

## THE IMPORTANCE OF THEME, COHESION, AND DISCOURSE IN TEACHING READING IN INDONESIA

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### Abstract

*Teaching reading is not a frill for the few. Many teachers and other practitioners believe that through good reading skills, the learners are able to comprehend the texts completely. The teaching of reading might be done in various and sophisticated activities. However, the focus of teaching reading is not always about the teaching of reading the texts regarding the vocabulary used in the texts. The interpretation of the intended meanings of the whole texts should be emphasized during the teaching and learning. The interpretation of the text can be achieved by the readers if they have good ability in finding the themes, cohesion, and also the discourse. The terms themes, cohesion, and the discourse cannot be separated from the texts and those aspects guide the readers to be able to comprehend the text they read.*

**Keyword:** *reading comprehension, themes, cohesion, discourse*

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### Background of the study

Indonesian curriculum for English subject is influenced by the use of English as a foreign language used by them to enlighten the Indonesian learners' knowledge. English is used to gather new information and knowledge of the world through written sources. The learners, then, are expected to have good reading skills to be able to improve their knowledge and experiences through the written sources provided. There are various ways and techniques to achieve this aim, improving students' reading comprehension, one of which is through selecting the correct reading materials. Many types of texts are presented during the English lesson in all

grades. Therefore, reading plays an important role since the Indonesian curriculum of teaching English focuses on genres (types of texts).

Reading skills are important and should be mastered by the learners. The communicative competence such as theme, cohesion, and discourse are some terms and parts of the text have to be found while the students are reading. Theme shows what the topic of the text is. The cohesion is how the writer uses his/her knowledge to tell the readers the reference which might be in different forms. Then, discourse is what the intended meaning or function of the text is so the readers can understand what the writer infers. Those three features

enable the reader comprehend the texts they are reading. To understand a text, the readers should be able to find the theme, cohesion and discourse.

The Indonesian learners have different cultures in learning English as a foreign language. The learners do not have many similarities since the location and the ways of life are different. Due to different social customs, people from different countries have different values, different ways of thinking and different behaviors. All these would bring barriers to communication. The learners still have limited background knowledge of the cultures they concern with. With the lack of cultural knowledge of the target language, it is quite hard for them to interpret the writer's intention. There is a gap which becomes obstacles for the learners in reading English texts. Therefore, there are many mistakes created by the Indonesian learners in comprehending any English texts.

The teaching of language nowadays is focused on the teaching of texts. A text does not mean that it is written or printed. Text is a meaningful language unit (Mickan in Handoyo & Zacharias, 2014:4). Each text has a certain context which the language user uses to interact with others. From the very young learners (children) until elderly, there are

various texts in context. They learn to comprehend texts, here reading comprehension, in which a certain cultural practice implemented. The students should respond this feature when they are trying to interpret any kind of texts.

In fact, there are still many students who feel hard to comprehend the English texts. The students' works on the final examination show that they have not comprehended the texts on the tests. The difficulty in finding the theme, cohesion and discourse is also found in their writings. Based on the writer's experiences, she found some college students still made mistakes in their writing in relation to the use of correct reference. Look at the sentences below.

...to be sure she was a woman, do not look in terms of age, religion and even heredity. Quite simply can love me for what it is, because they are not anything, because I do not have anything. Just maybe unfortunately retaliation because he loves me. And more importantly he was able to get my spirits ....

From the first sentence, it directly shows the reader that the topic of the text is about a woman. Therefore the reference used in the first sentence is correct. However, if the readers continue reading

the next sentences, the underlined words, 'they' and 'he' are not the correct referents for the theme of the text. It is clear that there are many students who do not understand how to use correct references based on the theme of the text. If they do not know the theme and references used in the text, it is also hard for them to comprehend the text. The better the students write, the better they read and vice versa.

In addition, the students in the same grade are also still confused the synonym of the text. The students can write "Future Wife" as the title of the text but the theme they are talking about is husband. It shows that the writer does not understand the theme and the reference. It is also hard for the students to interpret the meaning of a word in context. Another finding from the dialogues done by the writer and her student is presented below.

....  
The writer : Great!  
The Student : Thanks mis atas expression.  
The Writer : Anytime.  
The student : Maksudnya mis kapan pun?  
....

From the cited dialogue above, the conversation was between a teacher and a student (university student). They are talking about the student's work and the teacher appreciated the work. The word 'anytime' has many meanings depends on

the context. The context of the dialogue above, the word 'anytime' does not mean '*kapan aja*' instead of you are welcome. It shows that the student does not know the discourse of the text he had during the conversation with the teacher. If it happens continuously and the teacher does not know that the student has different interpretation of the word 'anytime', the communication will not run well. Therefore, understanding the discourse of any text is one key to understand the text.

From the dialogue above, there is another term which influences the student's understanding of the text. Ambiguity is one feature influencing the students' understanding. When there is more than one meaning, the ambiguity might rise and interrupt the student's understanding. Dearborn (2005: 40) proposes that the scope ambiguity refers to the possibility of assuming different logical forms of a sentence. Ambiguity, whether lexical or structural, must be distinguished from vagueness. A vague expression is imprecise, whereas an ambiguous expression has several precise meanings.

Some facts show that it is difficult for the students to understand the text because they do not know the reference, the lexical chains (Synonym, homonym, repetition, etc.) Moreover, the learners still

have low communicative competence which enables the learners communicate functionally and interactively. Hymes in Brown (2007: 219) defines communicative competence as the aspect of the competence which enables the readers to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts. If the readers do not have good communicative competence, it will be very hard for them to understand the meaning of the words in context based on its functions.

### **Review Related to the Theory**

#### **1. Reading Comprehension**

Reading is the process of gathering information from the writer to the readers in the form of written texts. It is also the process of understanding or comprehending the writer's idea from the written texts. Richards & Schmidt (2002: 442) states that reading perceives a written text in order to understand its contents. The understanding that results is called reading comprehension. From this definition, the readers do not only focus on the knowledge of the world but also the knowledge of the language used in the text. Perceiving a written text means that the readers use their experiences and their knowledge to interpret the correct meaning intended by the writer.

Furthermore, Richards & Schmidt (2002: 442) classify the types of reading. The first is literal comprehension which reading is in order to understand, remember, or recall the information explicitly contained in a passage. Then, inferential comprehension meaning in reading is aimed at finding information which is not explicitly stated in a passage by using the reader's experience and intuition, and by inferring (inference). The third is critical or evaluative comprehension which reading is in order to compare information in a passage with the reader's own knowledge and values. The last is appreciative comprehension that reading is in order to gain an emotional or other kind of valued response from a passage.

In understanding any text, the readers cannot release their ambiguity towards the texts they are reading. Ambiguity refers to the possibility of assuming different logical forms of a sentence (Dearborn, 2005: 40). An example is the sentence *Every man loves a woman*, which has two distinct readings: *for each man there is 'his' woman, and he loves her*; or alternatively *there is a specific woman who is loved by all the men*. With the first reading, *every man* 'has scope over' *a woman*, i.e. the sentence is primarily about 'every man'. With the

second reading, it is the other way round, i.e. the sentence is primarily about 'a woman'.

By this phenomenon, both the writer and the readers should minimize the occurrence of ambiguity. Ambiguity, whether lexical or structural, must be distinguished from vagueness (Dearborn, 2005: 40). A vague expression is imprecise which means that an ambiguous expression has several precise meanings. An example of a vague expression is the predicate *red* in *Mary owns a red skirt*. A dark pink or a dark orange skirt would be borderline cases for this sentence, due to the intrinsic vagueness of *red*. Vagueness is 'intrinsic' in the sense that it has nothing to do with lack of knowledge (we know what the color *red* looks like). There is a close connection between vagueness and context dependence. The existence of borderline cases is not necessarily a bad thing, as different usages may be salient in different situations; cf. *Mary owns an expensive skirt*. Depending on the financial situations of Mary and the listeners, the vague predicate *expensive* will have quite different readings. In sum, vagueness may be defined as follows: a sentence is vague if—despite the knowledge of all the circumstances in a given situation—one cannot determine with certainty whether it is true or false. An expression is vague if it

occurs in a sentence in such a way that it is responsible for the sentence's vagueness.

Reading is useful for many purposes (Harmer, 1998: 68). Many are able to read texts in English either for their careers, study, or simply for pleasure. Reading is also for provide the students more understanding at the use of the language. Then, reading texts also provide good models for English writing. Good reading texts can enrich the students' knowledge of good English texts and it may encourage them to write in a better way. Through reading texts, the students also have the opportunities to study the language including the vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and the way to construct sentences, paragraphs, and texts. At last, reading texts can introduce interesting topics which might stimulate discussion, imaginative responses, etc.

Harmer (1998: 69) proposes that there are some features should be corresponded by both the readers and the teachers in having reading activities. There should be a balance between real English and the students' capabilities and interests. The texts should also be authentic written material which can be understood by the beginners with the appropriate degree. The topic and the types of reading are worth considering too. The aim of reading should also be viewed as an important thing

considered in reading activities. The materials must be different for each aim. Reading for academic purposes mostly will use scientific texts be the priority. Reading for pleasure will be about magazines, newspaper, novels, plays, poems, advertisements, etc.

It is clear enough that reading involves not only the knowledge of language and the knowledge of world but it also requires the reader's the discourse competence. Moreover, comprehending is more than reading. Dearborn (2005: 19) states that comprehension and production impose many simultaneous demands on the reader to process information on a number of levels, including syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic. The text read by the readers might have new information for them and it connects the readers' given information and the new information. Syntax deals with the construction of the text (sentence formations). Then, semantic is about interpreting meaning of the texts. Lastly, discourse deals with the language use. The readers interpret meanings of the texts correctly based on those demands. The readers' interpretation will not be far away from the writer's interpretation if they have maximally used the demands for comprehending texts.

## 2. Reading Skills

To achieve the main goals of reading, there are some micro aims should be achieved. Brown (2000: 307) states some micro-skills of reading comprehension. They are (1) discriminate among the distinctive graphemes and orthographic patterns of English. (2) retain chunks of language of different lengths in short-terms memory. (3) process writing at an efficient rate of speed to suit the purpose. (4) recognize a core of words, and interpret word order patterns and their significance. (5) recognize grammatical word classes (nouns, verbs, etc.), systems (e.g. tense, agreement, pluralization), patterns, rules, and elliptical forms. (6) recognize that a particular meaning may be expressed in different grammatical forms. (7) recognize cohesive devices in written discourse and their role in signaling the relationship between and among clauses. (8) recognize the rhetorical forms of written discourse and their significance for interpretation. (9) recognize the communicative functions of written texts, according to form and purpose. (10) infer context that is not explicit by using background knowledge. (11) infer links and connections between events, ideas, etc. deduce causes and effects, and detect such relations as main idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification. (12)

distinguish between literal and implied meanings. (13) detect culturally specific references and interpret them in a context of the appropriate cultural schemata. (14) develop and use a battery of reading strategies such as scanning and skimming detecting discourse markers, guessing the meaning of words from context, and activating schemata for the interpretation of texts.

The students have to require abilities for skilful reading such as (Richards & Schmidt, 2000: 444) discerning main ideas, understanding sequence, noticing specific details, making inferences, making comparisons, and making predictions. Those skills of reading are taught separately so the students can learn better and this might be one strategy in reading. The teaching of reading strategies and helping learners understand and manage the use of strategies is thought to be an important aspect of the teaching of second or foreign language reading skills.

### 3. Communicative Competence

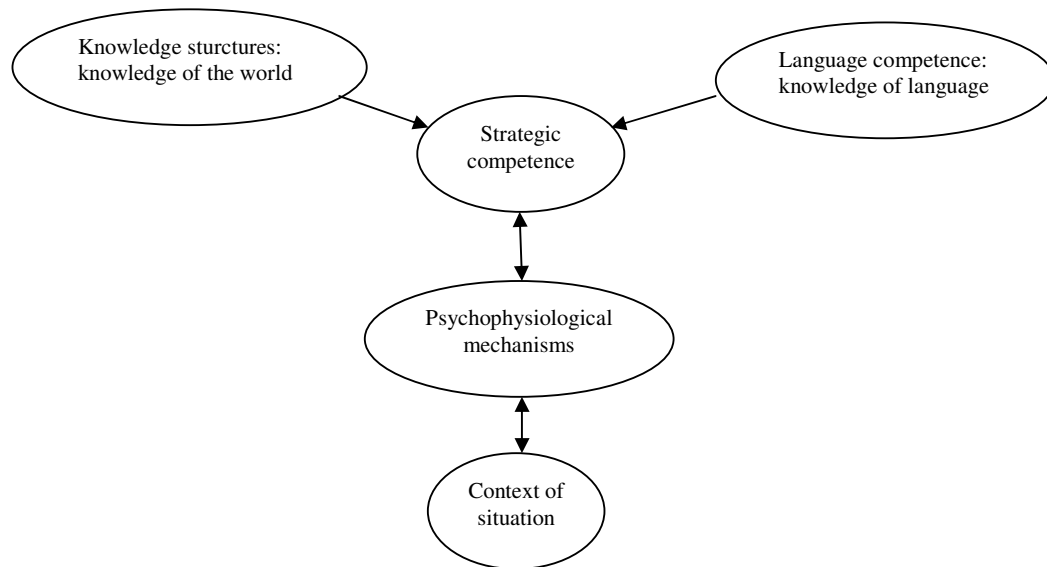
Communicative competence is the term given to the aspect of the competence which enables the readers to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts. It has some functional aspects of communications which are (Brown, 2007: 219-220) grammatical competence,

discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. Every aspect has its own functions influencing the learners' interpretation of texts.

Grammatical competence encompasses knowledge of the lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar, semantic, and phonology. The discourse competence is the ability to connect sentences in stretches of discourse and to form a meaningful whole out of a series of utterances. It is concerned with the inter-sentential relationships. Then, sociolinguistic competence is the knowledge of the socio-cultural rules of language and discourse. This competence requires an understanding of the social context in which language is used: the roles of participants. Lastly, the strategic competence is the verbal and nonverbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or due to insufficient competence (Canale & Swain, 1980 in Brown, 2007: 220). It is the execution of making the final decision for negotiating meaning.

Below is the figure of the components of communicative language ability in communicative language use

(Bachman, 1990: 85 in Brown, 2007: 222).



Every sentence has a theme and a rheme. The first part of the clause forms the theme and it shows the direction that the text is going. Theme is the element which serves as the point of departure of the message (Halliday, 2004: 64). It locates and orients the clause within its context. A clause consists of a theme accompanied by a rheme and the structure is expressed by the order. In discourse, theme is also labeled as the known information (Richards & Schmidt, 2000: 216). Meanwhile, the rheme is the information that is new. For example,

- (1) John sat in the front seat. (Its structure is subject (theme) + predicate (rheme)).
- (2) In the front seat sat John. (Its structure is predicate (theme) + subject (rheme)).

Those two sentences have different focus of given and new information.

Texts are the products of the process of language use. Written productions are texts and they semantic rather than formal and the cohesion is concerned. The term cohesion is really close to the texts. Cohesion is defined by Richards & Schmidt (2000: 86) as the grammatical and/or lexical relationships between the different elements of a text. It is the relationship between the different sentences or between different parts of a sentence.

In any text, logogenetic patterns of meaning, wording and sounding (writing) will emerge (Halliday, 2004: 531). Since phonological and graphological patterns are largely

‘arbitrary’ in relation to lexicogrammar (and, by a further strata step, in relation to semantics), logogenetic patterns here are largely confined to their own stratum. Below is the table of logogenetic patterns

for higher-ranking units (Halliday, 2004: 532).

Metafunction	Unit	System	Logogenetic pattern
Logical	Clause (nexus)	Taxis & logico semantic type	Phases of dominant logico-semantic type (e.g. ‘temporal/causal enhancement’ in narrative episodes; elaboration in reports concerned with entities); movement from one type to another (e.g. ‘reporting’ to ‘quoting’ in news articles)
Textual	Clause	Theme	Phases of favored (‘unmarked’/marked’) theme selections, giving prominence to organizational path through field (‘method of development’; e.g. chronology and protagonist focus in narrative and biographical discourse) and angles of assessment (e.g. hypothesis and conjecture in scientific discourse).
	Info unit	information	Phases of gradual accumulation of ‘main points’ as elaboration of afield (e.g. [state of] product in procedures}} and/or intensification of affect (e.g. positive features of product in advertisements)
interpersonal	Clause	Mood	Local phases of negotiation, with one mood selection complementing another (e.g. ‘interrogative’ ^ ‘declarative’ ^ ‘minor’), building up over a text into mood type motifs (e.g. a recipe as a ‘macro-imperative’ text) and interacting profiles – patterns of favored interpersonal selections in the clause (e.g. interviewee in admissions interviews, parent and child in the home)
Experiential	clause	Transitivity	Phases of favored process type selections (e.g. ‘material’ in method part of recipes, ‘existential’ and ‘relational’ in setting of narratives), building up over a text into process type motifs (e.g. a recipe as a

			macro-material' text) and profiles of participation (e.g. child as medium and adults as agent in a narrative)
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A set of lexicogrammatical systems which have evolved specifically as a resource for making is possible to transcend the boundaries of the clause. It is the domain of the highest-ranking grammatical unit. These lexicogrammatical systems originate in the textual meta-function and are collectively known as the system of cohesion (Halliday, 2004: 532).

Cohesion is created in various ways. Halliday (2004: 533) proposes four ways by which cohesion is created in English. They are conjunction, reference, ellipsis and lexical organization. It is clearly tied to the here-&-now of the material setting, as indicated by outward pointing or 'exophoric' references. The readers can find all four types of cohesive strategies at work in creating text-internal cohesive links.

Conjunction includes both conjunction proper and continuity Halliday (2004: 534). There are some markers indicating that a clause in new turn relates to a previous one; for example: *Mine's cold and . . . — Well, Jane, think of smoked salmon; Grab the pan! — Oh no, I'll grab the pan.* Such markers serve in the system of continuity and they are a characteristic feature of dialogic text. Conjunction as a

word joins words, phrases, or clauses together; for examples, and, but, so that, unless, nevertheless, and however (Richards & Schmidt, 2000: 107). Those words show that there is a relation between or among words, phrases, clauses, or sentences.

References are the relationship between a word or phrase and an entity in the external world, for example, the tree refers to the object of a 'tree (the referent) (Richards & Schmidt, 2000: 450). In other words, Halliday (2004: 534) states that conjunction (including continuity) links whole clauses, reference creates cohesion by creating links between elements. For example, here are various references to elements that are part of the dining situation — in particular the first mention of the fish (*this fish*) and the pan (*the pan*), where they are introduced into the discourse by reference to these entities on and around the dinner table. This reference is exophoric which is pointing outward from the text. However, once introduced in this way, they are picked up through anaphoric reference again and again, forming referential chains in the unfolding conversation: *this fish — it . . . ; the pan — the pan — the pan — it.*

Then, substitution and elimination is reference creating cohesion by creating links between elements of meaning (referents). There is also a resource operating at the level of wording. This takes two forms, substitution and ellipsis. It refers to simply as ellipsis, since substitution can be interpreted as a systemic variant. Ellipsis makes it possible to leave out parts of a structure when they can be presumed from what has gone before. Ellipsis indicates continuity, allowing speaker and addressee to focus on what is contrastive. For example, *Kate, I must say this fish is cooked beautifully — Thank you, Craig, so much for saying so.* Here the substitute item *so* stands for the hypotactically projected clause that *this fish is cooked beautifully*.

Lexical cohesion operates within the lexis and is achieved through the choice of lexical items. Two major motifs are established in this example. The first is *fish* (often presumed by *mine*, which means ‘my one’ — i.e. ‘my fish’) plus an evaluative term from the set *beautifully, lovely, (cold,) sensational, alright, terrific* — *cold* being interpretable as a negative evaluation in the local discourse environment. The lexical item *fish* is also related to *salmon*; and these combine in turn with terms for modes of preparation, viz, *cook* and *smoke*. The second motif is

not as central to the conversation, but it still plays an important role in the creation of cohesion. It consists of *pan* plus a term for manipulating the pan, first *grab* and then *wash*.

The next discussion is about coherence. There are various definitions and understanding of this term. In Dearborn (2005: 216), some researchers apply the term *cohesion* to the surface structure of the text and the term *coherence* to the concepts and relations underlying its meaning. *Cohesion* has sometimes been applied to smaller units of language in the text, and *coherence*, to some general overall interrelatedness in the text. Other researchers have defined *cohesion* as continuity in word and sentence structure, and *coherence* as continuity in meaning and context. As in the case of *coherence*, *discourse* has been defined in different ways. Several years ago, the term *discourse* was reserved for dialogue, and *text* was reserved for monologue. In contemporary research, *discourse* covers both monologic and dialogic spoken and written language.

Discourse is a communicative event in which language plays a prominent role (Dearborn, 2005: 216). It requires, at least, a sender (writer, speaker), a receiver (reader, listener), and a message that is being communicated. This message is not

just a concatenation of clauses. It should form a unified, coherent whole. Both the sender and receiver normally have the implicit agreement that the message being communicated is coherent. The sender and the receiver share the same understanding and background knowledge which suit each other to communicate.

The term coherence is defined that it can be reserved for the conceptual relationships that interpreters use to construct a coherent mental representation accommodated by what is presented in the discourse (Dearborn, 2005: 216). Cohesion is limited to the linguistic markers that cue the interpreter on how to build such coherent representations. Cohesion emphasizes discourse-as-product, and coherence emphasizes discourse-as-process. Cohesion alone is not sufficient for the interpretation of the discourse. Interpreters generate inferences on the basis of background knowledge and discourse constraints. Much of the background knowledge is experiential; hence, it involves common procedures and activities (called scripts), social interactions, and spatial settings. For instance, a narrative usually describes a setting, an action sequence with a conflict and plot, and an outcome. A script for eating in a restaurant would furnish inferences and help coherently tie together

the explicit content of a narrative about a bad restaurant experience. Although cohesion alone cannot fully account for coherence in discourse, the psycholinguistic literature has shown that cohesion facilitates coherence.

Cohesion and coherence can be divided into local (microstructure) and global (macrostructure). Local cohesion and coherence are related to the interrelatedness between adjacent discourse segments. Global cohesion and coherence are related to the interrelatedness of larger spans of discourse. For instance, scripted action sequences are globally coherent. Also, there are the rhetorical structures of narrative (such as setting + conflict + plot + resolution), expository (such as claim + evidence, problem + solution), and other discourse genres. Cohesion and coherence can be grammar driven and vocabulary driven. Grammar-driven cohesion refers to sentence structure, word structure, and the intonation of the discourse segments. Vocabulary-driven cohesion is the lexical vocabulary of the discourse segment. These cohesion cues activate vocabulary-driven (pre-grammatical, knowledge-based) and grammar-driven (syntax-based) coherence. Vocabulary-driven and grammar-driven coherence are not

necessarily mutually exclusive but often support each other, as illustrated below.

A complete theory of discourse coherence requires a harmonious layering of several levels, including vocabulary, sentence structure, meaning, discourse context, style, and world knowledge. When these levels lack of coordination, the coherence is more difficult. To get the message across, the sender will try to coordinate the levels. The receiver assumes that the sender's message is intended to be well formed and will make every attempt to construct a coherent interpretation.

The readers have many perspectives and those influence the readers' interpretation. To get the writers' implication of the texts, they have to do discourse analysis. The readers deal with not only the meaning of the words but also their meaning in contexts. Els at all (1984: 94) states that a basic tenet of discourse analysis is that the study of language in context offers a deeper insight into how meaning is attached to utterances than the study of language in isolated sentences. The context of the language may be considered both from a linguistic and from a social perspective; (1) in most situation of language use, utterances will be preceded and followed by other utterances, resulting in a dialogic or monologic texts, (2) in all situations of language use,

specific social relations between speaker and hearer will guide the structure of these utterances.

Discourse analysis, then, is done in which the readers examines the relationship between forms and the functions of the language (Brown, 2009: 226). The language use is in context and takes place in un-isolated areas. This kind of view should be introduced and understood by the learners so they can read more comprehensively and they will not develop mismatch interpretation. The following dialogues are the examples of the need of discourse analysis.

1. A : Got the time?  
B : Ten-fifteen.
2. Waiter : More coffee?  
Customer : I'm okay.
3. Parent : Dinner!  
Child : Just a minute!

Those exchanges cannot be interpreted as their forms. The first exchange "Got the time?" does not mean that do you have a watch, it is asking for the time instead. The next exchange, "I'm okay." seems that it is the response of someone asking for the condition. However, the waiter offered more coffee. Then the meaning of "I'm okay." is not the same as "I'm fine." Without the pragmatic context of discourse, the communication would be

extraordinarily ambiguous (Brown, 2007: 227).

Words are viewed by the readers in various ways and it results different interpretation. The interpretation of a word is influenced by the knowledge of words mastered by the readers. The principle that word knowledge can be fluid, subject to the creative ways in which discourse communities assign meaning to existing words, and construct completely new words, idioms, and collocations (Crystal, 2003; Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992; Schmitt, 2004; Vermeer, 2001 in Nation, 2009: 290). Words can be interpreted and they are very flexible meaning that every word might be interpreted differently based on the readers' perspectives. If the words are organized in a certain phrase which might be the collocation or idioms, or even new words, they bear different meanings which correspond to the context of the text. Evelyn Hatch (1978a: 404 in Brown 2007: 227) states that

In second language learning the basic assumption has been... that one first learns how to manipulate structures, that one gradually builds up a repertoire of structure and then, somehow, learns how to put the structures to use in discourse. We would like to consider the possibility that just the reverse happens. One learns how to do conversation, one learns how to interact verbally and out of this interaction syntactic structures are developed.

The focus of teaching is on the object of learning as a set of a priory rules and structures or as evolving a bond between the individual and others which is becoming a member of a community (Larsen-Freeman, 2004: 606 in Brown, 2004: 226). The teacher highlights the communicative competences. The real situation exposed to the learners can give opportunity to communicate in the community. If possible, they can get involved in the real community.

The communicative competence is implemented in the communicative language teaching. Communicative language teaching (CLT) is understood as an approach which is the myriad functions of language that learners must accomplish (Savignon, Higgs & Clifford in Brown, 2007: 341). The learners have to describe the spoken and written discourse and pragmatic conversation. The primary goal is learning how best to teach communication. The teachers are expected to search and find the reference to the communicative nature of language classes. Some characteristics of communicative language teaching are (Brown, 2007: 242)

- a. The learning goals are mainly on all of the components of communicative competence and not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence.

- b. The techniques of the language use are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. The organizational language forms are not the central focus. The focus is the aspects of language that enable the learners to accomplish the purposes.
  - c. The complementary principles underlying communicative competence are in fluency and accuracy. Sometimes, fluency is more important than accuracy since it can keep the learners meaningfully engaged in language use.
  - d. During the lesson, the learners are expected to use the language productively and receptively in unrehearsed contexts.
4. Strategies to increase comprehension of the text language

As explained above, the teaching of reading for Indonesian learners cannot be straightforwardly done by the many. The teachers must engage students “in real literacy events,” which Kern (2000: 17) in Hedgcock & Ferris (2009: 7) explicitly distinguished from “just rehearsing reading

and writing skills.” To develop L2 literacy, students must “learn not only about vocabulary and grammar but also about discourse and the processes by which it is created”.

There are various efforts should be implemented by the instructors and also the language learners to be able to limit the gap between the cultures of the language they learn and their first or second language’s cultures. Therefore, Grassi & Barker (2010:283) propose some strategies can be done in the pre-reading which might help the learners access the language of the text. They are as follows.

- a. Match the texts to the reading level of the learners (Eskey, 2005)
- b. Front-load key concepts of the text using the 30way model.
- c. Story tell the text first, using pictures or other visual contexts.
- d. Text retell in the first language.
- e. Outline the text for learners to examine before reading.

The comprehension of the text read by the learners is important during the teaching of reading. It is arguable that the learners’ different cultures can decrease the motivation in reading and create frustration around reading. The teachers should find any text which suits the learners’ needs. In fact, sometimes, there

are less various and existed texts available. For this case, there are some recommendations of strategies can be implemented during the reading process proposed by Grassi & Barker (2010: 284).

- a. Provide visual context for the main concepts.
- b. Allow for first language and second language group discussion around the text.
- c. Model the reading (read aloud).
- d. Arrange partner reading, small group reading, or whole class choral reading of the text.
- e. Teach jigsaw reading of the text, making individuals or pairs responsible for some part of the text that they share in groups.
- f. Match the books to the reading level of the student (Eskey, 2005); Nation, 2005).
- g. Provide texts in the first language.

There are also some activities can be implemented during the reading to specific language study if the text has been read and comprehended (Grassi & Barker, 2010: 284-5). The first is cloze activities with gaps to fill in vocabulary or grammar. Then, bring attention to grammar points in the text and allow learners to form rules for the grammar points. The third one is reconstruct the text using grammar forms

and new vocabulary. The last strategy is to use picture and sentence matching.

To be able to read more comprehensively, the learners must have the background knowledge of the language they learn. Since Indonesian learners have different cultures and ways of life, there are some strategies can be used to improve the learners' background knowledge (Grassi & Barker, 2010: 287-8).

- a. Sharing existing knowledge around the topic.
- b. Accessing and sharing different cultural perspectives around the topic.
- c. Asking 'why' questions about the topic or the text.
- d. Sequencing activities related to the topic.
- e. Showing movies around the topic.
- f. Arranging field trips to support the topic.
- g. Interviewing experts on the topic.
- h. Inviting the perspective of parents, student relatives or others from diverse cultures.

Based on this, there are some literacy skills needed by the learners as proposed by Fillmore & Snow (2000: 22) in Grassi & Barker (2010: 291-230).

- a. The ability to summarize texts, including the ability to interpret and infer the writer's intentions.

- b. The ability to analyze texts for various information, perspectives, and mood.
- c. The ability to understand and extract information from texts and relate it to the other ideas and information.
- d. The ability to evaluate the evidence and arguments presented in texts and critique the logic of the evidence and arguments.
- e. The ability to recognize and analyze the conventions used in various genres.
- f. The ability to recognize ungrammatical written language and the ability to make necessary corrections to grammar, punctuation, and capitalization.

Overall, the teaching of reading requires the teacher's supports in the content area or general education classroom for the Indonesian learners. The teacher should give (1) explicit reading instruction within the content areas and general education classroom, (2) strategies to increase vocabulary, oral language proficiency, comprehensibility of the text, grammar, and language study, (3) strategies to increase background knowledge, (4) reading strategies, and (5) strategies to help learners analyze,

organize, and interact with the content of the text.

### **Discussion**

The teaching of reading though has been the main role in the English as a foreign language teaching and it has been done in many various ways. Those are aimed at improving the students' ability in comprehending English texts. In comprehending any English text, the learners do not only need the knowledge of the world but also the communicative competence. The teachers can give more attention on the teaching of reading by giving deeper understanding of communicative competence. It is believed that, mastering communicative competence enables the readers easily interpret the texts correctly and appropriately.

Cohesion is a main step of linking appropriate terms or grammar form into an article. In foreign language teaching, through the exploration and analysis of discourse, looking for the language in the form of cohesion and its regularity, to grasp the characteristics and the skills of the discourse cohesion, in order to let the learners master the discourse context and ideological significance; familiar with the micro contact in discourse, improve the quality of foreign language teaching and learning efficiency and language application ability. Discourse is the

language form of terms and sentences. It has the characteristics of the semantic coherence and tight logic. It shows the relative functions of the semantics, and makes the ingredients of discourse complement each other, constructing the unique aesthetic feeling of the language.

The teachers can put some features of communicative competence. Cohesion can be taught during the teaching of English by giving knowledge of conjunction, reference, ellipsis, and lexical organization. In teaching conjunctions, the teachers can give a lot of texts which have different uses of conjunctions. She/he can ask the learners to make meaning based on the texts they read and finding the best meaning of the conjunction. It should be done to limit the falsity in interpreting the texts. For example, the conjunction 'as' in the following sentences.

- I will come to your house *as* you have invited me.
- Boni saw Mely *as* Boni walked to the office.

Those two sentences use the word 'as'. The first is a conjunction meaning 'because' and the second one is also a conjunction meaning 'while'. If the readers do not have good knowledge of conjunction and their uses, they will find it difficult to get the correct meaning of the conjunction.

The teacher also can introduce other "form" of conjunction which indicates that a clause in a new turn relates to a previous one. Like what Halliday (2004: 534) has told, *Mine's cold and . . . — Well, Jane, think of smoked salmon; Grab the pan! — Oh no, I'll grab the pan.* Such markers serve in the system of continuity and they are a characteristic feature of dialogic text.

Another term introduced to the learners is reference. The teacher can provide a single text but for example, the subject of the text is different form. John is a good person in his society. He works as a good staff in residential office. The architect always rides his motor bike to the office. The multitalented home building designer can draw new perspective in recent building styles. Another example given by Halliday in his book is that there are various references to elements that are part of the dining situation — in particular the first mention of the fish (*this fish*) and the pan (*the pan*), where they are introduced into the discourse by reference to these entities on and around the dinner table. However, once introduced in this way, they are picked up through anaphoric reference again and again, forming referential chains in the unfolding conversation: *this fish — it . . . ; the pan — the pan — the pan — it.*

The next is substitution and elimination. The teacher can ask the students to find the links which connect between elements of meaning or referents. There are two forms of this, substitution and ellipsis. Substitution is a systemic variant, for example, "My mother asks me to cook and I do *so*." The word 'so' substitute the word 'cook'. Meanwhile, the ellipsis can be taught by asking the students to find the words indicating continuity which might focus on what is contrastive.

Referring to the previous materials, those features are really close to the functional approach in language teaching. Functional approach is applied during the lesson by implementing the functional syllabus by the English teacher. The teachers can use the current language textbooks which covered a sequence of communicative functions. They are able to use some language functions proposed by Brown (1999) in (Brown, 2007: 225). They are elaborated as follows.

1. Introducing self and other people.
2. Exchanging personal information.
3. Asking how to spell someone's name.
4. Giving commands.
5. Apologizing and thanking.
6. Identifying and describing people.
7. Asking for information.

From all of those language functions, showing how context is the real key to giving meaning to both form and functions. Communication is qualitative and infinite but the syllabus must be quantitative and finite.

The communicative competence is really close to the communicative language teaching. The focus of the teaching is pushing toward communication. Based on the features of communicative language teaching, the teacher can focus her teaching on all the components of communicative competence. She does not only restrict to the grammatical or linguistic competence. The teacher can also use the language techniques designed to engage learners in pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. The focus of the teaching is the aspects of language which enable the learners accomplish those purposes. Thirdly, the teacher should correspond to the fluency and accuracy as the complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. It is done to keep the learners meaningfully engaged in language use. Lastly, the teacher can provide the students the opportunities to use the language productively and receptively in unrehearsed contexts.

The teacher can teach grammatical rules to be subsumed under the various

functional categories. The use of authentic texts is attempted to build up fluency. By providing much spontaneity, the students are encouraged to deal with unrehearsed situation under the guidance, but not the control of the teacher.

Further, Brown (2007: 242) claims that the manifestation of Communicative language teaching is the task-based instruction. Task-based instruction attracts the teachers and the students to the tasks in the classroom. The teacher can provide the tasks based on the real world activities which have an objective accessed in terms of outcome. The teachers focus on the communicative factors in which the learners have to have sufficient organizational competence, illocutionary competence to convey intended meaning, strategic competence to compensate for unforeseen difficulties and the tools of discourse.

Discourse analysis should pay attention to two aspects which are the structure of the text and the function of discourse components. The discourse deals with the language unit which structured with sentences. Meanwhile, the structure is very complex. Discourse is a semantic unit which its relationship with sentences is relationship of embodiment, meaning that the structure of the sentences come to embody the semantic content. In the

teaching practice of reading, to form a discourse that fit the need in the target language society, it should choose the language resources from top to bottom and with a goal, in order to understand the whole article. The description must focus on the semantic convergence between the structure and characteristics of sentences and the different components.

Reading should not only correspond to the words, phrases, sentences, grammar structure, also from discourse level, giving a macro analysis of the content of the article structure, cultivate students' logical thinking, improve their comprehensive reading ability. The teacher should make the learners clearly explain in the form of the language knowledge, to analyze use of cohesive devices, to create discourse coherence method, combine with the learned articles related to the cultural and social knowledge, analysis, together with the students in the process of cognitive inference, induction, summarize the knowledge of the discourse and training the students' ability of thinking and language use. Teachers should give more opportunities to explore and exchange knowledge to the learners. The process for imparting new knowledge is commonly to inspire interest in ways to import new lesson, speculate clue of the story

development, let the students read the text quickly, and understand the content and structure of the article, find out the related problems classify each section of the story and summarizes the central idea, give the overall understanding exchange activities such as organization and retelling, discussion, to deepen understanding of the article do the training of language skills, discuss the cohesive devices and writing skill of articles, style and rhetoric, to understand passages with valuation. This is good for student's ability to obtain overall information, improve their subjective initiative and the ability of independent thinking, and the communicative ability with foreign language.

In reading, students should analyze, reason, and summarize the process of writing the text actively, focusing on the learning content. It improves the students' ability and communication skills. Teachers ought to explain the important vocabulary and grammatical structure in learning, and try to create good communication atmosphere for students, exercise their ability of language application. Teaching reading stimulates students' interest and the language training pay attention to the language content and development of communication skills. In teaching reading, the teachers should consider the actual situation of language knowledge level, the

knowledge of language. The teacher has to give detailed explanation, especially to the obstacles of understanding the grammar and sentence structure. As far as possible use the learned language to skim through knowledge and capture the important language clues in discourse teaching, have an overall impression to the article, segment the article into some sections and find the central idea and important information. The teachers should be good at understanding the intention of the article, carries on deep analysis to each other, so that the learners based on the content, speak out their own opinions, and evaluative understanding.

Discourse analysis in reading teaching emphasizes the discourse, as a whole, content, significance, complied with people's cognitive process of thinking, to improve students' reading comprehension ability and cultivate students' ability in all aspects of language use. It narrows the dominant position of the teacher in the classroom, the whole teaching process centered on student activities. Practice has proved, through discourse analysis teaching, teachers can train the student quickly and accurately grasp the basic content of discourse and the central idea, find out the author's thinking, to understand how the author is expressed the ideological content through

the language structure. Discourse analysis teaching plays a very important role to improve students' reading ability, cultivate the students' analysis, induction, integration and inference ability and the ability of preliminary language communication, it is the benefit on helping learners to develop good reading methods, to improve their reading comprehension level, improve the quality of reading teaching.

### **Conclusion**

Teaching reading is not something easy for the teachers since it needs various and broad ways to have the learners deeply understand the texts. The teaching of readings should focus on some aspects to achieve the aims of reading any text. In teaching reading, the teachers also need to bring the knowledge of coherence, cohesion, discourse, and other communicative competence. The teachers should put them into their teachings in order to make the students easily comprehend the English texts. The teachers should try to give clear explanation and practices for the learners so they will not feel peculiar dealing with those aspects (communicative competence).

Regarding the aspects presented before, the teachers can do many things pre and while teaching of reading. The teacher

should give (1) explicit reading instruction within the content areas and general education classroom, (2) strategies to increase vocabulary, oral language proficiency, comprehensibility of the text, grammar, and language study, (3) strategies to increase background knowledge, (4) reading strategies, and (5) strategies to help learners analyze, organize, and interact with the content of the text.

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