

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter specifically details a research statement to conduct a study of Design-Based Research (DBR) in one of the institutes of health in Cirebon Indonesia. Both global and local issues of hybrid learning or blended learning and English for Specific Purposes (ESP), particularly in English for nursing students, are presented as the focal point in section 1.1. To adequately address the issues, the aims of the study are made as provided in section 1.2. Some research questions are raised in section 1.3 probing for processes of designing, implementing, and evaluating an ESP course for nurses with hybrid learning. A brief overview of English teaching in the research site is also provided in section 1.4 followed by the significance of the study in section 1.5, the definition of key terms in section 1.6, and the structure of the dissertation in section 1.7.

### 1.1 Background the Study

As today's classrooms are much influenced by technology integration, the need for adjusting teaching strategies to suit the ever-changing trends in technology is unquestionably required in 21<sup>st</sup>-century education, and ESP courses (English for Specific Purposes) are no exception. Most literature confirms a shifting pedagogical trend from traditional to technology-rich teaching during the last decade (Hattani, 2019) where access to knowledge is now simply at students' fingertips resulting from the proliferation of mobile devices. For instance, the students today, ESP learners, in particular, may already be more knowledgeable about the subject matter than their teachers (Javid, 2015). This indicates that technology extends learning sources beyond those available in the classroom. Consequently, ESP teaching in traditional modes seems to inadequately address the challenges of today's demands (Bhatia, Anthoni & Noguchi, 2014). Also spurred by the industrial revolution of 4.0, the present study views that there is a need to significantly transform ways of the students learn and update ways of instruction to impart knowledge in this digital age.

In the nursing field, the need of being able to deal with technology is also emphasized by Doyle (2019) in her article entitled important nursing and nurse practitioner skills. Today's nurses should be technology savvy to perform nursing duties such as updating patients' charts in an online database. Not only can technology aid healthcare professionals in efficiently managing a large patient load, but it also helps patients by providing more convenient and accessible options for their care. Therefore, nurses are valued for their competency to work with technology.

This technological competency is also referenced in the SKKNI, which stands for *Standar Kerja Nasional Indonesia*, or Indonesian occupational competency standards. Technology is explicitly listed as one of the seven key competencies to help accomplish particular job-related functions in the nursing sector, including constructing, organizing, planning, merging, modifying, and developing healthcare services. The present study, therefore, recognizes the necessity to incorporate technology into ESP teaching approaches for nursing students.

The SKKNI is a set of occupational competencies that was created with inputs from relevant industries. According to their report, Indonesian nurses failed to compete for overseas opportunities owing to a language barrier and insufficient clinical skills. Despite the fact that the need for Indonesian nurses to work abroad has risen in recent years, a lack of foreign language proficiency, particularly in English, remains a barrier (Mulyadi, Hersulastuti & Purnama, 2019). According to Ali & Watson (2018), language barriers can hinder nurses' capacity to communicate effectively with their patients in any nation or context, reducing their ability to provide appropriate and safe treatment to fulfill patients' needs. Therefore, this study sees the urgency to fill this gap by revisiting an ESP practice in the nursing study program, examining, comparing each syllabus component with those expected in the SKKNI, and designing as well as developing it accordingly.

In preparing Indonesian nurses for going global, a literature review study by Wachid (2017) identified possible strategies. Of all the strategies mentioned, one is ways of English learning using technology to enhance language competencies.

Vocabulary learning with visual clues, reading text to practice literacy skills and comprehension, learning how to pronounce English words properly, practicing grammatical items, and possibilities to enhance speaking and listening skills through various applications are all within a fingertip's reach. Technology aids in the provision of additional language learning opportunities outside of the classroom, resulting in a rich language learning experience.

Technology integration in English teaching and learning has been reported in various ways. Some examples of similar previous studies in Indonesia and international contexts have influenced the present study. In Indonesia, a qualitative study conducted by Aji (2017) found that blended learning, as technology-mediated learning, had a positive influence on students' English skills. At Banyuwangi Institute of Health Science, Laeli & Nashir (2018) discovered that adopting Edmodo in blended learning had a significant impact on students' achievement and ESP teaching to nursing students, encouraging them to participate more actively. A year later, under the qualitative inquiry paradigm, Mulyadi, Hersulastuti & Purnama (2019) investigated students' attitudes regarding hybrid learning in ESP mastery and how it impacted their enthusiasm and satisfaction. The present study attempts to incorporate blended learning elements into an ESP course design for nursing students, to implement and evaluate how it affects ESP teaching and learning.

In international contexts, a case study employing blended learning undertaken by Banditvilai (2016) proved to be directly effective in improving the four language skills of students in an Asian university environment. In a study of Iranian nursing students, Moradimokhles & Hwang (2020) discovered that when they were exposed to hybrid learning rather than online learning alone, their learning outcomes improved. Similarly, in a literature review study, Perera (2010) showed that e-learning was not the only component that improved learning; a hybrid approach delivered even better results. Tempted to replicate the utility of blended learning, as in prior studies, the present study employs hybrid learning in ESP instruction to nursing students, referring to it as *hybrid* rather than *blended*.

Blended learning gains the considerable interest of scholars, researchers, and practitioners for its fine credit history since the late 1990s. It was frequently

labeled as hybrid learning (Penn State, 2019; Driesen, 2016; Olapiriyakul & Scher, 2006) before the term ‘blended learning’ receives widespread use in research compared to the hybrid one (Hrastinski, 2019). Hybrid learning is precisely described as blended learning where face-to-face classes are combined with online learning access (Hall & Davidson, 2007). This study, therefore, uses both terms interchangeably.

More evidence of a major shift in ESP teaching concentrating on student-centered approaches under hybrid learning was also indicated by other researchers such as Beagle & Davis (2013) in investigating hybrid learning effectiveness in the ESP context. They confirmed that for ESP courses to acquire specialized language abilities, hybrid learning was appropriate. Similarly, Kern (2015) reported that with hybrid learning, ESP learners' language abilities were quickly strengthened, allowing them to become confident users of English in a real-life setting. The attitudes of ESP students toward hybrid learning were described by Kavaliauskiene (2011), and this study observes this aspect as well.

Echoing others, Lungu (2013) confirmed that hybrid learning in ESP classrooms provided two significant results; first, students learned better in a short time as hybrid learning provided room for flexibility, autonomy, and self-pacing following the student's ability, needs, and interests; second, teachers would have more time to make learning more engaging and motivating in such a way to fulfill the needs of students and the teaching-learning objectives. In brief, hybrid learning was proven to give positive contributions to ESP courses.

According to Spasić, Janković & Spasić-Stojković (2015), hybrid learning has the potential to answer the demand of ESP course design for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Therefore, hybrid learning can be employed to respond to Bathia, et al (2014) who claimed that traditional instruction brings an insufficient approach to the ESP classroom. Unfortunately, their study only explored ESP teacher roles, along with professional knowledge in the design process, and suggested team teaching be used as the underlying concept for ESP courses in tertiary education without further clarification of what and how to accomplish.

In addition, the research reports presented earlier mostly articulated both teachers' and students' attitudes towards usefulness, preferences, and appraisal which ended up with recommendations and strategies without an elaboration of pedagogical evidence but much more to do with impressionistic evidence. This kind of work, on the other hand, deserves attention to detail. The paucity of empirical research on the use of hybrid learning in Indonesia was acknowledged by Zainuddin & Keumala (2018). However, their report was merely a conceptual paper that seemed not to provide sufficient empirical support for hybrid learning deployment in Indonesia.

Some essential aspects of hybrid learning, such as proper course structure, the proportion of face-to-face and online learning that constitutes hybrid learning, and content selections for each, are not included in any of the aforementioned research to experience the true advantage of hybrid learning. Evidence ensuring the proper blend and how to achieve it has yet to be discovered. Therefore, this study attempt to design one accordingly to make the most of it and to discover an optimal blend for an ESP course, particularly in English for nurses.

This study, therefore, provides empirical and practical ideas on how to design, implement and evaluate an ESP course for nurses utilizing hybrid learning that meet the SKKNI, issued by the Ministry of Labor (2010). The SKKNI, in this study, underpins decisions on course design, learning objectives, and content selections for the ESP course. Hardiany (2018) conducted an earlier study in Indonesia, establishing an ESP syllabus for nursing students based on the Indonesian National Qualification Framework (KKNI). Meanwhile, this research focuses on the development and implementation of ESP course design for nursing students in the Indonesian Occupational Competency Standards (SKKNI), which appears to be more relevant to future workplace demands in the healthcare industry.

Seeing the importance of technology for nursing students' learning and preparation of pursuing a career in healthcare services, the present study, therefore, offers technology-mediated teaching and learning under the umbrella of hybrid learning. It is expected in this study that the nursing students would be encouraged to utilize technology for instructional reasons rather than for entertainment such as connecting on social media, playing online games, and downloading Korean

movies, as they always do on campus (Herlina, Sundayana & Purnawarman, 2019).

Despite being prolific internet users as reported by the nursing students in a pilot study survey, they were not particularly interested in using technology for their education. Their sophisticated gadgets and extensive knowledge about it reflected that they were basically very technology-oriented in their daily lives. In fact, they failed to take advantage of technology for their learning. This situation is very likely to reflect the traditional teaching strategy. It seems that the students are not familiar and or are not exposed to technology-rich learning.

ESP learning for nursing students is crucial as implied in the study of Norouzinia, Aghabarari, Shiri, et al (2016). They revealed that communication skills were essential to providing care in nursing practices. Moradimokhles & Hwang, (2020) emphasized the importance of knowing English to communicate with patients of different nationalities and provide comprehensive care. Therefore, the present study holds the view that wherever Indonesian nurses work, either overseas or at home, there will come a time that they need to rely on English to communicate with patients and other healthcare professionals.

In the present study, ESP is a compulsory subject. Yet, it receives less attention as the nursing students can hardly attend the class regularly. The class sessions are often skipped due to clinical training at the hospitals. While English should be taught in the classroom, some students are still working in the field since hospitals schedule nursing students at different times. In this regard, clinical training tends to limit their participation in classroom time. Consequently, most of the students have low attendance for English classes.

Another issue comes from the ESP teachers who find relevant resources difficult to obtain. According to the results of a pilot survey investigating 8 ESP teachers' challenges, scant printed learning contents relevant to medical context give rise to insufficient ESP teaching. Consequently, The ESP teachers lay particular stress on teaching general English skills and grammatical contents instead of the specific ones to the nursing field. This issue was also once raised by Setiawati (2016) and Susandi & Krishnawati (2016) who claimed that in Indonesia there was

no book no handouts contained materials that the medical students needed to support their future professional career.

In the hope of coping with the above-mentioned problems, the urge to introduce hybrid or blended learning in this study is noticeable for several expectations such as: (1) the students will learn English at any time convenient to them, without their presence in the real classroom on weekly basis to increase attendance; (2) both the students and their teachers are expected to avail themselves of the opportunity to obtain supporting or additional learning materials from multiple digital sources as a response to scant printed resources; (3) the most dominated traditional lecture-based instruction can be shifted to a hybrid teaching model that suit the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century education.

Furthermore, nursing institutions across Indonesia need to adjust to the current demanding era in order to keep up and compete with other international nursing institutions to prepare Indonesian nursing students for opportunities as medical professionals in other countries. According to Hamied (2012), through the use of science and technology, English, is placed as a vital instrument in global competitiveness. To this end, the present study incorporates technology such as Moodle, Zoom, Whatsapp and Edmodo into a hybrid ESP course design with onsite and online modes that include simulations, role-plays, discussions, and initiation as learning activities within a flipped classroom. Additionally, Christensen, Johnson & Horn (2008) estimated that in education and health care, by 2019, half of all courses would be delivered online. As a result, this study views technology as a means of launching a new ESP learning environment under the Hybrid model.

## **1.2 The Teaching of English at the Research Setting**

English teaching at the research setting comprises three areas: (1) General English in semester one; (2) TOEIC/TOEFL preparation in semester three; (3) English for nursing I and II in semester fifth and sixth; (3) English for NCLEX (National Council Licensure Examination) in the last semester. In a pilot survey of the present study, unfortunately, English is of less interest for some reasons: first, it is widespread to hear that English itself for General purposes (GE) is tricky, moreover

for specific purposes (ESP). The teachers at the research setting reported that ESP, along with its particular terms, gives rise to the problem in learning English. Consequently, this issue is likely to result in poor performance in the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). In contrast, gaining sufficient TOEIC and or TOEFL scores is compulsory to graduate from the research setting and to apply for a job overseas.

Second, the inability to fully participate in such a large size class ‘with traditional lecture-based instruction. Some nursing students reported that lecturers, mostly, opt for conventional learning in which they stand in front of the class for lecturing. This might contribute a negative effect on the students’ interest, motivation, and participation. Recognizing the failure of traditional teaching strategy at the research setting and considering the aforementioned benefits of integrating ICT into classroom practices as one of the features in 21<sup>st</sup>-century education, this study attempts to design a hybrid model of ESP course and bring it into practice to offer a new learning horizon for the nursing students in learning English. Additionally, this study argues that to gain the desired outcome on the English proficiency exam, it is critical to identify ways to modify teaching strategies.

Another issue arising at the research setting is the timing of clinical training and English class in the same semester. At the same time, nursing students have to spend some days in hospitals for clinical training and two days on campus to study English. It is not surprising that low attendance occurred in English class as they have to divide their concentration. This also might lead to another problem of the students’ performance on TOEIC that inadequately pleased the ESP teachers. They have not received sufficient English exposure. Accordingly, the present study proposes a credit hour block system that compels students to spend more time, twice a week, studying English right before clinical training. This strategy encourages them to complete an English course in seven weeks instead of 14 weekly basis meetings. The more English exposure individuals get, the higher their TOEIC results are projected to be in this study.



However, it is argued in this study that what matters most is how the ESP course helps students perform tasks using English in the context of their discipline to prepare for future careers, not what their starting point of proficiency is, nor what strengths and weaknesses both students and teachers have in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, knowing the needs of what industries precisely need, in this study, is the most important to ensure compliance with workplace requirements. For this reason, it is far more worthwhile to reference the SKKNI while designing an ESP course than to perform a student needs analysis alone in the present study. In the end, hybrid learning is intended to assist students to demonstrate two skills at the same time in their future roles as healthcare professionals: first, their ability in English communication, and; second, their ability to perform specific nursing tasks.

### **1.3. Aims of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to produce an intervention design of an ESP course for nursing students. Unlike previous related studies mentioned earlier, this study used design-based research (DBR) as the research methodology. Embracing Integrative Learning Framework (ILDF) by Bannan-Ritland (2003), three phases of informed exploration, enactment, and evaluation shape the objectives of the present study: first, to investigate what ESP course nursing students require to meet the healthcare industry expectations; second, to specify a hybrid model of an ESP course design that diverges traditional instructions; third, to design, develop, refine and implement the intervention design; fourth, to discover the effects on the ESP teaching, learning, and students' English proficiency (TOEIC) and how well it addresses the prevailing problem.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

As will be presented further in chapter two, hybrid learning is used in conjunction with the SKKNI to design and develop an ESP course for nursing students in order to assess how it responds to the challenges raised in this study. To this end, the present study seeks to address the following questions:

- 1) What kind of ESP course do nursing students need to meet the occupational competency standards of Indonesia (The SKKNI)?
- 2) What are the features of a hybrid model of an ESP course in this study?
- 3) How is the intervention design developed and implemented for nursing students?
- 4) What changes are found in the teaching and learning of ESP and the students' English proficiency (TOEIC), resulting from the hybrid model of ESP course design?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The present study is claimed to be significant for both theoretical and practical considerations in that (1) it attempts to portray perspectives of hybrid learning with practical hybrid learning class ideas, implementation guide, and implications for ESP teaching and learning, particularly to nursing students as future healthcare professionals. (2) It is expected to provide a clear picture of features that distinguish a hybrid model of an ESP course design from traditional instructions; (3) It is expected to contribute to the development of current literature in the field of hybrid learning in ESP course design; (4) It provides informative data of empirical evidence concerning the effects of hybrid learning to ESP teaching and learning and ESP students' English proficiency (TOEIC).

### **1.6 Definition of Key Terms**

- Hybrid or blended learning: Face-to-face interactions combined with additional instruction in an online learning environment that allows for digital information, individualized learning, and collaboration with peers (Belles, 2014, cited in Alekya & Ramani, 2019).
- English for Specific Purposes (ESP): A specific program based on "goal-oriented" principles. (Robinson, 1991).
- English for nurses: English that showcases nurse-patient contact and enables role-playing to develop communication; educates students medical and healthcare vocabulary as well as practical language and expressions; gives practice examinations in hearing, speaking, reading, and writing using actual written materials such as forms and medical charts. (VOA education, 2019).

- Course design is a series of activities to design learning activities (Nurpahmi, 2016).
- The SKKNI: Stand for Standar Kerja Nasional Indonesia or list of occupational competency standards issued by the Ministry of Labor of Indonesia.
- Role-play: Acting out a character who isn't oneself. An immersive role-playing experience would necessitate a level of commitment to the character comparable to that of a professional actor in a specific role (Warren & Stein, 2019).
- Simulation is a user-interactive experience that models some aspect of reality. (Warren & Stein, 2019).

### **1.7 Structure of the Dissertation**

This dissertation pictures design-based research encompassing five chapters. Chapter one, as the introductory chapter, provides general background information on the study, the teaching of English at the research site, aims of the study, research questions, significance of the study, definition of the key terms, and structure of the dissertation. Chapter two reviews relevant literature and previous related studies concerning ESP course design and its implementation in ESP teaching and learning. Chapter three describes a conceptual framework consisting of research design, method of data collection, research instrument, and data analysis. Chapter four provides the findings and discussion of the study. Chapter five comprises the conclusion, implications, and directions for further research.