

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the background of the study, the research questions, the purpose of the study, the scope of the study, limitation of the study, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

In this age, the world has entered the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which heralds a series of social, political, cultural, and economic upheavals that will occur over the 21st century (Schwab, 2021). The Fourth Industrial Revolution has brought changes in various aspects, one of them is education system (Lase, 2019). Fourth Industrial Revolution causes the world encounter VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) era, as cited by Johansen (2012). In anticipation of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the future work requires to adapt to new knowledge and skills in this disruptive era (Schwab, 2017). Helping students acquire 21st century skills is one way of facing the VUCA challenges.

Twenty-first century skills can be defined as any skills that are essential for navigating the twenty-first century. Individuals are increasingly required to learn new methods of working, living, learning, and thinking. They must learn new skills in order to use modern information-based work tools (Griffin, 2012). According to Partnership for 21st Century Learning, to prepare students' complex life and work environments in today's world, there are six learning and innovation skills: Creativity, Innovation, Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Communication, and Collaboration. And this study would focus on communication skills. Communication has been defined by Metusalem et al. (2017) in the context of 21st

century learning as a social process in which information is transmitted in order to establish shared meaning and to achieve desired outcomes. Moreover, as described by Lippl (2013, in Kivunja, 2015) and Piascik (2015 in Kivunja, 2015), the communication skill regards the understanding and sharing of ideas, thoughts, questions, and solutions. According to Richard (2005), communication skills could encourage successful social relationships and enable individuals to work effectively with others. Furthermore, explained by Partnership for 21st Century Skills that languages are used by students as effective communicators to engage in meaningful conversation, understand and interpret spoken language and written text, and present information, concepts, and ideas. The communication skill has been claimed as the most important of all life skills (Gerald, 2015, as cited in Kivunja, 2015, p. 228). According to National Education Association (2012), even though communication skills have always been valued in the workplace and in the public life, but in the twenty-first century, they have been transformed and are even more important today. Therefore, it is important to integrate communication in educational environments to prepare future generations for the 21st century.

The focus in language education in the twenty-first century is no longer on grammar, memorization and learning from rote, but rather using language and cultural knowledge as a means to communicate and connect with others all over the world (Eaton, 2010). Thus, the demand being put on educators is to discover approaches to infused these identified skills in their lessons so that students have an adequate amount of time to practice and master these skills in the course of their daily routines. 2013 Curriculum is targeted by the Indonesian government to achieve the competencies and characters needed in 21st century skills. Based on the

Ministry of Education and Culture (2013), 2013 Curriculum serves to prepare Indonesian citizens with both life skills as an individual and a citizen who is faithful to God, be productive, creative, innovative, and effective as well as contributive to society, nation, and world civilization.

To achieve the targets set by the Indonesian government through the 2013 Curriculum, this could be seen on the quality of the assessment instruments used by the teachers to assess students' abilities. As stated by Brown (2003), assessment is an ongoing process that encompasses a much wider domain. There are three aspects of the assessment of the 2013 Curriculum, namely aspects of knowledge, aspects of skills, and aspects of attitudes and behaviour. The assessment applied, based on Education and Culture Ministry Regulation 81A Year 2013 about the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum, is an authentic assessment, which according to Gulikers, et al (2004), this assessment expects students to think critically, analyze information, obtain new ideas, communicate, collaborate, solve problems, and conclude the information obtained. Therefore, to meet the requirements in the 2013 Curriculum, the assessment instrument designed by the teacher must be authentic. The assessment covered three aspects (knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviour) during the teaching and learning process.

Basic education in Indonesia is regulated in the Law article 17 on National Education System (No.20/2003), is stated that basic education consists of *Sekolah Dasar* (Elementary School) / equivalent and *Sekolah Menengah Pertama* (Junior High School) / equivalent. English is one of the compulsory subjects for Junior High School. However, English is not Indonesian students' first language.

According to Mariani (2010), using English to communicate is not easy if the

students' L1 is not English. Moreover, the students still have to achieve the standard competences as demanded by 2013 Curriculum (Jufri, 2016). In order to achieve the standard competences, the teachers must prepare relevant and authentic assessment instruments as required by 2013 Curriculum since those affected the success of 2013 Curriculum implementation (Indriyani, 2021).

According to Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture (No.24/2016), education in Indonesia uses Core Competence (KI) and Basic Competence (KD) of 2013 Curriculum as the standard competences. It aims to measure the ability of knowledge, skills, and attitudes and behaviour. Therefore, this study will look at how far communication skills as an important skill is infused in the assessment instruments used by teachers to assess students based on the current educational system in Indonesia.

1.2 Research Question

The problem of the research is elaborated in the following question:

1. What communication skills are relevant and potential to be developed for Junior High School students?
2. Which communication skills are infused in English language assessment instruments in Junior High School?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The study aims to analyze, formulate, and elaborate the relevant and potential communication skills proposed in the pertinent literature and references

in the language education and to find out the infusion of communication skills in the English Language assessment instruments used in Junior High Schools.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study was carried out based on an investigation of assessment instruments in order to analyze, formulate, and elaborate the relevant and potential communication skills proposed in the pertinent literature and references in the language education and to find out the infusion of communication skills in English Language assessment instruments of some Junior High Schools. The assessment instruments used as research objects are daily exercises or quizzes, daily exams, midterm exams, end-of-semester exams, and school exams of Junior High Schools in Jakarta and Depok. The focused of this study is limited to the communication skills only in assessment instruments.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

This study does not meet the requirements of the triangulation by Creswell to determine the truth with questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis. Researchers only use document analysis due to it will be quite a long work and therefore will not be feasible for the researcher. Concerning the limitation that the researcher has, the researcher is going to conduct research that only focused on communication skills on assessment instruments for Junior High Schools, as well as revealing potential communication skills to be developed for Junior High School students. Hereinafter, other researchers are expected to be able to accomplish this study with questionnaires and interviews.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to provide benefits both theoretically and practically for the field of language teaching. Theoretically, this study contributes to the knowledge of communication skills on assessment instruments in foreign language classes and as a source of ideas for infusion of communication skills as one of the 21st century skills in English language assessment instruments for all teachers and pre-service teachers in Indonesia. This study also sheds insight on an area of 21st-century learning discourse that has yet to be thoroughly investigated. Practically, this research will help teachers in developing English assessment instruments by infusing 21st century skills, especially communication skills. The result of this study is also expected to pioneer a further research and development program of integrating 21st century skills into teaching and learning process in English language context.



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