**CHAPTER II**

**THEORETICAL FOUNDATION**

* 1. **The Essence Of Reading**

There are four skills in English which should be mastered, they are: reading, speaking, listening and writing and it cannot be denied that reading is one of the most important. According to Harmer in The Practice of English Language Testing (1985:153) “Reading is an exercise dominated by the eyes and the brain”. Specifically, Nunan (1989:17) in his book also said that “Reading is a process of decoding written symbols, working from smaller units (individual letters) to larges ones (words, clauses and sentences)”.

Based on explanation above, the writer concludes that reading is a process to convey the message or information. By reading, the reader will know what they read and challenged to response the ideas of the author. In order to make the messages or information that comes from the author can be understood and comprehended easily by the reader.

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* 1. **The Importance of Reading in Islam**

As a muslim, our religion islam also consider that reading is important thing. Allah said in Qur’an surah Al- ‘Alaq 1-5 :

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1. Proclaim! (or read!) In the name of Thy Lord and Cherisher, who created-

2. Created man from clot of congealed Blood:

3. Read, for your lord is most Generous

4. who teaches by means of the pen-

5. Teaches man that they didn’t know.

This letter is the first time delivered to the Messengers Muhammad shallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam. The letter delivered in the early days of prophethood. At that time he could not write and do not understand about faith.Then Gabriel came with a treatise or revelation. Then Gabriel commanded the prophet to read it. Muhammad PBUH reluctant. He says, *"I can not read."* (HR. Bukhari no. 3). He continued to say that way until he finally read it. Then the verse came down, *"Read with (call) the name of your Lord Who created"*. What is meant here is creating beings in general. But what is meant here is specifically to human. Man was created from a clot as mentioned in the next verse, *"He has created man from a clot."*

Humans not only created, but he also ruled and prohibited. To explain these commands and prohibitions, Allah SWT sends the Messengers and the (Qur'an) to humans.

Allah (S.W.T.) made this great task for the prophet (S.A.W.) to learn and teach; to learn what Allah (S.W.T.) taught him from the book and wisdom, and teach the people around him what Allah (S.W.T.) had taught him. We see many verses in the *Qur'an* and many *hadith* emphasizing the importance of knowledge and seeking knowledge.

Knowledge is the road to *Iman* belief, and leads the person to fear Allah (S.W.T.). The fear, that is based on knowledge, regulates the person's deeds. Knowledge is the one that leads to fear of Allah, which in turn entices action. Allah (S.W.T.) said in *surat* Fatir, (Verse 28), what can be translated as, *"It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allah."* Because of that, Allah (S.W.T.) brought the people of knowledge to different higher levels according to their knowledge, For that reason Allah (S.W.T.) raised up the degree of those who have knowledge, He (S.W.T.) said in *surat* Al-Mujadilah, (Verse 11), what can be translated as*, "Allah will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge."*

* 1. **Reading Comprehension**

It is necessary for the students of Senior High School to master reading comprehension. Cooper (1986:11) stated that “Comprehension is a process in which the reader may construct meaning by interacting with the text. In reading comprehension, a reader should have knowledge about understanding the reading passage. The common questions on the passages are primarily about the main ideas, details, and an inference that can be drawn from the passages”[[1]](#footnote-2).

Interaction is what actually happens in the process of reading. Calling it “interaction” means that reading is not one, but two- way communication instead. It involves the reader as the first party and the text/ author as the second.

According to Singer (1985) reading comprehension has been defined as an interpretation of written symbols, the apprehending of meaning, the assimilation of ideas presented by the written, and the process of thinking while deciphering symbols[[2]](#footnote-3). Further, reading comprehension is related closely to the cognitive competence of the readers, because this will produce comprehension.

However, how intense the reader text/author interaction is depends on many factors. The time of reading, purpose, how the reader reads (partially or comprehensively), and even who the reader is. Different reader, with different prior knowledge, will have different understanding and different reaction toward the same time. It indicates that reading has a power not only to give information to the readers, but also influence their behavior.

In comprehending a topic, the readers interacts with the text relates to the pre-questioning of the text to prior experiences of construct meaning which can be found in the text. Skimming and scanning are two very useful techniques that will help the reader become a better reader.

1. Skimming

“Skimming is a technique used to look for the “gist” of what the author is saying without a lot of detail (Kustaryo, 1988:5)”. This reading technique is used if one wants to get a general impression of a book, essay, article and determine whether or not to read it more carefully. Moreover, Yorkey (134) defines that there are two purposes of skimming: to locate a specific word, fact, or idea quickly, and to get a rapid general impression of the material.

Azies & Alwasilah (1996:114) said *“*Aktifitas skimming melibatkan proses membaca, sekalipun dengan kecepatan melebihi kecepatan membaca pada umumnya”[[3]](#footnote-4).

Thus, in skimming the text, a reader needs to practice in order he or she can learn the key words and phrases which can cover all the material he or she is reading.

1. Scanning

Scanning is quickly reading to find the specific information Brown (2001:308) stated that, scanning is quickly searching for some particular piece or pieces of information in a text.

By scanning, a reader mean glancing rapidly through a text either a text either to search a specific piece of information (e.g. name, date) or to get an initial impression of whether the text is suitable for a given purpose”, Nuttall in Kahayanto (2005:11). When scanning the reader lets his or her eyes wander over the text until he or she is looking for, whether it is a place, a kind of food, a kind of verb, or a specific information. To enable the student to scan effectively, he or she should know what kinds of information he or she needs, also, he or she should have the strong belief where he or she will find such information needed from the text.

**D. Schema Theory Background and Knowledge in Reading**

Schema Theory is the source of some questions like: How do readers construct meaning? How do they decide what to hold on to, and having made that decision, how do they infer a writer’s message? The reader brings information, knowledge, emotion, experience, and culture– that is,schemata (plural)– to the printed word, Brown (2001: 299)[[4]](#footnote-5).

Beside that, this idea also support by Clarke and Silberstein in Brown (2001) capture the definition of schema theory as follows:

*“Research has shown that reading is only incidentally visual. More information is contributed by the reader than by the print on the page. That is, readers understand what they read because they are able to take the stimulus beyond its graphic representation and assign it membership to an appropriate group of concepts already stored in their memories…….Skill in reading depends on the efficient interaction between linguistic knowledge and knowledge of the world”[[5]](#footnote-6).*

There are two categories of schemata, as follows:

* 1. *Content Schemata* include what we know about people, the world, culture, and the universe
  2. *Formal Schemata* consist of our knowledge about discourse structure.

In line with the explanation above, the writer conclude that the use of pre-questioning is to build readers’ content schemata which are related to the background of knowledge.

**E. Cognitive Factors in Reading**

According to Harris and Sipay (1980:251) there are several cognitive factors in reading such as perception, attention, memory, and cognitive style[[6]](#footnote-7).

1. Perception

Perception starts with the stimulation of sense organs such as the eyes and ears, but it is far more than simple sensing. In perceiving, the brain selects, groups, organizes, and sequences the sensory data so that people perceive meaningful experiences that can lead to appropriate responses. Among the important characteristics of perception, several seem to have particular relevance for reading, such as follows:

1. Figure and Ground

Normally, one major unit or group of units is perceived clearly against a background that is more vaguely perceived.

1. Closure

The abilities to get the correct meaning of a sentence in which not all the words are recognized, and to pronounce a word correctly when some letters are blotted out, are examples of closure.

1. Sequence

In reading, all the stimuli are on the page and sequence is imposed by the reader.

1. Learning

Perception becomes meaningful units as they become associated with learned concepts and their verbal labels.

1. Set

One’s immediate mind set provides an anticipation of what is likely to come that is helpful when the anticipation is correct, but leads to errors when the anticipation is incorrect.

1. Discrimination

The abilities to analyze a whole perception into its parts, and to synthesize the parts correctly are basic to success in visual and auditory discrimination of words.

* + 1. Memory

Psychologists distinguish between iconic memory, the fraction of a second that a sensory impression lasts before it fades out. Short term memory, which lasts a view second and long term memory. A distinction is also made rote memory, in which the material may be without structure (as in a sequence of digits), and memory for meaningful material.

* + 1. Attention

According to Harris and Sipay (1980:277) attention based on the cognitive is the ability to attend and concentrate is basic to efficiency in perception, learning, and memory.

Related to this study, it means the person can maintain focus on particular stimuli and disregard or suppress other stimulation that reaches him at the same time, thus maintaining a stable figure in the focus of attention, against a non interfering background.

* + 1. Cognitive Style

Cognitive style refers to the tendency to prefer certain ways of handling cognitive tasks to other ways. The preferred may be a relatively strong aptitude or a fairly consistent behavioral tendency. Some explorations of cognitive style seem relevant to the understanding of reading disabilities.

* 1. **Reading as a Process of Predicting**

Reading has been considered only as a visual activity, because we do with the eyes. But, in The Book of Study Skills for Students of English, Yorkey (1982:100) stated reading is not only a visual activity. It is more than just simply run your eyes accumulating information as each words, phrase, and sentences is progressively recognized. Reading is also an active process of predicting what is likely to come next. Our brain processes the visual information from our eyes, rapidly forming and revising hypotheses about the form and content of what you are reading”[[7]](#footnote-8).

Thus, in this study the writer conclude that pre-questioning as the strategy to build up and to rise the students’ skill in predicting what will face by them in the whole text.

* 1. **Some Factors that Influence Students’ Reading Comprehension Achievement**

There are two factors that influence the students’ reading comprehension achievements and they are related one another, they are: internal factor and the external factor.

* + 1. The Internal Factor

The internal factor means the factor which come from the reader himself (Kahayanto, 2005:13). Or usually known as personal factor, because the factor has existed inside the reader. This factor dealt with self-motivation and interest.

* + - 1. Motivation

Motivation plays an important role in comprehending the text. The students will be motivated to read when they fell that they need something from the text. Brown (2001:75) divided the motivation theory into two kinds, they are: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Edward Deci in Brown (2001:76) defined intrinsic motivation, as follow:

*“Intrinsically motivated activities are ones from which there is no apparent reward except the activity itself. People seem to engage in the activities for their own sake and not because they lead to an extrinsic reward. It is aimed at bringing about curtaining internally rewarding consequences, namely, feelings of competence and self-determination.” .*

On the other one, extrinsic motivation defined by him as extrinsically motivated behaviors that carried out in anticipation of a reward from outside and beyond the self. Such as; money, prizes, grades, and even certain of positive feedback.

* + - 1. Interest

Interest is being one of the important factors in order to increasing the students’ comprehension achievement in reading. If one has interest to read, it means that he or she will get a good achievement. On the other side, if the reader has no any interest to read, it can influence his or her achievement.

In line with the explanation of motivation and interest above, in this study the writer interested to use pre-questioning to build up the students’ motivation and interest, and also want to see the effect of using pre-questioning in relationship with the students’ reading comprehension achievements. Because, it is impossible for the students to understand the text if he or she has no interest and motivation to read. So, it can be concluded that the good interest and motivation result the good achievement of the students.

* + 1. The External Factor

The external factor has a close relationship to reading material and teacher of reading. They are related one another.

* + - 1. Reading Material

The students’ achievements’ in reading depends on the level of the difficulty of the text. Thus, it can influence students’ achievement if the text given is not at the right level of the difficulty of the readers or the students.

* + - 1. Teacher of Reading

The teacher of reading should be careful in choosing the text and giving the tasks because they are related to the students’ reading comprehension achievements.

* 1. **Questioning Strategies**

The most important key to create an interactive learning is the initiation of interaction from the teacher by using question, Brown (2001:169). Appropriate questioning can fulfill a number of different functions, such as:

1. Teacher questions give students the opportunity to produce language comfortably without having to risk initiating language themselves. It is very scary for the students to have to initiate conversation or topics for discussion.
2. Teacher question can serve to initiate a chain reaction of students interaction among themselves.
3. Teacher questions giving immediate feedback about students’ comprehension.
4. Teacher questions provide students with opportunities to find out what they think. As they are nudged into responding to questions about, say, a reading, they can discover what their own opinions and reactions are. This self-discovery can be especially useful for a pre-reading activity.

Perhaps the simplest way to conceptualize the possibilities is to think of a range of questions, beginning with display questions that attempt to elicit information already known by the teacher and the students. In this study, the writer interested to use pre-questioning in order to make the general frame of the knowledge.

* 1. **Pre-questioning**

Based on Brown’s (2001) explanation of display questions, schema theory and students’ background knowledge explanation. He also defined pre-questioning implicitly as some questions which are provided before the students read the whole text, in order to build the students’ interest and motivation, also their cognitive factors and pre-questioning is very useful to activate the schemata, thus the students can predict what will be faced by them in the reading text.

* 1. **Kinds of Pre-questioning**

According to Harmer (1985:153), there are some kinds of pre-questioning, they are: Pre-questioning before reading to confirm expectations, pre-questioning before reading to extract specific information, pre-questioning before reading for general comprehension, and pre-questioning before reading for detail comprehension. The explanations are as following:

* + **Pre-questioning before reading to confirm expectations**

The use of pre-questioning as a tool for placing great emphasis on the lead-in stage (where students are encouraged to become interested in the subject matter of the text), encourages students to predict the content of the text, and gives them an interesting and motivating purpose for reading.

* + **Pre-questioning before reading to extract specific information**

Pre-questioning as a tool to force the students to extract specific information from the text. They are going to answer before reading the text. If they do this it will be possible for them to read in the required way, they should seen the text only to extract the information the questions demand.

* + **Pre-questioning before reading for general comprehension**

In this case pre-questioning used to build up the students’ prior knowledge.

* + **Pre-questioning before reading for detailed comprehension**

This kind of pre-questioning intends to give the students some detailed information that should be found by them in the whole of the text.

Based on the explanation above, in this study the writer only concern two kinds of pre-questioning, they are: Pre-questioning before reading for general comprehension and the pre-questioning before reading to confirm expectations.

* 1. **Kind of Questions in Reading Comprehension**

According to Loughed and TOEFL Information Bulletin in Djiwandono (2002:97), usually the questions in reading comprehension tests are about:

1. Main idea
2. Supporting details
3. Inferring meaning
4. Passage structure
5. Author’s aim
6. Knowledge about certain vocabulary
7. Defining vocabulary based on the context

In this study, the writer only concerns on main ideas and supporting details, because two kinds of reading comprehension test above are most important specific comprehension skills.

a. Main Ideas

The question about main idea asks the reader to determine the main idea or topic from a reading text, and commonly it is signed by words such as: *main point; mainly discussed; main idea; best title; main purpose; mainly concerned; main topic.*

Here are some examples of questions to ask about main idea:

- What is the main idea of the passage?

- With which of the following is the passage mainly concerned?

- What is the main part of the passage?

- Which of the following would be the best title?

b. Supporting Details

The question about supporting details asks the reader to find detail information that is printed explicitly in the text. It is commonly signed by words such as: *according to the author…; according to the passage…; who, what, when, where, why, how, which.*

Here are some examples of questions to ask about supporting details:

- Which of the following question does the passage answer?

- According to the passage, which statement is true?

- When did ‘something’ happen?

- Who did ‘something’?

1. Cooper, J. D. 1986. *Improving Reading Comprehension*. Boston: Houghtonmiffin Company [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Singer. 1985. *Theoretical Models and Process of Reading*. Barkeley: University of California [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Azies & Alwasilah, *Pengajaran Bahasa Komunikatif*. (PT. Remaja Rosdakarya Group. Bandung: 1996) p.113 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Brown, H Douglas. 2001. *Teaching by Principles*. San Francisco: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Clark and Silberstain in Brown, H Douglas. 2001. *Teaching by Principles*. San Francisco: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Harris, Albert. J. *How to Increase Reading Ability.* New York: Longman, Inc 1980, [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Yorkey, R.C. 1982. *Study Skills for Students of English.* Vermont: McGraw-Hill [↑](#footnote-ref-8)