A Broad Guide to Reading and Comprehension

A Broad Guide to Reading and Comprehension

By

Mahmoud Sultan Nafa

A Broad Guide to Reading and Comprehension

By Mahmoud Sultan Nafa

This book first published 2022

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

I dedicate this book to my parents' souls and to all members of my family who are the source of my inspiration. I also dedicate it to my dearest respectable and reputable friends – Mr. Saeed Nouri and the members of his council – since they have been highly supportive academically and psychologically in all stages of producing this distinguished work as well as other works. Moreover, I dedicate this book to the glowing candle of my love and life, my grandson Abdullah.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that having a high linguistic competence requires the full mastery of the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing as well the syntactic and lexical dimensions of the language tools, reading is considered to be the most vital pillar for enhancing all these skills. It enables readers to enhance all language skills as humans learn most information via the broad gate of reading. Furthermore, reading takes much of individuals' time as people spend more time on reading than other skills.

A Book is the Core of Enlightenment

This book contains seven chapters that cover various comprehensive reading domains. Chapter one investigates a plethora of reading theories and models that guide readers to comprehend the core components of the reading process. Furthermore, chapter two introduces many reading strategies and techniques that readers can utilize to understand reading texts thoroughly and in depth. Chapter three works as a guide for teachers and educationalists on carrying out an effective reading teaching process by displaying the multi-level roles that teachers can play to engage students in the reading process and to create independent and critical readers. Moreover, chapter four presents the comprehensive criteria of shortlisting teaching tasks from teachers' and students' perspectives which make the

reading process more conducive, practical and constructive. From another perspective, chapter five explores many strategies for designing supportive reading tasks that respond to students' levels, needs and interests. Additionally, chapter six probes several reading text exploiting strategies that can respond to and develop students' critical and creative reading abilities at diverse levels. Chapter seven explicates numerous assessment tools to evaluate reading in order to promote and enhance students' reading skills, enrich their vocabulary and boost their language competence.

In a nutshell, the key objective of this book is to create an independent learner with a new perspective of a critical and scrutinizing ability who reads to comprehend, evaluate and decide. This book achieves this orientation through adopting the academic research approach of exploring a myriad of books, journals and conference papers as well as other databases. More importantly, this book draws a broader background of carrying out a broader reading process through highlighting, reading theories, strategies, shortlisting reading texts, and multi-tiered text exploitation techniques along with offering a flexible assessment guide to direct, correct and develop reading, teaching and learning.

Keywords: *exploitation, THIEVES & SMELL reading, informativeness, metacognition, suitability, readability, endophoric*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Due to the pivotal importance of reading in all domains of knowledge, it is identified and discussed by many researchers of domains from various perceptions. Accordingly, they define reading based on their perspectives and purposes, but all of them agree on the broad and extreme vitality of this crucial skill. Berado (2006, p. 60) defines reading from different facets based on the reading purpose as he points out that "Reading means different things to different people, for some it is recognizing written words, while for others it is an opportunity to teach pronunciation and practice speaking".

I get sad every time I hear a person say, "I don't read." It's like saying "I don't learn," or "I don't laugh," or "I don't live."
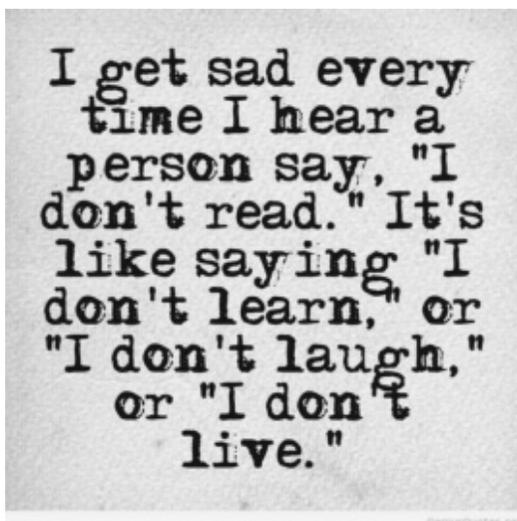
No reading no learning

Alderson (2000) outlines reading as a tool for enjoyment that people practice privately while being absorbed. Kovacs (2018, p. 56) focuses on mastering reading strategies as the key determinant for gaining knowledge and excelling in many successful careers such as translation, research and teaching. She hypothesizes that "Reading comprehension is one of the essential skills that language learners have to develop… necessary for the development and practice of the other skills." Furthermore, she points out

that reading comprehension is an exceedingly communicative and complex process that requires the four major levels of letter recognition, word-meaning decoding, syntax recognition and text exploration. Kovacs (p. 57) also confirms that to have a wide-ranging comprehension of any text, readers should be acquainted with general and close reading due to their complementary and interactive relations through postulating:

> The general approach helps the reader to discover the main concepts, the essential ideas of the text. Close reading means that any challenging words, terms, or expressions have to be looked up and their meaning must be clarified.

Baier (2005, p. 8) claims that reading is a decisive skill that prepares readers to deal with different variables in the fast-paced and fast-developing societies. She also argues that learners will fail to acquire various domains of knowledge without mastering reading strategies as she affirms that "Reading is fundamentally important for success since it opens the door for freedom or shuts the door to opportunity minding learning to need is a mean to an end."

However, Urquhart and Weir (1998, p. 35) say that effective reading is a combination of skill and comprehension as they define skill as "a cognitive ability which a person is able to use when interacting with texts". Thus, they present skill as a tool for attacking reading texts; by contrast, they consider comprehension as the product or outcome of an effective utilization of skill while dealing with the reading texts. Consequently, they stipulate mastering the reading skill as a prerequisite for a multi-tiered comprehension. Kim (2009, p. 4) agrees with them regarding the use of cognitive skills such as parsing, bridging and discourse-building when exploring reading texts as he approves that "… reading should be seen as a cognitive activity, where the reader interacts with the text to derive meaning."

Kovacs (2018, p. 57) partially agrees with Urquhart and Weir and suggests four distinguishing levels for reading in order to comprehend texts profoundly. Thus, she highlights the physical recognition of letters, the meaning decoding of words, the comprehension of words' grammatical structures and the in-depth interpretation of texts. Furthermore, Kovacs confirms the importance of ultra-text factors for comprehending texts by arguing "… the understanding of a text may also depend on the reader's language proficiency, cultural competence, background knowledge, and area of interest."

Davis (1964, cited in Kim, 2009) goes further by assuming that there are eight levels of reading comprehension in terms of recalling words and extracting their meaning from the texts as well as discovering explicit information and assimilating the ideas within texts. Additionally, reading ability implies making inferences from the reading texts and probing authors' objectives, techniques and tones, in addition to the texts' structures. Grabe (1991) shows a partial agreement with Davies, but he categorizes reading into six perspectives in terms of automatic recognition and lexical and syntactic knowledge as well as synthesis and analytical faculties. He also suggests the utilization of metacognitive skills which complement and support Kim's and Liu's hypothesis regarding the use of the higher order thinking skills (HOTS) when dealing with reading texts.

From another perspective, Davis and Bistodeau (1993) make a more detailed analysis of the reading process. They define reading as an interactive process between the readers and the texts where they use the bottom-up cognitive skills through analyzing texts at the word, sentence and detail levels. Readers also utilize the top-down techniques where they use the background, predict the gist and skim to get the meaning of the text. However, Carrell and Eisterhold (1983) investigate reading from a higher academic perception since they conclude that reading is a three-faceted interactive process between readers and texts, in addition to a group of lower-level rapid skills and higher-level understanding and interpretation skills.

CHAPTER 1

READING MODELS, PURPOSES, LEVELS AND THEORIES

Reading Models

Reading can be defined from different views based on purpose and function. Snow (2002) defines reading comprehension as an interactive process between readers and texts for simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning from the reading texts. Duke (2003) adds more depth to this definition as she adds navigation and critique by confirming that throughout the reading process readers explore or navigate the texts and critique their information by evaluating it according to their background knowledge. Snow provides a broader common definition coined through consulting many educationalists as he proposes (p. 272):

> comprehension is a process in which readers construct meaning by interacting with text through the combination of prior knowledge and previous experience, information in the text, and the stance the reader takes in relationship to the text.
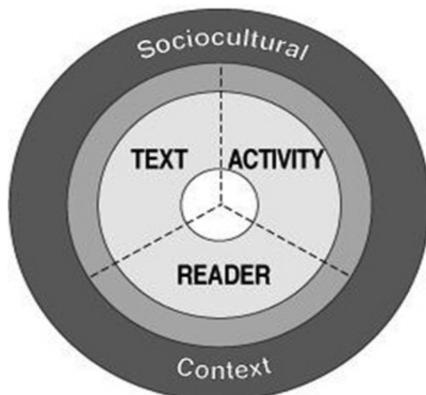
Figure 1. The RAND Heuristic (2002)

From another standpoint, Wegenhart (2015) provides a more detailed definition for reading as he found that reading could be defined as the confluence of five unique skills: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. This definition acts as a roadmap for guiding teachers to teach reading systematically and psychologically. RAND (2002, cited in Wegenhart, 2015, p. 10) presents another view of reading by pointing out all the components of the reading process through the RAND Heuristic Model which posits that reading is an outcome of many factors, stating that, "The model envisions reading comprehension as a product of the Reader, the Text, the Activity, and the Sociocultural Context of the reading."

The text means the complexity of the reading materials in terms of organization, whether it is written in cause or effect, comparison or contrast…etc., as well as the genre and the appearance (Appendix 1). Activity implies the readers' motives for reading which vary due to the depth of comprehending the text; however, the social context means focusing on the broader image of the reading context such as the support, shared ideas and language skill standards that empower readers to comprehend texts and express their ideas based on this understanding. This model is highly practical since it promotes teachers' and readers' efficacy as well as the factors that lead to proficient reading standards by providing precise controllable features that will develop readers' competences. Thus, teachers can focus on improving the controllable factors by explicitly teaching the phonetics, syntax and lexemes along with developing students' reading skills. Furthermore, teachers can design purposeful tasks with specific objectives and genres supported by background knowledge and academic resources.

However, although teachers cannot control the social context, they can create a social classroom context through diversifying reading activities such as creating panel discussions, you-and-the-author discussions, and emotional and evaluation exercises.

From another dimension, Hoover and Tunmer (2018) introduce the Simple View of Reading (SVR) model with an emphasis on decoding lexical items and comprehending linguistic components as the key points of understanding reading texts. They postulate that the students cannot understand reading texts when they lack the ability of decoding the linguistic features of the targeted texts; simultaneously, they cannot utilize the linguistic features unless they fully understand their lexical context. Accordingly, they guide teachers to concentrate on developing students to decode and understand texts' features for comprehending and evaluating texts as well as integrating

the linguistic components in their schemas. The SVR model is characterized by focusing on the two controllable modes of explicit and implicit teaching for decoding the linguistic features of the reading texts. However, this model has some serious drawbacks as it is very condensed; therefore, it requires highly experienced teachers in terms of pedagogy techniques in addition to linguistic domains.
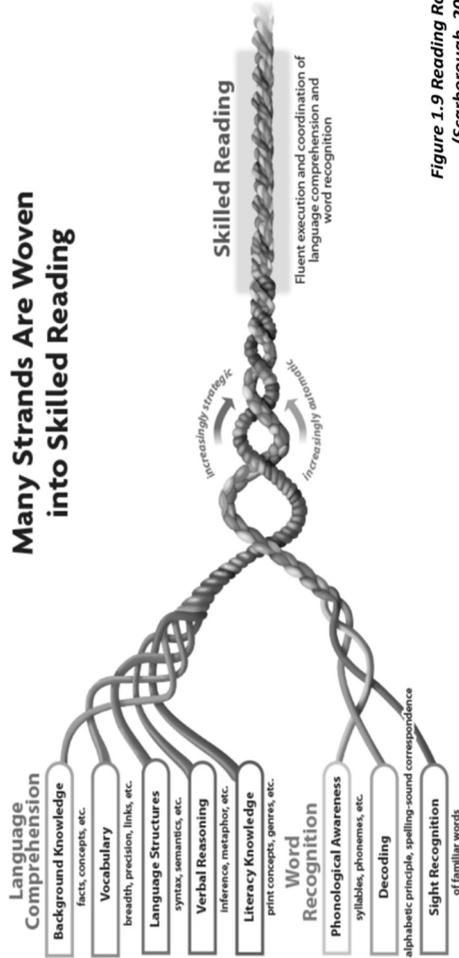
Figure 1.9 Reading Rope
(Scarborough, 2001)

In response to the limitation of the SVR model, Scarborough (2011, cited in Biemiller, 2006) presents the Reading Rope Model that breaks down reading components into two main threads with sub-models that direct teachers to identify the particular components that should be taught. Through the word recognition thread, learners use their phonological skills to merge sounds and letters into words as well as sentences, whereas decoding implies separating words distinctly in order to discriminate different sounds. Furthermore, sight recognition enables readers to recognize high-frequency recognizable words that do not require any decoding strategies. The word recognition skills are distinguished by being teachable as teachers can introduce them through repetition and modeling along with dictation provided that these strategies are supported by immediate feedback. Additionally, while tackling the word recognition strand, teachers should guide readers to attend to certain structural elements such as subject-verb agreement.
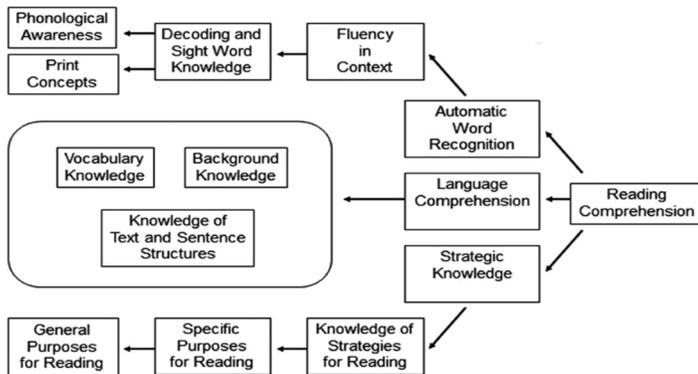
The Cognitive Model (McKenna & Stahl, 2009)

By contrast, through the background knowledge thread, readers can assume the content of certain texts based on the broad context and the specific context of the text. The broad context means using schematic or background knowledge to comprehend the specific syntactic or semantic elements of the text. The second component of the background thread – verbal reasoning – enables readers to comprehend the author's intentions, place the clauses in their correct position, and predict future events. Literacy knowledge, the third component of the background strand, enables readers to delve profoundly into the reading text by comprehending the author's word choice and how this affects the readers' comprehension. It also instructs the teachers on the text's complexity regarding the type of sentence structure in

terms of being simple, compound, complex or compound-complex. The components of the background knowledge strand are also teachable explicitly and implicitly through asking various levels of questions and analyzing sentences.

McKenna and Stahl (2009) propose the Cognitive Model that has close ties with the Reading Rope Model since many of their strands and threads intermingle and complement each other, but they are arranged in a different order. According to this model, teachers deal with the reading process directly by assessing students' reading abilities, and then highlight the points of weakness and use many mechanics to rectify them. They can break down the reading comprehension process into well-known components that can be tackled separately. For example, if the teacher discovers that a certain student is weak in comprehending and decoding sight words, they will develop practical strategies focusing solely on this default, to explore and fix it. Thus, by adopting this model in a backward manner or the top-down approach, teachers can save their own and their students' time by reinforcing only the aspects that require improvement. By the same token, teachers can specify the points of strength and build on them to develop students' reading abilities and raise their comprehension level.

EdD (n.d., p. 2) introduces reading as a highly strategic process for deriving meaning from context by utilizing a combination of various strategies such as "… the background knowledge, monitoring and clarifying, making predictions, drawing inferences, asking questions and summarizing." Furthermore, he asserts that strategic readers should be selective in shortlisting the most important information and changing this into ideas by linking it to their schematic and world knowledge. He also states that critical readers vary their reading speed through skillful monitoring and guidance as sometimes they need to skim or scan, while at other times they have to reread when encountering new and challenging texts. Furthermore, EdD focuses on making inferences as a multi-phased process that should be enhanced to boost learners' capacities to be not only critical readers, but independent learners as he postulates "Making inferences requires multiple strategies: activating prior knowledge, making predictions, summarizing, visualizing, clarifying, and asking questions" (p. 4).

From another viewpoint, EdD asserts the reciprocal relationship between background knowledge and reading. Possessing a rich background knowledge facilitates reading through enabling readers to better understand texts and to make a connection with the world of knowledge, in addition to making solid predictions and inferences. Simultaneously, reading enriches

and expands background knowledge by adding more syntactic and sematic knowledge as well as a broader cultural horizon that enable readers to utilize more text-attacking strategies to deepen their understanding of the reading texts. Additionally, he points out that making a connection between background knowledge and texts can be carried out by implementing various techniques: a. connecting new information to the schematic knowledge; b. explaining the similarities and differences between the textual information and the background knowledge and reconciling the contradictory information with background knowledge; c. formulating purposeful questions for discussing the points that cannot be derived from the texts; and d. using additional resources to comprehend the challenging knowledge and synthesizing all the acquired information with the background information.

Sangia (2014) sums up the reading process by confirming that it is not a mere reaction to symbols and signs, but an interaction between the readers' world knowledge and the textual elements to extract meaning. Furthermore, he argues that meaning should not be created based on learners' schemas and views, but should be negotiated based on texts' structural and thematical clues. Additionally, he concludes that the purpose of reading is not only gaining information but also adding, developing and expanding the readers' mental network.
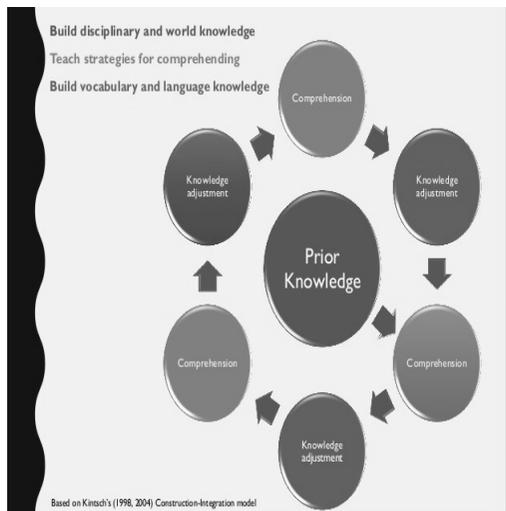
The Construction-Integration Model

Kintsch (2007) presents the Construction-Integration Practical Model that agrees with and adds a wider dimension to the schema theory reading concepts. He proposes that background knowledge and comprehension are closely interrelated as the development of one part affects the other part. He affirms that readers bring their background to the reading process when trying to comprehend the reading texts. This knowledge leads to different levels of comprehension in terms of being literal, in depth or metacognitive. Simultaneously, the newly-constructed comprehension changes and enriches the background knowledge which consequently elevates students' thinking strategies. In other words, when students read the reading texts and construct meaning, they build representations. Once these representations are constructed, the human brain integrates them with the brain's background knowledge which results in learning. Duke (2011) supports and comments on Kintsch's model by stating that (p. 53):

> When we comprehend, we gain new information that changes our knowledge, which is then available for later comprehension. So, in that positive, virtuous cycle, knowledge begets comprehension, which begets knowledge, and so on.

According to Kintsch's model, there are two levels of reading representation. The first one is text-based where students read the text meticulously to transform the ideas and information stated in the words, sentences and paragraphs of the texts to the working memory. This can be achieved by readers using their previous world and language knowledge to make textual inferences by connecting sentences to each other or linking pronouns to their antecedents for constructing a logical meaning. The second level of Kintsch's model is the situational level where the information, images, and events of the reading texts are integrated with the readers' coinciding prior knowledge stored in the working memory. To sum up, reading is a virtuous cycle where knowledge leads to comprehension and comprehension begets knowledge. However, this cycle can be crippled because some readers are unable to work through it due to their shallow background knowledge, the weakness of their inferential capacities and their low motivation and disposition to read certain texts (Appendix 2).

From another perspective, Kintsch's model categorizes readers into skilled and less skilled pointing out the reasons for having this discrepancy in their reading skills. He hypothesizes that skilled readers can read more efficiently because they have a greater facility for the reading process of reading and recognizing vocabulary as well as reading fluently to build up the local and overall meaning of the text. Moreover, skilled readers have a more mature

knowledge in terms of language knowledge – lexemes, syntax or structure identification, textual knowledge such as texts' discourse and organization along with world knowledge as they have more discipline relating to interpersonal faculties. These characteristics create and empower skilled readers by enabling them to read effectively by utilizing a greater array of textual elements and integrating a more multi-faceted world and language knowledge to construct the meaning from the text (Appendix 3). By contrast, less skilled readers lack or have low-level syntactic and lexical competence and world knowledge, so they face serious obstacles when analyzing or constructing meaning from reading texts. Guthrie and Humenick (2004) confirm another ground that distinguishes skilled readers as they are mostly more motivated and engaged in the reading process, so they can read more voluminously and at various scales. However, they agree with Duke and other researchers on teachers' vital role in fostering and developing readers' skills.

Reading Theories

Bartlett's Schema Theory

A schema is the mental structure of the general world knowledge of humans, first coined by the British psychologist Sir Frederic Bartlett (1886–1969) to explain the inaccuracy of the human recall of certain texts. He states that people give more information than that stated in the text due to the stored knowledge somewhere in their memory that he proposes as schemas or unconscious links preserving their prior knowledge. In the 1970s, Minsky developed Minsky's Frame Theory while trying to invent machines that could perceive the surrounding words with human capabilities. He argues that human beings use their own prior acquaintance to cope with new levels of information, so machines need to be supplied with certain data in order to enable them to work as humans.

Anderson (1977), a well-known psychologist, introduced the schema theory to the world of education. He points out that old knowledge stored in the schemas decisively effects the acquisition, absorption and integration of new knowledge. Information is stored in different types of folders: 1. Concepts (love, freedom…, etc.) 2. Events (weddings, feasts…, etc.) 3. Emotions (fear, anger…, etc.) 4. Roles (parents, mother…, etc.). All of these folders are interconnected forms of a certain network of knowledge and experience based on age and education, so the young and uneducated have smaller and less complicated schemas than aged educated people. Mills (2009) suggests using elaborative interrogation for building well-linked

schemas through training students to ask and answer their own comprehension questions, allowing them to improve their comprehension and memory retention. Consequently, this became a cornerstone for understanding the components of the reading process. The schema theory implies that reading comprehension can be built up by using the bottom-up strategy of decoding the information derived from letters, words and structural chunks, in addition to the top-down strategy of using the schematic or background world knowledge.

READING CUE SYSTEMS

Meaning
• Does it make sense?

Visual
• Does it look right?

Structure
• Does it sound right?

HISD **GLOBAL** GRADUATE
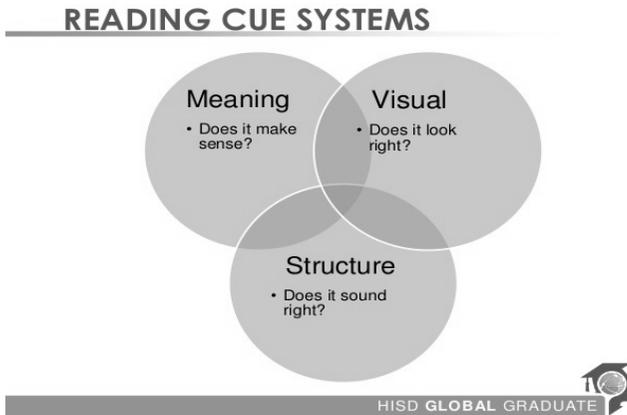
Why does the students' schematic knowledge vary?

Prado (2004) postulates that reading comprehension results from an active engagement between readers and texts by presenting a visual image of the reading comprehension consisting of reading, text, context and transaction. She advocates that each reader is unique in character, and thus reading style. The variance of readers' characteristics erupts from their world knowledge that determines the level of constructing meaning from the texts. Fletcher et al. (1994) consider this to be the most important factor in gaining the highest level of comprehension since they argue that the greater the world knowledge that readers have on a certain topic, the more profound is the metacognitive understanding that they reap. Furthermore, they confirm that world knowledge provides a more encouraging and stress-free atmosphere since it creates a fetching relation between readers and texts. They also explain that world knowledge is stored in the long-term memory as its components are kept in network connections called schemas. Throughout the reading process the short-term memory, which has a limited capacity, can pull at most ten items from the long-term memory to engage the reader

with the text. Thus, they agree with Nafa's (2017) presumption on the vitality of the brain-based approach for teaching reading. Both Fletcher et al. (1994) and Nafa (2017) explain scientifically why human beings cannot deal with many tasks concurrently. Narvaez (2002) investigates reasons for the diversity of readers' world knowledge due to the variance of their decoding and high order thinking (HOTS) skills, cognitive development, culture and objectives when attacking reading texts. Butcher and Kintsch (2003) highlight motivation as a fundamental individual difference among readers which affects comprehension efficacy and depth. They affirm that motivation activates the reading process since it definitely affects the brain chemistry positively or negatively. If the reading texts conform to readers' needs and interests, the motivation level increases and sustains the motivational factor that deepens and effectuates comprehension. By contrast, if the reading texts oppose the readers' inclination, the motivation level lowers causing shallow levels of comprehension. Patricia et al. (2009) support Butcher and Kintsch's attitude towards the impact of motivation on reading comprehension by proclaiming that demotivated readers do not grasp in-depth comprehension because they do not use an effective reading strategy or exert hard efforts to understand the targeted text from various dimensions. They also confirm that demotivated or less motivated readers cannot create an impressive meaning from the same texts like motivated readers due to the lack of interest and the lack of exploitation of text reading strategies. Nafa (2017) calls for adopting the brain-based approach as he confirms that data retention depends on comprehending the structure of the brain. He argues that knowledge is stored in different places depending on the type of teaching and learning. For instance, if the reader just reads a word or phrase, it is stored in one place, but if he listens to it, it will be stored in another place which reinforces remembrance, retention and comprehension. Consequently, he calls for integrating listening, reading, speaking and writing when tackling any educational task for enriching and re-enforcing schematic knowledge.

The Transactional Reader-Response Theory

Rosenblatt (1994) points out that the Transactional Reader-Response Theory guides readers to interact with reading texts and derive special meaning based on their emotions and schematic knowledge. Accordingly, teachers can create special contexts for any reading tasks by posing multi-tiered questions to exploit them at different degrees of the literal, in-depth comprehension level or charging students to form various types of questions to show their critical thinking echelons. Additionally, teachers can ask

students to provide the main didactic lesson derived from the texts based on a certain social perspective. Thus, teachers can create various learning opportunities based on the social or cultural contexts that they form through combining readers' individual schematic knowledge, the texts' features and the contexts' characteristics. Throughout the transaction process readers weave some mental links with the targeted texts at different points, pointing out comprehension levels in terms of gaining the gist, and detailed, endophoric or exophoric learning. The brain makes use of these links to construct images and meaning by utilizing some strategies like summarizing, clarifying, questioning and organizing to fix the received information with the readers' schematic knowledge. At the end, if the received information conforms to the background knowledge, it can be assimilated and integrated. However, if the newly constructed knowledge does not match the schematic knowledge, it can be adapted or rejected, leading to a non-comprehension result (Kucer, 2005). Furthermore, Pressley and Afflerbach (1995) investigate the reading transaction at a higher level by arguing that the brain utilizes the metacognitive skills and the fixing abilities to create a type of coherence between the new information and the background knowledge to accommodate or integrate it in the schema for future activation. Nevertheless, if this information cannot be accommodated in the schema, learning will not happen. Thus, they agree with Kucer in terms of the techniques and results of the transaction theory.

Consequently, it is evident that comprehension or different degrees of assimilating knowledge erupt from the transaction process; therefore, teachers should play crucial multi-level roles in terms of reading strategies, repairs, and scaffolding and using many reading approaches to enhance this process.

Foregrounding Theory

Abdul Kadir, Vengadasamy and Maasum (2012) add more depth to teachers' roles to complement the transaction theory as they propose the foregrounding theory. This highlights the utilization of more literary devices such as the "metaphor, simile, imagery, alliteration, assonance, repetition of key words or phrases, rhyme and meter" (p. 165) in order to add more richness to textual analysis as well as more advanced meanings away from the linguistic norms. They also confirm that the implementation of the foreground theory results in a better understanding of textual images, themes and characters in narrative texts. Furthermore, the foreground theory deepens the repercussions and affects understanding since its impacts affects the textual structure while showing psychological comprehension in

terms of facial expressions, posture and vocal intonations. Equally, they affirm the vitality of the transaction and response theory as they state that readers are more engaged in constructing texts' meaning by living the reading experience through feelings, memories or images that reading texts trigger. Thus, they agree with Rosenblatt about the important dimension that the transaction and response theory plays in developing reading comprehension. Both parties postulate that, when readers transact with reading texts, the latter create a link between their elements, and readers' experience is reinforced throughout the arising images, feelings, associations or attitudes. Vipond and Hunt (1984) agree with Abdul Kadir, Maasum and Vengadasamy's view regarding the utilization of the foreground theory as they argue that readers are attracted to reading texts by their structural or foreground elements. Miall and Kuiken (2002) affirm that teachers should be aware of students' retorts to the transaction and response and build on them for developing comprehension, creating independent readers, and developing readers' personalities. They assume that while transacting to the reading texts, students can provide an evaluative replication such as appreciation, pleasure, criticism or amusement. Besides, they can generate a narrative response across narrating fictional events, settings, and characters in addition to sympathy or empathy with these characters. Likewise, teachers can guide students to provide aesthetic responses to the form or style of certain texts which can be solid bases for interpreting texts. More importantly, students should provide self-modifying or cross-boundary responses that demonstrate the impacts of the reading texts' emotions on readers' self-development or emotional attitude and growth.

Reading Purposes and Levels

Reading Purposes

Readers can read to achieve various purposes based on their needs. Some of them read to get information as they need it for their studies or work since reading improves their language. Others read texts for adding to or enriching their knowledge through integrating more information into their schemas. Furthermore, some readers read for enjoyment as reading gives them a sense of relaxation and increases self-esteem through gaining more knowledge and experience. Lilian (1981, cited in Rusmiati, and Kamalina, 2017) defines reading purposes as reading for obtaining information, gaining pleasure or enjoyment, problem-solving and research-based evaluation. Oktarini, Suwarno, and Dharmayana (2017) support Lilian's classification of reading purposes by presuming that reading has five major purposes:

enjoyment, application, mining particular information, constructing the main idea and carrying out critical evaluation.

Reading levels

Reading comprehension can be investigated at various levels depending on the purpose of the reading process and the learners' levels. Kustaryo (1998, cited in Rusmiati and Kamalina, 2017) categorizes reading comprehension into three levels. Firstly, the literal level which is vital for all readers as they must understand what the author says before they can grasp what he implies. This level is considered to be the easiest level since readers do not need to read between the lines or go beyond the text's implications. Inferencing is the second level of comprehension that requires more engagement as readers have to delve beyond the texts' surface to understand the implied relations and link diverse facts and opinions to draw conclusions and derive generalizations. They should also build on certain clues to evaluate or detect the mood of the text based on comprehending the author and using their personal or schematic knowledge. Allen and Hancock (2008) add a more profound dimension to the concept of inferencing by postulating that it can be based on analyzing characters and the mood of the texts through examining the texture of their words. This can be determined through categorizing and identifying content words – nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs – or structural words. The third level is the critical reading that necessitates inquiring, comparing and assessing. It also demands a higher level of skill development, observation, and reading with an eye for detail as well as an active, creative and curious mind searching for deceptive remarks.

Richard et al. (2013) sorts reading comprehension into four levels that complement and support Kustaryo's classification. First is the literal or reading the line level where readers have to understand the explicit-text information. Readers do not need to go beyond the text as they are presumed to recognize and comprehend the ideas and details stated explicitly in the text. Inferential comprehension is the second level that focuses on understanding the information which is not explicitly stated in the text. Readers have to use their schematic knowledge and experience as well as their intuition to comprehend the relations among the ideas and combine them to derive conclusions to understand the implicit meaning. The critical or evaluative level requires more skills as it dictates comparing the textual information with readers' knowledge and values in order to define the text and the author's purpose for assessing their own knowledge in comparison with the textual information. The appreciative level which aims at exploring

any emotional or social values from the text is the highest level that entails a more critical view when dealing with the reading texts. In a nutshell, all of these skills should be integrated when designing or carrying out reading comprehension tasks focusing on understanding the purpose or the objective of the text based on the explicit and implicit information.

However, Westwood (2008) provides a two-tiered classification of reading comprehension levels by proposing critical reading through which students thoroughly comprehend the explicit and implicit information. They also assess the sense of the text from various perspectives such as accuracy, readability, complexity and other domains. The second level is creativity where students make use of the ideas and information gained from the texts to derive and develop more ideas.

CHAPTER 2

READING STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES

Pre-, While- and Post-reading Strategies

Adding enrichment-related tasks is another way to render authentic reading texts constructively teachable. This can be done by adding pre-reading tasks that aim at activating readers' schemas and act as a warming-up stage focusing on examining the cover page, title, author, charts, headings, font size and front flaps. Through using pictures teachers can start an active pre-reading activity by urging students to describe the essence of the picture, and then ask them to complete or give a title to the picture.

The while-reading strategy encourages readers to deal more actively, flexibly and interactively with reading texts. During this stage, students read parts of the text, and then stop to say something like commenting, predicting, asking questions or making a certain endophoric connection. Teachers handle the while-reading process by presenting the "surface problem" where they ask some factual or linear questions – avoiding yes/no questions, and completing/filling in a table or making lists. After this, teachers can do more to introduce the deeper problem by asking more in-depth questions such as those based on higher order thinking skills (HOTS), true or false questions with reasons and various activities focusing on deriving the meaning of the newly introduced vocabulary grounded on textual analysis.

By contrast, the post-reading technique usually contains various HOT questions that check readers' text comprehension. During this phase, students use a plethora of reading strategies to clarify any confusing issues, summarizing the texts and identifying details, events and characters as well as textual based inferences. Students can use the scale strategy by expressing the degree of their agreement – strongly agree, disagree, agree or strongly disagree. Retelling is another post-reading strategy where readers have to express the events in their own language, either orally or in writing. They may use the "Somebody Wanted but So" strategy (SWBS) that breaks down a summary into who wants to do the thing but why they