

Analysis of students' difficulty in reading academic journal at English Department Universitas Pasir Pengaraian

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ABSTRACT

Reading academic journals is essential for English department students, yet many face challenges comprehending them effectively. While numerous studies emphasize the importance of reading skills in academic success, limited research specifically addresses difficulties in reading journals among university students in rural contexts. This study aims to analyze the difficulties faced by English Department students at Universitas Pasir Pengaraian in reading academic journals. A descriptive qualitative method was employed, involving 36 students as the research population. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. The findings reveal that the main difficulties include limited vocabulary, unfamiliarity with academic structures, and lack of background knowledge on the journal topics. These issues contribute to reduced comprehension and motivation. The study concludes that targeted reading strategies and academic support are essential to improve students' journal reading competence.

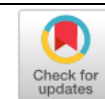
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INTRODUCTION

Reading academic journals is an important skill for English Department students, enabling them to engage with current research, build critical thinking abilities, and contribute effectively to scholarly discourse (Kelderak, 2023). However, Indonesian undergraduate students frequently encounter significant difficulties in comprehending academic texts, particularly regarding specialized vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and identifying main ideas (Anwar & Sailuddin, 2022; Ramadhianti & Somba, 2023; Rahayu, 2024).

Anwar and Sailuddin (2022) observed that a considerable portion of university students rated vocabulary comprehension as the most problematic aspect, with approximately 43% reporting challenges in decoding formal academic terminology. Similarly, Ramadhianti and Somba (2023) reported that EFL undergraduates in an Indonesian university struggled with distinguishing between main ideas and supporting details, interpreting cultural references, and managing unfamiliar academic lexicons—findings which were corroborated by Munawarah et al. (2024), identifying poor perceptions of academic journals among students at Hamzanwadi University.

In the digital age, these difficulties are exacerbated by challenges unique to online reading environments. Rahayu (2024) reported that students experience digital fatigue (e.g., eye strain), internet instability, and information overload, further limiting comprehension. Cognitive load theory explains that these disruptions hinder deep processing, causing fragmented attention and reducing retention (Sweller et al., 2022).

In University of Pasir Pengaraian the students learn about reading, they have five levels, start from first semester up to fifth semester. In each theme of reading levels discuss different topic. Part of reading comprehension are; main topics, topics of paragraph, main idea, patterns of organization, skimming, scanning, making inferences, summarizing, etc

The problems can be happened because some influence when the students was studied. There are: First, less practice reading can make students habitual in the find main idea or patterns of organization. Second, less understanding meaning of the text because lack of vocabulary, if the students read some text get new word unfamiliar, they are so confused because they are not understanding the meaning. They can open the dictionary to know the meaning of unfamiliar word. Not only useful in reading, speaking, listening and writing but also can new vocabulary after they read the dictionary vocabulary not lose important too.

Third, Sometime the monotonous technique and methods that the lecturer used to practice in the class made them felt bored in reading subject. Fourth, attendance of the students also influences to understand the topic one meeting they are not coming, they will much lose the material. If the lecturer gives the exercise, the students busy with their activity, such as they talk with other friends and copy paste the answer, so attendance students and the lecturer very influence in teaching and learning process.

Academic reading involves understanding complex texts that include argumentation, evidence, and specialized vocabulary (Nation, 2009). Reading academic texts demands cognitive strategies such as skimming, scanning, summarizing, and critical analysis (Alderson, 2000).

Previous studies (e.g., Chou, 2011; Ahmad, 2012) have shown that non-native English speakers face various challenges, including unfamiliar vocabulary, syntax, and text organization. A lack of motivation and prior knowledge also contributes significantly to reading difficulties. In Indonesian EFL contexts, reading academic journals poses additional difficulties due to linguistic and cultural differences, as well as limited exposure to authentic materials (Yusuf, 2011).

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze the difficulties experienced by students in reading academic journals in English. A qualitative design was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of students' challenges, perceptions, and experiences in processing academic texts. Sample in this research is all of students in sixth semester in English study program at University of Pasir Pengaraian they are 35 students. In this research using total sampling because total of population less of 100 so, all of population become sample of research (Sugiyono, 2007: 260).

In this study, researcher use instrumentations such as questionnaires and interviews created from Google Form. Data collection is carried out to get an overview by collecting data, looking for facts, then analyzing the data by compiling and collecting data, then interpreting it based on existing theories. The aim of this research is to reveal the difficulty of reading academic journals among English students in the 6th semester of the 2022/2023 academic year at Universitas Pasir Pengaraian.

Data collection is carried out to get an overview by collecting data, looking for facts, then analyzing the data by compiling and collecting data, then interpreting it based on existing theories. The formula used in getting the score of students' skill in reading news item text will can be seen on the following formula from (Sudijono, 2011:43)

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Notes: P = Total Score

F = number correct answer

N = Number of Test question

The data analysis technique used in this study is an interactive data collection model consisting of: 1. Data Reduction Reducing data means summarizing, choosing the main things, focusing on the important things, looking for themes and patterns. Thus, the data that has been reduced will provide a clearer picture, and make it easier for researchers to collect data in the field. 2 Data Display In this study, the data activities can be carried out in the form of brief descriptions, charts, relationships between categories, flowcharts and the like. By displaying the data, it will be easier to understand what happened, and plan further work based on what has been 3. Data Conclusion The last step is to draw conclusions from the various data that have been obtained. Conclusions in qualitative research are new findings that have never existed before. Findings can be in the form of a description or description of an object that was previously still dim or dark so that after research it becomes clear.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The result of the analysis of student data in the difficulty of reading academic journal are the ability to master reading materials complete, broad, and comprehensive. Furthermore, to find out the main idea in detail and understand the contents of the reading material, the reading ability obtained by students was 74%. Thus, the level of student's skill in reading journal of sixth semester English department of students is include the criteria very well, because more than 50% of students are able to read the understanding of the text given in the form question.

The result obtained showed that the level of the students in reading journal of English department students in the 2024 academic year was very good but needed to be improved when viewed based on the standard of minimal completeness criteria. This, should be the attention of the teachers and parents alike, especially for core reading journal of the understanding of critical and creative levels, of reading comprehension students still lack understanding of the elements of comparison implied in the discourse, understanding the problems raised and knowing the main ideas implied in the discourse.

The ability to read comprehension, students should be able and master and understand each level so that understanding becomes balanced, both from the literal, interpretation, critical and creative levels. Reading journal are balanced understanding of the level of understanding students are able to master and understanding the contents of reading well, so students are able to answer and understand the contents of the reading.

The result of this study can be used data and references for teachers to be able to pay more attention and increase student's interest reading. Improving the ability and interest in reading students also provides a very positive thing in the development and ability of students learning. With the description of the ability the students, teachers can make appropriate and appropriate learning programs and strategies and interesting so that the expected to be able to improve students learning subjects will run well if there is good cooperation between teachers and students in improving learning achievement, namely teachers can guide and provide motivation to students thought stages mastered in accordance with the existing curriculum.

Based on the finding of the research, it can be concluded that the students' difficulties in listening test of difficulty depend on two factors there are internal factors and external factors. In internal factors they are: 1) Lack of Vocabulary; 2) Listener interest and response; 3) Poor grammar and information; 4) Poor grammar and information; 5) Lack of Concentration; 6) The students don't trust themselves; 7) Feel worried; 8) Novel Language; 9) Long spoken.

In conclusion, the research findings indicate that students face challenges in the student difficulty due to both internal and external factors, with external factors appearing slightly more prominent. For internal factors, 17.82% of students "Totally Agree" and 55.66% "Agree" that these issues, such as lack of vocabulary, poor grammar, lack of concentration, and low self-confidence, impact their performance. Meanwhile, for external factors, 11.4% of students "Totally Agree" and 74.3% "Agree" those difficulties like grammar problem, vocabularies

problem, and individual personality. The higher percentage of "Agree" responses for external factors (5.7%). The higher percentage of "Totally Agree" responses for external factors (74.3% compared to 11.4% for internal factors) suggests that external conditions are slightly more immediately recognized as barriers. However, both factors play crucial roles, and addressing these challenges comprehensively by improving internal skills and addressing external testing conditions will be essential for enhancing students' difficulty in reading journal.

CONCLUSION

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