

CRITICAL READING SKILLS AMONG ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

STUDENTS AT IAIN LANGSA

SKRIPSI

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Degree (S1)

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Faculty



**MINISTRY OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS TARBIYAH AND TEACHERS
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STATEMENT OF APPROVAL

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STUDENTS AT IAIN LANGSA

Submitted to the Tarbiyah and Teachers Training Faculty
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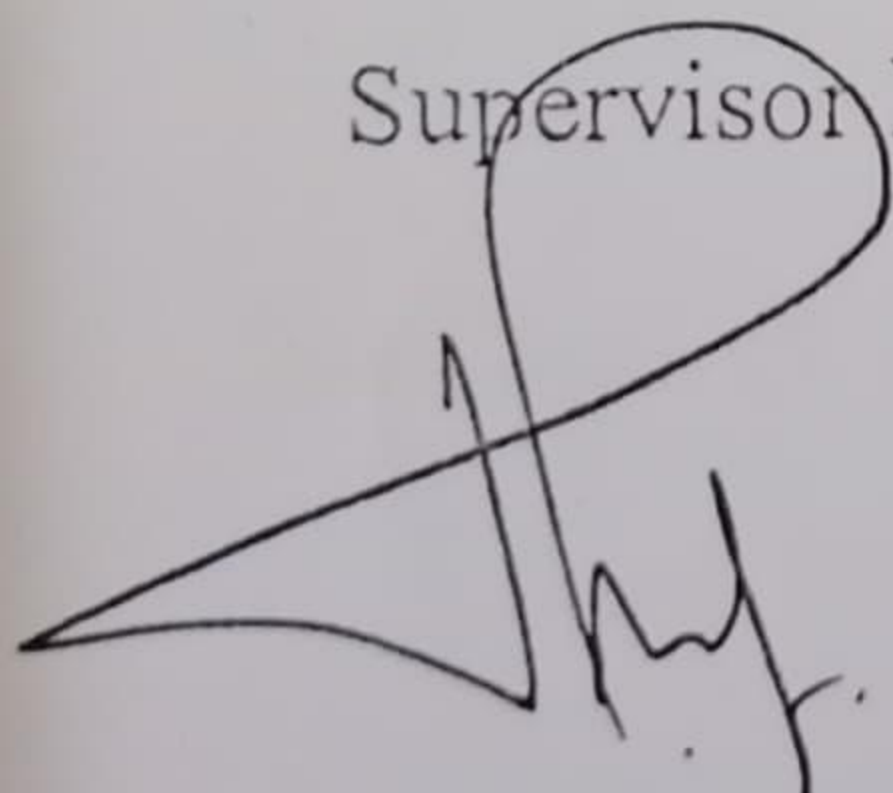
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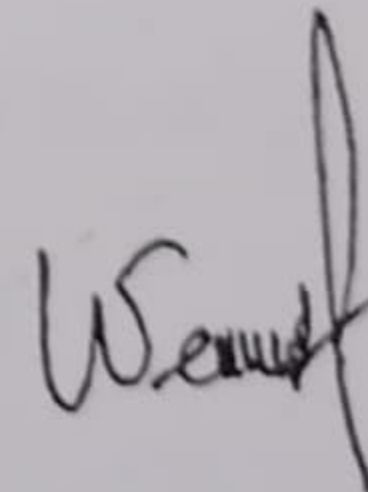
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CRITICAL READING SKILLS AMONG ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS AT IAIN LANGSA

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as a partial fulfillment of requirements for sarjana pendidikan (S.Pd) in English Department
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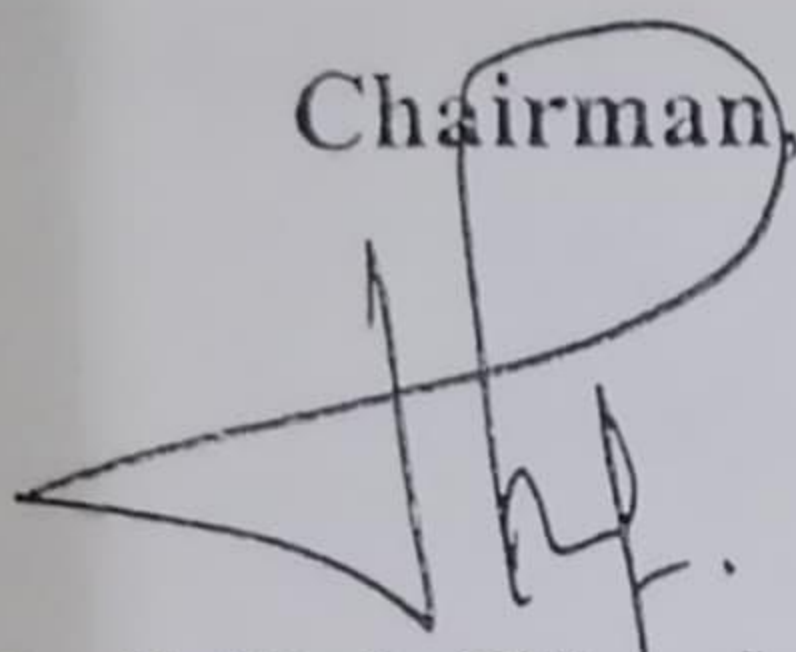
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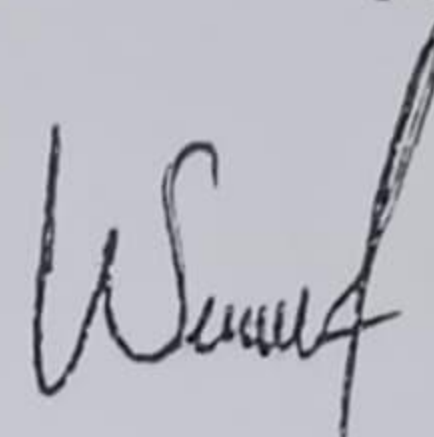
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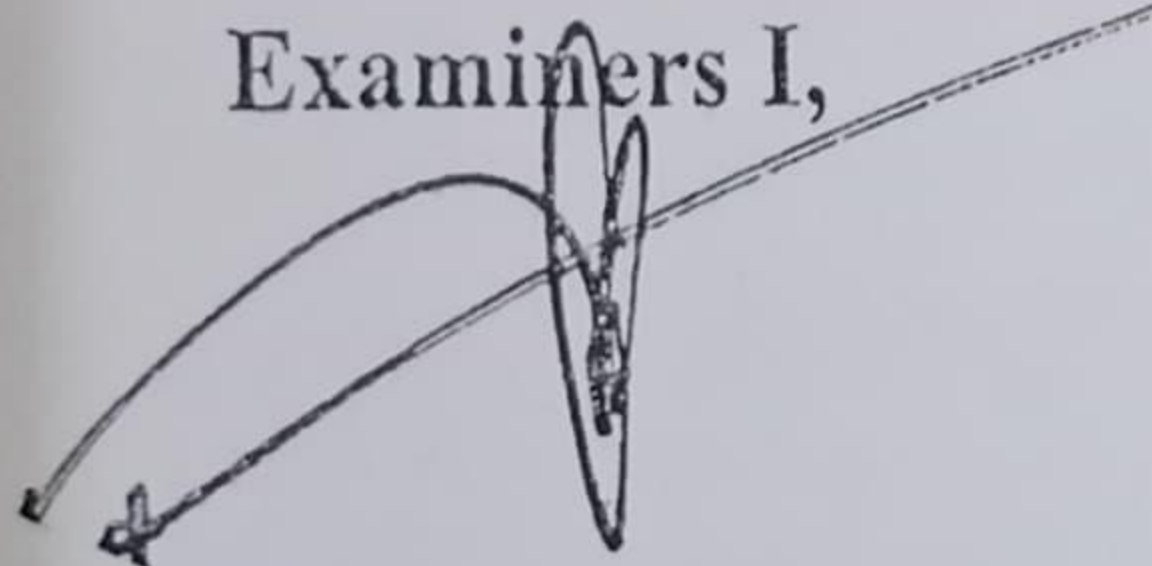
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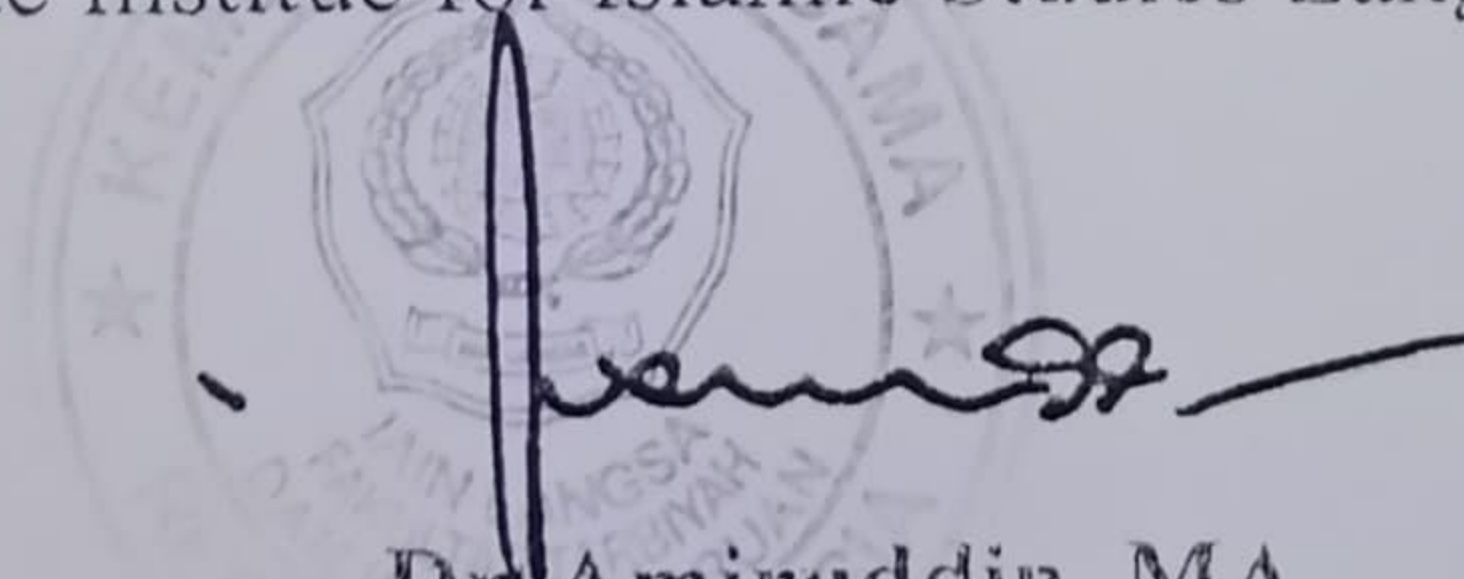


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“Critical Reading Skills Among English Department Students at IAIN
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Apabila dikemudian hari terbukti atau dapat dibuktikan bahwa skripsi ini
adalah hasil jiplakan, maka saya bersedia menerima segala sanksi yang diberikan
atas perbuatan saya tersebut.

Langsa, 30 Juli 2024
Yang Membuat Pernyataan



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By expressing praise and gratitude, we pray to Allah SWT for His mercy and grace, so that the author can complete this thesis.

The author's hope in making this is so that it can fulfill the assignment, as well as be useful for the author in filling in and adding a little knowledge about self-taught English learning using Telegram.

The author is fully aware that there are still many shortcomings in preparing this case study, due to the author's limited knowledge and abilities. For this reason, we hope for constructive criticism and suggestions from readers for the perfection of this Case Study.

Thus, we have written this foreword, we hope this is useful for the author and also for the readers.

Wassalammualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh

Langsa, 30 Agustus 2024

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ABSTRACT

Puja Puspita. 2024. Critical Reading Skills among English Department Students at IAIN Langsa.

Supervisor (1) Fadhillah Wiandari, MS (2) Wahidah, M. Ed

This study investigates the critical reading skills of English department students at IAIN Langsa from a critical literacy perspective, using a qualitative approach. Conducted between July 20 and 30, 2024, it involved 13 respondents who had taken essential courses in reading. The research employed questionnaires and interviews, guided by Finken and Ennis's assessment rubric, which focuses on five key indicators: focus, supporting reason, reasoning, organization, and integration. The findings reveal that most students can identify main ideas, supporting reasons, and logical arguments in texts. However, some face challenges in maintaining focus over long texts and analyzing organizational structures. Interviews highlighted strategies used by students, such as summarizing and identifying keywords to aid comprehension. Overall, the study underscores the importance of targeted interventions, such as workshops and guided reading sessions, to address these challenges. It recommends that lecturers focus on improving students' abilities to maintain concentration, analyze text structures, and integrate multiple perspectives. Future research should explore strategies to enhance critical reading skills further, conduct longitudinal studies to track progress over time, and investigate effective teaching approaches across diverse student populations.

Keyword: Critical Reading, Skills, Critical Literacy

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

In education, literacy referred to the ability to read and write. Literacy encompasses a broader range of skills and competencies essential for full participation in society. According to Macedo and Freire, "the relationship of learners to the world" emphasized that literacy involved much more than just interpreting an author's message without considering the broader context.¹ Beyond basic reading and writing, educational literacy includes digital literacy, which involves the effective use of digital tools and technologies to find, evaluate, and create information online.² Digital literacy plays an important role in education. Media literacy is also critical, as it empowers individuals to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media in various forms, understanding its role and impact in society. Numeracy, the ability to use mathematical concepts and skills in daily life, and critical literacy, which involves reading texts in an active, reflective manner to understand power dynamics, inequality, and social justice issues, are also integral components of modern literacy.³ Numeracy literacy skills were essential for solving and facing everyday problems using mathematical

¹ Wendy Luttrell, Paulo Freire, and Etc., "*Literacy: Reading the Word and the World.*," *Contemporary Sociology* 17, no. 6 (1988).

² Suwarjo Suwarjo et al., "Digital Literacy Analysis of Elementary School Teachers on Distance Learning Instructional Process in Yogyakarta," *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan* 14, no. 2 (2022).

³ Haura Sharifah and Ghullam Hamdu, "Implementation of Learning in Elementary Schools Is Related to the Implementation of Literacy and Numeracy Skills," *Buana Pendidikan: Jurnal Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan* 18, no. 1 (2021).

knowledge, both symbols and numbers.⁴ Together, these expanded dimensions of literacy enabled individuals to achieve personal goals, engage in lifelong learning, and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Critical literacy referred to the ability to actively and thoughtfully engage with texts, whether written, spoken, or visual, to understand and critique the deeper meanings, power dynamics, and social implications they conveyed.⁵ It involved more than just understanding the literal content; it encouraged students to analyze and question the underlying assumptions, biases, and ideologies present in the text. Critical literacy aimed to develop individuals' awareness of how language and media could shape perceptions, reinforce stereotypes, or challenge dominant narratives about social issues such as power structures, inequality, and justice. By fostering a critical approach to reading and interpreting information, critical literacy empowered individuals to become active, make reasoned judgments, and advocate for positive social change.

While, critical literacy skills, individuals not only deciphered the explicit meanings of texts but also uncovered implicit biases, perspectives, and agendas that might have been present. Critical literacy is an educational approach that emphasizes the analysis of texts in relation to power dynamics, social contexts, and ideological perspectives. Rooted in the principles of critical theory from the early 20th century, critical literacy builds on the work of scholars like Max

⁴ Wendy Dian Patriana, Sutama Sutama, and Murfiah Dewi Wulandari, "Pembudayaan Literasi Numerasi Untuk Asesmen Kompetensi Minimum Dalam Kegiatan Kurikuler Pada Sekolah Dasar Muhammadiyah," *Jurnal Basicedu* 5, no. 5 (2021).

⁵ Felix E. Hirsch, "Standards for Library Service: An International Survey (Book Review)," *College & Research Libraries* 37, no. 1 (1976).

Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, and Paulo Freire, who highlighted the role of literacy in liberating individuals from oppression.⁶ Practicing critical literacy involves engaging with texts on multiple levels, from understanding their basic content and structure to deconstructing implicit messages and placing them within broader social and historical contexts.

In education, critical literacy helped students develop essential skills for critical thinking and analysis, encouraging them to become active consumers of information.⁷ It taught them to recognize and challenge stereotypes and biases, understand the relationship between language and power, and appreciate diverse perspectives. Besides, critical literacy significantly enhances students' critical reading skills by teaching them to approach texts in a thoughtful and analytical manner.⁸ Through critical literacy practices, students learn to go beyond surface-level comprehension to interrogate the deeper meanings, perspectives, and power dynamics embedded within texts. Moreover, critical literacy empowers students to articulate their own perspectives. Ultimately, by fostering critical reading skills, critical literacy equips students with the tools necessary to engage meaningfully with texts, think critically about the world around them, and actively participate in shaping a more informed and inclusive society.

⁶ Seung Nam Son, "Didactical Reexamination on Liberal Arts Education in the Age of AI," *The Korean Association of General Education* 14, no. 4 (2020).

⁷ Rockie Sibanda, "Beyond the Written Word: Newspapers as Critical Literacy Teaching Tools in the South African Classroom," *English Language Teaching Educational Journal* 4, no. 3 (2021).

⁸ Dumrong Adunyarittigun, "Fostering University Students to Deal with Conflict through Critical Literacy in EFL Reading Class," *Journal of Asia TEFL* 19, no. 2 (2022).

In an era of information abundance, the ability to critically read and analyze texts was indispensable.⁹ The importance of critical reading skills could not be overstated, particularly in academic settings where students were expected to engage deeply with various sources of information. Critical reading went beyond mere comprehension; it involved questioning the author's intent, recognizing underlying assumptions, and assessing the validity of evidence presented. This higher-order thinking skill was essential for students to develop the ability to think independently and critically, which was a key objective of higher education. Understanding the nuances of critical reading also fostered independent, analytical thinkers equipped to navigate the complexities of the modern world.

Critical reading skills were particularly relevant for students in English departments due to the nature and demands of their academic discipline.¹⁰ English studies encompassed a wide range of textual materials, including literature, critical theory, linguistics, and cultural studies, all of which required a nuanced and sophisticated approach to reading. In literary studies, critical reading enabled students to engage deeply with texts, uncovering layers of meaning that were not immediately apparent. It allowed them to analyze narrative structures, thematic elements, and stylistic devices, leading to a richer understanding of literary works. For instance, when studying a novel, a student with strong critical reading skills

⁹ Olena Semenog et al., "Formation of Media Educational Skills of a Future Teacher in the Professional Training," *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala* 12, no. 3 (2020).

¹⁰ Iqbal Risca and Rahma Dianti, "A Correlational Study on Tertiary Students' Reading Habits and Their Critical Reading Skills," *Language and Education Journal* 6, no. 02 (2021).

could discern the author's use of symbolism, examine character development, and critique the societal implications embedded within the narrative.

On the other hand, critical reading was crucial when dealing with theoretical and critical texts, which were often dense and complex.¹¹ These texts required students to not only comprehend the arguments but also critically evaluate the evidence and theoretical frameworks presented by the authors. Furthermore, in the context of linguistic and cultural studies, critical reading enabled students to scrutinize texts for underlying ideologies and power structures. This involved understanding how language shaped and reflected social realities, as well as recognizing biases and assumptions in both academic and popular texts.¹² For example, a critical reading of media texts could reveal how language perpetuated stereotypes or marginalized certain groups, which was a key focus in cultural studies.

Additionally, the development of critical reading was essential for the overall academic growth of English students.¹³ It enhanced their ability to think independently, argue persuasively, and write analytically. These skills were not only vital for academic success but also for professional careers in fields such as education, journalism, publishing, and law, where critical analysis and effective communication were paramount. Moreover, critical reading skills were

¹¹ Adriaan van der Weel and Anne Mangen, "Textual Reading in Digitised Classrooms: Reflections on Reading beyond the Internet," *International Journal of Educational Research* 115 (2022).

¹² Naser Oroujlou and Karim Sadeghi, "Effects of Explicit Teaching of Critical Thinking Strategies on EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension," *Teaching English Language* 16, no. 2 (2022).

¹³ Khalilova Kamola Komilovna, "Mastering Reading Comprehension: A Vital Skill for Academic Success," *International scientific - online conference* 2, no. 23 (2023).

indispensable for lifelong learning and professional success.¹⁴ In an era characterized by an overwhelming amount of information, the ability to critically evaluate sources was crucial for making informed decisions. Employers across various fields valued graduates who could demonstrate strong critical thinking and analytical abilities, as these skills were indicative of a person's capability to tackle complex problems and generate innovative solutions.

Despite its importance, many students struggled with developing critical reading skills. Factors such as limited exposure to diverse reading materials, insufficient instruction on critical reading strategies, and a lack of practice opportunities hindered their progress. This study aimed to investigate the current state of critical reading skills among English department students at IAIN Langsa. By investigating the perspectives of the students that could support their development and difficulties, this research sought to contribute to the enhancement of critical reading instruction and ultimately improve students' academic performance and critical thinking capabilities.

B. Research Question

Based on the background above, the problem of this research could be formulated as follows: "how are students' critical reading from the perspective of critical literacy at English department IAIN Langsa"

¹⁴ John Holford et al., "Shaping the Field of Lifelong Education through Three Critical Debates in the International Journal of Lifelong Education," *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 41, no. 6 (2022).

C. Purpose of Study

Objective this study is aimed to answer the question problem above, as follows: “to investigating student’s critical reading from the perspective of critical literacy at English department IAIN Langsa”

D. Significance of Study

Theoretical Benefit

1. This result can contribute theoretical insights into effective instructional strategies and curriculum design
2. This study can enrich scholarly discussions on the importance of critical reading in academic English studies.

Practical Benefit

1. This study aims to empower students with essential skills for academic success and lifelong learning
2. This study improve students’ ability to understand and analyze complex texts, leading to better performance in coursework, exams, and research projects within the English department

E. Scope of Study

Critical reading from the perspective of critical literacy is a profound and empowering approach to engaging with texts. Critical literacy extends beyond traditional reading comprehension; it emphasizes the student’s active role in interpreting, questioning, and understanding the underlying messages, power dynamics, and ideologies within a text.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Research Finding

This research addresses the following research question: How are students' critical reading from the perspective of critical literacy at English department IAIN Langsa? This research is about an investigation critical reading course. In the classroom, the students are exposed the different degree in their perspective on literacy of critical reading. This research was conducted at IAIN Langsa from 20-25 July 2024. The researcher administired the questionnaire to 13 students as a participant of the study. The percentage off students' responses are the students' perspective of critical reading. The students are give 4 alternatives of the critical literacy the faced in the critical reading as know in the following

Strongly Disagree = 1

Disagree = 2

Neutral = 3

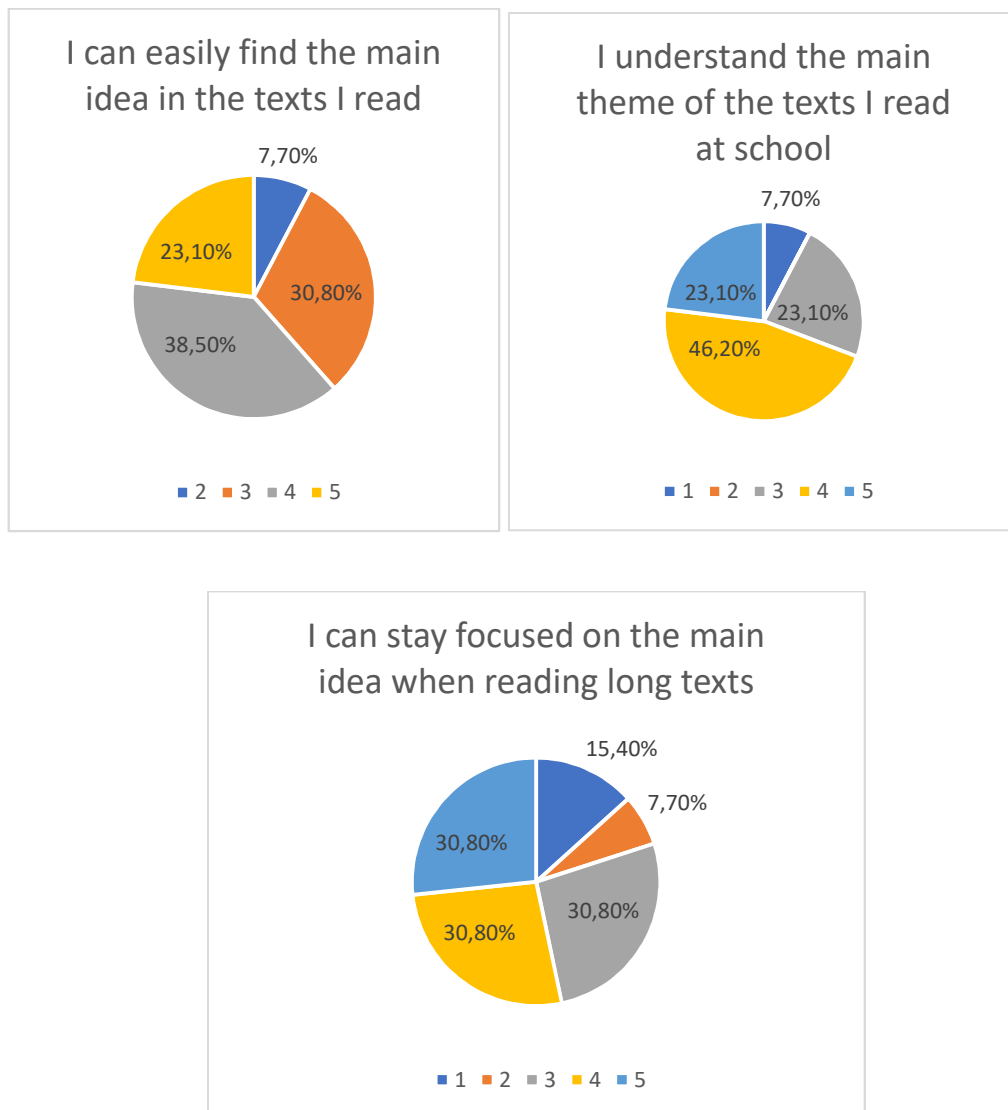
Agree = 4

Strongly Agree = 5

These symbols represented the investigation students' critical reading the based on the perspective of critical literacy at IAIN Langsa.

To further enhance the findings, the researcher conducted interviews with three out of the thirteen students. This interview conducted at IAIN Langsa in 25-30 July 2024. It followed by the indicator according to Finken and Ennis (1993). There are twelve questions distributed into five students, it divided into 5 indicators.

a. Focus



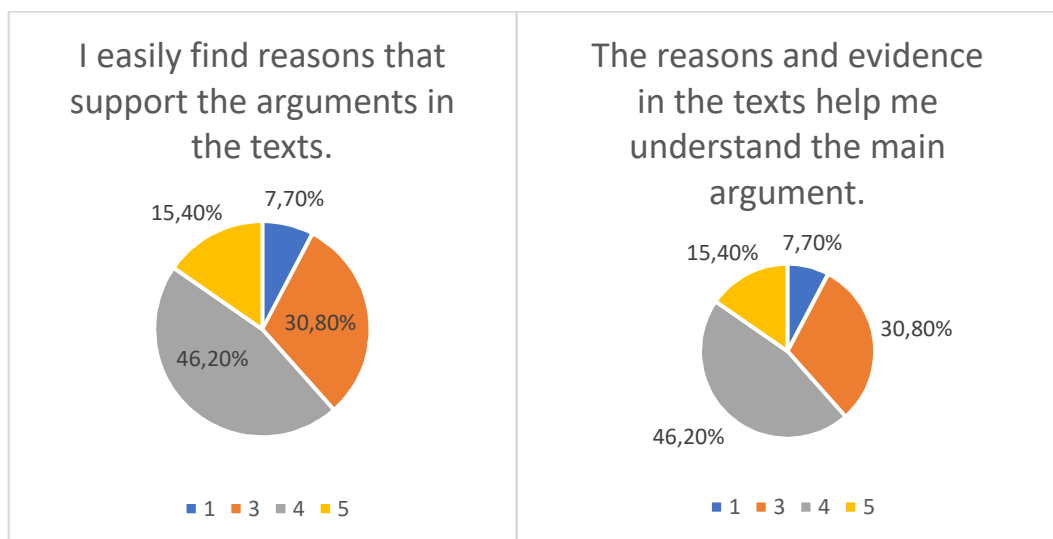
Finken and Ennis chosen the first indicator is Focus. It described the degree to which main idea is clear and maintained. There are three questions from the questionnaires above. The first questions highly 38,5% chose the 4th symbols, therefore, it took the five students. While the lowest percentage is 7,7% chose the 2nd symbols, it took a student. The second questions, the highly percentage depended in 46,2% chose 4th symbols, it took six students. Besides, the lowest in 7,7% chose 1st symbol, it took a student. The last questions, the highly percentage 30,8%, therefore, it took two symbols, the 4th and 3rd each, each four students. The lowest percentage is 7,7% in 2nd symbols, it took a students.

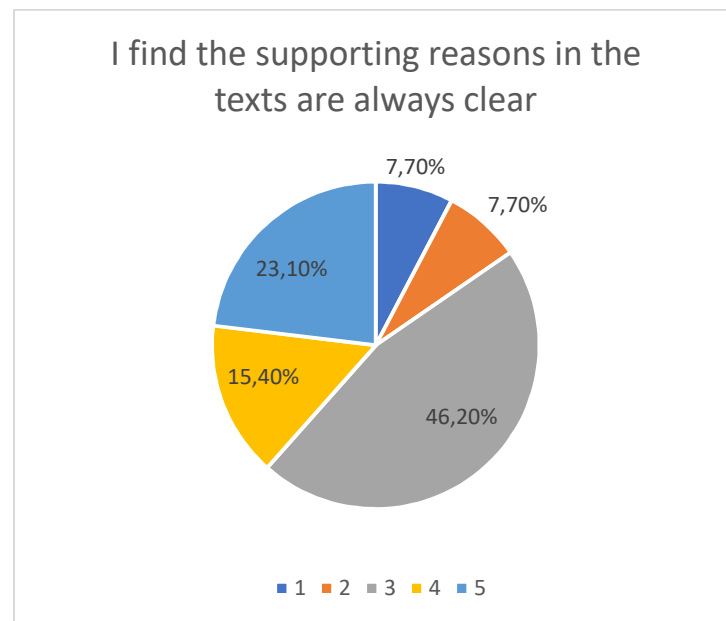
The interview there are three question, the first questions, the researcher ask to three participants; **“how do you ensure that you understand the main idea of the texts you read?”** All participants provided similar responses. Participant 1 stated, "I thoroughly read and identified the main sentence in each paragraph, then I noted each point and created a summary." Participant 2 echoed this approach, adding, "I usually read thoroughly and look for sentences that seem important. If there's something I don't understand, I go back and reread that section." Other participants shared the same strategy, emphasizing careful reading and identifying main sentences as key to comprehension.

In other hand, the second questions is **“can you give an example from a text you read at school where the main idea was clear to you?”** participant 1 mentioned reading Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Bumi Manusia*, noting that

"the main idea about the struggle of a native against the injustice and oppression of colonialism is very clear from the narrative and dialogue." Participant 2 referred to a text on environmental protection, explaining that "from beginning to end, the text explained why we should care about the environment and what we can do about it." Participant 3 also identified a text with the theme of protecting nature. Moreover, when the researcher asked, **"how do you maintain your focus on the main idea when reading a long text?"** participants shared various strategies. Participant 1 emphasized the importance of reading in small sections, taking short breaks, and summarizing each section. Participant 2 added that marking important points with a highlighter and dividing the text into parts help maintain focus. Participant 3 mentioned making short notes on the main points and periodically reviewing them. These responses highlight a common focus on detailed reading and summarization to grasp the main ideas of the texts.

b. Supporting Reason



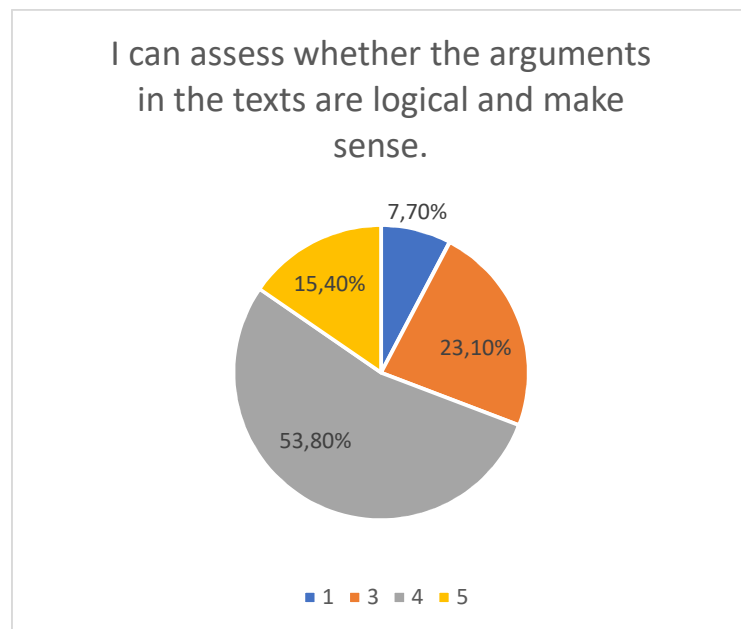
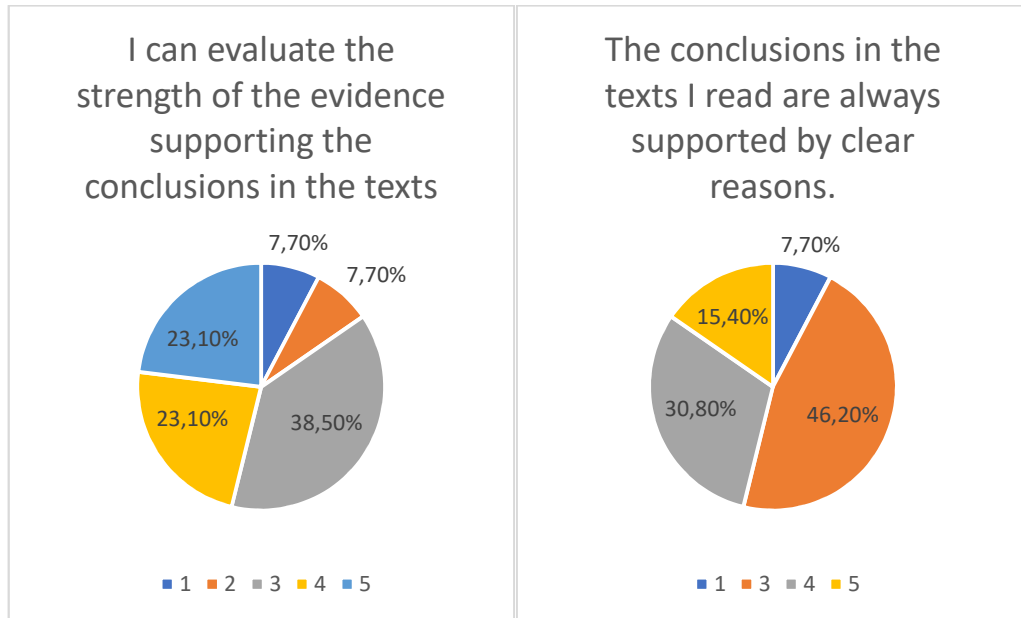


Finken and Ennis described this indicator degree to which supporting and evidence are clear. This indicator took three questions in questionnaire was distributed to the students. The first questions, the highly percentages was 46,2% chose 4th symbols, depended on six students, besides the lowest percentages is 7,7% chose 1st symbols, it took a student. The second questions, the highly percentages is 46,2% chose 4th symbols, it took six students, therefore the lowest percentages is 7,7% chose 1st symbols, it took a student. The last questions, the highly percentages is 46,2% chose 3rd symbols, it took six students. On the other hand, the lowest percentages is 7,7% chose the 1st and 2nd symbols, each a student.

On interview there are two questions for participants. The researcher asked, “**How do you find reasons that support arguments in the texts you read?**” participants described similar techniques, participant 1 mentioned looking for keywords or phrases like “because,” “cause,” and “therefore,” and

making notes about each reason. Participant 2 emphasized paying attention to sentences containing evidence or examples, often signaled by words like "for example" or "because." Participant 3 highlighted the importance of identifying sentences or paragraphs that provide evidence or explanations. These strategies demonstrate a systematic approach to recognizing and understanding the arguments presented in texts. While, the researcher asked, **“can you explain how the reasons in the text you read helped you understand the main argument?”** Participants highlighted the importance of these elements in comprehension. Participant 1 explained that reasons and evidence provide a logical basis and factual support, such as "increasing greenhouse gas emissions" and "rising global temperature data" in a text about global warming, which strengthen the argument. Participant 2 likened reasons and evidence to the foundation of an argument, noting that clear evidence makes the argument stronger and easier to understand. Participant 3 emphasized that reasons and evidence help the reader grasp the writer's message. These responses underscore the crucial role of supporting details in understanding and validating the main argument.

c. Reasoning

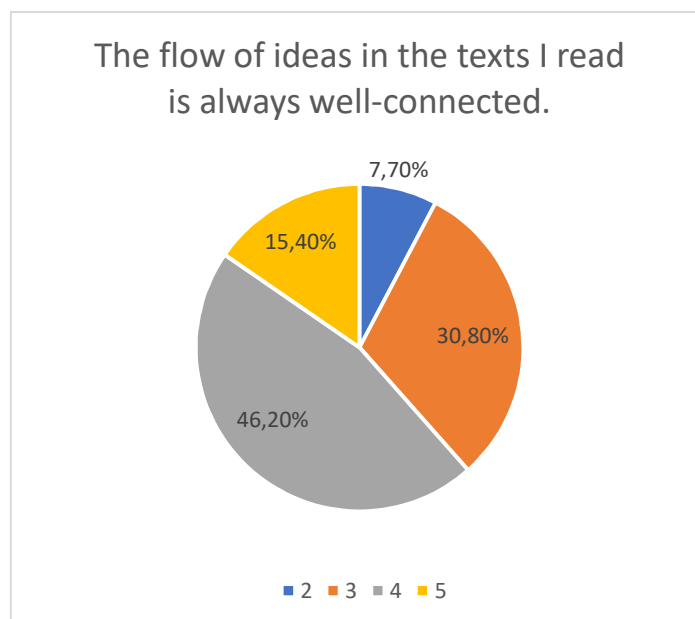
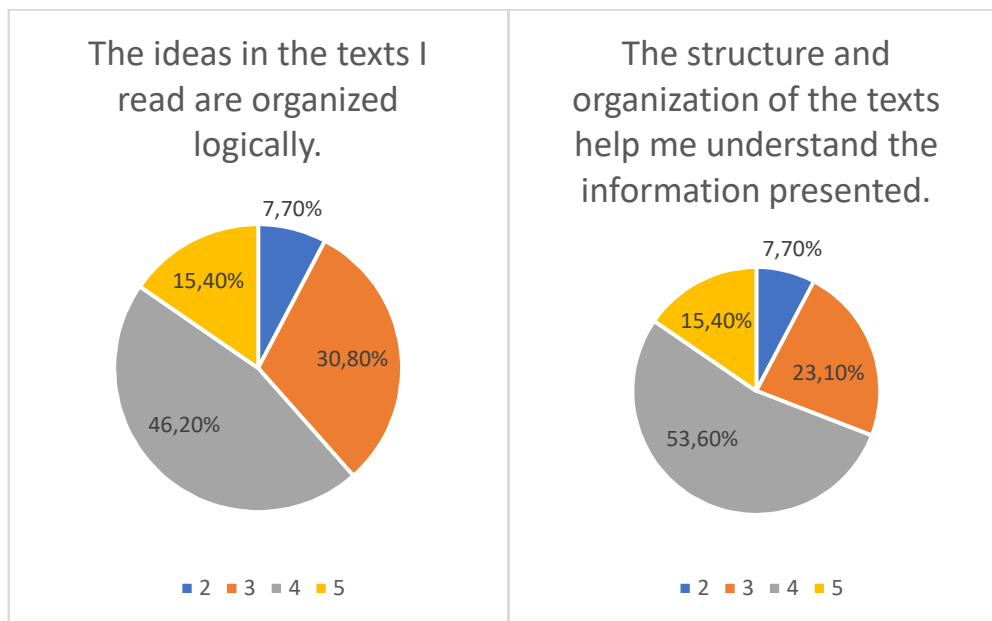


This indicator described that degree to which conclusion supported by clear reasons. It there three questions, the first questions, the highly

percentages is 38,5% chose 3rd symbols, it took five students. Besides in lowest percentages is 7,7% chose the 1st and 2nd symbols, it took a student. The second questions, the highly percentages is 46,2% chose 3rd symbols, it took six students, while the lowest percentages is 7,7% chose 1st symbols, it is a student. The last questions, the highly percentages is 53,8% chose 4th symbols, it took seven students, while the lowest percentages is 7,7% chose 1st symbols, it took a student.

In addition, in the context interview, the researcher asked, **“How do you evaluate whether the conclusion or argument is well-supported?”** Participants shared their evaluation methods. Participant 1 emphasized the importance of assessing whether the conclusion is well-supported by the evidence presented. Participant 2 highlighted the need to check if there is sufficient evidence and reasoning, noting that a well-supported conclusion typically has multiple reasonable reasons. Participant 3 focused on ensuring that the conclusion is relevant to the argument made.

d. Organization



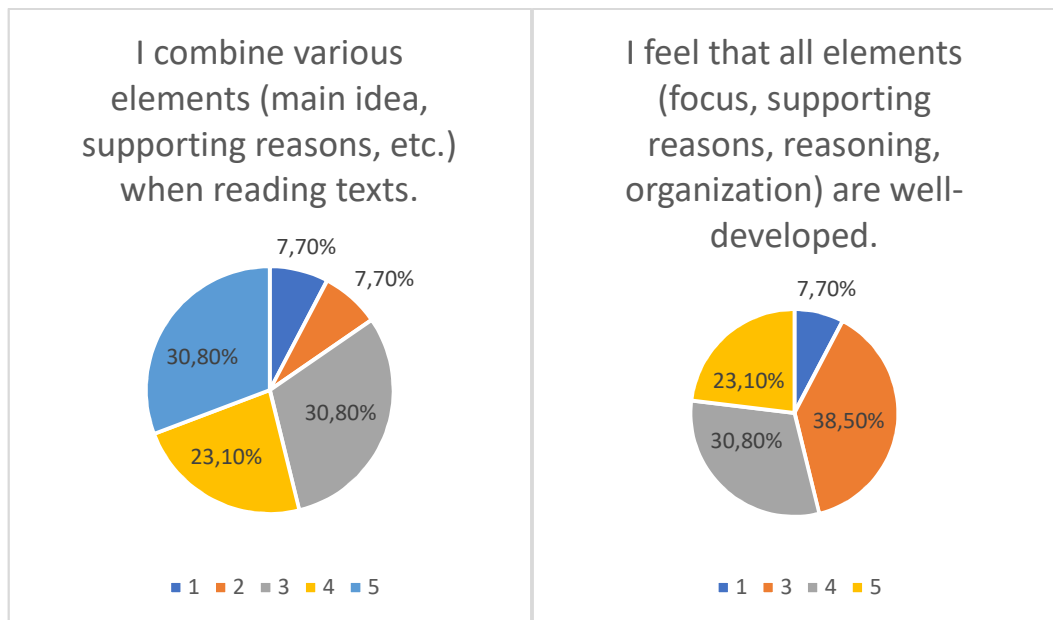
Described this indicator showed degree to which logical flow of ideas and explicitness of the plan are clear and connected. It put up three questions, the first questions shows the highly percentages 46,2% chose 4th symbols, and the lowest percentages 7,7% chose 2nd symbols, it showed a student. The second questions, the highly percentages is 53,6% chose 4th symbols, it took seven

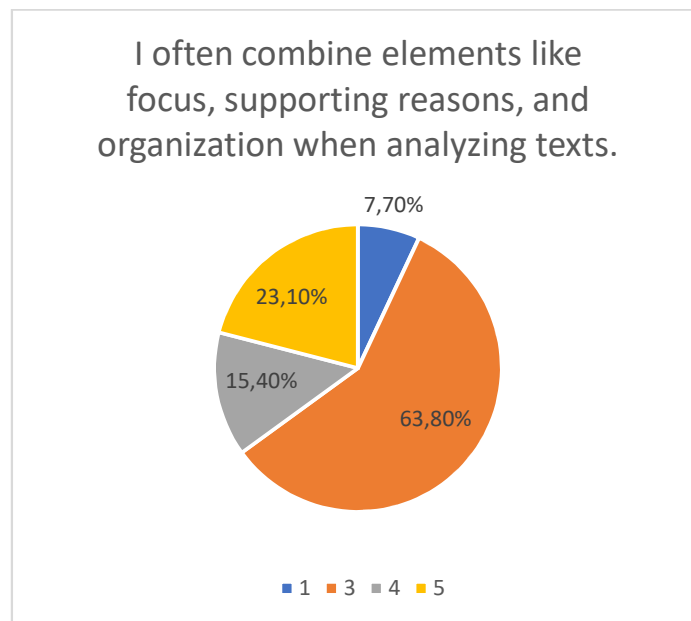
students, while the lowest percentages is 7,7% chose 2nd symbols, it took a student. The last questions, the highly percentages is 46,2% chose 4th symbols, it took six students, while the lowest percentages is 7,7% chose 2nd symbols, it took one student.

This interview with participants, the researcher asked, **“How do you determine if the ideas are presented in a logical and organized manner?”** Participant 1 checks the evidence and reasoning, evaluates the reliability of sources, and assesses the coherence and logic of the argument. Participant 2 examines the text's structure ensuring that each idea flows naturally and is supported by adequate reasons and evidence. Participant 3 compares the arguments to assess their organization. These approaches emphasize evaluating structural elements and coherence, reflecting a systematic method for analyzing logical and organized presentation in texts. While the researcher asked, “How important do you think the structure and organization are in understanding the arguments or information presented?” In response to the question, **“How important do you think structure and organization are in understanding the argument or information presented?”** participants emphasized their significance. Participant 1 noted that structure and organization are crucial because they help readers identify the main idea and supporting evidence, making the text easier to understand and remember. Participant 2 agreed, stating that a clear structure is essential for conveying ideas effectively and understanding arguments. Participant 3 added that organizational structure aids in following the author's storyline. These

responses highlight that participants consider structure and organization fundamental for comprehending and following arguments effectively.

e. Integration





The last indicator, Finken and Ennis described all features evident and equally well developed. This is showed three questions the first questions is 30,8% percentages chose 3rd symbols, it took five students, while 7,7% the lowest percentages chose 1st took one student. The second question, the highly 38,5% percentages chose 3rd symbols, while the lowest percentages is 7,7% chose 1st it took a student. The last question is 63,8% percentages chose 3rd symbols, it took seven student, while 7,7% the lowest percentages chose 1st symbols, it took one student.

This is the last indicator also in interview with three participants. The researcher asked, “**Mentioned the text above, what other impacts of global warming do you know?**” Participants shared additional impacts of global warming beyond those mentioned in the text. Participant 1 noted an increase in the frequency and intensity of natural disasters such as storms and floods, sea level rise threatening coastal areas, and changes in weather patterns

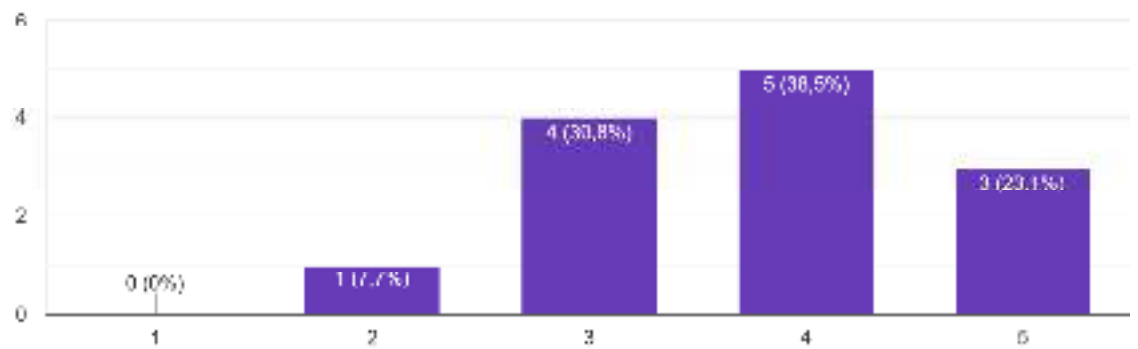
disrupting agriculture and food security. Participant 2 added melting polar ice caps, increasingly erratic weather, and habitat loss for many animals. Participant 3 mentioned rising seas, warming air, and habitat extinction. These responses reflect a broad awareness of global warming's impacts and indicate that participants can integrate knowledge from various sources.

The next questions is, **“How do you integrate your knowledge of different impact to explain them?”** Participants described their methods for integrating knowledge of global warming impacts. Participant 1 explained that they connect information from different sources and make links between various impacts. Participant 2 combines information into a coherent narrative, starting with causes, followed by impacts and concrete examples. Participant 3 gathers information from multiple sources to provide a comprehensive view of global warming. These approaches demonstrate the ability to synthesize and organize knowledge effectively. While, final questions, **“Do you see that features such as focus, supporting reasons, reasoning and organization are well developed in your answers?”** Participants affirmed that focus, supporting reasons, reasoning, and organization are crucial in their answers. Participant 1 highlighted that well-developed features help ensure arguments are presented clearly, supported by relevant evidence, and organized for easy comprehension. Participant 2 emphasized focusing on the main idea, providing strong reasons, and organizing ideas effectively for clarity. Participant 3 agreed that well-developed features, including focus, supporting reasons, and organization, are important for accurate and clear answers. These

responses underline the importance of these features in effective communication.

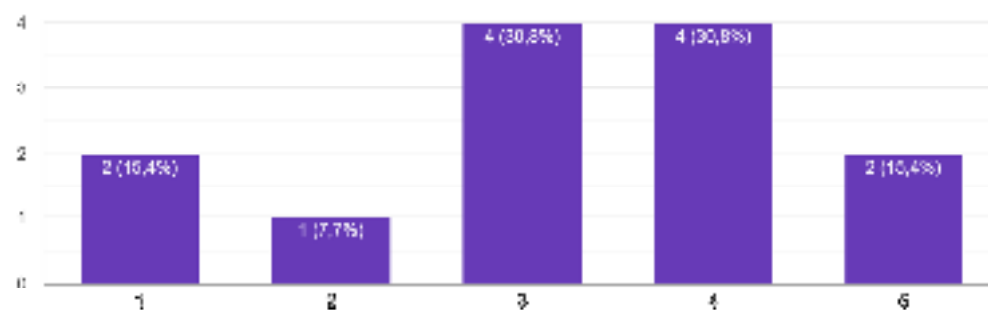
Saya mudah menemukan ide utama dalam teks yang saya baca.

13 jawaban



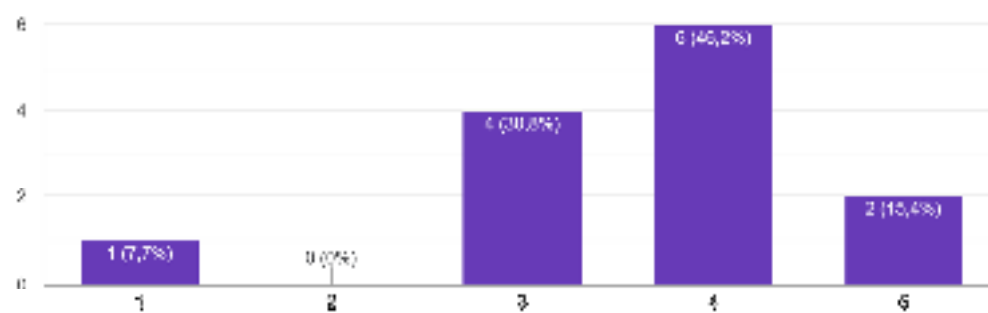
Saya bisa tetap fokus pada ide utama saat membaca teks panjang.

13 jawaban



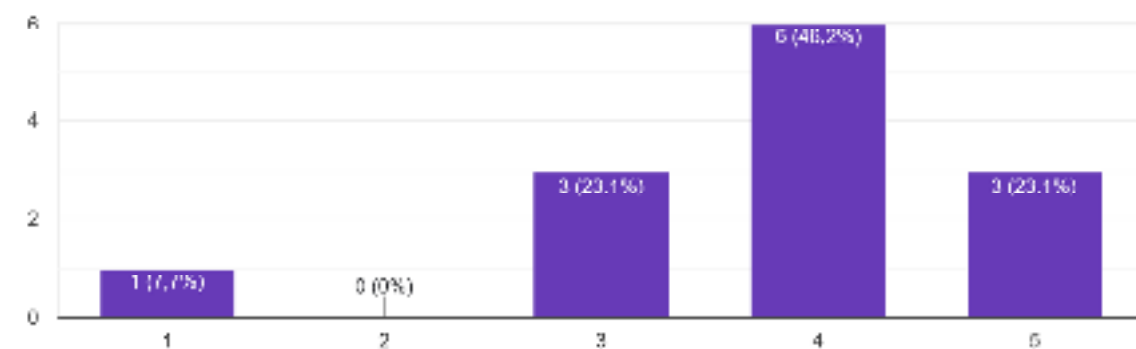
Saya mudah menemukan alasan yang mendukung argumen dalam teks.

13 jawaban



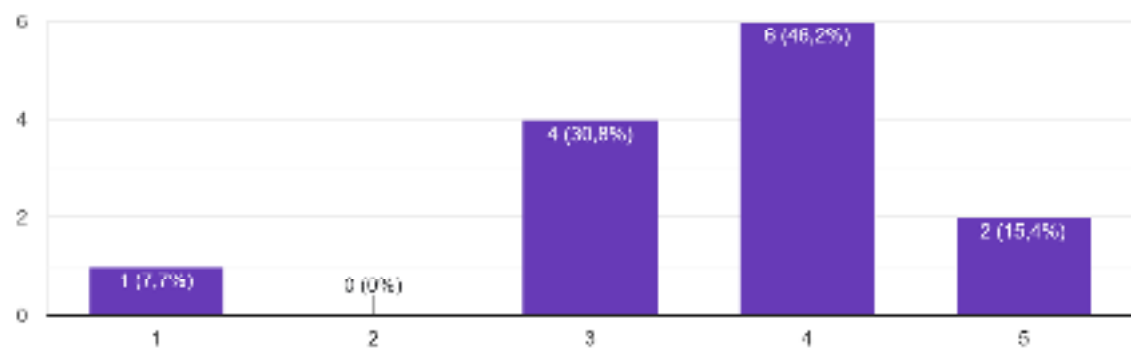
Saya mengerti tema utama dari teks yang saya baca di sekolah.

13 jawaban



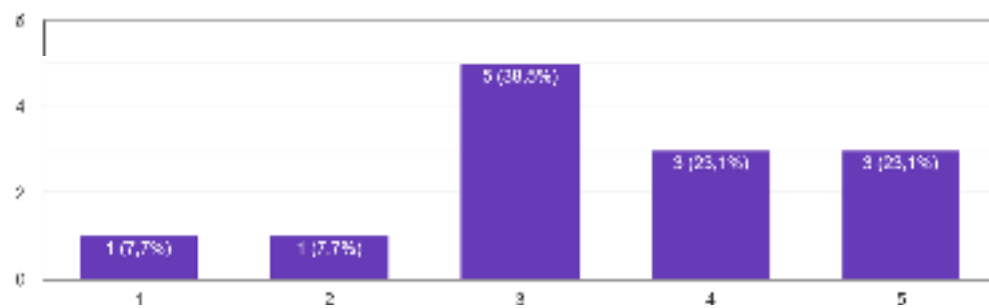
Alasan dan bukti dalam teks membantu saya memahami argumen utamanya.

13 jawaban



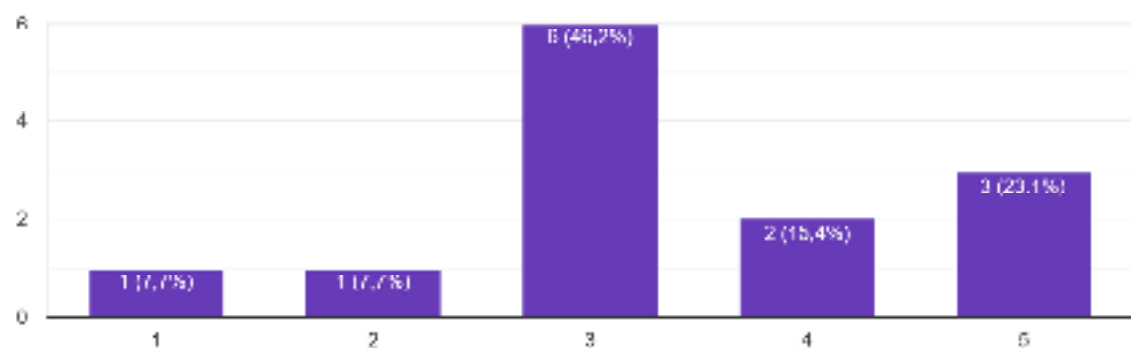
Saya bisa menilai kekuatan bukti yang mendukung kesimpulan dalam teks.

13 jawaban



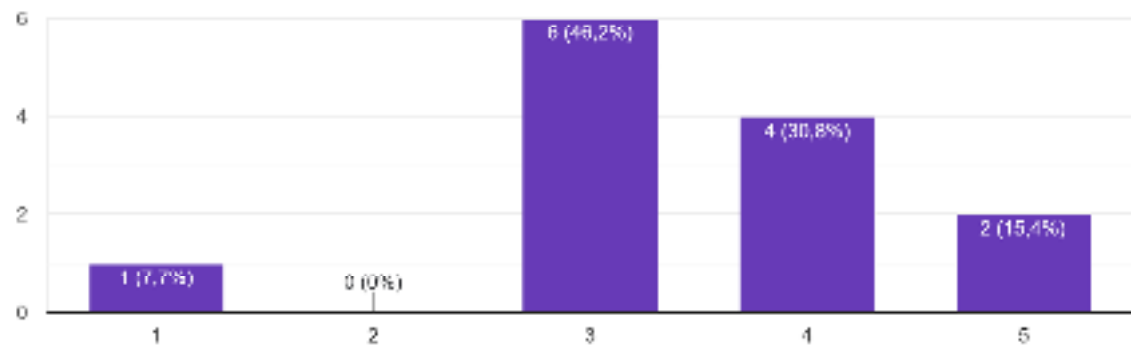
Saya merasa alasan pendukung dalam teks selalu jelas.

13 jawaban



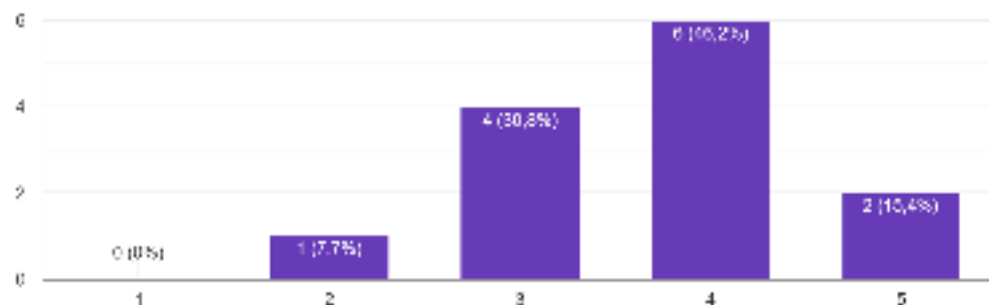
Kesimpulan dalam teks yang saya baca selalu didukung oleh alasan yang jelas.

13 jawaban



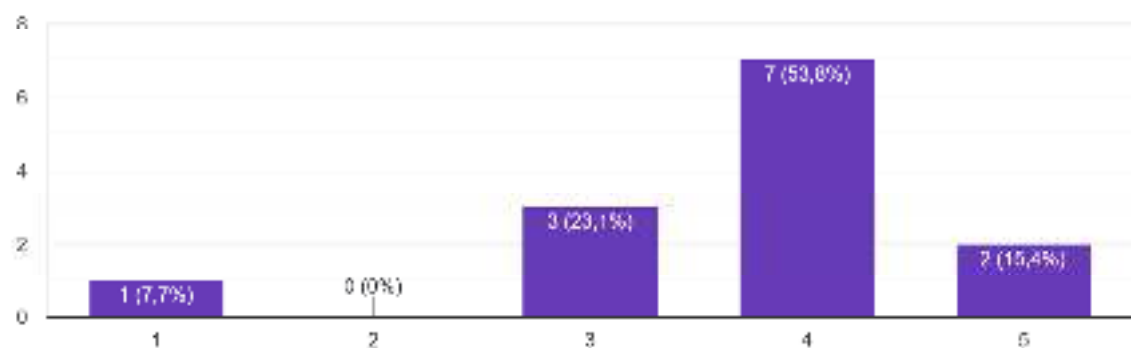
Ide-ide dalam teks yang saya baca disusun secara logis.

13 jawaban



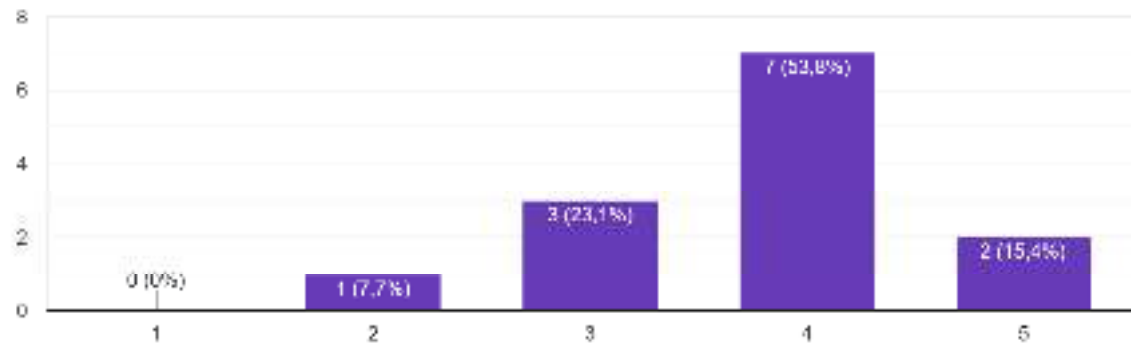
Saya bisa menilai apakah argumen dalam teks tersebut logis dan masuk akal.

13 jawaban



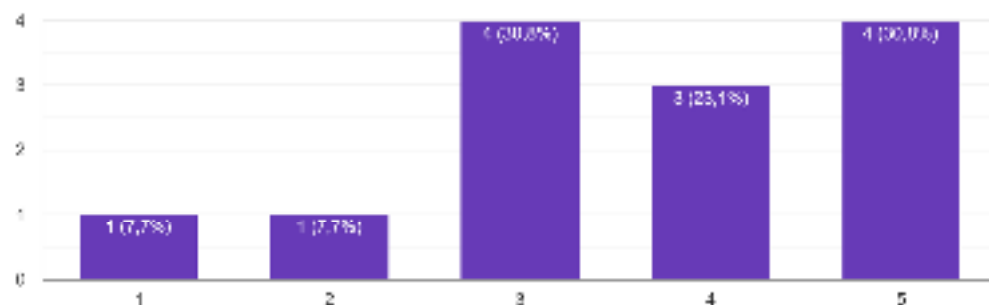
Struktur dan susunan teks membantu saya memahami informasi yang disajikan.

13 jawaban



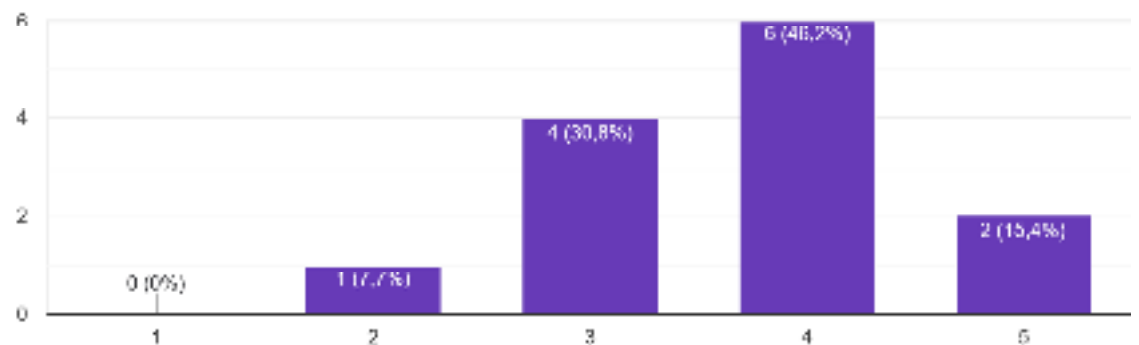
Saya menggabungkan berbagai elemen (ide utama, alasan pendukung, dll.) saat membaca teks.

13 jawaban



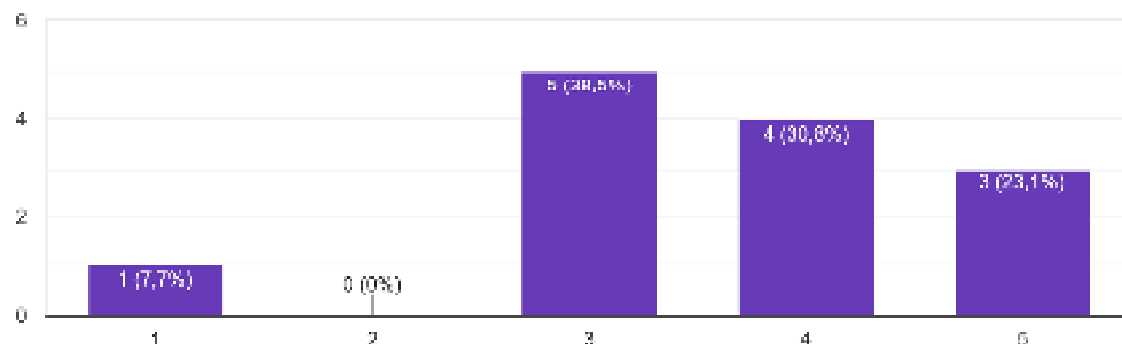
Alur ide dalam teks yang saya baca selalu terhubung dengan baik.

13 jawaban



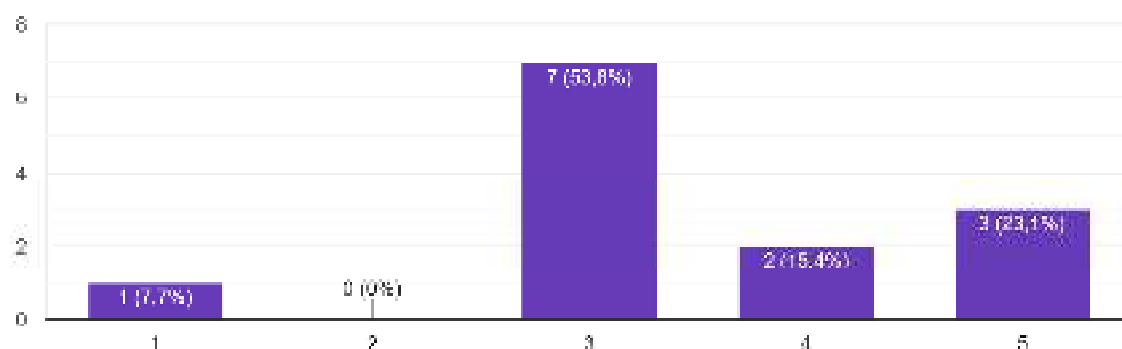
Saya merasa semua elemen (fokus, alasan pendukung, penalaran, organisasi) berkembang dengan baik.

13 jawaban



Saya sering menggabungkan elemen-elemen seperti fokus, alasan pendukung, dan organisasi saat menganalisis teks.

13 jawaban



B. Discussion

Critical reading and critical literacy are closely related concepts, but critical literacy takes the principles of critical reading further by emphasizing the social, political, and ideological dimensions of texts. From the perspective of critical literacy, critical reading is not just about understanding and analyzing a text but also about recognizing how texts are constructed to reflect, reinforce, or challenge

power dynamics and social structures. Based on the finding the analysis focused on five key indicators derived from Finken and Ennis's directives for assessment; focus, supporting reason, reasoning, organization, and integration.⁶⁷ These indicators provide a comprehensive understanding of the students' ability to engaged with and critically analyze texts. Its finding aligned with the research question, is now discussed.

Focus

The Focus assesses how clearly and consistently students can identify and retain the main idea or theme when reading a text. In the data collected through the questionnaire, 4 of students agreed that they could easily find the main idea in the text they read, while only 1 strongly disagreed. This distribution shows that most students are quite skilled in identifying the main theme. The results of the student interviews explained that they used various strategies to maintain their focus on the main idea, such as breaking the text into manageable chunks and summarizing each chunk. This method is corroborated by research by Purwaningrum and Arifin that highlighted the importance of active reading techniques such as summarizing and segmenting text to improve comprehension and retention.⁶⁸ In addition, the use of this strategy is in line with findings from Mayer, who emphasized that effective readers often use organizing techniques to manage and understand complex information.

⁶⁷ Marguerite M Finken and Robert H. Ennis, "Guidelines For Scoring Illinois Critical Thinking Essay Test," *Directions for Teachers Version*, 1993.

⁶⁸ Septiana Purwaningrum et al., "The Implementation of School Literacy Movement in the Perspective of Mortimer Adler and Charles Van Doren," *TADRIS: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 16, no. 2 (2021).

Supporting Reason

The Supporting Reasons evaluates how effectively students identify and understand the reasons and evidence that support the arguments in the text. According to the questionnaire data, 6 students agreed that they could easily find reasons and supporting evidence in the texts they read. In contrast, 1 students strongly disagreed, indicating some challenges in recognizing and understanding supporting elements. This distribution suggests that although most students successfully identified supporting reasons, a small number still had difficulties in this area.

This finding is supported by the results of student interviews. The results of the student interviews stated that they used certain techniques, such as looking for keywords and phrases that signal evidence, including terms such as "because," "therefore," and "for example." This approach is in line with the results of the questionnaire, which reflects a general understanding among students about how to identify supporting reasons to understand and evaluate arguments effectively.

The strategies mentioned by students are in line with findings from research on critical reading skills. According to Brich, emphasized the role of key signal words and phrases in guiding readers to recognize and interpret supporting evidence.⁶⁹ Similarly, research by Avalos highlighted that effective readers often use specific strategies to identify and analyze evidence, which supports the

⁶⁹ Irina R. Brich et al., "Construction or Updating? Event Model Processes during Visual Narrative Comprehension," *Psychonomic Bulletin and Review* (2023).

practices reported by students in this study.⁷⁰ In addition, the challenges some students faced in identifying supporting reasons are consistent with research by Duke and Pearson, who noted that understanding and evaluating supporting evidence can be particularly challenging for students who are still developing their critical reading skills. These data suggest that although many students are proficient in this area, targeted instruction in recognizing and analyzing evidence may further enhance their abilities.

Reasoning

Reasoning assesses students' ability to evaluate and understand conclusions drawn in a text, based on clear reasons and evidence. The questionnaire results revealed that 7 students felt confident in their ability to judge whether the arguments presented were logical and well-supported. This significant proportion indicates that the majority of students were able to critically evaluate the reasoning in the text. However, a small proportion of 1 still had difficulty with this aspect, indicating that there is room for improvement in developing reasoning skills among some students. This statement is supported by the results of interviews with students. Students said they used a variety of methods to assess the validity of arguments, such as evaluating the sufficiency and relevance of evidence, checking consistency in arguments, and examining the credibility of sources. This approach reflects a strong understanding of reasoning and shows that students actively engage in critical judgment. For example, students

⁷⁰ Mary A. Avalos, Alain Bengochea, and Walter G. Secada, "Reading Mathematics: More than Words and Clauses; More than Numbers and Symbols on a Page," 2015.

mentioned evaluating whether the evidence presented effectively supports the conclusion and whether the argument is logically consistent throughout the text.

This finding is supported by research on critical thinking and reasoning. According to Irma, effective reasoning involves assessing the logical coherence of arguments and the strength of supporting evidence.⁷¹ This is in line with the strategies reported by students, which emphasize the importance of evaluating arguments for consistency and relevance. Additionally, Widana in her research, highlighted that critical reasoning involves questioning and analyzing the validity of conclusions based on evidence, which is consistent with the methods described by participants in this study.⁷²

Furthermore, the variability in student responses suggests that while many students have a good understanding of reasoning, some may benefit from additional support. Research by Antler suggests that reasoning skills can be developed through targeted instruction and practice.⁷³ This underscores the need for continued focus on improving reasoning skills to ensure that all students can effectively evaluate and understand arguments in texts.

Organization

Organization evaluates the logical flow of ideas and the clarity of the text structure. Data from the questionnaire showed that 7 students agreed that the

⁷¹ Khoirun Nisa Irma, "Upaya Organisasi IPNU IPPNU Dalam Meningkatkan Kemampuan Berfikir Kritis Anggota Di Kecamatan Ngrogot Kabupaten Nganjuk," *KMKK: Kajian Moral dan Kewarganegaraan* 1, no. 1 (2023).

⁷² Widana, "Higher Order Thinking Skills Assessment towards Critical Thinking on Mathematics Lesson."

⁷³ Antler, "I Am a Critical Thinker: Exploring the Relationship between Self-Concept and Critical Thinking Ability."

structure and organization of the text significantly helped their understanding of the information presented. This majority reflects that students value the role of clear organization in facilitating comprehension. However, a small minority of 1 disagreed, highlighting that some students found the organizational aspect of the text challenging. Supported by the results of the interviews with students. Students described evaluating the text based on its structural components such as the introduction, body, and conclusion as well as the coherence of the argument throughout the text. Students suggested that well-organized texts helped them follow and understand arguments more easily. For example, one student noted that assessing the logical flow and structural coherence of a text was essential to understanding the main points and supporting details.

These findings are supported by research on reading comprehension and text organization. According to Carrell well-organized texts facilitate comprehension by providing a clear framework for readers to follow.⁷⁴ His research highlights that readers are better able to extract and synthesize information from logically structured texts. Similarly, Medimorec and Pavlik emphasized that the organization of information in a text affects readers' ability to comprehend and remember the content, consistent with the student experiences reported in the study.⁷⁵

In addition, the importance of clarity of organization is supported by research on instructional strategies. Davis in his research discussed the Cognitive Load

⁷⁴ Patricia L. Carrell, "Evidence of a Formal Schema in Second Language Comprehension," *Language Learning* 34, no. 2 (1984).

⁷⁵ Srdan Medimorec et al., "The Language of Instruction: Compensating for Challenge in Lectures," *Journal of Educational Psychology* 107, no. 4 (2015).

Theory, which states that well-structured information reduces cognitive load and increases comprehension.⁷⁶ This theory is consistent with student feedback that effective organization is essential to understanding and following arguments, as it helps to manage and integrate information more efficiently.

Integration

Integration assesses the ability to combine multiple elements of focus, supporting reasons, reasoning, and organization to form a coherent understanding of a text. Questionnaire data indicated that 8 students agreed that they could effectively integrate these elements, while 1 disagreed. This suggests that the majority of students are skilled at synthesizing multiple aspects of a text to create a cohesive understanding. The interview responses further illustrated how students approached integration. Participants described their process of connecting information from multiple sources and organizing it into a cohesive explanation. For example, students mentioned synthesizing data about global warming by connecting evidence from multiple texts to create a comprehensive view of the issue. One participant noted, “I usually combine information from multiple sources and organize it into a coherent narrative, connecting cause and effect.” Another added, “Integrating multiple elements helps me see the bigger picture and understand complex topics more thoroughly.”

These findings are consistent with research on integrative reading and writing skills. According to Alec, integration involves the ability to connect multiple

⁷⁶ Jason Stratton Davis, “Game Framework Analysis and Cognitive Learning Theory Providing a Theoretical Foundation for Efficacy in Learning in Educational Gaming,” *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research* 19, no. 7 (2020).

pieces of information to form a comprehensive understanding, which is essential for critical reading and writing.⁷⁷ It emphasized that effective integration requires synthesizing content from multiple sources and organizing it in a meaningful way. This is consistent with student responses, which highlighted the importance of combining elements to enhance comprehension.

The concept of integration is further supported by the work of King, discussed the role of textual integration in constructing meaning from complex information.⁷⁸ James' research emphasized that integrating multiple pieces of information allows readers to construct a coherent and nuanced understanding of a text. This approach is consistent with students' reported strategies for connecting and organizing information to gain a holistic perspective.

⁷⁷ Alec van Herwijnen, Peter Gumbach, and Michael Zaiser, "2010 International Snow Science Workshop 2010 International Snow Science Workshop," *Measurement* (2010).

⁷⁸ James R King and Norman A Stahl, "Between Word and Text in Life Narratives: Using Discourse Synthesis to Model Processes," *Narrative Inquiry* 25, no. 1 (2015).

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

The result of research reveal that students at the English Department of IAIN Langsa generally demonstrate a good level of critical reading ability from the perspective of critical literacy. While most students show proficiency in identifying main ideas, supporting reasons, and integrating various elements, there is a need for continued improvement in certain areas. The study highlights the importance of focused interventions to address specific challenges faced by some students, particularly in maintaining focus over long texts and assessing organizational structures. Overall, the students' abilities to integrate various aspects of critical reading are commendable, reflecting a robust understanding of critical literacy principles. Future research could further explore targeted strategies to enhance these skills and support students in achieving higher levels of critical reading proficiency.

B. Suggestions

This is recommended that students taking the critical reading course focus on improving their ability to maintain concentration on longer texts, analyze organizational structures, and integrate multiple perspectives to enhance their critical reading skills. Lecturers should implement targeted interventions, such as workshops and guided reading sessions, to address these specific challenges while continuously assessing and providing detailed feedback to support students' development. Additionally, future researchers should explore targeted strategies to

further enhance these skills, consider conducting longitudinal studies to track the progression of critical reading abilities over time, and investigate critical reading across diverse student populations to identify effective teaching approaches.

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