

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Reading is a process heavily mediated by the reader's ability to make informed predictions as he or she progresses through the text and involves the reader's ability to recompense their deficiency (Goodman, 1967). Therefore, it is equally important to know about the reading strategies which indicate how the readers understand the tasks they read and could be viewed as behavior exhibited as a result of particular reading processes occurring. The use of reading strategies is a prime characteristic of reading because it allows the readers to elaborate, organize, and evaluate information derived from text. Moreover, it reflects cognitive and metacognitive strategies, as well as motivation, because readers need to have both competence and disposition to be able to use strategies effectively in order to comprehend text.

Therefore, according to Abita (2000), there are many reading strategies to be performed, for instance, activating prior knowledge, clarifying meaning within the text, locating context clues, drawing conclusion, and so forth. On the other hand, the reading researchers usually divide reading strategies into three main categories: metacognitive, cognitive, and affective.

This section reviews the conceptual framework of reading strategies which are made up of three main categories: cognitive, affective, and

metacognitive strategies. Additionally, the research studies related to the current study are reviewed in the last section of this chapter.

### Conceptual Framework

In general, the reading strategy concepts that lead to be a skilled reader appear to have three major elements; cognitive, affective, and metacognitive. Each of these strategies is discussed here.

#### Cognitive Strategies

Cognitive strategies are more directly related to individual learning tasks and entail direct manipulation or transformation of the learning materials (O'Malley, et al., 1985). They aid the readers in constructing meaning from the text. According to Aebersold and Field (1997), while reading, readers' minds repeatedly engage in a variety of processes such as using bottom-up strategies. Readers start by processing information at the sentence level. That is, they focus on identification of the meaning and grammatical category of a word, sentence syntax, text details, and so forth.

Cognitive strategies engage students in activities that lead to understanding, knowing, or making cognitive progress (Garner, 1988). Cognition plays an important role in strategic learning when the prior knowledge or schema and domain knowledge are focused. Anderson (1996)

separates knowledge research into two categories: first generation knowledge and second generation knowledge.

First generation knowledge considers knowledge as pervasive, individualistic, and modifiable. Many studies of this knowledge focus on the importance of prior knowledge in learning, the difference of knowledge possessed by experts and novices, and the impact of the student's knowledge through strategy training. In addition, schema theory is rooted and relates to the effect of prior knowledge on a new learning situation. That is, when new information enters the mind, it must be compatible with prior knowledge, and actually entered into the proper category of the mind before comprehension can occur. According to the schema theory, comprehension is an interactive process between the text and the reader like a jigsaw puzzle. Therefore, the importance of the schema theory and the activation of prior knowledge as it relates to reading comprehension can be seen in the five functions of a schema. That is, a schema provides ideational scaffolding, permits selective attention, permits inference making, allows orderly memory searching, and facilitates editing and summarizing.

Second generation knowledge focuses more on the interactive nature of knowledge, taking into consideration other factors such as beliefs, strategies, and tasks. Second generation knowledge is domain-specific, which the knowledge is seen as situational and is studied within a particular context. Domain knowledge is currently viewed as a body of knowledge that is outside of an individual. However, it is defined as the declarative knowledge, conditional, and procedural knowledge that individuals have about a specific field of study. Declarative knowledge is "knowing that," procedural knowledge

is “knowing how,” and conditional knowledge is “knowing when and where.” For example, in selecting strategies to use to learn history, declarative knowledge would be “Text marking would be an appropriate strategy to use,” procedural knowledge would be “I know how to pull the information out in the form of a time line in the margins of my book,” and conditional knowledge would be “I know that time lines would help me learn the chronology, but I will need to select another strategy in order to see the relationships among key events.”

### Affective Strategies

According to Nist and Holschuh (2000), affective influences can provide the motivation for self-regulated learning and strategy use. There are three major influences on comprehension that are often influenced by instruction: motivation, beliefs about text, and epistemological beliefs.

First, motivation is a function of students’ perceptions of the value of information. It is defined as the process of initiating, sustaining, and directing activity. It is based on personal beliefs, instructors, materials, and tasks. Second, belief about text is the idea that students bring an array of beliefs about specific concepts to the current text being read. For instance, some students believe that everything they read in text is true. Finally, epistemological belief is defined as a set of beliefs about the nature of knowledge and the process of knowing.

### Metacognitive Strategies

Generally, researchers proclaimed that metacognitive strategy refers to the knowledge about cognitive states and abilities that can be shared among individuals while at the same time expanding the construct to include affective and motivational characteristics of thinking (Paris & Winograd, 1990, p. 15). Peter (2000) mentioned that metacognitive strategy refers to the abilities of readers to be aware of and monitor their reading processes. According to Anderson (2002), metacognitive strategy can simply be defined as thinking about thinking. Readers who are metacognitively aware know what to do when they do not understand; that is, they have strategies to find out or to figure out what they need to do. The use of metacognitive strategies ignites one's thinking and can lead to more profound learning and improved performance, especially among learners who are struggling.

Therefore, metacognitive strategy is needed when readers are not aware of what they can do when their comprehension is breaking down. The readers will not be able to use the strategies strategically. Readers without metacognitive approaches are essentially readers without direction or opportunities to review their progress, accomplishments, and future directions (O'malley, et al., 1985). Singhal (2001) stated that metacognitive strategies are behaviors undertaken by the learners to plan, arrange, and evaluate their own learning. Such strategies include direct attention and self-evaluation, organization, setting goals and objectives, seeking practice opportunities, and self-monitoring and correction of errors in the context of reading.

Metacognitive strategy is delineated into two aspects: knowledge about cognition and self-regulation of cognition (Baker & Brown, 1984; Brown, Armbruster, & Baker, 1986; Garner, 1987). The first key aspect of metacognition, knowledge about cognition, concerns what readers know about their cognitive resources and the regulation of those resources. The second key aspect is readers' ability to control or self-regulate their actions during reading. In fact, metacognitive strategy is viewed as the foundation of understanding text. The effective use of reading and learning strategies implies metacognitive awareness, especially in students' ability to monitor their own learning. Moreover, strategies that have a metacognitive competence and promote thinking about "what" and "how" students comprehend will enable them to perform better.

The current study followed a study of Mokhtari and Reichard (2002) which concentrated on the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies of readers while reading academic or school-related materials. Mokhtari and Reichard (2002) divided the metacognitive strategies into three categories: global reading strategies, problem solving strategies, and support strategies.

Global reading strategies (GLOB) are a set of reading strategies oriented toward a global analysis text. Global strategies can be thought of as generalized, intentional reading strategies aimed at setting the stage for the reading act. Global strategies consisted of 13 items, for instance, "I decide what to read closely and what to ignore," "I think about what I know to help me understand what I read," and "I have a purpose in mind when I read."

Problem solving strategies (PRLOB) are appeared to be oriented around strategies for solving problems when text becomes difficult to read.

Problem solving strategies provide readers with action plans that allow them to navigate through text skillfully. These strategies are localized, focused problem solving or repair strategies used when problems develop in understanding textual information. Problem solving strategies consisted of eight items, for instance, “When the text becomes difficult, I reread to increase my understanding,” and “I adjust my reading speech according to what I read.”

Support strategies (SUP) are primarily involved use of outside reference materials, taking notes, and other practical strategies that might be described as functional or support strategies. Support strategies serve a useful function for some of the students who seem to invoke them as needed. These strategies also provide the support mechanisms aimed at sustaining responses to reading. Support strategies consisted of nine items, for instance, “I take notes while reading,” “I underline or circle information in the text to help me remember it,” and “I summarize what I read to reflect on important information in the text.” These three types of strategies (i.e., Global, Problem solving, and Support strategies) interact with each other and have an important influence on text comprehension.

The next section reviews the studies in the domain of reading strategies, which are related to the current study.

### Review of Related Studies

Because of the importance of reading strategies, several research and studies in both foreign language (FL) and second language (L2) focused on the

domain of reading strategy. Research in second language reading (L2) suggests that readers use a variety of strategies to assist them with the acquisition, storage, and retrieval of information (Singhal, 2001). Based on this suggestion, there have been several studies identifying the differences in reading strategy usage among the groups of readers.

Mokhtari and Reichard (2002) conducted a study of assessing adolescent and adult readers' metacognitive awareness and perceived use of reading strategies while reading academic of school-related materials. There were three strategies – global reading strategies, problem solving strategies, and support strategies. The findings showed that there were significant differences between highly skilled readers and less skilled readers when using strategies. The highly skilled readers used global reading strategies and problem solving strategies more frequently than less skilled readers. However, there were no significant different in the use of support strategies by these two groups of the readers.

Anderson (2003) examined the role of L2 strategies within the context of online reading tasks. The participants were 247 readers who were divided into two groups: ESL and EFL. The survey of reading strategies (Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2001) was adapted to be used in this study. The results indicated a variety of strategies that the readers use while reading academic materials online. Sixty-seven percent of the top 12 strategies used by online readers were problem-solving strategies. EFL readers reported using the problem-solving strategies more frequently than did ESL readers, whereas there was no difference in their use of global reading strategies and support strategies.



Majid (1984) conducted the study with Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) exploring students' use of reading strategies when reading academic texts. The findings showed that there were significant differences of strategies use between proficient readers and non-proficient readers. Both groups differed in terms of their processes though they used similar strategies. The proficient readers used more strategies: 29 cognitive strategies, 12 metacognitive strategies, and 5 affective strategies. Comparing to the proficient readers, the non-proficient readers used 24 cognitive strategies, 7 metacognitive strategies, and 4 affective strategies. Furthermore, the proficient readers were better in regulating and evaluating their own reading through their use of more strategies. It was obvious that effective reading depends on the effective use of strategies. The characteristics of proficient readers, for instance, experience and self-concept played an important role in ensuring effective strategy use.

In 2004, Kaotsombut, Suwattananand, and Soranataporn investigated language learning strategies of graduate students at Mahidol University, Thailand. They used the Quick Placement Test Version II to measure English proficiency of the subjects. They also used the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) questionnaire and structures interviews as research tools. The results showed that the subjects generally used overall language learning strategies: compensation, metacognitive, cognitive, social, affective, and memory strategies, respectively. The compensation strategies, the only one strategy category, were rated at a high level while the rest were used at a medium level. The study suggests that the subjects employed compensation

strategies to overcome limitations of language when they encountered problems in using language.

Paris and Mayers (1981) examined comprehension monitoring and studied both good and poor readers. Their study focused on the differences in comprehension monitoring between good and poor fourth grade readers during the oral reading of a story. The results reported that poor readers did not engage in accurate monitoring as frequently as good readers, and demonstrated less accurate comprehension and recall of the stories than good readers. Additionally, the poor readers were more concerned with the pronunciation rather than meanings. Overall, poor readers engaged in few spontaneous study behaviors, failed to ask questions, take notes or use a dictionary as often as good readers. On the other hand, good readers used comprehension strategies far more frequently than poor readers. For instance, they wrote notes and summaries related to the text as well as used strategies of asking questions or referring to the dictionary to determine word meanings. The good readers used cognitive, memory, metacognitive, compensation, and social strategies to a far greater extent than the poor readers. In other words, there is a strong relationship between reading strategies used by the readers and their level of proficiency. Besides, the good readers (or high proficiency readers) tended to use a wider range of strategies and more frequent use of strategies than the poor readers (or low proficiency readers).

More recently, Yang (2002) reported the primary focus was monitoring reading comprehension by reassessing both proficient and non-proficient readers. Yang showed that, first of all, the proficient readers displayed more

competence in monitoring their on-going thinking process since they tended to monitor their reading process all the time in order to compensate for words that had not previously been decoded. Secondly, in both internal and external consistency, the proficient readers employed higher levels of comprehension monitoring. Thirdly, comprehension monitoring can be developed by interaction with a knowledgeable person. Teacher intervention enhanced the less-proficient readers' development of comprehension monitoring by providing them with knowledge of basic language as a resource for comprehension monitoring and integrating sporadic information. Finally, comprehension monitoring is no less significant than reading strategies. When something available is monitored, the monitoring of comprehension can become possible. Therefore, instruction of basic language knowledge should come before that of comprehension monitoring.

In 1996, Tang investigated the relationship between comprehension strategies in first language and second language reading. Included were eight participants from different faculties of Chinese students and the Scholar Association at the University of Victoria. Tang reported that, first of all, the participants in this study used similar strategies to construct the meaning of expository texts in first language (L1) and second language (L2). Tang also found that these readers used the identified strategies and strategy categories with similar frequencies. That is, the readers processed the texts similarly in both languages. These readers used similar strategies and the occurrences of these strategies in the two languages were comparable. Additionally, in order to bring all their cognitive and metacognitive strategies into play, all of the strategies that the participants believed appropriate to construct meaning of

the texts were used. In both L1 and L2, therefore, cognitive strategies appear to underlie comprehension processes. Tang emphasized, the metacognition is important to reading ability as well as the affective strategy.

In comparing the groups of high and low reading ability of Thai readers who were at the 11<sup>th</sup> grade level students, Sanuthapong (1992) found that, first of all, Thai readers used memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, and social strategies in reading Thai language at the lower ability level. Second, the use of memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies and social strategies in reading Thai language by those with high and low reading ability were not significantly different. Knowing strategies such as metacognitive, cognitive, and affective is important to the readers because it could help them benefit in their reading.

Paris and Jacobs (1984) investigated reading comprehension monitoring among skilled and unskilled readers who have long recognized the importance of metacognitive awareness in reading comprehension. The findings provided that skilled readers often engage in deliberate activities that require intended thinking, flexible strategies, and periodic self-monitoring. They focused on the topics, looked forward and backward in the passage, and checked their own understanding when they read. Unskilled readers, however, did not recruit and used the skills mentioned earlier. Also, they seemed to often forget these strategies and needed to use them. The unskilled readers did relatively little monitoring of their own memory, comprehension, and other cognitive tasks (Flavell, 1979). Additionally, according to Baker & Brown (1984), the unskilled readers tend to focus on reading as a decoding process rather than as a meaning-getting process.

In the study of Carrell (1989) with Spanish (as first language) and English (as foreign language) university students, the metacognitive awareness and the relationship between the metacognitive awareness and comprehension in reading were reported. The report showed that the strategies, used in L1 reading, such as focusing on grammatical structures, sound-letter, word meaning, and text details tended to correlate negatively with reading performance. In the L2 reading, however, there were some differences between the Spanish and the English groups of the university students used in this study. Overall, this study suggested that advanced proficiency level seems to apply reading strategies more effectively than lower proficiency level. The advanced proficiency level tended to be more global background knowledge such as text gist and textual organization while the lower proficiency level tended to be more local. This result pointed out the idea that metacognition, a tool for the better understanding of the text meaning, related to both reading proficiency and reading process (Carrell, 1998; Salataci, 2002).

In 1998, Najjar reported the use of cognitive learning strategies by L2 learners at a Japanese university. The materials and notes the students used to study the reading passages were examined for strategy use. The strategies used and the score on the comprehension tests done by the learners were then compared for differences in their effect on task performance. Najjar reported that not all learning strategies are equally effective in helping learners identify main ideas as well as the understanding of the content of the readings and learning strategies such as a full translation approach, and highlighting key ideas and note-taking strategies. In utilizing the reading with effective

strategies, the readers combined the use of strategies with the text in order to understand it and committed time to the task. They spent time on the task, interacted with the text in an effort to understand it and identified levels of information in order to give a better understanding of the content and retention of information. This, consequently, brought about a more successful performance on the comprehension for learners who applied these strategies.

Additionally, Anderson (1991) carried out a study to investigate the individual differences in strategy use by 28 adult second language learners while engaged in two reading tasks: taking a standardized reading comprehension test and reading academic texts. Anderson concluded from his study that advanced proficiency levels tended to be more global (used background knowledge, text gist, and textual organization) or top-down in their perceptions of effective and difficulty-causing reading strategies. The lower proficiency levels; however, tended to be more local or bottom-up, possibly because they may have been more dependent on bottom-up decoding skills. In other words, Anderson says, the different abilities in reading could be not the same in the reading performances. That is, these differences are how the strategies are strategically applied.

In conclusion, those empirical research reveal that reading strategies are essential tools for readers to better understand what they read (Carrell, 1998; Najar, 1998; Salataci, 2002). They can be used to facilitate learning or comprehension. Additionally, many studies (Anderson, 2003; Block, 1986; Singhal, 2001; Tang, 1996) point out that readers intentionally use varieties of reading strategies to comprehend L2 texts. This includes when the readers encounter problems in L2 reading, they use overall strategies to overcome

their limitations of the language. The studies also claimed that there were greater similarities of different groups of readers in their use of various strategies (Kaotsombut, Suwattananand & Soranastaporn, 2004; Majid, 1984; Sunuthapong, 1992).

Regarding readers' performance and readers' proficiency, researchers pointed out that they were strongly related (Paris & Mayer, 1981). The efficiency of L2 reading depends on the effective use of strategies. To understand a text, good readers and poor readers apply cognitive strategies differently. When the poor readers read, they seem to negatively use cognitive strategies. Thus, the good readers can reach higher understanding level than the poor readers.

The literature review in this chapter explores how L2 readers comprehend L2 texts. There are few studies investigating L2 readers' awareness of reading strategies and the relationships between their awareness and their reading abilities or their performance on reading tasks. Thus, the current study tries to answer the questions about the reader's usage of strategies by investigating how EFL readers use various strategies to increase their L2 understanding, and whether good and poor readers used similar or different strategies when they read L2 texts.

#### Summary of the Chapter

The conceptual framework of this study stated the reading strategies, which are cognitive, affective, and metacognitive. Cognitive is related to individual learning tasks and aids readers to construct the meaning of the text.

Affective strategy is related to self-schemas and it provides the motivation for self-regulated learning and strategy use. Metacognitive is the concept of thinking that can be related to the reading performance of readers. These strategies are emphasized in many studies about reading. In the last section of this chapter, the related research and studies were reviewed. Most of them gave importance to the strategies usage among the skilled readers and non-skilled when they read.

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