IMPROVING READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH SEMANTIC MAPPING STRATEGY FOR INDONESIAN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract: *This research investigates how semantic mapping strategy can improve students' reading comprehension. The subject of this research was the ten grade students consisted of 32 students. In this classroom action research, the researcher used quantitative data to see the improvement of the students' reading comprehension, and qualitative data to explain the change in students' behaviour during the implementation of the strategy. Based on the result of the test conducted at the end of the cycle and the analysis of the observation checklist and field notes, it could be concluded that both the students' reading comprehension and the students' attitude during the reading class have been improved. The students who passed the test improved from 43.75% at the baseline data to 87.5% at the end of cycle II. This improvement mostly influenced by the second and the third phase of semantic mapping strategy, which are brainstorming categorization. In this phases, the students activate their prior know and learn to visualize relationship between ideas and put them into categories. Thus, the students have a better comprehension of the text. The students also showed better motivation, interest, participation, and enthusiasm toward the learning process proven by the results of the observation. However, the materials in this present research were short reading texts. The implementation of the strategy on longer reading texts should be taken into a deeper study in the future research.*

Keywords: Improving Reading, Reading Comprehension, Semantic Mapping Strategy.

Abstrak: *Penelitian ini mendiskusikan bagaimana semantic mapping strategy dapat meningkatkan pemahaman membaca siswa. Subjek penelitian ini ada siswa kelas sepuluh yang terdiri dari 32 orang. Pada penelitian tindakan kelas ini, peneliti menggunakan data kuantitatif untuk melihat peningkatkan pemahaman membaca siswa, dan kualitatif data untuk menjelaskan perubahan sikap siswa selama semantic mapping strategy diterapkan. Berdasarkan hasil tes yang dilakukan di akhir siklus dan analisis dari lembar observasi dan fieldnotes, dapat disimpulkan bahwa baik pemahaman membaca dan perilaku siswa selama proses belajar telah mengalami peningkatan. Siswa yang lulus dalam tes meningkat dari 53.12% pada data awal menjadi 87.5% pada akhir siklus II. Peningkatan ini paling dipengaruhi oleh langkah ketiga dari prosedur semantic mapping strategy, yaitu brainstorming dan kategorisasi. Pada langkah ini, siswa menggunakan background knowledge dan berlatih memvisualisasi hubungan antar ide and mengkategorikannya. Dengan demikian, siswa menjadi lebih memahami isi teks. Para siswa juga menunjukkan motivasi, ketertarikan, partisipasi, dan antusiasme yang lebih*

baik terhadap proses belajar yang dibuktikan oleh hasil observasi. Namun, materi ajar pada penelitian ini adalah teks bacaan pendek. Implementasi strategi pada teks bacaan panjang harus dikaji lebih dalam pada penelitian selanjutnya.

Kata Kunci: Meningkatkan Membaca, Pemahaman Membaca, Semantic Mapping Strategy.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian students have more opportunity to read English matters than to converse with an English native speaker. Therefore, it is a great importance for secondary school students to have sufficient training to develop their reading comprehension skill. Because of this reason, from elementary level, students were already trained to understand various kinds of text. At elementary and junior high school level, the aspect of enjoyment is still the central focus. Students started to discuss certain aspects of what they have read, and turned the purpose of their reading from reading for pleasure to reading for comprehension at senior high school level. According to Nunan (2003), reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning and making sense of written text by relating what it is written on the page and the reader background knowledge. It is influenced by some factors, such as purpose of reading, readers' interest, quality of reading material, background knowledge, and vocabulary level.

To find out the level of reading comprehension of senior high school students, the researcher had conducted observation at one Senior High School Number 5 of Bengkulu City. She found that the students were still really passive in the reading class. When the teacher asked the students to answer questions based on the text, at first they indeed tried to answer the questions, but when they faced some questions of which the answers were not explicitly mention in the text, they started to feel confused and stopped answering the questions. In this case, the students did understand the questions but they did not know how to answer them. This probably happened because they found it difficult to analyze the information from the text. Finally, in the end, only a few students who did the task by themselves, the others just waited for their friends' answers.

In addition, the students' achievement in reading comprehension test was not satisfactory. With the passing grade score of 77, only 14 students (43.75 %) passed the test, and the rest of the class (56.25%) got scores below the passing grade. By seeing the test result, it is clear that the reading comprehension of the students need to be improved in some manners. Basically reading comprehension can be improved if the teacher uses an appropriate strategy. Teaching strategies are purposeful and applied with deliberate effort, instead of to do something quickly without paying attention; strategies slow the reader down and focus his or her attention according to

the demands of purposes and needs (Shanahan in Hilmes, 2007).

Various strategies have created to achieve reading comprehension that can be applied by a teacher, such as using pictures, using story pyramid, analyzing word, generating questions, and using semantic mapping. From all those strategies, the researcher consider semantic mapping as the appropriate strategy in teaching reading since learners comprehend better when they see the text organized in such a way which can easily be understood, and which indicates the relationships between ideas. It is also believed that semantic mapping strategy can motivate and involve students in thinking, reading, and writing aspects.

Semantic mapping strategy can also be useful for introducing the important vocabulary in a selection to be read. It shows students how the terms are interrelated. In addition, semantic mapping is the first major activity that activates student's appropriate background knowledge of a given topic (Freedman; Heimlich and Pittleman, cited in Ajideh, 2006). The map is an organized arrangement of vocabulary concepts which reveals what students already know about the topic and provides them with a base upon which they can construct the new information learned from the text. Therefore, teachers can use a semantic mapping to activate and tap student's background knowledge. Moreover, semantic mapping can be used by any student in any subject area.

Abdollahzadeh and Amiri (2009) stated that a semantic map can be used as a tool for discovering the conceptual relationships between vocabulary items. It enhances vocabulary development by helping students to link new information with previous experience. In line with this theory, Lihua (2005) said that semantic mapping means that the different points in a passage should be written down and the relationships among them should be noted. It is very effective in improving students' reading skills and it makes students focus on the reading materials by letting them write down whatever they think of when reading. In addition, Estes (1999) once said that semantic mapping is a strategy for graphically representing concepts. Semantic maps portray the schematic relations that compose a concept. It assumes that there are multiple relations between a concept and the knowledge that is associated with the concept. Thus, for any concept there are at least these three types of associations, associations of class (the order of things the concept falls into), associations of property (the attributes that define the concept), and associations of example.

Further, he also proposed the idea that the major purpose of the semantic map is to allow students to organize their prior knowledge into formal relations and thus to provide themselves a basis for understanding what they are about to read and study. Comprehension can be thought of as the elaboration and refinement of prior knowledge. What the semantic map provides is a graphic structure of that

knowledge to be used as the basis for organizing new ideas as they are understood.

Earlier in 1995, Zaid advocated the introduction of semantic mapping in reading classrooms which had been proven to be a beneficial reading technique even for the native speakers of all educational levels. It was found that learners had shown an impressive improvement on such areas as vocabulary development, written ability and most importantly reading comprehension. He also added that there are three places in a lesson where semantic mapping may be used: As a pre-assignment strategy to activate students' prior knowledge or to help the teacher in assessing the students' readiness to do the assignment; as a strategy to allow students to record what they are learning during the assignment; and as a post-assignment strategy to allow them to integrate or synthesize what they have studied.

Moreover, there are some previous successful researches about semantic mapping that can support the use of semantic mapping to improve students' reading comprehension. The first research about semantic mapping was done by Mahdum (2009) in FKIP UR Pekanbaru. Based on this research the students' reading ability could be improved by using semantic mapping strategy. In addition, in teaching learning process, students can work together, discuss and share information, improve mutual understanding, as well as give mutual support to get the objectives. And the second one was conducted by

Muhtar (2010) at SMPN 1 Sine with result that semantic mapping strategy was able to improve the students' reading comprehension. Furthermore, the class situation also improved. The class became more enjoyable and fun. The students became more active individually and in group.

From those three classroom action researches about semantic mapping, it can be seen that semantic mapping can be an appropriate strategy to improve both students' reading comprehension and classroom situation. Therefore, in this research, the researcher focused on improving the students' reading comprehension of grade X of Senor High School which consists of 32 students. Based on the school syllabus, the researcher focused the study on descriptive text. The strength of this research is that semantic mapping as the chosen strategy can be used by any student in any subject area. On the contrary, the result of this result cannot be generalized.

METHOD

Participant and Contexts

The participants for this study were 32 tenth grade students of class XB of Senior High School Number 5 Bengkulu City consisted of 18 females and 14 males. Moreover, the class was chosen as the subject of this study because the researcher was already done observation during the teaching practicum program on this class, so that the researcher already knew about the general classroom situation and the problems that the students

faced in learning English, especially reading.

Design and Procedures

The design of this research was classroom action research. There were several identified problems that need to be solved with the aims of improvement and involvement. Watts in Ferrance (2000) stated that action research is a process in which participants examine their own educational practice systematically and carefully, using the techniques of research with the intent that the research will inform and change his or her practices in the future. Since this is a classroom action research, it contains four elements: planning, acting, observing and reflecting. Those four phases are explained bellow:

Phase One: Planning

In the planning phase, researcher did some basic activities, like arranging the research schedule, creating the lesson plan, selecting the texts according to students' level of knowledge, making the tests that will be given to the students, and preparing the observation sheet and field notes.

Phase Two: Acting

Acting stage is the time on which the researcher applied the selected strategy, which was semantic mapping. The researcher did this action stage based on the procedures of semantic mapping. Zaid (1995) addressed five phases of semantic mapping procedures as below:

a) Introducing the topic.
   The teacher announces the topic of the unit by drawing a large oval on the chalkboard-an overhead projector can also be used-writing the topic inside of it. Some teachers display a picture relating to the topic to stimulate students' thoughts and get the brainstorming procedure going.

b) Brainstorming.
   The teacher asks the students to think of ideas that might be related to this topic.

c) Categorization.

d) Personalizing the map.
   After each student has made a copy of the pre-assignment map, the class is provided with some material on the topic. This material is typically a reading passage since semantic mapping is designed to show the relationship between the verbal and the visual. The reading will almost certainly contain more information about the topic than the students had listed on the pre-assignment map. As they read, students are to decide what to add to or eliminate from the pre-assignment map. New information is thereby integrated with prior knowledge.

e) Post-assignment synthesis.
   The last part of the class period is used to record the students' suggestions from their personal maps on the pre-assignment. Discussion will probably center on the amount of information acquired from the reading and how it has modified the original map. That wrote on the sequence below.

Thus, the action can be written down in the sequence as follow:

a) The researcher introduced the topic to the students. The researcher announced the topic of the text by drawing a large oval on the whiteboard and then wrote the topic inside of it.

b) The researcher asked the students to think of ideas that might be related to this topic. This brainstorming phase allows students to make use of their prior knowledge or experiences.

c) The third step is categorization. The teacher encouraged the students to see relationships among their suggestions and asked them to classify the words into some certain categories.

d) The teacher asked each student to draw semantic mapping of the topic based on their knowledge about it.

e) After each student had made the pre-reading map, the class was provided with some materials on the topic. This material was typically a reading passage since semantic mapping was designed to show the relationship between the verbal and the visual. The reading almost certainly contains more information about the topic than the students had listed on the pre-reading map.

f) As they read, students were to decide what to add to or eliminate from the pre-assignment map. New information was thereby integrated with prior knowledge.

g) And the last part was answering the questions based on the text and summarizing the text to see whether the students really comprehend the text.

Phase Three: Observing

Observation was done by the to see the implementation of acting stage by using the checklist and taking some notes in case there are some things that cannot be covered by the checklist.

Phase Four: Reflecting

After getting the detail overview about the problems that faced on the application of semantic mapping strategy, researcher repeated the cycle if needed until the indicator of success was achieved.

Research Instruments and Data Analysis

In collecting the data of the research, the researcher used two instruments that are test and field notes/recording. The first test was given to get the baseline data of the students score. So it was done before the students are explained about semantic mapping strategy. And the second test was given at the end of the cycle after the students already taught how to use the semantic mapping strategy to see their reading comprehension progress.

Further, observation was done by the researcher by using field notes. This observation tool was made based on the indicators and the learning strategy used in this research. In general, the field notes covered information about the students' attitude during overall learning process.

Moreover, the following is indicators of success from an action in this classroom action research, they are:

a. More effective learning process in the classroom and students' positive attitudes (motivation, interest, enthusiasm, engage actively in the

reading activity) during the implementation of Semantic Mapping that will be proven by observation using observation checklist and field notes.

b. Semantic Mapping strategy can improve students' reading comprehension with the percentage of the students who reached ≥ 77 is 80% of the total students.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Description of the Cycles
a. Cycle I

Cycle 1 was done based on the observation of the classroom situation done on the first week of the research that were on Saturday, 31st March, Sunday, 2nd April, and Saturday, 7th April 2012; the baseline data of the students' score, and the result of the informal interview with the English teacher who taught the class.

In planning stage, the researcher along with the teacher prepared all the materials needed for doing the research, such as research schedule, lesson plan, teaching and learning materials, reading comprehension test after the cycle, and observation checklist and field notes. Research schedule had been adjusted to the school schedule. The lesson plan and the learning material were designed based on the school curriculum and the syllabus. On this syllabus, the material that should be taught by the teacher was Descriptive text. Moreover, the researcher had analyzed the baseline data. It also became the consideration in designing the lesson plan and selecting the reading text.

The reading comprehension test after the cycle was designed based on the reading comprehension test which was given to get the baseline data with some modification. The position of the texts on the test was re-arranged. In addition, the observation checklist and field notes were designed carefully so that it can be effective for collecting the data needed.

The action stage of cycle I was conducted on Sunday, 9th April, Saturday, 14th April, and Sunday, 23rd April 2012. The procedures are as follow:

1. The teacher explained about the descriptive text to the students.
2. The teacher introduced the semantic mapping strategy to the students.
3. The purpose of using semantic mapping strategy and how this strategy can be helpful to make the students easier to comprehend the reading materials were explained to them.
4. The teacher started applying the procedures of semantic mapping strategy by introducing the topic of the reading text which was "Moon" to the students.
5. The teacher announced the topic of the text by drawing a large oval on the whiteboard and then wrote the topic inside of it.
6. The teacher asked the students to think of ideas that might be related to this topic and wrote them on the whiteboard. This brainstorming phase allows students to make use of

their prior knowledge and experiences.

7. The teacher encouraged the students to see relationships among their suggestions and asked them to classify the words into some certain categories.

8. The teacher drew a simple semantic map of the topic on the whiteboard as an example.

9. The teacher asked the students to draw semantic mapping of the topic based on their knowledge about it individually.

10. The students were monitored by the teacher during their work.

11. After each student had made the pre-reading map, the class was provided with the descriptive text about "Moon". The reading material almost certainly contains more information about the topic than the students had listed on the pre-reading map.

12. The students were asked to read the descriptive text.

13. As they read, students were to decide what to add to or eliminate from the pre-assignment map. New information was thereby integrated with prior knowledge.

14. The students were asked to draw the second semantic map based on the text they had read. By doing this, the students can compare what information they had before and after read the text. They can see the new information about the topic that

previously they did not know. Finally, this can help them to comprehend the text easier.

15. The students were asked to answer the questions based on the text. The semantic map they just drew can be helpful for them to find the answer faster.

16. The teacher and the students discussed about the two maps made by the students.

17. The students' answers of the questions were discussed and assessed.

The observation result showed that there were several things that need to be improved in the teaching and learning process. The students seemed to still faced some difficulties in putting the words they earned in the brainstorming phase into the right categories. Sometimes, they did not even know in what category those words belonged to. By seeing the result, the researcher decided to continue the action to the next cycle with some improvement.

b. Cycle II

Cycle II was done based on the result of the reflection of Cycle I. In Cycle II, the researcher revised the plan of the research and did the strategy with some betterment. Similar to the previous cycle, in cycle II the researcher also prepared the plan that had been revised and the materials needed for doing the action. The materials were chosen carefully by considering the time and difficulty level. In cycle II, it was planned that the researcher allocate more time for drawing the map and post-reading activity,

so that the students could practice doing the semantic mapping strategy with more than one descriptive text.

The procedures of action II for the first text was done as follow:

1. Types of semantic mapping were explained and showed to the students by using power point.
2. Some examples of semantic maps were displayed by using power point and later on were handed out to the students
3. The use of semantic mapping strategy and how this strategy can be helpful to make the students easier to comprehend the reading materials were reviewed.
4. The teacher started doing the procedures of semantic mapping strategy by introducing the topic of the first reading text which was "Cleopatra" to the students.
5. The teacher announced the topic of the text by drawing a large oval on the whiteboard and then wrote the topic inside of it.
6. The teacher asked the students to make small groups consisted of four people.
7. The teacher asked the groups of students to think of ideas that might be related to this topic.
8. The teacher encouraged the groups to see relationships among their suggestions and asked them to classify the words into some certain categories.
9. The teacher asked the students to draw semantic mapping of the topic based on their group discussion individually.
10. The students were monitored by the teacher during their work.
11. After each student had made the pre-reading map, the class was provided with the descriptive text about "Cleopatra". The students were asked to read the text.
12. As they read, students were to decide what to add to or eliminate from the pre-assignment map. New information was thereby integrated with prior knowledge.
13. The students discussed what the text was about in groups of four guided and monitor by the teacher.
14. The students were asked to draw the second semantic map based on the text they had read individually.
15. The students were asked to answer the questions based on the text in pairs. So that they could discuss to find the right answer.
16. The teacher and the students discussed about the two maps the students made and the answers of the questions.
17. Their maps and answers were assessed by the teacher.

In this cycle, to start the lesson, the teacher gives more explanation about the types of semantic mapping. She presented a slideshow about the types of semantic mapping and their explanation. Then, she also showed some examples of the maps.

The students worked in group so they could share and are expected to overcome their difficulty if categorizing the information. In the end, the students' maps showed that the students' reading comprehension did improve in this cycle. Their maps were rich of information and showed relationship between the ideas of the text clearly. Some students even could modify their maps by combining of types of semantic maps. In this cycle, to answer the questions, the students' did not re-read the text. They did it only with the help of their personal made map. It showed that their reading comprehension already much better.

Therefore, at the end of cycle II, the researcher decided to give post test to the students to see their reading comprehension progress. And the result of the test was presented below:

Table 1: Result of the Students' Reading Comprehension Test in the End of the Cycle II

Criteria (based on the passing grade ≥77)	Number of the Students (from 32 students)	Percentage (%)
Passed	28	87.5%
Failed	4	12.5%

The calculation of the result of the test at the end of Cycle II showed that the students' reading score was improved. There were only 4 out of 32 students who failed the test. In other words, 87.5% of the total students already passed it. This result already reached the indicator of success that had been set. Therefore, the researcher decided to stop the action.

Improvement of the Students' Reading Comprehension

The improvement of the students' reading comprehension by using semantic mapping strategy could be seen in the table below:

Table 2: The Students' Reading Comprehension Improvement

| Improvement of the students who passed the test out of 32 students	
Baseline Data	Final Result
43.75%	87.5%

The first data were the baseline data that gotten from the test conducted before the implementation of the strategy. The test was given to see on what level the students' reading comprehension was before the chosen strategy was applied. From the table, it can be said that the students' reading comprehension was low with only less than 50% or specifically 43.75% of the total students passed the test. Then, in the end of cycle II the students' who passed the test became 87.5 %. It was above the indicator

of success set by the researcher which said that the use of semantic mapping strategy can be categorized as success if it can improve students' reading comprehension with the percentage of the students who reached ≥ 77 is 80% of the total students (32 students).Based on the table above, it can be seen that there was significant improvement of the students' reading comprehension. The data on the table showed that the students who passed the test improved in each stage; from the baseline data to final result. Moreover, the data was turned into a chart below:

Chart 1: Chart of the Students' Passing Improvement Percentage
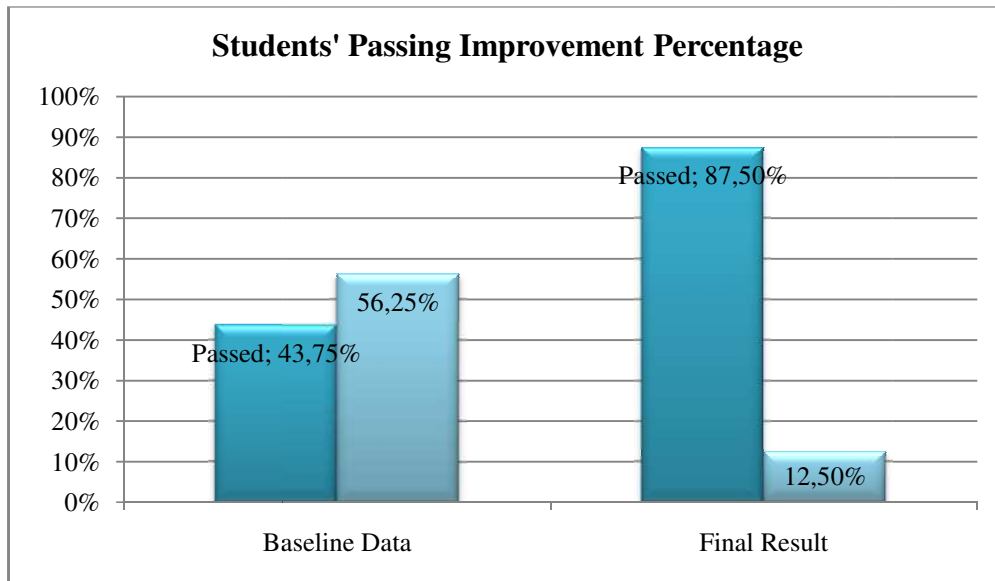
This improvement mostly influenced by the second state of semantic mapping procedure which is brainstorming, and the third stage which is categorization. The brainstorming phase allows students to make use of their prior knowledge or experiences. It also gives the teacher insight into the schemata of each of the students, thus revealing interests, level of readiness, gaps, misconceptions, and errors related to the text.

First, it allows learners considerable freedom to bring the students own prior knowledge and opinions to bear on a particular issue; and second, it involves the whole class. No one needs to feel threaten when any bid is acceptable and be added to the framework. Furthermore, semantic mapping enables students not only to visualize relationships, but to categorize them as well.

Observation Result

The classroom action research was not only about the improvement of the score, but it also considers the teaching and learning process as an important part to see the successfulness of the chosen strategy. Therefore, observation was done during the implementation of the strategy. The thing that was observed was students' attitude

during the learning process. he students also showed better motivation, interest, participation, and enthusiasm toward the learning process proven by the results of the observation.

DISCUSSION

The result of this research was compared to some theories and related studies to see whether there was similarity or difference. After analyzing the result of the implementation of the semantic mapping strategy, it can be seen that the result of this research support the theories and related findings explained previously.

The findings of this research showed the improvement of the students' reading comprehension and the students' attitude (motivation, interest, enthusiasm, engage actively in the reading activity) during the teaching and learning process. These findings support the theories of how semantic mapping strategy helps improving comprehension and students' attitude. The first theory from Baleghizadeh and Naeim (2011) explained that semantic mapping is used to help learners understand relationships and form concepts about broader topics. The basis of semantic mapping is the relationships among its elements (here, the words). It is widely believed that learners learn better if they are taught to build up relations between the terms in such a text. As the relationships among words are established, the learners will remember them more easily.

Based on the observation during the implementation of the action, the students found it easier to get the information from the text by looking at their maps instead of reading the texts. Their semantic maps helped them in completing the task both in the form of essay of summarizing. So, it is true that semantic mapping is an effective strategy for teaching reading skill and textual patterns of organization, and is effective for improving note taking and creative thinking skills. These skills were very helpful to improve students' reading comprehension.

Moreover, semantic mapping is the first major activity that activates student's appropriate background knowledge of a given topic (Freedman; Heimlich and Pittleman, cited in Ajideh, 2006). Activating the students' background knowledge is needed before reading the text. As Lenz in Saputri (2011) figured out, readers who do not have background knowledge about the topic of the text or the text type will have more difficulty in comprehending the text. It means that the students' background knowledge can influence their reading comprehension. Therefore, the students should be introduced to the text types early and review them often.

In Semantic Mapping strategy procedure, before the text was handed to the students, their background knowledge was already activated on brainstorming phase and was turned into pre-reading map. So, when they read the text, indirectly their background knowledge can help them to comprehend it because at least they already had something on their mind of the topic. To strengthen this finding, Estes (1999) said

that comprehension can be thought of as the elaboration and refinement of prior knowledge. So, when the prior knowledge of the students' was already activated, they only need to elaborate and link it to the new information from the text it to achieve comprehension.

Another theory added that the students engaged actively in the reading activity because semantic mapping is student centered since it makes use of the students' prior knowledge and because students control the input at each stage of the map's building. (Zaid, 1995). Also in drafting the map, semantic mapping strategy demanded the total students' involvement. In other words, the students are active participants throughout the development of the map.

Antonnaci (in Tateum, 2007) stated that semantic mapping is a visual representation of knowledge, a picture of conceptual relationship. It means that semantic mapping can be as a visual representation of knowledge. So, the students' maps in pre-reading activity can be said as the representative of their background knowledge, and in after reading activity, the maps were the representative of their comprehension of the text. Once they made rich of information map, it means they got much information from the text.

Furthermore, in this research, semantic mapping strategy was used to motivate and involve students in the learning process. It was done based on Lihua's (2005) opinion that said semantic mapping motivates and involves students in the thinking, reading, and writing aspects. As the consequence,

the findings of this research is on the same path as Zaid (1995) theory which said that the students who use semantic mapping manifest considerable improvement reading comprehension, written expression and vocabulary development.

In conclusion, it could be said that semantic mapping strategy can improve students' reading comprehension by motivating them to be active readers and to engage actively in the classroom activities. It also trains the students to activate their prior knowledge, to see relationship among the ideas in the text, and allows students to connect previous knowledge with new knowledge, thereby expanding their reservoir of knowledge through that interrelationship.

Besides support the theories of how semantic mapping can improve reading comprehension, the findings of this research also supports the related findings. The first one was conducted by Aprillianto (2009) at MTs Maarif Sukorejo Pasuruan. The findings of this research study indicate that semantic mapping technique was successful in improving both the students' ability in comprehending English texts (report texts) and the students' involvement in reading activities.

The second research about semantic mapping was done by Mahdum (2009) in FKIP UR Pekanbaru. Based on this research the students' reading ability could be improved by using semantic mapping strategy. In addition, in teaching learning process, students can work together, discuss and share information, improve mutual

understanding, as well as give mutual support to get the objectives.

And the third one was conducted Muhtar (2010) at SMPN 1 Sine with result that semantic mapping strategy was able to improve the students' reading comprehension. Furthermore, the class situation also improved. The class became more enjoyable and fun. The students became more active when worked both individually and in group. These findings were similar the results of this research proven by the result of the tests score and the analysis of the observation checklist and field notes that already described on the result section. Finally, from the discussion above, the researcher concluded that Semantic Mapping is an effective and appropriate strategy to improve students' reading comprehension, motivation, enthusiasm, and participation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the research, the researcher concluded that semantic mapping is one of the good strategies to improve students' reading comprehension proven by the improvement of the students passed the test which improved significantly from 43.75% in the baseline data to 87.5% in the final result.

Semantic mapping is also an appropriate strategy to improve the classroom situation proven by better attitude (motivation, enthusiasm, participation) of the students during the reading activities. By using semantic mapping strategy, the students are trained to activate their prior knowledge and to see the relationship between the ideas of the text which help them to comprehend the text better.

Semantic mapping strategy helps the students to compare and relate the information they have before and after reading the text easier. In implementing the semantic mapping strategy, the teacher can vary the classroom setting. The students can work in groups, in pairs, or individually

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