

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Review of Literature

1. Reading Comprehension for EFL Students

Reading is a fundamental skill that underpins academic success and effective communication, particularly for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students who rely on reading to access knowledge and develop language proficiency. Reading is the process that creates meaning through the dynamic interaction of the text's content, the reader's previous knowledge, the author, and the reading context (Mahmood, 2022). In the context of reading, comprehension is actively creating meaning by fusing textual content with the reader's prior knowledge (Dugasa et al., 2022). In the context of EFL students, reading is crucial because it allows them to English in input-poor settings (Ali et al., 2022). Therefore, reading comprehension is crucial for EFL students to improve their language skills, increase their knowledge, and achieve academic success.

Generally, reading comprehension can be defined as an active cognitive process that involves constructing meaning from text. Reading activities are crucial for developing and constructing the meaning of written texts (Güzel, 2022). It is not merely decoding words but engaging with the text to understand the author's message.

The primary purpose of reading extends beyond information acquisition, it also encompasses pleasure, critical analysis, and personal growth. According to Wani & Ismail (2024), developing good reading habits affects a number of aspect of people's lives, including intellectual growth, viewpoint growth, and personal development. Readers engage in various reading purposes, from scanning for specific details to deep analytical reading, each requiring different cognitive approaches.

Reading comprehension is the main objective of reading. Reading and comprehension are inseparable because comprehension is the main purpose of reading (Fitri et al., 2022). Moreover, reading comprehension involves more than just understanding individual words or sentences, it necessitates understanding the relationships between ideas, making inferences, and connecting new information with existing knowledge structures (Catts, 2022). Therefore, reading comprehension is a cognitive process that requires readers to actively interpret texts by linking ideas, making inferences, and connecting new information with their prior knowledge.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), reading comprehension is regarded as a complex socio-cognitive process that involves the interaction between linguistic knowledge, cognitive strategies, and learners' prior experiences. EFL students develop reading comprehension not only through exposure to printed texts but

also through engagement with various instructional media that support meaning construction. Reading comprehension occurs when learners actively integrate textual information with background knowledge and language competence, rather than merely decoding words or sentences.

The development of reading comprehension among EFL learners is closely related to the reading processes they employ. Research in EFL reading identifies three main processes: bottom-up, top-down, and interactive (Barnett, 1989; Brown, 2004; Browne; 1998; Debat, 2006; Farrell; 2002, as cited in Mohamed et al., 2025). Bottom-up processes refer to learners' lexical awareness and understanding of grammatical and syntactical components of the language . Top-down processing is a cognitive approach that depends on the reader's prior knowledge, experiences, and and expectations in order to comprehend written material. Effective reading comprehension is achieved through an interactive process in which both bottom-up and top-down strategies operate simultaneously, enabling learners to compensate for linguistic difficulties and achieve deeper understanding of texts.

Various instructional media play a significant role in facilitating EFL students' reading comprehension. Using audio-visual media like films, make online learning more interesting, inspiring, and eliminating boredom (Suharsiwi et al., 2022). The use of attractive visual components such as pictures, animations, and audio creates an interactive and enjoyable learning environment (Hakim & Wahyuni,

2024). Digital media enable students to develop and improve their reading skills by mastering supporting digital skills (Adnan et al., 2023). Therefore, The use of various instructional media can create an engaging learning environment and effectively support EFL students in improving their reading comprehension skills.

2. Teaching Reading Comprehension for EFL Students

Effective teaching reading comprehension involves equipping students with the necessary strategies to construct meaning from various texts. Teaching strategies can facilitate the implementation of a variety of teaching approaches and techniques for reading instruction (De Ocampo et al., 2024). Various techniques and approaches in teaching reading have been developed over time, ranging from explicit strategy instruction to more holistic approaches that emphasize reader response and authentic materials. Common approaches include the direct teaching of reading strategies, the use of graphic organizers, and reciprocal teaching. Within the EFL context, these approaches are particularly important because learners often face linguistic and cultural barriers that can hinder comprehension if instruction focuses solely on decoding skills.

In the reading classroom, the role of the teacher is multifaceted. Teachers act as facilitators, guides, and role models for effective reading strategies. The role of the teacher as a facilitator involves the preparation of teaching materials, strategies, methods, and media

before the implementation of learning activities. The teacher's role as a guide requires flexibility in designing the class, allowing students' interests and responding to direct the learning sessions, influence the teaching strategies, and shape the content (Alcivar et al., 2023). The teacher's role as a role model greatly influences students' character, as children tend to observe and imitate the teacher's attitudes and behavior (Arifudin & Ali, 2022). Teachers play an essential role in reading classrooms by facilitating learning, guiding students throughout the learning process, and becoming positive role models that support students' academic and personal development.

General strategies used in teaching reading often include activating prior knowledge, predicting content, clarifying vocabulary, summarizing key information, and asking questions. Reading strategies can improve students' reading comprehension abilities when they are used more frequently (Oranpattanachai, 2023). These strategies empower students to become more independent and strategic readers, enabling them to tackle diverse texts with confidence. For EFL learners, the systematic use of such strategies helps bridge the gap between limited language proficiency and the demands of academic reading.

Activating students' prior knowledge is considered an effective strategy in improving reading comprehension in EFL students. Prior knowledge activation is essential for maximizing learning and

understanding from texts (Hattan et al., 2024). This strategy helps students connect their existing experiences and knowledge with new information presented in the reading material. Students can better predict the connect, understand unfamiliar ideas, and improve reading comprehension by building these connections. To apply reading strategies effectively, teachers need to organize reading instruction in a structured and systemic way throughout the learning process. Reading instruction is generally divided into three main stages: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading.

The first stage in teaching reading comprehension for EFL students is the pre-reading activities. Pre-reading activities aim to direct students' attention to the text and encourage them to predict its content by activating their prior knowledge (Güzel, 2022). These activities are closely connected to students' background knowledge, allowing teachers to activate existing knowledge and help students build new understanding before reading. Activating prior knowledge enables learners to connect new information with what they already know, making comprehension more accessible and meaningful (Al Roomy, 2022). This stage is particularly essential in EFL contexts, where unfamiliar cultural content and vocabulary often hinder understanding.

The second stage is the while-reading activities, where students actively engage with the text and apply reading strategies to construct meaning. Teachers can emphasize the function of unknown words,

analyze reference words, grammatical functions of sentences, and learn to use dictionaries effectively in while-reading stage (Güzel, 2022). While reading activities helps students focus on important information in the text and reduce difficulties caused by limited vocabulary and language proficiency. Through guided interaction with the text, students can gradually develop more effective and strategic reading skills.

The final stage is the post-reading activities, which aims to deepen comprehension and reinforce learning. In the post-reading stage, students connect and review information from pre-reading and while-reading stages use prior knowledge, evaluate and analyze the text, and ask critical questions to construct meaning (Güzel, 2022). These activities help students evaluate their understanding, integrate new information, and develop higher-order thinking skills. In EFL students, post-reading activities also provide opportunities for language practice and reflection, supporting students in becoming more confident and autonomous readers over time.

3. KWL Strategy to Teach English

The KWL (Know, Want, Learned) strategy is originally developed by Ogle in 1986. KWL strategy is a popular instructional technique designed to activate prior knowledge, set purposes for reading, and monitor comprehension. KWL strategy refers to “what I Know”, “what I want to Learn”, and “what I learned”, which functions

to activate students' prior knowledge (Ogle, 1986). The "K" stands for Know, where students brainstorm what they already know about a topic before reading. The "W" represents Want, where students formulate questions about what they want to learn from the text. Finally, the "L" signifies Learned, where students record what they have learned after reading, ideally answering their initial "Want" questions.

The steps for implementing the KWL strategy in reading instruction according to Diasti et al. (2023):

- a. In the first step, students activate their prior knowledge by questioning themselves about information related to the topic.
- b. Then, students formulate questions regarding the information they want to know or discover from the passage.
- c. The final step encourages students to reflect on what they learned from the passage and to validate whether their previously formulated questions have been answered.

KWL strategy offers several significant advantages in improving students' reading comprehension and promoting active involvement in the learning process. The advantages of the KWL strategy include its ability to enhance metacognition and encouraging deeper comprehension when students share their knowledge and questions (Rozy, 2025). The KWL strategy is considered more measurable and effective in enhancing students' English reading comprehension throughout the learning process compared to conventional teaching

methods (Putri, 2023). KWL strategy enhances students' reading comprehension through engaging learning activities (Susana & Rojabi, 2025). KWL strategy can be regarded as an effective instructional approach that not only improves reading comprehension but also encourages students' active participation, critical thinking, and metacognitive awareness during learning activities.

Several previous studies have utilized the KWL strategy in teaching reading comprehension. For instance, a study by Zuriah & Mutia, (2023) find that the KWL strategy significantly improved EFL learners' reading comprehension skills. Similarly, research by Marpaung (2024) demonstrated the KWL strategy is useful for improving students' reading comprehension ability. These studies underscore the strategy's pedagogical value in diverse educational settings.

4. Kahoot! as a Learning Media to Teach English

Kahoot! has become an innovative learning platform that supports interactive and technology-based teaching and learning activities. Kahoot! is a game-based learning platform using technology to develop engaging and dynamic discussions, surveys, and quizzes (Pratiwi, 2023). Kahoot! is a tool that can be integrated into the teaching curriculum to improve interdisciplinary skills, while effectively utilizing digital technology and communication as learning resources (Aibar-Almazán et al., 2024). Kahoot! is a highly educational

online platform because it provides features that can be used as media in the learning process (Darma et al., 2022). Kahoot! can be considered an effective educational platform that enhances classroom engagement, integrates digital technology into learning, and supports the development of students' interdisciplinary skills.

The benefits of implementation Kahoot! in language learning are numerous. The use of Kahoot! increases students' interest and excitement in learning English, because they can play various interactive games, answer questions, compete with classmates, and receive results instantly (Lopatynska et al., 2024). Kahoot! can enhance students' learning achievement, as shown by the significant improvement in their English learning outcomes. Kahoot! effectively improves the engagement of students in the English course (Sagala & Rezeki, 2022). In the context of language learning, Kahoot! is effective in improving vocabulary mastery and motivation of tenth-grade senior high school students as an interactive motivation of tenth-grade senior high school students as an interactive learning tool (Devitriana & Wijirahayu, 2025). Overall, Kahoot! serves as an interactive learning platform that creates a more enjoyable learning atmosphere and supports students' active participation in English language learning.

Kahoot!'s role in enhancing student engagement and motivation is particularly noteworthy. The implementation of Kahoot! enhances the quality of students' learning in the classroom, particularly by

improving classroom dynamics, engagement, motivation, and learning experiences (Licorish et al., 2017). Key components contributing to this include leaderboards, point systems, and progress markers. This increased engagement often leads to better retention and deeper understanding of the material. The game-based approach of Kahoot! encourages students' participation, motivation, enjoyment, and concentration, resulting in positive learning outcomes (Gonzales, 2024). Kahoot! plays an important role in enhancing students' engagement, motivation, participation, concentration, and learning experiences through its interactive game-based features, which ultimately contribute to better understanding and positive learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the implementation of Kahoot! promotes collaborative learning and social interaction among students. Kahoot! enables students to receive immediate feedback, resulting in an engaging and dynamic environment that encourages discussions around key learning points (Sevim-Cirak & Islim, 2022 in Özdemir, 2025). Game-based learning platforms like Kahoot! can enhance students' communication skills and classroom interaction, which are essential components in English language learning. The use of game-based learning platforms like Kahoot! contributes to English language learning by fostering meaningful interaction and developing students' communicative competence.

Overall, the literature indicates that Kahoot! is an effective learning medium for teaching English due to its ability to combine technology, motivation, and pedagogical flexibility. Its game-based features not only enhance students' engagement and motivation but also support meaningful learning and continuous assessment. Therefore, Kahoot! is considered a suitable and innovative media to support English language teaching, particularly in creating an interactive and enjoyable learning environment that facilitates students' language development.

5. KWL Strategy Integrated with Kahoot! to Teach Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is a complex cognitive skill that involves understanding, interpreting, and analyzing written texts to actively construct meaning. However, many students in Indonesia still face challenge in reading literacy. Indonesian students are unfamiliar with the reading topics and text formats or styles, and they also struggle in reading longer texts (Patria, 2021). Therefore, innovation in the learning process is necessary to support students who struggle to comprehension various reading topics, text styles, and longer texts.

The Know, Want, Learned (KWL) strategy is one effective approach aimed at stimulating students' prior knowledge and guiding the reading process in a structured manner. KWL allows it to be easier for students to engage with descriptive texts, connect their knowledge

to the new information in the text, and enhance their comprehension of the text's content (Susana & Rojabi, 2025). The KWL strategy makes students more active because it allows teachers to guide them in identifying information more effectively and building a stronger overall understanding of the text. This improvement is attributed to KWL's encouragement of active engagement and reflection, which helps students comprehend textual material more deeply (Rozy, 2025). By filling out the KWL columns, students are encouraged to participate in class discussions and organize their ideas systematically after reading.

The use of technology, such as Kahoot!, has also proven to be significant in improving students' reading comprehension achievement through an active and enjoyable learning environment. Kahoot! can improve the significance of reading learning by raising student motivation, engagement, and comprehension more successfully than conventional methods (Lestari et al., 2026). Kahoot! serves as an effective motivational tool for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, which not only fosters a positive learning environment but also enhances student motivation and engagement through its interactive and gamified approach to education (Devitriana & Wijirahayu, 2025). As a game-based student response system, Kahoot! has a high impact on student engagement, perception and motivation, and positive attitudes toward reading materials (Marsa et al., 2021).

From these statements, it can be concluded that the integration of Kahoot! in EFL classrooms effectively enhances students' motivation, engagement, confidence, reading comprehension, and vocabulary mastery compared to conventional learning methods.

The integration of the KWL strategy with Kahoot! helps students become more engaged in the reading process because they are encouraged to think critically before, during, and after reading activities. The combination of KWL Plus and Kahoot! improved students' reading comprehension achievement, encouraged active participation during reading activities, and developed positive attitudes toward English reading (Pornchai et al., 2024). The implementation of Kahoot! also provides immediate feedback that helps students recognize their comprehension progress directly after completing reading tasks. The integration of KWL strategy and Kahoot! is considered an effective approach for teaching reading comprehension, especially for tenth-grade students in EFL students, because it combines structured reading guidance with technology-based interactive learning.

6. Procedure of KWL Strategy Integrated with Kahoot! in Teaching Reading Comprehension

The integration of KWL strategy with Kahoot! in teaching reading comprehension follows a structured procedure that guides students through the reading process. Based on the study by Pornchai

et al. (2024), the implementation of KWL strategy with Kahoot! consists of three stages: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. Each stage is designed to guide students through the reading process, from activating prior knowledge to evaluating their understanding of the text. The implementation of each stage is described as follows:

- a. Pre-reading stage: Students activate their prior knowledge by completing the K (Know) column and formulate questions about what they want to learn in the W (Want to Know) column.
- b. While-reading stage: Students read the text to find answers to the questions they have generated and record the information they have learned in the L (Learned) column.
- c. Post-reading stage: Kahoot! is used to review and assess students' understanding of the text through interactive quizzes.

Previous studies have reported positive outcomes from the implementation of KWL strategy and Kahoot! in reading comprehension. Study by Zuriah & Mutia (2023) found that KWL enhanced students' engagement and reading comprehension, although some students experienced difficulties in generating ideas, answering guiding questions, and applying the strategy effectively. Similarly, Fatmawan et al. (2023) reported improvements in students' reading achievement, classroom participation, and learning motivation through the use of KWL strategy. Regarding the integration of technology, Mawarni et al. (2025) revealed that Kahoot-based collaborative

learning improved students' reading comprehension and increased their participation, attention, interest, and engagement during reading activities. The integration of KWL Plus and Kahoot! significantly improved students' reading achievement and generated positive responses toward the learning process (Pornchai et al. 2024). Despite several challenges experienced, the study concluded that the integration of KWL strategy and Kahoot! positively influenced students' reading comprehension and motivation.

B. Relevant Research

There are several studies related to the implementation KWL strategy and Kahoot! in improving students' reading comprehension in EFL students. The first relevant study was conducted by AlAdwani et al. (2022) entitled "*The Effect of Using KWL (Know-Want-Learned) Strategy on Reading Comprehension of 5th Grade EFL Students in Kuwait*". The study investigated the effectiveness of the KWL strategy in improving students' reading comprehension achievement. The findings revealed that students who were taught using the KWL Plus strategy achieved significantly higher reading comprehension scores than those taught through conventional methods. The researcher concluded that KWL Plus strategy effectively activates students' background knowledge, promotes active discussion and learner engagement, and helps learners organize information systematically throughout the reading process. This study is relevant to the present research because both studies focus on the use of

KWL strategy to improve reading comprehension in EFL learning contexts.

The second relevant study was conducted by Susana & Rojabi (2025) entitled “*Enhancing EFL Students’ Reading Proficiency and Engagement through the KWL Strategy in Descriptive Texts*”. The study examined how the KWL strategy could enhance students’ reading proficiency and classroom engagement in learning descriptive texts. The results showed that the KWL strategy improved students’ ability to understand descriptive texts and increased their participation during reading activities. Students became more active in predicting, questioning, and reflecting on the information obtained from the texts. This study supports the current study because it highlights the effectiveness of KWL strategy in promoting active learning and reading comprehension among EFL students.

The third study conducted by Gonzales (2024) entitled “*Enhancing Literary Comprehension Through Interactive Reading Assignment via Kahoot!*” explored the use of Kahoot! as an interactive learning medium to improve students’ literary comprehension. The findings indicated that Kahoot! created a more enjoyable and engaging classroom environment, increased students’ motivation, and helped students better understand reading materials through interactive quizzes and immediate feedback. The study emphasized that gamified learning platforms such as Kahoot! can significantly improve students’ reading

comprehension and classroom interaction. This study is relevant to the present research because it demonstrates the effectiveness of Kahoot! as a technology-based tool in reading instruction.

Similarly, Mawarni et al. (2025) conducted a study entitled “*Gamifying Collaboration: Enhancing EFL Reading Skills through Kahoot! Application*”. The study investigated the impact of Kahoot! on students’ reading skills and collaborative learning in EFL classrooms. The researcher found that Kahoot!-based collaborative learning enhanced students’ reading comprehension achievement, participation, and collaboration during learning activities. The gamification features of Kahoot! encouraged students to become more enthusiastic and confident in answering reading comprehension questions. This study supports the present study because both studies integrate Kahoot! into reading instruction to create an interactive and motivating learning environment.

The most closely related study to the present research was conducted by Pornchai et al. (2024) entitled “*Effects of KWL Plus Strategy Incorporated with Kahoot Game on Enhancing Grade 10 Students’ Reading Comprehension*”. This study combined the KWL Plus strategy with Kahoot! game-based activities to improve students’ reading comprehension. The findings revealed that the integration of KWL strategy and Kahoot! significantly enhanced students’ reading comprehension achievement and learning motivation. Students showed positive attitudes toward reading activities because the combination of

structured reading strategies and interactive technology made the learning process more enjoyable and meaningful. This study is highly relevant to the current study because both studies focus on integrating KWL strategy with Kahoot! in teaching reading comprehension for tenth-grade students.

Based on the previous studies above, the researcher is interested in conducting this study because most previous research only focused on the implementation of KWL strategy or Kahoot! separately in teaching reading comprehension. Although several studies have shown positive results regarding the integration of KWL and Kahoot!, research discussing their implementation specifically for tenth-grade students in the EFL context, especially at MAN 4 Madiun, is still limited. In addition, students often experience difficulties in understanding reading texts, maintaining motivation, and actively participating during reading activities. Therefore, the researcher is interested in choosing the study entitled “*Teaching Reading Comprehension through KWL Strategy Integrated with Kahoot for Tenth Grade Students at MAN 4 Madiun*” to investigate whether the integration of structured reading strategy like KWL and interactive media like Kahoot! can effectively improve students’ reading comprehension.