CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the study, research questions formulated in the study, the purpose and the scope of the study, as well as the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Over the past decade, interest in 21th century skills have been growing because of internationalization and the globalization of the economy as well as the rapid development of ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) which constantly change the way the society lives, do their jobs and study (Voogt & Roblin, 2012). To survive the challenge of the 21st century, some skills are deemed as essential to possess. Education plays an essential role in developing skills, knowledge, and values in order to empower people to contribute to a sustainable future (OECD, 2018). With increasing attention to skills demanded for the knowledgeable society, schools and education system all over the world are urged to modify their curriculum (cf. European Commission 2002, OECD 2004, Voogt and Pelgrum 2005) to make sure students learned the skills. The skills required for education and the workplace in the present economy have been titled as the 21st century skills (Laar, et al. 2020), consisting of the 4C skills which are critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration. Furthermore, NEA (National Education Association) stated that 4C skills are considered as the future goal of education in order to raise proactive workers who are capable of working both in teams and individually in the future (Ula, 2019).

One of the many skills considered as the most imperative one is creativity, which is also dubbed as important to be successful in the 21st century (Kereluik et al., 2013). Oftentimes, creativity is defined as the effort on searching for new ideas, approaches or products which would match the world's needs. Creativity is one of the many elements included in innovation which is often defined as the fulfillment of new ideas to give a beneficial contribution towards a particular field (Ontario, 2016). Moreover, the 21st century demands a continuous innovation of new services, better progresses, and enhanced products for the world wide's global economy that these skills are now required in various career fields (Trilling and Fadel, 2009). A 2010 IBM study interviewed more than 15,000 CEOs from 60 countries and 33 industries, and found that creativity has been ranked the most important leadership quality in response to the world's increasingly complex and uncertain challenges (IBM, 2010). In the WEF Future of Jobs 2020 report, creativity and originality took part in the Top 15 skills in 2025. Specifically, in Indonesia, creativity skill is placed as the top list of the skills that are predicted to be high in demand (WEF, 2020, P. 83). It is suggested that creativity at school facilitates students through the unidentified situation to explore where there would be a diverse solution to consider where the ambiguity pressure is appreciated as a productive ground and where imagination is appreciated over repetitive knowledge (Upitis, 2014, p. 3). Having mastery over these skills will facilitate students in developing and implementing their ideas creatively, both individually or in a group (Prayitno, 2019). Researchers acknowledge that the need to engage in problem solving and critical and creative thinking has "always been at the core of learning and innovation". (Trilling & Fadel, 2009, p. 50). Creativity can be the most important skill that students must acquire in the twenty-first century, because it is compulsory to propose creative solutions to the many challenges which we face in the twenty-first century.

Countries have begun to pay attention to educational reforms around creativity (creative problem solving, creativity generation, design thinking, etc.)

and innovation. In 2008, the British secondary school curriculum was revised to emphasize creativity, and pilot projects began to measure their progress (Fadel et al., 2015). The European Union designated 2009 as the European Year of Creativity and Innovation, and started holding conferences and funding teacher training on problem-based and project-based learning methods. China has initiated a large-scale education reform, replacing the traditional rote teaching method with more problem/project-based learning methods (Bronson, 2010). Japan has begun to implement educational and economic reforms to solve its creativity problem (McCreedy, 2004).

Meanwhile in Indonesia, the government addresses challenges of the 21st century by continuously developing and innovating its curriculum to stay relevant to the demands of global education (Direktorat Pembinaan SMA, 2017). In the guide titled *Panduan Implementasi Kecakapan Abad 21 Kurikulum 2013 di SMA* issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture, there are several sections dedicated to helping senior school teachers integrate 21st century skills., in their lesson plans, learning activity, and learning assessment. Creativity becomes one of the skills that must be integrated into learning activity in order to meet the future needs and actualize Generasi Emas Indonesia Tahun 2045 (Kemendikbud, 2018).

According to NACCCE (1999) creative thinking skills are not subjects in the curriculum, but general functions of education. Creative thinking can and should be promoted in all areas of the curriculum and not just through so called 'creative subjects'. In line with this, Ariyana et al. (2018) stated that all school subject can be based on the 21st century skills framework, because the instruction of 21st century skills can generally be applied to every discipline. Which means English school subject is no exception. In fact, two of the key competencies in the 4C skills; creativity and collaboration, have been identified as key concepts of ELT by Oxford University ELT journals (Barfield, 2016; Maley & Bolitho, 2015).

There are various studies related to creativity and creative thinking. Karim et al. (2020) explored the six global competencies (6Cs)' level and profile

of 84 trainee teachers in Malaysian Teaching Training Institute. The teachers followed the implementation of NPDL (New Pedagogies for Deep Learning) as one of the recent pedagogical-centered scopes which improve both student-centered learning and other pedagogical elements all over the curriculum and between the disciplines. Karim obtained the required data by administering an online questionnaire and the result of comparison from his study showed that citizenship, collaboration, character skills and critical thinking are all beyond the norm. Meanwhile, both communication and creativity were shown to be under the norm. The findings demonstrated that NPDL has successfully improved four out of six global competencies of the trainee teachers, while the other two competencies were still requiring more attention for improvement in the future. Another study conducted by Borodina et al. (2019) who identified some elements of the manifestation of critical thinking among students while also investigating the dynamics of creativity among future teachers in the process of their professional training. Data from 390 respondents, which was acquired by implementing the method of J. Burner, became the fundamental resource of the discussion in this study. The study investigated the formation level of creative thinking in some Russian universities and later revealed that creative thinking at a high level was demonstrated by only a third of their respondents. On the other hand, the investigation of the dynamic of creative thinking manifestation among future teachers was conducted primarily on the basis of Kazan Federal University. Based on the questionnaire result and the discussion, the study revealed the dependency level of students' creativity in their academic courses as well as confirming the hypothesis which propounded that regular leisure reading of fiction books would also contribute to the increasing creativity level of future teachers.

One similarity between these two studies above is that they analyze whether or not a person already possessed creative thinking skills. Suto & Eccles (2014) argued that several skills might be too biased and ambiguous to be objectively measured. Both creative thinking and creativity could include every

sense (sight, touch, hearing, taste and smell) and is almost boundless which becomes a challenge to the precise definition. The skill itself might not be readily accessible but the products' quality and processes might be possible to assess.

Perhaps the study about the 21st century skills discourse which could be considered as the most relevant to the current study is conducted by Endang (2020), which investigates the incorporation of creative skill in English for the Popular Science Communication course at University Negeri Jakarta which focused on its syllabus and learning activities. In the syllabus, the students are required to think and put the ideas into a work and present it in front of the class. In learning activities, the lecturer triggers the students to be creative by asking several questions related to their work in order to help them deliver their ideas very well to the audience. Another study also carried out by Radifan & Dewanti (2020) who aimed to describe the extent of the incorporation of 4C skills in teachers' lesson plan at the level of senior high school. This study investigated further on how 4C skills were incorporated in the lesson plan and how each component in the lesson plan were incorporated with 4C skills. The result of Radifan's study showed that all lesson plans investigated have incorporated all four skills in 4C as well as problem solving and critical thinking. Some skills were established in all lesson plans despite the various topics employed in the lesson plan, while some others were more particularly incorporated in lesson plans with particular topic categories. By investigating several lesson plans, the study concluded that there are some components of the lesson plan that become the common part to incorporate the required 4C skills, which are competence achievement indicators, learning steps, learning methods and assessment.

Ahmed and Bonnie (2017) claimed that creativity could be learned and honed through different forms, and one of them would be through learning materials. Learning material is one of the equipment in learning which is constructed to assist the learning process (Amir, Muris & Arsyad, 2015). Learning

materials' existence could assist students in achieving their learning goals and the basic competencies. It is considered to be one of the essential elements in learning activity, specifically in the learning application which is advanced according to the needs of both teachers and students (Aisyi, Elvyanti, Gunawan, & Mulyana, 2013; Yuanita & Kurnia, 2019). Hence, learning materials would be capable of producing the capability that should be accomplished based on the learning competencies and objectives. It is mandatory for teachers to be capable in developing learning materials based on the relevant needs (Ariyani & Wangid, 2016).

Moreover, creativity can be learnt and fostered, and one of the ways to foster creativity in the classroom is by choosing the learning materials. The question to be asked is whether the learning materials in senior high school have incorporated creative thinking skills. The present study is focused on the incorporation of creative thinking skills in EFL materials for senior high school students. The aim is to find out whether or not creative thinking skill, as one of the essential skills in this era, has been incorporated in the learning materials for EFL students at senior high school level. This study also aims to describe ways creative thinking skills are incorporated in EFL learning materials for senior high school students.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the problem identified in the research background, the present study aims to answer the following question:

1. To what extent are creative thinking skills incorporated in EFL learning materials for senior high school students?
2. How are creative thinking skills incorporated in EFL learning materials for senior high school students?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purposes of this study are:

1. to investigate the extent of which creative thinking skills are incorporated in EFL learning materials for senior high school students; and
2. to describe ways creative thinking skills are incorporated in EFL learning materials for senior high school students.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on analyzing and describing how creative thinking skills are incorporated in EFL learning materials for senior high school students. The incorporation of creative thinking skills beyond the curriculum will not be covered in the study, which becomes its limitation. Aspects related to 21st century skills other than creative thinking skills may also be irrelevant.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Theoretically, this study is expected to be beneficial as a reference for future researchers focusing on the incorporation of the creative thinking skills or also another skill that is a part of 6C skills. This research also sheds light on an area of 21st-century teaching and learning that has yet to be thoroughly researched. Practically, this study may be useful for teachers, pre-service teachers, and English Language Education Study Program students by increasing their understanding about the incorporation of creative thinking skills in learning materials. In addition, the indicators of the creative thinking skills' incorporation will hopefully help teachers incorporate those skills in their selected learning materials.