



The Use of Mind Mapping Technique to Increase EFL Students' Motivation in Writing

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Abstract

This article focuses on describing the implementation of mind mapping technique to increase students' motivation in writing descriptive text. An English teacher and 36 students in a Junior high school in Brebes participated in this study. A qualitative design was used, and data were collected through classroom observation, questionnaire and interview. The sample of this study was Eighth Grade of A Junior High School in Brebes. This study used thematic analysis to analyse the data. This study found that the teacher did three steps in implementing mind mapping: giving students image of mind mapping, designing the writing task, and asking students to finish the writing task. Meanwhile, interview data indicated that most students enjoyed learning descriptive text by means of mind mapping. Regarding students' motivation, data from observation revealed that most students enjoyed the activities, as seen from their enthusiasm. Likewise, questionnaire data indicated that most students gave positive perceptions towards the use of mind mapping. Most of them strongly agree with the statement that this strategy can make the learning process become imaginative. In short, it can be concluded that the teacher has successfully applied mind mapping technique. It can make the students enjoy and more interested in learning descriptive text. Therefore, the writers suggest that teachers apply various strategies in teaching and learning process, especially mind mapping, to create an enjoyable classroom atmosphere. Meanwhile, other researchers are recommended to discover the use of mind mapping in teaching other text types.

Keywords: mind mapping technique; motivation; writing

Introduction

In English teaching-learning process, students have to master four skills of English, i.e. speaking, listening, writing and reading. To master only one skill, it does take a variety of ways in learning, for example writing skill as the difficult skill in English. This is supported by Westwood (2008:56) who says that "written language is perhaps the most difficult skills to acquire because its development involves the effective coordination of many different cognitive, linguistic and psychomotor processes".

In Indonesian curriculum, students in Junior High School are required to write text types, one of which is descriptive text. In this research, the writer focused on descriptive texts. Meanwhile, descriptive text is a text which says what a person or a thing is like. Its purpose is to describe and reveal a particular person, place or thing; descriptive text is a kind of the text with a purpose to give information, the context of this text is description of particular things, place, people, and other.

Apart from the importance of writing in educational learning for communication purposes, academic achievement and student achievement are all affected by students' motivation. Students are expected to be able to write several kinds of texts with good content and coherence; but they could not do it well. They often get low marks when doing the tests on writing skill and it affect their learning's motivation. To solve the problem in writing, it is important for the teachers to use an alternative technique in teaching writing to achieve the goal of the instruction or curriculum.

Since writing is the most difficult language skill, students face a lot of problems. In this study, the authors investigated the use of mind mapping technique to increase EFL students' motivation in writing. Buzan and Buzan (1993, p.102) discovered that "practices in their study perceived mind mapping as a fun, interesting, and motivating approach to learn". Therefore, this Mind Mapping not only makes students interested in teaching and learning process but also gives their motivation in writing.

In particular, this study attempted to know the teacher implement mind mapping technique in increasing EFL students' motivation in writing and the students' perspectives toward the use of mind mapping technique in increasing their motivation in writing.

Theoretical Framework

Writing

Writing is a complex metacognitive activity that draws on an individual's knowledge, basic skill, strategies, and ability to coordinate multiple processes. Harmer (2004, p.86) defines writing as a process that what we write is often heavily influenced by the constraints of genres, then these elements have to be present in learning activities. It means that writing cannot be separated from genres especially in teaching learning activities. Without a doubt, the most important invention of human history is writing. It provides a relatively permanent record of information, opinions, arguments, feelings, explanations, beliefs, theories, and so on.

Based on explanation above, the authors argue that writing is an expression of people's thought in front of words which have to choose and spell clearly in order to make a meaningful sentence and convey the writer's purpose. It allows us to share our communication with the others.

Problems of writing

Something which makes students find writing difficult to be learned is the problem of this subject. Students have many problems of its subject. Some of those are quite complicated. According to Masanjila (2005, p.18), there are six common problems that may occur when doing writing. Those problems are capitalization problem, punctuation problem, inexplicitness or fuzziness, poor organization or illogical sequence, spelling problem, and the last is grammatical error. Those problems are cases feared by all students, include students in junior high school who have to make the text types with variety of genres.

Despite the fact, students assume that writing is a complex issue. Students should make the writing as something fun where they can freely express their thoughts and imagination. Whereas learning writing at high school have many problems the present such as lack of experienced writing skill teacher and lack of time to study, the time for teaching writing, therefore mind mapping is considered

to give a positive effect on most students in the class and will continue to incorporate the learning tool in more of the writing lessons.

Steps of writing

The process of writing is virtually the same for all writers. Writers get their ideas from many different sources because they organize what they have to say (on paper, on a computer, on in their heads); for example, they write a draft; they ask what others think. They revise; make changes and additions to clarify their meaning. They edit for capitalization, punctuation, grammar, sentence sense, and spelling. Then they publish. It is the same for English Language Learners. They need to move through the writing process just like everyone else. The explanation of the processes will be given bellow:

- 1) The first step of writing is pre-writing. for English Language Learners, as well as other students, this involves providing experiences and comprehensible input that help students build background.
- 2) The second step of writing is drafting. This offers students the opportunity to get their ideas down. It may be in writer's notebooks, on separate sheets of paper, or on the computer. We offer writers a choice of ways to draft to motivate them to write and draw on their different strength as learners.
- 3) The third step of writing is revising. This poses a number of challenges for English Language Learners. We use small-group lessons as an opportunity to teach writers about revision and how to use the Revision Checklist we created.
- 4) The fourth step of writing is editing. Doing this gets the writing ready to go out into the world. We explain to writers that the purpose of editing is to make writing easy for readers to understand.
- 5) The last step of writing is publishing. Publishing offers writers opportunities to take their writing out into the world. There is a wide variety of ways to motivate writers to publish. Taking advantage of the class and school wide anthologies and literary magazines to collect student writing makes it available to readers in class and school libraries.

In addition to the steps of writing, Harmer (2004, p.4) suggests four elements processes of writing; they are planning, drafting, editing (reflecting) and final

version. The reason behind those four elements is that this process may be affected by the content of the writing, the type of writing and the medium it is written in (pen and paper, computer word files, live chat, etc). In writing, students write and revise again until they are satisfied that their writing expresses exactly what they want to say.

Dealing with statements above, the writer agrees that the steps of writing consists of the process of prewriting (planning), drafting, revising, editing and post-writing (publishing) in which connecting our thinking with current reasoning by using words to convey our through step by step.

Mind mapping

The use of mind mapping in higher education has increased significantly during the past decade. Mind Mapping is a popular technique, invented and copyrighted by Buzan (2006) in the UK. "Mind mapping is an organizer that a visual representation with a central theme surrounded by branches, themes, images, picture, and ideas taken from information given during a class" (Buzan, 2006). Mind maps have also been used as reflective tools that allow for broader associations to be made to the material (Budd, 2004). It means that mind mapping is one teaching and learning strategies that has recently emerged in higher education as a means to support student critical thinking. Using mind maps also helps teachers vary their teaching methods which may be more likely to reach diverse learners (Nesbit & Adesope, 2006). Mind maps area is a "useful tool for helping younger students with the process of building conceptual understanding of content and promoting achievement" (Buzan & Buzan, 2006).

As we know, the purposes of mind mapping is very interesting to learn. The purposes, according to Buzan (2006, p. 56), include: 1) to introduce a new concept in the development of thought-Radiant thinking, 2) to introduce the revolutionary new tool that allows us to use Radiant Thinking to best advantage in all aspects of your life-The Mind Map, and 3) to give a sense of excitement and discovery as we explore this universe.

Motivation

One of the more complicated problems of the second language learning and teaching has been to define and apply the construct of motivation in the classroom. According to Brown (2007, p. 88), motivation is divided into two types, i.e. intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation occurs when we are motivated to perform a behaviour or engage in an activity to learn a reward or avoid punishment. In the meantime, intrinsic motivation involves engaging in a behaviour because it is personally rewarding.

Meanwhile, Alderfer (2004) points out that motivation to learn is the tendency of students in learning activities that are driven by a desire for achievement or the best possible learning outcomes. It means that motivation is seen as a mental boost that drives and directs human behaviour, including learning behaviour. Syamsudin (2013, p. 203) identifies some indicators in certain stages. Indicators of motivation among other things: 1) The duration of activity, 2) Frequency of activities, 3) fortitude, tenacity and ability in the face of actions and difficulties to achieve the goals, 4) devotion and sacrifice to achieve goals, 5) Depth aspiration to be achieved by the activities carried out, 6) Level of qualification achievements, and 7) Directions attitude toward the target activity.

According to Alderfer (2004), Mind Mapping is a learning model that motivates students to learn on the subject matter of writing. Based on the explanation above, we conclude that to increase students' motivation in writing, mind mapping technique can be applied.

Research Methodology

This study employed a qualitative design, especially case study, by utilizing some techniques of data collection including classroom observation, questionnaire and interview. The participants of this study were chosen purposively, i.e. an English teacher and 36 students of class VII-D at a Junior high school in Salem, Brebes regency. A classroom observation and teacher interview were conducted to discover the procedures of mind mapping implemented by the teacher. Moreover, the close-ended questionnaire was administered to investigate the students' perspectives towards the use of mind mapping for teaching descriptive text.

The interview held after conducting observation with the purpose of finding the answers that could not be seen in observation. The writer used interview to one English teacher and 6 students in eight grades in junior high school that is categorized to be high, medium, and low students in learning English to gain the data about their perceptions about the use of mind mapping technique to increase their motivations in writing. The data analysis of this study was thematic analysis.

Findings and Discussion

This study has discovered the findings based on three data sources employed: observation, interview, and questionnaire. There are some questions discussed in this research. The first question is "How does the teacher implement mind mapping technique in increasing EFL students' motivation in writing?". The first question was answered by data from classroom observation, and also the data from interview to the teacher. The second question is "What are students' perspectives toward the use of mind mapping technique in increasing EFL students' motivation in writing?". The second question was answered by using the data from questionnaire and interview to the students.

Overall, questionnaire response data indicated that most of the students gave positive perceptions to the mind mapping technique for teaching descriptive text. Most of the students strongly agree with the statement that this strategy can make the learning process become imaginative. The data showed that around 90% of the students gave good responses to the questionnaire items. Furthermore, the data from interview to the English teacher and classroom observation showed that the teacher did three steps of implementing mind mapping: giving the students image of mind mapping, designing the writing task, and asking the students to finish writing task. The data from interview to the students indicated that most of them enjoyed learning descriptive text by using mind mapping technique.

In the present study, there are two research questions revealed by the writer. Those two research questions intended to investigate the use of mind mapping technique in teaching writing and the students' perspectives toward the use of mind mapping in increasing their motivation in writing. Furthermore, in this

section, the writer was trying to compare the implementation of mind mapping and students' perspectives toward the use of mind mapping in increasing their motivation in writing with some theories in the forthcoming paragraphs.

The first research question would figure out the use of mind mapping technique in teaching descriptive text. Based on the data from classroom observation, the writer conducted mind mapping according to proposed by Marlina (2016). It is similar with the previous study by Marlina (2016). Meanwhile, this research employed a qualitative approach with case study design. The data were collected through observation, documents analysis, interviews, and questionnaires. The result showed that in teaching writing especially procedure text it was possible to use mind mapping. Then, Beret D. Jones, and friends (2012) concludes that mind mapping is an effective way to motivate students in learning English. It is similar with the present study that by using mind mapping students can enjoy in learning descriptive text. As Naqib (2008) mentioned that the purpose of this activity is to increase students' motivation in writing.

Furthermore, the second research question is about students' perspectives toward the use of mind mapping in increasing their motivation in writing. Based on the data from the questionnaire, it showed that majority of the students were interested in mind mapping technique for teaching writing. Most of the students strongly agree with the statement that this strategy can make students' motivation increasing. The view is supported by Saloman and Perkins (1998, p.17) mind mapping activities require students to actively engage in their learning, often by connecting their prior knowledge to new information and to build motivation in learning.

Moreover, in the questionnaire results half of the students agree that by using mind mapping it can improve their writing and speaking ability. The findings correspond to the theory of Windura (2008, p.17) who said that mind mapping is an effective strategy of note taking and useful for solving the problem of students' in writing and the advantages is it makes students easier in memorizing a lot of information by using symbols, pictures, and colours. Moreover, the present study concludes that this activity can improve students' writing skill, it is similar with the previous study by Marlina (2016) according to the data results of the experiment, it is possible that mind mapping helps improve their writing ability.

Additionally, the present study has similar with the previous study which was conducted by Jones, and friends (2012). They concludes that mind mapping can helps students' more imaginative and also can increasing students' motivation in writing. Moreover, the present study conclude that this activity can improve students' writing skill, it is similar with the previous study by Naqib (2008) This research aimed to find out how mind mapping technique improve the students' writing ability. The conclusion drawn from the study is that mind mapping technique gives good contribution to improve the writing ability. It is similar with the present study that this strategy can improve students' writing ability.

Conclusion and Suggestion

In conclusion, the writers found that there were several procedures in implementing mind mapping. First, the teacher explained about descriptive text. Second, the teacher gave the students image of mind mapping. Finally, the teacher instructed the students to write a descriptive text clearly and correctly related to the image. Based on the data from observation, the authors found that mind mapping made the students enjoy while learning descriptive text. Besides, by using this activity, it can make the students more imaginative and easy to understand of what they will write.

Furthermore, majority of the students were interested in mind mapping technique for teaching descriptive text. Most of them strongly agree with the statement that this technique can increase their imagination. Moreover, we found the improvement on the students' motivation in writing descriptive text. It was shown by the data of questionnaire that half of the students agree that mind mapping could improve their motivation in writing. In responding to the research questions the writer found that there were several procedures in implementing mind mapping. The first step, the teacher explains about descriptive text. Second, the teacher gave the students image of mind mapping (figure 1, chapter two). And the last the teacher instructed the students should clearly and correctly to write descriptive text related to the image.

Based on the data from observation, the writer found that mind mapping make the students enjoy while learning descriptive text. Besides, by using this activity, it can make the students more imaginative and easy to understand of

what they will write. Furthermore, the second research question is about the students' perspectives toward the use of mind mapping in increasing their motivation in writing. Based on the data from the questionnaire, it showed that majority of the students were interested in mind mapping technique for teaching descriptive text. Most of the students strongly agree with the statement that this technique can make their imagination increasing. Moreover, the writer found the improvement of the students' motivation in writing descriptive text. It showed from the data of questionnaire that half of the students agree that by mind mapping it can improve their motivation of writing ability. However, this study has a limitation. The writer did not investigate the reason why the teacher chose mind mapping for teaching descriptive text. Whereas, the investigation would be helpful for the writer to know teacher's reason in implementing mind mapping.

Finally, based on the conclusion, the writer gives some suggestions to teacher, students and other researcher. For the teacher, they need various strategies in teaching and learning process, so that they can feel interest and motivated in learning the material. Choose the activity that can enliven the atmosphere in the class, thus, students do not feel boring in the learning process. One of technique that can be used is mind mapping.

By this study, the students allways feel bored in teaching and learning activites. In this case, the students are suggested that they have to improve their motivation with various strategies who make their imagination increase. This technique is expected to improve and encourage students' motivation and participation in the process of teaching and learning writing descriptive text.

The last, to the other researcher, based on the limitations of the present research that this study did not investigate the reason of choosing mind mapping, the writer recommends for other researchers to investigate the teacher's reason in implementing this technique. Besides, the study was only focused in writing, mind mapping is a type of mind mapp that can be used in various text. For further researcher they can use other text type, such procedure text to apply mind mapping.

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