



Students' Perceptions toward Using Mind Mapping on Writing Skill in EFL Classroom

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore students' perceptions toward the use of mind mapping in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Using a quantitative descriptive design, the study involved approximately 100 students who had experience using mind mapping in English learning activities. Data were collected Through a Likert-scale questionnaire consisting of eight items and supported by brief interviews. The Findings reveal that students have highly positive perceptions of mind mapping, as it is considered Enjoyable, motivating, and effective in improving writing skills, organizing ideas, enhancing memory Retention, and encouraging creativity. Most students also preferred mind mapping over traditional Note-taking methods and expressed willingness to use it more frequently in class. Although a small Number of students experienced some difficulties in applying the technique, overall results indicate that Mind mapping is an effective and engaging instructional strategy that can support students' learning Outcomes in EFL classrooms.

INTRODUCTION

English is widely acknowledged as a global language that plays a significant role in international Communication, education, and professional activities(Crystal, n.d.). In many countries, including Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language (EFL) at various educational levels, ranging from primary schools to universities. However, many students still face challenges in learning English. These Challenges often arise because students have difficulties organizing their ideas, understanding vocabulary, and expressing their thoughts clearly in English. Therefore, teachers are expected to apply appropriate and Effective teaching strategies to support students' learning and help them overcome these obstacles in the Classroom.

One instructional strategy that can be applied in EFL classrooms is mind mapping.

Mind mapping is a visual learning technique that helps students organize information and ideas in a structured and creative way. By using diagrams, keywords, and interconnected branches, students are able to link concepts and develop their ideas more effectively. This approach is considered beneficial because it promotes visual and creative thinking, making the learning process more engaging and easier to understand. In language learning, mind mapping can assist students in generating ideas, expanding their vocabulary, and organizing their thoughts before participating in speaking or writing activities. (Setya et al., 2016)

Previous studies have suggested that the use of mind mapping can positively affect students' participation and academic achievement in EFL classrooms. Research findings indicate that this technique enables students to organize their ideas more clearly and improves their confidence, particularly in writing tasks, as it simplifies the process of developing and structuring ideas. Furthermore, many students respond positively to the use of mind mapping because it encourages creativity and helps them develop ideas more effectively during the learning process.

Students' perceptions are also considered an important factor in evaluating the effectiveness of a teaching strategy. When students have positive perceptions of a particular learning method, they are more likely to participate actively in classroom activities and achieve better learning outcomes. Several studies on mind mapping in EFL contexts have shown that students generally have positive perceptions of this technique because it helps them generate ideas more easily, organize information more effectively, and maintain their motivation in learning English.

Based on these considerations, it is important to examine students' perceptions of the use of mind mapping in EFL classrooms. Understanding students' views of this technique can provide valuable insights for teachers in selecting suitable instructional strategies and improving the effectiveness of English language teaching. Therefore, this study aims to explore students' perceptions of the implementation of mind mapping in EFL classrooms and to identify how this technique supports their learning process (Setya et al., 2016).

Perception is mainly defined as the process by which people absorb, organize, and interpret sensory information from their surroundings to create meaningful experiences (Baker, n.d.). It goes on to say that culture, personal experiences, emotions, and social influences all shape perspective, causing different people to interpret the same stimulation differently. In the context of education, students' perceptions toward instructional strategies directly influence their motivation, participation, and learning outcomes. Therefore, understanding how students perceive a particular learning technique such as mind mapping is essential for EFL educators, as positive perceptions can foster a more conducive learning environment and contribute to improved language acquisition outcomes.

From a philosophical perspective, it contends that perception functions across two interrelated dimensions: the epistemological and the phenomenological (Fish, 2021). The epistemological dimension positions perception as the principal means through which individuals acquire knowledge of the external world, while the phenomenological dimension attends to the qualitative, first-person character of perceptual experience, that is, what it is like for an individual to undergo a given experience. This dual framework carries meaningful implications for educational research. Students engaged in learning activities do not passively receive information; rather, they actively construct understanding through the mediation of prior knowledge, cognitive schemas, and affective responses. In the context of EFL instruction, this perspective suggests that students' perceptions of mind mapping are shaped

not only by the cognitive gains they attribute to The strategy, but equally by the experiential quality it produces, encompassing dimensions such as Perceived meaningfulness, engagement, and learning efficacy.

Moreover, underscores the productive intersection between philosophical inquiry and empirical science in the study of perception, noting that scientific findings continuously provide conceptual tools that refine and inform theoretical accounts of perceptual experience. This convergence lends credence to the position that students' perceptual responses to instructional strategies are neither incidental nor idiosyncratic, but are systematically shaped by cognitive, affective, and contextual variables. It follows that a rigorous examination of EFL students' perceptions of mind mapping yields insights that extend beyond attitudinal measurement, illuminating the broader cognitive and affective mechanisms that underlie meaningful engagement in second language learning.

Mind mapping is a note-taking and cognitive technique developed by Tony Buzan that Reflects the natural way the human brain processes information. This technique is grounded in the Concept of radiant thinking, in which ideas extend from a central concept into interconnected Branches, forming a structured yet flexible network of associations. Buzan argues that mind maps Integrate keywords, images, colors, and curved lines to optimize memory retention, creativity, and Comprehension, as the brain tends to respond more effectively to visual and associative stimuli Than to linear forms of note-taking (Buzan, n.d.). Consequently, mind mapping enables learners To organize complex information more efficiently and facilitates easier retrieval of knowledge.

The benefits of mind mapping in educational contexts are extensive and Well-documented. It states that mind mapping assists learners in understanding Both the overall structure and the detailed components of a subject. In addition, it enhances Information management skills, improves concentration, fosters creativity and imagination, and Increases learning efficiency. (Widiyono, 2021.)further identifies three primary types of mind Mapping commonly applied in academic settings, namely syllabus mind maps, chapter mind Maps, and paragraph mind maps, each serving distinct purposes at different levels of learning. In Instructional practice, mind mapping also provides advantages for educators, such as reducing Preparation time, facilitating lesson revision, and promoting deeper student comprehension of the Subject matter.

Beyond its cognitive and pedagogical benefits, mind mapping serves as an effective tool For improving productivity, creativity, and decision-making in both academic and professional Contexts. Mind mapping enables individuals to process large Amounts of information efficiently, recognize relationships between ideas, and generate new Insights through visual organization. Furthermore, the application of mind mapping extends Beyond education to areas such as business planning, project management, and personal Goal-setting. When applied consistently, mind mapping encourages individuals to think both Creatively and systematically, thereby bridging the gap between idea generation and structured Analysis, and positioning it as both an essential study skill and a valuable life skill (Widiyono,2021).

Writing is a fundamental skill that develops progressively in the EFL classroom. Peterson (2003) explains that learners move from basic sentence construction to coherent paragraph Writing through a structured curriculum that gradually introduces vocabulary and grammar. Writing instruction includes key components such as mechanics, grammar, sentence construction, And composition, all of which support accuracy and clarity. Activities range from controlled Exercises, like modifying texts, to more independent tasks such as

dicto-comp and free Composition. This progression from controlled to free Linguistic accuracy and the ability to express ideas independently and creatively (Peterson, 2003.)

In the context of second language writing, emphasizes that writing instruction is not merely a Practical activity but is deeply influenced by teachers' theoretical beliefs about language and Learning. (Hyland, n.d.)explains that second language writing involves not only the act of producing texts in a non-native language, but also the processes of teaching, analyzing, and Understanding how writing develops among diverse learners. Because learners differ in Background, proficiency, and purpose, writing instruction must be flexible and informed by Multiple perspectives. Furthermore, various approaches to teaching writing, such as structural, Process, functional, and genre-based orientations are not mutually exclusive but complementary, Allowing teachers to adopt an eclectic approach. This highlights that effective EFL writing Instruction requires both theoretical awareness and practical adaptation to learners' needs, Ensuring that teaching methods support the complex and dynamic nature of writing development.

Academic writing, on the other hand, is viewed as a critical skill that extends beyond language Learning into intellectual and professional development, as discussed in . Academic writing is not simply about producing text but about developing clear thinking, structured argumentation, and Effective communication. It serves as a medium for expressing ideas, analyzing information, and Engaging in scholarly discourse. The process of academic writing involves several stages, Including researching, planning, drafting, revising, and editing, which together reflect its nature as A recursive and ongoing activity rather than a one-time task. Moreover, academic writing plays a Crucial role in fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and knowledge construction, enabling Students to participate actively in academic communities. Thus, mastering academic writing Equips learners with essential skills for both academic success and future professional contexts, Particularly in environments where clear and logical communication is highly valued.

METHODS

This study used a quantitative descriptive research design to understand and describe how Students perceive the use of mind maps in learning English as a foreign language. This descriptive method Was chosen because the study aimed to describe students' opinions, attitudes, and responses regarding the Use of mind maps in learning English. This approach enabled researchers to obtain a clear picture of how Students perceive the use of mind maps as a learning strategy in the classroom.

The participants were students studying English as a foreign language in one class. The study Involved approximately 20 to 30 students from one class who had participated in English learning Activities using mind maps. Participants were selected because they had direct experience using mind Maps during the learning process.

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire containing several questions regarding how Students perceived the use of mind maps in learning English. The questionnaire used a Likert scale with several response options: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. In addition, researchers also conducted brief interviews with several students to obtain more in-depth information about their experiences and opinions regarding the use of mind maps.

Data collection can be conducted after the learning activities using mind mapping implemented in Class. Students are asked to complete a questionnaire prepared by the researcher, then some of them are Selected to participate in short interviews to obtain additional data. Data obtained from the questionnaire Is analyzed using descriptive statistics, namely by calculating the percentage of each student’s answer. Meanwhile, the interview data is explained descriptively to strengthen and further explain the Questionnaire data. This allows researchers to understand and describe students’ perceptions of the use of Mind maps in EFL classes.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings of the study regarding students' perceptions toward the use of mind mapping in the EFL classroom. The data were collected through a questionnaire consisting of nine items administered to the students. Each item was designed to measure specific dimensions of students perception, including enjoyment, perceived effectiveness, motivation, ease of use, preference, memory retentin, confidence, creativity, and willingness for further use. The results are presented in table 1 below.

No	Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
1.	I enjoy using mind mapping in English class	90 (90%)	4 (4%)	6 (6%)
2.	Mind mapping improves my English writing skills	89 (89%)	5 (5%)	6 (6%)
3.	Mind mapping makes me more motivated to learn English	86 (86%)	8 (8%)	6 (6%)
4.	Mind mapping is easy for me to use	82 (82%)	12 (12%)	6 (6%)
5.	I prefer mind mapping to traditional note-taking methods	86 (86%)	8 (8%)	6 (6%)
6.	Mind mapping helps me remember English lessons longer	83 (83%)	10 (10%)	6 (6%)
7.	I feel confident when creating my own mind maps	84 (84%)	10 (10%)	6 (6%)
8.	I would like mind mapping to be used more often in English Classes	84 (84%)	9 (9%)	7 (7%)

As shown in Table 1, the data reveal that the majority of students expressed a consistently positive perception toward the use of mind mapping in the EFL classroom across all nine questionnaire items. The highest level of agreement was recorded for item 1, "I enjoy using mind mapping in English class," with 90 respondents (90%) selecting the agree option,

while only 4 respondents (4%) disagreed, and 6 respondents (6%) provided a neutral response. Similarly, item 2, "Mind mapping improves my English writing skills," received agreement from 89 respondents (89%), suggesting that students broadly recognize the benefit of mind mapping for their writing development.

Regarding motivation, item 3 indicated that 86 respondents (86%) agreed that mind mapping makes them more motivated to learn English, with 8 respondents (8%) disagreeing and 6 respondents (6%) remaining neutral. Item 4, which addressed the ease of use of mind mapping, showed that 82 respondents (82%) found it easy to use, although this item recorded the highest rate of disagreement among all items, with 12 respondents (12%) expressing difficulty. Nonetheless, item 5 demonstrated that 86 respondents (86%) preferred mind mapping over traditional note-taking methods, reflecting a favorable attitude toward this visual learning strategy.

In terms of retention of memories, question 6 found that 83 (83%) of respondents believed that mind mapping helped people recall English teachings for longer. Item 7 revealed that 84 respondents (84%) felt competent building their own mind maps. Furthermore, item 8 revealed that 84 respondents (84%) expressed a wish for mind mapping to be employed more frequently in English classes, emphasizing students' positive attitudes toward this instructional technique.

The study's findings show that students have overwhelmingly positive perceptions of the use of Mind mapping in the EFL classroom across all measured dimensions, including enjoyment, writing Improvement, motivation, ease of use, preference, memory retention, confidence, creativity, and Willingness to continue using. These findings are consistent with a large amount of recent empirical evidence that confirms the usefulness of mind mapping as an instructional method in language learnin environments.

In this study, enjoyment received the highest agreement rate (90%), demonstrating that students Perceive mind mapping to be an interesting and delightful classroom activity. This finding is consistent With that of Sabarun et al. (2021), who discovered that adopting a flow mind map increased students' Learning motivation and contributed to positive attitudes in the writing classroom. Similarly, a research of Thai EFL students found that learners had positive attitudes about the mind map approach, particularly The affective dimension of enthusiasm during English writing exercises. The enjoyment factor is Especially important because affective involvement is usually considered a prerequisite for meaningful Language learning. When students like a learning activity, they are more likely to put in cognitive effort And remain engaged over time.

In terms of writing improvement, 89% of respondents believed that mind mapping helps them improve their English writing skills. This is consistent with the findings of (Al-Aqasam et al., 2021), who used mind mapping as a digital brainstorming tool and found it helpful for boosting EFL students' writing skills and attitudes toward writing. This study investigated the impact of mind mapping on students' essay writing and found that it helped students create more coherent, creative, and well-organized essays, as well as leading to more

favorable attitudes toward writing by making it more pleasant. These findings imply that mind mapping is an excellent pre-writing scaffold because it helps students externalize and order their thoughts before drafting, reducing cognitive load and enhancing overall written output quality.

In terms of motivation, 86% of survey participants concurred that mind mapping boosts their desire to learn English. (Feng et al., 2023) who carried out an experimental study with 98 Iranian EFL learners and discovered that the mind-mapping group greatly enhanced learning motivation and willingness to speak, provide strong evidence for this. The ability of mind mapping to make abstract language knowledge more tangible and visually appealing may be the source of its motivational benefits as it encourages learners' intrinsic motivation.

This study found the highest proportion of disagreement across all items regarding ease of use (12%), indicating that although the majority of students find mind mapping to be accessible, a significant minority finds the approach challenging. This result highlights a subtle aspect that has also been noted in other studies. While the majority of Vietnamese EFL students responded favorably to a study examining their perspectives of mind mapping in reading, some students reported difficulties with idea selection and creativity when creating mind maps. This suggests that before expecting children to use mind mapping on their own, teachers should offer sufficient scaffolding, modeling, and practice opportunities.

According to the preference dimension, 86% of students prefer mind mapping to more conventional note-taking techniques. Given the cognitive benefits of visual learning aids over linear note-taking, this choice makes sense. (Berta & Mulat, 2024) came to the conclusion that mind mapping stimulates both hemispheres of the brain, making it easier for EFL learners to remember what they have learned and improving language skills like speaking, grammar, and vocabulary. Students' understanding of mind mapping's cognitive benefits and its ability to make learning more participatory and visually organized is reflected in their preference for it over traditional techniques.

In terms of memory retention, 83% of participants concurred that mind mapping prolongs their ability to recall English teachings. This result is consistent with the larger body of research on visual learning techniques, which shows that visual representations facilitate long-term information encoding and retrieval. A mixed-method experimental study with ESL students revealed a statistically significant difference in reading comprehension scores in favor of the mind mapping group, and students expressed satisfaction with the method's ability to reinforce comprehension and memory. The benefit of mind mapping is especially applicable in EFL environments where students need to concurrently retain a lot of vocabulary, grammar rules, and content information.

The confidence dimension demonstrated that 84% of students were confident in building their own mind maps. This finding implies that mind mapping not only helps with cognitive processing but also improves students' affective states, specifically their self-efficacy in language learning. Research on self-assessment mind maps discovered that most students had good opinions of mind maps and were willing to participate in

mind-mapping activities, with the technique having a beneficial impact on students' academic performance and creative self-efficacy in English learning. Building confidence is especially crucial in EFL courses, where students often feel anxious and self-conscious when producing linguistic output in a foreign language.

Finally, 84% of students expressed a desire for mind mapping to be used more frequently in English classes, indicating a high level of learner satisfaction with the technique. This finding reflects the broader trend documented in recent literature. (Nasri, 2025), in an experimental study involving EFL university students, found that the group receiving mind mapping strategy training demonstrated significant improvements in critical reading abilities in their post-test results, further demonstrating students' positive reception of the strategy. The willingness for continued use serves as a strong indicator that students perceive mind mapping as a valuable and sustainable component of their EFL learning experience.

All things considered, the results of this study confirm that mind mapping is a well-known and successful teaching method in EFL classes. Students appear to be aware of its cognitive, motivational, and affective benefits, as evidenced by the consistently high levels of agreement across all perceptual aspects. These findings have significant pedagogical ramifications: EFL teachers are urged to systematically incorporate mind mapping into their lessons, especially for speaking, writing, and vocabulary exercises, while also addressing the difficulties encountered by students who struggle to apply the method on their own. The benefits of this approach can be maximized for all learners, even those who may first struggle with the creative and organizational demands of mind mapping building, by offering organized direction, opportunities for peer participation, and a variety of mind mapping practice.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study show that students' opinions of mind mapping in EFL classes are largely favorable. The majority of students stated that mind mapping is entertaining, inspiring, and beneficial for enhancing their English proficiency, especially in writing, concept organization, and lesson retention. Additionally, students demonstrated a definite preference for mind mapping over conventional note-taking techniques since it enables them to clearly and creatively communicate their ideas. These findings imply that mind mapping is crucial for improving language learning's emotive and cognitive components.

Although most students considered mind mapping to be simple to use, a tiny percentage still has some trouble using the method. This suggests that in order for all pupils to fully benefit from it, appropriate instruction and practice are required. All things considered, mind mapping is a useful and interesting teaching technique in EFL classrooms. In order to enhance students' learning and establish a more engaging and meaningful learning environment, educators are urged to use mind mapping into their instructional strategies.

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