

THE USE OF KWL PLUS AND VIDEO IN READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS OF GRADE 6 BHUTANESE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Two primary objectives of this mixed method research were to examine the effectiveness of KWL Plus and Video in improving English reading comprehension skills of grade 6 Bhutanese ESL students and to determine the learning satisfaction of the students. The study was conducted in one of the schools in Bhutan with 31 students over the period of four weeks. A simple random sampling was used for selecting the sample. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected through the learning achievement test (pretest and posttest) and semi-structured interview respectively. The quantitative data were analyzed and interpreted using paired sample T-test with $p \leq .05$ level of significance, mean, and standard deviation. On the other hand, the qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis method.

The analysis of the pretest and posttest scores showed 100% students' improvement in their scores in posttest as compared to pretest. The mean (\bar{X}) difference of 8.65 between posttest (\bar{X} 27.65) and pretest (\bar{X} 19.0) indicated that the use of KWL Plus and Video improved the learning achievement of the students. Likewise, the data analysis of the semi-structured interview revealed that the students were satisfied while using the KWL Plus and Video when they read the stories in English. Thus, this study recommends the use of KWL Plus and Video as one of the strategies to improve the reading comprehension skills of the students.

Keywords: KWL Plus, Video, Reading Comprehension Skills, Grade 6 Students, ESL

Introduction

English has become a common spoken language for millions of people on top of being also the language of the internet (Sriprabha, & Sankar, 2016). English is increasingly becoming the medium of instructions globally because students have to learn many subjects in English as they progress in their education (Doiz, & Lasagabaster, 2018). This entails that quality of teaching and learning of English must be improved. Among many others, teaching reading skills is very important as reading being the most important skills of all to learn English language (Kim, Lee, & Zuilkowski, 2020). While there are many reading skills to be taught, teaching reading comprehension skills to the students merits top priority as it helps students for better comprehension of the text and better scope of learning.

English plays an important role in Bhutan too. Ever since the organized system of schooling began in 1961, English was the medium of instructions in Bhutan (Polsky, 2018). On top of that English is the language used in offices along with the national language Dzongkha. It is also the language used for international communication. Therefore, English in Bhutan has the status of second language (L2).

Until recently, Bhutanese classrooms were predominantly teacher-centered where teachers used lecture method of teaching and students followed rote learning (Dendup, 2020). Now that the English curriculum has been revised and shifted away from teacher-centered to child-centered learning: teachers take the role of guide and a facilitator while the students take the center stage and take greater responsibility for their learning (Royal Educational Council, 2017).

In spite of a well-intended and revised English curriculum, there are recent findings from researchers, educationists and media about the dwindling performance in English and in particular reading of Bhutanese students affecting other areas. According to Bhutan PISA-D national report, poor reading affected the performance in Mathematics and Science (BCSEA, 2019). Furthermore, students in Bhutan are reported reading the content without inferring the meaning of the text. This is attributed to the poor reading comprehension skills in students and thus the low performance.

During the board examination for grade X in 2016, students' average score was just 55.42 percent in English, which is the lowest in comparison to other subjects

like Economics, Mathematics, History and Geography and Science (MoE, 2017). Further, analysis of students' score in competency in four strands showed: 32.73 percent in reading, 35.83 percent in writing, 35.73 percent in listening and 33.66 in speaking respectively (BCSEA, 2019).

It is found that teachers in Bhutan use lecture method in teaching English (reading, writing, listening and speaking and language and grammar), where students are just passive listeners (LA Prairie, 2013, as cited in Dorji, 2017). In such teaching and learning situation teachers do all the reading and comprehension works and students remain inactive recipient of information.

Teachers use reading strategies like read aloud by the teacher, eco reading, choral reading and independent students reading (REC, 2016, as cited in Wangchuk, & Chalermnirundorn, 2019). In such reading activities, it is found that the teacher is more active than the students. The students simply repeat what is being read out to them without any comprehension of the materials they are reading. Students are also found sitting quietly without sharing their opinions. They do not ask questions to the teachers and friends. After the reading activities, students are found facing difficulty in retelling the content of the text in their

own words. During independent reading activities, students are mostly found doing what researchers call mindless reading, zoning out while gazing at the printed page (Schooler, Reichle, & Helpert, 2004). They do not have fun while reading. Students are also found without enthusiasm when they read on their own. In such cases, they perceive it as boring and unproductive maybe because reading is hard for them.

One of the tools teachers can use for enhancing reading comprehension skill is an advance organizer. It is a meta-cognitive strategy propounded by an American psychologist Ausubel in 1960 in his book "Assimilation Theory of Meaningful Learning" (Mei, 2018). Similarly, graphic organizers are also effective tools that can be used in improving reading skills. It provides a visual display that arranges ideas and shows the relationships between concepts. Graphic organizers help the students learn facts, concepts, information, ideas and new words easily (Kurniaman, & Zufriady, 2019). KWL Plus is a very good example of advance and graphic organizer.

KWL Plus strategy is very useful in improving the learners' reading comprehension achievement. KWL Plus involves not only reading and comprehension of the given text; learners are required to write down their understanding of the text

they have read. Therefore, in a way it acts as a powerful means to process information (Vaisean, & Phusawisot, 2020). For the teachers, KWL Plus provides spaces to make their class interactive. Since learners are meaningfully engaged in their own learning, it becomes much easier for the teacher to take control of the class (Rahmawati, 2018). Unlike other strategies KWL Plus is very flexible because teachers can use it for whole class, groups or for individual learners.

The use of KWL strategy to improve reading comprehension skill in other subjects like History has been attempted but the use of KWL Plus in teaching reading narrative text to ESL students is something new in Bhutan. No prior studies have been done to test its effectiveness in Bhutanese ESL classroom especially in primary schools. On top of that, the video recording of the roleplay as a scaffolding activity to enhance learning satisfaction derived through the use of KWL Plus strategy has never been attempted. Thus, this research study wants to examine the effectiveness of the use of KWL Plus strategy to improve reading comprehension skills and video recording activity to support the learning engagement and satisfaction of sixth grade Bhutanese ESL students. This study may come as a respite for those students who have struggled

in reading and reading comprehension activities.

Literature Review

1. Teaching and Learning Reading in ESL

Reading is going through a written text to decode messages and infer meaning. It is very important for English language learners of ESL to be able to read well in order to learn the language. It has a significant impact on the students' process of getting the required information while learning language. Teaching reading in an English as a Second Language classroom is considered crucial for learning the English language (Solikha, 2018).

Reading skill is very important to gain knowledge. The main objective of reading in English as a second language (ESL) class is to enhance the skill so as to make students easily read the literatures written in the English language (Albiladi, 2019).

Teaching reading requires certain standard framework to be followed by the teachers. In this study the researcher considered using the most widely accepted framework called Pre-During-Post or PDP. Teachers can use this lesson framework to design and execute an effective reading session. Additionally, the framework ensures that learners are motivated, engaged, and

active before, during, and after reading a text.

2. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is also the ability to decipher the meanings and ideas behind the written words and sentences. Over and above, in reading, comprehension is the final goal.

3. KWL Plus

KWL (Know-Want-Learn) strategy is a three-stage reading strategy and was first developed by Ogle in 1986 on the premise that learners acquire information by making meaning (Le & Nguyen, 2020). In the year 1987 Ogle created an extension of KWL strategy by adding Plus to it and thus it came to be known as KWL Plus (short for Know, Want to know, Learn plus mapping and summarizing).

There are essentially four steps involved in KWL Plus strategy. Firstly, learners will be provided with the chance to think and write about what they already know (K column) about the topic they are going to read. Secondly, they will be asked to list down about what they want (W column) to learn from the given topic. Thirdly, learners are required to look back after reading what they have learned (L column). Finally, the learners transfer the information into a map and summarize the information (Le, & Nguyen, 2020).

‘Plus’ part of the KWL Plus includes a story map and a writing summary of the text the students have read. These two are post reading activities. In this research, student used a story map to fill in the spaces with the title of the story, the characters, plot, setting, problem and solution in the story. After completing the story map students use the information gained from reading story, filling KWL chart and completing the story map to write a summary of the story. These two ‘Plus’ activities: story map and writing summary further enhance the comprehension of the story they read. These two activities are post reading activities and are used towards the end of the lesson as follow up activities for the reading story. For the story map, separate worksheets having story map must be printed and provided to the students and similarly, summary writing can be done either in papers provided by the teacher or in students’ notebooks.

Previous studies have shown that KWL Plus strategy have been very effective in improving the reading comprehension skills of the students (Lou, & Xu, 2016). The use of KWL Plus strategy has also helped learners to be self-directed and independent learners (Ningsih, 2020). KWL Plus strategy is very effective in reading texts which are narrative, expository and

descriptive in nature. It gives a good reading engagement thus stimulating the students' prior knowledge and help in connecting them with what they will learn. It can also meaningfully engage students in group work (Hamdan, 2014).

When KWL Plus strategy is used, teacher's role is minimal to that of a guide while students are empowered own their learning by being active participants (Sridharan, & Said, 2020). Le and Nguyen, (2020) have also mentioned that KWL Plus strategy can not only help find the purpose of reading that particular text, it can also aid students in keeping track of their reading and conduct self-assessment of their learning. Students also derive satisfaction since they have something concrete accomplished at the end of the reading.

4. Video

It has become necessary today to blend the learning with technology because of the unprecedented technological advancement. Among myriad technological tools and materials, video has become part and parcel of people's day to day life. It has also aided and made the teaching and learning experience especially of English as a second language both inside and outside the classroom more effective (Bajrami, & Ismaili, 2016).

Recent research on integration of video in enhancing reading comprehension skills have shown positive impact on the learning satisfaction and motivation in students. For instance, Mohammadian, Saed, and Shahi, (2018), found significant improvement in reading comprehension skills of the students after integrating video in reading lesson. Apart from improving the reading comprehension skills of students, filming video motivates the students to read, and engages them meaningfully. Furthermore, it also grabs student's attention, increase retention of information, etc. It also changes the roles of teacher, from the sole controller of information to mentor and guide. Besides these, the recorded videos of role plays are helpful for the students to have better comprehension of the story they have read and easier for the teacher to grade the students on reading comprehension (Young, 2020).

In this research, students used the teacher's smart phone to video record the roleplay of the story they have read. The video shooting of the role play of about two minutes was group activity. The teacher used the students' recorded video as assessment of learning. The teacher could understand and assess the level of reading comprehension of the story by watching

the videos. Students in groups used the knowledge and understanding gained from reading, filling KWL chart, writing summary and discussion of the story to come up with a roleplay. Students were allowed to use the teacher's smart phone in turn to video record their role plays not exceeding two minutes. Students were taken out for this activity.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the effectiveness of KWL Plus and Video in improving the English reading comprehension skills of grade 6 Bhutanese ESL students.

2. To determine the learning satisfaction of grade 6 Bhutanese ESL students on the use of KWL Plus and Video in improving the English reading comprehension.

Conceptual framework

This study consisted of two variables viz. independent and dependent variables. The independent variable was the use of KWL Plus and Video while the dependent variables were reading comprehension skills and students' learning satisfaction.

Research Methodology

This study used a combination of quantitative and qualitative research

methods. Such research method is also known as "Mixed Method" because the researcher collected, analyzed and interpreted both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study.

This study aimed at examining the effectiveness of KWL Plus and Video in improving the reading comprehension skills of grade 6 Bhutanese ESL students. Besides this, the study would also determine the learning satisfaction of the research participants towards the use of KWL Plus and Video in ESL reading comprehension lesson.

For the collection of quantitative data, the researcher administered pretest before using the KWL Plus and Video to the research participants and posttest after the lessons with treatment were completed. The researcher used Semi-structured interview for collecting the qualitative data at the end of the study to determine the learning satisfaction of the students.

1. Instruments

1.1 Lesson Plan

The researcher planned total four lessons in all of 90 minutes each. One lesson plan covered 2 sessions and 1 session was a period of 45 minutes. These lessons were designed to teach four short stories from the prescribed curriculum textbook for grade 6 Bhutanese students. The framework used for designing the

lesson was Pre-During-Post Reading or PDP Reading framework. These lessons were taught twice a week for a period of four weeks. The main focus of the lessons was the integration of KWL Plus and Video which guided the research participants while they were reading to comprehend the text.

1.2 Achievement Test.

To assess the effectiveness of the KWL Plus and Video, the researcher conducted a reading comprehension test to establish if learners had achieved the set learning objectives. Reading comprehension tests were done through pretest and posttest. Pretest comprising of 40 multiple choice questions (MCQs) was conducted before teaching the short stories. Posttest was administered to the same research participants using the same set of test items as done for pretest but with slight changes in the question structure and sequence of answers. On top of that after teaching each story, ten questions were administered as posttest. Therefore, posttests were done in four phases using ten questions each to get the required data.

1.3 Semi-structured Interview

The researcher used semi-structured interviews to determine the learning satisfaction of the research participants on the use of KWL Plus and Video. A set of five questions were framed

and asked to the research participants in a face-to-face interview. A relaxed and informal type of interview lasted between 2 to 5 minutes. By virtue of being a semi-structured interview, the participants were given the liberty to choose the language they felt the most comfortable to respond in and what's more, the participants were prompted and asked additional questions to get the best responses. All the interviews with the participants were audio-taped and later transcribed into English. After that, the data were analyzed using the thematic analysis method.

1.4 Participants

Grade 6 students studying ESL were the target participants of this study. The participants of the study consisted of 31 grade 6 ESL students. The research participants were of mixed gender and mixed English language abilities within the age range between 12-14 years. Since the school where the researcher conducted the study had only one section of grade 6 students, the entire students of grade 6 were the research participants.

2. Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

2.1 Validity

In this study, the research instruments were validated and authenticated by three experts: one expert

from Rangsit University, Thailand and two senior English teachers from Bhutan. To validate and authenticate if the items were related to the objectives, Item Objective Congruence (IOC) developed by Roviinelli and Hambleton in 1977 was used. All the items of the research instruments were rated above 0.67 by the experts. Apart from the ratings for each item, the three experts also provided written comments for few items for refinement and further improvement of the instruments.

2.2 Reliability

To check the reliability of the reading comprehension test questions, the researcher conducted a reliability test with 21 grade 6 students of neighboring school. Kuder-Richardson (KR-20) formula was used to gauge the reliability of 40 multiple choice questions. The reliability score obtained was 0.72 which proved that the test items were reliable. So, all the 40 test items were used for the data collection.

3. Data Collection Procedures

3.1 Approval and Ethical Consideration

Prior to the start of the actual research, the researcher was granted approval by the Research and Development Institute of Rangsit University, Thailand. Immediately after this, the researcher got the permission from the Ministry

of Education in Bhutan. Subsequently, permission was also sought from the Chief District Education Officer. Data collection procedures were initiated after the principal, academic head, class teacher and subject teacher approved their consent.

3.2 Participant's Consent Approval

Since all the research participants were below the legal age, the parents were requested to sign the consent letter after reading and understanding it on behalf of the research participants. The parents and students were also assured that their identity and information gathered will be kept confidential. Thus, the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants were strictly maintained at all times.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Quantitative Data Analysis-Learning Achievement Tests

Descriptive statistical analysis was used for analyzing the test results of pretest and posttest. After that, paired sample T-test was used for comparing mean, standard deviation and significance level. The value of 2-tailed significance value (p); in other words, $P \leq 0.05$ level of significance was referred to determine the significance difference between the means.

4.2 Qualitative Data Analysis-Semi-structured interview

To determine the participants' learning satisfaction, semi-structured interview was used to collect the data. Semi-structured interview allowed the researcher to understand the satisfaction, perceptions and views in a deeper level. So, the researcher developed themes, and patterns through coding system to analyze the data.

Research Results

In this study the researcher considered using the most widely accepted framework for reading called Pre-During-Post or PDP. This framework for reading was used for designing and executing an effective reading session because the framework ensures that learners are motivated, engaged, and active before, during, and after reading a text. Thus, this framework ascertains the pedagogical shift

from teacher-centered lesson to student-centered lesson.

1. Analysis and results of Quantitative Data

1.1 Students' Learning Achievement

The results of the quantitative data revealed that 100% of the research participants showed improvement in learning achievement in the posttest. The highest score of the research participant in the pretest was 28 and the lowest was 8 respectively. By the same token, 37 was the highest score and 21 the lowest in posttest. Participant No.18 showed the highest difference of 22 points, while participant No.2 and No.22 showed the lowest but an increase of 2 points as compared to pretest. It was clearly evident that all students' posttest scores were much higher than the pretest scores.

Table 1 Paired T-Test Analysis

Group	Pretest		Posttest		Mean Difference	T	-value
Sample	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD	27.65-19.00=8.65	-11.731	.000
Group	19.00	4.698	27.65	3.431			

As shown in the table above, the mean score for pretest was 19.00 with the standard deviation of 4.698 and on the other hand, mean score for posttest was 27.65 with the standard deviation of 3.431. It was also found that the significance P-value to be 0.001 which was lower than the significance value (p) < 0.05. This was a clear indication that the mean score of posttests was significantly higher than the mean score of pretests.

2. Analysis and results of Qualitative Data

After collecting the required qualitative data, it was analyzed using six steps approach (thematic analysis) as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The responses were audio-taped and were later translated in English for analysis. Finally, the data were analyzed and coded into themes: Learning Motivation, Learning Satisfaction, Classroom Participation Enhancement, Reading Comprehension Enhancement, and Preference for KWL Plus and Video. It was found that almost all of the students

responded positively on using KWL Plus and Video in reading stories.

Discussion and Conclusion

Major findings of the research in relation to the objectives will be discussed in the following section.

1) Effectiveness of KWL Plus and Video in improving the English reading comprehension skills of grade 6 Bhutanese ESL students.

According to the data analysis of the students' achievement test, the significance value (P-Value) of 0.001 indicated significant increase in the scores of the students in posttest. Notable improvement scores in posttest ranged from 2 points to as high as 22 points. The mean scores in the pretest and posttest were 19.0 and 27.65 respectively, with the mean difference of 8.65. The statistically significant difference in the mean score showed that the students performed much better in posttest than in pretest. Consequently, the study arrived at the conclusion that

there was a marked improvement in the English reading comprehension skills of grade six Bhutanese ESL students after the incorporation of KWL Plus and Video was used in reading stories in English.

When the scores between pretest and posttest were compared, all students showed an increase in posttest scores. Upon interviewing the students, it was learnt that the use of KWL Plus and Video made their understanding of the stories better. For instance, Student No. 1 said, “Filling up the story map and writing the summary made my understanding and remembering the story so much easier”. The KWL and Plus charts were easy to draw and easier to use. It immensely helped the students pick up the salient points and the elements of the story, making the difficult text easy to comprehend and remember. Similar findings were reported in the study conducted by Amelia and Kamalasar (2018). The researchers also reported that students found the KWL Plus charts easy to use and it helped them to select key ideas from the text they read.

This study also confirmed the findings presented by Almamari (2019), where the researcher stated that the use of KWL Plus strategy had positive impact on the academic performance of the students. The researcher reported that the

students who were taught using the KWL Plus strategy performed better academically than the students who were taught in a conventional method. The improvement in posttest scores could be due to the fact that when KWL Plus and Video was used in the lesson, it enhanced students’ comprehension power of the text, improved recall, and enhanced higher order thinking (Handayani, 2018).

2) Determining the learning satisfaction of grade 6 Bhutanese ESL students on the use of KWL Plus and Video in improving the English reading comprehension.

As per the findings from the semi-structured interview, most of the students found the lessons very interesting. The students were very happy about the lessons. “I am glad that I got chance to use KWL Plus and Video while reading stories. Previously, I did not enjoy reading stories” said student 3. Most of the students expressed that this kind of reading activities were far better than the traditional method of teaching reading. They stated that when they were able to comprehend the stories they got motivated to read more in English. These findings are supported by Almamari (2019), who reported that the use of KWL Plus gave comfort, enthusiasm, and satisfaction while reading.

Another finding of the interview was the motivation of the students to take part in activities. Vaisean & Phusawisot (2020) found out through qualitative data that KWL Plus made the students motivated to read more. It was noted that the students took active part in the activities because the use of KWL Plus and Video made the stories easy to comprehend. So, students were found willing to engage in conversation with their friends in groups and share their answers to the class. As expressed by student No. 4. “The use of KWL Plus and Video encouraged me to love reading stories. Unlike before, when we had group discussion or when I was asked to share about the story, I had many things to talk about”. It was evident that cooperative learning theory was well applied in this scenario. Cooperative learning is about working together, helping together and completing the given task together. In cooperative learning, one of the most important principles is the principle of positive interdependence (Arato, 2013).

“I will keep on using the KWL Plus and Video while reading the stories because it helped me understand the story easily and made me very creative” (Student No. 2). Thus, this study revealed that the students preferred to use the KWL Plus and Video in the future. This could be attributed to the ease of using

the strategy, which helped them to check their prior knowledge, fill the story map and summarize the main events of the story. The comprehension of the story was better because they could remember the events, concepts and information better. Cognitive theory of Jean Piaget which mainly believes that learners identify information based on previous knowledge they already had or by adopting new ideas. So, there is a change in the information acquired which is kept in the memory (Stevens-Fulbrook, 2019).

The students said that they had fun while reading using the KWL Plus and Video. They said that they had a feeling that they were the actual characters in the story while reading and during the role play. This was what exactly Social Learning Theory propounds. Albert Bandura states that learners can learn from characters both imaginary and real in movies, television programs, online media, and books can also contribute to learning. While implementing KWL strategy, students have to read through the story to complete the chart. They get ample chance to interact with the characters in the stories; hence learning from the text they read takes place (Kurt, 2020).

Therefore, the above findings elucidated how the use of KWL Plus and Video in the reading comprehension

activities impacts the overall learning of the students.

KWL Plus and Video was found as a learner-centered, activity-based approach to improve students' reading comprehension. As the scores of the posttest were much higher than the pretest, this study validates the effectiveness of KWL Plus and Video in improving the reading comprehension skill of students. Furthermore, students were satisfied when using the KWL Plus and Video while reading the stories. The students really had fun and comprehension became much easier with the use of the strategy.

The positive outcome of this research is also attributed to standard instructional framework used while implementing the intervention. To enhance the reading comprehension skills the framework for reading used was called Pre-During-Post or PDP. The use of KWL chart covered the first two stages of reading

framework (Pre-reading and During reading) while the post reading activities were facilitated through the use of story map, summary writing and recording the video of their roleplay of the story. These logical sequences of student-centered activities brought about improvement in students' reading comprehension skills.

However, a limitation in the use of KWL Plus and Video has been observed, it takes time to familiarize teachers and students in designing and implementing the KWL Plus strategy. If it is familiarized and used right from the elementary level, it would be easier by the time they reach upper primary level. On top of that if all the other subject teachers could adopt the strategy in reading activities, both the teachers and students would benefit immensely. In the final analysis, KWL Plus and Video is an effective teaching approach that is an essential tool required today to teach the twenty-first century students.

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