

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

II.1 Reading Comprehension

II.1.1 Conception of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is an extremely complex process whose different views result in different types of reading model. Reading models can be classified into three categories based on the three general principles of how reading is assumed to be processed; the models are top down, bottom up and interactive processing.

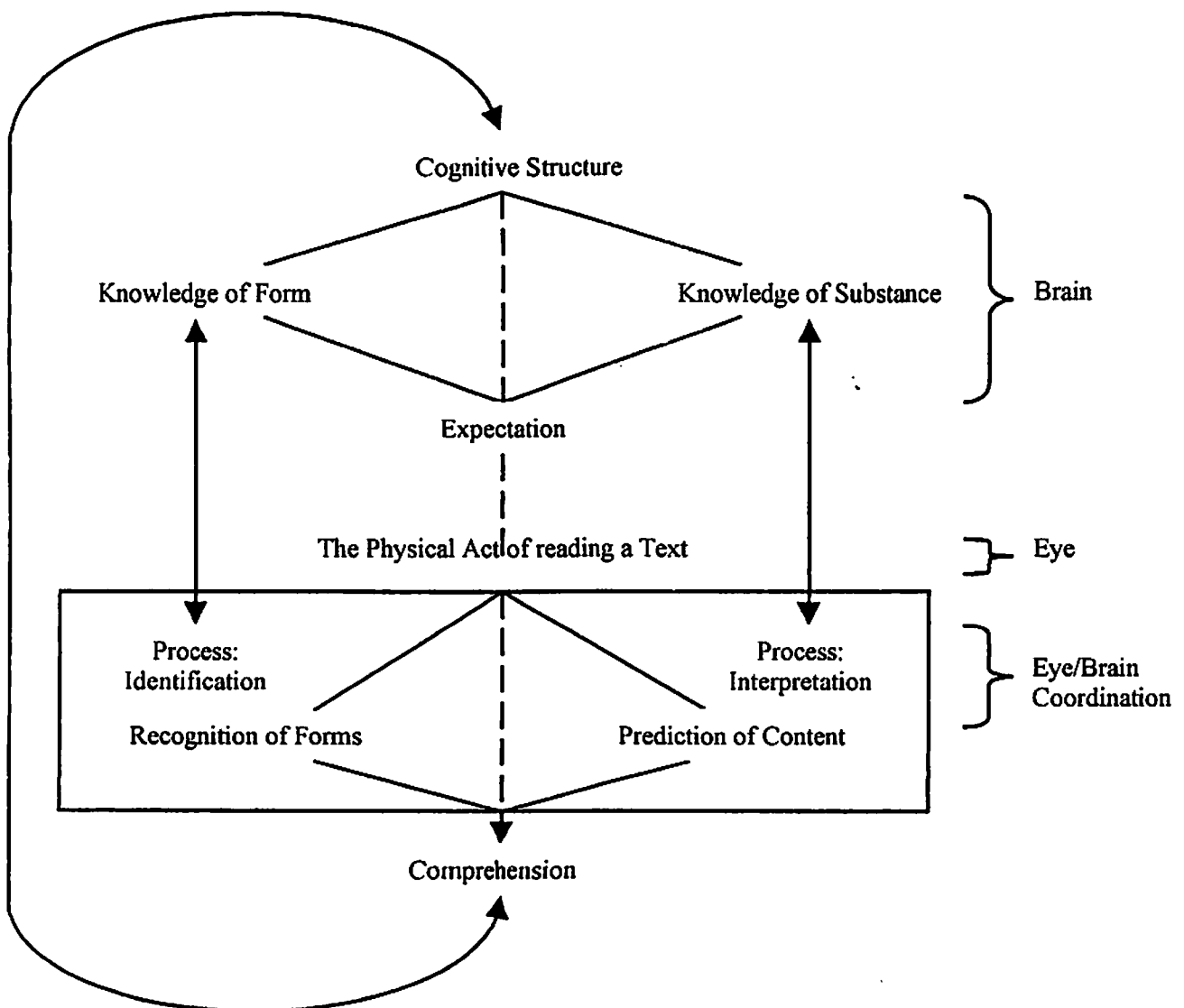
The primary characteristic of top down model is that the “top” of the information processing system, which is the part that is constructing the meaning of the passage, controls the information flow at all levels. According to Pollatsek and Rayner (1989:467), in the top down model, the reader uses their general world knowledge and contextual information from the passage being read to make hypotheses about what will come next during reading.

On the other hand, the basic idea of bottom up model is that visual information is initially sampled from the printed page and the information is transformed through a series of stages with little influence from general world knowledge, contextual information. The processing of comprehension in this model is very fast and that information flows through the processing system in a series of stages.

Another model of reading which has a great influence in cognitive psychology is interactive model. In this model, the reader is usually assumed to be drawing upon both top down and bottom up information before eventually settling upon an interpretation of the text (Pollatsek and Rayner, 1989:15).

Eskey (1986:15) displayed a diagram of the interactive model of the reading process. He conceived reading as a particular type of cognitive behavior based on certain kinds of knowledge which forms a part of the reader' cognitive structure. The diagram is presented as follows:

Figure 2.1 Reading as Cognitive Behavior: An interactive Model



It begins with cognitive structure in the brain, that is, what the reader knows and stored schemata in his long term memory. Here, he/she must know the language well enough in each written form and know enough about the subject matter of the text. These are to ensure that the text will be comprehensible to him/her. Yet, his/her knowledge of form will provide him/her a certain expectation about the language of the text. Given this expectation, during the physical act of reading, he/she can make an accurate identification of form, and if his/her reading skills are well developed, he/she will be able to do this quickly and automatically. Simultaneously, his/her knowledge of substance will provide him/her with a certain expectation about the larger conceptual structure of the text. Given this expectation, he/she can make accurate predictions in interpreting the text. In achieving comprehension, a personal reconstruction of the meaning of the text will be determined by the reader's knowledge and reasoning power. The word "interactive" refers to both interaction of the reader's several kinds of knowledge and the interaction of the reader and the text. But as the arrow from comprehension back to cognitive structure suggests, these two kinds of interaction blend into one as, in the normal process of reading, the reader makes the text part of what he/she knows.

II.1.2 Reading Strategies in Interactive Conception

McNeil (1992:4) stated that reading comprehension from interactive view consists of developing reading strategies. Since reading strategies are in the range of interactive concept of reading, there are three main cognitive theories

underlying the interactive conception in reading process: schema, active, metacognition. In schema theory, there are mental processes of how the reader's prior knowledge influences the newly obtained information in the text, how this is organized to facilitate the interaction, and how the reader's schemata affect the processing of the textual information.

Active theory means that readers has autonomy to set their own purpose for reading and adopt their reading strategies. In this theory, reading strategies are used to carry out the active processes. The active processes are a selective attention towards relevant text information, memorizing, constructing internal connection among ideas in the text, integrating the prior knowledge and new information in the text.

Metacognition theory refers to the awareness of one's own cognitive processes and self regulation in reading comprehension. Therefore, there exist mental activities. The mental activities are: being aware when one is not comprehending text and awareness of difficulties sources; regulating the reading activities; monitoring and checking comprehension of the text by posing questions.

II.2 Strategies and Effective Reading Skill

In the province of reading, the terms 'strategies' and 'skill' are often interchangeable in use. Although absolutely these two terms are different in meaning, they are related to each other since they have similar essence in their practical meanings. Oxford and Crookall as cited in Singhal (2001) defined

strategies as the learning techniques, behaviors, or study skills which make learning more effective and efficient. Marjourie & Wixson (1991:16) stated that skilled readers know much about reading process and this knowledge influence their ability to select and use appropriate strategies and skills in different situations.

From the two definitions, it can be presumed that reading strategies are effective directions or plans in a reading activity designed for a particular purpose, while the reading skills are the ability to get the purpose of reading activity. Thus in practice, this is why, these two terms are often interchangeable.

Although Doie as cited in Singhal (2001) has distinguished between the two, it still can be concluded that they are related to each other with regard to the principal objective of both strategies and effective reading skills to achieve. When strategies which are still flexible, intentional or deliberate and more about planning have been implemented and become habitual to the reader, they will be effective reading skills. When the deliberate planning becomes a custom, it may become the effective skill to plan, and if the strategies are performed frequently, they can become skills as so called alternative routines.

Cohen (1990:83) defined reading strategies as mental process that readers use consciously in reading. Furthermore, he states that there are characteristics of the strategies such as planning, competition, conscious manipulation and movement toward a goal. Concerning the objective of reading activity, this corresponds to the idea that effective reading means having an ability to read

accurately and efficiently and to understand the reading text based on the reader's need in order to achieve his or her purpose (Greenal & Swann, 1986:2).

In summary, both strategies and effective skills of reading are related to one another with regard to their similarity in practice and objective. Furthermore, as not all strategies in reading are good for particular learners, depending on the learner's condition and preference, and skilled readers usually know much about reading process and this knowledge influences their ability to select and use appropriate strategies and skills in different situations (Marjorie & Wixson, 1991:16), it can be inferred that in the province of reading, skills is the broader term in general than strategies.

II.3 Reading Proficiency of EFL

As a learner who attempts to read texts of English as a foreign language, he or she is supposed to get the target of reading that is comprehension. How good the reader's comprehension is – that requires some effective reading skills planned and performed in the learners' strategies – determines his reading attainment. At this point, his or her ability is realized. However, to get the degree of ability, it is important to get measurement. It is noted here that proficiency is one term used for measurement of a language skill performance. Since this study deals with the students' general degree of reading ability, this term is discussed in this section. Therefore the definitions and the use of proficiency in this study are considered significant to review.

There are several definitions of the term 'proficiency,' however, the crucial meaning is simply the same. In the view of language testing, this term means the students' "current level of competence" (Harris, 1994:3). He adds, "a general proficiency test indicates what an individual is capable of doing now (as a result of his cumulative learning experience), though it may also serve as a basis for predicting future attainment."

Furthermore, this term is used as one of the divisions of language testing in the classification to measure the language performance: aptitude, proficiency, and achievement (Harris, 1994:4). Therefore, he distinguished the meaning of proficiency from achievement, which seems to be interchangeable. He defines achievement test as the level of the student's mastery of specific skills in a learning situation or in reference to a curriculum.

Another reasonable definition is found in a complete source of reference, the Oxford English Dictionary (1993). It states several definitions of proficiency, but the following two definitions are close to the term meant in this study: (1) progress or advance towards completeness or perfection; improvement in skill or knowledge as distinguished from perfection, and (2) the state or degree of improvement attainment, and advanced condition; expertise (1993).

Examining the dictionary definitions, which are more general than Harris', it can be inferred that the term is merely the present performance in improving a skill or knowledge. A proficient learner is one that achieves the advanced performance in acquiring a skill.

From the review, these references confirm the use of proficiency in this study. As the purpose is investigating its relationship with the reading strategies choice. The strategy is assumed to contribute to the learners' success in reading ability. The learners' current ability in reading, their proficiency, is compared to the implementation of reading strategies.

The selection of proficiency test functioned as the instrument to measure the learners' reading ability is that this measurement is administered to collect data of their reading performance at present time without a reference of any course curriculum. This is intended to get the learners' general reading ability, based on a standardized test of proficiency.

TOEFL as a standardized test is preferably used in this study for some reasons (Vockell cited in Calvo, 2002). First, this type of test provided a high-tested reliability and validity. Second, this test has usually been reviewed by the specialists in an appropriate field.

II.4 Classification of Reading Strategies

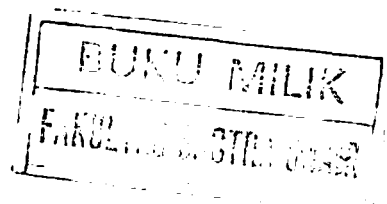
Classification of reading strategies so far has varied according to many perspectives of reading experts. There is no conformity among them in defining, categorizing among them. Hence it seems inevitable to see any classification conflicts. There are various kinds of classification in reading strategies proposed by some experts.

Sarig as cited in Cohen (1990:91) classifies reading strategies into four basic types. They include:

1. Support Strategies-types of reading acts undertaken to facilitate high-level strategies, for example, skimming, scanning, skipping, marking in the text, and using a glossary.
2. Paraphrase strategies-decoding strategies to clarify meaning by simplifying syntax, finding synonyms for words and phrases, looking for prepositions or basic ideas, and identifying the function of portions of the text.
3. Strategies for establishing coherence in text-the use of world knowledge or clues in the text to make the text intelligible as a piece of connected discourse-for example, looking for organization, using context, and distinguishing the discourse function in the text (such as introduction, definition, exemplification, and conclusion).
4. Strategies for supervising strategy use-conscious strategies for checking on the reading process as it takes place-for example, planning, ongoing self-evaluation, changing the planning and executing of tasks, identifying misunderstandings, and remediating when reading problems are found.

Others classification are general and local strategies. Block as cited in Barnett (1989:68) categorizes the strategies into:

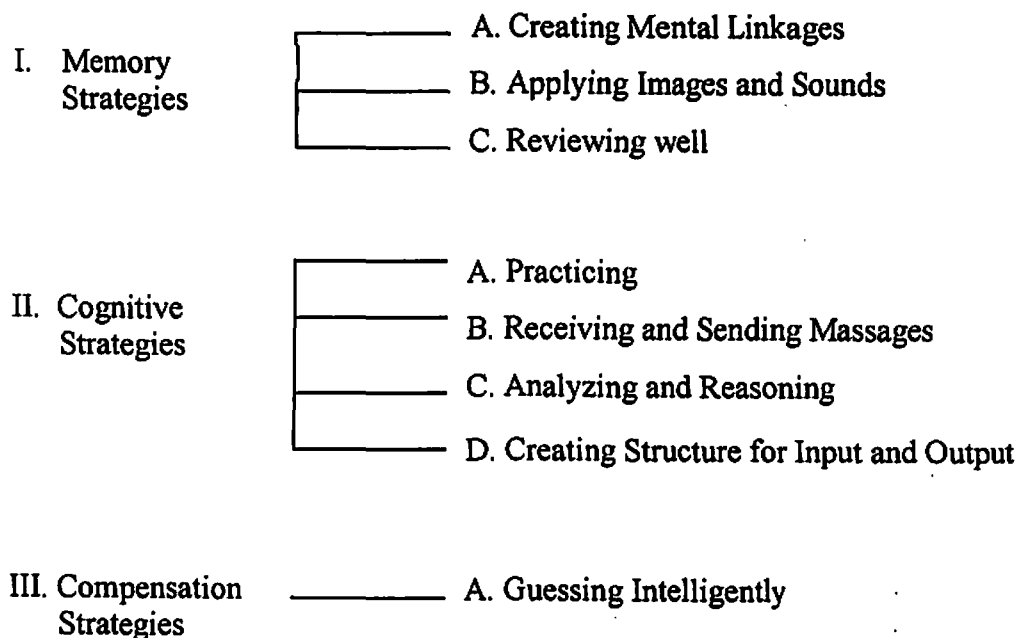
1. General Strategies: anticipate content, recognize text structure, integrate information, interpret the text, use general knowledge and association, and comment on processes, correct behavior.



2. Local Strategies: paraphrase, reread, question meaning of clause or sentence, question meaning of word, solve vocabulary problem

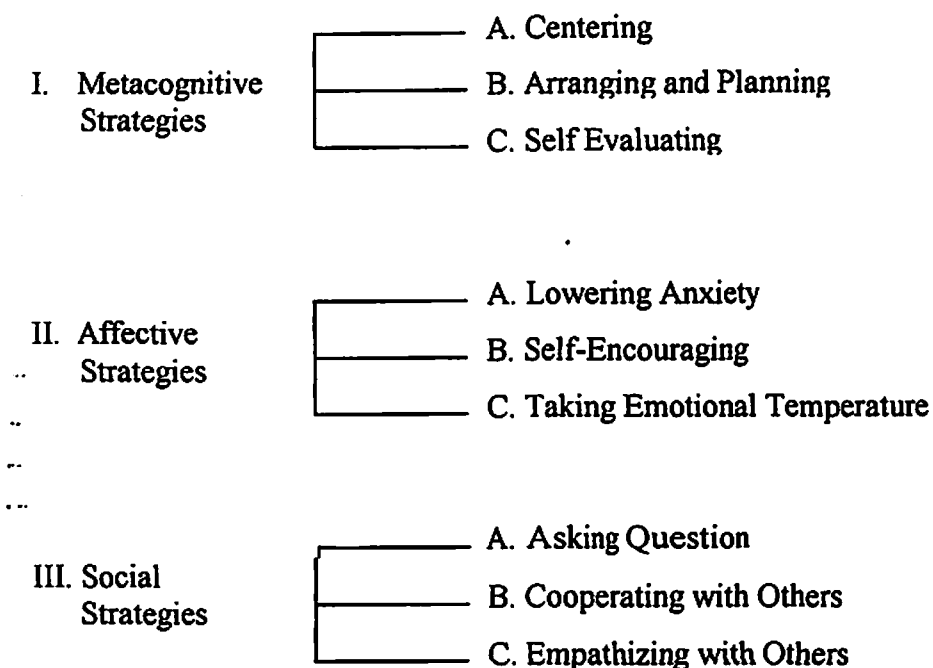
Oxford (1990) classification seems to be the most acceptable as it systematic and covers complete strategies in reading. She classifies reading strategies into two major classes, direct strategies: memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, and indirect strategies: metacognitive strategies, affective strategies and social strategies. These groups of strategies divided into nineteen sets of strategies in her original strategy system, and each strategy set comprises some strategy names. The complete classification can be seen in the following diagrams.

Figure 2.2 Diagram of Direct Strategies



The direct and indirect Strategies which are divided into six strategies groups are originally taken from classification created by Oxford as well as the seventeen strategies sets.

Figure 2.3 Diagram of Indirect Strategies



Oxford (1990) classification seems to be more acceptable in this study. It is by virtue of the study attempts to investigate reading strategies and reading proficiency. Therefore, the most complete classification is required in this study to investigate reading strategies.

II.4.1 Direct Strategies

Strategies that directly involve the target language are called direct strategies. The direct strategies are composed of memory strategies, such as grouping and using imagery, have a highly specific function: for remembering and retrieving new information. Cognitive strategies for understanding and producing the language like summarizing. Compensation strategies for using the language despite knowledge such as guessing or using synonyms.

II.4.1.1 Memory Strategies

Memory strategies help the readers store in memory the important things they read in the new language and also enable them to retrieve information in memory. Memory strategies fall into four sets: Creating Mental Linkages, Applying Images and Sounds, Reviewing Well, and Employing Action. Below are the definitions of each memory strategy, as clustered into appropriate strategy sets.

- A. Creating Mental Linkages: grouping, associating/elaborating, placing new words into a context.
- B. Applying Images and Sounds: using imagery, semantic mapping, using keywords, representing sounds in memory.
- C. Reviewing Well: Structured Reviewing.

II.4.1.2 Cognitive Strategies

Cognitive strategies are a varied lot, ranging from repeating to analyzing expression to summarizing. With all their variety, cognitive strategies are unified by a common function: manipulation or transformation of the target language by the readers. Four sets of cognitive strategies are Practicing, Receiving and Sending Messages, Analyzing and Reasoning, and Creating Structure for input and Output are the definitions of important cognitive strategies.

- A. Practicing: repeating, recognizing patterns of sentences, practicing naturalistically.
- B. Receiving and Sending Messages: getting the idea quickly, using resources for receiving and sending messages.
- C. Analyzing and Reasoning: analyzing expressions, analyzing contrastively, translating, transferring.
- D. Creating Structure for Input and Output: taking notes, summarizing, highlighting

II.4.1.3 Compensation Strategies

Compensation Strategies enable readers to use the new language for comprehension despite limitation in knowledge. The set of compensation strategy is Guessing Intelligently. It could be using linguistic clues and using other clues.

II.4.2 Indirect Strategies

These strategies support and manage reading without directly involving the target language. Indirect strategies are divided into metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. Metacognitive strategies for coordinating the reading process by function such as centering, planning, and evaluating. Affective strategies for regulating emotions, motivations, and attitudes. Social strategies for reading, through interaction. Bellow are the definitions of metacognitive strategies.

II.4.2.1 Metacognitive Strategies

Metacognitive strategies are behaviors undertaken by the readers to plan, arrange, and evaluate their own reading. Metacognitive strategies fall into three sets: centering, planning, and evaluating.

- A. Centering: over viewing and linking with already known material, and paying attention.
- B. Arranging and planning: finding out about reading, organizing, setting goals and objective, identifying the purpose of reading task, planning for task, seeking practice opportunities.
- C. Evaluating: self-monitoring and self-evaluating.

II.4.2.2 Affective Strategies

The term affective refers to emotions, attitudes, motivations, and values. It is impossible to overstate the importance of the affective factors. Three sets of affective strategies are lowering your anxiety, encouraging yourself, and taking

your emotional temperature. Below are the definitions of each affective strategy, as clustered into appropriate strategy sets.

- A. Lowering your anxiety: using progressive relaxation, deep breathing, or meditation, using music, using laughter.
- B. Encouraging yourself: making positive statement, taking risks wisely, rewarding yourself.
- C. Taking your emotional temperature: listening to your body.

II.4.2.3 Social Strategies

Social strategies are those that involve other individuals in the reading process and refer to cooperation with peers. Questioning, asking for correction, and feedback. For example, while reading, a student may ask another individual for feedback about his/her reading.

- A. Asking Questions: asking for clarification or verification.
- B. Cooperating with others: cooperating with peers, cooperating with proficient users of the new language.
- C. Empathizing with Others: developing cultural understanding, becoming aware of others' thoughts and feelings.

In order to get the complete of strategies in reading, the latter classification created by Oxford seems to be more acceptable in this study, because it is more complete than others' classification. Therefore, the most complete classification is needed in this study to identify the type of reading strategies that are mostly used by the English Department Students of Airlangga University, and to find the

correlation between reading strategy choice and reading proficiency of the English Department Students of Airlangga University.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA