

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Descriptive Writing

The primary purpose of descriptive writing is to describe a person, place or thing in such a way that a picture is formed in the reader's mind. (M'Carthy, 1998, p. 5) stated, "descriptive writing is that domain of writing that develops images through the use precise sensory words and phrases, and through devices such as metaphor and the sounds of words.". Moreover (Spencer, 2005, p. 4) stated, "descriptive writing depends on details and colorful language to bring a subject to life". By describing one person, place, or thing with vivid detail, a writer can create a descriptive scene in the reader's mind. The reader gains a rich, comprehensive, and detailed picture of what being described. (Lenski & Verbruggen, 2010, p. 93) stated, "descriptive writing presents an object, a place, or a person that creates a vivid impression in the reader's mind.

Capturing an event through descriptive writing involves paying close attention to the details by using all of five senses. (Leso, 2012, p. 44) stated, "to write an outstanding description, a writer has to turn on the five windows of idea, these windows refer to the five senses of hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, and touching (feeling)". Consequently, much of descriptive languages make use of sensory language, or language that appeals to one or more of the five senses. (Sorenson, 2009, p. 90) stated, "description relies on five senses, the reader should see, hear, taste, smell, and feel.". Logically, the more accurate a descriptive text in describing those senses, the more audience will be engaged with the text. Moreover, (Lenski & Verbruggen, 2010, p. 93) stated, "writer often use their five senses as they consider their description and use the literary devices of similes and metaphors to make their meanings more vivid.

Descriptive writing has been variously classified. (Albright, 2011) stated, "on the basis of the author's purpose, attitude or general method, descriptive writing classified as being: (1) scientific or artistic, according to whether the writer seeks merely to give accurate information of to present that information in a literary

style, so as to appeal to the reader's aesthetic tastes; (2) objective or subjective, according to whether the writer describes plain fact or projects his personality into the thing described; and (3) enumerative or impressionistic, according to the method of selecting and using the parts of qualities of the object in description.”. Moreover, (Kane, 2003, p. 253) stated, “Whatever sense it appeals to, descriptive writing is two broad kinds: objective and subjective. In objective description the writer sets aside those aspects of the perception unique to himself and concentrates on describing the percepts (that is, what is perceived) in itself. In subjective (also called impressionistic) description a writer projects his or her feelings into the percept.

In descriptive text, a writer commonly use simple present tense, adjective and preposition. Here are the structures of descriptive text :

- a. Identification : identified phenomenon to be describe
- b. Description : describes parts, qualities, characteristic of a person or something that is describes.

1. Teaching Descriptive writing

The teacher often struggle with how to help the students be more descriptive in their writing. (Atlee, 2005, p. 31) stated, “there are two stages in teaching students how to become more descriptive in their writing. First, the students must be able to distinguish between ‘telling’ and ‘showing’. Second, students need strategy for using description in their own work.”. Students tend to tell, not show what is happening, so their writing ends up sounding more like a newspaper article rather than a story.

Good writers describe an idea by showing it like a picture. To show idea, the writer chooses words that draw a mind picture. They use details and examples to help the reader to ‘see’. (Woolley, 1997, p. 5) stated, “good writing is a combination of skills that are learned and practiced throughout one’s life.”. Good writer is being able to organize thoughts so the writing makes sense to someone else.

Learning descriptive writing is an exciting process for the students. It allows them to learn ways to express themselves and share with others creatively. (Prior & Stephens, 2000, p. 3) stated, “through descriptive writing, the students will be able to perfect basic writing skills.

By learning about descriptive writing, the students can enhance their writing skills by choosing the right words. Students also learn and apply precise word choices, sophisticated sentence structures and effective writing techniques. (Rozmiarek, 2000, p. 4) stated, “descriptive writing allows writers to express the ways in which they view and experience the world. At the same time, many skills can be taught while the students enjoy their attempts at self-expression.”. Moreover, (Woolley, 1997, p. 31) stated, “with the teaching of descriptive writing, students not only become better writers, but more selective readers as well.”. By learning descriptive writing, the students’ writing will be more interesting and full of details.

Teaching descriptive writing encourages students to use new vocabulary words and it can help students clarify their understanding of new subject matter material. Moreover, (John Scharter, 2012) stated, “writing descriptively teaches the students to organize their thinking, search for and communicate details, define people, place, things, and write with clarity and purpose.” Students need to learn how to use detail effectively to create pictures, feelings and moods.

There is no one way to teach descriptive writing. (John Scharter, 2012) stated, “teaching writing involves careful selection of pictures, model text, prompts, rubrics, and skill development activity”. When teaching students about descriptive writing, there are two important components that the teacher had to make the students aware of. The first is appealing to the five senses and the second is to be specific. If the students learn these skills and apply them when they write, they will be effective descriptive writers. (Albright, 2011) stated, “the effective describer needs several qualifications: observation, that he may gather suggestive data; imagination, that he may fill out the suggestions; a deep, inner life of thought and feeling; and a habit of analysis and reflection.”.

Three main things that the students should remember when writing a descriptive essay: first, it should have one central impression. Second, the students may adopt to have either an objective or subjective tone in their description. The objective description merely describes the object, while subjective also includes the writer's attitude and feeling toward it. Third, the purpose of descriptive essay is to present an engaging description to the readers so that they can visualize the images under description. (Woolley, 1997, p. 5) stated, "writing skills are developed by writing on a daily basis and when the students learn in many different writing experience."

2. Descriptive Writing Skills

Clearly there are numbers of factors appear to be related to descriptive writing, and there are pretty wide variations across students in their skill with description. (John Scharter, 2012) stated "at least there are two skills in descriptive writing; composing skills and organizing skills". Composing skill consist of: Includes descriptive words and details (look, sound, movement, taste, composition, age, size, location, etc. Second the use of precise language (tulip instead of flower, mansion instead of home). Third includes strong verb (she raced to the park. He gulp down his launch). Fourth uses transitions (before, during, after,in front of, behind, beside) and sentence variation (combines choppy sentences, revises repetitive sentence starts). Fifth makes comparison (fast as lightning, hair like silk, hotter than burning coal). Sixth uses words that engage and surprise the reader (enormous, shrimp; muscle bigger than mountain).

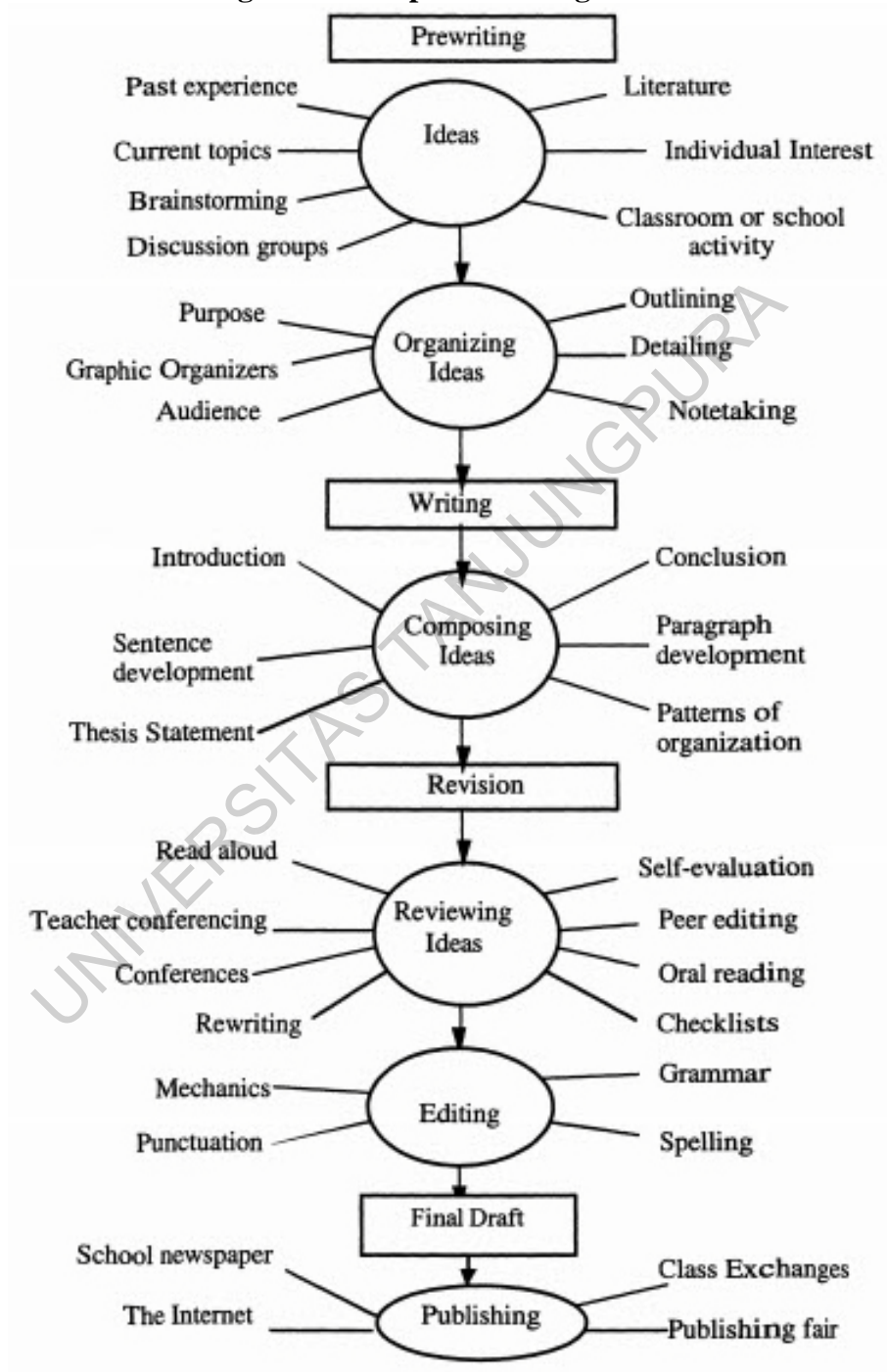
Organizing skill consists of: Generates attribute charts to develop and sort ideas and details for descriptive writing. Second organizes descriptions either by time, visual field (left to right; top to bottom; small to large), details, or procedure. Third writes topic sentences that orient and engage the reader. Fourth writes concluding sentences that use a concluding word or phrase, give advice, or summarize the description.

3. Descriptive Writing stages

Writing is a complex, difficult and time consuming process. Providing students with an understanding in writing process will help them in working with

their descriptive writing. (Nagin, 2012)stated, “writing process is any of the activities of thinking strategies used to compose a piece of writing.”. These are sometimes described as cycle of planning or writing stages.

Figure 1Descriptive Writing Process



Adopted from (Ball, 2010)

As shown by Figure 1, the process of writing involves many stages, each of which is as valuable as the next, each focusing on the overall design and purpose of the final product. For many years, it was assumed that the writing process generally operated in some variation of three to five stages. (Donohue, 2009, p. 9)stated, “for years, the writing process has been defined in five recognizable steps: Prewriting, Drafting, Revising, Editing, and Publishing.”.

a. Prewriting

Prewriting is the first stage of the writing process, typically followed by drafting, revision, editing and publishing. (Nagin, 2012)stated, “prewriting is any planning activity that helps the writer invent content and generate ideas, images, view point, and so on, to be developed into piece of writing.”. Elements of prewriting may include planning, research, outlining, diagramming, storyboarding or clustering (also known as graphic organizer or mind mapping). Moreover, (Scarry & Scarry, 2010, p. 5)stated, “prewriting is the earliest stage of the writing process, uses technique such as brainstorming, clustering, and outlining to transform thoughts into words.”. Prewriting techniques used by professional writers as well as student writers as they gather material and generate idea for writing.

Prewriting technique helps writers gathering ideas and gather material about topics that are required. (Scarry & Scarry, 2010, p. 5)stated, “prewriting techniques are a way to explore and give some order to what might otherwise be a confusing hodgepodge of different thoughts on a topic.”.

During prewriting stage, teacher help students plan for their writing by providing necessary background experiences and arranging practice activities.(Caswell & Mahler, 2004, p. 42)stated, “the objective of prewriting is to prepare students for writing by allowing them to discover what they know and what else they need to know.”

In the prewriting phase of descriptive essay writing, students should take time to think about who or what they want to describe and why. (Caswell & Mahler, 2004, p. 42)stated, “prewriting allows students to gather idea, this stages promotes

opportunities for students to cognitively record what they know before they formulate a draft.”. If students begin their writing by just drafting, they limit their ideas; they force their ideas to fit within the confinements of the current selected structure.

Once a topic is chosen, students should spend time thinking about the qualities they want to describe. Brainstorm about all the details associated with the topic. Even when not writing about a place, reflect on the surroundings. Consider not just physical characteristics, but also what memories, feelings, and ideas the subject evokes. Memory and emotion play an important role in conveying the subject’s significance. Plan the focus of each paragraph and create an outline that puts these details into a logical sequence.

b. Drafting

Once writer feel they have generated enough ideas during prewriting to serve as a departure point, the writer make a first attempt in getting those ideas down, this part of writing process is called drafting. (Nagin, 2012)stated, “in drafting the writer begins to develop content through sustained production of connected prose.”. The number of drafts may depend on the type, length, and complexity of writing task.

The drafting stage uses the result of prewriting stage. (Cohen & Cohen, 2007, p. 290)stated, “in drafting stage, the focus should be on getting the message across with regard to purpose, audience, content and organization, not on conventions of writing such as spelling and sentence structure.”.At this stage, students are beginning to get their ideas on paper. (Cohen & Cohen, 2007, p. 291)stated, “during the first draft stage, students may need to go back and revise their initial mapor outline and work on organizational structure.”. Students should be concentrating on writing a topic sentence for each paragraph and supporting it with details. Students need to understand that writing is an iterative process of going back and forth between getting those ideas down on paper and then going back to the outline to recheck whether the paragraph makea sense.

In drafting stage, the students begin to connect their ideas. (Donohue, 2009, p. 11) stated, “during the drafting stage, the students are able to craft their own writing.” There are a wide range of experiences that the students may explore when experimenting with new forms of writing.

c. Revising

Revision is the stage in the writing process where the author reviews, alters, and amends her or his message, according to what has been written in the draft. (Moore & Cassel, 2010, p. 17) stated, “revising refers to a global revision of the paper, not just cosmetic and grammatical changes.” Moreover, (Urquhart & McIver, 2005, p. 11) stated, “revising is the time when writers review their work, checking for clarity of message, word choice, and organization.”

In the revision phase, students review, modify, and reorganize their work with the goal of making it the best it can be. (Nagin, 2012) stated, “in revising, a writer approaches a rough draft with an editorial eye, identifying and deleting extraneous subject matter, focusing material, determining what needs to be amplified and what needs to be cut.”

Revision is the key to effective document. In revising the writer think more deeply about the readers’ need and expectation. At this stage the writer also refine the prose, making each sentence as concise and accurate as possible. (Nagin, 2012) stated, “revising involves structural changes to a text, or macro editing refining content and creating structure by organizing ideas and theme into sequenced, coherent paragraph.” Moreover, (Wingersky, Boerner, & Holguin-Balogh, 2008, p. 3) stated, “revising is one of the most important steps in writing a paper, involves smoothing out the writing, adding more details, and making other changes”.

d. Editing

Editing is a stage of the writing process in which a writer or editor strives to improve a draft (and sometimes prepare it for publication) by correcting errors and by making words and sentences clearer, more precise, and more effective. (Diane Publishing Company, 1996, p. 19) stated, “editing, which is refinement

stage of the writing process, is the cleaning up and correcting a piece of writing.”. Moreover, (Rog & Kropp, 2004, p. 17) stated, “editing means correcting only the mechanical of the writing.”. At this point in the writing process, writers proofread and correct errors in grammar and mechanics. It’s also the time to improve style and clarity.

Editing focuses on making the documents meet the conventions of stands written English. The purpose of editing proses is to make sure that the paragraph does not contain any grammatical errors.(Rog & Kropp, 2004, p. 17) stated, “in editing, the editor’s focus is entirely spelling, grammar, punctuation, and other mechanical issues.”. Moreover,(American BookWorks Corporation, 2011, p. 11) stated, “during editing, students check their work for English usage such as grammar, syntax, punctuation, and mechanics.

4. Descriptive Language Features

Descriptive writing typically encapsulates a particular event, experience or time. It is highly stylized, with heavy use of sensory language, asking the reader to hear, smell, taste or see the story. Descriptive writing requires plenty of sculpting to provide the reader with the most vivid impression possible. According to (Pate, 2012) Descriptive Language Features consist of :

a. Dominant Impression and Mood

Descriptive writing always has a uniform or dominant impression that sets its tone and mood. For instance, instead of an author telling her reader she felt safe and comfortable in a particular situation, she conjures up a safe environment through descriptive phrases of the setting, time and perhaps other characters. A happy memory of eating with the family might detail how the author’s mother snuggled close to her, how the sweet dessert smelled and how the worn but clean tablecloth set the background for the meal.

b. Sensory Detail

Descriptive writing relies heavily on sensory detail. The writer relays how a stale slice of bread tasted, including its texture or smell. A character describing how the breeze feels states how it smells and feels. A breeze may be warm and

heavy, or crisp and wet, or even icy. It may smell like salt, dirt, jasmine or like the grease trap from the nearby fast-food restaurant. Write down exactly which smells, sounds, tastes and sites you or your character felt during an event.

c. Vivid Language

Descriptive writing requires vivid, specific, concrete language so the reader can easily visualize the action. The less your reader has to work to visualize the story, the more he grasps the story and can empathize with characters. For instance, the sentence, "It was a nice day," gives the reader no insight into that particular day. Describe why exactly the day was nice. The sun may have been shining indirectly through trees, casting soft shadows and warming the ground, and the crisp desert breeze carrying a smell of clean sand and rain.

B. Graphic Organizer

1. Graphic Organizer in Descriptive Paragraph

A graphic organizer, also known as knowledge map, concept map, story map, cognitive organizer, advance organizer, or concept diagram, is a communication tool that uses visual symbols to express knowledge, concepts, thoughts, or ideas, and the relationships between them. (Parker, 2005, p. 4) state that "graphic organizers are visual representations that help us gather and sort information." Moreover, (Hibbard & Wagner, 2003, p. 117) stated, "a graphic organizer is a diagram that represents a relationship directed by thinking-skill verb."

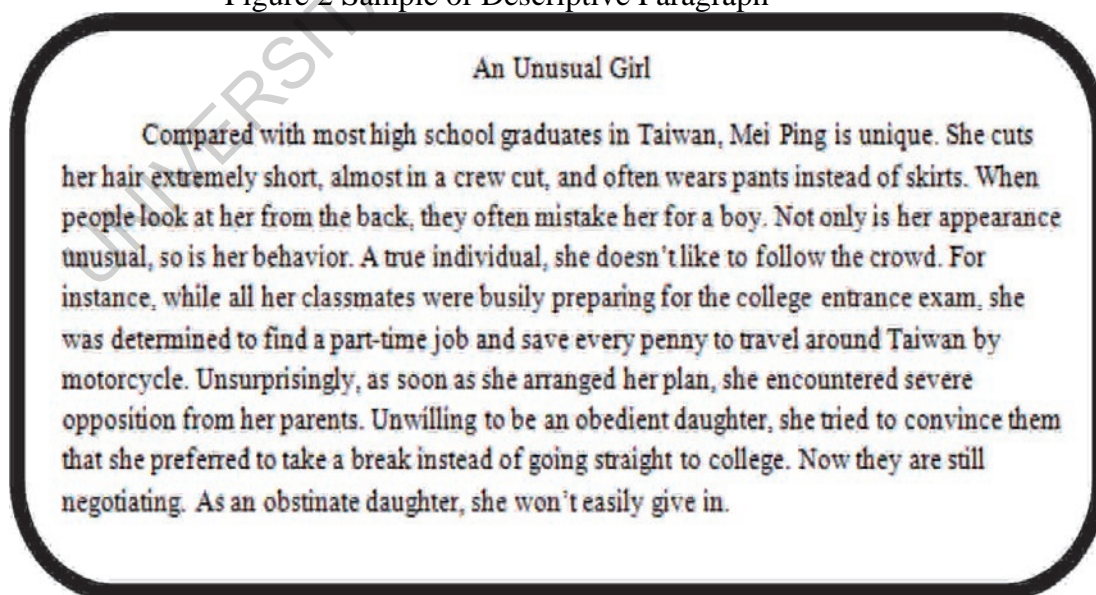
The main purpose of a graphic organizer is to provide a visual aid to facilitate learning and instruction. (Parker, 2005, p. 4) stated, "graphic organizer help students see pattern and relationships between given information.". With graphic organizer, it is easier for the students to form a concept, organizing idea, and see relationships between elements. (Hibbard & Wagner, 2003, p. 117) stated, " the purpose of graphic organizer is to give the student support in processing information". By employing graphic organizer, the students gain effectiveness in processing information.

Graphic organizers can be used during the pre-writing stage or at any other time during the writing process. For example, a student who has written a draft lacking in coherence and purposeful organization could benefit from using a graphic organizer during conferencing with the teacher or peers. The perspective gained from graphically visualizing ideas should persuade even the reluctant user of graphic organizers that some method of organization is necessary for effective communication.

Teachers can provide printed or electronic templates for all students to use individually as graphic organizers during the writing process. These templates can be used during a demonstration lesson as well. The teacher-student conferencing process, including the results of formative assessment, can help both teacher and student to determine which graphic organizer is best for each particular student during a specific writing assignment. This instructional-learning strategy also addresses the various learning styles that each student prefers. No matter the style or method, graphic organizers serve a critical role during any writing process.

Below is an example of employing graphic organizer to gather information from a descriptive text :

Figure 2 Sample of Descriptive Paragraph

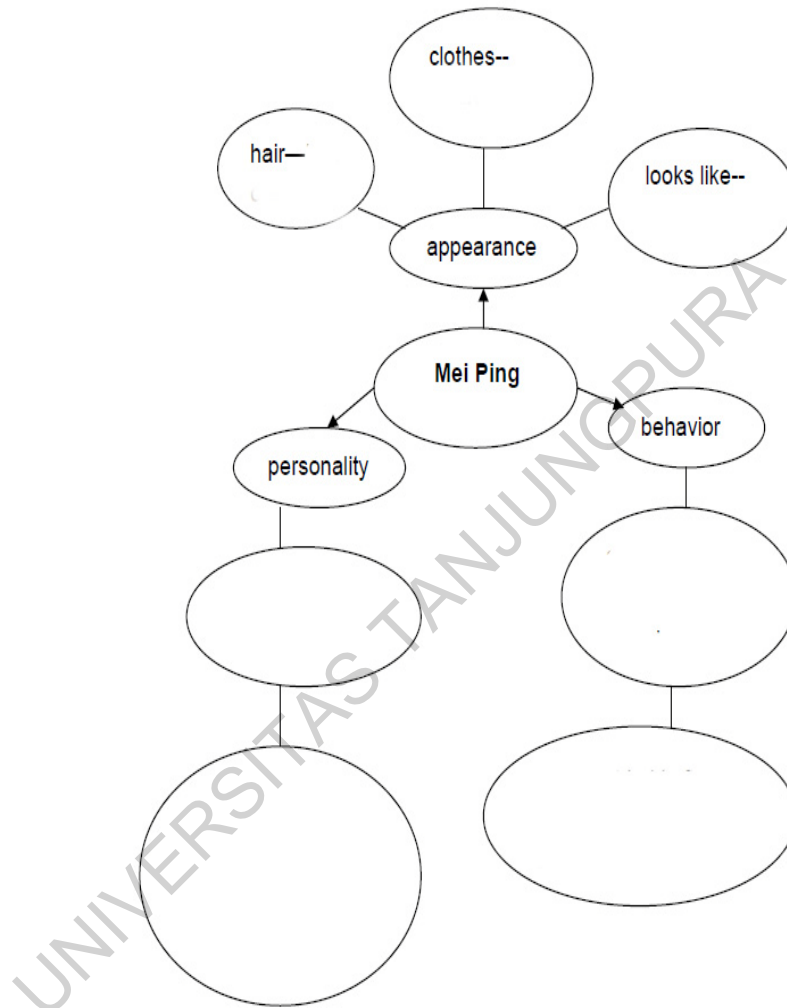


(Taken from: <http://english.tyhs.edu.tw>)

Above text is a sample of descriptive text about a person, the teacher asked the students to comprehend the paragraph and then the students asked fill in the

graphic organizer that have been prepared by the teacher before. Below is a sample or graphic organizer for above text:

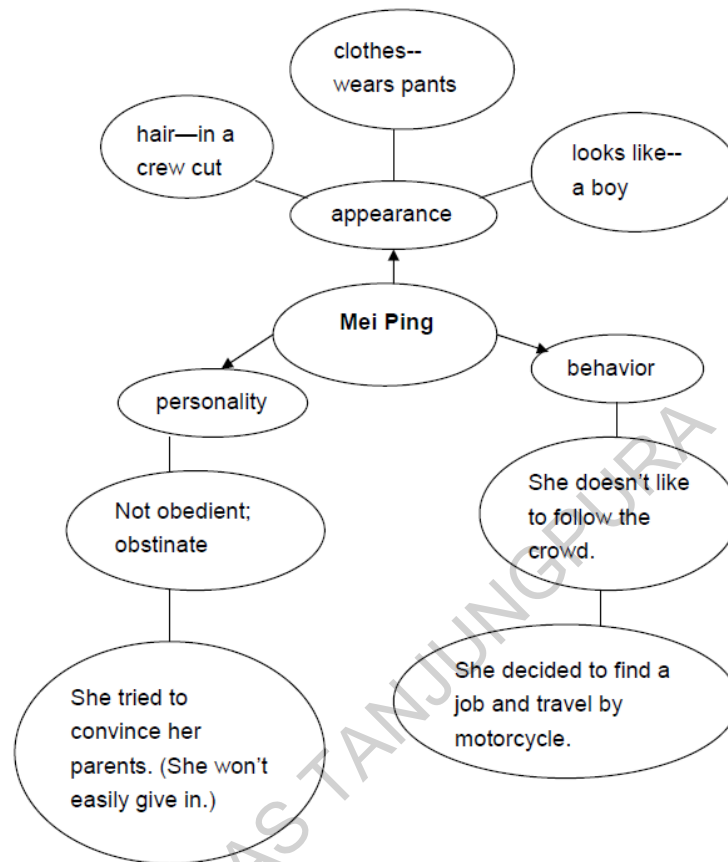
Figure 3 Graphic Organizer of “Mei Ping”



Taken from : <http://english.tyhs.edu.tw>

In graphic organizer above, we can see that the students are already provided with topics that they can write about Mei Ping, such as: hair, clothes, looks like, personality, and behavior. The only thing that the students have to do is fill in the blanks with related descriptive topics that they can gather from the text. (Parker, 2005, p. 66) stated, “by using graphic organizer, the teacher is helping the students make connections and assimilate new information into what they already know.”. Later on, their graphic organizer will look like this:

Figure 4 “Meil Ling’s” Graphic Organizer that had been filled in



Taken from: <http://english.tyhs.edu.tw>

As we can see from figure above, by employing graphic organizer it is easier for the students to gather information from a text.(Parker, 2005, p. 4)stated, “graphic organizers have a way of connecting several pieces of isolated information, they take new information and file it into an existing framework.”.In graphic organizer above, the student use graphic organizer to map out their idea, so it is easier for the students to understand and/or organize their idea. (Parker, 2005, p. 4)stated, “graphic organizers are referred to a maps, because they help the students to “maps out” ideas in visual way.