

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the explanation about the background of the study, research questions, objectives of the research, scope of the research, significance of the research, key terms, and state of the arts.

### 1.1 Background of the Research

In recent years, technological innovation and the pervasive impact of social media have drastically changed how modern learners consume information. These learners known as digital natives, typically marked by their heavy reliance on mobile devices and social media, demonstrates short attention spans (Almazova et al., 2018; Donahue, 2016; Nikkhoo et al., 2023). Traditional, long-form teaching methods struggle to capture and keep interest among these students who prefer quick and easily consumable content. This mismatch is further exacerbated by the massive amount of content available online, which leading to cognitive overload and makes it difficult for students to find and prioritize pertinent information (Filipe, 2020; Sewell et al., 2020). In addition, the COVID-19 epidemic accelerated these shifts, as education systems around the world transitioned to online and hybrid models, exposing the limitations of traditional methods (T. Wang et al., 2021; Widayanti & Suarnajaya, 2021). Consequently, there is a greater demand for instructional solutions that address these emerging learning preferences.

In response to these changing dynamics, microlearning has emerged as a significant trend in education, offering a solution that aligns with the habits and preferences of modern students. Microlearning deliver content in short, focused bursts, often through mobile apps, catering to those who prefer quick, digestible pieces of information (Bannister et al., 2020; Skalka, 2021). This approach reduce cognitive overload by breaking down complex information into easy-to-understand pieces, making it highly effective for learning (Javorcik, 2021). In

addition, Samala (2023) found that microlearning improves focus and reduces distractions, making it ideal for students who struggle with long-term concentration. Prior studies have demonstrated that incorporating microlearning into educational settings can help students remember what they have learned, keep them more engaged, and boost their confidence across various subjects (K. Leong et al., 2021; Sankaranarayanan et al., 2022; Shatte & Teague, 2020). This innovative approach accommodates flexible, self-paced learning, making it well-suited for meeting the demands of quality learning in the digital age.

In language education, microlearning has demonstrated significant effectiveness (Fedorova et al., 2022; Patrika Rizal et al., 2022). Language acquisition, which relies on consistent practice and repetition, is significantly enhanced by microlearning's brief, targeted lessons (Ichiuji, 2022). Studies in mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) indicate that learners achieve significant advancements when educational content is delivered in small, accessible modules that can be accessed anytime and anywhere (Fang, 2018; Nikou, 2019; Zhen & Hashim, 2022). Furthermore, Barus (2023) highlights that microlearning can be effectively incorporated into diverse English language teaching contexts, such as English for specific purposes and college English courses, thus meeting the distinct needs of various student groups. This statement is supported by Tolstikh et al. (2021) who examined microlearning in the context of teaching English to engineering students in Russia, finding that it positively impacts student learning, comprehension, and motivation. These studies collectively demonstrate the potential of microlearning to improve English language learning results and meet the various demands of students in higher education settings.

The efficacy of microlearning in improving language-learning outcomes highlights its ability to address specific language issues that students encounter. One of the most difficult is achieving fluency in English, which is critical to students' academic and professional success (Rao, 2019; Wayan Maba, 2023). Fluency in English has become an essential criterion in employment, as companies demand graduates with strong communication skills, particularly in global areas like business and education (Dewi, 2022; Rido, 2020; Setiawan, 2022). However,

despite having studied English for many years, many college graduates, especially those from non-English majors, experience difficulties in oral communication due to the heavy emphasis on grammar and written exercises in traditional materials (Hapsari et al., 2017; Mohd Amin & Abu Bakar, 2022; Ong et al., 2022). This is evidenced by a pilot study conducted at the Faculty of Economics and Business at a private university in Jakarta in May 2025, which revealed that limited vocabulary and pronunciation were their main challenges. These issues in line with Taufik Hidayat (Taufik Hidayat, 2024) observation regarding the negative impact on their self-confidence and participation in professional communication. The disconnect between classroom learning and real-world application often stems from a lack of opportunities to practice speaking in real-world settings. This issue is not adequately addressed by the current learning materials (Tantri et al., 2023). This gap emphasizing the need for more effective, practice-oriented learning materials.

Additionally, it is necessary that materials not only address linguistic competencies but also resonate with students' interests and real-world applications. Karya et al. (2022) notes that many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners face challenges in initiating conversations due to anxiety and uncertainty. By creating engaging and accessible materials, educators can help students overcome these barriers and foster a more conducive environment for speaking practice. Moreover, a study in the nursing context illustrates how students perceive the importance of English speaking skills for their professional development (Pebriano, 2023). This highlights the need for materials that not only teach language but also connect to specific fields of study, thereby reinforcing the practical relevance of English in students' future careers. By integrating professional contexts into learning materials, educators can better prepare students for real-world communication challenges.

Complementing the microlearning principle, digital flipbooks present a promising learning tool for interactive and multimedia-enhanced learning experiences (Melisa Allela, 2021). Digital flipbooks offer interactive and engaging experiences through multimedia elements, such as audio recordings, videos, and interactive exercises (Sa'adah et al., 2022; Sunnayah, 2021). The



visual and auditory features of digital flipbooks provide students with authentic language input and pronunciation practice hence it have the potential to improve learners' engagement, motivation, and retention of speaking skills. Moreover, digital flipbooks can be accessed on various digital devices, allowing learners to engage in flexible and self-paced learning (Azzahra & Prayogo, 2022).

Prior reseachers have proven the effectiveness of flipbook as digital learning tool in english language teaching. Purwaningsih et al. (2022) developed a prototype flipbook learning source for teaching English 'Simple Past Tense' specifically for junior high school students. The findings indicate that learning through this medium is feasible and can improve students' learning outcomes. Daud et al. (2022) for example, developed an interactive e-module for English Structure course in college classes. The implementation has gained positive feedback from students since it accesible anywhere and anytime using their mobile phones.

Additionally, to fully prepare students for the demands of the 21st-century workplace, it is crucial to integrate collaboration skills into English-speaking materials (Menggo et al., 2019a). Collaboration skills, a critical component of 21st-century skills, enhances not only communication abilities but also teamwork, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills, which are highly valued by employers (Hidayati et al., 2020; Sudinpreeda et al., 2020; Winaryati & Munsarif, 2021). By embedding collaboration activities into the learning process, educators can provide students with opportunities to practice English in group settings and collaborative projects, mirroring the real-world contexts where these skills are applied (Ong et al., 2022). This approach ensures that students are not only improving their language proficiency but are also developing the soft skills necessary for success in a globalized workforce.

Reviewing previous research by Ahmad & Yunus (2019) found that using collaborative learning in the English college classroom has lowered students' inhibitions and anxiety which lead to the improvement of student speaking skills'. It is agreed by Ayyub et al. (2021) who employed collaborative learning to teach speaking in English department class. He stated that students

demonstrated significant achievement in improving their speaking accuracy and fluency using collaborative learning activities. Collaborative activities, such as group discussions, role-plays, and project-based tasks, provide opportunities for learners to practice and refine their speaking skills in real-life contexts (Hendarwati et al., 2021; F. Wang et al., 2019). Through collaborative interactions, learners can learn to negotiate meaning, express opinions, and develop cultural awareness, which are essential components of effective spoken communication in English (Badr, 2020; Endah Widyastuti, 2021; Malik & Ubaidillah, 2021).

Recognizing the potential of microlearning flipbook-based English speaking learning materials infused with collaboration skills, this research endeavors to design targeted resources to address the specific needs of non-English major students in higher education. By embracing microlearning's advantages, while incorporating interactive and multimedia features in digital flipbooks, learners can access authentic language input and pronunciation practice, leading to improved speaking skills. Furthermore, the integration of collaboration skills will empower learners to engage in authentic language practice, negotiate meaning, and develop cultural competency, thus bridging the gap in English language learning materials and nurturing students' language proficiency for academic and professional success in the 21st century. In summary, the benefits of microlearning, the existing problem of English proficiency in speaking among non-English major students, the versatility of digital flipbooks, the need to infuse collaboration skills, and the urgency to design learning materials that combine all these elements provide a strong rationale for exploring innovative approaches in English language education. Hence, the researcher would like to design microlearning flipbook-based and collaboration skills-infused English speaking learning materials for non-English major students.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

The research question for this study is broken down into four smaller questions, which are listed in the section below.

1. To what extent do the existing English speaking learning materials for non-english major students employ microlearning and infused with collaboration skills?
2. How is the process of designing microlearning flipbook-based and collaboration skills-infused English speaking learning materials for non-English major students?
3. How is the design of microlearning flipbook-based and collaboration skills-infused English speaking learning materials for non-English major students?
4. How is the readability and employability of microlearning flipbook-based and collaboration skills-infused English speaking learning materials for non-English major students?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

In line with the question of the research, the objective of this research are:

- 1) To analyse how the existing English speaking learning materials used by non-English major students employ microlearning and infused with collaboration skills.
- 2) To describe the procedure of designing microlearning flipbook-based and collaboration skills-infused English speaking learning materials for non-english major students.
- 3) To design microlearning flipbook-based and collaboration skills-infused English speaking learning materials for non-english major students.
- 4) To measure the readability and employability of microlearning flipbook-based and collaboration skills-infused English speaking learning materials for non-english major students.

### **1.4 Scope of the Research**

This study focuses on designing microlearning flipbook-based and collaboration skills infused English-speaking materials for non-English major students in an Islamic-based university. The scope is intentionally delimited to ensure alignment between pedagogical objectives, media format, learner characteristics, and language needs. The limitations are framed as follows:



- First, although flipbook is used as the primary platform for presenting the microlearning object materials (MCLOM), the study does not restrict content to static formats. Instead, the flipbook is utilized to its full potential by embedding short videos and podcast episodes (Andini et al., 2018). However, materials that demand direct interaction (e.g., real-time polling) or are based on advanced technologies, such as Augmented Reality (AR) or 3D models, are excluded due to the technical limitations of the flipbook.
- Second, the collaboration skills infused into the materials are selectively chosen based on their pedagogical relevance to speaking skills such as peer feedback, group discussion, and role-play. This focus aligns with findings that speaking development benefits from collaborative learning experiences (Negara, 2021). This study excluding collaborative essay writing or peer editing of written paper.
- Third, this study specifically targets students from the Faculty of Economics and Business in Islamic based University. This group presents distinct learning needs compared to students from science or humanities backgrounds. They require communication strategies relevant to business contexts. Thus, vocabulary development and speaking tasks are tailored to support domain-specific fluency and workplace readiness (Solehan et al., 2021).

### **1.5 Significance of the Research**

This study presented an enormous chance to expand the understanding of microlearning and collaboration skills, especially collaboration skills in microlearning-based English-speaking materials, for non-English major students. The research is expected to contribute to both the theoretical and practical areas of the educational profession.

- 1) Theoretically, it should describe how microlearning and collaboration skills were designed and integrated into English-speaking materials for non-English major students. For other researchers, the study can construct on current data to give new research, as well as promote future research in

the microlearning area so that other researchers interested in carrying out the study can use the results as a reference.

- 2) The study can help students who use microlearning-based speaking techniques improve their learning experiences. Furthermore, it is expected that the 21st-century skills required in the workplace, which place a significant emphasis on building collaboration skills, will be successfully incorporated into the way students study. Meanwhile, teachers can use the study's findings to design microlearning-based learning activities that enhance 21st-century competencies while teaching and learning speaking skills. Teachers serve as coaches and facilitators of inquiry and reflection, therefore providing them with references and information on how to apply the learning paradigm might be beneficial.

### **1.6 Key Terms**

The following are the primary terminology utilized in this research, which will also be briefly defined to provide a larger picture of the research's focus:

#### **1) Microlearning**

Microlearning is an approach to learning that focuses on short-term activities and small units of information that can be integrated into daily routines (Hug, 2005). Hug emphasizes that microlearning supports iterative and flexible learning through digital media, such as text messages, short videos, and mobile applications. Torgerson (2021) defines microlearning as "the delivery of concise, focused information, typically two to eight minutes in length, designed for rapid, personalized consumption through digital technology." She emphasizes the importance of "snackable" and user-needs-based design.

#### **2) Flipbook**

Perdana et al. (2021) mentioned digital flipbooks as interactive learning media that present material in various formats, including text, images, videos, and animations. They allow material to be delivered in a systematic



and attractive manner and can be accessed through various devices, making them suitable for independent and flexible learning.

### 3) Collaboration Skills

Collaboration is the process and structure that enables individuals to work together to achieve a common goal (Saroinsong, 2023). Effective collaboration includes open communication, shared decision-making, and mutual trust. Furthermore, Alozie et al. (2023) emphasized that collaboration skills entail sharing responsibilities, resolving conflicts, and making collective decisions. The researchers identified shared goals, mutual participation, and accountability as important elements of successful collaboration.

### 4) English Speaking Learning Materials

According to Richards (2001), these materials include resources designed to improve students' speaking skills. Examples include pronunciation exercises, dialogues, and interactive communication activities. These materials should be contextual, communicative, and relevant to students' needs. In addition, Heaton as cited in Menggo et al., (2019b) emphasizes that speaking materials should address aspects of accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility and enable students to express ideas spontaneously and meaningfully.

### 5) Non-English Major Students:

Nuraini, (2023) defines non-English majors as students who do not major in English but still need English skills to support their studies and careers. Fu et al., (2021) adds that these students often face challenges in acquiring English due to their non-language-focused academic background. Thus, learning strategies and motivation become important factors in their success.

## 1.7 State of the Art

A review of previous studies reveals that several innovative approaches to enhancing English-speaking skills have been developed. These approaches include the use of microlearning, flipbook media, collaborative skills, and material design for non-English majors. However, integrating these four aspects into a contextual, flexible approach to learning English speaking that suits the characteristics of economics students from Islamic-based universities is still very limited.

First, Microlearning has been recognized as an effective approach in delivering learning content in a concise, focused and accessible manner (Mellisa Allela, 2021). This is evidenced by Gao et al. (2023), who demonstrated microlearning effectiveness to increase learners' motivation and oral proficiency by using TikTok in MICE education. Second, Flipbook can integrate text, audio, and video and provide access on various devices (Perdana et al., 2021). It is proven by Sa'adah et al. (2022) who successfully boost students' engagement by implementing digital flipbooks to facilitate formative assessment in English class.

Third, collaborative language learning has been shown to support speaking fluency and social interaction (Nugraha et al., 2022). This is supported by I Gede Astawa & I Ketut Ardiasa (2022) study used collaborative learning for Tourism students which was shown not only strengthens their English-speaking skills but also equips them with practical, job-related competencies, making it an effective pedagogical strategy for vocational language training. Fourth, the needs of non-English major students, especially those in economics and accounting programs, are unique. They require speaking materials based on work contexts and professional presentations (Nuraini, 2023). Further, Nuraini explained that although students recognize the importance of English for their studies and careers, many have limited language proficiency and rely heavily on their lecturers. This emphasizes the importance of flexible, contextualized, and empowering learning approaches.

Thus, previous research has paved the way for innovations in microlearning, flipbooks, collaboration skills-based approach and non-english major students as target users. Specifically, there remains a gap in understanding how digital flipbooks can be enriched with microlearning object materials and infused collaborative activities to create a more interactive and engaging learning experience for non-english major students. This study aims to bridge that gap, offering a comprehensive framework that merges microlearning, digital flipbooks, and collaborative engagement to optimize English language instruction especially for non-English major students. This means that the materials are tailored specifically to the needs and interests of non-English major students, who may have different motivations and challenges when learning the language.

