

# IMPROVING LITERAL AND INFERENTIAL COMPREHENSION USING KNOW-WHAT TO LEARN-LEARNED (KWL) STRATEGY

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## ABSTRACT

This paper highlights the findings of a study which was undertaken at the Institute for Islamic Studies (henceforth *STAIN*) of Palangka Raya. The aim of the study was to describe how the teaching of reading using reading strategy Know-What to learn-Learned (henceforth K-W-L) strategy can improve reading comprehension for the fifth semester students of the English education study program in *STAIN Palangka Raya* in academic year 2013/2014. 26 fifth semester students from English education study program were taken as the subject of the study. The data were taken from observation, field notes, questionnaire, and achievement test. The result reveals that the K-W-L not only improves comprehension but also increase motivation in learning.

Key words: *K-W-L, Reading Comprehension, Literal, Inferential.*

Among other language skills the importance of reading makes reading receive a special focus in many second or foreign-language situations (Richards and Renandya, 2002:273). In most tertiary institutions reading is given a first priority (Armahedi, 2003: 1; Nur, 2003: 167) due to some reasons. First, the success of academic life for college students largely depends on reading (Adyawardhani, 2003: 2; Hedgcock & Ferris, 2009: 2). Second, reading becomes more important than other skills in a country where generally the students have very small opportunity to converse with native speakers, but have access to written language, (River in Sutarsyah, 2008: 128). Third, there is a connection between reading and other language skills, particularly writing (Smith, 2004: 178; Cox, 1996: 354-355; Braunger & Lewis, 2001: 64-65). Reading provides a model for writing and background knowledge important in generating ideas for a wide range of topics. Reading is the input, while writing is the output (Nation, 2009: 1).

The fifth semester students at the English education study program in *STAIN* are obliged to take Extensive Reading course which is designed to provide the students with the opportunity to improve their English reading proficiency based on the six levels of thinking: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating (Kurikulum dan Silabus Tarbiyah *STAIN* Palangkaraya, 2006). At the extensive reading course, the students need to comprehend the literal, inferential, and applied comprehension of expository and argumentative types of texts from popular, scientific and literary materials at the post advanced level (more than 7, 000 words).

In spite of the demand of the syllabus, the result of preliminary test revealed that the students still encounter problems to identify main ideas (particularly the implied ones), to differentiate major supporting details from the minor ones, to understand writer's ideas organization, to cope with difficult vocabularies, to get the gist of the text, to recall what

they read, and to state their comprehension of the text using their own words. Moreover, the result of questionnaire also revealed that the students have a very limited knowledge of reading strategies and automatically lack of reading strategies use during the process of reading.

On the basis of students' response, the first factor contributes to their problems is from the reader (the students' themselves). The lack of vocabularies, lack of background knowledge (of topics discussed, of text-structure, and of text organization), lack of knowledge of strategies in reading, and lack of use of reading strategies are the identified causes. Besides the *reader*, another factor donates to problems in reading is the *text*. From the 12 students, only 8,3% of the students (1) consider expository text to be easy among narrative and descriptive.

Apparently there is a discrepancy between the demand of syllabus and the students' ability. In addition, in order to comprehend a text reader needs to recognize words and to compare what is written in the text with when it is used in conversation (to decode), to activate and build what a reader already knows (schemata), to integrate the schemata with what is understood from the discourse, to utilize reading strategies in tackling reading problems, and to be aware of their reading process. These requirements should be established within every process of teaching reading. Apparently it takes greater will, plan and determination of teachers to meet this goal.

Regarding the problems and the requirements of comprehension, consequently English teachers; particularly the reading teachers, needs to provide appropriate teaching and learning process of expository texts by selecting and adapting appropriate teaching strategy that meets the requirement of comprehension and is effective in solving problems in reading expository materials.

The focus of this article is in providing the answer to question "How can K-W-L improve students' literal and inferential comprehension?" It is aimed at describing the implementation of K-W-L strategy in improving the reading comprehension of the fifth semester students at the English Department of STAIN Palangka Raya in academic year 2013/2014.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Reading Comprehension And Reading Strategy Instruction**

Experts in reading agree that it is not easy to comprehend a text since reading is a complex process. According to Birch (2002:2), the process of reading seems simple—just like other mental activities—but in fact it is complex and complicated because it involves a great deal of precise knowledge which must be acquired or learned and many processing strategies which must be practiced until they are automatic. Carnine, et al. (1990:3) state that "reading is a complex process—complex to learn and complex to teach."

Experts in reading agree that it is not easy to comprehend a text since reading is a complex process. Grabe & Stoller (2002:19) describe the way how reading comprehension processes to work for skilled readers text by dividing the processes into lower-level processes—represent the more automatic linguistic processes and are typically as more

skills orientated, and high-level processes—represent comprehension processes that make much more use of the reader’s background knowledge and inferencing skills. Apparently, it takes more than just reading aloud or read word by word to achieve the *comprehension* level.

As a consequence of its complex process reading is not a passive activity. Anderson (1999) states that reading is an active, fluent process which involves the reading material in building meaning, which combines the words on the printed page which the reader’s background knowledge and experiences; in where readers move through the printed text with specific purposes in mind to accomplish specific goal. Similarly, Smith (1971) states that reading is not a passive mechanical activity but purposeful and rational, dependent on the prior knowledge and expectations of the reader (or learner). Therefore, reading takes the occurrence of interaction between knowledge existing in a learner’s mind (prior knowledge) and the new knowledge from the information being read in the text. Nunan (1991: 68) believes that we use our schemata to organize our knowledge carried around in our head into interrelated patterns those constructed our previous experience of the experiential world and guide us as we make sense of new experiences using schemata. In relation to this, Anderson (1994: 469) finds out that it is a reader’s schemata that affect the recall of information in a text and explains that “a reader comprehends a message when he is able to bring to mind a schema that gives account of the objects and events described in the message”. So, one will be able to comprehend a text when he is able to connect what he has known about the text with the new knowledge he finds in the text.

Besides schemata, comprehension also takes the use of strategies in reading. Reading strategies range from simple fix-up strategies such as simply rereading difficult segments and guessing the meaning of an unknown word from context, to more comprehensive strategies such as summarizing and relating what is being read to the reader's background knowledge (Janzen, in Richard, et al. 2002). In many studies, the use of various strategies has been found to be effective in improving students’ reading comprehension (Baker & Brown 1984; Brown 1981; Palinnscar & Brown, 1984). Stahl (2004) states that strategies can be tools in the assimilation, refinement, and use of content, and it is believed as the reader is actively engage in particular cognitive strategies (activating prior knowledge, predicting, organizing, questioning, summarizing, and creating a mental image), he/she will be likely to understand and recall more of what they read. Meanwhile, Alderson (1984) believes that “the use of reading strategies is regarded as being conducive to successful reading comprehension despite the complex nature of the reading process, which invokes both the L2 reader’s language ability and reading ability”. Similarly, Blachowicz & Ogle (2002) state that using strategies for constructing meaning before, during and after reading will help students connect what they read now with what they have learned in the past. Hence, using reading strategies indicates how readers conceive a task, what they do to make meaning from texts, and what they do when comprehension breaks down (Zhang, 2001). These mean that as a student or reader, she/he has to be able to create a certain strategy to comprehend texts.

However, researchers such as Cohen (2003, 2007), Grabe (2004), Hadwin, Winne, Stockley, Nesbit, and Woszczyzna (2001), Paris (2002), and Zhang (2003) pointed out that strategies themselves are not inherently good or bad, but they have the potential to be used effectively or ineffectively in different contexts. Readers’ use of reading strategies is

informed by their metacognitive awareness of the strategies and how these strategies can be maximized for optimal effects in solving comprehension problems (Carrell, 1998; Carrell et al., 1998; Cohen, 2007; Hudson, 2007; Wenden, 1998; White, 1999; Zhang, 2008). So, without the students' awareness in monitoring their comprehension and using appropriate strategies to deal with their problems in comprehending texts, they will not be able to achieve the maximum benefits of using strategies. From this, we can conclude that the readers themselves must be active and be aware in reading.

Besides schemata, reading strategies, and students' awareness in reading, it is the teachers' duty to facilitate the use of the strategies, and to build students' awareness in using strategies in reading, as well as monitoring their comprehension during reading in order to maximize the effect and enhance the use of strategies in reading for better achievement. Regarding the complexity of comprehension process, teachers should provide effective teaching and learning process in the teaching of reading in order to facilitate students in reading and comprehending what they are reading using comprehension strategies in reading. The teacher should provide a place where the strategies can grow and where they can teach the students about the 'what', 'how', 'when', and 'which' of strategies in reading: strategy instruction. Researchers have found that teaching reading strategies is important to developing increased student comprehension. At the same time, they have found many teachers lack a solid foundation for teaching these reading comprehension strategies (National Reading Panel, 2005). Therefore, teachers need to be prepared, through professional development, on how to design effective comprehension strategies and how to teach these strategies to their students. Improving reading skills is a top priority for all educators (McKown & Barnett, 2007:4).

Regarding the problems and the requirements of comprehension, consequently English teachers; particularly the reading teachers, needs to provide appropriate teaching and learning process of expository texts by selecting and adapting appropriate teaching strategy that meets the requirement of comprehension and is effective in solving problems in reading expository materials.

From the many strategies of teaching reading, Ogle's (1986) Know-What to learn-Learned (K-W-L) is the most appropriate strategy that meets the requirement of comprehension (build schemata, provide opportunities in using reading strategy, and enable the students to plan, monitor, and evaluate their reading process). It also provides the teacher's opportunity to model and guide active involvement during the reading process (Blachowicz and Ogle, 2008). The K-W-L is a group process using the knowledge and information students bring to help each other build a better starting place for learning and to share the results of their reading. Through K-W-L, the readers interpret text based on their own background which is the integration of new information with prior knowledge showed the comprehension (Duchnowsky, et al., 2005:39).

The teacher and students begin the process of reading and learning by brainstorming together what they *know* (the K in K-W-L) about a topic. The teacher guides students to probe their knowledge statements and to find conflicting or partial statements of what they know. The teacher then writes on the blackboard, overhead projector, or computer what the students think they know, writing down their ideas just as they volunteer them. The teacher's role is not to correct or evaluate but to encourage and stimulate students to think broadly about what they bring to the study. Through this brainstorming–discussion

process, some questions or uncertainties generally surface. These the teacher writes in the center column, “What we *want to know*.” The teacher’s role is to help students activate their knowledge and develop interest in the topic. As ideas are voiced and written down, they may seem random and unconnected. At this point the teacher needs to make a decision. With a variety of ideas being shared, the teacher can easily ask what the students *want to know* (the W in K-W-L). Again, it is the students’ role to think of real questions, and the teacher’s to write down what they say. These questions form the second column on the worksheet or blackboard. The goal is to get as many different ideas out as possible in the time allotted. Once the students have discussed the topic, they are more ready to begin their own reading. It may be useful to have students write down on their own worksheets or learning logs those pieces of information they individually think they know and the questions they want to know more about. In this way, both the group and the individual are respected. Some teachers have students work in pairs to do both the writing and reading, as this is more stimulating and supportive for some children who may lack confidence in writing and taking risks. Teachers can diagnose from this discussion what texts will be most useful to the students. It may be that what was anticipated as adequate turns out to be inappropriate. Finally, the students showed their comprehension by writing down the information they have got from the text on the third column on the worksheet—the *Learned*—column. Further discussion is provided as the students state the result of their reading activity.

### **Know-What To Learn-Learned (Kwl) Strategy**

Since the study focuses on the implementation of Know-What to learn-Learned strategy, then the discussions this strategy are divided into the nature of the strategies, the procedure in using the strategies, the strength and approach of the strategy, and previous studies.

#### ***Nature of Know-What to Know-Learned (K-W-L)***

This approach is developed by Ogle (1986) based on the idea that teachers should begin expository comprehension lessons by honoring what students already know about the topic, and by helping them decide what else they would like to learn about it. The letters *K*, *W*, and *L* stand for the three basic steps in the procedure: assessing what I know, determining what I want to Know, and recalling what I learned through reading. Each student uses a worksheet to record ideas as the lesson progress. The following is the KWL worksheet

K-W-L Strategy Sheet From Ogle (1996)		
NAME _____ SUBJECT _____		
1.		
K - What We Know	W - What we Want to Learn	L - What We Learned and Still Need to Learn
2.		
Categories of Information We Expect to Use		
A.	D.	G.
B.	E.	H.
C.	F.	I.

**Figure 1. KWL Worksheet**

***Procedure of Know-What to Know-Learned (K-W-L)***

As the nature of instructional strategies, the KWL strategy consists of three phases: pre-reading, whilst-reading, and post-reading activities. The first procedure of KWL to state here is from the inventor of the KWL, Ogle.

First of all, the teacher explains the strategy to use as he/she initiate a new topic or prepare students to read an article or chapter. After a brief explanation the teacher and students identify what they think they know about the topic; the teacher writes student-brainstormed ideas on the board or overhead transparency. All ideas should be recorded—it is not the teacher’s role at this time to clarify misconceptions, simply to let students first articulate the associations they have with the topic, right or wrong. As students engage in this brainstorming some questions should begin to emerge. Not everyone should have the same ideas; some disagreements and misconceptions begin to surface. The teacher notes these differences and helps students frame them into questions. These then becoming of the second column: what we want to know.

As the teacher facilitates the brainstorming of ideas and elicits questions that will guide the reading, she is modeling the writing of ideas and framing of questions for students who have difficult time taking risks and composing their own questions. As soon as the teacher feels the students are ready, she suggests that each now write on their own sheet what they individually think they know in the “know” column and the 2-3 questions that are most interest to them in the second column. With less motivated students, selecting questions from those modeled by the teacher may provide a basic level of commitment to the learning. Some secondary students have learned that not engaging in class activities protects them; such students may need more structure and familiarity with the process before they will be willing to ask their own questions they think are more likely to be answered from those the teacher has modeled.

After students have accessed their ideas about content and structure and have identified key questions they then read and make notes in the third, learned, column of their worksheet. They will write answers to their questions and note new and interesting information. This note-making can occur as an ongoing reading-note making recursive activity. Other students may wait until they have read through a whole section of text before stopping to check what they have learned and make notes. Teachers can model making notes and then checking questions against the text information; this can provide a good opportunity to demonstrate the need for multiple sources of information if some basic questions are overlooked or not answered adequately.

Often students are confronted with a great deal of information they are expected to internalize in short periods of time. When it is important to retain the information the two post-reading components of the strategy, mapping and summarizing, are valuable. These were added after the original KWL was developed because teachers found that students still needed help rehearsing new information in ways that would make it memorable (Carr & Ogle, 1987). Once students have completed their reading and note-making, they go back and create a graphic map or diagram of the ideas. This map should include both what the student knew prior to reading and the important information that has been gained. Some teachers suggest students use two colors of pen or pencil to make even clearer the weaving together of new and old information. As students create a map of their ideas they should be using some of the basic structures or frames inherent to the content presentation. When the map is completed it is easy for students to write summaries; they simply use the category labels on their maps as main ideas and the subsumed information as details or illustrations.

### ***The Strength and Weaknesses of KWL***

Despite of its importance, the KWL strategy also have shortcomings. The following table summarizes the strength and weaknesses of KWL strategy as proposed by Abubakar (2011) as follows

**Table 1. Strength and Weaknesses of KWL**

No	Strength	Weakness
1	<b>Elicits students' prior knowledge.</b> Students have to brainstorm their ideas and try to listing everything they know about the topic.	<b>Difficult for students with no prior knowledge</b> Students have a problem to listing in 'K' column and hard for them to have general idea of the topic.
2	<b>Easy to use and organize</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students could divide the important and not so important points by dividing them into appropriate column</li> <li>• They could see clearly the points in order to answer the comprehension questions.</li> </ul>	<b>Take time to complete.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have to draw the framework and use a lot of time to think about what to list in each column</li> <li>• Not appropriate to use in exams because the time is limited.</li> </ul>
3	<b>Sets a purpose for reading.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readers have the idea about the text before reading the whole text.</li> <li>• Readers be more focus to find the important points while reading.</li> </ul>	<b>Not effective for reading fiction materials.</b> Readers do not have any idea about the story or novel. So, this strategy is not suitable.

4	<p><b>Encourage students to make a critical thinking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have to think hard about what they want to know more about the topic by formulating questions to fill the ‘W’ column</li> <li>• Students need to fill in the ‘L’ column by thinking what they had learnt after reading the text.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Not proper for readers without active thinking</b></p> <p>This strategy serves as a model for active thinking during the reading process. Therefore, it is not suitable for readers with low thinking level and poor memory skill because they will not be able to expand their ideas beyond the text.</p>
5	<p><b>Helps students to monitor their comprehension and knowledge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students know their vocabulary level and understanding ability</li> <li>• Students learn new topic and put an effort to study more about the topic in order to update their knowledge</li> </ul>	<p><b>Students will give up and get bored easily</b></p> <p>When students fail to make a critical thinking by filling in the three column, they would give up and refuse to complete the framework</p>

### Previous studies

The following section presents the important results of KWL technique on reading comprehension from the prior studies. In Thailand, there were at least ten studies investigate the technique and have proved that KWL was significant in improving the students’ ability in recalling expository information ( Drew (1995), Norasing (1997), Sawetamalya (2000), Sangsonfa (2002), Siluang (2005), Jangpiboonpong (2007), Kasemsuk (2008), Salah (2008), Pongsuk (2009), Fengjuan (2010), and Samaikongsun (2012). Besides that, the KWL technique also increased the students’ motivation in reading. Boonde’s study (2011) proved the KWL to be significant in motivating the students to read more. Moreover, the KWL technique also enable the students in evaluating their own language process. This conclusion is drawn by Rahim (2007) and Pujiono, et al. (2009).

Besides improving reading ability, the KWL-Plus technique also useful for improving other skills like writing and speaking as in Maulani’s study (2008) who investigate the use of KWL-Plus in improving the students writing ability, and in Jafrizal (2011) who tried to improved the students speaking ability through KWL-Plus technique and language games.

Regarding the effectiveness of KWL technique, the present study aims at improving the students’ reading achievement using the technique.

### RESEARCH METHOD

The study employed Collaborative Classroom Action Research (CAR) designs under the procedure of (a) identifying classroom problem(s), (b) planning, (c) implementing, (d) observing, and (e) evaluating. The subjects of the study were twenty six fifth semester of the English Education Study Program of STAIN Palangka Raya in 2013/2014 academic year. The data were both qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative data derived from the students’ active participation during the implementation of the strategy, while the quantitative data were taken from the result of reading achievement test conducted at the end of each cycle. The instruments used in collecting the data were achievement test, observation, field notes and questionnaire.

The result of preliminary study conducted by the researcher in the first meeting of the class showed that the students had problems in identifying topic and main ideas, distinguishing major and minor details, drawing inference, and identifying literal information from the text. The identified causes were because of the lack of vocabulary, the lack of background knowledge activation, the lack of knowledge of reading strategies, the lack of use of reading strategies, the lack of students' active involvement during the teaching and learning process, and the lack of students' awareness of the reading process.

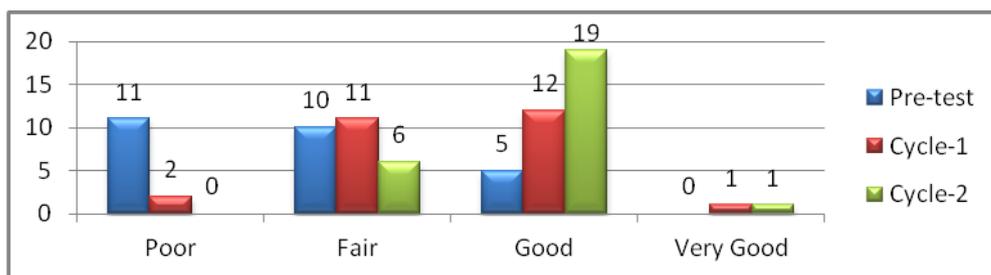
In order to solve the classroom's problem, the researcher designed the lesson plan and the criteria of success of the study at the *planning* phase; *implemented* the K-W-L strategy in two cycles with four meetings for cycle 1 and four meetings for cycle 2; recorded and collected data dealing with the teaching and learning activities of Islamic Extensive Reading subject in the classroom and data about any aspect or event that occurs in the teaching and learning process at the *observing* phase; and evaluates the strength and the weakness of the strategy implemented in the class at the *reflecting* phase.

There were three phases of activity in each meeting: pre-reading stage, whilst reading stage, and post reading stage. Students' participation in each stage was reflected through their responses and interests toward step by step activity in the three phases of the K-W-L strategy itself: pre-reading stage, guided silent-reading stage and post-reading stage. The better the technique implemented the more active the students participate in the activities. By the end of each cycle, students' reflection on the implemented technique was captured through questionnaire.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

The findings presented in this section comprised the steps in conducting Islamic Extensive Reading subject using K-W-L strategy and the students' active participation during the class. Based on the results of the achievement test, overall progress of observation results, reflections from questionnaire, results of the field notes and results of students' worksheet, it was concluded that the students had successfully improved their achievement in term of reading comprehension and their learning participation in term of active and positive engagement in learning process.

Based on the results of the achievement test, overall progress of observation results, reflections from questionnaire, results of the field notes and results of students' worksheet, it is concluded that the students had successfully improved their achievement in term of reading comprehension and their learning participation in term of active and positive engagement in learning process. By the end of the Cycle 2, the students gained significant improvement in the achievement, reflecting that the process of learning had effectively touched the main causes of their reading difficulties. The increased ability to recognize structure used by writer in organizing expository text in the text mapping activity has relevancy to the increase of their reading comprehension. The following is the improvement of students' scores from pre-test, cycle-1 and cycle-2.



**Figure 2 Students' Scores in Pre-test, Cycle-1, and Cycle-2**

As in the figure above, there were decreases in the number of students whose score at the *poor* and *fair* category. In the pre-test, there were 11 students whose score are at the *poor* category. However, in cycle-1, these numbers decreased into 2. Moreover, there were 6 students whose score improved from the *poor* category to the *fair* category (SQ, DD, NF, HW, NT, and SM). In addition, there were also 6 students whose score improved from the *fair* to the *good* category (AHR, MHD, RY, MW, WDJ, and EA). There was also a slight increase in students whose score achieved the very good category (from zero to one student).

The improvement continues as there were ten (10) students whose score improved from *fair* to *good* category in the second cycle (SQ, DD, NF, HL, RS, SS, and SM). Meanwhile, there were two students whose scores improved from the *poor* into *fair* category. They are MRS and NH.

In addition, the teacher-researcher believes that students showed improvement in their reading skills. The reason is because 75% (even more) of the students showed significance improvement in identifying the topic, main idea, writer's organization, text structure, literal information, and drawing inference. The improvement of the students from the pre-test, cycle 1 and cycle-2 is presented in Table 3

**Table 2 Students' Reading Skill in Pre-test, Cycle-1 and Cycle-2**

No	Reading Skills	Improvement					
		Pre-test		Cycle-1		Cycle-2	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1	<i>Topic</i>						
	a. Item 1	26	100%	26	100%	26	100%
	b. Item 11	26	100%	26	100%	26	100%
2	<i>Main Idea (item 6)</i>	18	69%	24	93%	24	93%
3	<i>Writer's Organization (item 8)</i>	5	21%	8	30%	26	100%
4	<i>Text Structure</i>						
	a. Item 9	7	27%	8	45%	22	87%
	b. Item 19	5	21%	6	24%	26	100%
5	<i>Literal Information</i>						
	a. Item 2	19	72%	26	100%	26	100%
	b. Item 3	26	100%	26	100%	26	100%
	c. Item 4	24	93%	26	100%	21	84%
	d. Item 5	25	96%	25	96%	21	84%
	e. Item 7	26	100%	26	100%	26	100%

	f. Item 12		22	87%	26	100%	29	87%
	g. Item 13		25	96%	26	100%	24	93%
	h. Item 14		25	96%	26	100%	24	93%
	i. Item 15		26	100%	26	100%	26	100%
	j. Item 16		24	93%	26	100%	19	75%
	k. Item 17		26	100%	21	84%	26	100%
	l. Item 18		26	100%	13	60%	21	84%
	m. Item 20		22	87%	26	100%	26	100%
6	<i>Drawing</i> (item 8)	<i>Inference</i>	5	21%	13	60%	26	100%

In regard with the students' participation in the teaching and learning process of each cycle, the data obtained from observation showed positive results. The low proficient students' involvement in Cycle 2 gradually improved much better than in the previous cycle. The changes on the procedures in Cycle 2 display good impacts to the group. The students enthusiastically formulated and verified prediction orally. Here it can be seen that the role of the teacher to be directly involved in guiding the students through the three phases of the KWL in the learning process resulted in higher enthusiasm and motivation of the students to be actively involved. The following is the resume of students' involvement during the learning process in cycle-1 and cycle-2.

**Table 3 Progress of Students' Involvement in Two Cycles**

Stages	Indicators	Progress Percentages	
		Cycle 1	Cycle 2
<i>Pre-reading</i>	Responding to schemata building activity performed by the teacher	48%	76.5%
	Stating background knowledge	100%	100%
<i>Whilst-reading</i>	Filling in the <i>know</i> column	56%	76.5%
	Discussing and stating further ideas	82%	85.5%
	Writing down what they want to know about the topic in the <i>what to learn</i> column	94.3%	96.5%
	Reading the text purposefully (to identify information related to their questions)	52%	70.5%
<i>Post-reading</i>	Writing answers to their questions and note new and interesting information in the <i>learned</i> column	35%	69.5%
	Going back and create a graphic map or diagram including both what the student knew prior to reading and the important information that has been gained	0 (*)	100
	Answering comprehension questions	52%	70.5%
Overall results		64.03 %	83.00%

\*) This activity only occurs in Cycle-2

From the table above, the students realized the importance of restructuring activity (item e and f) as they effectively raised hand in identifying the use of particular structure in expository text in facilitating their comprehension and in completing the graphic organizers.

## **DISCUSSION**

This study was investigating the effectiveness of discussion process-based activities in KWL strategy to improve students' reading comprehension and their involvement during the learning process. Here, the researcher will discuss how the utilization of KWL can enhance students' performance.

The KWL (Ogle, 1986) is a useful instructional strategies to enable teachers to access the prior knowledge of students and to help students develop their own purposes for reading expository text. It comprises the three stages in reading (pre-, whilst- and post) with three phases particularly at the whilst-reading stage: pre-reading phase, reading phase, and post-reading (prove) phase. In this study, the KWL was utilized in combination with mapping of ideas. The findings indicate that the procedure of KWL with mapping solves students' problems in comprehending expository text and provides opportunity for the students to think like good readers do: activate and build schemata, utilize effective strategies during reading. Moreover, it improves students self confidence and produces independent readers.

First of all, the procedure of teaching reading using KWL with mapping was able to solve students' problems in comprehending expository text. The utilization of single KWL without mapping activity in the first cycle improved students' ability in identifying the topic, main idea, and literal information within the text. However, it is failed to improve students' ability in identifying writer's organization and text structure which is the underlying requirement of comprehending expository text. After the procedure of the teaching was revised, by adding mapping of students' ideas, it made students' reading ability improved. The students utilized the text structure strategy by reading in chunk and being aware of how the text organized by constructing the map. This is in line with Meyer et al.'s (1980) belief that "good readers employed a text structure strategy". From this, we can conclude as the students utilize the text structure strategy, the students begin to achieve the 'good readers' status. Moreover, students' response to questionnaire reflected positive perception for the effectiveness of KWL with mapping in solving their problem in reading expository text by 65% in the first cycle's questionnaire and 100% in the second cycle.

Besides solving student' problems, the procedure of KWL using mapping was proven to be effective in providing opportunity for the students to think like good readers do: activate and build schemata, and utilize effective strategies during reading. In the first place, the KWL was effective in activating and building students' schemata. Under the teacher's direct instruction students' schemata are built by pictures and key words vocabularies given at the pre-reading activities. This procedure is in line with Anderson's (1999:12) theory that before asking the students to read reading teacher needs to establish background so that they have sufficient information to understand the text. Within the process of learning using KWL, the students utilize what they have known about the text and try to find its relation with the existing information the text provides as they verify the preciseness of their prediction. This schemata building activity gained positive response from the students—particularly the low proficient readers—as the number of students

raised hands to state what they expect to learn increase during the implementation of the KWL (from 56% to 76.5%). With the teacher's encouragement, the students were motivated to state their previous knowledge (activate their schemata) and making pre-assessment of what information to be delivered by the writer in the text.

Besides activating schemata, good readers utilize strategies during reading. The procedure of learning reading using KWL provides opportunity for the students to utilize reading strategies. First of all, the materials are arranged in order to make the students aware of the main component of essays. Intentionally, the teacher provides/marks the introductory sentences, thesis statement, controlling ideas, major and minor details, and concluding sentences. During reading, the students learned to move their eyes effectively only the important information. Along with time, the students are gradually able to read in chunk. This procedure is given on the basis of Brown et al.'s (1995:256) statement that "able readers with the most reading abilities coordinate the use of multiple reading strategies to improve their understanding and memory of the text, and this is not done without guidance." In other words the students do not automatically utilize effective strategies during reading. Moreover, Meyer et al.'s (1980) believe "good readers employed a text structure strategy, which is a strategy entailed searching for the primary thesis of or text structure that subsumed or bound large chunks of information into clusters of related details corresponding to the macrostructures in reading. Another reading in chunk activity occurs when the students create mapping of their ideas. They have determined of what they need to know in the text (use of structure) and create the mapping. This activity enables students remember the important information in the text. The students actively involved during this activity by 94.3% in the first cycle and 96.5% in the second cycle.

Then, along with the three phases of KWL, the students automatically utilize reading strategies such as anticipating, predicting, confirming and modifying their ideas with the text. They anticipate what information to be encounter in the text using their prior knowledge through predicting, confirming their pre-comprehension with the information provided by the text, and modifying their ideas as they find their prediction different from the existing information found in the text. The usage of the reading strategies enables them to be efficient readers. This effectiveness of the procedure of KWL supported by the students 96% in the first questionnaire in cycle 1 and 100% in the questionnaire in the second cycle.

Another effectiveness of the procedure of KWL in enabling the students to do what other good readers do is in enabling the students monitor their comprehension. By being constantly aware of the connections they make between text knowledge and world knowledge, the students monitor their comprehension by comparing the stated background knowledge with the existing information used in the text. Morrison (2004) believes that language learners need to be taught comprehension monitoring techniques and then he recommends KWL as one of the technique in helping the students to monitor their comprehension.

During the teaching and learning process, the teacher's involvement during the teaching and learning process was very important to provide help for the students in achieving the goal of the learning: to comprehend the content of expository text. However, the 'help' provided by the teacher here does not merely test students' memory of the text read.

Instead, the procedure leads the students to process the text by providing guidance and at the same time gradually release the responsibility to the students. The finding recommends that the procedure of KWL improves students' self confidence and produces independent readers.

Students' self confidence improved as they given opportunity to practice interacting with the text and identifying key components of the text. Under the teacher's direct instruction through modeling and guidance in the forms of leading questions, the students were able to scrutinize the text efficiently and effectively as they have determined and achievable goal and clear steps in the effort to accomplish the goal. The improvement in self confidence reflected in the increase of number of students who raised their hands to formulate prediction orally, to verify the preciseness of their prediction orally, and to confirm their comprehension. The students admitted this effectiveness by 89% in the first cycle and 100% in the second cycle. Furthermore, they recommend this strategy to be used in reading any kinds of reading material by other students.

Besides their self confidence, the students' motivation to learn was also improved during the implementation of the KWL strategy. Through the teacher's active involvement by giving direct instruction, students were motivated to be actively involved in all the stages of the reading process. This is reflected in the increase of percentage of their involvement in the learning process which increased significantly from 58.14% to 79.2%. This finding supports Abi Samra's (2006) statement that the KWL is an effective strategy for teaching reading comprehension because it helps students set reading purposes by listing their background knowledge, read more actively and enthusiastically, and remember more information from what they read.

Finally, the procedure of teaching reading using KWL and graphic organizer produces independent readers. The teacher gradually released the responsibility to the students as the procedure of KWL can be independently utilized by the students themselves. This is supporting Richardson and Morgan's (1997) finding that the KWL engages students in higher order thinking skills and that these skills include making connections between interrelated elements of the text, justifying thought processes and drawing logical conclusions. They maintain that these skills can set the pathway toward independent reading, foster learner responsibility and improve reading comprehension. This finding is in line with the principle of teaching reading stated by Blachowicz and Ogle (2008) that "good teachers know their students and provide the needed guidance and support as they consciously move from direct instruction to a release of responsibility to their students".

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

The conclusion arrives at the description of how Know-What to learn-Learned (KWL) strategy can improve reading skill of the fifth semester English study program students of Islamic State College of Palangka Raya. The research findings showed that affirmative development of the students' reading comprehension was rendered from the increase of language proficiency in relation to expository writer's organization they recognized through sequential activities of the KWL.

The achievement gain showed encouraging result as indicated by the increasing mean score which was 65,34 in preliminary study and slightly increased to 69,15 in Cycle 1 and

reached 71,61 in Cycle 2, revealing that twenty (76,92%) of the twenty six students scored above average of 70 out 100 points. Six (15%) of the students scored below minimum target of 75 points which to some extent raised better than their previous results. In regard with the students' participation in the teaching and learning process in the two cycles (six meetings), the analysis of observation, field notes, and questionnaire data demonstrated positive results in that the students actively engaged in the learning process.

The improvement of the achievement tests and learning participation were encompassed through three stages of KWL strategy namely: pre-reading, whilst-reading, and post-reading stages. In the pre-reading stage the students were introduced to promote their language proficiency in the schemata building activity by the display of pictures and introduction of new/contextual vocabularies on the whiteboard. Before asking the students to state their prior knowledge, the teacher models the way to state background knowledge. Then the teacher asks the students to state what they think they know and to write them down in the *know* column. Along with the students, the teacher displays all the students' ideas on the whiteboard. After the brainstorming activity, the teacher then ask the students to state their expectation from the text by asking them to fill the *what to learn* column with questions related to what they want to know from the text.

In the whilst-reading stage, the teacher asks the students to actively monitor their comprehension during the reading process. Activities at the whilst-reading activity are: (1) asking Ss to read the text purposefully (to identify information related to their questions), (2) modeling how to write answers to their questions and note new and interesting information, and (3) asking Ss to write answers to their questions and note new and interesting information the *learned* column.

Following the KWL, text mapping and comprehension questions were added at the post-reading activity. The activity is done by ordering the students to go back and to create a graphic map or diagram including both what the student knew prior to reading and the important information that has been gained. Finally, students' comprehension toward the text was evaluated through oral comprehension questions.

To follow up the conclusion, some suggestions are proposed to the English students, teachers/lecturers and other researchers. The Know-What to learn-Learned (KWL) was effective and suitable to improve reading comprehension in terms of providing the students opportunity to utilize reading strategies, to enhance students' self confidence, and to produce independent learners. However, since the KWL is effective for reading all informational text, the students are suggested applying the strategy independently not only in the classroom but also outside wherever they are reading any type of information text.

For English teacher/lecturer, regarding the effectiveness of KWL they are recommended to teach reading using KWL and also in improving reading comprehension or other skills (e.g. listening, speaking, and writing). However, there was a shortcoming of this study to be considered in terms of the authenticity of the reading material. The researcher mostly took the reading selection from books for the teaching of writing, simplified the essay by providing the components of the essay itself, and did not measure the level of difficulties of the texts. In other words, the reading materials used in this study was not authentic which may contribute to students' improvement. Therefore, the teachers are suggested to

use authentic reading materials for more real improvement, and in applying the KWL teachers are suggested to take this shortcoming into account for better preparation and implementation for better students' reading achievement.

Finally, for other researchers, the development of appropriate procedure of KWL strategy in another action research can be conducted with different reading micro-skills and different level of proficiency.

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