

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **1.1. Research Background**

Learning English is essential in the 21st century. English is an international language and the most popular language in the world. English is one of the most popular languages globally, with around 1,130 million native speakers, and nearly twice that many say it as a second or foreign language (Klappenbach, 2022). Learners who can speak English will be easier to communicate with foreigners. According to Crystal (2017), English is an international or global language because of its wide use in usage in a variety of fields, including politics, diplomatic, international trades and industry, business, science and technology, education, the media, and information technology, and popular culture.

English learning has several elements of language that should be mastered, such as pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. In this research, the researcher focused on vocabulary. Vocabularies are critical for EFL learners to study. According to Wallace (2007), vocabulary is essential in learning English. EFL learners with a broad vocabulary have a greater chance of improving their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills (Richards, 2015).

Moreover, the stronger EFL learners speak, write, read, and listen, depending on their vocabulary. The more vocabulary EFL learners known and used, the more meaning they can express in various situations. Vocabulary is al

the words that exist in a language that is basic elements in English. Vocabulary plays an essential role in learning every language. The more EFL learners master vocabulary, the more significant possibility that EFL learners can skillfully use the language.

Nation (2006) suggested that a EFL learner needs a vocabulary of between 8000 and 9000-word families to understand a range of texts. This figure is effective for a novel or newspaper comprehension rate of 98%. In this research, the researcher focused on EFL learners who like to read English novels for their vocabulary acquisition. The researcher conducted this research because the researcher found a phenomenon about this in the 2017 English Education Study Program. Some of them like reading novels to acquire their vocabulary. Therefore, the researcher investigated the perceptions of EFL learners' batch 2017 from reading novels for vocabulary acquisition.

Bamford, Day, and Richard (2004), states that, the EFL learners who read more will become better and more confident readers. Still, they will also enhance their reading, writing, listening, speaking skills, and most importantly, their vocabulary acquisition. The EFL learners will have many opportunities to see words in various contexts and be familiar with them. It is easier for EFL learners to develop their skills, especially those who want to increase their vocabulary by reading English Novels.

As the researcher mentioned, vocabulary was fundamental to language and extremely important to language learners. Words were the prime building blocks of speech since they label objects, actions, and ideas without which learners

cannot convey the intended meaning. The EFL learners who lack vocabulary need to study hard in order to enhance their language. According to Alyami and Mohsen (2019), one of the most effective ways of helping EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition is reading a book. When EFL learners read challenging book that was fluently and consist of unfamiliar words faced commonly and in various contexts (Morett 2019). It is the process of EFL learners to indicate the meaning of new words by resolving the rationale of the words and phrases surrounding the English novels.

A study by Palupi et al. (2021) found that reading a novel can improve English skills is grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and social culture. The result of this research concluded by reading English novels have some impact for student ability. Palupi et al. (2021) found that, reading English novel students not only understand the correct grammar but also how to use it. There are various new words and sentence structures in an English novel. Another study Alsaif and Masrai (2019), investigate extensive reading and incidental vocabulary acquisition. The study found that the participant's vocabulary increase has been primarily influenced by extensive reading, showing that the extensive reading activity resulted in vocabulary acquisition. In their study, the pre-test result indicates that the participant has a receptive vocabulary size of 4,600 words, and the post-test has increased to 5,300 words. However, this research collected data from one EFL learners' which created a gap for the researcher to find out the result of a larger number of participants.

From the preliminary observation in Universitas Tanjungpura, the researcher found that the undergraduate students of EFL learners of the English Education Study Program of 2017 have used English novel reading to increase their English vocabulary. To find out the student perception and based on both of the previous research above, the researcher was interested in investigating a larger number of participants in the same background regarding their perception of reading English novels for vocabulary acquisition. To fill the research gap, the researcher has conducted a descriptive study on 30 undergraduate students for questionnaire and 3 EFL learners for interview to find out their perception through reading English Novels for their vocabulary acquisition.

## **1.2. Research Question**

Based on the background explained previously, the research provides a question that can help the researchers seek the answer to this study. The following form of the question represents the formulation of the problem: What is the EFL learners' perception of vocabulary acquisition using English novels?

## **1.3. Research Purpose**

Based on the research question above, the purpose of this study was to find out EFL learners' perception through reading English Novels for their vocabulary acquisition.

#### **1.4. Research Significant**

In this research, the learners are significant. The significance of this research will be explained as follow:

1) For Learners:

This research helps EFL learners who want to learn English by reading English novels for their vocabulary acquisition.

2) For the Teachers:

This research helps the teacher who wants to teach English by reading English novels for student vocabulary acquisition.

#### **1.5. Research Terminology**

The definition of the terms in this research will be explained as follows:

- 1) EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learner is a student in the English Education Study Program of 2017 at the Universitas Tanjungpura who does not use English as a first language.
- 2) Vocabulary acquisition is knowledge through understanding the words and their meaning.
- 3) English Novel results from a long imagination or long narrative text that discusses the problems of a person's life or various figures written in English.
- 4) Descriptive is to describe and answer in more detail the problems to be studied by studying as much as possible an individual, a group, or an event.