

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter provides a brief overview of the theories that support the study. It presents the information related to the research to build an understanding of the study, including the definition of reading, the definition of reading interest, factors affecting reading interest, the definition of reading comprehension, the components of reading comprehension, assessing reading comprehension, and the correlation between reading interest and reading comprehension.

#### **A. Theoretical Framework**

##### **1. Definition of Reading**

Reading is an activity that provides information and knowledge to the reader. It is not a passive act, but rather an active process where readers connect textual information to their prior knowledge. According to Nunan (2003, p. 68), reading is a fluent process in which readers combine information from a text with their background knowledge to build meaning, and the goal of reading is comprehension. This means that reading involves extracting ideas and understanding from various printed materials such as textbooks, magazines, newspapers, and novels.

Harmer (1998) also stated that reading is an incredibly active occupation. To do it successfully, readers must understand the meanings of the words and how they relate to one another. This highlights the importance of comprehension and vocabulary mastery, particularly for students who rely on reading as their primary tool for learning.

Based on these views, reading receives and deconstructs meaning from written texts, making it one of the most essential skills.

In English Language Teaching (ELT), reading is crucial in supporting language development and helping learners build vocabulary, increase grammatical awareness, and improve their overall language proficiency.

Furthermore, international research has emphasized the significance of reading skills. Based on the PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) 2022 report, Indonesian students achieved an average reading score of 359, significantly below the OECD average of 476. Only 25% of Indonesian students reached proficiency level 2 or above, indicating a low level of reading literacy among most students. This shows that reading literacy in Indonesia remains a serious issue, especially when compared to other countries. Moreover, indicates serious challenges in reading comprehension among Indonesian students and reflects the urgent need for improvement in reading instruction.

In conclusion, reading is not just a passive activity, but an essential and active skill that requires comprehension and vocabulary mastery. It plays a significant role in language development, especially in English Language Teaching. However, based on international assessments such as PISA, Indonesian students still face considerable challenges in reading literacy, indicating a critical need to improve students' reading comprehension skills through better reading instruction and practices.

## **2. Definition of Reading Interest**

Reading interest strongly motivates people to analyze, remember, and evaluate their completed readings. It is an exciting learning experience that shapes and intensifies a person's determination of their future goals (Hurlock, 1993). Besides that, Hidi (2006) defined reading interest as a psychological phenomenon that occurs when interest serves as a unique motivational variable, characterized by increased attention, concentration, and Influence during the interaction between people and their interests. It can be concluded that a person's strong interest in reading is shaped by their inner drive and motivation.

Dechant (1982) states that interest is very influential in promoting reading activity. Achievement in reading also depends on the students' motivational reading, and a lack of interest may cause poor reading or reading failure. To achieve reading, the students must want to read. Interest in reading motivates people to pay close attention to the text. People are more likely to

actively engage in reading if they are interested in the material. This interest can lead to reading becoming a habitual activity for them.

According to Musta'aliyah et al. (2022), reading interest is a motivational attitude in EFL learners that significantly correlates with reading comprehension performance in a moderate positive manner. In addition, Rahayu (2015) stated that reading interest is a condition in which someone can feel happy while reading and also recognize the benefits of reading. It means that, if you want to develop an interest in reading, you must find enjoyment in it and turn it into a habit by making reading a fun activity. Moreover, interest in reading is one of the motivational factors that drives students to read more frequently, and it may influence their level of comprehension.

In conclusion, reading interest can be defined as a strong internal motivation and enjoyment. It encourages individuals to read actively, focus intently, and engage meaningfully with texts. This interest enhances comprehension and turns reading into a positive and habitual activity when developed consistently.

### **3. Factors Affecting Reading Interest**

The level of interest varies among people and depends on how it develops within them. Several factors determine whether someone has high or low interest. According to Crawley & Mountain (1995), six factors that influenced children's interests were identified. These factors are:

#### **a. Previous experience**

Students may not develop an interest in something new if they have never had the opportunity to experience it before.

#### **b. Self-Concept**

When students perceive information as threatening, they are more likely to reject it. On the other hand, if students view the information as beneficial for enhancing their skills, they are more likely to accept it.

c. Values

When a knowledgeable and authoritative individual presents a subject matter, it effectively captures the student's interest.

d. Understandable Subject

Students are more likely to be interested in information they can easily comprehend and understand.

e. The Level of Pressure Involvement

Having flexible reading options and less pressure can increase students' interest in reading.

f. The Complexity of Subject Material

Students with greater intellectual and psychological flexibility are more drawn to complex subject matter.

In addition, Skinner (1984) mentioned four aspects of interest:

a. Pleasure

Pleasure arises when people are interested in objects or activities that bring them satisfaction and enjoyment.

b. Willingness

The desire for motivation will develop willpower, attention, and focus on a particular object, sparking the individual's interest.

c. Consciousness

When individuals possess consciousness, they demonstrate an active interest in a particular subject or object.

d. Attention

When individuals observe an object, their perception of it is influenced by what they focus on or find interesting.

From the theories, it can be inferred that interest in reading reflects a person's desire to read to gain information or knowledge. In simpler terms, interest in reading is a strong motivation to engage in reading activities, driven by the pleasure it brings. Regarding different aspects of reading, interest may encompass the enjoyment, understanding the benefits of reading, the frequency of reading, and the number of books one has read.

#### **4. Definition of Reading Comprehension**

Reading comprehension involves the skill of understanding a text and grasping its interpretation in a meaningful way. According to Healy (2002), reading comprehension consists of understanding the written word, grasping the reading content, and constructing meaning from the text. In addition, Woolley (2011) states that reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from the text. The goal is to understand what is described in the text, rather than extracting meaning from isolated words or sentences. That statement is supported by Horowitz (2014), who notes that reading comprehension is a complex cognitive process; the reader must also be intentional and thoughtful while reading, monitoring the words and their meanings as the reading progresses. This means that the reader cannot only read the text but also comprehend its meaning and formulate sentences based on their understanding.

Johnson (2008) stated that comprehension skills are strategies readers use to retrieve information and construct meaning from expository text. They are the thinking processes, broken down into steps, used to comprehend. Additionally, reading comprehension refers to the ability to accurately and effectively understand and extract information from a text. It means that reading comprehension is the process of understanding and constructing meaning by easily obtaining and grasping information from the text.

Based on the definitions above, the writer concludes that reading comprehension is the ability to grasp, comprehend, and formulate the text based on understanding to obtain information easily.

#### **5. The Component of Reading Comprehension**

To comprehend a reading text effectively, it is essential to focus on several key components that contribute to reading comprehension. By actively engaging with these components, readers can deepen their understanding and retention of the material. According to Nuttall (1982), reading comprehension

has five components. These are the main ideas: specific information, reference, inference, and understanding vocabulary.

a. Main Idea

According to Suparman (n.d.), the main idea is the most crucial concept stated in the topic sentence and developed through supporting sentences within a single paragraph. Another factor that determines an idea is the ability to comprehend and extract the main point of a passage by summarizing it and identifying repetitions of the main idea or specific words. So, determining the main idea means identifying the key point that the author develops throughout the paragraph. This key concept often serves as the foundation for the information presented, helping the reader grasp the overall message or purpose of the paragraph.

b. Specific information

Readers need to search for specific information in a text because it helps them find exactly what they are looking for, such as definitions, examples, facts, incidents, comparisons, analogies, cause-and-effect statistics, and quotations. With a specific goal in mind, readers focus on relevant parts of the text while ignoring irrelevant ones. They may only read sentences related to their questions to locate particular information.

c. Reference

Reference involves using one thing to represent something else, providing the necessary information to interpret the other. Finding a reference involves translating one linguistic expression into another to determine it.

d. Inference

Making an inference involves drawing a logical conclusion based on the information given in the passage. It implies that the reader understands and logically completes the sentence or sentences.

e. Understanding Vocabulary

According to Harmer (2004), determining the meaning of vocabulary items from context is one of the most critical aspects of successful reading.

So, understanding vocabulary means grasping the meaning of words. As your vocabulary improves, your understanding deepens. Understanding is the ultimate goal of reading to get information, so the importance of vocabulary development cannot be overestimated.

Based on the explanation above, readers should engage with five key components to understand and comprehend the text. These components are interrelated and support one another to build a complete understanding of a passage. Mastering each component enables readers to grasp the literal meaning and develop critical thinking and analytical skills. As readers improve in identifying the main idea, locating specific details, interpreting references, making inferences, and understanding vocabulary, their reading proficiency will grow significantly. Therefore, educators and learners must emphasize these components during reading activities to effectively enhance comprehension.

## **6. Assessing Reading Comprehension**

The different assessment methods for the test type have advantages and disadvantages. According to Richards & Schmidt (2010, p. 35), assessment is a systematic approach to gathering information and making inferences about students' work or abilities. It means that assessment is how teachers evaluate students' performance and ability to understand written text. A precise evaluation of reading comprehension is essential to determine whether learning objectives are being met, identify students needing improvement, and plan for future instruction.

As stated by Oakhill et al. (2015, p.32), the ways to assess reading comprehension include:

### **a. True or False**

In this format, the student reads or listens to a passage and is then presented with several statements, each of which is true or false to the text. The student has to make a true or false assessment about each statement.

#### b. Multiple Choice

In a multiple-choice test, students must choose the one response they believe is the correct answer. This task is more complex than yes/no questions because there are multiple response options, but it is less challenging than open-ended questions.

#### c. Cloze Test

In the cloze test, single words are omitted and the reader has to fill them in, usually from a choice of 3 to 5 words. The omitted words can be deleted from a passage or isolated sentences, but a passage should be used for testing comprehension. According to Harmer (2002, p.323), cloze, in its purest form, is the deletion of every word in a text (somewhere between every fifth or tenth word). In addition, Manning (1987, p. 4) states that the classic cloze test involves systematically deleting words from a text and requires the replacement of these words.

#### d. Open-Ended Questions

Using open-ended questions is a sensitive way to assess comprehension because specific response options do not influence students' responses. After reading or listening to a passage of text, the student must answer a series of questions.

As explained above, it is not easy to know the effectiveness of a teaching sequence and the extent of understanding without testing. Testing provides valuable feedback for both learners and teachers. In this study, the researchers will use a multiple-choice test to assess students' reading comprehension and gather data.

### **7. Correlation between Reading Interest and Reading Comprehension**

The students should enhance their reading skills, particularly in comprehension. Reading comprehension is essential for acquiring general and specific information and identifying a text's central idea or topic sentence. However, students still struggle with reading activities. The level of interest directly impacts the success of English learning, especially in reading



comprehension. Therefore, reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning from a text. Reading comprehension in this research is the process of understanding texts. Reading comprehension is easy to learn if the student is interested in reading. Therefore, it is abundantly clear that there is an essential relationship between students' reading interest and reading comprehension.

Hidi (2001) argued that reading interest was central to how certain types of information were selected and processed to facilitate comprehension of others. The empirical findings indicate that readers find it easier to comprehend and remember information that aligns with their interests. Therefore, selecting relevant information is essential to capture the reader's interest and improve their reading experience. Snow (2002) states that involvement and motivation affect language comprehension. This statement highlights the importance of reading interest as a key factor in the decision to read. It highlights that students are more inclined to read material that captures their interest, underscoring the importance of considering individual preferences when encouraging reading.

In addition, Hidi (2002) concluded that interest did not simply enhance learning. However, reading interest can motivate readers to delve into texts' main ideas and underlying meaning, moving beyond the surface structure. Therefore, the writer can conclude that reading interest is related to students' critical thinking skills. If learners possess high essential thinking skills, they are more likely to understand a text that contains challenging words. Reading interest is a feeling of special attention to reading that encourages students to develop a good habit of active reading. Increasing reading interest improves the ability to understand the content. Students interested in reading conduct reading activities because they desire information.

According to the explanation above, increasing reading interest enhances comprehension abilities. The higher the reading interest, the higher the comprehension. Students' level of interest in reading and the content of the reading help shape the process of text processing and the development of

comprehension in various ways. This will be utilized in reading activities, ultimately increasing their reading comprehension.

### **B. Study of the Relevant Research**

To help fund this research, the writer reviews some previous studies related to the topic of the present study. The prior studies will be discussed in the following order:

This study is relevant to the study by Andaresta (2020), which found that there is a positive relationship between reading interest and reading comprehension ability of 4th-semester students from the English Education study program at IAIN Palangka Raya, but this needs to be increased because there are some students who lack reading interest, which affects reading comprehension. So, students need to be motivated to improve their reading interest. The research instrument for collecting data consists of a questionnaire for the reading interest test and a multiple-choice test for reading comprehension. The calculation result showed a medium correlation between reading interest and reading comprehension, with a correlation coefficient of 0.590.

Another study was conducted by Aprilianti (2022). A correlation was found between students' reading interest and reading comprehension at SMKN 1 Jenangan, Ponorogo. The score showed that  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted. The research instruments used to collect data include a questionnaire for reading interest tests and a recount text for reading comprehension tests. The calculation result showed that the correlation between reading interest and reading comprehension has a medium correlation, ranging from 0.40 to 0.70.

Fadiyah (2023) found a positive correlation between reading interest and reading comprehension scores among first-grade students at SMK Farmasi Kesuma Bangsa, Bandar Lampung. The results showed a correlation coefficient of 0.609 between students' reading interest and reading comprehension, at a significance level of 0.000. This suggests that students with a high interest in reading tend to perform better in reading comprehension than those without

such interest. The research instruments used in this study were a questionnaire to assess reading interest and a multiple-choice test to evaluate reading comprehension.

Krismayanti (2020) found a low but statistically significant correlation between students' reading interest and their reading comprehension in the English Department of IAIN Kediri. Although the result indicated a low correlation, it was still considered significant. The researcher obtained a significance value of 0.014, lower than the standard significance level ( $0.014 < 0.05$ ). According to the interpretation, the correlation coefficient was 0.288, which falls into the category of low correlation. Since the coefficient correlation was higher than the critical r-table value ( $0.288 > 0.235$ ), the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was accepted. The research instruments used in this study were a questionnaire for reading interest and a multiple-choice test for reading comprehension.

In addition, Lestari (2022) found a significant positive correlation between students' reading interest and their reading comprehension of narrative texts at the tenth grade level of State Senior High School 1, Kubu. The researcher collected data using a questionnaire for the reading interest test and a narrative text test for the reading comprehension test. The calculation results showed a significant positive correlation, with an observed coefficient of  $r = 0.543$ .

Sandika (2022) found a significant correlation between reading interest and reading comprehension among the eighth-grade students of SMPN 1 Sukawati. The researcher concludes that reading interest significantly correlates with students' reading comprehension. It means that students will get higher scores on reading comprehension tests if they have higher reading interest scores. Then, the researcher collected data using a questionnaire for the reading interest test and a multiple-choice reading comprehension test. The calculation result showed a significant correlation between reading interest and reading comprehension, with a t-value of 41.54 and a t-critical value of 1.686. Since  $41.54 > 1.686$  ( $t\text{-count} > t\text{-table}$ ),  $H_a$  is accepted.

Wilda (2020) found a significant correlation between reading interest and reading comprehension among undergraduate EFL students at Tridianti University, Palembang. The results showed a correlation coefficient of 0.477 between reading interest and reading comprehension, with a significance value of 0.000. Furthermore, reading interest contributed to reading comprehension by 18.6%. The research instruments used in this study were a questionnaire for reading interest and a multiple-choice test for reading comprehension.

Yardila (2023) found a significant positive correlation between students' reading interest and their reading comprehension achievement at SMA YWKA Palembang. The results showed that the  $r$  value was higher than the  $r$ -table value ( $df = 123$ ) ( $0.401 > 0.147$ ). Furthermore, the significance value (sig. 2-tailed) was 0.000, which is lower than 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). In addition, the  $R^2$  value was 0.161, indicating that students' reading interest contributed 16.1% to their reading comprehension achievement. The instruments used for data collection are a questionnaire for the reading interest test and an achievement test for reading comprehension.

Yusuf (2023) found a positive correlation between reading interest and reading comprehension among eleventh-grade students at MAN 1 Ponorogo. The correlation coefficient was 0.752018, while the  $r$  table value at the 5% significance level was 0.2564. Since  $0.752018 > 0.2564$ , the result indicates a strong correlation, with the coefficient falling within the range of 0.70 – 0.90. The data collection instruments used in this study were a questionnaire for the reading interest test and a multiple-choice test for reading comprehension.

To fill this gap, this study focuses on a specific sample of eighth-grade students in a *Cerdas Istimewa* (gifted) class at a junior high school in Tasikmalaya. This group is rarely studied, yet it holds the potential to provide new insights into how reading interest affects reading comprehension in higher-ability students. By doing so, the findings of this research are expected to contribute valuable perspectives for educators and future researchers in designing more effective and targeted reading programs.

### **C. Research Hypothesis**

In this research, the writer provides the hypothesis as follows:

**$H_0$ :** There is no correlation between students' reading interest and their reading comprehension ability

**$H_a$ :** There is a correlation between students' reading interest and their reading comprehension