

II. FRAME OF THEORIES

A. The Concept of Reading Comprehension

Nuttal (1982) in Simanjuntak (1988:8) defines “reading as the meaningful interpretation of printed or written verbal symbol. So it can be said that reading is the result of the interaction between the “perception of graphic symbols” (Nuttal: 1982). That represents language and the reader’s language skill, cognitive skill, and the knowledge of the world. In this process, the readers try to create the meaning intended by the writer.

Bamford (1998:12) define reading as the constructing meaning from a printed or written message. The constructing of meaning involves the reading connecting information from the written message with previous knowledge to arrive at meaning-at understanding.

Both definitions above imply that the aim of reading process is to get the understanding or meaning which is trying to be informed by the writer to the reader. The reader tries to interpret word per word, sentence per sentence based on its context and clues (i.e. punctuation) given by the writer on the text. In the process of getting idea of the text, the reader uses his skills to recognize the language or genre of the

text.

The ability to understand the content of the text is an essential thing in reading activity. Dechan (1986:260) states that reading is a progressive understanding of the meaning and ideas presented by a sequence words. In addition, Dallman (1982:23) has said that reading is more than knowing what each letter of alphabet stand for; reading involves more than word organization; the comprehension is an essential of reading; that without comprehension no readings take place.

In addition, Loban, Ryan, and Squire (1969: 378) express reading comprehension in indeed a very elaborate procedure, involving a balance of many elements in a passage and their organization in the proper relation to each other comprehension in reading depends upon knowing the literal meaning of words in various context. The reader must also be able to perceive the relation of each part to the other and each of the wholes.

The statements above mean that when the readers finished reading text, they should get the information or ideas from the text, they should not only call out the words of the text, but they also have to know the meaning of the words, message from the text, and then are able to get information carried by in the text.

From the statements stated previously, it is inferred that reading is a process of perceiving meaning of written materials while comprehension itself is needed in reading in order to get the idea from the written materials. Comprehension is an essential thing in reading process.

Reading comprehension is a complex construction process in which reading comprehension skill is needed. Nuttal (1985) stated that there are five sort reading skills that should be mastered by the reader to comprehend the text deeply, which is as follow:

1. Determining main idea

The main idea is the most important piece of information the author wants you to know about the concept of that paragraph. Determining idea is a skill to grasp and find the main point of the passage by summarizing the passage and look for repetition of ideas / words (Kelly R., 2004).

2. Finding the specific information or part of text

Finding the specific information or part of the text means looking for the information that relevant to the goal in mind and ignores the irrelevant.

3. Finding reference

Reference is the intentional use of one thing to indicate something else in which one provides the information necessary to interpret the other. Finding reference means interpreting and determining one linguistic expression to another. There are two types of reference; cataphoric and anaphoric reference. A cataphoric reference unit refers to another unit that is introduced later on in the text/speech. To understand the unit referred to by a cataphoric reference you would need to look ahead in the text.

Meanwhile, An anaphoric reference unit, on the other hand, refers to another unit that

was introduced earlier on in the text. To understand the unit referred to by an anaphoric reference you would need to look back in the text.

4. Finding inference

Inference is a good guess or conclusion drawn based on logic of passage. Finding inference means the reader imply the sentence/ passage understand and conclude it logically.

5. Understanding vocabulary.

Understanding vocabulary means comprehend what the words mean. When vocabulary mastery improves, comprehension will be deeper. Since comprehension is the ultimate goal of reading, the reader cannot overestimate the importance of vocabulary development.

B. The Concept of Understanding Sentence Pattern

Sentence pattern has always been referred to the rules in which parts of sentences are combined together into longer utterances (Aitchison, 1992:26). Therefore, sentences will bring the bulk of meaning in reading. It becomes necessary to understand the sentence pattern. Simanjuntak (1989: 93) stated that there are four aspects that is important to understanding of sentence pattern.

1. Identifying key ideas

McWhorter (1986:62) defines that every sentence expresses at least one key idea, or basic message. This key idea is made up two parts, a simple subject and a simple

predicate. The simple subject, usually a noun, identifies the person or subject the sentence is about. The main part of the predicate – the simple predicate – is a verb, which tells what the person or object is doing or has done. Usually a sentence contains additional information about the subject and/or the predicate.

For example: *Indonesia proclaimed* her independence on August 17th, 1945 in
 Jakarta.

The key idea of this sentence is Indonesia proclaimed. It is expressed by the simple subject and predicate. The simple subject of this sentence is Indonesia; it tells what the sentence is about. The main part of the predicate is the verb ‘proclaimed’; this tells what Indonesia did. The rest of the sentence gives more information about the predicate telling what was proclaimed and when.

In many long and complicated sentences, the key idea is not as obvious as in the previous example. To find the key idea, there are two important questions;

- a. Who or what is the sentence about?
- b. What is happening in the sentence?

We can observe from the following complicated sentence:

“Pancasila, meaning Five Pillars or Five Principles, is the State’s philosophy of the Republic of Indonesia, the wording of which has been arranged in exactly the same order as the written text of the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution”.

In this sentence, the answer to the question, “ who or what is the sentence about?” is “Pancasila”. The verb is auxiliary verb is and has been arranged”. The rest of the

sentence gives more information about the subject by telling the meaning of Pancasila, and when it has been arranged. In a long and complicated sentence, it may have more than one subject and/or more than one verb in the predicate. From the above sentence we can see that there are two subjects and two verbs, “Pancasila and the wording” are two subjects, and ‘is’ and has been arranged’ are two verbs.

2. Locating details

After knowing how to identify the key idea, the next step in understanding a sentence is to see how the details affect its meaning. Mcwhorther (1986:64) defines that most details either add to or change the meaning of the key idea. Usually they answer such questions about the subject or predicate as ‘what, where, which, when, how, or why’.

For example:

- a. Ratna drove ^{what} her car ^{where} to Jakarta ^{when} yesterday.
- b. ^{When} Last week she watched ^{how} with interest ^{what} a television program.

While reading a sentence, a reader must be sure to notice how the details change, limit, or add to the meaning of the key idea. In the following examples, decide how the underlined portion affects the meaning of the key idea.

- a. A large department store, such as Ratu Plaza in Jakarta or Deli Plaza in Medan, employs many different types of people.
- b. The news about the result of the general election was surprising.

In the first example, the underlined detail explains the name of a large department

store. In the second example, the underlined detail describes the news.

3. Reading sentences that combined ideas

Many sentences express more than one key idea. Often a writer will combine two or more closely related ideas into one sentence. This is done for one of three reasons :

(1) to clarify the ideas, (2) to emphasize their connection, (3) to show that they are of equal importance (McWhorter :1986:65). For example: *The construction of the building took three years; its destruction took three minutes.* In this sentence two ideas are combined:

- a. The construction of the building took three years.
- b. The destruction of the building took three minutes.

It is important to notice both key ideas while we read combined sentences. We can recognize combined ideas by looking at the punctuation in the sentence. Two or more complete ideas can be combined by:

- a. Using a semicolon

Example: The library is a quiet place to study; it allows you to study through multimedia resources.

- b. Using a comma followed by conjunction (and, but, or, nor, so, far, yet, etc.)

Example: My mother bought a new car, but he couldn't keep up with the payments.

4. Reading sentences that relates ideas

Often a writer expands a sentence by adding a related but less important idea. This related idea has its own noun and verb, but it expresses an incomplete thought and cannot stand by itself (McWhorteer, 1986:68). We can observe the following sentence:

I did my English homework *while I waited for the bus*. In this sentence, the more important idea is that *I waited for the bus*. The first part of the sentence gives an activity that explains the second part.

It is important to notice the relationship between ideas while we read the sentence of this type. They are many functions of the lesser importance idea. Among them are:

- a. Describes

Example: My brother, *who lives in Surabaya*, called me last night.

- b. Expresses cause

Example: *Because he had studied hard*, he passed all his exam.

- c. States purpose or reason

Example: Jane has saved her salary for about five years, *so she could buy a new car*.

- d. Describe conditions or circumstances

Example: *If you agree with my plan*, I will start to do it.

e. Expressing time relationship

Example: *While I was waiting for the train*, I read a newspaper.

C. The Concept of Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary is an important factor in a language. Therefore, mastering vocabulary is very useful for the students to be able to communicate with others. Vocabulary is actually a total number of words which (with rule combining them) make up the language (Hornby, 1984: 958).

Students who do not master a sufficient number of vocabularies will fail in using language satisfactory. Harmer (1993:153) says that if language structure makes up skeleton language, it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and flesh. This statement implies that an ability to manipulate grammatical structure is not enough for expressing meaning unless words are used.

Meanwhile, Wallace (1987:30) says that, “vocabulary is the stock of word used by people, a particular class of people or even person.” Concerning with the statement, vocabulary is fundamental for everyone who wants to speak or produce any utterances for reading.

Byrne (1972: 10) says that in order to communicate effectively, the learners needs adequate numbers of vocabulary. Furthermore, Rivers (1972:402) states that it would be impossible learning a language without words. It means that without vocabulary, the learner cannot reach his purpose in learning language for communication either in oral or written form.

There are some types of vocabulary in English. Fries (1974:45) classify English words into four groups, namely:

- a. Content words represent the names of objects or things that are the concrete nouns (rabbit, car, and box); action down by with those things, that is: verbs (jump, hit, push); the qualities of these things that is: adjectives (big, beautiful, heavy, and tall); and the indication such meanings as frequency, degree, manner and place, that is adverbs (carefully, here, now).

Example: *Ana stops the car.*

- b. Function words are those words, which one used as a means of expressing relation of grammar/structure. Such as conjunction (and, however, but), article (a, the), auxiliaries (do, does, did).

Example: *Andy is as clever as Indah but Ronnie is not like them.*

- c. Substitute words are those which represent individual things or specific action as substitutes for whole form classes of words, that is, indefinites (anybody, anyone, some body, and everybody).

Example: *Everyone has left the room.*

- d. Distributed words, those are distributed in use according to grammatical matter as the presence or absence of negative, such as: any, either, and neither.

Example: *You're not allowed to pass this line and neither am I.*

Based on the theories above, it can be concluded that vocabulary is a set of a words that is used to make communication among people that contain useful ideas,

information, and meaning. Without mastering a large number of vocabularies, it is difficult for a learner to study and to use the language. It means that learning vocabulary plays an important contribution. The more words people learn, the more ideas they have. Therefore, people can communicate with others effectively. In this research, the researcher will use the content words (nouns, verbs, and adjectives).

D. The Concept of Vocabulary Test

A vocabulary test is usually divided into two types, breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge. Freebody (1981) in Read (1993) defined breadth of vocabulary knowledge as the size of learner's vocabulary (how many words are known), whereas depth of knowledge involves a consideration of the quality of learner's vocabulary knowledge (how well are particular words known).

However, it is generally difficult to reach both types of test at the same time. A test on breadth of vocabulary involves a lot of words to be covered in the test and it requires a short response in relation to each word being tested (Read, 1993). Then, it focuses on the depth of vocabulary; very few words can be included because it usually deals with the testing of words in context and usage and the use of words in different situations. Since this study is meant to measure the students' vocabulary size, the test will be focused on the breadth of vocabulary knowledge that should cover a lot of words.

Nation (1990) describes a method of sampling from a dictionary to make a test on it.

One way to do this is by taking the first word in every tenth page of the dictionary

depending on how many words are needed for the test. From these words we can make vocabulary test, for example, multiple-choice test and the students are intended to find the meaning of the words either in English or in student's native language. If we want to find a rough estimate of students' vocabulary size we can take a representative dictionary and open the page in dictionary randomly and then ask a student to explain the meaning of the more uncommon word on one page. So, if the dictionary contains 30,000 words and the students know about two-third of the words, then we can roughly estimate that the student's vocabulary size is about 20,000 words (Nation, 1990).

Another way of measuring students' vocabulary size is based on word frequency count. The General Service List (GSL) of English (Bauer & Nation, 1993) and University Word List (UWL) (Nation, 1990) will be used as the Vocabulary Level Test to test the students' vocabulary size. The Word Definition Matching Format (WDMF) will be used as the kind of the vocabulary level test (Sutarsyah, 2006). The vocabulary level test is divided into some levels. A number of words are selected randomly from different levels, e.g., the first 1000 words, the second 1000 words, and the third 1000 words, and the UWL as the sample.

The levels are limited to only four levels, namely the first three levels, the first 1000 words, the second 1000 words, and the third 1000 words level, which are taken from General Service List of English Words (GSL) of Bauer & Nation (1993). The fourth level is taken from University Word List of Nation (1990). The additional words from

UWL, which seem to be more difficult, are included to see how many they master words that are commonly used at university level. This level can also be used to see if the learners have mastered academic vocabulary. If they know the words in the university list, they are able to read university texts and need only guess or look up less than 1 unknown word in every 18 words (Nation, 1990). Each level is represented by 30 words as a sample. So, there will be 120 items for the test. The words to be included in the test were selected proportionally by picking up every tenth words in the list of the first three levels.

The words from UWL (University Word List), the sampling is a bit different because the number of words is smaller, 800 words (Nation, 1990). Therefore, the words were picked up in every eight words in the list. This sampling method is believed to be representative in that the result can be generalized to the population (the four vocabulary levels).

According to Nation (1990:78), there are two steps to consider when looking at tests of total vocabulary size, they are:

1. Selecting

Usually it is not possible to test all the words within a particular group. First, we must exclude all the words that we cannot easily test, for example *a, the, of, be*. In fact, the test will be easier to make if we test only nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.

Second, after we have excluded the words we cannot test, we must find a good way

of choosing the test items from the words left. The best way is to number the words and then to choose every tenth word if this will give enough words for the test.

2. Testing

There are recognition and recall test. In recognition test, we want to see if the learners know the meaning of a word after they hear or see it. In such tests the learners hear or see an English word then write or say a mother-tongue word, or English synonym or definition. While in recall test, we are interested in the learners' producing the word. In such tests the learners hear or see a mother-tongue word or a simple English synonym or definition, or they see a picture and then they write or say the English word.

Asking learners to respond with English synonyms or definitions requires the learners to have a reasonable proficiency in English. It can be used successfully with advanced learners (Nation, 1970). In this research, the writer tested the recognition of vocabulary and used translation test. Translation test is designed to be the basis for estimating the students' vocabulary size (Nurweni & Read, 1990). The aim of the test was to find which words in the *general service list* and *university word list* were known and which were not known. In this test, the students are required to choose the word to go with each meaning by matching the words with their definition in Indonesian language.

Translation is the interpreting of the meaning of a text and the subsequent production of an equivalent text, likewise called a "translation," that communicates the same

message in another language. The text to be translated is called the source text, and the language that it is to be translated into is called the target language; the final product is sometimes called the target text.

The sample of the test can be seen as follow:

- a) Private
- b) Slow
- c) Sorry
- d) Jump 1. _____melompat
- e) Apply 2. _____pelan
- f) Blame 3. _____pribadi/swasta

According to the definition above, it can be concluded that the vocabulary size is the number of words that student masters based on certain level. Vocabulary size is categorized in the breadth of vocabulary knowledge. The translation test is used as vocabulary size test is the students are to match the English words to Indonesian equivalent.

E. The Correlation between Understanding Sentence Pattern, Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Comprehension

In relevance to the previous idea it can be said that to construct the sentences, there are rules. In this case, certainly problems in understanding sentence pattern will result in problems in understanding the passage and therefore it is a kind of problem in reading comprehension.

If the students failed to understand the sentence pattern from the text, they will not be

successful to catch the idea from the passage because the first, student should be able to separate the part of the sentence or constituent of the sentence, which the subject, predicate, object are.

It is clear that understanding of sentence pattern is important in reading. It can help the readers to comprehend the text. In adequate interpretation of sentence pattern or ignoring it altogether may also hinder reading comprehension (Bond, 1973).

In the other side, vocabulary and reading have a close relationship. According to Nation (1990) vocabulary is clearly an important skill in reading. The students have to master vocabulary because it will help them to succeed in reading.

When reading, students need vocabulary to help them understand the idea and when learning vocabulary, students need a lot of practice of reading because reading is the active way in learning vocabulary. So if the students know a lot of vocabulary, they will be able to comprehend the reading text easily. It is impossible for the students to understand the passage without master the vocabulary. It is clear that the students' vocabulary is needed to face the difficulties in learning English, especially to understand reading materials.

F. The Theoretical Assumption

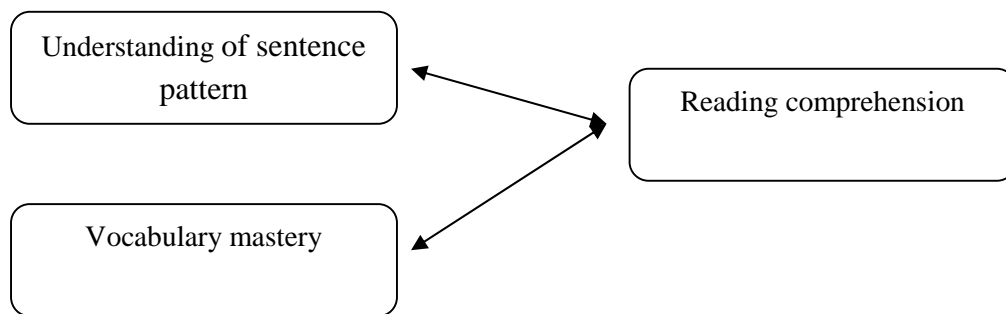
In accordance with the theories previously presented, the researcher assumes that understanding sentence pattern and vocabulary mastery have close connection with reading comprehension. Understanding of sentence pattern is important in reading. It can help the readers to comprehend the text. To construct the sentences, there are

rules. In this case, certainly problems in understanding sentence pattern will result in problems in understanding the passage and therefore it is a kind of problem in reading comprehension.

If the students failed to understand the sentence pattern from the text, they will not be successful to catch the idea from the passage because the student should be able to separate the part of the sentence or constituent of the sentence.

Meanwhile, vocabulary and reading also have a close relationship. If the students know a lot of vocabulary, they will be able to comprehend the reading text easily. It is impossible for the students to understand the passage without master the vocabulary. It is clear that the students' vocabulary is needed to face the difficulties in understand reading materials.

The correlation between understanding of sentence pattern, vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension can be illustrated as follow:



G. The Hypothesis

The researcher proposes the hypotheses as follow:

1. " There is positive significant correlation between students' understanding of

sentence pattern and their reading comprehension achievement.”

2. ” There is positive significant correlation between students’ vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension achievement. “
3. “There is positive significant correlation between students’ understanding of sentence pattern, vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension achievement.”