

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presented background of the study, research problems, problem limitations, research objectives, and research significances. Background of the study describe the practical and theoretical context relevant to this study. The problem formulation section lists the two primary research questions derived from the background. The problem limitation defines the specific focus of the study. The research objectives concise statements that describe what are the goals of this research. Finally, the research significances section describes the advantages and potential impacts of conducting this study.

1.1 Background of The Study

The advent of technology has ushered in a period of disruption, evident in significant transformations across numerous sectors, particularly the tourism industry. To maintain excellence in the global era, the tourism industry must adapt to the ever-changing times and improve the quality of its services. However, the primary factor in enhancing services is creating highly skilled and readily employable workers. Vocational education is crucial in preparing the younger generation with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel as skilled and proficient workers. Some expert have different opinions regarding vocational education as quoted from Cahyadi et al., (2022), Vocational education refers to an educational approach that aims to generate graduates who possess the necessary skills and abilities that align with the demands of the workforce. Some individuals also define vocational education as an educational curriculum that aims to equip

students with specialised knowledge, skills, and competencies for specific occupations (Bacca et al., 2015). Vocational education, as defined by several sources, primarily focuses on equipping graduates with the necessary skills and knowledge to successfully enter the workforce (Samani, 2018).

Vocational education is a component of the education system that equips individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in a specific occupation or professional domain. As a result, vocational teachers will instruct their students to become highly proficient in a specific skill. This will prepare them to enter the workforce upon graduation, including adapting to the challenges of the fourth industrial revolution and the demands of the 21st century (Sudjani, 2016 in. Meanwhile, according to Mingaleva & Vukovic, 2020; Patacsil & Tablatin, 2017; Saifurrahman et al., (2021) Vocational education defined as an instrumental in preparing individuals for the workforce by acquiring the necessary skills through professional development and enhancing the abilities of students, enabling them to enter the industry directly (Rosantono et al., 2021:582). Based on the review above, it can be concluded that vocational education is education that aims to prepare students to become competent, skilled and work-able workers.

The tourism studies program in vocational education offers promising career opportunities because of Indonesia's abundant appeal and natural beauty. Students will acquire comprehensive information and skills related to the tourism business, with a particular emphasis on developing effective communication abilities. A Guest Relations Officer (GRO) plays a crucial role in the tourist industry. The front office department includes a division known as the guest

relations officer (GRO), whose primary role is to ensure guest satisfaction and provide necessary information. In addition to ensuring guest comfort, the GRO is also responsible for assisting guests with inquiries, such as providing recommendations for tourist destinations or facilitating the booking of plane tickets for departure. Due to the high volume of hotel guests, there is a corresponding increase in the number of guests seeking assistance from the guest relations officer. Consequently, some guests may become frustrated while waiting for their turn to receive information. Guest relations officers are obligated to consistently exert their utmost effort and ensure the provision of comfort to hotel guests. Guest relations officers are required to possess the ability to offer hospitality to all hotel visitors (Yulanda & Putri, 2017:21). Thus, GRO, or Guest Relations Officer, is an employee responsible for delivering assistance and support to hotel customers, commencing from the moment of arrival till leave. The GRO is expected to deliver optimal service, particularly by maintaining exceptional communication with visitors. Hence, it is crucial for students to acquire proficiency in GRO-related content, particularly in the domain of communication.

Vocational education learning in Indonesia still uses a simple method, namely textbooks. Valverde et al., (2002: 2) define textbook as a things. A lot of people have the chance to look at and understand (or not understand) these parts of learning. They are the tools that are most closely linked to teaching and learning in most schools. The ideas behind education policy are broken down into steps that teachers and students can follow in textbooks. These people are supposed to be the link between the goals of the people who make education

policy and the goals of the teachers who teach. The exact role they play as mediators may vary depending on the country, school system, and classroom. Their significant importance stays the same (Okeeffe, 2013:2).

Nevertheless, employing this approach is unsuitable for education that focuses only on GRO. This study aligns with Robb (2019:6) assertion that one drawback of using textbooks in education is reduced comprehension, particularly in relation to the limited growth of interpersonal skills. In addition, there are numerous students enrolled in tourism studies programmes who possess poor interpersonal skills, which consequently affects their ability to effectively communicate with guests or clients. Effective communication encompasses more than just verbal language abilities, it also includes other modes of communication, such as verbal and non-verbal communication. As a result, multimodal literacy acquisition is critical for individuals in the tourism industry to improve their level of expertise. Jewitt (2009:15) argues that multimodality posits that all modes, including language, have been influenced by their cultural, historical, and social contexts in order to fulfil societal purposes (Kustini et al., 2020:39). In simple words, multimodal literacy refers to the ability to understand and use all forms of media as a communication tool. If related to the context of vocational education, this ability is very important for developing interpersonal skills.

Considering the importance of communication science for the world of tourism, there are many previous studies that discuss the same things as those carried out by Makhroji et al., (2023) and Surahman et al., (2023). Makhroji et al., (2023) who conducted “*Development of E-Module Based on Flip Book Media to Improve Students’ Speaking Skills*”, the objective of this research is to enhance

the speaking abilities of students by creating e-module teaching materials that are based on Flip Book media. This research helps create engaging speaking learning medium. However, several shortcomings can inform future research. It is said that the N-Gain score shows a speaking improvement, however it does not specify the score or how it is interpreted. Previous study does not specify whether the e-module has video or audio. Previous research discussed little about non-verbal communication, even though in the world of tourism it is very important. This study does not examine how long-term e-module use affects student motivation and learning independence. The study only included Samudra University students, thus generalizations must be made.

Next, Surahman et al., (2023) under the title “*Flipbook Maker Based E-Module Development Design in Thematic Learning in Elementary School*”. The aim of this research is to develop an e-module design using a flipbook maker for students in basic education, which will be used to increase student learning achievement. On the other hand, this research has a weakness, namely that there is no effectiveness of the e-module on student learning outcomes, so a trial is needed. Thus, the flipbook for guest relations offered in this research is supported by a limited amount of information and materials that were not available in previous research. As previously said, the predominant method of learning in Indonesia relies heavily on textbooks as the primary source of material. However, textbooks are not particularly suitable for meeting the English language requirements, especially in the context of guest service.

In addition, the use of written materials in textbooks fails to incorporate multimodal literacy, despite the significance of GRO grasping and comprehending

diverse forms of communication media, such as verbal, non-verbal, and visual. Based on pre-research conducted by researchers, data was found that developing English language learning teaching materials in the tourism context is very necessary, especially for the D4 Business and Professional Communication study program at Ganesha University of Education. This is evidenced by the existence of textbooks that are not specifically designed as guest service fulfillment materials and the lack of use of multimodal literacy in such materials. So the development of this material is very necessary in order to fulfill job demands which require individuals to improve English communication skills so that they are able to understand and communicate with guests from various countries.

Presently, the tourism sector necessitates that all employees possess a high level of proficiency in English communication. This requirement stems from the fact that English is widely recognized as the international language and serves as a primary means of communication. Hence, the creation of English-language materials holds great significance, particularly within the realm of guest service. By utilising flipbooks, students can acquire English language skills specifically for the role of a GRO (Guest Relations Officer) in a highly engaging and interesting manner. In addition, flipbooks can be incorporated using other media formats, such as text, photos, audio, and video. Therefore, this can motivate students to enhance their comprehension of the notion of guest service and refine their communication skills comprehensively, encompassing both verbal and nonverbal aspects. Furthermore, it is anticipated that the creation of this flipbook can serve as a groundbreaking advancement in the field of English language education for GRO. Flipbooks can enhance students' multimodal literacy and

interpersonal abilities, enabling them to thrive in the professional realm.

1.2 Problem Identification

In order to create a competent and skilled guest relation officer, it can be supported by the provision of learning materials. One of the crucial aspects of instructional material development is multimodal literacy. Multimodal literacy is understanding and communicating meaning through written language, speech, music, gestures, and visual images. However, the current situation shows that using multimodal literacy-based learning materials to carry out learning is still a problem in vocational education. Apart from that, the current textbooks in printed learning materials are not designed based on student's needs, and the learning materials need to be adapted to the specific needs of students in the industrial field. This recent problem is also found in English for Business and Professional Communication (D4) at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha. The preliminary observation shows that the use of media only focuses on textbooks; multimodal-based learning tools are necessary. In reality, vocational education must focus on more complex teaching and not just on texts. Thus, the English for Guest Relation Officer learning materials need to be developed to enhance students' multimodal literacy.

1.3 The Limitation of Problem

This study is limited to developing supplementary English learning materials for guest relation officer. The limitations of this study are viewed from; the English materials needed, how the English materials are developed, and the quality of the developed product.

1.4 Research Questions

Regarding the identification of the problems above, the research questions for this study are as follows;

1. How is the flipbook developed for the English for Guest Relation Officer in English for Business and Professional Communication (D4) program at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha?
2. How is the quality of the flipbook developed in the course of English for Guest Relation Officer in English for Business and Professional Communication (D4) program at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha?

1.5 Research Objectives

Regarding to the research questions above, the objectives of the study are as follows;

1. To describe how the flipbook developed for the course of English for Guest Relation Officer in English for Business and Professional Communication (D4) program at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha.
2. To explain the quality of the flipbook developed in the course of English for Guest Relation Officer in English for Business and Professional Communication (D4) program at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha.

1.6 The Significance of Research

In general, there are two kinds of research significance that are expected to be achieved by this research, namely:

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

This research is expected to contribute knowledge regarding the development of Flipbook as learning material in studying the English for Guest Relation Officer at D4 English for Business and Professional Communication's students in Ganesha University of Education.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

a. For Researchers

This research is expected to add to previous multimodal literacy and flipbook research. Hopefully, these findings can become a reference for other researchers who will conduct similar research.

b. For Students

The research developing flipbooks as a learning material other than books is expected to increase interest and motivation to learn by utilizing the features of the flipbook. Thus, students' academic abilities increase.

c. For Teachers

Research using flipbook is expected to make it easier for teachers to deliver learning materials and assignments to students. Besides that, it is hoped that it can spur teachers to innovate in developing learning materials.