THE KWLM TECHNIQUE: SUSTAINING INTERESTS AND ENHANCING MOTIVATION IN READING

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ABSTRACT

The common phenomenon among students, which becomes the persistent problem faced by many English teachers, is the attempt to sustain genuine interest in continuing to learn and use English, especially reading once the examinations are over. Teachers have to create a healthy balance between preparing students for the standardized examination and for life-long language skills. Utilizing an effective teaching technique like the KWLM can encourage students to read actively through the learning events and promote students motivation to read. This technique assists teachers to make students comprehend reading texts through charts that include column for each activity on activating students’ prior knowledge, expressing their curiosity, explaining information gotten, and extending information on the topic. As it provides an opportunity for students to expand their ideas by reading more texts, they are indirectly trained to do self-directed reading. This is justified by the students responses towards the questionnaires distributed. By utilizing the KWLM technique, the ultimate goal of language teachers to help learners become autonomous readers can be achieved.

Keywords: The KWLM Technique, autonomous learner.

INTRODUCTION

Life-long learning is one of the ultimate goals of education, for today is the era of learning rather than teaching. The process in obtaining knowledge does not depend on teachers, but students can actively acquire it themselves, as the wide accessibility of information and explosion of knowledge-academic papers and web pages in the Internet that are mostly written in English, are feasible. Reading, then, is undoubtedly an advanced means of gathering and processing information, by which we could dialog ancient saints and communicate with people on the other side of the world. Thus, students should not only become self-motivated or an autonomous readers, but also capable in processing the needed of information quickly.

In language education, the idea of learner-centered practice and autonomy are integrated into communicative language teaching [1]. However, the effort to sustain genuine interest in continuing to read English texts once the classes or examinations are over are common problems faced by many English teachers.

For example, as stated by Kweldju 2000; Rukmini, 2004; Firmanto, 2005 in [2], although reading is considered to be an important language skill, many students are likely to be reluctant readers, and seen it as uninteresting activity due to students’ limited background knowledge, inability to understand the content of the text, and complicated organizational structure of the text. These common phenomena happen because students overly depend on teachers and are reluctant to develop a sense of responsibility for their learning outcome. Therefore, students do not adequately develop skills to perform real-life communicative task effectively.

As emphasized by [2] that teachers are faced with challenge of providing effective English reading instruction so that students can get access to reading in particular, and to literacy, in general, as one of the steps to become self-directed, independent students. Reading is done neither any
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In reading, instruction nor because of force of tests, but reading for life. In this sense, autonomous readers decide what to read, when, and how to read by taking responsibility for their learning. As a result, students need to be actively involved in reading activities that have meaning and application to the real world.

Approaches to autonomisation and governing principles for the indispensable role of the teacher in autonomy often refer to increased learner involvement, critical reflection and use of English. The promotion of learner autonomy has been broadly divided into five categories, namely resource-based approaches, technology-based approaches, learner-based approaches, classroom-based approaches, and curriculum-based approaches (Benson, 2001). This paper will focus on classroom-based approach which put emphasizes on changes in the relationship between students and teachers in the classroom, particularly when teacher selects a teaching technique in reading class.

By understanding the importance of being autonomous readers and identifying aforementioned problems, a suitable teaching technique is required. The technique should guarantee the effective teaching which makes the students become autonomous readers by sustaining their interest and motivating them to do self-directed reading. Considering this, the KWLM technique is selected since it is claimed as an effective teaching technique to improve students’ motivation to read [3].

As applying the KWLM technique is leading to sustain students’ interest and enhance their motivation to read, this teaching technique is worth investigating. This paper reports on students responses to a questionnaire after the implementation of the KWLM technique.

THE KWLM TECHNIQUE TO SUSTAIN INTEREST AND ENHANCE READING MOTIVATION

The KWLM (K, W, L, and M stand for Know, Want to learn, Learned, and to learn More) technique is adapted from K-W-L teaching technique. K-W-L technique, was firstly developed by Dona Ogle in 1986, is used to guide students through text (Conner, 2006:14 and Ruddel, 2005:242). However, Wuryanto (2008:2) argues, that the exercise can be expand beyond K, W, L. H, stands for “how” can be added to learn more. This H can be done by posing new questions about the topic. It includes other sources of information, including organization, experts, tutors, websites, or librarians. In line with Wuryanto6, Ruddell (2005:242) proposes K-W-L Plus that is a combination of the original K-W-L with mapping. Therefore in this study, the researcher adds M to the former technique, K-W-L, for varying the task as follow up activities and assessment. “M” stands for “more”, which implies to learn more through self-directed reading other references [3]. Students begin by brainstorming everything they Know about a topic. This information is recorded in the K column of a KWLM chart. Students activate their prior knowledge, express curiosity, explain information gotten, and extend information on the topic. They then generate a list of questions about what they Want to Know about the topic. These questions are listed in the W column of the chart. During reading, students answer the questions that are in the W column. This activity sets students’ purpose for reading and access their comprehension of the test. This new information that they have Learned is recorded in the L column of the KWLM chart. To learn more is written on the post reading activity to list some additional information that students want to learn...
more and how to access the information students monitor their comprehension. The information is listed on M column [4], [5], [6], [7] This activity provides an opportunity for students to expand ideas beyond the text. The complete KWLM chart can be seen in Appendix 1.

Related to the explanations above, the KWLM technique is assumed to cover the students’ problem in reading. First, students will become familiar with general content of the material as this technique elicits students’ prior knowledge of the topic of the text. Second, it helps students to monitor their comprehension. This can be done because before reading, they will do prediction. It also allows students to assess their comprehension of the text. Third, it employs student centered strategy, for the students are actively involved in reading activities. It let them to dominate the text comprehension process. Fourth, this technique can be an exercise for a class, study group, or individually. Fifth, it provides an opportunity for students to expand ideas beyond the text because this technique utilizes reading based activities that can initiate other language skills activities.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

The population of the research was the first semester students from Fisheries and Marine Science faculty of Brawijaya University which was located in Jl. Veteran Malang. In academic year of 2012/2013 the students who were attending the English course were from different study programs but under the same faculty. In Fisheries and Marine Science faculty, English served as English for Academic Purposes not General English that was aimed at developing students’ English language skills specific to the subject contents or field of study with emphasis on communicative language use in academic contexts. The topic areas covered reading, speaking, and writing with some necessary linguistic explanations needed to support the skills development. It was offered in the first semester with 2 credits. As English for Academic Purposes, the activity of learning was focused on reading. This department was chosen due to the accessibility of the subjects, for the researcher has been teaching in this department. In the present research, the simple sampling in the research was taken, 50 students, from a class: T02. They were taught using the KWLM technique for three reading texts which were accomplished in six meetings. The questionnaires were distributed in the seventh meeting.

There were two questionnaires on students’ opinion to know the students’ attitude focused on the implementation of the KWLM technique. The first questionnaire was in the form of open-ended question. This kind of questionnaire has items “where the actual question is not followed by response options for the respondent to choose but rather by some blank space for respondent to fill” [8]. Short-answer question form was chosen to simplify the data. Short-answer question “involves a real explanatory enquiry about an issue; that is, they require a more free-ranging and unpredictable respond.” [8]. Therefore, it has high validity and reliability. It comprised of five variables, as follows: students’ involvement in the class activities, the information transmission done by the lecturers, students’ skill development, activities engagements, and students’ exploration on their attitude and value. This questionnaire was adapted from characteristics of a good language teacher on Brown [9] and Vacca and Vacca [10].

The second questionnaire was in the form of close-ended question, which respondents “were provided with ready-made response options to choose”
It used Likert scale, which respondents were asked to “indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with these items by marking one of the responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree” (Dornyei, 2003: 37).

Because it used Likert scale, the validity and reliability of this questionnaire needed to be revealed. By using SPSS 19.0, the try out results were analyzed. 42 respondents were asked to fill in the questionnaire. With the significant value .05, the value of each questionnaire item should be higher than .312. After the statistical calculation applied, it was found that all items on the questionnaire valued higher than .312. Therefore, the questionnaire items were valid. The reliability of this kind of questionnaire was measures by the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient. The questionnaire was reliable if the value was exceed 0.6 (Dornyei, 2003: 112). For the practicality, SPSS 19.0 was chosen to calculate the value. Result yielded that the reliability value for each sub variable was exceeded 0.6. Therefore, the questionnaire was reliable.

Nine variables are the KWLM technique will allow the students in experiencing open-ended problem, enhancing problem solving skill, activating learning for studying, bringing comfortable atmosphere, motivating in learning, improving competence, using worksheet (chart), helping comprehending texts, and becoming a learning tool. This questionnaire was adapted from characteristics of KWL technique on Vacca and Vacca (1998) and Ruddel (2001:430).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The first questionnaire on student’s opinion was used to check the students’ attitude towards the KWLM technique as the main focus of investigation. Six questions were delivered to the students experiencing the KWLM technique. The interpretations of student’s opinion for the students experiencing the KWLM technique in learning reading were conducted by reading all the answers and interpreting the results whether and answers showed positive, negative, or not clear attitude upon the KWLM technique. Answers were presented in percentages, accompanied with the interpretations. By doing so, the position of the students’ attitudes could be observed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Topics of the Questions</th>
<th>Students’ Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The students’ general impression on the KWLM technique</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Good things from the KWLM technique</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Benefits of learning reading by means of the KWLM technique</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Weaknesses of the KWLM technique</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The purpose of using the KWLM technique in learning reading</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>The students’ experience in learning reading using the KWLM technique</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Students’ General Impression of the KWLM Technique

Looking at Table 1, in response to question no 1, “What do you think of the KWLM technique” this question was aimed at asking students’ general attitude to the procedure. In other words, students’ general impression on the KWLM technique was measured. It can be seen that 91% of the students feel that the KWLM technique helped them in improving their reading ability. This feeling became the general impression. However, 2%, only one student disagreed with the previous students. This group thought that the KWLM technique sometimes made him be confused. They saw it more from the sequence of the procedures than from the beneficial sides. This student commented, “It is not really good. It makes me confused sometimes.” Besides that, two students (4%) gave statement in between. They said that the KWLM technique was good but sometimes, they got confused.

Good Things from the KWLM Technique

When the students were asked to see this teaching technique more objectively, the second question was specified to three questions: “Do you see good things from this technique? If yes what are they? If not, what is your analysis?” These questions were asked to see the power of the procedure. Students felt whether or not this procedure could help them in mastering reading. Answering question no 2, 98% of the students thought that the KWLM technique had good things (see Table 1). The good things can be in the form of making students more active learner, to what they refer to the learner center’s activity, general improvement of reading skill, understand and comprehend the reading material easily, guide to learn, and develop students’ writing ability.

About making students be more active learner, ARF answered: “Yes, we become active learners.” A student with initial name KAS pointed to the use of the KWLM technique to the learner center by replying: “… it helps the students to find more information based on the students’ need.” Another opinion was, “Yes, I always think of main idea, details, and organization of the text.” In this class, even, EKS, who showed his negative attitude when he answered question no.1, admitted that “Yes. I know some important content of the text although I work hard for it.” Based on the second question in the student’s opinion, there were some good things of the KWLM technique.

Benefits of Learning Reading through the KWLM Technique

“Do you think the approach is beneficial for students? Why?” were in the third item in the questionnaire. This question was used to re-check students’ observation on the KWLM technique power. Answering the third question, 100% of the students showed their positive attitude towards this teaching technique. EKS said that although he showed his negative attitude towards the technique he thought this technique still brought advantage for him. Opportunity to be guided to do the reading activities and to finish the assignment during the class was identified to be the good things from this technique by NUR, ERL, NOA, some other students. The next benefit of learning using the KWLM technique was that NOV thought that she could get some new vocabulary from her friends during filling in the chart. Another student mentioned that the KWLM technique helped them to get accustomed to write English sentences through composing a paragraph under a particular organization or making a summary.
Weaknesses of Learning Reading through the KWLM Technique

The next question was about the weaknesses of the procedure, “Do you see weaknesses of this approach? If yes, what are they? How to overcome such things?” These questions were asked to the students and these questions allowed students to criticize the procedure and tell things that were disadvantageous their reading activity during the teaching and learning process using the KWLM technique.

There were some weaknesses revealed from the students’ answers to number 4. They gave the opinion on teaching technique more objectively. There were 35 students (70%) that mentioned there were no weaknesses on this teaching technique. However, 15 of them (30%) mentioned there were some problems they faced in the KWLM technique implementation.

EKS, a student who was discouraged with this technique mentioned, “… This technique is sometimes confusing. The solution is we often asked the lecturer to explain more about the text or assignment”. The other weaknesses were explained as follows. First, some students saw doing extra reading activities to answer their extra questions as negative part. Second, some students confessed that they were sometimes confused with the activities. Third, some students found that the KWLM technique was best done in pairs or individual, not in a big group (a group with five or six members).

To overcome the first problem, the students were encouraged to find more references because the lecturer assigned task that required the students to read more reading sources. The second problem was solved by the mini lesson performed by the teacher to the students who needed more explanation. The third problem was solved because the lecturer did not always assigned the students to do the assignment in a big group, but also smaller group (a group of three), pair work, and individual work.

The KWLM Technique in the Teaching of Reading

The fifth question was about the students’ feeling whether or not they would recommend the use of strategic interaction approach in learning reading. “Should this technique be used in teaching reading? For what purpose?” were asked. These questions were to recheck students’ opinion on the previous questions. If they felt that the procedure was weak then they would not recommend the use of it in teaching reading. On the other hand, if they thought that there were strengths of the technique, they would recommend the use of it. Item no.5 was also used to check students’ attitude toward the procedure as it was reflected in answering item no.4.

In response to question no 5, it could be seen that 92% of the students feel that the KWLM technique was suitable to teach reading. This group thought that the KWLM technique “… makes the purpose of reading was clear.” In addition to this, JUN said, “KWLM let the students to find important points on reading text based on the students’ need”. To support this statement, SHI mentioned, “… we are directed to understand the content of reading texts fast and to find the main idea of the text”. The others showed the important of implementing the KWLM technique in teaching reading, by saying, “… it eases us to identify the text (text type, grammar, vocab, and sentences.)” Nevertheless, 4% of the students disagreed with the previous statement. This group thought that the KWLM technique did not need to be implemented every meeting. Besides that, two students (4%) gave statement in between. They said that the KWLM technique was good but sometimes, they got confused with that.

Additional Comments for the KWLM Technique Implementation
The last question was to wrap up the questionnaire. “Do you have additional comments? Write about your experience in learning reading using this technique in brief!” were the questions. These questions were asked to the students if they had more comments towards learning reading by making use of the KWLM technique in their learning. They could show their positive or negative attitude towards the procedure.

Answering the last question, 92% of the students showed their positive attitude towards this teaching technique. Opportunity to experience this technique make DES understand reading texts in a different way. She highlighted that “This technique expands us to get more knowledge from the topic.” In line with this statement, KAR said “I am happy to know and use KWLM technique so that I’d be a student that always find info about things I don’t know.” However, the negative impression mentioned by ABD and ANN was sometimes, they found difficulty in analyzing the texts using KWLM column.

From the second questionnaire, the students’ attitude to the KWLM technique characteristics are reported as follow.

Table 2. The Summary of Questionnaire 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Freq</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Freq</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Freq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>experiencing open-ended problem</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>enhancing problem solving skill</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>activating learning for studying</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>bringing comfortable atmosphere</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>motivating in learning</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>improving competence</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>using worksheet (chart)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>helping comprehending texts</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>becoming a learning tool</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>32.44%</td>
<td>64.89%</td>
<td>2.67%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The KWLM technique Guides Students to Experience Open-ended Problem, Enhance Problem Solving, and Activate the Learning to Studying

There were 13 of students (26%) who strongly agreed and 37 of students (74%) who agreed to the statement that the KWLM technique let the students experience open-ended problem. This technique also enhanced the students’ problem solving skill. This statement was justified by 17 students (44%) who strongly agreed to this statement, while 33 of them (66%) agreed upon it. Besides that, statement no. 14 mentioned that the KWLM technique could activate the learning for studying. There were 25 of the students (50%) strongly agreed to it.

The KWLM technique was motivating students to learn English. There were 12 of the students (24%) strongly agreed with this. There were 19 of the students (38%) strongly agreed that this technique made the students’ competence increased. 19 students (38%) strongly agreed to the statement that showed the function of the worksheet in this technique. Responding to statement that this technique would help students to comprehend the reading texts, 12 students (24%) strongly agreed to it, and 38 (76%) agreed on it.
The second questionnaire shows that almost 65% of the students agree the use of the KWLM technique in the teaching of reading, and for almost 32% of the students express strongly disagree, and only 3% of them disagree with the implementation of the KWLM technique. None of the student stated strongly disagree upon the technique.

![Figure 1. Summary of Questionnaire 2](image)

In short, the effectiveness of the KWLM technique implies that this technique can be used one of the teaching technique to teach reading. This point is strengthened by the opinions of the students concerning the use of the KWLM technique which are gathered through the questionnaires. According to them, the KWLM technique is more enjoyable than the other teaching techniques to learn English because they are far from being boring, for it can sustain students’ interest. In addition, the students claim that they prefer the utility of the KWLM technique due to several reasons like it can motivate them to be self-directed readers.

**CONCLUSION**

This present study was conducted to proof that the KWLM technique can be used as a trigger for student to be autonomous readers since they are trained to activate their background knowledge, express curiosity, explain information gotten and extend information on the topic by reading more references. Because this teaching technique provides students to expand their ideas by reading more texts, books, and other references they are indirectly trained to be autonomous readers.

It is also justified by the questionnaires result that 100% of the students found that the KWLM technique was beneficial for their reading skill. They recommended the KWLM technique to be used in the teaching of reading in English to ease the students in understanding and comprehending the reading texts, for it was successfully guide the students to be actively involved in the teaching and learning process activities, and it allowed the students to improve their study skills, for it allowed the student to scan the topic, skim the main idea, do predictions before they read, and preview the text to know the organizational pattern employed. Finally, it was the fun learning tool as it encouraged the students to read more on the basis of the students’ need, which drives the students to be self-directed reader. Shortly, the KWLM technique successfully sustains the students’ interest and enhances their motivation to read.

Due to the time constraints and scope of the study, the present study has several limitations. First, it only involves one class of the one-year students of faculty of Fisheries and Marine Science; therefore the result may not be generalized for all students in this university. Second, the students from the non-English department were asked to give opinions that may affect the richness of the data collections. Third, this study shows the teaching technique for university level. The limitations of the present study leave gaps for other researchers to fill in. Further investigations can be done with larger number of population and employ English department students as the target populations. the future studies should include secondary or primary level of education to implement the KWLM technique to sustain the students’ interest and enhance their motivation to read in English.
REFERENCES


