

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides general information about the research. The introduction chapter contains background of the study, research questions, aims of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, clarification of key terms, organisation of the paper, and concluding remarks.

1.1 Background of the Study

English is a worldwide language due to the sheer numbers of the speakers and there has never been a language widely spread as English is nowadays (Kuteeva, 2020; Mauranen, 2018; Melitz, 2018). Today, English is used as a unifying language of people who speak different languages and come from different lingua-cultural backgrounds, so that it has a great role in intercultural communication that excels three circles: inner, outer, and expanding circles, leading to the concept of World Englishes (Fang; 2017, Kachru, 1985; Kachru, 1992). English is the language of global commerce, the main language of international diplomacy, the most common language on the internet, the language of academic journals in majority; leading to the concept of Standard English, and the language that international travellers with different native languages use to communicate (Graddol, 2006; Mauranen, 2018), leading to the idea of English as a Lingua Franca (henceforth ELF). This advancement of the spreading of English makes English serve as a lingua franca which unifies people's understanding towards certain subject matter.

In Indonesia, although English is not considered as an official language used by the government for intranational purposes, English plays an important role as a foreign language, especially in urban centres (Lauder, 2020). In addition, English is the only compulsory foreign language subject in Indonesian curriculum (Lauder, 2020), making it the most easy-to-access foreign language for students in Indonesia. Be that as it may, English that is first taught in middle school “four hours a week for six years up to the end of high school” (Lauder, 2020, p. 619) seems not enough,

so that many English learners in Indonesia, mostly school students, take private English lesson outside school. This is an obvious example in response to the importance of English.

The aforementioned statements are showing the roles of English in both worldwide and Indonesia's perspectives. However, our knowledge about how students see and think about this phenomenon is still narrow. Studies regarding the growth of English as a Lingua Franca from students' perspective are still somewhat scarce. Previous studies concerning ELF show that there are more articles focusing on teachers' opinions on ELF (see Bayyurt, 2017; Bayyurt, et al., 2019; Ceyhan-Bingöl & Özkan, 2019; Luo, 2016; Ramadhani & Muslim, 2021; Tosuncuoğlu & Kırmızı, 2019; Zhang, 2021) compared to articles focusing on students' opinions on ELF. Therefore, the researcher aims to fill the gap by conducting research concerning students' opinion on ELF in an English Language Teaching (ELT) classroom.

1.2 Research Question

The study was conducted with the question: What are students' opinions on ELF in relation to ELT in Indonesian context?

1.3 Aim of the Study

With the background of the study and the research questions stated before, the study aimed to investigate students' opinions on ELF in relation to ELT in Indonesian context.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to provide several advantages in the related field. It is divided into two significances: theoretical, practical, and professional.

1. **Theoretically**, this study is expected to enrich the comprehension of opinion towards ELF from students' point of view.

2. **Practically**, this study is expected to provide information for enhancing possible teaching and learning insights which implement the use of ELF in an ELT classroom.
3. **Professionally**, this study is expected to attract more scholars to research ELF implications and applications in a greater scope of study.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study was conducted for approximately one month. Grade eleven students (n=29) at a high school in Bandung were involved in this study. The focus of this study is to investigate students' opinions on ELF in an ELT classroom.

1.6 Clarification of Key Terms

1.6.1 English as a Lingua Franca

English as a Lingua Franca refers to the worldwide contact language that can unify the understanding in communications between people with different lingua-cultural backgrounds and that English is a chosen and/or the only medium for communication (Mauranen, 2018; Seidlhofer, 2011).

1.6.2 Standard English

Standard English refers to a variety of English used by educated people (Trudgill, 1999) both in forms of spoken or written text since the exposure of Standard English is mainly found in academic settings, especially in academic writing (Cheshire, 1999). Thus, Standard English is not a language, not an accent, not a style, not a register, and not a set of prescriptive rules, and it has nothing to do with particular pronunciation varieties (Trudgill, 1999).

1.6.3 World Englishes

The term 'World Englishes' was coined by Kachru (1982), defining varieties of English across the globe. Kachru's term 'World Englishes' makes English excel in three different circles, namely inner, outer, and expanding circles (Kachru, 1985). Inner circle of English is defined as the variety of

which English is the first spoken language. Outer circle means that English is an additional or second language and has official status to use. Expanding circle is where English has a status of foreign language.

1.6.4 ELT Classroom

English Language Teaching (ELT) classroom is defined as the activity, as well as the industry, of teaching English to non-native speakers (British Council, n.d.).

1.7 Organization of the Paper

This undergraduate research paper consists of five chapters: (1) Introduction, (2) Literature Review, (3) Methodology, (4) Findings and Discussion, and (5) Conclusion.

1.8 Concluding Remarks

To summarise, this study aims to answer the research question “What are students' opinions of ELF in relation to ELT in Indonesian context?” This study is meant as a contribution to fill the gap of previous studies concerning ELF and deepen the understanding of students’ point of view regarding ELF.