Chapter Two

Literature Review

This chapter discusses the literature that is used in this study. In this chapter, theories on reading skill, the importance of reading, the factors inhibiting students to read and reviews on related study are elaborated.

Reading Skill

Reading skill is one of the four basics English skills. In order to have reading skills, people need to use their linguistic intelligence as according to Adams and Collins (1985), Wagner, Schatschneider, and Phyhtian-Sence (2009) as cited in Alkialbi (2015) “reading is the most complex activity that involves orthographic, phonological, syntactic and semantic processing; i.e., bottom-up processing, background knowledge and top-down processing” (p. 14). In line with that, Qanwal and Karim (2014) defined the terms of “reading” into three categories; reading as an interpretative and decoding skill, interactive skill, and active, cognitive, and thinking process.

Reading as interpretive or decoding skill means that reading is a process of understanding each words to build a meaning, in order to gain information as it is used to expand and develop the readers’ knowledge. As Qanwal and Karim (2014) mentioned above, “reading is regarded as an interpretative or decoding skill as it engages the reader to decode the textual message by identifying printed symbols in order to interpret their meanings” (p. 1020). In line with that, Dadzie (2008) as cited
in Acheaw and Larson (2014) also stated that “reading is the ability to understand words contained in a document and make use of the knowledge for personal growth and development” (p. 5).

Reading as an interactive skill means that reading involves interaction process. Shawn (1959) as cited in Qanwal and Karim (2014), stated that “reading is the communication of thoughts, moods, and emotions through which one receives from others their ideas and feelings” (p. 1020). Singhal (2006) as cited in Demiröz (2010) added that reading is a dynamic and interactive skill which involves related knowledge to understand the written material. From the explanation above, reading as an interactive skill is a medium to share ideas and feelings between readers and writers’ ideas which involve related knowledge to digest the information of the written material.

Reading as an active, cognitive, and thinking process engages the reader through thinking process, which demands certain attitudes and responses towards the text (Qanwal & Karim, 2014). Arauch and Weinstein (1968) as cited in Qanwal and Karim added that reading is an active process by which the readers should understand the text so that they understand the writer’s thought. Moreover, reading academic text is not only simply finding the information from the text, but it rather engages the students to regenerate the meaning together with the author by applying students’ knowledge to analyse it (Hermida, 2009). It can be defined that reading is a complex and multifaceted activity since it involves cognitive process to analyse, inference, and
visualize, metacognitive process to regulate their cognition, and motivational process for stimulus to start and sustain reading activity, in order to extracting the meaning of the written text (Demiröz, 2010).

In conclusion, reading is an interactive process between readers and writers’ ideas in which the reader tries to elicit the meaning where thinking process, background knowledge, and also linguistic knowledge are used. Reading skills can empower the reader interpret the writing into meaning and gain the aims of independent comprehension.

The Importance of Reading

Reading is one of essential skills to achieve students’ success as language learners. Mikulecky (2008) as cited in Qanwal and Karim (2014) mentioned that reading is the key in acquiring a second language and reading plays as the fundamental instruction in all aspects of language learning. “Reading, as a receptive skill, has long been regarded as a prerequisite for foreign language acquisition since it functions as an essential source of input for other skills to develop” (Aebersold & Field, 1997 as cited in Hoang, 2016, p. 5). In other words, reading is an inevitable activity among foreign language students and it becomes the important source of input which students use to develop other skills. It is obvious that improving reading activity can develop students’ writing skill and speaking skill (Hung & Nang, 2015). Moreover, students who read a lot can write better, improve vocabulary and speak more fluent than students who do not read much (Hung & Nang, 2015).
In higher education, Carrell and Grabe (2002) as cited in Safdarian, Ghyasi, and Farsani (2014) said that reading is the most crucial skill to be mastered for university students to receive knowledge of their own discipline. Reading plays an important role in the academic development, especially when students have to deal with huge amount of foreign language materials for their own specialist subjects (McDonough & Shaw, 2013). Grabe and Stoller (2001) as cited in Demiröz (2010) added that reading is the prior means for university students to be independent learners, whether the aims is to achieve better on academic tasks, learning more about subject matter, or improving language skills. In this case, students are expected to be independent learners through reading activity. Students are moving away from a passive learning of instruction-dependent learner to a more active, creative, and autonomous one by reading (Safdarian, Ghyasi, & Farsani, 2014). In this case, students are actively selecting their reading and knowing where and when they want to conduct reading activity.

**The Factors Inhibiting Students to Read**

In the higher education, students are expected to read by their own initiative, as Cullinan (2000) stated that reading by their own initiative or independent reading is done for finding some information or for pleasure and no body assigns it, requires it to report, or checks on comprehension. Grabe (2000) as cited in Cheethman, Harper, and Ito (2017) stated that motivation is a factor which affects students to read and it is commonly dealing with self-motivation. Cambria and Guthrie (2010) has
defined that “motivation are the values, beliefs, and behaviours surrounding reading for an individual” (p. 16). Kahayanto (2005) as cited in Shehu (2015) defined self-motivation as “personal factor”, “because the factor has existed inside the reader” (p. 29). In other words, independent reading is an activity which requires an effort or interest to get involved on it. On the other hand, for some students who have lack of motivation, they tend to have negative attitude towards reading and they push themselves away from book (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010)

Insufficient linguistic is also affect students reluctant to read. According to Mourtaga (2005), he stated that insufficient linguistic competence in general, language differences between students first language and second language, and the spelling or sound system are problems which discourage students to read. In line with that, Shehu (2015) revealed that, new words, background knowledge, type of the text, organization, lack of illustration, tenses, linking words, and pronoun are the inhibiting factors to students to read. It can be seen that student English proficiency level is also the factors which inhibit students to read. The lower their English proficiency level, the lower their motivation or interest to read. In addition Lanying (2005) also stated that, students who have low proficiency in language become unmotivated because they cannot enjoy reading than students who have high proficiency in language. Once the students who have low proficiency find difficulties during reading, their focus on the text may be distracted and it leads them to disinterest to keep on reading the text. Since students are disinterested in reading, it makes them feel bored and do not want
to read anymore. Beside these factors, Baiba (2015) added that “they do not have habit of reading in English and they dislike learning this language, and it does not interest them” (p. 27).

Reading habit plays an essential part during students’ earlier age. In developing students’ reading habit, it takes considerable time to develop students’ reading interest. It is important for parents and teachers to encourage students to have reading habit since they were in the early age. In line with that, Partin and Gillespie as cited in Galgoa (2016) mentioned that, students have more positive attitude toward reading if they are introduced with reading activity since they were in the early age. Students who never have experience reading activity or do not have reading habit since they were in the early age, their focus on their reading is not longer than students who has reading habit or positive attitude towards reading. They are more likely feel bored and could not enjoy their reading time.

The other inhibiting factor which also give a big influence is spending time in front of television and internet usage. Watching television plays significant role in reducing students or many people to read. According to the data from Central Statistical Agency (BPS) as cited in Kompas (2016), it is revealed that there are 91.58% Indonesia’s people spending their time to watch television and only 17.58% people are interested in reading. Moreover, in this digital era, internet also plays contribution in reducing reading habit. Almost all students in the world use internet to complete their need. Internet provides an easier way for students and other users of
internet to find information, communicate with people across the world and also meet their pleasure. Mokhtari, Reichard, and Gardner (2014) revealed on their study that, internet users spent significantly more time per day using the internet than reading for academic purposes, watching television, and recreational reading. They reported under the category internet usage, 90.1% the users of internet were using internet for email, 63.8% chatting using instant messaging, 56.2% surfing the web, and 52.5% listening to the music. However, students at the higher education are required to manage their time wisely and they are expected to be independent learner. Besides those factors above, Hoeft (2012) also found some factors inhibiting students to do reading: “schedules that did not allow time for reading, social life that comes before reading, dislike reading of any kind, lack of interest in topic, and laziness” (p. 11).

Thus, we can conclude that there are several factors which prevent students to read. These factors are lack of self-motivation and interest in topic, insufficient linguistic competence or language proficiency, lack of reading habit, reluctances, television and internet usage, hectic schedule, social life, and types of reading.

**Review of Related Studies**

The researcher has found that there are four studies reviewed problems in reading which leads to prevent students to do read. To begin with, the study was conducted by Mourtaga (2005) with the title “Some Reading Problem of Arab EFL Students”. The total respondents of the research is 30, male and female teacher of English. The aim of the study is to reveal some oral and non-oral reading problems
that Arab EFL students face, especially university students, in the Gaza Strip encountered when they read English. The first finding is reading problem related to insufficient linguistic competence in general and use of English. Most of the students find difficulty with unfamiliar words. The second finding is reading problems related to differences between English and Arabic. In this case, it is assumed that phonology differences between Arabic and English and the spelling sound system of English is different from Arabic, especially vowel system cause students hard to deal with.

Second study is conducted by Singh (2014) with the title “Challenges in Academic Reading and Overcoming Strategies in Taught master Programme: A Case Study of International Graduate Students in Malaysia”. This study investigates the challenges in the academic reading practice. The total respondent of this study is 203 international graduate students. This study revealed many of respondent confirmed that low proficiency in English language and lack of strong background knowledge in their discipline content knowledge prevented them from taking part in academic literacy practices such as reading fluently and comprehension.

The other study is done by Hoeft (2012) with the title “Why University Students Don’t Read: What Professors Can Do to Increase Compliance”. The aim of this study is assessing reading compliance among first semester freshmen at a small Midwestern two-year liberal art university. There are 72% of the incoming freshmen are first-generation college students and 19% are over the age of 22. In the first round survey the total respondents is 111 students, the second round survey the total
respondents is 98 students, and the last round of survey, there are 96 respondents. The report findings of this study are: most of students were busy with their schedules that did not allow time for reading; students social life; they disliked any kind of reading; lack of interest in topic; and they confirmed that they were lazy to read.

The last related study is conducted by Mokhtari, Reichard, and Gardner (2009) with the title “The Impact of Internet and television Use on the Reading Habits and Practices of College Students”. The total sample of this study was 15,000 respondents and there were 4,500 respondents. The aim of this study was to examine whether internet and television use displaced other activities, including recreational reading. This study revealed 85% students were indicated using internet more than recreational reading, reading for academic purposes, or watching television. This study reported 95% students used internet “every day or almost every day”. The most common activity found under the category internet use were using email (90.4%), chatting instant message (63.8%), surfing the web (56.2%), and listening to music (52.5%). Students reported that watching television was not enjoyable as much as using internet. Therefore, it affected their spending time for recreational reading and academic reading. It can be concluded that internet usage and watching television have shifted reading activity.

Based on the findings of previous studies above, there are several factors which replace students’ reading activity. These factors are insufficient linguistic competence, language differences between L1 and L2, lack of background
knowledge, time constraint, students’ social life, lack interest of any kind of reading
texts, laziness, and uncontrollable situation in using internet facilities. Of these
several findings, this study was conducted to determine whether these factors also
affected students not to read or other factors that made students reluctant to read.
Moreover, this research focusing on the factors inhibiting students to read is scarcely
done by other researchers. Therefore, this study was conducted to bridge the gap.