PROCEEDINGS
International Conference on Education
Faculty of Tarbiyah | UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri
E-ISSN: 3025-6828

Volume 3, 2025

The Effectiveness of the Mind Mapping Model Through Canva Application for Students' Recount Text at SMKN 1 Kediri

Grace Ajar Legowo[1], Rika Riwayatningsih[2], Sulistyani[3]
[1,2,3] English Language Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Nusantara PGRI Kediri, Indonesia
Correspondence e-mail: legowograceajar@gmail.com

Abstract:
This study explores the effectiveness of integrating the Mind Mapping model through the Canva application in improving students' recount text writing skills at SMKN 1 Kediri. Writing recount texts plays a vital role in language learning, as it enables students to narrate personal experiences in a structured and chronological way. However, many vocational students struggle with limited vocabulary, poor text organization, and low confidence in writing. To address these issues, this research employed a quasi-experimental design using pre-test and post-test methods in two eleventh-grade classes. One class was taught recount writing using manual mind mapping, while the other applied Canva-based digital mind mapping. Students' works were assessed using the COVLM rubric (Content, Organization, Vocabulary, Language, and Mechanics), and the data were analyzed through t-tests and N-Gain. The findings indicate that although both groups improved, the Canva-based group showed significantly higher gains in organization, engagement, and writing quality. Students also demonstrated greater enthusiasm and confidence when using digital tools. The study concludes that Canva-based mind mapping is more effective than manual techniques in enhancing recount writing skills and can serve as an innovative strategy for EFL classrooms.

Keywords: *Mind Mapping; Canva; Recount Text; Writing Skills*

Article History:
Received : 31 July 2025
Revised : 25 August 2025
Accepted : 25 September 2025

Introduction

Writing is one of the most challenging skills in the English language learning. Among various text types, recount writing requires students to retell personal or factual experiences in chronological order, which often becomes difficult due to limited vocabulary, difficulties in organizing ideas, and a lack of confidence. Previous studies have shown that mind mapping is a powerful technique to visually organize ideas, generate new insights, and improve writing fluency. However, traditional (manual) mind mapping sometimes fails to sustain students' engagement. The integration of digital platforms such as Canva offers an alternative solution. Canva provides visual, interactive, and user-friendly features that help students design mind maps more creatively. Based on constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes active engagement and knowledge construction, digital mind mapping has the potential to enhance the effectiveness of writing instruction. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of applying mind mapping through Canva to improve recount text writing skills of vocational students at SMKN 1 Kediri.

Methods

This research employed a quasi-experimental design with a pre-test and post-test involving two intact classes, namely Class XI KI 1 as the control group using manual mind mapping and Class XI KI 2 as the experimental group using Canva-based mind mapping. The study was conducted in the Industrial Chemistry Program at SMKN 1 Kediri in the academic year 2024/2025. The participants were purposively selected based on the school's schedule and teacher assignment, and all students gave consent to participate in the study. The data source consisted of students' written products collected through a writing test, in which they were instructed to compose a recount text of 150–200 words. The type of data in this study was quantitative data obtained from students' writing performance scores. To assess the students' achievement, the COVLM analytic rubric was used, which covers five dimensions: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. The rubric descriptors guided raters in evaluating relevance and development of ideas, logical sequencing and cohesion, appropriacy and precision of word choice, grammatical accuracy and sentence variety, as well as mechanics including spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and formatting. The procedures of the study included a pre-test, treatment, post-test, and scoring process. In the pre-test, both groups wrote a recount text individually. During the treatment phase, the control group constructed paper-based mind maps while the experimental group created digital mind maps using Canva. In the post-test, students wrote another recount text with the same genre but different topics. Scoring was carried out by two independent raters using the COVLM rubric, and any discrepancies were resolved through discussion to reach consensus. Finally, the data analysis was performed using statistical tests. The normality and homogeneity of the data were first examined, followed by paired t-tests to measure within-group differences, independent t-tests to determine between-group differences, and N-Gain analysis to assess the effectiveness of the treatment. This methodological framework was designed to provide valid and reliable evidence on the effectiveness of the Canva-based mind mapping technique in improving students' recount text writing skills.

Results and Discussion

Findings

The results of the statistical analysis indicated that both the control and experimental groups improved from pre-test to post-test. The control group (manual mind mapping) increased from a mean score of 70.7 to 79.5, with an N-Gain of 0.30, while the experimental group (Canva-based mind mapping) improved from 80.9 to 87.9, with an N-Gain of 0.37. According to Hake (1998), both results are categorized as medium effectiveness, though the Canva group achieved a relatively higher gain. These findings suggest that the use of digital tools in planning writing has a stronger positive impact compared to conventional methods.

The improvement in both groups demonstrates that mind mapping itself—whether manual or digital—supports students' ability to organize ideas in recount writing. This result is consistent with Al-Jarf (2009), who reported that mind mapping enhances writing fluency by helping learners generate and structure ideas. However, the higher effectiveness in the Canva group indicates that digital affordances add value. Mayer's (2009) multimedia learning theory explains that learning is more effective when verbal and visual modes are integrated. Canva provides templates, images, and icons that engage dual coding processes, enabling students to better connect and elaborate their ideas.

From a sociocultural perspective, Vygotsky's (1978) concept of mediation is also relevant. Digital tools like Canva act as cultural artifacts that scaffold learners' thinking processes. By reducing the cognitive load required in manual drawing, students could devote more attention to content, grammar, and organization. This aligns with the analytic scoring results, where the Canva group showed stronger improvements in organization and vocabulary (Brown, 2004; Weigle, 2002).

These findings are also consistent with recent studies. Buran and Filyukov (2015) found that digital mind mapping increases learner engagement and motivation. Similarly, Al-Jarf (2009) emphasized the role of visual mapping in improving coherence in writing. The present study supports those findings, while adding evidence that Canva, as a widely accessible application, is particularly effective for vocational school students who are familiar with digital platforms.

Nevertheless, the medium level of effectiveness indicates that Canva alone is not sufficient to achieve maximum results. The researcher observed that some students still faced challenges in developing grammar and mechanics, despite improvements in content and organization. This suggests that digital mind mapping should be complemented with explicit instruction and practice in linguistic accuracy. Such a combination may lead to higher gains in future applications.

Overall, the discussion confirms that Canva-based mind mapping provides both cognitive and affective benefits. Cognitively, it facilitates idea generation and organization; affectively, it enhances motivation and engagement. These findings support Mayer's (2009) multimedia learning theory and Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural approach, while also extending prior studies on mind mapping (Al-Jarf, 2009; Buran & Filyukov, 2015). Thus, integrating digital tools into writing pedagogy is recommended, particularly in contexts where students are already digitally literate.

Figure 1.

Analysis

The statistical analysis in this study was carried out using paired-sample t-tests, independent-sample t-tests, and N-Gain scores to measure the effectiveness of the treatments. First, the paired-sample t-test showed a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores within both the control and experimental groups, indicating that mind mapping—either manual or digital—was effective in improving students' recount writing skills. This is in line with Creswell (2012), who noted that experimental and quasi-experimental designs are intended to determine the impact of a treatment by comparing pre-test and post-test results.

Second, the independent-sample t-test demonstrated a statistically significant difference between the post-test scores of the experimental and control groups. The experimental group, which used Canva-based mind mapping, outperformed the control group with higher gains in content and organization. According to Sugiyono (2019), this type of comparative analysis is crucial in educational research for determining whether a new instructional strategy provides better outcomes compared to traditional approaches.

Third, the calculation of N-Gain showed that both groups reached a medium level of effectiveness (0.30 for the control group and 0.37 for the experimental group), as categorized by Hake (1998). Although both methods were moderately effective, the Canva-based mind mapping approach showed higher improvement, confirming its potential as a pedagogical tool. This aligns with Mayer's (2009) multimedia learning theory, which emphasizes that integrating text with visual elements enhances learners' comprehension and retention.

From a theoretical perspective, the results also support Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which highlights the role of tools and mediation in cognitive development. Canva acted as a digital scaffold that mediated students' thinking processes, helping them plan and structure their recount texts more effectively. Compared to traditional mind mapping, digital mapping minimized the manual burden of drawing, which reduced cognitive load and allowed students to focus on higher-order aspects such as organization and language use.

The findings resonate with prior research. Al-Jarf (2009) reported that mind mapping improves coherence and fluency in writing, while Buran and Filyukov (2015) found that digital mind maps enhance student engagement and motivation. The current study extends these findings by providing empirical evidence that Canva, as a popular digital platform, contributes to measurable improvements in recount writing.

From the researcher's perspective, the medium effectiveness achieved suggests that while Canva is beneficial, it should not be considered a standalone solution. Some students continued to face challenges in grammar and mechanics despite using digital mind maps. This indicates that Canva-based planning must be complemented with explicit instruction in linguistic accuracy. Additionally, providing opportunities for peer review and feedback may further increase the effectiveness of this approach.

In conclusion, the analysis demonstrates that Canva-based mind mapping is more effective than manual mapping in enhancing students' recount text skills, particularly in the dimensions of content and organization. This effectiveness is supported by statistical evidence, theoretical perspectives, and previous studies. However, the researcher also notes that future studies should integrate digital mind mapping with additional instructional strategies to maximize learning outcomes.

Conclusion

This study concludes that integrating mind mapping through the Canva application is effective in improving students' recount text writing skills. Compared to manual mind mapping, Canva-based mind mapping offers greater visual support, fosters creativity, and enhances students' engagement. It is recommended that English teachers incorporate digital tools such as Canva into writing instruction to create more interactive and meaningful learning experiences.

References

Al-Jarf, R. (2009). Enhancing freshman students' writing skills with a mind mapping software. Asia EFL Journal, 11(3), 4–26.

Buran, A., & Filyukov, A. (2015). Mind mapping technique in language learning. Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 206, 215–218. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.10.010

Brown, H. D. (2004). Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Hake, R. R. (1998). Interactive-engagement versus traditional methods: A six-thousand-student survey of mechanics test data for introductory physics courses. American Journal of Physics, 66(1), 64–74.

Mayer, R. E. (2009). Multimedia learning (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Sugiyono. (2019). Metode penelitian kuantitatif, kualitatif, dan R&D. Bandung: Alfabeta.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Weigle, S. C. (2002). Assessing writing. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.