

**PROBLEMS FACED BY ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS OF
FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND ARTS OF STATE UNIVERSITY OF
PADANG IN CRITICAL READING**

Thesis

*Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements to Obtain Strata One (S1)
Degree*



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**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND ARTS
STATE UNIVERSITY OF PADANG
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HALAMAN PERSETUJUAN SKRIPSI

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OF PADANG IN CRITICAL READING**

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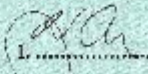
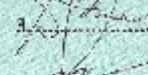
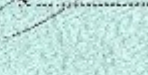
*Dinyatakan Lulus Setelah Dipertahankan Disiapkan Tim Penguji Skripsi
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ABSTRAK

Rahmi, G. 2012. Problems Faced by English Department Students of Faculty of Language and Arts of State University of Padang in Critical Reading. *Skripsi*. Jurusan Bahasa Inggris. Universitas Negeri Padang.

Pembimbing 1 : Drs. Zainuddin Amir, M.Pd

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Penelitian ini dilaksanakan untuk menemukan masalah yang dihadapi mahasiswa dalam critical reading karena temuan penelitian awal menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa masih menghadapi masalah dalam membaca. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif. Populasi penelitian adalah mahasiswa Bahasa Inggris tahun masuk 2008. Sampel penelitian diambil dengan menggunakan cluster sampling. Sampel penelitian ini adalah kelas kependidikan 2 yang terdiri dari 34 mahasiswa. Data diambil dengan menggunakan tes dan interview. Sebelum tes diberikan kepada mahasiswa sebanyak dua kali, Try Out juga dilakukan dulu sebanyak dua kali.

Pertanyaan yang diujikan adalah dalam bentuk pilihan ganda. Untuk mengetahui *reliability* dan *item difficulty* dari soal, ada 46 pertanyaan yang diujikan dalam *Try Out*. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa soal memiliki *reliability* 0.686 (*reliable*) dan soal yang memiliki kesulitan sedang adalah 11 soal tentang *writer's tone*, 10 soal tentang *writer's point of view*, dan 8 soal tentang *writer's purpose*. Karena soal yang digunakan untuk tes berjumlah 30 soal, maka 1 soal dengan kesulitan sedang tentang *writer's tone* dibuang dan 2 soal untuk *writer's purpose* direvisi.

Hasil tes menunjukkan bahwa skor mahasiswa dalam ketiga *sub skills* ini tergolong rendah secara rata-rata. Dari keseluruhan mahasiswa yang mengikuti tes, tidak ada yang berhasil memperoleh skor pada rentangan 66-100. Sebaliknya, 50.00% mahasiswa memperoleh skor pada rentangan 41-55 (D), 35.29% mahasiswa memperoleh skor pada rentangan 0-40 (E) dan hanya 14.70% mahasiswa mendapatkan skor pada rentangan 56-65 (C). Hasil wawancara juga menunjukkan bahwa mereka memiliki masalah dalam menjawab soal-soal tersebut. Masalah tersebut adalah *vocabulary*, *background knowledge*, *complex sentences*, pengetahuan mengenai definisi dari *skill* itu sendiri, pengetahuan mengenai cara mengetahui ketiga *sub skills* ini, dan lainnya.

Berdasarkan penjelasan di atas bisa disimpulkan bahwa kemampuan *critical reading* mahasiswa masih rendah dan berdasarkan hasil wawancara, ada beberapa masalah yang mereka hadapi dalam *critical reading*. Untuk itu disarankan kepada jurusan Bahasa Inggris untuk merevisi silabus pengajaran mata kuliah *Reading* dan menekankan pentingnya pengajaran *critical reading* dan strategi untuk menguasai kosa kata dalam kelas *Reading*. Para dosen diharapkan juga bisa memberikan latihan dan tugas yang lebih banyak tentang *critical reading* dan menemukan cara untuk meningkatkan minat membaca mahasiswa.

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The Writer

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Problem

Reading is one of the important skills to be mastered. It helps people get information from many sources, cultures, and countries. It also helps people increase their knowledge. In addition, it is necessary to help people learn of considerable information from a text they read in academic and professional contexts. Then, it can also make people get pleasure. So, people need to have good reading ability in order to get these advantages of reading.

In the English department of State University of Padang, reading is one of the required subjects. It offers reading courses both for educational and non educational programs. It consists of Reading 1, Reading 2, Reading 3, and Extensive Reading. They are all prerequisite subjects; if the students do not pass Reading 1, they cannot take Reading 2. In these subjects, the students are taught various skills. Viewed from syllabus, in Reading 1, they learned about pre reading, scanning, context clues, key ideas of sentences, reference words, topic of paragraph, topic sentence, stated main idea, details, and transitional words or connectives. In Reading 2, they learned about topic, stated main idea and unstated main idea, topic sentence, supporting details, paragraph patterns, the title, introductory paragraph, thesis statement, supporting information, skimming, and scanning. And in Reading 3, they learned about skimming, scanning, the title, introductory paragraph, thesis statement, topic sentence, supporting information,

concluding paragraph, author's thought, summarizing, and critical reading. From the skills in reading courses, reading skills can be divided to be three levels; literal reading, inferential reading, and critical reading. From the skills they learned in Reading 1, Reading 2, and Reading 3, writer's purpose, writer's tone, and writer's point of view are classified as critical reading.

According to Wood (2000), critical reading is reading to analyze, evaluate, and come up with new ideas. So, after reading text or other materials, readers will not only recount or accept the content, but they will think what beyond the text by analyzing and evaluating it. Experts have different opinion about the division of critical reading skills. One of the experts, Elder (2004,) divides it to be distinguishing facts from opinion, determining the author's purpose, determining the author's tone, and determining the author's point of view.

The data taken from one of Educational Classes (Kepend 2 class) which consists of 36 students year 2008, shows the students' Reading marks. The students have taken all reading courses- Reading 1, Reading 2, Reading 3, and Extensive Reading. The table below shows the data.

Table 1.1 Reading Marks of the Students from Educational Class 2

Courses	Marks				
	A	B	C	D	E
Reading 1	10 students	19 students	7 students	-	-
Reading 2	13 students	23 students	-	-	-
Reading 3	10 students	18 students	7 students	1 students	-
Extensive Reading	4 students	26 students	6 students	-	-

However, based on the interviews done to some students and lecturers, it seems that the students had problems in reading and understanding articles that they were assigned to read. According to some students who have been interviewed, reading is a difficult activity to do. They admitted that it was hard for them to understand reading materials that were given to them. They needed long time to understand them. Some of the students also admitted that reading was hard because they did not have sufficient background knowledge about the texts that they read. It is so difficult for them to get the meaning that writers convey if they do not have knowledge about the text before. It is hard to recognize what the writer wants, how writer sees the problem, and how the writer feels in a passage, text, or even articles. They also informed that reading was a boring and uninteresting activity to do. Then, they added that uninteresting reading materials could make them feel bored of doing reading activity. Some of students also admitted that they do not like reading and are not accustomed to reading since they were kids.

Some English department lecturers who have been interviewed about students' reading ability also stated that reading was a difficult activity for the students. It was hard for them to understand written materials given in some courses they teach. The students could not understand the word and also its meaning. They needed more time to understand it. The lecturers assumed that the problems happened because the students were lazy and did not have high interest and motivation to read. Then, they happened because the students did not understand reading skills well and did not apply them in reading activity. Next, the students only read short paragraphs so they did not apply the skills. The lecturers also informed that Reading taught to the students was skill based so it would be difficult for the students to read longer text that needs students' critical reading ability. In addition, the lecturers also informed that some students got problems in analyzing, evaluating, and thinking of what they read.

Based on the data from interviews above, there are some possible causes why students have difficulties and problems in reading so that they probably have low ability in reading. First, students' knowledge of vocabulary might be low. Vocabulary is very important to be known and mastered. So, when students do not know the vocabulary, of course they will not understand the meaning. It was revealed that they got problems about vocabulary and overcame it by using Google translation or looking at dictionary very often.

Then, another thing that is probably the reason why students' reading ability is low is students' reading habit. English students should often read English text so that their reading ability increases. But, it was found that some

students do not like to do reading activity. They said they read when there was task from lecturers required them to read. Then, the students are not accustomed to doing reading activity. As English students, they should often do reading activity. But, because it seems that their reading habit is not built well since they were children, they still have problems when they do reading.

In addition, reading materials in reading courses are also assumed as one of the causes of students' problems in reading. Students were accustomed to reading short paragraphs. Then, the reading material given to them probably has low difficulty so that the students can only recognize the content of the material, but they cannot analyze, evaluate, and think of the materials. Reading that was taught to the students is perhaps skill based. The students were asked to master the skills and apply them in doing the examination. It made them hard to read and understand difficult reading materials that probably need students' higher level reading ability- critical reading ability.

Furthermore, the students probably do not apply what they learn in reading class in reading activity. They perhaps do not understand how to use reading skills and do not know what skills must be used when they do reading activity. If they do not know how to use the skills, they will spend more time in reading a text. Most of the students interviewed mentioned they had problem in reading because they could not understand message that the writers convey. It seems that the students can recognize only what the reading materials are about; they might have problem in analyzing, evaluating, and thinking of what they read.

The results of interview with the students and lecturers and students mark are very contradictive. This is not easy to be explained. Research is needed very much to be done to know the problems. However, based on the interviews with some lecturers, good mark that students got might be because the reading material given to them in class and also in examination were relatively easy and did not require critical thinking. Then, participation, attendance and tasks were also taken as consideration in determining the final mark.

From explanation above, it can be concluded that reading is very important skill that students need to have and master. Students need to have good reading skills that will affect their reading ability. It is very necessary to do research about students' problems in mastering skills that they have learned in reading courses.

B. Identification of the Problem

There are some possible causes why students get difficulty in reading. The problems are like lack knowledge of vocabulary, bad reading habit, and reading skills. Reading skill is considered as one of possible causes of students in reading. Students might have problems in applying some reading skills that have been learned in class. Critical reading is one of reading skills that students have learned. Students might have problems in critical reading because it is known from interviews that they have problems in analyzing, evaluating, and thinking of what they read.

C. Limitation of Problem

The discussion of the problems will be limited around students' critical reading. Because it seems that it is too large discussion if critical reading is discussed all, so the sub skills that will be analyzed are writer's purpose, writer's tone, and writer's point of view.

D. Formulation of Problem

Based on that problem stated, it could be verified that the formulation of this research is, "What are the problems faced by the English Department students in critical reading?" The problems will be found by analyzing students' ability in answering questions on writer's purpose, writer's tone, and writer's point of view.

E. Research Questions

The following research questions are developed from the general above:

1. What problems do the students face in answering questions on writer's purpose in reading?
2. What problems do the students face in answering questions on writer's tone in reading?
3. What problems do the students face in answering questions on writer's point of view in reading?

F. Purpose of the research

The purpose of the research is to explain the problems faced by the students in critical reading.

G. Significance of the Problem

It is expected that the result of this research will contribute to the improvement of students' reading ability in applying reading skills they learned. The result of this research will show the students' ability in critical reading skills; writer's purpose, writer's tone, and writer's point of view. Moreover, the result will also show the problems that students frequently get in answering questions on writer's purpose, tone, and points of view in reading. By showing the result, it is hoped that the students will know their ability and then the way to overcome all their problems. Then, it is hoped that the result will be concerned to be an improvement in teaching Reading in English Department. The department can use the result of this research to decide what can be done to overcome students' problems in reading. This research is also expected to give significant contribution to the State University of Padang by giving factual data about students' ability and problems in answering questions on writer's purpose, tone, and points of view in reading.

H. Definition of Key Term

- 1.1 Reading: one skill that helps readers get information and knowledge from reading materials they read by using some skills.
- 1.2 Critical reading: the process of making judgments in reading done by readers to evaluate what they have read and to make a decision.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. CONCLUSIONS

After interpreting the result of the research, it can be concluded that the students had problems in critical reading. Their problems were background knowledge, limited vocabulary, and understanding complex sentences. In addition, they admitted that the writer's point of view was the most difficult sub skill in critical reading. Even, some of them could not tell the definition of this sub skill and the clues to determine it. To sum up, the following data show the problems that the students faced in critical reading:

1. In general, the ability of students in determining writer's purpose is very poor. It was proved that students got score 51.47 (poor) in average. This fact indicates that the students had problems in determining writer's purpose. The problem was in finding the clues to recognize writer's purpose.
2. The ability of students in determining writer's tone was also poor. The data show that the students got score 45.29 in average. It means the students had problems in determining writer's tone. Some students did not know the definition of writer's tone so that it was difficult for them to understand the meaning of the questions and how to answer it. In addition, finding the clues to find the writer's tone was also the problem for them.

Then, there were some students (33.33%) that admitted if finding writer's tone was the most difficult skill for them among these three critical sub skills.

3. The ability of students in determining writer's point of view was poor. It can be seen from the data that the students got score 44.26 in average. It represents that the students had problems in recognizing writer's point of view. Some of the students did not know the definition of writer's point of view. Then, they did not have any idea about the clues to find writer's point of view. In addition, none of the students knew the meaning of bias and the signs if the writer has bias in writing something. Then, some of students (66.67%) said that determining writer's point of view was the most difficult sub skill among these three sub skills.

B. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the conclusions above, the researcher proposed some suggestions as follow:

1. Since the ability of the students in critical reading –determining writer's purpose, writer's tone, and writer's point of view was poor, it is suggested that English Department revises the syllabus of teaching Reading and emphasizes the importance of teaching critical reading to the students.
2. The lecturers are expected to give more critical reading exercise to the students so that the students can improve their critical reading ability.

3. Strategy to build vocabulary is very crucial to be included in Reading class.
4. The English Department and lecturers are suggested to find the solution to improve the students' bad reading habit and make the students practice more often so that they have many vocabularies and they are accustomed to answering difficult questions.
5. The students who want to do research about students' problems in skills or in courses should also interview the lecturers in order to get the more comprehensive and complete data.

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Appendix 1

SYLLABUS

Department/Faculty : English Department

Course : Reading 1

Credit Hours : 3 sks

Course Description : this course provides the students with the reading skills such as punctuation, context clues, key ideas, reference words, topic sentence, supporting details of a paragraph of approximately 50 words and transitional.

Competence Standard : Understand genre paragraphs (descriptive, expository, procedure, discussion, report) of approximately 50 words by using reading skills, such as punctuations, context clues, reference words, topic, topic sentence, and supporting details.

Basic Competence	Indicators	Topics/Materials	Learning Experience
Understand a word/phrase	Identify the function of punctuation	Knowledge of understanding punctuation in a sentence: - Comma - Colon - Etc	Discussing the meaning and function of punctuations in a group of three students
	Understand context clues	Knowledge of understanding word/phrase (context clues) in sentences	Lecturing
	Given a number of words/phrases, students can identify the meaning of word/phrase using different kinds of context clues	Examples of context clues: - definition clues - example clues - cause effect - etc in paragraph of different text types (descriptive, expository, procedure, discussion, report)	Discussing the meaning and the function of context clues in finding the meaning of unfamiliar words

	Identify the meaning of unfamiliar words in a simple paragraph or passage	Context clues in a paragraph and passages in different text types	Finding the meaning of unfamiliar words in a paragraph Finding examples of context clues in a paragraph as homework
Understand sentences	Identify the core part of a sentence Given a number of sentences students can identify the relationship of sentences	Knowledge of understanding key idea in sentences and example of related and combined ideas in a sentence Eg. - Related ideas - Combined ideas	Identifying the core part of a sentence (key idea) Identifying the related key idea and combined ideas in group of three Reporting the relationship of ideas in class discussion
Understand relationship of sentences	Identify the relations of sentences	Knowledge of reference words eg. Their, her, etc	Identifying the function of reference word in a word/paragraph
		Mid Term Test	
Understand a paragraph of different text types: (descriptive, expository, procedure, discussion, report)	Understand what is: - paragraph - topic - main idea - topic sentence - supporting details Given number of paragraphs students can identify: - topic - main idea - topic sentence	Knowledge of understanding: - paragraph - topic of a paragraph - topic sentence - stated main idea - details Examples of paragraph of different text types: (descriptive, expository, procedure, discussion, report)	Finding the: - topic of a paragraph - topic sentence - stated main idea - details Underlining the topic, main idea in a paragraph (descriptive, expository, procedure, discussion, report)

	- supporting details in a paragraph of different text types		Rearranging sentences in a procedure paragraph Describe the topic in a (descriptive paragraph, expository, discussion, report)
Understand transitional words	Identify the relationship of paragraphs of different text types	Transitional words/ Connectives	Rearranging scrambled sentences/paragraphs based on transitional words given Answering comprehension questions
		Final Semester Test	

SYLLABUS

Department/Faculty : English Department

Course : Reading 2

Credit Hours : 3 sks/ July-December

Course Description : this course as the continuation of Reading 1 subject, provides the students with the reading skills such as skimming and scanning, understanding paragraph, unstated main idea, paragraph pattern, passage, and article of approximately 150 words.

Competence Standard : Understand genre paragraphs (spoof, anecdote, recount, narrative, news item) of approximately 150 words by

using reading skills, such as skimming and scanning, understanding paragraph, unstated main idea, paragraph pattern, article, passage of approximately 150 words.

Week	Basic Competence	Indicators	Topics/Materials	Learning Experience
1	Understand stated main idea paragraph	Able to identify : - topic - main idea - topic sentence - supporting details of stated main idea paragraph of different text types	Stated main idea paragraph of different text types (spoof, anecdote, recount, narrative, news item)	Reviewing main idea paragraph (stated) Finding the: - topic - main idea - topic sentence - supporting details of stated main idea paragraph of different text types
2-3	Understand elements of unstated main idea paragraph	Able to identify: - topic - main idea - supporting detail of unstated main idea paragraph of different text types	Element of unstated main idea paragraphs of different text types (spoof, anecdote, recount, narrative, news item)	Finding the: - topic of a paragraph - main idea - details Underlining the topic, main idea of certain paragraphs Stating the : - topic - main idea - supporting details of unstated main idea paragraph of different text types

10-11	Understand passages of different text types	Able to identify: - the title - introductory paragraph - thesis statement - topic sentences of every paragraph - supporting information in passages of different text types (spoof, anecdote, recount, narrative, news item)	Elements of a passage of different text types (spoof, anecdote, recount, narrative, news item)	Discussing the elements of a passage of different text types (spoof, anecdote, recount, narrative, news item) Identifying the elements of a passage in a group of 3 students	
12-13	Understand articles	Able to identify elements of an article: - the title - introductory paragraph - thesis statement - topic sentence of every paragraph - supporting information - concluding paragraph in articles of different text types (spoof, anecdote, recount, narrative, news item)	Elements of an article in different text types (spoof, anecdote, recount, narrative, news item) Articles in different text types (spoof, anecdote, recount, narrative, news item)	Discussing the elements of an article of different text types (spoof, anecdote, recount, narrative, news item) Identifying the elements of a passages in a group of 3 students	
14-15	Use skimming in reading different text types	Finding general ideas in passage of approximately 150 words of different text types (spoof, anecdote, recount, narrative, news item)	Knowledge of skimming a passage of approximately 150 words of different text types (spoof, anecdote, recount, narrative, news item)	Skimming passages of 150 words of different text types to find general ideas of the texts Answering comprehension	

				questions	
15-16	Use scanning in reading different text types	Finding specific ideas in passage of approximately 150 words of different text types (spoof, anecdote, recount, narrative, news item)	Knowledge of scanning a passage of approximately 150 words of different text types (spoof, anecdote, recount, narrative, news item)	Scanning the passages to find specific information of different text types Answering comprehension questions	
			Final examination		

SYLLABUS

Department/Faculty : English Department

Course Title : Reading 3

Credit Hours : 3 sks

Course Description : As the continuation of Reading 1 and Reading 2, Reading 3 provides the students with the different kind of reading skills (skimming and scanning), finding unstated main ideas, paragraph pattern of passages, articles, and textbook in different kind of text types.

Competence Standard : Understand the passages, articles and textbook in different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews) by using reading skills, such as finding unstated main ideas, paragraph pattern of passages, articles; skimming and scanning.

Basic Competence	Indicators	Topic/Materials
Do pre-reading in reading different text	Know how to pre-read a passage of approximately 200-350 words in different text types by using skimming skill	Passage of approximately 200-350 words of different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, review)

types (passages and articles)	Know how to pre-read a passage of approximately 200-350 words in different text types by using scanning skill Know how to pre-read article in different text types by using skimming skill Know how to pre-read article in different text types by using scanning skill	used for skimming Passage of approximately 200-350 words in different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews) to be used for scanning Articles in different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews) to be used for skimming Articles in different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews) to be used for scanning
Understanding article in different text types (continued)	Able to identify: - the title - introductory paragraph - thesis statement - topic sentence of every paragraph - supporting information - conclusion paragraph in articles of different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews)	Knowledge of: - the title - introductory paragraph - thesis statement - topic sentence of every paragraph - supporting information - conclusion paragraph in articles of different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews) Articles of approximately 2500 words in different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews)
Understand the author's thought pattern deeply	Able to identify in depth the author's thought patterns and text organization (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews)	Articles and essay in different patterns (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews)
Understand essay and textbook chapter	Summarize an essay and article of different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews) Report an essay and article of different text	Essay and articles textbook chapter in different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews) to be summarized and reported Textbook chapter in different text types

	types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews)	(explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews) to be summarized and reported
Mid-Term Test		
Understand textbook chapter	Summarize textbook chapter of different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews) Report textbook chapter of different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews)	Textbook chapter in different text types Summarize textbook chapter of different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews) to be summarized and reported
Understand articles, textbook chapter, and textbook with critical reading	Able to review the points in articles, textbook chapter in different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews) Able to discuss information in different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews) Able to evaluate article and textbook chapter by asking critical questions to the author's opinion in different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews)	Articles, textbook chapter and textbook reviewing the points, in different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews) Articles, textbook chapter and textbook discussing the information in different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews) Articles, textbook chapter and textbook evaluating by asking critical questions to author's opinion, in different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews)
Understand different formats of text (instruction, description, narrative, categories, and research report)	Apply different reading tactic in reading different format of text; instruction, description, narrative, categories, and research report in different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews)	Essay, article, research report, instruction, textbook chapter and textbook for reviewing points, discussing information, evaluating, asking critical questions to the author's opinion in different text types (explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, reviews)

Final Examination		

Kepustakaan:

1. Milkulecky, Beatrice S. 1990. *A Short Course in Teaching Reading Skills*. London: Addison Wesley Publishing Company.
2. Mc. Whorter, Kathleen, T. 1986. *Guide to College Reading*. Boston: Little Brown and Company.
3. Mc. Whorter, Kathleen, T. 1992. *Efficient and Flexible Reading*. London: Brown and Company.
4. Richard, Jack C. 1997. *From Reader to Reading Teacher: Issues and Strategies for Second Language Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.