

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter introduces the background to the study as well as the research question, the research objective, the scope of study and the significance of study. Definition of key terms and organization of the thesis follow afterward. This chapter begins with background to the study, which provides outlines about the importance of learning English of global world in present and how the language operates in the context of Islamic boarding school in Indonesia.

1.1 Basic Consideration

To face the global competition, students are required to have the capability to master international languages. Being able in mastering international language can be prepared through educational institutions, for example, Islamic boarding school or *Pesantren* in Bahasa Indonesia. Islamic boarding schools offer foreign language teaching, such as Arabic & English. *Santris* (student who are living in Islamic boarding school) are required to master both foreign languages. Foreign language skill is the main capital that the students should achieve successfully for facing the global competition. Using foreign language intends to improve the students' knowledge in Islamic study and science through their English communication engagement (Departemen Agama, 2011).

Unlike the common of educational institutions particularly in Indonesia, Islamic boarding school has twenty-four hours educational system (Mukhlis & Fadhilah, 2016). It means that all students are required to stay in boarding school during the learning process. During twenty-four hours learning process, the school makes rule for students. The students are required to speak English in their daily conversation. Daily conversation is one way to promote foreign language

speaking improvement through daily communication (Mukhlas & Fadhillah, 2016). Daily conversation can support student in attempting to be more proficient in foreign language speaking. Yet, foreign language learners often encounter problems in their attempts to learn to speak the language, such as in when learning English. Richard (1990) stated that the types of students' problem in learning to speak English are: 1) students cannot sustain spoken interaction beyond segments, 2) frequent communication breakdowns, 3) lack of vocabulary needed to talk about common utterances, 4) lack of communication, and 5) cannot participate actively in conversation. These are the common problem that students find and may make them feel not confident to speak English and hinder practicing their English speaking skill.

In Islamic boarding school, bilingual language is crucial things. The students in boarding school need foreign language proficiency in order to support their fluency in mastering both languages. The boarding school applies English and Arabic language inside the boarding school. For beginner students, they may face obstacles in speaking English and Arabic in their daily life. Brown and Jule (1983) reported that learning foreign language is considered to be one of the most difficult aspects of language learning for the teacher to help students with.

The study reported in this undergraduate thesis sought to examine the students who are living in an Islamic boarding school especially in Gorontalo, henceforth refers to HB Islamic boarding school. Unlike other boarding school in Gorontalo province, this boarding school applies English as a means of daily conversation. Students should speak English from early morning until evening. This rule applies for all of students in HB Islamic Boarding School. Many

students especially first grade of junior high school in the school are beginners and may have limited English vocabulary and do not speak English fluently. However, HB Islamic boarding school required them to use English in their daily communication. There is no adjustment for students and they are forced their self into speaking English. Even though they have an adjustment, it seems like they do not have enough time to adapt the English language. By considering the problem above, the aim of this proposal study is figuring out students' voices on the use of English in Islamic boarding school. Every student has their own perception towards the running process of learning English and using the language for communication.

There are several similar studies on the uses of English in Islamic boarding school, for example, from Fakhruddin & Megawati (2018). They examined the stakeholders' perspective upon English language teaching in Islamic boarding school Al-Amanah, Junwangi, Krian. It found that the teacher and the students felt significantly helped in English teaching by the English use in *Pesantren*. In other words, English use in pesantren give an advantages for students, teacher, and school in English educational. Another previous study was from Mukhlas & Fadhilah(2016) who investigated how Daily Conversation Method (DCM) influenced *santris'* speaking ability on foreign language in Al-Mizan Islamic boarding school. They found that DCM influenced students' speaking fluency where environment supported students to practice foreign language in daily conversation.

In spite of this existing literature, none of these studies focused their investigations on the special English program in Islamic boarding school,

especially in the context of Gorontalo. Therefore, this study specifically explored the students' voices on English language use as part of students' daily interaction outside classes, especially in Islamic Boarding School in Gorontalo, which the previous study above did not elaborate on. The researcher needs information from students enrolling into the Islamic boarding school, which later refers to HB Islamic Boarding School. This study is expected to be an alternative or guideline for students and lecturer to solve the problem in teaching speaking English.

1.2 Research Question

The first graders in HB Islamic Boarding School are beginners in English learning and they may be less proficient in speaking the language. Perhaps, their English learning in elementary school were not maximal. The boarding school requires them to use English in their daily interaction. Every student has their own way to observe something or object according to their determinate related to the student itself. According to Vermetten as cited in Fakhruddin & Megawati (2018), students' perceptions of learning environment as well as their desired way of learning direct their study behavior, which eventually determines the effectiveness of the environment. Therefore, this study poses one key research question: What do Indonesian learners of English living in an Islamic boarding school report about communicating in English outside classrooms?

1.3 Research Objective

This study elaborated on the students' voices on using English in the first grade students of junior high school particularly at HB Islamic boarding school in Gorontalo. By elaborating the students' voices toward English use, this study

attempts to explore whether using English as part of their daily conversation provide advantages or challenges for students' effort in mastering English as the obligation in students of HB Islamic Boarding School in Gorontalo.

1.4 Scope of Study

By considering the use of English in Islamic boarding school, this study focuses on exploring students' voices on using English, particularly, in the first grade of junior high school outside the classroom as part of their daily communication. It did not investigate students' voices towards English uses in the classroom.

1.5 Significance of Study

The significance of this study is as follows. First, the findings may help students living in the boarding school reflect on their English communication-related exercises; thus, they can recognize which areas of language skills need improvement and how they can address this. Second, with the findings, the teacher in the boarding school can have insights to develop their strategies in teaching English especially in boarding school in order to make students feel interested and comfortable to learn English; thus improves the outcome of their English language learning which further positive impact on how they operate using the language in their daily interaction.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

Below are the definitions of the terms used throughout this thesis.

- a) *Pesantren* is a muslim school in Indonesia, operated by religious leader which the students were taught by Islamic learning system.

- b) *Santri* is the students who are staying or living inside the pesantren
- c) Boarding School is a school which some or all the students stay in school during a day school
- d) *HB* Islamic Boarding School is one of the Islamic boarding schools in Gorontalo province
- e) *Ustadz* is a male teacher in boarding school
- f) *Ustadza* is a female teacher in boarding school

1.7 Organization of Thesis

This study is divided into five chapters. Following this part, is present basic consideration, research question, research objective and research significance. Chapter 2 presents the literature review which contains the English learning in Indonesia, The English teaching in Hubulo Islamic Boarding School and some previous studies. Chapter 3 outlines the methodology of the research which explain how the research will be conducted, include research design, technique to take the relevant data and also how the data analyzed. Chapter 4 presents the result of the study, begins with the data findings with the explanation of every theme in finding itself and then discussion. Lastly, Chapter 5 provides summary of this study including the conclusion of the researcher drawn from the research and recommendation where the researcher suggests the several ideas for related future work.