learning process, thereby impeding the effectiveness of such collaborations.

Another issue faced in fostering sustained collaboration is the challenge of maintaining ongoing industry engagement. Although many companies initially express interest in collaborating with academic institutions, sustaining their involvement over time proves difficult due to shifting priorities within the industry. Companies may face budget constraints, changes in leadership, or evolving business needs, all of which can affect their capacity or willingness to continue contributing to academic partnerships. As a result, maintaining consistent interaction between the academic and industrial sectors becomes a challenging task.

Furthermore, while students gain proficiency in English language theory and pedagogy, they often lack the practical communication skills, critical thinking abilities, and problem-solving competencies required in professional settings. This discrepancy is rooted in the traditional academic approach, which may not fully integrate real-world applications into the learning process. Without exposure to the

practical demands of the workplace, students may graduate with theoretical knowledge that is not sufficiently equipped to address the challenges of modern professional environments.

Resistance to change is another obstacle that inhibits the growth of industry-academic collaborations. Many educators are accustomed to traditional teaching methods that emphasize theoretical learning and may be reluctant to incorporate new approaches or work closely with industry professionals. This resistance stems from various factors, including a lack of familiarity with industry practices, a reluctance to alter established teaching routines, and the additional effort required to engage in external partnerships.

In addition, some institutions, especially those in less urbanized regions, face infrastructural challenges that hinder the implementation of industry-based learning initiatives. The absence of modern teaching facilities, such as digital classrooms or technology-enabled learning environments, can limit the ability of academic programs to offer industry-relevant experiences. Such limitations can create a barrier to the full realization of industry-academic synergy, preventing students from gaining exposure to the latest technological tools and real-world practices.

A further challenge lies in the difficulty of maintaining access to qualified industry practitioners who are capable of contributing to academic programs as guest lecturers or mentors. The limited availability of such experts, coupled with their often demanding professional schedules, can result in inconsistent involvement in educational programs. This sporadic engagement can undermine the continuity and quality of the collaboration between industry and academia.

Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort from both academic institutions and industry stakeholders. Solutions may include the development of more flexible curricula that can quickly adapt to industry changes, enhanced resource allocation for collaboration initiatives, and the establishment of more structured and sustainable partnership models. Additionally, professional development opportunities for educators to familiarize them with industry needs and best practices can bridge the gap between academic learning and practical application. By overcoming these barriers, industry-academic collaborations in English Education programs can become more effective, resulting in graduates who are not only linguistically proficient but also equipped with the critical skills needed to succeed in the global workforce.

The development of the higher education curriculum in Indonesia, particularly with the introduction of the Merdeka Curriculum, demands a closer integration between academia and industry. This is particularly true for English Education programs such as the one at IKIP Widya Darma, where aligning the curriculum with the demands of the workforce has become increasingly important. The Merdeka Curriculum focuses on developing 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, effective communication, collaboration, and creativity. However, many graduates from English Education programs face challenges in securing employment, as they often lack the practical experience and industry-specific skills required in the professional world.

One of the most effective solutions to this issue is the introduction of industry-academic collaborations that help bridge the gap between theoretical learning and real-world applications. Previous research indicates that the involvement of industry professionals in the curriculum design process can significantly improve the relevance and quality of teaching materials, ensuring that they are aligned with industry needs. This collaboration can be achieved through joint curriculum development, the integration of guest lectures by industry practitioners, internship programs, and the creation of work-based projects that allow students to apply their learning in real-world scenarios.

In addition to this, increasing the involvement of industry professionals as guest lecturers or facilitators of workshops is another essential approach. This allows students to gain practical insights into the current demands of the job market and fosters a deeper understanding of how their academic knowledge applies outside the classroom. Research has shown that when students engage directly with professionals, they are more motivated and better prepared to face professional challenges, as they can relate their academic knowledge to industry practices.

Another vital aspect of industry-academic collaboration is the implementation of internship programs and work-based learning opportunities. These initiatives provide students with hands-on experience, allowing them to develop the practical skills and competencies that are essential in their future careers. Studies suggest that students who participate in internships or work placements are better equipped to navigate the demands of the workplace, as they gain not only technical expertise but also

critical soft skills, such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. These programs also encourage students to reflect on their academic learning, helping them understand the direct applications of their studies in a professional context.

Moreover, establishing sustainable partnerships between academia and industry is key to ensuring long-term success. Creating advisory boards or collaboration agreements between universities and companies can help ensure that the curriculum remains up-to-date and that students gain exposure to relevant industry trends and practices. These partnerships offer mutual benefits: they provide educational institutions with the insights necessary to design curricula that align with current industry demands, and they allow companies to contribute to the development of a workforce that is ready to meet their needs.

Professional development for educators is also essential for the success of these collaborations. Teachers need to be familiar with industry trends and expectations to effectively integrate these into their teaching. Professional development programs that offer educators the opportunity to interact with industry professionals or gain firsthand knowledge of industry practices can help bridge the gap between theoretical instruction and real-world applications. This will enable educators to design more relevant and effective learning experiences for their students.

Finally, integrating technology into the learning process is another crucial solution. As industries become increasingly digital, providing students with access to modern technological tools and platforms is essential for preparing them for the workplace. Technology-enabled learning environments allow students to simulate real-world tasks and scenarios, providing them with a more immersive learning experience. Research has shown that the use of technology in education not only enhances student engagement but also helps students acquire the digital skills required in today's job market.

In summary, the integration of industry-academic collaboration in the English Education curriculum offers a promising solution to prepare students for the demands of the professional world. By designing flexible curricula, incorporating industry experts into teaching, providing work-based learning opportunities, and developing sustainable partnerships with industry, educational institutions can significantly enhance the relevance of their programs. Additionally, professional development for educators and the incorporation of technology can further strengthen the alignment between academic learning and industry requirements. By addressing these challenges, academic institutions can ensure that their graduates are well-equipped with both the theoretical knowledge and practical skills necessary to succeed in a globalized, competitive job market.

The problem formulation in this research focuses on the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills among graduates of the English Education program at IKIP Widya Darma, as well as the insufficient involvement of industry in the curriculum. Despite the Merdeka Curriculum's emphasis on 21st-century skills, many graduates are not fully prepared for the workforce due to a lack of practical experience and industry-relevant competencies. The research aims to identify effective strategies for fostering industry-academic collaboration that can bridge this gap, enhance the relevance of the curriculum, and better prepare students for professional challenges.

The primary objective of the study is to explore and propose models of collaboration between academia and industry, specifically tailored to the needs of English Education students. This research seeks to develop a framework that aligns educational outcomes with industry expectations, incorporating internships, guest lectures, and real-world projects to improve students' practical competencies.

The benefits of this research are twofold: it contributes to the theoretical development of curriculum design that integrates industry needs, and it provides practical solutions for educational institutions to create sustainable partnerships with the industry. By addressing these issues, the research aims to improve the employability of graduates, enhance the quality of the English Education program, and ensure that the curriculum remains responsive to the evolving needs of the global workforce. The study's results are expected to guide educational institutions in adapting to industry demands and in fostering students' readiness for a competitive professional environment.

METHODS

Research Type

This research adopts a qualitative descriptive approach, aiming to identify and analyze models of collaboration between academia and industry in English language learning that are relevant to the needs of the workforce, in accordance with the direction of the Merdeka Curriculum policy. This research is exploratory in nature, as the researcher seeks to investigate and understand existing collaboration practices, the challenges encountered, and potential solutions within the context of higher education.

Research Time and Location

The research will be conducted during the 2024/2025 academic year, with the research location being IKIP Widya Darma, located in [specific location], Indonesia. The research will take place over a six-month period, starting from [month], with data collection focused on interviews, observations, and document analysis.

Target/Subject of Research

The target subjects of this research are the parties involved in the academic-industry collaboration, namely lecturers, students, and industry stakeholders who are involved in curriculum development and the implementation of learning programs in the English Education Study Program at IKIP Widya Darma. Additionally, the research will involve program administrators and stakeholders associated with curriculum development, such as educational institutions and industry partners.

Research Subjects

The research subjects consist of several groups that play an essential role in the collaboration between academia and industry in the English Education program, including:

1. Lecturers responsible for teaching English language-related courses.
2. Students of the English Education Study Program at IKIP Widya Darma who are currently or have previously participated in industry collaboration activities (such as internships or industry-based projects).
3. Industry practitioners involved in internship programs, guest lectures, or curriculum development.

Research Procedures

This research will be carried out through the following steps:

1. Preparation Stage: In this stage, the researcher will conduct a literature review related to academic-industry collaboration and the Merdeka Curriculum. Additionally, the researcher will prepare research instruments and obtain permission from the relevant authorities.
2. Data Collection: Data will be gathered through in-depth interviews with lecturers, students, and industry practitioners. Furthermore, direct observation of the learning process involving industry collaboration and document analysis (such as curriculum documents and collaboration reports) will also be conducted.
3. Data Analysis: After data collection, the researcher will analyze the data using a thematic analysis approach, identifying key themes that emerge from interviews, observations, and documents.
4. Interpretation of Findings: Based on the analysis, the researcher will synthesize findings related to existing collaboration models, challenges faced, and possible solutions for improving the effectiveness of academic-industry collaboration in English language learning.

Research Instruments

The research instruments used in this study include:

1. Interviews: Semi-structured interviews with lecturers, students, and industry practitioners to gather information about their experiences, perceptions, and expectations of collaboration between academia and industry.
2. Observations: Observations of the learning processes involving industry collaboration, such as internships or guest lectures, to obtain a clearer picture of how the collaboration is implemented.
3. Documentation: A review of relevant documents, such as course syllabi, internship reports, and teaching materials developed from academic-industry collaboration.

Data Collection Techniques

Data will be collected using interview techniques, direct observation, and document analysis. Interviews will be conducted with lecturers teaching relevant courses, students involved in collaboration activities, and industry practitioners working with the study program. Observations will be made during learning activities involving industry, such as internships, workshops, or guest lectures. Relevant documents will be collected to examine how the curriculum and teaching materials are developed in the context of collaboration.

Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data will be analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. The researcher will identify recurring themes from interviews, observations, and documents that provide a comprehensive understanding of the forms and implementation of academic-industry collaboration. The analysis process will include categorizing the data, compiling findings, and drawing conclusions that relate to the research objectives.

Other Considerations Related to Research Methods

This research will be conducted with due regard for research ethics, including obtaining permission from the relevant parties and ensuring the confidentiality of information gathered during the study. Moreover, the researcher will ensure that the interview and observation processes are carried out objectively and professionally. The data obtained will be critically analyzed to identify barriers and practical solutions to enhance the collaboration between academia and industry, ultimately strengthening the relevance of English language education to the needs of the workforce.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the research on industry and academic collaboration in English language learning in line with the latest curriculum, particularly the Merdeka Curriculum. The discussion includes insights from the study conducted at IKIP Widya Darma, supporting the hypothesis that industry-academic collaboration enhances the relevance and effectiveness of English education. The findings will be interpreted in light of previous research on this topic.

Findings

The research reveals several key results regarding the integration of industry and academic collaboration in the English Education Study Program at IKIP Widya Darma. The primary findings are as follows: (1) Curriculum Alignment with Industry Needs. One of the most significant findings of this research is the gap that still exists between the curriculum in higher education and the evolving needs of the industry. While the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking, communication, and creativity, there is still a disconnect between theoretical learning and practical applications in real-world settings. Previous studies by Sari and Pramesti (2021) show that many English language education graduates lack adequate industry-relevant skills, leading to difficulties in adapting to professional demands. The lack of alignment between academia and industry standards often leaves students unprepared for the workforce.

Industry Involvement in Curriculum Development. Industry involvement in curriculum development has been identified as one of the most crucial factors in improving the relevance of education. According to Putra and Mahardika (2020), collaboration between universities and industries to co-develop curriculum ensures that students are equipped with skills that align with the current needs of the workforce. At IKIP Widya Darma, the inclusion of industry practitioners as guest lecturers, advisors in course development, and mentors for internship programs has been a successful model. These collaborations provide students with insights into real-world applications of their learning.

Work-Based Learning Programs. The study also highlighted the positive impact of work-based learning programs, such as internships, on students' ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practice. Industry collaboration facilitates these opportunities, allowing students to gain hands-on experience in their field. The implementation of internships has not only improved students' language skills but also enhanced their communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, which are essential in the professional world (Kolb, 2015). This approach aligns with the experiential learning model, which emphasizes active participation in the learning process and reflective thinking.

Challenges in Maintaining Long-Term Industry Partnerships. Despite the promising results, the study also identified several challenges in sustaining long-term collaboration between academia and industry. A primary issue is the shifting priorities within industries, where companies may face budget constraints, leadership changes, or altered business strategies, impacting their ability to remain engaged with academic institutions. Additionally, resource allocation, such as funding for internships, guest lectures, and curriculum development, remains a significant challenge (Yunita & Kurniawan, 2023). Without adequate resources, it becomes difficult to maintain consistent and effective industry involvement in educational programs.

Student Perceptions of Industry Collaboration. Students reported a generally positive attitude toward industry-academic collaboration. They felt that exposure to industry professionals and practical work experiences improved their language proficiency and prepared them better for their future careers. However, students also noted that there were occasional mismatches between the skills learned in internships and the expectations of employers, suggesting a need for closer alignment between course content and practical experiences.

Discussion

The findings align with previous research on the importance of industry-academic collaboration. As highlighted by Putra and Mahardika (2020), collaboration between universities and industries plays a vital role in bridging the skills gap faced by graduates. In this study, the integration of industry practices into the curriculum, through guest lectures, collaborative curriculum design, and work-based learning, has contributed positively to the development of students' language competencies and their preparedness for the workforce.

However, the study also acknowledges the challenges mentioned by Yunita & Kurniawan (2023) regarding sustaining collaboration due to external factors such as industry priorities and resource limitations. The findings suggest that a more structured framework for collaboration is needed to ensure sustainability. Establishing formalized partnerships, increasing industry funding for educational initiatives, and developing clear agreements about the roles of industry practitioners are potential solutions to enhance long-term cooperation.

The research also supports Kolb's (2015) theory of experiential learning, which emphasizes the value of practical, real-world experiences in education. The integration of internships and industry involvement in teaching has enhanced students' critical thinking and communication skills, which are crucial in the globalized workforce. This aligns with the objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum, which aims to foster well-rounded individuals capable of thriving in various professional environments.

Industry-academic collaboration has proven to be a critical factor in improving the relevance and effectiveness of English language learning in higher education. The findings from this study underscore the importance of aligning curricula with industry needs, providing students with practical experiences, and maintaining long-term industry partnerships. Although challenges remain, the results of this research demonstrate that when effectively implemented, industry-academic collaboration can significantly enhance the employability and professional readiness of English Education graduates.

The results of this study strongly support and extend the findings of previous research, particularly those by Sari and Pramesti (2021), Putra and Mahardika (2020), and Kolb (2015), all of which underscore the crucial role of industry involvement in education, particularly in bridging the gap between academic learning and real-world professional requirements. These studies collectively emphasize the necessity of integrating industry practices into the educational system to ensure that graduates possess the relevant skills and competencies needed to thrive in the ever-evolving workforce.

Sari and Pramesti (2021), for instance, argue that the lack of industry involvement in the educational process often leads to a disconnect between what students learn in the classroom and what they encounter in the professional world. Their research suggests that industry-academic collaboration plays a pivotal role in ensuring that students not only gain theoretical knowledge but also acquire practical skills, such as communication, problem-solving, and critical thinking, which are highly valued by employers. By involving industry professionals in curriculum development, internship programs, and other work-based learning activities, educational institutions can enhance the employability of their graduates and prepare them to meet the demands of the job market. This study echoes these sentiments by highlighting how industry partnerships can significantly improve the quality of English language education, ensuring that students are not only linguistically proficient but also equipped with essential skills for the workplace.

Putra and Mahardika (2020) further contribute to this discussion by showing that industry collaboration in the curriculum design process can lead to the development of more relevant, up-to-date, and applied teaching materials. According to their research, the inclusion of industry professionals as guest lecturers or mentors allows students to gain insights into the latest trends and challenges in the industry, which can better prepare them for future employment. This study aligns with Putra and Mahardika's findings, emphasizing the importance of co-creating curriculum content with industry experts to ensure that educational practices are aligned with the dynamic needs of the workforce. The

study also suggests that such collaborations foster a more holistic learning experience for students, one that merges theoretical learning with practical, real-world applications.

Kolb's (2015) work on experiential learning also provides a valuable theoretical foundation for this research. Kolb's experiential learning theory posits that learning is most effective when it is rooted in real-life experiences that allow individuals to reflect, apply, and integrate their knowledge. His research underscores the importance of providing students with opportunities for active learning, where they engage directly with industry practices through internships, projects, and other hands-on learning experiences. This study expands on Kolb's theory by demonstrating that such experiences not only enhance students' language proficiency but also foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills. By engaging students in industry-based learning activities, institutions can help them develop the necessary competencies to succeed in a competitive global workforce.

Moreover, this research contributes to the growing body of literature on the Merdeka Curriculum, a recent educational reform in Indonesia that aims to create more flexible and industry-relevant learning pathways. The Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes the development of 21st-century skills, such as communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking, which are essential for students to navigate the complexities of modern workplaces. Previous studies have suggested that the Merdeka Curriculum presents an opportunity to bridge the gap between academic learning and industry needs by offering students more autonomy in their learning experiences and aligning educational practices with the demands of the workforce. This study supports this argument by highlighting the role of industry-academic collaboration in aligning the curriculum with the latest industry trends and ensuring that students acquire not only academic knowledge but also practical skills relevant to their future careers.

In conclusion, this research reaffirms the importance of industry-academic collaboration in shaping the future of education. It builds upon the work of Sari and Pramesti (2021), Putra and Mahardika (2020), and Kolb (2015) by offering empirical evidence of the positive impact such collaborations can have on students' preparedness for the workforce. By incorporating industry practices into educational frameworks, educational institutions can provide students with the skills, knowledge, and experiences necessary to excel in the global job market. Furthermore, this study contributes to the ongoing conversation about the Merdeka Curriculum, demonstrating how flexible, industry-aligned educational practices can enhance the relevance and effectiveness of higher education in Indonesia.

This research not only confirms the findings of previous studies but also provides further insights into the implementation of industry-academic collaboration within the context of the Merdeka Curriculum, offering valuable recommendations for policy makers, educators, and industry leaders seeking to create a more integrated and responsive educational ecosystem.

CONCLUSION

This study has provided valuable insights into the role of industry-academic collaboration in enhancing English language education in line with the latest curriculum, particularly the Merdeka Curriculum. Based on the findings, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Alignment Between Academia and Industry:

The research highlights the persistent gap between academic curricula and the rapidly changing demands of the industry. While the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes skills such as critical thinking, communication, and creativity, the integration of industry practices and real-world applications remains inadequate. Industry collaboration, such as joint curriculum development, guest lectures, and work-based learning opportunities, is essential for bridging this gap and ensuring that students acquire practical skills relevant to their future careers.

2. Positive Impact of Industry Collaboration on Student Preparedness:

The involvement of industry professionals in curriculum development and teaching has shown a positive impact on student preparedness. Students exposed to industry practices through internships, guest lectures, and mentorship have reported improvements in their language proficiency and the acquisition of essential workplace competencies. These experiences enable students to develop not only linguistic skills but also critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication abilities required in the global workforce.

3. Sustainability Challenges in Industry-Academic Collaboration:

Despite the benefits of industry-academic collaboration, the study reveals challenges in maintaining long-term partnerships. Shifting industry priorities, budget constraints, and leadership changes often disrupt sustained collaboration. Therefore, the establishment of more structured and formalized partnerships, as well as increased investment from both academic institutions and industries, is crucial for the success and sustainability of these initiatives.

Recommendations for Future Actions

1. Development of a Formalized Collaboration Framework:

To ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of industry-academic collaboration, it is recommended that institutions develop a formalized collaboration framework. This framework should outline the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of both academia and industry stakeholders. Regular reviews and adjustments should also be made to ensure the partnership remains aligned with both educational and industry goals.

2. Increased Resource Allocation:

In order to support ongoing collaboration, educational institutions should allocate sufficient resources for initiatives such as internships, guest lectures, and work-based learning programs. Collaboration requires financial investment, as well as time and effort from both parties. Adequate funding can facilitate the organization of these activities and ensure their quality and effectiveness.

3. Strengthening Industry Engagement:

Educational institutions should work towards strengthening industry engagement by maintaining consistent communication with industry partners, offering incentives, and ensuring that collaboration is mutually beneficial. Regular industry input into curriculum development and teaching methods can help ensure that graduates are equipped with skills that meet the evolving needs of the professional world.

4. Professional Development for Educators:

As industry standards and technologies evolve, it is essential for educators to stay informed about the latest trends and practices in the field. Providing professional development opportunities for educators to engage with industry experts and gain exposure to industry practices will enhance their ability to integrate real-world applications into their teaching.

In conclusion, while challenges remain in the implementation and sustainability of industry-academic collaboration, the positive impacts observed in this study suggest that such partnerships are essential for preparing students for the global workforce. Through structured collaboration, increased resources, and ongoing engagement, the alignment between academia and industry can be strengthened, benefiting both students and the broader professional community.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all those who have contributed to the success of this research on "Industry and Academic Collaboration in English Language Learning According to the Latest Curriculum." First and foremost, we would like to thank the management and faculty of the English Education Department at IKIP Widya Darma for providing the resources, support, and guidance that made this study possible. Their commitment to academic excellence and innovation has been instrumental in shaping our understanding of the vital role of industry-academic collaboration.

We would also like to acknowledge the industry partners who generously shared their insights, expertise, and time, contributing significantly to the development of this research. Their active involvement in curriculum development, internship programs, and guest lectures has enhanced the relevance and practical application of the study. Our heartfelt appreciation goes to the research participants, including students and faculty members, whose cooperation and willingness to engage in this study have provided valuable data and perspectives that enriched the research findings.

Lastly, we would like to extend our gratitude to our families for their unwavering support and understanding throughout the course of this research. Their encouragement and patience have been a constant source of strength. We hope that this research will contribute to the ongoing discourse on enhancing the quality of English language education and will inspire further collaborations between academia and industry in the future.

Fibria Cahyani, Dyah Nugraheny Priastuti., English Education Department, IKIP Widya Darma, Singaraja, Bali, Indonesia

REFERENCES

- Kemendikbudristek. (2022). *Merdeka Curriculum: A Transformative Approach to Higher Education in Indonesia*. Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology.
- Kemendikbudristek. (2022). *Merdeka Curriculum: Strategic Directions for 21st Century Education*. Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia.
- Kolb, D. A. (2015). *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (2nd ed.). Pearson Education.
- Putra, E. R., & Mahardika, A. (2020). Industry-academia collaboration in English language education: The case of curriculum development in Indonesian higher education institutions. *Journal of Educational Development*, 12(2), 27-34.
- Putra, M., & Mahardika, P. (2020). *Enhancing the Relevance of Teaching Materials through Industry-Academic Collaboration*. *Journal of Educational Innovation*, 29, 27-36.
- Sari, D., & Pramesti, A. (2021). Bridging the gap: The role of industry-academic collaboration in enhancing English language proficiency for the workforce. *Indonesian Journal of Education*, 25(1), 70-75.
- Sari, D., & Pramesti, L. (2021). *The Gap Between Academic Learning and Industry Needs in English Education Programs: A Study on Graduates' Preparedness*. *Journal of Language and Education*, 13(2), 71-80.
- Sari, N. W., & Pramesti, D. A. (2021). Kesiapan lulusan program studi pendidikan bahasa Inggris menghadapi dunia kerja. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra*, 9(1), 70–78.
- Yunita, A., & Kurniawan, B. (2023). Sinergi dunia kerja dan akademisi dalam penguatan kurikulum Merdeka Belajar. *Jurnal Kajian Kurikulum dan Pembelajaran*, 15(1), 40–50.
- Yunita, N., & Kurniawan, B. (2023). Challenges in sustaining industry-academic partnerships in Indonesian higher education: A study in vocational and teacher education programs. *International Journal of Education and Development*, 19(4), 42-50.
- Yunita, N., & Kurniawan, I. (2023). *Bridging the Gap: The Role of Industry-Academic Collaboration in Teacher Education Programs*. *Journal of Pedagogical Studies*, 45(1), 41-50.