

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the background, research questions, research objectives, research significance, research framework, and previous research.

A. Background

This study discusses students' perspectives toward reading English fan fiction to foster their reading interest. This research is narrowed only to students who have read English fan fiction, aiming to find out what students think about whether their reading interest in reading English texts can be increased after reading English fan fiction.

Reading is students' most critical component in their learning process (Bharuthram, 2012). Each subject requires students to be able to read either instructions or material, which means, students would face the reading experience daily. However, outside the learning process, Indonesian students, in particular, do not get much reading experience, especially memorable reading experiences, due to their low reading interest. In 2015-2016, Indonesia ranked 64th from a total of 70 countries that participated in The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), which is a worldwide study by the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) of 15-year-old students' educational performance for reading in (FactsMaps, 2018). National Library also released data showing only 10% of Indonesians above ten years old are interested in reading (Wibowo, 2015). It proves that students do not participate in a significant amount of reading activity because of their low interest.

Students' reading interest means they engage with the reading content (McKool, 1998; Pambudiyatno et al., 2021). It is the condition where reading gets students' attention. There are curiosity and the wanting to involve with the written text. Teachers should pay attention to students' reading preferences to build students' reading interest. There is a study conducted by Sari Dewi (2018) about

students' reading preferences, resulting in fiction being the most chosen reading text by students.

The type of fiction that might help in boosting reading interest is fan fiction. Garcia (2016) states that fan fiction could be one of the most widely read fiction genres nowadays, which should be possible to be used as one of the media to learn English. According to Waseem (2018), fan fiction is low-pressure because the reader enjoys the story with popular characters. It immerses readers in the text and makes them genuinely enjoy their reading process, which could affect their reading interest.

Based on a brief survey to the first year students of English Education of State Islamic University in Bandung, out of 50 students know about fan fiction, and 39 students read English fan fiction too. This survey shows that fan fiction is a familiar genre for them. From this survey, it was also found that some of the answers did not match the question. Those answers come from students who have no prior knowledge about the topic in the questionnaire. It proves that they did not read the question carefully due to their low interest in the issue being asked.

There are some studies conducted about the use of fan fiction for English learning, especially in reading. First, a research by Rosalina, Suhatmady, & Surya (2016) focuses on finding Indonesian K-poppers' motivation which involves the online English fan fiction community and their literacy activities, including writing and reading English fan fiction. Second, a research by Dwi Cahyati & Abdulrahman (2020) focuses on students' or the young generation's motivation to read Indonesian fan fiction and English fan fiction, which is as good as Indonesian. Third, a research by Utami & Nur (2021) analyzes students' reading interests while learning from home during the pandemic.

However, they are different from this research, in which the focus of this research is on exploring students' experience in reading English fan fiction, specifically of K-pop Idol to foster their reading interest.

B. Research Questions

Based on the problems in the background, it formulates the following question “How does English fan fiction foster students' reading interest based on their perspective?”

C. Research Objectives

Based on the background above, this research intends to find out how reading English fan fiction fosters students' reading interest based on their perspective.

D. Research Significances

This research is expected to provide information about students' perspectives on reading English fan fiction to foster their reading interest. It is also expected to give the teacher alternative material for guiding students to learn English, especially for increasing students' reading interests.

Practically, this research gives significance to the following:

1. Students

The result of this research is intended to foster students' interest in reading English texts.

2. Teachers

After this research is conducted, it is expected to give supporting data for teachers to consider fan fiction as one of the media to teach students to learn English.

E. Research Framework

As stated by Freed (2017), reading is the essential method for information securing in numerous areas; subsequently, the capacity to build exact and complete portrayals of texts has critical ramifications for scholarly execution, word-related achievement, and physical prosperity. National Reading Panel said there are five components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (Bal, 2018). Understanding the text is a requirement for reading, making comprehension the essence of reading itself (Durkin, 2004). To understand the text, students need to know the meaning of

each word. Limited vocabulary makes it difficult for students to understand what they read. However, vocabulary is one of the early identification of reading comprehension difficulties that affect students' reading activity (Catts et al., 2016). Students can increase their reading comprehension by reading more texts, but this depends on their reading interests.

To improve students' reading interest, teachers should understand what materials students prefer for learning English. What kind of medium make students' reading experience optimal? It is essential to pay attention to this because if students are not interested in reading the text, it will be difficult to start reading. Interest is one of the crucial things for enjoying reading activities. Students should be encouraged to read more because strong enthusiasm will help them get the best reading experience. Based on the study by Utami & Nur (2021), students nowadays prefer online sources for their reading material. They also like reading fiction rather than non-fiction materials.

Understanding students' preferences is the teacher's form of respecting students' perspectives. Considering students' preferences will actively promote their participation in reading activity and subsequently improve their reading performance (Subbarau & Mustafa, 2016). Using text that students are genuinely interested in also encourages them to share their points of view. Because students prefer reading fiction, teachers can use fan fiction as an alternative or solution to increase students' interest in reading because fan fiction is part of fiction and can be accessed easily online.

Fan fiction is a non-commercial fiction that comes from the fandom itself. It is a genre of text that is re-write from the original stories created by fans of work and includes canon elements of at least one fictional universe (Bahoric & Swaggerty, 2015). Fan fiction recently became famous and known in early 2000. The readers of this kind of fiction also vary. Most of them come from teenagers and pre-adult. Readers can mostly read fan fiction through online applications or websites accessed by mobile phones or pc, such as Wattpad, fan fiction.net, A03,

Tumblr, and even non-fan fiction writing sites like Twitter. As stated by Thomas (2011), fan fiction refers to other stories written by fans regarding plot lines and characters from the original story, sometimes they take one or two aspects from the original story, like the name of the character, then proceeds to make a very different storyline and setting or plot. The meaning of fan fiction is growing along with many researchers who are interested in this topic.

Nowadays, a new type of fan fiction is snowballing in the community called real-person fiction, often abbreviated as RPF. Fathallah (2018) said even though the idea of writing real person as fan fiction shares discomfort between the writer and reader, several researchers who have studied RPF then equated RPF with the process of visualizing films from real characters since RPF is a type of fan fiction that takes real people as characters and face-claiming them in the story, for example, artists or public figures such as K-pop idols.

Due to the explanation above, this research will focus on real-person fiction, specifically K-pop idols' fan fiction, as the medium to find out students' perspectives on reading fan fiction to foster their reading interest. The research sample would be taken from undergraduate students in the English Education Department of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, first and second year students, and already having experience in reading English fan fiction with K-pop idols as story characters.

F. Previous Research

There are several studies about fan fiction as a medium related to reading activity, mainly English-language texts. First, research by Khairuddin (2013a) focused on students' reading interest in a second language. This research aimed to identify students' reading interests in reading second language materials and determine the differences in students' reading interests based on their genders. This study was conducted with 86 samples, which are Form Four students in Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia. The data was collected using a 6-item questionnaire adapted and adopted from Marrero (2009). Data were analyzed and presented in

the form of frequency. This research found that students have a low interest in reading English materials, and there is a significant difference between male and female students. From these findings, it can be suggested that teachers should take action to develop and enhance male students' reading interests.

Second, a research by Rosalina, Suhatmady, & Surya (2016). Their study aims to find out Indonesian K-poppers' motivation while joining the online English fan fiction community and what kind of literacy they were engaging in English fan fiction. The sample of this research was taken from three fan fiction authors who actively write on *asianfanfict.com*. This qualitative research collected data from questionnaires, interviews, and fan fiction authors' documentation. The result of this research reveals four significant findings. First, the samples' motivations in writing English fan fiction divide into three aspects: self-enrichment, staying a little longer, and celebration of media content they got from their favorite characters. Second, fan fiction writers on *asianfanfics.com* were engaged in English literacy, reading each other's fan fiction and writing fan fiction, using Woodrow's theory of writing strategy. They are the Cognitive, Meta-cognitive, and Social categories in their writing. The third goal is to stay a little longer interacting with their readers. Most of the time is social interaction, which is compliment and appreciation between the sample and their readers. And the last is the celebration of the content they got, which they project their experience into their writing.

Third, Dwi Cahyati & Abdulrahman (2020) studied the young generations' motivation in reading and how English fan fiction could affect them. This study used a qualitative method which took five participants as the research sample. The sample is those who've read English fan fiction, aged 15-25 years, mentioning gender and fandom. The data was collected by interview and analyzed using qualitative methods. The process interview would be conducted via email for 30 minutes per person. This research found out that four out of five participants said that fan fiction helped them improve their reading skills, and one out of five participants felt fan fiction helped her improve her reading skills and writing

skills. Using idol names as characters in the story also influences their motivation to read. Reading English fan fiction also stated improved their English vocabulary.

The fourth is a research on students' reading interest during learning from home amidst the Covid-19 Pandemic by Utami & Nur (2021). It focused on analyzing students' reading interests during learning from home because of the pandemic. This study is qualitative research with a survey that took 79 samples. The sample is students from the second, fourth, and sixth semesters. The data was collected through a questionnaire and interview, then analyzed descriptively by the researcher. This study showed that during the learning-from-home, students didn't like to read academic material since its too difficult to understand without a guide. They preferred reading fiction rather than reading non-fiction. They also chose reading online instead of reading offline. They spent 15-30 minutes a day and only read 1-3 books within five months during learning from home. Their reading materials came from online and offline sources, websites, and print books using smartphones. The material that was mostly read was novels, especially the romantic genre. With these findings, teachers should consider picking exciting reading materials for lecturing based on students' data.

However, this research is slightly different from the previous research. This research intends to discover how does reading English fan fiction foster students' reading interest in English texts. For this reason, this study focuses on students' perspectives on reading English fan fiction to foster their reading interest.