

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers background of the study, research questions, aims of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, and clarification of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Reading is not merely about recognizing words, it is an active process of constructing meaning from the text. Grabe & Stoller (2019) define reading as “the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret this information appropriately” (p. 3). This definition highlights that reading goes beyond decoding words, it requires students to understand how ideas are connected and process the information effectively. In an educational context, reading proficiency is important because it enables students to understand textbooks, academic material, and other resources necessary for learning thoroughly (Indrayadi et al., 2020; Nisa et al., 2018). Moreover, Reading allows students to engage with the texts, find important information, and build their understanding (Hasibuan, 2022; Moge, 2019; Rochman, 2018).

Given that reading involves understanding meaning and processing information, reading comprehension plays a central role in students’ academic success. It is more than simply recognizing words, it involves understanding the structure of the text, identifying main ideas, and extracting meaningful information. As Smith et al. (2021) emphasize, reading comprehension is a core academic skill because it supports learning across all subject. When students are able to comprehend texts effectively, they can analyze information correctly, understand both explicit and implicit meanings, draw logical conclusions, and apply their knowledge in different contexts. Thus, developing reading comprehension is an essential goal in education.

In Junior High School, students are expected to understand various text types, including descriptive, recount, and narrative texts (Emilia, 2011). As one of the main genres in the Junior High School curriculum, recount texts are commonly included in summative assessments. Recount texts are important because they help students develop their ability to retell past events in a structured way, which is

useful not only for language learning but also for expressing personal experiences. However, despite the importance of reading, many students found significant difficulties in reading comprehension. Common problems involve struggling to identify the main idea, comprehend unfamiliar vocabulary, make inferences, and locate specific details (R. Aini, 2024; Nuralimah et al., 2023; Kiew & Shah, 2020). According to Saraswati et al. (2021), eighth-grade students in particular tend to struggle with identifying both explicit and implicit meanings in a text as well as limited vocabulary knowledge. These challenges become more apparent when students are reading longer or dealing with more complex texts. As a result, many students struggle to comprehend a passage well (Abeywickrama & Smarakoon, 2021). Additionally, conventional or monotonous teaching methods tend to reduce student engagement, making it harder for students to understand what they read (Tugo & Tabernilla, 2023). Without effective learning strategies, students' reading developments can be hindered, which may affect their performance in other subjects as well (Yunita et al., 2023).

These problems were also evident during my teaching practice in the previous semester. While teaching eighth-grade students at a public Junior High School, the researcher observed that many of the students had difficulty comprehending recount text. Most of them struggled to identify the main idea, draw inferences, and organize the text structure. When given reading tasks, many students gave incomplete answers. Only a few students were able to retell the story in the correct order, while others skipped important details. In addition, the class discussion revealed a lack of engagement with the material. These observations indicate the need for a strategy that supports students in understanding the content and structure more effectively.

Furthermore, based on the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM) set by the school, the minimum score required by the English subject is 75. However, initial observations revealed that the majority of students did not meet this standard, particularly in the area of reading comprehension. This showed that further efforts are needed to improve students' reading abilities, one of which is through the use of instructional media such as mind mapping.

In response to these challenges, a number of teaching strategies have been proposed and applied to improve reading comprehension. One increasingly popular

approach is the adoption of active learning, where students are encouraged to participate directly in their learning process through discussions and interaction with the course material. Özgür (2023) suggests that active learning positively affects students' academic achievement and learning retention. One form of active learning that supports students' understanding is visualization, especially through the use of mind mapping.

Mind mapping is one of the strategies that helps students visually organize information and highlight the key concept. According to Buzan (2007), mind mapping is a creative thinking tool that works in line with how the brain naturally processes information. It is the easiest way to get the information into the brain and get the information out of the brain. In the educational context, mind mapping has been widely recognized for its effectiveness in improving students' comprehension. Several studies have found that it helps students better understand texts by encouraging them visually, organizing, and connecting the ideas (Natalia et al., 2022; Zebua, 2022; Alya Fitri et al., 2022). By improving students' ability to organize information, mind mapping supports memory retention and comprehension ((Fitrawantono & Astutik, 2024). Furthermore, this strategy also promotes critical thinking and allows learners to explore ideas in a non-linear way, helping them understand the overall structure and meaning of the text (Shi et al., 2022).

The effectiveness of mind mapping has been confirmed across different educational levels. For instance, Fitrawantono & Astutik (2024) demonstrated that sixth-grade elementary students in Indonesia showed a significant improvement in their comprehension scores, increasing from an average of 49.5 to 68.5 after using mind mapping. Similarly, Nguyen & Nguyen (2023) reported a moderate improvement among eleventh-grade students in Vietnam, and Ramadhan et al. (2023) found significant increase in comprehension among twelfth-grade students in Indonesia, with a p-value of 0.000, indicating a strong effect of mind mapping on students' reading abilities.

Although these studies underline the effectiveness of mind mapping, most of the research has been conducted at the elementary and senior high school levels. For instance, Fitrawantono & Astutik (2024) conducted their study with sixth-grade

students in elementary school, while Nguyen & Nguyen (2023) involved eleventh-grade students in senior high school, leaving the Junior High School level underexplored in terms of mind mapping implementation. In addition, Hamed (2024) emphasized the importance of exploring the use of mind mapping across different text types to better understand its impact on students' reading. Furthermore, most previous studies have focused on the outcomes of mind mapping in improving reading comprehension. However, there is limited research that explores how students actually engage with and construct mind maps during the learning process.

To address this gap, it is important to focus on the type of text that is commonly taught at Junior High School. One of them is the recount text, which retells past events. This type of text typically follows a specific structure: orientation, events, and reorientation (Derewianka & Jones, 2016). Because of its chronological and organized, mind mapping can help students visualize and arrange the key part of the text, understand character actions, and find main ideas.

Therefore, the integration of mind mapping in reading recount text is expected to improve students' comprehension and engagement with the text. Based on the background, the present study aims to investigate the implementation of the mind mapping as a strategy to improve Junior High School students' comprehension of recount text. This study also seeks to understand how students engage with recount text through mind mapping and how this strategy can contribute to their reading process.

1.2 Research Question

In accordance with the purpose above, this study was conducted to answer the following question:

1. To what extent does the use of mind mapping improve students' comprehension of recount text in a Junior High School Classroom?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Based on the background above, the purpose of this study is:

1. To explore how the use of mind mapping improves Junior High School students' comprehension of recount texts.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the use of mind mapping as a teaching strategy to improve students' reading comprehension of recount text in a Junior High School classroom. The study is limited to eighth-grade students in one public Junior High School, with the emphasis on the improvement of students' understanding of recount texts after using mind mapping in the classroom activities. In the current study, mind mapping refers to a visual learning strategy that allows students to organize and connect the information from a text in a structured way. Reading comprehension is the specific skill targeted for improvement through this strategy, and the recount text is selected as the teaching material for its relevance to the curriculum.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The present research is expected to provide several benefits in theoretical, practical and professional areas:

1. Theoretical benefit

The research is expected to contribute to the body of knowledge on the use of mind mapping in teaching recount texts, especially in improving students' reading comprehension in Junior High School settings. It can also serve as a relevant reference for future studies in similar areas.

2. Practical benefit

The findings of this study are expected to be beneficial for both teachers and students. For teachers, mind mapping can serve as an innovative strategy to improve students' engagement and comprehension through visualization. For students, it offers a structured and visual way of understanding the content and sequence of recount texts, thus supporting their reading comprehension development.

3. Professional benefit

The study is also expected to support English teachers in improving their instructional practices, particularly by applying student centered learning through mind mapping. The strategy allows students to explore texts, organize ideas visually, and engage in meaningful classroom interactions, which contribute to a more effective and interactive teaching approach.

1.6 Clarification of Key Terms

The terms below will be frequently used in this research. To avoid misconceptions and misunderstanding, the clarifications of the terms used in this research:

a) Mind Mapping

Mind mapping is a visual learning strategy that helps students organize and connect ideas through diagrams that reflect how the brain naturally processes information (Buzan, 2007). In this study, mind mapping is used as a tool to help students visually arrange the content of recount text, aiming to support their comprehension and information retention.

b) Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension refers to the ability to understand, evaluate, and interpret written texts. It includes identifying main ideas, identifying the references, making inferences, and recognizing supporting details (Nuttall, 1982). In this study, reading comprehension is the main skill targeted for improvement through the use of mind mapping.

c) Recount Text

Recount text is a type of text that retells past events in a chronological order, this often includes personal experiences, diaries, or factual incidents (Anderson & Anderson, 2003; Knapp & Watkins, 2005, Emilia, 2011). Since understanding recount texts requires the ability to follow the sequence, students need the appropriate reading strategies to support their comprehension. In this study, mind mapping is used as a strategy to help students visually organize these key elements and improve their understanding of recount texts.

1.7 Organization of the Paper

This research paper is systematically organized to provide a clear and structured explanation of the study. Each chapter serves a specific function to support the overall research objectives. The organization of the paper is as follows:

1) Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter presents the background of the study, which focuses on improving students' reading comprehension through the use of mind mapping

in learning recount text. It included the research question, research objective, the scope and significance of the study. Additionally, this chapter defines key terms and outlines the structure of the paper.

2) Chapter II Literature Review

This chapter reviews the relevant theories that form the foundation of the research. It discusses the concept of mind mapping, including its definition, purposes, procedures, advantages, and disadvantages. It also explains the concept and purpose of reading comprehension, and the role of mind mapping in improving reading skills. Furthermore, it elaborates on the characteristics of recount texts, including their generic structure and language features, as well as the Minimum Mastery Criteria applied in the school.

3) Chapter III Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research method used in the study, which is Classroom Action Research (CAR). The research was conducted with eighth-grade students at a Junior High School in Bandung. This chapter outlines the research design, participants, setting, and procedures in each cycle of the CAR. It also explains the data collection techniques such as observation, interview, and students' reading tests, and the data analysis technique used, namely the interactive model by Miles and Huberman.

4) Chapter IV Findings and Discussion

This chapter presents the result of the research based on the data collected during the CAR cycles. It explains how the use of mind mapping could influence students' reading comprehension in each cycle. The discussion links the findings with the research questions and relevant theories.

5) Chapter V Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter concludes the research by summarizing the main findings regarding the effectiveness of mind mapping in teaching recount texts. It also addresses the limitations of the study and provides suggestions for future researchers and English teachers who are interested in using mind mapping as a teaching strategy.

1.8 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has discussed the general outline of this study. This chapter has discussed the background of the study, research question of the study, purpose of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, and clarification of the key terms. The theories of this research will be discussed in the next chapter, Literature Review.