

Enhancing the Eighth Grade Students' Achievement of Reading Comprehension by Using KWL (Know, Want to know and Learnt) Strategy at SMPN 9 Jember

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Abstract: The aim of this research was to enhance the eighth grade students' participation by using KWL strategy. The research design was Classroom Action Research. The research area was a junior high school in Jember that was chosen purposively. The research subjects were the Eighth Grade Students of SMPN 9 Jember. The data was collected by reading test, observation, interview and documentation. This reasearch was done in two cycles and the result showed that the percentage of the students' participation improved 68.75% in both cycles from pre-Cycle (27%) to Cycle 1 (95.75%) and from Cycle 1 (95.75%) to Cycle 2 (98.55%) improved 2.8%. It can be said that this research fulfilled the criteria of success. This means that the use of KWL Strategy could enhance the students' participation and reading comprehension achievement.

Key Words: KWL Strategy, Students' Reading Comprehension Achievement.

1. Introduction

English is considered a compulsory subject at junior and senior high schools. It is stated in KTSP curriculum for junior and senior high levels that the students should learn four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, writing and three language components such as vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar.

Concerning the four language skills and the three language components, reading is to be the one of the major issues in research. Reading is considered as one of the English skills that involves an active occupation (Harmer, 2004:70). It means that we have to catch what the words mean, understand them and work out if we agree with them. Then, Grellet (1996:8) states reading is an active skill which means there is a process of guessing, predicting, checking and asking oneself question.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. *Reading comprehension in English language teaching*

According to Grellet (1996:3) reading comprehension is how to understand a written text to get information that you need by thinking, predicting and guessing the author's message. Therefore, we have to comprehend the text if we want to find the information of the text. But the fact showed that many students had problem in comprehending the text. It was because they just read the text without comprehending the text and they were lack of vocabulary. Furthermore, the researcher tried to use KWL (Know, Want to Know and Learnt) strategy to enhance the students' reading comprehension achievement.

2.2. *Reading strategies*

KWL is a strategy that can be applied on reading. Ogle (1986:564) develops this strategy to help the students in reading situation to gain their knowledge before reading. KWL strategy can also help the students use their background knowledge actively and merge new information with their knowledge and learn technical vocabulary (Tompkins, 2010:441). Xu (2010:183) states that KWL is implemented with expository text but it can be used effectively with narrative text. In addition, Ortlieb and Cheek (2012:368) state that KWL often is used for expository text and recently is used for narrative text as well. In assisting the students doing this strategy, Ogle creates a simple KWL worksheet during the thinking-reading process. There are three steps in KWL strategy: assessing what I **K**now, determining what I **W**ant to learn and recalling what I did **L**earn as a result of reading (Ogle, 1986:565). First, the students start to access their background knowledge related to the topic before they read the text, then the students will write words, phrases or sentence in **K** column. Second, The students have to write down on **W** column

some questions that they want to know from the text. Third, during or after reading the students fill **L** column with their new information that they have gotten from the text. So they can check their questions in **W** column and their statement in **K** column to avoid misperceptions.

In addition, KWL strategy gives some advantages for the students and the teacher. KWL strategy can assist the students to gain their prior knowledge and combine it with new knowledge. Thus, they will get wider knowledge and richer vocabularies. While, the teacher can also control what the students' focus on the text and make the teacher use an interactive model in reading class, so it becomes active learning (Foote et al, 2001:55).. That's why the researcher chose KWL strategy to enhance the students' reading comprehension achievement.

3. The Study

3.1. Research context

The research was conducted in EFL (English as a foreign context) where students learnt English as a minor subject, one of the compulsory subjects in a junior high school in Jember.

3.2. Research design

This research was a classroom action research design because it was intended to enhance the eighth grade students' reading comprehension achievement by using KWL at SMPN 9 Jember. As what Creswell (2012:577) notes that the classroom action research is to improve in practice of education from the students' difficulties, to solve those problems by collecting, analyzing data and implementing changes based on their finding. The action of each cycle covered reflecting, getting data, planning, acting, and analyzing the result of the action (Lodico et al, 2010:322).: (1)

It was found that students of SMPN 9 Jember especially the eighth B grade students had problem in reading comprehension, (2) KWL was never applied in the teaching reading by the English teacher. According to Freankel and Wellen (2012:100), purposive method is how the researcher uses personal judgment to choose a sample that represents the research subject.

3.3. Research participants

The research participants were the eighth grade students at a junior high school (SMPN 9) in Jember. The students were identified as of the lowest class in reading comprehension.

3.4. Research data and analysis

The data were obtained by test, interview, observation and documentation. In this research. They were data and supporting data. The primary data was taken from reading comprehension test and observation. Reading test comprehension was used to collect the students' reading achievement and observation was done to see the students' participation during teaching and learning activity. Then, interview and documentation were used to get supporting data. The interview in this research was used to acquire the detailed information such as the curriculum, the teacher's method in teaching reading, the problem faced by the students in reading class and the students' participation. Documentation was used to obtained the students' name of the eighth B grade and the previous score in reading comprehension test from the eighth grade English teacher at SMPN 9 Jember.

4. Research findings and discussion

This research was done in two cycles in order to check the consistency of the research result. One cycle covered two meetings of implementation the action and

one meeting of the reading test. Based on the observation results, the percentage of the students' participation improved 68.75% from pre-Cycle (27%) to Cycle 1 (95.75%). It showed that the requirement of at least 75% the students actively participated in teaching learning process was fulfilled. Cycle 2 was conducted to see the consistency of the students' participation improvement. As a result, Cycle 2 got better than Cycle 1. From Cycle 1 (95.75%) to Cycle 2 (98.55%) improved 2.8%. This showed that the result of the students' participation in Cycle 1 was consistent compared with the result of the students' participation in Cycle 2.

After implementing the action by using KWL strategy, the researcher gave the test to the students. The percentage of the students' who got ≥ 74 in pre-Cycle (18.9%) improved 58.2% from Cycle 1 (77.1%). It can be said that, Cycle 1 fulfilled the criteria of success because 75% of the students get score 74 or higher. Then, Cycle 2 was conducted to know the consistency of the students' reading comprehension achievement. It showed that from Cycle 1 (77.1%) to Cycle 2 (80%) improved 2.9%. Then, it can be concluded that the improvement of the students' reading achievement was consistent.

In sum, the result of the observation showed that the average of the students' participation during teaching and learning process by using KWL Strategy improved from 95.75% in Cycle 1 to 98.55% in Cycle 2. Then, the result of the students' reading achievement showed that the percentage of the students' who got ≥ 74 improved from 77.1% in Cycle 1 to 80% in Cycle 2.

When the action was implemented, the students were divided into some groups based on their previous reading test. Each group consisted of one higher achiever, two middle achievers and one low achiever. Then, the researcher explained how to

fill out the worksheet. First, the researcher guided them to fill out K column by asking some question about what they know about the topic (Little Red Riding Hood). In this activity, most of them wrote about what they looked in the picture given. It was because there were only some students had already known the story so the researcher helped the students by giving some questions and broader idea to make them think what happened in the story. It was intended to dig up their background knowledge about the story.

Second, the researcher asked them to make questions that they want to know from the text. In filling W column, the students were curious about the topic being discussed such as how the story was and how the end of the story because they were not familiar with the story. It means that it helped them fill W column with the questions that they wanted to know. The students could generate the questions in W column but they had the difficulties to write the questions in English. So, short explanation about grammar and assistance to arrange the question in a good order were given. Third, the researcher asked them to write the information that they got from the text after they read the text. This activity made them combine between their background knowledge and new information that they got after read the text and code their own meaning about what they read. After the students filled each column, the researcher discussed together with the class in order to check their understanding.

During the implementation of KWL strategy, the students experienced the difficulties to write questions in English but it was solved by giving short explanation about grammar and guiding them to write question in a good order. Further, in the next meeting, the students did the worksheet easier than before

because they had known how to work with the KWL worksheet from the previous meeting

5. Conclusion

Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that the use of KWL strategy can enhance the eighth grade students' participation and the students' reading achievement at SMPN 9 Jember. Therefore, The English teacher is suggested to use KWL Strategy as an alternative teaching of reading to enhance the students' participation and the students' reading achievement. It is because KWL Strategy helps the students activate their background knowledge and merge between their prior knowledge and new information that they got. It makes them code their own meaning during reading process.

Similarly, the future researchers are suggested to conduct other research with the same or different research design dealing with KWL Strategy. It can be applied at difference school, different level of research subjects or different texts. KWL strategy can be implemented with the types of expository text such as descriptive text, report text, analytical exposition, hortatory exposition and so forth.

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