

Students' Interest in Using Semantic Mapping Technique in Learning English Writing Ability

Isnaeni Wahab*, Zul Astri
Universitas Muslim Maros, Indonesia

Abstract

This study aims to out the students' interest to learn English writing through Semantic Mapping Technique. This research is carried out under a descriptive qualitative paradigm at the Junior High School of Kartika XX-I Makassar. The purposive sampling technique is used to select the sample from the population, which consisted of 70 students in three classes. The chosen sample is the students of A class that consisted of 29 students. The data of the students' interests is collected by using students' experiences in learning by using semantic mapping. Those are by observation and questionnaires. Data analysis through data reduction, data presentation, and concluding stages. The result shows that the student's interest to learn writing through the Semantic Mapping Technique is categorized as very high. The students feel motivated, excited, and active in joining the class.

Keywords: Semantic Mapping, Learning English, Writing Ability

1. Introduction

English is an international language that has been used as a foreign language in Indonesia for many years. It has been incorporated into the curriculum of English schools and colleges. English consists of four skills that the English teachers teach; they are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Harmer (1991: 16) states that language has four basic English skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Sari (2015) also agreed that writing is one of the essential skills besides listening, speaking, and reading, which students master. Writing is a skill that is used to communicate without interaction directly. It seems that writing is a more complex language skill and more challenging than others because the students need to have a solid concept of writing, construct correct grammatical sentences, and know as many words as possible. Therefore, writing communicates his thoughts and feelings by visible signs and understanding to himself and other people. Furthermore, Writing is also a mental work of investing thought, and it is about how to convey and organize ideas into paragraphs that the readers can read. In other words, writing is not only a process of thinking something to say and selecting words needed to express it, but writing is a process of producing meaningful written messages.

Huy (2015) that writing is one of the aspects of skills that have significant support for other skills because if the students are good at writing, they can read and speak the text more effectively. According to Zasrianita (2016), writing still becomes the necessary language skill that the students must master if the students feel like success in learning the language. Dantes (2013) states that writing is one of the essential skills in language because it supports students expanding other macro language skills without realizing it. Students usually need to explore their ideas by reading several articles, journals, or books during the writing process.

Fauzan et al. (2018) stated that Writing is an activity where the students should master some skills such as arranging a good sentence, having a lot of vocabulary, understanding the organization, and language use. It is because writing activity is communication. In this case, the students are expected to write a descriptive text. Therefore, a teacher must ask the students how to write well, and they also must come across a proper technique that is suitable for the student's needs. Zasrianita (2016) said that there are some problems faced by the teachers 1) the teachers just teach based on a guidebook that makes the students were passive during the teaching and learning process, 2) the

teachers use monotonous strategy in teaching, and 3) the teacher only focused on materials in the English guidebook.

In teaching writing, the teachers need various techniques or strategies to be used as an effort to motivate students to be active and feel relaxed while attending the class. Related to the problems, semantic mapping is a strategy that can be used to assist the learners in establishing the relationships between ideas. So, semantic mapping is intended to make the students enjoy and excited in the learning process. Semantic mapping is a specific type of graphic organizer to help the students be more creative in developing their writing. Johnson (2008: 228) states, "Semantic mapping or word webs are effective in teaching the concept of a paragraph." Semantic mapping is like a diagram pattern used to show the words, thought, or other ideas related to and organize main keywords or ideas. (Buzan, 2010) stated that semantic mapping is used to produce, imagine, contexture, and categorize the ideas to assist in studying and managing the information, solving the problems, making decisions, and writing. According to Zaid (1995:5), the procedures of semantic mapping techniques consist of 1) knowing the main topic, it means that the teacher should know the unit of lessons and decides that semantic mapping technique is suitable to use, 2) brainstorming, the students must think about the ideas that are possible be related to the topic. It makes the students use their background knowledge or experiences, 3) Categorization, the students have to find the words that relate to each other and form a map consisting of some words. It is the phases that allow students to build up ideas and find the connection between the words. During this phase, the teacher might help the students to introduce new vocabulary words. The students hoped to get experience in practicing some valuable cognitive skills, especially categorization and exemplifying, but also comparing, cause and effect, inference making, and forming judgments. 4) Personalizing the map, after the students make a pre-assignment map, the teacher should introduce some material on the topic. It is typically a reading passage since semantic mapping is designed to show the verbal and visual relationship. 5) Post-assignment synthesis, the last step is to record the student words from their maps on the pre-assignment. The map can outline writing a short essay on the topic. It can be concluded that the sequence in making semantic mapping is as follows: (1) choose the word as a topic, (2) show the target word, (3) ask the students to find as many words related to the target words, (4) ask the student write the generated words in categories, (5) ask the student label categories, (6) construct a map, (7) Lead the class in a discussion that focuses on identifying meanings and uses of words, clarifying ideas, highlighting major conclusions, identifying key elements, expanding ideas, and summarizing information.

Based on many previous studies which found that semantic mapping techniques can improve students' language skills, this study wanted to know the students' interest in using semantic mapping techniques could improve skills, especially in English writing ability.

2. Method

This research uses a descriptive quantitative study. Descriptive research is a helpful human instrument to determine the focus of research, selecting informants as data sources, collecting data, assessing data quality, analyzing data, interpreting data, and making conclusions on the findings (Sugiyono, 2017). This research was conducted at Junior High School Kartika XX-1 Makassar. The population consisted of three classes with a total of 70 students. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample. The sample chosen was the students of A class that consisted of 29 students. The instruments used were a) observation is a data collection technique carried out in which the researcher observes and records systematically the application of semantic mapping in learning writing ability in the class, and b) questioner is used to measure students' interest in the learning that has been done. Questionnaires were used to obtain personal information such as attitudes, opinions, hopes, and desires of respondents. This questionnaire aims to determine students' interest in writing. This data analysis included (1) Data Reduction. The selection process focuses on simplifying, abstracting, and transforming raw data that emerge from written records in the field. Data reduction takes place continuously as long as a qualitatively oriented project takes place. The next reduction stage is to summarize, code, trace themes, create clusters, create

partitions, and write memos, (2) Data Presentation. Presentation as a set of structured information that allows concluding, and (3) drawing conclusion.

3. Result and Discussion

The findings of this research deal with the analysis of data collected through observation and giving questionnaires to know the students' interest in using semantic mapping in learning writing. In this research, the questionnaire consisted of 10 items expected to find out students' interest in learning writing. Therefore, the researcher provided the students with very high interest, High Interest, Medium, Low Interest, and Very Low Interest. The researcher divided positive statements and negative ones.

Table 1. The Rate percentage of the Students' Interest

No	Classification	Range of Scores	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Very High Interest	85 – 100	20	69
2.	High Interest	69 – 84	9	31
3.	Medium	52 – 68	0	0
4.	Low Interest	36 – 51	0	0
5.	Very Low Interest	20 - 35	0	0
Total			29	100

Based on the table above, the students answered the questionnaires individually, referring to their opinions after giving treatment using the Semantic Mapping Technique. The students' interest in the writing process using Semantic Mapping Technique showed that none of the students was Medium, Low interest, and Very Low interest, 9(31%) students as High Interest and 20(69%) students were Very High Interest with Semantic Mapping Technique.

The student's interest and enthusiasm to learn writing demonstrated significant improvement after applying the Semantic Mapping Technique. Most of the students were categorized as very high interest. It can be concluded that the application of Semantic Mapping Technique in teaching writing could change the students' writing ability and make them interested in learning writing. Most students have positive statements about the application of the Semantic Mapping Technique in teaching writing.

The discussion deals with arguments and further interpretation of the research findings based on data. Refers to the finding of the students' interest, the researcher analysed that the students were interested in making descriptive text by using semantic mapping technique. The analysis showed that using the semantic mapping technique significantly influenced the students' interest in writing in English. This means that there was excellent applicable material in teaching writing skills. In this research, the students' interest was considered as output because they were expected to have an interest category through the semantic mapping technique in writing.

It was based on the research by Nurhaeni (2014) found that the students' ability to write descriptive text improved significantly. The students' interest in learning to write descriptive text through the Semantic Mapping Technique was categorized as very high. This idea is also supported by Indah and Crestiana (2021) in their research that the students were always interested, felt helpful, and happy to learn English using this strategy, particularly in improving their writing skills. It also found by Sari (2015) in her research that learning writing through semantic mapping becomes the class environment be alive, the students are motivated, excited, and active in following the class,

the communication be effective, and the classroom assessment and reflection ran well. Purwanto (2019) Semantic mapping is one of those but is very interesting, absorbing, and motivating.

Furthermore, it is the most effective method of improving one's writing abilities. The use of semantic mapping, in addition to being an effective prewriting technique that involves creating a diagram with lines, boxes, arrows, circles, words, and phrases to show how new words and ideas are related to the topic, is a highly engaging way of increasing vocabulary knowledge and encouraging students to retrieve and use what they already know. (Source: Harmer) (2007, p.236).

4. Conclusion

A conclusion is reached by using the findings and discussion from the preceding Chapter to determine whether or not students' writing abilities were enhanced by the use of the Semantic Mapping Technique. When the strategy was implemented in teaching-learning English in this exercise, the students appeared to be interested and passionate about their learning. The statistics revealed that the students' level of interest was classed as high level of concern. It was proved by the pupils' performance on the Likert-Scale questionnaire.

References

- Buzan, T. (2000). *The Mind Map Book*. Penguin Books.
- Dantes, N. (2012). *Metode Penelitian*. Yogyakarta: C.V Andi Offset.
- Fauzan, A., Jufrizal., Zul Amri. (2018) *The Effect of Semantic Mapping in Teaching Writing Skill on Seventh Grade Students of SMPN 3 Batusangkar*. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, V (301)
- Harmer, J. (2007). *How to teach for exams* (3rd ed.). Edinburg: Pearson Education Limited.
- Harmer, J. 1991. *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. New York: Longman Group
- Huy, N.T. 2015. *Problem Affectivity Learning Writing Skill of Grade II at Thony LinhHight School*. *Asian Journal of Educational Research*. Vol. 3, No 2.
- Indah, O. D., & Crestiana, J. (2022). *Analyzing the Students' Interest on the Use of Semantic Mapping Strategy in Improving Students Writing Skill*. *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, [S.l.], Vol 9 (2), p. 825-833, <https://ejournal.iainpalopo.ac.id/index.php/ideas/article/view/2401>
- Johnson, P A. (2008). *Teaching Reading and Writing*. United States of America: Rowman & Littlefield Publisher, Inc
- Nurhaeni. (2014). *The Implementation of Semantic Mapping Technique in Teaching Descriptive Text to Improve Students' Writing Ability of the Eighth Graders of SMPN 3 Bontoramba Kab. Jeneponto*. Thesis UNM
- Purwanto. (2019). *Improving Writing Recount Texts through Semantic Mapping*. *Teacher in educational Research*. Vol 1(2) p. 76-90 <https://ejournal.ressi.id/index.php/TER/article/view/48/76>
- Sari, N. P. (2015). *Improving Students' Writing Skills in Narrative Text by Using Semantic Mapping*. *Jurnal Edutama* Vol. 2 No. 1
- Sugiyono, (2017). *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan (Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D)*. Bandung: Alfabeta
- Zaid, M. A. 1995. *Semantic Mapping in Communicative Language Teaching*. *English Teaching Forum* 33 (3), 6-16. Retrieved on December 15th 2013 <http://exchanges.go.com>
- Zasrianita, F. (2016). *Applying Semantic Mapping Technique in Students' Writing Quality*. *Jurnal Bahasa*. Vol 6 (2) <https://ejournal.iainbengkulu.ac.id/index.php/alughah/article/view/1486> <http://dx.doi.org/10.29300/lughah.v6i2.1486>