# THE EFFECT OF USING DIGITAL MIND MAPPING ON STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY AT SMPN 2 RAMBAH SAMO

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## ABSTRACT

*This study aims to determine the effect of using digital mind mapping on students' reading comprehension ability in recount texts. This study uses a pre-experimental method with one group pre-test post-test. The research sample consisted of eighth-grade students at SMPN 2 Rambah Samo in the 2025/2026 academic year. The research instrument was a multiple-choice test consisting of 32 questions that had been tested for validity and reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.974). The data were analyzed using normality tests, paired sample t-tests, and N-Gain. The results showed an increase in students' reading comprehension skills after using digital mind maps. The average pre-test score was 58.93, while the post-test score was 67.36. The Sig. value (two tails) was 0.000 < 0.05, so $H_a$ was accepted. Thus, digital mind maps have a significant effect on students' reading comprehension ability.*

*Keywords: reading comprehension, recount text, digital mind mapping*

## ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pengaruh penggunaan digital mind mapping terhadap kemampuan membaca pemahaman siswa pada teks recount. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode pre-experimental dengan desain one group pre-test dan post-test. Sampel penelitian adalah siswa kelas VIII SMPN 2 Rambah Samo tahun ajaran 2025/2026. Instrumen penelitian berupa tes pilihan ganda sebanyak 32 soal yang telah diuji validitas dan reliabilitasnya (Cronbach's Alpha = 0,974). Data dianalisis menggunakan uji normalitas, paired sample t-test, dan N-Gain. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya peningkatan kemampuan membaca pemahaman siswa setelah penggunaan digital mind mapping. Nilai rata-rata pre-test sebesar (58.93), sedangkan post-test sebesar (67.36) Nilai Sig. (2-tailed) sebesar (0.000) < 0.05 sehingga $H_a$ diterima. Dengan demikian, digital mind

mapping berpengaruh signifikan terhadap kemampuan membaca pemahaman siswa.

Kata Kunci: reading comprehension, recount text, digital mind mapping

## A. Introduction

Language can be defined as a communication system used by humans to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings. One of the most widely used languages in communication and as an international language is English. English has been widely used by other countries to communicate between countries both verbally and in writing. In addition to being used as an international language and a means of communication, English can also help open access to education, careers, and life skills. Without mastering English, individuals may face limitations in interacting and competing at a global level. According to Tarigan (2015), language is a form of communication used to convey messages between speakers and listeners. Communication can be said to be successful if the message conveyed is well understood by the recipient. The level of English proficiency in Indonesia is still relatively low. This is due to several factors, such as unequal access to education and the quality of English

language learning in various regions. Based on the English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) report released by Education First in 2023, Indonesia ranks 79th out of 113 countries with low English proficiency. This data shows that the English proficiency of Indonesians still needs to be improved through various effective learning efforts. In English language learning, there are four main skills that students must master, namely speaking, writing, reading, and listening. Speaking and writing are productive skills, while reading and listening are receptive skills. One of the most important skills in language learning is reading. Reading is a basic skill that helps students acquire information, expand their vocabulary, and improve their understanding of texts. Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) state that reading can help students improve their language skills through vocabulary development, comprehension, and critical thinking skills. However, in classroom learning practices, students still face several problems in understanding texts, especially

recount texts. One of the causes is the use of conventional teaching methods, which are less able to attract students' attention and make it difficult for them to understand the content of the text. In addition, limited vocabulary and a lack of prior knowledge about the reading topic also hinder students' ability to understand the text comprehensively. To overcome these problems, a more innovative and engaging learning strategy is needed for students. One strategy that can be used is digital mind mapping. Mind mapping is a visual technique that can help students organize information and connect the main ideas in a reading text. According to Buzan (2008), mind mapping can help a person express and organize ideas quickly and effectively. In addition, Shoimin (2014) states that mind mapping can activate all parts of the brain through the use of images and graphic designs, making it easier for students to understand and remember information. The use of digital technology in creating mind maps can increase students' interest and motivation to learn. Digital media allows information to be presented visually and attractively, making it

easier for students to understand the content of the reading material.

In general, reading can be defined as the ability to understand words and grasp the information contained in a text. Reading is the process of understanding and interpreting written language to obtain the meaning that the writer wants to convey. The main purpose of reading is to obtain information or achieve certain goals as well as for personal enjoyment (Watkins, 2017). Reading ability is an important skill in learning English because it plays a role in improving comprehension, enriching vocabulary, and developing various language skills (Jahandar et al., 2012; Alyousef, 2016). Reading is considered an interactive process between the writer and the reader and is a basic skill that is the main goal in education for all ages. Reading requires thinking strategies to achieve effective comprehension (Sadiku, 2015). In the context of reading, comprehension means the ability to interpret and absorb the meaning of a text by utilizing the reader's knowledge. Comprehension is a constructive process that involves combining information in the text with prior knowledge or experience to form

a complete meaning (Snow, 2010). Comprehension does not only occur through reading, but can also occur through activities such as recognizing, listening, storing, and processing ideas from the text because this is a process of language acquisition. Reading comprehension is a complex process that involves the interaction between the reader's prior knowledge, observation, and attitude. The ability to understand a text requires the reader to use existing knowledge to construct meaning and organize information from words or groups of words in the text (Fahriany, 2014). Reading comprehension is a complex and multidimensional process because it involves interactions between the text, prior knowledge, experience, and various cognitive skills of the reader (Klingner et al. in Ganie et al., 2019; Oakhill, Cain, & Elbro, 2015). Good comprehension is achieved when readers are able to connect the information expressed in the text with their prior knowledge or experience (Scanlon, Anderson, & Sweeney, 2010). In the context of reading, comprehension is not merely reading the text, but involves the process of interpreting and internalizing the meaning contained within it (Bojovic, 2010).

According to Kunnu (2014), comprehension skills are divided into four parts, namely: (1) literal comprehension, which is understanding ideas and facts that are stated explicitly; (2) interpretive/ inferential comprehension, which is understanding implied information; (3) critical reading, which is the ability to collect, apply, and analyze information to evaluate the content of a text; and (4) creative reading, which is the ability to find new solutions or ideas based on a text.

Recount text is a type of text that aims to recount events or experiences that occurred in the past (Gusneli et al., 2016). This text presents a series of events chronologically so that readers can understand what happened, when it happened, and the sequence of events (Rahayu, 2018; Zaida, 2017). In addition to providing information, recount texts can also serve as entertainment for readers. In general, recount texts serve to convey personal experiences or historical events that have occurred. These texts belong to the genre of stories that focus on real events in the past. They are arranged

based on the sequence of time or the chronology of the actual events (Hyland, 2013). In addition to conveying information, recount texts can also contain assessments or reflections on the events being recounted (Saragih et al., 2014).

Digital media is content that has been converted into digital format and can be accessed through a computer network or the internet, such as text, images, audio, and video that can be shared electronically. Digital media is also understood as a form of modern mass communication that utilizes digital technology to produce, disseminate, and consume information, as well as facilitate two-way interaction between the sender and receiver of messages (McQuail, 2010). Digital media is a technology-based platform and content that allows individuals to access, create, and share information, ideas, and culture through various forms of electronic media. In the context of education, digital media serves as a learning tool that combines text and images to help students better understand the material (Mayer, 2014).

Visual learning tools are a form of visual presentation of information that helps teachers explain material and makes it easier for students to understand lessons (Raiyn et al., 2016). These tools come in various forms, such as mind maps, pictures, diagrams, posters, graphs, videos, films, cartoons, flash cards, slide presentations, games, and coloring books. The use of these visual tools can improve the clarity of material delivery and support the effectiveness of the learning process. One form of visual tool that is widely used is mind mapping. Mind mapping is a creative approach that helps students generate ideas, take notes, and organize information (Silberman, 2009). This technique aims to group and organize information to make learning more effective.

Mind mapping also allow individuals to see the big picture of a topic while detailing ideas in a structured visual form (Feng et al., 2023). In practice, mind mapping begin with a main idea placed in the center of the page, then expand in various directions in the form of branches containing keywords, phrases, facts, images, and concepts (Huda, 2016). This technique helps improve memory because information is presented in a structured, interesting, and easy-to-understand

manner. In addition, mind mapping involves both hemispheres of the brain, thereby optimizing thinking potential, visually depicting cognitive processes, and supporting the development of students' thinking skills (Windura, 2013).

Mind mapping are an effective and superior method of note-taking that supports the learning process. The use of mind maps can develop students' memory, brainstorming, learning, and creativity skills (Ingemann, 2008). In addition, this technique is useful in reading activities because it helps readers place and connect the information obtained into systematically organized branches of ideas. In general, mind mapping integrate two reading comprehension processes, namely top-down and bottom-up, thus reflecting the way the brain works in grouping knowledge and experiences (Brown, 2001). Therefore, mind mapping can be seen as a visualization of the thinking process and information processing in the brain. Mind maps can also be combined with the KWL strategy to improve the effectiveness of reading instruction. The KWL (Know, Want, Learn) strategy aims to connect students' prior knowledge with the material being studied (Ogle in Virginia Department of Education, 2004). The K (Know) stage encourages students to recall prior knowledge related to the reading topic; the W (Want) stage focuses on what students want to know; and the L (Learn) stage identifies new information or understanding gained after reading. The combination of mind mapping and the KWL strategy can improve reading comprehension, reduce boredom, and help students understand texts in a more structured and meaningful way.

## B. Research Method

The research method used in this study was a pre-experimental method with a pre-experimental one group pre-test post-test pre-experimental research design, which involved one group or one class as the research sample. The sample was given pre-tests and post-tests to determine the difference in reading comprehension skills before and after the intervention.

This study was conducted at SMPN 2 Rambah Samo in the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The research population consisted of all 185 eighth-grade

students, covering classes VIII A to VIII F. The sampling technique used was cluster random sampling, in which only one piece of paper was marked as the determining factor for the selected class.

The data collection techniques in this study included observation, pretest, and posttest. The measuring instruments used had undergone validity and reliability tests. The prerequisite test conducted was a normality test, while the hypothesis test used a paired sample t-test and N-gain to determine the effect of digital mind mapping on student learning outcomes. Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 27 to determine the effect of digital mind mapping on students' reading comprehension skills.

## C.   Research Results and Discussion

The learning process using digital mind maps was conducted in three sessions. A pre-test was administered to assess the students' initial abilities. After determining the students' initial abilities based on reading comprehension indicators, digital mind maps were applied before administering a post-test. The

following are the students' scores before and after the application:

**Tabel 1 The Score of Pre-test and Post-test**

| Name | Pretest | Posttest | Gained |
|------|---------|----------|--------|
| AFL  | 47   | 59   | 6  |
| AND  | 66   | 72   | 6  |
| AH   | 50   | 59   | 9  |
| AH   | 50   | 56   | 6  |
| BPG  | 69   | 72   | 3  |
| CW   | 59   | 66   | 7  |
| DA   | 66   | 72   | 6  |
| FJ   | 72   | 81   | 9  |
| FM   | 50   | 56   | 6  |
| FAHM | 72   | 78   | 6  |
| GAM  | 50   | 63   | 13 |
| KFBS | 53   | 72   | 25 |
| MKBM | 53   | 59   | 6  |
| MRGS | 66   | 75   | 9  |
| MA   | 56   | 63   | 4  |
| NABS | 66   | 72   | 9  |
| NFT  | 63   | 66   | 3  |
| N    | 56   | 63   | 7  |
| RNK  | 56   | 66   | 10 |
| RA   | 59   | 69   | 10 |
| RI   | 66   | 75   | 9  |
| SM   | 59   | 66   | 7  |
| SS   | 63   | 72   | 9  |
| SA   | 63   | 72   | 9  |
| SA   | 63   | 66   | 3  |
| VTDG | 47   | 59   | 12 |
| WRT  | 50   | 59   | 9  |
| YLS  | 53   | 75   | 22 |
| Z    | 59   | 66   | 7  |
| Total | 1.768 | 2.021 | 259 |
| Mean | 58.93 | 67.36 | 8.6 |

Based on Table 1, there was an increase in the average student score from an initial score of 58.93 to 67.36, an increase of 8.6. In the initial exam,

the lowest student score was 47 and the highest was 72, while in the final exam, the lowest student score was 56 and the highest was 81.

Before testing the hypothesis, a normality test was conducted. The normality test was conducted to test whether a group of data came from a normally distributed population or not. In this study, the Shapiro-Wilk test was used because the sample size was less than 50 data points. The following are the results of the normality test for the students' pre-test and post-test data.

**Table 1 Normality Test of Pre-test and Post-test**

|  | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | Statistic | Df | Sig. |
| Pre-test | .931 | 30 | .086 |
| Post-test | .950 | 30 | .124 |

Table 2 shows that the Sig value in the pretest is > 0.05, indicating that the data is normally distributed, and the Sig value in the posttest is > 0.05, indicating that the data can be said to be normally distributed. In addition, hypothesis testing was conducted in this study using the paired sample t-test method. This test was used to analyze the difference in the average reading comprehension scores of students. $H_0$ is accepted and $H_a$ is rejected if $t_{count} > t_{table}$ or the significance value (2-tailed) < 0.05. H0 is rejected and Ha is accepted if $t_{count} < t_{table}$ or the significance value (2-tailed) > 0.05. The following are the results of the t-test analysis of the pretest and posttest data.

**Table 2 The Paired Sample T-test**

|  | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Devition |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ngain | 30 | .00 | 1.00 | .4593 | 0.18429 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 30 |  |  |  |  |

Based on calculations using SPSS, the t-count results can be used to determine whether the use of digital mind mapping has a significant effect on students' reading comprehension abilities. Table 4 shows that the $t_{count}$ value is 11.176 with a significance level of .000 < 0.05. The $t_{count}$ value of 11.176 is greater than the $t_{table}$ value of

2.045. As a result, the alternative hypothesis ($H_a$) is accepted and the null hypothesis ($H_0$) is rejected. It can be concluded that there is any effect in students' reading comprehension abilities when using digital mind mapping in student learning outcomes.

To see the extent to which digital mind mapping affects student learning outcomes before and after using digital mind mapping, an N-gain test was conducted. The following are the results of the N-gain test analysis:

**Table 3 Result of Descriptive Statistic of Ngain Score**

| | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | | T | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Lower | Upper | | | |
| Pair Pretest-posttest | -8.433 | 4.133 | .755 | -9.977 | -6.890 | -11.176 | 29 | .000 |

Based on Table 4, it can be seen that the calculation using SPSS shows a g value of 0.45. The value of 0.45 is within the range of $0.30 \leq g \leq 0.70$. The value of 0.45 falls into the moderate category. Therefore, the use of digital mind maps in improving

student learning outcomes falls into the moderate criteria.

The application of digital mind maps has an impact on reading comprehension skills. Before the application of digital mind maps, students were given a pretest to determine their initial level of comprehension, and the results of the pretest were relatively low. Then, digital mind maps were applied in the learning process. Students' reading comprehension skills improved. Students began to understand the main ideas, general structure, and language features.

In the initial stage, the students' pretest results had an average score of 58.93. After being given the digital mind map treatment, the students' reading comprehension skills improved, with the posttest results having an average score of 67.36, an increase of 8.6. This condition shows that the use of digital mind maps can improve students' reading comprehension skills.

This is in line with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) theory, which states that students can achieve higher levels of cognitive development by receiving help or guidance from teachers and peers.

The right learning methods can serve as scaffolding that helps students develop reading comprehension skills. Therefore, the use of interactive learning models is very important in facilitating the learning process and improving students' reading comprehension outcomes.

Statistically, the normality test results show that the pre-test and post-test data are normally distributed (Sig. > 0.05). The results of the paired sample t-test show that the $t_{count}$ value is 11.176 with a significance level of .000 < 0.05. The $t_{count}$ value of 11.176 is greater than the $t_{table}$ value of 2.045, so it can be concluded that there is a difference between the average pre-test and post-test scores. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis ($H_a$) is accepted, which means that the use of digital mind maps has a positive effect on students' reading comprehension skills. In addition, to determine the extent of the improvement in students' reading comprehension skills through digital mind maps, an N-gain test was conducted. The descriptive statistics of the N-gain test show an average value of 0.45. The value of 0.45 is within the range of $0.30 \leq g \leq 0.70$. The value of 0.45 falls into the moderate

category. Therefore, the use of digital mind maps in improving student learning outcomes falls into the moderate criteria.

The findings are consistent with Hasibuan (2022) in a study entitled "The Effect Of Mind Mapping To Students' Ability In Reading Comprehension At The Eighth Grade Students Of Smp Swasra Al-Mukin". The results showed an increase in reading comprehension ability. This increase can be seen from the average score of the control group, which was 54.5 on the initial test and 69.5 on the final test. Meanwhile, the experimental group had a pre-test average score of 55.4 and a post-test score of 77.7.

Negara et al. (2024), "The Effectiveness of Using Mind Mapping Technique to Improve Students' Reading Comprehension in Narrative Text" The findings show an improvement in reading comprehension. This improvement can be seen from the pre-test average score of 62.1 and the post-test average score of 75.4.

Silvia et al. (2022) "The Application Of Mind Mapping Technique To Increase Students' Reading Comprehension

Achievement At The Eight Grade SMPN 38 Palembang". The results of the study showed an increase in reading comprehension. This improvement can be seen from the average pre-test score of the control class of 51.25 and the average post-test score of 52.97. Meanwhile, the average pre-test score of the experimental class was 54.13 and the average post-test score was 82.13.

Therefore, the results of this study reinforce the view that reading comprehension learning will be more effective if supported by systematic reading strategies and media that help visualize information. The use of digital mind maps has been proven to improve students' reading comprehension skills. These findings are in line with Sagita et al. (2024), who state that digital mind maps are an effective tool for improving reading comprehension in learning, as well as for improving higher-order cognitive skills such as critical thinking, drawing conclusions, and analytical reasoning. The use of digital mind maps allows students to visually organize complex information, understand difficult texts, identify main themes, and understand the relationships between ideas.

## D. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that the reading comprehension skills of students in class VIII A of SMPN 2 Rambah Samo experienced difficulties. After using digital mind mapping, the students' reading comprehension skills improved. The students' mean pre-test score was 58.93 and increased to a mean post-test score of 67.83, with an increase of 8.6.

Statistical analysis shows that the data is normally distributed (Sig. > 0.05), and the paired sample t-test shows that the $t_{count}$ value is 11.176 with a significance level of $0.000 < 0.05$. The $t_{count}$ value of 11.176 is greater than the $t_{table}$ value of 2.045, which means that the research hypothesis is accepted. Descriptive statistics for N-gain show an average value of 0.45. The value of 0.45 is within the range of $0.30 \leq g \leq 0.70$. The value of 0.45 falls into the moderate category. Therefore, the use of digital mind maps in improving student learning outcomes falls into the moderate criteria. The application of digital mind maps has been proven effective in improving reading comprehension skills, increasing student engagement in learning, and using digital mind maps to visualize information and facilitate understanding of the material.

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