

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter background of the research. It is divided into the following sections: background of the research, limitation of the research, formulation of the research, purpose of the research, significance of the research, and definition of key terms. The background provides an overview of the research, while the other section explains the scope, research questions, objectives, and contributions of the study.

1.1. Background of the Research

Reading is one of the important skills in language learning, which plays a significant role in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. Reading is more than decoding words and sentences; it is making meaning, determining main ideas, understanding details, drawing inferences, and evaluating an author's or speaker's message. The conceptual framework for GR-based reading comprehension was also suggested by Grabe and Stoller (2019), which suggests that understanding texts meaningfully occurs when linguistic knowledge, cognitive mental processes, as well as background knowledge interacts. In higher education, reading comprehension is indispensable because much academic information is conveyed primarily through English-language texts.

At the university level, students are required to comprehend various types of academic texts, including scholarly articles, journals, and research-based readings. English articles are frequently used as primary learning materials because they contain up-to-date information, employ authentic

language, and introduce students to academic writing styles that meet scholarly standards. Articles are used to introduce students to real language, academic discussion, and new aspects of knowledge in different fields. Academic writing also requires higher order thinking skills, for example, analysis of arguments, synthesis of materials, and inference about implicit meanings (Nation & Waring, 2020). To enhance academic success, students' comprehension of English articles becomes crucial, particularly when it comes to finishing tasks, taking part in debates, and performing research. According to Abidin (2016), strong reading comprehension skills enable students to obtain effective information, understand main ideas, and critically evaluate the content of academic texts.

However, previous studies indicate that EFL university students often experience difficulties in comprehending English academic texts. According to several Indonesian studies, students frequently struggle to recognize key concepts, comprehend specific details, and decipher latent meanings in English texts. These difficulties are influenced by limited academic vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and insufficient mastery of effective reading strategies (Hidayati, 2018). As a result, students tend to focus on translating individual words rather than understanding the overall meaning of the text, which often results in fragmented comprehension and misunderstanding of the author's ideas.

In the Indonesian EFL context, reading comprehension remains a challenging skill for university students. Research conducted by Aziz, Daud, and Ismail (2019) shows that many EFL students struggle to identify main

ideas and supporting details in academic texts due to insufficient exposure to authentic English reading materials and limited strategic reading practice. These challenges become more apparent when students are required to read English articles that contain technical terms, abstract concepts, and implicit information.

In addition to linguistic factors, background knowledge also affects students' reading comprehension. Students who lack prior knowledge of the topic tend to struggle to connect new information with their existing cognitive frameworks. This condition is further exacerbated when students are not accustomed to using reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, making inferences, and identifying main ideas (Sari & Putri, 2020). In fact, these strategies are essential for comprehending information-dense academic articles.

At the university level, particularly for sixth-semester students, the demand for reading comprehension increases significantly. Students are expected not only to understand texts but also to analyze, compare, and utilize information from English sources to support their academic work and research preparation, drawing on various English articles. Reading comprehension serves as a foundational skill for completing academic assignments, participating in scholarly discussions, and preparing undergraduate theses. However, based on preliminary observations within the instructional context, some sixth-semester students still face difficulties in comprehending English articles effectively, which negatively impacts their academic performance, confidence, and learning outcomes.

Furthermore, inadequate reading comprehension skills may hinder students' ability to participate in academic discussions, write research-based assignments, and understand theoretical concepts presented in English. If these difficulties are not identified and addressed, students may rely heavily on translated materials or summaries, which limits their exposure to authentic academic English and slows their language development (Grabe, 2020).

Based on the explanations above, this study aims to analyze the reading comprehension of sixth-semester students at Universitas Pasir Pengaraian toward English articles and to identify the difficulties they encounter during the reading process. By examining students' comprehension levels and identifying the difficulties they face when reading English articles, this research is expected to provide empirical insights that can support the improvement of reading instruction and learning strategies in higher education EFL contexts.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher conducted her research to do in depth analysis entitled, "Students Reading Comprehension in English Articles at Sixth Semester Student in University of Pasir Pengaraian".

1.2. Limitation of the Research

Based on the setting of the research above, the researcher focused her research on the reading comprehension of English academic articles (identifying main ideas, understanding detailed information, vocabulary comprehension, and making inferences) of the sixth-semester students at the University of Pasir Pengaraian.

1.3. Formulation of the Research

Based on the limitation of the research, the formulation of the research is as follows:

1. How is the Students Reading Comprehension In English Articles At Sixth Semester Student In University Of Pasir Pengaraian?
2. What are the difficulties of students' reading comprehension in identifying main ideas, understanding detailed information, vocabulary comprehension, and making inferences in English academic articles?

1.4. Purpose of the Research

Based on the formulation of the research, the purpose of the research is to find out the students' Comprehension in reading of English academic articles.

1.5. Significance of the Research

1. For students, this study may increase awareness of reading difficulties and the importance of applying appropriate reading strategies.
2. For lecturers, the findings may serve as a reference for designing more effective reading instruction strategies.

1.6. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding and to ensure clarity, the following key terms are defined based on their use in this research.

1. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension refers to the ability to understand, interpret, and construct meaning from written texts by integrating textual information, linguistic knowledge, and prior knowledge (Grabe & Stoller, 2019).

2. English Academic Articles

English academic articles are scholarly texts written in English that present research findings, theoretical discussions, or academic arguments and are commonly used as learning materials in higher education (Hyland, 2019).

3. Sixth-Semester Students

Sixth-semester students are undergraduate learners who are in the advanced stage of study and are required to engage in academic reading for research preparation and final project development.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter examines the theoretical foundations and existing scholarship relevant to the study the study of students reading comprehension in English article in this part the review of related literature present about the theoretical framework of this research. It also discusses the review of related theories, review of related findings and conceptual framework. In the review of related theories, it discusses about the reading comprehension and English article.

2.1. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is a complex cognitive process that involves constructing meaning from written texts through the interaction between readers' prior knowledge, linguistic competence, and cognitive strategies. It is not limited to recognizing words or sentences but requires readers to actively interpret, analyze, and evaluate information presented in a text. Grabe and Stoller (2019) define reading comprehension as the ability to extract and construct meaning by integrating textual information with background knowledge and purposeful reading strategies.

Reading is an interactive process between the reader and the researcher of texts to get information include in texts by comprehending it. According to Klingner, et.al (2007), reading comprehension is a multi- component, highly complex process that involves many interactions between readers and what they bring to the text related to the text. Snow (2002 : 19) also defined reading comprehension as the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language which consists of three elements: the reader, the text, and the activity or purpose for

reading. It means that reading comprehension is not a simple process. In reading comprehension, readers need their prior knowledge about text they read to build their comprehension.

Moreillon (2007) stated that reading is making meaning from print and from visual information. But reading is not simple. Reading is an active process that requires a great deal of practice and skill. Then, Patel & Jain (2008: 9) also added that reading comprehension involves understanding the meaning of context, vocabulary, grammatical structure and concepts. Thus, in reading comprehension readers need to understand about components included in the texts.

Regarding the definition of reading comprehension above, the researcher concludes that reading comprehension is a complex process in term of constructing the meaning in purposes to know what texts talk about. When readers read, they will make a connection between their background knowledge and the new information from the text. In comprehending texts, readers also need to understand the meaning of context, vocabulary, grammatical structure and concept of texts. So that the readers can have good reading comprehension

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), reading comprehension becomes more challenging because learners must process texts written in a non-native language. According to Grabe (2020), EFL readers often face difficulties due to limited vocabulary knowledge, unfamiliar grammatical structures, and insufficient exposure to authentic English texts. Therefore, reading comprehension in EFL settings requires systematic instruction and continuous practice to support learners' academic reading development.

At the university level, reading comprehension is an essential academic skill. Students are expected to understand complex texts, analyze arguments, and

synthesize information from various sources. Effective reading comprehension enables students to engage actively in academic tasks such as writing research papers, participating in discussions, and completing coursework successfully.

Reading comprehension plays a crucial role in academic success, particularly in higher education where English is widely used as a medium for academic resources. Most textbooks, journal articles, and reference materials are written in English, requiring students to possess adequate reading comprehension skills to access information effectively. According to Snow and Matthews (2016), strong reading comprehension skills allow students to process academic content more efficiently and develop critical thinking abilities.

In EFL higher education contexts, reading comprehension also supports language development. Through reading academic texts, students are exposed to academic vocabulary, discourse structures, and formal language use. Nation and Waring (2020) argue that extensive exposure to academic reading materials can enhance students' vocabulary acquisition and overall language proficiency.

For sixth-semester students, reading comprehension is particularly important because they are often preparing for research-related activities such as proposal writing and final projects. Inadequate reading comprehension at this stage may limit students' ability to understand theoretical frameworks and empirical studies presented in English academic articles.

2.2 The Purpose of Reading

There are some kinds of reading purposes. Barret (1969: 187) states categories of goals of the reading program:

- a. Perceptual goals are concerned with flexibility, rate, and accuracy of word perception.

b. Cognitive goals are concerned with the types and levels of thought generated during reading.

c. Affective goals are concerned with the feelings children have toward reading.

There are three purposes in reading comprehension, the third purpose of reading comprehension includes perceptual goals, cognitive goals and the last is affective goals. For the third reading purpose the students need to be concerned with the text reading.

2.3 English Articles

English academic articles refer to written scholarly works published in journals or academic platforms that aim to disseminate research findings or theoretical perspectives. According to Hyland (2019), academic articles are characterized by formal language, structured organization, discipline-specific vocabulary, and implicit meanings that require advanced reading comprehension skills.

English articles are commonly used as primary reading materials in higher education due to their academic relevance and authenticity. Academic articles present research findings, theoretical discussions, and scholarly arguments that require readers to engage in higher-level comprehension processes. According to Hyland (2019), academic articles are characterized by complex sentence structures, discipline-specific vocabulary, and implicit meanings that demand advanced reading skills.

Reading English academic articles requires students to identify main ideas, understand supporting details, interpret technical terms, and evaluate arguments presented by authors. These demands make English articles more challenging than

general reading texts. As a result, students need to develop effective reading strategies to comprehend academic articles efficiently.

In EFL contexts, English articles also function as a bridge between language learning and content learning. By reading academic articles, students not only improve their language skills but also gain knowledge related to their field of study. However, without sufficient reading comprehension skills, students may struggle to benefit fully from these materials.

2.4 Aspects of Reading Comprehension

In order for readers to comprehend texts in a meaningful way, reading comprehension includes a number of interconnected components. According to Grabe (2020), effective comprehension relies on readers' capacity to recognize key concepts, comprehend specifics, grasp language, and draw conclusions from the text.

2.4.1 Identifying Main Ideas

The capacity to identify a text's or paragraph's main concept is known as "main idea identification." Grabe (2020) asserts that comprehending core ideas is essential to reading comprehension since it enables readers to understand a text's overall meaning. Due to their limited previous knowledge and new text formats, EFL students frequently struggle to identify important concepts.

2.4.2 Understanding Detailed Information

Recognizing particular facts, justifications, and examples that bolster the basic notion is essential to comprehending comprehensive information. According to Snow and Matthews (2016), coherent comprehension requires readers to be able to relate details to the main idea. EFL readers may find it difficult to understand academic papers because detailed material is frequently given in dense and complex forms.

2.4.3 Vocabulary Comprehension

Reading comprehension, especially in academic reading, heavily depends on vocabulary comprehension. Students may not be familiar with the large percentage of low-frequency and technical terminology included in academic books. According to Nation (2016), a lack of vocabulary might make it more difficult for readers to comprehend texts and draw conclusions. Consequently, a crucial component of reading comprehension in English articles is word understanding.

2.4.4 Making Inferences

Understanding implicit information that is not explicitly expressed in the text is referred to as making inferences. To deduce meaning, readers must rely on past information and contextual cues. Grabe and Stoller (2019) claim that inferencing is a higher-level comprehension ability that sets skilled readers apart from less proficient ones. Due to their limited linguistic and background knowledge, EFL students frequently have difficulty drawing conclusions.

2.5 Review of Related Finding

Reading comprehension among EFL university students has been the subject of several research. When reading English texts, Aziz, Daud, and Ismail (2019) discovered that EFL students had trouble recognizing key concepts and comprehending academic language. Their research made clear how crucial it is to teach reading methods.

According to different research by Putri and Syafitri (2021), Indonesian EFL students had trouble drawing conclusions and deciphering latent meanings in scholarly papers. The results showed that students' heavy reliance on word-by-word translation had a detrimental impact on their understanding.

Additionally, study by Rahmawati and Lestari (2022) shown a strong correlation between students' reading comprehension skills and their familiarity with academic text structures and terminology. These studies show that reading comprehension problems are still a common problem in EFL higher education settings.

Numerous studies have investigated reading comprehension among EFL learners at the university level, particularly in relation to academic texts. These studies provide important insights into students' reading abilities, strategies, and difficulties.

Hidayati (2018) investigated problems in teaching and learning reading comprehension among EFL university students in Indonesia. The study revealed that limited vocabulary knowledge and unfamiliarity with academic text structures were major factors contributing to students' low reading comprehension performance. The findings emphasized the importance of systematic reading instruction in higher education.

Rahim (2018) explored reading instruction practices in Indonesian schools and higher education contexts. The study highlighted that students' reading comprehension abilities were closely related to their exposure to structured reading activities and the use of appropriate reading strategies. Rahim concluded that insufficient emphasis on comprehension strategies could hinder students' academic reading development.

Sari and Putri (2020) analyzed university students' reading strategies in comprehending English academic texts. Their study showed that students who frequently applied strategies such as skimming, scanning, and identifying key ideas demonstrated better comprehension compared to those who relied mainly on

word-by-word translation. This study confirmed the role of strategic reading in academic contexts.

Grabe (2020) discussed reading comprehension in second language learning and emphasized that academic reading requires higher-level cognitive processing, including synthesizing information and evaluating arguments. Grabe noted that EFL students often face challenges in academic reading due to limited linguistic resources and insufficient reading experience with authentic academic texts.

Examined extensive reading in second language contexts and found that exposure to authentic reading materials, including academic articles, contributed positively to students' vocabulary growth and reading fluency (Nation and Waring, 2020). Their study suggested that frequent engagement with English texts can gradually improve students' reading comprehension skills.

According to Hyland (2019), these features make academic articles challenging for EFL learners and require advanced reading comprehension skills to interpret texts accurately. Hyland (2019) analyzed the characteristics of academic discourse and highlighted that academic articles contain dense information, technical vocabulary, and implicit meanings.

Snow and Matthews (2016) investigated reading comprehension development and found that successful comprehension depends on readers' ability to integrate textual information with background knowledge. Their study emphasized that students with limited prior knowledge often experience difficulties in understanding complex academic texts.

Abidin (2016) examined character-based reading instruction and found that structured reading activities that emphasize comprehension skills, such as identifying main ideas and evaluating content, can improve students' reading

performance. Although the study focused on instructional approaches, its findings are relevant to understanding the importance of reading comprehension development in academic contexts

However, most of the earlier research was on mixed student levels or general reading books. There are still few studies that particularly look at sixth-semester university students' reading comprehension of academic English publications. Therefore, the present study aims to fill this gap by analyzing students' reading comprehension and identifying their difficulties in reading English articles at Universitas Pasir Pengaraian.

Based on the previous studies, it can be concluded that reading comprehension difficulties among EFL university students commonly involve vocabulary limitations, difficulty in identifying main ideas, and challenges in making inferences. Most studies focused on general academic texts or mixed-level students.

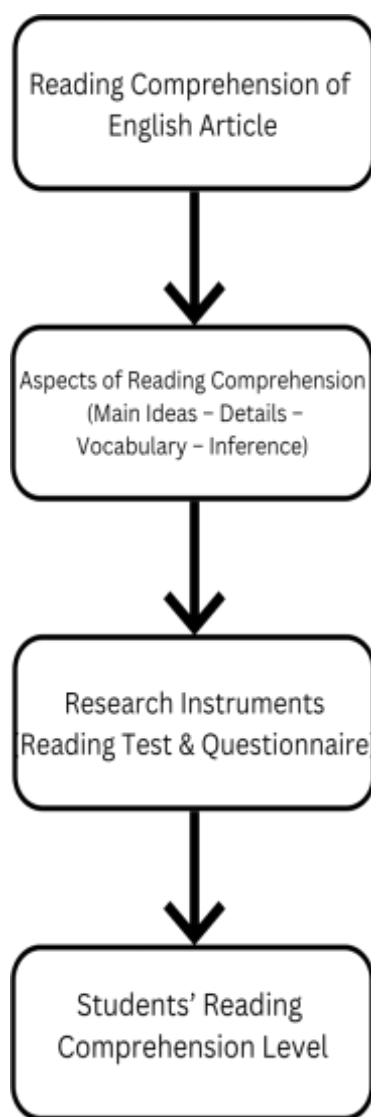
In contrast, the present study specifically focuses on sixth-semester students and examines their comprehension of English academic articles, which require higher-level academic reading skills. Therefore, this research provides a more specific academic context and contributes empirical data from Universitas Pasir Pengaraian, which has not been addressed in previous studies.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

This study assumes that students' reading comprehension of English academic articles is influenced by several aspects, including identifying main ideas, understanding detailed information, vocabulary comprehension, and making inferences.

These aspects are measured through a reading comprehension test, while

students perceived difficulties are identified through a questionnaire. The interaction of these aspects reflects students' overall reading comprehension ability in English academic articles.



1.1. Picture of Flow chart

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the introduction of the research methodology. The research methodology was a way to find out the result of a given problem on a specific matter.

3.1 Research Design

A descriptive quantitative research design was used in this study. Descriptive quantitative research used numerical data collection and statistical analysis to explain events as they naturally occur. This design is appropriate for the present study because it aims to describe students' reading comprehension levels and identify the difficulties they face when reading English academic articles without manipulating variables.

Descriptive quantitative research is appropriate for studies that concentrate on characterizing traits, capacities, or circumstances of a population based on quantifiable data, according to Creswell & Creswell (2018).

3.2 Setting of the Research

This research was conducted at University Pasir Pengaraian, Riau. The subjects of this study were sixth-semester students of the English Education Study Program. The research was planned to be conducted during the academic year 2026, after obtaining permission from the faculty and relevant lecturers.

3.3 Population and Sample of the Research

3.3.1 Population

The population of this study consisted of all sixth-semester students of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Pasir Pengaraian.

3.3.2 Sample

The sample of this study was selected using total sampling techniques, in which all members of the population are included as research participants. This technique was used because the number of sixth-semester students is manageable and allows the researcher to obtain comprehensive data. According to Sugiyono

(2019), total sampling is appropriate when the population size is relatively small.

3.4. Validity of the Instrument

Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. According to Brown (2010), a valid test accurately measures the specific ability or skill that the researcher intends to assess. In this study, the researcher used content validity because the reading comprehension test was developed based on the reading comprehension indicators proposed by Grobe (2020).

The instrument consisted of one English article entitled “The Importance of Education in Developing Future Generations” and ten multiple-choice questions. The questions were designed to measure four reading comprehension indicators, namely identifying the main idea, understanding detailed information, vocabulary in context, and making inference. Before the test was administered, the instrument was reviewed by the research supervisor (expert judgment) to ensure that the content, language, level of difficulty, and the suitability of each item were appropriate for sixth-semester students.

The blueprint of the instrument is presented in the following table.

Table 3.1 Blueprint of Reading Comprehension Test

No	ReadingIndicator	Item Numbers	Number of Items
1	Main Idea	1–2	2
2	Detailed Information	3–5	3
3	Vocabulary in Context	6–7	2
4	Making Inference	8–10	3
Total			10

Based on the expert's evaluation, the instrument was considered appropriate to measure the students' reading comprehension ability.

3.5. Instrument of the Research

The instrument used in this research was a reading comprehension test. The researcher prepared one English article entitled “The Importance of Education in Developing Future Generations”. After reading the article, the students answered ten multiple-choice questions.

The test measured four aspects of reading comprehension adapted from Grobe (2020), namely identifying the main idea, understanding detailed information, vocabulary in context, and making inference. Each correct answer was scored one point, while each incorrect answer received zero points. Therefore, the maximum score was ten points.

The students' scores were converted into percentages using the following formula:

$$\text{Score} = \frac{\text{Correct Answers}}{10} \times 100$$

The students' achievement was classified into the following categories.

Table 3.2 Students' Achievement Categories

Percentage	Category
81–100	Excellent
61–80	Good
41–60	Fair
21–40	Poor
0–20	Very Poor

3.6. Technique of Collecting the Data

The data in this research were collected through a reading comprehension test. First, the researcher requested permission from the lecturer to conduct the research. After obtaining permission, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and the procedures for completing the test.

The students were then given one English article and asked to read it carefully. After reading the article, they answered ten multiple-choice questions individually within the allotted time. During the test, the students were not allowed to discuss the answers with their classmates or use dictionaries.

After all students completed the test, the researcher collected the answer sheets and scored each student's responses using the prepared answer key. The obtained scores became the primary data for this research.

The procedures for collecting the data were as follows:

1. Preparing the reading comprehension test.
2. Asking permission to conduct the research.
3. Explaining the research procedures to the participants.
4. Distributing the reading text and test questions.
5. Asking students to complete the test individually.
6. Collecting the students' answer sheets.
7. Scoring the students' answers.
8. Tabulating the scores for analysis.

3.7 Technique of Data Analysis

The data obtained from the reading comprehension test were analyzed using descriptive quantitative analysis. The researcher first calculated each student's score by giving one point for each correct answer and zero points for each incorrect answer.

The students' final scores were calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Score} = \frac{\text{Correct Answers}}{\text{Total Items}} \times 100$$

where:

Score = Students' final score

Correct Answers = Number of correct answers

Total Items = 10

Next, the researcher calculated the mean score using the following formula:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

where:

$\bar{X}$ = Mean score

$\sum X$ = Total students' scores

N = Number of students

The researcher also calculated the percentage of students' achievement in each reading comprehension indicator using the following formula:

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

where:

P = Percentage

F = Total correct answers for each indicator

N = Maximum possible score for each indicator

Finally, the results were presented in tables and interpreted descriptively based on the following achievement categories.

Percentage	Category
81–100	Excellent
61–80	Good
41–60	Fair
21–40	Poor
0–20	Very Poor

The analysis focused on identifying the students' reading comprehension ability in each reading indicator, namely identifying the main idea, understanding detailed information, vocabulary in context, and making inference. The findings were then interpreted to answer the research question.