DOUBLE BUBBLE MAP: THE ATTEMPT TO ENHANCE THE STUDENTS’ SKILL IN WRITING A COMPARISON AND CONTRAST PARAGRAPH

Anak Agung Putri Maharani
Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar
Email: aamaharani@unmas.ac.id

ABSTRACT
This study was designed as a classroom action research (henceforward, CAR). There were 32 students (consisted of 19 women and 13 men) who were the group of IIC class in English Education Study Program (hereafter, EESP) involved, and experienced problems in comparison and contrast paragraph writing. It was proven by the average score in the pre-test which showed a figure of 60.6. To overcome the problems, double bubble map as one of graphic organizers was applied. Thus, the purposes of this study were to improve the students’ writing skill and to investigate their responses towards the application of double bubble map. There were two cycles implemented, and the instruments used to collect the data were performance test, analytic scoring rubric, and questionnaire. The data were analyzed by means of descriptive statistical analysis. The first finding was the writing skill of the students could be improved by the use of double bubble map. It was supported by the average score in cycle 1 which showed a figure of 67.5, and it was increased to be 74.8 in cycle 2. The second finding was the students gave response positively to the implementation of double bubble map.

Key words: comparison and contrast paragraph writing, double bubble map, response

ABSTRAK

Kata Kunci: double bubble map, kemampuan menulis paragraf comparison dan contrast, respon
INTRODUCTION

One of the skills that students need to master in English language learning is writing. Writing is an effective means of communication as Kane (2000:3) states that writing is worth learning. It is supported by Hook and Evans (2004) who define writing as a tool for communication and it is both a skill and a means of self-expression. People need writing to exchange information, share technology, knowledge, and science. Moreover, writing belongs to productive skill area and, definitely enables students to develop and express their ideas, thoughts, and creativity into a written form. This form is crucial as it is capable students to extend and deliver whatever that cannot be expressed by oral or spoken language. Therefore, writing cannot be separated from daily lives.

It is important for students to learn about how to write which covered within writing process. It means that a quality writing product is the result of following a systematic process. Oshima and Hogue (2007:15) state that writing is never a one–step action; it is an ongoing creative act. The ongoing process engrosses prewriting, organizing, writing and polishing. In prewriting, the writers create ideas. It means they choose a topic and collect ideas to explain the topic. In organizing, the writers organize the ideas. It means they organize the idea into a simple outline. In writing, the writers write a rough draft. It means using the outline as guidance. In polishing, the writers polish their rough draft by editing it and making revisions. It means they edit and revise what they have written. These items are supporting each other in yielding a writing product.

Besides, in the process, writers always involve thinking skill and creative skill. Good writers are capable in honing their creativity in expressing their thought into an understandable written form. Therefore, a good masterpiece is the one which is interesting and has good flow as to attract readers to read and to assist them to understand it. However, to be good writers, students must practice. Dunlap and Weisman (2007:105) state that the more writers practice, the more support they have, and the better they get. By practicing, students can learn more about how to make a meaningful writing.
In writing, students start to learn how to produce words, then words to sentences and from sentences to a paragraph. It, again, represents that writing involves systematic progression to pursue. Zemach and Rumisek (2005:11) state that a paragraph is a group of sentences about a single topic. Together, the sentences of the paragraph explain the writer’s main idea (most important idea) about the topic. In academic writing, a paragraph usually consists of five until ten sentences or more, depending on the topic. Those are well structured into a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence. To be well built, the paragraph must be coherent and cohesive.

Even though writing is essential, its mastery is like a two side coin. Not only as the prominent aspect for students in facing this 21st century when technology and information are widely spread in ease, but its mastery is also problematic for students. Richards and Renandya (2002:303) state that there is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for language learners to be mastered. The difficulty lies in generating and organizing ideas, afterwards translating these ideas into readable text. Unfortunately, these obstacles get worsen as the fact that Indonesian students learn and use English as a foreign language. It is as the result of the limited vocabulary storage that keeps them struggling in arranging the words, or expressing their ideas into a meaningful written communication.

In the writing class which involves II C freshmen in EESP, similar problems were detected. Most of the students were observed reluctant in communicating their ideas. It went wrong when they compared and contrasted two objects. There were threefold reasons identified. First, the students did not have great background knowledge about the two objects that were being compared and contrasted. Second, like many other young learners, the students were most likely confused because they were unfamiliar with this informational text’s compare-contrast structure. They were not sure how to interpret the information about two objects when those were presented through this format. Third, the students were English-language learners and had gaps in their English vocabulary to understand or express what they were thinking during the lesson. As the result, many students were careless to create the
paragraph. It was supported by the mean score of the students in their pre-test yielded a figure of 60.6 that considered insufficient. It is indicating that the students encountered problems in writing.

Amongst numerous informational texts, comparison and contrast paragraph is essential to master. Oshima and Hogue (2007) argue that people compare and contrast in their everyday life. For instance, courses or teachers are compared and contrasted when deciding which classes to take. Similarly, in college classes, students will often have to compare and contrast. They might be asked to compare two learning strategies in learning English or two characters in a play. As stated in Silver (2017), comparing and contrasting help teachers achieve five distinct instructional goals such as, a) strengthen students' memories, 2) develop higher-order thinking skills, 3) increase students’ comprehension, 4) enhance students' writing in the content areas, and 5) develop students' habits of mind.

Referring to what have been mentioned, explicit instruction and teacher modeling are needed to show students how comparison and contrast text’s structure works and to demonstrate strategies that they can use as they interact with these texts on their own are required. Consequently, the researcher utilized a graphic organizer, one of which is double bubble map to assist the students in enhancing their writing skill. It was conducted in a series of carefully organized lessons. The researcher demonstrated the way to use it, then provided the students with opportunities for guided practice, and finally allowed them to practice it on their own. Actually, double bubble map is defined as a tool for comparing and contrasting objects. Writers draw two traversed larger circles and write the words for the two objects being contrasted in the right and left area. Meanwhile, in the shade area, the writers write the common qualities between the two objects.

All students can benefit from the map. Long and Carlson (2011) state that a double bubble map allows students to visually compare and contrast ideas using a series of bubbles connected to their topic. It helps students get their thoughts in sequence before they begin drafting their assignment. It is useful during prewriting when students generate ideas.
and plan their writing. The students utilize the map to gather their ideas.

In summary, in line with the previous elucidation, a research on the implementation of double bubble map to improve the II C students’ writing skill was conducted. It was, subsequently, intended to scrutinize whether or not the writing skill of the students can be enhanced through double bubble map. Furthermore, it was also prominent to investigate the students’ response towards the implementation of the map in enhancing their writing skill.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

Having designed as a classroom action research, this research aimed at improving the comparison and contrast paragraph writing skill of the II C freshmen who enrolled paragraph writing course in EESP through double bubble map. There were 32 subjects who faced difficulties in writing. The research was conducted within 2 continual cycles with four activities in each cycle namely; planning, action, observation, and reflection. In order to gain a rich set of data to be analyzed, the researcher administered performance test, analytical scoring rubric and questionnaire as the main instruments. The performance test made use five criteria (format, punctuation and mechanic, content, organization, grammar and sentence structure) which were adapted from Oshima and Hogue (2007) and the items were detailed into the analytical scoring rubric protocol. The rubric was well built to ensure an objective and valid scoring of the performance task. The questionnaire, in contrary, consisted of 15 statements with 5 likert scales. Meanwhile, for the treatment instruments, double bubble map worksheet, and lesson plans were employed. The collected data was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively by means of descriptive statistical analysis. The yielded data from administering the performance test resulted score in writing; meanwhile the data obtained from spreading the 15 item questionnaire resulted percentages that translated into tables to facilitate the interpretation.
FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This research was done concerning the urgency of improving the English writing skill of the students who had writing problems. To eliminate the problems, it made use of a cyclical process of CAR. Two cycles were completed which initiated by preliminary observation and pre-test. Moreover, a questionnaire was used to know the students’ response. The description of data that the researcher obtained as the result of administering and spreading the research instruments displayed as the findings of this research. The collected data can be listed as follows:

Pre-Test

This undertaking research was instigated by doing the preliminary observation followed by administering the pre-test towards the participants. It was done to identify the students’ prior writing skill which was represented by a figure of 60.6. The test resulted on 7 participants (21.88%) passed the passing grade (>70); in contrast, 25 participants (78.12%) were below the passing grade (<70). It is interpreted that the students faced obstacles in writing. The mean score that they got was categorized insufficient as it was below the passing grade. Thus, cycle I was conducted to solve the subjects’ problems in writing.

Cycle I

The first cycle comprised 2 meetings for teaching and post-test sessions. In meeting session, four steps were conducted, simply named plan, action, observation, and reflection. Additionally, it was conducted writing processes involving 4 different interconnected phases (prewriting, organizing, writing and polishing). The researcher prepared the double bubble map worksheet, the lesson plan, the analytical scoring rubric, and the post-test before moving forward to the action. Having been well prepared, prior to tracking the students involved in this study, all students were taught the correct format for using double bubble map as well as explaining the map and its intended purpose using the direct instruction. The researcher demonstrated how to dig ideas by using the map, and then followed by guided writing. It was finalized by the students practiced using it by themselves.

In cycle I, the umbrella topic that the students must work with was public place.
They freely chose the two objects which were related to the umbrella topic. It was observed that the students were unfamiliar with bubble double map. As the guided practice was primarily highlighted, they got immersed in writing. They determined the purpose of their paragraph, why they need to compare the two objects. Its goal was to ensure them in selecting suitable foundations to compare and contrast the objects.

Having decided the purpose of writing, they worked with their double bubble map. They started jotting down the points of differences on the wings of the bubble and the points of similarities in the center of the traversed bubble. The accurate and balance comparison and contrast of the two objects were dependable on the foundation they emphasized. They used the map to reveal the brief points of similarities and differences. After reading the points attentively, they deleted or revised the inappropriate ones, and its outcome was a better map. Then, an outline was made after the students selected which side they focused on, comparison or contrast side. Having followed the complete writing process, the final form of the students’ writing was completed.

Post-test I was administered towards all participants who were assessed by using analytical scoring rubric. The calculated means score yielded a figure of 67.5 which was slightly below the passing score. Comparing with the pre-test result, the post-test I result was better wherein several participants passed the passing score. They were 19 numbers or 59.4% of participants under the research whose scores were greater than the passing score and 13 participants (40.6%) failed in going above the passing score. It could be wrapped up that double bubble map enabled the participants in developing their writing skill. However, regarding the insufficient category of the mean score in post-test I and only few subjects who were observed as being active in asking the questions and doing the practice, therefore, it was determined to extend the study into the second cycle.

**Cycle II**

This later cycle was carried out due to the demerits of the former cycle. It was to change the insufficient score of the participants into good satisfactory score. This latter cycle was attentively designed
pondering both strengths and weaknesses of the former cycle. Similarly, 2 meetings were done which initiated by preparing the map worksheet, the lesson plan, the post-test, the analytical scoring rubric, and the questionnaire. A new umbrella topic which covered in the same material was offered during the class to bring new atmosphere and to stimulate the participants’ attention and motivation. The topic was about transportation.

In cycle II, the students was familiar with using the map, therefore, the researcher only facilitated them based on their needs. They were able to work independently and rarely led by the researcher’s instructions. Individually, they chose the two objects along with the purpose of comparing and contrasting them. The problem they encountered was mainly about using the suitable transitional words and signal words to elaborate their paragraph.

A lot of practices by using the map made the students at ease in arranging their ideas. Furthermore, the development of their paragraph was done by referring to the map that they made. In other words, the map was usable in guiding them to develop their writing. After scrutinizing the points attentively, they developed it as their best outcome shown by the outline of the paragraph. The student’s selection over the side they focused on was represented by the created outline. It was followed by completing the ready-published paragraph.

After conducting the second post-test, a valuable advance was gained. The participants’ mean score on writing skill was 74.8 and it was categorized sufficient. It was found that all students exceeded the passing score. There were 29 participants (90.6%) exceeded the passing score and only 3 participants (9.4%) whose score were equivalent to the passing score (70). The subjects were observed more active and enthusiastic during the teaching and learning process.

Furthermore, the percentage of the students’ response also revealed valuable finding. The responses were gathered by spreading a 15 item questionnaire to all participants. Using a Likert Scale, the students’ responses were scored and entered into an Excel spreadsheet. It allowed the researcher to determine whether individual student believed they were affected by the map. Fortunately, all questionnaires were completed, and soon
after were calculated. It was achieved that 42% of the participants strongly agreed, 34% of the participants agreed, 10% of the participants doubted, 6% of the participants disagreed, and 8% of the participants strongly disagreed towards the implementation of double bubble map.

**Discussion**

Having conducted the research, two data were collected in the forms of scores and percentages. The data from administering the tests yielded mean scores which were displayed into three cohorts namely, pre-test, post-test 1 and post-test 2. The enhancements are comparable which can be shown in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Test</td>
<td>60.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Test 1</td>
<td>67.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Test 2</td>
<td>74.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. The Summary of the Mean Score of the Students’ Writing Skill in Pre-Test, Post-Test 1 and Post-Test 2

Based on the table, it is apparently seen the significant gradual positive changes of the mean scores in each test. These changes represent the improvement of the mean scores which implies the students’ obstacles in writing were progressively decreased. Being compared with the mean score in the pre-test, the means score in cycle I was upgraded 6.9 points. The mean score in cycle II had increased up to 7.3 points compared with the mean score in cycle I, but it was upgraded up to 14.2 points from the pre-test.

The use of double bubble map is beneficial in term of developing the skill of writing. Double bubble map is one of the graphic organizers within thinking maps which originally developed by Hyerle in 1990. It is specified to comparing and contrasting matters. Further, Hyerle (2012) states that the main benefits of the map are that is it reflective, consistent, integrative, flexible and developmental as well as emphasizes on complex thinking skills, the development of independence as students learn to use the organizer, and research demonstrating increased student comprehension. The students gather the information by investigating the topics compared and contrasted and they process the information by using their critical thinking. Moreover, Long and Carlson (2011) argue that double bubble map allows students to visually compare and
contrast ideas using a series of bubbles connected to their topic. It is a visual tool that students can use to organize their ideas and thus enhance writing.

The utility of double bubble map in prewriting step invites students to demonstrate their thought process on paper instead of in their minds. By doing so, it provides the students with opportunities to form insights related to academic content that might not have been activated prior to the students’ use of the map (Long and Carlson, 2011). By watching their thoughts unfold on the map, they will be better equipped to construct their knowledge and develop deeper knowledge and understanding of concepts. As the result, the obtained information will be stored in a long term.

On the other hand, the data collected by spreading the questionnaire covered the responses of the students towards the use of the map. When being asked to respond the use of double bubble map, the students were generally able to choose relevant option. It could be wrapped up in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It could be seen that most students strongly agreed to the implementation of the map in developing their writing. Most of the students accepted double bubble map to support their writing. It is proven by the students’ active participation during class. They were increasingly more creative in expressing their ideas.

**CONCLUSION**

**Conclusions**

This study made use of a classroom action research. Based on the detailed findings and the discussion, it could be summed up that double bubble map could enhance the writing skill of the students. The students were assisted in organizing their ideas and developing a coherent and united paragraph. It could be proven by the increasing mean scores of the subjects. The mean scores in pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2 were figures of 60.6, 67.5, and 74.8 respectively. Moreover, the
subjects gave positive response towards the application of double bubble map. It was in accordance with the result of questionnaire.

SUGGESTIONS
Considering the merits and demerits of this current research, suggestions are able to be proposed:

a. It is suggested to other lecturers to use double bubble map in writing class especially in comparison and contrast paragraph writing.

b. It is recommended for students to use double bubble map across disciplines as it enables them to deeper their knowledge and sharpen their critical thinking.

REFERENCES


