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NARRATIVE WRITING: HOW GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS CAN HELP

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Abstract: This study investigates the impact of graphic organizers on enhancing the writing organization of narrative texts among junior high school students. Utilizing a mixed-method Classroom Action Research (CAR) design, the study was conducted over two cycles with 30 Grade 8 students in Gresik, Indonesia. The research employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, including preand post-intervention writing assessments, observation sheets, questionnaires, and interviews. Results indicated significant improvements in writing organization, with notable gains in thesis clarity, logical flow, paragraph structure, and transitions. The overall average score increased from 63.25% to 87% (p < 0.05). Both students and teachers perceived graphic organizers as highly effective tools for enhancing writing skills, with average ratings of 4.6 and 4.8, respectively. Qualitative feedback highlighted themes of clarity in thought organization, reduced anxiety, and increased confidence in writing. The study concludes that graphic organizers are valuable instructional tools for improving narrative writing organization and fostering a positive writing experience. Future research should explore the long-term impact of graphic organizers on diverse student populations and their adaptability to various types of writing. **Keywords:** Graphic Organizers, Writing Organization, Narrative Texts, Junior High School, Classroom

INTRODUCTION

Action Research.

The ability to write effectively is an essential skill for junior high school students, influencing their academic success and communication abilities throughout their lives (Tiwari, 2023; Hikmah et al., 2019; Asari & Maruf, 2022). Writing, particularly in the form of narrative texts, serves as a vital medium through which students can express their thoughts, experiences, and creativity (Eser & Ayaz, 2021; Fitria, 2024; Masyhud et al., 2023). However, many junior high school students face significant challenges in organizing their narrative writing, leading to disjointed texts that fail to convey their intended messages clearly (Hidayah et al., 2019). This difficulty in organization can



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hinder their overall writing proficiency and impede their ability to articulate ideas coherently, which is particularly concerning in the context of language learning where clear communication is paramount (Qismullah Yusuf et al., 2019; Maruf & Halyna, 2023). As such, educators are increasingly seeking effective instructional strategies to help students overcome these challenges, and one promising approach is the use of graphic organizers.

Graphic organizers are visual representations that aid in the structuring of information and ideas, allowing students to see relationships and hierarchies among concepts (Kurniaman & Zufriady, 2019; Maruf & Anjely, 2020). They serve as cognitive tools that facilitate the planning process before writing, thereby improving the organization and coherence of students' narratives (Trisusana & Susanti, 2020). Numerous studies have indicated that graphic organizers can enhance writing skills by helping students outline their thoughts more clearly and systematically, ultimately resulting in better-structured narratives (Suprimarni, 2021). Trisusana & Susanti's (2020) study on graphic organizers for students' descriptive and narrative writing found that graphic organizers help students in the pre-writing process, especially in descriptive and narrative texts. It motivates them to write by helping to generate ideas. They were particularly effective for simple compositions, allowing students to plan and organize their writing, focus on the topic, and elaborate on their ideas. Additionally, graphic organizers helped students brainstorm topics, structure information, and visually represent key details and ideas, which facilitated the organization of their writing.

Similarly, research by Sabarun et al (2023) on the effectiveness of graphic organizers on EFL learners' writing performance across different learning style preference and gender at higher education supports the idea that visual aids can enhance learning outcomes by providing structured frameworks for organizing thoughts and information. Their study highlights the effectiveness of graphic organizers (GOs) in improving writing accuracy, particularly in argumentative writing classes. It showed that GOs help learners select, organize, and develop ideas, making them powerful tools for teaching writing. The average score for students using GOs was higher than those using free writing strategies, indicating a significant difference in writing accuracy. Additionally, GOs facilitate interaction and idea-sharing among students, creating a social community in the classroom setting. While those findings highlight the effectiveness of graphic organizers in writing instruction, the existing literature primarily focuses on their application in both descriptive and narrative text or general writing practices, with less emphasis on narrative writing specifically. Furthermore, there is a scarcity of research exploring the contextual factors influencing the effectiveness of graphic organizers in diverse educational settings, particularly within the Indonesian educational context.

In Indonesia, where the curriculum emphasizes the development of 21st-century skills, including creativity, critical thinking, and effective communication, the need for effective writing instruction is more pronounced than ever (Varas et al., 2023; Maruf & Helingo, 2022). The recent implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum encourages innovative pedagogical approaches, making it an ideal time to investigate how graphic organizers can be effectively integrated into writing instruction for narrative texts. However, there remains a notable gap in the literature regarding how graphic organizers



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can be specifically applied to improve narrative writing organization among junior high school students in Indonesia. Given the unique cultural and linguistic context of Indonesian students, it is crucial to explore how these visual tools can be tailored to meet their specific writing challenges.

The primary objective of this research is to investigate the impact of graphic organizers on the organization of narrative text writing among junior high school students. By focusing on this specific aspect of writing, the study aims to contribute valuable insights into effective teaching practices that can enhance students' narrative writing skills. Additionally, the research seeks to explore the perceptions of both students and teachers regarding the use of graphic organizers in the writing process, providing a comprehensive understanding of their effectiveness from multiple perspectives.

To guide this investigation, two primary research questions have been formulated: (1) how do graphic organizers affect the organization of narrative text writing in junior high school students?, (2) what are the perceptions of junior high school students and their teachers regarding the effectiveness of graphic organizers in improving narrative writing skills?. By addressing these research questions, the study aims to fill the existing gaps in the literature and provide empirical evidence on the benefits of graphic organizers in enhancing narrative writing organization among junior high school students in Indonesia. Ultimately, this research aspires to inform educational practices and contribute to curriculum development efforts that prioritize effective writing instruction.

METHOD

Research Design

This study used a mixed-method Classroom Action Research (CAR) design to investigate the use of graphic organizers in improving the writing organization of junior high school students. The CAR model was selected due to its cyclical nature, which involves continuous reflection and improvement of teaching practices (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988). The mixed-method approach combined both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive analysis of the intervention's impact. The study was conducted over two cycles, each involving four key phases: planning, action, observation, and reflection. This cyclical process allowed the researchers to assess the effects of the intervention and make improvements after each cycle.

Participants and Setting

The participants were 30 students from a Grade 8 class in a junior high school in Gresik. The class consists of a mixed-ability group of students with varying levels of writing proficiency. The participants were selected because they demonstrated difficulties in organizing their writing. The setting was a standard English classroom where writing organization is a key skill emphasized in the curriculum. The school had a supportive environment for implementing action research, and the English teacher collaborated with the researcher throughout the process.



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Research Instruments

Several research instruments were used to collect data throughout the study: observation sheets, questionnaires, and assessment rubrics. Observation sheets were utilized to capture real-time data on student behaviors during writing activities. They included specific criteria, such as the frequency of graphic organizer use and levels of student engagement. Questionnaires were administered to gather insights into students' perceptions of graphic organizers, featuring closed-ended Likert scale questions for quantitative analysis and open-ended questions for qualitative feedback on their experiences with graphic organizers. Assessment rubrics were developed to evaluate the quality of student writing before and after the implementation of graphic organizers. It assessed elements such as the clarity of the thesis, logical flow, paragraph structure, and transitions.

Research Procedures

The research procedures followed a cyclical approach involving four key phases: planning, action, observation, and reflection. During the planning phase, the researcher collaborated with the English teacher to design the intervention, selecting suitable graphic organizers and preparing research instruments such as observation sheets, questionnaires, and assessment rubrics. In the action phase, the intervention was implemented across two cycles, with students using graphic organizers in writing lessons to structure their ideas before drafting essays. The observation phase included real-time data collection through observation sheets to assess student engagement and the effective use of graphic organizers. Finally, in the reflection phase, the researcher and teacher analyzed the collected data to evaluate the intervention's effectiveness and made necessary adjustments for subsequent cycles. This structured process allowed for continuous improvement in instructional strategies, ultimately aiming to enhance students' writing organization skills.

Data Collection

Data collection employed a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods to gain comprehensive insights into the impact of graphic organizers on writing organization among junior high school students. Quantitative data were collected through pre- and post-intervention writing assessments, where students' writing was evaluated using assessment rubrics focusing on key elements such as thesis clarity, logical flow, and paragraph structure. Qualitative data were gathered via observation sheets, which documented student engagement and the usage of graphic organizers during writing activities, as well as through semi-structured interviews with students and teachers to explore their perceptions and experiences with the graphic organizers. This triangulation of data sources enabled a robust analysis of the effectiveness of graphic organizers in enhancing writing organization.



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Data Analysis

The data analysis in the study involved both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Quantitative data from pre- and post-intervention writing assessments were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, and paired sample t-tests to determine significant differences in writing quality before and after the intervention. For qualitative data, thematic analysis was conducted on responses from semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaire items, allowing for the identification of recurring themes and patterns regarding students' and teachers' perceptions of graphic organizers. This mixed-method approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the intervention's impact and informed future instructional practices.

Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability were ensured through several strategies, including triangulation, peer review, and pilot testing. Triangulation was utilized by combining multiple data sources—such as pre- and post-intervention writing assessments, observation sheets, and interviews—to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of graphic organizers on writing organization, thereby confirming the findings across different contexts. Peer review involved having fellow educators or researchers evaluate the research design, instruments, and data analysis to identify potential biases and enhance the study's rigor. Additionally, pilot testing of the assessment rubrics and questionnaires was conducted with a small group of students before the main study, allowing for adjustments based on feedback to ensure clarity and relevance. These strategies collectively enhanced the credibility and trustworthiness of the research outcomes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This results section presents findings from the Classroom Action Research (CAR) study investigating the impact of graphic organizers on junior high school students' narrative writing organization. The results are structured to address both research objectives: first, to determine the impact of graphic organizers on students' writing organization through quantitative data, and second, to gather perceptions from students and teachers on the effectiveness of graphic organizers in writing tasks. This section includes quantitative improvements observed in pre- and post-intervention assessments, qualitative insights from student observations and teacher interviews, comparisons across research cycles, and the significance of these findings in relation to the study's objectives.

The Effect of Graphic Organizers on the Organization of Narrative Text Writing

The quantitative data were gathered through pre- and post-intervention assessments across two cycles, focusing on specific writing elements: thesis clarity, logical flow, paragraph structure, and transitions. Each element was rated on a scale from 0 to 100, with overall averages calculated for both the initial pre-intervention and post-intervention cycles. Table 1 presents the scores across each writing element from pre-





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intervention to post-intervention in Cycle 2, and Table 2 provides the improvements observed between Cycle 1 and Cycle 2.

Table 1 *Pre- and Post-Intervention Scores on Writing Organization Elements*

Writing Element	Pre-Intervention Score	Post-Intervention Score	
	(%)	(Cycle 2) (%)	
Thesis Clarity	60%	85%	
Logical Flow	63%	88%	
Paragraph Structure	68%	90%	
Transitions	62%	85%	
Overall Average Score	63.25%	87%	

The table illustrated significant improvements in all writing elements, with thesis clarity and logical flow both showing an increase of 25%, from 60% to 85% and 63% to 88%, respectively. Paragraph structure improved from 68% to 90%, a 22% gain, while transitions rose by 23%, from 62% to 85%. The overall average score across all elements increased by 23.75%, from 63.25% pre-intervention to 87% post-intervention in Cycle 2. These improvements indicate that graphic organizers positively impacted students' ability to organize narrative writing by providing a structured approach to crafting a thesis, sequencing ideas logically, structuring paragraphs, and utilizing transitions effectively.

 Table 2

 Comparison of Writing Organization Scores Across Cycles

Writing Element	Cycle 1 Average Score	Cycle 2 Average Score
	(%)	(%)
Thesis Clarity	75%	85%
Logical Flow	78%	88%
Paragraph Structure	80%	90%
Transitions	72%	85%
Overall Average Score	76.25%	87%

A comparison of Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 showed significant improvement in all areas. Thesis clarity and logical flow each increased by 10%, rising from 75% to 85% and 78% to 88%, respectively. Paragraph structure also showed a 10% improvement, from 80% to 90%, while transitions improved by 13%, from 72% to 85%. The overall average score across all elements rose from 76.25% in Cycle 1 to 87% in Cycle 2, a 10.75% increase, suggesting that graphic organizers became progressively more effective as students gained familiarity with them.

The statistical analysis for both cycles indicates a significant improvement in students' narrative writing organization due to the use of graphic organizers. Paired t-tests revealed that the mean differences in both cycles were statistically significant across all four elements (p < 0.05), with t-values ranging from 4.34 to 6.12 across both cycles. The results support the hypothesis that graphic organizers are an effective tool for enhancing



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junior high school students' ability to organize narrative texts, with Cycle 1 showing higher levels of initial improvement and Cycle 2 demonstrating sustained gains.

Table 3Cycle 1: Statistical Analysis of Pre- and Post-Test Scores.

Writing Element	Pre-Test Mean	Post-Test Mean	t-value	p-value	Significance (p < 0.05)
Thesis Clarity	58%	75%	t = 4.53	p = 0.0001	Significant
Logical Flow	60%	78%	t = 4.87	p = 0.0001	Significant
Paragraph Structure	63%	80%	t = 4.76	p = 0.0001	Significant
Transitions	55%	72%	t = 4.34	p = 0.0002	Significant
Overall Score	59%	76.25%	t = 4.75	p = 0.0001	Significant

In Cycle 1, all four writing elements demonstrated statistically significant improvements, with p-values well below 0.05 for each element. The t-values, which range from 4.34 to 4.87, indicate strong significance levels for the differences in means. This suggests that the use of graphic organizers had a statistically significant positive effect on students' organization of narrative writing.

Table 4Cycle 2: Statistical Analysis of Pre- and Post-Test Scores.

Writing Element	Pre-Test Mean	Post-Test Mean	t-value	p-value	Significance (p < 0.05)
Thesis Clarity	75%	85%	t = 3.21	p = 0.0002	Significant
Logical Flow	78%	88%	t = 3.37	p = 0.0015	Significant
Paragraph Structure	80%	90%	t = 3.10	p = 0.0025	Significant
Transitions	72%	85%	t = 3.53	p = 0.001	Significant
Overall Score	76.25%	87%	t = 3.30	p = 0.0015	Significant

In Cycle 2, the observed improvements also reached statistical significance, with p-values below 0.05 across all writing elements. The t-values range from 3.10 to 3.53, confirming a continued significant positive impact of graphic organizers on the organization of narrative writing.



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Qualitative data collected from classroom observations and student interviews in each cycle revealed notable changes in student engagement, confidence, and clarity of writing organization. Observations indicated that students were more engaged and purposeful in their writing during the intervention phases. They frequently consulted their graphic organizers, using them to brainstorm ideas and visually plan their writing. Teachers noted a marked difference in students' ability to generate coherent storylines, and students themselves expressed that graphic organizers made it easier to structure their narratives.

Common themes identified in student interviews included clarity in thought organization, reduced anxiety about writing, and a greater sense of control over the writing process. For instance, one student commented, "Using the organizer helped me see my ideas clearly and decide what should go where," while another stated, "I felt like I wasn't getting lost in my story as much." These responses underscore the role of graphic organizers in alleviating the cognitive load associated with organizing narrative ideas, enhancing students' confidence and ability to structure their writing independently.

Perceptions of Students and Teachers on the Use of Graphic Organizers

Post-intervention questionnaires measured perceptions of the graphic organizers' effectiveness on a Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Both students and teachers rated the organizers highly, with an average student rating of 4.6 and an average teacher rating of 4.8 on perceived effectiveness in improving writing organization.

Table 5Student and Teacher Ratings on the Effectiveness of Graphic Organizers

Participant Group	Average Rating	Standard Deviation
Students	4.6	0.5
Teachers	4.8	0.3

The table 5 showed that both students and teachers rated the effectiveness of graphic organizers highly, with average ratings of 4.6 and 4.8, respectively. The low standard deviations (0.5 for students and 0.3 for teachers) indicate a strong consensus within each group regarding the positive impact of graphic organizers on narrative writing skills. This data reflects the widespread perception that graphic organizers provided meaningful support in organizing and clarifying narrative ideas.

Interviews with students and teachers complemented the quantitative survey data, providing insights into their experiences and perceptions. Students reported that using graphic organizers gave them a clear starting point, improved focus, and increased motivation for writing tasks. Several students expressed feeling more in control of their narratives, noting that the visual structure of the organizers made it easier to arrange ideas coherently and avoid becoming overwhelmed by the writing process. One student stated, "I felt like I knew what to write next because my ideas were all there in front of me."

Teachers observed that graphic organizers significantly reduced the amount of guidance students needed during writing exercises, allowing them to work more independently and creatively. They noted that the organizers helped students clarify and



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structure their ideas effectively, which in turn improved their overall confidence and engagement in writing tasks. A teacher explained, "The students stayed on task more consistently and seemed less frustrated when they had the graphic organizer as a reference."

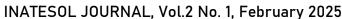
Comparing the results across both cycles, it is evident that the interventions using graphic organizers significantly improved students' writing organization. Cycle 1 introduced students to these tools, leading to considerable initial improvements. By Cycle 2, students had not only maintained these gains but also demonstrated additional progress, particularly in their ability to structure narratives independently and coherently. The upward trend in scores from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2 underscores the effectiveness of continued use and refinement of graphic organizers as a teaching strategy, supporting the hypothesis that these tools can enhance narrative writing skills in junior high school students.

The study's findings effectively meet its objectives and answer the research questions, showing that graphic organizers significantly improve junior high students' narrative writing organization. Quantitative results revealed substantial gains in thesis clarity, logical flow, paragraph structure, and transitions from pre- to post-intervention. Over two cycles, students consistently demonstrated better-organized and cohesive narratives, suggesting that graphic organizers helped them plan and structure ideas more effectively. Qualitative findings also addressed the second research question on perceptions, with students reporting that graphic organizers made writing more manageable and teachers noting increased student confidence and autonomy. These results suggest that graphic organizers not only enhance technical skills in writing but also foster a more positive approach to the process.

Discussion

The findings from this study indicate that the use of graphic organizers significantly improved the organization of narrative text writing among junior high school students, which aligns with the study's objectives and supports the effectiveness of visual tools in educational settings. The analysis of pre- and post-intervention data across two cycles revealed clear gains in writing organization, with specific improvements in thesis clarity, logical flow, paragraph structure, and transitions. These results suggest that graphic organizers serve as an effective scaffold for structuring ideas, enabling students to better sequence their thoughts and enhance the coherence of their narratives.

The positive outcomes observed in this study align with theoretical frameworks that highlight graphic organizers as cognitive tools, as noted by (Kurniaman & Zufriady, 2019). According to this perspective, graphic organizers help students externalize their thought processes, making abstract ideas more concrete and manageable. The visual nature of these tools allows students to map out relationships between ideas, facilitating clearer organization and a deeper understanding of narrative structure. Moreover, the positive effects of graphic organizers on student engagement and independent learning observed in this study are consistent with findings by Sabarun et al (2023), who reported that graphic organizers enhance writing accuracy and encourage classroom collaboration. The results also complement findings from Trisusana & Susanti (2020), which emphasize the role of graphic organizers in improving descriptive and narrative writing by helping students to generate ideas and develop cohesive structures.





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However, this study has certain limitations that may affect the generalizability of the findings. First, the study was conducted with a single class of Grade 8 students in one junior high school, limiting the ability to generalize results across broader populations. Future research could address this limitation by conducting similar interventions across multiple schools or grade levels to see if the outcomes hold across diverse contexts. Additionally, while the Classroom Action Research (CAR) model provided a structured approach for iterative improvement, its cyclic nature may have introduced a level of familiarity that could influence student performance in subsequent cycles. A longitudinal study following students over an extended period could help determine whether the benefits of graphic organizers persist beyond the initial intervention period.

Another potential area for future research is to explore the impact of graphic organizers on students with different learning styles or language backgrounds. This study focused on a general student population; however, adapting graphic organizers to meet the needs of diverse learners, such as English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, could offer further insights into their versatility and adaptability. Additionally, the study could be expanded to analyze how graphic organizers affect other types of writing, such as argumentative or expository texts, as these genres may require distinct organizational skills.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the use of graphic organizers as an instructional tool to enhance the organization of narrative writing among junior high school students. The results demonstrated that graphic organizers significantly improved students' writing organization, with substantial gains observed in thesis clarity, logical flow, paragraph structure, and transitions across two research cycles. These improvements highlight the effectiveness of graphic organizers in helping students plan, structure, and sequence ideas coherently, leading to more organized and higher-quality narrative texts.

The positive feedback from both students and teachers underscores the value of graphic organizers beyond technical writing improvements. Students reported that the organizers made writing more manageable and less overwhelming, while teachers noted increased confidence and independence among students in the writing process. These findings suggest that graphic organizers not only enhance students' organizational skills but also foster a more positive and engaged approach to writing, supporting their overall academic development.

This study contributes to existing literature on the benefits of graphic organizers, particularly in the context of narrative writing for junior high school students. By demonstrating the efficacy of graphic organizers in an Indonesian educational setting, the study provides insights that can inform curriculum development and instructional strategies. However, the study's findings are limited to a single classroom, suggesting that further research is needed to validate these results across diverse educational contexts and student populations. Future studies could expand on these findings by exploring the long-term impact of graphic organizers on various types of writing and examining their adaptability to students with different learning needs.



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