CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

English is divided into four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Reading is one of the four basic skills of English language learning that students must master. Based on Pollard (2008:44), reading is similar to listening in that it is a receptive skill. It involves students interacting with visual language input, which they need to process and understand. Reading is also important for students because they can get new information and knowledge. Students need to comprehend the text during the reading process. They are not only expected to read in good pronunciation; however, they have to construct or find the meaning through interaction and involvement with written language.

Besides, Serravallo (2010:43) states that reading is thinking, understanding, and getting at the meaning behind the text. It means that reading is a thinking process and helps to construct and maintain the meaning of the words. There are many benefits that can be found through reading. Students get knowledge and new vocabulary that can improve their memory. It also increases their understanding of the text. Students are expected to get some messages from their reading in learning English. Since it is generally learned from the secondary level of education and higher education, it implies that after studying the language for nine years, it is expected that students can comprehend a reading text.

Reading comprehension is an active process that is important to the students' understanding to read a text and get the meaning. Therefore, learning to read is a life-long process. Understanding and remembering information can

improve their reading comprehension. It is not a simple process but is a complex activity in the teaching-learning process. Basically, readers use background knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, experience with text, and other strategies to help them understand written text. Reading is one of the basic skills in English, which is not simply translated word by word, but it needs to know the meaning of the text and context.

Based on the result observation on the eighth-grade students in SMP Sila Dharma Denpasar, the researcher found out that the students had low ability in reading comprehension. The eighth-grade students in SMP Sila Dharma had a problem in reading comprehension, especially in the recount text. The students had low ability to understand recount text; they had difficulties comprehending generic structures, language features, and finding out the factual or specific information. They had not learned to guess meaning using context or employ their background knowledge related to the text. The researcher also found out that the students lacked the motivation to learn and felt bored when they followed the teaching and learning process. For them, reading was a boring activity.

This study focused on improving the students' reading comprehension to solve the problem. The major purpose was to improve the reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP Sila Dharma in academic year 2021/2022. The students' reading comprehension ability was improved by using Know, Want, and Learn (KWL). KWL was chosen to solve their reading comprehension. KWL is a strategy to improve students' achievement in reading comprehension. In KWL, there are three columns such as K, W, and L. in the K column, the students write down what they know about the topic. In the W column, they write down what they

want to know about the topic. Finally, in the L column, they write down what they have learned from the topic that given by the researcher.

Applying KWL enables the students to show their ability during the learning process. They can be more active in the class and never feel bored. They can also improve their reading comprehension because they are excited to show and share their ability in the learning process. The process of KWL will provide more practice of the teaching-learning activity. KWL can be used to teach the students to comprehend the text. Besides, they can show their background knowledge, predict information they expect to find in the reading material, and take notes.

Based on the background above, reading comprehension is an important skill that gives many advantages to the students. In addition, by comprehending a reading text well, students can get information clearly and avoid misunderstanding. Therefore, reading comprehension is an important skill that students should master to understand the reading text. In addition to teaching reading comprehension, one of the effective strategies appropriate to improve students' reading comprehension is KWL. Therefore, the researcher is motivated to do scientific research entitled "Improving Reading Comprehension of the Eighth-grade Students of SMP Sila Dharma in Academic Year 2021/2022 Through KWL".

1.2 Research Problem

Based on the background of the study above, the eighth-grade students of SMP Sila Dharma in academic year 2021/2022 still found some problems in teaching and learning activity, especially in reading comprehension. In addition, the students also felt it difficult when they were asked to find four aspects of reading: identifying general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual

reference in the reading text. In order to solve this problem, KWL was proposed to help students clearly analyze the schematic structure of the reading text. Therefore, the research problem of this study can be formulated as follows: can reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP Sila Dharma in academic year 2021/2022 be improved through KWL?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Any scientific investigation intends to answer the research problem that has been previously formulated and determined. To make the present study well-directed, it is necessary to declare an objective to be achieved. It is guidance in taking any decisions needed and also starting point of doing the research. The objective of the present study is certainly essential. Based on the research problem that has been stated, the study's objectives are to determine whether the reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP Sila Dharma in academic year 2021/20022 can be improved through KWL.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

In relation to the study's objective, this study is focused on the use of KWL to reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP Sila Dharma Denpasar in academic year 2021/2022 especially in terms of recount text reading comprehension. In the present study, SMP Sila Dharma Denpasar applied the 2013 curriculum. The lesson plan and learning material were based on the curriculum and syllabus of the eighth-grade students of SMP Sila Dharma Denpasar. Thus, the present study focused on the fourth main competencies and four basic competencies as the requirement in constructing the lesson plan in the present study.

The fourth main competency is understanding knowledge (factual, conceptual, and procedural) in science, technology, art culture, and humanity on the basic religion insight, nationalism, state, and phenomena – concerned civilization and exciting phenomena which look real. In addition, the researcher focuses on four basic competencies is 4.11 understanding a short and simple recount text related to personal experiences in the past (personal recount) by paying attention to social functions, text structures, and linguistic elements, correctly and in context. The reading comprehension would be improved limited to the recount text which is a personal experience in the past (personal recount). The present study was focused on identifying general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference of the reading comprehension passages.

1.5 Significance of the Study

One of the principles and practical reflections that are taken into account in undertaking the present investigation is the significance of the expected research finding. This research is concerned with the teaching and learning process in reading comprehension Through KWL to improve students' reading skills, knowledge, and motivation. Moreover, the result of the study is mainly expected to be useful in teaching recount text through KWL as a part of the teaching strategy. Furthermore, the result of the study is expected to provide both theoretical as well as practical significance as follows:

Theoretically, the findings can be beneficial as theoretical evidence about the implementation of the theory based on the problem faced above that was improving reading comprehension through KWL. In addition, this study was expected to enrich theories and be used as a reference for future studies related to

KWL in teaching reading comprehension. Furthermore, it can contribute new research findings on the use of KWL in teaching reading comprehension. Moreover, the results are estimated to enrich theories and can be used as references for future studies related to KWL in teaching reading comprehension. Furthermore, the findings can be used as empirical evidence that gives other researchers information.

Practically, the present study of this research can be useful for students, teachers, and other researchers. For the students, the result of this study can help them comprehend the points of reading and can be an enjoyable subject. In addition, they may have a new experience and great improvement in reading comprehension when they join the reading class. Besides, the students' ability in reading comprehension can gradually improve because they do not only read; however, they try to understand what they read. By applying KWL, they are expected to understand finding general information, specific information, textual meaning, and reference in reading comprehension, especially in recount text. For the teacher, the result of this study is expected to give feedback, enriching their strategy in teaching reading comprehension. Furthermore, the result of this study can give beneficial contributions to the teacher, especially teachers who teach eighth-grade students in SMP Sila Dharma Denpasar. Furthermore, it can measure their progress in the teaching-learning process by applying KWL and acting as guides to conduct the lesson well. Then, for the other researcher, the present study is expected to enrich their knowledge about KWL, which could be referenced for future research, especially in conducting classroom action research to teach reading comprehension or other English skills.

1.6 Definition of Key Term

The present study was focused on improving the reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP Sila Dharma Denpasar in academic year 2021/2022 through applying KWL. The terms in scientific research sound complicated to the readers because they are broad, and the definitions do not give clear-cut clarification. Some terms are defined operationally to avoid misunderstanding on the readers and provide a clear insight about all terms that exist in the present research briefly and clearly. The researcher described some operational definitional definitions of the important key terms. Therefore, there are some definitions of key terms that are operationally defined as follows:

1. Reading Comprehension

   Reading comprehension in the present study is operationally defined as the ability of the eighth-grade students of SMP Sila Dharma Denpasar in identifying general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference of recount text.

2. KWL

   KWL is operationally defined as a strategy used by the teacher to improve reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP Sila Dharma Denpasar in academic year 2021/2022 in which the students are actively engaged into three columns: K, W, and L column. In the K column, the students write down what they have already known about the topic. In the W column, they predict what they want to know about the topic. Finally, in the L column, they write down what they have learned from the text.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

A scientific study is intended to provide significance, and it should be based on some theoretical background and empirical evidence. In this chapter, the researcher focused on the theoretical review of some theories related to the presents study. It is crucial to bind and limit the topic to focus the research on what is worth writing. Therefore, to strengthen the theoretical framework of this research, the researcher should review some relevant theories from experts related to this study. In addition, theoretically should contribute practical significance. In the present study, the researcher elaborates on reading comprehension, KWL, and reading comprehension assessment. The theoretical reviews are elaborated as follows:

2.1.1 Reading Comprehension

Reading is a process to get some information from the text and also as a section of language skills that is important in improving the students' knowledge. Reading comprehension is defined as an equal understanding of a text that has been read. Understanding a text comes from the interaction between the written words and how to trigger knowledge outside the text. Besides, through reading, the students get pleasure from what they have read, improve their knowledge and develop their critical thinking. According to Harmer (2001:99), reading is useful for language acquisition. Good reading texts can introduce interesting topics, stimulate discussion and provide fascinating lessons.

Patel and Jain (2008:113) state that reading is the most useful and important skill. This skill is more important than speaking and writing. Good reading keeps students regular in reading which provides both pleasure and benefits. Moreover, Tankersley (2003:146) states that reading is the act of making sense of print. While some students pass their eyes over the text, if they have not gained meaning and understanding due to the act of reading, then reading has not taken place. Pre-reading activities get students to think about how they will approach the text and what information will be needed after reading.

In addition, Johnson (2008:4) states that reading is a constantly developing skill. Like other skills, the students get better at reading by practicing. Conversely, if students do not practice, they will not get better, and their skills may deteriorate because reading practice helps them become better readers. Reading integrates visual and nonvisual information. The visual information found on the page combined with the nonvisual information contained in the head creates meaning during reading. In that way, what is in the head is just as important as what is on the page in creating meaning (reading).

Klingner et al. (2007:2) state that reading comprehension constructs meaning by coordinating complex processes that include word reading, word and word knowledge, and fluency. It means that reading comprehension is understanding each word and finding information from the text. They also mention that reading comprehension involves much more than readers' responses to the text. Reading comprehension is a multi-component, highly complex process that involves many interactions between readers and what they bring to the text and variable related to the text itself; interest in text and understanding it. Students who can comprehend a variety of texts can integrate comprehension strategies according

to the kind of reading text. These students will explain what they are doing when they understand and realize that they do not comprehend.

According to Brown (2004:185), reading is likewise a skill that teachers simply expect leaners to acquire in foreign language learning. Reading purpose is intended to get pleasure, more information, and knowledge. The students are expected to read the words and interact with the text to gain meaning in reading comprehension. Reading comprehension could help the students master and vocabulary. By reading, students add their new vocabularies. According to Smith (2004:2), reading is the most natural activity in the world. Reading comprehension is about understanding written text. Improving reading comprehension is to read often and read interesting material. Another way to improve reading comprehension is to improve vocabulary.

Meanwhile, Snow (2002:11) states that reading comprehension is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involves written language. Comprehension entails three elements: the student who does the comprehension, the text that is to be comprehended, and the activity in which comprehension is a part of comprehending the text. The students must have a wide range of capacity, ability, knowledge, and experience that a student brings to the act of reading. The students can understand what the writer means and understand the meaning and the context of the text. Through reading, the readers have to relate the information written on the text with their background knowledge; thus, the students can easily comprehend the text they have already read.

Based on those definitions above, it can be concluded that reading comprehension is defined as the process of understanding the meaning of the text. Without reading comprehension, the students could not understand the text or what

they had already read. That is an important thing that should be improved to increase students' knowledge, and teachers must be good models in teaching reading. Furthermore, while teaching reading, students understand and comprehend what they read and can get new information or knowledge to improve and develop their ability in reading comprehension.

2.1.2 Know, Want, Learn (KWL)

In reading, students sometimes find it difficult to understand the text of the read. Moreover, students who do not fully understand the language they are learning will be confused about the text. They are not interested and bored, so they will assume it is a difficult lesson. To help the students to understand the text, they learn reading comprehension through KWL. KWL helps the students become better readers of recount text and help instructors be more interactive in their teaching. KWL is an immediate way to make a new topic or concept relevant to learners based on prior knowledge.

Arends and Kilcher (2010:146) state that KWL engages students in accessing prior knowledge, framing learning questions and goals before an instructional segment, and then reflecting on what has been learned following instruction. Therefore, it can help students and teachers to uncover misconceptions and connect to prior learning. In addition, KWL is an interesting activity for the students in the reading process. Before they read and after they read, they can share their knowledge about the topic that they already know. They can get new information after reading the text. In the present study, the strategy consists of getting students to ask three questions and record notes as they begin to study or read about a topic.
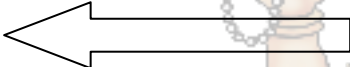
1. What do I know?

2. What do I want to know?

3. What have I learned?

The question above can be drawn into KWL Thinking Sheet. KWL Thinking Sheet based on Ogle in Arends and Kilcher can be seen as follows.
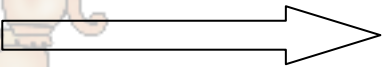
Table 2.1
KWL Thinking Sheet

Name:

What I Know (K)	What I want to know (W)	What I have learned (L)

Use at the beginning of the lesson   Use toward the end of the lesson

Blachowicz and Ogle (2008:15) define that reading as essential. It is how people gain information and ideas from books, newspapers, manuals, letters, advertisements, and other materials. In addition, using strategies to construct meaning before, during, and after reading help students connect what they have already known with what they have learned in the past students who read well and widely build a strong foundation for learning in all areas of life. Therefore, to help the students understand what they are reading, they are taught reading comprehension through the KWL. Students' prior knowledge is achieved by asking them what they already know, then the students set grades following in what they want to know, and after reading, students discuss what they have learned previously. Students apply higher-order thinking strategies which assist in building meaning from what they read and help them examine their progress toward their goal in learning, especially in reading comprehension.

According to Klingner et al. (2007:105), one of the strategies in the interactive previewing text is KWL. It provides a structure of recalling what learners know about the topic, what they want to know, and finally, a list of what has been learned is yet to be learned. They learned to brainstorm everything they knew about the topic. These questions are listed in the W column. After reading, learners answer these questions about what they have learned from the text in the L column.

In addition, according to Burke (2005:16), KWL guides students through their reading material. Although the process begins as a before-reading activity, its primary purpose is to develop a framework that students can use; they read KWL as an effective instructional strategy worth attention. This strategy can help students monitor their comprehension and knowledge because they know their vocabulary level and understanding ability. Furthermore, students learn a new topic and put an effort to study more about the topic to update their knowledge. It is a useful assessment tool for the teacher in the teaching-learning process, especially reading comprehension.

According to Herrell and Jordan (2006:252), KWL charts have three section charts that the students use to explore what they know (K), what they want to know (W), and what they learn (L) about the topic. In addition, there are some steps in using KWL in teaching reading comprehension that would encourage students' understanding of the recount text. The researcher decided to use KWL as the teaching strategy to be implemented in the classroom from many strategies that can be used in teaching reading comprehension, especially in recount text in the classroom. Moreover, there are six chart steps of KWL, which was adapted from Herrell and Jordan (2006:253) as follows:

1. The teacher prepares a topic and KWL sheet to teach students how to gather basic information.

2. The teacher delivers a blank KWL sheet and a topic to the students.

3. The teacher then asks them to fill the K column based on what they know about the topic.

4. After finishing the K column, the students are asked to fill the W column by writing down what they want to know about the topic.

5. The teacher presents the recount text and asks the students to read it.

6. The teacher asks the students to write what they have learned about the recount text related to the topic in the L column.

2.1.3 Assessment Reading Comprehension

Assessment is the process of determining the strengths and weaknesses of a certain object. Assessment may be conducted for many purposes, but the ultimate goal is to improve instruction for the students. The assessment of reading comprehension is a critical component of any research effort to improve the understanding of reading comprehension and how it can be best to teach in the classroom. N'Namdi (2005:57) describes assessment as a tool that measures a learner's knowledge and ability. The teacher has to assess the student's knowledge and ability to understand the material that the teacher has taught. Assessment forms should be based on, and reflect, what is taught in the classroom. Or in other words, teachers assess what they have been taught in the classroom.

To assess the students' comprehension, the teacher can ask students some questions related to the reading text to check whether they understand or not. However, Klingner et al. (2007:14) also say that reading comprehension assessment

has different purposes. One of these is to compare students' comprehension levels to those in a norming sample. Another is to find out if students have met pre-established criteria for their grade level. A third purpose is to inform instruction by determining when students understand what they read and how efficiently they use comprehension strategies.

As a teacher, the researcher needs to assess students' comprehension for many different purposes. Camille (2008:63) states assessment helps us to make informed decisions regarding the level of materials our students can handle. But knowing what the students can read is only the first step. The researcher also needed to know how they read to build on strong strategies and introduce new ones. The teacher can assess the students' comprehension in many ways to get the result. The result will show whether the students can handle the materials or not to develop the students' understanding.

In assessing reading comprehension, the teacher expects the students can reach the goal. Pang et al. (2003:18) state two forms of reading assessment. The first is to find out how well the students are reading to help them improve. The second is to measure how much progress has been made. Both forms of assessment are needed for effective reading instruction. Text comprehension is usually assessed through questions. Furthermore, the questions should focus on the main idea and viewpoints, not minor details. The students' responses can be spoken or written. Written responses can be in the form of multiple-choice, short answers, or extended pieces of writing. Also, when teachers assess their students, they have to make an assessment that relates to the student in their daily life.

There are many types of assessment that can be used to assess students' reading comprehension ability. One of them is a short-answer task. According to

Alderson (2000:227), a short answer task is a semi-objective alternative to multiple-choice. Test-takers are simply asked a question that requires a brief response in a few words. Furthermore, the researcher in the present study assesses the students' reading comprehension by using short answer tasks. The students should give the answer or idea about the test by short answer task. They directly answer the questions their ide based on the questions. This kind of test is a good way of measuring grammatical form and meaning of reading comprehension. The conclusion is that both teaching and assessing are so closely interrelated that the form of assessment is not just giving a test at the end of the teaching process but also in every activity that appears in the class that can be in the form of a test.

In addition, the researcher focuses on N'Namdi (2005) theory that assessment is a tool that measures a learner's knowledge and ability. The assessment of reading comprehension is a critical component of any research effort to improve understanding about reading comprehension and how it can be taught to be properly. In the present study, the assessment on reading comprehension was conducted in the form of a short answer task given to the students in pre-test and post-test.

2.2 Empirical Review

Empirical review is about reviewing researchers previously conducted by other researchers that might be similar to the present study to get the information and theories about previous research that are relevant to the present study. In addition, knowledge of empirical review evidence can help the researcher avoid unintentional replication of previous study results and place the researcher in a better position for their study results. The purpose is to support the present study by

considering the results and whether this study would be as successful as the relevant empirical review. Two similar types of research have been chosen. The two previous studies have been done by applying KWL to improve reading comprehension.

The first research was conducted by Wiprayoga (2017) entitled "Improving Reading Comprehension of the Eighth-grade Students of SMP Sila Dharma in Academic Year 2016/2017 Through KWL". The objective of the study was planned to figure out the effectiveness of KWL in teaching reading comprehension to the eighth-grade students of SMP Sila Dharma. Looking at the result of the research, the researcher had improved the subjects' ability to comprehend the recount text through the implementation of KWL as the teaching strategy. The improvement of the students' achievement also could be seen after the two cycles were conducted. Moreover, in this study, KWL contributed positively to improving students' reading comprehension.

The second study that was relevant to this study was done by Agustini (2018) entitled "Improving Reading Comprehension the Tenth-grade Students of SMK Negeri 2 Sukawati in Academic Year 2017/2018 Through KWL". The objective of the study was to find out whether the KWL strategy can improve students' reading comprehension in recount text. Based on the result and discussion of the research, is was found that the use of KWL could be improve the reading comprehension of the tenth-grade students of SMK Negeri 2 Sukawati in academic year 2017/2018. The results of implementing KWL strategy in this study could be seen from the progressing mean the score of the pre-test and post-test which were administered to the students after the implementation of KWL.

The researcher above gained the same results. After conducting two cycles, the findings showed that there were constant improvements after the researcher applied KWL; the students had positive responses. However, there were not only strengths but also some weaknesses. Both of the researchers did not clearly explain the correct theory and the steps of implementing the teaching strategy. As a result, it confused the students during the implementation of the strategy. The researcher adapted a theory from Herrel and Jordan (2006) in the present study. The researcher explained the theory clearly and completed the procedure steps. It made the teachers more confident when implementing the teaching strategy, and it would be easier to understand the theory when doing the activity during the learning process.