

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Reading is one of the crucial skills that should be mastered by EFL students in learning English. It is viewed as the foundation of all English language skills since it reinforces other language skills, such as speaking, listening, and writing (Mohaidat, 2018; Saori, 2020). Specifically, in the teaching of reading for EFL students, the essential aspect that should be emphasized by the teacher is reading comprehension. Oakhill, Cain, & Elbro (2015) state that reading comprehension is the process of understanding the words, sentences, and text to create a mental representation. According to Mohaidat (2018), reading comprehension is the ability to construct the meaning of the written text in the target language by associating learning activities with students' experience or prior knowledge. Additionally, Zhou (2016) asserts that reading comprehension can promote students' language learning because it is a language input that trains the brain to process and understands the target language. It indicates that reading comprehension is crucial in learning the target language because it enables the students to learn the language and enhance their knowledge. Therefore, fostering EFL students' reading comprehension is essential in learning the target language.

Furthermore, in fostering EFL students' reading comprehension, teachers could not simply give the students reading text and ask them to read it. The teachers need more effort to provide clear instructions and guidance to the students in

constructing the meaning of the text to achieve successful comprehension. That is why it is important that teachers use effective strategies for teaching reading. According to Khaghaninejad, Saadabadimotlagh, and Kowsari (2015), EFL students should be taught through reading instruction strategies, such as Think-Pair-Share and SQ3R that can help them read in the target language as well as effectively promote their reading comprehension. It indicates that the use of reading strategies is essential in teaching reading, particularly in developing students' reading comprehension.

The teaching of reading in the 21st century requires EFL teachers to employ innovative teaching strategies. In this context, an innovative teaching strategy means teachers' creativity in reinventing the learning strategy to provide more interesting activities for students (Kalyani & Rajasekaran, 2018). One of the characteristics of an innovative teaching strategy is collaboration (Lynch, 2018). In teaching reading comprehension, collaboration is important for engaging students in learning activities (Pan & Wu, 2013). Therefore, some teaching strategies that focus on collaboration are important to be applied and research to investigate their effect on students' reading comprehension skills.

The use of teaching strategies that employ collaboration in teaching reading for EFL students can promote meaningful learning and students' language acquisition (Joritz-Nakagawa, 2006). In this regard, one of the teaching strategies that heavily rely on collaboration is cooperative learning (Killen, 1996; Slavin, 2006; Kagan & Kagan, 2009). There are some cooperative strategies for teaching EFL reading which are based on cooperative learning, such as Think-Pair-Share (TPS), Jigsaw, Teams-Games-Tournament (TGT). Particularly, there are some

studies that have been done to investigate Think-Pair-Share in the context of teaching EFL reading (Carss, 2007; Sapsuha & Bugis, 2013; Sugiarto & Sumarsono, 2014; Shih & Reynolds, 2015; Sumekto, 2018; Hudri & Irwandi, 2019; Liunokas, 2019). Generally, these studies have proven that Think-Pair-Share is an effective strategy for teaching reading comprehension in the face to face classroom.

The results of some of the previous studies discussed in the previous paragraph seem to prove the claims of existing theories that argue for the strength of Think-Pair-Share for teaching EFL reading. Moreover, Shih and Reynolds (2015) underline that teaching reading using Think-Pair-Share may provide an environment that trains EFL students for their critical thinking and analysis in discussing the learning material and increase their motivation in learning the target language. Furthermore, Carss (2007) notes that the use of Think-Pair-Share in a guided reading lesson integrates the cognitive and social aspects of learning in which the focus is on having a meaningful discussion about the reading text and promoting the use of comprehension skills. The benefit of Think-Pair-Share to students' reading comprehension is possibly related to Sharma & Saarsar's (2018) argument that Think-Pair-Share is a strategy that allows students to have time to think individually and then work in pairs to refine their thinking, does strengthening their learning. Considering these advantages, Think-Pair-Share is chosen as a cooperative strategy for teaching reading in this research.

Additionally, this research was carried out amidst the global pandemic, where all teaching-learning activities in Indonesian schools were conducted in an online learning mode. According to Reinders and White (2010), online reading instruction in English Language teaching can utilize a number of online platforms

or Learning Management Systems (LMS). In this research, Think-Pair-Share-based reading instruction would be implemented in online learning setting assisted with Google Classroom for teaching EFL reading. Google Classroom is a suitable LMS for teaching reading because it can assist the students in comprehending the reading text easier since it has great features (Sulistyanto & Imada, 2020). These features, such as *stream*, *classwork*, *people*, *grades*, *reuse posts*, and others, help the students and teachers to discuss any topic about the learning material, maximize collaboration among the students, submitting assignments efficiently, and assisting the teachers in grading students' assignments (Dewi & Sulistyawati, 2020). The effectiveness of Google Classroom in teaching reading and the possibility of doing the discussions and collaboration became the reason to choose Google Classroom as an LMS in implementing Think-Pair-Share-based reading instruction for teaching EFL reading. Therefore, online Think-Pair-Share-based reading instruction setting would be investigated to discover its effect on EFL students reading comprehension.

Moreover, Think-Pair-Share was initially proposed as a teaching strategy that consisted of three different stages, i.e.: 1) *Think* where the students are given some questions or problems, and they are also provided *think time* to think about the answers; 2) *Pair* where the students start to work in pairs to discuss their answers; 3) *Share* where the pairs start to share the results of their discussion with the rest of the class (McTighe & Lyman, 1988).

Kagan, in 1991 (discussed in Sharma & Saarsar, 2018), further elaborated the application of Think-Pair-Share, stating that Think-Pair-Share is a powerful yet flexible strategy. According to Kagan and Kagan (2009), Think-Pair-Share as a

flexible strategy means that it is possible to generate thousands of different three-structure sequences because there are various ways for doing the three steps of Think-Pair-Share. For instance, during the think time, the students can visualize the learning materials by making a list with multiple ideas or use visual organizers to shape their thoughts since written think time is highly effective (Kagan Publishing, 2003). Then, in pairs, the students can do the discussion or take turns listing ideas with their partner (Kagan Publishing, 2003). Later, in sharing their findings with the class, one student can share their answer with the class, or all students can share their answers simultaneously (Kagan Publishing, 2003). Due to this openness to flexibility, Think-Pair-Share represents an interesting research area to be investigated since there are various ways for students to *think* about the learning material, interact in *pairs* over the learning material, and *share* what they have learned with others.

One of the emergent practices related to this flexible nature of Think-Pair-Share application, specifically in English Language teaching, is the integration of mind map. Buzan (2006), for instance, asserts that mind map is highly adaptive for reading, note-taking, as well as visualizing students' thinking process into a graphic which could help them to understand the way their brain thinks and use mind map as a media for organizing, recalling, developing creative thinking, and problem-solving in their study (Buzan, 2006). Even, Buzan's statement is supported by several studies that have been done to investigate the effectiveness of mind map in teaching reading comprehension for EFL students (Kim & Kim, 2012; Rizqiya, 2013; Sabbhah, 2015; Malekzadeh & Bayat, 2015; Zhou, 2016; Aulia, 2017; Mohaidat, 2018; Alomari, 2019). More specifically, Lubis, Herlina, and Rukmana

(2019) highlight that Think-Pair-Share enables the integration of mind map as a teaching medium into its steps, especially in doing *think* and *pair* steps. The use of mind map in Think-Pair-Share could assist students to enhance their understanding of the learning material and recall it efficiently since mind map is an effective media to store the information into the brain and retrieve it out of the brain (Lubis, Herlina, & Rukmana, 2019). Mind map in Think-Pair-Share can also help the students summarize the important ideas using keywords and facilitate the students to have meaningful discussion and opportunities to develop more ideas in pairs (Lubis, Herlina, & Rukmana, 2019). It indicates that mind map can optimize the application of Think-Pair-Share for teaching reading.

In recent years, mind map becomes more popular, and the electronic form of mind map starts to emerge. The use of electronic mind map (e-mind map) has become easier and more attractive than the traditional form as they include images, colors, and drawing (Mohaidat, 2018). In line with that statement, Furtado, Hirashima, and Hayashi (2018) state that the electronic form of mind map may provide a more captivating and effective tool for students to visualize their comprehension. Besides, e-mind map can also be used to facilitate the students in creating their mind map in the online learning setting. Therefore, e-mind map is essential to be used in the current study.

There are various e-mind map tools or software that can be utilized for teaching reading. Ayoa is one of the e-mind map tools that popular among the students. It is a mind mapping software for creating the mind map using electronic devices. Ayoa is an e-mind map tool that offers complete flexibility. The students have many choices whether they want to download it on their PC, smartphone, or

use the web version, and it can also be used in online or offline mode. Besides, Ayoa has great features that support collaboration in which the students could invite their friends to see their mind map and revise it together. It shows that Ayoa is an alternative teaching medium that can be integrated into the steps of Think-Pair-Share, especially in the *think* and *pair* steps. In the *think* step, Ayoa can assist the students in summarizing and visualizing their ideas into a mind map as a product of their comprehension. Then, in the *pair* step, students can compare their mind maps with their partner in pairs as media for discussion before sharing their answers with other pairs. Therefore, the present study uses Ayoa as an e-mind map tool for facilitating the students in creating their mind maps.

There are several researchers that have investigated the integration of mind map and other map-related learning media into Think-Pair-Share. Oktavia, Mustikaningtyas, and Mubarok (2016) have investigated the implementation of Think-Pair-Share Model integrated with mind map in improving Indonesian senior high school students' creative thinking and learning achievement in Biology Subject. A quite similar study by Jatmiko, Kartina, Irwandani, Fakhri, Pricilia, and Rahayu (2018) investigated the effect of Reading-Concept Map integrated with Think-Pair-Share (Remap-TPS) learning model in improving Indonesian senior high school students' cognitive ability and scientific attitude in learning Physics Subject. Another study was conducted by Lubis, Herlina, and Rukmana (2019), who found a significant effect of Think-Pair-Share learning model using mind map on senior high school students' learning activities and cognitive learning outcomes in Biology Subject.

Based on the results of the previous studies, it can be concluded that the research about the implementation of Think-Pair-Share integrated with mind map has effectively assisted the students in their learning. Despite these previous studies that have been conducted, there is a lack of study that specifically investigates the implementation of online Think-Pair-Share integrated with e-mind map for teaching EFL reading. Hence, the novelties of this research are the implementation of Think-Pair-Share integrated with mind map for teaching EFL reading and the use of online learning setting to implement the strategy due to this research was carried out during the Covid-19 pandemic, where all teaching-learning activities in the school were conducted in an online learning mode. In this research, online Think-Pair-Share-based reading instruction was assisted with Google Classroom and integrated with e-mind map using e-mind map tool Ayoa. Specifically, e-mind map was inserted in the *think* and *pair* steps. Therefore, this study is aimed to research whether or not the use of e-mind map in online Think-Pair-Share-based reading instruction has a significant impact towards EFL students' reading comprehension in a state senior high school in Singaraja, Bali Province, Indonesia.

1.2 Problem Identification

With regards to the existing theories, Buzan (2006) asserts that mind map is a highly adaptive and effective tool to enhance reading. It is effective for organizing the information and identifying the key ideas or keywords from the written text. In line with this statement, Mohaidat (2018) states that the utilization of mind map in learning the target language is particularly effective in enhancing the level of reading comprehension among the EFL students. Moreover, Think-Pair-Share is

one of the cooperative learning strategies that is flexible to be implemented for teaching different grades level or any content area (Kagan Publishing, 2003) (including reading, Shih & Reynolds, 2015). According to Kagan Publishing (2003), in the *think* stage, it enables to involve students to make a list of their ideas or use visual organizers to shape their thoughts since giving the students chance to write down their ideas is effective, and in the *pair* stage, the students can take turns listing ideas with their partner. Therefore, mind map could be specifically inserted into these two steps of Think-Pair-Share.

In addition, this research was carried out in an online mode due to Covid-19 health protocols at Indonesian schools. Reinders and White (2010) note that online reading instruction in English Language teaching can utilize a number of online platforms or learning management systems. In this study, Google Classroom was utilized to administer the online reading instruction. Meanwhile, e-mind map tool Ayoa was used to facilitate the students in creating their mind map in online learning setting. Therefore, online Think-Pair-Share with e-mind map integration was used as the strategy for teaching reading. However, there is a lack of research that has investigated the impact of this integration towards EFL students' reading comprehension. Therefore, the current study aimed to fill this gap.

1.3 Problem Delimitations

The present study focuses on investigating the effect of e-mind map use in an online Think-Pair-Share-based reading instruction setting towards Indonesian EFL senior high school students' reading comprehension. Due to Covid-19 pandemic, this study is also limited in that its setting was all online. Online Think-

Pair-Share-based reading instruction was assisted with Google Classroom and integrated with e-mind map as the teaching media using e-mind map tool Ayoa. The samples of the study involved Indonesian EFL eleventh graders of senior high school. Another important limitation of this study is that Analytical Exposition Text was used as the learning materials for teaching EFL reading.

1.4 Research Question

Based on the research background and problem identification, the research question of the present study is formulated as follows.

“Is there any significant difference between eleventh-grade students taught by using online Think-Pair-Share with e-mind map integration and those who are taught by using online Think-Pair-Share without e-mind map integration in their reading comprehension at SMA Negeri 1 Singaraja?”

1.5 Research Objective

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether or not there is significant difference between eleventh-grade students taught by using online Think-Pair-Share with e-mind map integration and those who are taught by using online Think-Pair-Share without e-mind map integration in their reading comprehension at SMA Negeri 1 Singaraja.

1.6 Research Significance

The results of this study are expected to be beneficial both theoretically and practically.

1. Theoretical Significance

The results of this study are expected to enrich the existing literature on theories of Think-Pair-Share and the integration of Think-Pair-Share with e-mind map, especially in the context of teaching EFL reading.

2. Practical Significance

a. For EFL Teachers

The results of this study are expected to give new insight for other EFL teachers about the effect of e-mind map and its implementation for teaching reading comprehension of EFL students using TPS as a cooperative learning strategy. The results of this study are also expected to enrich the information about the effective and innovative teaching strategies for teaching EFL reading.

b. For EFL Teachers Educators

The results of this study are expected to give new insight for EFL teachers educators related to the integration of Think-Pair-Share and mind map for teaching reading comprehension and its possible adoption for teaching reading methodology.

c. For EFL Reading Materials Developers

The results of this study are also expected to be valuable for material developers, especially digital material developers, in designing and developing learning materials related to reading, especially for an online reading instruction setting.

