

## DOES KWL STRATEGY IMPROVE STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION DURING DISTANCE LEARNING?

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### ABSTRACT

Reading cannot be separated from comprehension. Students need to comprehend what they have read to get the information. This study aimed to determine whether the subjects' reading comprehension can be improved through the Know, Want to know, Learnt (KWL) strategy combined with pictures. The subjects were the eighth-grade students of SMP Dharma Wiweka Denpasar in the academic year 2021/2022, especially the students of the VIII H class which consisted of 36 students. Classroom action research is chosen as the design of the study. There were two cycles with two sessions in each cycle. Each cycle consists of initial reflection, planning, action, observation, and reflection. A questionnaire was also distributed to the students. Based on the result, the mean scores of pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2 were 51.31, 66.92, and 76.53. The result of the post-tests showed that there were significant improvements in subjects' reading comprehension. Moreover, the questionnaire result showed that the students responded positively to using the KWL strategy combined with pictures. Therefore, this study proved that reading comprehension could be improved through KWL Strategy combined with pictures.

**Keywords:** KWL, picture, reading comprehension.

### INTRODUCTION

Reading is a must for students to learn. It transfers information that improves knowledge. Reading is also the basic skill to get the meaning of texts. Based on Broughton et al. (2003), reading is the ability to read a text, process it, and try to comprehend the meaning. The students are not necessarily read the text or passage loudly during the reading process. The most important thing is how the texts or passages are comprehended so that it is understood well. The more they do reading, the easier they comprehend the meaning of the texts or passages (Dewi et al., 2020).

Then, reading is constructing meaning process through dynamic interaction. The students read a text to know and understand the meaning, and then catch the point and get lots of information. Johnson (2008) states that reading is the act of creating meaning that requires background knowledge, vocabulary, and experiences in

comprehending particular texts. In reading comprehension, almost all the students have difficulties comprehending the contents. The students must comprehend the text to know its meaning. By understanding the text, they can receive the correct information and knowledge. The components in reading such as the topic of the material are new for the students and they do not know what the text talks about such as: finding the main idea, the meaning of word, phrase, sentence, and textual reference in the text.

Regarding the notion of reading, the students need comprehension skills, especially reading comprehension. Comprehension is crucial in reading because the purpose of reading is to gain much knowledge from the information in the text (Pustika, 2018). In addition, reading is a process that is determined by the brain, emotions, and beliefs (Weaver, 2009). In addition, reading is an important skill. They

could acquire ideas and information to broaden their interests (Apriliani et al., 2021). Having the ability in reading helps the students to comprehend the texts. By reading, they can catch the information in the texts even the detailed information in each paragraph.

Even though reading is important for the students, the students are still confused about reading comprehension in SMP Dharma Wiweka Denpasar. The results of observation the students of the eighth grade of SMP Dharma Wiweka Denpasar still had problems comprehending the meaning of a text. They said that they were not enthusiastic about reading English literature and they seemed to be bored by the learning process. They lack and are confused in vocabulary which impacts their participation in the classroom. The technique that was used by the teacher in the class was monotone which it made the students difficult in comprehending the text. Only teachers who actively teach and speak without allowing their students to have an opinion. There was no combination of learning media to support the learning reading process and then asked the students to answer the questions provided in the text.

Based on the problem, the researcher used KWL Strategy to improve the reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP Dharma Wiweka Denpasar. KWL strategy is one of the strategies that develop active reading (Ogle, 1986). The researcher proposes that the KWL strategy is used to improve students' reading comprehension. This strategy can help the students in comprehending the text and make the students' ability in reading comprehension to be better. KWL strategy provides students with a structure to guide them through the lesson and apply their background knowledge to the new material.

There are three phases in implementing the KWL strategy. First, students are allowed to think about the ideas they already know that in write in column K. Second, reviewing the topic of what they still want to know and then made in the form of a question in column W. Third, they read and then examine the text and write what they have got, and they learned in column L (Nurfadillah, 2018). Furthermore, the strategy gives opportunities to get and share knowledge (Dewi et al., 2020). Therefore, this study is aimed at finding out whether the students' reading comprehension can be improved through the KWL strategy combined with pictures.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This was action research. Action research is a process to improve education by incorporating change and involves educators working together to improve their practice (Mertler in Ary et al., 2010:514). Action research is collaborative and encourages educators to talk and working together in empowering relationships, including educators as integral, participating members of the process. The action research aimed to improve 36 subjects' skills by implementing appropriate techniques and being the disposition to be a reflective practitioner. Besides, the researcher could establish a good relationship with the school community to have good communication with all members of the school.

The participants were the 36 students of VIII H of SMP Dharma Wiweka Denpasar. There were 20 males and 16 females. This class was selected because they had problems in reading comprehension although most of them could read a text with good pronunciation based on the result

of an interview with the teacher who taught English in VIII H class. Therefore, the researcher expected that students' reading comprehension could be improved through the KWL strategy combined with pictures.

In conducting this classroom action research, the researcher conducted an initial reflection by interviewing the English teacher about the situation in the VIII H class of SMP Dharma Wiweka Denpasar, observing the subject, and administering a pre-test. In this design of the study, the teaching-learning process was considered into two cycles which consisted of two sessions in each cycle. The process of this classroom action research was adapted from Kemmis and Mc Taggart in Burns (2010:8). The research procedures which were used in this classroom action research, namely initial reflection, planning, action, observation, and reflection in which the process continues to the next cycle if the result in the previous cycle is unsuccessful.

Further on, the researcher conducted observation to know the problems, which was conducted in eighth-grade students of SMP Dharma Wiweka Denpasar, especially in reading comprehension. Then, the researcher conducted an interview by asking some questions related to the problems. After that, the researcher administered the pre-test to the subjects. The purpose was to know the prior ability of the students in the eighth grade of SMP Dharma Wiweka Denpasar, especially in VIII H. In this research design, the teaching-learning processes were considered into two cycles containing two sessions.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

The following section provides information on the findings of the study

during the two cycles and also the result of the questionnaire.

### ***Pre-Cycle***

Pre-cycle was conducted to obtain the students' prior ability in reading comprehension before the KWL strategy combined with the picture was implemented. The researcher conducted a preliminary observation of the eighth-grade students of SMP Dharma Wiweka Denpasar, especially the students of the VIII H class. The researcher interviewed the teacher who taught English in VIII H class via WhatsApp. Besides, the researcher was allowed to observe the learning and teaching process by joining the WhatsApp group which consisted of students of VIII H class in English subject. To obtain the data, the researcher administered a pre-test to the subjects under the study.

The result of the interview done with the English teacher indicated that most of the students in the VIII H class had a problem with reading comprehension. They were difficult in finding general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference to descriptive text. The minimum passing grade for the English subject of the eighth-grade class was 75. Based on the difficulties that they faced, it seems that they need to have further treatment to help the students improve their reading comprehension.

In addition, as a matter of fact, the students had a low interest in reading, especially in reading English literature so they rarely read English literature and they rarely do practices to improve reading comprehension. The teacher just shared material to the WhatsApp group and asked the students to read the material attached in the group. When the teacher began the discussion session, only a few students

were active to join the discussion. At the end of the lesson, the teacher assigned the students to do the homework. Finally, the teacher concluded the class.

In order to find out the fact, the researcher conducted an observation. The researcher was allowed to do an observation of the students of the VIII H class. The observation was conducted during the learning and teaching process. The result was similar to what the English teacher said. They were difficult in finding general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference to descriptive text. During the observation, the researcher found that a few students were active during the learning process. As the result, the class became quiet.

The researcher administered a pre-test to the subject under the study by sharing the pre-test with their WhatsApp group to find out the problem faced by the subjects in reading comprehension. It was aimed to find out the subjects' pre-existing ability in reading comprehension. The subject was 36 students of VIII H class. The subjects were asked to answer the question in form of short answer tasks which consisted of 20 items. In administering the pre-test, the researcher explained to the subjects that the test should be worked individually and also wrote it in their own paper. Then, the subjects took a picture of their tasks with their phone camera and send it to the researcher. The questions of the pre-test were focused on finding general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference of descriptive text. The topics used in descriptive text were about person and place. The total score of the pre-test was 1847 (see table 4.1). It means that the subjects' reading comprehension was low and need to be improved. Moreover, the

mean score of the pre-test was calculated as follows.

$$\text{Mean score of pre-test} = \frac{\sum X}{N} = \frac{1847}{36} = 51.31$$

The mean score of the pre-test was 51.31. It indicated that the subjects' ability in reading comprehension was low. Furthermore, only 3 subjects could pass the minimum passing grade which was standardized at 75. The result of the pre-test indicated that the subjects had difficulties in reading comprehension especially in identifying general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference of descriptive text. Based on the problem found above, the researcher tried to improve their reading comprehension through the KWL strategy combined with pictures in the cyclical process. Therefore, the researcher conducted cycle 1 to solve their problem in reading comprehension.

### *Cycle I*

Cycle I was carried out based on the result of the pre-test in the pre-cycle. It showed that most subjects in VIII H class had low reading comprehension. In this cycle, the researcher conducted these four interconnected activities, namely, planning, action, observation, and reflection. In this cycle, the researcher carried out the learning and teaching process through the KWL strategy combined with the picture.

Planning is the preparation step done by the researcher before the strategy was applied. In planning, the researcher prepared the lesson plan, learning material, a picture, student's worksheet, and post-test 1. The curriculum used in SMP Dharma Wiweka Denpasar was curriculum 2013. The researcher prepared the lesson plan according to the syllabus being used in

SMP Dharma Wiweka Denpasar in the English subject of eighth grade. The lesson plan was made for two sessions and the time allotment for each session was 80 minutes.

The researcher also prepared the learning materials such as the definitions of descriptive text which contained how to identify the generic structure, identify general information, and specific information, finding the textual meaning and textual reference of descriptive text. Besides, the researcher also prepared worksheets of descriptive text about the person. The worksheets were purposed to give them practice in reading comprehension. Finally, the researcher constructed the post-test I to find out the progress of subjects' reading comprehension after the implementation of the KWL strategy combined with the picture. The post-test I was administered in the second session of the cycle I.

The action was the step where the researcher began to apply what had been prepared in planning. In action, the researcher acted as an English teacher in the VIII H class. The researcher implemented the KWL strategy combined with the picture. The researcher followed the learning and teaching activities based on the lesson plan that had been made. Those activities were divided into three parts, namely pre-activity, whilst-activity, and post-activity. In session 1, the researcher firstly explained the definition of descriptive text, how to identify the generic structure, identify general information and specific information, finding the textual meaning and textual reference. Then, the researcher asked the subjects to create a KWL column in their own paper. Next, the researcher separately gave a picture and a descriptive text about "Tirta Empul

Temple". The subjects were invited to discuss the topic given and then wrote what they already know about the picture in the K column, and what they want to know in the W column, and listed what they have learned from the text given in the L column. After that, the subjects were asked to answer 10 questions about the topic given to measure whether they could comprehend the text given. After finishing the task given, both the researcher and the subjects discussed it together and summarized the material through WhatsApp group and Google Meet.

In session 2, the activity was focused on reviewing the generic structure of a descriptive text and finding the textual meaning and textual reference. The subjects were given a picture and text about "Duck". Besides, the researcher also implemented the KWL strategy in session 1 to help them comprehend the text. Then, the researcher asked the subjects to answer 10 questions. After that, both the researcher and the subjects discussed the answer and summarized the material. At the end of session 2 in cycle I, the researcher administered a post-test consisting of 20 questions to the WhatsApp group which should be finished in 40 minutes.

During the learning and teaching process, the researcher conducted an observation to find out the subjects' responses toward the implementation of the KWL strategy combined with the picture. In cycle I, the subjects seemed to be active enough during the learning process in the WhatsApp group although there were some subjects who did not pay attention in the class. In addition, there were some subjects who were still confused with the material and faced difficulty to answer the worksheet. Most subjects were still

confused about finding textual meaning and textual reference.

Finding textual meaning and textual reference refers to reflecting or analyzing the action based on the result of the observation in order to decide whether the research would be continued or stopped. In this case, the researcher discovered some problems and tried to find a solution to those problems.

Furthermore, to find out the subjects' improvement after implementing the KWL strategy combined with the picture, the researcher administered a post-test I. Post-test I was administered at the end of session 2 in cycle I. The post-test I consisted of 20 questions which should be finished in 40 minutes. Post-test I was followed by 36 subjects. Based on the data presented in table 4.1, the total score obtained in cycle I was 2409. The mean scores of post-test I could be calculated as follows:

$$\text{Mean score of post-test I} = \frac{\sum X}{N} = \frac{2409}{36} = 66.92$$

The mean score of post-test I was 66.92. It indicated the students' improvement in cycle I. Specifically, 15 subjects passed the minimum passing grade. However, the success indicator was not achieved yet in cycle I where at least 29 subjects of 36 subjects should pass the minimum passing grade. Therefore, cycle I was continued to cycle II.

### ***Cycle II***

Cycle 2 was carried out based on the result of the cycle I. Cycle II was conducted to get a better implementation. Cycle II was focused on improving the subjects' reading comprehension to get a better result than cycle I. Cycle II also consisted of two

sessions each session consisted of four interconnected activities namely revised planning, action, observation, and reflection.

Revised planning on cycle 1 was based on the result of the previous cycle. The researcher prepared the lesson plan, learning material, a picture, students' worksheet, and post-test II. The researcher also prepared descriptive texts for the reading material. However, the topic used in this cycle was about place. The learning material was about identifying general information and specific information and also finding the textual meaning and textual reference. Here, the researcher also prepared a questionnaire about the implementation of the KWL strategy combined with a picture that was administered at the end of the cycle.

In action, the researcher conducted all of the preparations which had been planned. The learning and teaching process in cycle II was the same as in cycle I where the researcher used the KWL strategy combined with the picture. There were two sessions in cycle II, namely session 3 and session 4 while the time allotment was 80 minutes. In session 3, the researcher focused on identifying general information and specific information and finding the textual meaning and textual reference since the subjects had difficulty in this part. The researcher shared a picture and a descriptive text about "Rihanna".

In this session, the researcher guided the subjects to share what they already know, what they want to know, and what they have learned from the text given. After that, the researcher asked the students to do the worksheet related to the passage which consisted of 10 questions and discussed it together as the subjects had finished the worksheet. In session 4, the researcher

shared a picture and a descriptive text about “Agnes Monica”. KWL strategy was implemented to guide the subjects in comprehending the text given. Then, the researcher administered a worksheet to the subjects and discussed it together in order to give a further understanding to the subject about identifying general and specific information and also finding the textual meaning and textual reference. At the end of session 4, post-test 2 was administered which consisted of 20 questions and it should be finished in 40 minutes. The detail of action used in cycle 2 can be seen in appendix 4.

During the learning and teaching process, the researcher also conducted an observation. The researcher found that the subjects were more active because they could understand and answer the question in cycle II than in cycle I. The students were enthusiastic while discussing the material in the WhatsApp group. More students improved in reading comprehension especially in identifying general and specific information and finding the textual meaning and textual reference of the text. It was indicated by the number of correct answers from the subjects when they did the worksheet given by the researcher.

Identifying general and specific information and finding the textual meaning and textual references of the text refers to reflecting or analyzing the action based on the result of the observation to decide whether the research would be continued or stopped. In this case, the researcher discovered some problems and tried to find a solution to those problems.

Moreover, to find out the subjects’ improvement after implementing the KWL strategy combined with a picture, the researcher administered the post-test 2. Post-test 2 was administered at the end of

session 4 in cycle II. The post-test 2 consisted of 20 questions which should be finished in 40 minutes. Post-test 2 was followed by 36 subjects. Based on the data, the total score obtained in cycle II was 2755. The mean scores of post-test 2 could be calculated as follows:

$$\text{Mean score of post-test 2} = \frac{\sum X}{N} = \frac{2755}{36} = 76.53$$

The mean score of post-test 2 was 76.53. It indicated that there was an improvement in subjects’ reading comprehension after implementing the KWL strategy combined with pictures in cycle II. There were 29 subjects who surpassed the minimum passing grade. It indicated that there was a significant improvement in the subjects’ reading comprehension after KWL strategy combined with pictures was implemented. In addition, the subjects’ reading comprehension was improved especially in identifying general and specific information and also finding the textual meaning and textual reference. Moreover, this research could be indicated as successful because the number of subjects who passed the minimum passing grade had fulfilled the conditions where at least 80 % of subjects or 29 of 36 subjects.

In order to get the supporting data, the researcher administered a questionnaire to the subjects at the end of cycle II. The researcher administered the questionnaire in order to find out the subjects’ responses to the implementation of the KWL strategy combined with pictures. The questionnaire consisted of 10 statements which were written in *Bahasa Indonesia* so the subjects could fill the questionnaire easily. Each statement had 5 options which used a Likert

rating scale, ranging from 5-1. The result of the questionnaire as tabulated in table 4.2 shows that the subject responses of Strongly Agree/*Sangat Setuju* (SS) was 400, responses of Agree/*Setuju* (S) was 800, responses of hesitate/*Ragu-Ragu* (RR) was 234, responses of Disagree/*Tidak Setuju* (TS) was 2, and responses of Strongly Disagree/*Sangat Tidak Setuju* (STS) was 0. The accumulation score of questionnaires was 1436. The percentage scores for each response were calculated as follows:

1. Responses percentage of Strongly Agree  
$$= \frac{400}{1436} \times 100\% = 27.86\%$$
2. Responses percentage of Agree  
$$= \frac{800}{1436} \times 100\% = 55.71\%$$
3. Responses percentage of Hesitate =  
$$\frac{234}{1436} \times 100\% = 16.30\%$$
4. Responses percentage of Disagree  
$$= \frac{2}{1436} \times 100\% = 0.14\%$$
5. Responses percentage of Strongly Disagree  
$$= \frac{0}{1436} \times 100\% = 0\%$$

The result of the questionnaire showed that there were 27.86 % of responses strongly agree, 55.71 % responses agree, 16.30 % responses hesitate, 0.14 % responses disagree, and 0 % responses disagree with the implementation of the KWL strategy combined with the picture. Based on the result of the questionnaire, showed that most of the subjects gave positive responses toward the

implementation of the KWL strategy combined with pictures. The researcher could say that the implementation of the KWL strategy combined with the picture was helpful to improve subjects' reading comprehension.

## CLOSING

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP Dharma Wiweka Denpasar in the academic year 2021/2022 could be improved using the KWL strategy. In addition, the students could identify general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference in descriptive text in reading comprehension. Moreover, they also gave positive responses to the implementation of the KWL strategy during distance learning. However, the study is limited to only two cycles. It is necessary to have further research that accommodates larger samples and more cycles.

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