



CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Clustering Techniques

Clustering is a nonlinear brainstorming technique that allows writers to generate ideas freely and discover connections among them before drafting (Rico, 1983, p. 28). Based on Langan (2004, p. 27) through clustering, students can visualize their ideas, expand related points, and organize supporting details effectively, which makes the writing process easier and more coherent. It means that both of theories has same idea to provide the writing technique for writers to brainstorm before beginning their writing process.

2.1.1 Application clustering techniques in teaching English writing

Clustering is a strategy that can be used to generate material for a paper. This method is especially helpful for individuals who prefer to organize their thoughts visually. Axelrod and Cooper in Heaton (2008) explain that clustering is useful for any type of writing. Writers use it in the early stages of planning a paper to identify subtopics or organize information.

They may try discard several clusters before finding on a promising one. Here's how clustering works. Start by writing your main topic in the middle of a sheet of paper and circle it. Write related ideas around it, cirde them, and connect them to the central circle. Continue witing quickly and moving to other spaces, repeating this process. As new idesas emerge, connect them to the appropriate artil no further ideas come circles. Keep going start to mind. Review the clusters that you have created, If a circle of clusters is enough to start a draft, we can cluster again, expand the branches, you can expand on it further to develop the structure and begin writing the first draft.

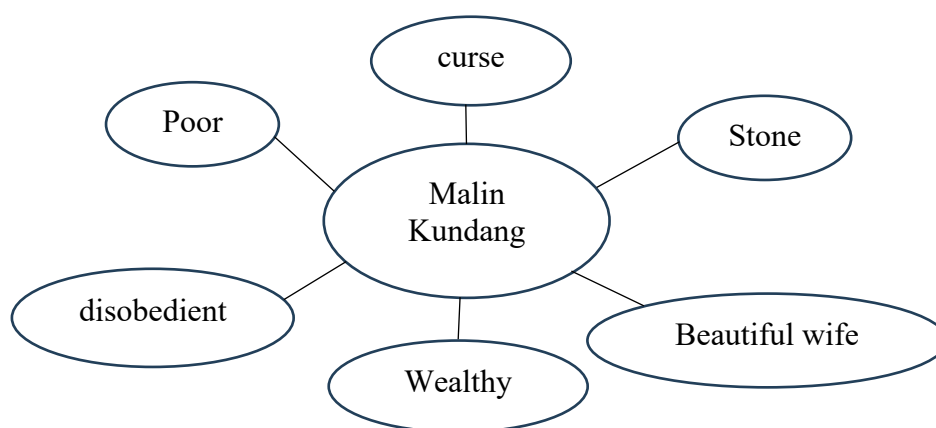


Figure 2.1

The Application of Clustering Technique

(Adapted from Rico's, 1983)

In this approach, a key word or target word is related to other words or concepts. For example, the word "Malin Kundang" is connected to "poor," "wealthy," and "beautiful wife," because Malin Kundang starts off poor, becomes wealthy, and marries a beautiful wife. Similarly, the word "disobedient" is related because Malin Kundang refuses to acknowledge his mother and is cursed to become a stone. By assigning a target word to students and asking them to create clusters based on it, we encourage students to expand their vocabulary and activate their background knowledge, which ultimately aids in writing.

2.2 Writing Skill

Writing skill is the ability to convey ideas, information, or emotions effectively and coherently through written text. This skill encompasses a range of competencies, from understanding grammar and punctuation to organizing ideas coherently. Effective writing also involves writing in the ideal way for the intended audience. Writing holds a vital role as a productive skill in learning and teaching English, especially for students learning it as a foreign language. Hyland (2019) explains that writing goes beyond producing words on paper; it is an act of delivering ideas to readers with a clear purpose, making it a social practice that requires writers to be mindful of their audience and the context in which the text is created.

Nunan (2015) describes writing as a demanding activity that combines both cognitive and linguistic processes. Students need to develop ideas, arrange them in a logical order, and present them using correct grammar and suitable vocabulary. Similarly,



Oshima and Hogue (2014) highlight that an effective paragraph must demonstrate unity, coherence, and sufficient detail to convey its main point clearly.

Although writing is essential, many EFL learners continue to find it difficult. Al Hosni (2014) notes that students frequently encounter obstacles when trying to develop ideas, structure their thoughts, and use language precisely. Graham and Perin (2007) also emphasize that students' weak writing performance is often linked to the lack of prewriting activities that help them plan what they want to write.

To help students overcome these difficulties, teachers are advised to use strategies that guide student in planning and organizing their ideas before drafting. One such strategy is clustering, which was introduced by Rico (1983) as a brainstorming tool. Clustering enables students to create a visual network of related ideas around a central concept, making it easier for them to connect their thoughts and write in a more structured way.

2.3 Narrative Texts

Narrative text is one of the functional text types taught to students in junior high schools as part of the English subject in the Indonesian curriculum. This type of text plays an essential role in developing students' ability to express ideas creatively, organize events sequentially, and communicate meaningful experiences. It is designed not only to entertain but also to convey moral messages or explain events—both real and imaginary. According to Hornby (2015) in the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, a narrative is "a description of events, especially in a novel or story, the act or process of telling a story." This definition is echoed by Langan (2004), who states, "Narration is when a writer tells the story of something that happened". Through narrative, writers clarify statements by detailing personal experiences. Setiawan (2005) defines narrative as a type of text that tells the story of a legend or event designed to amuse and entertain the reader. Anderson (1997) further explain that narrative text is a text type that aims to entertain the reader and present a series of events that lead to a complication and resolution. Similarly, Knapp and Watkins (2005) describe narrative as a genre that deals with the reconstruction of past events and experiences, structured with orientation, complication, and resolution.

Based on these expert opinions, it can be concluded that narrative text is a type of writing that recounts a sequence of events—either real or imagined—using a clear and logical structure. It serves both to entertain and to inform readers, and it commonly includes moral or educational values embedded within the story.



In the Indonesian national curriculum—both under the 2013 Curriculum (Kurikulum 2013) and the more recent Merdeka Curriculum—narrative text is taught as a key writing genre in junior high school. Its inclusion aims to help students improve their storytelling abilities, enrich their vocabulary, understand text structure, and develop written fluency in English. By practicing narrative writing, students also gain opportunities to express their creativity, reflect on experiences, and engage more actively in the learning process. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2017), narrative writing is emphasized to foster language development and critical thinking skills in learners.

Kind of narrative texts are:

1. Fairy tale

Fairy tales are a complex and evolving genre with deep cultural significance. Originally rooted in oral traditions and myths, these stories reflect the historical and material circumstances of their societies (Teverson, 2019). While classical fairy tales like "Cinderella" and "Snow White" have become familiar cultural touchstones (Zipes, 2015).

2. Legend

Legend is typically brief narratives centered on specific places, people, or objects, reflecting community beliefs and moral judgments (Simpson, 1991). It is a story tell about the origin or place. Such as, Lake of Toba.

3. Folk tale

Folk tales are stories passed down orally through generations, often explaining natural phenomena or conveying life lessons (Barnet, 1978). It is a story passed down from generation to generation become part of the community tradition. Such as, Malin Kundang.

4. Myth

Myths are essential to human existence, expressing profound truths embedded in fantasy (Duvick, 1990). It develops in the community and generally considered a factual story or actually story happened. Such as, Aji Saka.

5. Fable

Fables are short stories that often use personified animals to convey moral lessons (Tasić-Randelović, 2023). It is a story about animals such as, Mouse Deer and Crocodile.



2.2.1 Generic Structure of Narrative texts

Adrerson states that the steps for constructing narrative texts are:

a. Orientation/ exposition

The readers are introduced to the main characters and possibly some minor characters. Some indication is generally given of where the action is located and when it is taking place.

b. Complication/ rising action

The complication is pushed along by a serious of events, during which we usually expect some sort of complication or problem to arise. It just would not be so interesting if something unexpected did not happen. This complication will involve the main characters and oven serves to (temporally) toward them from reaching their goal.

c. Sequence of event/ Climax

This is where the narrator tells how the character reacts to the complication. It includes their feeling and what they do. The event can be told in chronological order (the order in which they happen) or with flashback. The audience is given the narrators' point of view.

d. Resolution/ falling action

Action In this part, the implication may be resolved for better or worse, but it is rarely left completely unresolved (although this is of course possible in certain types of narrative which leaves us wondering "How did it end"?)

e. Reorientation. It is an optional closure of event

2.2.2 The Language Element of Narrative Texts

According to Djuharie (2012), the language elements use in writing narrative paragraph are nouns, individual participant, past tense, conjunction, action verb, and saying verb.

a. Noun

A word used as the name of a person, place or thing. For example:

1. Budi is our teacher
2. There is a table in the class
3. I saw a man in the market

b. Individual participant



According to Setiawan (2005), individual participants are typically the central characters or protagonists in narratives, whose actions or experiences drive the story.

c. Past tense

Used to describe actions that occurred at a specific point in the past. Azar (1999) states that the simple past tense is used to talk about completed actions at a particular time in the past, and it is a fundamental element of narrative writing to indicate events that have already occurred.

d. Conjunction

Words that join one word, phrase, or sentence to another. There are two types coordinating and subordinating conjunctions. According to Quirk et al. (1985), conjunctions are essential in narratives to connect ideas and events, creating cohesion in the text

e. Action verb

Action verbs can be regular (adding "ed" or "d" to the infinitive) or irregular (not following the usual inflection pattern). As explained by Azar (2002), action verbs play a crucial role in driving the plot of a narrative and providing clarity to the sequence of events.

f. Saying verb

These verbs report or convey speech or thought, such as said, told, promised, thought, and understood. According to Thonburry (2005), saying verbs are essential in dialogues within narratives, allowing characters to express their thoughts, beliefs, or direct speech.

2.4 Previous Studies

Haris (2022) in her thesis "The Effectiveness of Clustering Technique in Improving Students' Writing Skill in Narrative Text at SMA Negeri 21 Makassar" investigated the application of clustering techniques to enhance students' writing performance in narrative texts at a public senior high school in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. Her research revealed a significant improvement in students' ability to generate and organize ideas, particularly in constructing the generic structure of narrative texts. The study found that after implementing clustering techniques, students were more engaged and found writing more enjoyable, treating the activity almost like a game. Specifically, the results showed



that students became more confident in expressing their ideas, and their narrative writing improved in structure and coherence, as evidenced by the increase in post-test scores compared to pre-test results.

Similarly, Anggitaningrum (2021) in her thesis "Investigating Clustering Technique on Students' Writing Skill in Narrative Text" investigated the application of clustering techniques to enhance students' writing performance in narrative texts at SMA Tulus Bhakti in Bekasi, West Java, Indonesia. The study used a quasi-experimental design with a post-test only control group involving 60 tenth-grade students. Her research revealed a significant improvement in students' ability to generate, organize, and structure their ideas after the implementation of clustering techniques. Specifically, the results showed that the experimental group, which applied the technique, outperformed the control group, indicating that clustering made the writing process more systematic and helped students write more fluently and confidently. Students became more creative and critical in expressing ideas, resulting in more coherent narrative writing.

Awaliyah (2024) in her thesis "Teachings on Writing Narrative Texts through Teaching Clustering to Tenth Grade Students of SMK Nurul Huda Sukaraja" investigated the effectiveness of clustering techniques in improving students' writing performance in narrative texts at a vocational high school in Sukaraja, West Java, Indonesia. Her research employed an experimental method involving control and experimental groups. The findings showed a significant improvement in students' writing scores after the implementation of the clustering technique, with post-test results revealing a higher average and reduced writing difficulties. Specifically, students taught using clustering were better able to generate, organize, and structure ideas in narrative form, leading to more coherent and well-developed texts. The study concluded that clustering helped students identify the core elements of a story and express them with greater clarity and confidence.

Although several studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of clustering techniques in improving students' narrative text writing skills, these investigations have largely focused on senior or vocational high school contexts using experimental or quasi-experimental research designs. For instance, Haris (2022), Anggitaningrum (2021), and Awaliyah (2024) each reported significant improvements in students' ability to generate, organize, and structure narrative ideas through the use of clustering techniques. However, there remains a notable research gap in exploring the application of clustering techniques at the junior high school level. In addition, most previous studies have emphasized



quantitative outcomes, while the integration of clustering within a Classroom Action Research (CAR) framework—emphasizing reflective teaching practice and ongoing classroom-based intervention—has been limited. Therefore, this study seeks to fill that gap by examining the effectiveness of clustering techniques in enhancing junior high school students' narrative writing performance through a Classroom Action Research approach.

