ACADEMIC READING CHALLENGES OF AN ESL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT

A Thesis

Pesented to Department of English Language Education as Partial Fulfillment of Requirements to Obtain the Sarjana Pendidikan Degree in English Language Education



Conveyed by:

Afnan Martua Muslih

(20322083)

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION

FACULTY OF PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIO-CULTURAL SCIENCES

ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF INDONESIA

YOGYAKART

APPROVAL SHEET

ACADEMIC READING CHALLENGES OF AN ESL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT

By

Afnan Martua Muslih

(20322083)

Approved on:

By

Supervisor

Dr. Ista Maharsi, S.S., M.Hum

NIP : 056130501

RATFICATION SHEET

ACADEMIC READING CHALLENGES OF AN ESL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT

By

Afnan Martua Muslih (20322083)

Defended before the Board of Examiners on 2 August 2024 and Declared Acceptable.

Board of Examiners

Chairperson : Dr. Ista Maharsi, S.S.,M.Hum

First Examiner : Astri Hapsari, S.S.,M.TESOL

Second Examiner : Anandayu Suri Ardini, S.S.,M.A

Yogyakarta, 2 August 2024

Department of English Language Education

Faculty of Psychology & Socio-Cultural Sciences

Islamic University of Indonesia

Supervisor

Head of Department,

Puji Rahayu,S.Pd.,M.LS.T.,ph.D.

NIP:053310402

STATEMENT OF WORK'S ORIGINALITY

I honestly state that 1 wrote this thesis myself and there is no other work except cited in quotations and references as n scientific paper should.

Yogyakarta, 25- 07-2024

The Writer,



Afnan Martua Muslih

20322083

MOTTO

"Whoever follows a path in pursuit of knowledge, Allah will make easy for him a path to Paradise"

(Prophet Muhammad SWA)

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Mr. Martua Muslih and Mrs. Hasibah Nuh lubis, who always support me in everything, and my thesis supervisor Dr.Ista Maharsi,S.S.,M.Hum. who also always provided guidance and support during the process of compiling and finishing this thesis. In addition, this thesis is also dedicated to all my friends who always listen to my complaints during the process of writing the thesis until it is finished.

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20322083

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ACADEMIC READING CHALLENGES OF AN ESL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT

AFNAN MARTUA MUSLIH

20322083

ABSTRACT

Although there have been many studies related to challenges in academic reading, there has been a little study on challenges faced by undergraduate ESL student in academic reading. There are several issues related to academic reading, may include difficulties in com prehending complex texts, confusion in identifying main ideas and key details, limited vocabulary and understanding of specialized terminology, as well as challenges in maintaining focus and accuracy when reading lengthy materials are to mention some of the challenges. The study aims to explore some challenges faced by undergraduate ESL student in university academic reading. This study used a descriptive qualitative approach. In this research, data was collected through interview. The study utilized the Zoom platform as the setting for conducting an interview with Ms. H, a student specializing in Accounting at University X. She was selected as participant since she was an EFL student studying in ESL country. Thematic analysis is employed as the method for this analysis. Based on analysis, this study showed that some challenges faced by undergraduate ESL students in university academic reading such as text comprehension, engaging in scholarly conversations, course requirements, and discipline relevance. Integrating stages of the reading academic improved students' writing skills. This study suggests implications for students to be able to apply and use appropriate strategies to overcome these challenges by developing their reading skills.

Keywords: Academic reading challenges, ESL context, University

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Academic reading is a fundamental aspect of university education, and proficiency in this skill is crucial for students' academic success. Many undergraduate students encounter difficulties in comprehending and effectively interacting with academic texts. These challenges may arise from various factors such as the complexity of language used in scholarly articles, unfamiliar disciplinary terms, lack of reading strategies, limited vocabulary, and inadequate prior knowledge (Liu & Read, 2020). Nevertheless, despite these challenges, reading skills remain essential for enabling students to understand complex texts, critically analyze information, and synthesize knowledge. Language educators play a vital role in guiding the development of these skills. Therefore, understanding the skill needs and challenges in university academic reading from the perspectives of students and language educators is crucial for designing effective reading learning strategies and interventions.

Previous research has explored various aspects of academic reading skills and challenges. For instance, Johnson and Smith (2022) conducted research on specific skills that undergraduate students consider important for academic reading. Their findings emphasized the importance of critical thinking, active

engagement with texts, note-taking, time management, and information synthesis Lee et al. (2021) focused on challenges in academic reading in the context of online learning, highlighting issues such as distractions and lack of focus. One key point of this research is the significance of academic reading skills for undergraduate students.

The ability to comprehend complex texts, critically analyze information, and synthesize knowledge is highlighted as a crucial component of these skills and by examining the students' perspective, this research uncovers various challenges, including language complexity, unfamiliar disciplinary terms, and limited reading strategies (Kintsch, 1998). The Construction-Integration Model proposed by Kintsch (1998) proves to be a valuable framework for understanding the integration and inference processes crucial for effective comprehension. The focus of this model on how readers construct meaning from texts aligns with the complexity of academic reading, providing insights into the involved cognitive processes.

While this research provides valuable insights, further contextualization through references to foundational works in cognitive reading models would enhance its academic depth. Including references to Kintsch (1998) a broader discussion of reading comprehension and would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the subject (Snow, 2002).

According to Hellekjaer (2009) in his research Academic English Reading Proficiency at the University Level: A Norwegian Case Study and the Results indicated that approximately 30% of participants struggled significantly with English reading, with an additional 44% finding it more challenging compared to their native language. Key obstacles identified included encountering unfamiliar vocabulary and reading at a slower pace. Interestingly, participants engaged in extracurricular reading and those capable of inferring word meanings from context demonstrated higher reading scores. Many faced issues stemming from poor language proficiency, leading to falling below the linguistic threshold required. Contrary to expectations, the study revealed that Norwegian EFL instruction at the upper-secondary level does not adequately foster the academic English reading proficiency necessary for higher education. DiCerbo et, al. (2014) in their research A Review of the Literature on Teaching Academic English to English Language Learners. This research examines existing literature to ascertain the understanding of Academic English (AE) within K–12 education. It delineates how AE is defined in educational research, its implementation in instructional strategies, and the implications for teacher training and development. While the primary focus is on English language learners, the insights drawn have relevance for all students encountering difficulties in mastering AE. The article highlights significant hurdles in defining and implementing AE in teaching and recommends avenues for future

investigation.

There are research on academic reading in Indonesia, such as the research results of Fitriana, Meida (2018) in her research Students' Reading Strategies in Comprehending Academic Reading: ACase Study in an Indonesian Private Collage. This research aimed to investigate the specific strategies employed by students with varying levels of English proficiency to comprehend academic reading, as well as the factors influencing their reading comprehension. The study utilized a qualitative approach based on the case study theory. Data were gathered through interview, documentary analysis, and questionnaires, and analyzed using techniques such as data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. Findings revealed distinct differences in strategies utilized by low and high proficiency students. Additionally, the study identified five key factors influencing students' reading comprehension motivation, linguistic competence, interest, text characteristics, and environmental factors.

Eka Damayanti (2017) also found that students used various strategies for reading academic texts, such as: re-reading strategies: reading titles, subtitles and abstracts; predict the content of the text. Strategies when reading: highlighting key words, taking notes, and connecting new information to existing knowledge. Post-reading strategies: summarizing text content, answering questions, and evaluating information. The strategy most often used is the strategy when reading, namely marking keywords and taking notes. Students still experience difficulties in

structure of Academic Texts. However, studies on academic reading challenges still need to be carried out due to limited references of such studies in EFL context, particulary in Indonesia. Therefore, this study aim to explore some challenges faced by undergraduate ESL student in university academic reading.

1.2 Identification of the problem

There are many Indonesian students aspiring to pursue higher education in Malaysia. There are around 11,000 (eleven thousand) Indonesian students in Malaysia studying from the S1-S3 level. Seventy percent (70%) of Indonesian students consists of undergraduate students. The challenge related to academic challenges among EFL student in ESL context that have been written in previous research. Winnie, et al. (2023) in their study explained that the Indonesian EFL students felt the challenges when transitioning from an EFL to an ESL environment while studying in Malaysia. This challenge was also related to the requirement of speaking in an academic context, as they felt it was more challenging as the findings indicated that the respondents were more concerned with insufficient vocabulary than grammar knowledge. Another study by Singh (2019) described that international EFL master's students faced academic challenges in their writing and reading practices, which were further impaired by the lack of English language proficiency.The nature of the challenges are linked to other language skills such as speaking and listening, and these challenges create a network of additional academic literacy challenges.

Study by Qian, et al. (2023) EFL students struggled with academic vocabulary and lacked sufficient reading skills, particularly in terms of speed reading to locate

information. While the students did demonstrate some use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, they tended to rely heavily on translation software and dictionaries. As most previous research focused on how EFL students overcame their challenges in English-speaking countries. There is little discussion on Indonesian students and their challenges in Malaysian University. Thus, this study was conducted to identify the challenges faced by EFL speaker students and the strategies they used to navigate the challenges during their transition from EFL to ESL speakers in Malaysian University.

1.3 Formulation of the problem

This study makes attempts to answer the following question: What challenges does undergraduate ESL student face in university academic reading?

1.4 Objectives of the study

The study aims to explore some challenges faced by undergraduate ESL student in university academic reading.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study lies in its exploration of challenges in university academic reading from the perspectives of undergraduate students. The findings contribute to understanding the challenges faced by students in university academic reading. Consequently, they can identify and overcome obstacles in

developing their reading skills, thereby enhancing the quality of their learning. For teachers, the research provides valuable insights into what students need when it comes to academic reading, enabling them to design more relevant and effective teaching programs. Thus, this research has the potential to improve the quality of teaching and students' learning outcomes in the context of university academic reading.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Reading for Academic Purposes

Reading within an academic context presents a distinct set of challenges and characteristics, as opposed to general reading practices. The theoretical perspectives on academic reading shed light on the complexities inherent in the reading process. According to McNamara and Magliano (2009) the significance of effectively managing both lower level and higher-level processes for fluent academic reading. Unlike general reading, academic reading is marked by specific objectives and requirements. Referers to Anderson (2015) teachers identified key challenges encountered by first-year students, which included difficulties in "reading discipline specific genre," "lack ofmotivation," and "reading strategically." In contrast, the main reading challenges faced by final-year students, as indicated by Hartshorn et al. (2017), were related to "ESL issues," "vocabulary," "understanding discipline content," and once again, the challenge of "lack of strategies." Khalifa and Weir (2009) noting a continuum of reading speeds in this context, ranging from skimming and scanning to meticulous reading for learning and memorization. The unique nature of academic reading extends to the integration of multiple texts on

related topics, forming an intertextual structure that surpasses understanding individual texts (Perfetti, et al. 2019). Critically evaluating textual information becomes paramount in academic reading,especially in the era of diverse online resources (Leu et al., 2011). The assessment of information for relevance,accuracy, credibility, and bias is vital for university-level reading activities. Recognizing these theoretical perspectives is instrumental for researchers and educators in understanding the dynamic and challenging nature of academic reading, enabling the development of suitable strategies and interventions to support readers in this specialized context.

2.1.1 Studies of Academic Reading in University

Research conducted in university settings on academic reading has predominantly focused on identifying the specific reading competencies required and the challenges faced by students and many researchers have researched with various theories and different objects. Various methodologies, including surveys and qualitative assessments, have been employed to collect data from students. Survey-based studies by Weir, et al. (2012) generally revealed that most reading skills are important for university studies. These surveys underscore the importance of a diverse range of reading and reading-related skills, covering fundamental comprehension to interpretation and evaluation. Discrepancies have been observed across academic stages and disciplinary fields, with undergraduate tasks focusing

on skills like retrieval and application, while postgraduate tasks involve more interpretation and evaluation. Scientific disciplines tend to emphasize basic comprehension, while humanities oriented fields require more evaluative and interpretive competencies .

Moreover, these surveys unveil some primary cognitive obstacles encountered by university students in academic reading assignments. Weir et al. (2012) identify challenges such as grappling with intricate subject matter, dealing with limited reading time, sifting through lengthy texts, and swiftly locating pertinent information. Anderson's (2015) survey highlights challenges related to understanding genre-specific conventions within disciplines, lack of motivation, and strategic reading strategies among first-year students. Hartshorn et al. (2017) identify obstacles associated with English as a Second Language (ESL) issues, vocabulary comprehension, grasping disciplinary content, and deficiency in strategic approaches among final-year students. Hellekjær's (2009) survey among Norwegian undergraduates and graduates reveals low reading speed as a substantial issue in both Norwegian and English, along with difficulties in English vocabulary during reading.

While these studies offer valuable insights into the skill requirements and hurdles of university-level reading, they have certain limitations. The breadth and character of the investigated reading competencies vary significantly among studies, making it challenging to formulate overarching conclusions. For instance,

qualitative studies such as those conducted by Carson (2001) and Moore et al. (2012) focus on describing or broadly categorizing reading activities, lacking in-depth exploration of the particular cognitive skills or resources necessary. Similarly, survey-based research by Anderson (2015) and Hartshorn etal. (2017) features questionnaire items that are too generic to provide precise insights into specific reading skills. Other surveys scrutinize only a limited number of cognitive skills, ranging from 4 to 13. To acquire a more comprehensive understanding of university-level reading, further empirical data is warranted, particularly through thorough investigation into the skill prerequisites and challenges faced by university students. In this regard, the current study aims to collect insights from undergraduate students through semi-structured interview at a New Zealand university.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

According to Howard, et al. (2018) there are several challenges in university academic reading. First, he explains that text comprehension which involves understanding and interpreting academic texts, including identifying main arguments, evidence, and overall context. Second, another thing that challange students reading is scholarly conversations which encompasses students' participation in scholarly conversations, including discussions and writing within the academic context, alongside the difficulties they encounter in contributing to these discussions. Third, he stated that course requirements relate to academic courses necessitating extensive reading, impacting students' study habits and

understanding of the material. Last, discipline-specific underscores the significance of academic reading within specific disciplines or fields of study, and how readings are tailored to meet their needs and goals. Finally, writing improvement explores how academic reading can enhance students' writing skills by exposing them to various writing styles, argument structures, and techniques.

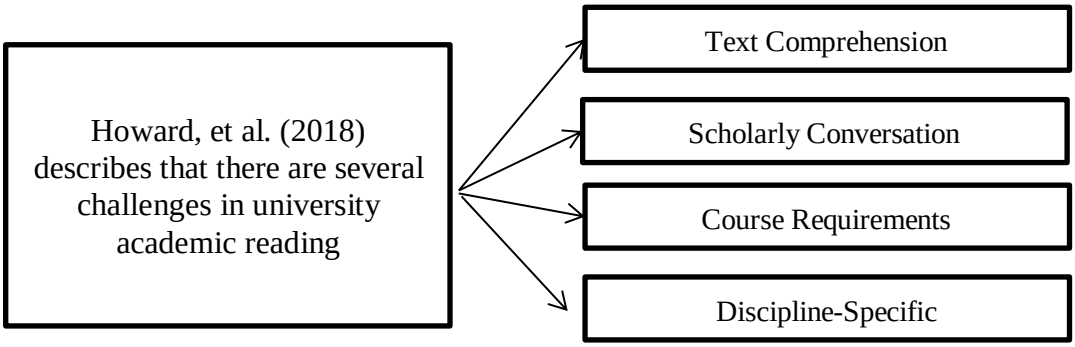


Figure 2. 1 Theoretical Framework

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Research Design

This research is a qualitative research, it is a research that exploring and understanding the meaning of an individual or group that is related to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2008). The process of this research involving questions and procedures. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach following Creswell(2012), descriptive method is a research method that tries to describe phenomenon, occurrence, event, that happens in the present. Descriptive method of research is to gather information about present existing condition. Creswell (2012, p. 274) explained the purpose of descriptive method is to find a detailed explanation and description about the object of the research systematically. Thus, based on the explanation above, the researcher assumed that a descriptive qualitative method is relevant for this research.

3.2 Data Preparation

In this research, data was collected through interview, providingparticipants with the opportunity to share insights, experiences, and specifically, challenges related to academic reading in the university context. These interview followed a qualitative approach to collect in-depth and contextual data, focusing on the exploration of challenges faced by individuals in their academic reading experiences within the university environment.

a. Setting and Participants

The study utilized the Zoom platform as the setting for conducting an interview with Ms. H age 22, she is from Bangkalan East Java. She is a student majoring in Accounting at University X. Her mother tongue is Bahasa Indonesia, she has been learning English since she was 17. The participant is majoring in accounting in a university in Malaysia. In the university where the participant enrolled academic courses English is used as a Second Language, which means she was selected based on her proficiency in academic reading, the challenges she faced throughout the learning process as an EFL student in ESL academic courses.

3.3 Informed Consent Form

In this study, the researcher conducted interview with undergraduate students who demonstrated extensive involvement in academic reading. Prior to commencing the interview, the researcher sought permission by preparing an informed consent form that participants had to fill out before the interview began. By completing the form, participants indicated their agreement to participate in the interview.

3.4 Data Collection

The data collection technique employed in this study was qualitative interview with student, focusing on exploring students' perspectives and

experiences related to challenges in academic reading at the university level. The interview also aimed to uncover the specific skills necessary for academic reading in the university setting.

In this research, the researcher used interview as a data collection instrument. To obtain the data, the researcher conducted an interview with Ms. H, a student majoring in Accounting at University. Following the interview, the researcher conducted the thematizing coding transcription procedure, analyzed the interview's data, and conclude a conclusion. Additionally, the researcher interprets the data in multiple coding systems as follows.

Table 4. 1 Data in Multiple Coding Systems According to (Howard, et al. 2018)

CONSTRUCTS	Codes	
Understanding context	**UC**	**5**
Scholarly Conversation	**SC**	**2**
Academic Course	**AC**	**4**
Discipline-Specific	**DS**	**4**
Improve Writing	**IW**	**4**

Table 4. 2 Coding Sample

CODING SAMPLE	MEANING
UC	UC: Understanding Context This theme encompasses how students understand and interpret academic texts, including identifying main arguments, evidence, and the overall context of the material.
SC	SC: Scholarly Conversation This theme involves the participation and challenges students face in engaging with scholarly conversations, which include discussions, debates, and writing within their academic community.
AC	AC: Academic Course This theme refers to the academic courses that require extensive reading of academic texts and how these courses impact students' study habits and learning processes.
DS	DS: Discipline -Specific This theme addresses the importance and applicability of academic reading to specific disciplines or fields of study, highlighting how reading material is tailored to suit different academic areas.
IW	IW: Improve Writing This theme explores the relationship between academic reading and the improvement of students' writing skills, including how exposure to various writing styles and argumentation techniques influences their own writing.

The interview was conducted in Bahasa Indonesia, therefore the data had to be translated into English by the researcher. An example of a translated interview transcript is provided below.

Table 4. 3 An Example of A Translated Interview Transcript

I	What type of text helped you improve your writing style and structure the most?
	Jenis teks apa yang paling membantu ningkatin gaya dan struktur tulisanmu?
S	Research journals and academic articles with in-depth literature reviews really help me understand how to write well and organize my writing.
	Jurnal riset dan artikel akademik dengan tinjauan literatur yang mendalam sangat membantu aku paham gimana cara menulis yang baik dan mengorganisir tulisanku.

Research Instrument: The research instrument used for interview with students was an interview guide containing specific questions related to the research focus. Here are key questions for the research focus on challenges in academic reading at the university:

Table 3. 1 Interview Matrix

NO	Constructs	Components	Interview Question Guidelines
Q	Academic reading is a readers' understanding of the context; it represents one of the ways in which undergraduates participate in scholary conversations (Manarin et al. 2015).	• Understanding of context • Scholarly conversation (diskusi ilmiah atau tulisan ilmiah/ pendapat ilmiah)	1. How do you understand texts and context? 2. What are the challenges in doing scholarly conversation?

2	Academic reading refers to text assigned as part of academic coursework, and is often dicipline-specific (Sengupta, 2002). Academic reading engages students in disciplinary discourse and improves students' writing (Lockhart & Soliday, 2016).	• Academic Course • Discipline- Specific • Improve students writing	3. What courses that you are taking that requires you to read a lot of references? 4. What do you think of the relationship between academic reading and writing ?

3.5 Data Analysis Technique

Following the completion of the interview, the researcher transcribes the obtained data and proceeds to analyze it. Thematic analysis is employed as the method for this analysis, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). According to them, thematic analysis involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns or themes within the collected data. A theme, in this context, encapsulatesa significant aspect of the data in relation to the research question and represents a patterned response or meaning within the dataset. The six phases of thematic analysis, as articulated by Braun and Clarke (2006), are followed meticulously.

These phases include familiarizing the data Phase 1, generating initial codes based on interesting points Phase 2, searching for themes Phase 3, reviewing

themes Phase 4, defining and naming themes Phase 5, and producing the final report Phase 6. Throughout these phases, the researcher aims to capture meaningfulpatterns and issues of interest in the data, culminating in a comprehensive analysis.After the thematic analysis, the next step involves data reduction, simplification, and organization. This process is crucial for the researcher to manage and understand the collected data effectively.

3.6 Trustworthiness

Throughout the course of this investigation, the researcher employed the case study as the chosen method. This methodology underwent rigorous evaluation for credibility under the supervision of the academic advisor. The outcome involved seeking peer debriefing. The integrity of this inquiry was of significance as it facilitated a more objective examination of the data.

CHAPTER IV

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Finding

4.1.1 Understanding Context

Understanding context is one of challanges that affect EFL students ability to understand complex sentences in academic reading. Based on the results of the interview that have been conducted, the student described that Inadequate vocabulary knowledge in technical article was recognized as one of the main issues. Vocabulary knowledge plays an important role in understanding complex reading materials such as article, particularly those containing technical expressions.

"I've had difficulties with technical articles. I use dictionaries and online resources understand the terms."

(UC/UN_CONT/S/014)

"I use a dictionary or online resources to look up words I don't understand, and then try to understand the concept through context or additional references."

(UC/UN_CONT/S/022)

The data above shows that Ms. H had a difficulties in reading technical term in academic reading, therefore she need various vocabulary in order to comprehend the text or reading materials, she uses definitions

from dictionaries to help reading, It can be concluded that dictionary use helps Ms. H to improve her text comprehension and might lead to lexical improvement.

4.1.2 Scholarly Conversations

Students also face challenges in engaging with scholarly conversations, which include discussions, debates, and writing within their academic community.

"When I read scholarly literature that I'm not familiar with such as engineering, it's really hard to understand some of the vocabulary."

(SC/SCH_CONV/S/026)

"Yes, I've been struggling with tech articles that have a lot of technical terms. I solve it by asking for help from friends who understand better or looking for additional explanations online."

(SC/SCH_CONV/S/034)

The data above indicates that Ms. H has insufficient vocabulary and a lack of specialist knowledge in schorlarly disucussion represent serious obstacles in academic reading, she mentioned that she have been struggling with scholarly conversations that containing technical expressions.

4.1.3 Academic Course

Academic courses that require extensive reading of academic texts and how these courses impact students' study habits and learning processes.

"I study accounting, so I had to read a lot and I also study English literature and religion courses. "

(AC/AC_COUR/S/044)

"I study a lot of academic literature since accounting requires me to comprehend complicated ideas and apply them to real-world issues."

(AC/AC_COUR/S/052)

The data above shows that since Ms. H study accounting she had to read several academic literature since her course requires her to comprehend compilcated ideas, it also requires her to do an extensive reading of academic texts such as English literature and religion courses to help with her academic reading. Extensive reading strategy played an important role in improving academic reading.

4.1.4 Discipline- Specific

Discipline-Specific addresses the importance and applicability of academic reading to specific disciplines or fields of study, highlighting how reading material is tailored to suit different academic areas.

"The readings provide context and detailed explanations of the topics covered in class,helping me understand the material better and apply it to my assignments."

(IW/DISC_REL/S/058)

"The article on evolutionary theory was very helpful for understanding the basic concepts that I later used in my research."

(IW/DISC_REL/S/062)

The data above indicates that academic reading also helps Ms. H's to understand context and detailed explanations of the accounting topics covered. Academic reading also applicable to her in order to interact with and make connections and judgements between texts covered in her class, question contributions, and challenge inherent biases in her research arguments.

4.1.5 Improve Writing

This theme explores the relationship between academic reading and the improvement of students' writing skills, including how exposure to various writing styles and argumentation techniques influences their own writing.

"When I read a journal on research methodology, I learned how to write the methodology section more clearly, which was very helpful for my thesis."

(IW/WRT_IMP/S/070)

"Research journals and academic articles with in-depth literature reviews really help me understand how to write well and organize my writing."

(IW/WRT_IMP/S/072

Based on the data above, it can be concluded that Ms. H improved her writing by reading a journal on research methodology. Academic reading also made some exposure to research in her accounting, it also provides the foundation of knowledge she need to develop her thesis. Academic reading also discover existing arguments, methodologies, and findings that will shape her to orginize her writing.

4.1.6 Reading Strategies

Courses that necessitate extensive reading of academic texts impact students' study habits and their ability to employ effective reading strategies.

"I usually read the entire text first to get a general understanding, then mark important parts, take notes on key points, and if there's something I don't understand, I check the dictionary or the internet. Sometimes, I also discuss it with friends to exchange ideas."

(RS/GEN/S/012)

"When I read academic texts, I use a highlighter to mark important sections and make small notes on sticky notes or directly in the margins of the book. This makes it easier to find important points when I review the material."

(RS/TOOL/S/020)

The data above indicates that Ms. H uses various reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, highlighting, annotating, and note-taking.

These strategies help her manage and understand academic texts more effectively. Discussing with peers and seeking clarification also enhance her comprehension and retention of the material.

Effective reading strategies are crucial in navigating dense academic materials and improving comprehension, thereby fostering better academic performance.

4.1.7 Reading Skill Development

The process of reading skill development is essential for students to successfully engage with academic texts.

"I often encounter unfamiliar vocabulary, especially when reading heavy journals. Using a dictionary or online resources is quite effective because I quickly understand and relate to the discussed concepts."
(RS/VS/S/024)

I like to make mind maps or flow diagrams to see the relationships between ideas. I also note down the pros and cons of each perspective to make it clearer during discussions."
(RS/APPL/S/032)

The data above demonstrates that Ms. H encounters unfamiliar vocabulary frequently, particularly in challenging academic texts. Using dictionaries and online resources helps her quickly understand and integrate new terms and concepts. Additionally, creating mind maps and diagrams

aids in organizing and understanding complex ideas, which supports her reading skill development.

Developing strong reading skills is integral to academic success, enabling students to effectively engage with and comprehend complex academic texts across various disciplines.

4.2 Discussions

The ability to successfully read, comprehend, synthesize, and reproduce the ideas presented in academic texts is central to university students' success in their studies. Reading within an academic context presents a distinct set of challenges for undergraduate students, especially for those for whom English is not their first language. Difficulties in academic reading often involve complex sentence structures, advanced vocabulary, and unfamiliar technical terms (Al-Jarrah, 2018). Text comprehension is a significant challenge that affects EFL students' ability to understand complex sentences in academic reading. EFL students frequently encounter difficulties with technical terminology, highlighting the importance of having a broad and diverse vocabulary to fully comprehend academic texts and reading materials. Vocabulary knowledge has important role in reading comprehension performance, they posited that vocabulary learning is

central in language acquisition especially as a foreign language (Sidek et, al. 2015). Vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension are highly related since lexical knowledge can assist foreign language learners in grasping the meaning of written text (Fadi, 2019).

Learners have difficulty achieving success academically without comprehending much of what is written in the reading materials as academic texts differ from other kinds of writing such as personal, journalistic or business writing (Romly, 2018). Academic courses require students to engage in extensive reading of academic texts, which encourages learners to read extensively material that interests them and develop cognitive and metacognitive skills for reading comprehension improvement (Channuan, 2013). Extensive reading serves as an excellent means of supplying rich target language input, particularly in an EFL setting.

Academic reading is also discipline-specific and requires comprehension of the context and thorough explanations of the subjects addressed. Whereas, the Academic reading aimed at assisting the students in developing their skills of language to support their careers in accounting field (Nugroho, 2020). Academic reading facilitating the students to develop their language ability based on their own field of studies.

Furthermore, academic reading improves students' writing skills. Reading current viewpoints, research techniques, and conclusions influences how students write (Al-Jarrah, 2018). Without reading, the writing process would not run well, as writing involves producing a final product of student proficiency in learning the language. Producing a writing product is a long process with sequential steps. Academic reading exposes students to existing research findings and gaps in knowledge, helping them identify areas for contribution and formulate focused research questions. This, in turn, provides stronger arguments and credibility to their perspectives and established practices in their fields.

The significant role of reading in writing and students' language learning development. reading and writing do share similar properties and students are more likely to benefit from the instruction that makes reading and writing activities go hand-in-hand and benefit each other (Juriati et, al. 2018). Furthermore, Bas (2012) demonstrates how reading affects writing, and writing affects reading, as well as how they interact with one another. When students start reading, they take in information and form their own opinions depending on what they read. Afterwards, students usually record their opinions in writing. Put another way, students learn things by reading, and then they use writing to express what they believe and understand. There are also significant improvements in students' academic writing

skills due to integrating the stages of the reading and writing process, which helps students approach academic writing systematically (Milad, 2017).

Effective strategies are required to overcome challenges in reading and comprehending academic texts. One viable approach is contextual learning, wherein students are immersed in authentic contexts relevant to their subjects. Through contextual learning, students can integrate the concepts they learn with real-world scenarios, enhancing comprehension and retention of material (Smith, 2022). Additionally, broadening vocabulary and deepening understanding of technical terminology are paramount. Supplementary resources such as specialized dictionaries or glossaries focusing on academic terminology within specific fields of study can aid in this. Consistent practice in recognizing and utilizing technical terms within relevant contexts further bolsters comprehension (Jones, 2023).

Lastly, collaborative methodologies can also be instrumental in addressing academic hurdles. Joining study groups or engaging in online discussion forums can facilitate the exchange of ideas and support among peers. Engaging in discussions with peers who have a stronger grasp of the subject matter or seeking guidance from instructors can provide invaluable insights and aid in overcoming academic obstacles (Brown, 2021).

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Conclusion

The study aims to explore challenges faced by undergraduate ESL student in university academic reading. Based on the research questions, it can be concluded that there are some challenges faced by undergraduate ESL student in university academic reading as follows:

1. Understanding context affect EFL students ability to understand complex sentences in academic reading.
2. Students also face challenges in engaging with scholarly conversations, which include discussions, debates, and writing within their academic community.
3. Academic courses require extensive reading of academic texts impact students' study habits and learning processes.
4. Integrating the stages of the reading academic improved students' writing skills.

5.2 Suggestion

Based on the conclusions aforementioned, students are expected to be able to apply and use appropriate strategies to overcome these challenges by developing

their reading skills, thereby enhancing the quality of their learning. There are some suggestion or future researchers, such as involve more participants, employ mixed method research design, also include students' varied level of education.

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APPENDIXES

Name : Afnan Martua Muslih

Title : Academic Reading Challenges of an ESL undergraduate student

Thematizing Matrix

Constructs	**Code**	
Understanding context	UC	5
Scholarly Conversation	SC	2
Academic Course	AC	4
Discipline-Specific	DS	4
Improve Writing	IW	4

Reading strategies

- **Note taking**
- **Skimming and scanning**
- **Highlighting and Annotating**
- **Discussion and Peer Learning**
- **Supplementary Resources**
- **Seeking Clarification**
- **Multimodal Learning**
- **Identifying Main Ideas and Supporting Details**

Reading skill development

- **Vocabulary strategies**

- **Curiosity**
- **Reading frequency**
- **Insights from learning**
- **Interesting**
- **Reading topics**
- **Learning resources**
- **Time management**

Coding Matrix

Coding Sample	Meaning
UC	**UC: Understanding Context** This theme encompasses how students understand and interpret academic texts, including identifying main arguments, evidence, and the overall context of the material.
SC	**SC: Scholarly Conversation** This theme involves the participation and challenges students face in engaging with scholarly conversations, which include discussions, debates, and writing within their academic community.
AC	**AC: Academic Course** This theme refers to the academic courses that require extensive reading of academic texts and how these courses impact students' study habits and learning processes.

DS	**DS: Discipline -Specific** This theme addresses the importance and applicability of academic reading to specific disciplines or fields of study, highlighting how reading material is tailored to suit different academic areas.
IW	**IW: Improve Writing** This theme explores the relationship between academic reading and the improvement of students' writing skills, including how exposure to various writing styles and argumentation techniques influences their own writing.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Participant : Ms. H

Time : 25 minutes

Date : Monday, 15 Mei 2024

I : Interviewer

P : Participant

Subject	Line	Transcription	Codes
I	1	Baik H mari kita mulai wawancara hari ini ya	Opening
P	2	Oke.	Opening
I	3	Assalamulaikum warrohmatullahi wabarakatuh.	Opening
P	4	Waalaikumsalam warrohmatullahi wabarakatuh.	Opening
I	5	Sebelumnya, mungkin kamu bisa memperkenalkan diri terlebihn dahulu.	Opening
P	6	Nama saya H, saya kuliah di X, jurusan Akuntansi.	Opening

I	7	Oke, mohon maaf minta waktunya sebentar untuk menjawab beberapa pertanyaan mengenai penelitian tugas akhir skripsi saya yang berjudul Academic Reading Challenges of an ESL undergraduate student. Apakah kamu sebelumnya sering membaca teks akademik berbahasa Inggris?	
P	8	Iya, suka sih baca-baca teks akademik berbahasa Inggris, tapi nggak sering banget.	Reading Frequency
I	9	Nah, apa yang membuat kamu tertarik untuk membaca teks akademik berbahasa Inggris, meskipun tidak melakukannya secara teratur?	
P	10	jadi intinya, gua tuh tertarik sama bacaan-bacaan akademik berbahasa Inggris karena ada beberapa topik yang emang bikin penasaran, gitu, meskipun ga setiap hari juga baca. Kadang-kadang, ada aja info atau insight yang gua dapet dari bacaan-bacaan itu, loh. Jadi, meskipun ga rutin, tapi kadang-kadang kalo nemu topik yang kece, gua bakal ngeresapin tuh bacaan!	UC Curiosity Insights from learning
I	11	Topik seperti apa yang biasanya menarik perhatian kamu? Bisakah kamu menyebutkan contoh-contoh topik tersebut?	
P	12	Biasanya gua tertarik sama topik-topik yang lagi hype atau yang gua lagi kepo banget, kayak teknologi baru, ekonomi, atau isu-isu sosial gitu. Contohnya, gua pernah baca tentang (Artificial Intelligence) sama sustainability di bisnis, seru banget!	Interest Reading topics
I	15	Keren banget, Gimana sih kamu biasanya memehami teks dan konteksnya ?	

P	10	Aku biasanya bisa memehami teks dan konteks dari diskusi bahasa Inggris, jurnal, dan literatur lainnya.	Reading strrategies
I	11	Bisa jelaskan lebih detail tentang proses atau strategi khusus yang kamu gunakan saat membaca teks akademik?	
P	12	Gua biasanya baca keseluruhan teks dulu biar dapet gambaran umumnya. Terus, gua tandain bagian-bagian penting, catat poin-poin kunci, dan kalo ada yang gak ngerti langsung cek di kamus atau internet. Kadang gua juga diskusi sama temen buat saling tuker pikiran.	Reading stgrategies
I	13	Wah menarik,Bisa ceritain gak, kapan terkahir kamu kesulitan memehami teks? Gimana cara kamu ngatasinnya?	
P	14	Aku pernah kesulitan sama artikel teknik. Aku pake kamus dan sumber online buat ngerti istilah- istilahnya.	UC
I	15	Apakah ada teknik lain selain menggunakan kamus dan sumber online yang kamu gunakan untuk memahami teks sulit?	
P	16	Selain kamus dan sumber online, gua juga suka	Reading

		nonton video atau baca artikel yang ngejelasin topik yang sama tapi pake bahasa yang lebih simpel. Kadang gua juga tanya dosen atau senior yang lebih paham.	strategies, Learning resources
I	17	Strategi apa yang kamu pake buat nagngkep ide utama di teks akademik?	
P	18	Aku biasanya baca seluruh teks dulu buat pemahaman keseluruhan, terus baca lagi lebih teliti buat cari argumen utama dan bukti pendukungnya.	Reading strategies
I	19	Apakah ada alat bantu (seperti highlight atau catatan) yang kamu gunakan untuk membantu dalam proses ini?	
P	20	Iya, gua sering pake highlighter buat tandain bagian penting, terus gua bikin catatan kecil di sticky notes atau langsung di margin buku. Jadi kalo mau baca ulang gampang nemuin poin-poin pentingnya.	Reading tools
I	21	Gimana caramu handle kosa kata atau konsep yang gak familiar di teks akademik?	
P	22	Aku pake kamus atau sumber online buat cari tahu kata yang gak aku ngerti, terus coba paham konsepnya lewat konteks atau cari referensi tambahan.	Vocabulary strategies

I	23	Seberapa sering kamu menemukan kosa kataatau konsep yang tidak familiar? Bagaimana efektivitas metode ini dalam membantu pemahamanmu?	
P	24	Lumayan sering sih, apalagi kalo baca jurnal yang berat-berat. Metode ini cukup efektif, soalnya gua jadi lebih cepat paham dan bisa langsung relate sama konsep yang dibahas. Tapi kadang tetep butuh waktu buat bener-bener ngerti.	Vocabulary challenges
I	25	Tantangan apa yang kamu hadapi dalam diskusi ilmiah, Han?	
P	26	Pas aku baca literatur dari bidang yang aku gak kenal kayak teknik, susah banget ngerti beberapa kosa katanya.	
I	27	Selain kosa kata, apakah ada tantangan lain yang kamu hadapi saat berdiskusi ilmiah?	
P	28	Kadang gua juga kesulitan nangkep konteks atau argumen yang disampaikan, apalagi kalo topiknya di luar bidang gua. Terus, bikin argumen balik yang kuat juga butuh usaha ekstra.	UC
I	29	Gimana caramu nyiapin buat diskusi atau debat topik akademik?	
P	30	Aku biasanya baca artikel terkait topiknya, catat poin penting, dan coba paham sudut pandang yang beda- beda biar bisa ikut diskusi dengan efektif.	Discusssion preparation

I	31	Apakah ada teknik khusus dalam mencatat atau cara tertentu yang kamu gunakan untuk memahami sudut pandang yang berbeda?	
P	32	Gua suka bikin mind map atau diagram alur gitu buat liat hubungan antar ide. Terus, gua catat pro dan kontra dari tiap sudut pandang biar lebih jelas pas diskusi.	Reading stretagies & application Note-taking strategies
I	33	Pernah gak sih kamu ngerasa susah banget buat terlibat sama artikel atau riset ilmiah? Bisa kasih contoh?	
P	34	Iya, aku pernah kesulitan sama artikel teknologi yang banyak istilah teknis. Aku atasin dengan meminta bantuan teman yang lebih ngerti atau cari penjelasan tambahan online.	UC
I	35	Apakah kamu memiliki kelompok belajar atau mentor khusus yang membantu dalam memahami artikel-artikel sulit?	
P	36	Iya, gua punya kelompok belajar sama temen-temen sejurusan. Kita sering bikin sesi belajar bareng, tuker-tukeran catatan, dan kadang undang senior atau dosen buat bantuin kalo ada yang susah.	UC Learning group

I	37	Bagaimana kamu biasanya meminta bantuan teman? Apakah kalian sering mengadakan sesi belajar bersama?	
P	38	Iya, kadang kita kumpul buat diskusi atau belajar bareng, tukar-tukar informasi yang kita tahu.	Peer learning
I	39	Gimana menurut kamu kemampuanmu buat ikut diskusi ilmiah udah bekembang seiring waktu?	
P	40	Menurutku kemampuanku berkembang dengan latihan, sering baca, dan diskusi artikel ilmiah. Aku jadi lebih pede ngungkapin pendapat dan nanya pertanyaan kritis.	Discussion skills development
I	41	Apa saja perubahan signifikan yang kamu rasakan dalam kemampuan diskusi ilmiahmu?	
P	42	Sekarang gua lebih pede buat ngomong di diskusi, terus gua juga lebih kritis dalam nyusun argumen dan nanya pertanyaan. Selain itu, gua jadi lebih paham gimana cara nge-analisis teks dan ide-ide kompleks.	Scholarly conversation Skill development
I	43	Mata kuliah apa yang kamu ambil yang nuntut kamu baca banyak referensi?	

P	44	Aku ambil akuntansi, dan aku harus banyak baca waktu ambil mata kuliah sastra inggris dan mata kuliah agama.	Academic courses
I	45	Apakah ada perbedaan dalam jenis bacaan yang dibutuhkan untuk masing-masing mata kuliah tersebut?	
P	46	Pasti ada dong! Akuntansi biasanya bacaan tentang teori dan kasus-kasus praktis, sementara sastra Inggris lebih banyak baca novel atau esai, dan mata kuliah agama biasanya teks-teks klasik sama tafsir.	Academic courses
I	47	Gimana cara kamu atur beban bacaan buat kuliah - kuliahmu?	
P	48	Aku bikin jadwal baca dan coba patuhi itu. Aku juga pecah bacaan jadi bagian yang lebih kecil dan bisa dikelola biar lebih gampang di pahami.	Time management
I	49	Apakah jadwal tersebut fleksibel atau tetap? Bagaimana kamu menyesuaikan jika ada perubahan dalam jadwal kuliah atau tugas?	
P	50	Jadwalnya fleksibel kok, gua bisa adjust kalo ada tugas mendadak atau perubahan jadwal kuliah. Yang penting tetep konsisten aja buat nyisihin waktu khusus buat baca.	Time management Academic Course
I	51	Mata kuliah mana yang paling menuntut bacaannya? Kenapa?	

P	52	Akuntansi punya tuntutan bacaan yang berat karena melibatkan pemahaman teori yang kompleks dan penerapannya ke masalah praktis.	Discpline-Specific
I	53	Apa tantangan utama yang kamu hadapi ketika membaca materi untuk mata kuliah akuntansi?	
P	54	Nah, tantangannya tuh biasanya ada di pemahaman teori yang susah dan gimana menerapinnya ke situasi nyata.	Disipline-Specific
I	55	Bagaimana kamu mengatasi tantangan dalam memahami teori kompleks dan menerapkannya pada situasi praktis dalam bacaan untuk mata kuliah akuntansi?	
P	56	Gue biasanya sih nyari contoh-contoh nyata yang bisa ngebantu ngertiin teori yang rumit. Terus, kalo udah ngerti teorinya, gue coba terapin langsung ke kasus-kasus yang beneran ada.	Disipline-Specific
I	57	Gimana bahan bacaan buat mata kuliahmu membantu kamu memahami subjeknya lebih baik?	
P	58	Bacaan itu ngasih konteks dan penjelasan rinci tentang topik yang di bahas di kelas, bantu aku paham materi lebih dalam dan menerapkannya di tugas.	Academic courses
I	59	Seberapa relevan bacaan itu sama bidang studi kamu?	

P	60	Bacaan itu sangat relevan buat bidangku, dan seringkali jadi dasar buat tugas risetku.	Reading relevance
I	61	Bisa kasih contoh tugas bacaan yang sangat berguna buat disiplinmu?	
P	62	Artikel tentang teori evolusi sangat membantu buat paham konsep dasar yang kemudian aku pake di risetku.	Reading relevance
I	63	Gimana bacaan itu mempengaruhi pendekatan kamu buat riset dan tugas di bidangmu?	
P	64	Bacaan itu ngasih perspektif dan ide baru yang bisa aku pake di riset. Mereka juga bantu aku ngembangin argumen yang lebih kuat di tugas.	Academic courses
I	65	Apakah ada metode khusus yang kamu gunakan untuk memahami teori kompleks dalam akuntansi?	
P	66	Gua sering pake contoh-contoh praktis buat ngerti teori yang rumit. Kadang gua juga bikin ringkasan atau diagram alur buat liat step-by-step penerapannya. Dan tentu aja, diskusi sama temen juga sangat membantu.	Disipline-Specific
I	67	Menurutmu apa hubungan anatara membaca akademik dan menulis ?	
P	68	Kamu perlu banyak baca biar bisa nulis dengan baik.	Writing Improvement

I	69	Gimana bacaan akademik ngaruh ke kemampuan menulismu?	
P	70	Bacaan akademik bantu aku paham struktur penulisan yang baik dan gimana ngembangin argumen yang efektif.	Writing Improvement
I	71	Bisa ceritain contoh spesifik gimana bacaan ningkatin kemampuan menulismu?	
P	72	Waktu aku baca jurnal tentang metodologi riset, aku belajar gimana nulis bagian metodologi dengan lebih jelas dan terstruktur, yang sangat membantu buat skripsiku.	Writing Improvement
I	73	Jenis teks apa yang paling membantu ningkatin gaya dan struktur tulisanmu?	
P	74	Jurnal riset dan artikel akademik dengan tinjauan literatur yang mendalam sangat membantu aku paham gimana cara menulis yang baik dan mengorganisir tulisanku.	Writing Improvement
P	75	Mungkin yang bisa saya tambahkan, jangan takut untuk mencoba membaca teks yang terlihat sulit. Dengan latihan dan kesabaran, lama-lama pasti bisa dipahami. Terus, manfaatkan teknologi dan diskusi dengan teman untuk saling membantu. Tetap semangat dan jangan mudah menyerah!	Perseverance of learning
I	76	Baik terimakasih banyak H atas waktunya. Semoga kita dapat berbincang dan bertemu kembali dilain waktu ya, Wassalamualaikum , See you later	Closing
P	77	Sama sama Afnan, Waalaikumsalam, sampai jumpa.	Closing