**CHAPTER I**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. **Research Background**

In this globalization era, many aspects of life, such as technology, business and education, have become integrated through a global network by means of communication, transportation and trade. Under this situation, international contacts have increased and eventually led to the need of a global language that allows people of different nations or languages communicate one another in order to accomplish communication purposes. It has been widely recognized that because of English geography, cultural history, its promotion through aids programs and its role as the language of science and technology, English has achieved its global status (Jazadi, 2004). English now is considered as a lingua franca that is used as a contact language among speakers from different first languages (Jenkins, 2011).

The spread of English worldwide has established a variation in the use of English based on different nations, that is known as Kachru’s three circle models of English: ‘inner circle’, ‘outer circle’, ‘expanding circle’ (Kachru in Crystal, 2004). The inner circle refers to countries of native-speakers (e.g. Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States), the outer circle refers to countries where English may or may not be the official language but plays roles in many official discourses (e.g. India, the Philippines, Singapore), and the expanding circle refers to countries where English is widely used as a foreign language, such as in Indonesia, Thailand, China (Murray & Christison, 2011).

Indonesia that belongs to the expanding circle recognizes the importance of English, especially in the economic sector with the country’s abundant natural resources, in which the ability to use English becomes one of the tools to communicate with potential investors under equality principles. The link between English and economy has been conjured up by the British Council (Colman, 2010) which believes that English is critical for countries’ successful participation in the globaleconomy, provides individuals with access to crucial knowledge,skills and employment opportunities and enables organisations to create and sustain international links.

This significant status of English unavoidably affects the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Indonesia. According to Lamb (2002), EFL settings are deemed as ‘difficult circumstances’ in which English is generally recognized as an important language, but EFL learners face unfavorable conditions, such as low level of exposure to the target language and educational limitations for development of target language skills.

In a specific case in Indonesia that also encounters ‘difficult circumstances’ for acquisition of EFL, the recognition of the growing importance of English in the world is obviously indicated by, among others, offering English lessons from elementary school to university levels, the changing curriculum of English from the grammar-translation-based curriculum (1945) to the competency-based curriculum (2004) which was revised and became the educational unit level curriculum (*KTSP*) andrecently has been replaced with the 2013 curriculum, an increasing number of bilingual schools in which some non-English subjects (i.e. math and sciences) are taught in English, and a huge number of private English courses.

With regards to bilingual schools, the Indonesia government showed its intention for the purpose of improving the national education towards achieving international quality by granting additional funding and special status *Rintisan Sekolah Bertaraf International* (RSBI)or ‘new shoot’ international standard schools to an increasing number of particularly state primary and secondary schools. These RSBI schools emphasized the use of English as the medium of instruction for mathematics, science and core vocational subjects, starting from Year 4 of primary schools to secondary schools. However, apart from its implementation problems, such as low proficiency level in English of more than half of the RSBI secondary school teachers (Coleman, 2009), the Constitutional Court has decided to exclude the RSBI from the Indonesia’s educational system since 2013, because this system was judged as causing discrimination or gaps among learners.

In the same year, the government launchedthe2013Curriculum which prescribes teachers to adopt a scientific approach in order to prepare the students with the 21st century skills that require critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and various forms of communication. With whatever changes in the curriculum, English remains a subject included in the curriculum.

In terms of learning contexts, the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Indonesia may take place in three different types of education, namely formal, non-formal and informal education, for which Ettling (1993) argues that learning experience can be equally powerful in each of those educational settings. The Indonesian government shares the same beliefs as stated in Laws No. 20 of 2003 Article 1 Section 3 that the national education system is all educational components integrally related to achieve national education objectives. This law defines formal education as structured and graded education consisting of primary, secondary and higher education. Non formal education is an education path outside formal education that can be implemented in a structured and integrated way. Meanwhile, informal education refers to education that exists in family and surrounding environment. These three educational paths can be associated with schools for formal education, English private courses for non formal education and homes for informal education.

Richards (2014) emphasized that because classroom has limitations, particularly providing limited affordances (opportunities for learning), learning should take place both inside and outside the class in order to achieve success in language learning. This is in line with technological advancement that has offered learners with opportunities to use English outside the class through such as technology, internet and media.

In this light, it is considered necessary to capture the contexts of English language learning in those educational settings in order to find out how contextual factors, such as learning situation, classroom, and teaching method (Griffiths, 2009), that exist in the learning contexts which interact with learner factors (individual differences) influence successful learning of English as a foreign language. Griffiths (2009) explains that the variations of learning situation range from naturalistic (being immersed in the target language, like children learn their first language) to formal classrooms, while teaching methods may vary from grammar translation methods to communicative approach. Both situational factors can shape different types of classrooms where students learn the target language.

Within a particular learning context, individual learners may vary a great deal in their rate of learning, their approach to learning and their actual achievement, particularly for people who begin learning L2 later in life (Ortega, 2009). The study of individual learner differences that was initiated by a psychologist Sir Frances Galton at the end of 19th century seeks to document the factors that contribute to these kinds of variation.Individual learner differences, such as language aptitude, motivation, learning strategies and personality (Skehan 1989),have been researched widely and according to Dӧrnyei (2005) these individual variables have important roles in the success of language learning. However, Individual differences alone cannot be responsible for L2 acquisition as they always join forces with environments, as Ortega (2009) underlined that learners’ psychological state cannot be separated from their learning contexts and lived experiences. Considering this view, to understand factors affecting L2 learning should include both individual factors and contextual factors. In this light, Anastasi (1994, in Dӧrnyei, 2005: 4) assures that “the inherited genetic information sets broad limits to one’s development and within these limits, what individuals actually become depends on their environment”.

There have been amplestudies on learner and learning variables (Griffiths, 2009) and social dimensions of L2 learning. However many of the studies investigated single factors or correlated some factors, and the framework of second language acquisition (SLA) that includes all possible influencing factors is constructed as a concept based on separate studies.There is still the need to conduct an empirical study which covers both individual and contextual factors in a particular EFL environment, since every context is unique and creates its own L2 environment. The uniqueness of EFL learning in Indonesia was characterized byits difficult circumstances, as addressed by Lamb (2002). Other researchers (e.g. Larson, 2014; Suryanto, 2014) also mentioned some hindering factors encountered by many Indonesian students learning English, such as:learners’ characteristics (e.g. low participation in class, unreflective in learning), teachers’ issues (e.g. socio-economic factors, low English proficiency), and the influence of learners’ first language that may cause misspell and/or mispronounce English words.

This study, with intensive reference to related, available theories/research findings, tries to provide a comprehensive profile of the EFL students coveringthe individual and contextual factorsthat potentially influence EFL learningalong with their predictor constructs (e.g. parental involvement and classroom activities for the contextual factors, and motivation and learning strategies for the individual factors), particularly with regards to EFL students’ achievementat senior high schools in Samarinda. The students’ EFL achievement are determined on the basis of their academic scores collected from their schools. Meanwhile, the internally and externally influencing factors are drawn through self-reported questionnairesfrom the students’ own information on how they perceive and utilize those learning variables that might influence their English achievement.

To enrich the description about the EFL students in this study, gender differences and school accreditations would be discussed to see whether they could determine the students’ individual and contextual factors, since so far, findings of previous research on gender and second language acquisition have remained inconclusive.With regards to gender, many sociolinguists have shifted their views, from traditionally male-female dichotomy as a static, bipolar opposite in relation to language use and learning to a complex system of social relations (Ellis, 2008).

Meanwhile, school accreditation is also interesting to address to see whether students at schools with different accreditation levels show different individual and contextual factors.In Indonesia, based on Laws No 20/2003 on National Educational System,the government assessed the feasibility of schools, as an educational program, through school accreditation on the basis of the national educational standards.

Eventually, it is assumed that conducive learning contexts and positive learner variables, significantly contribute to students’ English achievement. Better understanding on how these factors might contribute to successful language learners will potentially help EFL learners make the most of their individual differences and learning opportunities offered by their learning contexts.

1. **Problem Statement and Research Questions**

The important role of English has affected the phenomena of English Language Teaching (ELT) all over Indonesia but, indeed, with different ELT situations in every part of the country. East Kalimantan located in the central zone of Indonesia which is well known as its tropical rain forests also deals with the demand of ELT, as the province with its districts and cities’ export orientations also sees the need to make international contacts in which English plays the role as the medium for interactions among people of different nations and languages.

Like in other parts of Indonesia, in East Kalimantan students may learn English as a foreign language in different learning contexts. Within these contexts, there are possible internal and external factors that significantly affect successful language learning. In reference toa large number of previous research findings that put emphasis on individual factors or internal factors and contextual factors or external factors as separate studies, the current study has the intention to explore both factors in a specific EFL context, that is, among EFL students at high schools in Samarinda, the Capital City of East Kalimantan Province. This is because learning contexts are unique, different from one another.

Based on the 2015 data, Samarinda covers a land area of 783 km2 or 0.61% of the total area of East Kalimantan with the population density of 1,037.80 people/km2, making this city the second most populous region (following Balikpapan City) in East Kalimantan (*Statistics Office of East Kalimantan*, 2017).Surrounded by rivers, the Mahakam and the Karangmumus, Samarinda has a unique vibe and has been a vibrant trading hub for three centuries which has brought about a relatively high population rate due to high level of people from outer islands (e.g. Java and Sulawesi) coming to the city for job opportunities (Rahmadant, 2013). As the capital city of East Kalimantan with its biodiversity-rich resources, Samarinda has been a place where many international events (e.g. conferences on tropical rain forest, climate change, and culture) were conducted, bringing people from different countries to come.

Due to that fact, the study intends to see a more comprehensive phenomenon of EFL learning by investigating some potentially influencing factors rather than a single factor. This is based on Naiman, et al. (1978, in Abraham & Vann 1987: 85) who assured that “… many factors must be considered simultaneously to discover how they interact to affect one’s success as a language learner in a given situation”. Therefore, this study focuses its problem on what and how students’ individual differences and contextual factors contribute to their EFL achievements. This problem can be elaborated into two main questions and ten sub research questions, as follows:

1. How are thestudents’ individual factors, in terms of language learning motivation and strategies, andcontextual factors of language learning?
2. How is the students’ motivation in language learning?
3. Are there any differences in motivation in language learning by gender and school accreditation?
4. How is the students’ use of language learning strategies?
5. Are there any differences in the use of language learning strategies by gender and school accreditation?
6. How is thestudents’ contextual factors of language learning?
7. Are there any differences in the students’contextual factors of language learning by gender and school accreditation?
8. To what extent do the individual factors, in term of language learning motivation and strategies, and contextual factors correlate one another to influence the EFL achievement?
9. Do motivation in language learning and contextual factorsinfluence language learning strategies?
10. Do motivation in language learning, language learning strategies and contextual factors influence the EFL achievement?
11. **Research Aims**

This study aims to provide a profile of EFL studentsat senior high schools in Samarinda, with regards to their motivation in language learning, language learning strategies, contextual factors, and EFL achievement, and to validate whether the conceptual framework developed based on the existing findings of SLA studies which were mainly done in second language settings are also applicable to the EFL setting. Based on these general aims and the research questions, the specific objectives of the study are:

1. To find out how the students’ individual factors, in terms of language learning motivation and strategies, and contextual factors of language learning, are.
2. To find out how the students’ motivation in language learning is.
3. To find out if there are any differences in motivation in language learning by gender and school accreditation.
4. To find out how the students’ use of language learning strategies is.
5. To find out if there are any differences in the use of language learning strategies by gender and school accreditation.
6. To find out howthe students’ contextual factors of language learning are.
7. To find out if there are differences in the students’ contextual factors of language learning by gender and school accreditation
8. To find out the extent to which the individual factors, in term of language learning motivation and strategies, and contextual factors correlate one another to influence the EFL achievement.
9. To find out if motivation in language learning and contextual factors influence language learning strategies.
10. To find out if motivation in language learning, language learning strategies and contextual factors influence the EFL achievement.
11. **Significances of the Research**

This research is expected to make the following contributions:

1. Theoretically, results of the study will illuminate the existing theories on factors affecting L2 learners in terms of individual factorsand contextual factors in formal and non-formal/informal settings of language learning. The results will complete the existing understanding of the internal and external factors affecting learning achievement of English as a foreign language.

2. The study is intended to deliver empirical findings on EFL learning in the complex linkages between the individual differences and contextual factors and their correlation with the students’ EFL achievements that have not yet been investigated comprehensively in a context-specific setting.

3. The expected empirical findings are expected to be useful for the purposes of offering constructive information related to EFL learning to teachers, educational scientists, parents, headmasters, and the government, and creating conducive atmosphere that can optimize any individual potentials in EFL learning.

1. **Research Scope and Limitations**

This study investigates the complex linkages between individual and contextual factors and how these linkages influence students’ achievement in English as a foreign language (EFL). Within this relatively wide scope, the study set some limitations in order to make it more focused and researchable. The limitations are as follows:

1. Individual factors are referred to individual differences or personal characteristics, of which people differ by degree, and vary from fixed/immutable (e.g. age, sex) to variable (e.g. motivation, language learning strategies) as affected by learning contexts and the course of L2 development. This study limits this aspect only on investigating individual differences which are non-biologically-fixed or which might be influenced by external factors (e.g. learning environment). These include motivation and language learning strategies, which are widely researched and proved to have a positive correlation with good language learners.
2. Contextual factors are considered as a social dimension of language learning that include factors related to learning environments. In this study, the contextual factors are limited to factors related to EFL learning that take place at school and outside school contexts.
3. EFL students are students who learn English as a foreign language. This study limits EFL students to the 11th grade students of senior high school in Samarinda City of East Kalimantan Province.
4. EFL achievementis the knowledge or proficiency in English as a foreign language that has been learned or taughtand, for the purpose of this study, is measured by an English achievement test carried out by the students’ English teachers at the end of the eleventh year of their study.