

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Critical Reading Comprehension

2.1.1 Definition of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension encompasses three main elements the ability to comprehend actively processes involved in the act of comprehending, skill, previous experiences and motivation, the difficulty and characteristics of the text (Caldwell, 2008, p. 90). Reading comprehension can therefore be defined as a means by which a reader develops the relationship between the author who provides written material and becomes familiar with the use of written language, which includes his or her ability to read, write, and use the language to improve his or her reading proficiency and overall effectiveness. The above definition continues with the statement that in addition to providing a means for reading comprehension, reading comprehension also helps to build the conceptual framework necessary for future processes required for reading comprehension (ZA & Khatmi, 2020).

Further to the above definition, Pourhosein Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016) highlighted the importance of developing reading comprehension as part of learning to provide an opportunity for students to successfully complete an academic task and includes a number of different components, processes, or even factors in order to identify the most effective methods or strategies for enhancing students' ability to perform academic tasks. This enables students to use information in order to understand information related to the written materials in question and develop knowledge about the material that has been used for all academic tasks through the various levels of reading, writing, and using the written material for academic purposes.

Abbasi (2022) argues that reading comprehension evolves through a continuous process of decoding and interpreting written information, and it represents a complex activity that requires understanding the text. It also requires the reader to engage in the author's intent in writing the material. Reading comprehension, as reported by Subedi and Lecturer (2022), is a multi-faceted cognitive process. Reading proficiency encompasses several sub-skills that

together lead to comprehension. It depends on the reader's ability to process the text using suitable strategies and their language competence.

2.1.2 Definiton of Critical Reading Comprehension

Assessing understanding of a passage means that assessing how well students understand what they read or comprehend from that passage. According to Smith & Ottoe in Drani, informational texts can be grouped into these five classifications of reading comprehension:

1. Literal Comprehension

Literal comprehension is taken as the exact definition of each word (a) spoken or written (b) and in context (c).

2. Inferential Comprehension.

Inferential comprehension requires students to infer or derive information that is not stated directly in order to comprehend exactly what the author meant by writing his or her material.

3. Critical Thinking Comprehension.

This form of comprehension, known as critical thinking comprehension, requires learners to evaluate and interpret the author's ideas, make judgments, and provide personal responses. It involves analyzing context, comparing new and existing knowledge, and drawing rational conclusions from the text.

4. Creative Comprehension.

Creative comprehension requires students to actively create new ideas and develop them into written works based on the materials they read.

5. Interpretive Comprehension.

In interpretive comprehension, students should attempt to apply their understanding to interpret, as well as, summarize what they have read.

Comber & Nixon (2011) define critical reading comprehension as a deeper level of reading comprehension grounded in an expanded view of literacy. It requires students to grasp not only the content but also the context of the text. It is important to develop in the middle years of primary school in discussion of literacy development.

Moreover, critical reading consists of using a critical approach to analyze visual and written information, distinguishing between factual material and opinion, asking questions, making reasoned decisions based on logic, and evaluating data (Ozensoy, 2021). In addition, Olifant and Boakye (2022) state that critical reading comprehension explains the

action of using critical skills to analyse the text thoroughly and gain a full understanding. Finally, students must develop their own interpretations of the text by asking meaningful questions to clarify the author's perspective

2.2 THIEVES Strategy

2.2.1 Definition of THIEVES Strategy

Asmarni et al. (2022) explain that the THIEVES strategy involves a detailed analysis of texts and is designed to activate students' prior knowledge so they can predict the content they will encounter. In addition, Husni & Wati (2021) describe THIEVES as a pre-reading approach that helps students develop an initial understanding of a text before reading a chapter. This is supported by Zwiers (2010), who identifies THIEVES as an effective strategy for pre-reading activities. Similarly, Drani (2019) states that THIEVES enables students to go through several preparatory reading stages before engaging with textbook sections. This strategy may support the learning and teaching process, therefore providing teachers with an effective method of teaching reading while helping students in class.

The THIEVES strategy allows students to "steal" information about a piece of writing before reading by assessing the title, headings and subheadings of a piece as well as the first few words of the text, the illustrations, the ending, the summary and the characteristics of the vocabulary used in the text. Using the THIEVES approach, students are able to build significant background knowledge of the reading content.

The THIEVES approach has been supported in the literature. In this research study, Al-Faki & Siddiek (2013) provided a rubric that was used to evaluate the use of the THIEVES in the current study, and Ilahi (2020) found that students utilize the THIEVES approach to help them recognize the material that they read from the text. Thus, the THIEVES strategy is an instructional approach that includes seven steps to prepare students with background information before reading, and it also helps in structuring their prior knowledge. (Khataee, 2019).

Based on the theoretical review, THIEVES can be understood as a reading strategy that increases students' background knowledge in reading assignments. It encourages students to preview texts before reading so they can predict their structure and content more effectively. This strategy is suitable for use with all types of texts.

2.2.2 Steps of the THIEVES Strategy

As per Liff-Manz (2002), THIEVES is a tool that helps identify essential elements of textbook sections (chapters) which can (and should) be surveyed, previewed and pondered before they read. THIEVES identifies several elements. Here's how to apply the THIEVES strategy:

- **Title:** The title of the chapter usually goes unnoticed by students when they are reading the chapter because it actually is the door that allows entrance into the chapter. In most cases, the title gives the subject matter together with the context of what you are going to read. Here are some examples of questions students should answer for themselves at this point: What is the title? What knowledge do I have regarding this subject? What do I expect the text to be about? Does the title express a particular perspective or point of view?
- **Heading:** The headings of the chapters are frequently the introduction to broad general subject matter areas listed in the chapters themselves. By stringing the headings together, in many cases students can create a summary of the chapter before reading the chapter. Here are some sample questions that the students can ask themselves at this point: What is indicated by this heading regarding the reading content? What topic is covered in the following paragraph? How can I transform this heading into a meaningful question?
- **Introduction:** While introduction sections often provide the reader with an overview of what will happen in a chapter; they also provide some context for what occurs, from which they were extracted. Occasionally, there is no introduction heading (e.g., before the title and after the first heading) or could be the first or second paragraph of a chapter if it has few headings. Some examples of questions students could answer are, "Is there something at the start of a chapter that is italicized? Does the first paragraph of a chapter give any indication of what will occur in the chapter? What does the opening paragraph of the chapter suggest I will read about later in this text? Am I familiar at all with the subject matter before I read this chapter?"
- **Every first sentence in paragraphs:** Previews are formed by having students read just the initial sentence of each paragraph, which typically introduces the topic discussed. Given that the first sentence will be the only aspect of previewing that will help students delete parts of the chapter; it is helpful to have students answer questions like; "Based on each paragraph's first sentence what do I believe this chapter will be

about?"

- **Visual and vocabulary** elements of an assignment (for example: pictures, charts, graphs, maps and tables) are very useful in allowing students a means of accessing the content of a chapter prior to reading, so students have had some exposure to what they will be studying or doing prior to even beginning to read. Also, using vocabulary will assist the students with understanding the meaning of the chapter; the highlighted words are keys for significant concepts within the text. Some of the questions that students may be answering in this stage include, "Does the text have any visuals (drawings, photographs, maps, etc.?) What information do the visuals provide about what I will learn from the text? How do captions enhance my ability to understand the meaning? Are there key terms in bold throughout the chapter?"
- **End of Chapter Questions:** After reading the material in a textbook, there are several questions that will help students determine the significance of information contained in the textbook. Including the end of chapter review questions as part of the previewing process will encourage them to identify all of the significant points, irrespective of whether or not they have to respond to the questions. The questions that they can answer at this stage will be, "What type of questions are included? What information do they indicate will be of significance? How do the questions help in determining what I will be studying?"
- **Summary:** Finally, the summary will provide a starting point for the students to review the material in the chapter after they have finished their reading. Summaries provide the overall framework of reference for the detailed information in the text.

2.2.3 The Advantages of Using THIEVES Strategy

The THIEVES strategy is considered an instructional reading approach that provides multiple advantages in the teaching and learning process. According to Khataee (2019), it helps learners deal with difficulties in understanding written texts. Supporting this view, Indrawati & Widiana (2019) found through their research that the use of THIEVES leads to an improvement in students' reading comprehension skills. Likewise, Husni & Wati (2021) highlight its effectiveness in strengthening students' comprehension abilities. Furthermore, Sarifuddin & Nunggrasari (2019) also recognize its usefulness in classroom practice, as their findings show that THIEVES has a positive influence on students' reading comprehension performance. In other that, he stated that the THIEVES made students

focus and enjoy the material that was shown by the teacher.

Based on the previous explanation, it can be concluded that the THIEVES strategy is an effective approach that offers various advantages, particularly in improving students' critical reading comprehension. This strategy supports students in strengthening their critical reading skills through an interactive and engaging learning process.

2.3 Review of Previous Related Study

While reviewing most of the previous literature, most studies showed that the THIEVES strategy effectively taught reading comprehension. Researchers chronologically related studies by date and level of students done in different countries as follows:

Indrawati & Widiana (2019) carried out a quantitative study using a quasi-experimental design to examine the impact of the THIEVES strategy on tenth-grade students at MAN 1 Pangkalpinang. Their findings indicated that the strategy effectively improved students' reading comprehension. In a similar vein, Sarifuddin & Nunggrasari (2019) investigated the influence of THIEVES on students' motivation in reading comprehension through experimental research involving 18 students at SMK Darul Quran. The results revealed a significant effect of the strategy on students' reading motivation in reading comprehension activities. Moreover, Khataee (2019) employed a mixed-methods approach to explore the use of THIEVES as an activating strategy for EFL learners' reading comprehension. The study concluded that the strategy is beneficial in enhancing understanding of expository texts. Furthermore, Ilahi (2020) conducted a quantitative pre-experimental study to examine the effectiveness of the THIEVES strategy on seventh-grade junior high school students' reading comprehension achievement. The findings showed a noticeable difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores, indicating that the THIEVES strategy significantly influenced students' reading comprehension. In a related study, Larasati et al. (2023) carried out quasi-experimental research involving 62 participants at SMPN 1 Panang Enim. Their results demonstrated that the THIEVES strategy had a significant impact on improving students' reading comprehension.

Al-Faki & Siddiek (2013) carried out an experimental study using a t-test to examine the role of activating prior knowledge in an EFL context. Their findings revealed a positive relationship between the use of the THIEVES strategy for activating prior knowledge and improved reading comprehension. Similarly, Rico et al. (2023) investigated the effectiveness of the THIEVES strategy in teaching descriptive text reading comprehension to eighth-grade students. Using a pre-test and post-test design analyzed with a t-test, they found that the strategy was effective in improving students' comprehension.

Based on these previous studies, the THIEVES strategy is considered to have a beneficial impact when applied in teaching and learning, particularly in reading comprehension. It helps activate students' prior knowledge, which prepares them to better understand and absorb information from the text.

