

# The Application of Story Mapping Technique to Improve Writing Skills

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**Abstract:** This research aims to find out whether or not the application of the story mapping technique can improve the writing skills of Grade X students of SMK Negeri 3 Palu. The type of this research was a quasi-experimental research design that involved two groups; experimental and control. The population was Grade X students of SMK Negeri 3 Palu. The sample was selected by applying purposive sampling technique. They were X RPL A consisting of 30 students (experimental group) and X TSM A consisting of 34 students (the control group). The experimental group was given the treatment, while the control group was not. The technique of data collection was test. They were pre-test and post-test. The result of data analysis indicated that there was a significant difference between the post-test results of two groups. By applying two tails test at 0.05 level of significance with 60 degrees of freedom (df) or  $62-2=60$ , it was found that the t-counted (8.462) was greater than the t-table (1.669). It means that the research hypothesis is accepted. In conclusion, the application of story mapping technique can improve writing skills of Grade X students of SMK particularly in writing English Narrative Text. The result of this research will be very beneficial for future studies, especially for the English teacher of junior and senior high school or lecturer of English Education Study Program. They can apply this technique in their daily instructional process, as well as they can conduct a class action or experimental research by applying the story mapping technique. In addition, this technique can not only for teaching writing but it also can be applied for teaching reading. By doing so, the future study can be also focused on Improving reading skills through story mapping technique.

**Keywords:** *application, story mapping, technique, writing skills*

## Introduction

To have a high proficiency in English, the students need to learn and master language skills and language components. Language skills deal with listening, speaking, reading, and writing. While language components are vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Listening and reading are categorized as receptive skills since learners receive and understand information through listening the speaker in form of face to face, audio, as well as audio visual and reading the text. On the other hand, speaking and writing are productive skills for learners must be able to produce language through speaking and writing performance. (Brown, 2001) and (Mulune, 2018)

Hence, writing skills as one of productive skills becomes very important for students to learn because it is an essential activity for them in their future live (Putra, 2012). Therefore, the students need to practice it to have a good writing skills. Writing is the way how to share ideas, feelings, thoughts, desires, and experiences to the reader in written form. (Mattix Dietsch, 2009) states that writing is a process of discovery idea to sharpen thinking skills, open opportunities for learning, help strengthen social relations and encouraged success in universities and workplaces. It is considered as the most difficult skills for the students since they have to be able to yield good writing. For these reasons, they must have capabilities in writing process and master components of writing such as format, punctuation and mechanics, content, organization, grammar and sentence structure. Beside the use of transition signal, pattern of organization, spatial order and time order (Oshima & Hogue, 2007).

In line with (Richards & Renandya, 2002) and (McCrimmon, 1976) state that writing is a hard skill and task for second and foreign students since they must be able to write sentences with grammatically correct, convey ideas and experience to others. (Celce-Murcia & McIntosh, 1991) further states that there are still many native speakers who have not been able to express ideas accurately and coherence as the main goal in producing a written work in which English as a second language or as a foreign language. (Kellogg, 2008) states that learning how to write coherently and interrelated between one sentence and another and between one paragraph and another to become an effective text, it is still difficult and requires the achievement of knowledge development in the long term. It is in contrast to speaking skills. To conclude, writing skills do most difficult skills for foreign and second language students even for writer who produced many books and articles.

To have an idea in writing, there are several type of text that can be applied. Based on the 2013 curriculum, the latest curriculum in Indonesia for SMP and SMA or SMK , the students of senior high school (SMA,MA,SMK) are required to be able to write different genres of text such as narrative, procedure, recount, descriptive, spoof, and report. Narrative is an imaginative story or personal experience in which it contains a message or moral value for readers.

A narrative text is a kind of of genre that telling story in past tense. It conveys an incident, bad and good experience in the form of a story or in a sequence of the problem occur. The logical sequence of ideas and sentences in narrative text are written in well order. By doing so, to enable the students to express the idea of the story, they must write the events in good arrangement through the story mapping.

The aim of narrative text is to comfort the reader or listener with the idea of the story. In line with (Arina Luardini Maria; Asi Natalina, 2014) state that a narrative text is organized by using time order like early in the morning, in the middle of the night and the afternoon. To summarize, the narrative text is one of genre deal with a fiction and non fiction story in past tense, orientation, complication, and resolution as well as time order that can be applied to teach English particularly in teaching writing skills.

In preliminary observation, it was found that the students of SMK Negeri 3 Palu had problems when they deal with writing narrative text. Their teacher said that they find difficulty to generate their ideas for they do not know how to begin to express their idea through writing a story, including who is the protagonist and antagonist , where and when the story occured or setting, what happen, how to write the plot deal with introduction of problem, complication, climax, and resolution. Besides, the students had some difficulties in using grammatical sentences and they were lack of vocabulary mastery.

To solve the students' problems, it was selected the story mapping technique as medium in the instructional process. The story mapping technique is a visible portrait of the setting or the plot and the characters. It is supported by (Grünke, Wilbert, & Stegemann, 2013) state that the technique is a guide to ease the students to generate their idea in the process of writing narrative text. It helps the students to relate the story events and to view the arrangement of literary work selection in writing narrative text. Similarly to (Boulineau, Fore Iii, Hagan-Burke, & Burke, 2004) argue the technique directs students' attention to related elements of stories applying a spesific structure. In using this technique, the English teacher can provide the students with graphic organizer and model their students how to place the elements ( setting, characters, plot, climax resolution, and conclusion). As (Sriyana, Ikhsanudin, & Bunau, 2018) define that story mapping is a graphic or semantic visual representation of narrative.

In addition, (Tabatabaei & Radi, 2013) state the story mapping is called a story structure. It is a visibel depiction of the story by writing the crucial elements of the story (character, setting,

plot, and theme). Thus the story grammar can be taught directly to hasten students' development of the story schema. In line with (Tabatabaei & Radi, 2013) and (D. Li, 2000) also state "the story mapping assign the students with a bird's eye view of the story structure and the relationship between story elements". The elements of story which frequently found are setting, characters, plot, and resolution.

It is clear that applying the technique can helps and ease the leaners to write a good narrative text since they are guided by teacher to figure out of how to place the elements of the story or generic structure of narrative text. However, the most important thing is how to apply the story mapping technique.

There were some steps to use it. (1) the instructor should introduce the concept of the story mapping technique in terms of the advantages and its useful for students; (2) elaborating the main elements of the story mapping by finding out the elements of the story concerning to figure out the tittle, setting, the theme, major character and minor character, then identifying orientation, plot (sequence of events), resolution; (3) Invite the students to read narrative text with their pair. The teacher encourage them to write the answers just using key words; (4) invite the students to complete the story map work sheet after the students get the explanation from the teacher about how to apply the story mapping technique; (5) provide the students with evaluation in order to check their comprehension on the story (Farris, Fuhler, & Walther, 2004); (Dunlosky, Rawson, Marsh, Nathan, & Willingham, 2013). Moreover, (Bosma & Blok, 1992) and (Nurlaila, 2013) provide the steps of applying the story mapping technique as follow (1) students read the story; (1) fill the elements of the story in the map. Write the number of episodes narrative to narrative; (3) develop questions based on the narrative, such as "What is the protagonist of the story? Where did the story take place? "what is problem?" "What happened next?" "Why" "When did you realize the problem was being solved?"; (4) determine which questions should be raised before the story read and asked after reading; Furthermore, (Sriyana et al., 2018) modify steps of how to use the story mapping technique. They combine the step between two experts above to teach reading comprehension of narrative text. (1) the teacher explained all elements of story and its example; (2) the teacher explained about story mapping technique and its benefit; (3) the teacher gave the students example of the story mapping outline and explain how to fill it; (4) the teacher lead the students to read the text and after that discussed the task by filling the story mapping outline; the teacher raised some questions related to the story the students read orally; and (7) the teacher invite the students' to submit the task that had been discussed.

To summarize, the step of how to apply the story mapping technique to teach writing narrative text is different from how to teach reading comprehension of narrative text. The steps are: (1) Make sure that each student has a group since they will do everything in group. Explain what technique that is going to be applied. It must be the story mapping technique and its concept in terms of its advantages and disadvantages; (2) explain the type of text that is going to be developed in terms of the elements of story as well as the generic structure of the text; (3) provide the students with narrative text then asked them to identify based on the elements of the story and the generic structure; (4) instruct the students to insert the elements of the story and the generic structure into the story mapping (graphic organizer) then discussed about what they have done; last but not least, (5) provide the students with topic suggested then asked them to insert the topic into the story mapping, elements of the story who is the main character, supporting character, setting, plot, conflict, resolution, and theme, as well as the generic structure, orientation, events, and reorientation or conclusion; last but not least, (6) instruct them to compose narrative text based on the idea they write at the story mapping; (7) asking the

students to check each other by using peer editing worksheet if it is possible; or (8) invite the students to read or present their narrative text through screen to check format, punctuation and mechanics, content, sentence structure and grammar, as well as organization (Oshima & Hogue, 2007) and (Elmedni & Lyons, 2015).

concerning with the background above, this research is at aiming to find out whether or not the story mapping technique can improve the students' writing skills in writing narrative text.

## Method

The type this research is a quasi - experimental research design. There was an experimental and control group. In a quasi - experimental design, both groups were provided with pre-test and post-test, but treatment was conducted only in experimental group in which the story mapping technique applied for Grade X students of SMK Negeri 3 Palu to improve the students' skills in writing narrative text (Seliger, Seliger, Shohamy, & Shohamy, 1989)

(Margono, 2007) states population is all the data that concern us in a scope and time that we set. The population of this research was Grade X students of SMK Negeri 3 Palu. The population consisted of 12 classes.

(Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2011) state that sample in a research study is the group of people or things in which information can be obtained. It means that sample is the subject selected from the population to observe and analyze. The sample selected was a cluster random sampling technique because it was appropriate to the design of the research. Furthermore, the research was conducted in these two classes since the students had problems in learning English especially writing and it also to test the technique.

Related to the topic, there were two variables of this research. They were dependent and independent variables. The dependent variable was writing skills at Grade X students of SMK Negeri 3 Palu while the independent variable was the use of the story mapping technique.

An instrument is a tool for collecting data. It was test that consisted of pre-test and post-test provided to the experimental and the control group. Before the post-test, the treatment was given only for the experimental group. The criteria of scoring the result of students learning outcomes or post-test are adapted from (Weigle, 2002).

The procedure of how to find the result of research are: Firstly, to find out individual score, it was used the formula developed by (Sutomo, 1985) as follows:

$$Score = \frac{\text{the obtained score}}{\text{the maximum score}} \times 100$$

Secondly, to compute the mean score of the pre-test and the post-test of the students of both groups, it was used formula proposed by (Hatch & Farhady, 1982) as follows:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Where:

$\bar{X}$  = the mean score

$\sum X$  = the sum of each data

N = the sum of data

Thirdly, after having the mean score of both the experimental and the control groups, the mean score and the squared deviation were computed to find out the significant difference

between the experimental and the control group. It was used the formula proposed by (Arikunto, 2006) as follows:

$$\sum x^2 = \sum x^2 - \frac{(\sum x)^2}{N}$$

$$\sum y^2 = \sum y^2 - \frac{(\sum y)^2}{N}$$

Where:

$$\sum x^2 = \text{Deviation score of experimental group}$$

$$\sum y^2 = \text{Deviation score of control group}$$

N = Number of students

Then, the data was analyzed to find out the significant difference or to test hypothesis by using the t-count formula as proposed by (Arikunto, 2006) as follows:

$$t = \frac{Mx - My}{\sqrt{\left[ \frac{\sum x^2 + \sum y^2}{n_x + n_y - 2} \right] \left[ \frac{1}{n_x} + \frac{1}{n_y} \right]}}$$

Where:

Mx = Mean of the experimental group

My = Mean of the control group

$\sum x$  = Sum of Square of the experimental group

$\sum y$  = Sum of Square of the control group

Nx = Number of students of the experimental group

Ny = number of students of the control group

### Finding

The result of applying the story mapping technique indicated that the students' learning outcomes improved. It could be proved by comparing the mean score between the result of students' pre-test and post-test in experimental group and students' pre-test and post-test in control group. The details result are presented in the two following graphics.

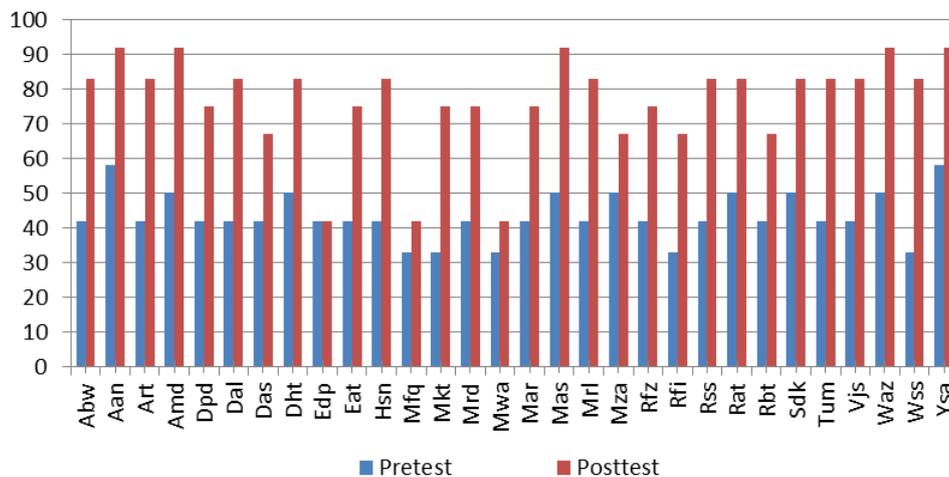


Figure 1 Students' Pre-test and Post-test Score of the Experimental Group

The result of research indicated that the mean score of students' pre-test in the experimental group was 43.433, the highest score was 58 and the lowest score was 33. While the result of students' mean score of post-test in the experimental group was 75.667. The highest score was 92 and the lowest score was 42. With reference to the result of analysis of post-test and pre-test mean score in the experimental group, it could be concluded that there was an upward movement in pre-test and post-test. It went up significantly 33.23 (76.52%) points from pre-test to post-test at the experimental group.

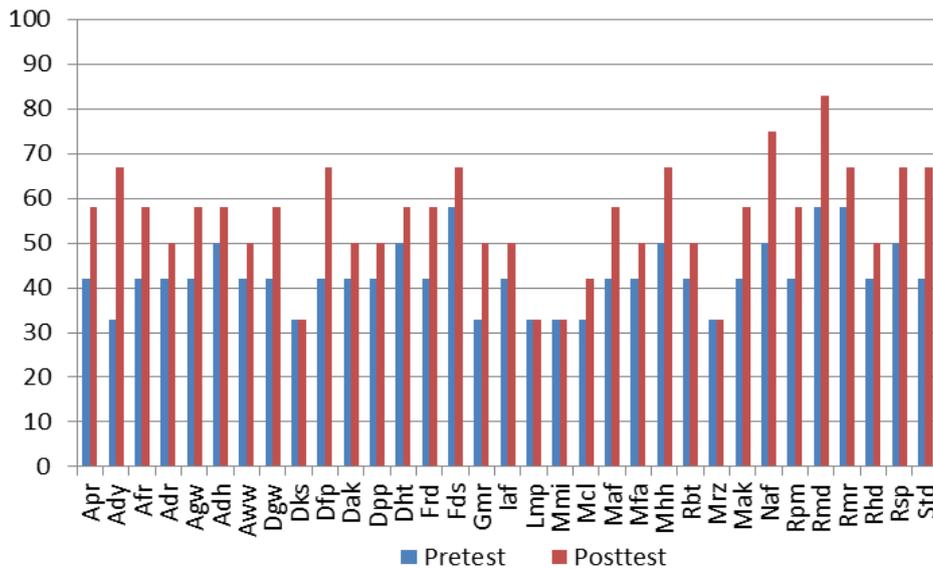


Figure 2 Students' Pre-test and Post-test Scores of the Control Group

The result of this research indicated that the mean score of pre-test in the control group was 42,971. The highest score was 58 and the lowest score was 33. While the mean score of post-test in the control group was 55.559. the highest score was 83 and the lowest score was 33. Based on the result of analysis, it could be concluded that there was an upward movement in pre-test and post-test. It went up significantly 12.59 (29.30%) points from pre-test to post-test at the control group.

Based on the results of the normality and homogeneity test of students' pre-test in the experimental group and the control group, it was found that both groups were normally distributed and the f-test showed that both groups had the same variance. The result of data analysis of pre-test indicated that the writing skills of students' in the experimental group were not better than the students' writing skill in the control group. Therefore, the two groups could be treated with different technique.

The students' of the experimental group were treated by applying the story mapping technique, while the students of the control group were not. Then, at the end of treatment, the students' of the two groups were given post-test. The result of the post-test of the two groups were analyzed to know the improvement of students' writing skills of the experimental group and the control group.

Based on the result of the normality and homogeneity test of students' post-test in the experimental group and the control group, it was found that both group were normally distributed and the result of homogeneity test indicated that the two groups had not different variance.

To sum up, the results of the research indicated that the writing skills of the students could be improved through the story mapping technique. Because, the two groups were treated with different technique during the instructional process. The results hypothesis test, t-test, t-counted was (8.462 greater than t-table (1.669). It means that the hypothesis was accepted

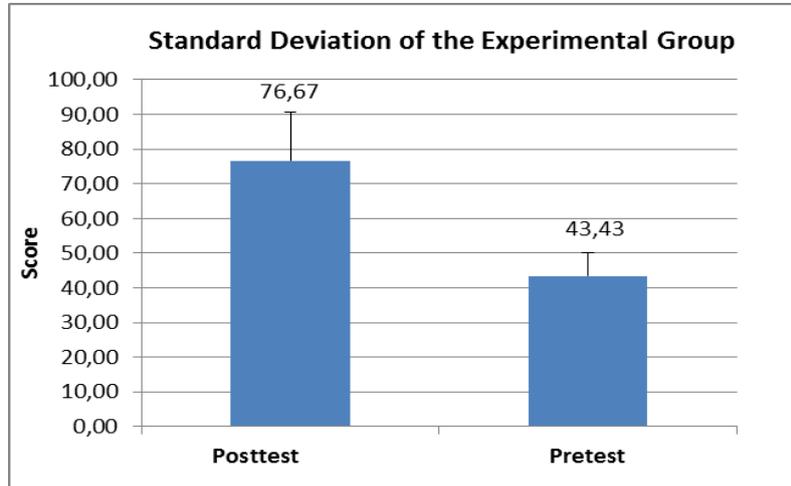


Figure 3 Standard Deviation of the Experimental Group

The mean score of post-test in the experimental group was higher than the mean score of pre-test in the experimental group in which its deviation was 33.24. The variance value of post-test in the experimental group was higher than the variance value in pre-test of the experimental group. It was caused by the number of data of students' post-test had more variance. Likewise, the standard deviation which is the root of variance which means the distribution of post-test data in the experimental group was more than the distribution of pre-test data in the experimental group.

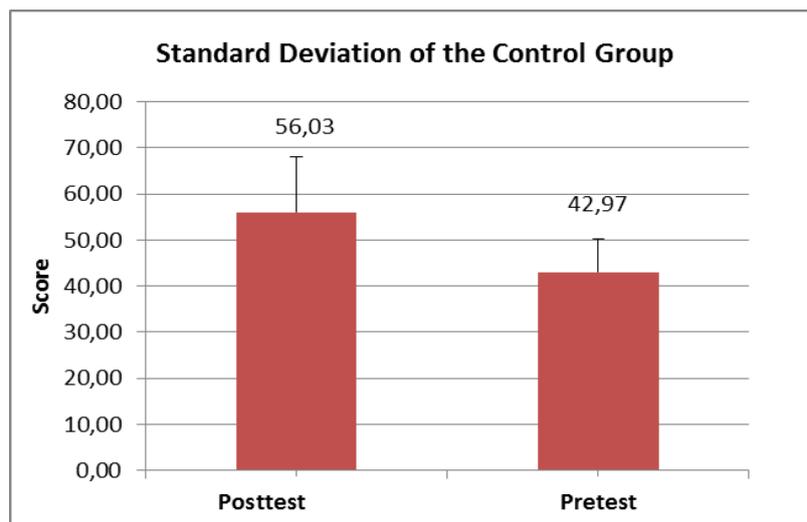


Figure 4 Standard Deviation of the Control Group

The mean score of students' post-test in control group was higher than the mean score of students' pre-test in which its deviation was 13.06. The variance value of post-test in the control group was higher than the variance value in pre-test of control group. It was caused by the

number of data of students' post-test had more variance. Likewise, the standard deviation which is the root of variance which means the distribution of post-test data in the control group was more than the distribution of pre-test data in the control group.

**Discussion**

This research applied a quasi-experimental research design by having an experimental and a control group. Both groups were chosen by cluster random sampling technique. X RPL A was the experimental group while X TSM A was the control group. The pre-test was assigned to the experimental group and control group in the different days. The experimental group and control group were given pretest before starting the treatment. The students were assigned to write narrative text about Malin Kundang at least 100 words.

After doing the pre-test, the treatment was provided to the experimental group for eight times. Starting from the first until the eight meetings, the students were instructed to fill the story mapping before they began to write narrative text. Thus, the students got familiar with the story mapping technique.

After conducting the treatment, both groups were provided with post-test. The result of the post-test of the experimental group was better than the result of the pretest. Most students had been able to write a narrative text. They also did not find any difficult to generate their ideas more since they were able to write sentences grammatically, to organize, to punctuate, to capitalize as well as they were good in vocabulary mastery and spelling.

**Table 1.** t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Equal Variances

	<b>Experimental</b>	<b>Control</b>
Mean	33,233	12,588
Variance	129,357	64,553
Observations	30,000	34,000
Pooled Variance	94,865	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0,000	
Df	62,000	
t Stat	8,462	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0,000	
t Critical one-tail	1,670	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,000	
t Critical two-tail	1,999	

Based on the result of analysis in the t-test, it was used Assuming Equal Variances. The finding could be seen in the table above that the t - value of df = 62 was 1,669. It indicated that the t-counted > t-table. It was 8.462 greater than t-table = 1.669 with level of significance 0.05. it means that the hypothesis is accepted and the application of the story mapping technique had a significance difference in improving the writing skills of students' in the experimental group.

The finding of this research is in line with (Abidin, 2014) and (Sayekti, 2014) show that the students' writing skills can be improved by applying story mapping technique. The students have good improvement in some components of writing such as organization, vocabulary, mechanics and grammar and sentence structure. They were able to generate ideas to produce well-organize recount texts. They were also able to use the appropriate vocabulary, grammar,

punctuation, spelling, and capitalization in their writing. They also had a positive attitude in instructional process. In addition, they were motivated and did the class assignment well.

It is different from (Grünke et al., 2013), (Sharif & Ibrahim, 2014). They conducted a research using story mapping to enable the children with low intellectual abilities to comprehend reading text. Their finding showed that the story mapping technique was very effective in improving reading comprehension of struggling students. It is similar to (Mila, 2018) showed that the technique could improve the students' reading comprehension in finding the main idea, could create good atmosphere of the classroom in terms of students' cooperation, motivation, participation, as well as their enthusiastic hence the classroom became more alive.

Other research that has similarity to (Mila, 2018) is (Sriyana et al., 2018), (Fadillah, 2019). They found that the story mapping technique could improve students' participation in reading class. They could cooperate with their classmate well. Beside, they were also curious and have a positive response to do all activities in classroom. It could be seen from their ability to response the questions provided by the teacher. In addition, the students not only paid more attention to teacher but they also could participate actively in learning activity.

Another research was conducted by (Boulineau et al., 2004) showed that the effect of story mapping technique on student participants' comprehension of story-grammar elements was monitored and it had a positive result. It is similar to (Alturki, 2017) and (Aditya, Suparman, & Supriadi, 2017) showed that there were a significant improvement of students' reading comprehension ability with the significant level ( $0.00 < 0.05$ ). It reveals that the technique can facilitate students to ease catching the information from the text. Indeed, It not only could help students with learning normal ability but it also could help the learners with learning disabilities.

(Sidekli, 2013), (Burger, 2010) and (Sakkir, Rahman, & Salija, 2016) conducted a research on how to improve writing skills by applying story mapping technique. It showed there was a significant difference between pre-test and post-test. It was found that final assessment was higher than pre-assessment. Likewise, (Khairani, Delfi, & Supriusman, 2019) stated that story mapping technique could improved the students' ability in comprehending narrative text. They recommended that teacher could apply the story it to overcome the students' problem in comprehending narrative texts since it could be a beneficial technique that have structure and graphic organization of text in helping the students to organize idea in writing process.

Furthermore, (K. L. Li & Wen, 2017) and (Nalliveettil & Mahasneh, 2017) found that story mapping technique has an impact on teaching and learning environment, pupil's learning in terms of attracting students' attention and teaching literary elements. For these reasons, it was a good technique to improve pupil's reading comprehension. In short, the story mapping technique not only had a very significant effect on students' learning outcomes in writing narrative text but it also had a positive impact on students' learning outcomes in understanding reading text.

## **Conclusion**

The story mapping technique is beneficial and has provided significant effect on student's learning outcomes in writing narrative text. It was proved through the result of t-counted (8.462) is higher than t-table (1.669). It reveals that the research hypothesis is accepted. It indicates that the students' writing skills can be improved through the story mapping technique.

The result of this research will be very beneficial for future studies, especially for the English teacher of junior and senior high school or lecturer of English Education Study Program. They can apply this technique in their daily instructional process, as well as they can conduct a class action or experimental research by applying the story mapping technique. In

additional, this technique can not only for teaching writing but it also can be applied for teaching reading. By doing so, future study can be also focused on improving reading skills through the story mapping technique.

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