

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses the concepts and findings which are reviews from related literature which are expected to contribute to the findings of the research.

2.1. Concept of Reading

Reading is one of the important skills of a foreign language that is aimed to be taught to students in EFL courses. Also it is not an easy course to comprehend for the foreign language students because reading is a complex process. The first definition of the reading is from P. L. Carrel, J. Devine, and D. E. Eskey (1988:16). They claims that reading is interaction between writer and the reader.

Reading is a receptive language process. It is a psycholinguistic process in that it starts with a linguistic surface representation encoded by a writer and ends with meaning which the reader constructs. There is an essential interaction between language and thought in reading. The writer encodes thought as language and the reader decodes language to thought.

Establishing a clear definition of reading provides an important perspective for evaluating approaches to teaching word-identification skills. Most educators would agree that the major purpose of reading should be the construction of

meaning -- comprehending and actively responding to what is read. Two of the most widely cited and agreed-upon definitions of reading are the following:

1. Reading is the process of constructing meaning from written texts. It is a complex skill requiring the coordination of a number of interrelated sources of information (Anderson et al., 1985:10).
2. Reading is the process of constructing meaning through the dynamic interaction among: (1) the reader's existing knowledge; (2) the information suggested by the text being read; and (3) the context of the reading situation (Wixson, Peters, Weber, & Roeber, 1987, citing the new definition of reading for Michigan).

Moreover, mechanistic definitions of reading as the translation of printed symbols into oral language equivalents are incomplete given the progress made in understanding the nature of the reading process. There is widespread agreement that without the activation of relevant prior knowledge by a cognitively active reader and the melding of that prior knowledge with the text information, there can be no *reading* of text.

Even definitions of reading that emphasize meaning indicate that reading is activated by print. The reader must be able to translate the written words into meaningful language. Virtually all four and five-year-old children can communicate with and learn from oral language. But very few can read, because they lack the ability to identify printed words. While simply being able to recognize or "say" the printed words of text without constructing the meaning of

that text is not reading, constructing meaning from written text is impossible without being able to identify the words.

The terms *word identification*, *word recognition*, and *decoding* are frequently used interchangeably. The new *Literacy Dictionary* (Harris & Hodges, 1995) defines both word recognition and word identification as "the process of determining the pronunciation and some degree of meaning of an unknown word" (pp. 282-283). For words that are in a reader's meaning vocabulary, unlocking the pronunciation leads to the word's meaning. If a printed word is not in a reader's meaning vocabulary, word-identification skills may allow access to the word's pronunciation, but not its meaning. Being able to arrive at the pronunciation of a printed word constitutes word identification in the most minimal sense; However, if the reader is unable to attach meaning to the word, then he or she has not read the word, since reading must end in meaning construction.

The statements above leads us to that reading is one of important skill in learning English. There are massive amounts of research literature available discussing the different reading strategies which suggests that reading comprehension is strengthened when students work methodically and systematically to improve their reading skills. In order to become good readers students must have the ability to apply different strategies in order to build meaning for themselves and as teachers, we need to teach students how to think about these strategies as they read.

2.2. Concept of Reading Comprehension

The reading comprehension is complex and multi-dimensional. Effective teachers have an understanding of this complexity and are able to use a range of teaching approaches that produce confident and independent readers. Reading with the students and helping them practice specific reading components can dramatically improve their ability to read. Nuttal (1985) shows that there are five essential components of reading that students must be taught in order to learn to read. Teachers can help the students to comprehend the reading texts by systematically practicing these five components of reading skills, they are:

1. Determining what is the central to a text, or **determining the main idea**.

This comprehension strategy involves identifying the idea or ideas that are most important throughout the text, not ideas of lesser importance and not those that feature only in one section of the text. For example:

It was backward day at school. The students had to do things backward. Some of them wore their T-shirts backward. They took a test before they studied the lesson! Dessert was served first instead of last. They tried to walk home backward, but they bumped into each other and fell down.

The main idea in this passage is *the students had a backward day*, because the paragraph tells about a backward day at school. It can be seen from the paragraph that each sentence describes backward activities.

2. Identifying the writer's purpose or reason for writing and a particular information, or **identifying specific information**. Supporting students in identifying specific information teacher can help their students to recognize that writers bring their own experiences and insights to their writing. They also help students to build the habit of responding thoughtfully to what they read. The example below shows the case:

Nestle SA is a Swiss Company engaged in the nutrition, health and wellness sectors. It is the holding company of the Nestle Group, which comprises subsidiaries, associated companies and joint ventures throughout the world. In February 2011, the Company acquired CM&D Pharma Ltd.

To the questions, what did the company acquire in 2011 as to identify specific information the answer is *CM&D Pharma Ltd.* because we can see that the paragraph tells that the Nestle SA Company acquired CM&D Pharma Ltd. in February 2011. So, we can notice that the specific information is actually *CM&D Pharma Ltd.*

3. Using content in a text to come to a personal conclusion about something that is not stated explicitly in the text, or **inference**. When the writer provides clues but not all the information, we read "between the lines" to form hypotheses, revise these, understand underlying themes, make critical judgments, and draw conclusions. For example:

There was once a young shepherd boy who tended his sheep at the foot of a mountain near a dark forest. He thought upon a plan by which he could get a little company and some excitement. He rushed down

towards the village calling out “Wolf, wolf,” and the villagers came out to meet him. This pleased the boy so much that a few days afterwards he tried the same trick, and again the villagers came to help him. But shortly after this, a wolf actually did come out from the forest. This time the villagers, who had been fooled twice before, thought the boy was again deceiving them, and nobody stirred to come to help him.

As can be noted that the text above tells us the shepherd boy is a liar. This is true because the story tells about a shepherd boy that deceived the villagers twice. So, it can be inferred that the shepherd boy is a *Liar*.

4. Trying to understand the common words refer to, or **reference**. When students read English texts, occasionally they will find many examples of subject common words, such as he, she, it, they, etc. Common words instead of using many other words, it usually nouns. To understand the text, it is important to understand what those common words refers to. Here is an example:

Influenza kills up to half a million people every year. As a big reason: the world relies on the 18 manufacturerers for the 250 million doses of vaccines made annually.

Why is the world so unprepared for such a routine threat? The 18 vaccine producers, which include GlaxoSmithKline and Aventis Pasteur, can only afford to produce the number of doses they think they’ll be able to sell. So, if demand increases in a particularly harsh flu season, there simply aren’t enough shots to go around.

“... the number of doses **they** think they’ll be able to sell.”

Obviously, the word **they** in the sentence refers to 18 vaccine producers because the text tells about the production of influenza vaccine. From the piece of sentence we can see that the word “they” is refers to the 18 vaccine producers. It is clear that the word **they** refers to *18 vaccine producers*.

5. Learning to understand words, or **vocabulary items**. Vocabulary is the core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well students speak, listen, read, and write. The following example demonstrates:

The sugar glider is a marsupial, just like the other Australia animals – the Kangaroo, the koala and the wombat for instant. The sugar glider is a possum – very similar to the tupai in Indonesia. In fact, the sugar glider is glides or terbang laying in Bahasa Indonesia. When it jumps from one tree to another it spreads its four legs out wide; and its extra skin also spreads out and function like a parachute.

“ ... it spreads its four legs out wide ... “

The underlined word is actually the synonym of expands because the underlined word “spreads” in Indonesian means to expand. Based on the question the word that “spreads” has the same meaning with “expands”.

So, the right word in this context is *expands*.

To achieve the aspects of reading above, the students need the reading process, requiring continuous practice, development, and refinement. In addition, reading requires creativity and critical analysis. Consumers of literature make ventures

with each piece, innately deviating from literal words to create images that make sense to them in the unfamiliar places the texts describe. Since reading is such a complex process, it cannot be controlled or restricted to one or two interpretations. There are no concrete laws in reading, but rather allows readers an escape to produce their own products introspectively. Readers use a variety of reading strategies to assist with decoding (to translate symbols into sounds or visual representations of speech) and comprehension. Readers may use context clues to identify the meaning of unknown words. Readers integrate the words they have read into their existing framework of knowledge or schema (schemata theory).

A requirement for reading is a good contrast between letters and background (depending on colors of letters and background, any pattern or image in the background, and lighting) and a suitable font size. Nuttal (1985:14) defines that reading is the meaningful interpretation of printed or written verbal symbols. Furthermore, Dubin et al (1985:27) say that reading comprehension is the ability to make sense of written or printed symbols to guide recovery information from his/her human memory and subsequently use the written message. From some concepts stated above, it can be ascertained that reading is actually an activity that is done by a reader to get new ideas, information, and knowledge in order to understand the content of the text.

2.3. Concept of Learning Strategies

Learning Strategy is language behaviors students actually engage in to learn and regulate the learning of the second language (Wenden, 1987: 6). Over time, students will develop their own learning strategies which include the ways in

which they learn and remember information, how they study for tests and how they make the best use of their learning strengths. Many students may not even be aware that they are using these strategies as it may have become a natural and automatic process for them. There are some strategies, on the other hand, that students may need to be taught, or at least brought to their attention. The phrase ‘learning strategies’ refers to the actions and behaviors a person uses to learn (Oxford, 1989). All students use strategies to help them succeed, but not all are aware of the strategies they use. As Rebecca Oxford states: “...the most successful students tend to use learning strategies that are appropriate to the material, to the task, and to their own goals, needs, and stage of learning,” (Oxford, 1989). It means that learning strategies is student’s strategies in helping them in the learning process. The technique and the action used by the students depend on students need in helping them to tackle different language tasks.

Since there are many classifications of language learning strategies proposed, different researcher, such as O’Malley et al, Oxford, Scarsella, and Vandergrift, may have different taxonomy of language learning strategies. However, they actually reflect more or less the same categorization.

2.4. Classification of Learning Strategies

According to O’Malley, et al. (1985: 582-584) typical strategies are divided into three categories, i.e. metacognitive, cognitive, and social strategy. Besides, Setiyadi (2011) also stated that there are three main categories of language learning strategies; metacognitive category, cognitive category, and social category.

2.4.1. Metacognitive Strategy

Metacognition literally means "big thinking". You are thinking about thinking. During this process you are examining your brain's processing. Teachers work to guide students to become more strategic thinkers by helping them understand the way they are processing information. Questioning, visualizing, and synthesizing information are all ways that readers can examine their thinking process. Through scaffolding and reciprocal teaching, students are able to practice the skills that lead to these overt acts becoming automatic (Fountas and Pinnell, 1999).

By practicing and applying metacognitive strategies, students will become good readers, capable of handling any text across a curriculum. Because metacognitive strategies appear obvious, some teachers might believe that students in intermediate grades begin the school year cognizant of these strategies and experienced in using them. The truth is, most students are unaware of the metacognitive process. Yet only through "thinking about thinking" and using metacognitive strategies do students truly learn. With that in mind, we have to consider the following three main reasons to teach metacognitive strategies (Fogarty 1994):

1. To develop in students a deeper understanding of text

Good readers know how to use cognitive and metacognitive strategies together to develop a deeper understanding of a book's theme or topic. They learn or "construct knowledge" (using cognitive strategies) through a variety of methods, and then recognize (using metacognitive strategies) when they lack understanding, and consequently choose the right tools to correct the problem.

2. To take students' thinking to a higher level

For many students, explaining their thought process is a daunting task. They may think, "How do I explain what I think? I don't know what to say. My teacher usually helps me out." These students need opportunities to take their thinking to a higher level and express themselves clearly. Small-group activities, especially those with a teacher's guidance, provide them with the right opportunities.

3. To steer students into adulthood

Once metacognitive strategies are grasped, students will transfer use of these skills from their school lives to their personal lives and will continue to apply them as they mature.

Metacognition is a three-part process (Fogarty, 1994). To be successful thinkers, students must develop a plan before reading, monitor their understanding of text; use "fix-up" strategies when meaning breaks down, and then evaluate their thinking after reading.

In addition, Wenden and Rubin (1987:25) in Vaidya (2007) state that metacognitive refers to an individual's self-knowledge used to oversee, regulate or self-direct language learning by planning, monitoring, and evaluating their learning activities. The goal of this strategy teaches students how to become purposeful, effective, and independent students. Students with metacognitive learning strategy can make plan for their studies. Students without metacognitive learning strategy are essentially students without directions and abilities to review their accomplishment, progress, and future learning direction.

At first glance, teachers might think that students automatically use metacognitive strategies. However, when one child was asked what she was thinking about while reading, she replied, “I’m not thinking. I’m reading.” Unfortunately, that simple, honest statement is true for students in all content areas who see reading, writing, math, science, and social studies as “subjects” rather than opportunities to think and reflect. Yet only through using metacognitive strategies can they truly learn. With this thought in mind, let’s look at two compelling reasons to teach metacognitive strategies in the primary years (Fogarty 1994):

Good readers learn how to use cognitive and metacognitive strategies in conjunction to develop a deeper understanding of a content-area topic, a character’s motives, a book’s theme, and the like. They construct knowledge through a variety of different venues (cognition), and they identify when they no longer understand and what they can do about it (metacognition). Therefore, constructing understanding requires both cognitive and metacognitive elements.

The ultimate goal of strategy instruction is transfer to be able to use any strategy at any time and for any purpose. Teaching for metacognitive strategies assures that students will be able to successfully use these strategies well into adulthood.

2.4.2. Cognitive Strategy

The cognitive processes include all activities related to mental processing. In relation to language learning strategies, the cognitive category may include all activities that take place in the brain in order to acquire a foreign language. This category may include intelligent guessing, looking for patterns from sentences,

association, grouping in the mind, deducting, imagery, and other mental processes (Setiyadi, 2011).

Then, Fillmore (1979) explicitly mentions a cognitive category to classify some learning activities. They have different concepts of what cognitive strategies are. Fillmore states that examples of cognitive strategy are (a) get some expressions you understand, and start talking, (b) make the most what you have got. It seems that these are not mental processes that relate to language learning. Such processes are not categorized under the same category in O'Malley & Chamot's study and Oxford's study. O'Malley & Chamot and Oxford classify learning strategies in different ways but they seem to be similar in classifying learning processes when it comes to cognitive strategies.

In Oxford's model, *guessing intelligently by using linguistic clues* is similar to *infer by using available information* in O'Malley & Chamot's model. Memory strategy in Oxford's model, which includes creating mental linkages, applying images and reviewing, will be included under the cognitive strategies in Setiyadi's study since the processes mentioned in the category of memory in Oxford's model involve mental processing.

2.4.3. Social Strategy

There are patterns in the way social studies readings are organized. Teaching students to recognize and understand these patterns will lead to a better understanding of social studies content. Some readings lend themselves to a particular reading skill, while other passages involve multiple reading skills.

Reading with a purpose assists student's comprehension. Below are important reading skills that will increase student's understanding of social studies and prepare students for future careers and college. Social category was investigated and explicitly stated in studies conducted by Fillmore (1979). In the study by Fillmore (1979) there are three social strategies, namely joining a group, give the impressions with a few well-chosen-words that you can speak the language, and count on your friends.

In study of Fillmore (1979) there are three strategies, namely: a) joining a group, b) give the impression with a few well that you can speak the language, and c) count on friend. It can be said that students interact with others outside the classroom. However, social strategies can help all students increase their ability to empathize by developing cultural understanding and becoming aware of others' thoughts and feelings.

Those are very important for students to gain their attention and energy on: 1) focusing to certain language task, 2) activities skills, or 3) materials in their language learning process. Different writers have classified similar processes into different categories. Some use the same terms for a category but they refer to different concepts, and some others refer to the same concepts with different terms.

2.5. The Role of Language Learning Strategies Towards Reading Comprehension

Learning strategies play a significant role in the comprehension of the text, and students who are equipped with sufficient and effective learning strategies employ

them correctly and appropriately to comprehend the text. Thus, the good reader is a strategic reader and he knows how to approach the text. Garner (1987) defines learning strategies as generally deliberate, planful activities which are undertaken by an active reader, many times to remedy perceived cognitive failure, and facilitate reading comprehension. Thus, reading strategies cover 1) how the reader thinks of a reading task, 2) what textual clues he considers, 3) how he understands what he has read, and 4) what he does when he does not understand the text.

It is widely acknowledged that strategy use improves reading comprehension and that most readers will face many difficulties if they do not take up using a variety of strategies. Therefore, reading strategies are required for efficient reading, and in every reading lesson they should be introduced, practiced and their use should be discussed by asking such questions as what strategies to use, where, when, how, how much, how often, and why to use them in comprehending different texts. It is suggested that the reader use strategies in combination rather than in isolation for achievement.

Fedderholdt (1997) stated that learning reading by using cognitive strategies usually uses connection. The readers connect what they know with what they are reading. The readers sometimes think about what is going to happen and make predictions based on what they know and what they have read. The students may also ask themselves questions before, during, and after reading to better understand the author and the meaning of the text. Besides that, students notice the way the author uses language to get his or her ideas across, identify the most important ideas and restate them in their own words, and think about

the text's big idea or message and why it is important. However, cognitive strategy instruction develops the thinking skills that will make students strategic, flexible students. Good reading comprehension requires that students monitor their understanding while reading a passage.

Cognitive strategies refer to the steps or operations used in learning or problem-solving, which require direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of learning materials. They operate directly on new information and control it to promote learning. They help a student to understand intelligent guessing, looking for patterns from sentences, association, grouping in the mind, deducting, imagery, and other mental processes (Setiyadi, 2011). Unlike metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies may not be applied to all types of learning tasks. Rather, they seem to be directly connected to specific learning tasks.

Social/affective strategies which are exemplified as cooperating and asking for clarification have to do with the ways in which a student chooses to interact with other students and native speakers. They may be applied to a broad range of tasks (C. Arnoutse and G. Schellings, 2003: 388-409).

Looking thoroughly at the definition of learning strategies above, the researcher defines learning strategies as special thoughts, actions, and choices taken in purpose of achieving learning objectives. The description above stated that using proper strategies, students seem to know what they are doing and what they are supposed to do in the process of learning. They have made steps or systematic frameworks to anticipate any problems they will probably face. By this way, their learning is likely to be more effective and systematic.

2.6. Theoretical Assumption

According to the previous discussion, it is showed that the language students have different strategies in learning reading. Determining students' learning strategies is important to make English teachers be more creative and effective in choosing appropriate learning strategies in learning activity. Learning strategies are usually used in the learning process, even if the students do not consider about what learning strategies those he/she uses in their learning process. Each of learning strategy has different influence towards reading comprehension. Referring to it, this present study was aimed to find out each of learning strategies used by the students in learning reading and the correlation of the use of learning strategies toward students' reading comprehension.

2.7. Hypothesis

From the theoretical assumption described previously, the researcher formulated the following hypothesis:

1. "Cognitive strategy is the learning strategy used by most students in reading comprehension."
2. "There is a correlation of using language learning strategies towards reading comprehension."