

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

In the modern day, where technology plays a significant role in meeting requirements, such those of employment or education. Teenagers in particular use technology to harness their interests in literacy in the community. Reading is still not very popular, despite the fact that it is important and useful for the future. In fact, the Qur'an explicitly orders Muslims to read in surah Al- 'Ala verses 1-3 which reads:

اِقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ اِقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ

Reading is a process that a reader uses to understand the writer's intention through the written word (Tarigan, 1998). Reading is a beneficial pastime for students, but it is also something essential and necessary because the success of their studies greatly depends on their reading proficiency (Ramelan, 1990).

Based on Willingham (2017), it examines the cognitive processes associated with reading and highlights the significant impact that reading has on cognitive development. The author explores the ways in which reading not only improves linguistic proficiency, but also influences the development of critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and comprehension. Willingham explores the neurological elements of reading, providing insight into how the brain handles written text and the consequences for cognitive function as a

whole. This book offers valuable perspectives on the fact that reading is not merely a skill, but an essential endeavour that greatly contributes to intellectual advancement and maturation.

Teenagers in the general population increasingly use social media more frequently as a substitute for traditional literacy. Today's youngsters spend about nine hours a day staring at screens. This indicates that people find electronics to be more engaging than books. Several of them are active on social media platforms like Wattpad, WhatsApp, Instagram, and Twitter. Teenagers can access articles or read tweets through various social media platforms, one of which is fan fiction. Fan fiction, per the Jamison (2013), is literature that continues, interrupts, reimagines, or recycles previously published stories or characters. On Wattpad, Webtoon, Facebook, and Twitter, we can find this fan fiction. Mistry (2011) defined Twitter is a free, extensively used social networking application that allows users to post information in a real-time news stream. Especially among youths, Indonesians frequently use the network Twitter. Twitter, one of the most popular networks, offers users a way to write fan fiction stories through a thread called Alternative Universe, or AU.

Alternative Universe, as per Jayanti et. al (2023), is a fictitious novel with a storyline and characters set in a parallel universe that is created as natural as possible so that readers can feel the feelings that the author wishes to portray. This Alternative Universe features a wide range of genres, including thrillers, comedies, romances, fluffy, horror, and light everyday life stories. In

essence, Alternative Universe gives the writer the ability to transform their beloved character into a "normal" person. The characteristics of the characters in Alternative Universe are made up. Synopses, character profiles, and screenshots from fictitious chat applications are typically included in Alternative Universes, which are authored and shared in the manner of Twitter threads. Many people enjoy Alternative Universe because of its distinct and laid-back language style and light plot that showcases slice-of-life stories.

The majority of Alternative Universe 's readers are those who utilize Twitter. Some of the Alternative Universe's that garner great attention are Malioboro at Midnight by @skysphire which has 132,000 likes and 34,000 Retweets; Cake Store by @equilanas, which gets 152,000 likes 60,500 Retweets; and the fictional Walk You Home by @megumiiiiiee, which has 58,400 likes and 25,200 Retweets. Many statistics demonstrate that Alternative Universe has a huge and undoubtedly diversified viewership. One of the reasons fanfictions has thousands of readers is that it is simple to access Alternative Universe, especially in the digital age when everything can be accessed online.

Several topics can be discussed in further detail in this regard based on Alternative Universe's strong reading interest, particularly among teens. The writing style of Alternative Universe (AU) is primarily a combination of Indonesian and English. Even some Alternative Universe postings are written in English, which was almost fully written in English by @amaranthsch. Naturally, something that is unknown before reading becomes known, such as

English vocabulary that is still unfamiliar until reading reveals its meaning. Single words, compound words, and idioms are all examples of lexemes (Richard & Schmidt, 2002). By utilising Alternative Universe (AU), foreign languages like English are introduced to students and readers, allowing them to indirectly acquire the meanings of terminology. This approach continues until students get familiar with the language. Permana (2020) asserts that vocabulary plays a crucial role in language acquisition. Consequently, in order to effectively learn a language, it is imperative to additionally strengthen one's vocabulary. Indeed, the Al-Qur'an also addresses the topic in surah Al-Baqarah: 31, which states:

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ

إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

This rhyme offers a practical illustration of how crucial it is to understand a language's vocabulary, particularly while communicating. In addition, having a solid vocabulary helps you learn the language more quickly because you are already familiar with its meaning.

Recently, there has been a significant change in the approaches used to improve language skills, specifically in the area of learning English, within the subject of language acquisition. The conventional methods of enhancing one's vocabulary, which typically involve memorization and repetitive drills, have demonstrated certain limitations in cultivating a profound and nuanced

comprehension of language. As a result of this educational difficulty, there has been an increasing fascination with inventive methods that involve learners in more immersive and pleasurable experiences. An increasingly prominent technique is the integration of Alternative Universe (AU). Alternative Universe (AU) are fictitious or speculative universes that exist inside literature. In these worlds, characters, places, and narratives differ from those found in the real world.

Based on the previously stated opinions, it can be inferred that this research seeks to examine the influence of Alternative Universe (AU) on students' English language skills, particularly their vocabulary skills. Additionally, the study aims to identify the advantages of reading alternative universes and how they can serve as a valuable resource for students to enhance their interest and proficiency in English. The response to this research will be derived from the perspectives of multiple Alternative Universe (AU) students and readers regarding the impact of Alternative Universe (AU) on vocabulary proficiency, which is one of the English language aptitudes. Considering the viewpoints of these students, it is predicted that the increasing popularity of Alternative Universe will motivate students to acquire English language skills and enhance their vocabulary.

Given the aforementioned description, researcher inclined to select this subject for future investigation and as a potential reference for enhancing students' English-speaking proficiency, under the title **STUDENTS VIEWS**

TOWARDS READING ALTERNATIVE UNIVERSE (AU) TO ENHANCE ENGLISH VOCABULARY SKILLS.

B. Definition of Key Terms

To prevent misunderstandings, several research-related words are defined.

1. Alternative Universe (AU) is one part of a fan-fiction written on Twitter by an idol fan. The characters in Alternative Universe (AU) are usually taken from K-Pop Idol, anime characters, or characters from a series. The Alternative Universe (AU) was used as a research tool in this study to examine how English proficiency can be improved through the use of the AU. The author's influence on the students' enthusiasm in learning English will be discussed in relation to the student reading assignment Alternative Universe (AU).
2. Vocabulary refers to all of the words used in a language, whether broadly or explicitly. Vocabulary is also one of the skills in learning English. In this study, vocabulary played the part of an English ability that was the main focus in data retrieval and completion. Here, vocabulary is also a test subject to see if students' skill levels can be raised by using Alternative Universe (AU).
3. Students' Views is the opinion or perception of students on the impact of reading alternative universe (AU) on vocabulary skills. The point of view of the student will be measured and investigated in this study, and the student's perspective will serve as the data that is gathered and

reinterpreted to make it more understandable. Additionally, the teacher can use this perspective of the student as a guide to create learning strategies that are more enjoyable for the students in the classroom.

C. Research Questions

The main questions to be addressed in this research are:

1. How are student's views about reading Alternative Universe (AU) as a media for enhancing vocabulary skills?
2. What are the benefits students feel when reading Alternative Universe (AU) to enhance their English Vocabulary skills?

D. Objective Study

The research intends to investigate the following research questions:

1. To find out the students' point of view about reading Alternative Universe (AU) as a media for enhancing vocabulary skills.
2. To determine the benefits that students perceive from reading Alternative Universe (AU) to enhance their English vocabulary skills.

E. Significance of Study

This research is beneficial for students, teachers, and researchers. Considering that in the era of technology, it is important for teachers or students to make the best use of existing technology as a medium to make learning easier and fun in class. Several studies say that fan-fiction which contains one of them, namely Alternative Universe (AU) that Alternative Universe (AU) has a good impact on students' interest in reading at this time.

This study will provide useful information about students' views on the use of Alternative Universe (AU) in improving one of the skills in English, namely vocabulary skills. This study can be a reference and inspiration for teachers to be able to develop the media used in class to be more inspiring and fun, and in accordance with the interests of the students themselves, so as to increase students' enthusiasm in learning English.

With any luck, this study can serve as a springboard for additional studies of the AU as a tool for teaching and learning English and other literacy skills. Undoubtedly, the results of this study will benefit all readers.