

MODIFYING TEACHING MATERIAL OF WORD MAP TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' WRITING ACHIEVEMENT OF DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPH

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Abstract: The aims of this research were to 1) find out the problems the students face in the implementation of modified word map in teaching writing, 2) find out whether there are the significant differences on students' writing skill before and after the implementation of modified word map, 3) find out how the implementation of modified word map can affect students' writing skill. This is a quasi-experimental research with one group pre-test post-test design. The instruments used in this study were writing test and interview. The validity of the two instruments were based on content and construct validity. The results showed that there was difference on students' writing skill. Thus, the process of word map modification in teaching writing is effective in teaching writing especially in promoting the aspect of vocabulary. The implementation of modified word map affects students' writing skill.

Keywords : *Descriptive paragraph , word map, writing achievement.*

Abstrak: Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk 1) mencari masalah- masalah yang dihadapi siswa dalam penerapan modifikasi word map, 2) mencari apakah ada perbedaan yang signifikan pada kemampuan menulis siswa sebelum dan sesudah penerapan modifikasi word map, 3) mencari bagaimanakah penerapan modifikasi word map mempengaruhi kemampuan menulis siswa. Ini adalah penelitian Quasi Ekperimental dengan desain one group pretest- posttest. Alat yang digunakan pada penelitian ini adalah tes menulis dan wawancara. Validiti kedua alat ini berdasarkan konten dan konstruk validiti. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa ada perbedaan pada kemampuan menulis siswa. Sehingga, proses modifikasi word map dalam pengajaran efektif dalam pengajaran menulis terutama untuk meningkatkan aspek vocabulary. Penerapan modifikasi dari word map mempengaruhi kemampuan menulis siswa.

Kata kunci : *Paragraf deskriptif, peningkatan menulis, word map.*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the most complex processes to acquire English language because the activity stimulates thinking and facilitates them to develop some language skills simultaneously. Nunan (in Nacira 2010) agreed that “it is easier to learn to speak than to write no matter if it is a first or second language”. It means that to achieve writing skills is difficult task to do.

On the other hand Richard (2002) states that writing requires L2 to not only focus on planning and organizing skills in a higher level but also on spelling, punctuation, word choice skills in a level. Based on previous research conducted by Huy (2015), lack of vocabulary knowledge plays a crucial role in the quality of writing because the students do not know how to study vocabulary effectively. In line with this problem, Richard (2002) states that vocabulary is core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. It means that writing cannot be taught alone, but usually with the integration of the other skill and components. Vocabulary puts a vital importance in the quality of writing. Thus, the researcher considers finding out a writing teaching technique which is promote the vocabulary knowledge.

One of the strategies which is suitable for students in teaching writing is word maps. According to Harmer (2007) word map is an extremely engaging way of building up vocabulary knowledge as well as provoking students into retrieving

and using what they know. Most word maps organizers engage students in developing a definition, synonyms, antonyms, and a picture for a given vocabulary word or concept. Vocabulary is represented in hierarchical fashion with the most comprehensive concepts at the top of the map and more detailed specific concepts at the deeper of the map. Using a graphic organizer, students think about terms or concepts in several ways. Word maps can help the students to predict the meaning of word by using students’ whole brain so it will generate more ideas. Thus, by using word map, the students will generate more ideas and develop their vocabulary in order to improve their writing quality.

There have been several studies about word map, writing and innovative conducted by some researchers, those are Ronaghi, Bayat, & Mahmoodi (2015); Shakoori, Kadivar, and Sarami (2017); Al-Shaer (2014); Nobahar, Tabrizi, & Shaghghi (2013); Pishghadam & Ghanizadeh (2006). Those studies were focus on improving students’ achievement by using several traditional techniques and methods. The results of the research, asked the next researcher to take a greater interaction between the researcher and learner and do not only focus on the ultimate goal of finishing the content and syllabus, but should more creative and adapt their own innovative teaching technique and strategy.

Therefore, the researcher wanted make a modification of the implementation that can be

integrated with the writing skill, because the origins of word map only focus on vocabulary teaching. Thus, it hopes that word map will be more effective in order to make the quality of writing will be increased.

In line with the explanation above, the researcher entitled this research with the modifying teaching material of word map to enhance students' writing achievement of descriptive paragraph.

Thus, this study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What problems do students face in the implementation of modified word map in teaching writing?
2. Is there any difference on students' writing skill before and after the implementation of modified word map?
3. How can the implementation of modified word map affect students' writing skill?

METHODS

The researcher used quasy experimental research with one group pretest- posttest. It means that the researcher attempts to find out the significant difference of modified word map on students' writing achievement before and after the treatment. The research design of the research is illustration as follows:

T1 X T2

Notes:

T1 = pre- test

X = Treatment

T2 = Post-test

(Setiyadi, 2006)

From nine classes of seventh grader, one class was taken as the subject of the research, that was VII.7. It was the experimental class. The experimental class was be taught by modified word map. Firstly, the researcher conducted interview to know what are the problem that students face in learning writing. Then the researcher conducted pretest. The pretest used to know the students mastery before treatment. After knowing students' writing skill. The researcher did the treatment to the students by teaching using modified word map. The treatments were conducted three times. The researcher took the test for writing or doing the posttest to the students (the test of post-test and pre-test items were the same items). The validity of the writing test focused more on the construct validity in which the researcher developed and based the writing test on the Heaton's construction in writing test from Heaton, besides the researcher also concerned on content validity. For the reliability, the researcher used interrater reliability which was calculated using SPSS by seeing the coefficient of Kappa value which determined the reliability of pretest and posttest.

Semi structure interview was conducted to the students in order to know the students' respond after being taught by using modified word map.

After data were complete, the data analyzed both of quantitatively and qualitatively. To analyze the quantitative data, the researcher will use Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) program. The data

obtained from modified word map in writing achievement and writing test will be calculated before and after treatment. Repeated Measures T-test is used to compare means score from the result of pretest and posttest. The researcher will use significant level of 0.05 in which the probability of error in the hypothesis is only about 5

After analyzing the result of the students' writing test, the researcher also describes how the modified word map affect the students writing achievement by analyzing the students' writing test result and their pretest and posttest.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Regarding to the first research question, that is "what problems do students face in the implementation of modified word map in teaching writing?" In order to answer the research question number one, the researcher conducted an interview before the treatment to know the teaching learning process before conducting the treatment and what are the students' problems in learning English.

Based on the interview that researcher did to the seventh grader, the researcher got some valuable data relating to the implementation of modifying word map in teaching writing. The data are as follow:

Table 1. Result of semi-structured interview

No	Tendencies	Percentage
1.	Problem/Interest	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content 	50 %

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization • Vocabulary • Language Use • Mechanic 	45%
		85 %
		50 %
		26%
2.	Response of the implementation	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interesting, enjoyable and useful • Boring, monotonous, and disadvantageous. 	82 %
		18%

The researcher found that some of the students find it hard to understand about the aspect of writing skill such as vocabulary. According to Student 18 (one of students from grade VII) "writing aspect such vocabulary makes me a bit confuse to write a descriptive paragraph". This condition is strengthened by Student 24 (one of students from grade VII) who said that "I do not brush up my English vocabulary, so it makes me difficult to master English, beside that I feel difficult in exploring my ideas because of that. Thus, I do not understand grammar, because it is so difficult to be understood and sometime I feel embarrassed if I speak English or write a sentence using English".

Therefore, the limitation of students' vocabulary mastery can be classified to be one of the biggest problems faced by the students in writing descriptive paragraph. If the student does not master the aspects which must be scored in writing, it will be error.

The next research question was “Is there any difference of students’ writing achievement after being taught by using modified word map?”

The research was conducted in the seventh grade of SMP Negeri 2 Bandar Lampung, from 02nd August to 24th August 2017. This study was conducted every Wednesday and Thursday in a week. The class consisted of thirty students with sixteen girls and fourteen boys. The researcher conducting the treatment to the students then giving them writing test (posttest) in the end of the teaching learning process in order to answer the research question number 2. After getting the results of pretest and posttest score, the researcher answered the research questions number 1 by using t-test. The result is: there is difference of students’ writing achievement after being taught by using modified word map. The result can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. Results of Pretest and Posttest Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Paired Samples 1	PRETEST	66.9000	30	6.84483	1.24969
	POSTTEST	73.9000	30	6.91500	1.26250

Table 2. Results of Paired Samples T-Test Paired Samples Test

Paired Differences	t	df	Significance
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	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		Lower	Upper	Sig. (2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper			
Paired Samples 1	7.0000	9.28477	1.69516	10.46699	3.53301	4.1299	.000	

Based on the table 4.4 above, the pretest that consists of 30 students, has mean score 66.90 for the pretest and the posttest has mean score 73.90. Table 4.5 shows that sig (2 tailed) is 0.000. It means that $\text{sig} < \alpha (p < 0.05; p = 0.000)$. It can be concluded that H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted that there is difference of students’ writing achievement after being taught by using modified word map and there is significant improvement between pretest and posttest. Table 4.5 indicates that students’ mean score of posttest is higher than pretest.

The last research question was “how can modified word map affect students writing achievement?” In order to answer this research question the researcher conducted interview to the students. Based on the pretest, can be concluded that the ability of students’ writing before using modified word mapping is very low, and even tends to be difficult to make a paragraph in writing. This is particularly happen to Student 13 as

one of students from grade VII “Do you like writing in English?” Student 13 said that “I feel difficult to study English. Especially writing and speaking in English”. Same with Student 13, other students also said the same thing, they were also having difficulty in making a writing in English. Student 5 of grade VII, Student 5 said that “I cannot write using English, because I do not understand grammar, or tenses and I also do not master English vocabulary”.

Most difficulty in students’ English writing comes from aspect of grammar or tenses (language use) used in designing a sentence. In addition, the word mastery is also still very limited to make a paragraph. It is like described by Student 25 of grade VII. Student 25 said that “I feel difficult in writing a descriptive paragraph, because I do not understand the formula and also less of English vocabulary. I feel like confused in writing and I cannot master vocabulary. So, I also confused about the grammar. I feel so slow in writing and confuses in exploring my writing”.

Besides having trouble in writing, students also experienced difficulty in following teaching and learning process. In addition, the students do not have good grammar skill and students are also difficult to understand the matter at learning English.

Based on what have been stated above, the researcher used modified word map as solution to overcome difficulties to their students in following teaching learning process.. It is used by teachers to show

students how words group together. Getting students to build up their own maps by working in groups (as we have suggested) has the added advantage of making them try to remember some of the many words they know, while at the same time learning new words from their peers. Furthermore, in word map, the students are going to work on aspects of the thing for example “House” and the rooms or things in it. Thus, we start by putting the beginnings of a map on the board. Students then come to the board and add some things that related with it. However, the origin versions of word map are in a random and not in simple one. Sometime the students will get frustration and lost their ideas to write because they are confused with the branches. In the other hand, in the new version of word map, it is more hierarchical and well organizes. It also present in a simple way. The students will easier in framing before they write a sentence. The writing process will make the students feel interesting.

By implementing modified word map, students can relate vocabulary words to their own background or experience. Thus, it involves students in thinking, reading and writing. At last, it engages the students as active learner.

DISCUSSION

Modified word map is one of strategies in teaching writing. It is a good for learning process in writing because modified word map enables the students to relate the vocabulary words to their own background or experience. Oshima and Houge (1999) states that there are some

elements of writing in order to establish a good text, those are:

1. Coherence

Every good paragraph has unity that mean only one idea is discussed. Coherent means that every paragraph has to hold each other. The movement from one sentence to the following must be logical and smooth.

2. Grammar and vocabulary

Grammar is the study of the rules about how words change their form and combine with other words to make sentences. It also has influence to decide the meaning of the sentence. In addition, while focusing on grammar, the writer should choose and use appropriate vocabularies to make or develop a text in order not to get ambiguity.

3. Sentence Structure

There are four kinds of sentence. They are:

a. Simple Sentences

Simple sentence is consist of at least subject and predicate or noun and verb.

b. Complex Sentence

Complex sentence has one dependent clause (headed by a subordinating conjunction or a relative pronoun) joined to an independent clause.

c. Compound Sentence

It has two independent clauses joined by:

- 1) A coordinating conjunction (for, and, nor, but, yet, so)
- 2) A conjunctive adverb (e.g. however, therefore)
- 3) A semicolon alone

In relation to teaching writing, Harmer (2004) state that there is a certain particular consideration that needs to be taken account such as sentence organization, paragraph arrangement, and coherence. Moreover, teaching writing also requires the elements of writing including grammar, sentence organization, vocabulary, and mechanics. Therefore, in other words it can be said that guiding the students in writing is not only how to make a good a groups of words become a sentence, a group of sentences become a good paragraph how to organize their ideas into written form. The teacher should give some information about the rules how to use a good grammar, content, vocabulary and mechanics. Then, the teacher must give the appropriate guidance in which the students are able to express their ideas in written form properly.

Based on the result of interview, the researcher found that some of the students find it hard to understand about the aspect of writing skill such as vocabulary. It is in line with student 18's statement who said that "writing aspect such vocabulary makes me a bit confuse to write a descriptive paragraph". This condition is supported by Student 24 who said that "I do not brush up my English vocabulary, so it makes me difficult to master English, beside that I feel difficult in exploring my ideas because of that."

Therefore, the limitation of students' vocabulary mastery can be classified to be one of the biggest problems faced by the students in writing descriptive paragraph. In line with this problem, Huy (2015) states that

lack of vocabulary knowledge plays a crucial role in the quality of writing because the students do not know how to study vocabulary effectively. If the student does not master the aspects which must be scored in writing, they will make some mistake. It was due to the fact that vocabulary as one of the writing tools has significant role in writing.

Richard (2002) states that vocabulary is core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. It means that writing cannot be taught alone, but usually with the integration of the other skill and components. Vocabulary puts a vital importance in the quality of writing, because the number of words we use is a reasonable measure of our intelligence and our writing quality. According to Baker (1971) “the number of words you use is reasonable measure of your intelligence. Writing is a productive skill. It is very useful for students because it can convey their message through their minds in the written form. From the explanation above, there are so many useful function of vocabulary in improving the language skill, such as developing writing skill.

As a matter of facts, the results confirm the theory of Rivers (in Subroto 2013) claimed that writing in the language becomes a complicated activity because writing involves meaningful segments of language: words, sentence, grammar, and how to transfer those segments into written forms. Objectives of the teaching of writing skill can be achieved through some approaches.

Harmer (2004) says that there are two approaches in teaching writing. They are focusing on the product of writing process and focusing on the writing process itself. However, teachers have to pay attention to the various stages of any piece of writing process and the students should know the criteria of writing in order to make good quality of writing. Student's writing skill before using modified word map is low. Some students face some difficulties in writing English paragraphs. The use of the modified word map in the process of improving the students' writing skill brings positive response for the students. Based on the calculation between pretest and posttest, it is known that the mean score for the pretest is 66.90 and the mean score for posttest is 73.90. Table 4.5 shows that sig (2 tailed) is 0.000. It means that $\text{sig} < \alpha (p < 0.05; p = 0.000)$. It can be concluded that there is difference of students' writing skill after being taught by using modified word map and there is significant improvement between pretest and posttest. Table 4.5 indicates that students' mean score of posttest is higher than pretest.

Furthermore, the word mapping strategy is one of the most powerful strategies to teach vocabulary because it engages students in thinking about word relationships (Graves, 2006). Word mapping strategy is referred to by different names, such as semantic mapping, concept mapping, and word clusters. The strategy may be adapted to the nature of vocabulary instruction, the learning outcomes, and students' grade levels. For example, for learning some words, it may be more

appropriate to have students explore the synonyms, antonyms, and origin of the words, whereas for other words it may be more helpful to find examples and non-examples of the words. According to Graves (2006) the use of word map can give away to students in representing knowledge, especially in language. Not only students can get an ease in the study but also the teacher will be easy to explain the subject or material.

Based on the result of research, the teacher assumed that the implementation of word map is not in line with the teacher's hope. It causes an unclear instruction that makes the students feel difficult to understand the variation and teacher's creativity. The complex structure of writing makes the original word map a less useful learning strategy. Based on what have been stated before, the researcher used modified word map as solution to overcome difficulties to their students in following teaching learning process. Word map is one of strategies in teaching writing. Word map is an extremely engaging way of building up vocabulary knowledge as well as provoking students into retrieving and using what they know (Harmer, 2007). It is used by teachers to show students how words group together. Getting students to build up their own maps by working in groups (as we have suggested) has the added advantage of making them try to remember some of the many words they know, while at the same time learning new words from their peers.

Furthermore, in word map, the students are going to work on aspects

of the thing for example "House" and the rooms or things in it. Thus, we start by putting the beginnings of a map on the board. Students then come to the board and add some things that related with it (Harmer, 2000). However, the origin versions of word map are in a random and not in simple one. Sometime the students will get frustration and lost their ideas to write because they are confused with the branches. In the other hand, in the new version of word map, it is more hierarchical and well organizes. It also present in a simple way. The students will be easier to frame before they write a sentence. The writing process will make the students feel interesting.

By implementing modified word map, students can relate vocabulary words to their own background or experience. Thus, it involves students in thinking, reading and writing. At last, it engages the students as active learner (Graves, 2006).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In relation to the results of the research, it is inferred that the aspect of vocabulary becomes problem in the implementation of modified Word Map in teaching writing. The limitation of students' vocabulary mastery can be classified to be one of the biggest problems faced by the students in writing descriptive paragraph. If the student does not master the aspects which must be scored in writing, it will be error. In writing skill, Vocabulary as one of the writing tools has significant role in writing, because the number of words we use is a reasonable measure of our intelligence and our

writing quality. Then, data of writing test showed that there were differences on students' writing skill before and after the implementation of modified word map. Students' writing skill after using modified word map was increased. Based on the calculation in the pretest that consists of 30 students, the mean score is 66.90 and the posttest is 73.90. Thus, the computation also shows that sig (2 tailed) is 0.000. It means that $\text{sig} < \alpha$ ($p < 0.05$; $p = 0.000$). It can be concluded that H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted that there are differences on students' writing skill before and after the implementation of modified word map and there is significant improvement between pretest and posttest. Based on the data calculation, it indicated that students' mean score of posttest is higher than pretest. The implementation of modified word map also affects students' writing skill. Hence, the origin versions of word map were in a random and not in simple one. Sometime the students got frustration and lost their ideas to write because they were confused with the branches. In the other hand, in the new version of word map, it is more hierarchical and well organizes. It also present in a simple way. The students easier in framing before they write a sentence. The writing process make the students feel interesting. As the result, students can relate vocabulary words to their own background or experience. Thus, it involves students in thinking, reading and writing. At last, it engages the students as active learner that can improve their writing skill.

Additionally, the researcher provides some suggestions for other researchers who are interested in conducting relevant research. First of all, since the use of word map was modified to be appropriate to teach writing especially in promoting the aspect of vocabulary, it seems that it would be interesting for the future researchers to implement this strategy in different English skills. Furthermore, it is suggested for the further researchers to conduct their research in a senior high school which has students with good ability of English in order to get the best result of the research. In addition, it is also suggested for the next researcher to implement word mapping in long term research to see the different effect of word mapping to students' in other language skills.

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