The Use of Mind Mapping in Writing Skills

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Abstract

Writing is the most difficult skill to master and to learn because in writing activity the students must find ideas and develop the ideas. Mind mapping is one of an alternative strategy to improve the student's writing skill. The aims of this research are to know how the students make mind mapping in their writing skills and to find out the student's problems when they make mind mapping. The data were gained by interviewing four students' of English Language Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta. The result showed that there are six points related to how make mind mapping by the students including choosing and writing the title of mind mapping, putting main ideas on top of mind mapping chart, making arrows/lines in the vertical way, writing main points of mind mapping, giving a number/note/color on each point of mind mapping as label to guide in mind mapping, and developing results of mind mapping in the description format. Additionally, there are two points which discuss the student's problems in making mind mapping, including looking for appropriate main points and making connections between the main points.

Keywords: writing skills, mind mapping, descriptive qualitative.

Introduction

Students who major in English language are supposed to master the four skills, such as listening skill, speaking skill, writing skill and reading skill. Harmer (2007) explains that we use language in terms of four skills- speaking, reading, listening and writing. Among those four skills, writing is the most difficult of other skills to master and to learn, because in writing activity the students must find ideas and develop the ideas. This is supported by Naqbi (2011) who stated that on writing activities, students faced difficulties to develop their ideas, and the students only focus on their final writing.

From these problems, there are some alternative strategies to solve the problems, one of them is using mind mapping. According to Buzan (2010), mind mapping helps students to think creatively, associate ideas, and make different connections. Mind mapping can be used as a learning strategy especially in writing skill. There are some advantages of using mind mapping; one of them is mind mapping can facilitate the students to develop the ideas. According to Naqbi (2011), using mind mapping caused a noticeable transformation in the student's writing; they are more active in asking questions to understand the topic of writing and students are also more creative to develop their ideas. This strategy is easy for learners to encourage self-expression and apply it in writing. Davies (2008) and Noonan (2012) stated that for adult learner, mind mapping is regarded to be an effective strategy in writing (as cited in Davies, 2011).

Methodology

This research adopted a descriptive qualitative design. Descriptive qualitative was appropriate for this research because this research analysed student's opinions about using mind mapping to support their writing skills. In addition, the research was aimed to know students' problems in using mind mapping.

In line with the purposes, this research used a qualitative method. Cresswell (2012) asserted that qualitative is one of the types educational research methods that is best to develop a detailed, exploring, and specific understanding of the main problem.

There were four participants and all of them had used mind mapping and they were female, because from recommendations of participants, they recommended their friends who also use mind mapping and happen to be all female. The researcher wanted to know the participants' perceptions of using mind mapping in their writing. The researcher used the pseudonym to protect the identity of the participants in reporting the result.

TABLE

Profile of Participants

No.	Name	Class	Age	Gender
1.	Emma	F	20	Female
2.	Ammi	C	20	Female
3.	Arra	E	18	Female

4.	Rara	D	20	Female

This research used individual interviews for research instruments. The interview is a flexible way for data collection, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used; hear and speak, verbal and non-verbal (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011).

Furthermore, the research used a standardized open-ended interview as the type of interview. Patton mentioned the questions already created and the participants will answer the same questions given by the researcher. Then, the researcher used open-ended items as the construction of schedule in the research. Open-ended questions are flexible, it means the researcher can get more information to clear up any misunderstanding (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). Related to his argument; the researcher showed some interview guidelines to the participants. So, the participants can prepare well to answer the questions of the interview.

Moreover, the researcher used indirect questions for question formats. Tuckman described indirect questions is a way in asking of something when the answer is open answered such as the opinion of participants.

The researcher transcribed the recording after collecting data with interview. Then, the researcher conducted interpretation and marked the answers of the main questions and follow-up questions. The researcher also conducted

member checking to explain the accuracy of the interview result. Next, probing in which the researcher conducted the probing to complete the data.

The researcher chose and categorized the data by using coding. Coding is the ascription of a category label to a piece of data, that is either decided in advance or in response to the data that have been collected (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). Firstly, the researcher conducted verbatim in which the researcher changed the data from audio into the piece of words.

The next step is breaking down text which the researcher reconstructed the narrative data into the complex sentence. Next is categorization in which the researcher conducted the categorization step in this section. The final step is narration which the researcher explained the finding of the analysis data in a descriptive way. All of the data created on descriptive narration. Then, the researcher showed the result of the research questions.

While the quantitative research uses reliability and validity to ascertain whether the data is valid or not, the qualitative research has trustworthiness which has a function that research is true. According to Guba and Lincoln (1986), the purpose of trustworthiness to support the argument that finding inquiry is worth to paying attention (as cited in Elo, Kaariainen, Kanste, Polkki, Utirainen, & Kyngas, 2014). Guba and Lincoln (1986) also stated that there are five types to develop trustworthiness in qualitative data; credibility, confirmability, dependability, transferability, and authenticity.

For this research, the researcher used credibility because this type is suitable for the researcher's study. The researcher used credibility to maintain trustworthiness in this research. Based on Polit and Beck, credibility refers to the truth of the data or perspective of participants and their interpretation and representation by the researcher (Cope, 2014).

Findings and Discussion

This part discusses two main topics of this research. The first one is how the students make mind mapping and the second one is the student's problems in using mind mapping. Based on the findings, all participants, Emma, Ammi, Arra and Rara mentioned that there were six steps in making mind mapping, including choosing and writing the title of mind mapping, putting main ideas on top of mind mapping chart, making arrows/lines in the vertical way, writing main points of mind mapping, giving a number/note/color on each point of mind mapping as label to guide in mind mapping, and developing results of mind mapping in the description format.

How the Students Made Mind Mapping in Their Writing Skills

Choosing and Writing the Title of Mind Mapping. There are three participants mentioning about these step. Ammi, Arra, and Rara said that choosing and writing the title of mind mapping became the first step in making mind mapping. The step in which the participants chose and wrote the title of the mind mapping is actually in line with Mento, Martinelii, and Jones (1999) who said that students normally chose words to focus on a particular aspect of writing.

Putting main ideas on top of mind mapping chart. This is the second step conducted by the participants. Mind mapping has some models such as having titles in the center, below, or above of the mind mapping chart. One of the participants, Emma, mentioned that she usually wrote the title of mind mapping on the top chart. This model of writing mind mapping was stated by Buzan (as cited in Kurniawati, 2010) who mentioned that the main idea or topic can be started from the top of the mind mapping chart. The following figure illustrates the sample of mind mapping topic/main idea.

Making an Arrow/Lines in the Vertical Ways. Mind mapping has various interconnected lines. Three of four participants named Emma, Ammi, and Arra mentioned that they made mind mapping's branches like arrows or lines that curve vertically. The participants' statements were similar to Buzan (2009) who explained that people can make curved lines as the connection, and then connect the main branches to the center image of mind mapping. Below is one of the examples of participants' illustration about making an arrow/lines in the vertical ways.

Making Main Points of Mind Mapping. Two of four participants, Arra and Rara, claimed that they wrote main points in their mind mapping. These participants explained that each points will explain some information or explain about the ideas. This step is in accordance with Anton (2008) as cited in Azizah (2013) who stated that when making mind mapping, it can be from the main idea to develop the related ideas. This is the figure that explains the participants' mind mapping when they made main mapping points.

Giving Number/Note/Colors on Each point of Mind Mapping as Label to Guide in Mapping. The step in which the participants' giving number/note/colors on each point of mind mapping as a label to guide in mapping was usually conducted by the participants. Three participants, Ammi, Arra, and Rara, claimed that they gave a label to guide in mapping as a way to make them easier to learn mind mapping and to remember the mind mapping plots which they made previously. Such way of making mind mapping was in line with Kurniawati (2010) who explained that a variation with capitalization, colors, underline, or symbol which describes the main points or ideas are commonly used in mind mapping. This is the one illustrated by participants when they giving numbers/note/colors on each point of mind mapping as a label to guide in mapping.

Making the Results of Mind Mapping in the Description Format. The data revealed that this was the last step in making mind mapping by participants. Four participants said that they described the mind mapping points in the last step. The way the participants described mind mapping points after they finished making mind mapping is in line with Mento, Martinelii, and Jones (1999) who mentioned that the students usually presented the mind mapping they have made in the essay form.

The Students' Problems in Using Mind Mapping

There were three problems in using mind mapping experienced by all participants. Three participants had similar experience in making mind mapping in which they mentioned that when they made mind mapping they had difficulty in

looking for appropriate main points and they had difficulty in making connections between main points. The detailed information from the problems in using mind mapping to support student's writing skill is explained in the following paragraphs.

Looking for appropriate main points. The first problem in using mind mapping to support student's writing skill was mentioned by two participants, Emma and Rara. The participants' experience is in line with Dewi (2010) who said that most of the students were not able yet in choosing a word, using spelling, and punctuation appropriately. These empirical facts can be seen from the result of students' work in which most of the students do not use variation words yet.

Difficulty in Making Connections between Main Points. Two participants mentioned that they found it difficult in making connections between main points. Emma had experience when she made mind mapping. She said that she felt confused to make connections in mind mapping. Likewise, Arra mentioned that she had the problem when she made a connection in mind mapping. In this case, the main points that the participants made were mostly in the form of abstract words or words with abstract ideas. This situation led these participants to think abstractly. The statement mentioning that they had difficulty in making connections between main points was in line with Adodo (2013), each points has a connector line that connects with the other points.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Students who are major in English language are required to master the four skills, such as listening skill, speaking skill, writing skill and reading skill. Among

those four skills, writing is the most difficult of other skills to master and to learn, because in writing activity the students must find ideas and develop the ideas. From these problems, there are some alternative strategy to solve the problems that are using mind mapping. Furthermore, the reason why this research was conducted because many students still do not know or do not use mind mapping as writing strategy even though mind mapping is one of the easy strategies to use and apply in writing.

Therefore, this research aims to investigate how the student's make mind mapping in their writing skills and the student's problems when they make mind mapping. Also, the research question of this research how do students make mind mapping in their writing skills and what are the student's problems in making mind mapping.

This research used a qualitative research design. Then, to collect the data, the interview was used in this research. The participants have experienced in using mind mapping in their writing skills. The first findings represented there were how the students make mind mapping. First, choosing and write the title of mind mapping. Second, putting mind ideas on top of mind mapping. Third, making an arrow/lines in a vertical way. Four, making the main points of mind mapping. Next, giving numbers/notes/colors on each point of mind mapping as a label to guide in mapping. The last is to make the results of mind mapping in the description format. The second findings represented there were the student's problems in using mind mapping such as looking for appropriate main points and difficulties in making connections between main points.

Based on the findings of this research, the researcher proposes some recommendations related to this research. The recommendations are intended for students and other researchers.

For the students. Based on the result of this research, the students can know the problems and how to make mind mapping in their writing skills. By knowing the problems and the ways to make mind mapping, the researcher recommends the students to use mind mapping as writing strategy, because mind mapping is an easy strategy to apply in writing skill and after the students knowing the problems they can prepare well to solve the problems when they make mind mapping.

For other researchers. Regarding the research findings, other researchers finally know the students that use mind mapping in their writing skills. Also, other researchers can know the student's problems and how they use mind mapping in writing. In addition, the researcher recommends other researchers to develop this research by adding some other students in order to gain deeper and better-off data results. Likewise, other researchers may use this research as the main topic or lead to other investigations related to using mind mapping. Therefore, the researcher also recommends for other researchers to start working on other topics dealing with the factors of using mind mapping in student's writing skills in order to know how the various factors in the use of mind mapping as the writing strategy.

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