

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

In this chapter, the researcher writes some essential studies from the previous research, books, and also journal articles related to this research. There are several significant points in this chapter. The topic of the literature review composes reading, reading comprehension, reading comprehension difficulties, reading comprehension strategies, non-English department students and conceptual framework. In the last of chapter two, the researcher also puts the review of related studies.

#### **Reading**

Reading is one of fundamental skills which should be mastered by the students in learning process. Many experts have given their thought about what reading really means. According to Tarigan (as cited in Jaenal, 2010), reading is a process which is carried and used by the students to get a message delivered by the author through words or written language. It simply means that students have a purpose to get a message when they read a text or a book. Mikulecky (2011) stated that reading is a complex conscious and unconscious mental process in which the reader uses a variety of the strategies to reconstruct the meaning. From the statement mentioned, reading is a complex activity which needs a strategy to understand. Schoenbah, Greenleaf, Cziko, and Hurwitz (2006) defined that reading as a complex activity. Besides, there are some aspects involved in the reading process. Based on Nordhin, Razid, Zhubir, and Sadjirin (2013), reading is an activity which affects the learning achievement. When learning is concerned,

there will be different ability, different level, and different achievement of the students. Reading is the key to the other skill, like listening, speaking, and writing. As a Hasani, Rahimy, and Arjmandi (2013) said, reading is the application of a skill which evolved for other purposes such as writing, listening and speaking. That way, it is important to have a good reading ability to get a fluent in a language. To sum up from the explanation above, reading is an important skill in learning which should be mastered by the students who need a strategy to understand the reading context in learning achievement.

### **Reading Comprehension**

Reading comprehension is important skill for all the students. Reading comprehension is an interactive activity which involves the background knowledge of the readers and the text itself (Nordhin, Razid, Zhubir, & Sadjirin, 2013). If the students comprehend the text, they just re-call their knowledge. Samuel (2001) also stated that reading comprehension is a process in which the readers construct meaning using information in the printed page and stored of readers' head. In fact, it is the most complex language skill which involves the interaction of other sub-skills namely skimming, scanning, and careful reading and predicting. Thus, reading comprehension is an activity which involves students' background knowledge and skill to understand the text.

Reading comprehension gives several significances for the students in learning process. According to Chung (2012), it is important to have a good reading comprehension skill because most of textbook are written in English language. That way, it is crucial for the students to have a good reading

comprehension skill because it will help them in learning process. Furthermore, having a good reading comprehension will contribute to our knowledge achievement. Bojovic (2010) said that through reading comprehension, the readers can obtain new information. In regards to the statement mentioned, the students can achieve the purposes of the course because most English textbooks have provided the material of the course. Hence, reading comprehension is a crucial skill for college students. By mastering reading skill, it will help the students in learning achievement and in their future career.

### **Reading Comprehension Difficulties**

Studies on reading comprehension show that EFL learners face some difficulties when they read. Based on the study conducted by Chawwang (2008), the structured sentence and cultural knowledge take a section in students' reading difficulties. The structured sentences are used to determine the meaning of sentences and the grammatical function of a word called as knowledge of syntax or word order. Besides, the cultural knowledge can make the students feel ambiguous. The contradiction between content knowledge of culture and knowledge of vocabulary makes the students do not clearly understand.

Moreover, Shehu (2015) has found that working memory and absence of extensive reading also takes part in reading difficulties. If the students have a low working memory, they may difficult to re-call what they have read. The statement mentioned is in line with Dehn (2011) who stated that reading is an activity purposed to get information and working memory as a central cognitive process which is responsible for the efficient processing of information. Moreover, the

absence of extensive reading or having limited time to read or just read to little is a great obstacle in comprehending text. The students read a little or nothing will usually fail in decode text or analyze its meaning. That way, the students should make their time free to read more in order to have a good comprehending text.

In addition, the study from Chawwang and Shehu above as cited in Guthrie (2007), low motivation is a main difficulty in reading. If the students have a low motivation to read, it will affect on their reading comprehending skill. Hence, the motivation affects on reading comprehension growth, but reading comprehension does not affect in motivation growth (Guthrie, 2007).

Moreover, Chung (2012) concluded that reading difficulties are related to vocabulary knowledge. Vocabulary is the highest problem faced by students in comprehending English text. Lack of vocabulary can make the students misunderstanding about the context of the text because there are some vocabularies which have multiple meaning.

In reading comprehension, the students may read different text types. Based on Alderso (2002), the students will feel difficult to understand the text when they do not familiar with the text type. Therefore, if the students do not familiar with the kind of text, they cannot follow and understand what the text is about.

### **Reading Comprehension Strategies**

To overcome reading comprehension difficulties, there are several strategies explained by the expert to solve. According to Xinguang (2008), several reading strategies mostly used by the students are cognitive strategy, social

strategy, and affective strategy. Cognitive strategy involve conscious ways of tackling reading comprehension difficulties, such as translating, guessing, visualizing, taking notes, using graphic organizer and internet browsing. Social strategy means learning by interacting with others such as, asking someone else or asking teacher's help. Then, affective strategy is concerned with managing emotions. Thus, for more detailed information about these reading comprehension strategies, each strategy is explained in the following paragraphs.

**Translating.** Schuman (2008) said that one of the strategies to solve reading difficulties is by translating some words or sentences. Regarding the statement mentioned, it is in line with Karimian (2013) who said "In students' eyes, with the help of translation, they could be encouraged more to learn English language and understand it better" (p.10). It is assumed that the students prefer to translate the difficulties words to help them, than do other things. Karimian (2013) also added "the use of translation can increase the students' sense of security to learn what they do not know, and also help them to feel comfortable with the teachers in the EFL classes" (p.9).

**Guessing.** According to Schuman (2008), guessing from the context can ease the students to understand what the text means. It is similar to Chung (2011) who argued that guessing from the context results better comprehension for the students than reading each word carefully and slowly. Gaither (2011) proposed that guessing becomes one of favorite strategies used by the students. Guessing is a strategy in which readers use the information from a text including titles,

headings, pictures, and diagrams and their own personal experiences to anticipate what they are about to read (or what comes next).

**Visualizing.** Visualizing helps the students to learn the link between the words on a page and the pictures in their head (Schuman, 2008). Based on the statement mentioned, it is in line with Goudvais and Harvey (2007) who said “the students who visualize as they read have a richer reading experience and can better remember what they have read for longer periods of time” (p.6). When the students read, their brains will translate the description of people, place, and things into picture, and ability to translate the words into picture will ease the students to get better understand.

**Taking Notes.** According to Mangen (2014), students who take a note of something unfamiliar with them will have good memory retention of it. It has proven by Mina (2011) that students who take a note while reading performed significantly better on both comprehension and remembered important ideas. It can be said that taking notes was a great strategy in solving unfamiliar words difficulties because it required the students to write the meaning of a word

**Graphic Organizer.** Breiseth (2018) suggested that using graphic organizer will allow the students to organize information and ideas efficiently without using various languages. Graphic organizer will ease the students to understand context of the text because it will add important information. Hence, graphic organizer itself can be drawn as main-mapping, time-lines, or chart.

**Asking Friends.** Mahfoodh and Alghail (2016) proposed that the students are more comfortable and get better understanding when they ask to their friends

about the reading explanation. Besides, asking friends is also strategy which can be used by the students to get better understanding in reading a text. In addition, Chawwang (200) stated that the main idea will help the students in understanding a text. The students should indicate the topic in order to know what the text is about and what the writer wants to express. Then, the students need to find out the most important ideas.

**Internet Browsing.** In addition, Johnson (2011) stated that since the Internet has such a large collection of information that may even seem limitless, students can take advantage of the Internet. It also supported by Sileo (2008) who stated that Internet can help students in learning and increase students achievement. It can be said that internet enables students to find information as well as allowing the students to think creatively to solve their learning problem.

### **Non-English Department Students**

Learning English is important for everyone. Many countries include English as their second language, and there are many schools which provide English in their syllabus. Nowadays, people are required to use English in their daily life. There are some benefits in learning English. For example, it can open people's new career opportunities, help to communicate with foreign people, make life more entertaining, and make smarter.

In educational context, English is learnt in all educational levels started from Elementary School, Junior High School, Senior High School, and university level. In one university, there are several departments, and among them are English department which learns about English deeply than other department.

Certainly, the students in English department have more experiment and input of English language than others.

Since English language becomes an international language, there are some departments evolve to use English in their daily courses such as in department of international law, international government, and international relation. Students from non-English department learn English in specific purposes, and among them are English for Science, English for Law, and English for Government. Robinson (1991) stated that the students learn English because they are not interested in English and its culture because of work or study. From the statement mentioned, the students learn English because it is a need and not their willingness. As one of the reasons why non-English department learn English, English will bring the benefits for their future career. Modiano (2009) claimed that students learn English because it is essential for them in the future in relation to their work.

However, non-English department students may face a lot of problems regarding the learning and understanding English during their classes. The problems appear in various skills such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Besides, the problems faced by non-English department students may be more than problems which are faced by English department students (Xinguang, 2014). Therefore, it can happen because non-English department students do not learn English deeply and continuously due to their limited time.

### **Review of Related Studies**

The researcher relates some studies to this current research. There are some studies which present the similar topic about the problems in reading



comprehension. Here, the researcher provides the summary of the previous researches.

The first research was about “A study of Chinese non-English major students’ English reading strategies” which was conducted by Xinguang (2014). This study aimed to investigate the main reading strategies that Chinese non-English major students like to use and find out the reasons why they do not like to use some other strategies. The participants of this study were 210 students including 108 boys and 102 girls. They were in the range of age started from 18 to 22 with an average age of 20. Most of them had learned English for about 10 years, and they learnt English as a foreign language in traditional classroom setting. This study used a questionnaire instrument. For the result of this study, most students need to cultivate their sense of applying reading strategies in English learning. The most strategies used by the students were cognitive strategy, social strategy, and affective strategy. As the reason, using these strategies mentioned, these were popular in their learning life.

The second research entitled “Reading comprehension problems encountered by foreign language students: Case study of Albania, Croatia” was conducted by Shehu (2015). This study was purposed to perceive the problems which generally appeared along the reading comprehension process. Another purpose of this research was to find out the proper strategies used by the students for problem solving. This study used questionnaire as the research instrument which was distributed to three different high schools in Albania which had 150 participants. The results presented the frequent reading comprehension faced by

the students, and those were vocabulary, working memory, absence of extensive reading, and text type. Moreover, this study also found the strategies that mostly appeared in helping the students' reading difficulty, and those strategies were making a review, using cooperative learning, and allowing students to demonstrate their understanding about text.

Several previous studies show that reading comprehension brings a lot of difficulties and needs strategies to solve the difficulties. However, what makes this research different is that this study uses qualitative research approach which is different from those two previous studies. Those previous studies use quantitative approach. By using qualitative research approach, this study can explore more especially in difficulties and strategies in comprehending English text of non-English department students.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Reading is a basic English skill which should be mastered by the students. Reading based on Tarigan (1990) in Jaenal (2010), they defined that reading as a process which is carried and used by the students to get a message delivered by the author through words or written language. Hence, reading means a process which the students do to get a message within a text.

In addition, reading also cannot be separated from comprehension. Reading comprehension itself is defined by Samuel (2001) who said that reading is an interactive activity which involves the background knowledge of the students. From the statement mentioned, when the students do a reading

comprehension, they use what they have in knowledge to understand what the text means.

Nowadays, all of the students read English text including the students from non-English department. They read English text because they have an English course in their compulsory course. Non-English department students may get more challenges rather than English department students in reading.

In reading comprehension, there are several difficulties which mostly appear such as sentence structure and cultural background (Chawwang, 2008). Sentence structure deals with meaning of the sentences and grammatical function. Cultural background can make the students feel ambiguous because there is contradiction between content knowledge and cultural knowledge of vocabulary. Shehu (2015) has found that working memory and absence of extensive reading can also be challenges in reading for students. Working memory deals with the students' inability to remember what they have got before. The absence of extensive reading deals with limited time and limited text to read. Based on Guthrie (2007) study, low motivation is a main difficulty in reading. Then, Chung (2012) added that lack of vocabulary as the challenge in reading. Lack of vocabulary can make the students misunderstanding the meaning of the context. Alderso (2002) found that unfamiliar text types will make the students do not understand what the text is about.

To solve those difficulties, some study has found the strategies. Schuman (2008) said that translating, guessing, and visualizing can be the alternative ways to solve reading problem. Translating some difficult words will help the students

to understand what the whole text means. Besides, guessing from the context can ease the students to understand even though when they have not known some meaning of words. In addition, visualizing will help them to connect the words on a page and picture on their head, so they will understand better what exactly the text means. Mahfoodh and Alghail (2016) found that asking friend comes up as a solution to solve reading difficulty. They said that if the students find difficulties, they will feel more comfortable to ask about the reading context to their friends. Breiseth (2018) said that using graphic or mind mapping will ease the students to understand the context of the text. Therefore, as indicated in the research questions above, the researcher makes a chart to ease the reader knowing what is discussed in this research.

Figure 1

*Conceptual Framework*

