

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

The development of globalization has spread English throughout the world and reshaped the dynamic of English. Since the beginning of the ninetieth, Britain and USA had sent English throughout the world by economy and the political imperialism (Crystal, 2012). In particular, as stated by Curran and Chern (2016) Asian countries put English as a subject in educational setting. This implies that many Asian countries place English as important role in education system. In 2003, estimated that there were 320-380 million of English native speakers, 300 to 500 million of English as second language speakers, and 500 million to one billion of nonnative English speakers (Crystal 2003, as cited in Curran & Chren, 2017). As a result, the number of 'non-native speaker' of English increased over the 'native speaker'. Hence, English is used as communication tool not only for among native speakers of English, but also among English nonnative speakers.

Moreover, the growth of English users has caused to the increase number of English varieties (Sadeghpour & Sharifian, 2017). Kachru (1985, as cited in Al-Mutairi, 2019) has introduced the spread of English in term of three concentric circles: The Inner Circle (countries where English is used as a native language or primary language, this circle includes such countries as the USA, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, Australia, and New

Zealand), the Outer Circle (this refers to the countries that have old historical British colonial relations and used in the main uses of English are for communicational, institutional, and official purposes. Examples include Singapore, India, and Malawi), the Expanding Circle (the rest of the world where the spread of English has reached, e.g. most parts of East and Southeast Asia). Concentric circles introduced by Kachru (1985) show no superior variety of English and as the fundamental that varieties of English should be respected.

The topic of English pre-service teachers' attitudes toward English varieties has gathered research attention in the past decade (Ahn, 2014, 2015; Curran & Chern, 2017; Sadeghpour & Sharifian, 2017; Sa'd, 2018; Lee, Lee, & Drajati, 2019; Rezaei, Khosravizadeh, & Mottaghi, 2019). From the pre-services' attitudes side, Ahn (2015) examined Korean and English teachers' attitude toward Asian English varieties (Singaporean, Indian, Chinese and Japanese English), the result showed that due to the lack of awareness of four selected Asian Englishes, it led the teachers' rejection and negative attitude toward those Asian Englishes. The study regarding students' attitudes toward English varieties (British, American, African American Vernacular, Persian, and Australian English) has been pointed out by Rezaei, Khosravizadeh & Mottaghi (2018). However, a few studies documented regarding pre-service English teachers' attitude toward English varieties along with Thai English. In particular, it lays a gap of empirical research on attitudes toward English varieties take part during international teaching Practicum.

There are pre-service teachers from one of state universities in Indonesia majoring English education have joined international teaching practicum (ITP) program in southern Thailand for five months. During carrying out teaching practicum, they taught English to Thai students at schools which means that the interaction with Thai people has often occurred. The issue found that the pre-service teachers perceived that Thai English was 'funny' and 'weird'. To have better understanding about their attitudes when communicating with Thai people during ITP program, therefore, this study explores the Indonesian pre-service teachers' attitudes toward Thai English.

In international occasion, where there is a great possibility to interact with the cross-cultural community worldwide. As a result, English pre-service teachers face fact that they will communicate or even work with individuals from different cultural backgrounds, hence, insight into the attitudes toward English varieties is essential due to it will inform curriculum writers and policy makers to prepare English teachers to have better range of communication. According to Ahn (2015), studies concerning about attitudes toward English varieties can identify communicative needs to be able to enable students to communicate effectively with English varieties speakers, also can encourage English teachers to develop positive attitudes so that they can be role models who are open to and cultivate respect towards the different varieties of English.

## 1.2 Formulation of the Problem

A research question addressed in this present study is “what are English pre-service teachers’ attitudes toward Thai English during international teaching practicum for five months?”

## 1.3 Operational Definitions

To avoid misinterpretation of this research, here are the operational definitions of each keyword:

- 1.3.1 Pre-service teachers’ attitude** : ideas or beliefs (cognitive component), emotions or feelings (affective component), and action (behavioral component) owned by student teachers.
- 1.3.2 Thai English** : English spoken by Thai people which shows distinctive features namely transfer, translation, shift, lexical borrowing and hybridization. Also distinctive features in vowel and consonant. Those distinctive features present Thai identity.
- 1.3.3 International Teaching Practicum program** : program from one of universities in Indonesia which assigned the English pre-service teachers to conduct teaching practicum in Thailand schools for five months.

#### **1.4 Aim of the Research**

The research aimed to investigate the English pre-service teachers' attitudes toward Thai English during international teaching practicum in Thailand schools for five months.

#### **1.5 Uses of the Research**

**1.5.1 Theoretical use** : This study expands the literature of three components of attitude toward Thai English variety, especially in the international teaching practicum context.

**1.5.2 Practical use** : This study offers information for university curriculum writers and policy makers to better prepare future English teachers by developing a greater understanding and respect of English varieties.

**1.5.3 Empirical use** : This study offers empirical insight for the researcher into what the pre-service teachers' attitudes toward Thai English during international teaching practicum program.