CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Communication is a process in where individual and or a group of individuals creating and using information to connect with each other. Over time, there are so many ways for communication to occur whenever, wherever, as long as there is information established between both of the parties. The forms of communication have developed along with how the world advanced through globalization. It is now a lot easier for us to connect to each other as there are a plethora of methods that could be used for us as media to communicate and create bond across the world, and one of those media is internet.

Talking about communication, generally, it occurs when the information shared can be mutually understood by both of the parties and it exists in many ways. Through symbols, gestures, signs, and actions that can help to convey and deliver the information and its meanings. Despite being varies in forms, we as human will still find it difficult to only use the points above to communicate to each other, and that is how language is needed.

Simply saying, language is a tool that makes communication becomes less complicated. Language has developed over times creating so many languages that is used across the world by now. According to the data by www.ethnologue.com there are over 7,000 languages in the world today and by that it could be a problem for us to communicate well since we share different languages. In that
case, lingua franca is created. Lingua franca itself is any languages chosen as communication purpose between its natives and non-natives, and to this day English has become the biggest lingua franca that is used all over the world, internationally. (English as the Lingua Franca/ELF; *this word will be used for the rest of this research)

English appears in International context being a sign that people have to start using English or at least understand and can use it to communicate since it has a big part in the spread of information globally in written, spoken or even online. Thus, having a good English skill is one of privileges in today’s world.

There are many ways for people to learn English but directly learn by using the language to communicate can be such a big help as it involves the process of learning while practicing. This day’s society, especially youths have been so creative in creating an environment in where they can comfortably communicate and share their preferred information about certain topics and issues in a group of discussion which is known as discourse community. So many discourse communities have arises and one of it is called as fandom. Fandom itself means as a group of people who are in the state of being a fan of someone or something, and the fandom that will be discussed throughout this study is K-Pop fandom.

The fandom members usually gather up offline and online to exchange information and communicate about anything related to the artist and any other things they have become fan of. For fans themselves, there will be certain satisfaction if they could share information with each other and channeled their
love for their idols in so many ways possible, and one of these ways is to Role-play as their favorite idols.

Role-play is an embodiment of character, when ones act as a certain character by using the identity, expression, personality, and passion of the person which they borrow and play. And K-Pop role-play will be the main focus of this research.

The interesting part of this K-Pop Role-play thing is that it is kind of unique online discourse community, in where a big group of people who have different background and languages involved in communicating and conversing about particular topic around K-Pop. So far there are only few studies have been created to analyze deeper about this phenomenon. And the part which will be the main focus in this study is how the role-players use this activity to not only enjoying their fan activities but also to develop their language learning, especially in English.

Role-players mainly use English as their lingua franca as the community of role-player itself is global, though there are some role-players who tend to use their mother language as they feel it more comfortable. However, if they want to update their characters, digging up for latest information and so on they still have to at least understand English in order to get enough information. Because mainly, the information itself is written and translated from the original source’s language that is Korean to English.

Thus, from this phenomenon many role-players especially Indonesian role-players as the main focus in this study use this opportunity to utilize any
things they could do within this activity in order to enhance their ELF aside only to enjoy their fan activities.

1.2 Formulation of the Study

Based on the background stated above, the following questions are formulated as:

1. What parts/elements of K-Pop role-play that helps the role-players in improving their English, especially as Lingua Franca?
2. What aspects of English are perceived to be improved by respondents involved in K-Pop role-play community?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore on what aspects of English are perceived as improvement by the perspective of the K-Pop role-players after they joined in the K-Pop role-play community, to get to know on what parts in K-Pop role-play that help them in improving their English especially as a Lingua Franca and also to find out how K-Pop role-play takes part as a potential media for ELF learners.

1.4 Scopes and Limitation

As the media used by role-player is so wide and varies; this study focused on Indonesian K-pop role-players who were born in Indonesia, currently living in Indonesia and have Bahasa Indonesia as their main language used who based on the Twitter platform.
1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to give its contribution to show more about K-Pop role-play as one of creative ways for English learners to improve their English as Lingua Franca proficiency that it is also hopefully could bring new knowledge that K-Pop role-play (or any online role-play in general) can be used as a tool to introduce a new method and model for self ELF learning materials. Not to mention, this study also conducted to instill and try to indicate the perception that being a fan has good influence beside only used as a medium for the fans to enjoy their fan activities.

The writer also wishes that the ELF learners who involved in K-Pop role-play could use this media wisely so that it will bring them more positive effect than negatives. Last but not least, this research might be used as a reference for other researchers if they are conducting research related around this topic.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

- **ELF** – Lingua Franca means the use of (any) chosen languages between non-natives to interact with each other. So, ELF or English as Lingua Franca means that English as the language used by non-natives to communicate with each other.

- **Discourse Community** – Is unit of groups consist of people who share the same interests.

- **K-Pop Role-play** – Role-play is an activity in which ones are borrowing others’ personality and identity and act based on that or act out as someone else. K-Pop role-play is basically means to acting out as someone else within K-Pop boundaries, such as K-Pop Idols, Artists, Singers, etc.