

**IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION OF
DESCRIPTIVE TEXT BY USING PICTURES AND SEMANTIC MAPPING
AT GRADE VII.1 OF SMPN 2
X KOTO DIATAS SOLOK REGENCY**

THESIS



By

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**Submitted to Fulfill one of the Requirements
to Get Master Degree in Education**

**ENGLISH EDUCATION SECTION
LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM
GRADUATE PROGRAM
STATE UNIVERSITY OF PADANG
2012**

ABSTRAK

Nurmailis Muis. 2012. *Meningkatkan Pemahaman Membaca Teks Deskriptif dengan Menggunakan Gambar dan Pemetaan Semantik di Kelas VII.1 SMPN 2 X Koto Diatas Kab. Solok*. Tesis. Jurusan Bahasa Inggris. Program S2. Universitas Negeri Padang.

Berdasarkan pengalaman dan observasi peneliti, pemahaman membaca siswa Kelas VII.1 SMPN 2 X Koto Diatas Kabupaten Solok terhadap deskriptif teks masih rendah. Masalah ini disebabkan oleh beberapa faktor; misalnya siswa membaca teks, kurangnya kosa kata bahasa Inggris siswa, and kurangnya teknik yang memadai dalam membaca. Akibatnya, mereka kesulitan untuk memperoleh informasi atau ide dari teks serta membedakan jenis-jenis teks.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjabarkan sejauh mana gambar dan pemetaan semantik dapat meningkatkan pemahaman membaca teks deskriptif dan apa faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi perubahan yang terjadi terhadap penggunaan gambar dan Pemetaan semantik terhadap peningkatan pemahaman membaca siswa dalam memahami teks deskriptif pada kelas VII.1 SMPN 2 X Koto Diatas Kab. Solok yang dilakukan melalui penelitian tindakan kelas. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan dalam dua siklus. Setiap siklus terdiri dari empat langkah yaitu perencanaan, pelaksanaan, observasi, dan refleksi. Data kuantitatif dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan tes membaca dalam bentuk pilihan ganda dan data kualitatif melalui observasi, catatan lapangan dan wawancara. Data kualitatif dianalisis dengan menggunakan rumus rata-rata dan hasilnya dibandingkan dengan kriteria ketuntasan minimum (KKM). Data kualitatif dianalisis dengan menggunakan prosedur kualitatif menurut Yasin. Hasil dari kedua jenis data akan dibandingkan dan saling dihubungkan untuk menjelaskan pencapaian siswa dan faktor yang berpengaruh.

Penemuan dari penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa pemahaman membaca teks deskriptif siswa meningkat setelah menggunakan gambar dan pemetaan semantik dalam rangka memahami teks. Disamping itu, ditemukan juga beberapa faktor yang mempengaruhi peningkatan pemahaman ini yaitu materi, teknik, media, manajemen kelas, strategi guru dan pendekatan guru yang digunakan.

ABSTRACT

Nurmailis Muis, 2012. *Improving Students' Reading Comprehension of Descriptive Text by Using Pictures and Semantic Mapping at Grade VII.1 of SMPN 2 X Koto Diatas Solok Regency*. Thesis. English Education Section. Graduate Program. State University of Padang.

Based on the researcher's experience and observation, students' reading comprehension of descriptive genre text at grade VII.1 SMPN 2 X Koto Diatas Solok Regency was still low. The problem was caused by several factors; the students were lazy to read the text, the lack of vocabulary and the lack of good techniques. As a result, it was hard for them to figure out the information or ideas of the text and differentiate the genre texts.

The research was aimed to explain to what extent the pictures and semantic mapping can improve students' reading comprehension of descriptive texts and what factors influencing the using of this technique could better improve students' reading comprehension of descriptive text at grade VII.1 of SMPN 2 X Koto Diatas Solok Regency through classroom action research. The research was done in two cycles. Each cycle consists of four steps; planning, action, observation, and reflection. The quantitative data was collected by the reading test in multiple choices and the qualitative data through observation, field notes and interview. The quantitative data was analyzed by using average score formula and comparing with the minimum passing grade criteria (KKM). The qualitative data was analyzed by qualitative procedure by Yasin. The result of the both data would be compared and connected to explain about the students' improvement and the factors that were influenced it.

The findings of this research showed that the students' reading comprehension of descriptive text improved after they used pictures and semantic mapping in order to understand the text. In addition, it has been found that the factors that were influenced the improvement are the materials, the technique, the classroom management, the media, the teacher's strategy and the teacher's approach.

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SURAT PERNYATAAN

Dengan ini saya menyatakan bahwa:

1. Karya tulis saya, tesis dengan judul **“Improving Students’ Reading Comprehension of Descriptive Text by Using Pictures and Semantic Mapping at Grade VII.1 of SMPN 2 X Koto Diatas Solok Regency”** adalah asli dan belum pernah diajukan untuk mendapat gelar akademik baik di Universitas Negeri Padang maupun perguruan tinggi lainnya.
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Padang, Oktober 2012
Saya yang menyatakan,

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Acknowledgement

All praises belong to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the world, who has given all opportunities and healthy for the writer to finish and complete the thesis, namely *“Improving Students’ Reading Comprehension of Descriptive Text by Using Pictures and Semantic Mapping at Grade VII.1 of SMPN 2 X Koto Diatas Solok Regency”*. The writer also wants to pray invocation for Muhammad SAW, the great and the last prophet, who had challenged and given his endeavors to preach commandments of Allah for prosperous life of people.

In finishing the thesis, the writer had got a lot of helpful from people in different professions. In this chance, the writer would like to say thank you to:

1. **Prof. Drs. H. Zainil, M.A., Ph.D** and **Dr. Hj. Desmawati Radjab M.Pd** as her advisors who have facilitated me with their time, chances, guidance, and advices.
2. **Prof. Dr. H. Anas Yasin, MA., Prof. Mukhaiyar, M.Pd** and **Prof. Jalius Jama, M.Ed., Ph.D** as her examiners who have given many contributions in finishing this thesis.
3. All the lecturers as English section who have given knowledge and experiences to the writer.
4. Her beloved parents **Drs. H. Abdul Muis** and **Minur**, her beloved husband **Boy Naldo**, her beloved daughter **Alexandra Alya**, and her beloved brother and sisters **Habibul Muis, Nova Tri Wahyuni Muis** and **Fitrah Amaliah Muis** who have supported and motivated her to finish the English Graduate Program (S.2) mentally and financially.

5. All friends and colleagues in UNP, SMPN 1 X Koto Diatas, SMPN 2 X Koto Diatas and SMPN 3 X Koto Diatas who have given their helpful for the writer in order to finish the thesis.

The writer realizes that the thesis is not prefect yet. She really appreciated to the other comments and advices for the better thesis. On the other hand, she prayed and hoped that the thesis will give a good contribution to all people who connect to English in the world.

Padang, October 2012

The writer

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

Reading, as one of four skills in a language, becomes an important skill for students to learn how to get new information and knowledge about their lesson. In English lesson, reading is a crucial activity since it is needed by the students to understand and handle the written English references. This skill has to be comprehended by them because it is a tool for them to enlarge their knowledge and to open their relationship in the globalization era. It means that when students are able to get the meanings of the text in reading activity, they become easier in understanding information and have a good quality in learning.

Dealing with the necessary of reading, the Indonesian's government through the curriculum (depdiknas: 2003) expects the students in Junior High School to understand reading materials at least for six genre texts; descriptive, narrative, recount, procedure, report and anecdote. The all genres are taught in different classes in Junior High School. For stage VII, the genres that are taught are narrative, descriptive and recount. In class VIII, the students have to master narrative, recount, descriptive and anecdote texts. The English teachers in class IX teaches all genre texts. These genres have their own specific characteristics that are different from others. In comprehending these texts, the students must have an ability to identify the topic, main idea, generic structures and also the meaning of the text in order to classify the text which is

taken into one of the three genres. In the other hand, the students must have a technique or media to help them to comprehend these genre texts too.

Many kinds of genre texts that have to be understood by the students make them hard to comprehend the reading. According to the writer's observation in class VII.1 Junior High School 2 X Koto Diatas Solok Regency, the students had lack of reading comprehension especially in descriptive text. The problems can also be seen from the results of preliminary test about the descriptive text that was held in this class on Saturday, January 15th 2011. Based on the marks of the preliminary test, only 14% of the students got score 70 and 18% got 60 and 65. Others were marked in and below 50 where the minimum passing grade criteria (KKM) was 60.

The marks of the students' test show the problems that were faced by the students in reading descriptive text. During the observation in the classroom, the writer found that they were lazy to read and hard to figure out the texts since the descriptive text was not completed with the pictures about the text. Sometimes in several books that were used in the learning and teaching process were no title. It was difficult for them to know the content of the text.

When the teacher gave the students a test, they tried to answer the questions by rewriting the sentence in the text that has the same words based on the question given. Few students attempted to translate the texts in order to understand the texts. Several students chose to answer several questions that they knew and let others empty. Besides that, other students, who did not

understand about the text yet, cheated from their friends to get the answers without reading the text. They asked and moved from one student to others to get the answers of the questions. This activity made the classroom noisy.

When they were asked why they did not want to find the answers by themselves, they argued that the texts were too difficult to understand. They were lazy to seek the meanings of the new words in the dictionary, because it spent much time and the activity made them bored. In addition, the meaning of the words in the dictionary sometimes confused the students since the meaning was not based on the texts' context. Those were why they got troubles in comprehending the texts.

To solve the problems above, the students have to be assisted by using relevant technique. The researcher was interested to use pictures and semantic mapping to facilitate them in comprehending the descriptive text. The choosing of the technique aimed to assist the students in reading the text since the pictures can activate the students' background knowledge and motivated them to know what the text's content, and semantic mapping is to link the ideas in the texts into the simple model. In the classroom activity, the teacher showed the pictures and the title of the text before the reading activity began. It was hoped to activate their background knowledge about the text and gave the motivation to the students to follow the classroom activity. So, the teacher applied the pictures to guide the students in creating a semantic mapping dealing with what the text might tell about. It was also done to help them to predict and review about the text's content when they read.

The link of using pictures and semantic mapping was used not only to motivate and activate the students' background knowledge in teaching and learning process but also to help them to discover and understand about the text. It was why the teacher had to give a stimulus for the students to make them comfortable during the teaching and learning process. The stimulus itself could be given by using the pictures and semantic mapping, especially in teaching reading since the technique could be used in a collaborative model.

B. Identification of the Problem

Based on the writer's observation and the preliminary test in the classroom, the students faced several problems in comprehending the text especially for descriptive text. The first problem, they did not understand well about the content of the text. It was indicated by the result of the preliminary test about the descriptive text in which 68% of the students got low scores. On the other hand, they only tried to answer the questions by rewriting the sentence in the text that has the same words based on the question given. It created the answers that were not relevant with the questions. Other students who did not want to read the text only cheated the answers from their friends without knowing what the meaning of the text.

The low reading comprehension was caused by several factors. First, the students had lack of vocabularies. However they tried to find the meanings of the words in the dictionary, the meanings sometimes were not relevant with the context in the text. So, the intention of the text was not reached by the students. Then, the students did not have background knowledge about the

topic. In several cases in the classroom, the simple topic sometimes was not recovered well because the text did not have a title or a picture that was shown about the content of the text. The last, they did not know the good technique to comprehend the text. In several meetings, they only translated the text and the questions in the exercise into Indonesian and the activity wasted much time.

C. Limitation of the Problem

Based on the identification above, there were many problems in reading process faced by the students. However, the researcher limited her study to solve the problem about the students' difficulties in comprehending the descriptive text. In addition, the researcher also tried to facilitate students to understand vocabularies from the text. The problems were solved by using the pictures and semantic mapping technique that was held in the grade VII.1 in Junior High School 2 X Koto Diatas Solok Regency. The use of pictures and semantic mapping were expected to activate the students' background knowledge, motivate them in teaching and learning process and facilitate the students to comprehend the text.

D. Formulation of the Problem

The problem of this research is formulated according to these questions:

1. To what extent can pictures and semantic mapping improve students' reading comprehension of descriptive texts at grade VII.1 of Junior High School 2 X Koto Diatas Solok Regency?

2. What factors influence the changes of students' reading comprehension of descriptive texts by using pictures and semantic mapping at grade VII.1 Junior High School 2 X Koto Diatas Solok Regency?

E. Purpose of the Research

The purposes of the research are to find out and to explain:

1. to what extent the pictures and semantic mapping can improve students' reading comprehension of descriptive texts.
2. the factors of using pictures and semantic mapping that influence the improvement of students' reading comprehension of descriptive texts.

F. Significance of the Research

It is expected that the result of the research gave significance theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the use of pictures and semantic mapping can be a source to get new information about the description of using pictures and semantic mapping as a collaborative technique in reading activity. Practically, it gives a direction how to use the pictures and the semantic mapping as a collaborative technique in teaching and learning process. It is also suitable to be used in other skills in English.

G. Definition of the Key Terms

The thesis has a title 'Improving Students' Reading Comprehension of Descriptive Texts by Using Pictures and Semantic Mapping at Junior High School 2 X Koto Diatas Solok regency'. To avoid a confusing in

understanding of the title, there are several meanings the definition of the key terms that are used in the title like belows:

1. Reading comprehension is the students' understanding about a text when they read it.
2. Pictures are media - such as; image, photo, cartoon, etc in flat surface - used to encourage students' background knowledge or schemata about a text.
3. Semantic mapping is a technique used to list the words that are correlated with the text, and draw the relationship among the ideas that are stated in the text.
4. Descriptive text is a kind of genre texts which has a purpose to describe the details about people, animal, things, etc.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

In conclusion, the application of pictures and semantic mapping for the grade VII.1 of SMPN 2 X Koto Diatas Solok Regency especially to help the students to comprehend about reading descriptive text has been successful. Referring to the findings of this class action research, with the following points:

1. The use of pictures and semantic mapping better improve the students' understanding of reading descriptive text. The result can be shown from the tables and the diagrams in the previous chapter.
2. Factors that influence changes of the students' reading comprehension of Descriptive text are:
 - a. The material that was chosen was suitable with the students' level.
 - b. The technique that was as a mixing between pictures and semantic mapping that was really facilitated them to understand about the descriptive text.
 - c. The media that was used in colorful things stimulated them to active in the teaching and learning process.
 - d. The classroom management helped them to work together with their friends in group discussion.
 - e. The teacher's strategy facilitated them to understand about the text by showing the pictures firstly before they begun to make a map and read the text.

- f. The teacher's approach also affected to the students to motivate them to do their duties.

B. Implication

According to the findings and conclusion of the research, there are positive and negative implications for the next teaching and learning process in the future. For positive implications, the use of pictures and semantic mapping is suitable to improve the students' comprehension in reading, especially for descriptive genre text such what had been applied in the seventh grade in the SMPN 2 X Koto Diatas Solok Regency. As additional, the pictures and the semantic mapping also can be used for other genre texts in English curriculum. The use of pictures and semantic mapping can build a good atmosphere for the students in classroom's activities since they can interact and interest with the technique. It can motivate students to learn other skills in English too.

On the contrary side, the use of picture and semantic mapping has a negative implication, especially to facilitate the students in understanding the synonym and the antonym of a new vocabulary, since the students do not have background knowledge about the topic given. So, the teacher has to active to assist students to find and seek the antonym and the synonym by asking or explaining about the antonym and the synonym of the word.

C. Suggestion

Based on the result of this research, the researcher suggested to the others and the English teacher some ideas as follow:

1. The use of pictures and semantic mapping to comprehend the descriptive texts could be used as a good alternative technique in teaching and learning English.
2. The researcher as an English teacher would prepare some activities dealing with the use of pictures and semantic mapping to motivate the students in interaction and feed backs among the processes of teaching and learning English.
3. The other researchers could apply the pictures and the semantic mapping on other skills in English, such as listening, speaking or writing and other genre texts such as procedure, narrative, report, etc.

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