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Improving Writing Skill Through Mind Mapping Technique

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to find a way to improve writing skills through mind mapping. This study was conducted in three cycles following the procedures for action research, namely planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. This research used pre- experimental research consisting of two cycles, and each cycle consisted of two sessions. Besides, the research was preceded by an initial reflection to know the subjects' pre- existing ability in the pre-cycle. The whole process of the present study consisted of three main phases: pre-cycle, cycle I, and cycle II, in which each cycle consisted of four interconnected activities: planning, action, observation, and reflection. The researcher used a pretest, post-test, and questionnaire to analyze the significant improvement. The researcher used statistics using the main score formula to analyze the data. The finding shows that the mean post-test score is higher (87) than the pretest score (70). Based on these results of the post-test, the questionnaire result showed positive responses from the subjects toward implementing the mind mapping technique. In other words, this study establishes that 8th-grade students' writing ability in SMPN 3 Abiansemal, Badung, Bali could be enhanced by her mind mapping technique.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Writing is a productive skill in English. It is the most consequential skill among skills such as speaking, reading, and listening. It is also a productive skill that allows people to communicate. On the other hand, writing is a challenging skill for students to master, especially as linguistically correct, socially appropriate, and enhanced written discourse in a foreign language. Unfortunately, it is also one of the most challenging skills to master in language learning (Mita and Shimoda, 2023). In this case, even after years of learning English, students still find it challenging to write. In writing, the students usually face common problems: developing ideas and transferring the concept from the brain onto a written form. When the students want to start writing a paragraph or text, they usually write it freely. However, many students do not know how to write a paragraph or text based on paragraph or text structure.

For students to write competently, they must know how to construct paragraphs and texts. (Gerald and Joseph, 2024) states that to write well, a writer must learn how to write in a good way, how sense works, and how acquires knowledge. To get students interested in learning to write, they should start writing about what they know. (Fitriyah et al., 2024) states that the ability to write has become an essential skill in the international community. It means that all students must learn writing skills. Writing is so essential that English teachers should pay particular attention to it. Writing measures, a student's success in language learning. If students can write well, they correspondingly use the language. Furthermore, students could easily remember something.

In writing, it is common to find students struggling with constructing paragraphs. Some problems make writing challenging to create, impacting many students in the school. (Le et al., 2023) recognize that writers formulate their thoughts, organize them, and create a written record of them using the conventions of spelling and grammar. According to the fact that those problems occur continuously at the school during the learning process. Thus, to do it well, the students often have to recall their experiences on what they have ever read, listened to, seen, or done to create a good paragraph, mainly descriptive.

The eighth-grade students faced difficulties, like did not clearly understand descriptive paragraphs, especially how to describe a person, place, or thing. They had a problem organizing their ideas and were still disorganized about how to start writing the descriptive paragraph since their knowledge of organizing and developing the paragraph was still low. They often made some mistakes because their vocabularies were still limited. In addition, the students felt bored and sleepy during the teaching and learning process. This condition was caused by some aspects which could be seen in students' condition in the classroom and also driven by teachers' techniques in teaching English. The improper technique tends to make the learning process not run well, and it affects students' achievement in writing. It also had an impact on the future of the students when they could not write sufficiently. On the other hand, by using appropriate techniques, students' inquisitiveness in the subject matter can be improved fast, and it will be assured for their future (Andajani et al., 2023).

The teacher used conventional asking and answering techniques in the teaching-learning process. The teacher only exemplified the material in general in a descriptive

paragraph and then asked the students to discuss the material established in their textbook. In addition, the teacher requested the students to write a descriptive paragraph without directing them. The teacher only gave the assignment, gave feedback to the students, and concluded that the teaching-learning process made the students not comprehend very well about descriptive paragraphs. Thus, the students were hard to construct a good descriptive paragraph.

In order to resolve the problem, the teacher needs to use an appropriate teaching technique, which may the researcher highly recommends utilizing Mind Mapping Technique. This technique can help students make an ideal descriptive paragraph and correlate it to how their brain works to remember something. The mind mapping process starts by writing down the paragraph's topic in the center and then considering and writing the latest or related ideas of the topic, which are written from the center and connected by the line. By focusing on the essential ideas written down in the student's own words and looking for connections between them, they can map their knowledge and help them sufficiently understand what they have written and knowledge from their mind (Arief and Wiratman, 2023).

Besides, it is an exhilarating and challenging technique for students. This technique can motivate the students to brainstorm and write their ideas. It can make the students easy to remember objects as well. Furthermore, it can help the students to systematize their ideas before they develop them into a paragraph since they can examine the general ideas and choose the best details without wasting much time. The general ideas are commonly put in the middle, then lines and arrows connect them to more specific details, signifying they are connected.

In addition, this technique could help the teacher in the teaching-learning process, especially in writing a descriptive paragraph using the mind mapping technique. The importance of the statements and the facts above, the researcher is interested to know whether or not the mind mapping technique could be used as an appropriate technique and could be used to improve the student's writing skills. Therefore, from the research problem already explained, the researcher conducted research entitled "Improving Writing Skill through Mind Mapping Technique.

2. METHOD

It covers discussion about research design, subject of the study, data source, data collecting technique and instrument, technique of data verification, and data analysis. The research design used in this research is Classroom Action Research (CAR) (Derakhshan and Nazari, 2024) states that action research typically involves four broad phases in a cycle of research. According to (Wahid and Sudirman, 2023), in action, the researcher implements the plan or changes a practice and collects data it may be collected from variety of sources. In this research the data was collected by using research instruments, tests (pre-test and post- tests) and questionnaire.

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The first step in the cycle of classroom action research is planning where the researcher should plan some activities before teaching. After planning, the researcher going to an action in classroom as a teacher and taught the students based on the planning which were prepared. The second step is observation where the researcher observed the classroom situation and learnt about the students' behaviour in classroom basically how the subjects respond or understand when they are studying is observed by the researcher during the teaching and learning process (Reinhardt et al., 2023).

The last step is reflection where the researcher gave evaluation to the students about the action that was conducted. A good deal of the reflection is reflection on action. Therefore, in this classroom action research, the teaching and learning process was divided into some cycles where each of the cycles consisted of two sessions. Each session consisted of four interrelated activities such as: planning, action, observation, and reflection.

The subject of research is to give boundaries to the subject of research as an object, thing or person to which the data for the research variables are attached, and in question. The subject of this research are the students from 8th-grade students from SMPN 3 Abiansema, Badung, with conducted by 24 subjects.

The data required to answer the research question under study collected through administering pre-test and post-test, and the supporting data gathered through administering questionnaire to the subjects under study which the eighth grade of SMP N 3 Abiansema. The following formula was applied to analyze the data.

In addition, the calculation of the mean score would be categorized as the table of Conversion Competency of knowledge of the subjects:

1. The formula applied to compute the main score as follows: $M = \frac{\sum X}{N}$

Where: M = mean score

$\sum X$ = the sum of the total score

N = the total number of the subject

In addition, the calculation of the mean score would be categorized as the table of Conversion Competency of knowledge in SMP N 3 Abiansema.

2. The data collecting from the questionnaire simply and descriptively analyzed as the following percentage of an item in Figure 1.:

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{Total Responses of an item}}{\text{Total Responses of an item}} \times 100$$

Figure 1. Percentage of an item

Source: Rahayu and Supartini, 2025

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Could write a description in such explicit detail and well-organized. The score conducted by 24 subjects showed an increasing mean figure of 74.30, showing that 19 subjects could achieve the minimum passing grade. In addition, it could be stated that

the success indicator in the present study was accomplished. As a result, the research ended in this cycle. Besides, additional supporting data were collected by administering the questionnaire. It was administered to determine the subjects' responses after involving the technique.

This figure showed that more than 99% of the responses displayed that the subjects agreed with implementing the mind mapping technique. It gave a positive response to the implementation of the technique. By using the mind mapping technique, the subjects were more active in writing their paragraph and could develop their ideas swiftly and structurally. In addition, the implementation of the mind mapping technique was accepted by the subjects in learning writing in the classroom as it was practical to build their confidence in writing a descriptive paragraph.

Their motivation to learn descriptive paragraph writing improved as they enjoyed teaching and learning. The present study used classroom action research consisting of four interconnected activities: planning, action, observation, and reflection (Kadel, 2024). The present classroom action research was divided into two cycles, each consisting of two sessions. Two instruments were used to accumulate the data: tests (pre-test and post-test) and a questionnaire. Based on the pre-cycle, cycle I, and cycle II findings, it was necessary to do a deep discussion to make a deeper understanding. Therefore, the findings were discussed as follows.

In the pre-cycle, the researcher administered the pre-test. They were administered to figure out the subjects' pre-existing ability in writing before applying the technique. The mean pre-test score of 24 subjects in the pre-cycle was 51.20, and none of the subjects could achieve the minimum passing grade, showing that their writing ability was still low. Furthermore, most of them cannot write a paragraph based on its generic structure. They also found it challenging to start writing the paragraph. It was because they could not organize and evolve their ideas in writing a descriptive paragraph.

In addition, the structures of their sentences were still incorrect. Finally, the researcher did an observation; during the implementation of the technique, some were still noisy and talked with their friends in the classroom. When applying the technique researcher tries to get the student's attention with the first steps of the mind mapping technique. Therefore, it needed to be improved by conducting the cyclical process in which the mind mapping technique was applied. In cycle I, after the mind mapping technique was applied, the writing skill of the subjects showed improvement. The post-test result, followed by 24 subjects in cycle I, showed a mean figure of 73.33. One of the subjects could write a descriptive paragraph with an excellent generic structure such as identification, description, and conclusion. Most subjects could write their descriptions.

An excellent descriptive paragraph based on the criteria required in the scoring rubric; their grammatical features were better than the pre-cycle. However, even though they could write better paragraphs, they still lacked in organizing and developing their ideas. The observation showed that some students did not pay attention to the

explanation and tended to be passive. However, the teaching and learning process could run smoothly. In addition, the mean score obtained by the subjects in cycle I was much higher than the mean score of the pre-test; however, the success indicator had not been achieved. Then the cyclical process was continued to cycle II in order to get an improvement.

In cycle II, the subjects became more active in the classroom because the researcher revised their planning to get a better result from the subjects' writing skills. The researcher prepared a picture based on the topic to stimulate the subjects to find ideas and make them feel enthusiastic. As a result, the subjects developed their ideas pleasingly and could write descriptive paragraphs in sound structure and grammar. The subjects could write a unified and coherent paragraph: moreover, they could write a descriptive paragraph that identifies the describing object. They allowed them to develop their ideas into descriptive paragraphs, and constructing the paragraph became easier. In other words, the learning process in writing descriptive paragraphs could be more active by implementing the mind mapping technique (Sharma and Sievers, 2023).

According to the data and the elaboration above, the present classroom action research achieved the success indicator. The mind mapping technique could help the subjects improve their writing skill, especially in writing a descriptive paragraph. In addition, it also could be seen from the obtained data from pre-test to post-test 1 and 2. Therefore, the present study ended in the second cycle since the implementation of the mind mapping technique worked well and successfully improved writing skills, especially in writing descriptive paragraphs of the subjects. In addition, it is reinforced by the result of a questionnaire, which showed that the subjects gave positive responses to implementing the mind mapping technique in teaching and the learning process in the classroom. To sum up, it can be concluded that the writing skill of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 3 Abiansema could be improved through the mind mapping technique.

4. CONCLUSION

The present study was in the form of classroom action research. The teaching and learning processes are divided into two cycles, each consisting of two sessions. First, the data was obtained by administering the pre-test in the pre-cycle to know the subjects' pre-existing ability in writing. Then, it was continued by giving post-tests at the end of cycles I and II to know the progressing writing achievement after applying the mind mapping technique in the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

Finally, the questionnaire was administered to determine the students' responses to the mind mapping technique. As discussed in the last chapter, there was an improvement in the mean score of the subjects from pre-test to post-test 2. In addition, the number of subjects who reached the minimum passing grade improved approximated to the result in post-test 1. One subject in cycle I and 19 in cycle II could achieve a minimum passing grade from pre-test to cycle II. Hence, this result reached the success indicator stated in chapter III; thus, the present study ended.

The data demanded were also collected by giving questionnaires to the subjects. In line with the post-test result, the questionnaire showed positive responses from the subjects toward implementing the mind mapping technique. More than 99% of the

subjects agreed with implementing the mind mapping technique. It indicated the subjects significantly accepted this technique. In conclusion, according to the finding of the present research from pre-test to post-test and the questionnaire, it can be supposed that the writing skills of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 3 Abiansema can be improved through the mind mapping technique. In addition, the subjects could write the descriptive paragraph well based on the generic structure.

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