

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Tourism is a major industry in Indonesia, ranking fourth in foreign exchange earnings behind crude oil, natural gas, and palm oil. In Indonesia, tourism industry is a means of economic development that does not necessitate excessive long-term investment before providing benefits. In the coming years, it is predicted that the tourism industry in Indonesia will be the country's leading revenue power source, exceeding all other industries.

In recent years, tourism has been acknowledged as a major economic contributor in most destination areas. It boosts foreign exchange earnings, creates jobs, raises awareness, improves living standards, and enhances the image of these destinations. However, it is important to note that many developing countries benefit significantly from tourism without fully understanding its true economic impact (Okech, 2008 in Sharma, 2015).

Kim (2008) noted that a growing number of universities globally are placing greater emphasis on hospitality and tourism programs. The goal of tourism education is to train skilled professionals for the tourism and hospitality industries. Similarly, in Indonesia, tourism is the second most popular major at the Vocational High School (SMK) level. Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) indicates that around 83,000 students graduate each year from various majors, with tourism being a significant contributor.

Vocational high schools aim to prepare students for employment after graduation, ensuring they have mastered the required vocational skills and are ready to work in their chosen fields. According to the UU Sisdiknas (2003), vocational high schools are designed to equip students for jobs in particular disciplines. After graduating, vocational students must be prepared to enter the workforce and should possess certain specialized skills to complement their knowledge. The specific purposes of vocational high schools are to: (1) prepare students to become productive individuals who can work independently and fill mid-level job positions that align with their chosen skill programs; (2) equip students to choose a career, remain resilient and competent, adapt to various work environments, and develop a professional attitude; (3) equip students with knowledge in science, technology, and the arts to support their future development, whether independently or through higher education; and (4) prepare students with the competencies necessary for their chosen fields of expertise.

One of vocational high schools in Indonesia, especially in North Sumatera Province is SMKN 1 Medan that has several majors. One of the majors is Tourism Department. This major draws student interest because it equips graduates with skills to become tour guides, travel bloggers or vloggers, and professionals in the tourism and travel industry, and others. The curriculum focuses on subjects that support students' careers, particularly English. For instance, tour guides need to master English to effectively guide and inform tourists. Additionally, proficiency in English provides a significant advantage for graduates of the tourism department.

Concerning English instruction, the Minister of Education and Culture issued Regulation No. 68, 69, 10/2013, which outlines the basic competencies for

English. This regulation emphasizes that English teaching in vocational high schools (SMK) should prioritize the development of communicative competence. Graduates of vocational high schools are expected to be workforce-ready and competitive in the global industry, with proficiency in oral communication being a crucial requirement. Therefore, the objective of English education in vocational high schools is to equip students with the communication skills needed to use English effectively. To have effective oral communication, students should develop their speaking skills, as illustrated by tourism students. The tourism department requires that students enhance their oral communication skills- because, in the future, they must be able to interact orally with travelers, and others.

English has emerged as the universal language for business, technology, and academic discourse. As a worldwide phenomenon, the trend of English globalization necessitates communication with individuals from many languages and cultural origins and in a variety of circumstances. Most English speakers today reside in countries where it is taught as a foreign or second language, and it serves as the language of daily communication in these settings (Crystal, 1997). Effective communication is essential for accomplishing daily tasks and interacting with others. In English Language Teaching (ELT), effective communication is crucial for success, and speaking is recognized as one of the four essential language skills. As communication underpins interaction, the ability to communicate effectively is the most crucial skill. Modern education places significant emphasis on teaching students to comprehend and apply English in everyday contexts. To meet the goal of teaching English as a foreign language, teachers need to adopt innovative approaches. The role of educators in this domain

is multifaceted. For tourism students, developing speaking skills is particularly important due to its essential role in communication. Students in vocational high schools are urged to communicate effectively in English. According to Gebhard (1996), teachers need to focus on motivating students to engage in communication during English classes. Therefore, educators should incorporate authentic materials, media, and resources, and empower students to take ownership of their learning.

English Language Teaching (ELT) and technology are interconnected (Singhal, 1997), constantly influenced by global changes and advancements. In the realm of education, especially in the teaching and learning of English, technological advancements generate significant pressure to incorporate technology into classroom methodologies. UNESCO acknowledges that utilizing Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is a crucial strategy for achieving Education for All (EFA) goals (UNESCO-Ck.htm, 2005). The convergence of globalization, the worldwide dissemination of English, and technological advancements has profoundly reshaped the learning and teaching of English as a global language (Warschauer & Healey, 1988). According to Tsui and Tollefson (2007), English and technology are indispensable tools for global communication. Pelgrum (1996) argues that Technology is considered crucial for enhancing student learning. He also proposes that technology promotes collaboration among students, motivates them to take charge of their own learning, improves inquiry and communication skills, and creates environments that support critical thinking, decision-making, and problem-solving activities. The use of technology in the classroom can transform the classroom into an active, learner-directed environment. Alismail and McGuire (2015) stated that it is essential to assist students in utilizing the power of

technology to develop 21st century learning abilities. modern educational systems, technological devices are swiftly being incorporated into learning environments with the expectation that their utilization will enhance student learning and motivation (Aagaard, 2015). The evolution of the 21st century has influenced the roles of teachers. Bedford (2013) notes that technology specifically affects how teachers operate within the classroom. According to Chinaze (2016), teachers in the 21st century are expected to act as facilitators, lifelong learners, collaborators, and evaluators. Therefore, to be effective English teachers in the 21st century, educators must adapt by redefining and assuming a range of classroom responsibilities. Teachers use technology in their lessons to improve the learning experience. They make classes more interesting and relevant by utilising digital resources, interactive applications, and online platforms. Technology also allows teachers to differentiate education to meet individual students' needs.

Technology-enabled collaborative learning involves utilizing digital instructional materials. The evolution of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has introduced diverse forms of mobile learning media, such as e-learning, video conferencing, digital resources, and more (Wirasasmita & Uska, 2017). Digital teaching materials, developed as part of improved learning facilities and resources, are books designed using ICT to enhance classroom learning. Finita (2015) explains that digital teaching materials encompass not only text but also interactive media accessible to learners. Digital teaching materials have grown more interactive, integrating images, audio, video, and quizzes, presented in attractive color schemes and layouts that enhance interaction between teachers and students (Hwan, 2017; Jeong, 2013). Rachmah (2018) demonstrates that digital

teaching materials provide a richer reading experience through the inclusion of images, audio, videos, animations, and navigational aids that facilitate interactive simulations. Moreover, these materials provide flexibility since they can be accessed anytime and anywhere, stored conveniently on multiple devices, are eco-friendly (Sofyan, 2019), and can greatly improve learning effectiveness (Sukamin, 2012).

Therefore, it can be concluded that digital materials include interactive elements such as images, audio, video, and quizzes, with attractive layouts and color compositions that support interaction between teachers and students. Digital teaching materials enhance reading experiences with images, audio, film, animation, and navigation, stimulating interactive simulations. They provide flexibility, allowing access anytime and anywhere, easy storage across different devices, environmental friendliness, and potential efficiency in learning time.

To enhance tourism students' speaking skills, it is essential to furnish them with suitable digital teaching materials, which can greatly enhance the teaching and learning experience. Customized high-quality digital materials that cater to the specific requirements of students and reflect the unique characteristics of each study program will enhance learning results significantly. Therefore, it is crucial to innovate and develop digital speaking materials specifically designed for tourism students. In this study, Flip PDF Professional Software was employed for material development.

Flip PDF Professional Software converts printed books and materials into digital ebooks formatted as flipbooks (Hardiansyah, 2016). According to Amanullah (2020), digital flipbooks mark a notable advancement in learning

activities in the digital age. According to Watin and Kustijono (2017), Flip PDF Professional integrates multimedia components such as audio, animations, videos, and Flash. The resulting outputs are accessible in various formats including HTML5, EXE, Zip, Mac app, FBR, mobile types, tablets, and CDs (Sugianto, 2013). Ghaliyah (2015) observed that Flip PDF provides appealing features such as intuitive navigation, lifelike flip effects, immersive experiences, and high-quality video formats. Finita (2015) mentioned that Flip PDF Professional is useful for compiling and editing learning materials.

Using Flip PDF Professional Software, Rusmawati (2023) utilized Flip PDF Professional Software to develop electronic teaching materials based on the SAVI Approach, showing its effectiveness in improving students' problem-solving abilities in static fluid topics. Moreover, Rahman (2022) created a mathematics e-module using Flip PDF Professional software for algebraic expressions, confirming its usefulness and appropriateness for mathematics education in schools. Sriwahyuni (2019) employed Flip PDF Professional to develop electronic teaching materials focused on optical instruments, achieving a high validity score of 79.4% in total validity testing, indicating excellent quality and reliability.

Several studies have examined the application of Flip PDF Professional Software in education. However, to date, few researchers have specifically investigated its application in English language teaching and learning. Therefore, further research is needed to explore integrating Flip PDF Professional Software into English language education to promote 21st-century skills among students.

It can be seen that the referenced studies by Rusmawati (2023), Rahman (2022) and Sriwahyuni (2019) focus on science and mathematics subjects,

respectively. In contrast, this research conducted a research in English context especially for English speaking skills with the target is eleventh-grade students of tourism department. The referenced studies emphasize topics related to static fluid material, algebraic form material and optical instruments topic. In contrast, this research centers on developing digital speaking material which contains topic related to Tourism Department. These variations in content and educational achievements underscore a gap in the field, given the limited research on employing Flip PDF Professional Software to teach speaking skills at the eleventh-grade level within a tourism department.

Based on observations and interviews with the English teacher of class XI - UPW 1 at SMKN 1 Medan, several issues were identified during speaking lessons: (1) students' limited speaking proficiency; (2) lack of innovative speaking materials for the teacher. The initial problem arose from students encountering difficulties in speaking English. They had limited practice, lacked interest in learning the language, were passive during speaking classes, struggled with pronunciation, and found it hard to articulate their thoughts in English. As a result, students achieved low scores in speaking tests and failed to meet the school's minimum standard score (KKM) of 70.

From the researcher's observations at SMKN 1 Medan, data from class XI-UPW 1 regarding students' Speaking KKM revealed that their English-speaking proficiency is notably deficient. The English teacher highlighted the students' very poor speaking skills. This assessment is corroborated by the students' average speaking test score of approximately 56.42, indicating that overall, the class did not meet the KKM requirement.

This data is illustrated in the table below.

Table 1. 1 Average Score of 28 Students' English Skills

No	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
1	70.8	56.42	84.2	73.52

Source: Daftar Nilai Bahasa Inggris Kelas XI- UPW 1 Sem Ganjil 2023/2024 SMKN 1 Medan

During the educational process, several factors must be considered, including input, learning motivation, instructors, curriculum, teaching and learning activities, assessment systems, facilities, media, and materials. According to Faturahman (2007), teaching and learning activities encompass various components such as objectives, learning content, teaching methods, instructional tools, resources, and evaluation methods. Overall, educational relevance refers to the alignment or suitability of education with life's demands (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1997: 24). One aspect concerns the connection between education and the students' living environment, indicating that the materials provided should be relevant to their real-life experiences. This corresponds with the second issue identified: during classroom observations of the teaching-learning process, it was apparent that the teacher lacked innovative teaching materials. However, teaching materials constitute essential components of the learning process. The English teacher of class XI- UPW 1 used just a textbook which is published by Yudhistira. Unfortunately, the textbook titled "Talk Active – Senior High School/ Vocational High School Year XI" is intended for general use in both Senior High School and Vocational High School, as indicated on its cover. Moreover, the English speaking materials taught to students remain generic and do not align with the tourism program. For instance, in Chapter 3 of the book, the speaking materials focus on "asking and giving advice" with tasks such as discussing studying English and

interactions between doctors and patients. Similarly, Chapter 4 covers "asking and giving information" with tasks related to types of books students like to read. Chapter 6 addresses "asking and giving opinions" on topics such as teenagers' most significant issues.

These topics do not meet the specific needs of the students or their field of study, hindering Tourism students from improving their speaking skills efficiently. Given this situation, decisions must be made to develop digital speaking materials specifically for the second semester of Class XI in the tourism department. This initiative aims to provide effective support that addresses students' challenges in learning English, particularly speaking, which is crucial for their academic goals.

Learning components consist of various interconnected elements crucial to achieving educational objectives within the teaching and learning process. These components encompass teaching materials, media, evaluation methods, and strategies essential for effective learning.

All these elements play vital roles in the teaching and learning process, but currently, the use of teaching materials is considered especially crucial, even more so than the media, evaluation methods, and strategies employed by teachers, it can be seen that teaching material forms the foundation of what is being learned. It includes textbooks, lecture notes, articles, videos, and other resources that convey essential information and concepts to learners. Without appropriate teaching material, the learning process lacks substance and direction. Teaching material ensures that the content being taught is relevant to the learning objectives and goals. It provides structured information that aligns with the curriculum and educational standards, helping learners grasp essential concepts effectively. Teaching material

is often more accessible and consistent than media resources. Textbooks and written materials can be distributed to students in physical or digital formats, ensuring equitable access to content. Additionally, teaching material tends to be more consistent in quality and accuracy compared to media resources (Hattie, 2009).

Evaluation only takes the form of measuring students' level of success in learning. There are three interrelated things in learning evaluation activities, namely evaluation, measurement and tests. These three terms are often misinterpreted so that their meaning and position are unclear. Gronlund (1976) defined evaluation as a systematic procedure for gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data to assess the extent to which students have attained learning goals. Similarly, Hopkins and Antes (1990) described evaluation as an ongoing assessment aimed at gathering information about students, teachers, educational programs, and the teaching-learning process. This assessment helps determine the degree of student progress and the effectiveness of decisions related to student descriptions and program efficacy.

Similarly, the teaching strategies employed by teachers. In Indonesia, the learning strategy used is still a conventional model, which makes students as objects, not subjects. This model takes the form of educators being the central role in achieving learning outcomes and seems to be the only source of knowledge. This learning model generally limits every movement of students' space to be more active. This learning model assumes uniformity among all students, a concept known in education as standardization, overlooking the unique potentials and diverse needs of individual students. A learning system like this is also called a one-way learning system, because what we want to achieve is how educators can teach

well so that there is only knowledge transfer. Therefore, there is a need for improvements and changes in the educational process, one of which is by perfecting a more ideal learning situation. The learning dynamic, where initially the teacher had complete control, has evolved to empower students to take charge of their learning (Hammond, 2020). This shift enables students to engage more actively with learning tools and resources (Saputro, 2018; Hoidn, 2016), with the teacher assuming roles as facilitator, motivator, and evaluator. Implementing this new "student-centered" approach necessitates increased student interest and engagement in learning (Darsih, 2018), which can be fostered through a supportive learning environment, including effective use of teaching materials. Teaching material provides the foundational content upon which students build their understanding of a subject. As noted by Mayer (2005), well-organized instructional material aids in knowledge construction and retention, serving as a scaffold for learning. Engaging teaching material encourages active participation and engagement among students. As highlighted by the National Research Council (2000), interactive instructional materials stimulate student curiosity, promote exploration, and foster deeper understanding of concepts.

In the contemporary digital age, incorporating technology into education is essential. According to Alismail and McGuire (2015), enabling students to harness the potential of technology is crucial for cultivating 21st-century learning skills. Technological devices are rapidly being integrated into learning settings in modern educational systems on the basis that their use will increase student learning and motivation (Aagaard, 2015). Collaborative learning facilitated by technology involves utilizing materials during the learning process. Incorporating technology-

based materials can fulfill the requirements of 21st-century learning skills. One of the latest technology which can create teaching material is FLIP PDF Professional Software. Therefore, based on the explanation provided above, it can be stated that research concerning developing digital material through FLIP PDF Professional Software is urgent to be conducted.

Therefore, this study aimed to design innovative digital speaking materials tailored to the specific needs of tourism students in learning English. The goal is for these materials to engage students more effectively and alleviate boredom during English learning sessions.

This research was widely acknowledged for its innovation in the intersection of education and technology, showcasing how FLIP PDF Professional Software creates an interactive and engaging learning environment where students actively participate in the learning process. Then, tailoring the content to the specific needs of the tourism department is crucial. It's an innovative approach as it addresses the real-world requirements of students in this field, making the learning experience more practical and relevant to their careers. Then, focusing on speaking is directly relevant to the tourism industry, where communication and explanation skills are essential. This approach addresses practical skill development, which is an innovative approach in language instruction. This research became the real-world application to prepare students for their future careers by teaching skills that they will directly use in the tourism industry.

1.2 The Problems of Study

Considering the research background, the problems addressed in this study were formulated as follows:

1. How are the existing speaking materials for tourism department students of a vocational high school in Medan?
2. What relevant speaking materials are needed by tourism department students of a vocational high school in Medan?
3. How digital speaking materials through Flip PDF Professional Software are developed for tourism department students of a vocational high school in Medan?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

Aligned with the problems, the objectives of the study were:

1. to describe the existing speaking materials used currently by tourism department students of a vocational high school in Medan.
2. to investigate speaking materials which meet to tourism department students of a vocational high school in Medan.
3. to develop digital speaking materials through Flip PDF Professional Software for tourism department students of a vocational high school in Medan.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

This study was limited on the development of digital speaking materials tailored for eleventh-grade students in the tourism department, specifically those in class XI-UPW 1 at SMKN 1 Medan. The procedure of this research was limited to evaluating the current *Alur Tujuan Pembelajaran (ATP)* and materials, developed the digital speaking material based on students' needs, validated the developed digital speaking material, revised the developed digital speaking material and final product as developed digital speaking material. These digital speaking materials are employed for the purpose of teaching and learning speaking skills. This digital speaking materials were developed through Flip PDF Professional Software, and the researcher inserted the material that related to the tourism subject. Then the digital speaking materials were shared to the teacher.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

The results of this research were anticipated to be valuable in both theoretical and practical contexts.

1. Theoretically, this study aimed to contribute to the enrichment of theories related to English teaching and learning, particularly in the context of teaching speaking using Flip PDF Professional Software. It is expected to provide new insights into the development of learning materials for specific vocational fields and to advance theory in ESP (English for Specific Purposes).

2. Practically, this study has some conceptual contribution to:

- a. The researcher – to enhance their understanding by integrating English Language Teaching (ELT) and technology to meet the demands of 21st-century education.
- b. The English teacher – to be able to develop learning materials through Flip PDF Professional Software.
- c. The students of tourism department – This study offers pertinent materials aimed at reigniting students' motivation to enhance their English proficiency within their specialized skills, thereby expanding their knowledge and improving their speaking abilities. The digital materials are anticipated to boost students' motivation in learning English, particularly in speaking.
- d. Other researchers – encouraged to conduct similar studies focusing on different skills.