Story Mapping Technique on Tenth Grade Students' Writing Ability at SMKS Raksana 2 Medan

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Abstract. This study aims to determine whether the Story Mapping Technique can significantly influence the ability to write recount texts at the tenth grade of SMKS Raksana 2 Medan. The Story Mapping Technique used in this study is based on the theory proposed by Li (2007). Using purposive sampling technique, the population of this study consisted of all tenth-grade students at SMKS Raksana 2 Medan, totaling 66 students divided into five classes. The results showed a significant improvement in students' writing ability after the implementation of the Story Mapping Technique. Data analysis using the t-test revealed that the calculated t-value was 2.054, while the t-table value was 1.697 at a significance level of $p < 0.05$. Since the t-calculated> t-table (2.054>1.697), it was concluded that applying the Story Mapping Technique had a significant effect on students' ability to write recount texts in the tenth grade at SMKS Raksana 2 Medan. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted, while the null hypothesis (H0) was rejected. Based on these findings, the Story Mapping Technique is proven to be effective in improving students' ability to write recount texts and can be considered an alternative method for teaching writing at the secondary school level.

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INTRODUCTION

Writing is a vital skill in mastering a language, serving as an essential tool for communication, knowledge creation, and academic achievement. According to Harmer (2004) writing is a process that involves communicating ideas, thoughts, and feelings through written text, allowing for clear and systematic transmission of information. Writing is also an activity that helps people think about their ideas and put them into clear and real form (Sinaga, 2017). Schindler & Schäfer (2021) further emphasize that writing is not only

a medium for conveying messages but also a practice that stimulates the development of deeper understanding and broader insights. Writing can also be viewed as a mental process where the language user expresses information through written text, highlighting its cognitive nature in constructing meaning (Simarmata, 2015). Furthermore, visual aids are important in enhancing comprehension and memory retention in learning, including writing (Nuraini et al., 2022). Sidabutar (2021) explained that writing is not only critical in academic contexts but also essential in various careers, as it is often tested in many standardized exams.

In the context of education, writing skills are fundamental for students to succeed academically and professionally. However, students learning English often face problems in conveying their ideas clearly and effectively due to a limited vocabulary and a lack of understanding of complex grammatical structures. Many students are afraid of making grammatical mistakes or using incorrect words, which can negatively impact the quality of their writing. The pressure to perform well academically often exacerbates these challenges, leading students to feel anxious and unmotivated when asked to write. In addition, the lack of exposure to authentic English writing practices and insufficient practice time further worsen the problems, making writing an intimidating task for many students. At SMKS Raksana 2 Medan, specific difficulties were identified among tenth-grade students in writing English recount texts. Based on interviews conducted with English teachers at SMKS Raksana 2 Medan, it is known that some students still experience obstacles in writing recount texts. The main problem they face is the difficulty in conveying ideas in writing. Even though they have thoughts they want to convey, many students feel confused about how to start a paragraph. As a result, they have difficulty writing down these ideas in a proper and structured manner. Data collected on students' average English scores revealed that their performance remained below the minimum competency standard (KKM) of 75, with an average score of 72.75 in the 2023/2024 academic year and 73.75 in the 2024/2025 academic year. These findings highlight the urgent need for innovative and supportive teaching techniques to enhance students' writing abilities.

One promising approach to address these challenges is the Story Mapping Technique. Story Mapping is a visual strategy that aids students in organizing the essential elements of a story, such as characters, setting, events, and resolution (Li, 2007). By providing a structured framework, Story Mapping helps students plan their writing systematically, ensuring coherence and logical sequencing of ideas. According Anwar & Ahmed (2016), this technique supports students in understanding and arranging narrative elements, making the writing process more manageable and less intimidating. This research adopts the Story Mapping theory proposed by Li (2007), which emphasizes that Story Mapping is designed to facilitate story organization by helping students visualize the basic structure and important elements in the story, such as characters, context, and events. Through the use of Story Mapping, students are guided to construct their knowledge about the structure and components of recount texts. This visual tool is expected to assist students in better understanding the concept of recount writing and to develop the writing skills necessary for effective communication, both academically and professionally, particularly as they prepare for future careers in the workforce.

In recount text writing, the Story Mapping Technique proves particularly beneficial. Recount texts are narrative texts aimed at retelling past events or experiences in a structured manner, typically following an orientation, a series of events, and a reorientation (Khoir, 2015; Siregar, 2022). Students often find recount texts challenging due to the need for clear chronological organization and appropriate use of language features such as past tense verbs and time connectors (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). Without a clear understanding of structure, students' recount texts often become disorganized, omitting important events or lacking cohesion between ideas. By employing Story Mapping, students can visually map out the sequence of events and essential details before writing, leading to improved clarity and coherence. Theoretical foundations supporting the use of Story Mapping in writing instruction are robust. Vygotsky (1978) propose that the writing process involves stages such as planning, translating, and reviewing. Story Mapping aligns with the planning stage, enabling students to organize their ideas effectively before drafting. Moreover, cognitive theories of learning emphasize the importance of visual aids in enhancing comprehension and memory retention (Nuraini et al., 2022). Visual representation allows students to externalize their internal thought processes, making abstract ideas more concrete and easier to manipulate during the writing process. Furthermore, the concept of scaffolding in education, as proposed by Vygotsky (1978), supports the use of structured aids like Story Mapping. Scaffolding refers to providing temporary support to learners to accomplish tasks they might not manage independently. In the context of writing, Story Mapping acts as a scaffold that guides students through the complexities of text organization and idea development, gradually building their independence.

Previous research supports the efficacy of Story Mapping in improving students' writing skills. (Indrawati, 2016) demonstrated that Story Mapping significantly enhanced students' narrative writing abilities by helping them organize story elements coherently. Similarly, (Asma, 2019) found that Story Mapping improved both writing achievement and classroom participation among students learning to write recount texts. (Nuraini et al., 2022) also reported that students who used Story Mapping showed better comprehension of story structure, leading to improved writing fluency and accuracy. These studies highlight the potential of Story Mapping as an effective instructional strategy for enhancing students' writing performance. In addition to facilitating better organization, Story Mapping encourages students to expand their vocabulary and use language more creatively. By identifying key events and descriptive elements during the mapping process, students are prompted to select precise and varied vocabulary, enriching their written expression. Furthermore, Story Mapping fosters greater student engagement and motivation, making the writing process more interactive and enjoyable (Allo et al., 2020). It creates a more student-centered classroom environment where learners feel ownership over their work, thus enhancing intrinsic motivation.

By integrating Story Mapping into writing instruction, it is anticipated that students will develop stronger organizational skills, produce more coherent narratives, and achieve higher levels of writing proficiency. Additionally, it is expected that students' confidence in expressing their ideas in English will improve, reducing the anxiety associated with writing tasks. Improving writing skills not only contributes to better academic performance but also equips students with essential communication skills needed in their future careers. In

conclusion, writing is an indispensable skill that demands systematic instruction and continuous practice. The integration of visual strategies such as Story Mapping offers a promising avenue for addressing common writing difficulties faced by students. Through this study, it is hoped that English teachers can adopt and adapt Story Mapping techniques to foster more effective and engaging writing instruction, ultimately contributing to the improvement of students' academic performance in English language learning. The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights for educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers in enhancing English language education, particularly in vocational school settings where practical communication skills are highly emphasized. With the growing importance of English proficiency in the global job market, strengthening students' writing abilities through effective pedagogical approaches becomes even more critical for their future success.

Given the persistent challenges faced by students at SMKS Raksana 2 Medan in writing recount texts and the proven benefits of Story Mapping, this study tries to investigate whether the use of Story Mapping Technique affects in enhancing students' ability to write recount texts in the tenth grade of SMKS Raksana 2 Medan.

METHODS

This study used a Quantitative Experimental method. According to Sugiono (2013) experimental research is a method to find the effect of a treatment on others under controlled conditions. The independent variable in this research was the use of the Story Mapping Technique, and the dependent variable was the students' ability in writing recount texts. The research was conducted at SMKS Raksana 2 Medan during the academic year 2024/2025. The population included all tenth-grade students, totaling 66 students divided into five classes. However, only two classes were selected as the sample using purposive sampling. This method was chosen because the school had already established class groupings, making it impractical to randomly assign individual students. Purposive sampling, as explained by Sugiono (2013) is appropriate when selecting samples based on specific characteristics and practical considerations. Some considerations in selecting this class included accessibility and schedule compatibility. The chosen class was deemed to possess reasonably equal academic capabilities, facilitating an equitable comparison between the experimental and control groups. The selection of these two groups was expected to align with the research aims, specifically to assess the influence of the Story Mapping Technique on students' writing skills

Based on initial observations, the RPL & AKL class was selected as the experimental group and the Multimedia class as the control group, with each class consisting of 16 students. These two classes were chosen because they had relatively similar academic abilities in writing skills, ensuring a fair comparison. The experimental group received instruction using the Story Mapping Technique, where students were taught to identify and map key elements such as characters, setting, sequence of events, and outcomes before writing their recount texts. In contrast, the control group was taught through conventional teaching methods without the use of Story Mapping. The research instrument was a writing test focused on recount texts. Students were assigned to write recount texts based on topics

provided by the researcher. The test was administered twice: before the treatment as a pre-test and after the treatment as a post-test. The students' writings were evaluated based on five aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics, using the analytical scoring rubric proposed by Jacobs et al. (1981). Each aspect was scored carefully to ensure objective and comprehensive assessment of students' writing ability.

The procedure of this study began with the administration of a pre-test to both groups to measure their initial ability. After the pre-test, the experimental group received the Story Mapping instruction for several sessions. Students created story maps to plan their recount texts, while the control group continued with standard instructional methods. Following the treatment period, a post-test was administered to both groups to evaluate the progress in their writing skills. The data collected from the pre-test and post-test were analyzed using a statistical approach. The mean scores of the pre-test and post-test for both groups were calculated, and the improvement was measured by comparing the gain scores. To examine whether there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups, an independent t-test was applied at the 0.05 level of significance. Through this methodical approach, the study aimed to provide valid and reliable evidence regarding the effectiveness of the Story Mapping Technique on students' recount text writing abilities at SMKS Raksana 2 Medan.

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FINDINGS

This section presents and discusses the results of the recount text writing test given to the experimental and control groups. Data were obtained through pre-tests and post-tests to measure the effect of using the Story Mapping Technique on students' recount text writing skills. The following table summarizes students' scores before and after the treatment.

Table 1 shows the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group taught using the Story Mapping Technique, including the differences in scores and their squares for statistical analysis.

Table 1. The Calculation of Pre-Test and Post-Test of the Experimental Group

No	Students' Initial Names	Pre-Test (X_1)	Post-Test (X_2)	Deviation (d) $(X2-X1)$	Deviation (d2)) $(X2-X1)^2$
1	AR	52	70	18	324
2	AH	61	86	25	625
3	GL	62	84	22	484
4	GF	54	67	13	169
5	MA	53	63	10	100
6	RA	63	83	20	400
7	RM	67	79	12	144
8	RL	67	89	22	484
9	VG	77	83	6	36
10	VI	61	85	24	576
11	CA	60	70	10	100
12	FN	63	84	21	441

13	MR	56	67	11	121
14	PG	58	79	21	441
15	RS	60	82	22	484
16	SA	74	87	13	169
	Total	988	1258	270	5098
	Average	61.7	78.6	16.8	318.6

Referring to Table 1, the experimental group achieved a total pre-test score of 988, product an average score of 61.7. After implementing the Story Mapping Technique as a learning tool, the post-test total rose to 1258, with a mean score of 78.6. The difference between the pre-test and post-test scores was 270, and the total squared differences (d^2) reached 5098. These findings suggest that there was a notable enhancement in the students' vocabulary mastery after undergoing the treatment.

Table 2 presents the pre-test and post-test scores of the control group taught without using theStory Mapping Technique, including the score differences and their squares for statistical analysis.

Table 2. The Calculation of Pre-Test and Post-Test of the Control Group

No	Students' Initial Names	Pre-Test (Y_1)	Post-Test (Y_2)	Deviation (d) (Y2-Y1)	Deviation (d)^2 (Y2-Y1)^2
1	AZ	58	65	7	49
2	AD	56	65	9	81
3	CY	46	63	17	289
4	DA	62	82	20	400
5	IH	53	63	10	100
6	NS	56	72	16	256
7	NZ	58	76	18	324
8	NW	60	72	12	144
9	NH	43	61	18	324
10	PS	52	62	10	100
11	RS	76	85	9	81
12	SG	60	65	5	25
13	SR	46	65	19	361
14	TK	52	66	14	196
15	TD	56	68	12	144
16	QR	60	72	12	144
	Total	894	1102	208	3018
	Average	55.8	68.8	13	188.6

Based on Table 2, the total pre-test score of the control group is 894, with a mean score of 55.8. After conventional learning, the total post-test score increased to 1102, with a mean of 68.8. The difference between the pre-test and post-test scores (d) is 208, while the sum of the squares of differences (d^2) is 3018. These results indicate a significant

improvement in students' vocabulary mastery after conventional learning, even using the TED Talks Application is higher.

Based on the data obtained from the experimental group and control group, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Table 3. The Means of Pre-Test and Post-Test of the Experimental Group and The Control Group

Group	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Experimental	61.7	78.6
Control	55.8	68.8

This study aimed to determine the effect of using the Story Mapping Technique on students' ability to write recount texts at the tenth grade of SMKS Raksana 2 Medan. Data collection was conducted through pre-tests and post-tests administered to both the experimental and control groups. The pre-test was conducted to measure students' initial ability before receiving the treatment, while the post-test was administered to evaluate the improvement after the treatment. In the experimental group, the average pre-test score was 61.7. After receiving instruction through the Story Mapping Technique, the post-test average rose significantly to 78.6. Meanwhile, in the control group, the pre-test average score was 55.8, and the post-test average increased to 68.8. The results indicate that the experimental group showed a substantial improvement of 16.9 points, whereas the control group experienced an improvement of 13.0 points. Although both groups improved, the experimental group achieved a higher increase in writing scores compared to the control group. This result suggests that the Story Mapping Technique had a more significant impact on enhancing students' writing skills, particularly in organizing ideas, developing content, improving vocabulary usage, applying correct grammar, and maintaining writing mechanics.

To test whether the difference between the two groups is statistically significant, an independent sample t-test was conducted. The t-test results showed that the t-calculated was 2.054, while the t-table was 1.697 at a significance level of $p < 0.05$. Since the t-calculated (2.054) > t-table (1.697), it could be concluded that the use of the Story Mapping Technique had a significant effect on the recount text writing ability of tenth-grade students at SMKS Raksana 2 Medan. Thus, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted, while the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected. The improvement in the experimental group can be attributed to the structured support provided by Story Mapping. By visually organizing the key elements of a story—such as characters, setting, sequence of events, and resolution—students were better able to plan and develop coherent narratives. Story Mapping helped students identify the chronological flow of events, thus reducing confusion and hesitation during the writing process. Students who initially struggled with starting their paragraphs and sequencing their ideas found it easier to write recount texts with logical progression and cohesion. The use of Story Mapping also motivated students to be more involved in their learning process, making the classroom environment more interactive and dynamic.

This finding is consistent with the theories proposed by Li (2007), who argued that Story Mapping facilitates the organization of ideas by providing a visual framework that

supports story development. It is also supported by the view of (Flower & Hayes, 1981) who emphasized the importance of planning in the writing process. Through visual planning, students are encouraged to develop their ideas thoroughly before writing, resulting in more structured and coherent texts. The improvement in vocabulary and grammar usage observed in the experimental group aligns with the belief that visual aids like Story Mapping stimulate deeper cognitive processing, leading to better language acquisition and use. Furthermore, the findings align with previous research conducted by (Nuraini et al., 2022) and (Allo et al., 2020), who demonstrated that students using visual strategies such as Story Mapping not only enhanced their writing performance but also showed increased motivation and confidence. The active involvement of students in constructing their story maps fostered a sense of ownership over their learning, which is crucial for developing independent writing skills.

On the contrary, the control group, which was taught using conventional methods without visual support, also showed improvement but to a lesser extent. This suggests that while traditional teaching approaches may lead to some progress, they may not be as effective in addressing students' difficulties in organizing and expressing their ideas systematically. Without the structured guidance provided by Story Mapping, students in the control group likely continued to face challenges in developing coherent and detailed recount texts. The findings of this study also reflect the real challenges observed at SMKS Raksana 2 Medan, where students often struggled to express their ideas clearly and sequentially. Before the treatment, many students found it difficult to initiate paragraphs, link events chronologically, and maintain grammatical accuracy. After the implementation of Story Mapping, students became more confident in their writing, as they could rely on their story maps to guide the development of their recount texts. This suggests that the use of appropriate strategies in writing instruction plays a significant role in helping students overcome their difficulties.

Overall, the significant improvement observed in the experimental group demonstrates that the Story Mapping Technique is an effective strategy for enhancing students' writing abilities, especially in recount text writing. It provides a structured yet flexible framework that supports students in planning, organizing, and expressing their ideas more clearly and coherently. This improvement not only contributes to better academic performance but also equips students with essential communication skills that are valuable in real-world contexts, particularly in vocational settings where clear and effective communication is crucial. In conclusion, the results of this study highlight the importance of using innovative, student-centered techniques such as Story Mapping in teaching writing skills. Teachers are encouraged to integrate Story Mapping into their instructional practices to help students overcome common writing challenges and to foster greater engagement, confidence, and proficiency in writing recount texts.

DISCUSSION

The results showed that students' writing ability improved significantly after the treatment. This can be seen from the post-test average score of the experimental class, which was higher than the control class. This indicates that the Story Mapping Technique had a positive and effective impact on improving students' writing ability, especially in organizing ideas, structuring events chronologically, and developing content with better coherence.

Compared to other studies, the result of this research is in line with previous findings, although there are some differences in focus and design. For example, Li (2007) conducted research on students with learning disabilities using Story Mapping and Facilitative Story Mapping Questions. Three out of four students in that study showed improvement in writing fluency, indicated by the increase in T-units. While Li focused on fluency and word diversity in students with special needs, this study focused on recount text writing in vocational school students and still found significant improvement, especially in content, organization, and grammar. This supports Li's (2007) theory that Story Mapping Technique helps students visualize and organize important story elements such as characters, setting, and events, leading to more fluent and developed writing.

Similarly, (Usman et al., 2020) found a significant improvement in students' narrative writing ability using the Story Mapping Technique. Their research showed that students could better generate ideas and organize their writing. This aligns with the findings of the current study, where students in the experimental class were able to develop recount texts with clearer structure and flow of events. Although Usman did not explicitly mention a theoretical framework, their findings align with the cognitive principle that visual planning aids students in idea generation and organization, making Story Mapping a practical strategy in classroom settings.

(Nuraini, Subari, Wahyuningsih, et al., 2022) also reported improvement in writing performance through the use of story mapping. Although their context was middle school and focused on narrative texts, the result still supports the current study's findings that visual organization tools like story mapping enhance students' ability to plan and write effectively.

Furthermore, the findings of this study are consistent with Allo et al. (2020), who conducted their research at SMAN 1 Palopo. They demonstrated that Story Mapping Technique effectively improved students' ability to write recount texts. This is similar to the current study, where students in the experimental class outperformed those in the control class in post-test writing scores, indicating that the technique helped them plan and structure their recounts more effectively.

One factor contributing to the success of the Story Mapping Technique in this study is the visual nature of the method, which helps students brainstorm and organize ideas before writing. According to Li (2007), story mapping assists students in visualizing important story elements such as characters, setting, and events, which is crucial in recount writing. Unlike conventional teaching methods where students might write spontaneously without planning, story mapping offers a structured pre-writing strategy that guides them throughout the writing process.

It can then be concluded that the use of Story Mapping Technique had a significant and positive effect on students' writing ability in recount text. These findings reinforce the importance of using graphic organizers as a tool to support students' writing development.

Therefore, English teachers are encouraged to adopt this technique in their classrooms, particularly when teaching text types that require chronological structure and clear organization.

The study reveals a limitation in the participant sample, which was restricted to students at SMKS Raksana 2 Medan. This restricted demography may influence the applicability of the findings to wider educational settings, such as conventional high schools or pupils with diverse academic backgrounds. The study mainly concentrated on writing recount text and restricting the application of the Story Mapping Technique to other genres or more complex writing forms. The reliance on short-term post-test findings limits understanding the long-term retention and transferability of writing skills acquired through Story Mapping. These limitations are relevant when interpreting the results and validating the findings. They indicate that although the technique demonstrated effectiveness in this context, additional research is required to verify its applicability across various student demographics, writing assignments, and educational environments.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from the results that the use of the Story Mapping fashion had a significant effect on the recount text capability of tenth- grade scholars at SMKS Raksana 2 Medan. This was substantiated by the advanced average score enhancement in the experimental group compared to the control group after the operation of the fashion, as well as the t- test results which showed significance at the 0.05 level. The Story Mapping fashion proved to help scholars in organizing ideas, developing text structure, perfecting vocabulary, and perfecting the use of alphabet and jotting mechanics. also, the use of this fashion also enhanced scholars' provocation, active engagement, and confidence in the jotting process. thus, it's suggested that English preceptors consider exercising Story Mapping as a strategy in tutoring jotting chops, particularly in the recount text kidney, to ameliorate the quality of literacy and scholars' jotting issues.

This study's limitations include its focus on students at SMKS Raksana 2 Medan, short-term post-test results, and the only use of recount texts. These characteristics limit generalizability across student demographics, writing genres, and educational contexts. Although Story Mapping demonstrated effectiveness in this context, additional research is necessary to validate its broader applicability and long-term impact on writing skills. Future research should explore Story Mapping across diverse student demographics (e.g., senior or vocational high school students in general), various writing genres (e.g., narrative, argumentative), and extended durations to evaluate the technique's persistent effectiveness and skill transferability. Comparative research across diff(erent educational contexts may improve comprehension of its universal relevance.

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