

## Using KWL (Know Want Learn) Reading Strategy to Teach Reading Comprehension: A Case in One Public Senior High School in Palembang

**Leni Rohliah**

A lecturer of State Islamic University of Raden Fatah Palembang

[rohliahleni@gmail.com](mailto:rohliahleni@gmail.com)

**Hilma Suryani**

A lecturer of State Islamic University of Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi

[suryanihilma@gmail.com](mailto:suryanihilma@gmail.com)

### Abstract

KWL reading strategy is one of the strategies to improve the ability of comprehending reading text, especially expository texts. The study was conducted to find out whether or not there was a significant difference in the students' reading achievement in comprehending expository texts between the students who were taught by using KWL Reading Strategy and those who were not. It used one of the quasi-experimental designs--pretest-posttest non-equivalent control group design. There were 79 students of SMA N 4 Palembang participating in this study. In selecting the sample, purposive sampling technique was used. The data were gathered through the use of reading comprehension test. T-test analyses namely paired sample t-test and independent sample test were applied to examine the hypotheses. The results of t-test revealed that there was significant improvement in students' reading comprehension after the intervention. KWL reading strategies helped students to comprehend the expository text and gave a positive influence to the students' improvement. Furthermore, teachers could apply this strategy as a variation in teaching reading in his/her class to avoid students' boredom.

**Key words:** expository text, KWL strategy, reading skill

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### Introduction

English plays an important role in our everyday life. It is known that English is an international language since it has been largely spoken among foreign language speakers (Marzulina, Pitaloka & Yolanda, 2019). In the 2013 curriculum for senior high school, English subject has some specific purposes. Based on that current curriculum, there are three objectives of English Subject in senior high school. Firstly, the students are able to develop the competence in informational literacy level. The second objective is that the students are aware of the essence and significance of English to enhance the competitiveness in global society. Last, according to Kemendikbud, the students are able to develop understanding on the relation between language and culture (as cited in Suryani & Amalia, 2018). In fact, the condition of Indonesian students is different from what we expect. From the study conducted by the international education company English First (EF), Indonesia ranked 32<sup>nd</sup> out of 72 participating countries in the 2016 English First English Proficiency Index (EF EPI). Several language aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, reading and listening are used in EF EPI. Furthermore, Program for International

Student Assessment in 2018 revealed that Indonesia reading mean score was 371, under OECD average which was 487. Indonesia's position was 71<sup>st</sup> of 76 participating countries (OECD, 2018). From these data it can be assumed Indonesian students' reading proficiency was at risk. They even have difficulties to find the information and cannot connect the information from the text with their previous knowledge. As a result, it makes their reading achievement very low.

Teaching reading can be a tiring task, needing much effort or energy, especially over a period of time. It is often difficult to know how to improve students' reading skill since they may read any kinds of reading texts which have different genres, structures, and uses. One of the types of reading texts is expository text. Conley (1992) states that the expository text is written text in which information is presented to reader in such content areas as science, social studies, and health. It is also a type of written discourse that is used to explain, describe, give information or inform. We mostly find this type of text in our daily lives, for example: non-fiction book, magazines, or newspaper article.

One of the reading strategies that are suitable to teach expository text is KWL Reading Strategy. K-W-L (What I Know, What I Want, and What I Learn) is a teaching strategy developed by Ogle (1986) used to encourage reading by first activating students' prior knowledge, then developing questions of interest to focus attention during reading, and finally reflecting on what was learned. This strategy can help teachers become aware of what level of understanding the students have of the topic before and after it is taught. For students, it allows them to take inventory of what they have already known and what they want to know. Students can categorize information about the topic that they expect to use from the expository text. Ogle also asserts that KWL helps students become better readers of expository texts and helps teachers to be more interactive in their teaching.

Though there have been a lot of studies conducted concerning with the implementation of KWL reading strategy, the use of various reading genres through this strategy particularly expository texts is still limited. Therefore, we were interested in conducting the study to find out the effects of KWL strategy on students' reading skill in expository texts of the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 4 Palembang.

## Literature Review

### *KWL reading strategies*

The KWL strategy is a method devised to teach students to read actively by engaging previous knowledge, asking questions, and recalling important information in the text to enhance comprehension (Carr & Ogle, 1987). The K stands for what students Know, the W stands for what students Want or Will learn, and the L stands for what students Learn as they read or research. In the KWL strategy the students are asked to list about what they know about the subject and the questions they may have about the subject before reading the text selection. Then after reading the selection, the students are asked to write what they have learned about the subject. This strategy prompts the students to identify previous knowledge to consider what they want or need to know and list the useful information learned from the selection during reading (Simpson: 1996; Aldridge: 1989; Carr & Ogle: 1987). This strategy expects the students to evaluate what they know and learn. KWL can be used as an initial tool to allow feedback on what information students possess about the topic to be taught, what questions they have about this topic and what they have learned when the instructor is ready to move on the next topic. KWL charts assist teachers in activating students' prior knowledge of a subject or topic and encourage inquisition, active reading, and research. KWL charts are especially helpful as a pre reading strategy when reading expository text and may also serve as an assessment of what students have learned during a unit of study.

**Table 1.** Example of KWL Charts. Topic: Cheetahs

What I Know	What I Want	What I Learn
Animal	Where do they live?	They live in Africa/plains area.
Fast	How and what do they eat?	They hunt mammals using a “chase-trip-bite” method.
Hunter	Are they more like dogs or lions?	Cheetahs evolved from cat-like mammals that lived more than four million years ago.

By using KWL reading strategies students might elicit their prior knowledge of the topic of the text, set a purpose of reading, help them to monitor their comprehension, provide an opportunity for students to expand ideas beyond the text, express their own ideas and knowledge, and can be an early assessment tool for teacher. However, there might be some obstacles to apply this strategy in a classroom if the students do not have background knowledge of the topic of the text. The students may also think a billion things if they are asked what they want to know. In contrast, they may say “nothing” when they are asked what they want to know about the topic of the text. In addition, it takes a lot of space to hang up chart especially in a big class. Therefore, teacher must be wise to choose the topic that is appropriate for class discussion, and it is suggested that teacher gives limited time for students to fill the chart.

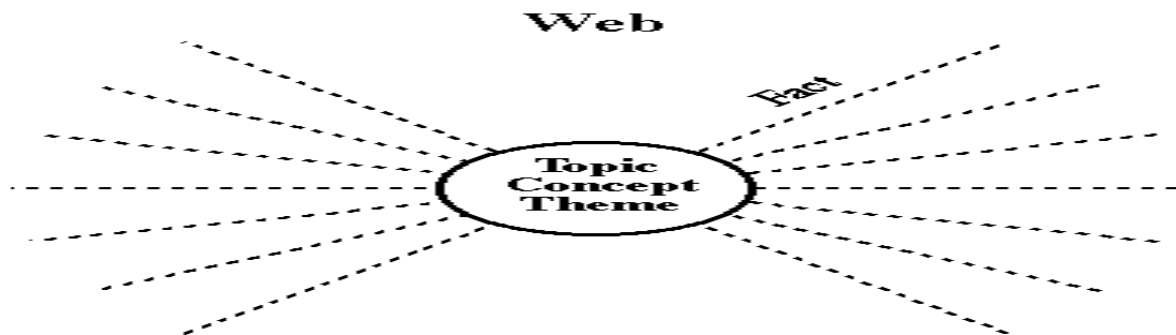
### ***Expository texts***

Expository texts are written to convey, describe, or explain non-fictional information. The main purpose of expository text is to inform or to describe. Authors who write expository texts research the topic to gain information. The information is organized in a logical and interesting manner using various expository text structures. Expository text is a rhetorical mode of writing in which the purpose of the author is to inform, explain, describe, or define his or her subject to the reader. Expository text is meant to “expose” information and it is the most frequently used type of writing by students in colleges and universities. Duke and Kays (1998) state that expository texts contain more difficult vocabulary and concepts than narrative texts. In non-fiction texts, readers may see complicated words they do not normally use in their daily lives. The more frequently ESL/EFL learners come across unknown words, the more likely they are to get confused about comprehending what message or messages a text carries. Additionally, expository texts are harder to read because they explain particular contents unlike fictional texts in which readers can easily follow the plot. A well-written exposition remains focused on its topic and listing events in chronological order. Gunning (1992) states that one key to improve comprehension of expository text is to understand the text structure that is the way the author has organized his ideas. The author may develop an idea by listing a series of reasons, describing location, supplying causes, or some other technique. It means to comprehend expository text, the reader should recognize the way the author develop his idea. The most common expository text structures include *description, enumerative or listing, sequence, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, and problem and solution* (Reutzel & Cooter, 2007).

#### **a. Description**

A descriptive essay explains an idea or concept. It is a type of expository writing that enables the reader to feel whatever you are reading. One should write using all the senses: sight, smell, touch, hearing, and taste. (See Fig. 1).

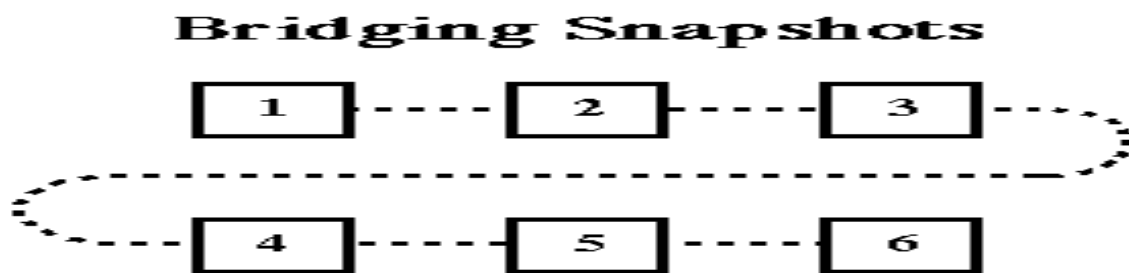
Figure 1. Description



## b. Enumerative or listing

This includes listing connected information, outlining a series of steps, or placing ideas in a hierarchy. The author may signal the pattern through the following words; *the following, then, addition, another, well, furthermore, finally, few, likewise, besides, several some, many, a, also, in, as*. (See Fig. 2).

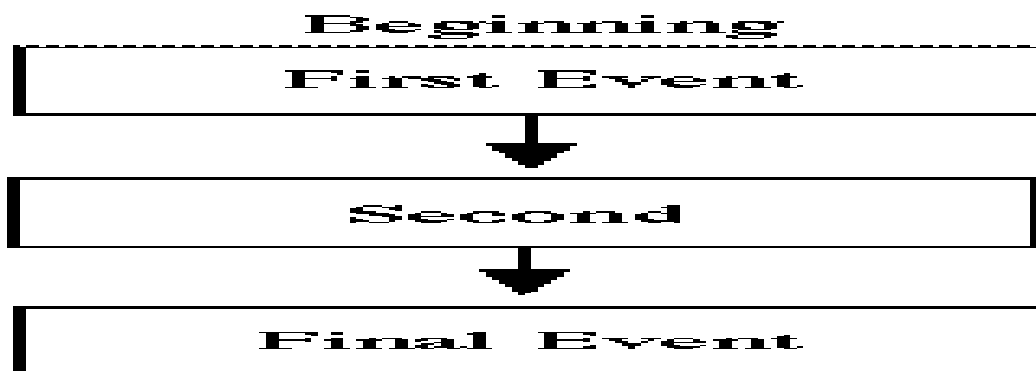
Figure 2. Enumerative or listing



## c. Sequence

This includes a series of events leading up to a conclusion, or the sequence of occurrences related to a particular happening. The events can be separated in years as in a historical timeline or in a series of actions taking only a few seconds, hours, day. It also involves putting facts, events, or concepts in order of occurrence. The author traces the development of the topic or gives the steps in the sequence. The author may signal the pattern through the following words; *first, second, third, last, then, at that time, during, next, until, while, soon, after, now immediately*. (See Fig. 3).

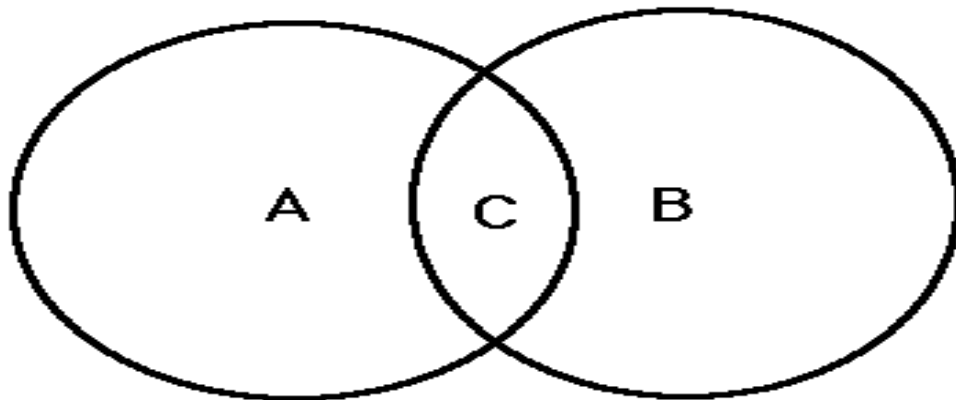
Figure 3. Sequence



#### d. Comparison and Contrast

This involves describing how two or more events, places, characters, or other ideas are similar or different in several ways. The author points out likeness (comparison) and/or differences (contrast) among facts, concepts, events, people, etc. the author may signal this pattern through the following words; *however, but, yet, despite, still, even though, on the contrary, otherwise, in comparison, on the other hand.* (See Fig. 4).

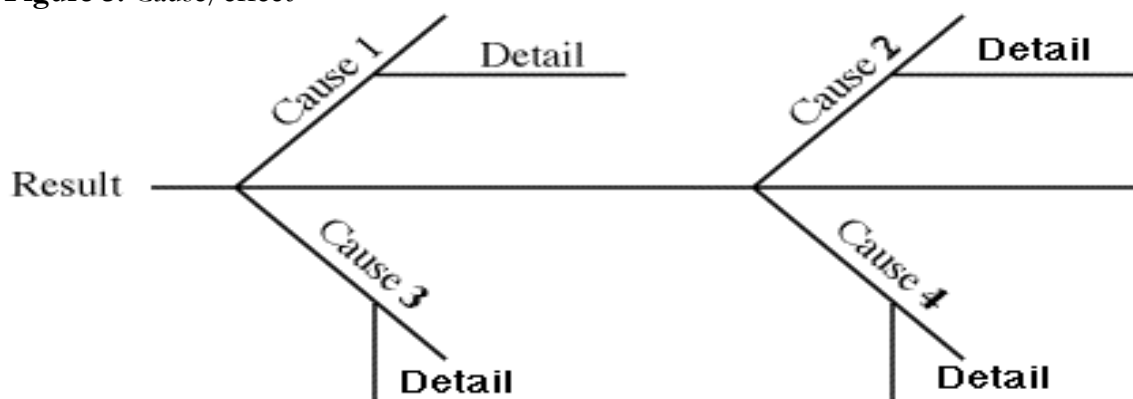
**Figure 4.** Comparison and contrast



#### e. Cause/Effect

This may involve several reasons why an event occurred or several effects from one cause, and of course, as single cause/effects situation. Cause and effect writing identifies the reason for something occurring and lists what occurs because of that reason. This is also known as analysis. The author shows how facts, events, or concepts (effects) happen or come into being because of other facts, events, or concepts (causes). The author may signal this pattern through the following words; *for this reason, in order to, because, so that, therefore, thus, as a result, consequently, on account of accordingly, nevertheless, since, and if...then.* (See Fig. 5).

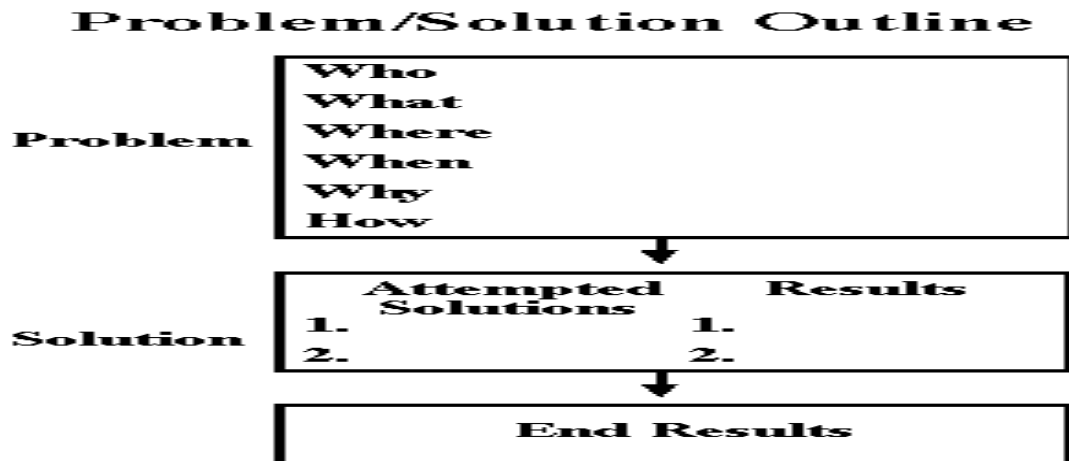
**Figure 5.** Cause/effect



#### f. Problem and Solution

Authors use this technique to identify the problem, give solutions with possible result and finally, the solution that was chosen. The author shows the development of a problem and the solution(s) to the problem. The author may signal this pattern through the following words; *problem, solution, because, since, as a result, so that, therefore, consequently, nevertheless, accordingly, if...then, and thus.* (See Fig. 6).

**Figure 6.** Problem and solution



#### Methods

##### *Quantitative research design*

In this study, we used an experimental method. We used one of quasi-experimental methods called a pretest-posttest non-equivalent control group design. We used one of quasi-experimental methods called a pretest-posttest non-equivalent control group design. There were two groups of the sample. One was the control group, and the other was the experimental group. The treatment was started by a pre-test and was ended by post-test.

##### *Research site and participants*

The population in this study was all the eleventh-grade students of SMA Negeri 4 Palembang with the total number of 270 students. The sample of the study was taken by using purposive sampling. We used purposive sampling due to the weaknesses of KWL strategy. First, this strategy needed students who had enough background knowledge about the topic. From the information we got from the English teacher of SMA Negeri 4 Palembang, we assumed that science students had better background knowledge than the social students. Second, this strategy needed students who were not too active and too passive in interacting in the class. There was no special science class in that school; all the science classes were arranged equally. Each class consisted of students from various level of ability in English subject. Therefore, we chose the science classes in conducting her study. We took two classes from the science classes, XI IPA 1 (40 students) and XI IPA 4 (39 students) as sample of this study. Both these two classes were taught by the same English teacher and their English achievement was not significantly different.

##### *Data collection and analysis*

In collecting the data, we used reading comprehension test. In this study, we used the ready-made test in the form of multiple choices. The items were taken from national examination preparation book. There were 12 passages with 40 questions. Before giving the tests



to the sample, we had given a try out to other group of students who were in the same level as the sample in order to know the validity of the tests. We gave the try out to the 33 students at the eleventh grade of SMA Negeri 15 Palembang. Based on the result of the try out, it was found that there were 20 items out from 60 items of reading test. 3 items were deleted automatically and 17 items should be deleted since their  $r$  obtained were lower than the  $r$ -table (0.334,  $n=33$ ).

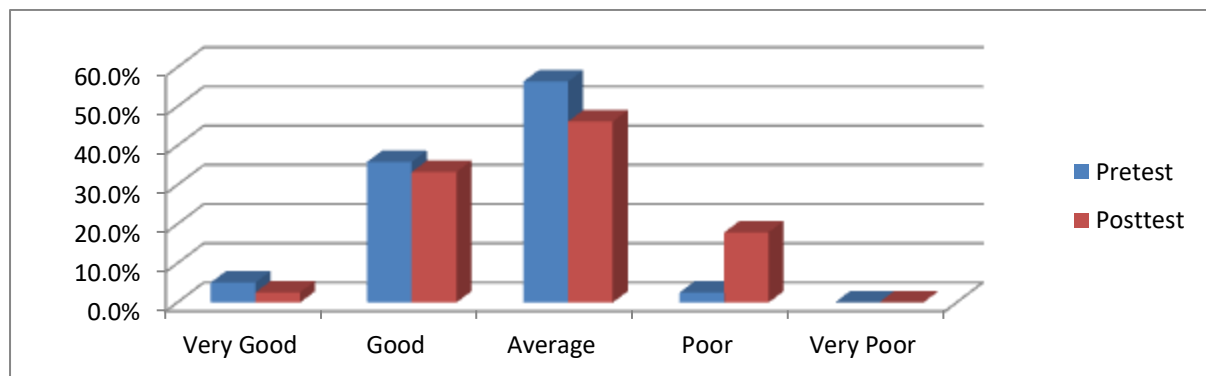
Based on the calculation the reliability coefficient was 0.94. According to Wallen and Fraenkel (1991), the reliability coefficient of the test should be at least 0.70 and preferably higher. Since the test reliability was higher than 0.70, then the test was considered reliable. In analyzing the data, we used t-tests, namely paired sample t-test and independent sample t-test. Both experimental and control groups were given pretest and posttest. The data from pretest and posttest were analyzed using paired sample t test. Meanwhile, the result of posttest of both groups were analyzed using independent sample t test.

## Findings

### *The improvement of students' reading comprehension after the intervention*

The lowest score of students in control group in the pre-test was 55 and the highest score was 87.5; the lowest score in the post-test was 50 and the highest score was 92.5. Figure 7 showed the score distribution of the pre-test and post-test.

**Figure 7.** Students' reading comprehension in control group



The above figure demonstrates that based on the result of pretest and posttest; there was no student in very poor category. There were 5.1% of students in very good category in pretest and 2.6% in posttest.

**Figure 8.** Students' reading comprehension in experimental group

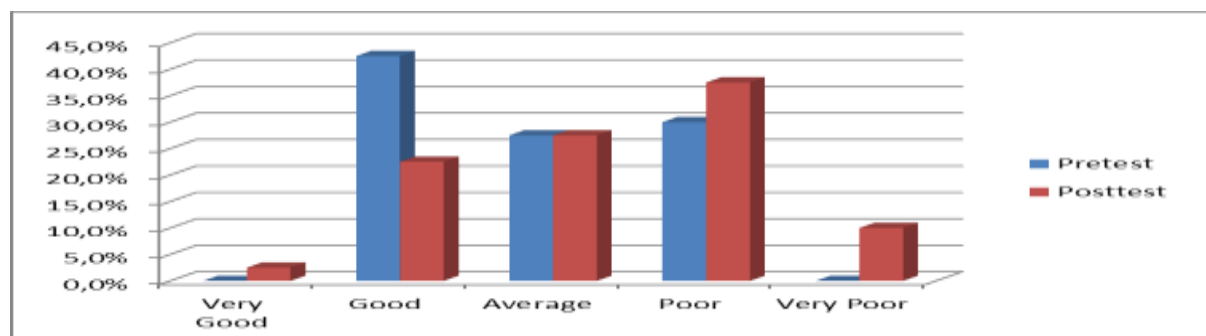


Figure 8 showed that there were 10% students in very poor category. 2.5% of students were in very good category.

**Table 2.** *the result of paired sample t test analysis in experimental group*

Paired Sample T- Test		
t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
3.40	39	.002

The estimation on the paired sample statistics showed that the mean of the pre-test was 23.85 and the mean of the post-test was 26.30. The mean difference of the pre-test and post-test was 2.45. The t-obtained was 3.40. At the significance level of  $p < 0.05$  in two tailed testing and df 39, the critical value of t-table is 2.023. Since the value of t-obtained exceeded the critical value of t-table, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected and the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) was accepted. It means that using KWL strategy to teach reading especially expository texts improved the students' reading comprehension achievement.

### ***The difference of students' reading comprehension between experimental group and control group***

**Table 3.** The result of independent sample T test analysis

Independent Sample T- Test		
t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
2.098	78	.000

The estimation on the independent sample t-test showed that the t-obtained in the equal variances not assumed was -2.098. Null hypothesis was rejected if  $-t$  obtained  $< -t$  table or t obtained  $> t$  table and P value  $< 0.05$  (Priyatno, 2008: 97). At the significance level of  $p < 0.05$  in two tailed testing and df 69, the critical value of  $-t$  table is - 1. 995. Since the value of  $-t$ -obtained exceeded the critical value of  $-t$  table, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected and the research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) was accepted. It means that there was a significance difference in the students' reading comprehension achievement between students who were taught by using KWL strategy and those who were not.

## **Discussion**

With regard to the findings, KWL reading strategy could improve the students' reading comprehension achievement. This result supports the statement of Ogle (1986) that KWL helps students become better readers of expository texts and helps teachers to be more interactive in their teaching. As we found during the treatment through KWL reading strategy, the atmosphere of the class was not boring. The students seemed interested to follow each step, such as to fill the K (What I Know) chart with their prior knowledge about the topic, to list the questions to get the information they wanted to know in the W (What I Want to Know) chart, and to find the answers of their questions while reading the text and then write them on the L (What I Learn) chart. Sometimes the students had various opinions and interesting questions about the text. For the students whose questions were not found in the text, we encouraged them by asking the whole class to discuss it together. It created a secure atmosphere in the class. This is in line with the study conducted by Riswanto, Risnati, and Lismayanti (2014). In their study, they found that



KWL strategy provides the students with meaningful learning by activating prior knowledge related to the reading text.

However, the independent sample t-test showed that the t-obtained was -2.098 which exceeded the critical value of  $-t$  table at the significance level of  $p < 0.05$  in two tailed testing and  $df$  78. It means that there was a significance difference in the students' reading comprehension achievement between students who were taught by using KWL strategy and those who were not. The minus result of the t- obtained (-2.098) means that the mean point of the experimental group was lower than the mean point of the control group. It may be due to the difficulties the students had in learning by using KWL strategy. The difficulties we found during the implementation of KWL are congruent with the ones found in the study conducted by Rusmiati (2017). In her study, class management and time management were the weaknesses in teaching and learning process using KWL strategy. For the class management, the teacher found it hard to control the students as there were a large number of students in the class.

Finally, we consider that KWL strategy gave a significant influence in students' achievement though the achievement of the students who were taught by using KWL strategy was not better than the achievement of those who were not taught by using KWL strategy. In here we cannot neglect factors that influence the reading achievement of the students, such as the internal factor that is from students' themselves and external factor that is out of student's himself.

## Conclusions

From the result of the study, it could be concluded that KWL strategy could improve the students' reading achievement. The data in paired sample t-test indicated that there was an improvement on the reading achievement of the students who were taught by using KWL strategy. It was proven by the result of the questionnaire that most of students liked using KWL Reading Strategy to read expository text because they could relate their previous knowledge to the new information, share ideas among friends, and determine what information they wanted to know. From the result of the independent sample t-test, there was a significant difference in the students' reading comprehension achievement between students who were taught by using KWL strategy. It indicated that KWL strategy could be the one of the alternatives the teacher can use to explore the students' reading comprehension. Besides, we could not ignore the factors that influenced the students' reading achievement, such as the internal factor (students' physical condition, five senses condition, motivation, interest, and attention) and external factors (nature condition, social condition, curriculum, teachers, facilities, and school administration).

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