

STUDENT TEACHERS PREFERENCES, CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES IN READING JOURNAL ARTICLES IN PROJECT-BASED LEARNING CLASSROOM

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Abstract

The utilization of reading journal articles has the potential to enhance students' academic achievement by enabling them to meet the essential competencies. Consequently, students are likely to exhibit superior academic performance, with reading journal articles serving as a crucial factor in this outcome. This study tries to investigate the student teachers' preferences in reading journal articles in research in education lectures. This study also explores student teachers' challenges and strategies in reading journal articles to complete their writing article project. 18 student teachers from the English Education Department of Wiralodra University participated in this study. This case study research used a questionnaire and semi-structured interview to get the data. The findings showed that the students read the journal articles as one of the requirements to write an article. The result also showed that the students preferred reading journal articles indexed by SINTA. Thus, there are five major challenges in reading journal articles. Those are seeking the appropriate journal article, searching the suitable web to seek the article, translating the article, understanding the unfamiliar words, and understanding the content of the article. Then, there are five strategies that the students use to overcome the challenges. These are opening the dictionary both online and printed dictionary, reading the journal articles more than once, sharing with their friends, watching tutorial videos in seeking the journal article and the last is discussing with the lecturers.

Keywords: Reading Journal Articles; Preferences; Challenges; Strategies.

Introduction

The reading of journal articles is an essential activity for students who are learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in higher education since it serves a variety of academic goals and offers considerable benefits for the development of their proficiency skills. Reading academic articles provides students with the opportunity to improve their metacognitive reading skills and reading motivation, both of which are crucial components for enhancing reading comprehension, Meniado (2016). Furthermore, reading scholarly journal articles allows the students to strengthen their academic writing abilities by practicing the use of discourse markers to establish internal consistency and flow in their work, (Choemue & Bram, 2021). Consequently,

exposure to scholarly articles helps English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students improve their academic writing proficiency by providing them with opportunities to practice the use of discourse markers in their writing assignments, which helps them create cohesion and coherence, (Larhmaid, 2018).

English Education of Wiralodra University tries to implement project-based learning to give a contextual experience for the students. One of the lecturers that implement Project-based learning is the Research in Education lecturer. In this lecture, the students are divided into several groups to create a journal article project. One of the important activities in this project is reading journal articles. Reading journal articles is the process of actively engaging with research publications in a specific field.

By reading journal articles the students can get many information related to the latest findings, methodologies, and discussions from academic experts. According to Winiharti et al. (2014), the implementation of reading journals has the potential to improve students' academic performance by allowing them to satisfy standard skills. Consequently, it may contribute to higher academic performance, especially in subjects where reading is essential. Therefore, higher education students must learn how to read the articles in journals.

However, reading journal articles presents a greater challenge for students since it requires them to demonstrate a wide range of skills, such as inquiring, comprehending, generating, and reacting to texts, Calma as cited in Munawarah et al. (2023). To read proficiently, students must incorporate sufficient vocabulary and prior knowledge into the reading process, Westwood (2008). Numerous studies have emphasized the challenges that students face when attempting to peruse scholarly texts. The students expressed challenges in comprehending vocabulary and requested the lecturer's support in understanding complex terminologies and vocabulary (Shen, 2013). Understanding the content of scientific articles is also challenging. To properly interpret and assess the information offered, researchers must have a thorough understanding of scientific writing abilities and research paper structure (Meo & Eldawlatly, 2019). An additional challenge arises when students are required to peruse lengthy academic texts. Phakiti and Li (2011) discovered that students experienced difficulties with academic writing and information synthesis. Academic background, self-efficacy, linguistics proficiency, motivation, self-regulation, and students' acclimation to academic life all contribute to these challenges.

Some previous studies concerning the reading journal article have also been conducted by the researchers. First, the study conducted by Aliponga (2013). The objective of this study is to figure out the advantages that may be derived from perusing a journal. The findings indicate that the implementation of a reading journal served as a catalyst for increased student engagement with the reading material, facilitating comprehension of key concepts and details, as well as fostering the development of critical thinking skills. The second was conducted by Fakhrudin (2017). The present investigation centered on the utilization of a reading journal as a means to enhance students' aptitude for reading comprehension. The results suggest that a majority of the subjects possess a proficient grasp of the subject matter, and the assignment serves as a catalyst for enhancing pupils' comprehension in the domain of reading. The paramount consideration is that a majority of pupils hold the belief that perusing scholarly publications enhances their writing skills. The third study is conducted by Rahman (2020). The purpose of this research was to examine how undergraduates felt about using scholarly publications as sources for their thesis. According to the data, the subjects' stories largely centered on the sources of their inspiration and difficulties. Controlled incentives, including the desire for a model, ease of access and currency, and pressure from teachers and administrators, appeared to be a major factor in the success of these pupils. Academic technical words and vocabulary, text complexity, and ineffective reading skills were all problems these kids faced. The results of this study highlight the importance of facilitating students' reading of scholarly publications during their senior year in college.

The first and second studies focused on the benefit of reading journal articles in the EFL context. Then, the third study focused on

the experience of last semester students of UIN Mataram in reading journal articles to write their thesis. Compared to this study, the objectives of this study did not only focus on the experience of student teachers in reading journal articles. But also, their preferences, challenges, and strategies in reading journal articles to complete their writing article project. So, based on the explanations above, the writer created the following research questions.

1. How are the implementations of reading journal articles in the project-based learning classroom?
2. What are the student teachers' preferences in reading journal articles in the project-based learning classroom?
3. What are the student teachers' challenges in reading journal articles in the project-based learning classroom?
4. What are the student teachers' strategies in overcoming the challenges in reading journal articles in the project-based learning classroom?

Methodology

This study focused on the student teachers' experience in reading journal articles during the project-based learning classroom. This study also investigated the student teachers' preferences, challenges, and strategies in reading journal articles to enhance their literacy skills. A case study dives deep into a single subject, such as a company, historical event, or social phenomenon. Yin (2018) and Stake (1995) highlight two key characteristics: in-depth exploration and contextual analysis. Unlike broad surveys, case studies go beyond surface details, meticulously examining the subject's intricacies. They also emphasize understanding the context, and the surrounding environment that shapes the subject's behavior or outcome. Therefore, this study belongs to a case study. 18 student teachers participated in this study. The

participants are the student teachers who take the Research in Education Lecture at the English education department of Wiralodra University and are known to use reading journal articles, as one of the steps in completing their writing article project. The questionnaire and semi-structured interview were used to get the data. There are ten questions adopted from Pesut & Zivkovic (2016) that focus on the purpose, the duration, the types, the indexed, and the tools that student teachers use in reading articles. The writer used Google form and delivered it through WhatsApp groups. Then after that, the writer conducted a semi-structured interview. There are five questions adopted from Aharony & Bar-Ilan (2018) prepared to get the data about student teachers' experiences, challenges, and strategies used in reading journal articles. After getting the data, then the data were analyzed qualitatively.

Findings and Discussion

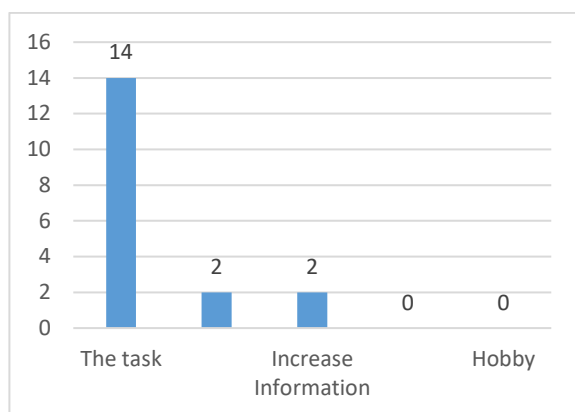
The Purpose of Reading Journal Articles in Project-Based Learning Classroom

Keeping a reading journal can be of tremendous assistance in the process of developing reading literacy. In addition to cultivating an interest in reading, keeping a reading journal can help one develop a deeper comprehension of the material presented in the text, particularly if it is done in conjunction with dedicated reading time. According to Lubis (2020), keeping a reading journal is a reflection of one's level of literacy and reading habits. For instance, a lecturer at the university level is aware of the progress that students are making to acquire a better understanding of the world from the reading journal.

The questionnaire revealed that 14 student teachers read journal articles as a requirement for their project. Two student teachers responded affirmatively when asked whether they desired to provide additional

information. Subsequently, two student teachers responded affirmatively to their desire to enhance their knowledge.

Table 1. The purpose of reading journal articles



From the table, it is known that the majority of the student teachers read the journal article because it is part of the task of research in education lectures. So, the student teachers have the responsibility to complete their writing article by reading the journal article. From the interview session, it is known that the student teachers have to complete a writing journal article project. After the mid-term test, the student teachers have 7 meetings to complete the project. Then one of the prerequisites in writing the journal is reading a journal article. The students read journal articles for several reasons the first is to seek an interesting topic and title for their project. In the interview, S4 stated that

to find a good idea for my project....I read the titles of the papers to see if there are any interesting topics in my field So that I can conduct the research with the similar topic.

From the interview, S4 read the journal articles to get an idea. The S4 looks for inspiration within their field by reading the titles of existing research papers. The S4

wants to find a similar topic that is appropriate to her interest and tries to conduct research that is close to previous research. The statement is supported by Dewan and Gupta (2016) who stated that when the reader searches via the Internet, the majority of databases often present both the title and abstract of the research paper. This would allow readers to ascertain whether they truly need to peruse the entire content of your research work. Therefore, it may be inferred that by reading the article titles, the writer can gain inspiration to conduct similar research from a different perspective.

Then, the student teachers also used the reading articles to seek the theory for the literature review. In the interview, the S7 stated that.

Yes of course...my lecturer also wants me to use a good theory in my literature review, so I'm looking for articles with theories that I can use in my article.

This statement demonstrates that S7 has the intention to seek articles that explore relevant theories related to her research. By actively seeking articles that explore pertinent theories, the S7 is not just gathering the information but S7 also constructs a foundation for her research. The statement is supported by Cronin, et al., (2008) who stated that a solid literature review compiles data from a variety of sources regarding a specific topic. A substantial proportion of literature reviews are integrated into primary research articles as a section that establishes the theoretical framework for the article's subject-matter study. Therefore, it can be concluded that reading journal articles can be one of the ways to seek the theories that can be used to write an article. Because in literature review section, contains useful information for writing an article.

Another reason for reading the article is because the student teachers have to find the

previous research related to their study. In the interview, S6 stated that

I read journal articles because I want to know the previous research that has the same topic with me. I think...I need to make sure my research is not the same with the other research. I have to find a new problem so that my research will be different...ehmmmm something new.

From the interview, it can be seen that S6 wants to comprehend previous studies related to their subject by reading journal articles. S6 tries to prevent repetition and guarantee that the research provides a novel viewpoint, either by addressing a novel issue or examining their chosen topic from another point of view. This statement is supported by Lopes et al. (2016) who stated that a source of inspiration for new research can arise from the recognized disparity between current research knowledge and practical application. It is recommended to identify gaps in the literature by examining the discussion section of published studies, specifically focusing on the limitations and recommendations for future research, Bermunez (2021)

The next reasons is to support the data. In writing the findings, the student teachers need additional theory to support their statement. In the interview session, S3 and S11 stated that

Ehm...when I read article...journal article...I also find theories to explain my research results. I think to support my data in the findings and discussion part, I need to show the theories. I mean... I need to find articles that have theories that support my data.

Yeah you're right. I can use that theory not only for literature review, but it also can be used when I write the findings.

From the statements above, it can be stated that S3 and S11 show that they have a good understanding of how theories and research results fit together. The S3 and S11 know that data might not be enough to give a full picture. So, in journal articles, they actively look for theories that can help explain their results in the discussion section. The S3 and S11 want to show that their study is stronger and in line with what is already known in the field by showing that their data fits with well-known theories. The statement is in line with Yahaya et al. (2019) who stated that a theory attempts to shed light on a specific occurrence by way of a methodical compilation of concepts and guidelines. It lets Researchers Bridge the gap between theoretical and empirical claims, as well as between abstract and tangible ideas. Because of the strong relationship between research and theory, the former is more important and requires the latter's application or use to give a comprehensive and recognized knowledge contribution to society or the studied topic.

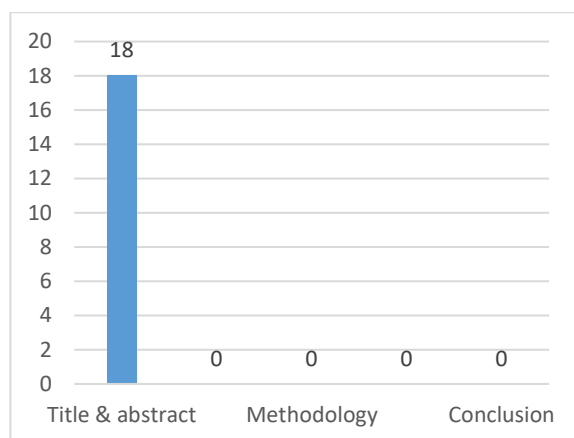
The Student Teachers' Preferences in Reading Journal Articles

During the Research in Education course, the lecturer requires students to extensively read the most recent books and journal articles to enhance their journal article writing. This research examines five preference criteria of student teachers' reading of articles: purpose, duration, type, index, and instruments utilized.

From the questionnaire, it can be seen that all of the student teachers decide to read the title and abstract first before they read a whole article. From the table, it is seen that 18 student teachers prefer to read the title and abstract before they read all parts of the article. The first part of journal articles that

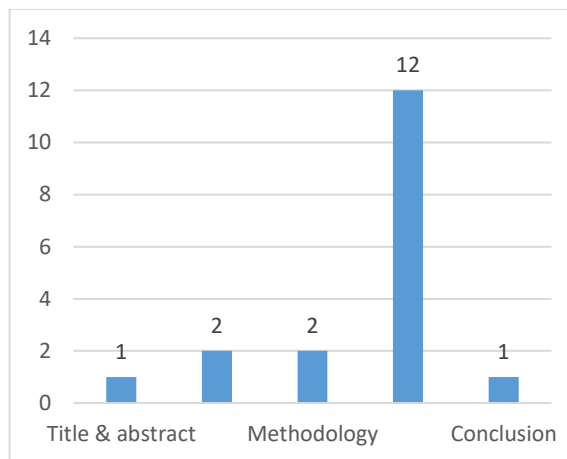
student teachers read. From the questionnaire, it can be seen that all of the student teachers chose the title and abstract. The student teachers try to read the title and abstract first to know whether the journal articles are relevant to their topic of research. Subramanyam R. (2013) stated that in the same way that the title of a movie is what draws in spectators to the theatre, the title of the article is what draws in readers in the first place. A strong title will provide the potential reader with a great deal of information about the study, allowing them to make an informed decision about whether or not to proceed with the paper.

Table 2. The first part of journal articles that student teachers read



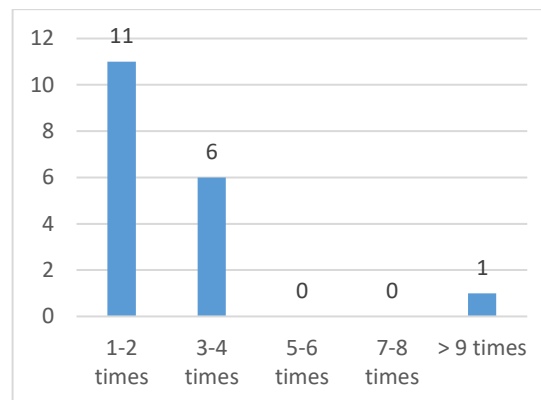
The next is the part of journal articles that student teachers read repeatedly. From the questionnaire, it can be seen that 12 student teachers prefer to read findings and discussion repeatedly. Two student teachers prefer to read literature review or methodology repeatedly. And one student teacher prefers to read conclusion or title and abstract. According to Kaderavek & Justice (2005) and Håland et al. (2021), the reading materials on several occasions and the implementation of guided reading methods have been linked to the improvement of literacy abilities and comprehension.

Table 3. The part of journal articles that are read repeatedly



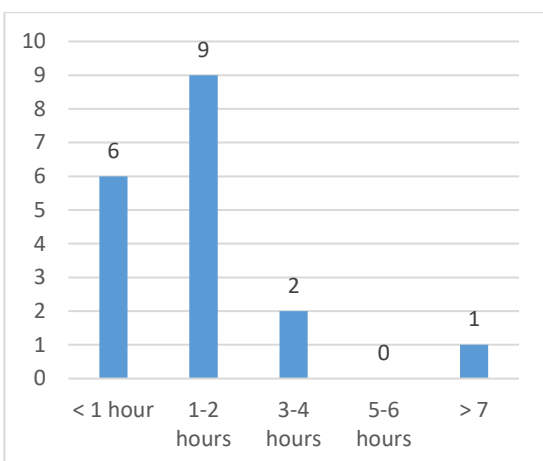
The next is reading duration in a week of student teachers in reading journal articles. 11 student teachers prefer to read 1 to 2 times a week. 6 student teachers prefer to read 3 to 4 times a week. Then the last only 1 student teacher read more than 9 times in a week.

Table 4. Reading duration in a week



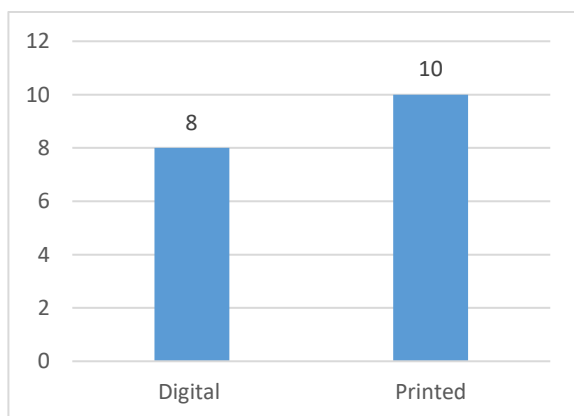
The next is student teachers' reading duration per day. From the table, it can be seen that 9 student teachers spent 1 to 2 hours per day to read. 6 student teachers spent less than 1 hour to read journal articles. Then, 2 student teachers spent 3 to 4 hours per day. The last, only 1 student teacher spent more than 7 hours per day.

Table 5. Reading duration per day



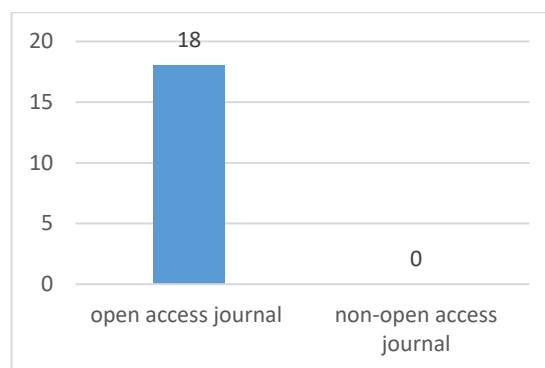
The next is student teachers' preferences in reading journal articles. 10 student teachers prefer to read printed journal articles. While 8 student teachers prefer to read digital journal articles. From the result of the questionnaire, it can be concluded that the student teachers prefer to read printed journals. Research has demonstrated that reading from physical printed materials can lead to improved performance, understanding, and memory on exams, in contrast to digital platforms, Miah & Kong (2024).

Table 6. Types of journal media



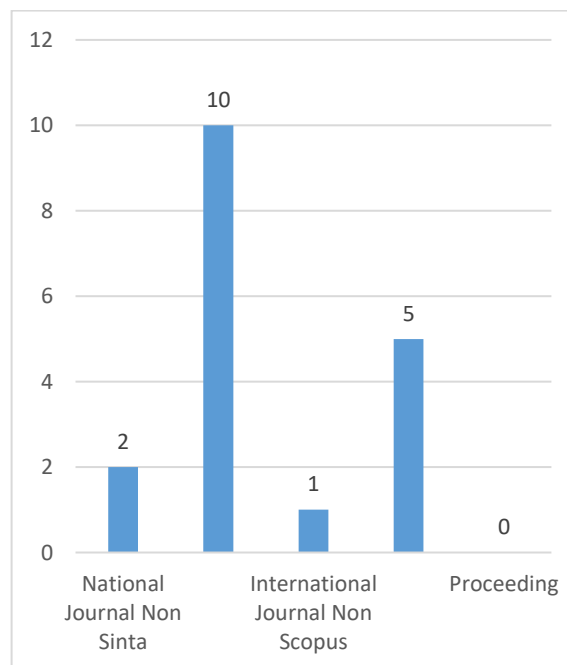
The next is the accessibility of student teachers in accessing journal article. 18 student teachers prefer to read an open-access journal.

Table 7. Accessibility preferences



The next is the indexed journal article preferences. 10 student teachers prefer to read a national journal indexed by Sinta. 5 student teachers prefer to read an international journal indexed by Scopus. 2 student teachers prefer to read a national journal non-Sinta. And only 1 student teachers prefer to read international journals non-Scopus.

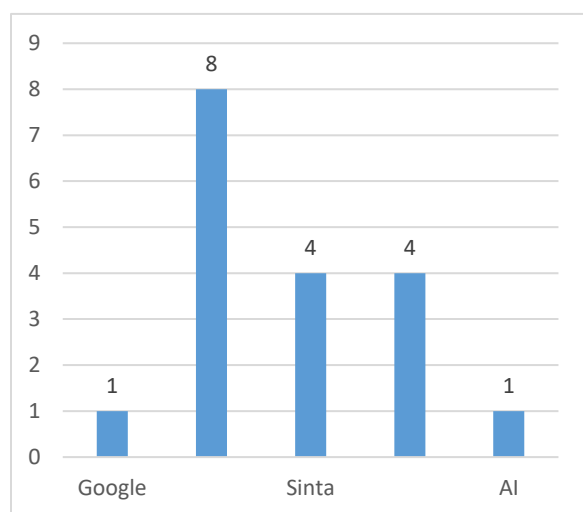
Table 8. Indexed of journal article's preferences



The next is the journal article search website preferences. From the table, it can be seen that 8 student teachers prefer to use

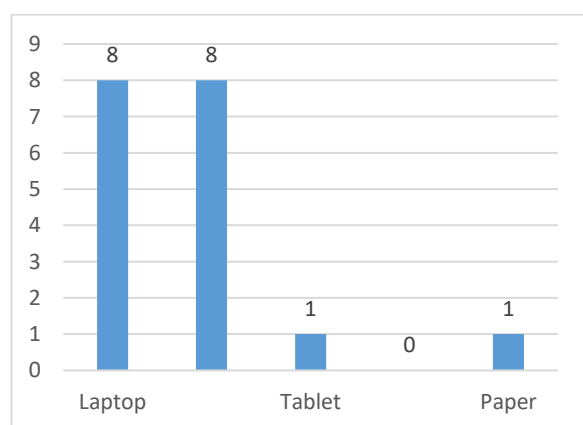
Google Scholar to seek the journal articles. 4 student teachers prefer to seek the journal articles through Sinta or Web e-journal international. Then 1 student teachers prefer to seek journal articles from Google or AI.

Table 9. Journal article search website's preferences



The last is media to read. 8 student teachers prefer to use a laptop or hand phone in reading journal articles. 1 student prefers to use a tablet or paper in reading journal articles.

Table 10. Media's preferences to read



The Student Teachers' Challenges in Reading Journal Articles

Because reading journal articles is something new for the students. During the

process, the student faced some challenges. From the interview, it is known that student teachers face some challenges those are seeking the appropriate journal article, searching the suitable web to seek the article, translating the article, understanding the unfamiliar words, and understanding the content of the article.

The first challenge is seeking the appropriate journal article. In the interview, S7 stated that

My problem is looking for article titles that match the research I am working on.

From the interview, it can be seen that S7 showed difficulties in finding journal articles for the research. The main problem of S7 is finding articles that are appropriate to the topic S7 wants to investigate. The statement is supported by Akmal et al. (2020) who stated that many researchers typically read journal articles to help them prepare for their research ideas. The second problem is searching the suitable web to seek the article. In the interview, S4 stated that

Searching for journal articles often presents major challenges, especially for novice researchers like me. One of the main challenges is accessibility to the web. Many academic journals require a subscription or payment to access the full article, creating financial constraints for individuals on a limited budget.

From the interview, it can be seen that as a new researcher, S4 has difficulties finding journal articles web. Lots of important research articles are only available in online journals that you have to pay for, which can be expensive. The statement is supported by Klein et al (2014) who stated that one of the obstacles in accessing the web is reference rot, which occurs when a large fraction of papers have broken or inaccessible online connections, making it difficult for

researchers to get extra information required for a thorough comprehension of the research. The third problem is translating the article. In the interview session, S14 stated that

The main challenge in reading journal articles is that sometimes there is some vocabulary in English that you don't understand, so you have to translate it back and forth

From the interview, it can be seen that S14 is highlighting a common obstacle faced by her. The challenge lies in encountering unfamiliar English words within the journal articles. This forces her to constantly translate these words back and forth, interrupting the flow of reading and hindering their comprehension. The S14 is essentially saying that the language itself can be a barrier to understanding the research she needs. The statement is supported by Al-Jarrah & Ismail, (2018), who stated that inadequate vocabulary knowledge could potentially contribute to a lack of comprehension. When students read, their limited vocabulary knowledge suggests that comprehending the text is dependent on their ability to identify the essential words in English.

The fourth problem is understanding unfamiliar words. In the interview, S15 stated that

Very strange vocabulary (foreign), sometimes it is quite difficult to translate or understand the sentences.

The interview shows that the main problem of S15 is complex or unfamiliar vocabulary. S15 uses terms like "strange vocabulary" and "difficult to translate" to express the challenge of understanding words that might be technical or not commonly used in everyday speech. This can make it hard to grasp the full meaning of the sentences and

hinder their comprehension of the research. The S15 is saying the articles use words that are so hard to understand, that even translating them doesn't always make sense. The statement is supported by Mohammed & Rashid (2017) who stated that the terms in English might be confusing and that countries that speak English as a second language may not be familiar with some of the vocabulary. The last problem is understanding the content of the article. In the interview, S18 stated that

My main challenge in reading journal articles is understanding the content of the journal article. Usually journal articles use scientific terms that are still unfamiliar to me.

From the interview, it shows that S18 is struggling with the technical language used in academic journals. S18 pinpoints the main challenge as understanding the content itself because the articles are filled with scientific terms they haven't encountered before. This highlights the student's desire to learn the complex language of their field but also acknowledges the initial hurdle of unfamiliar vocabulary. They're saying the articles use words they've never heard before, which makes it hard to understand what the research is all about. This finding aligns with the study conducted by Satriani (2018), which revealed that challenging reading materials pose a significant obstacle for students in comprehending the text. The student's lack of familiarity with the reading material and the grammatical complexity of the text are contributing factors to their failure to comprehend it accurately.

The Student Teachers' Strategies in Reading Journal Articles

From the challenges above, the students tried to implement some strategies to face the problem of reading journal articles. The first strategy is opening the online or

printed dictionary. In the interview, S2 stated that

Sometimes it's difficult to understand some sentences in journal. So, I used google translate to translate it to Bahasa Indonesia.

The S2 used Google Translate to translate the content of the article. So, even though S2 is a student teacher in the English Education Department S2 still uses Google Translate in understanding the content of the articles. Winiharti et al. (2021) stated Google Translate is widely recognized as a crucial tool for facilitating communication between individuals who speak different languages. The statement is also supported by Valijärvi and Tarsoly (2019) who have viewed Google Translate should be viewed in a more favorable light, particularly concerning the acquisition of second languages. Students who learn foreign languages become more analytical and proficient when they use Google Translate as a tool during the learning process. This has encouraged them to learn the languages on their own, which in turn would enhance their self-confidence.

The second strategy used by the students is reading the journal article more than once. S5 in the interview session stated that

Maybe 3 to 4 times ya....because I'm not smart heheee I need to read again and again so I can get the findings of the articles.

S5 feels not good in understanding the content of the article. Therefore S5 spent the time to read the article more than once. Because some sentences or paragraphs are difficult to understand. So, the S5 used this strategy to make her more understood. The statement is in line with Cheng et al. (2021) who stated that the usage of scientific vocabulary that is uncommon in normal

English may trigger a linguistic barrier to interpretation.

The third is sharing with their friend. In the interview session S8 stated that

I ask my friends, the member of my group to help me read the sentences and tell me the meaning of the text.

S8 asks her friends when S8 cannot find the proper article or when they cannot understand the material well. The statement is in line with Callaman (2023) who stated that in the classroom, students sometimes depend on peers and acquaintances who have an excellent knowledge of the topic of study issue.

The next strategy is watching the tutorial video in seeking the journal article. In the interview session, S11 stated that

Sometimes I watch reels or TikTok to get the tips to download or get journal article.

S11 used social media such as YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram to seek tutorials on how to seek a good article or the best web to find an article. S11 watched the video to get more information on how to get a proper article related to the topic that they will present. Kristiani & Pradnyadewi (2021) have found that the advancement of technology appears to yield numerous favorable impacts on the field of education. The utilization of technology offers a diverse range of educational resources that are engaging for students. YouTube is a technological advancement that can serve as a viable learning medium. YouTube offers a diverse range of educational videos. In this study, YouTube showed a positive impact in giving tutorials on how to seek appropriate journal articles on the internet.

Then, the last is a discussing with the lecturers. In the interview session, S13 stated that

I come to the lecturer...to discuss about my problem

S13 tried to discuss with the lecturer after S13 found an article. The S13 makes sure that the article that will be read is correct. So, S13 prefers to show to the lecturer first then after that they re-read the articles. Lecturers' roles in facilitating access to scholarly articles and encouraging students to contribute academically (Bond, 2018). Lecturers can help students navigate the publication process and connect them to appropriate studies in their chosen area of interest.

Conclusion

The result of the study found that students read journal articles as a necessary step for writing their own journal articles. The student teachers preferred to read articles listed in SINTA, a reliable Indonesian database for academic publications. However, the research revealed five challenges face when reading these journal articles. First, finding the right article can be tricky. Students need one that perfectly matches their research topic and comes from a trustworthy source. Second, searching the web itself can be challenging because not all websites contain reliable academic content. Third, language can be a barrier. Articles often use technical terms and complex structures, especially difficult for students who don't read fluently in that language. Fourth, even in their native language, students might encounter unfamiliar scientific words. Finally, grasping the overall research can be difficult, particularly for those new to academic reading. The study also identified five strategies students use to overcome these challenges. The student

teachers rely on dictionaries, both online and printed, to understand the technical vocabulary. Sometimes, multiple readings are needed to solidify their understanding. The student teachers also discuss and share the articles with friends for their perspectives. Additionally, student teachers use online video tutorials to learn how to search and access articles effectively. And lastly, the student teachers do not hesitate to seek guidance from their lecturers for help with complex concepts. By understanding these challenges and strategies, students can become more confident and successful readers of journal articles, ultimately leading them to write stronger research pieces themselves.

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