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Reading-to-Write in the Classroom: The Use of Mind Mapping as Schemata and as Outlining

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Abstract

This paper is aimed at giving an effective way of teaching the integrated skills of reading-to-write by using mind mapping. Even the term of reading-to-write itself seems new to education environment of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) especially to teachers and lecturers; however, the intertwined activities of reading-to-write give some advantages to the learners taught and moreover to the teachers and/or lecturers themselves. The learners actively study the two skills integrated in accordance with the topics explored and for the teachers and/or lecturers, they save their energy and time in teaching reading-to-write skills. In a meeting in the classroom, they just prepare one main topic for these two skills and the time is really effective used by both parties. The effectiveness teaching and learning process of reading-to-write is more enhanced by the use of mind mapping in those skills. There is a strong assumption that the use of mind mapping in reading-to-write can improve the learners' reading comprehension and writing quality.

***Keywords:** Reading-to-Write; Mind Mapping; Mind Mapping as Schemata and as Outlining;*

1. Introduction

One of the primary tenets of communicative language learning has been the importance of integrative language tasks. This view has been done by English for Specific Purposes (ESP) surveys showing that reading-to-write skills tasks are common in university settings (Delaney, 2008). Nevertheless, relatively research has been reported about second language (L2) learners' performance on reading-to-write skills tasks—a reading comprehension and a response essay—in relation to the individual and external factors that affect performance.

Furthermore, in these tasks, mind mapping is used as a visual tool to help learners improving their competence and understanding towards the skills of reading and writing. Thus, the purposes of endorsing the skills of reading-to-write tasks using mind mapping are to improve learners' reading comprehension and writing quality and also to encourage EFL teachers and/or lecturers effectively in preparing and teaching reading-to-write skills tasks integrated. By the use of mind mapping in the reading-to-write skills tasks, it can facilitate learners in comprehending reading texts and composing quality writings or essays.

Teaching reading can produce a written product and that product can be based on some characteristics of learners. The basic characteristics of learners' native language are different from the characteristics of EFL writing that reading efforts are blocked. Those characteristics are permanence, processing time, distance, orthography, complexity, vocabulary, formality, guessing, and vocabulary analysis, distinguishing between literal and implied meanings, and capitalizing on discourse markers to process relationships. The characteristics above have been embedded in the native language learners. Since they were born until they become adults, these characteristics which they get day by day are ingrained and can influence the way they send or give messages to other people in all skills. By understanding these characteristics, as readers, learners will be helped to diagnose certain reading difficulties arising from the idiosyncrasies of written language, to point their techniques toward specific objectives, and to remind them of some of the advantages of the written language over spoken. Thus, for EFL learners, they need much effort and ways to gain what they read and write in comprehending a text and in composing writing.

2. Description of Mind Mapping and Reading-to-Write

2.1 Mind Mapping

A lot of books, seminars and investigations give people insights about human brain. For instance is the amount of neuron in human brain. It is one billion (1.000.000.000.000) which is approximately one hundred and sixty seven (167) times the amount of humans in this planet. This neuron, with its hundreds small hands, like amoeba, can be bigger and bigger and so can be smaller and smaller. Those actions are happened actively, sensitively and focus to reach every atom in order to make a connection-the moving mind mapping. The activity in human brain is so marvelous. It shows how human beings are special creatures that can learn, create, produce, and effort anything that they want.

Words are tremendous power. People who have power to persuade, to inspire, and to influence other people are those who attach the strength of words. It is not surprisingly, then, that words and their power have become one of the most important currencies in the knowledge revolution of the 21st century (Buzan, 2002: 4).

Seeing the uniqueness of human brain and the powerful of words, in relation to teaching and learning English, EFL teachers need to design a learning of words in a creative way. This learning system can focus on the use of both sides of the brain: the left and the right ones. It impacts to humans' creative thinking. Thus, the design combination powers of humans left and right brains to increase the power of their vocabulary, and how to combine everything, humans have learned in the verbal intelligence so far to create those thinking tools – mind mappings. By using mind mappings, this creates a creative way to enrich humans' vocabulary which then it can effect the competence of humans

skills in reading and writing. It is expected that reading-to-write through mind mapping can improve people's language acquisition and so forth it will note down all the competences with the entire collection. It finally means that human skills associations are unique, and that their ability to grow their reading-to-write and enhance their verbal intelligence is infinite.

Mind mapping is a visual diagram used to record and organize information in a way which the brain finds captivating and easy to process (Buzan Online, p. 32). Thoughts, ideas or facts are laid out around a central theme so that we can clearly see their flows in different levels which lesser categories are portrayed as branches of larger branches. Mind mapping is a tool that makes thinking become visible; a thought organizer that works in accordance with the brain work mechanism; a system to save and retrieve data to and/or from the brain; and, a note that is fast and easy to be made and remembered.

The visualization concept of mind mapping involves a combination of keywords and images, and Buzan (2007) encourages the use of at least three colours, symbols, and codes to highlight or signify ideas. The main approach in the making of a mind mapping is to begin in the centre of the page with a keyword representing a concept. From this keyword a central line spreads out, links to another word associated with the starting concept word. From this central line, thinner lines send out radial shoots. Each radial is connected to an off-shoot idea (Neville, 2006: 16). Wikipedia also describes mind mapping as follows:

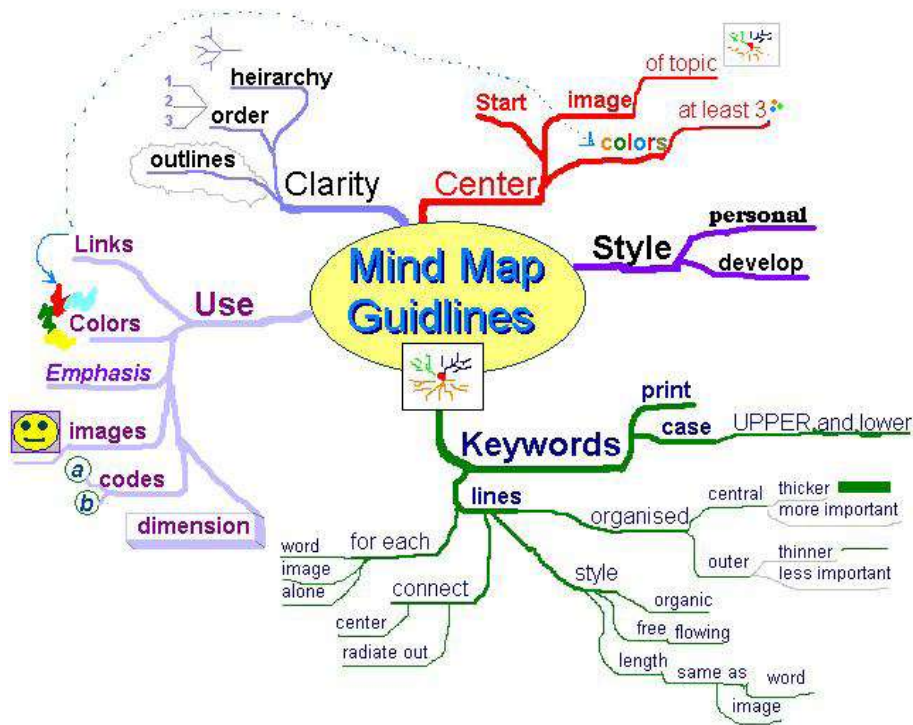


Figure 4. Mind Map taken from Wikipedia, 2006 (Nevil, 2006: 16)

Based on previously stated of mind mapping process, a mind mapping has four (4) important characteristics: Central Image (CI), Basic Ordering Ideas (BOIs), Branches and Sub-Branched, and Correlation (Buzan, 2007). The big topic of our attention is mentioned as central image which consisting words and images. The main ideas that radiate out from the central theme of a mind mapping are known as Basic Order Ideas (BOIs). These primary concepts are responsible for shaping and guiding the process of association by setting the basic framework and hierarchy from which ideas can be extended. The BOIs are clockwise-starting from right and circling to the left. We are easily to imagine or describe them. The branches consist of keywords, images, symbols, and/or a code which is written

on the associated line. The supporting ideas are placed as sub-branches. The last is the correlation. Once ideas are displayed in mind mapping form, patterns of thought can be easily examined, revealing similarities and linkages information in different parts of the map.

2.2 Reading-to-Write

The term “reading-to-write” can be examined from two perspectives: pedagogical and theoretical. The pedagogical perspective refers to instructional tasks that combine reading and writing for various educational purposes (*e.g.*, summary writing as a learning tool, Fitzgerald & Shanahan, 2000; Delaney, 2008). The theoretical perspective is more closely associated with the underlying abilities that learners display when performing these tasks. The reading-to-write construct can be examined from a reading, writing, or constructivist approach depending on the importance given to the literacy skills involved.

From the reading perspective, reading-to-write involves either reading to learn (Carver, 1997; Enright et al., 2000; Kintsch, 1998; Delaney, 2008) or reading to integrate information (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). When reading to learn or to integrate, readers/writers construct elaborate models of the text structure and situation, enabling them to select information from the source text, evaluate it, and use it for writing purposes (Kintsch, 1998).

From the writing perspective, Hayes’ (1996) cognitive-affective model of writing offers a reasonable explanation of the role of reading and writing. Reading comprehension,

which is a central feature of this model, serves three different purposes: to access topic knowledge, to understand the tasks, and to retrieve or evaluate the written outcome.

From the constructivist perspective, reading comprehension and composing are seen as processes of building meaning (Delaney, 2008). In other words, the readers/writers establish new meanings from the reading that they later articulate on paper. The meaning construction occurs by means of three key textual operations: organizing, selecting, and connecting (Spivey, 1990, 1997; Delaney, 2008).

Perhaps reading-to-write should be conceptualized as a reciprocal interaction between literacy skills, in which the basic processes and strategies used for reading and writing are modified by an individual's goals and abilities, and also by external factors. Reading-to-write certainly involves the interplay of reading and writing processes, as advocated by constructivists, but merely having reading and writing abilities is not sufficient to perform reading-to-write tasks successfully (Grabe, 2001; Delaney, 2008).

3. The Use of Mind Mapping in Reading-to-Write as Schemata and as Outlining

Reading is a very complex process which requires an active participation on the part of the reader. According to Harris (2000), the message in the printed text is not something given in advance – or given at all – but something created by an interaction between the writer and reader as participants in a particular communicative situation. This means reading is a thinking process in which it requires the reader to understand and perhaps to use different skills in gaining the information from the text by inferring, questioning, predicting, and drawing conclusions.

On these two decades, research reveals some significant findings through the approaches of teaching reading skills (Brown, 1994: 284). Firstly, reading is a psycholinguistic guessing game. In this finding, the spirit of the bottom-up side works. The readers must first recognize the letters, morphemes, syllables, words, phrases, grammatical cues, discourse markers and use their linguistic data processing mechanisms to impose some sort of order on these signals. Then those data are selected to make some sense that coherence and meaningful. Second is schema theory and background knowledge. Schema theory (Brown, 1994: 284) is the hallmark of which a text does not by itself carry meaning. There are information, knowledge, emotion, experience, and culture when the reader constructs the meaning of the printed words. This theory is the vice versa of the first finding. This reading process is called top-down that brings a whole host of background knowledge information into the arena of making decisions about what something “means.” The last finding of teaching reading skill is adult literacy training. This finding is the use of both approaches mentioned above. Teaching literacy is a specialized field of research and practice which derives insights from a number of “skills-based” (bottom-up) and “strategy-based” (top-down) domains of inquiry. In addition to those three findings, there are some current topics which grasp researchers’ mills (Brown, 1994: 286): the effect of culture on reading, the role of cognition in reading, the role conscious strategies in learning to read a second language, effective techniques for activating schemata, and relationships of reading to writing. In relation to the topic of this study, the most utilized topics to rise are the effective techniques for activating schemata and relationships of reading and writing.

As a mentioned previously, enhancing the learners' skills are not just in comprehending texts but also in continuing doing and producing effective writings. As readers, the learners raise schemata in after reading the text and in continuing this activity, as writers, the learners use outlining to plan their writing. In comprehending the reading or the text, learners are able to interpret the information should be supported by their background knowledge, cognitive development, strategy use, interest, and purpose. They reconstruct the text information based on the knowledge drawn from the text and from their prior knowledge. These factors are presented in learners' schemata (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). Schemata influence how the learners recognize information and also how they store it. In writing, this kind of activity can be mentioned as a draft of an outline (Sun & Feng, 2009), as a planning (Olive, Favart *et al.* 2009) or as an outlining (Ramage, Bean, & Johnson, 2003; Salija, 2004) which may be helpful to different writers at different points in the writing process. Outlining can organize the learners' pieces of writing to lead them from their pre-writing stage-the complicated stage faced by Indonesian learners when they have to start writing-to the final text.

4. The Teaching Learning Process of Reading-to-Write in the Classroom: The Use of Mind Mapping

The activities that connect reading and writing skills/reading-to-write are processed into five entangled parts. In the first part, the learners are asked to read the reading passage. For the second one, after reading the text, the learners summarize what information they get from the reading using mind mapping. Next, for the third part, teacher checks the

learners' reading comprehension by giving some comprehension exercises including multiple choice questions, true/false, short answers and gap filling directly after they finish their mind mappings. To connect with the reading skills, teacher asks learners to write about a topic, is given by the teacher, related with the reading they have read before by firstly do the outlining using mind mapping. That is the fourth part. The last part of connecting reading and writing activities is that learners start producing their writing based on the mind mapping that they have made as pre-writing. As mind mapping is used in these two skills, the learners are active during the reading and writing activities and their reading-to-write ability improves after implementing the actions.

The skills of reading-to-writing are influenced by the writer thinking skills and those thinking skills can be actively enhanced through mind mappings. The applications of mind mapping in reading and writing can help learners enhance text comprehension, develop critical reading, lead to more meaningful information retention, plan and generate ideas, and improve their writing quality. When these skills are applied recursively, the learners will engage in utilizing varieties of study-type strategies and in more planning, particularly during the reading and pre-writing phase. According to Krashen (1984) reading is the appropriate input for the acquisition of writing skills because it is generally assumed that reading passages will somehow function as primary models which writing skills can be learned. It means that reading which gives some ideas and information can help learners in writing. To sum up, a mind mapping can be a transaction technique in reading and writing skills which are connected to each other, as schemata and as an outlining.

Conclusion

In conclusion, mind mapping is a creative tool to be applied in reading-to-write skills processes. By connecting these integrated skills using mind mapping, learners are trained and taught to be familiar in employing it whereas it can improve their competences in reading and writing. It could help them in thinking critically and the knowledge itself could lead to more meaningful information retention. This technique could enhance the learning process of learners and so teachers, both in reading and in writing skills.

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