CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The first chapter provides general outlines of the study. It covers the background of the study, research questions, objectives of the study, scope of the study, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Mastering speaking skills holds significant importance for many students, as it is often perceived as a key indicator of language learning success (Bailey & Kathleen, 2020). However, not all students possess the ability to speak spontaneously and fluently. This issue is particularly prominent in the Indonesian context, where a significant number of graduates struggle to speak English fluently despite studying the language for six years during their junior and senior high school education (Lumettu & Runtuwene, 2018; Handayani & Rizkiani, 2019; Mukminin & Arif, 2015). One central issue related to unsatisfactory speaking skills is the speaking materials used in the classroom.

There is a growing body of literature investigating speaking materials, such as the one conducted by Palupi et al., (2019). They state that pupils find it challenging to comprehend spoken topics in textbooks. Besides, in her study, Surtikanti (2014) discovered that the existing book being utilized in instruction failed to provide conversation models that encompassed both transactional and interpersonal discourse, as well as spoken descriptive prose. Further, a content analysis study was conducted by Suryanti & Ratmanida (2019). They revealed that the speaking materials do not adequately support inspiration, imagination, creativity, and cultural sensitivity to satisfy learners with moments of inspiration, imagination, creativity, and sensitivity; they also lack spoken language characteristics, communication function and strategies, and a variety of speaking materials. Many of the speaking materials are, at the very least, insufficient, and frequently deceptive and empowering, failing to give second-language speakers representations of conversational data or efficient methods for promoting spoken English communication ((Burns, 1998). This demonstrates the need to develop speaking

material that provides second-language speakers with practical resources that enable them to acquire conversational skill and employ highly effective techniques for enhancing their spoken English communication skills.

Several research studies have been undertaken to address this issue and find solutions. Fauzan (2014) points out that by developing speaking materials, students can improve their speaking skills. Therefore, the researcher conducted an investigation into the development of speaking materials for university students studying English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The outcomes demonstrated that the students were capable of initiating, maintaining, and advancing conversations in English. However, certain issues were identified concerning the effective implementation of the speaking materials. It was observed that certain topics presented a considerable challenge for the students, as they were unfamiliar with the foreign contexts associated with them. Additionally, some students exhibited dominant behavior, while others struggled to visualize the given topics effectively. To overcome these concerns, the author suggested the integration of more visual aids, such as pictures, to facilitate comprehension and foster greater engagement.

Further, Palupi et al., (2019) highlight that to make learning to talk independently easier, students should have access to an engaging speaking material textbook or program. The researchers designed the speaking material using the Communicative Language Teaching method to create a dependable resource for second-semester students in the English department. Consequently, there was a notable rise in student engagement, as they exhibited a keen interest in and derived pleasure from utilizing the speaking module.

Furthermore, Surtikanti (2014) undertook the development of video-based speaking materials designed to teach speaking skills in accordance with the curriculum for seventh-grade students. According to her findings, proficient speaking materials should encompass engaging and challenging tasks that offer learners additional opportunities to practice language usage. These resources should comprehensively address vocabulary, pronunciation, word order, proper grammar, and fluency aspects of speaking. Besides, the acquired information should be applicable as a communication tool in everyday life situations.

The aforementioned studies focused on the development of speaking materials in Junior High Schools and higher education levels. A noticeable gap exists in the research regarding the creation of speaking materials specifically designed for senior high school students. Besides, the developed speaking materials are predominantly limited to textbook formats. Due to the vital roles that learning materials play, it is critical that they are constantly developed in accordance with the newest trends and learner demands. Modern learners are often characterized as digital natives, adept at multitasking, and actively engaged in experiential learning. They heavily rely on communication tools, such as the Internet, both to acquire knowledge and to connect with others (Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005). Hence, it is crucial to develop learning materials that incorporate technology in order to cater to the needs and preferences of modern learners.

Some scholars have explored the incorporation of technology to create innovative and interactive learning environments that foster the development of effective speaking skills. In a study conducted by Syafiq et al. (2021), the impact of YouTube videos on students' speaking skills during the online learning phase of the COVID-19 pandemic was investigated. The findings revealed a noteworthy improvement in students' motivation and interest in the speaking class. By combining spoken language with visual context, YouTube videos proved effective in helping students not only enjoy their English classes but also comprehend the content better. This, in turn, led to increased happiness and motivation to study the language.

Furthermore, Truong and Le (2022) emphasize the significant benefits of using videos for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students. They argue that videos provide opportunities for EFL students to enhance their vocabulary, grammar, and presentation skills. By observing and modelling the voice of native speakers, students can strive to imitate their pronunciation and strive to sound more like native speakers themselves. Moreover, videos help students grasp the most natural and effective ways of communicating in public. However, a common obstacle that arises is the issue of video duration. The utilization of digital tools or devices, while offering potential benefits, also brings about distractions that may

not align with the attention span of today's students. Consequently, there is a risk that students may quickly lose interest and become engaged in other activities (Gao & Yu, 2017). Therefore, it is essential to create concise yet meaningful videos in order to minimize distractions. By focusing on conciseness, the videos can effectively capture and maintain students' attention, ensuring that the content is engaging and impactful.

While existing studies have clearly established the way to motivate learners to actively speak through the development of the speaking materials, they have not addressed how learners nowadays absorb all the abundant information. Due to the limited capacity of the human brain in this technological advancement, learners cannot memorize an infinite amount of information. Therefore, breaking down information into manageable pieces becomes crucial, and this aligns with one of the fundamental characteristics of microlearning.

The use of short, bite-sized learning content allows students to direct their attention to one specific piece of information at a time (Drakidou, 2018; Major & Calandrino, 2018; Nilsson, 2021). This approach effectively prevents distractions and ensures that students do not feel overwhelmed during the learning process. By breaking down the information into small, manageable portions, students can maintain focus, absorb the material more effectively, and achieve better learning outcomes. Consequently, the development of concise and engaging technology-based learning materials, aligned with the principles of microlearning, emerges as a favorable solution.

Further, speaking is one of the ways of communication, which is one of the skills required in the 21st century. Kaburise, (2016) emphasizes the significance of communication skills as crucial soft skills and a determining factor for employability in the modern era. Communication skills encompass the ability to express ideas clearly through verbal, written, and nonverbal means, actively listen to understand the meaning, employ communication to inform, advise, inspire, and persuade, utilize various media and technologies, and interact effectively with others in diverse contexts (Trilling, 2009). The importance of communication skills is widely recognized, leading to their integration into educational settings. (Radifan

& Dewanti, 2020) shed light on the integration of communication skills within senior high school English lesson plans, specifically focusing on the elements of lesson plans that incorporate these skills. Similarly, Kaushal (2018) conducted a study on integrating employability skills, including communication skills, into engineering education. The study examined the curriculum and instructional techniques employed in communication skills classes in colleges. Furthermore, Utami & Sulistyaningrum (2022) explored the inclusion of communication skills in the syllabus. However, less emphasis has been placed on incorporating communication skills into learning materials.

Based on the studies discussed previously, it is concluded that there is a need to provide English learning materials that are suitable for modern learners with the incorporation of skills needed in this era. Therefore, this study aims to design microlearning-based and communication skills-integrated English learning materials for speaking for eleventh graders.

Microlearning utilizes recent web technologies as well as emerging e-learning and educational technology developments (Allela, 2021) and is beneficial for students as it promotes active learning and student-centered learning ((Leong et al., 2021; Tolstikh et al., 2021; Mohammed et al., 2018). Because of the features offered, students can choose their own learning pace when using the microlearning approach. They can access the material whenever they choose and at their own speed. Moreover, in this technologically advanced period where information is abundant, microlearning with its bite-sized chunks and brief learning exercises supports students to lessen the cognitive load and boost the transfer of short-term to long-term memory (Corbeil et al., 2021) as small, concentrated chunks of knowledge are better retained and absorbed than larger, more comprehensive chunks of knowledge (Allela, 2021).

Numerous studies have explored the benefits of microlearning across various contexts. For instance, Gagne et al. (2019) conducted a scoping review focusing on the use of microlearning as a pedagogical technique in training healthcare professionals. The findings suggested that microlearning can improve performance and enhance safety in clinical environments. It allows students to

revisit challenging material multiple times, ensuring comprehension and mastery of new or complex processes in clinical education. Similarly, Polasek & Javorcik (2019) conducted a study on computer architecture and found that microlearning enables more effective learning by encouraging students to learn from their mistakes. Furthermore, Nieves and Moreno (2021) aimed to enhance the teaching and learning processes of mathematics using microlearning with a group of ninth-grade students. The study revealed that microlearning facilitated gradual improvement in students' critical thinking skills and fostered independent development. Moreover, microlearning has also been employed in the field of English language teaching and learning, as demonstrated by studies conducted by Hosseini et al. (2020); Fedorova et al., (2022); Tolstikh et al., (2021). These studies highlight the positive impact of microlearning on students' language proficiency. In summary, microlearning has been associated with improved performance, enhanced learning outcomes, and independent skill development.

Following a comprehensive review of the existing literature, it is evident that further research is required on the application of the microlearning approach in the development of language materials, especially concerning its integration with the added value of communication skills as essential 21st-century competencies within the senior high school setting. Therefore, this research aims to conduct a research and development study on designing microlearning-based and communication skills-integrated English learning materials for speaking for eleventh graders.

1.2 Research Questions

1. To what extent are the existing learning materials based on microlearning and integrated with communication skills?
2. How is the procedure of designing microlearning-based and communication skills-integrated English learning materials for speaking for eleventh graders?
3. How is the design of microlearning-based and communication skills-integrated English learning materials for speaking for eleventh graders?

4. How are the validity and employability of microlearning-based and communication skills-integrated English learning material for speaking for eleventh graders?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

According to the problems of research, the purposes of research could be outlined as follows;

1. To explore how the existing English learning materials for speaking for eleventh graders are based on microlearning and integrated with communication skills.
2. To describe the procedure of designing microlearning-based and communication skills-integrated English learning materials for speaking for eleventh graders.
3. To describe the design of microlearning-based and communication skills-integrated English learning materials for speaking for eleventh graders.
4. To measure the validity and employability of microlearning-based and communication skills-integrated English learning material for speaking for eleventh graders

1.4 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on designing microlearning-based and communication skills-integrated English learning materials for speaking for eleventh graders. It outlines the production of a series of learning materials for eleventh graders for speaking for EFL students in a senior high school context by adopting all the principles of microlearning, integrated with communication skills values. In designing the English learning material for speaking, the researcher referred to *Capaian Pembelajaran* set by the government and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) as a standard suggested by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology. In addition, this study used the research and development, the ADDIE model, as the research design. The model comprises five steps, they are analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation.

1.5 Significance of the Study

It is expected that this study will be insightful and contribute to improving the quality of instruction throughout the teaching and learning process theoretically and practically. The results of this study may be used as guidance for further research, especially in material development study and research and development. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute to the literature on the microlearning approach in English language education in Indonesia as the topic has lately been emerging. Practically, this study can assist English teachers in creating lessons that are personalized to the needs of their students who are digital natives. As a result, students might get the benefit of utilizing English learning materials for speaking in a bite-sized which can be learned anytime, anywhere.

1.6 Key Terms

The followings are the key terms covered in this study, and they will also be briefly described to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research focuses.

- Microlearning
  The word "microlearning" in this study refers to a learning method that uses technology and digitalization in the most effective way possible. With its smaller chunks, this method can enhance students' learning retention. Besides, it is particularly accessible to pupils because it is practical, making learning possible at any moment.
- Communication Skills
  Communication skills are one of the skills required in the 21st century. Communication skills mean the ability to effectively convey messages, ideas, or thoughts from the speaker to the intended audience.
- English learning materials for speaking
  English learning materials for speaking are essential resources that support second language speakers in acquiring and developing their conversational skills and spoken communication in English. These materials serve as a means to provide learners with depictions of real-life conversational data or effective strategies that facilitate effective spoken communication.

- Eleventh Graders

  In this research, the term 'eleventh graders' are students in the middle year of senior high school who are usually between the ages of 16 and 17.