STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES ON USING MIND MAPPING IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

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Abstract

The aim of the research is to know the students' experiences about the use of mind mapping technique in learning writing descriptive text. The respondents of the research were 15 of 11th grade students of Senior High School in East Jakarta. This study employed a descriptive qualitative method with a case study design. Interviews and documentation were employed as instruments. The findings of the research indicated that most of the students were engaged in learning writing descriptive text using mind mapping technique. Majority of the students showed positive attitudes toward the mind maping; they can reveal its essential to gain the knowledge and improve writing abilities especially descriptive text. However, a few students stated found the difficulties in terms of capitalization, punctuation, and grammar during writing classes.

Keywords: Mind Mapping, Writing, Descriptive Text, Students' Experiences

INTRODUCTION

One of those language skills that play the most important and difficult for students at Senior High School, after interviewing them is writing. The reason is in writing they ask to produce something which express the idea. Therefore, writing is also one of the way where the people can express their ideas and share with others (Ismayanti, Eni; Kholiq, 2020). Since writing, one of the four skills to be mastered in English, is the most difficult language skill, the students face problem in starting to write (Husna, 2019). They cannot express ideas by simply starting to write, describing people, things and other things. One thing that makes them stuck is confusion about starting to write something. Another problem is the lack of students' motivation to focus more on improving writing skills. As a result, many students get unsatisfactory scores in writing. In addition, an important problem is the difficulty of developing the main idea, expanding supporting details, choosing the right words, vocabulary and grammar.

Understanding the phenomenon above, to solve the students' problem in writing, one technique that can be used is mind mapping (Nurlaila, 2013). In line with Nurlaila's statement, (Saputro et al., 2017) mind map is quite literally would be "mapped" human's thought. It is organizing ideas by mapping creatively and effectively. Mind mapping technique helps students to gather ideas before starting to write. Using mind mapping, students are expected can improve their ability in writing skills, primarily writing in descriptive text (Bagus et al., 2021). They free to writing as their only drawing on a paper such build a shape, showing images or drawing with a text, and a lot of colors without make a paragraph and the students not feeling bored anymore. Therefore this study is important to be conducted to know the students' voices at the descriptive text in writing skills.

Definition of Writing

Writing is a thinking activity that converts thoughts into words and ideas that are structured and coherent. In short, writing is also a process of putting ideas on paper and putting them into something meaningful. It means that writing is how to person putting the ideas and messages, not only mastery grammatical patterns but also the development of ideas and information with the right process (Tiarina, 2013). In the process of writing, the content of the writing must be able to describe the ideas and the messages must be conveyed well to the reader. So that writing can be understood well, many aspects must be considered such as vocabulary, proper grammar, spelling, and the most crucial is the relationship between topics, ideas and context. (Husna, 2019).

Definition of Descriptive Text

Descriptive text is to describe what we see (Fitri et al., 2017). It describes a person, place, thing, or idea using concrete and also vivid details. In descriptive text, there are two important schema structures, namely identification and description. In the preparation of writing descriptive text, there are several linguistic features that must be considered, such as written in the present tense, using adjectives, linking verbs, and using specific participant.(Siahaan, 2013) (Jayanti, 2019)(E.Puri, 2019).

Definition of Mind Mapping

In creating a mind mapping, it starts with writing the main idea in the middle of the page in a blank sheet. Like a diagram, everyone can draw lines consisting of pictures, phrases, concepts, keywords and facts (Amaniarsih et al., 2020).

Based on Buzan (Silalahi, 2016), there are five steps to apply mind mapping, here they are:

1. Prepare some colored pens and a blank sheet of unlined paper.
2. In the middle of the page, please draw a picture that sums up the main subject which represent main topic.
3. Draw some lines connecting the supporting ideas with the main idea in the middle.
4. To show the keywords or the supporting ideas, underlined and put some notes.
5. If you want to add your thoughts, just draw additional lines like branch of tree. Then write each these supporting ideas which represent your details.

METHOD

This research used descriptive qualitative with interviews and observation were employed as instruments. The subject were 15 of 11th grade students of Senior High School in East Jakarta which consist of 8 females and 7 males. These students had previously struggled with acquiring English, particularly writing. The researcher learned from multiple informal interviews that the students found the difficulties to begin writing and their weaknesses were in capitalization, punctuation, and grammar. While the object of the research was the utilization of mind mapping in writing class, especially descriptive text. Documentation and interviews are used by researchers to collect data. In documentation, students ask to write paragraphs of descriptive text in different topic for example about place and family. In the interview, students asked some questions related to their experiences while learning writing descriptive text using mind mapping technique.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Traditionally, mind mapping can be used to explore any theme or topic. Teacher just simply start by writing the interesting topic on the board. Then, students begin by choosing a topic they like based on what the teacher gives. Start to map it in the middle and write keywords or new ideas from the topic and connect them to become a coherent text. In this research, students are asking to write descriptive text talking about place and family. So that, they should map their own main idea into some key words, then key words of the object described into sentences. Last, the explanatory key words become whole paragraphs.

Below are the findings of the students' experiences in writing descriptive text (using mind mapping):

Data 1

The researcher made a lesson plan about the descriptive text with the topic is describing family. In this case, the students are already learn about the schematic structure of descriptive text and the characteristics of mind mapping.

Below is the example of students' descriptive text about family:

My Sister, Clara

Hi, hello. I am Cassandra. I stay at Jakarta, Indonesia since 2017. My neighborhood is very nice and comfort. There are so many cozy place around my home so I can explore every my leisure time. I love it so much.

Ok, then my family is one of my favorite story to share. I only have one sister, her name is Clara. She is 20 years old and still as college student in one of university. She is slim and active. She has brown eyes and straight hair. She oftens wear colourful shirt with jeans, so sporty. We often take a picture together and share it through our social media. Yess, you may see our pictures on my IG.

Based on the example above, it can be seen that the student is trying to describe her sister looked likes and her personalities. From that descriptive text, the researcher found some difficulties faced by the student. First, the student had difficulties in schematic structure which divided into two parts that is identification and description. In the first paragraph, student did not identify and introduce the character (her sister), she immediately describe about herself. Then, in the second paragraph, the student already described the character in detail. In this case, student basically comprehend about the generic structure but still confuse on how to apply it on the paragraph.

Data 2

Below is another example of descriptive text about family by the student:

My lovely family

There are four people in my family. I am the youngest children and i have one brother, his name…. Zagy. I do not have sister. My mom is a teacher in elementary school and my dad is steward in Garuda Indonesia. I love my family because I am happy when I am with them. My mom is beautiful and she has curly long black hair. my dad also handsome and he has black eyes and tall. I love them so much.

From the second example above, it can be seen that the student still found difficulties in arranging the descriptive text. To make sure the students' comprehension about mind mapping, the researcher recheck to the student about the application of mind mapping before starting to write a descriptive text. However, students still did some mistakes especially in grammar and punctuation. For instance, on the paragraph above, student often write the word "I" with the lower case. Then, in the sentence ". *my dad also handsome ...*" the letter of 'm', it should typed by capital letter. Another finding, in the sentence '*his name .... Zagy*', the sentence is missing tobe, so it should add the tobe 'is'. From those analysis it can be conclude that students still lack of understanding in grammar. In addition, the descriptive text written is too short and does not fit the generic structure.

Data 3
Another finding based on the students' writing about descriptive text about place.

Kramat Jati Traditional Market

Kramat Jati traditional market is the most impressive place in East Jakarta, Indonesia. The <u>location very</u> strategic and easy to find. <u>there</u> are a lot of things to sell for example clothes, fruit, vegetable, various fresh fish and so on. This traditional market is cleaner and well-organized so people can buy and sell freely.
<u>many</u> people visit this market to buy something with big <u>portion They</u> can buy various fruit for example watermelon, avocado, apple, and the most famous is banana. There is a location where many kinds of banana are on sale. In <u>kramat jati</u> traditional market, people also can buy fresh fish from shrimp, cakalang until dori fish. Everything can buy here.

From the third example above, the researcher found that the student has difficulties in grammar, capitalization and punctuation. Here are the explanations, in the sentence of '*The <u>location very</u> strategic*' is missing tobe, it should add to be 'is'. As students have learnt, descriptive text is using present tense. For that reason, the students should encompass the pattern of the present tense. Another finding is in the sentence of '*find. <u>there</u> are,* the word after fullstop is should be followed by capital letter. Then in the word *'<u>many</u> people',* the word *'many'* starts with capital letter because it is the first word in the paragraph. Next is student forgot to put the punctuation in the sentence '*<u>portion They</u>'*. In this case, the fullstop is needed to separate between sentence. Although students make some mistakes, they can arrange paragraphs appropriately with the right generic structure and tenses. Plus, students can map descriptive sentences well. In a nutshell, students can understand the function of mind mapping.

Data 4
Below is the other example of descriptive text about place:

Bandung

Bandung is one of the cities in Indonesia. It is the capital province of <u>west java</u>. This city is also famous as one of the tourist destinations. It is visited by many tourists both on weekends and long holidays. This city has cool air, good food and beautiful views.
In Bandung, there is many types of tourist attractions such as mountains, nature, attractions, child-friendly rides and parks. If you want to enjoy nature, you can visit the Lembang area. For

example Orchid Forest Cikole, Jungle Milk Lembang and <u>so on Then,</u> if you want to go shopping just visit Cihampelas and Dago. There are so many factory outlets which that sell good quality goods at affordable prices.

Based on the fourth example of students' writing result, it can be seen that the student has two mistakes. First is in the word "*west java*"*,* in this sentence, the name of the city or place should start with capital letter. So, the correct writing is '*West Java'.* Next mistake is in the word '*<u>so on Then'</u>.* In this case, the fullstop is needed to separate between sentence. From whole parts of the paragraph, it can be seen that the student has already comprehend about the generic structure of mind mapping and how to arrange descriptive paragraph using appropriate tenses.

Refers to the samples of the descriptive paragraph arranged by students above, it can be concluded that using mind mapping is enabling learner to learn how to develop main ideas into good paragraph. Eventhough, in some cases, several problems experienced by students such as grammatical error, lack attention to punctuation, capitalization, and other incorrect technical writing. To complement these results, researchers need to interview students' experiences during writing classes using mind mapping to understand what they are feeling and dealing with. Here are the data:
1. Through mind mapping, students able to develop main ideas into good paragraph. Even, they need extra time to organize it.
2. Students get the gist about generic structure of descriptive text.
3. Lack of grammar mastery. Students are still confusing on the tenses used in arranging descriptive text.

CONCLUSION

Regardimg on the result and the findings ,it was found that the students experiences in writing descriptive text using mind mapping lies on three issues namely the inability in adjusting the appropriate structure grammar in the text, difficulty in developing main ideas, and the difficulty in other technical writing such as punctuation and capitalization. However, students showed a positive attitude towards the use of mind mapping in terms of arranging sentences into correct paragraphs. The use of mind mapping is indeed very helpful for students, but it is not as easy as imagined. Teachers must prepare well the material to be taught as well as tips and tricks so that students do not get bored while studying because writing is a class that requires high focus. This research still have limitation, for instance, while interviewing the students, the answers given by participants do not reflect the actual situation. Certainly, future research in mind mapping can be developed even better in various aspect of learning.

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