**Students’ Engagement and Interest in Learning Writing through Mind Mapping Technique**

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**ABSTRACT**

The objective of this research was to find out whether the use of mind mapping technique is effective or ineffective in improving students’ engagement and interest in learning writing. The researcher employed quantitative method with the quasi-experimental design. The research was conducted to the fourth-semester students of English Study Program of STAIN Watampone. The data were collected by using observation checklist, writing test, and questionnaire. The data from observation checklist were used to find out students’ behavioral engagement, in this case, students’ participation in experimental group which was taught writing subject through mind mapping technique. The writing test was given twice for both experimental and control group to investigate the students’ writing ability which shows students’ cognitive engagement before and after the treatment was conducted. It can be concluded that the use of mind mapping technique in learning writing is effective to increase students’ engagement and interest. Moreover, further analysis shows that students’ behavioral engagement is higher than students’ cognitive engagement and students’ expressed interest increases higher than other types of interest due to the technique used which was mind mapping technique.

Keywords: Mind mapping technique, Engagement, and Interest

**INTRODUCTION**

Writing is one of the language skills and it is aimed to help the writer to give information to the reader. [Klein (1985](#_ENREF_4)) argues that writing is the skill to use symbols to present ideas or concepts. The symbols then represent the meaning to be communicated to the other people. In writing process, there are many things need to pay consideration to and it needs a knowledge of language structure, diction, vocabulary, writing techniques, kinds of writing, and general knowledge. These will put someone in difficulties in writing if he or she does not know to deal with them.

STAIN Watampone is one of the colleges in Bone regency, South Sulawesi province. In STAIN Watampone, particularly at the English Study Program, Writing is one of the compulsory subjects, thus in order to finish their study, the students have to pass this course. Currently, the lecturers teach Writing subject by using brainstorming technique which is expected to be an effective technique to make the students engaged and interested.

Though, some difficulties are faced by the students especially in Writing subject. The students are still a lack of vocabulary, therefore they always find difficulties in choosing correct words in writing. They are also a lack of idea to write or unable to express their thought in writing. Moreover, they cannot organize the paragraph well. Overall, the students score in writing subject are still below 70 which is the standard score to pass the subject. The students also think that the technique used by the lecturer needs to be changed or improved.

It is the lecturers’ and researchers’ responsibility to find out the solution to overcome the problems encountered by the students in learning writing. English teacher should know what techniques which can help students to overcome their difficulties. By using a suitable and an attractive technique in teaching and learning Writing in the classroom, it is expected that the learners will find it easier to learn. The technique used in teaching and learning process is very important in increasing students’ ability, especially writing skill. Therefore, the students will be engaged in learning and interested to learn writing. Moreover, those problems mentioned before can be solved. A lecturer has a responsibility to help the students to explore their ideas. One of the techniques can be implemented in teaching and learning process to help the students to explore their ideas and transform those ideas into writing is mind mapping technique. In this case, the researcher tried to help the student to explore their ideas by using mind mapping technique.

Mind mapping is a technique of making hand-drawn map to express and describe thoughts, ideas, and concepts connected to the central topic in the form of keywords, images, and colors. [Buzan (2002](#_ENREF_2)) explains that mind map works naturally like how the human brain works in sequencing facts and thoughts. When students implement mind mapping in daily basic learning, they will discover that their lives turn out to be more productive, pleased, and effective in every subject. There are no boundaries to the different ways for us to use mind mapping as there is no restriction to the number of thoughts, concepts and networks can be formed by the brain.

[Michalko (2011](#_ENREF_5)) proposed some advantages of using mind mapping technique which will help us in some situations, such as: (1) triggering the entire brain, (2) permitting attention on the subject, (3) providing a distinct image of the details and the big picture and (4) making concentration on the subject which helps to get the information about it. Meanwhile, according to [Buzan (2012](#_ENREF_3)), some benefits of using Mind Map are: (1) ideas, (2) interconnections, (3) imaginations, (4) efficiency, (5) concentration, (6) remembering improvement, (7) learning faster and more effective and (7) Perceiving the complete image.

Those positive effects of implementing mind mapping technique correspond with the difficulties faced by the students in learning writing. By using mind mapping technique, it can dig out students’ creativity which will result them easier to explore ideas to be expressed in writing. It also gives the students a complete portrait of what they are going to write which results in a better writing organization. Vocabulary will not be a problem anymore because mind mapping technique can make the students recall more effective and efficient. Therefore, using mind mapping technique will be an effective and efficient way to overcome the difficulties encountered by the students in learning writing.

Based on the illustration above, the purpose of this investigation was to find out:

1. To discover whether or not the use of mind mapping technique in teaching Writing is effective in improving students’ engagement in learning writing on the fourth semester of English Study Program of STAIN Watampone.
2. To discover whether or not the use of mind mapping technique in teaching Writing is effective to raise the students’ interest in learning Writing at the fourth semester of English Study Program of STAIN Watampone.

**METHOD**

In this research, the researcher used the quantitative method with quasi-experimental design, where it consisted of two groups of students. The research was held in STAIN Watampone, Population is all of the subjects who are connected to the research. The population of this research was all of the fourth-semester students of English Study Program in STAIN Watampone academic year 2016/2017. The sum of the populations was 73 students.

In collecting the required data to answer the research questions, the researcher used three kinds of instruments; they were writing test, observation, and questionnaire. Writing test and observation were used to answer the first research question, which was to find out students’ engagement in learning writing through mind mapping technique showed by students writing achievement and participation. The questionnaire was given in order to answer the second research question, that was to find out students’ interest in learning writing with mind mapping technique.

Both groups were given two kinds of test which were pretest and posttest. The pretest was aimed to find out the prior writing ability of the students, while posttest was given to find out the students’ ability in writing after conducting the treatment. One group received treatment by using Mind Mapping Technique and the other group received treatment by using Brainstorming Technique.

Meanwhile, in order to find out students’ participation in learning writing through mind mapping technique, the observation was done with observation checklist in every meeting. The data obtained was analyzed quantitatively and the result were compared. At the end of the research, the questionnaire was distributed to all students in the experimental group to measure their interest in studying writing through mind mapping technique.

**RESULTS**

1. **Students’ Engagement**

There are two dimensions of engagement investigated in this research, namely students’ achievement and participation. Regarding the writing achievement of the students, the score of the students’ pretest and posttest of both experimental and control group can be as the reference. The pretest result of the experimental group was similar with the result of the pretest in control group. Based on statistics calculation, the mean score of both groups were 58.33 for the experimental group and 60.47 for the control group. It means that control group had a quite higher score than the experimental group. However, the difference was not considerable. Moreover, based on SPSS 23 calculation, in this case, independent sample t-test of pretest result of both experimental and control group, the value was 0.534 which is bigger than alpha 0.05. It means that there was no significant difference between the pretest result of experimental and control group. Therefore, the research proceeded on both groups.

After conducting five meetings of the treatment, the posttest was given to both experimental and control group in order to know the students’ writing ability after the treatment. The mean scores were 86.87 in experimental group while the control group got 78.73 average scores. A considerable difference can be seen in both mean scores. This time, the students in experimental group which were taught through mind mapping technique got a higher score than the students who were taught through brainstorming technique in control group. In order to know whether the difference was significant or not, the researcher calculated the score statistically by using SPSS 23. The result of independent sample t-test by using SPSS 23 showed that the value was 0.039 < 0.05 (alpha). The result means that there is a significant difference of the posttest result of both groups. There was a significant improvement of students’ score in experimental group which was taught writing through mind mapping technique compared with the students in control group which were not taught through mind mapping technique. Thus, mind mapping technique is effective in improving student’ writing achievement. This finding is in line with the research finding by [Syamsuddin (2014](#_ENREF_7)) who found that mind mapping strategy improved students’ writing achievement as well as the research by [Riswanto and Putra (2012](#_ENREF_6)) in their study which found that Mind Mapping Strategy improved students’ writing achievement.

Regarding the students’ participation in the class during the treatment session in experimental group which was taught through mind mapping technique. The result can be seen in the following table.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Meeting | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Percentage of Students’ Participation | **28.9** | **48.9** | **71.1** | **91.1** | **93.3** |

Based on the result of the observation sheet, it was found that the students’ participation increased in every meeting. In the first and the second meeting, the percentage of students’ participation were 28.9 and 48.9 respectively which were very low. It was then increased significantly on the third meeting with 71.1. However, it was still below the standard which was 75. Later, on the fourth and fifth meetings, the percentage of students’ participation increased to 91.1 and 93.3 which both were categorized as high. Therefore, it can be concluded that treatment with mind mapping technique increased students’ participation in learning writing.

From the explanation above, mind mapping technique is effective to be applied to increase both elements of engagement namely achievement and participation. Mind mapping technique is proven to be effective to improve students’ engagement in learning writing. Therefore, H1 of the hypothesis was accepted and H0 was rejected.

Afterward, based on the results both dimensions of engagement namely cognitive engagement showed by students’ achievement in learning writing through mind mapping technique and behavioral engagement presented by students’ participation in learning writing through mind mapping technique, it can be seen that there is a difference between both results. The students’ achievement which was showed by the experimental group average posttest score was 86.87. Meanwhile, students’ participation during the last observation on the last treatment in the experimental group reached 93.3. It can be clearly seen that students’ interest in learning writing through mind mapping technique was higher than students’ achievement in learning writing through mind mapping technique. In the other words, students’ behavioral engagement increased more than students’ cognitive engagement in learning writing due to the technique used.

Therefore, it can be concluded that mind mapping technique increased more highly students’ behavioral engagement than students’ cognitive engagement in learning writing. It means that mind mapping technique is more effective on students’ behavioral engagement than on students’ cognitive engagement.

1. **Students’ Interest**

Based on the result of the questionnaires employed to the experimental group, the interest of the fourth semester students of STAIN Watampone was categorized as very high and high. There were 13 of 15 students (87%) were categorized as very high and the rest 2 students (13%) were categorized as high. Therefore, it can be said that all of the students in the experimental group which was taught through mind mapping technique were very highly or highly interested in learning writing through mind mapping technique. It can be seen in the table below.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Interval Score | Category | Result | |
| F | % |
| 84-100 | Very high | 13 | 87 |
| 68-83 | High | 2 | 13 |
| 52-67 | Moderate | 0 | 0 |
| 36-51 | Low | 0 | 0 |
| 20-35 | Very low | 0 | 0 |
| Total | | 15 | 100 |

The analysis of all items of the questionnaire shows that mind mapping technique successfully solved the problems in learning writing. Based on students’ response, mind mapping technique helped them to find ideas to write and made them easy to transfer the ideas into a well-organized writing. It is also proven according to students’ response to be able to help them to be more active in learning writing. Eventually, the students’ interest in learning writing increased because of mind mapping technique. Therefore, mind mapping technique is an effective and efficient way in learning writing and should be applied by the lecturer. From this fact, it can be pointed out that the use of mind mapping technique in teaching writing is proven to be effective to increase the students interest in learning writing subject.

[Atkinson (1964](#_ENREF_1)) stated that there are four types of interest namely expressed interest, manifest interest, tested interest and inventoried interest. The analysis of each type of interest based on the questionnaire result shows that all types were classified as very high. However, the expressed interest shows the highest score which was 71.4 (95%). It means that the students had a very high expressed interest in learning writing through mind mapping technique. Meanwhile, the manifest interest got the lowest with 66.2 (88%) but it was still categorized as very high. It can be concluded that among the four types of interest, the expressed interest got the highest score. Therefore, the students had highest in expressed interest in learning writing through mind mapping technique. The comparison can be seen in the following figure.

**CONCLUSION**

Mind mapping technique use is effective in improving students’ achievement as well as students’ interest in learning writing. Therefore, the use of mind mapping technique is effective in improving students’ engagement in learning writing. Between the two dimensions of engagement, mind mapping technique gave a more effect on the students’ behavioral engagement than it did on the students’ cognitive engagement.

The use of mind mapping technique is effective to raise students’ interest in learning writing. Among the four types of interest, mind mapping technique increased the students’ expressed interest higher than it did on the manifest interest, tested interest and inventoried interest.

**SUGGESTIONS**

The result of this research regarding with the students’ engagement and interest in learning writing becomes a good reference to apply mind mapping technique as a suitable technique in teaching and learning writing, especially to the English Study Program in a college or university in order to improve students’ engagement and interest in learning writing.

This research was limited to the two groups at English Study Program STAIN Watampone and the result cannot be seen as universal but rather as an image of what the situation is at the represented a college or university. For further research, it is suggested that more researches should be conducted regarding with using mind mapping technique to improve students’ engagement and interest in learning writing, or possibly subjects. Furthermore, more researches should be conducted with more specific analysis, how and what aspects of it can improve students’ engagement and interest in learning, and investigate a larger number of the students for a longer period of time.

There are some findings in this research which need to be investigated and proven quantitatively such as the increasing of students’ vocabulary mastery as well as students’ well-organized writing. Therefore, it is suggested that further studies regarding mind mapping should be conducted by looking at these hypotheses.

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