

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The use of novels for extensive reading has received considerable attention in the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education. Extensive reading, which is characterized by reading a large amount of material for enjoyment and general comprehension, has been shown to improve language acquisition, increase vocabulary, and foster positive attitudes toward reading. Mikami (2020) and Yamashita (2013), emphasize the role of extensive reading in reducing anxiety and boosting intrinsic motivation by promoting enjoyable and self-directed learning experiences. In the EFL context, novel-based extensive reading provides a unique opportunity for language learners to engage with authentic texts that reflect different cultures, narratives, and viewpoints (Elley, 1991). Extensive reading is a language learning strategy that emphasizes reading a lot of information for general comprehension and enjoyment. Unlike intensive reading, which focuses on precise comprehension of a shorter book, extensive reading encourages students to engage with longer materials at their own pace, resulting in a more joyful and stress-free learning environment. The concept of extensive reading is rooted in language acquisition theories that emphasize the necessity of exposure to the target language. According to research, frequent reading can help with vocabulary acquisition, reading fluency, and general language competency. Extensive reading programs are particularly effective when they are tailored to students' interests and proficiency levels. For example, studies in Japan have demonstrated improvements in motivation and reading fluency across various educational levels when learners engage with materials, they find enjoyable and meaningful (Fujita & Noro, 2009; Matsui & Noro, 2010). Programs integrating technology, such as MReader, allow learners to visualize their progress and enhance

their comprehension, further reinforcing the value of extensive reading in EFL contexts (Mikami, 2020).

As learners encounter more language in context, they naturally gain linguistic intuition, which improves their capacity to use the language successfully. Recent research indicates that students' personal reading experiences have a substantial impact on their motivation and involvement in language acquisition. According to Taguchi et al. (2009), learner motivation is closely related to the materials they select to read, implying that novels can be an effective tool for creating a stronger connection to the language. Furthermore, being a qualitative study methodology, narrative inquiry allows for a thorough examination of individual experiences, allowing researchers to gain rich, contextualized insights into how EFL interact with books (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Galih Susani (2018), stated that readers with good reading skills and talent will be absorb a variety of information and knowledge that will be beneficial to their lives.

Over the last few decades, extensive reading has grown in favor in both second language acquisition and foreign language training. The low interest in reading among students significantly impacts their reading habits and skills. Research indicates that a supportive home literacy environment enhances children's reading interest, with parental involvement being crucial (Notten & Becker, 2022). Additionally, studies show that early exposure to reading activities correlates with improved reading motivation and skills (Boonk et al., 2018). Furthermore, fostering a positive reading culture in schools can counteract perceptions of reading as boring, thereby enhancing students' attitudes towards language learning (Wulandari et al., 2023). It has been established that substantial reading not only improves language ability but also expands learners' cultural knowledge and critical thinking abilities. English novels are a legitimate form of learning media, so it can be used as a teaching tool. Students can enhance their English proficiency by reading English novels since novels contain elements that can aid in the study of vocabulary, grammar, and sociocultural aspects of English

Experience using novels in improving reading skills carried out by participant such as novels as a learning medium to improve reading skills and improve language skills, especially English novels. Novels become a medium for increasing reading comprehension by making novels as effective teaching materials to improve reading skills because in novels there are elements in reading. Jacob (pseudonym), participant, used novels as a hobby or habit that made him improve reading comprehension. He has been using novels as a medium in improving English such as reading comprehension for 6 years, starting when the participant was in junior high school. Participant love to read novel, especially fantasy, horror, and romance genres. This is proof that the participant has made novels as a medium in improving reading skills such as reading comprehension. Participant used the novel by reading it and looking for meaning in sentences and words contained in the novel, so that participant can find out about the meaning of the sentence or word. The improvement of reading comprehension ability can be seen from the participant English language skill such as vocabulary skill, pronunciation skill, especially reading skill such as reading comprehension. Another evidence of the participant's success in improving reading comprehension on the use of novels as a medium of improvement is that the participant gets a perfect grade in a course that requires the participant to read a large amount of reading and then write an analysis report for each passage. Participant used his hobby of reading novels, which has long been a part of his life, as an asset to succeed in the course.

This study aims to make a substantial contribution to the field of language instruction by exploring EFL students' experiences with using novels for extensive reading. This study's findings will not only improve our understanding of effective language teaching approaches, but will also provide educators with evidence-based ways for cultivating a deep and enduring love of reading in their students'. Finally, this research hopes to pave the way for more interesting, immersive, and effective language learning experiences for EFL students all around the world.

In the previous research, few researchers stated that novel can be one of the teaching materials but the fact that teachers may view a novel's lack of a set textbook format as a disadvantage because of its lengthy text and abundance of new vocabulary, which may be difficult to students utilized to the shorter sections found in traditional textbooks (Gareis et al., 2009; Lazar, 1990). For readers of high-intermediate to advanced levels of English to fully enjoy the reading experience, a novel is therefore thought to be the best choice (Gareis et al., 2009; Hişmanoğlu, 2005). However, as Tsou (2007) notes, even students with lower reading competence levels can learn to read novels for pleasure. The challenges can be reduced to make novels a pleasurable substitute for textbooks with careful selection of the appropriate works and appropriate supervision (Brunes, 2009; Gareis et al., 2009; Jou, 2006). The previous research, (Tsai, 2012) stated that the study investigated if a novel could serve as the primary text for an EFL reading course at a college. Its main objective was to evaluate the effectiveness of novel teaching techniques using students' subjective perceptions. Alshammari & Ahmed (2019), also stated that the study findings showed that the responses of participants regarding the use of interactive instruction in Saudi EFL reading classrooms with real literary texts—like novels—were generally positive. The previous studies used a mixed-methods study to investigate 10 Saudi EFL university students' perceptions of the use of novel as a material in an intensive three-week reading class. While this research is using qualitative research to find students experiences in the use of novels in improving students reading comprehension. This could be a methodological gap between previous research and this research.

Despite the recognized benefits of using novels in an EFL context, there is a paucity of research specifically focusing on students' subjective experiences during their reading journeys. By employing narrative inquiry, this study aims to fill this gap by exploring EFL students' perspectives on using novels for extensive reading. This exploration not only contributes to the academic discourse surrounding extensive

reading practices but also highlights the need for pedagogical approaches that consider learner experiences and preferences in the selection of reading materials.

In conclusion, exploring EFL student experiences in using novels for extensive reading is crucial for educators aiming to promote effective literacy practices. To address the issues raised above, this research will examine students' experiences in reading broadly to understand the factors that support or encourage them to engage in reading activities. By understanding the student experiences, this research can identify more effective methods to increase reading interest and overcome existing problems. This study seeks to uncover these experiences, providing insights that could inform curriculum design and instructional strategies in EFL programs. According to recent studies employing novels as a teaching tool can improve students' English ability as well as their interest and involvement in reading. Despite the potential benefits, there has been little significant research on EFL students' experiences with novels for the purpose of improving reading comprehension. Previous research on extensive reading has generally focused on learning strategies, such as speed-reading techniques or vocabulary development methods, without considering students' subjective experiences of reading for pleasure or in a wider context. These studies provide valuable insights into the technical and strategic aspects of reading but often overlook how deep reading experiences, such as through novels, can enhance students' engagement and motivation in extensive reading. As a result, this research will fill the gap by exploring how the use of novels in extensive reading can create a more meaningful reading experience for students, as well as how aspects such as emotional attachment to characters or storylines can support their increased interest and reading habits. Thus, this research focuses not only on learning strategies but also on students' personal experiences in their interactions with literary texts, especially novels, which can open new insights on how to improve extensive reading among students. The study's findings will not only improve our understanding of effective language teaching methodologies, but will also offer educators with evidence-based methods for instilling

in their students a deep and enduring love of reading. Finally, this research aims to pave the way for more engaging, immersive, and effective language learning experiences for EFL students around the world.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

Formulation of the problem in this research are: How are students' experiences in using novel for extensive reading?

1.3 Operational Definitions

- 1.3.1 Students' experience:** The student experience refers to the total quality of a student's academic and social life while enrolled in a higher education institution. It encompasses a wide range of factors, including the quality of instruction, the ambiance on campus, extracurricular activities, support services, and more. Students' experiences here are to explore how participant experiences in using novels for extensive reading.
- 1.3.2 Novel:** Novel is a created prose narrative of a significant length and a certain complexity that creatively explores human experience, typically through a connected series of events involving a group of people in a particular environment. Novels are used in this study as media in extensive reading.
- 1.3.3 Extensive reading:** Extensive reading is an approach to reading where learners engage with large quantities of text for enjoyment and overall comprehension, rather than for detailed analysis or examination. It typically involves reading materials that are at or below the learner's language proficiency level, which helps to foster fluency and build reading habits. In this research, extensive reading used to find out and explore the participant's experiences in improving reading comprehension.

1.4 Aim of the Research

The purpose of this research is to explore students' experiences in the use of novel for extensive reading. The contribution of this research is expected to improve extensive reading skill such as reading comprehension, writing skill, and vocabulary acquisition through novels as a medium.

1.5 Significance of the Study

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

This research will be an additional input for future researchers who will conduct similar research on the theory and concept of students' experience in reading novel for reading comprehension, and could draw from various educational theories and concepts that provide a foundation for understanding the relationship between novel use and reading comprehension in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

This research holds several practical implications for students, educators, and educational institutions. The practical applications of this research are numerous and can significantly impact EFL students' learning experiences, language development, and overall academic and personal growth. By understanding how novels enhance reading comprehension, educators and students can make informed decisions about reading materials and teaching methods, ultimately leading to a more effective and engaging learning process.

1.5.3 Empirical Significance

This research holds several empirical implications for the researcher. The empirical applications of this research are numerous and can significantly impact EFL students' learning experiences, language development, and overall

academic and personal growth. By understanding how novels enhance reading comprehension, educators and students can make informed decisions about reading materials and teaching methods, ultimately leading to a more effective learning process.