

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Theoretical Background

1. Reading in EFL Classroom

Reading is an activity of looking at the written text in order to understand its meaning. The meaning of the text can be gained by using readers' prior knowledge. This is in line with Li (2010), "Reading may mean looking at a written text in order to understand its contents" (p.185). Safarian and Gorjian (2010) also stated, "Reading is thinking cued by written language" (p.39). Meanwhile, according to Hennings (1999) in Asyik and Putri (2016) reading is where the writer and reader take action together in a written text. Moreover, reading is an important language skill whose main purpose is comprehension (Kusdemir & Bulut, 2018), it is a process which starts with seeing, continues with the reception of information and results in comprehension in the brain. Therefore, reading is a complex language skill that requires many skills to be used at the same time.

Reading comprehension is a complex process to get the author's message by constructing meaning of symbols in the written text. However, many students find it difficult to comprehend the text given by their teacher in the classroom. The students expressed that it is hard to find the main idea, the supporting idea, or even the content of the text. Therrien (2006) stated, "Many students have difficulties with reading fluency

or text comprehension or both”(p.22). Therefore, the teacher should build students interest, fluency, or text comprehension in learning reading.

To overcome students’ difficulties in reading comprehension, the teacher should apply a teaching strategy in the classroom. Thus, one of the strategies suitable in teaching reading is cooperative learning.

2. Cooperative Learning in Teaching Reading

Cooperative learning is an effective teaching strategy that can be used to enhance achievement and socialization among students and contribute to improved attitudes towards learning and working with others (Gillies & Ashman, 2005). Cooperative learning has been defined as "small groups of learners working together as a team to solve a problem, complete a task, or accomplish a common goal" (Artz & Newman, 1990, p.448). From the two definitions above, it can be concluded that cooperative learning facilitates students to help each other while learning in a social manner.

Cooperative learning can provide a very pleasant learning atmosphere (Marzbana & Alinejad, 2013). As cooperative learning creates a non-stressful environment both for learning and practicing English, it helps students to learn in collaboration, have fun and develop their language skills in an integrated way. While studying in groups, they had the chance to make suggestions, request, agree/disagree and clarify meaning which exists in real life discourse. While reading, they also comprehend the vocabulary and the listened texts as well (Yavuz & Arslan, 2018). Practically employed cooperative learning helps learners participate in reading lessons effectively,

create an abundant and healthy English learning environment, make language learning more meaningful, and increase acquisition (Bolukbas, Keskin, Polat, 2011).

There are three typical techniques used to teach reading in Cooperative learning strategy (Rice, 2009): (1) Shared reading, which involves a group of students and teachers sitting close together (2) Guide Reading, which can be done silently or loudly. Guided reading leads the students to understand that reading is a process of actively constructing the author's intended meaning and allows teachers to support students while they are reading. (3) Independent reading which provides time for children to read text without the need of teacher support. Therefore, the teachers can use these techniques for teaching reading to their students. Thus, the students can get involved in reading activity to get the meaning or information from their reading materials.

B. Study of the Relevant Research

There are many studies has been conducted that emphasized the positive effects of using cooperative learning to enhance students' reading comprehension, such as Azizinezhad, et al., (2012), aimed to know the effect of cooperative learning to enhance the students' language learning. He concluded that cooperative learning can be used to enhance students' language learning. Thus, it could achieve the positive effect in language acquisition as well as enhancing motivation towards learning English. Moreover, Khan and Ahmad (2014) aimed to assess the effects of

cooperative learning on the reading achievement of students in the subject of English. In the same way, Seetape (2003) revealed that cooperative learning has increased students' English reading skill. Certain studies also shown that combining cooperative learning with English reading instruction creates student opportunities to interact with peers, increase peer communication and support, encourage reading-comprehension development, and lower anxiety (Gillies & Ashman, 2005).

The previous studies are relevant to this present study because those researches also applying cooperative learning strategies in teaching reading. However, this research focuses to identify the students' challenges and advantages in using cooperative learning in reading class.