
THE POSITIVE EFFECTS OF MIND MAPPING STRATEGY INTEGRATION ON IMPROVING EFL LEARNERS' WRITING SKILL

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Abstract

The ever-changing nature of modern L2 writing enterprises has added incremental challenges for worldwide EFL learners to continue their productivity, participation, and commitment in this long-lengthy process as they are required to become more proficient L2 writers. Concerning this issue, this study aimed to investigate the positive effects of mind mapping strategy integration in elevating EFL learners' writing skills. Thus, the researcher reviewed the research results taken from 25 mind mapping strategy studies with the help of a thematic analysis to generate more robust and reliable research results. After analyzing the prior research results forming in 25 previous mind mapping strategy studies, the researcher subsumed them into some main specific themes to ascertain the comprehensibility of the targeted data. Two major specific themes were stipulated namely: (1) Mind mapping strategy enables EFL learners to become more organized L2 writers and (2) Mind mapping strategy transforms EFL learners into more avid L2 writers. It was revealed that mind mapping strategy can potentially elevate EFL learners' writing motivation, confidence, autonomy, and skills.

Keywords: EFL learners, library study, mind mapping strategy, thematic analysis, writing

Introduction

In this ever-changing era, it is vitally essential for worldwide EFL learners to fully master writing skills to be deemed proficient L2 academicians. In the writing processes, EFL learners are required to address their intended thoughts, ideas, and argumentations clearly to the targeted readers to create more meaningful writing compositions. This fundamental L2 writing learning process aligns with [Maharani et al. \(2018\)](#) stating that upon generating more qualified writing products, EFL learners are encouraged to express their particular ideas, feelings, and opinions understandably to the readers. Contrastively, mastering advanced L2 writing competencies is not an easy task for EFL learners. As they frequently confront various obstacles while attempting to delineate their ideas. The first common obstruction EFL learners oftentimes face is due to the lack of ideas leading them to experience frustrating L2 writing learning activities. [Thiel and Conroy \(2022\)](#) mention that EFL learners will have a higher degree of tendency to depart from their existing writing learning dynamics while they are not able to discover specific ideas to be explicated in their writing compositions. Furthermore, other taxing hurdles that can hinder EFL learners' writing motivation are the

complexities of writing tasks, grammatical knowledge, dictions, and vocabulary that are suitably relevant to the writing learning contexts they are engaging with.

This belief corresponds with [Lestari et al. \(2022\)](#) repudiating that to be able to become qualified L2 writers, EFL learners are advised to constantly employ appropriate word choices, grammar, and vocabulary throughout their writing tasks. These frequently-occurred writing hindrances do not only halt the cognitive but also the affective sides of EFL learners. Since EFL learners are highly depressed to generate their specific ideas in high-quality writing products, they tend to instill a higher level of anxiety. When EFL learners are not able to minimize their existing growth of this feeling, they will encounter another arduous impediment in organizing particular thoughts into well-composed writing products. This above-mentioned affective issue is meaningfully associated with [Yunus and Chien \(2016\)](#) avowing that a predominant number of globalized EFL learners generally experience hard times while attempting to delineate their intended thoughts into a good piece of writing as they experienced a higher level of restlessness before dealing with the specifically-given writing tasks.

The good news to better mitigate all the aforementioned L2 writing learning issues is through the constant utilization of a mind mapping strategy. Mind mapping strategy is one of the useful approaches for EFL learners to plan, organize, and explain the ideas residing in their minds easily by creating creative and interesting graphic organizers that are specifically apprehensible for them. [Tay and Phang \(2022\)](#) theorize that with the integration of mind mapping strategy, EFL learners will be more capable of managing their upcoming writing tasks effortlessly as they are intensively trained to create creative, fascinating, and comprehensible writing outlines. It is also worth emphasizing that in the light of mind-mapping strategy implementation, EFL learners can intensively monitor their writing contents as they can recall the previously-written ideas that are already depicted in the writing plans. [Wahid and Sudirman \(2023\)](#) adduce that mind mapping strategy is worthwhile to be continuously applied in a wide variety of L2 writing learning enterprises where EFL learners' critical writing skills are honed simultaneously as they can compose the intended writing products in line with their prior writing plans. Of considerable importance is EFL learners can progressively transfigure into more competent, strategic, and critical L2 writers through continuous exposure to mind mapping strategy. These commendable writing learning outcomes can take place since they have gained a more profound understanding of the nature of their targeted writing tasks. [Al-Zyoud et al. \(2018\)](#) strongly suggest L2 writing instructors to incorporating mind mapping strategy at the beginning of writing activities to significantly raise EFL learners' particular awareness of the writing topics they have selected.

To the best of researcher's knowledge, none of these previous studies have specifically investigated the positive effects of mind mapping strategy integration in improving EFL learners' writing skills. To fill this gap, the researcher planned to profoundly investigate the positive impacts of this learner-oriented learning approach in fostering EFL learners' writing competencies for the betterment of future writing learning processes endured by them. The first study conducted by [Fauzan et al. \(2020\)](#) revealed that the majority of Indonesian EFL learners were still having difficult moments while applying a set of decent academic writing rules to their writing products, which motivate L2 writing learning instructors to intensively train them on how to implement those writing conventions accurately. [Mardiansyah \(2020\)](#) strongly encouraged Indonesian EFL educators to nurture their learners' self-confidence before commencing varied writing activities to enable them to

obtain more satisfying writing learning achievements. In the third study, Putri (2018) highly prompted Indonesian EFL educationalists to reinforce learners' development of critical thinking skills and creativity that might be influential for them to compose more high-quality writing products. Saputra (2015) unfolded that through the process genre approach, EFL learners have gained a higher degree of enthusiasm and interest to continue doing the specifically-given writing tasks as they have been more familiar with the writing task genres they have been into. In the last study, Wijaya (2022) uncovered that in the light of robust metacognitive awareness development, graduate university EFL learners had a sustainable determination to accomplish the taxing writing tasks since they were capable of planning, monitoring, and evaluating their writing compositions. This current small-scale qualitative study was initiated to profoundly investigate the positive effects of mind-mapping strategy integration in fostering worldwide EFL learners' writing competencies. By conducting this study, the specifically-attained research results can have a more promising way for globalized L2 writing learning instructors to start initializing a mind mapping strategy at the onset of their writing activities to address more promising writing learning assistance in which EFL learners can construct better writing compositions to achieve more fruitful writing learning outcomes. Aligning with the main purpose of this study, the researcher aimed to answer one following research problem namely: (1) what are the positive effects of mind mapping strategy integration towards the elevation of EFL learners' writing skills?

Literature Review

A notable advantageous value of employing a mind mapping strategy is L2 writing learning instructors can check whether their learners have already inculcated specific background knowledge of the major writing topics. By obtaining this beneficial writing background, L2 writing learning instructors can provide greater assistance for EFL learners to accomplish their writing tasks efficiently. This conception is in agreement with Chalak and Rastgoo (2021) believing that with the presence of mind mapping strategy, EFL learners will have broader opportunities to finish their challenging writing assignments successfully as their teachers have appropriately identified the particular writing learning needs and prior knowledge that should be possessed by them. To embody the above-elucidated advantageous writing learning values, L2 writing learning instructors are concurrently advocated to apply questioning strategies in their mind mapping strategy to help learners particularly identify the writing contents, which in turn is beneficial for enhancing their writing competencies to the utmost potential. Fu et al. (2019) highly recommend L2 writing learning instructors all around the globe incorporate questioning techniques upon incorporating mind mapping strategy in their writing learning circumstances to enable them to become more familiar with the writing strengths and weaknesses, eventually improving their writing skills to the fullest development.

Mind-mapping strategy can potentially promote a more positively-sound and emotionally-supportive writing learning atmosphere where EFL learners can proactively engage with given writing tasks, be more highly motivated to overcome a vast range of writing challenges, and become more fluent writers. All these advantageous writing learning outcomes are in obedient with the previous finding of Luangkrajang (2022) revealing that a vast majority of EFL learners are more willing to actively participate in the complex writing processes, confidently face varied writing interferences, and delineate the intended ideas easily after they have been introduced to mind-

mapping strategy. From the L2 writing learning instructors' side, the employment of a mind mapping strategy can create more enjoyable writing learning dynamics owing to the gradual diminution of lecturing time, better classroom management, and significant improvement of teachers' attention to learners' writing processes. These meritorious benefits are closely interlinked with Akihary and Apituley (2022) finding out that under the guidance of a mind mapping strategy, EFL learners have undergone more pleasant writing learning climates in which there is a significant reduction of teacher-oriented style, placement of supportive classroom environments, and teachers' considerable attention toward learners' writing learning activities.

Methodology

Research design and approach of the study

The researcher set out this current small-scale qualitative investigation with the accompaniment of a library study approach. By employing this research method, the specifically-obtained research results can generate a more insightful understanding of the specific phenomenon that was being explored. Having such a purpose, the researcher critically reviewed the research results from 25 mind mapping strategy studies.

Two major reasons of conducting the study

Two main reasons encouraged the researcher to select these 25 prior studies. Firstly, it is hoped that the reviewed research results will help EFL learners to possess more robust self-confidence and motivation while confronting various challenging writing learning tasks during their academic journeys. Secondly, it is also expected that EFL learners will experience more enjoyable writing learning processes with the support of mind mapping strategy in the future events. As a result, they will be more capable of managing their writing learning activities accordingly and generate qualified writing products suitable with the subject-specific subjects they have mastered.

Data analysis and depictions stages

During the data depictions processes, the researcher subcategorized the most often appeared research results generated by 25 studies into some major-specific themes to enable L2 writing learning instructors to fully understand the significance of incorporating a mind-mapping strategy at the outset of writing enterprises. To release this study aim, the researcher also employed a thematic analysis approach to yield more valid, well-structured, and robust research results that might be contributable to the further advancement of EFL writing learning dynamics conducted globally. After embodying all these consecutive data analysis processes, the researcher expounded all the divided research themes argumentatively by integrating prior relevant theories and findings by which the attained research results were considered trustworthy and reliable. The researcher formulated the research instrument with the help of annotated bibliography in which the specific research results were explained in depth details. Annotated bibliography enabled the researcher to structure the argumentations of targeted research results clearly based on the sub-specific themes having been

categorized in a thematic analysis process. Face validity was employed to ascertain the reliability of this research instrument. Before argumentatively explicating the subcategorized research results, the researcher asked a help from his former lecturer to check whether the annotated bibliography instrument is compatible with this study’s context. After receiving some constructive feedback from the lecturer, the researcher proceeded into the data delineation stage.

Results and Discussion

After conducting an in-depth thematic analysis, two major specific themes were stipulated namely: (1) Mind mapping strategy enables EFL learners to become more organized L2 writers and (2) Mind mapping strategy transforms EFL learners into more avid L2 writers. In the previously-conducted studies, the researchers only focused on explaining how mind-mapping strategy assisted EFL learners to become more independent, well-organized, and proficient L2 writers. Practically speaking, the previous researchers merely explained the effective integration of mind mapping strategy comprising of brainstorming, planning, monitoring, drafting, and revision stages without explicitly mentioning the influential impacts of this strategy for the advancement of EFL learners’ writing learning progress. Therefore, the forthcoming research results attained in this small-scale library study specifically focus on various meritorious writing learning rewards potentially obtained by EFL learners through mind mapping strategy. These reviewed research results will be an additional complementary for the systematized research results generated by the previous researchers by which educational institutions and EFL teachers will be helped a lot in maximizing the utmost potential of this strategy for advancing our learners’ writing skills.

Theme 1. *Mind mapping strategy enables EFL learners to become more organized L2 writers*

Theme 1	Authors
Mind mapping strategy enables EFL learners to become more organized L2 writers	Abbaspour and Rastgoo (2020); Al-Zyoud et al. (2018); Bukhari (2016); Erdiana (2016); Fadillah (2019); Karim (2018); Sebit and Yildiz (2020); Ngo and Tran (2021); Vijayavalsalan (2016); Wahid and Sudirman (2023); Waloyo (2017); Wangmo and Chalermnirundorn (2018); Yunus and Chien (2016).

Based on theme 1 above, it is worth noting that mind mapping strategy can potentially enable EFL learners to become more organized L2 writers. This happened since EFL learners can structure their specific ideas, thoughts, and ideas accordingly before immersing into the real-time writing processes. Al- Zyoud et al. (2018) articulate through the implementation of a mind mapping strategy, EFL learners can better plan their writing compositions constructively in which their argumentations are well-organized before commencing the apparent writing activities. EFL learners are also able to explain their targeted ideas clearly to the targeted readers with the support of mind mapping strategy since they have known the following writing steps that should be performed. This argumentation is in agreement with Fadillah (2019) adducing that through the constant utilization of mind mapping strategy, EFL learners have successfully transfigured into more mindful writing planners and judicious decision makers as they can develop the targeted writing ideas easily and organize their thinking in accord with the prior writing plans. Another cognitive side having been escalated

through the use of mind mapping strategy is EFL learners' successfulness of composing high-quality writing products based on the appropriately-chosen writing strategies. By employing a wide variety of meaningful writing strategies, EFL learners are more likely to compose more qualified writing products as they can fine-tune these chosen writing strategies in accord with the specific nature of their writing tasks. This meaningful writing learning strategy is in harmony with the finding of Sebit and Yildiz (2020) who discovered that a predominant number of Iranian university EFL learners were skillful in delineating their writing argumentations comprehensibly to the targeted readers since they have been armed with the exhaustive knowledge of how and when to utilize a set of meaningful writing strategies that are suitable for their writing tasks.

Furthermore, mind mapping strategy can simultaneously diminish excessive writing anxiety experienced by EFL learners to be replaced by a higher level of self-confidence. When EFL learners have gradually become more confident toward their writing learning activities, they are strongly motivated to participate in varied writing learning dynamics in order to foster their writing competencies to the fullest development. These research results strengthened a study of Wahid and Sudirman (2023) unraveling that a vast number of Indonesian university EFL learners have been able to survive and thrive in their current writing learning complexities since they are sufficiently eager to overcome every single writing adversity, diminish the excessive writing anxiety, increase their self-confidence, and hold more positive perspectives toward writing learning activities they are engaging with. As they have been more comfortable with the demanding L2 writing learning situations, EFL learners can concurrently begin to understand the specific nature of their writing tasks. By instilling this in-depth writing understanding, they can become more successful L2 writers as they can fulfill all the prerequisite writing requirements presented in their tasks. Waloyo (2017) strongly suggested L2 writing learning instructors to applying the mind mapping strategy at the onset of writing activities to supportively assist EFL learners to accomplish the specifically-given writing tasks in conformance with the writing requirements addressed to them.

In the last line of argumentation, the meaningful internalization of the mind mapping strategy can also bring about a more profound transformation to EFL learners' higher-order thinking skills and creative development. Learners can become more critical L2 writers since they are required to create a series of effective writing plans mutually correspond with their writing tasks. This finding was corroborated by Wangmo and Chalermnirundorn (2018) believing that mind mapping strategy can sustainably scaffold EFL learners' higher-order thinking skills growth by assigning them to design appropriate writing plans. In line with the further development of creativity, the mind mapping strategy trains EFL learners to creatively select language expressions, dictions, coherence, and cohesion appropriate for their writing tasks. Yunus and Chien (2016) have likewise acknowledged that mind mapping strategy can reinforce EFL learners' creative minds as they have to be more adaptable and flexible in incorporating a set of selected writing contents in conformance with their writing situations. All these reviewed research results aimed to provoke a higher level of awareness for educational stakeholders to start integrating mind mapping strategy at the onset of writing activities endured by EFL learners in order to progressively transfigure them into more strategic, autonomous, and critical L2 writers.

Theme 2: *Mind mapping strategy transforms EFL learners into more avid L2 writers*

Theme 2	Authors
Mind mapping strategy transforms EFL learners into more avid L2 writers	Alqasham and Al-Ahdal (2021); Fu et al. (2019); Karim et al. (2019); Karim et al. (2021); Karim et al. (2016); Khudhair (2016); Lestari et al. (2022); Naibaho (2022); Pradasari and Pratiwi (2018); Pratiwi et al. (2016); Tarin and Yawilong (2022); Vejayan and Yunus (2022).

Theme 2 interestingly unfolded that mind mapping strategy can be one of the critical determinants for EFL learners to progressively transfigure into more avid L2 writers. As mind mapping strategy implementation successfully creates an anxiety-free writing learning atmosphere where EFL learners can propose their personalized writing guidelines freely, their current writing learning interest is inevitably aroused resulting in the significant enhancement of their L2 writing proficiency. This first rewarding benefit affirmed the previous finding of [Alqasham and Al-Ahdal \(2021\)](#) confessing that mind mapping strategy significantly helped EFL learners to plan their writing learning processes in a better purpose without feeling intimidated by severe judgments addressed by their teacher or classmates. When EFL learners have felt more comfortable with mind mapping strategy, they are more willing to bravely cope with a vast range of writing learning hurdles in which qualified writing products can be produced. This laudable writing learning character concurs with the prior finding of [Fu et al. \(2019\)](#) confirming that when EFL learners have inculcated more positive perceptions toward the use of mind mapping strategy, they will strongly determine to put forth a higher degree of writing efforts to produce better writing compositions. Moreover, mind mapping strategy can supportively provide great assistance for EFL learners to obtain various new words and expressions to be incorporated in their writing compositions. This action should be undertaken to allow EFL learners to become more broad-minded L2 writers. This suggestion has an agreement with [Khudhair \(2016\)](#) confessing that mind mapping strategy can act as one of the propelling forces for EFL learners to become more insightful L2 writers by which they obtain new vocabulary and expressions that are indispensable for the betterment of their writing quality.

Life-long writing characters can easily reside within EFL learners when L2 writing learning instructors committedly promote more positively-sound and emotionally-supportive writing learning enterprises in the light of mind mapping strategy. It is noteworthy to be propounded that through mind mapping strategy, EFL learners can infuse a higher level of intellectual curiosity, initiatively initiate their independent writing practices, and earnestly cope with various writing obstacles. [Naibaho \(2022\)](#) highly encouraged L2 writing learning instructors in Indonesia promote more enjoyable writing learning atmosphere where EFL learners are committed to participate in the entire writing processes. Upon incorporating a mind mapping strategy, second language teachers need to teach EFL learners on how to make the best use of certain writing strategies in harmony with their particular writing situations. As a result of this training, EFL learners can gradually transform into more strategic writing planners in the long run. This fundamental principle aligns with [Pradasari and Pratiwi \(2018\)](#) strongly motivating Indonesian university EFL teachers to equip their learners with appropriate writing strategies in order to make them become more effective problem-solvers. In the end, mind mapping strategy can eventually help EFL learners to attain more satisfying writing

achievements. This positive writing learning outcome took place as they can self-initiate, manage, and evaluate their particular writing activities autonomously. In obedient with this ultimate writing learning outcome, Pratiwi et al. (2016) contended that through mind mapping strategy, EFL learners can endure more meaningful writing learning processes impacting the specific writing learning achievements they are going attain. The aforementioned research results review attempted to encourage worldwide EFL teachers to internalize mind mapping strategy in their writing classroom contexts wherein EFL learners can truly become life-long L2 writers possessing the robust writing desire in the entire academic lives.

Conclusion and Recommendations/Implications

Reflecting on the obtained research results forming in this present small-scale library study, it can be inferred that the continual integration of mind mapping strategy in L2 writing learning enterprises can potentially bring about a wide variety of advantageous values for EFL learners comprising cognitive, affective, and mentality domains. From the cognitive side, EFL learners are more strongly willing to proceed into the complexities of writing processes as they have noticed how to effectively create meaningful writing plans sustaining the continuity of their writing processes. Moving on to the affective areas, the mind mapping strategy is believed to significantly improve EFL learners' writing endeavor, motivation, and perseverance turning them into more optimistic L2 writers. Regarding the mentality aspect, EFL learners having been equipped with a mind mapping strategy will have a more robust tendency to deal with a vast variety of writing obstacles that may result in more satisfying writing achievements and performances. Apart from the above-mentioned shortfall, the specifically-attained research results have slightly provided beneficial insights into the critical importance of internalizing mind mapping strategy at the commencement of L2 writing learning enterprises in which EFL learners can optimistically confront the constant writing complexities with the existence of high-quality writing compositions to be proved as a well-deserved result of all their writing efforts. Future researchers need to tap into the potential disadvantages of mind mapping strategy in order to enable EFL teachers to combine this learner-oriented teaching approach with other applicable pedagogical method in order to better promote a positively-sound writing climate for all learners.

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