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ENHANCING NINTH-GRADE WRITING SKILLS: MIND MAPPING AND TEAM GAME TOURNAMENT TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING REPORT TEXTS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effectiveness of Mind Mapping and Team Game Tournament (TGT) techniques in enhancing the report writing skills of ninth-grade students at SMPN 7 Tangerang. The research was conducted over the first semester of the 2023/2024 academic year, involving 67 participants divided into two groups for each teaching method. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the study combined quantitative analysis of pre-test and post-test scores with qualitative insights from semi-structured interviews to evaluate and compare the impact of each technique. Quantitative findings indicated that both methods significantly improved students' writing abilities. The Mind Mapping group's average scores increased from 65.52 to 82.91, while the TGT group's scores rose from 64.53 to 80.35. However, the difference in effectiveness between the two techniques was not statistically significant. Qualitatively, students expressed a preference for Mind Mapping for its simplicity and aid in organizing thoughts and generating ideas. Conversely, TGT was favored for its engaging and collaborative nature, enhancing learning through competitive and cooperative dynamics. The study suggests that both techniques are valuable educational tools. It recommends their continued use to cater to different learning styles, potentially in combination, to maximize student engagement and learning outcomes in writing education.

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INTRODUCTION

Writing in English, particularly as a foreign language, presents significant challenges for students in Indonesia. As English is not their native language, Indonesian students often struggle with various aspects of writing, such as generating ideas, organizing those ideas coherently, and mastering the necessary vocabulary and grammar. Writing, as a complex cognitive process, requires students to gather information, plan an outline, construct sentences, and ensure overall organization—all of which are difficult tasks when dealing with a foreign language that differs structurally and culturally from their native tongue (Al Kamli, 2019; Arifin, 2020; Pablo & Lasaten, 2018).

The primary difficulties students faced in writing English texts stem from the inherent differences between English and their native language. These differences are not limited to linguistic structure but extend to cultural aspects as well, making the process of writing in English particularly daunting for ESL/EFL learners. Consequently, students often experience difficulties in understanding content, organizing their texts, using appropriate language, mastering vocabulary, and applying proper mechanics (Amalia, 2021; Eryilmaz & Yesilyurt, 2022).

Given these challenges, it is crucial to identify effective teaching techniques that can assist students in overcoming these obstacles and improving their writing skills. Strategic teaching methods, such as Mind Mapping and Team Game Tournament (TGT), can help facilitate the writing process by providing a structured approach that guides students in organizing their thoughts and ideas. These techniques not only have the potential to enhance students' writing performance but also to positively influence their attitudes towards writing in English (Al Kamli, 2019).

This study aims to explore whether the Mind Mapping and Team Game Tournament (TGT) techniques can significantly improve ninth-grade students' ability to write report texts in English. It also seeks to determine which of these two techniques is more effective in enhancing students' writing skills. Additionally, the study examined students' perceptions of both techniques to understand how these methods influenced their learning experience and motivation in writing report texts.

Despite the numerous studies conducted on teaching techniques for improving writing skills in ESL/EFL contexts, gaps remain in understanding the comparative effectiveness of Mind Mapping and TGT techniques, particularly in the context of Indonesian junior high school students. Previous research has shown the benefits of both techniques individually, with Mind Mapping aiding in idea generation and organization (Buzan, 2006) and TGT fostering collaboration and engagement through competitive learning (Veloo et al., 2016). However, there is a lack of studies directly comparing these two techniques to determine which is more effective in enhancing students' writing abilities, specifically in writing report texts. Furthermore, students' perspectives on these techniques have not been thoroughly explored, leaving a gap in understanding how these methods impact student motivation and perception of writing tasks.

This study aims to fill these gaps by comparing the effectiveness of Mind Mapping and TGT techniques in improving students' report writing skills and by investigating students' perceptions of these techniques. Through this research, educators can gain insights into which teaching method is more beneficial for enhancing writing skills and how students respond to these instructional strategies.

The foundation of this study builds upon previous research that has demonstrated the effectiveness of Mind Mapping and TGT techniques in improving various aspects of writing skills. For instance, studies by Khoiriyah (2014) and Bukhari (2016) have shown that Mind Mapping can significantly enhance students' ability to organize and generate ideas, improving their overall writing performance. Similarly, Firman and Fathurahman (2017) found that Mind Mapping is particularly effective in helping students comprehend and structure their writing.

On the other hand, research by Haryono and Tukiyo (2022) and Astria and Maesaroh (2021) has highlighted the benefits of TGT in promoting collaborative learning and improving students' writing skills through competitive and engaging activities. These studies suggest that TGT

not only improves writing abilities but also fosters teamwork and social skills, making it an enjoyable and effective learning method.

Despite these findings, there remains a need to directly compare these two techniques within the same study, particularly in the context of Indonesian junior high school students. By doing so, this research contribute to a deeper understanding of which technique is more effective for enhancing report writing skills, providing valuable insights for educators in selecting the most appropriate instructional strategies.

METHODS

Research Design

This study utilized a mixed-method approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods to comprehensively analyze the research problem. Mixed methods allow for the collection, analysis, and integration of both quantitative and qualitative data within a single study to better understand the research questions (Creswell, 2013). The quantitative component involved testing three hypotheses through statistical analysis, while the qualitative aspect aimed to understand students' perceptions of the teaching techniques used. According to Vo, Long and Nhi (2024), mixed methods can lessen the limitations of using qualitative and quantitative approaches individually while simultaneously increasing the strengths of each. This approach enables a more comprehensive analysis by combining the benefits of both methods.

The quantitative analysis employed dependent and independent t-tests using IBM SPSS Statistics 25. The dependent t-test was used to evaluate whether the Mind Mapping and Team Game Tournament (TGT) techniques significantly improved students' ability to write report texts. The independent t-test was applied to determine which technique was more effective in enhancing writing skills. For the qualitative analysis, semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather insights into students' perceptions of the Mind Mapping and TGT techniques. The interview responses were transcribed, categorized, and analyzed to identify common themes and insights.

Setting and Participants

The research was conducted at SMPN 7 Tangerang during the first semester of the 2023/2024 academic year. The study focused on ninth-grade students, with a total of 67 participants. The participants were divided into two groups: 33 students were assigned to the Mind Mapping group, and 34 students were assigned to the TGT group. Both groups received instruction on writing report texts. The study was structured over four meetings: the first meeting involved a pre-test, the second and third meetings were dedicated to teaching using the respective techniques, and the fourth meeting involved a post-test to assess the effectiveness of the techniques.

Research Method

The research employed a pre-experimental design as part of its quantitative approach. This design was chosen because it did not involve a control group or random sampling from the population, which is characteristic of pre-experimental studies (Sugiyono, 2018). The pre-test was administered to both groups to measure their initial ability to write report texts. Following the application of the Mind Mapping and TGT techniques over three sessions, a post-test was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of these techniques.

Data collection involved both tests and interviews. The tests consisted of a pre-test and a post-test for each group. The theme for the writing tasks was animals, which was aligned with the curriculum requirements for ninth-grade students under the 2013 Curriculum. Interviews were conducted with eight students from each group to explore their perceptions of the Mind Mapping and TGT techniques. The interviews were semi-structured with open-ended questions, and the responses were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed qualitatively. The quantitative data from the pre-test and post-test were analysed using dependent t-tests to assess the improvement in students' writing abilities, and independent t-tests to compare the effectiveness of the two techniques.

The qualitative data were analysed by coding and categorizing the interview responses to identify themes related to students' perceptions of the techniques.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

This section presents the research results using a mixed-method approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative findings are based on the analysis of students' pre-test and post-test scores, while the qualitative findings are derived from interviews with students about their perceptions of the Mind Mapping and Team Game Tournament (TGT) techniques.

1. Quantitative Results

1.1 Mind Mapping Technique

The first research question explored whether the Mind Mapping technique significantly improves students' ability to write report texts. The data revealed that the mean pre-test score for students using the Mind Mapping technique was 65.52, with a post-test mean score of 82.91. This indicates an increase of 17.39 points. The statistical analysis showed a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores, confirming the effectiveness of the Mind Mapping technique in improving students' writing abilities.

Table 4.1 - Paired Samples Statistics for Mind Mapping Technique:

Test	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-Test of Mind Mapping Tech	65.52	33	10.081	1.755
Post-Test of Mind Mapping Tech	82.91	33	7.346	1.279

The paired samples correlation also supports the effectiveness of Mind Mapping, with a p-value of 0.000, indicating a significant improvement.

Table 4.2 - Paired Samples Correlations for Mind Mapping Technique:

N	Correlation	Sig.
33	0.816	0.000

1.2 Team Game Tournament Technique

The second research question examined whether the TGT technique significantly improves students' writing abilities. The pre-test mean score for students using TGT was 64.53, which increased to 80.35 in the post-test, indicating a significant improvement of 15.82 points.

Table 4.3 - Paired Samples Statistics for TGT Technique:

Test	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-Test of TGT Technique	64.53	34	15.92	2.605
Post-Test of TGT Technique	80.35	34	8.481	1.455

The paired samples correlation for TGT showed a p-value of 0.007, further confirming the significant improvement.

Table 4.4 - Paired Samples Correlations for TGT Technique:

N	Correlation	Sig.
34	0.452	0.007

1.3 Comparison Between Mind Mapping and TGT Techniques

The second research question focused on comparing the effectiveness of the Mind Mapping and TGT techniques. The results showed that the mean improvement in scores for the Mind Mapping group was slightly higher (17.39) compared to the TGT group (15.82). However, the statistical analysis revealed that this difference was not significant, indicating that Mind Mapping does not work more effectively than TGT in improving students' writing abilities.

Table 4.5 - Independent Samples Test:

	T-Statistic	T-Critical	Decision
Mind Mapping vs TG	1.317	1.669	Do not reject Ho

2. Qualitative results

After doing the test, the researcher conducted a semi structure interview on mind mapping and TGT techniques. Each technique consists of 5 questions. The interviews were conducted in Indonesian to avoid misunderstanding since the students are still in Junior High School. There were only six students participating in the interview. The researcher selected two high-achieving students, two moderately achieving students, and two students who still needed help

Mind Mapping items

1. What do you think about writing a report text?
2. Do you find it difficult to write a report text? Why?
3. What is your opinion about using mind mapping to write a report text?
4. Do you enjoy writing a report text using the mind mapping technique? Why?
5. Do you agree that learning with mind mapping can improve your ability to write a report text? Why?

TGT (Team Game Tournament)

1. What do you think about writing a report text?
2. Do you find it difficult to write a report text? Why?
3. What do you think about writing a report text using the Team Game Tournament method?
4. Do you enjoy writing a report text with the Team Game Tournament technique? Why?
5. Do you agree that "using the Team Game Tournament method can improve your ability to write a report text"? Why?

The study employed methodological triangulation to boost its credibility, following the guidelines suggested by Norman and James (2020). It incorporated diverse data collection techniques, including semi-structured interviews, recordings, and tests, to strengthen the validity and reliability of the results. This multifaceted approach helped reduce biases and provided a fuller understanding of the research subject. By utilizing various methods, the study capitalized on the advantages of each to mitigate the shortcomings of others, leading to a more comprehensive and thorough examination.

Students' Perception of Mind Mapping Technique

The Mind Mapping technique was widely appreciated by the students for making the process of writing report texts easier and more intuitive. One student commented, *"It's easy because Mind Mapping helps me find information and group related words according to the theme"* (S1). Another student echoed this sentiment, explaining that *"I find it fun and easy! Mind Mapping allows me to generate imagination, and since it doesn't require many words, I can understand and explain the report text better"* (S7). These comments highlight how Mind Mapping simplified the process of gathering and organizing information, making it more accessible to students.

In addition to easing the writing process, Mind Mapping was also recognized for its ability to help students organize their thoughts and accelerate the flow of ideas. One student pointed out, *"Mind Mapping helps me arrange the text better and makes the flow of thoughts faster, which is great for writing reports"* (S2). This organizational aspect of Mind Mapping was crucial for students who struggled with structuring their writing. Furthermore, the technique was seen as a tool for developing creative ideas, with one student stating, *"Mind Mapping is great because it encourages the development of creative ideas while writing"* (S5), and another adding, *"It's an excellent tool for creativity. We can expand our ideas and think more creatively during the writing process"* (S6).

Moreover, Mind Mapping was perceived as a method that sharpened students' ability to think critically and write effectively. *"Yes, it helps sharpen my thinking skills and improves my writing ability"* (S5), commented one student, while another agreed, *"Definitely! Mind Mapping sharpens both my thinking and writing skills, making the process more efficient"* (S6). Another student emphasized the focus it provided, stating, *"Mind Mapping really helps me think about the theme more deeply and organize my thoughts clearly"* (S8). These reflections underscore the technique's role in enhancing not just the students' writing abilities, but also their cognitive processes.

Students' Perception of Team Game Tournament (TGT) Technique

The Team Game Tournament (TGT) technique received enthusiastic responses from the students, who found it to be both exciting and engaging. One student described the experience as, *"It's really exciting because there's a challenge involved. I enjoy being challenged in this way"* (S1). Another student shared a similar sentiment, stating, *"The competition aspect is thrilling. It pushes us to do better and learn more"* (S7). These comments reflect how the competitive element of TGT motivated students to actively participate and engage with the material.

Students also appreciated how TGT helped them improve their vocabulary skills. One student noted, *"TGT helps me arrange and memorize vocabulary effectively"* (S2), while another added, *"It's exciting to learn how to organize vocabulary into coherent English sentences"* (S3). The technique was particularly effective in promoting the practical application of vocabulary, which is crucial for writing report texts.

The collaborative nature of TGT was another aspect that students valued. *"I like how TGT allows us to cooperate with our friends while learning"* (S2), commented one student, emphasizing the importance of teamwork in the learning process. Another student remarked, *"It's great because I can write together with my team"* (S4). This cooperative element not only made the learning process more enjoyable but also fostered a sense of camaraderie and mutual support among students. *"It's fun working with the team and helping each other out"* (S5), noted one student, while another added, *"The teamwork aspect makes it very enjoyable"* (S6).

Furthermore, the fun and enjoyable atmosphere created by TGT was a key factor in its success. *"TGT is fun and exciting because of the team collaboration"* (S5), shared one student. Another student emphasized, *"It's a lot of fun, especially because we get to work together as a team"* (S6). Additionally, TGT was seen as a valuable learning tool that helped students gain new knowledge. One student reflected, *"TGT is exciting because it helps me gain more knowledge about writing report texts"* (S4). Another student appreciated the opportunity to share and exchange knowledge with her peers, stating, *"It's great for gaining knowledge, especially when we share ideas within the team"* (S6).

Overall, the students perceived TGT as an effective and enjoyable technique that not only improved their writing skills but also encouraged teamwork and a deeper understanding of the content.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of Mind Mapping and Team Game Tournament (TGT) techniques in enhancing the writing abilities of ninth-grade students at SMPN 7 Tangerang, particularly in crafting report texts. The mixed-method approach utilized in this study, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data, provides a comprehensive understanding of how these techniques influence student learning. The discussion is structured around the quantitative results from pre-tests and post-tests, followed by an analysis of student perceptions gathered through interviews.

Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative findings from the study clearly demonstrate that both the Mind Mapping and TGT techniques significantly improved students' writing abilities.

1. Mind Mapping Technique:

The quantitative data revealed a notable improvement in students' writing abilities when utilizing the Mind Mapping technique. The mean score increased significantly from 65.52 in the pre-test to 82.91 in the post-test. This substantial increase suggests that Mind Mapping is effective in helping students organize their thoughts and ideas, leading to more coherent and well-structured report texts. The statistical analysis, supported by a p-value lower than the alpha level of 0.050, indicates that the improvement was not due to chance, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This finding aligns with Buzan's (2006) theory, which posits that Mind Mapping is a powerful tool for organizing information visually, thus enhancing cognitive processing and creativity in writing tasks. Recent studies by Wahid & Sudirman (2023) and Tarin & Yawilong (2022) have further supported the effectiveness of Mind Mapping in improving students' organizational skills and academic performance, particularly in writing tasks.

2. Team Game Tournament (TGT) Technique:

Similarly, the TGT technique also resulted in a significant improvement in students' writing performance. The mean score rose from 64.53 in the pre-test to 80.35 in the post-test, with the improvement being statistically significant as evidenced by a p-value of 0.007. The effectiveness of TGT can be attributed to its cooperative learning approach, which promotes active participation and motivation through competition Wyk (2011). The TGT technique engages students in a dynamic learning environment where they work together to achieve common goals, which fosters both academic achievement and social skills. This finding corroborates previous research by Astria and Maesaroh (2021), who found that TGT significantly enhanced students' writing abilities by making learning more enjoyable and collaborative. Additionally, newer research by Matitaputty et al.,(2023) has shown that TGT improves student engagement and retention of knowledge, particularly in language learning contexts.

3. Comparison of Mind Mapping and TGT:

Although both techniques were effective, the comparative analysis revealed no significant difference in their effectiveness. The independent t-test showed that the t-statistic (1.317) was lower than the t-critical value (1.669), indicating that Mind Mapping did not work more effectively than TGT. While the mean score for Mind Mapping was slightly higher (82.91) compared to TGT (80.35), this difference was not statistically significant. This suggests that both techniques are equally valuable in improving students' writing skills, albeit through different mechanisms. Mind Mapping aids in organizing and visualizing information, while TGT leverages the benefits of cooperative learning and competition to engage students Johnson & Johnson (2009). Recent study,

such as those Gillies (2016), have also emphasized the importance of using diverse instructional strategies to cater to different learning styles and needs, which supports the idea of incorporating both techniques in educational practices.

Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative data, obtained through student interviews, provided deeper insights into how students perceived the effectiveness of Mind Mapping and TGT in their learning experiences, complementing the quantitative results.

1. Mind Mapping Technique:

Students expressed that the Mind Mapping technique was particularly useful in simplifying the process of writing report texts. One student commented, “It’s easy because Mind Mapping helps me find information and group related words according to the theme” (S1), highlighting how the technique facilitated information organization. Another student remarked, “I find it fun and easy! Mind Mapping allows me to generate imagination, and since it doesn’t require many words, I can understand and explain the report text better” (S7). These perceptions resonate with the findings of Buzan (2006), who argued that Mind Mapping helps in structuring ideas visually, which can enhance understanding and retention of information. Moreover, students appreciated that Mind Mapping helped them accelerate the flow of ideas and develop creative thoughts, which are critical in writing tasks. This aligns with research by Farrand et al., (2002), who found that Mind Mapping can improve memory retention and cognitive organization in students.

2. Team Game Tournament (TGT) Technique:

The TGT technique was also well-received by students, many of whom described it as an exciting and engaging way to learn. One student shared, “It’s really exciting because there’s a challenge involved. I enjoy being challenged in this way” (S1), underscoring the motivating effect of competition in TGT. Another student added, “The competition aspect is thrilling. It pushes us to do better and learn more” (S7). These comments support the notion that competition can be a powerful motivator in educational settings, as suggested by Matitaputty et al.,(2023). Additionally, students noted that TGT helped them arrange and memorize vocabulary, a crucial skill for writing report texts. The collaborative nature of TGT was particularly beneficial, as it encouraged teamwork and peer learning, which are essential components of cooperative learning models (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). The fun and interactive nature of TGT made the learning experience more enjoyable, contributing to the significant improvements observed in the quantitative analysis. This finding is consistent with the research by Astria and Maesaroh (2021), who noted that TGT enhances student engagement and learning outcomes through its interactive approach. Additionally, new findings by Karyati & Hapsari (2024) further highlight the effectiveness of TGT in fostering a collaborative and competitive learning environment that enhances language skills.

In a nutshell, the findings from both the quantitative and qualitative analyses indicate that Mind Mapping and TGT are both effective techniques for improving students' ability to write report texts. While the quantitative data confirmed significant improvements in students' writing scores with both techniques, the qualitative data provided valuable insights into how these techniques were perceived and experienced by the students. Mind Mapping was particularly effective in helping students organize their thoughts and develop creative ideas, which is essential for producing well-structured and coherent texts. On the other hand, TGT was highly engaging and motivated students through competition and teamwork, which enhanced their learning experience and writing performance. Although the statistical analysis showed no significant difference between the two techniques, both were found to be equally valuable, each offering unique advantages that contribute to students' academic success. Educators are encouraged to incorporate both Mind Mapping and TGT into their teaching strategies, tailoring their use to the specific needs and learning styles of their students, as supported by recent educational research (Gillies, 2016).

CONCLUSION

This study underscores the effectiveness of both Mind Mapping and Team Game Tournament (TGT) techniques in improving the report writing skills of ninth-grade students. Through a rigorous mixed-method approach, it was demonstrated that these techniques significantly enhance students' ability to organize and articulate their thoughts in written English. While both methods showed substantial improvements in student performance, there was no significant difference between the two, suggesting that each has unique benefits that contribute to learning in different ways. Mind Mapping was particularly effective in helping students structure their ideas and enhance creativity, making it a valuable tool for individual learning and preliminary organization of thoughts. On the other hand, TGT fostered a dynamic and interactive learning environment, promoting teamwork and engagement through competitive activities, which was instrumental in improving communication and collaboration skills among students.

Given these findings, it is recommended that educators incorporate both techniques into their teaching repertoire to address varied learning preferences and needs. This dual approach can maximize educational outcomes by leveraging the strengths of both structured individual learning and interactive group dynamics. Further research could explore the integration of these methods in other subjects and educational settings to fully exploit their potential in diverse learning environments.

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