

The Use Of Kwl (Know, Want, Learned) Strategy On Students' Reading Comprehension

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ABSTRACT

This study aims at investigating the effectiveness of KWL (Know, Want, and Learned) strategy on the students' reading comprehension. Quasi-experimental design was used in the study. The population taken was the seventh grade students of SMP PGRI 6 Malang. There were 54 students belonging to class VII C as the experimental group and VII A as the control group. Both pre and post tests were executed to obtain the data. The primary data were gained by comparing the result of post-test from the experimental group and that of the control group. The result of post-test exhibits that the sig. (2 tailed) or p-value is 0.000 lower than 0.05 (the level of significance). It means that the students who are taught by using KWL strategy have better reading comprehension than those who are not. The results of questionnaire show that the students give very good responses related to the implementation of KWL strategy. Overall, the results imply that the students' reading comprehension can be effectively increased by using KWL strategy.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the learning of English, all of four language skills should be improved by the students. Among all the language skills, reading is one of the English skills, that is not simply translated into each word by each word but it should be entirely comprehended in the process of language course. It is also supported by (Heriyawati et al., 2018) who stated that reading is seen as the process of identification and comprehending the written text, and it is expected readers to read critically to connect and understand the content of the text as well as to get the knowledge from the text. (Nunan et al., 2015) stated that reading is required to pronounce the word loudly and comprehend the idea beyond the text. Again, reading does not only show how to identify some codes and to pronounce it, but also to make the learners understand the text meaning. Reading is a sort of active process while the readers comprehend the text being read. Information from the text is gathered and passed into the brain during the reading. The information gathered includes explicit or implicit ideas in the forms of words, phrase, and sentence. According to (Saepudin, 2018), the activities or reading comprehension are finding the main idea, the meaning of words, detail information and making inference. Further, (Sinambela et al., 2015) stated that the activity of reading is about concerning on the detail contents of written texts. It can be concluded that the reading activities need a sequence process involving not only understanding the surface of the texts but also beyond the texts.

Thus, there are various reasons to enhance reading skill for the students (Anderson, 1999; Cahyono, 2006). Firstly, students need to have a good reading skill. Secondly, reading becomes the basis to get successful in language and academic learning. Thirdly, the skill accommodates the students to enrich their vocabulary. Fourth, the students master more English language in written. At last, the skill can support the

students' language acquisition process, deliver better examples for writing, have opportunities to explore new topics, encourage the discussion, and absorb the language.

The goal of reading activity is having a comprehension. (Klingner et al., 2007) contributes that reading comprehension is a complete process of multi components including some interaction of the readers' previous knowledge and operational strategy with other variables related to the text such as students' interests of the text and their understanding of text types. The reading comprehension is able to be interpreted as an ability of the reader to process text, get to know the intent of the text that the reader reads, and able integrate it with what the reader knows. It also commonly referred to the cycle of having understood the text meaning (Woolley, 2011). Again, the purpose of reading activity is rather to have comprehended the entire text understanding than to derive literal meaning from words or sentences.

Reading without understanding seems useless. (Aulia, 2017) mentioned that without having comprehension, reading for pleasure or knowledge is impossible to be applied. Understanding the meaning of each set of words, sentences, and paragraphs that are part of the text is the purpose of reading. As the students find difficulties in mastering English in terms of vocabulary and grammar, lack of vocabulary and grammar mastery related to the text being read also contribute to the students' difficulties in comprehending the texts. Finding the main ideas and the purposes of the text seem difficult for the students when they do not know how to comprehend and understand the text well. The problem of comprehending the text is also caused by using inappropriate technique of reading.

In fact, many students still found difficulties in comprehending the text. This condition also happened in junior high school, particularly at SMP PGRI 6 Malang. Their difficulties become problems for identifying the text and answering comprehension questions because they do not know what information is in the text. The difficulties faced by the students include, firstly, lack of vocabulary and grammar which affect their comprehension as they feel difficult approaching the text. Secondly, the students find difficulty in finding the meaning in the given text as they depend on their teacher's assistance to read the text word by word or sentence by sentence. Lastly, the students have less motivation, feel reluctant, and passive because they feel that reading is boring and not interesting.

Moreover, according to our preliminary study, there are some teachers not executing background knowledge to support their students' schemata of what they are planning to learn. They also do not accommodate their students to have some questions, since they take more time to explain only. The teachers pose themselves to provide all information and instruction, take over all the things that the students have to do and the students only listen to what the teachers said. In this occasion, the students are passive listeners. The students do not get an opportunity to tell what they have known or what they have learned about the topic.

Based on the above mentioned problems, an appropriate teaching technique and reading strategy is needed to overcome the problems. A strategy can be defined as a plan of action designed to reach a particular goal. It is expected that the teaching-learning process will be more effective, and the students will be more actively engaged with the text by employing a particular reading strategy. Otherwise, it is also expected that the students will be able to read the way an expert reader does as they are not only able to engage with the text actively, but also they are able to keep track of their comprehension. The strategy being used enables them to connect their schemata with the text.

There are various teaching and learning strategies applied in classroom to increase the students' reading comprehension. Employing the KWL (Know, Want, and Learned) strategy is one of them. According to (Usman et al., 2019), KWL strategy is one of the strategies that consider to be applied by the teachers in reading class because it assists them to operate students' background knowledge and students' interests of the topic. It involves three basic steps, which lead students in providing a path of what they already know and recall what they have learned from reading. (Usman et al., 2019) also stated that the goal of the KWL strategy helps students elicit their prior knowledge based on the information of the text, arrange the reading purpose, check their comprehension, assess the students to learn the text more, and develop ideas based on the text. In addition, the KWL strategy is able to help students figure out and evaluate their learning experience. It also becomes a useful assessment tool for teachers.

The KWL strategy is a sort of student-activity-based strategy since the students are directed to be active in the pre-reading, while reading and after reading. The strategy is divided into three stages namely K represents what they Know, W is to decide what they Want to learn, and L is recognized as what they Learned based on they have read. At the stage 'Know', it requires the students to brainstorm what they know related to the topic given and they continue writing down the ideas based on the topic in the board or a piece of worksheet. (Sinambela et al., 2015). Further, in this first stage, the students will know, analyze, and predict what they will learn from the text (KNOW). At the stage 'Want', the teachers ask the students to create the questions based on the topic being. In this stage, the students develop thoughts about what they will learned by creating their own questions. And the last stage 'Learned', the students have the opportunity to connect

the link of the reading purpose, the questions they have created, and the information they found in the text. Furthermore, they will classify the important information from the text and make brief conclusion from the text (Usman et al., 2019). The strategy will favor the students to predict what they will read through a series of questions that they are going to answer later. It also helps them to become better readers. Besides that, the teachers will teach more interactive in their teaching when implementing the strategy.

Generally, there are three important steps in doing KWL strategy, which are recorded in the KWL worksheet. The first step is pre-reading activities. In this step, the teacher guides the students in brainstorming or investigating their prior knowledge on the topic to be discussed. Alternatively, it can also be done by giving feeder questions to help the students brainstorming their ideas. The brainstorming process has a purpose to activate the students' prior knowledge for helping them understanding the text. The students' responses are recorded in column *K* on the worksheet.

On the second step, the teacher provides some questions to the students on what they want to learn from the topic. In the step, the students make important questions according to their interests on the topic. The questions are written down in column *W* of their worksheet. When the students have finished writing the questions, the teacher commands them to read the text and find more information they want to learn based on the text. The information should be useful for answering their questions later.

The last step of the KWL process is post-reading activities. In this step, all questions in column *W* will be answered according to the information, which the students have learned and known from the text. They write all the answers in column *L* on their worksheet. Moreover, the students will also review and conclude about what they have learned in the reading text. We expect that if the three steps of the strategy are well implemented, the end result is the students can comprehend the descriptive text easily and more interested in following the reading class.

Likewise, (Richard T. Vacca, 2008) emphasized that prior knowledge and students' experience in any learning situation have the most principal situations in reading comprehension. Furthermore, they stated that having comprehended a text could be encouraged through making prediction based on the text being read. This activity can be treated by using KWL strategy. The strategy, then can favor the students to enhance their understanding on the topic learned, to keep the students involving in what a fluent reader does, to have a comprehension of the text being read, to control their own learning process, to adopt it for the students' learning, and to save the information derived from the text.

Due to the above situation, the study aims at investigating the effectiveness of employing KWL strategy for students' reading comprehension and to know whether there is a significant difference between students who are taught using KWL and those who are not taught by using KWL on reading comprehension class. Thus, the problems of this study can be formulated as if there is a difference showing up between students' reading comprehension who are being taught by using KWL strategy and those who are not.

2. METHOD

This study employed quasi-experimental research design by using two instruments namely test and questionnaire. Quasi-experimental design was applied because it is similar to true experimental design in the way of having treatment and non-treatment groups (Walser, 2014). However, the participants were not randomly assigned to the groups. The design of this study is described in the following diagram (Ary et al., 2009):

Table 1. The Research Design (Pre-test and Post-test Group Design)

Group	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
E	X ₁	XX	Y ₂
C	X ₁	O	Y ₂

Notes:

- E : Experimental Group
- C : Control Group
- X₁ : Pre-test
- Y₂ : Post-test
- XX : Treatment toward experimental group
- O : No Treatment

The study used the seventh grade students of SMP PGRI 6 Malang in the school year of 2018/2019 as the participants. There were four classes of the seventh grade namely, class VII.A consisting of 27 students, class VII.B consisting of 27 students, class VII.C consisting of 27 students and class VII.D consisting of 28 students. The total number was 109 students. A random sampling was used to select the sample. We took a lottery to select the experimental group and control group. Furthermore, VII.A was chosen as the experimental group meanwhile VII.B as the control group.

Reading comprehension test (including pre-test and post-test) was the main instruments to gain the data and the questionnaire was the additional instruments to get the additional information related to the implementation of KWL strategy on reading class. Before giving the pre-test, some try-outs were given to both classes: experimental and control groups. The try-out test aimed to analyze items of questions of the reading test whether they were valid and reliable. The pre-test was a test assigned to the control and experimental groups before conducting the treatment. The use of pre-tests was for knowing the range of reading comprehension abilities from both of groups. The tests were conducted on the first meeting with as many as 20 multiple choice questions on understanding descriptive text.

The post-tests were assigned to both of control and the experimental groups after the treatment was implemented. The aim of the test was to check whether there is an effect of providing treatment. If the mean score of the experimental group was better than that of the control group, it meant that the treatment had greater changes or improvement in the experimental group. The post-tests were assigned in the last meeting in which the tests consisted of 20 multiple choice questions on understanding descriptive text.

Questionnaire was another research instrument employed to gain information and responses about the study from the participants in order to support the result of the study. The questionnaire consisted of 10 close-ended questions. The questions were multiple choice questions to find information of the students' preference in learning English, particularly in the use of KWL in teaching reading. The questionnaire was distributed to the students on the last meeting after the students completed the post-test. Independent t-test was executed to justify the results of pre-tests and post-tests. The result of the questionnaire was also calculated to support the main data of the test

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this study, content validity is necessary because the materials are made based on the syllabus and curriculum of junior high school. The test items of this study are made according to the descriptive text as the material of the second semester at the seventh grade. Then, the validity is analyzed the validity using SPSS 22 software to know whether the items of test are valid. The reliability of the test is also analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha in SPSS 22 software. The computation shows that the 20 question items of try-out 1 and the 21 items of try-out 2 are valid. The reliability score of the try-out of pre-test and post-test is 0.789 and 0.784 which means that the items of the test are reliable.

The result shows that the use of KWL strategy has positive effect on students' reading comprehension. It is found that the mean score of pre-test from experimental group is 60.93 and the mean score of pre-test from control group is 61.30. It shows that the control group has higher score than that of the experimental group. It can be concluded that the students who include to the experimental group having difficulties in reading comprehension than those who include to the control group.

The KWL strategy was implemented to the experimental group for two meetings. Meanwhile, the control group is taught without using KWL strategy. The post-test is assigned for both groups after the usage of strategy has finished. The post-test results show that the experimental group has better mean score than that of the control group. The mean score of the experimental group is 74.63 and the mean score of the control group is 65.19. Based on the post-test results, it is implied that the KWL strategy can enhance the students' reading comprehension. The data are not only seen from the post-test score but also from the entire independent sample *t-test* score. The result shows that the significant value (2-tailed) is 0.000 meaning that there is a great distinction between the reading comprehension of the students who are taught using KWL strategy and those who are not taught using KWL strategy. So, the null hypothesis is rejected because significant value (2-tailed) is less than 0.05. and the p-value is 0.00. lower than level of significance 0.05, the computation means that KWL strategy affects the seventh grade students' reading comprehension on descriptive text. It clearly refers to the treatment that is employed in the experimental group, the students become more interested when the strategy is applied. Moreover, the students also realize that it is easier to understand the descriptive text by using KWL strategy.

In addition, questionnaire is applied to get the additional information related to the implementation of KWL strategy. The result of questionnaire in the implementation of KWL strategy shows very good response. Out of 10 items, there are seven questions answered *strongly agree* and there are three questions answered *agree*. According to the calculation of the questionnaire, the response on Item 1 shows that there

are 16 students (59.3%) *agree* that KWL strategy is an interesting strategy for teaching reading comprehension. On Item 2, there are 14 students (51.9%) *agree* that KWL could help them understand reading material in English lesson. To response Item 3, 14 students (51.9%) *strongly agree* that the strategy is easily applied in teaching reading comprehension. Item 4 showed 11 students (40.7%) *strongly agree* that the strategy makes them more critical in understanding the reading text. Then, the responses of 14 students (51.9%) to Item 5 show that they *agree* that the strategy makes them easier to understand the reading text.

For Item 6, there are 12 students (44.5%) answering *strongly agree* that KWL makes them more motivated and more active in learning reading comprehension. Then, 16 students (59.3%) respond *strongly agree* to Item 7. It means that the strategy makes them more enthusiastic in taking reading comprehension lesson. Then in Item 8, the students think that KWL needs to be implemented in SMP PGRI 6 Malang to improve their reading comprehension as there are 16 students (59.3%) answering *strongly agree*. There are 15 students (55.6%) answering *strongly agree* to respond Item 9, which means that the implementation of the strategy makes their reading comprehension increase. For the last item, 18 students (66.7%) respond the question with *strongly agree* because they think that the strategy can be useful for them someday. From the result of the questionnaire analysis, it is indicated that KWL strategy is effectively employed in the teaching of reading comprehension.

The result of the study shows that students' interests of the topic discussed are very high and they are able to revive their background knowledge based on the topic. It is in line with (Usman et al., 2019) that KWL strategy assists students activating their background knowledge and interests of a topic. It is associated with the usage of the KWL strategy for increasing the reading comprehension of the junior high school students. In terms of the reading matrix, (Usman et al., 2019) mentioned the basic steps of KWL which are described in three columns. The first column informs what the students *know* the topic, the second column shows what the students *want* to learn, and the third column shares what the students have *learned*. In operating KWL, the students can follow the steps well. In the first step, they are guided to activate their prior understanding in relation to the text. The second step before the students read the descriptive text, the students try to think more critically and deeper about what they want to learn or know the topic more by eliciting information. After the second step is complete, the students begin to read the descriptive text. In the last step, they answer the questions and draw conclusion of what they have learned from the text. To sum up, the application of KWL strategy is successfully executed and shows a crucial impact on the students' reading comprehension.

In short, the question in the study can be answered based on the data finding. The result reveals that there is a great distinction on the students' reading comprehension between the two groups of students who are being taught by using KWL strategy and those who are not. The students who are treated by KWL strategy have better comprehension on reading. The strategy has positive impact on the students' reading comprehension, since it enhances the students' interests and motivation to read English texts. Having interests and motivations in reading is important for them to engage more reading and to comprehend texts. Moreover, the strategy is beneficial to improve the students English, particularly vocabulary and grammar. These conditions cannot be found in the control group that is not treated using the strategy. Thus, it is said that to advance the students' reading comprehension can be done through using KWL strategy.

Teachers have an important role in assisting the students to have better comprehension in the reading materials that are being learned in the class. Thus, being creative and having an ability to choose teaching strategies or methods is important to provide the process of teaching and learning more conducive and to create a comfortable atmosphere in the classroom. By doing so, it is expected that the students are able to comprehend more texts, especially English texts. They are, therefore encouraged to learn or read English texts more often. Thus, the teachers should also be able to recognize the students' ability and the students' condition in an attempt to provide an appropriate strategy for teaching reading skill and for improving the students' reading comprehension. The appropriate reading strategy, such as KWL, leads to support the students being active students during the lesson either through doing individual or through group work activities.

KWL and other reading strategies facilitate the students to be actively engaged and to be more enthusiastic during the process of teaching and learning in the classroom. Moreover, employing this strategy in the classroom brings some impacts to the students, such as: being good readers if they have to work on many activities at the same time, reading comprehension when reading in silence, having an ability to connect new knowledge to the previous knowledge, self-monitoring their reading comprehension by setting questions and answering the questions, and having an ability to make summary and organize the information (Aulia, 2017). The struggling readers may also have better comprehension by employing the KWL strategy. KWL is not only beneficial for improving reading comprehension, but also students' writing. Further, the students can become can be active readers. Thus, it is in line with (Zhang, 2010) who states that KWL supports the development of the students' language and interpretation skills.

Since reading is a matter of having the learning itself, teaching reading strategies to the students at early stage of education is beneficial for improving the students' interests, motivation and habit in reading. Employing reading strategies in teaching enables the students to become strategic and good readers that influence their academic performance. However, it is not an immediate process since the students need enough practices in using reading strategies. Whatever the reading strategies employed by the students; it is influenced by the cognitive process. Moreover, the students will transform themselves into an independent reader when they know how to operate particular reading strategies in their reading activity. They may also develop their autonomy and critical reading which support their learning successfulness. These facts bring about the importance of teaching reading strategies in all levels of education and the teacher's ability to vary the use of different reading strategies in their teaching.

Another impact of choosing an appropriate strategy in reading activity is improving the students' abilities in English through reading materials. It is also expected that the students will be more confident in expressing their ideas, pay more attention and become more serious during the learning in the class because of the importance of English for their future. Moreover, using the strategies are necessary for either improving the students' motivation in learning English or comprehending text, no matter the teacher is around or not. Thus, the selected strategies in the teaching English are beneficial for both language skills and components

4. CONCLUSION

The study shows that KWL has significantly and effectively affected the students' reading comprehension. The students who are treated by using KWL strategy perform better on their reading comprehension than those who are not. Some positive effects, such as improving interest and motivation towards reading, can also be found after the implementation of the KWL strategy. KWL, therefore is an effective strategy, which favors the students, improve their comprehension on reading descriptive text, it is suggested that other English teachers can implement KWL in their teaching practice, with different genre of the texts. Since this study is classroom based, another study on the effectiveness of implementation of KWL for individual reading activity can be conducted. For future researchers, they can conduct the study by using different methodology to investigate deeper the use of KWL in English language teaching in order to get the betterment teaching of reading or the teaching of English as foreign language in Indonesia.

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