THE USE OF SEMANTIC MAPPING TECHNIQUE IN TEACHING READING RECOUNT TEXT
(A Case Study at The Eighth Grade of Junior High School in Majenang)

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Abstract

This study deals with the investigation of semantic mapping technique in teaching reading recount text. It was intended to find out the teacher's way in using semantic mapping technique in teaching reading recount text; and students' perceptions toward the implementation of semantic mapping technique in teaching reading recount text. In addition, the writer used the theory from Schmitt (2002, p. 44) who explained about teacher's ways in implementing semantic mapping word technique in teaching reading comprehension. The writer used qualitative research with the type of case study involving an English teachers and the students of eighth grade. To collect the data, classroom observation, interview, and questionnaire were utilized. The findings indicated that the teacher implemented the steps in conducting semantic mapping strategy as suggested by Schmitt (2002, p. 44. In addition, the students also enjoy the teaching learning process using the technique of semantic mapping. Furthermore, the major conclusion of this study indicated that the teacher was able to apply the semantic mapping technique that encourages the students to develop their reading skill. Regarding the weakness of this research, the present study did not point out specific factors influencing students' motivation in learning Semantic mapping. Thus, it is recommended that further researchers should investigate teacher's perception on implementing the technique of semantic mapping in the teaching-learning process.

Keywords: *reading comprehension, recount text, semantic mapping.*

INTRODUCTION

Reading, as one of the basic skills, is widely taught in teaching process through many variations. It is a process of psycholinguistic preceded by a writer's representation of linguistic appearance and ended by reader's construction of meaning (Brown, 2001, p.12). Similarly, Wilson (1950, p.2) states that reading is a cognition of printed or written symbol that serves as stimuli to recall of meaning built through the reader's past experience.

If learners are equipped by high level of reading comprehension, they may obtain a better input than those who have the low one. The skill of reading comprehension skill refers to reader's fluency in interpreting the written word and understand it well (Connor, Morrison, & Petrella, 2004, p. 4). Specifically, Neumann, Ross and Slaboch (2008) divide reading comprehension into three levels: 1) literal comprehension occurring when readers recognize the form of words and the meaning can understand the explicit information due to his/ her recognition of words and meaning form; 2) inferential comprehension dealing with an activity of understanding the text deeply and guessing the author's thoughts; and 3) evaluative comprehension referring to an activity of correlating reader's knowledge and author's knowledge for making new experiences of understanding.

The skill of reading is one of the language skills which is the most important of all. Further a main key to research as it is widely believed that it has to be mastered recently (Cross and James, 2005,p 255). Therefore, learning of reading is a major objective of curriculum in schooling and the most important language skills of all (Cross and James, 2005, p. 255).

In fact, students find some problems in learning skill of reading especially in reading comprehension. Onwuegbuzie (2009, p. 56) points out that the problems encountered by the students in reading comprehension including remedial vocabulary, as well as problems of short-term and long-term memory, and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD).

In line with the experiences of the writer in peer teaching especially in teaching reading, the writer finds out the problems faced by the students especially in reading comprehension. It is difficult for the students to find out the meaning of the text,

identify the main idea of text, etc. Regarding these problems, the writer realizes that the teacher has applies one of the techniques in teaching reading comprehension. It is semantic mapping technique that was able to solve that problems.

Amoush (2012, p. 2) states that semantic mapping refers to knowledge and conceptual relationship which is visual in representation. It assists the students considerable improvement in reading comprehension, written expression and development of vocabulary (Amoush (2012, p. 2). Also, it is a creation of graphic arrangement of clusters which is associated around a grouping key word, thought or idea (Hadley, 2003; Brown, 2001, p. 76). This kind of technique can be assumed as a good strategy to improve reading skills (Harvey & Goudvish, 2007, p. 6; Schmitt, 2002, p. 50; Harmer 2007; Mirhassani and Akhlaghi, 2009).

Here is the example of semantic mapping as suggested by Schmitt (2002).
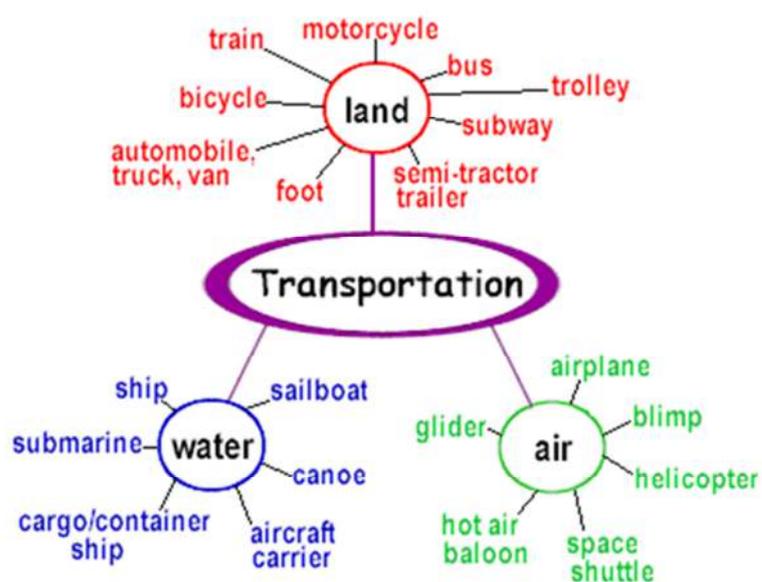
(Schmitt, 2002)

Figure 1 The example of semantic mapping

Applying to teaching recount text, Schmitt (2002, p. 44) proposed several steps. The first is choosing a word or words based on the recount texts which was read by the students. The second is completing a semantic map for each word. The third is determining various word forms and recognizing the way those words relate to the chosen word based on the text (Word families: e.g., went; Parts of speech and their

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uses in a sentence: e.g., ate, walked, thought). The third is analyzing the concepts and vocabulary of the text. The fourth is arranging the words in a map depicting the interrelationships between the concepts, followed by the students' additional diagram of the words or concepts that have already been understood by the students.

To emphasize, there are previous studies on related topic conducted by Ahour and Sakhei (2015), and Zorfass and Gray (2014). None of these studies investigated the issue on the implementation of semantic mapping in teaching reading recount text. Therefore, to fill this gap, the present study tries to conduct the research under the title "The Implementation of Semantic Mapping Technique in Teaching Reading Recount Text" (A Case study at the Eighth Grade of Junior High School in Majenang).

METHOD

This study employed the qualitative study with the type of case study as suggested by Gerring (2004, p. 1). Research participants consist of two English teachers and 32 eight grade students of a Junior High School in Majenang who were selected purposively. The primary data were through classroom observation, questionnaire, and interview.

The data from the observation were analyzed by transcribing, categorizing, drawing conclusion and validating the data taken from interview and questionnaire (Creswell, 2008, p. 219). Accordingly, the results of interview were also transcribed, classified, identified, displayed, and drawn a conclusion. Finally, the writer analyzed the data from questionnaire which were analyzed through explaining, categorizing, presenting, and drawing the conclusion.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Teacher's Ways in Implementing Semantic Mapping Technique in Teaching Reading Recount Text

The result of the study obtained from the data collected through classroom observation. It is indicated that teachers have implemented semantic mapping word technique in teaching reading comprehension through several steps. The first is selecting a word or words from recount texts read by the students. The second is

completing a semantic map of each word. The third is semantic maps focusing on evaluating various word forms and their relation to the chosen word from the text. Furthermore, the students are required to arrange the words that is relevant with the theme. Then, the next step is analyzing the concepts and vocabulary containing in the text. The subsequent step is arranging map of the word that describes the interrelationships between the concepts. It is followed by adding it into the diagram of the words or concepts that have been understood by the students. It purposed to describe the relationships between their previous knowledge and the information in the text. In short, based on the data collected through classroom observation, the writer concluded that the teacher implemented semantic mapping strategy as suggested by Schmitt (2002, p. 44) who explained about teacher's ways in implementing semantic mapping word technique in teaching reading comprehension.

Students' Perceptions towards The Implementation of Semantic Mapping Technique in Teaching Reading Recount Text

Based on students' choices in questionnaire item, it could be concluded that the majority of the students viewed the use of semantic mapping words technique positively. It was able to help the students in understanding reading comprehension, improving students' skill and students' motivation in learning English especially in reading skill. In addition, the students also enjoy the teaching learning process through the use of semantic mapping technique.

The results of this study was similar with the study conducted by Ahour and Sakhei (2015) entitled "The Effect of Semantic Mapping Strategy Instruction on Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension". They investigated the effect of semantic mapping strategy instruction on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' listening comprehension. In this case, the previous study was in line with the present study in which both studies used semantic mapping technique as the main focus of the studies.

CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated semantic mapping strategy in teaching reading recount text. In this case, there were two main conclusions of this study based on each research question. The first conclusion was about how the teacher uses semantic mapping technique in teaching reading recount text. In this regard, the writer

concluded that the teacher implemented the steps in conducting semantic mapping strategy as suggested by Schmitt (2002, p. 44); it is explained about teacher's ways in implementing semantic mapping word technique in teaching reading comprehension. The second conclusion was students' perceptions toward the implementation of semantic mapping technique in teaching reading recount text. In this point, the writer concluded that the majority of the students viewed that the use of semantic mapping words technique was able to help the students in understanding reading comprehension and improving students' skill and students' motivation in learning English especially in reading skill. It leads to the students' enjoyment on teaching learning process through the use of semantic mapping technique.

Regarding the weakness of the present research in that it did not point out specific factors influencing students' motivation in learning Semantic mapping, the writer recommends that further researchers investigate teacher's perception about the implementation of semantic mapping in the teaching-learning process. Also, the investigation on the same field with various techniques, methods and approaches is recommended. The reason is that it provides the students a new atmosphere in the process of teaching and learning. Semantic mapping as the strategy to teach English should be applied by the teachers in the various ways with reference to the step in semantic mapping.

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