

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

II.1 Schemata and Reading Process

Reading is a process of identification and recognition of printed or written symbols which serve as stimuli for the recall meaning built up through past experience, and further the construction of new meanings through the reader's manipulation of relevant concepts already in his possession (Tinker and McCullough cited in Burns, Roe, and Ross, 1984).

The above mentioned idea of reading is based on the schemata theory which suggests that the knowledge we carry around in our head is organized into interrelated patterns of frames or 'schemata.' These are constructed from our previous experience of the experiential world and guide as we make sense of new experiences. They also enabled us to make prediction about what we might expect to experience in a given context. (Bartlett cited in Nunan, 1991.)

Further, Widdowson (cited in Nunan, 1991) has reinterpreted schema theory from an applied linguistic perspective. He postulates two levels of language: a systemic level and a schematic level. The systemic level includes the phonological, morphological, and syntactic elements of the language, while the schematic levels relates to our background knowledge. This background knowledge exercises an executive function over the systemic level of language. In comprehending a given piece of

language, we use what sociologists call interpretative procedures for achieving a match between our schematic knowledge and the language which is encoded systemically.

The role of background knowledge in language comprehension has as one of its fundamental tenets that text, any text, either spoken or written, does not by itself carry meaning. Rather, a text only provides directions for listeners or readers as to how they should retrieve or construct meaning from their own, previously acquired knowledge or background knowledge. In other words, comprehending a text is an interactive process between the reader's background knowledge and the text, and efficient comprehension requires the ability to relate the textual material to one's own knowledge. (Anderson et.al. cited in Carrel, 1988.)

Moreover in the reading process, Coady (cited in Carrel, 1988) suggests a model in which the ESL—English Second Language—reader's background knowledge interacts with conceptual abilities and process strategies, more or less successfully, to produce comprehension. (See Figure II.1)

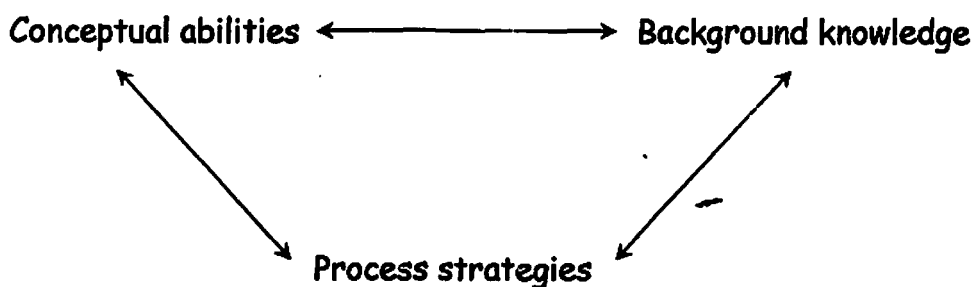


Figure II.1 Coady (1979), Model of the ESL Reader

By conceptual abilities, Coady means general intellectual capacity. By processing strategies, Coady means various subcomponents of reading ability, including many which are also more general language processing skills which also apply to oral language (e.g., grapheme-morphophonemic correspondences, syllable-morpheme, syntactic information [deep and surface], lexical meaning, and conceptual meaning).

II.2 Types of Reading Comprehension

According to Barret (cited in Dupuis and Askov, 1982), there are four levels of comprehension: literal, inferential, evaluation, and appreciation. These levels and their specific tasks that readers perform at various levels are as follows:

a. Literal Comprehension

Literal comprehension, also called factual comprehension, requires the recognition or recall of ideas, information, and happenings that are explicitly stated in the materials read. Recognition tasks, which frequently take the purpose of reading, require the students to locate or identify explicit statements in the reading selection. Recall tasks demand the students to produce from memory explicit statement from a selection; such tasks are often in the form of question that the teachers pose to students after reading is completed.

b. Inferential Comprehension

Inferential comprehension is demonstrated by the student when s/he uses a synthesis of the literal content of a selection, his personal knowledge, his intuition, and his imagination as a basis for conjecture or hypotheses. Generally, the inferential comprehension is elicited by purposes for reading and by teacher's questions which demand thinking and imagination which are stimulated by, but go beyond, the printed page.

c. Evaluation

Evaluation is demonstrated by a student when s/he makes judgments about the content of a reading selection by comparing it with external criteria, e.g., information provided by the teacher on the subjects, authorities sources on the subjects, or by accredited written sources on the subject; or with internal criteria, e.g., the reader's experiences, knowledge, or values related to the subjects under consideration. In essence, evaluation requires students to make judgments about the content of their reading, judgments that have to do with its accuracy, acceptability, worth, desirability, completeness, suitability, timelines, quality, truthfulness, or probability of occurrence.

d. Appreciation

Appreciation has to do with the students' awareness of literary techniques, forms, styles, and structures employed by the authors to stimulate emotional responses in their readers. Obviously, the primary focus is on the heightening the students' sensitivity to the ways the authors achieve an emotional as well as an intellectual impact to their readers.

In addition, according to Harris (1972) the skills in reading comprehension are:

- a. Acquisition of a rich, extensive, accurate vocabulary
- b. Ability to grasp the meaning of unit increasing size, phrase, sentence, paragraph, and the whole selection
- c. Ability to find the answers to the specific questions
- d. Ability to understand sequence of events
- e. Ability to select and to understand main ideas
- f. Ability to note and to recall details
- g. Ability to grasp the organization of the author's plan
- h. Ability to follow directions accurately
- i. Ability to evaluate what one reads
- j. Ability to remember what one has read

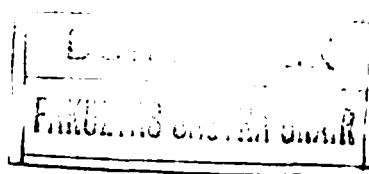
However, according to the 1994 English curriculum (Depdikbud, 1993), the expected reading skills acquired by the students in high schools are:

1. *Menemukan informasi tertentu*
2. *Mendapatkan gambaran umum tentang isi bacaan*
3. *Menemukan pikiran utama yang tersurat*
4. *Menemukan pikiran utama yang tersirat*
5. *Menemukan semua informasi rinci yang tersurat*
6. *Mendapatkan informasi yang tersirat*
7. *Menafsirkan makna kata, frasa berdasarkan konteks*
8. *Mendapatkan rasa senang (Depdikbud, 1993)*

English Translation:

1. Finding specific information
2. Finding general idea of the content of the text
3. Finding the explicit main ideas
4. Finding the implicit main ideas
5. Finding explicit detailed information
6. Finding implied information
7. Interpreting meaning of words, phrases based on the context
8. Getting enjoyment of reading

Following the above description, the writer found that items 1 and 3 are at the level of factual comprehension. Items 5 and 2 are at the level of inferential comprehension. Items 4 and 6 are at the level of evaluation. Finally, items 7 and 8 are at the level of appreciation. Furthermore, the writer also assumes that those four levels of reading comprehension require the connecting process of the reader's identification and recognition to the printed selection with the knowledge already stored in their memory, in which could be facilitated by the using of pre-reading activities.



II.3 Reading Material

According to the 1994 English curriculum (Depdikbud, 1993) the reading materials for the high school students are:

...teks berbentuk narasi, deskripsi, percakapan, argumentasi, dan yang berbentuk khusus (jadual, formulir, daftar isi buku, indeks, pengumuman, buku petunjuk, pamphlet, tiket, label, catatan harian, leaflet, selebaran, brosur, daftar acara, surat) yang panjangnya lebih kurang 250 kata...

English translation:

...narrative texts, descriptive texts, dialogue scripts, argumentative texts, and particular forms (schedule, forms, table of contents, indexes, announcements, manuals, pamphlets, tickets, package labels, journals, leaflets, prospective, brochures, programme lists, letters) which spans approximately 250 words...

Moreover, according to Coady (cited in Carrel, 1988), the subject of reading materials should be of high interest and relate well to the background of the reader. The interest and background knowledge will enable students to comprehend a reasonable rate and keep him involved in the material in spite of its syntactic difficulty.

From the above description, the writer has found that many reading materials can be applied in his study. However, knowing his limitation and inexperience, the writer derived the three reading materials from junior high school textbooks (published) for second-year students. Each of them was applied for each session of data collection. These textbooks differ from the textbook used by the respondents (i.e., students of SMP Negeri

16 Surabaya) and are in accordance with GBPP 1994 Curriculum. (See Appendix, p.53 – 57.)

II.4 Types of Reading Questions

Following the objectives of reading comprehension in the GBPP, reading comprehension skills which are presented in the examination are usually getting the main idea, vocabulary, context, details, summary, reference, and inferential question.

There are many types of reading comprehension questions. Karim (cited in Fungidiawati, 1987) divides them into three types:

- a. **Factual question:** questions that are based on the information specifically stated in the selection.
- b. **Inferential question:** question that are based on the information that is relevant to, but not specifically stated in the selection.
- c. **Main idea:** question for instance themes, main idea, or best title question.

Further, Norris (cited in Fungidiawati, 1987) said that five types of question for comprehension can be graded according to linguistics form of the required response, the relation between information that is needed to answer correctly, and the information provided in the reading selection.

Type 1: information for the reading sufficient for the answer is contained in the question itself.

- a) answerable simple by yes/no or true/false
- b) multiple choice answers are given with the question.

Type 2: answerable with the information quoted directly from the reading selection (wh-question—who, when, what).

Type 3: answerable with information acquired from the reading selection, but not by direct quotation from a single (usually why or how question).

Type 4: answerable with information acquired from the reading; the information is not stated explicitly in the selection.

Type 5: the answer requires evaluation or judgment which relates the reading selection to the additional information or experience of the readers.

The reading comprehension questions used in this study are the ones already provided in each of the chosen reading materials in the selected textbooks. Whereas the chosen textbooks are in accordance with GBPP 1994 Curriculum, the writer assumes that these reading comprehension questions fit the requirements of this study.

II.5 Types of Reading Performance

According to Lewis and Hill (1992) the types of reading performance in the language classroom could be described in the manner of the chart below. (See Figure II.2)

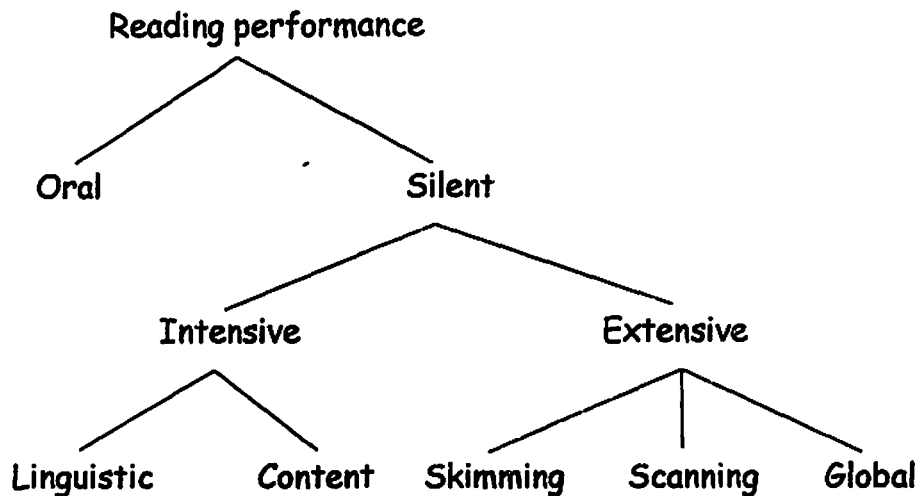


Figure II.2 Lewis and Hill (1992), variety of reading performance

Oral reading, reading aloud or reading out loud, involves both the reader and the hearer to get and understand the information and the general ideas of a given reading text. Conversely, silent reading, reading silently, only involves the reader himself.

Silent reading may be subcategorized into intensive and extensive reading. Intensive reading means students are expected to understand everything they read and to be able to answer detailed vocabulary and comprehension questions. In other hand, extensive reading means students have a general understanding of the text without necessarily understanding every word.

Intensive reading is usually a classroom-oriented activity in which students focus on the linguistic or semantic details of a passage. Intensive reading calls students' attention to grammatical forms, discourse markers, and other surface structure details for the purpose of understanding literal meaning, implications, rhetorical relationship, and the like.

Extensive reading is carried out to achieve a general understanding of a text. This, especially, sometimes involves skimming (the eyes run over the text to discover what the main idea of the passage is) and scanning (the reader looks out for particular items in the text) for gaining the general sense of a text. At other times, perhaps after students have done some pre-reading activities, skimmed for the gist, and scanned for some key details, extensive reading is quite simply a relatively rapid and efficient process of reading a text for global or general meaning.

Given the above description and in conjunction with the objective of the study, the writer asked all respondents to perform silent reading, intensively or extensively, in order to accomplish the given tasks.

II.6 Pre-reading

Lewis and Hill (1992) suggest that all language use in real life occurs in situations which allow the language user to rely heavily on anticipation and context. It is correspondingly difficult to ask students to read a new reading text with no preparation. Thus, a set of pre-reading activities may encourage students to get a general understanding. A good reading preparation involves:

a) Introduction

The teacher gives students a brief (two or three sentences) introduction to the content of the text. Many well-designed modern textbooks use photograph or other illustration which help to indicate

the general content of the text. Teachers should, if necessary, specifically draw attention to these and help students to bring to mind vocabulary and ideas which will occur in the text.

b) Pre-question

Pre-question are comprehension question asked before the students read the text. They help students understand the text by focusing attention on the key words and ideas. Two or three pre-question are enough. These questions should follow the main story-line or line of argument in the text and be in the correct sequence. They are intended to indicate the basic structure of the text, and help student anticipation.

c) Vocabulary

Teachers take certain new words which occur in the text or have correlation with. This may be done by using word-ladders, or word-roses. For these, the certain word is written at the top of the ladder, or in the centre of the rose. (See Figure II.3.) Then, teachers ask students to fill in the blank space. Each word they fill in should be connected to the central word. This kind of vocabulary focus provides an amusing way of previewing vocabulary, and provides an excellent part of the general preparation for text study.

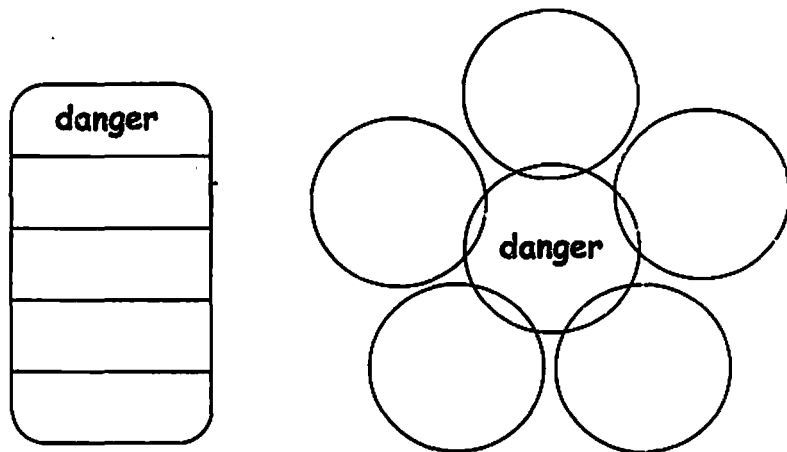


Figure 11.3 Lewis and Hill (1992), Word-Ladder and Word Rose

In this study, the writer applied those three steps of guidance for the pre-reading activities as the intended treatment of the respondents in the pre-reading group. The details are enclosed in the appendix section. (See Appendix, p.50 – 52)

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA