

## CHAPTER II

### THEORETICAL REVIEW

#### A. Reading

##### 1. Reading for EFL Learners

Reading is an essential skill in language learning because it is a way of gaining new knowledge and expanding information that requires thinking processes. According to Suzanne (2015), Reading is an active thinking process of identifying important ideas and comparing, evaluating, and applying them. This reading process allows readers to use their prior knowledge. According to Dean's (2013), as cited in (Muslaini, 2017) that reading involves more than just seeing the words clearly, correctly pronouncing the printed words, and understanding the meaning of isolated words. The point is that reading requires the reader to think and feel to see and pronounce the words in the text and understand all the text's components. According to Nuttal (2000), reading means the interaction between the writer's mind and the reader's mind. In this process, the reader tries to capture the message and create the meaning intended by the writer. Tarigan (2008, as cited in Zainal, 2020), defines reading as "a process carried out and used by a reader to receive messages conveyed by a writer through words that the reader can see and recognize." The point is that reading is a way to determine the meaning of words in a text and then interpret them.

Noviyanto (2012) defined, reading as comprehending written texts. He further stated that reading consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition is the process of learning how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language, while comprehension is making connected meanings of words, sentences and texts. He added that readers who have background knowledge, vocabulary, grammar knowledge, experience with texts and other strategies help them understand written texts.

The purpose of reading is to connect the ideas in the text to what the reader already knows. To connect ideas, readers must understand the subject of the text. According to Grabe and Stoller (2019), reading has several purposes, such as finding simple information by scanning the text for specific information or words. Second, fast skimming aims to guess where vital information is in the text. Then, reading is learning a large amount of information from a text and integrating the information by critically evaluating the information read. Reading is also done to write or find information needed to write, read texts critically, and gain a general comprehension.

Reading is a thought process that allows readers to comprehend the meaning of a text by connecting background knowledge, comprehending sentence connections, comprehending different types of texts, and applying appropriate reading skills. According to Debruin-Parecki et al. (2015) as cited in (Alghonaim, 2020), reading allows students to become

independent in understanding complex text structures while improving their academic and professional skills. Successful readers have a higher reading comprehension level because they can make connections between ideas, comprehend complex ideas, and contemplate information while reading. According to Horwitz (2013), reading is important for developing second language competence fully. Language learners must-read for academic or professional purposes. Haupt (2015) notes that reading is an important skill for language learners to develop alongside other language skills such as writing, speaking, and listening. Haupt added, language learners are encouraged to develop reading skills because it will help them acquire other skills. In conclusion, reading is a skill that all language learners must acquire because it allows students to gain insight into various important information about academics, culture, and everyday knowledge.

**a. Reading for EFL Students in University**

Reading for EFL students at university aims to increase students' knowledge and understanding. Most of the students' time is spent reading textbooks, journals, articles, encyclopedias, newspapers, and other texts relevant to a particular field of study. According to Braguglia (2005), reading activities are necessary for academic and intellectual development. Thus, students must develop reading habits and skills because they have a significant impact on academic progress. Moreover, university learning activities such as research,

writing, seminars, and discussions require students to always read and obtain reliable knowledge and information, so that the quality of learning outcomes continues to improve.

Al-Mahrooqi and Denman (2018) in a study conducted in Oman, found that EFL students must know reading strategies that can improve reading skills. Students are expected to know and comprehend how to use various reading strategies. This can help students become more efficient and impressive learners thereby enabling them to excel in the academic side of university life.

## **2. Reading Comprehension**

Reading comprehension can be defined as the activity to comprehend the text, and it is the primary goal of the reading process. Snow (2002) defines reading comprehension as "the process of extracting and forming meaning simultaneously through interaction and involvement with written language." Readers are encouraged to extract information from the text to construct the meaning. In other words, readers read the text to gain information or ideas, and they try to comprehend what is contained in the text. Successful comprehension allows the reader to obtain new information from the text that is useful for generating new knowledge. According to Grellet (1986, as cited by Rusmiati & Kamalina, 2016), reading comprehension means that students understand written texts by extracting the meaning required to obtain information efficiently as possible. This suggests that students engage in reading activities to

extract useful information from a text. According to Woolley (2011), reading comprehension is making meaning from a text.

Westwood (2001), claimed that reading comprehension is an active thinking process. The reader consciously constructs meaning to understand the concepts and information presented in a text. Furthermore, readers should use the information they already have to sift through, interpret, organize, and reflect on the information from the page. They must be able to connect the ideas in a text and the pictures in their minds to be successful at reading comprehension. Kustaryo (1988, as cited in Hamdani, Siswantoro, & Sarosa, 2016), explains that reading with comprehension is understanding what has been read. It is an active thinking process that draws on the students' experience, knowledge, and comprehension skills.

Reading comprehension requires three aspects: the reader who does the comprehension, the text to be comprehended, and activities related to the purpose, process, and consequences. According to Klingner et al. (2007), reading comprehension is a multicomponent, very complex process that involves many interactions between the reader and what the reader brings to the text (previous knowledge, use of strategies) as well as variables related to the text itself (interest in the text, understanding the type of text). Similarly, McNamara (2007) claims that reading comprehension results from the complex interaction between characteristics of the text and what the reader brings to the reading

situation. This is a strategy and process for connecting the ideas in the text material and the students' thoughts or ideas.

It can be concluded that reading comprehension is an activity that involves comprehending all the information conveyed by the author, which refers to the ability to make connections between words in a text, to understand ideas. The relationship between ideas expressed in a particular text. The act that is not simple to teach, learn or practice. Comprehension always plays an essential role in reading because the main reason for reading is for students to understand what they are reading. Students cannot get any ideas written in a text or book if they do not know what they have read.

### **3. Component of Reading Comprehension**

Reading comprehension has several components that can be learned. According to King and Stanley (1989), five elements can help students in reading carefully:

a. **Finding factual information**

Students must be familiar with specific details to understand factual information. Readers are required to scan the passage for specific information. There are many types of objective information questions, such as questions about reason, purpose, result, comparison, means, identity, time, and number, the majority of which have answers in the text.

b. **Find the main idea**

The paragraph's main idea informs the reader of what the author wants to know about the topic. Identifying the topic can usually help the reader understand the main ideas, make a specific statement, or emphasize a specific aspect of the topic. Finding ideas is important because it enables understand the paragraph and remember its content later.

c. Find the meaning of vocabulary

Finding the meaning of vocabulary in context means that readers can better guess whether words are familiar or unfamiliar by connecting the close meaning of unknown words to the text and the topic of the text being read.

d. Identify References

It can be tiresome to have and repeat several words or phrases in each paragraph of a text. Word references can be used to avoid repetition of words and will assist the reader/student comprehend the text as a whole.

e. Making inference

The most important aspect of reading is comprehension. Making inferences allows students to think more deeply about the implied meaning in the text. It is a skill that enables students to use prior knowledge of the text to comprehend something not explicitly stated in the text.

#### 4. Reading Strategies

Reading strategies will help students understand the text and are a plan for solving problems they face when doing reading activities. Brown (2007) defines strategy as "a specific method of approaching a problem or task, a mode of operation to achieve certain goals, a planned design to control and manipulate certain information." Students can apply various strategies to understand, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate the texts they read. The suitable strategy can improve students' understanding and reduce students' barriers to understanding what they read. Pani (2004) as cited in Karami (2008) defines reading strategies as "the mental operations involved when readers approach texts effectively to understand what they are reading."

A reading comprehension strategy is a set of steps the reader uses to comprehend the text. Comprehension strategy instruction helps students become purposeful readers who actively control their reading comprehension. According to Brookbank (1999, as cited in Banditvilai, 2020), several research studies have shown a positive relationship between students' reading strategies and reading comprehension skill. In line with that, Alexander, Graham, and Harris (1998) argue that a strategic reader will use his strategy to get to a goal, whether he understands the text in book chapters, appreciating a work, or understanding instructions about specific information or helpful knowledge. The findings show that reading strategies are one of the most critical factors in increasing reading

comprehension skills, and they have a significant impact on students' reading comprehension skills. Students are not only passive recipients of knowledge but also active meaning-makers. Successful readers use a variety of skills to comprehend the meaning of the text.

It is crucial to determine the full range of possible reading strategies when analyzing the effectiveness of a reading strategy approach in improving reading comprehension. Pressley (2002) found that student reading performance improved significantly when students learned various possible reading strategies focused on cognitive and metacognitive understanding. As mentioned by Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) on the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS), reading strategies are described in three categories: Global Reading Strategies (GLOB), Problem Solving Strategies (PROB), and Supporting Strategies (SUP). Global reading strategies (GLOB) are deliberate and well-planned strategies that learners use to monitor or manage their reading, such as setting goals, analyzing text in terms of length and structure, or using typographic aids, tables, and illustrations. Problem-solving strategies (PROB) are another type of reading strategy. Readers use activities and procedures while dealing directly with the text. It is a localized and focused strategy that is used when problems in understanding textual information arise; Examples are changing a person's reading speed when the content becomes difficult or easy, guessing the meaning of new words, and rereading texts to improve comprehension. The last category is support strategies (SUP), which are

basic support strategies to help readers grasp the material, such as using a dictionary, taking notes, underlining, or highlighting textual information. It is a strategy that students or readers employ to comprehend, develop, and reconstruct the meaning of a text.

**a. Global Reading Strategies (GLOB)**

Global reading strategies are one of the categories of reading strategies based on the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS). According to Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002), global reading strategies are deliberate and planned strategies that students use to monitor or manage their reading. Global reading strategies indicate that students have the ability to plan and manage their reading comprehension process. According to Hokkanen (2015), global reading strategies are reading strategies that have a lot to do with reading preparation. Reading preparation will affect the way students understand the text better and help students get information easily. There are 13 items from global reading strategies that can be used by readers:

1. Setting purpose for reading

Setting reading goals helps readers stay focused and gives them a mission, which improves students' comprehension (Cox, 2019).

2. Using background knowledge

Background knowledge in reading activities will help readers build on the information they already know and better comprehend the text. According to Souisa & Meyer (2020), through the process of

building their prior knowledge of the materials, the students are trained to think deeply about the materials. Therefore, they can make association concept, reflection and reformulate their knowledge before they are involved in grasping the information from the texts.

### 3. Previewing text

Readers use preview to recall past knowledge and create reading goals. This activity requires students to skim the text before reading, looking for features and information that will be useful when they read it in detail later.

### 4. Checking if text content fit purpose

The reader needs to check whether the purpose of reading is fit with the text's content. There are three types of reading goals: entertaining, informing, and persuading.

### 5. Skimming to note

In this strategy the reader reviews the text first by paying attention to the characteristics of the text such as the length of the text and the organization of the text. Skimming can also help readers find specific information more quickly and speed up the reading process.

### 6. Deciding what to read

The reader can decide which parts of the text to read carefully and which parts to ignore.

7. Using tables, figures, and picture

The use of tables, figures, and pictures will make it easier for readers to understand technical information if the text contains visual and data elements.

8. Using context clues

This reading strategy is used when there are unknown words, so the reader uses clues such as other words in the text based on the same sentence. These clues can be synonyms, antonyms, definitions, or examples.

9. Using typographical aids

Readers can use typographic tools such as bold and italics to identify the important information.

10. Analyzing and evaluating

Analyzing and evaluating texts can help readers understand the ideas and structure of the text critically, making it easier to draw conclusions.

11. Checking understanding

Readers can check their understanding when they find new information in the text and this can add insight to the reader's knowledge.

## 12. Guessing what material is about

Guessing the content of the text is done by the reader to identify the meaning of important words that are unknown to understand a reading text.

## 13. Checking if guesses are right

Readers can check to see if their guess about a text is right or not.

### **b. Problem Solving Strategies**

The next category of reading strategies is problem solving strategies. According to Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002), problem solving strategies are action plans used by students to navigate in solving problems in reading texts skillfully. Readers use problem-solving strategies when the text becomes difficult or when they are having difficulties comprehending the text. According to Park (2010), problem solving strategies are strategies that readers use when working directly with texts in a focused manner when problems arise in understanding textual information. Readers can overcome problems while reading by using strategies such as reading repeatedly, adjusting reading speed, reading slowly and carefully, trying to refocus when losing concentration, pausing for a moment and then rethinking the contents of the reading, etc.

#### 1. Reading slowly and carefully

Reading slowly gives the reader time to think carefully about the meaning of words, word choice, connections to text and other

ideas, and links to the reader's experience. According to Fisher (2016), Reading slowly and carefully can be done by selecting certain key words or phrases in the text. This allows students to select specific information from a text. It does not mean reading word for word, it just means reading carefully. Readers can read slowly and carefully to ensure that they understand the text.

2. Getting back when distracted

Sometimes there are times where the reader has a distraction while reading. But that doesn't mean that readers should succumb to the annoyance. For this reason, readers can do various ways to refocus when they lose concentration.

3. Adjusting reading speed

The reader can adjust the reading speed according to what is being read. For example, when reading a long text, they can adjust their reading speed more quickly when going through the easy parts and slower through the more difficult parts.

4. Paying closer attention when facing text difficulties

When having difficulties in reading the text, the reader should pay more attention to their reading so that they do not miss the important information.

#### 5. Pausing to reflect on reading

Readers can occasionally stop and reflect on the contents of the text they have read. This is done by readers to ensure that they are thinking clearly before continuing to read.

#### 6. Visualizing information

In this strategy, readers try to imagine or visualize information to help remember what they read. By visualizing, readers can draw on knowledge, make connections, and gather information in the text.

#### 7. Re-reading

Readers can reread texts to develop reading comprehension, increase vocabulary, and build confidence in them.

#### 8. Guessing unknown word

While reading, the reader can try to guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases according to the context of the reading. This strategy can help readers when they have difficulty understanding about the text and can add new vocabulary for readers.

### c. Support Strategies

According to Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002), support strategies provide a support mechanism that is intended to maintain reading responses. Support strategies are basic supporting strategies to help readers understand the contents of the text such as using a dictionary, taking notes, underlining, or highlighting textual information.

1. Taking notes while reading

Taking good notes while reading will help readers understand the reading and get the most out of it based on the purpose of the reading.

2. Reading out loud

Hiebert, et al., (2012) stated that reading aloud is a reading technique in which students take turns to read the text given aloud. Reading aloud allows a deeper understanding of general ideas and specific details of the text.

3. Underlining and circling

Readers can underline or circle important information in the text to help remember it, such as the main paragraph of the paragraph, explanatory material, and key words.

4. Using dictionaries

★ The use of a dictionary can help the reader when finding the meaning of unknown words. According to Hamilton (2012), the use of dictionaries to help reading is likely to develop in the future as reading comprehension improves. In addition, Hamdi (2015) said that using a dictionary during reading will help readers to find difficult vocabulary, ascertain its meaning based on contextual information, and learn more meanings of words in other contexts with different collocations and constructions. However, it should

be noted that the difficult words to be looked up in the dictionary must be relevant to the context of the reading.

5. Paraphrasing

Readers paraphrase, i.e. restate the idea in their own words.

Paraphrasing shows that the reader understands the text well.

6. Going back and forth to find relationship

The reader reads the text back and forth to find the relationship between the ideas contained in the text.

7. Asking self-questions

Readers use the strategy of asking themselves about certain things whose answers are found in the text they are reading.

8. Translating English into native language

Reading the English text and translating it into the native language will help the reader understand the content of the text.

9. Thinking about information in both English and mother tongue

While reading, the reader thinks about the information in the text in both English and the mother tongue.

## **B. Student Preferences**

Sullivan (2016) states that the term 'preference' refers to individuals' stable likes and dislikes. These likes and dislikes may be present or future-oriented. It can be concluded that students' preferences are things that they like and dislike. Preference is also related to something frequently used or chosen to achieve specific goals.

Birenbaum (2007) stated that the higher education institutions are assisted by information to serve students better and conduct research on student preferences for teaching and assessment to understand the various other factors that drive the learning process and its outcomes. Birenbaum also added that students' preferences could affect teacher evaluations. Knowing students' preferences will help teachers achieve their goals in teaching language in the classroom. Knowing student preferences also helps teachers to provide feedback on student performance.

Attention to student preferences for a learning process will help teachers determine to learn according to student needs. In addition, teachers can prepare appropriate methods of teaching and will assist students in understanding the subjects they learn in class. This relates to Nunan's (1995) belief that "Lecturers should learn what students think and feel about what and how they want to learn". Since students' beliefs will impact on students' attitudes during the teaching and learning process, teachers need to know how they want to be taught and what they want to learn. The teachers' strategy affects student learning outcomes and improves student competence and skills towards a better direction. Knowing students' preferences in using reading comprehension strategies will make students part of a necessary reading comprehension learning process to help achieve learning objectives in EFL class.

### **C. Previous Studies**

Researcher have reviewed several previous studies related to students' preferences in using reading strategies for reading comprehension to support this research. For instance, Albiladi (2018), examined specific reading strategies that language learners believe will effectively develop their reading skills. The method applied is a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) to collect data. The participants were 20 adult language learner from English Language Institutions in America. The results of the analysis showed several reading strategies that language learners believed could be used successfully to improve their reading skills: Reading Aloud, Silent Reading, Shared Reading, Scanning or Skimming Sections of Text, and Timed Reading. The study's findings revealed that majority of the participants have positive perceptions of the use of different reading strategies. The use of this strategy depends on the purpose of the reading process. Participants are knowledgeable about the different reading strategies and their intended use.

Another study by Altahab (2019), examined the use of reading strategies amongst Saudi EFL University students, exploring which strategies are perceived to be the most frequently used. This study also aimed to explore gender differences in Saudi EFL University students' adoption of reading strategies. The instrument in this study used a structured questionnaire based on Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS). The participants in this study were EFL learners at King Saud University. The results reveal that Saudi EFL University students are aware of most types of

reading strategies. Based on the resulting analysis, it was concluded that the research participants tend to use problem-solving strategies including 'translating', 're-reading', and 'paying closer attention to reading'. Meanwhile, no significant differences were found between male and female students in the use of reading strategies.

Furthermore, Susanti and Fitriawati (2020), identified the reading strategies used by students of the English Department at the university level at Padang State University. The design of this research is descriptive research that uses questionnaires and interviews to collect the data. The participants in this study were 63 English Students at UNP. This study was conducted based on Toprak and Almacioglu (2009) titled "Three Reading Phases and Their Applications in the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language in Reading Classes with Young Learners" and Sadjirin (2013) titled "Exploring the Reading Strategies Exploited by Better Readers", with the details: Pre-Reading Strategies, While-Reading Strategies, and Post-Reading Strategies. Based on analysis results: the students' reading strategies in pre-reading is previewing, the students' reading strategies in while-reading is guessing, and the students' reading strategies in post-reading is follow-up activity.

Additionally, in a more recent study, Qusyaeri, et al (2021), described the students' perception of reading strategies and finding the highest and the lowest scores of reading strategies. This quantitative research used a questionnaire for data collection. The participants in this study were 150 English students of PGRI Wiranegara University Pasuruan. This study was

conducted based on Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) by Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002). The result of this study showed that most students were accustomed to implement the presented strategies in their reading activities. The dominant strategy used by students is that “The students usually do when text becomes difficult, I read slowly and carefully” and the lowest score strategy used by students is that “The students sometimes do I analyze the structure early to help me in understanding”.

Based on the analysis of previous studies, it can be concluded that research in the area of reading strategies have been conducted effectively. In some of the previous studies, it can be seen that there are differences in the focus of research, research approaches, research instruments, and the results of the research itself. Several previous studies have used both quantitative and qualitative research methods. While this research is a survey research using a quantitative method with a questionnaire and an interview for data collection. The previous studies focus on identifying the reading strategies used by students, students' perceptions of reading strategies, and which reading strategies are used the most by students. However, this research focuses on students' preferences which are still linked to previous studies that discuss reading strategies. From this point of view, it becomes clear that research on reading strategies is crucial in terms of providing information for students and teachers to make good quality in the way they do teaching in the classroom or do reading for themselves, especially for reading comprehension.