



MIND MAPPING AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY FOR ENHANCING EFL STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION IN VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

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Abstract

This study examines the effectiveness of Mind Mapping in improving English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' reading comprehension of narrative texts in a vocational school. The study employed a quasi-experimental design involving 56 second-grade students selected through cluster random sampling. The participants were divided into an experimental group taught through Mind Mapping and a control group taught through conventional instruction. The primary data were obtained through pre-test and post-test scores, while supporting data were gathered through classroom observation, brief learning-reflection interviews, and documentation of students' mind maps. The results showed that the experimental group improved from 60.95 to 72.38, while the control group improved from 61.42 to 66.19. The t-test value was 3.96, which was higher than the t-table value of 1.67 at the 0.05 significance level. The qualitative evidence also showed stronger student engagement, clearer identification of narrative structure, and better organization of ideas. These findings indicate that Mind Mapping is an effective visual learning strategy for strengthening EFL reading comprehension in vocational education contexts

Keywords: Mind Mapping; EFL; Reading Comprehension; Narrative Text; Vocational School

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INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is widely recognized as a central competence in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning because it enables learners to gain information, interpret meaning, and participate in academic literacy practices. Recent reading research explains that comprehension is not a passive decoding activity, but a strategic process in which readers integrate linguistic knowledge, prior knowledge, and textual cues to construct meaning (Duke et al., 2021; Grabe & Stoller, 2020). In school contexts, students who comprehend texts well are more likely to perform better across subjects because reading supports vocabulary growth, critical thinking, and independent learning. The Program for International Student Assessment has also continued to emphasize reading literacy as a key indicator of students' capacity to use written information for real-life purposes (OECD, 2023; Shanahan, 2020). Therefore, improving reading comprehension remains a major concern in EFL teaching, particularly in contexts where English exposure outside the classroom is limited.

In vocational education, reading comprehension has a practical function because students are expected to understand instructions, workplace-related texts, manuals, narratives, and other English materials connected to future employment needs. Studies in vocational EFL contexts indicate that students often require contextual and engaging strategies because conventional reading instruction may not sufficiently connect texts with learners' interests and learning styles (Enni et al., 2024; Surahmat, 2025). Narrative text is one of the genres commonly taught in Indonesian secondary education, and it requires students to identify orientation, complication, resolution, characters, events, and implicit moral values. However, many EFL students still experience difficulty in identifying main ideas, connecting events, and organizing story elements when reading narrative texts (Alkhazaleh & Abu Sal, 2024; Ayiz et al., 2024). This condition suggests that EFL reading instruction needs strategies that make text structure visible, organized, and easier to process.

Mind Mapping is one visual learning strategy that has gained attention because it helps learners organize ideas through branches, keywords, symbols, and connections. Recent studies show that mind maps and graphic organizers can support reading comprehension by helping students detect relationships among ideas, classify supporting details, and remember information more effectively (Hazaymeh & Alomery, 2022; Qi et al., 2021). In reading

lessons, Mind Mapping may help students transform linear texts into visual representations, which can reduce cognitive overload and support deeper comprehension. Experimental studies have found that students taught with mind maps or graphic organizers often outperform students taught through conventional approaches in reading comprehension tasks (Alkhazaleh & Abu Sal, 2024; Ayiz et al., 2024). Thus, Mind Mapping is theoretically and pedagogically relevant to EFL reading because it combines visual organization, cognitive engagement, and active meaning construction.

Although the effectiveness of Mind Mapping has been reported in several EFL and ESL contexts, the specific application of this strategy in vocational schools in West Nusa Tenggara remains underexplored. Previous studies have often focused on general secondary schools, universities, or non-Indonesian contexts, so their findings may not fully represent the learning realities of vocational students in regional Indonesian settings (Enni et al., 2024; Hazaymeh & Alomery, 2022). Moreover, many studies emphasize test-score improvement without sufficiently explaining how classroom engagement, students' learning reflections, and documentation of learning products support the quantitative results. This leaves a gap in understanding how Mind Mapping works not only as a score-improving technique but also as a classroom strategy that supports students' organization of narrative text elements. Therefore, this study fills the gap by examining Mind Mapping in a vocational school in West Nusa Tenggara using test results supported by observation, interview reflections, and documentation.

To address this gap, the present study investigates the effect of Mind Mapping on EFL students' reading comprehension of narrative texts at vocational schools. The rationale for using Mind Mapping is that narrative comprehension requires students to organize characters, events, conflicts, and resolutions, and these elements can be made clearer through visual mapping (Alkhazaleh & Abu Sal, 2024; Buzan, 2018). A quasi-experimental design was used because intact classroom groups are common in educational research and random assignment of individual students is often impractical in school settings (Capili, 2024; Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The objective of this study is to determine whether students taught through Mind Mapping achieve significantly better reading comprehension than students taught through conventional instruction. The study is expected to provide empirical, contextual, and pedagogical contributions to EFL reading instruction in vocational education, especially in regional Indonesian contexts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading Comprehension in EFL Learning

Reading comprehension is a fundamental component of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning because it enables learners to construct meaning from written texts and use information for academic and practical purposes. Contemporary reading theories view comprehension as an active and strategic process rather than a simple act of decoding words. According to Duke et al. (2021), successful comprehension occurs when readers integrate linguistic knowledge, background knowledge, inferencing skills, and strategic thinking to construct coherent meaning from a text. Similarly, Grabe and Stoller (2020) explain that reading involves complex interactions among cognitive, linguistic, and metacognitive processes that allow readers to interpret information and connect textual ideas.

The importance of reading comprehension has been emphasized globally through educational assessments and literacy frameworks. The OECD (2023) defines reading literacy as the ability to understand, evaluate, and use written information to achieve personal goals and participate effectively in society. Likewise, Shanahan (2020) argues that reading instruction should focus not only on word recognition but also on higher-order thinking skills that enable learners to analyze, interpret, and evaluate texts. These perspectives highlight that reading comprehension is essential for academic achievement and lifelong learning.

In EFL settings, reading plays an even more significant role because it serves as a major source of language input. Through reading activities, learners are exposed to vocabulary, grammatical structures, discourse patterns, and cultural information that may not be readily available through oral communication. Nation (2021) states that extensive exposure to written texts contributes significantly to vocabulary development, which in turn supports reading comprehension. Students with broader vocabulary knowledge tend to comprehend texts more effectively because they can process textual information with fewer interruptions.

Despite its importance, many EFL learners experience difficulties in reading comprehension. Common challenges include limited vocabulary, insufficient background knowledge, weak inferencing skills, and inability to identify relationships among ideas within a text (Grabe & Stoller, 2020). These difficulties are often more pronounced in

contexts where English exposure is limited outside the classroom. Consequently, learners may struggle to identify main ideas, supporting details, textual organization, and implicit meanings.

Reading instruction therefore requires pedagogical approaches that facilitate learners' engagement with texts and support the construction of meaning. Duke et al. (2021) emphasized the importance of explicit instruction in comprehension strategies, including summarizing, predicting, questioning, and organizing information. Such strategies help learners process textual information more effectively and develop independent reading skills.

Assessment also plays a crucial role in measuring students' reading comprehension. Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) explain that reading assessments should evaluate learners' ability to understand explicit information, infer meanings, identify main ideas, and interpret textual relationships. Hughes (2020) similarly notes that valid reading tests should measure various levels of comprehension rather than merely testing vocabulary recognition. In educational research, reading comprehension tests are frequently employed to determine the effectiveness of instructional interventions because they provide measurable evidence of learning outcomes.

Overall, reading comprehension is a multidimensional skill that involves linguistic knowledge, cognitive processing, and strategic behavior. Effective instruction must therefore provide learners with opportunities to actively engage with texts, organize information, and develop comprehension strategies. These considerations are particularly important in vocational education settings, where students must comprehend texts related to both academic learning and future workplace demands.

Narrative Text Comprehension in Vocational EFL Contexts

Narrative text is one of the major genres taught in Indonesian secondary schools and serves an important role in developing students' reading comprehension skills. Narrative texts present stories that typically contain a sequence of events involving characters, settings, conflicts, and resolutions. According to Yuliani (2020), narrative texts provide opportunities for learners to develop comprehension skills because they require readers to understand story structures, identify relationships among events, and interpret underlying messages. Successful comprehension of narrative texts therefore involves both literal understanding and higher-order interpretation.

The structure of narrative texts generally consists of orientation, complication, resolution, and sometimes reorientation. Readers are expected to recognize these organizational components to understand how a story develops from beginning to end. However, many EFL learners encounter difficulties in identifying these elements and understanding the connections among them. Alkhazaleh and Abu Sal (2024) found that students often struggle to determine key events, recognize cause-and-effect relationships, and organize story information coherently. Similar findings were reported by Ayiz et al. (2024), who observed that learners frequently experience challenges in connecting textual details to the overall meaning of a narrative.

In vocational school contexts, reading comprehension carries additional significance because students are expected to acquire practical literacy skills that support future employment and professional development. Vocational learners need to understand various forms of written communication, including manuals, instructions, workplace documents, and informational texts. Nevertheless, narrative texts remain important because they help students develop fundamental comprehension abilities that can later be transferred to other genres. Enni et al. (2024) argue that reading activities based on meaningful and culturally relevant narratives can improve students' engagement and motivation, particularly in vocational education settings where learners often prefer contextualized learning experiences.

The need for contextualized reading instruction has been further emphasized in recent studies. Surahmat (2025) reports that authentic and relevant materials significantly contribute to students' reading comprehension because they help learners connect textual information with real-life experiences. In vocational schools, where students often focus on practical and career-oriented learning, reading activities that encourage active participation and meaningful interpretation are particularly beneficial.

One challenge frequently identified in vocational EFL classrooms is students' limited ability to organize textual information. Learners may understand isolated details but fail to connect them into a coherent representation of the story. This difficulty can reduce comprehension performance, especially when students are required to answer inferential or analytical questions. According to Grabe and Stoller (2020), successful readers construct mental representations of text by organizing information into meaningful structures. When

learners lack strategies for organizing textual information, comprehension becomes fragmented and less effective.

To address these challenges, reading instruction should incorporate techniques that make textual structures more visible and accessible. Duke et al. (2021) suggest that instructional supports such as graphic organizers can help students identify relationships among ideas and improve comprehension outcomes. Such approaches are particularly relevant for narrative texts because they enable learners to visually represent story elements and understand how events are connected.

Therefore, improving narrative text comprehension in vocational EFL contexts requires instructional strategies that support organization, engagement, and meaning construction. By helping learners identify characters, settings, conflicts, and resolutions more systematically, teachers can facilitate deeper comprehension and more effective reading experiences.

Mind Mapping as a Strategy for Enhancing Reading Comprehension

Mind Mapping is a visual learning strategy that enables learners to organize information through diagrams consisting of central ideas, branches, keywords, symbols, and interconnected concepts. Originally popularized by Buzan (2018), Mind Mapping is based on the principle that visual organization mirrors the associative nature of human thinking. By representing information in a structured and interconnected format, mind maps help learners process, store, and retrieve knowledge more efficiently.

From a cognitive perspective, Mind Mapping supports meaningful learning by reducing the complexity of textual information. Instead of processing information in a linear sequence, learners can identify key concepts and visualize relationships among them. Buzan (2018) argues that this visual structure promotes active engagement because students are required to analyze information, select important ideas, and organize them into meaningful categories. Consequently, Mind Mapping encourages deeper processing of information compared to passive reading activities.

Theoretical support for Mind Mapping can be found in contemporary reading comprehension research. Duke et al. (2021) emphasize that effective comprehension involves constructing coherent representations of text. Graphic and visual organizers facilitate this process by helping readers identify relationships among ideas and integrate textual information into organized knowledge structures. Similarly, Grabe and Stoller (2020)

note that comprehension improves when learners use strategies that support the organization and monitoring of information during reading.

Numerous empirical studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of Mind Mapping and related graphic organizers in improving reading comprehension. Hazaymeh and Alomery (2022) found that visual mind mapping significantly enhanced English language learners' reading ability and critical thinking skills. Students who used mind maps were better able to identify key information, recognize relationships among concepts, and retain textual content. These findings suggest that visual organization can strengthen both comprehension and cognitive engagement.

Similarly, Qi et al. (2021) reported that graphic organizers positively influenced EFL learners' reading comprehension by helping them structure information and connect textual ideas. The study concluded that visual representations promote meaningful learning because learners actively organize and interpret information rather than simply receiving it. Ayiz et al. (2024) also found that graphic organizers contributed to more effective reading experiences by enabling learners to identify main ideas and supporting details more efficiently.

Specific evidence regarding Mind Mapping and narrative texts has also been reported. Alkhazaleh and Abu Sal (2024) demonstrated that students taught through Mind Mapping achieved significantly higher reading comprehension scores than those taught through traditional methods. The researchers attributed this improvement to the visual representation of story elements, which helped students organize characters, events, and plot developments more effectively. Such findings are particularly relevant to narrative text instruction because story comprehension depends heavily on understanding relationships among events and characters.

In educational research, the effectiveness of instructional strategies such as Mind Mapping is often examined through quasi-experimental designs. According to Creswell and Creswell (2023), quasi-experimental studies are appropriate when researchers seek to determine causal relationships in natural educational settings where random assignment is not feasible. Capili (2024) similarly explains that quasi-experimental approaches allow researchers to compare treatment and control groups while maintaining classroom authenticity. Cohen et al. (2018) and Sugiyono (2021) further note that educational

interventions can be evaluated through pre-test and post-test comparisons supported by complementary qualitative evidence.

Taken together, the theoretical and empirical literature suggests that Mind Mapping is a promising strategy for improving reading comprehension. By visually organizing textual information, enhancing cognitive engagement, and supporting meaningful learning, Mind Mapping provides a practical instructional approach for helping EFL learners comprehend narrative texts more effectively. This theoretical foundation supports the investigation of Mind Mapping as an intervention for vocational school students' reading comprehension in the present study.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a quasi-experimental design with a pre-test and post-test control group model. A quasi-experimental design is appropriate for classroom research because it allows researchers to examine the effect of a treatment when random assignment of individual participants is not fully possible (Capili, 2024; Creswell & Creswell, 2023). In this study, Mind Mapping served as the instructional treatment, while students' reading comprehension of narrative texts served as the dependent variable. The experimental group was taught using Mind Mapping, whereas the control group was taught using conventional reading instruction. The design enabled the researcher to compare students' learning gains before and after the treatment and to determine whether the difference between groups was statistically significant.

Population and Samples

The population of this study consisted of all second-grade students of vocational school year. The total population was 175 students distributed across seven classes. The sample was selected through cluster random sampling because the students were naturally organized into intact classes, and this technique is commonly used when classroom grouping must be maintained for practical and administrative reasons (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Sugiyono, 2021). Two classes were selected as the sample, consisting of 56 students in total. One class consisting of 28 students was assigned as the experimental group, while another class consisting of 28 students was assigned as the control group.

Table 1. Population sample distribution

Group	Class	Number of Students
Experimental Group	XI TKJ A	28
Control Group	XI TKJ B	28
Total	-	56

Instruments

The main instrument of this study was a reading comprehension test consisting of 30 multiple-choice items. The test measured students' comprehension of narrative texts, including main idea identification, detailed information, vocabulary in context, sequence of events, and narrative structure. Multiple-choice reading tests are commonly used in language assessment because they allow consistent scoring and can represent several comprehension indicators when the items are carefully developed (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019; Hughes, 2020). In addition to the test, classroom observation notes were used to record students' engagement, participation, and learning behavior during the treatment. Brief learning-reflection interviews and documentation of students' mind maps were also used as supporting evidence to explain the quantitative findings more comprehensively.

Table 2. Research instruments and data sources

Instrument	Purpose	Data Produced
Reading comprehension test	To measure pre-treatment and post-treatment comprehension	Pre-test and post-test scores
Observation notes	To record student engagement and classroom behavior	Engagement and participation patterns
Brief interview/reflection notes	To capture student and teacher perceptions of the learning process	Perceived usefulness and difficulties
Documentation	To collect students' mind maps and learning products	Evidence of idea organization and narrative structure

Procedures

The research procedure consisted of four main stages. First, both the experimental and control groups were given a pre-test to identify their initial reading comprehension ability. Second, the experimental group received reading instruction through Mind Mapping, while the control group received conventional instruction. In the experimental group, students were guided to identify the title, characters, orientation, complication, resolution,

keywords, and supporting details of narrative texts and then represent them visually in mind maps. Third, both groups were given a post-test after the treatment to measure improvement. Finally, the quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and t-test, while observation, interview/reflection, and documentation data were summarized thematically to support the interpretation of the test results.

Table 3. Research procedure

Stage	Activity	Output
1	Pre-test for experimental and control groups	Initial reading comprehension scores
2	Treatment using Mind Mapping for experimental group and conventional teaching for control group	Classroom learning process data
3	Post-test for both groups	Final reading comprehension scores
4	Data analysis using t-test and qualitative summary	Statistical and supporting findings

RESULTS

This section presents the results obtained from the reading comprehension tests, classroom observation, brief interview/reflection notes, and documentation of students' learning products. The primary quantitative results were obtained from the pre-test and post-test scores, while the qualitative supporting data were used to explain classroom changes during the implementation of Mind Mapping. The presentation of test results is important because it shows whether students' reading comprehension improved after the treatment. Observation results are included to describe how students participated during the learning process. Interview/reflection and documentation results are included to show how students understood and represented narrative text elements through Mind Mapping.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of pre-test and post-test scores

Group	Test	Total Score	Mean Score	Highest Score	Lowest Score
Experimental	Pre-test	1706.60	60.95	76.66	46.66
Experimental	Post-test	2026.57	72.38	90.00	60.00
Control	Pre-test	1719.91	61.42	76.66	33.33

Control	Post-test	1853.26	66.19	87.50	46.66
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Table 4 shows that the experimental group improved from a pre-test mean score of 60.95 to a post-test mean score of 72.38. The control group also improved from 61.42 to 66.19, but the increase was smaller than that of the experimental group. The experimental group gained 11.43 points, while the control group gained 4.77 points. This result indicates that students taught through Mind Mapping achieved stronger improvement in reading comprehension. The increase suggests that visual organization helped students identify and remember the structure and content of narrative texts more effectively than conventional instruction.

Table 5. Deviation scores of experimental and control groups

Group	Σ Deviation	Mean Deviation	Square Deviation
Experimental	319.97	11.42	875.94
Control	133.35	4.77	1298.31

Table 5 confirms that the experimental group had a higher mean deviation than the control group. The mean deviation of the experimental group was 11.42, while the mean deviation of the control group was 4.77. This difference indicates that the learning gain in the experimental group was greater after the Mind Mapping treatment. The deviation results support the descriptive findings shown in Table 4. Therefore, further inferential analysis was conducted using a t-test.

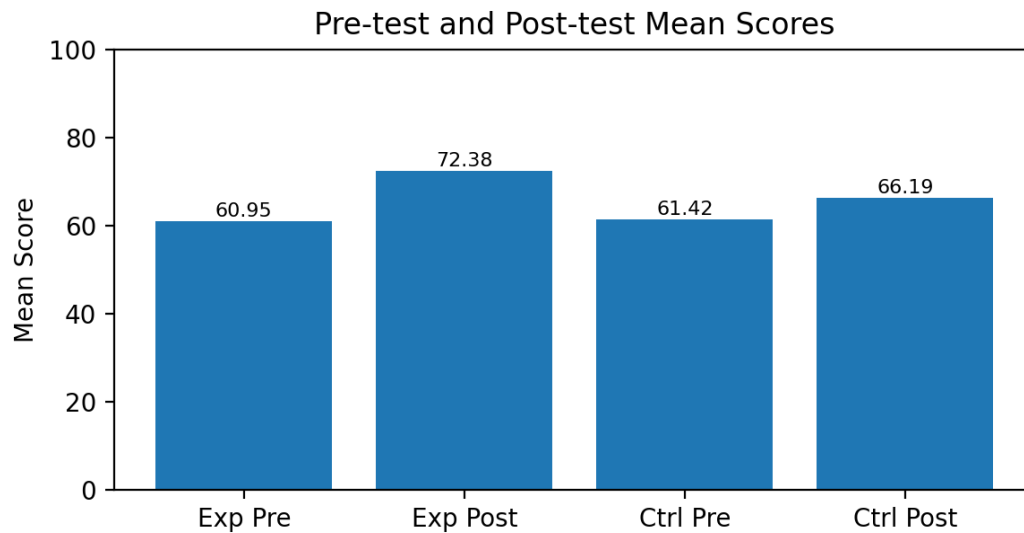
Table 6. T-test result

Variable	Value
t-test	3.96
t-table at 0.05	1.67
Degree of freedom (df)	54
Decision	Ha accepted; Ho rejected

Table 6 shows that the t-test value was 3.96, while the t-table value at the 0.05 significance level was 1.67 with 54 degrees of freedom. Since the t-test value was higher than the t-table value, the difference between the experimental and control groups was statistically significant. This means that the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. In other words, Mind Mapping had a significant effect on students'

reading comprehension of narrative texts. The statistical result provides strong evidence that the treatment contributed to students' learning improvement.

Figure 1. Comparison of pre-test and post-test mean scores



Interview/Reflection Results

Brief learning-reflection interviews were used as supporting data to understand students' and teacher's responses to the Mind Mapping technique. The interview/reflection data showed that students in the experimental group perceived Mind Mapping as helpful because it made the text easier to break into smaller parts. Several students reported that drawing branches, keywords, and story elements helped them remember the sequence of events in narrative texts. The teacher's reflection also indicated that students became more willing to participate because the activity required them to produce a visible learning product.

These findings suggest that Mind Mapping supported not only comprehension but also classroom interaction.

Table 7. Summary of interview/reflection results

Data Source	Emerging Theme	Evidence Summary	Interpretation
Students	Easier text organization	Students stated that keywords and branches helped them separate orientation, complication, and resolution.	Mind Mapping helped students process narrative structure.
Students	Better memory	Students reported that visual notes were easier to remember than long sentences.	Visual representation supported retention.
Teacher	Higher participation	Teacher observed that more students contributed during group and individual mapping activities.	Mind Mapping increased engagement.
Teacher	Clearer comprehension checking	Students' maps made it easier to see whether they understood the story elements.	Mind maps functioned as visible comprehension evidence.

Observation Results

Classroom observation showed that the experimental group was more active during reading activities after Mind Mapping was introduced. Students were observed identifying keywords, discussing story elements, and arranging information into branches. Compared with the control group, students in the experimental group showed more visible interaction with the text because they had to transform textual information into a visual structure. The observation also showed that students were more confident when answering questions related to main ideas and story sequence. These behaviors indicate that Mind Mapping encouraged active learning and helped students organize comprehension strategies.

Table 8. Summary of classroom observation results

Observed Aspect	Experimental Group	Control Group	Meaning of Result
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Student participation	Students actively created branches and discussed ideas.	Students mostly listened and answered when asked.	Mind Mapping promoted active participation.
Text structure identification	Students identified orientation, complication, and resolution visually.	Students identified text parts mostly through teacher explanation.	Visual mapping supported genre awareness.
Confidence	Students showed more confidence presenting ideas from their maps.	Students were less confident and relied on notes.	Mind Mapping provided a visible support tool.
Collaboration	Students shared keywords and compared maps.	Interaction was limited.	The technique encouraged peer learning.

Documentation Results

Documentation data consisted of students' mind maps and classroom learning products produced during the treatment. The documents showed that students were able to represent narrative text elements using central topics, branches, keywords, and supporting details. Most students placed the story title or main idea at the center and then expanded it into characters, setting, problem, sequence of events, and resolution. This learning product demonstrated that students could identify the structure of narrative texts more explicitly. Therefore, the documentation supported the test and observation results by showing concrete evidence of students' comprehension development.

Table 9. Summary of documentation results

Documented Product	What Was Found	Contribution to Result
Students' mind maps	Students organized title, characters, setting, conflict, and resolution into branches.	Shows ability to identify narrative structure.
Post-treatment worksheet	Students answered more questions related to main idea and sequence correctly.	Supports improvement in comprehension.
Classroom photos/learning notes	Students were involved in visual mapping activities.	Supports observation of engagement.

DISCUSSION: HOW DO THE RESULTS FILL THE GAP?

The results fill the gap identified in the introduction by providing empirical evidence from a vocational school in West Nusa Tenggara, a context that has not been sufficiently represented in previous Mind Mapping research. Prior studies have shown that Mind Mapping and graphic organizers can improve reading comprehension, but many of them were conducted in general school, university, or non-regional contexts (Alkhazaleh & Abu Sal, 2024; Hazaymeh & Alomery, 2022). The present study extends this body of knowledge by demonstrating that Mind Mapping is also effective for vocational EFL students. The significant t-test result and higher mean gain in the experimental group confirm that the technique worked in this specific educational setting. Therefore, the study fills a contextual gap by showing that visual learning strategies are relevant to regional Indonesian vocational education.

The findings also answer the gap that previous studies have often focused mainly on quantitative test scores without explaining classroom process evidence. In this study, the improvement in scores was supported by observation, interview/reflection, and documentation results. The observation data showed that students became more active, while the interview/reflection data indicated that students perceived Mind Mapping as helpful for organizing ideas. Documentation of students' mind maps showed that learners could represent narrative elements visually. As a result, the study provides a more complete explanation of how and why Mind Mapping improved reading comprehension.

The results further support cognitive learning theory because students did not only receive information from the teacher but actively reconstructed the text into a visual format. By selecting keywords, arranging branches, and connecting story elements, students engaged in active organization of information. This process is consistent with the idea that meaningful learning occurs when learners organize new information and connect it with existing knowledge (Duke et al., 2021; Shanahan, 2020). In addition, the results align with schema theory because students used Mind Mapping to connect narrative text structure with their prior knowledge of stories. Thus, Mind Mapping worked as a cognitive scaffold that helped students process narrative texts more systematically.

The findings are also pedagogically meaningful because vocational students often benefit from practical, visual, and product-based learning activities. The observation results showed that students became more engaged when they could create visual maps rather than

only read and translate text. This is important because low engagement is one reason EFL students struggle with reading comprehension in conventional classrooms (Enni et al., 2024; Surahmat, 2025). Mind Mapping changed the reading activity from a teacher-centered explanation into a student-centered learning process. Therefore, the technique helped fill the pedagogical gap by offering a more interactive approach to reading instruction.

Overall, the results show that Mind Mapping fills the research gap in three ways. First, it provides quantitative evidence that Mind Mapping significantly improves reading comprehension of narrative texts. Second, it provides qualitative support showing that the strategy improves engagement, confidence, and organization of ideas. Third, it contributes to EFL pedagogy in West Nusa Tenggara by demonstrating that a visual learning strategy can be adapted to vocational school learners. These findings strengthen the argument that reading instruction should not rely only on translation or teacher explanation. Instead, teachers should provide strategies that help students visually organize meaning and actively interact with texts.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Mind Mapping is an effective strategy for improving EFL students' reading comprehension of narrative texts in a vocational school in West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. The experimental group achieved a higher improvement than the control group, and the t-test result confirmed a statistically significant difference. Supporting evidence from observation, interview/reflection, and documentation showed that Mind Mapping also improved students' engagement, confidence, and ability to organize narrative text elements. This means that, going forward, EFL teachers in vocational schools can use Mind Mapping as a practical classroom strategy to make reading instruction more interactive, visual, and meaningful. Future studies are encouraged to apply Mind Mapping in other genres, other language skills, and digital learning environments to examine its broader impact on EFL learning.

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