CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Introduction

This chapter discusses theories that are relevant to the research. It concerns to theories of reading comprehension, reading strategies, and vocabulary.

2.1   Definition of Reading

Many experts have differently defined the word reading. According to Grellet (1985) reading is assigning meaning and extracting information from written text. It means reading requires some abilities to extract information from a text and to construct a new understanding. Guy (1993) states that reading is the recognition of printed or written symbol that serve as stimuli to recall meanings. It shows that reading requires the ability to recognize symbol or printed words and to construct a meaning from the text.

However, according to Klingner, Vaughn and Boardman (2007) reading is a process of constructing meaning can be achieved through dynamic instruction among the following aspects: the reader's prior knowledge, the information suggested by the text, and the context of the reading situation. It is also supported by Mcentire (2003) who defines reading as a constructive process which the prior knowledge and experience affects the reader's comprehension of the text. It seems that the prior knowledge and experience are important to get proper understanding of the information in a text. Appropriate comprehension is possible to obtain as

the content of the text is close to the reader's prior knowledge. For example, a doctor who reads medical article would find it better in comprehending the text than the farmer.

Furthermore, Grabe & Stoller (2002) state that the idea of reading is also to do with purposes, experiences, strategies, skills, and even attitude towards reading. It means that reading facilitates a writer to share knowledge, ideas and feelings with reader, where both of them have their own language patterns and experiences. It indicates that reading is not only getting messages from a text, but also utilizing the reading purposes and strategies to do with.

Another definition of reading proposed by McGinnis and Smith (1982:14) is:

> Reading is a process of identifying, interpreting and evaluating ideas in terms of mental content or total awareness of the reader. It is a complex process that is dependent upon the individual's language development, experiential background, cognitive ability and attitude toward reading. Reading ability results from the application of those factors as the individual attempts to identify, interpret and evaluate ideas from written material.

In conclusion, for this present research, reading is defined as an activity where reader attempts to get information from a text that is conveyed by writer. It requires not only about decoding symbols, but also trying to get a message and giving responses to the text. Besides, readers also need to consider the purposes and strategies in their reading to help them read efficiently.

2.2   Reading Strategies

When the readers find unknown words in the text, they should have some strategies to comprehend those words. It is in accordance with Caverly and Peterson (1996) who state that to understand the text the reader needs to find the key words of the text. This will allow the readers to understand the meaning of the unknown words. While according to Mcentire (2003, p.29) when the readers find unknown words, the readers do not need to look up every word in a dictionary, the readers can often guess the meaning of new words through context. This indicates that proficient readers should focus on the text as much as what they take from it. They make meaning from the text by using their own knowledge and experiences. Proficient readers are constantly making predictions during reading. They try to guess what will come next. Their prior knowledge and experiences with texts as well as with world around them allow to do this. Hedgecock & Ferris (2009) state that background knowledge is unquestionably helpful for students in their reading, since it is necessary to have adequate knowledge to encounter a reading task.

Being a strategic reader requires a set of strategies that work well in combination. Grabe & Stoller (2002) explain that there are three models of reading.

1. **Top-down model** is when reader gives assumption about the text, and then identifies the text only to confirm their assumption and perspectives about the meaning of the text. It means that the reader has the background knowledge about the text read by the reader.

2. **Bottom-up model** is when the reader recognizes every letter and word in text to comprehend the meaning in text correctly. The reader has not the background knowledge about the text.

3. **Integrated model** is also called as interactive model as it is an interaction model between top-down and bottom-up model. It combines reader's background knowledge as a top-down perspective and useful knowledge from text as a bottom-up perspective.

   The example of the text used in the models above:

   The octopus escapes from its enemies by giving out a thick dark fluid to darken the water. It can also change the colour of its body to match its surroundings. It hides from its enemies by doing this.

   - Top-down model : in this model, the readers focus on the key words based on their prior knowledge. For example, the readers hesitate about the octopus squirt black ink to escape from its enemies. After reading the words "thick dark fluid" their assumption is confirmed.

   - Bottom-up model : in this model, the readers do not have background knowledge of the text. For example, the readers do not know about the octopus's characteristic in escaping its enemies before reading the text. By reading the text, the readers know about the characteristic of the octopus. So, the text help the readers to get to know about the octopus.

   - Integrated model : in this model, the readers have background knowledge of the text and focus on the key words of the text so the readers know what will come next. Example: the readers know that the

octopus squirt black ink, but the readers do not know the function of the black ink. After reading the text, the readers know the function of octopus's ink. So, the readers make a good comprehension by combining their prior knowledge and the information consisted in the text.

Furthermore, Adler (1972) explains that there are some techniques which can be used to make reading faster and efficient. The techniques are:

1. **Skimming** is used to quickly identify the main ideas of a text. Skimming is readers skim a text when they look it over quickly to get a general idea of the subject-matter. The reader is not interested in all the detail. Skimmers run their eye down the page or screen looking for pointers that sum up the contents. Subheadings or bullet points attract their attention, as do the introductory phrases of paragraphs. In longer texts, skimmers check the contents lists, the opening and closing paragraphs of chapters, and any introductions, conclusions or summaries.

2. **Scanning** is a technique used when looking up a word in the telephone book or dictionary. Readers scan a piece of writing when they quickly search it for specific information. Readers search for key words or ideas. In most cases, readers know what they are looking for, so the readers concentrating on finding a particular answer. Scanning involves moving eyes quickly down the page seeking specific words and phrases. When scanning, look for the author's use of organizers such as numbers, letters, steps, or the words, first,

second, or next. Look for words that are bold faced, italics, or in a different font size, style, or color.

Those Strategies are very helpful in reading. However, the effectiveness of reading depends on the reader's ability to use those strategies. Skimming is used when readers need a general idea of a book's subject matter. On the other side, scanning is used when readers need to gather specific information.

2.3 Reading Comprehension

According to Ruddell (1994) as cited in Apriani (2011) comprehension is a process in which a reader constructs meaning while, or after, interacting with text through the combination of prior knowledge and previous experience, information in text, reader takes in relationship to the text, and immediate, remember, or anticipated social interactions and communication. Grabe & Stoller (2002) state that comprehension as processing words, forming a general main ideas representation and integrating it into a new understanding.

Those definitions above suggest that comprehension is achieved when reader successfully extracts the useful knowledge from a text and constructs it into a new understanding of their own. Furthermore (Day & Park, 2005) also propose several types of comprehension, as follows.

1. **Literal comprehension** is to have a straightforward understanding meaning of a text, such as vocabularies and facts, which is not explicated in that text.

2. **Inferential comprehension** is to conclude information from a text and build new information which is not explicitly stated in text.

3. **Reorganization** is rearranging information from various parts of a text in order to get new information.

4. **Predictive comprehension** is integrating reader's understanding of a text and their own knowledge about that text in order to determine what might happen next or after it is finished.

5. **Evaluative comprehension** is like inferential comprehension. The difference is that evaluative comprehension requires readers' comprehensive judgment about some aspects in a text and ability to redevelop an understanding by using related issues.

6. **Appreciative or personal comprehension** is reading in order to gain an emotional or other value response from a text, and it demands reader to respond a text also with their feelings.

From the definitions above, reading comprehension refers to the understanding of what has been read. Comprehension is a thinking process that depends not only on the comprehension skills but also on the readers' experience and background knowledge.

2.4 Definition of Vocabulary

According to Nation & Newton (1997) vocabulary is knowledge of words and word meanings. Actually vocabulary is more complex, vocabulary mastery is not only knowing the words and its meanings, but also knowing about how the words sound and how the words are used in the context. It is according to Miller & Gildea (1987) who state that knowing a word by sight and sound and knowing

its dictionary definition are not the same as knowing how to use the word correctly and understanding it when it is heard or seen in various contexts.

Building up a useful vocabulary is central to the learning of a foreign language at primary level (Cameron, 2001). Someone who has a lot of vocabulary of foreign language, she/he could learn language easily. Since vocabulary is all about words, and good mastery of vocabulary helps someone understand language. It is supported by Wallace (1982) who says that vocabulary is one of the most important parts of languages, because when speaking a language, the speakers need several words to convey ideas. Therefore, people can understand what the speakers mean. When a learner intends to learn foreign language, he/she has to learn the vocabulary of the foreign language first.

Wallace (1982) mentions two importances of vocabulary:

1. Language exists in two forms, spoken and written, both of them need vocabulary to develop the existence itself.

2. Vocabulary is one of the important of four language skills. Therefore, vocabulary is very needed for production in learning English as a foreign language rather than only needed for recognition it.

Furthermore, Lehr & Osborn (2001) explain two kinds of vocabulary description as follow:

First, words come in two forms, oral and print.

1. Oral vocabulary includes the words that are recognized and used in listening and speaking.

2. Print vocabulary includes the words that are recognized and used in reading and writing.

Second, word knowledge is composed of two forms, receptive and productive.

1. Receptive Vocabulary includes words that are recognized when we hear or see them. It is the ability to comprehend passive vocabulary which is used in reading and listening context.

2. Productive vocabulary includes words that are recognized when we speak or write. It is an active ability which is used in speaking or writing.

Furthermore, knowing and understanding words mean knowing their "form" (how they sounds, how they spelt, grammatical change that could be made to them), their "meaning" (their conceptual content, and how they relate to other words and in particular types of language use (Cameron, 2001).

2.5   Related Research

In previous research conducted by Liu and Nation (1985) which was about successful of guessing the meaning in a text, the results show that the participants who have high reading proficiency level could successfully guess 85% to 100% of the unknown   words. In contrast, the participants who have low reading proficiency level guess around 30% to 40% of the unknown words.

Yildirim, Yildiz and Ates (2011) found that there was significant correlation between both vocabulary and comprehending expository text as well

as vocabulary and comprehending narrative text. The findings also showed that vocabulary is a predictor of comprehending narrative and expository texts.

Hirsch (2003) found that knowing at least 90 percent of the words of a text enables the reader to get the main idea from the reading and guess correctly what many of the unfamiliar words mean, which will help them learn new words.

2.6   Synthesis

From the theories described above, it can be concluded that many factors affect the reading comprehension. Vocabulary is important to have full comprehension of a text, but skills and strategies such as top-down model, bottom-up model, integrated model, skimming, and scanning are also helpful for the readers to comprehend a text.