

## IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION OF DESCRIPTIVE TEXT THROUGH THE USE OF MIND MAPPING FOR CLASS XI STUDENTS OF SMAN 8 KUPANG

Clara Taroci Meda <sup>a,1\*</sup>  
Soleman Dapa Taka <sup>b,2</sup>  
Gracia M. N. Otta <sup>c,3</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Student of the English Education Study Program, Nusa Cendana University, Kupang, Indonesia

<sup>b,c</sup> Lecturer of English Education Study Program, Nusa Cendana University, Kupang, Indonesia

<sup>1</sup> [clarataroci@gmail.com](mailto:clarataroci@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> [sdapataka@gmail.com](mailto:sdapataka@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup> [graciaotta@gmail.com](mailto:graciaotta@gmail.com)

KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Descriptive Text Learning Strategy Mind Mapping Reading Comprehension Visualization	This study aims to improve the reading comprehension of descriptive texts among Grade XI students at SMA Negeri 8 Kupang through the implementation of the mind mapping technique. The research adopts a qualitative approach involving observations, interviews, and reading tasks to explore how mind mapping helps students in understanding descriptive texts. The participants were 30 students from Class XI-B. The results showed that 80% of the students actively engaged in the mind mapping activities, and 90% of them reported an improvement in their comprehension after applying the technique. Students stated that mind mapping helped them organize ideas, visualize key points, and made the learning process more enjoyable. The findings indicate that mind mapping is an effective strategy to enhance reading comprehension, especially in identifying main ideas and understanding text structures. This technique also fosters creativity and motivation among students. Thus, integrating mind mapping into reading lessons can significantly support students' comprehension of descriptive texts.
<b>How to cite:</b> Meda, C. T., Dapa Taka, S., Otta, G. (2026). IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION OF DESCRIPTIVE TEXT THROUGH THE USE OF MIND MAPPING FOR CLASS XI STUDENTS OF SMAN 8 KUPANG. <i>SPARKLE Journal of Language, Education and Culture</i> , 8 (1) 66 – 71.	

### INTRODUCTION

Reading is a fundamental language skill essential in today's information-driven world. It enables individuals to interpret and internalize messages from written texts. According to several scholars (Wulan, 2010; Darmadi, 2018), reading is more than word recognition; it is an active cognitive process that involves decoding and understanding the meaning of written language. However, comprehension is not a passive activity. It requires mental engagement and interaction between the text and the reader's background knowledge (Somadayo, 2011).

In the Indonesian educational context, English is a compulsory subject taught from elementary to higher education levels. Among the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—reading plays a crucial role in academic success across subjects. Nevertheless, many Indonesian students continue to face challenges in comprehending English texts. Factors such as limited vocabulary, lack of motivation, and insufficient learning strategies contribute to poor reading comprehension, especially with descriptive texts, which require students to identify and understand specific details and structures.

To overcome these challenges, effective and engaging learning strategies must be implemented. One promising method is mind mapping, developed by Tony Buzan (2006), which allows learners to visualize and organize information in a structured way. By representing relationships between ideas through diagrams, students are better able to extract meaning from texts. Studies (Asmiati, 2001; Beki, 2009) have shown that mind mapping enhances students' understanding by stimulating creativity, improving memory retention, and promoting active learning.

Mind mapping is particularly suitable for reading descriptive texts, which often contain layered information about people, places, or objects. The visual structure of a mind map helps learners identify main ideas and supporting details, making it easier to navigate through the content. In addition, this method encourages students to engage more actively with the text, improving both comprehension and motivation. This study was conducted at SMAN 8 Kupang, focusing on class XI students with relatively low reading comprehension skills. The researcher chose class XI-B, based on previous teaching experience during the *Teaching Practice (PPL)* and a recommendation from the English teacher. The aim of this research is to examine whether mind mapping can improve students' understanding of descriptive texts and to explore their perceptions of the technique as a learning strategy.

Therefore, this study was conducted to address two main research questions: whether the use of mind mapping can improve students' comprehension of descriptive texts, and what benefits students perceive from using the technique. The study specifically aims to examine the effectiveness of mind mapping in helping students identify key ideas and understand text structure, and to explore how this visual strategy contributes to motivation and engagement. It is expected that the findings will provide practical insights for both teachers and students, particularly in enhancing reading comprehension through a structured, visual, and creative learning approach that supports better understanding and retention of descriptive texts.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method to investigate the use of mind mapping in improving students' reading comprehension of descriptive texts. The research was conducted at SMAN 8 Kupang with 30 students of class XI-B, selected through purposive sampling. This class was chosen because the students had sufficient experience in using learning strategies and were known to be cooperative, based on the researcher's prior engagement during *Praktek Pengenalan Lapangan (PPL)* and a recommendation from the English teacher. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and reading tasks. Students were given descriptive texts to read, asked to create mind maps, and asked to respond to comprehension questions based on their work. Questionnaires were also distributed to gather student perceptions about the effectiveness of mind mapping. The data were analyzed thematically by examining patterns in students' organization of ideas, clarity, visual structure, connection of concepts, completeness, and creativity. The results of interviews, observations, and student products were integrated to describe how mind mapping influenced their understanding of descriptive texts.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

## Findings

This study found that the application of mind mapping had a significant impact on students' reading comprehension of descriptive texts. The research was carried out through a classroom activity involving 30 students from class XI-B at SMAN 8 Kupang. Students were given two descriptive texts—one about Nusa Dua Beach and another about the City of Yogyakarta—which served as the reading materials. The Nusa Dua Beach text described the beach's natural beauty, tourist activities, and comprehensive facilities, while the Yogyakarta text highlighted its cultural heritage, traditional market, and performing arts. After reading, students were asked to create mind maps based on the texts by identifying and organizing key ideas such as the place name, uniqueness, tourist attractions, and facilities. Most students were able to illustrate their understanding using branches and keywords to connect main ideas with supporting details.

The classroom observation showed that 80% of the students (24 out of 30) actively engaged in the process, asking questions, collaborating with peers, and demonstrating creativity in their mind maps. For example, in the Nusa Dua Beach mind map, students included keywords such as "white sand," "snorkeling," "hotels," and "sunrise," which were connected to the central idea by branches. In the Yogyakarta mind map, students highlighted "Borobudur," "gudeg," "batik," and "Beringharjo Market," representing both cultural and culinary aspects. These visual tools helped students better retain information and understand the descriptive structure of the texts. However, 20% of students (6 students) participated passively or had difficulty organizing the information, likely due to unfamiliarity with the method or lower reading confidence.

After completing the mind maps, students completed a questionnaire to report their experiences with the technique. The responses demonstrated strong positive feedback, as summarized below:

**Table 1.1. The summary of student responses to the questionnaire**

No.	Questions	"Yes" Responses (Positive)	"No" Responses (Negative)
1.	Do you feel that using mind mapping helps you understand descriptive texts better?	27 students (90%)	3 students (10%)
2.	Do you feel more motivated to read after using mind mapping?	27 students (90%)	3 students (10%)
3.	Do you feel that mind mapping makes the learning process more enjoyable?	27 students (90%)	3 students (10%)
4.	Do you find it difficult to use mind mapping while studying?	3 students (10%)	27 students (90%)
5.	Do you feel that mind mapping is more effective compared to other traditional learning methods?	27 students (90%)	3 students (10%)

The questionnaire results show that mind mapping helped students improve their comprehension, motivation, and enjoyment of learning. Most students reported that the technique made reading easier by helping them visualize and connect ideas. In addition to their mind-mapping products, their answers to comprehension questions demonstrated a better understanding of key elements, including main ideas, supporting details, and text structure. The activity also fostered creativity, as students used colors, symbols, and artistic layouts to present their ideas. Overall, the findings confirmed that mind mapping is an effective strategy to enhance students' reading comprehension of descriptive texts.

## Discussions

The findings of this study indicate that mind mapping is an effective technique to improve students' reading comprehension of descriptive texts. Students reported that the visual representation of information helped them understand the text's structure more clearly, connect ideas logically, and recall content more easily. Specifically, they benefited from four main aspects of the technique: visual information, where students could see the relationships between concepts through images and layout; idea organization, which enabled them to identify main ideas and supporting details more systematically; memory improvement, as the use of colors, symbols, and keywords helped reinforce recall; and creativity, since students had the freedom to design their maps in personalized ways, which increased their motivation and enjoyment during learning. These elements contributed not only to their comprehension but also to greater engagement with the reading material.

These outcomes align with Buzan (2012), who stated that mind mapping aids in absorbing and processing information efficiently, and Swadarma (2013), who emphasized that the technique enhances the learning experience by making note-taking more dynamic and meaningful. Interviews with students further confirmed these benefits; one student remarked that after using mind mapping, they could "see the relationship between ideas more clearly," which helped improve understanding and memory retention. Based on these results, it is recommended that teachers provide regular training in mind mapping and apply this technique to a range of texts beyond descriptive ones, including narrative, expository, and argumentative texts. Integrating mind mapping into the curriculum can support students' comprehension and foster deeper, more active engagement in reading activities.

## CONCLUSION

Based on research conducted at SMA N 8 Kupang City, it can be concluded that the application of the mind mapping technique significantly improves students' reading skills, especially their understanding of descriptive texts. Through observation and data analysis, it was found that 80% of students actively participated in the mind mapping activity, and 90% of them found it easier to understand descriptive text after using this technique.

Mind mapping has been proven to be effective in helping students in several ways. Firstly, this technique allows students to visualize information, so they can see the connections between ideas and information in the text, making it easier for them to understand the structure and context. Secondly, mind mapping also helps students organize main ideas and important details, allowing them to quickly identify key points. Visually presented information is easier to remember, which contributes to better comprehension. Finally, mind mapping encourages students' creativity, inviting them to think creatively and critically, thus making the learning process more interesting and fun. Thus, mind mapping not only improves students' understanding of descriptive text but also makes the learning process more interactive and fun.

## REFERENCES

Arsyad and Marwan (2016): "The Effect of Mind Mapping on EFL Students' Idea Development in Argumentative Writing across Gender Differences and Learning Styles." Research Gate

- Azizah, F. R. (2020). *Mind Map dalam Pembelajaran Keterampilan Membaca Pemahaman Teks Bahasa Arab*. Jurnal Lisanul Arab, 9 (2), 166. <https://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/index.php/laa/article/view/34436>
- Buzan, T. 2006. *Mind Map untuk Meningkatkan Kreativitas*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama.
- Buzan, T. (2012). *The Mind Map Book: Unlock your creativity, boost your memory, change your life*. Penguin.
- Fathinah, R. A., & Iqlima, F. (2024). Pengaruh Mind Mapping terhadap Tingkat Pemahaman Pembelajaran Mahasiswa. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 8(3), 49493–49498.
- Hamzah & Wahyuningsih (2022). Penggunaan Mind Mapping Untuk Keterampilan Membaca Teks Bahasa Jerman. *E-Journal Laterne Nomor 11, Volume 3*.
- Karimah, N., Ngatmini, & Kurniawan, L. A. (2024). Pengaruh mind mapping terhadap kemampuan membaca pemahaman peserta didik SMPN 5 Pati. *SIMPATI: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan dan Bahasa*, 2(1), 162-175.
- Male, H (2019). *Using Mind Mapping to Improve Students' Reading Comprehension at SMK BPS&K II Bekasi*. English Education Department Chairperson.
- Naharia (2015). *Improving the Students' Reading Comprehension through the Discovery Learning Method*. Universitas Muhamadiyah Makasar.
- Ramadhan, G.F., Wisudaningsih, E. T., & Fatmawati, R. (2023). The Effect of Using Mind Mapping on Students' Reading Comprehension. *IDEAS Journal of Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 11(1), 385-394
- Rosmiati, E., Mustika, I., & Firmansyah, D. (2020). Efektivitas metode mind mapping dalam meningkatkan hasil belajar menulis teks fantasi. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran*, 3(5). P-ISSN 2614-624X, E-ISSN 2614-6231.
- Salem, F. P. (2017). Improving students' writing descriptive text using the mind mapping teaching strategy of the tenth-grade students of SMA Negeri 4 Kupang in the academic year 2017/2018. *International Journal of Research – GRANTHAALAYAH*, 5(12)
- Saori (2020). *The Use Of Mind Mapping To Teach Reading Comprehension*. *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*. Vol 8 No 2.
- Sariayu (2019). The Effect of Extensive Reading Activities in Improving Students' Vocabulary at the Tenth Grade of SMA Negeri 4 Takalar. Universitas Muhamadiyah Makasar.
- Somadayo, S. (2011). *Strategis dan Teknik Pembelajaran Membaca*. Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu.
- Swadarma, A. (2013). Penerapan Mind Mapping dalam Pembelajaran untuk Meningkatkan Kreativitas dan Pemahaman siswa. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran*, 2(1), 45-52.
- Tarigan, H. G. (2008). *Membaca sebagai suatu ketrampilan berbahasa*. Angkasa

Tatipang, D. P., Oroh, E. Z., & Liando, N. V. F. (2021). The application of the mind mapping technique to increase students' reading comprehension in the seventh grade of SMP. English Education Department, Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Negeri Manado.

Wafa, K., Kartini, A. Y., Tauchid, M. A., & Afiana, I. (2019). Improving students' reading comprehension through mind mapping: A classroom research at the 8th grade of MTs Assalam Bangilan in the academic year of 2018/2019. *EDUtec: Journal of Education and Technology*.

Zaid, M.A., & Zainuddin, Z. (2018). The Effectiveness of Mind Mapping in Improving Reading Comprehension among Secondary School Students. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Science*, 8(5), 123-134.