

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL REVIEW

A. Reading Comprehension

1. Definition of Reading

Reading is one of the most important academic skills needed by students as a source of knowledge and enjoyment. Reading is also quite possibly, the most important skill a student must acquire in order to success in the school and in life. Moreover reading has been a highly emphasized skill in the English foreign learner context. Reading can be regarded as a process that involves, decoding, interpreting and comprehending written material.

Different people use the term of reading in some ways, because reading is a complex process, and this complexity accounts for the variety of its definition. Reading is one way to communicate between the writer and reader. As Day and Bamford define reading as a process of how a reader understands the written message and connect it to his prior knowledge.¹A reader actively interacts with the reading

¹Richard R. Day and Julian Baford, *Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), P 12

material in the reading process. While Ruddell said that reading is the act of constructing meaning while transacting with text.² Here the reader should interaction with the text not only in action with the text. But reading is not simple. Reading is an active process that requires a great deal of practice and skill.³ Because to mastering reading we not only learn the theory but also the practice what we have been read and apply it in real life as much as we can. The reader can get meaning from the author, the page or anywhere else. So, they make meaning from the interaction between prior knowledge and previous experience with the new information.

From the definition above, it seems that reading is a process when the reader makes meaning through the combination of prior knowledge and previous experience. He or She connects text information to what they already know. Information ideas are exchanged between writer and reader in the act of communication. The writer expresses his thoughts on paper with language using whatever skills and style she or he

²Martha Rapp Rudell, *Teaching Content Reading and Writing: Fifth Edition*, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.), p.30.

³Judi Moreillon, *Collaborative Strategies for Teaching Reading Comprehension* (Chicago; America Library Association, 2007), p. 10.

has developed personally. The reader tries to get meaning from printed page.

Reading is not just a means of comprehension but becoming aware of how writers express meaning and also becoming able to reconstruct those meanings for our own understanding. So, reading can add our knowledge because every word that is read to construct meaning to comprehend. With reading we get more knowledge or information. It means that reading is important to be learned.

2. Definition of Comprehension

Comprehension is a kind of up-market synonym for understanding in discussions that are (or are intended to appear) technical and scientific. In such contexts the word frequently doesn't appear alone, but in such combination as comprehension skills or the comprehension process, even by people who would never use expressions like understanding skills or the understanding process. ⁴It means that comprehension may be regarded as relating aspects of the word around us- including what we read, to the knowledge.

⁴Frank Smith, *Understanding Reading Sixth Edition* (New Jersey: Lawrence Associates, 2004) P. 12

According to Danielle, comprehension is not always effortless and fast, of course. When beginning readers struggle over individual words, reading is slowed to near halt and deeper levels of comprehension are seriously compromised. Comprehension is not only cognitive competence or understanding the knowledge but also ability to grasp something mentally. Because it is not easy to understand the difference between ideas and fact, beside the definition that show us that comprehension is the main modal in reading skill in order to understand the whole of the text.

3. Definition of Reading Comprehension

The ability to read a written language with good comprehension and a reasonable rate has long been organized to be important skill. “Reading comprehension strategy is a cognitive or behavioral action that is enacted under particular contextual conditions, with the goal of improving some aspect of comprehension.”⁵ A general component is many definition of comprehension is the interpretation of the information in the text, the use of prior knowledge to interpret this information

⁵ Smith, P. 6.

and ultimately. The construction of a coherent representation of picture in the reader's mind of what the text is about.⁶ Reading comprehension is an interaction between ability of prior knowledge reader on reading book. The readers will get information or knowledge of the text after they read. So they understand information of text.

Reading comprehension is a product of complex interactions between the properties of the text and what readers bring to the reading situation.⁷ The readers must relevant their knowledge, word decoding ability, text-based and situation model-based differencing skills, competency with a variety of reading strategies, metacognitive skills, and so on.

Reading comprehension is a process in which the reader has to decide linguistic symbol and reconstruct and reconstruct them up to a meaningful whole as intended by the writer. Comprehension includes recognizing and understanding a main idea and related detail. Meanwhile, according to Klingner reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning

⁶Smith, P. 28.

⁷ Smith, P. 111.

by coordinating a number of complex processes that include word reading, word and world knowledge and fluency.⁸

4. Purpose of Reading

A purpose of reading is established for each lesson and each extension changes the purpose for reading, which then changes the reader's focus. It means the purpose of reading can be reachable if the readers get the best way to understand the reading material. Reading can be summarized as a process that involves vision and response to understand and comprehend reading material is aimed to obtain information and improve our knowledge.⁹

And every individual has their own reason for read and their own needed. So here we focus on the importance of purpose in private reading and the range in different purposes for which individual, so here several reading based on Reading Basic Reading Skill 1. ¹⁰There are own purpose for reading. Such as:

⁸ Klingner Janette. K. *Collaborative Strategic Reading: Strategies for Improving Comprehension*. (sopris west) 1996 P. 12

⁹ Charlotte S. Huck and Barbara Z. Kiefer, *Children's Literature in The elementary school* (New york; Mcgraw-Hill, 2004), P 12.

¹⁰Naf'anTarihoran and MiftahulRachmat, *Reading Basic Reading Skill 1*.(Serang : Loquen Press, 2012) p. 6

1. Reading for pleasure is reading a narrative, novel, comics and so on. Here the readers enjoy the 'sound' and the rhythm of literary text.
2. Reading for a general impression, such as: to gain an idea of the writer's viewpoints, to decide whether or not to read the text.
3. Reading for organizing reading and study, such as: to identify the important content of a text, to answer a specific question, to decide which section of a text to start studying.
4. Reading for learning content or procedure, such as: to gain an understanding of new concepts, to learn certain facts from a text and to follow instructions.

5. Reading Assessment

According to Peter Newmark, to begin the job by reading the original for two purposes : first, to understand what it is about, second, to analyze it.

6. How to Teach Reading

Here description of how teach a students to read :

1. You teach a students to read by helping him or to learn the relationship between the printed words and their meaning.

2. The teaching of reading usually begins by presenting the students with a story as simple vocabulary arranged in story. Easy sentences in a book or on a chart.
3. The students is given help and is encaourageto practice reading these sentences aloud and silently.
4. More words are added to the reading material, and the sentences and stories get longer.
5. Students are readied for this process through the teaching of phonemic awareness and phonics.
6. Comprehension skill are usually taught by helping the student read silently and answer various types of question.
7. The students learner to read common words, like that instant words, and meaningful words like names, both in stories and isolation.
8. Writing is introduced ; the students start to write and read his own stories.
9. The printed stories, students-written stories, phonics lesson, and comprehension drill gradually increase in difficulty as the students gains in ability.

10. Usually, quite a bit of reading practice and frequent review lessons are necessary.

B. Short Story

1. Definition of Short Story

The use of literature had been known since the nineteenth century. It was mostly used as material when English language was taught by using Grammar Translation Method (GTM). So, the goal of foreign language in the time is to learn a language in order to read its literature or in order to benefit from the mental discipline and intellectual development that result from foreign language study.¹¹Based on the statement above, it can be concluded that literature had been used long time ago in foreign language teaching. Even, it was a popular material to learn language in the time. Moreover, the use of literature can give many advantages, especially for students' mental discipline and intellectual development.

¹¹Jack C Richard and Theodore S. Rodgers, *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching: A description and analysis*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), P.3

One of the literatures is short story. According to MacMillan, “Short story is a brief work of prose narrative.”¹² It means that short story is a short prose narrative that usually can be read in short time. In other word, the reader does not need much time to comprehend what the short story tells about.

Meanwhile, Lazar said that “Short story is a work of fiction. It tells one event in a very concentrated way, describes something at moment of crisis, introduces people who are told do not really exist, has plot and characters who are somehow connected with each other.”¹³ From the definition above, it is clear that short story is a simple literary text which can be considered to be used as material in learning language because of its distinctive features.

According to Edgar Allan Poe “Short story is any why-weather it be a prose narrative glibly described as” shorter than a novel, no longer than can be read in a single sitting”¹⁴

¹² MacMillan Literature Series, *Introducing Literature, Signature Edition*, (New York : Glencoe/McGrawhill 1985), P.53

¹³ Gillian Lazar, *Literature and Language Teaching: A guide for teachers and trainers*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), P. 73

¹⁴ Rust Hill, *Writing in general and the short story in particular*, (Boston : Library of cougreass in publication, 1977) P, 1

According to Beyond as quoted by Rust Hill book. He believes that only two to thing about the nature of short story:

- a. A short story tells of some thing that happened to someone.
- b. The successful contemporary short story win demonstrate a more harmonious relationship of all its aspect than will any other literary art from. Excepting perhaps lyric poetry.¹⁵

Meanwhile to Peter Newmark in her book” short story is, of literary forms, the second most difficult, but here he is released from the obvious constrains of poetry – metre and rhyme – whilst the varieties of sound-effect are likely to play a minor role.¹⁶

In this case, to developing students reading skill will use short stories for kids. The writer assumes that with short stories for kids will be a better way to improve students reading skill and will make a good achievement. Because by reading

¹⁵ Rust Hill. P.1

¹⁶ Peter Newmark, *A text Book of Translation* (New York : Prentice Hall, 1988) P. 170

story the students are not only get the meaning of the word in the work, but also to get them understand in the work.

2. The Elements of Short Story

As the same as other fiction works, short story also has its own element. But some experts have different opinions about how many the short story's elements are. Gordon and Kuehner said that the short story has six elements.¹⁷ Meanwhile Diyanni said that there seven elements of the short story. The differences include, irony and symbol. According to Diyanni the irony and symbol are elements that will help the reader to compress a great deal of meaning into a brief space and understand the works.¹⁸ However, the two books still have same explanation when they elaborate the other elements such as plot, setting, character, theme and style. In this study, the writer explains the elements that are only in the Gordon and Kuehner's book. The elements are as follows :

¹⁷ Jane Bachman Gordon, Karen Kuehner, *Fiction: The elements of short story*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1999) P. 1-247

¹⁸ Robert Diyanni, *Literature : Reading fiction, Poetry and Drama 5th Ed.*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2002) P.92

a. Plot

Plot is the author's arrangements of the events in a narrative to get a desired effect. It is a series of actions that are usually organized in chronologically order. There are two aspects that construct a plot: causality and conflict. Causality is needed to substitute of two or more events. A conflict is an internal or external fight between the main character and the opposite character. When a story includes internal conflict, it means that the main character is in conflict with himself or herself. It contrast, an external conflict happen between the main character and another character, society, or natural forces.

b. Setting

Setting is to describe time and place in the story. It can be general, specific, or every detailed. It may serve some purposes, such as influencing action, defining character, or contributing to mood.

c. Character

Character is a person created for work of fiction. It may be autobiographical versions of the author. The people that the author knows, the people that may the author has observed or overheard. The character is divided into two categories. Major and minor characters. The major characters are protagonist and antagonist character. Meanwhile, the minor characters are confidant or confidante, foil, a stereotyped character, and piece of furniture character. These are the characters that support to develop plot of the story.

d. Theme

Theme is an author's insight or general observation about human nature or the human condition that is delivered by characters, plot, and imagery. There is a rule to put theme in the story. But, it can be identified in the factual details of plot, characters, and setting.

e. Style

Style is an author's characteristic way to say things in the story. It is divided into three components: diction,

imagery and symbols and syntax. The first component is diction. It is the author's choice on using words. It can be chosen as general or specific, formal or informal, abstract or concrete, common, jargon, and etc. The second component is imagery and symbol. Imagery is a term of senses. It involves sight, tastes, smell, touch, and hearing. It also associates with figure of speech like simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole and others. Then, a symbol is concrete anything like an object, a place, a character, and an action. The last component is syntax or sentence structure.

3. The Advantages of Short Story

According to Pathan and Al-Dersi in their journal, there are some advantages of using short stories, they are :

- a. Short stories are considered as highly useful resource material in EFL classrooms as they provide rich linguistic input, effective stimuli, for students to express themselves in other languages, and a potential source of learner motivation.
- b. They can be the main teaching material in reading comprehension class as well as can supplement the

main course materials for the in class and out of class activities of foreign language teaching, learning and practice. The EFL teachers can exploit this aspect for the same purpose in their class.

- c. Stories can be more beneficial than any other informational materials, in stimulating the acquisition process, as they provide authentic context for processing in language. So, they should form an important place in the teaching material, selected by the EFL teachers, to teach reading comprehension skill.
- d. As stories increase foreign language students' insight into the country and the people whose language is being learnt, by providing cultural information about the target language, EFL students can also benefit from them. Also such use of stories will help them in fostering their ability to interpret discourse in different social and cultural target language contexts.
- e. As stories expose students to a wide variety of styles and language functions, they can help the EFL students to enhance their thinking and language abilities, as well

as other study skill such as learning vocabulary, discovering questions, evaluating evidence etc.

- f. Stories are easy to finish, definite to understand and attract the students' attention more than any other normal passage which can be considered as another advantages for the EFL teachers to attract their students toward reading in English.¹⁹

From the description above, the use of short story is very useful for the student. Its part of the short story can give the student many chances to enhance their insight of many countries, moral values, language skill, vocabulary, critical thinking and emotional intelligent, etc. so that, short story can be alternative material for English teachers in developing their students reading comprehension.

C. Teaching Reading Through Short Story

The short story is literary genre. Usually short story for student as beginner, reader and English second language student the text will full illustration of picture and the world will write in the

¹⁹ Mustafa Mubarak, P. and Zamzan Emhemmad M, A., Investigating the Role of Short Stories in Overcoming the problem faced by the Libyan EFL Learners in Reading Comprehension Skill, *The Criterion An International Journal in English*, Vol 12, 2013, p 4-6.

simple sentences, because it can help them easier to understand what they read with a simple word of simple sentences. The short story that has illustration and patterned language can make text comprehensible. Text used in class should preferable be short.²⁰ The other word text is that simple and shorter is more received by students in the class.

The short story will be easier to understand in getting meaning and even is more enjoyable full of fun and it can make their imagination go on. From the short story, the student can build their motivation. The reader is motivated to read; by interesting content or a challenging task.²¹

What does teacher do through short story ? the teacher can use this technique to teach reading through short story, there are :

- a. Pre-Reading activities
 1. Helping student with cultural background
 2. Stimulating student's interest in the story
 3. Pre-Teaching vocabulary

²⁰ John Haycraft, *An Introduction to English Language Teaching*, (London: Longman Group Ltd, 1978), P. 45

²¹ PennyUr, *A Course in language teaching : Practice and theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1999) P, 148

b. While-Reading activities

1. Helping students to understand the plot
2. Helping students to understand the character
3. Helping students with difficult vocabulary

c. Post-Reading activities

1. Helping students to make interpretation of the text
2. Understanding narrative point of view
3. Follow up writing activities
4. Follow up fluency practice