

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In an increasingly interconnected world, languages hold a fundamental influence in shaping communication. Lingua franca is a common language used for communication between people with different mother tongues. It is not a native language for any of the speakers (Barančicová & Zerzová, 2015). It serves as a common means of interaction or a bridge language, enabling mutual understanding among speakers of different native languages (Iriance, 2018).

English, as the most widely spoken and studied language across the globe, has established a position as lingua franca, enabling effective communication and understanding among nations (Ergasheva, 2024). English has become the main language used in international communication because it is the most convenient and effective way for people from different countries to communicate (Carlos, 2024). English has become the preferred medium of communication in international contexts because it allows people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds to interact more easily (Carlos, 2024).

In the context of English as a lingua franca, the main focus is on achieving mutual understanding rather than using perfect grammar or sounding like a native speaker. This approach defied the traditional belief that learning English must always follow native speaker norms. Instead, English as a lingua franca supports the use of diverse English varieties and encourages clear and effective communication strategies (Maqsood et al., 2024).

When using English as a lingua franca, speakers have dealt with some aspects such as different accents, proficiency levels, and cultural references (Shofiya & Basuni, 2024). Therefore, the use of communication strategies becomes crucial. Such strategies help speakers maintain politeness, ensure clarity, and improve efficiency in their interactions. In professional contexts, especially in workplace context, these three aspects are important to support smooth and successful communication between individuals from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, there are two main strategies: positive politeness, which aims to strengthen interpersonal relationships by showing respect, intimacy, and attention to the speaker. Furthermore, negative politeness, which shows respect by maintaining distance, being cautious, and avoiding pressure on the other person. In the context of business communication, politeness strategies help maintain professional communication and prevent misunderstandings. For example, the use of phrases such as “maybe we could...” or “would you mind if...” are forms of strategies often used to remain polite when communicating with international partners (Oatey, 2021).

Clarity is crucial for the message to be easily understood, especially when the speakers have different English language skills. Jenkins (2013) builds upon Grice's cooperative principle, the maxim of manner proposed by Grice is a rule that encourages speakers to avoid ambiguity, speak in an organized way, and convey messages in a clear and concise way. In interactions where English is not the first language for both speakers, the implementation of maxim of manner helps prevent misunderstandings and ensures that listeners can grasp the speaker's intention without the need for clarification.

Efficiency refers to how clearly and practically a message is conveyed so that it can be easily understood and responded to. Drucker (1967) states, “Efficiency is doing things right,” which means choosing simple vocabulary, using short and direct sentences, and presenting ideas in a logical flow. As observed by Cogo and

Dewey (2012), speakers who use English as a lingua franca often simplify their language and adjust their language style to make conversations more comprehensible and efficient.

With a good command of English, students will be better equipped to participate in communication, build connections with people from different backgrounds, and engage more confidently in academic or professional contexts that involve international collaboration. Moreover, the ability to communicate effectively using English as a lingua franca, can help and provide job opportunities and cooperation.

The limitation of this study is focus on students of 2021 Applied Foreign Language concentration in English, especially those who actively used English during their internships, because these students have recently completed internship experiences relevant to the use of English as a lingua franca in business communication. Their experiences provided relevant and practical insights into how English was used to interact with people from different language and cultural backgrounds. This focus also supports the objective of the research by looking at their actual experiences, the study can explore how they felt about using English as a lingua franca in bussiness communication and how they implemented various communication strategies to overcome language challenges.

The urgency of this study is based on the increasing use of English as a lingua franca in the context of business communication, students often interact with non-native speakers, whereby the success of communication is determined more by the effectiveness of communication strategies than native speaker norms. However, English learning often still focuses on formal and structural aspects, thus it does not reflect the real communication needs in the working field. Therefore, it is essential to understand if the use of English as a lingua franca impacts their business communication, as well as to explore the communication strategies students use when using English as a lingua franca.

1.2. Problem Formulation

To guide the research process of this study, the formulated problems can be seen as follows:

1. How does the use of English as a lingua franca have an impact on business communication?
2. How do students apply communication strategies such as politeness, clarity, and efficiency when using English as a lingua franca in business communication?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

To provide a clear direction for this research and ensure that the study stays focused on its main aims, the objectives of the study can be seen as follows:

1. To discuss the use of English as a lingua franca has an impact on business communication.
2. To explore how students apply communication strategies such as politeness, clarity, and efficiency when using English as a lingua franca in business communication.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the understanding of how English as a lingua franca is used by students in business communication. This study focuses on the impact of English as a lingua franca and how students apply communication strategies such as politeness, clarity, and efficiency when using English as a lingua franca.

The findings of this study are expected to provide benefits for students, lecturers, and researchers. For students, this study helps in understanding the communication strategies by using English as a lingua franca to communicate with people from different nations. For lecturers, this study provides insights for

improving the teaching of communication using English as a lingua franca. For researchers, this study can serve as a reference for further research on the use of English as a lingua franca.

1.5 Output of the Research

The output of this research is a published scientific article, which discusses the use of English as a lingua franca in business communication: A case study of Applied Foreign Language Students. The article will appear in *SANTHET: Jurnal Sejarah, Pendidikan dan Humaniora*, Volume 9, Issue 4. It is expected to contribute to the development of English learning in education.