

IMPROVING STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN READING COMPREHENSION BY USING KNOW-WANT-LEARN (KWL) CHART TECHNIQUE

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the process of improving students' achievement in reading comprehension by using KWL Chart Technique. The objective was to discover the significant improvement of students' achievement in reading comprehension when the students were taught by using KWL Chart Technique. The subjects of the study were the second grade students of SMP Negeri 29 Medan. There were thirty four students. They were taught by using KWL Chart Technique. The instruments for the data collection were reading assessment, questionnaire sheet, and observation sheet. The techniques of the data analysis applied were quantitative and qualitative. In analyzing the data, the students were three reading tests namely orientation test, test I, and test II. The mean of students' core for the orientation test was 38.59, test I was 59.32, and test II was 77.76. The total percentage of students who passed the passing grade significantly improved, in the orientation test it was 3.12%, in test I it was 23.53%, and in test II it was 88.24%. It was found that the application of KWL Chart Technique significantly improved the students' achievement in reading comprehension.

Key Words: Know-Want-Learn (KWL), reading comprehension

INTRODUCTION

English is an introduction spoken language in international event and is used as the medium of information flow on science, technology, and culture as well. As we are in developing country we should try to be able to speak English to make relationship with other country in the world so that we can master the science, technology and culture in the world. So we can face the competition in the global era. By mastering English, it is easier for us to make a good relationship with other countries. In education context, English has function as a means to communicate in the daily communication, to get knowledge, to make interpersonal communication, to share information and to enjoy language lesson in English culture.

DEPDIKBUD (1993) said that English is the first foreign language to be studied in order to master and develop the knowledge, technology, arts and to create a good relation with other countries. The position of English in Indonesia is as compulsory first foreign language taught at the school start from kindergarten up to university level. Although it is just a foreign language, it is very important. It proves that it is one of the subjects required for passing the National Examination for junior and Junior High School.

English proficiency consists of four skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing that should be achieved by the students who learn English. Reading is one of the most important skills in learning language. Brown (2004) states that reading is arguably the most essential for success in all educational context, remain a skill of paramount importance as we create assessment of general language ability. In reading the students are required to be able to read. Through reading, students can get knowledge. Therefore, reading cannot be separated in studying and learning process in the class.

Educational Unit Curriculum for Junior High School about standard competence in reading states that students are expected to be able to comprehend the meaning (sense) of both interpersonal and transactional written text formally as well as informally in the form of Descriptive, Recount, Narrative, Procedure, and Report in the context of daily life. It means that in reading skill, they are expected to be able to get some knowledge and information from the text.

In learning English, students are expected to get some messages from their reading. Since it is generally learned from secondary level of education and higher education, it implies that after studying the language for six years, it is expected that students will be able to comprehend a reading text as well as possible. The problem, students who have learned English for six years are not successfully as the government's expectation. It means that most of the students cannot get some information from the reading texts. One of the factors is that students cannot combine their prior knowledge with the information stated in the text, so it will be very difficult for them to comprehend the text they read.

Based on the problem above, the writer would like to conduct a research by applying KWL (know-want-learn) technique to overcome the problem. KWL technique enables students to explore what they know, what they want to know, and what they learn about a topic. By this technique, students activate their own personal background knowledge, predict about the information they expect to find in the reading material, and take notes related to the information gained. Each of these tasks supports their comprehension as they prepare to read, as they read, and after they read. Therefore, this technique could be a solution to improve students' achievement in comprehending a reading text.

METHODOLOGY

The research design of this study is Classroom Action Research. Wallace (1998:1) defines action research as the systematic collection and analysis of data relating to the improvement of some area of professional practice.

Moreover, Kemmis and Taggart (1988) in Burns (2009:7) define that action research typically involves four broad phase in a cycle of research, the first cycle may become a continuing or iterative, spiral of cycles which recur until the action researcher has achieved a satisfactory outcome and feels it is time to stop. It means that second cycle is not necessary to be continued if the class means score at the first cycle is satisfying or there are significance progresses in first cycle.

These are four broad phases in a cycle of research can be seen in following figure;

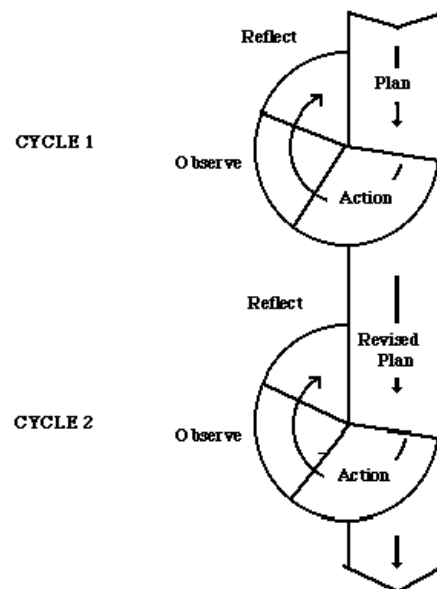


Figure 3.1 Cyclical action research model based on Kemmis and Taggart (1988) in Burns (2010:9)

Figure 3.1 shows that Cycle 1 consists of planning, action, observation, and reflection.

a) **Planning**

Planning is arrangement for doing something. In this phases there will be many activities organized that will be done in action phases related to identify problem, such as;

1. Preparing lesson plans.
2. Preparing reading texts and the tests for each meeting.
3. Preparing the facilities and media that will be used.
4. Preparing questionnaire sheet and observation sheet for the students.

5. Planning and designing the application of teaching reading by using KWL CHART.

b) Action

Action is the process of doing. Action stage is the implementation of planning. Everything that has been planned will be done in five meetings for the first cycle. Those activities will be done as the following:

1. Teacher gives the apperception to active the students' prior knowledge.
2. Teacher motivates the students.
3. Teacher tells the students the goal of the activity.
4. The teacher give the students one topic of descriptive text and ask them to make a KWL chart based on the topic given.
5. After filling the **K** and **W** session, the teacher asks the students to read the whole text and try to find the new information related to what they have in the **W** session, the information should be put in the **L** session.
6. After completing the KWL chart, teacher leads the students to have a discussion and share each other about their chart. A misconception should be clarified.
7. Twenty minutes before the time up, Teacher gives individual test for the students.
8. Students answer the questions which are related to the descriptive text organization (identification, description, and conclusion).
9. Teacher evaluates the whole activity

c) Observation

Observation will be done when the classroom action research is going on. Observation is phase to record everything happens during teaching-learning process including the effects of the actions. The purposes of Observation is to find out the information of action, such as students' attitudes, behaviors, and activities while giving action even the obstacles that happened in observer's book. The observer will observe whole teaching learning process in the classroom. The observer is to see how the teaching and learning process have run, whether the planned teaching and learning design points have been implemented as a whole or not, then whether the result is good or not. This step will provide the observer the data as the result of the respond of the step in acting. This observation will prove the action.

d) Reflection

Reflection is as the evaluation of the action which has been done. The teacher should make it as the feedback of the running of the cycle. Through doing

the reflection, the writer will reflect on everything done and makes conclusion as a whole. The conclusion concerns with the process and the result. Whatever the weakness or the strength found will be listed on so that the writer can evaluate what need to be evaluated and improve what need to be improved if there is no improving in the first cycle. Therefore it must be continue to the second cycle.

This research applies quantitative and qualitative data. The qualitative data is used to describe the situation during the teaching and learning process when the quantitative data is used to analyze the score of the students.

1. Quantitative data:
 - Essay tests. The students will be asked to answer 10 reading comprehension questions test. This test related to the text that will be read. This test is used to get the quantitative data.
2. Qualitative data:
 - Observation sheet that will be used to identify all the condition that will happen during the teaching learning process including teachers, students, and the context of the situation that will be done by the collaborator.
 - Questionnaire sheet will be used to know students' opinion about English subject, reading comprehension, and the strategy of teaching.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this part, the discussion of the data and the findings are divided into the first cycle and the second cycle.

FIRST CYCLE

In the first meeting, when the orientation test was conducted. In the orientation test, the mean of students' score was just 38.59 and the percentage of the master students was just 3.12 %. At that time, the KWL technique had not been applied yet. Students comprehend the text only by reading the whole text. Even some students have no motivation and curiosity to comprehend the text. As the result, some of them could not answer the questions well and just cheated their friends' answer.

In the first cycle test, the number of students was 34 and the total score of the students was 2017, so the mean was 59.32

The number of master students was 8 students and the percentage was 23.53 %

In the first cycle test, after the KWL chart technique was applied, the mean of students' total score was still below the minimum standard (KKM). The English teacher made 70 as minimum standard (KKM) in English lesson especially in reading. The mean of the students' score in the first cycle test was just 59.32 and the percentage of the master students was just 23.53%. The collaborator worked together with researcher in filling out observation sheet and diary note result, there are some cases that were analyzed in observation sheet why are the mean of students' score was still below the minimum standard (KKM). In cycle I, the teacher did not ask if they understood or not and the teacher forgot to give chance for students to ask some questions. The teacher explained the material too fast and she could not manage the class well. As results, the students made noise and they did not pay attention to the lesson. In doing the Essay, some of the students cheated their friends and they are still weak in Tenses.

SECOND CYCLE

In the cycle II, the number of students was 34 and the total score of the students was 2644, so the mean was 77.76. The number of master students was 30 and the percentage was 88.24%

In this second cycle test, the students' mean score had improved above the minimum standard and most of students got score above the minimum standard (70) too. In this cycle, the weakness of the research in cycle I had reflected and as the result the mean of students' score had improved above minimum standard (KKM). There were some efforts done to improve the students' mean score. The first, the teacher motivated the students to be more serious in studying English especially in doing the essay test. The teacher motivated the students by playing a song of Celion Dion's song which the title is The Power of Dream. The teacher explained the meaning of the song and it made the students understand that they should study seriously. The second, the teacher explained the material slowly. The teacher asked students if they had understood or not and the teacher gave chance for students to ask some questions and the students asked some questions to the teacher and the teacher answered all the questions well. Finally, the students understand the descriptive text well.

Since the students got difficulties in Tenses so in the second cycle the teacher taught the students about Tenses that mostly used in descriptive text in order to make their essay test become better.

Based on the observation sheet and interview with the students, the teaching activities ran well in the second cycle. The students became more active by giving some questions to the teacher and when doing the essay test, there was no students cheated their friends. All the students did their test well. The teacher improved her ability to manage the class well and explained the material slowly in order to make students more understand to the material.

Based on the result of questionnaire scores, the percentage of students who disagreed was 0% (0 students), agreed was 47.05% (16 students) and strongly agreed

52.94% (18 students). Based on the data, it was concluded that most of students were strongly agreed that the using of KWL technique was very helpful to improve their reading comprehension.

The whole efforts above made the students' mean score improved and most students got score above the minimum standard (70). The students' condition and feeling were better than in the first cycle. Since the students' mean score got above KKM and more than 70% of students got score more than 70, so the next cycle do not need to be done.

From the analysis above, the researcher found the improvement in the students' mean score, condition and feelings. The mean of the students' score improved from cycle I (59.32) to cycle II (77.76) so the improvement is 18.44. The students got score above the minimum standard (70) in cycle I was 23.52% and in cycle II was 88.24 %, so the improvement was 64.72 %. The students' condition and feeling was more active, enthusiast, easier comprehend the material and brave in asking questions. The students' condition and feelings were shown in the observation sheet (see appendix E).

It can be concluded that whole the students' achievement had improved from the first cycle test to second cycle test.

Table. 1 The Comparison of Students' reading Score

Score	Orientation test	Test I	Test II
The Highest Score	79	80	95
The Lowest Score	13	20	45

From the chart, it shows that students' score kept improving. In test I (in cycle 1), the lowest score was 20 and the highest score was 80. In test II (cycle 2), the lowest score was 45 and the highest score was 95. Those scores showed the significant improvement of students' reading comprehension.

DISCUSSIONS

KWL charts (Ogle, 1986), with which students explore what they know, what they want to know, and what they learn about a topic, have been widely used in thematic unit studies. Typically the teacher divides a large piece of chart paper into three vertical sections. Labeling **K** in the first section for what students **KNOW**, **W** in the middle section for what students **WANT** to learn about, and **L** in the last section for what students **LEARN** during the course of studying the material.

According to <http://www.bridgew.edu/library/CAGS>, using KWL charts can help students activate their prior knowledge. KWL chart provides a framework that students can use to construct meaning from new material. This process is referred as "constructing meaning". Finding out what prior information students have about a topic/subject help them bring meaning to any new information acquired.

Furthermore, Herrell and Jordan (2006:114) states that by using KWL chart, students could activate their own personal background knowledge, predict about the

information they expect to find in the reading material, and take notes related to information gained. Each of these tasks supports their comprehension as they prepare to read, as they read, and after they read.

Based on the explanation above, KWL chart is a good technique to use in teaching learning process, especially in teaching reading since through KWL chart, students can explore what they know, what they want to know, and what they learn about a topic. It means that teaching speaking by using KWL chart can improve students' reading comprehension.

The research findings above showed that the students score improved from the first cycle test (59.32) to the second cycle test (77.76) by using KWL chart and students condition was better from cycle I to cycle II in doing essay test.

However, there were still four students who got score under standard minimum score (KKM) and the students' mean score could not reach 70. There were some reasons why this condition happened. First, some of students still lack of vocabulary. The teacher did not focus in this case and she should have helped the students to enrich their vocabulary. Second, KWL chart is good to be done for the students who have great vocabulary but in the class, some of the students still lack of vocabulary. Those reasons why some of students could not reach the standard minimum score (KKM).

Although there were four students could not reach standard minimum score (KKM), KWL chart kept improving students' achievement in reading comprehension since all the students' score kept improving from the first cycle to the second cycle and the students' mean score kept improving from the first cycle to the second cycle. The number of master students improved from the first cycle (23.53%) to the second cycle (88.24%). It means that KWL chart can help the students to improve their achievement in reading comprehension.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

After analyzing the data, it was found out that the students' score increased from test I to test II. The mean of the students' score in test I was 59.32 then it was improved in the test II became 77.76. it means that the mean of the students' score from test I to test II was improved 18.44. From the data it can be concluded that teaching reading comprehension by using KWL chart could significantly improve students' achievement in reading comprehension.

Suggestion

Based on the findings of this research, it is indicated that students' reading comprehension improved by applying KWL chart. In relation to the conclusion above, some points are suggested as follow:

1. It is important for English teachers to apply KWL chart in teaching reading comprehension since this technique can improve students' reading comprehension.
2. Other researcher improve the research about KWL chart dealing with reading comprehension.

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