

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Background**

Academic text reading is a specific category of reading. In which the purposes is to give students exposure to different viewpoints and ideas (Yukselir, 2014). Consequently, it requires more engagement than just reading the words on the page. In order to learn and retain what students' read, it's a good idea to do things like circling key words, writing notes, and reflecting (Kasim and Raisha, 2018).

Reading academic texts can be challenging for some students (Phantharakphong & Pothitha, 2013). According to Brownie & Silver (1995), this happens because of 4 factors, there are the matter of text structure, information overload, the authority of the textbook, and the concept that are disconnected from experience and prior knowledge. The challenges faced by the students might be different for each student as for example, it contains many words that students barely find in daily life. Due to this situation, the researcher is interested to find out the students' challenges in reading academic text.

The previous' studies of students' reading challenges in Chinese Mandarin students illuminate the point that not all texts pose the same reading challenges to students (Tong, Tong, & McBride-Chang, 2015). For example, expository texts turn out to be more difficult than narrative texts (Graesser, McNamara, & Louwerse, 2003; McNamara, Ozuru, & Floyd,

2011), which are moreover, the predominant genre from which students learn across content areas.

This study is different from previous studies. Specifically, this study will focus on finding out the challenges in reading academic texts which are very different from the narrative and expository texts. Academic texts are frequently described as complex and abstract, because their language often contains a lot of conjunctions, discourse markers, extended noun groups with modifiers, nominalizations, extended and embedded clauses, high lexical density, cross-discipline, and discipline-specific vocabulary. Academic texts display complex discourse organization, as the majority use expository or argumentative structures (Schleppegrell, 2004; Snow & Uccelli, 2009) that place a higher cognitive demand on readers and require extensive background knowledge.

Although the issue of students' challenges in reading academic text is popular and often to examine in some countries, but in Indonesia the issue is still rarely conducted. To fill this void, this study will investigate students' challenges in reading academic text that specifically faced in their year of university education using self-assessment in the written form of students' self-reflection.

## **B. Formulation of The Problem**

The current research is formulated in to this question,  
 “What are the students' challenges in reading academic text?”

### **C. Operational Definition**

To avoid misunderstanding, here are the operational definitions of each keyword:

Academic text : It is kinds of text such as textbooks and scholarly journal articles read by students in higher education level in EFL context who are doing their thesis.

Reflective self-assessment : It is students' reflection in written form made for telling the experiences of the students after reading academic text. This reflective self-assessment consists of students' strength and challenges after reading academic text, and students' plans for improvement of their reading after knowing their challenges.

### **D. Aims of The Research**

This study aims to investigate the challenges in reading academic text faced by students in Universitas Siliwangi Tasikmalaya.

## **E. Significances of The Study**

### **1. Theoretical Use**

Theoretically, this study will expand the use of students' self-assessment to explore the challenges in reading academic text faced by students in Universitas Siliwangi Tasikmalaya.

### **2. Empirical Use**

This study will provide empirical insights into what are the students' challenges in reading academic text.

### **3. Practical Use**

This study can provide the implementation of self-assessment as to improve students' reading academic text in English language learning.