

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents some points related to the study, such as background of the study, statement of research questions, purpose of the study, scope of the study, and significance of the study.

### 1.1. Background of the Study

In recent years, the pace of change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is moving rapidly toward various sectors of life, including the education sector (Schwab, 2017). How people communicate has changed drastically with the advent of emerging technology in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These developments have percolated into the classroom, modifying how students and teachers communicate. It has been globally understood that investing in the integration of 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills in the classroom has many benefits and effective communication skills are critical to that success (Bolstad, Gilbert, McDowall, Bull, Boyd & Hipkins, 2012). Kaburise (2016) also stated that communication skills have been identified as vital soft skills and a contributing factor to employability in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century. According to this, it is generally accepted that communication skills are a core essential of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills needed in this fourth industrial revolution and needed to be integrated into the classroom. However, there are still a limited number of studies that investigated how communication skills are integrated into the syllabus.

The “Three Rs” (reading, writing, and arithmetic) which are considered basic skills and the fundamentals of education during the last 50 years are no longer in line with the change in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century. This continuously evolving

the environment is characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity, or commonly named VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous) as cited in Johansen, 2007. It is known that because of such disruptive changes, future employment requires adapting to new knowledge and skills to prepare for the fourth industrial revolution (Schwab, 2017).

As citizens in this period, it is necessary to require some skills which are considered as the “21<sup>st</sup>-century skills” to continue to thrive and avoid being left behind. The Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century (2019) argues that students need three essential skills for facing the 21<sup>st</sup>-century, such as life and career skills (consist flexibility and adaptation, initiative and responsibility, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity and accountability, leadership and responsibility), learning and innovation skills (4Cs) (consist critical thinking and problem-solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity and innovation), and information, media and technology skills (consist information, media, and ICT literacy). In line with that idea, it has been shown that developing cognitive skills such as the ability to stop and objectively consider a conflict with another individual will enhance good interpersonal skills and decrease antisocial behavior (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor & Schellinger, 2011). Bedwell, Fiore, and Salas (2011) also stated that the cognitive skills required to process and interpret complex verbal and nonverbal messages, as well as formulate and express appropriate responses, help the interpersonal ability of successful communication as cited in National Research Council (2012). However, to have successful communication requires not only the ability to express thoughts and ideas

effectively but also the ability to listen and decipher context, as well as the ability to communicate effectively in diverse environments. To have communication skills, one must be able to use multiple media and technologies and be able to determine their efficacy, and know how to evaluate their effects as well as determine their efficacy a priori (Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century, 2019).

Furthermore, language education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century according to Eaton (2010), is no longer based on grammar, memorization, and rote learning, but rather on using language and cultural understanding to interact and engage with people all over the world. As a result, educators are being pushed to find ways to integrate these established skills into the lessons. In that way, students have enough time to practice and master these skills in the course of their daily routines. In response to this matter, prior studies have been conducted by some researchers regarding how communication skills are integrated into the syllabus. One such study is by Zuwanda, Sumarni & Sulistyaningrum (2021), which conducted a study that used qualitative descriptive method. Their analysis focused on designing life and career skills-integrated speaking syllabuses for English Language Education Study Program by conducting a need analysis of life and career skills, including oral communication skills, towards nineteen syllabuses for speaking courses from six universities in Indonesia. The findings reveal that life and career skills have been integrated implicitly and explicitly into speaking syllabuses and oral communication competence mainly appeared in course description, learning objectives, learning outcomes, materials, and teaching method.

Kaushal (2018) also did a study on integrating employability skills in engineering education, their analysis focused on the syllabus and teaching methods used in communication skills classes in the colleges. It was found that on reviewing the syllabi, most of the contact time was allotted to the theory of communication and very little activity or discussion, interaction time was reserved. In conclusion, the communication skills which are mostly taught to engineers through the chalk and talk method have failed to yield results. The researcher suggests some changes in the methodology of teaching communication skills to engineering students and the syllabus can be substantiated by some team-based activities like making a group presentation or a group discussion on some challenging topic.

Another study by Menggo, Suastra, Budiarsa & Padmadewi (2019) focused their analysis on the types of learners' target needs and learning needs for material development in the academic English-speaking course. The study used a questionnaire and in-depth interviews with 312 English department students from six universities in three Indonesian provinces. The study's findings revealed that the independent speaking task was necessitated by students (64,49%) and lack of vocabulary (32,69%). Moreover, communication and collaboration (39,10%) were students' wants towards course design whereas video was learning media input (38,46%). Discussion as procedure desired (37,50%), group work (37,82%) as a classroom setting, and active communicator (39,74%) as the learners' role. Students' wants strongly indicated that material design must be able to promote 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills.

However, even though there have been studies on EFL teachers' comprehension and implementation of 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills, there appears to be a lack of studies that investigate the integration of communication skills in the syllabus, despite their importance in the teaching and learning process. Zuwanda, Sumarni & Sulistyaningrum (2021) found oral communication competence mainly appeared in five components of syllabus, which are: course description, learning objectives, learning outcomes, materials, and teaching method. According to that, this study should investigate further in which components of syllabus that integrated communication skills in this "English in Public Speaking Discourse" syllabus. Moreover, Kaushal (2018) analyzed the syllabus made based on the teacher's thinking. It was stated that the most common method used for teaching communication skills was lecture mode due to a shortage of time and a lengthy syllabus. Meanwhile, this is contrary to the findings of a study from Menggo, Suastra, Budiarsa & Padmadewi (2019) which says that students need more practical learning methods. It is said that students want strong material design that must be able to promote 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills, including communication skills, such as speaking tasks, discussions, and group work. This gap has led the researcher to further investigate this study, especially in the "English in Public Speaking Discourse" syllabus at English Language Education Study Program Universitas Negeri Jakarta as the initial purpose of this study was conducted.

Public speaking is a vital means of communication, it is a part of talk as performance, which involves the aspect of audience and setting, structure construction, language formality, and method of delivery (Lucas, 2009). As



public speaking becomes required skill that every student should master as its essence for their future career, this study should further investigate whether this “English in Public Speaking Discourse” syllabus has met the ideal public speaking and integrated communication skills. Also, *Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia Nomor 3 Tahun 2020 Tentang Standar Nasional Pendidikan Tinggi* highlights the curriculum adjustment in order to integrate the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in all elements of course design in higher education. Hence, additional studies of the integration of communication skills as one of the core essential skills in the 21<sup>st</sup> century into the syllabus are needed.

### **1.2. Research Questions**

According to problems stated in the previous section, two research questions are formulated as follows:

1. To what extent are communication skills integrated into the “English in Public Speaking Discourse” syllabus at English Language Education Study Program Universitas Negeri Jakarta?
2. In which syllabus components are the communication skills integrated into the “English in Public Speaking Discourse” syllabus at English Language Education Study Program Universitas Negeri Jakarta?

### **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

In line with the statement of research questions, there are two objectives of this study as follows:

1. To find out the extent to which communication skills are integrated into the “English in Public Speaking Discourse” syllabus at English Language Education Study Program Universitas Negeri Jakarta.
2. To identify the components of “English in Public Speaking Discourse” syllabus at the English Language Education Study Program Universitas Negeri Jakarta that has been integrated into communication skills.

#### **1.4. Scope of the Study**

This study focuses on identifying the integration of communication skills in the “English in Public Speaking Discourse” syllabus at English Language Education Study Program Universitas Negeri Jakarta. Statements in syllabus components are used to highlight communication skills in the planned teaching-learning process.

#### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The result of this study is expected to be a great benefit to language teaching and learning in the context of English language education. This study was conducted to provide benefits in two aspects, theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the findings of this study are expected to be used as reference information of 21<sup>st</sup>-century learning in the language teaching sector and to shed insight on an area of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century learning discourse that has yet to be thoroughly investigated. Practically, this study could be used as additional insights to help with curriculum adjustments in English language education for the teachers and is also expected to lead further research and development programs in the field of 21<sup>st</sup>-century teaching and learning in the related field for other researchers.