



The Effectiveness of Media-Based Mind Mapping in Teaching Short Story Writing at SMP Unismuh Makassar

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses a community engagement project aimed at enhancing short story writing skills through media-based mind mapping at SMP Unismuh Makassar. The school faced challenges in improving students' creative writing abilities, particularly in narrative construction. In response, a mind mapping technique using media was implemented as an innovative teaching method. The project involved interactive workshops where students were guided in using mind mapping to organize their ideas and develop structured narratives. The results revealed a significant improvement in students' ability to create coherent and creative short stories. Feedback from both students and teachers indicated that the method effectively boosted student engagement and writing quality. The study concludes that media-based mind mapping is an effective tool for improving short story writing in educational settings, fostering creativity, and enhancing writing competencies.

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A. INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian Language curriculum, as stipulated by the 2013 Curriculum (*Kurikulum 2013*), adopts a scientific approach emphasizing observation, questioning, experimentation, reasoning, and communication. However, government-issued textbooks often create confusion among teachers, leading to challenges in implementing the curriculum effectively. Addressing these issues, this study proposes the integration of a media-based mind mapping model as an innovative pedagogical strategy, particularly in the domain of short story writing.

Teaching literature—especially creative writing such as short stories—presents a dual challenge for both students and teachers. According to Swastika, Siswanto, and Lestari (2010), many teachers struggle to teach short story writing effectively, often resulting in disengaging classroom experiences. Limitations in teaching time, the extensive scope of writing instruction, and the tendency toward monotonous strategies further exacerbate the problem. Teachers' limited engagement with literary works and lack of reading habits also hinder their ability to inspire students (Sudewi, Gunatama, & Yasa, 2014).

Several scholars have emphasized the importance of shifting from a subject matter-oriented approach to a more holistic model. Hartono (2005) criticized the dominance of cognitive and



psychomotor domains in language teaching, which often marginalizes the affective domain. This imbalance may produce students who are technically competent but lack emotional depth and engagement. In this context, there is a need for models that foster creativity, emotional involvement, and student-centered learning.

Mind mapping, introduced by Buzan (2012), is a brain-based learning strategy designed to promote creative, non-linear thinking. It utilizes visual elements—such as colors, images, and spatial arrangements—to support comprehension, memory retention, and idea development. Research has shown that mind mapping can enhance students' academic performance across subjects (Nesbit & Adesope, 2006), and in writing, it aids in organizing thoughts, planning structure, and generating ideas (Al-Jarf, 2009). In Indonesian contexts, studies by Wahyuni (2015) and Pratiwi (2018) have demonstrated that mind mapping improves students' ability to express ideas more clearly and cohesively in written texts.

The integration of media into mind mapping—such as digital images, videos, or interactive platforms—adds another dimension of engagement. Daryanto (2013) argues that media plays a crucial role in facilitating learning, bridging students' real-world experiences with academic content. Hapsari (2015) supports this view, noting that well-designed media helps students construct accurate and realistic understandings of abstract concepts. In language and literature instruction, media enhances immersion, visualization, and interest, all of which are essential for narrative writing.

Writing is an essential communication tool. In the school context, short story writing serves not only to develop students' language skills but also to nurture their imagination and emotional intelligence. Sumardjo (in Antilan Purba, 2010) defines short stories as concise narratives focused on a single core idea or event, allowing students to practice precise and impactful storytelling. Nugroho (2014) and Kosasih (2012) affirm that short stories foster empathy, critical thinking, and creativity—skills highly relevant to 21st-century education.

Based on the challenges identified and supported by relevant literature, this study investigates the effectiveness of a **media-based mind mapping model** in improving students' short story writing skills. It aims to assess the model's impact on students' creativity, comprehension, and engagement in a classroom setting, specifically at SMP Unismuh Makassar.

B. METHODS

The method used in this research is the experimental method. This method aims to observe the effects of a treatment, which aligns with the purpose of investigating the improvement in students' learning outcomes through the implementation of media-based mind mapping in short story writing at SMP Unismuh Makassar during the 2024/2025 academic year.

1. Variables

- 1) **Independent Variable (X₁):** Teaching short story writing using the media-based mind mapping model.
- 2) **Independent Variable (X₂):** Teaching short story writing using the conventional method.

2. Instrument

The instrument used in this study is a writing test. The test includes a short story writing assessment designed to measure students' initial writing abilities (pretest) and their final abilities (posttest) after treatment.



3. Scoring Guidelines

The scoring rubric employed in this study is based on the writing assessment guidelines by Nurgiyantoro (2012: 307). The rubric has been modified and validated through an expert judgment process to ensure its reliability and suitability for the context of short story writing.

4. Implementation Procedures

The implementation of the study includes the following steps:

1) Preparation Stage:

- Developing learning materials using the media-based mind mapping model.
- Designing the pretest and posttest instruments.
- Conducting an expert judgment to validate the materials and instruments.
- Determining the experimental and control groups.

2) Implementation Stage:

- Conducting a pretest to assess the students' initial writing abilities.
- Applying the media-based mind mapping model in the experimental group and the conventional method in the control group over several sessions.
- Each session focuses on specific aspects of short story writing, including idea generation, narrative structure, character development, and plot organization.

3) Evaluation Stage:

- Administering a posttest to evaluate the students' writing improvement.
- Comparing the pretest and posttest results to assess the effectiveness of the media-based mind mapping model.

5. Activity Schedule and Location

The research was conducted at SMP Unismuh Makassar during the 2024/2025 academic year. The series of activities spanned approximately eight weeks, including preparation, implementation, and evaluation phases.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion section contains the outcomes of the community engagement activities and their analysis. Describe the sequence of activities in detail and the results obtained (impact and benefits) supported by adequate photos or data. The results should address the problems described in the introduction. This section can be divided into several subheadings. (Use Book Antiqua font, size 11, single-spaced.)

1. Results of Community Engagement Activities

This research aimed to assess the effectiveness of media-based mind mapping in teaching short story writing to students at SMP Unismuh Makassar during the 2024/2025 academic year. The data analysis covered two main variables: experimental (media-based mind mapping) and control (lecture-based teaching).



2. Descriptive Results

The experimental group achieved an average score of **75.48** with a standard deviation of **8.48**, while the control group scored an average of **62.03** with a standard deviation of **7.81**. The distribution of student scores for each group is as follows:

- **Experimental Group:**

- Scores 80–100 (Very Good): 18 students (58.05%)
- Scores 66–79 (Good): 8 students (25.80%)
- Scores 56–65 (Fair): 5 students (16.15%)
- Scores < 56 (Poor/Fail): None

- **Control Group:**

- Scores 66–79 (Good): 9 students (28.15%)
- Scores 56–65 (Fair): 16 students (50%)
- Scores 40–55 (Poor): 7 students (21.85%)
- Scores < 40 (Fail): None

3. Statistical Analysis

1) Normality Test:

Normality tests using the Liliefors method showed that both groups were normally distributed:

- Experimental group: $L_{count}=0.098$, $L_{table}=0.159$, $L_{count} < L_{table}$.
- Control group: $L_{count}=0.010$, $L_{table}=0.158$, $L_{count} < L_{table}$.

2) Homogeneity Test:

Homogeneity was tested using the largest-to-smallest variance ratio:

- $F_{count}=1.179$, $F_{table}=1.55$, $F_{count} < F_{table}$.
- These results confirm that the sample is homogeneous.

3) Hypothesis Testing (t-Test):

The t-test showed a significant difference between the experimental and control groups. This result indicates that media-based mind mapping significantly improves students' short story writing skills compared to the lecture-based method.



4. Discussion

The results confirm the effectiveness of the media-based mind mapping model in improving short story writing skills among students. Compared to the conventional method, the experimental group demonstrated higher performance in all aspects of writing, including idea generation, narrative organization, and plot development.

1) Enhanced Engagement:

The use of media-based mind mapping allowed students to visualize their ideas more effectively, leading to improved creativity and coherence in their writing.

2) Skill Improvement Across Categories:

A majority of students in the experimental group (58.05%) achieved very good scores (80–100), showcasing the model's capability to foster higher-order thinking and skill mastery.

3) Alignment with Previous Studies:

These findings align with prior research, which highlights the benefits of visual learning tools like mind mapping in enhancing both cognitive and creative writing skills (Nurgiyantoro, 2012).

4) Visual Documentation

Supporting data and visuals, including photos of student activities and sample mind maps, are included to illustrate the engagement and outcomes.

5) Figure 1: Example of a Student's Mind Map

(Image of a sample mind map created by students during the experimental phase.)

6) Figure 2: Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Scores

(Graph showing the improvement in writing scores between the experimental and control groups.)

D. CONCLUSION

The implementation of media-based mind mapping in teaching short story writing at SMP Unismuh Makassar significantly improved students' writing abilities compared to the traditional lecture method. The experimental group achieved a higher average score of 75.48, with 58.05% of students scoring in the "very good" category, while the control group had an average score of 62.03, with no students achieving this category. Statistical tests confirmed that the data were normally distributed and homogeneous, ensuring the reliability of the results.

The findings highlight the effectiveness of media-based mind mapping in fostering creativity, enhancing idea organization, and supporting the writing process. These outcomes align with the study's objective to improve students' short story writing skills through innovative teaching methods.

Recommendations

1. Teachers are encouraged to integrate media-based mind mapping into their writing curriculum to engage students more actively and improve learning outcomes.
2. Future studies should explore the application of this method across other grade levels and subjects to assess its broader applicability.



Limitations

The study was conducted within a limited timeframe and focused on a single school. Expanding the sample size and duration could provide more comprehensive insights into the long-term impact of media-based mind mapping.

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F. AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The contributions of each team member to the community engagement activities and the article writing process are as follows:

- Maria Ulviani (MU): Led the planning, coordination, and overall implementation of the community engagement activities; contributed to article preparation and final revisions.
- Sulvahrul Amin (SA): Assisted in the development and delivery of the mind-mapping teaching method; contributed to data collection and article preparation.
- Hilda Hafid (HH): Conducted impact analysis and results presentation; contributed to article preparation and review.
- Rosmalina Kemala (RK): Supported activity implementation, organized documentation (photos and data), and contributed to article preparation and revisions.

Each member played a crucial role in ensuring the success of this program and the completion of this article.

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