

The Implementation of KWL Chart Strategy to Improve Worldwide EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension Skills

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Abstract

There is a dire need for worldwide second language educators to sustainably invoke more interactive, favorable, and meaningful reading learning enterprises in which EFL learners are strongly willing to channel more effortful actions to hone their reading comprehension skills to the utmost development. KWL chart strategy can be one of the appropriate solutions to fulfill this reading learning demand by which EFL learners can activate their prior knowledge in harmony with the reading texts they are going to read, monitor their reading comprehension towards particular reading topics intensively, and profoundly evaluate their newly-acquired knowledge obtained through various passages. This present small-scale library study aimed to investigate the extent the KWL chart strategy can improve globalized EFL learners' reading comprehension skills. 20 prior findings obtained from the KWL chart strategy in reading studies were thematically analyzed to yield more comprehensible and credible research results for the betterment of EFL reading learning enterprises nationwide. After analyzing those previous findings, two main research themes were generated namely: (1) KWL chart strategy transforms EFL learners into more spirited readers and (2) KWL chart strategy exceptionally escalates EFL learners' reading proficiency level. In the end, it can be fairly concluded that the effective deployment of the KWL strategy not merely resulted in the significant enhancement of EFL learners' reading comprehension skills but also their reading endeavor and knowledge.

Keyword: KWL chart strategy, reading comprehension skills, EFL learners, library study, thematic analysis

INTRODUCTION

One salient reference point to regard globalized EFL learners as proficient target language academicians is through the full mastery of reading skills. This underlying belief is in harmony with Zuriah and Mutia (2023) who believe that more competent second-language academicians can efficiently conduct more meaningful interpretations of a wide variety of reading texts. To thoroughly master a decent level of reading skills, EFL learners are prompted to conduct a more interactive interaction with the particularly-selected reading texts to gain a more profound understanding of

the particular reading topics they are reading. Hamidia (2021) argues that successful L2 readers are more adept at gaining a more precise comprehension of the specifically-assigned reading resources resulting in the significant elevation of their reading comprehension skills. Even so, it is ubiquitous to discover that the majority of worldwide EFL learners encounter serious impediments upon commencing their main reading learning activities due to the scant development of vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension skills, and effective reading strategies employment. When all the above-mentioned reading obstructions are overlooked, it can significantly reduce EFL learners' reading-learning motivation leading them to become underdeveloped L2 readers. These contentions are mutually interlinked with Park (2020) strongly suggesting second language educationalists all around the globe start promoting more enjoyable, positively sound, and interactive reading learning enterprises wherein EFL learners are extensively encouraged to foster their reading competencies to the fullest development. In the same vein, Sholeh (2020) unearthed that an overwhelming majority of Indonesian university EFL learners made an earlier departure from their existing reading learning dynamics concerning the lack of vocabulary growth and poor reading comprehension skills.

In response to the aforesaid reading learning issues, the KWL chart strategy appears to strongly affirm EFL learners' reading comprehension skills and motivation by which they can properly organize their prior, existing, and well-molded understanding of the particular reading topics through a vast variety of reflective reading charts. This underlying principle is strongly substantiated by Asmara et al. (2023) unfolding that a great majority of Indonesian graduate university EFL learners began to gain more profound comprehension and elevate their reading motivation to a greater level after being introduced to KWL chart strategy wherein they could recall, restructure, and reflect on their already-attained knowledge towards the specific reading topics having been explored. Based on the seminal theory and construction of the KWL chart strategy devised by Carr and Ogle (1987), the KWL chart strategy stands for what I know, what I want to learn, and what I learned. With the accompaniment of these three consecutive KWL chart strategy cycles, EFL learners can progressively transform into more proactive, critical, thoughtful, and well-rounded L2 readers since they constantly reactivate their prior knowledge of the subject-specific matters being discussed in the reading texts to enrich their current understanding, which in turn assist them to comprehensively obtain the newly-enriched knowledge regarding the previously-discussed reading topics. These advantageous values are associated with AlAdwani et al. (2021) articulating that the KWL strategy can act as one of the propelling forces for EFL learners to foster their current reading comprehension skills to the utmost development where they are constantly commissioned to fine-tune their previous knowledge with the novel information having been grasped through their insistent reading learning participation to become more insightful readers.

Of considerable importance is EFL learners can gradually transfigure into more

autonomous and critical L2 readers through exposure to the KWL chart strategy. This rewarding reading learning outcome takes place as EFL learners are independently allowed to enrich, monitor, rejuvenate, and evaluate the designated information forming in their reading contents to acquire a more comprehensive understanding of the main reading topics. These beneficial reading learning rewards are in agreement with the previous finding of Gunawan and Rahmawati (2022) uncovering that a predominant number of Indonesian university EFL learners were more capable of keeping precise tracks towards their entire reading learning activities wherein they habitually utilize their background knowledge, broadly explore the targeted reading topics, intensively monitor their present understanding of their reading texts, and exhaustively evaluate whether the newly-acquired information overlapped with their prior knowledge through KWL chart strategy. According to Hamidia (2021), three consecutive reading learning steps should be initiated by worldwide second language educationalists to ascertain the utmost utilities of the KWL chart strategy to truly happen in their regular reading classroom circumstances namely pre-reading, whilst-reading, and post-reading activities. In the first reading learning step, EFL learners are encouraged to share their previous understanding concerning what they have or have not known about the forthcoming reading topics going to be discussed. The positive outcome of this activity is second language educators can check the extent their learners have understood the reading topics. As a result, they are strongly motivated to share the previously-obtained knowledge to be completed by other learning companions impacting their readiness to participate in the main reading learning activities. These basic conceptions strengthened the theory of efficient reading strategy propounded by Markovic (2021) asserting that by recollecting their background knowledge towards their particularly-assigned reading topics, EFL learners' reading motivation and knowledge are continually enriched wherein mutual information sharing disseminated by other learning counterparts. During participating in the whilst reading activities, EFL learners are assigned to profoundly explore various essential major points forming in their current reading texts by monitoring whether their intellectual curiosity and prior knowledge have been responded to by that information. This second reading stage is vitally crucial since EFL learners can mutually correlate their existing knowledge with ample information forming in their reading texts. The above-elucidated contentions are inspired by Jones (2021) highly advising EFL learners to conduct a more intensive reading comprehension monitoring process actively during interacting with their reading texts to gradually enable them to become more knowledgeable readers. Upon reaching the post-reading activity, second language educators are prompted to collectively involve all learning community members to specifically expound the main important points having been discovered in their reading texts to other classmates and critically reflect whether their thought-provoking curiosity has been responded to accordingly by the reading texts. The essentialism of this ultimate reading stage concurs with Damaranti et al. (2021) averring that by taking an active part in more evaluative post-reading activities, EFL

learners will be more skilled at rejuvenating their memories of the already-accomplished reading texts and checking whether they have thoroughly understood the specifically-addressed reading topics given by their teachers.

There were five previous investigations have been initiated aligned with this current research topic. The first study was conducted by Johan et al. (2023) advocating Indonesian university EFL lecturers to immerse their learners' daily-based reading learning activities through the means of Google Classroom media to arouse their reading interest, endeavor, and motivation to a greater level. Mbato (2019) emphasized the foremost importance for Indonesian university EFL teachers to nurture the advanced development of their learners' critical thinking skills by that they could successfully comprehend varied essential information derived from complex reading texts. Mitsalina et al. (2022) strongly advised Indonesian EFL educators to start internalizing the Jigsaw II technique at the commencement of reading learning dynamics to promote a higher degree of reading enjoyment wherein language learners are highly motivated to explore plenty of reading texts. Wijaya (2022) unraveled that with the support of a metacognitive strategy, Indonesian graduate university EFL learners could better plan, monitor, and evaluate their academic reading learning enterprises resulting in more fruitful reading learning outcomes attainment. In the last investigation, Wijaya (2022) unveiled that most English Education Master Students in a private university had progressively transfigured into more competent, vibrant, and lifelong readers after being exposed to extensive reading activity in which they are deliberately granted constant freedom to read a vast range of reading texts arousing their specific reading interests. Irrespective of these insightful and applicable research results, these previously-conducted studies have not yet explored the implementation of the KWL chart strategy to improve worldwide EFL learners' reading comprehension skills. To complement this research gap, the researcher ran this small-scale library study to investigate the extent KWL chart strategy can impart a more supportive reading learning assistance for globalized EFL learners in an attempt to elevate their reading comprehension skills. Concerning this major study objective, the researcher attempted to answer this single research problem namely: (1) to what extent does the implementation of the KWL chart strategy help worldwide EFL learners to improve their reading comprehension skills?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher embarked on this small-scale qualitative study with the enlightenment of a library analysis approach to generate more credible, comprehensible, and applicable research results in line with the research context being investigated. Since this present small-scale qualitative study was framed by a library analysis, the researcher reviewed the previously-obtained research results of 20 KWL chart strategy in EFL reading studies to provide more obvious portrayals for worldwide readers of the extent to this learner-oriented learning approach operate meaningfully

in these modern EFL reading learning contexts. Concerning this major study purpose, these 20 selected studies ranged from 2018 until 2023 year. By integrating the latest trends of these prior studies, the researcher could potentially yield more valid and up-to-date research results for existing reading learning dynamics undergone by globalized EFL learners. Two main reasons prompted the researcher to initiate this library investigation. Firstly, as globalized EFL learners often confront a vast variety of arduous reading barriers upon comprehending their reading texts, it is expectantly hoped that the forthcoming research results shed enlightenment for them to gain a more in-depth understanding of their particularly-assigned reading texts through well-structured reading organizers. Secondly, it is fair to be asserted that the specifically-obtained research results can enable EFL learners to become more well-rounded readers upon the accomplishment of their reading learning enterprises by which they conscientiously plan, monitor, and evaluate the newly-acquired information under the reading topics having been explored. During the data analysis stage, the researcher made use of a thematic analysis approach. A thematic analysis approach was employed to compose more simplified research results to be easily understood by the readers. To fully maximize the particular benefit of this research methodology, the researcher subdivided the most predominant research results derived from 20 specifically-selected KWL chart strategy in reading studies into some main specific themes. By carrying out this research action, those well-organized research themes allowed the readers to discern the clearer linen of the mainly-investigated topic established in the current body of this library research. Furthermore, the researcher explicated each single research theme argumentatively with the substantiation of previous relevant research results and theoretical frameworks to produce more robust research outcomes contributable to the future betterment of worldwide EFL reading learning enterprises.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From the thematic analysis having been conducted, the researcher attained two major specific themes namely: (1) KWL chart strategy transforms EFL learners into more spirited readers and (2) KWL chart strategy exceptionally escalates EFL learners' reading proficiency levels. More comprehensive explications concerning these two main particular themes can be observed in these forthcoming sections.

Table 1 KWL Chart Strategy Transforms EFL Learners into More Spirited Readers

Theme 1	Authors
KWL Chart Strategy Transforms EFL Learners into More Spirited Readers	AlAdwani et al. (2021); Damaranti et al. (2021); Gunawan and Rahmawati (2022); Hamidia (2021); Katemba and Sihombing (2023); Nurfadilah (2020); Satria et al. (2019); Sornkeaw (2021); Zuriah and Mutia (2023).

Based on theme 1 depicted above, the continual integration of the KWL chart strategy can potentially transform EFL learners into more spirited readers. This commendable reading attribute occurs since they are highly desirous of exploring richer information by reading a wide range of reading texts outside the formal reading learning dynamics. As a result, they can easily recall the newly-attained information when they encounter similar reading-learning tasks in future events. This first meritorious value is in line with AlAdwani et al. (2021) acknowledging that through the maximization of the KWL chart strategy, EFL learners terrifically foster their reading learning endeavor by reading plenty of reading texts, which in turn enables them to become more knowledgeable readers. Other three advantageous benefits of the KWL chart strategy prompting worldwide EFL learners to progressively become more vibrant readers are they enjoy the whole reading learning process, ceaselessly showcase proactive reading participation, and strongly infuse a robust commitment to continue developing their reading comprehension skills. All these influential impacts are akin to the theory of the KWL chart strategy adduced by Gunawan and Rahmawati (2022) mentioning that after continual exposure to the KWL chart strategy, Indonesian university EFL learners constantly undergo more favorable reading learning enterprises, participate actively in various kinds of reading learning activities, and possess a stronger desire to elevate their reading proficiency levels.

It is worth accentuating that globalized EFL learners cast a higher level of appreciation towards the sustainable implementation of the KWL chart strategy in their regular reading learning enterprises wherein they have instilled a more potent intellectual curiosity, are more accustomed to activating their prior knowledge, and conducted a more profound evaluation whether they have gained something valuable from their specific reading texts. These beliefs sit well with the previous finding of Hamidia (2021) who highly advocates second language educators in Indonesia to start immersing their learners into the KWL chart strategy to significantly arouse their intellectual curiosity, rejuvenate their background knowledge accordingly, and reflect on their already-attained knowledge derived from the reading texts. In a similar vein, the continual internalization of the KWL chart strategy can be one of the credible mainstays for globalized second language educationalists who are willing to promote a more anxiety-free reading learning climates in which language learners can strategically orchestrate a vast range of meaningful reading strategies useful to accomplish their current reading impediments. As a result of these fruitful reading learning outcomes, EFL learners will become more resilient readers thriving, even in the most adverse reading learning situations. The above-explained elucidations are compatible with Satria et al. (2019) strongly motivating second language educationalists all around the globe to arm their learners with the appropriate employment of KWL chart strategy where EFL learners can gradually transfigure into more autonomous, perseverance, and strategic problem-solvers upon confronting varied reading learning barriers. The centrality of the

KWL chart strategy in EFL reading learning processes has gained another salient role when it comes to the constant cultivation of learners' critical reading skills. With the support of the KWL chart strategy, EFL learners can personally assess whether they have thoroughly understood the particularly-assigned reading topics, properly follow the right flows of their reading texts, and exhaustively expound their newly-constructed understanding to other learning companions. Zuriah and Mutia (2023) unearthed that the majority of Indonesian university EFL learners were more skillful at comprehending the major essential points forming in their reading texts, fluent at following the flow of ideas written by the authors, and proficient at explicating the already-attained information to other learning counterparts.

Table 2 KWL Chart Strategy Exceptionally Escalates EFL Learners' Reading Proficiency Levels

Theme 2	Authors
KWL Chart Strategy Exceptionally Escalates EFL Learners' Reading Proficiency Level	Amelia and Kamalasari (2018); Haryanto (2019); Husnaini (2018); Mardhotillah and Fajaria (2021); Nair and Said (2020); Nisa (2018); Rianti and Swondo (2020); Rohliah and Suryani (2020); Samarng (2023); Sari and Astrid (2023); Vy and Ha (2020).

Table 2 showcased that the KWL chart strategy can outstandingly elevate EFL learners' reading proficiency levels. This coveted reading learning benefit is not happening by chance as EFL learners begin to gain a more robust interest, endeavor, and motivation to continue reading a vast array of reading texts. These positive reading learning attributes are the apparent products of the successful promotion of more positively-sound reading learning vicinities. Haryanto (2019) highly advised second language reading instructors in Indonesia to provoke a more pleasurable and stress-free reading learning atmosphere where EFL learners are more eager to independently read a vast range of reading texts increasing their reading learning achievements. Moreover, the KWL chart strategy can exponentially improve EFL learners' reading competency level to the fullest potential since they gain a more comprehensive understanding of varied taxing reading text types assisting them to accomplish the specifically-given reading comprehension questions more efficiently. The aforesaid contention is affirmed by the previous research result of Mardhotillah and Fajaria (2021) contending that the continuous incorporation of the KWL chart strategy acts as an efficient means of assisting EFL learners to comprehend various challenging reading texts easily and address suitable responses toward the

provided reading comprehension questions.

The continuous implementation of the KWL chart strategy is increasingly important when EFL learners are bombarded by a wide array of complex reading learning hindrances. It is believed that the KWL chart strategy can progressively allow more positive trajectories for EFL learners to become more strategic decision-makers and effective problem-solvers to successfully resolve the reading learning hurdles they are currently facing. Nisa (2018) construed that the meaningful mean of the KWL chart strategy can provide a sound foundation for EFL learners to devise a vast array of efficient reading strategies helpful for them to better mitigate the specifically-situated reading learning hindrances they are facing. KWL chart strategy is applicable to be internalized in daily-based reading learning dynamics comprising EFL learners who possess divergent reading proficiency levels. The applicability of this learner-oriented learning approach is pivotal since EFL learners will have broader opportunities to acquire a great number of novel vocabularies assisting them to gain more exhaustive comprehension towards unfamiliar reading learning topics. This rewarding reading learning benefit is closely associated with Rianti and Swondo (2020) supporting worldwide second language educationalists to take the utmost prioritization concerning the integral usage of the KWL chart strategy in their regular reading learning activities by which EFL learners can overlap their previous with the existing knowledge in the support of enriched vocabulary knowledge. Lastly, through the enlightenment of the KWL chart strategy, EFL learners will have higher probabilities to attain more gratifying reading learning outcomes since they can create a mutual correlation between their previous and existing knowledge concerning the specifically-explored reading topics, establish a more supportive and collaborative knowledge sharing with trusted learning companions, and reflect whether their previous predictions along with expectations are in harmony with the information forming in their reading texts. These underlying principles are in uniformity with Rohliah and Suryani (2020) who have similarly revealed that a predominant number of Indonesian university EFL learners continually increased their reading competencies level to greater development through the means of KWL chart strategy wherein they were already familiar with prior knowledge activation steps, collaborative reading sharing enterprises, and profound reading information evaluation actions.

CONCLUSIONS

Reflecting on the thematically-reviewed research results derived from this present small-scale qualitative library study, the sustainable integration of the KWL chart strategy can be one of the critical determinants for globalized EFL learners to extensively undergo intellectual empowerment with the existence of conducive-friendly and positively-sound reading learning circumstances. This laudable reading learning outcome takes place as EFL learners can make a strong correlation between their background knowledge and newly-grasped information before conducting a more

in-depth exploration of their forthcoming reading texts. Furthermore, with the accompaniment of the KWL chart strategy, EFL learners are strongly encouraged to read manifold reading texts after being introduced to the KWL chart strategy as they have become more aware of activating meaningful reading strategies best fitting their particular reading learning contexts. Several drawbacks in this current small-scale qualitative library study could be traced due to the limited number of previous scientific articles having been reviewed. To that end, it is worth considering for prospective researchers that the number of KWL chart strategy in EFL reading studies could be expanded to increase the generalizability of the forthcoming research results, which are contributable to the striking advancement of worldwide EFL reading learning enterprises.

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