IMPROVING READING COMPREHENSION OF THE EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS OF SMP (SLUB) SARASWATI 1 DENPASAR THROUGH KWL

Dede Putra Prawira Adhinatha
Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar
dedenatha5@gmail.com

I Komang Budiarta
Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar
mrbudi@unmas.ac.id

Ni Wayan Krismayani
Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar
chrismayani@unmas.ac.id

Abstract: Reading comprehension is the process of acquiring knowledge and comprehending the meaning of printed items. It is a necessary language ability that must be mastered. Initial research revealed that the majority of the eighth-grade students of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar struggled with reading comprehension, particularly identifying general and specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference. Moreover, the purpose of the study was to determine whether the reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar could be enhanced using KWL (Know Want Learn). To achieve the objective, the researcher performed classroom action research in two cycles. Research instruments, including tests and a questionnaire, were used to obtain the necessary data. Afterwards, the data were examined by comparing pre- and post-test findings. On the basis of the findings, it was evident that the subjects' mean scores improved significantly between the pre- and post-tests. As supporting data, the questionnaire was also completed at the end of the last cycle; the results indicated good responses to the implementation of KWL. Therefore, it could be concluded that implementing KWL could increase reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar.

Keywords: improving, KWL, reading comprehension

INTRODUCTION

One of the most fundamental abilities for learning a language is reading. When learning English as a foreign language, this is a receptive skill that must be learned. Reading is connecting written symbols with the reader's knowledge to comprehend the text's content. According to Patel & Jain (2008), reading is crucial for keeping one's knowledge updated. Reading ability is a crucial component of academic achievement. Although most students will never speak much English, they must read English to complete their studies. Reading boosts one's knowledge and provides new information since it forces brain cells to operate, making the reader wiser and more creative. Furthermore, Johnson (2008) states that reading creates meaning, and it requires the readers' prior knowledge, vocabulary, and experience to assist them in comprehending the text. It enables readers to grasp the main point of the reading texts.

Reading is a dynamic process that requires extensive practice and ability (Moreillon, 2007). Students must read to obtain information or knowledge. Additionally, students can learn and participate actively in class by reading. Students are therefore expected to be able to acquire a large amount of vocabulary and knowledge through reading properly and comprehending the substance of the text they read. Reading is one of the most natural hobbies in the world (Smith, 2004). This is evident in the indirect manner in which people read information daily. Reading is a very personal experience; the reader's reading and personal resources define how effectively the reader reads, and reading is the most valuable and essential skill. Reading proficiency is more essential than speaking and writing skills. Reading provides intellectual need for knowledge (Asipi et al., 2022)

Understanding what you read is a collaborative activity. It involves textual interaction between the author and the readers. According to Serravallo (2010), reading comprehension is the process of comprehending the meaning of the text as well as what has been read. It entails both the extraction and production of meaning via interpersonal and written communication. Furthermore, when a teacher teaches reading comprehension as part of the classroom teaching and learning process, students may find it simpler to locate the four aspects of reading. In addition, according to Harmer (2007), reading is an activity dominated by the eyes and the brain, and it links the two. The brain must interpret the meaning of messages received by the eyes. This is the fundamental component of reading comprehension.

Furthermore, Lems et al. (2010) state that reading comprehension is not a fixed skill. It is influenced by the surrounding environments (Asipi et., 2022). These changes also depend on the goal of the reading and the material. Reading books can also give opportunities to acquire vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and how readers arrange sentences, paragraphs, and text, among other things. When the students master vocabulary, they will have much better reading comprehension (Pandita et al., 2021; Vienarahayu et al., 2022). Reading will provide students with material that will expand their knowledge and develop their conceptual ideas. Reading comprehension, according to Woolley (2011), is the process of getting meaning from text. Instead than obtaining meaning from individual words or sentences, the goal is to comprehend what the text describes. Throughout the reading process, mental models or representations of the meaning of text concepts are constructed.

Reading comprehension is the process of grasping the author's intended meaning when reading. Snow (2002) describes reading comprehension as the process of activating, extracting, and building meaning via engagement with written language. Comprehension is the capacity to

comprehend the meaning of words, concepts, and the relationships provided in a text (McNamara, 2007). Reading comprehension is a challenging language skill that requires extra efforts for the students to master (Pang et al., 2003). It is a complex action that requires perception and thought. Word recognition and comprehension are two interrelated activities that comprise reading (Asipi et al., 2022). Word recognition is the understanding of the correspondence between written and spoken language. Comprehending interconnected words, sentences, and texts is the comprehension process.

Based on interviews conducted as part of a preliminary observation at SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar, students in the Bilingual 8th grade class had some difficulties with reading comprehension exercises. Some students lacked comprehension skills such as locating the main idea, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference in the reading texts, according to the teacher. In addition, they had difficulties reading the material and comprehending the text's main point. Students also knew how to pronounce the word, but they were unaware of its meaning. In addition, numerous students attempted to comprehend the text by reading it multiple times but were unsuccessful since they could not comprehend what they read.

Many factors can influence reading comprehension improvement, one of which is teaching technique. An interview with an English teacher at SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar revealed that the teacher still employed a traditional technique in teaching reading comprehension. The teacher only discussed the content and invited students to answer questions based on the textbook. This learning type was passive, making it easier for students to forget the content influencing their performance. Furthermore, when students found difficult terms in the text, they struggled to grasp the materials. The employment of teaching methods was critical in the teaching and learning process. This can be modified by instructional outcomes, one of which was students' improvement. Teachers should use techniques to keep class interactions fresh and entertaining. Based on the difficulties raised above, the researcher concluded that the teacher's technique of teaching reading comprehension was ineffective.

One way to teach reading that could be used as Know Want Learn, henceforth called KWL. Students gain independence in reading, writing, and learning the materials. This technique gives students a structure to help them navigate the lesson and applies their prior knowledge to the new information. The KWL, as the teaching technique, may monitor and analyze students' progress in comprehending the text and focusing on the key topics. When explaining the content, the teacher can capture the students' attention by employing KWL. It allows students to gain information, discuss ideas with other students, and make studying and interpreting the material much simpler. KWL technique in the teaching and learning process offers various advantages. For example, it is an intriguing and helpful method to implement in the teaching and learning since it may assist students in understanding the text. They can also demonstrate their prior knowledge, estimate the information they expect to discover in reading material, and take notes on the information received.

KWL is a basic teaching approach for teaching reading comprehension of recount texts. Furthermore, KWL is an approach that the researcher used in this study at SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar, particularly for students in class VIII. This method can help children comprehend the content and become better readers. It is a hands-on method for developing new subjects or concepts that are meaningful to learners depending on their past expertise. According to Arends & Kilcher (2010), KWL engages students in accessing existing

knowledge, identifying learning questions and goals prior to the instructional segment, and then reflecting on what has been learned following teaching. As a result, it can assist students and teachers in identifying misunderstandings and concepts for prior learning.

Reading is essential, as stated by Blachowicz & Ogle (2008). It is the process by which individuals acquire knowledge and ideas from books, newspapers, manuals, letters, and ads, among other sources. In addition, utilizing ways to construct meaning before, during, and after reading helps students make connections between what they are currently reading and what they have previously learned. KWL gives a simple and straightforward method for exploring their extensive knowledge sources (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 2010). Students list their knowledge on the issue. In the second phase, students propose questions they have regarding the topic. In the last phase, students indicate what they have learned, which may include answers to their questions, essential related information, and new material that enhances their prior reading comprehension. In the present study, KWL can assist students in reflecting on and evaluating their learning experiences. KWL is one of the instructional tactics that might enhance students' participation.

KWL is intended to assist students in learning from reading text in any subject area. It has three steps: brainstorming and categorizing, asking for reading goals, and checking answers. As a result, this procedure is intended to assist teachers in becoming more responsive in assisting students in accessing appropriate knowledge when reading texts. KWL promotes active reading of texts (Kloock et al., 2010). According to Herrell & Jordan (2016), KWL charts are three-part charts that students use to explore what they know (K), what they want to know (W), and what they learn (L) about a topic. Teachers typically arrange three-part columns with the letters K, W, and L at the top of each column. The teacher introduces the topic, and students are asked what they 'know' about it. The teacher then records the responses of the students on the chart.

As a result, the researcher attempts to use KWL to teach reading comprehension to assist students in discovering general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference in recount texts. KWL is thought to be an effective teaching technique for improving students' reading comprehension of recount texts. Based on the background, the current research problem could be constructed as follows: can reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023 be improved through KWL? Furthermore, this research aimed to determine whether KWL can improve reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design and Subjects

This study employed Classroom Action Research as its research design. According to Burns (2010), classroom action research has been a component of a bigger educational movement for some time. This is associated with 'reflective practice' and 'teacher as researcher.' In addition, classroom action research is a process in which participants assess their own teaching practices deliberately and thoroughly utilizing research strategies (Ferrance, 2000). The process of action research includes planning, action, observation, and reflection

(Ary et al., 2010). The present study was conducted in two cycles using classroom action research as the research design.

The subjects of the present study were the eighth-grade students of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023. The students of VIII Bilingual class were chosen as research participants for this study. There were 28 students who participated in the research. The research subjects were chosen based on preliminary observations by interviewing English teachers. The VIII Bilingual class students were shown to have low reading comprehension, particularly in identifying general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual references. This issue must be addressed as soon as possible by employing proper instructional tactics. Furthermore, the researcher believed that by using the KWL, the subjects would increase their reading comprehension.

Data Collection and Analysis

The researcher collected data using two types of instruments: tests (pre- and post-tests) and a questionnaire. Before executing the technique, the researcher conducted a preliminary test. The purpose of the pre-test was to determine the prior reading comprehension knowledge of the subjects. After administering the pre-test, the researcher developed lesson plans and then used the technique to enhance the reading comprehension of the individuals. Moreover, the post-test was conducted at the end of each cycle. The purpose of the post-test was to gauge their progress following the application of KWL. The post-test scores demonstrated the subjects' enhanced reading comprehension and the action's results. In the current classroom action research, the questionnaire was also administered at the end of the last cycle to measure the subjects' attitudes on using the technique for teaching reading comprehension by picking the researcher-provided options. In this study, the questionnaire served as additional data.

As indicated previously, the required data were collected by the administration of a pre-test, post-test, and questionnaire. Prior to the implementation of KWL, pre-tests revealed pre-existing reading comprehension, while post-tests demonstrated the technique's efficacy in teaching subjects. The findings of the post-test were compared to the results of the pre-test to measure the improvement. If the mean post-test score was higher than the mean pre-test score, the intervention successfully improved the subjects' reading comprehension. Using the provided formulas, the researcher must analyze the data. The data from the administration of the tests were examined using the mean score formula. Besides, the data from the questionnaire were examined using the percentage formula

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The subjects of the study were given research instruments to collect reliable data. The researcher used two different types of research instruments in this study to gather data. Tests and questionnaires were the instruments used. Pre-test and post-test tests were administered. In addition, the subject took a pre-test before the strategy was applied. The goal of the pre-test was to ascertain the subjects' prior reading comprehension. The post-test was administered at the end of each cycle. The purpose of the post-test was to evaluate how much the subjects' reading comprehension could be improved during implementing KWL. In addition, a questionnaire was given at the end of the last cycle to determine their responses after being taught through applying the strategy, KWL.

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Data were gathered by administering the research instruments to answer the research problem. Through a cycle of classroom action research, KWL was successfully implemented in the present classroom action research. Three sets of pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2 scores resulted from administering those instruments to the subjects. After implementing KWL in their lessons, the subjects' reading comprehension scores improved. The pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2 results from the research should be tabulated so they can be carefully calculated or analyzed. As a result, the following tabulation clearly showed the necessary data gathered from the pre-cycle, cycle I, and cycle II.

Cycles (Research Instrument)	Descriptive Statistic			
	Min.	Max.	Total	Mean
Pre-cycle (Pre-test)	45	75	1908	68.14
Cycle I (Post-test 1)	58	97	2311	82.54
Cycle II (Post-test 2)	82	98	2595	92.68

Table 1. The Data Tabulation Showing the Progressing Mean Scores

It could be clearly seen that table 1 showed there were increasing achievements of the subjects in reading comprehension after the implementation of KWL. The minimum scores of the pre-cycle to cycle II increased from 45 to 82. In addition, the maximum scores also improved respectively from 75 to 98. The final scores in cycle II indicated that all subjects could achieve the minimum passing grade at the school. Moreover, the mean scores resulted by the pre-test and post-test 1 and 2. There were significant improvements in a figure of 68.14 to 92.68 respectively, from pre-cycle to cycle I. The current research findings revealed that KWL could improve the subjects' reading comprehension.

In addition, the additional supporting data were gathered through a structured questionnaire distributed at the end of the previous cycle to determine their reactions to using KWL in teaching reading comprehension. The structured questionnaire was made up of ten statements written in Indonesian so that the subjects of Bilingual class of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar students could understand them easily. Furthermore, the structured questionnaire included five options: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. The questionnaire results were analyzed using a Likert rating scale (5) to one (1). The following table contained additional data showing the subjects' total responses to an item and all structured questionnaire items mirroring their responses on implementing KWL in teaching reading comprehension.

Questionnaire Responses	Percentages
Strongly Agree	27.85%
Agree	56.78%
Undecided	14.02%
Disagree	1.26%
Strongly Disagree	0.09%

Table 2. The Data Tabulation Showing the Subjects' Responses

According to the questionnaire results, the subjects' responses to applying KWL were very effective in increasing their reading comprehension. This was supported by the responses of those who responded positively to implementing KWL. Based on the percentage calculation, there were 27.85% of the responses that subjects responded strongly agree; 56.78%, agree; 14.02%, undecided; 1.26%, disagree; and 0.09%, strongly disagree. The pre-test and post-test results showed a significant increase in the subjects' reading comprehension and were consistent with the questionnaire results. In other words, KWL helped the eighth-grade students of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar to improve reading comprehension.

Discussion

The design of this study was based on classroom action research. The classroom action research aimed to address concerns with reading comprehension among the eighth-grade students at SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar. As a result, the researcher employed KWL as the instructional strategy. This study was divided into two cycles, with two sessions per cycle. In addition, it consisted of four interrelated activities: planning, action, observation, and reflection. Following a preliminary reflection on this research, cycles I and II were conducted. In addition, the researcher used tests (pre- and post-tests) and a structured questionnaire to collect data. In addition, the pre-cycle, cycle I, and cycle II may be analyzed in greater depth as follows.

During the pre-cycle, the researcher conducted interviews with the English teacher at SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar and conducted observations in order to acquire precise data on reading comprehension. The participants were given a pre-test to assess their current reading comprehension abilities. The researcher found, based on the findings of the pre-test, that the participants had low reading comprehension because they had difficulty identifying the four aspects of reading comprehension: general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual references. The mean score on the pre-test was 68.14, as assessed by a three-factor grading criteria. None of the 28 people who took the pre-test earned a passing mark. The results of the pre-test suggested that the reading comprehension of the subjects was still weak and required improvement. Observations revealed that the people had difficulty identifying the four reading aspects. The strategy to teaching reading comprehension was repetitive. As a result, the researcher decided to conduct cycle I in a light-hearted environment conducive to teaching and learning.

In cycle I, the researcher used KWL to teach the subjects. The statistics showed an increase in the mean reading comprehension scores of the subjects. Their mean score after a post-test at the end of cycle I was 82.54. The post-test results revealed that their reading comprehension improved greatly from the pre-cycle. However, the success indicators still needed to be met, as only 17 out of 28 subjects obtained the minimum passing grade on the post-test. Using KWL, some students learned to recognize general information, specific information, textual reference, and textual meaning when reading. In this cycle, only a few subjects focused on the teaching and learning process. They responded more actively to some queries posed by the researcher. When reading texts, however, some students needed assistance identifying general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference. As a result, this research cannot be finished because the classroom action research still needed to meet the success indicators set in the previous chapter. The researcher did cycle II of this classroom action research to acquire substantially better findings.

The researcher modified the design for the second cycle to stress the finding of general and specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference in reading texts. In the first and second sessions of cycle I, the subjects struggled to differentiate between the four aspects of reading. On the second post-test of cycle II, the mean score was 92.68. This demonstrated that the subjects' mean scores increased more than between the pre-test and post-test 1. Moreover, 28 subjects achieved the passing grade. The results of cycle II also revealed that KWL can improve their reading comprehension. They may become more invested in the teaching and learning process. During the third and fourth sessions, the subjects were more enthusiastic and involved in the teaching and learning process. By the end of cycle II, they were able to recognize the four reading aspects in recount texts. They were more attentive and engaged in the teaching and learning process. They valued developing reading comprehension when KWL was implemented. Participation in a reading exercise dramatically increased students' literacy (Budiarta, 2022). In addition, cycle II of this class action research can now be concluded because the subjects have satisfied the targeted success indicator.

In this study, a structured questionnaire was used to determine the responses of the subjects' to the implementation of KWL in the teaching and learning process in order to improve reading comprehension. More than 84% of the responses believed that the strategy may help them enhance their reading comprehension of recount texts and in identifying the four reading aspects. Using this strategy during the learning process can assist create a positive environment that will increase students' interest in reading comprehension (Andari et al., 2022). In terms of producing ideas, it was pretty beneficial to them. Moreover, students may acquire confidence throughout the teaching and learning of reading comprehension since they could compare their opinions to those of their peers.

Based on the preceding evidence and explanation, implementing KWL was the optimal cause of the action. It helped the subjects increase their comprehension of the reading texts. The findings of the pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2 indicated a significant improvement in the reading comprehension of the subjects, which was concluded in the second cycle. In addition, it was reinforced by questionnaire data that demonstrated a favorable response to the implementation of KWL. Based on the presentation and findings of the research, it can be concluded that KWL as a teaching strategy can improve the reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar.

CONCLUSION

The pre-test mean score revealed that the subjects' reading comprehension remained inadequate. The pre-test results revealed that none of the subjects achieved the minimum passing grade. In post-test 1, the statistics showed that only 17 subjects received the passing grade, while 28 subjects received the minimum passing grade in post-test 2. Furthermore, the pre-cycle, cycle I, and cycle II mean scores were 68.14, 82.54, and 92.68, respectively. Furthermore, data clearly demonstrated that KWL could improve the subjects' reading comprehension. As a result, this research can be done in cycle II.

The supporting data was gathered using a questionnaire. According to the questionnaire answers, more than 84% of the subjects' responses believed that KWL should be used to teach reading comprehension. This indicated that KWL can increase their activity level while also greatly improving their reading comprehension. Their comments demonstrated the efficacy of

KWL, with most of them positively reacting to utilizing KWL to increase their reading comprehension. As a result, the subjects gladly accepted the strategy and totally loved the teaching and learning process of reading comprehension.

The purpose of this classroom action research was to help the eighth-grade students of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar who were struggling with reading comprehension. The findings demonstrated that the subjects' difficulties could be solved by applying KWL. They may also recognize general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference of reading texts. They were also eager to use KWL to improve their reading comprehension. Based on the results of the pre-test, post-test, and questionnaire, it was possible to increase the reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students at SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar by using KWL.

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