IMPROVING STUDENTS’ READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH SEMANTIC MAPPING STRATEGY
(An Action Research in the Eighth Year Students of SMPN 1 Sine in the 2009/2010 Academic Year)

THESIS

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Language is a means of communication. Communication takes place not only with two or more speakers, but also between a speaker and a text. There should be a kind of interaction between the learner (reader) and the text which is being read in order to be good readers.

Reading is a necessary skill that any learner needs. Unfortunately, how to teach reading has not been given due care in some schools. In the past, according to the traditional view, reading begins with the child's mastering the names of the letters, mastering the letter-sound relationships, then, learning some easy words in isolation, and, finally, reading simple stories with highly controlled vocabularies (Harp and Brewer, 1996: 17). Researchers and teachers as well complain that most learners are not able to understand what they read.

Reading cannot be separated from comprehension. That is why there appear a lot of problems dealing with reading comprehension. Many English learners find it difficult to understand the English text. Very often, they get stuck because of some problems, such as unfamiliar words, their inability in understanding the context, being reluctant, and so forth.

Reading is not an easy skill to master. It is a complex process that requires specialized skill of the reader (Dechant, 1977: 21). Besides, it is also comprehension process as well as writing. According to Nunan (1998: 33),
reading needs identification and also interpretation processes which require the reader’s knowledge about the language structure used in the text and his knowledge about a given topic. It is the complexity that makes some students less interested in this kind of activity. They find it difficult to understand what is on the reading passage since they do not know the technique which can help them to read more effectively and efficiently. This phenomenon happens in almost every language class.

Reading comprehension skills separate the "passive" unskilled readers from the "active" readers. Skilled readers do not just read, they interact with the text. Skilled readers, for instance, predict what will happen next in a story using clues presented in text, create questions about the main idea, message, or plot of the text, and monitor understanding of the sequence, context, or characters (Sanders, 2001: 26).

To be able to achieve the purposes of reading comprehension, one should have some basic reading skills as follows; (1) literal skills (getting the central thought and main idea, recalling and recognizing of facts and information, finding answer to specific questions); (2) interpretive skills (drawing conclusions, generalizing, deriving meaning from context); (3) critical skill (determining the writer’s purpose); and (4) creative skills (applying information into daily life).

Based on the preliminary observation on the teaching-learning process in SMP Negeri 1 Sine, the writer found that there are some problems that arise in students’ reading comprehension. The students still encounter some difficulties in comprehending English texts. In the interview with some students, they said that
they got difficulties in identifying the implicit and explicit information of the text. Besides, many students have low motivation in reading class.

The students' lack of understanding on reading lesson is mainly caused by an inappropriate teaching technique used when the teachers attempted to explain reading materials. The teacher only uses one technique namely, conventional technique. In the reading class, the teacher presents a subject in the text book and asks students to read whether silently or loudly, and then students have to answer the questions that follow. Consequently, the reading lesson becomes monotonous and boring, students lack motivation to read, even if they read, they show negative attitudes. As a result, the students are not able to get good scores in their reading achievement.

Permendiknas no. 24, 2006 at seventh article in point b states that the teachers under Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan Departemen Pendidikan Nasional can develop KTSP curriculum innovatively. It means that the teacher has the right in using method or technique in a teaching process as long as the technique can achieve instructional goals. The teacher has to be able to make an interesting material and to use an interesting technique. One of the ways that may have a significant impact on the teaching reading process is the semantic mapping strategy.

Semantic mapping strategy can be used for, at least, several different instructional purposes. This strategy can assist teachers in planning the instruction by helping them identify the patterns of organization of ideas and the concepts.
A semantic mapping strategy can be useful for introducing the important vocabulary in a selection to be read. It shows students how the terms are interrelated. Teachers can use a semantic mapping to activate and tap student's background knowledge. Also, it can be a helpful reference for students to use in clarifying confusing points as they are reading. Once students are familiar with the nature of the semantic mapping strategy, they can create their own mapping during-reading or post-reading activity.

Steps in the creation of semantic mapping strategy, particularly; the concept and word mapping strategies are: Analyze the concepts and vocabulary in the text. Arrange the words in a map that depicts the interrelationships between the concepts. Add to the diagram the words or concepts that are already understood by the students in order to depict the relationships between what they know and the information in the text.

The semantic mapping strategy or Structured Overview, as it is sometimes called, is a schematic diagram of the major concepts in a portion of text. The researcher of this study uses the semantic mapping strategy in teaching reading at SMPN 1 Sine because it can develop the students’ thinking skills and reading comprehension. This strategy can easily be taught and implemented for the students. The researcher believes that semantic mapping strategy can improve the students’ reading comprehension.
B. Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of the study above, the research problems which arise are as follows:

1. Can semantic mapping strategy improve students’ reading comprehension?
2. What may happen when semantic mapping strategy is implemented in the classroom practice?

C. Limitation of the Problem

In this research, the researcher focuses on improving students’ reading comprehension using semantic mapping strategy. The reading comprehension is limited only on the literal reading and interpretive reading.

D. The Purposes of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine whether the use of semantic mapping strategy can improve the students’ reading comprehension. Besides, the research is also designed to study what may happen when semantic mapping strategy is implemented in the classroom practice.

E. The Benefits of the Study

1. For students
   a) The students’ English reading skill increases.
   b) The students are trained to be capable of reading texts using semantic mapping strategy.
c) The students’ vocabulary will increase automatically.

d) It will give an enjoyable learning situation which can improve the students’ learning motivation.

2. **For teachers**

   a) They can use semantic mapping strategy as an alternative technique in teaching reading.

   b) It stimulates the teacher to find a new approach which is appropriate for teaching reading.

   c) It improves the teachers’ capability to conduct teaching learning activity appropriately.

3. **For other researchers**

   Other researchers can use this research as a reference in improving reading comprehension.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A. The Definition of Reading

Harison and Smith (1980: 23) define reading as the act of responding with appropriate meaning to print or written verbal symbols. It means that reading is the result of interaction between the graphic symbols that represent language and the reader’s language skill, and cognitive skills and knowledge of the words. In this process, the reader tries to recreate the meaning intended by the writer.

According to Wallace (1992: 4), reading as interpreting means reacting to a written text as a piece of communication. In other words, we assume some communicative intent on the writer’s part which the reader has some purposes in attempting to understand.

According to Williams (1996: 11) reading is a process of obtaining meaning from written text. Readers carry out knowledge of the writing system, knowledge of the language, and the ability to interpret meaning from a text.

According to Aebersold and Field (1997: 15) reading is what happens when people look at a text and assign meaning to the written symbols in that text. The similar definition stated by Nunan (1998: 33) that reading is a process of decoding written symbols, working from a smaller unit (individual letters) to larger ones (words, clauses, and sentences).
Based on the theories above, it can be concluded that reading is a more complex process to obtain ideas or meaning from a text, which is symbolized in written or printed language.

B. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is not essentially different from other kinds of comprehension. Comprehension is sometimes, but not always related to the speed of reading. Reading comprehension means the ability to understand the material given by the author.

Jarolimek (1985: 243) gives the definition of reading comprehension as follows:

Reading with comprehension means that the reader is able to extract from the selection on the essential facts and understanding, visualize details and sense the relatedness of the facts.

From the statement above, it can be known that reading with comprehension covers not only reading the selection on the essential facts, but also trying to comprehend or understand the message in the selection of the essential facts. One indication that a reader already comprehends the selection is when he can answer the questions based on the selection.

Jarolimek (1985: 244) points out that reading comprehension is social studies consisting of at least four components:

1) Getting the literal meaning or a general understanding of what is being communicated.

2) Understanding and remembering facts detail that supports the ideas.
3) Recognizing and remembering the sequence of ideas or events presented, and

4) Following direction.

All the four components above show that in reading comprehension the reader has to understand and remember the author’s ideas in the selection and try to find the supporting detail that support the ideas.

1. Strategies on Reading Comprehension

Grellet (1998: 4) offers some strategies in reading comprehension as follows:

a. **Scanning**
   Scanning is quickly going through a text to find a particular piece of information. The readers only try to locate specific information (ex: name, a date, etc) and do not follow the linearity of the passage.

b. **Skimming**
   Skimming is quickly running one’s eyes over a text to get the gist of it. It is more thorough activity which requires an overall view of the text and implies a definite reading competence.

c. **Extensive Reading**
   Extensive reading is reading longer text, usually for one’s pleasure. This is a fluency activity mainly involving global understanding. Reader has general understanding without necessarily reading every word.
d. Intensive Reading

Intensive reading is reading shorter texts to extract specific information. This is more an accuracy activity involving reading for detail. Readers are expected to understand everything they read and to be able to answer detailed vocabulary and comprehension questions.

2. Factors Influencing Reading Comprehension

It is a fact that most students have some difficulties in comprehending a text. Those difficulties cause deficiency in the reading process. Inadequate comprehension is usually created by some factors. According to Cushenbery (1985: 62) there are several factors which influence reading comprehension so that the comprehension is not optimum. They are:

a. Emotional Factor

Learners usually become severely frustrated when they are not able to comprehend reading material satisfactorily. Their unsuccessful attempts to read, which makes them conspicuous in a socially unfavorable way, are the reason they are disappointed and ashamed. Children who are depressed or hyperactive have great difficulty in reading. Their home environment which is not harmonious with their psychology problems can hinder their concentration.

b. Intelligence Comprehension

Wolf (1987: 307) stated that reading comprehension can be defined as information processing. It assumes that reading comprehension is a cognitive
process. First, the input is perceived in its visual mode and then it is processed in a general cognitive level. Therefore, a particular level of comprehension needs a particular level of intelligence. There are different levels of intelligence needed in dealing with comprehension questions at the literal, interpretive, critical, and creative level.

c. Physical Factors
Learners who have health problems such as obesity, malnutrition, neurological difficulties and granular disturbances may have a significant negative impact on reading in general and comprehension in particular.

d. Background Experience
Those who have limited experiences with words in the number of settings will have difficulty with comprehension in general because of their low level of schemata. Besides, Baker and Brown (1985: 32) state that the ability to grasp the logical organization of the text is firmly rooted in the reader’s prior knowledge of the world. If a reader does not have the relevant background information, it may be difficult or impossible for him to detect the logical organization of the text being read. It can be said that efficient comprehension requires the ability to relate the textual material to the reader’s existing or prior knowledge.

3. Level of Reading Comprehension
Some people say that the act of reading only consists of pronouncing words. They consider that comprehension is not important. Concentrating on
pronouncing words rather than comprehending the essence of the passage is a waste of precious time. Based on the idea above, the teacher needs to emphasize the basic comprehension skills. According to Burns et. Al (1984: 177) there are four levels of comprehension:

a. Literal Reading

Literal reading or reading for literal comprehension which involves acquiring information that directly stated in a section, is important and also prerequisite for higher level understanding. At this level, the readers are able to comprehend what the author has said.

b. Interpretive Reading

Interpretive reading involving reading between the lines or making inferences, it is the process of deriving ideas that are implied rather than directly stated. At this level, the readers are able to understand what the author means.

c. Critical Reading

Critical reading is evaluating written material comparing the ideas discovered in the material, which is known standards and drawing conclusion about their accuracy, appropriateness. Critical reading depends upon literal comprehension and grasping implied ideas is especially important.

d. Creative Reading

Creative reading involves going beyond the material presented the author. It requires readers to think as they read, just as critical reading does, and it also requires them to use their imagination.
In teaching reading, a teacher must teach the four levels of comprehension level. First, use a discussion or questioning technique that brings out just what the author said or in other words, in pre-reading; a teacher ask questions related to the topic before he starts his reading. It is probably more effective to develop desire to read the article and help them arrive at a literal understanding of the piece to be read. Then, after the students have completed reading the assigned section, teacher and students should discuss it.

Based on the theories above, it can be concluded that reading is a complex process to obtain ideas or meaning from a text which is symbolized in written or printed language. Comprehension in reading means that when someone reads he must understand what he reads. It can be said that in reading comprehension, there should be an interaction between the author and the reader. The author expresses his ideas in the form of written language and the reader has to understand the meaning of the text intended by the author.

To be able to achieve the purposes of reading comprehension, one should have some basic reading skills as follows; (1) literal skills (getting the central thought and main idea, recalling and recognizing of facts and information, finding answer to specific questions); (2) interpretive skills (drawing conclusions, generalizing, deriving meaning from context); (3) critical skill (determining the writer’s purpose); and (4) creative skills (applying information into daily life).

In relation to the study, those skills can be implemented into two levels of understanding as follows:
1. **Reading the lines**

   Learners are able to understand the literal meaning i.e., responding to the precise meaning of familiar words in their context and inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words from contextual clues and also visualizing the scenes and events the words conjure up.

2. **Reading between the lines**

   Learners are able to get the writer’s intent and purpose, to interpret clues to character and plot, and to distinguish between fact and fiction.

C. **Semantic Mapping**

1. **Definition and Techniques**

   Hanf (1971: 225) describes mapping as “a verbal picture of ideas which are organized and symbolized by the reader”. It is a tool for increasing reading comprehension and retention. The map contains the main idea in the center of the paper with spokes radiating from the center. These spokes are labeled with words or phrases that represent the subordinate idea.

   Sinatra, et al. (1986: 4) defines semantic mapping as a graphic arrangement showing how the major and minor ideas are related in a written work. The map consists of nodes which can be drawn as circles, rectangles, or squares containing key words or phrases, and connecting links in the form of lines or arrows drawn between the nodes.

   Davidson (1982: 52) defines semantic mapping as a map or diagrams of relationship or ideas, a graphic representation of their interpretation of information
in the text or their personal responses to the text based on their knowledge. The maps are verbal graphic in nature with words and phrases connected by lines.

Maggard, defines semantic mapping as a term which describes a variety of strategies designed to show how key words or concepts are related to one another through graphic representation. (in http://www.miyazaki-mic.jp/jmaggard/history.html).

Huynh (2002: 47) states that semantic mapping falls under the broad category of graphic organizers and can be used in any subject area to help students understand relationships and to build concepts about broad topics. Semantic mapping allows students to see relationships that may be difficult to visualize. Semantic maps reflect a way to (1) illustrate the attributes related to an idea or concept and (2) show the relationships among those elements, usually in a way that is not possible through verbal means. The process of making a semantic map is sometimes called webbing, probably because the finished product can resemble a spider web.

Further description of semantic mapping is provided by Johnson, Pittelman, and Heimlich (1986: 779) who describe the technique as “a categorical structuring of information in a graphic form. It is an individualized content approach in that students are required to relate new words to their own experiences and prior knowledge”.

From the above definitions, it can be concluded that semantic mapping is a graphic arrangement designed in the form of nodes (circles or squares) and connecting links to show how key concepts or main ideas and subordinate ideas
are related to one another. It functions as an advanced organizer to activate student’s background knowledge.

There are a number of ways to create maps. Widomski (1983, cited in Maggard,) promotes a combination of semantic mapping and directed reading activities to enable readers to make use of schemata so that they might achieve a fuller understanding of a text. Widomski says that word webs always consist of the following parts: a core question (which could be the main idea of the text, for example), the web strands (the answers to the core question), the strand supports/supporting details (the facts and inferences in a text), and the strand ties (the graphic representations of connections or lines drawn between major and minor ideas on a semantic map).

Maggard. (http://www.miyazaki-mic.jp/imaggard/history.html) describes the procedure of semantic mapping used by Johnson & Pearson (1984) as follows: First, instructors choose a core concept of a text and display it visually so that all students can see it. The core concepts might be written on a blackboard, on an overhead transparency, on a large sheet of paper, or even displayed from a computer which has an overhead projection system. Next, students are encouraged to write down a series of words or phrases associated with the core concept. After brainstorming and generating lists of words or phrases relevant to the topic, students are asked to compare their lists with their peers. Then students are asked to illustrate relationships between each word on their list by linking the words or phrases together with lines.
During the process of constructing a semantic map, instructors can identify what is in and what is outside their learners’ level of awareness in regards to core ideas and supporting details. This can provide instructors with important diagnostic information which can help them lead the class in an appropriate direction. It is only after students have completed the pre-reading maps that they read the text.

Recently, semantic mapping has been used in a variety of ways, including the following (Maggard in http://www.miyazaki-mic.jp/immaggard/history.html)

a. As a technique for increasing vocabulary and improving reading comprehension
b. As a means of improving the teaching of study skills
c. As a framework for identifying the structural organization of texts
d. As a means of teaching critical thinking skills
e. As a link between reading and writing instruction

The following are examples of semantic mapping:

![Semantic Map Example](image.png)

*Figure 1 An example of Sinatra’s semantic mapping*
Sinatra (1986: 5) described different formats of semantic map; (1) the narrative sequential, format arranges information in several parallel hierarchical strands, (2) the thematic or descriptive map displays elements and details about person, places, or things around a central theme, and (3) the comparative and contrastive map; relationship among concepts by displaying how class, examples and attributes are related.

Figure 2 An example of Johnson et al. semantic mapping.

2. Application of Semantic Mapping in Reading Comprehension

Semantic mapping can be used before, during, or after reading activity. Semantic mapping activities that are carried out during the pre-reading phase of a
lesson is to activate learners’ schemata and to introduce them to main point of the text. As a pre-reading activity, teachers can use core questions to enhance the comprehension, main ideas, supporting details, pattern of textual organization, as well as character and plot development. In this phase, a semantic map is developed by placing the central idea in a circle in the center of a sheet of paper. Students then brainstorm words and phrases that relate to the topic. “Key words” are then written on spokes radiating from the central topic word (Johnson and Pittleman; 1986: 778-783).

During mapping activities learners are instructed to make associations with the main ideas in a text and their supporting details via word collocations, co-ordinates, super-ordinates and synonyms. Furthermore, they are asked to make associations between reading passages (e.g, short stories, newspaper, articles and novels) and what was inside of their level of awareness prior to reading the texts. In other words, learners are asked to create their own unique semantic networks of association with a given text (Maggard in http://www.miyazakimic.jp/jmaggard/history.html).

Heimlich and Pittleman (1986) also encourage post-reading mapping. During the post-reading phase of a lesson learners can add new ideas, concepts and even categories to their pre-reading maps. The final phase of map construction comes when the learners are asked to recall the details of a text and to discuss and graph new information onto their pre-existing maps.
If semantic maps are generated during both phases, it is wise for students and teachers to use different colors on the second map. This makes it easier to see which words or phrases are new to the learners.

The results of semantic mapping as described above could certainly represent a schema about the subject, and it would more resemble students’ schema for the subject. (Johnson and Pittelman; 1986: 778-783).

3. Classroom Application of Semantic Mapping

Zaid (1995: 9) explains that there are three places in a lesson where semantic mapping may be used; as pre-reading strategy to activate students’ prior knowledge or to help the teacher in assessing the students’ readiness to do the assignment. The teacher asks the students to think of ideas related to the topic. This brainstorming phase allow students to make use of their prior knowledge or experience. Thus prior knowledge can be used as a stepping block to new knowledge. This phase gives the teacher insight into the level of readiness of each student to new topic. As a strategy to allow students’ to record what they are learning during reading. As they are reading, the students write down the new information they gained from the text and decide what to add to or to eliminate from the pre-reading map. New information is thereby integrated with prior knowledge. As a post-reading strategy to allow them to integrate or synthesize what they have studied. After reading, the students discuss the information acquired from the reading and how to modify the pre-reading map. The class as a whole decides the final shape of the map. It serves as a visual representation of the
knowledge they gained from the reading. The steps in teaching and learning process using semantic mapping strategy are described as follows:

a. Pre-Reading

1) Write the topic of the text and draw a circle around it.

2) Ask students to think about the topic and share as many words as they can that relate to the topic.

3) Discuss and record on the map information and words that students suggest.

4) Write the information in cluster.

5) Discuss each of the cluster or categories of words and determine appropriate labels or headings.

b. During Reading

1) Have the students read the text.

2) Have the students use their notes during a discussion period in which they share the information about the topic gained through their independent reading.

3) Through discussion, elicit main ideas and supporting details. Record these on the map using the main idea headings, and supporting details as the information listed under the categories. Use colored pens so that each major category and its detail are written in different color. This helps
students to associate the supporting details with the main idea. Add new information to the map.

c. Post Reading

1) After the students have finished reading the text, add new information about the topic to the map suggested.

2) After the students have had an opportunity to add all of the new information to the map, have them make their own copies of the semantic map from the chalkboard.

D. Rationale

Reading is very essential in that it is the basic skill needed in learning any subjects. Reading is a thinking activity which involves comprehension strategies of the reader to gain knowledge. When a student can read texts effectively, he is a successful reader. By doing so, he can absorb and transfer the desired information into his brain and keep it inside. In other words, he can obtain any knowledge or information he reads when he is able to comprehend the reading text. Thus, a successful reader can successfully learn.

Reading comprehension can be defined as a thought process through which readers become aware of idea, understand it in terms of their experiential background, and interpret it in relation to their own needs and purpose. Comprehension involves almost every type of understanding and thinking.
Therefore, in reading lesson, teacher should use the techniques which explore and maintain students’ thinking process.

As stated in the previous chapter, students have no interests and motivation in reading class because the teachers use one technique, method or media over and over again. The reading class becomes monotonous and the students get bored of this. So, teachers should be creative to solve these problems. In line with this, the writer proposed a solution, that is, by using semantic mapping technique in teaching reading to improve students’ reading comprehension.

It is widely believed that learners learn better if they are taught to build up relations between the terms in a text. Semantic mapping strategy is based on building up new relationships between the components of the text. Semantic mapping technique is used to motivate and involve students in the thinking, reading, and writing aspects. It enhances vocabulary development by helping student link new information with previous experience.

Accordingly, the researcher believes that it is necessary to use semantic mapping strategy for teaching reading comprehension. Students need to read about what they are interested in and to interact and communicate effectively.

E. Hypothesis

Based on the related theories explained above, the writer proposes the following research hypothesis:
The use of semantic mapping strategy can improve the reading comprehension of class VIII G students of SMP Negeri 1 Sine in the academic year of 2009/2010.
CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHOD

A. Setting and the Time of the Research

The study is a classroom action research, which implements semantic mapping strategy to improve students’ reading comprehension. This study will take place in SMP Negeri 1 Sine, Ngawi Regency, East Java. The location of the school is about 30 kilometers from the centre of Ngawi city. The school has 23 classes (seven of the ninth grade, eight of the eighth grade, and eight of the seventh grade). There were five English teachers in the school and all of them are SI graduates.

Time allotment for English is 4 x 45 minutes a week (2 x 45 minutes for each meeting). This research will be conducted in April to May, 2010.

B. Research Subject

The subject of the research is class VIII G students of SMP Negeri 1 Sine. There are 38 students in the classroom. The English teacher and the researcher are the agents. The other English teachers assist the researcher. They will be as analysts or observers.

There are some reasons for choosing class VIII G students as the subject of the research. The first reason is they were assumed to have an adequate knowledge of vocabulary and grammar which will help them in understanding or
comprehending reading texts. The second one is they have no interests and motivation in following the reading class.

C. Research Method

The method used in this research is an action research. There are various definitions of action research stated by some experts. Kemmis as quoted by Hopkins (1993: 44) gives the definition of action research as follows:

Action research is a form of self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participators in a social situation (including education) in order to improve the rationality and justice of (a) their own social or educational practice, (b) their understanding of these practices and (c) the situation in which practices are carried out.

Mills (2000: 6) states that action research is any systematic inquiry conducted by teacher researchers, principals, school counselors, or other stakeholders in teaching-learning environment to gather information about the ways how their particular schools operate, how they teach, and how well their students learn. Moreover, Nunan (1997: 18) argues that action research has distinctive feature that is those affected by planned changes have the primary responsibility for deciding on courses of critically informed action which seem likely to lead to improvement, for evaluating the results of strategies tried out in practice. Ebbut as quoted by Hopkins (1993: 45) states that action research is about the systematic study of attempts to improve educational practice by group or participants and by means of own reflection upon the effects of these actions.

Based on several definitions stated by some experts, the writer concludes that action research is any systematic inquiry undertaken by participators in a
social situation (including education) which is directed towards greater understanding and improvement of practices where those practices are carried out.

D. Procedures of the Research

1. Planning

In this step, the researcher shares ideas with the collaborator in order to discuss the lesson plan, material, media, time, schedule, and instrument for observation. The topic of reading comprehension in the lesson plan is based on the syllabus in the curriculum. The reading material that the researcher uses is narrative and recount texts because those are the text types that are taught in the eighth grade of junior high school. The researcher uses video shooting to record all proven activities in the class. By this way, the comparison actually can be analyzed. Photographs, journals, field notes, interview questions sheet, are also necessary to support in observation.

2. Implementing

The process of teaching reading using semantic mapping strategy begins. The semantic mapping strategy is applied based on the following procedure:

a. The researcher selects a text at the appropriate reading level.

b. The researcher prepares questions to lead students through the story map, for example 'Where did the story take place'? 'When did the story take place'?...etc.
c. The researcher discusses the organization of the story by explaining that any story has a beginning, middle, and end.

d. The researcher explains the visual story map and relates it to the story organization.

e. The researcher asks students to read the story and to fill the map but without looking the ready-made story map done by the researcher.

f. The researcher asks students about other stories they learned and asks them to compare them to the story they have been taught by the story map.

3. Observing

In this step, the writer as the practitioner will implement semantic mapping strategies in the teaching and learning process, and the English teacher as the collaborators will observe students’ understanding, participation, and activities in the teaching-learning process. Observation is one of the techniques which is used in collecting the data. The result of the observation is recorded on observation sheets as the data.

4. Reflecting

After carrying out the teaching process using semantic mapping technique, the researcher and the collaborators recite the result of the activities which occur in classroom as the reflection of the action. They evaluate the process and the result of the implementation of semantic mapping technique in the reading class. It is a basic consideration to make plan and to conduct the next meeting. It will
also be used to answer the hypothesis that has been proposed by the writer before the action is carried out.

E. Technique for Collecting Data

To obtain the data, the writer uses some instruments, namely: observation, interview, questionnaire, and test.

1. Observation

The researcher will observe and make research diary while the observer will make field notes of all activities done in the process of teaching and learning reading comprehension through semantic mapping strategy. In doing the observation, the researcher is helped by two collaborators.

2. Interview

This technique is held at the beginning and the end of the research to know the students’ view of the teaching-learning process, especially in teaching reading.

3. Questionnaire

The questionnaire is a set of questions provided to obtain responses indirectly as it is occurred in non-face-to-face situation. It is given in the form of written questions with available answers in ranged-degree. It is aimed to know the students’ personal problem faced in reading. The researcher uses questionnaire in the preliminary research and at the end of the implementation.

4. Test

a. Reading Comprehension Test
The researcher conducts tests of reading comprehension. There are a pre-test and a post-test which are used to collect the data. Each test contains 25 items. The test consists of text and questions which are related to the text that has been taught to the students.

b. Try-Out Test

The test instrument will be tried out first before it will be implemented in the teaching and learning process. It is aimed to know the validity and reliability of the test instrument. The test instruments are analyzed using internal validity and reliability.

F. Technique for Analyzing Data

The classroom action research in this study will be successful if there is an improvement or enhancement of students’ reading comprehension. It can be shown when the students can do the test, feel easy, and enjoy learning reading in the classroom. After the data are collected, the researcher analyzes the scores from those tests by calculating the mean of the pre-test and the post-test. Then, the hypothesis of this research is tested by using statistical analysis. He uses it to answer whether there are significant differences between students’ reading comprehension before and after the action.

The data which are collected are analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The qualitative data that are taken during the teaching-learning process are analyzed using Constant Comparative Method as suggested by Strauss and Glesser (in Moleong, 2004: 288-289). They say, in general, that the data analysis
includes data reduction, data classification, data synthesis, and action hypothesis. In analyzing the data, the researcher investigated the field notes made regularly by the researcher. He also evaluated the teaching and learning process by considering the input and suggestions from the English teacher and collaborators. The classroom action research would be successful if there was an improvement of students’ reading comprehension. The success could be seen when the students could do the test. Besides, the students’ response and reaction to the lesson was better than before where they enjoyed and felt comfortable in learning reading comprehension in the classroom.

The quantitative data are analyzed using descriptive statistics. It is done to compare the students’ reading comprehension before and after each cycle or the result of the pre-test and post-test. The results of the test are analyzed using a formula proposed by Arikunto (1979: 150). The formula is as follows:

1. Mean

The mean of the pre-test and the post-test can be calculated with the formulas as follows:

\[
\overline{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N} \quad \overline{Y} = \frac{\sum Y}{N}
\]

In which:

- \( \overline{X} \) = means of pre-test scores
- \( \overline{Y} \) = means of post-test scores
- \( N \) = the number of sample
2. t-test of non-independent

To know whether there is some progression or not, the researcher compares all those score using t-test. The formula as follows:

\[
t = \frac{\overline{D}}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum D^2 - (\sum D)^2}{N(N-1)}}}
\]

Notes:
- \( t \) = the t-value for non independent (correlated) means
- \( D \) = the difference between the paired scores
- \( \overline{D} \) = the mean of the differences
- \( \sum D^2 \) = the sum of the squared difference scores
- \( N \) = the number of pairs

Finally, by analyzing data from observation, interview, questionnaire, and test, the writer is able to draw a conclusion whether semantic mapping can improve the students’ reading comprehension or not.
CHAPTER IV
RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of the research is to improve students’ reading comprehension through semantic mapping technique. The result of the research implementation is presented in Chapter four which consists of two sections. The first section is the process of the research and the second one is the discussion.

A. Process of the Research

1. Introduction

The research was conducted in collaboration with the English teacher of SMPN 1 Sine. The researcher was the teacher who implemented the action research, and the English teacher was the observer.

Before the researcher implemented the research, he did some observations. He found that the class situation of the English lesson, especially in reading was still monotonous and the class was not active. The teacher used to ask the students to read loudly together, translate the text, and then answer the questions. The students tended to be passive during the lesson. They sometimes did not pay attention to the lesson. Moreover, the students’ reading comprehension was still low. Besides, in the interview with some students before the research, they said that when completing the reading comprehension questions, they could complete the task in reading material merely by matching the words and the sentences in the
tasks with the words and the sentences in the text without knowing what the text told them about.

Based on the reasons above, the researcher proposed the use of semantic mapping strategy as a solution in teaching reading. The researcher believed that semantic mapping strategy could improve the students’ reading comprehension.

2. Research Implementation

The implementation of teaching reading comprehension through semantic mapping consisted of two cycles. The first cycle consisted of five meetings. One meeting for the pre-test, three meetings for delivering the material, and one meeting for the post-test. The second cycle consisted of four meetings. Three meetings for delivering the material and one meeting for the post-test. Each meeting took 90 minutes. In all cycles, narrative and recount texts were used as teaching material.

a. Cycle 1

1) Planning the Action

Finding the fact that the students’ reading comprehension was low, which showed their low achievement, the researcher planned to teach them by choosing a certain teaching technique. The chosen technique is semantic mapping. The researcher believed that semantic mapping technique was an appropriate technique to improve students’ reading comprehension.

To implement that technique, the researcher constructed a lesson plan as teacher’s guidance in teaching, prepared the materials based on the curriculum,
made students’ worksheet consisted of some tasks and everything related to the action. The action plan would be implemented by the researcher. The collaborator observed the whole process during the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

2) Implementing the Action

The action plan was implemented by the researcher. In the first cycle, he introduced narrative and recount texts. He guided the students to analyze the text and how to comprehend it. There were four texts that were used in this cycle. Each meeting used one text. The implementation of semantic mapping technique is described for each meeting as follows:

a) Meeting 1

The first meeting was held on Tuesday, April 6th 2010. In this meeting the pre-test was conducted. This test was held to know the students’ achievement in reading comprehension before the action plan was implemented.

b) Meeting 2

1) Opening

The second meeting was held on Thursday, April 8th 2010. The lesson started at 07.00 a.m. The researcher and collaborator came to the class, greeted the students, and checked students’ attendance. Beginning the lesson, the students looked very fresh because it was the first lesson of that day. In this meeting there were 38 students in the classroom.
As planned before, the researcher introduced semantic mapping technique used to improve reading comprehension. Using black marker, the researcher drew a large oval on the whiteboard and wrote inside it “The Monkey and the Crocodile” the topic that was going to be discussed. Then, he asked the students to tell him what they knew about the topic. The researcher prepared questions to lead students through the story map. The questions were: “Where does the story occur?, “When does the story occur?, “Who is the main character?, etc.

The researcher recorded their responses on the whiteboard; listing them in the order they were given. When no further suggestions were raised, the researcher asked the students if they saw any ways to group their ideas.

2) Main activity

The researcher gave an explanation about the strategies to analyze the text. He gave a short explanation about the material of that day that was a narrative text. The text that would be discussed was “The Monkey and the Crocodile”.

Firstly, the researcher gave each student a copy of the text. The researcher asked the students to read the text silently.

Secondly, the researcher explored the students’ knowledge about the topic of that day to build students’ background knowledge. He asked them to recall their knowledge about narrative text, including the purpose, generic structure and language features. He reminded students that most stories have a beginning, which includes the time of the story, where it takes place, and introduces the main character(s). An event then sets a problem or conflict in motion, which is followed
by attempts to reach the goal or resolve the conflict. Finally, the goal or conflict is resolved in some way and the main character(s) react to the outcome.

Thirdly, the researcher drew a rectangle on the whiteboard. The researcher wrote the word "Orientation" in the rectangle. He drew another rectangle under the first one, and wrote the word "Problem" in the second rectangle. Then, he drew a third rectangle under the first two, and wrote the word "Solution" in the third rectangle. The researcher made notes in each rectangle.

Figure 3: Story map “The Monkey and the Crocodile”
Finally, after the students had finished “personalizing” the reading map, they were given the opportunity to offer new information for supplementing the whiteboard version of the map. The researcher recorded the new information. As he had expected, because of the differences among students’ experiences and interpretations of what was important in the reading, there were some disagreements about the final shape the map should take. This part of the activity is the most valuable because it produces an interaction among students.

3) Closing activity

Before closing the lesson, the researcher evaluated the students’ reading comprehension. It was done by giving the tasks based on the text given before. During the activities, the researcher monitored the class in finding the equivalents of the unfamiliar words and in discussing the text. Due to the limitation of time, the researcher asked the students to continue their work at home.

c) Meeting 3

1) Opening

The third meeting was held on Tuesday, April 13th 2010. The researcher and collaborator came to the class, greeted the students, and checked students’ attendance. The researcher started the meeting by reviewing the lesson of the last meeting. After that, the researcher continued his lesson by warming the students up first. The researcher gave the clues about the topic that will be given by asking
“Do you know the story of “The legend of Toba Lake”? “Where does the story occur?, etc.

2) Main activity

The researcher selected the topic of narrative text from the Developing Competence in English book, entitled “The Legend of Toba Lake”. The researcher asked the students to read the text silently. Then, he asked them to construct a semantic map. In the beginning, some of the students could not make the concept well. The researcher guided the students how to construct the map. The researcher constructed a map through nodes and lines bond through establishing relationships between the words/phrases taken from the text. Then, the researcher clarified the way the words/phrases are constructed in a map, and taught them how to read the map well. The students paid attention enthusiastically.

After constructing the map, the researcher prepared questions to ask students about the words/phrases illustrated on the map. The questions were: “Where does the story occur? “ They answered: “Around a narrow valley of Toba hill.” “Who are the main characters? “They answered: “Fisherman, beautiful princess and a daughter.” Most of the students could answer the questions well. Then, the researcher asked them to create a map similar to the map they were taught by the researcher.
Figure 4: Story map “The Legend of Toba Lake”.

Problem: The fish had turned into a beautiful princess.

Solution: They lived happily and harmoniously with their only daughter.

Major problem: The princess heard that and felt that he had broken their promise.

Major resolution: The place turned into lake Toba and the hill into Samosir island.
3) Closing activity

Before ending the class, the researcher evaluated students’ comprehension by giving tasks which should be done by using semantic mapping strategy.

d) Meeting 4

1) Opening

The fourth meeting was conducted on Thursday, April 15th 2010. Seeing that the students were ready with the lesson, the researcher began to carry out brainstorming activities. The topic that would be discussed was about a recount text. The instructional process was the same as the process in the third meeting.

2) Main activity

The researcher gave an explanation about the strategies to analyze the text. He gave a short explanation about the material of that day that was a recount text. The text that would be discussed was “Unlucky Sunday”.

Firstly, the researcher gave each student a copy of the text. The researcher asked the students to read the text silently.

Secondly, the researcher explored the students’ knowledge about the topic of that day to build students’ background knowledge. He asked them to recall their knowledge about a recount text. The purpose of the recount text is to retell somebody about event in the past time. The text organization is orientation, events, and reorientation. The researcher explained to the students that the content of a recount text is organized based on the event.
Thirdly, the researcher drew a rectangle on the whiteboard. The researcher wrote the word "Orientation" in the rectangle. He drew another rectangle under the first one, and wrote the word "Events" in the second rectangle. Then, he drew a third rectangle under the first two, and wrote the word "Reorientation" in the third rectangle. The researcher made notes in each rectangle.

Finally, after students had finished “personalizing” the reading map, they were given the opportunity to offer new information supplementing the whiteboard version of the map. The researcher recorded the new information. As he had expected, because of the differences among students’ experiences and
interpretations of what was important in the reading, there were some disagreements about the final shape the map should take. This part of the activity is the most valuable because it produces an interaction among students.

3) Closing activity

Before closing the lesson, the researcher evaluated the students’ reading comprehension. It was done by giving the tasks based on the text given before.

e) Meeting 5

The fifth meeting was held on Tuesday, April 20th 2010. In this meeting, Post-test 1 was conducted. This test was held to know the students’ achievement in reading comprehension after the action plan was implemented.

3) Observing the Action

Observing is an important aspect in a classroom action research, because it can help the researcher gain a better understanding of his own research. When the researcher implemented the semantic mapping technique in teaching reading comprehension, the process was observed and the result can be explained as follows:

a. The first meeting

In this meeting, the pre-test was conducted. This test was held to know the students’ achievement in reading comprehension before the action plan was implemented. From the pre-test result, the mean of the students’ scores was 55.89.
b. The second meeting

In the second meeting, the teaching and learning process ran slowly. There were some students who were not active in the teaching and learning process. In brainstorming the topic, most of the students still felt hesitant to express their opinion because they were not familiar with the researcher yet. Only a few students were eager to give a response. When the researcher explained the topic, the students paid attention to him. While the researcher was giving instruction about how they would construct semantic mapping, they were confused. Some students had not understood the way to construct semantic mapping yet.

c. The third meeting

In the third meeting, the researcher stimulated the students’ prior knowledge. He asked the students to brainstorm on the topic. Unlike in the second meeting, the researcher did not have to give much encouragement to the students to express their opinion. Yet, he did not limit the time for the students to brainstorm. The students tended to be more relaxed compared with the previous meeting. There were some students who began to show up their interest in the lesson.

Based on the collaborator view, the students were more active to join the teaching and learning activities. The students did not feel shy to express their opinion. When the researcher instructed them to draw the information from the text, the students could make it well. However, there were some students who were still passive; they did not give their opinion or their comment because they
were shy to speak in English. There were also some students who could not make the semantic mapping well.

In general, the teaching and learning process in the third meeting ran better than that in the previous meeting. The class was alive and the students enjoyed joining the lesson.

d. The fourth meeting

In the fourth meeting, the students were very active and enthusiastic in doing the activities. First, most of them paid attention to the researcher’s explanation. Some students even reconfirmed it by asking whether they would use the same technique like in the previous meeting. Second, most of the students could easily answer the researcher’s questions about the topic. Third, most of them were actively involved in the brainstorming activity. Fourth, most of the students could construct the map quickly. They could analyze the text faster than before.

In general, it can be said that the teaching learning process ran well in the fourth meeting.

e. The fifth meeting

In this meeting, Post-test 1 was conducted. This test was held to know the students’ achievement in reading comprehension after the action plan was implemented.
The result of Post-test 1 showed improvement of students’ mean score. The mean score increased from 55.89 in the pre-test to 63.16 in the post-test.

4) Reflecting

From the observation, the researcher and the collaborator noted that the process of teaching and learning using semantic mapping generally ran well. In analyzing the data, both researcher and collaborator analyzed the strength and weaknesses of semantic mapping technique. They were described as follow:

a. The Strength

There were some positive results in the teaching and learning process during the first cycle as follows:

a) Using semantic mapping in teaching reading attracted the students’ curiosity. The students tried to understand the text.

b) There was an improvement of students’ reading comprehension. It could be observed from the result of the pre-test and the post-test. The mean score increased from 55.89 in the pre-test to 63.16 in the post-test.

b. The Weaknesses

There were some weaknesses in the teaching and learning process during the first cycle as follows:

1. Some students could not identify the implicit information of the texts.

2. Some students were still passive in the teaching and learning process.

3. Some students were bored and did not pay attention to the lesson.

4. The researcher did not use media in the teaching and learning process.
5) Revising the Plan

To solve the problems that appeared in Cycle 1, the researcher revised the plan for the next cycle so that the weaknesses would not occur anymore. Based on the result of the evaluation above, the researcher then made some improvements in applying the semantic mapping strategy as follows:

a) In identifying the implicit information of the texts, the researcher gave some more examples and exercises to be practiced.

b) The researcher used pictures related to the topic as instructional media. It would attract the students’ attention and motivate them to join the teaching-learning process.

c) In conducting the teaching and learning process, the researcher divided the class into some groups. It was hoped that the students would work with others and learn from them.

a. Cycle 2

1) Planning the Action

In Cycle 2 the researcher and the collaborator made some revisions and improvements in the lesson plan and some aspects in it, especially the use of instructional media. Even so, the planning of the action plan in Cycle 2 was not totally different from that in Cycle 1.
2) Implementing the Action

In implementing the action plan, the researcher was assisted by the collaborator who acted as the observer this time. In the second cycle, he introduced narrative and recount texts. He guided the students to analyze the text and how to comprehend it. There were three texts that were used in this cycle. Each meeting used one text. The implementation of semantic mapping technique is described for each meeting as follows:

a) Meeting 1

1) Opening

Meeting 1 was conducted on Thursday, April 29th 2010. At the beginning of the class, the researcher started the lesson by greeting the class and explained the objectives of the lesson of that day. He also told the students that he would use the technique that has been introduced in the previous meeting. After that, he conducted brainstorming activities to activate the students’ prior knowledge about the topic of the lesson. He showed them a picture of a Prambanan temple, gave them some questions related to the topic such as: “Have you ever seen the temple?” and “Which temples have you visited?”, and introduced the topic to be discussed in the meeting, which was “Prambanan Temple”. To expand the brainstorming activities, he also asked the students to mention the things that they usually find at a temple and the activities that people do at the temple.

Afterwards, the researcher asked the students to classify the information about the temple and recorded the information in the form of a semantic map. Then, the researcher divided the class into groups.
2) Main activity

The researcher distributed the students’ worksheet and asked them to read the text entitled “Prambanan Temple” silently and do the assignment in the worksheet. The assignment was making a semantic map based on the information they obtained from the text. After that, the researcher asked them to report their work. He asked one member of the group to state the main idea and the supporting ideas of each paragraph and to draw the semantic map on the board. He also invited some volunteers from another group to complete the map when some information in each paragraph was not complete yet. The activity was continued until the semantic map of the text was complete. The semantic map made by the students is presented in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Story map “Prambanan Temple”
3) Closing activity

Before ending the class, the researcher evaluated students’ comprehension by giving tasks which should be done by using semantic mapping strategy. It was done by giving the tasks based on the text given before. During the activities, the researcher monitored the class, in finding the equivalents of the unfamiliar words and in discussing the text. Due to the limitation of the time, the researcher asked the students to continue their work at home.

b) Meeting 2

1) Opening

The second meeting was held on Tuesday, May 4th 2010. The researcher told the students that he would use the technique that had been introduced in the previous meeting. Seeing that the students were ready with the lesson, the researcher began to carry out brainstorming activities. The topic that would be discussed was “The Boys and the Frogs”. The researcher asked the students to tell everything they knew about the topic. Since the students knew about the topic already, they automatically gave the information and classified them into some clusters.

2) Main activity

Like in the first meeting, the researcher grouped the students randomly. Afterwards, the researcher chose one of the students in the group as the group leader and gave them instructions of what they should do with the group in the next phase. Then, the researcher distributed a worksheet to the students. He asked
them to read the text silently, to find the Indonesian equivalent of some unfamiliar words, to read the text carefully, and to develop a semantic map based on the information they obtained from the text. While the students were busy with the assignment, the researcher and the observer monitored the class.

Then, the researcher asked the students to report their work. He asked one of the groups to draw the semantic map on the board. Some students expressed their opinion spontaneously when they found their friends made mistakes or when the information was incomplete.

As soon as the semantic map was completed, the researcher elaborated the text. He explained the content of the text and sometimes asked the students to answer some questions to check whether they had understood the text or not.

3) Closing activity

Before ending the class, the researcher evaluated students’ comprehension by giving tasks which should be done by using semantic mapping strategy. It was done by giving the tasks based on the text given before. During the activities, the researcher monitored the class, in finding the equivalents of the unfamiliar words and in discussing the text. Due to the limitation of the time, the researcher asked the students to continue their work at home. The semantic map made by the students is presented in Figure 7.
Figure 7: Story map “The Boys and the Frogs”
c) Meeting 3

1) Opening

In the third meeting, on Thursday, May 6th 2010 the instructional process was the same as the process in the second meeting. The lesson started at 07.00 a.m. The researcher and collaborator came to the class, greeted the students, and checked students’ attendance. He began the lesson by conducting brainstorming activities. He attracted the students’ attention by showing a picture of “students and a teacher” in the classroom. Then, he gave them some questions related to the picture. The text that would be discussed was “A Surprising Monday”.

2) Main activity

The researcher started to discuss the content of the text. He checked the students’ understanding on some unfamiliar words in the text. He gave them some instructions to draw the semantic map in a group. He also asked some students to give additional information on the map. Most of the students were already used to do the activity. Some students were actively involved in giving comments on their friend’s work. They were willing to express their disagreement if they had a different opinion from their friends’, especially in mentioning the implicit main ideas and in completing the map with information in the text. The activity went on until the semantic map was completed. The semantic map made by the students is presented in Figure 8.
3) Closing activity

Before closing the lesson, the researcher evaluated the students’ reading comprehension. It was done by giving the tasks based on the text given before.
d) Meeting 4

The fourth meeting was held on Saturday, May 8th 2010. In this meeting, Post-test 2 was conducted. This test was held to know the students’ achievement in reading comprehension after the action plan was implemented.

3) Observing the Action

a. The first meeting

The researcher conducted some activities to stimulate the students’ prior knowledge. They paid attention to the researcher’s explanation on the objectives of the meeting. They were very active and enthusiastic in doing the activities. Sometimes, they asked the researcher to put some information when the researcher made the semantic map. They seemed that they were already familiar with the technique. When the researcher instructed to draw the information from the text, the students could do it well.

b. The second meeting

In the second meeting, the teaching and learning process became more effective than before. The students followed the teaching and learning process enthusiastically. They were not shy anymore to ask about the lesson if they did not understand it. In this meeting, the researcher and collaborator saw that there was a good cooperation in each group. They helped each other to discuss the topic of the lesson actively in their group.
c. The third meeting

In the third meeting, the researcher could find that there was a big improvement in their reading comprehension. The students did not feel shy to ask his/her opinion. Most of the students could easily answer the researcher’s questions on the topic. Most of the students could construct the map quickly. They could analyze the text faster than before. In general, it can be said that the teaching learning process ran well in this meeting.

d. The fourth meeting

In this meeting, Post-test 2 was conducted. This test was held to know the students’ achievement in reading comprehension after the action plan was implemented.

The result of Post-test 2 showed improvement of students’ mean score. The mean score increased from 63.16 in Post-test 1 to 75.05 in Post-test 2.

4) Reflecting

Based on the observation results, the researcher and the collaborator had reflection on the result of the action in the second cycle. The positive results of cycle 2 were as follow:

a) The class became more enjoyable and fun

They did not seem depressed when they joined the English lesson. It can be seen from their attitude in joining the lesson, they were not crowded anymore. They were ready to join the class. Their response was good
during the teaching and learning process. They tried to answer the questions as well as possible.

b) The students could identify the explicit and implicit information of the text.

When the students were given some questions related to the text orally, they could answer correctly. They were also able to retell the story of the text by their own words.

c) The students’ reading scores improved

It can be seen from the result of the mean scores that they got from the second cycle. The mean of the post-test in the first cycle was 63.16 and the mean of post-test in the second cycle was 75.05. It can be concluded that there is an improvement.

d) The students became more active individually and in groups

Their activity can be seen from changing their behavior as long as they joined in English class. It seemed that they were interested in English lesson, when the teacher asked them to do the exercises they did the exercise seriously. They began to ask some questions if they did not know or understand the lesson given.

e) The students’ motivation increased

After using the semantic mapping strategy, they did not feel depressed in learning English. Because they did not feel depressed, they learned English joyfully. Their self-confidence increased. These made them have
the courage to explore and express their idea. The enjoyable and fun situation effected the students’ motivation.

From the result of reflection, the researcher concluded that semantic mapping technique is a suitable technique to improve the students’ reading comprehension in SMP Negeri 1 Sine.

B. Discussion

The discussion is focused on using the semantic mapping technique in the teaching and learning of reading comprehension at SMP Negeri 1 Sine. In this process, the researcher identified some factors causing the low achievement of the students’ reading comprehension. The factors came from the teacher and students. The English teacher used monotonous technique in the teaching reading comprehension. Unfortunately, this technique was not suitable with the condition of the class. The students were not active in the teaching and learning process. The teacher just read the text loudly, asked the students to translate it by themselves and answered the comprehension question. The students were passive during the teaching and learning process. They also often got bored during the lesson, so that they did not understand the materials which had been taught by the teacher.

After implementing the action in the first and second cycle, some points can be taken, namely: (1) the improvement of students’ reading comprehension; (2) the improvement of the teaching and learning process.
1. The Improvement of Reading Comprehension

From the tests, it could be concluded that semantic mapping technique could improve the students’ reading comprehension. Zaid (1995: 9) stated that semantic mapping allows students to manifest considerable improvement in writing expression, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension. The advantages of using semantic mapping strategy in teaching and learning reading were:

a. Using the semantic mapping strategy in the pre-reading phase can stimulate the students’ prior knowledge (schemata).

b. Using the semantic mapping strategy in the whilst-reading phase helps the students to record the information obtained from the text.

c. Using the semantic mapping strategy in the post-reading phase provides the students with an overall description about the text and helps the teacher to assess the students’ comprehension of the text.

There were some indicators which showed that there was an improvement in their reading comprehension. They were:

(1) The students could find the explicit information of the text.

(2) The students could find the implicit information text.

(3) The students’ reading scores improve from cycle to cycle which can be seen on the following table.
Table 1: The mean scores of the test

Table 1 showed that there was an improvement of students’ test result before and after the action research. It was proved by the increase of the students’ mean score from 55.89 in the pre-test to 63.16 in Cycle 1, and 75.05 in Cycle 2.

2. The Improvement of the Teaching and Learning Process

Teachings reading through semantic mapping technique made the students easier to understand the content of the text. They became more active in learning reading. They showed their contribution in the discussion and participated well in the teaching and learning process by giving some opinion and asking some information they did not know. They enjoyed joining the lesson. The added media also made the students comprehend the content of the text more easily.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION, AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

Based on the research results and discussion elaborated in the preceding chapters, the researcher concludes as follows:

1. The semantic mapping strategy can improve students’ reading comprehension. It is proven by the increase of the students’ mean score from 55.89 in the pre-test to 63.16 in Cycle 1, and 75.05 in Cycle 2.

2. The semantic mapping strategy can improve the class situation. The class becomes more enjoyable and fun. The students become more active both individually and in group.

3. The advantages of using semantic mapping strategy in teaching reading are:
   a. Using the semantic mapping strategy in the pre-reading phase can stimulate the students’ prior knowledge (schemata). By creating a semantic map based on the students’ schemata, the students are prepared with the topic to be read / discussed.
   
   b. Using the semantic mapping strategy in the whilst-reading phase helps the students to record the information obtained from the text. By making a semantic map while reading a text, the students are equipped with a technique to relate their prior knowledge with the new information.
c. Using the semantic mapping strategy in the post-reading phase provides the students with an overall description about the text and helps the teacher to assess the students’ comprehension of the text.

B. Implication

The research findings of this action research show that semantic mapping strategy can improve students’ reading comprehension. Teaching reading through semantic mapping technique made the students easier to understand the content of the text. Furthermore, the class situation also improved. The students became more active in learning reading. They enjoyed joining the lesson.

The use of semantic mapping strategy has proven to be an effective way in teaching-learning reading comprehension. Using semantic mapping strategy in reading class is strongly suggested.

C. Suggestion

Pertaining to the research results and discussion, some suggestions are offered on the use of the semantic mapping technique in the teaching-learning of reading comprehension.

First, teachers should focus their attention to the selection of the instructional material and media as well as the time allotment of the teaching-learning activities. The selection of the instructional material should be based on some considerations like familiarity, level of difficulty, and students’ interest. The media used should be in line with the theme, supporting the teaching-learning
activities, interesting, and various. In addition to the material and media, the time allotment for reading activity also needs to be considered. In this case, it is suggested to manage the time appropriately, in which the time division should be based on the difficulty level of each phase. It is aimed to avoid the teacher from focusing on a certain stage. Thus, the time allocation for each phase in the lesson plan should be included.

Second, in the pre-reading phase, it is suggested for teachers to encourage the students to make a semantic map of their own version if they are already familiar with the technique. Once the technique is used in the teaching-learning activity, the students will understand how to make a semantic map in the pre-reading phase. Therefore, with the intention to make the teaching-learning process more student-centered, it is better for the students to make their semantic map in this phase.

Third, in the whilst-reading phase, it is suggested to assign the students to make a semantic map in pairs or individually instead of in a group. The students are expected to be independent in comprehending a text. Thus, it is important for them to be able to use this technique when they read any materials by themselves.

Finally, in the post-reading phase, it is recommended to display/publish the students’ best works as the benchmark in order to give reinforcement to the students in doing their works. It can be done by attaching their works on the classroom wall.

In general, due to the fact that using the semantic mapping technique can improve the students’ reading comprehension; it is suggested to the English
teachers especially whose students have the same characteristics and in the similar situation to apply this technique as one of the alternatives that can be used in the teaching of reading comprehension.

It is also expected to share the information of the implementation of the technique through a teacher’s forum, such as in an in-service training like Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran, workshop, and seminar or write an article about it in a journal or a newspaper.

For future researchers, it is hoped that they will conduct a similar study on the other skills like listening, speaking, and writing and at other levels of students for the improvement of the teaching of English or carry out an experimental study on the same skill in order to verify the present result.
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