A Comprehensive Review of the Components for Process Approach to Overcome Writing Impairments among Low Proficiency Learners in Malaysia

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Abstract

Researchers and educators have both expressed interest in the English as a Second Language (ESL) ability of Malaysian students. Due to the Malaysia's multilingualism and the significance of English in international communication, learning outcomes must be improved through the use of efficient pedagogical approaches. Accordingly, this systematic literature review (SLR) examines process approach in writing and its application specifically focusing on how it affects low-proficiency and ESL learners in Malaysia when it comes to communication achievement. By using a qualitative research approach this study has examined published literature from 2019 to 2023 across three databases: Scopus, Web of Sciences, and Google Scholar. 16 publications were extracted out of 763 related articles based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The findings revealed that the Process Approach has the potential to improve ESL students' writing abilities, but putting it into practice calls for a careful grasp of the regional context, particularly in Malaysia. The advantages of this strategy can be maximized by addressing issues like time restrictions and pedagogical considerations, as well as by using complementing components like planning, brainstorming, and mind-mapping. Future research is suggested to fill the gap in this study by investigating other relevant approaches to writing effectively and efficiently for students.

Keywords: process approach, writing impairments, English as a Second Language, low proficiency learners, systematic literature review

1. Introduction

Over the years, Malaysian English language instruction has undergone some pedagogical changes. The importance of dialogic education has been emphasized in recent research, which emphasizes classroom discussion as a means of fostering collective knowledge building (Ramasamy & Zainal, 2023a). It has been discovered that these interactive discourse frameworks help second language (L2) learning, particularly in Malaysian lower secondary English as a Second Language (ESL) courses (Ramasamy & Zainal, 2023b). However, addressing students' skill levels presents difficulties that may impede the efficacy of remedial procedures. Students have varying degrees of skills and abilities to cope with subject matter. Therefore, a range of skills may affect the delivery of content and educations may find it difficult to address the limitations of every student individually. It affirms that the skills of students tend to complicate the process of designing and implementing remedial education which can potentially reduce its effectiveness unless it is appropriately addressed. Another study emphasized the importance of language learning strategies (LLS) in enhancing the writing skills of Year 4 ESL students (Yu et al., 2023).

Instruction effectiveness is determined by students' success at the end of the lesson. The heterogeneity of class in this context cannot be set aside. Malaysian classroom is comprised of mixed-ability students, the Cambridge Baseline Study (CBS), which was conducted in 2013, before the education reformation, emphasized the use of Differentiated Instruction (DI). Since DI is newly implemented in the education system of Malaysia little evidence is available from various aspects, namely, its effectiveness, teachers' readiness, challenges faced, factors significant to its implementation, students' and teachers' perceptions, its aptness to Malaysian classrooms and needs of relevant stakeholders (Lavania & Nor, 2021). Moreover, to better cope with the instructions teachers can adjust their pedagogy to better suit the requirements of their students by being aware of these strategies. The cutting-edge 6+1 Producing Traits method, which emphasizes components like ideas, organization, and voice that are necessary for producing comprehensive writing, has also been included in ESL classes (Ag-Ahmad et al., 2023). Notwithstanding this advancement, challenges persist, especially for Chinese ESL learners in Malaysia who sometimes encounter errors stemming from Mandarin as their first language (Govindarajoo et al., 2022). The Process Approach to writing has received a lot of attention in English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, especially regarding Malaysia. Palpanadan et al. (2023) highlighted the challenges faced by prospective ESL instructors in Malaysian primary schools and the benefits of the Product Approach over the Process Approach. The research findings indicated that while the strategies of the Process Approach were deemed beneficial, their use was constrained by factors such as institutional policies, time constraints, and pedagogical considerations.

The Process Approach has been recognized as an essential strategy for enhancing writing skills within the broader context of international education. According to Jack and Hashim (2023), the Process Approach is one of the five methods most commonly used to teach writing in ESL classrooms. Their findings demonstrated that, among other strategies, this one created more positive outcomes, demonstrating how effective it is in assisting students who have difficulties with writing. However, there might be differences in how the Process Approach is adjusted and used in different circumstances. For instance, Chai et al. (2022) enhanced the writing skills of Year 5 Primary School students in Malaysia during the COVID-19 pandemic by using poetry and the WH-questions technique. This innovative approach demonstrated the versatility and flexibility of the Process Approach, proving its usefulness even in difficult situations.

Despite being widely known, Malaysia poses unique challenges when it comes to using the Process Approach. To support ESL learners' academic writing abilities, Gul et al. (2023) stressed the value of feedback. To supplement the Process Approach, complete solutions are needed. Their investigation of oral feedback practices revealed a variety of strategies, including grammatical-based and correction-based feedback. Therefore, this study seeks to close this gap by investigating the implementation and experience of the process approach in writing for low-proficiency ESL learners within the Malaysian context.

2. Literature Review

This section presents relevant literature related to the landscape of writing instruction and approach and trends in using the writing process approach.

2.1 The Landscape of Writing Instruction and Approach

Writing is an essential literacy skill that is critical to K-12 students' academic achievement. The dual difficulty for students studying English as a Second Language (ESL) is becoming fluent in the language and improving their writing abilities. Teachers are frequently faced with a dilemma as a result of this dual issue, particularly when deciding what should be the main focus of writing teaching. Is it better to focus on teaching kids how to write (learn-to-write) or on using writing as a tool to help them enhance their English language skills (write-to-learn language)? The theory put forth by Brisk (2021) suggests that there is no conflict between the learn-to-write (LW) and write-to-learn language (WLL) approaches. Rather, they can be easily combined to improve ESL writing training, particularly in elementary school settings.

English is regarded as a second language in Malaysia, where learners' ability is greatly impacted by a range of elements such as their learning preferences, cultural backgrounds, and past experiences. For instance, Yu et al.'s (2023) study examined the language acquisition techniques Year 4 ESL students used to hone their writing abilities. The study emphasized the value of using a wide range of language learning techniques while instructing ESL students in writing. The results also underscored how important it is for educators to be aware of the strategies that their students use so that they can modify their methods of instruction to better meet students' needs.

Moreover, the complexity of teaching writing in ESL is heightened by the variety of difficulties teachers encounter. While the Product Approach to writing is typically preferred for its practicality, Palpanadan et al. (2023) pointed out that the Process Approach offers useful strategies that are not as commonly used. The limited implementation of the Process Approach is ascribed to multiple variables, such as educational problems, institutional guidelines, and time constraints. This emphasizes how important it is for educational institutions and policymakers to provide top priority to advanced writing techniques that help students develop their ability to write independently.

The multitude of mistakes made by ESL students further complicates the terrain of ESL writing teaching. For example, Imtiaz et al. (2023) examined spelling mistakes produced by ESL students in secondary education. The main categories of spelling errors found in the study were insertion, transition, substitution, and omission. The main reasons for these errors were identified as a deficiency in vocabulary, reading habits, motivation, and the impact of the mother language. Teachers who are trying to give their students the best learning experience possible while navigating the challenges of ESL writing teaching will find great value in these insights.

Over the past several decades, there have been major changes to the way writing is taught to students learning English as a second language (ESL). The emphasis on the writing process over the end product has resulted in a noticeable global movement from product-oriented to process-oriented methods (Muamaroh et al., 2020). With this method, students are encouraged to come up with ideas, draught, edit, and revise their work, which leads to a greater comprehension of the writing process. On the other hand, due to its historical British colonial heritage, Malaysia places a heavy emphasis on grammar and sentence structure in its ESL writing training (Rashid et al., 2022). However, there has been a drive in Malaysia to adopt more modern educational approaches due to globalization, and the growing significance of English in the ASEAN region.

The integration of reading and writing is emphasized in ESL writing teaching globally, which fosters analytical and critical thinking abilities (Grabe & Kaplan, 2014). This integrated approach is thought to improve students' understanding and communication skills, equipping them for problems in both the classroom and the workplace. Nonetheless, reading and writing have historically been taught separately in Malaysian classrooms, which may have made it more difficult for children to draw connections between the two (Wong, 2018). The usage of technology in the classroom is another area where there are differences. Digital resources are increasingly being used in ESL writing teaching worldwide, utilizing wikis, blogs, and digital storytelling to engage students (Warschauer, 2009). On the other hand, although Malaysia has made progress in incorporating technology into the classroom, its use in ESL writing is still restricted, frequently because of issues with infrastructure and teacher readiness (Awang et al., 2021).

As a result of its specific historical, cultural, and educational background, Malaysia has a different trajectory in ESL writing instruction

than other countries, even though worldwide trends are shifting toward more integrated, technology-driven, and collaborative approaches. But as the nation's educational system gets more modernized and globalized, ESL writing instruction may progressively follow international best practices to guarantee that students are ready for the problems of the twenty-first century.

2.2 Trends in Using the Writing Process Approach

Academic study has focused heavily on the process approach to writing, particularly when it comes to improving writing abilities. The potential of the process approach to encourage learners' creativity and critical thinking is one of the important trends seen in its application. The process technique has demonstrated a noticeable improvement in university students' academic writing abilities, particularly when producing scientific articles based on historical folklore. A study by Sunardi et al. (2023) highlighted the greater student participation during the teaching and learning process, underscoring the significance of both the process and the outcomes. Another new trend is the incorporation of contextual learning into the process approach. Fitriani et al. (2023) highlighted the necessity of creating instructional resources for poetry composition that are grounded in an all-encompassing contextual learning methodology. Their study brought to light the difficulties Bogor Regency elementary school pupils encountered as a result of restrictions on the resources available to them for instruction and the methods their teachers employed. Students can improve their poetry writing abilities by making connections between the subject matter and the real world through the integration of contextual learning.

Moreover, the process approach does not minimize the importance of feedback, particularly oral feedback. In a qualitative investigation, Gul et al. (2023) assessed the opinions of students on the oral feedback methods their instructors employed. Several beneficial oral feedback techniques, such as grammatical-based, procedural-based, clarification-based, and correction-based feedback, were identified by their research. For students to reach the requirements and improve their academic writing abilities, these kinds of feedback mechanisms are essential.

Additionally, a recurrent issue in recent studies has been the significance of instructional materials that are customized to the needs of the students. According to Nugrahani, Musarokah, and Sophia (2023), instructional materials are essential to the learning process. Their study focused on creating pragmatically designed English teaching resources, with an emphasis on how materials should be tailored to the needs of individual students as well as the current curriculum.

Based on the above elaboration, it can be concluded that the process approach to writing has changed over time, concentrating on incorporating contextual learning, giving useful feedback, and creating specialized teaching resources. These developments highlight the need to teach writing in a comprehensive way, which guarantees that students not only learn the skills they need but also know how to use them in a variety of situations.

3. Research Methodology

In conducting a thorough search of the pertinent literature for this systematic literature review (SLR), the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) was used (Page et al., 2021). The PRISMA methods mainly consist of four phases: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion criteria.

3.1 Data Search and Eligibility Criteria

Three databases - Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), and Google Scholar – were principally employed in this SLR to retrieve relevant materials for the subject under investigation. These databases were used to collect information on the writing Process Approach to overcoming writing impairments among low-proficiency learners in Malaysia. Scopus and WOS are the two largest abstract and citation databases available with a concentration on social science articles a worldwide and regional levels (Singh et al., 2021), while Google Scholar is the largest and most comprehensive source of publication metadata and impact indicators almost in every field when compared to other databases (Chertow et al., 2021). All three databases listed sufficient coverage robustness to enable further in-depth transdisciplinary comparisons.

For specific data search, selection, and screening, a procedure was created in advance to support the process of eligibility data that would be included or excluded in the final review. The current paper reviews empirical and theoretical articles that were released between 2019 and 2023. As a result, prior articles in the form of books, chapters, and proceedings were excluded. Since the topic is related to the writing process approach, the data search was conducted within the field of social science or the arts and humanities, particularly in the area of language learning. Furthermore, the articles included are in English. Hence, the articles written in other than English language were excluded. Table 1 presents the search string for eligibility criteria and exclusion papers.

Table 1. Eligibility Criteria and Exclusion Papers

Criterion	Eligibility	Exclusion
Timeline	Between 2019 to 2023	<2019
Literature Type	Empirical and Theoretical	Books, Chapters, and Proceedings that are not related to the topic
Language	English	Other than English
Scope	Related to the Writing Process Approach	Not related to the Writing Process Approach

The inclusion and exclusion criteria were looked at in terms of publication type, research focus, methodology, study design, and quality criteria. A brief description of each criterion is provided below:

- To keep the SLR credible and unbiased, only peer-reviewed journal publications were included. It is ensured that the selected studies meet the high requirements of the writing process approach research by excluding non-peer-reviewed sources.

- This SLR primarily includes research about the writing process approach and its challenges to low-proficiency learners in Malaysia. This guarantees that the chosen research stays pertinent to the subject and aligns with the research objectives. This is emphasized by excluding studies that do not directly address the theme of the writing process approach and its problems for low-proficiency learners.

- The incorporation of research studies utilizing pertinent approaches, specifically content analysis and empirical methods, emphasizes the significance of upholding a robust link to the facets of writing impairments and writing complexities. This SLR remains closely linked to Malaysian components of the writing process since papers that do not use pertinent research procedures are excluded.

- This SLR keeps an emphasis on studies that directly advance our understanding of the writing process approach in Malaysia by including studies with design types relevant to the research objectives. The relevance of this SLR is increased by excluding studies with design types irrelevant to the research objectives.

- The chosen studies offer strong insights into Malaysian writing process approaches while upholding the highest standard of articles that exhibit methodological rigor, clear reporting, and adherence to ethical research standards. To maintain high research quality standards, it is ensured that the chosen studies exclude articles that lack methodological rigor, clear reporting, or ethical research standards.

In addition, this SLR paper also created an extensive search method to find pertinent academic papers, journal articles, conference proceedings, and other scholarly sources. The researcher also performed preliminary searches in selected databases to identify pertinent keywords before adjusting the search terms accordingly. It used databases like Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar with search terms specific to the writing process approach, writing impairments, and low-proficiency learners. It also combined search terms by using Boolean operators (AND, OR) to refine searches, e.g., "writing process approach and writing impairments", and "writing process approach and low proficiency learners".

More specifically, the TITLE-ABS-KEY index was used to conduct a more thorough document search combining all the above keywords. Table 2 shows the search string for each database employed in this SLR study.

Table 2. Search String for Three Databases

Database	Keyword Used
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY (("writing process approach" AND "writing impairments" OR "writing process approach" AND "low proficiency learners"))
Web of Science	TS = (("writing process approach" OR "writing impairments" AND "writing process approach" OR "low proficiency learners"))
Google Scholars	Writing process approach AND writing impairments OR low proficiency learners

3.2 Data Screening and Extraction

After getting the search results, a priority filter in the database system by protocol was then performed accordingly. Records that did not have the above phrases in the titles, abstracts, or keywords were ignored throughout the screening process since they had no bearing on the study. At the end of the screening procedure, all duplicate records were removed from each level. All data were manually verified during the screening process to prevent unexpected errors from arising while using an automated screening method.

In the initial step, the records were read, referring to the titles, keywords, and abstracts for direction. The designation of invalid articles was then made. After the screening finished, the researcher went over the assessments and decided on the results. Then the researcher searched for any remaining data and obtained the complete articles. The subscription database allowed the researchers to access the full text of the data. For the complete reports, the screening criteria from step one must also be followed. The last step was taking the pertinent data from the included reports to respond to the review's research objectives.

Figure 1 illustrates the results of the data screening and data collection process from identification, screening, and inclusion criteria. The records from three databases are 763 entries. They are included in Scopus (n = 104), Web of Science (n = 89), and Google Scholar (n = 570). Out of 763 entries, 347 records were removed before screening due to duplication (n = 210) and irrelevant (n = 137). In the screening phase, a total of 416 records were screened which resulted in 216 records excluded because they did not meet the proposed criteria. At this stage, the total number of records sought for retrieval is 200 from the previous records screened minus records excluded.

After considering the eligibility of full text, 152 records were not retrieved because the researcher was unable to get full access to the studies. Consequently, 48 records were assessed for eligibility. However, this screening stage also took an exclusion process, in which several more papers were excluded due to not being related to the process approach (n = 14) and not related to writing impairments (n =

18). The last stage shows 16 records as included studies to be reviewed in the current research.
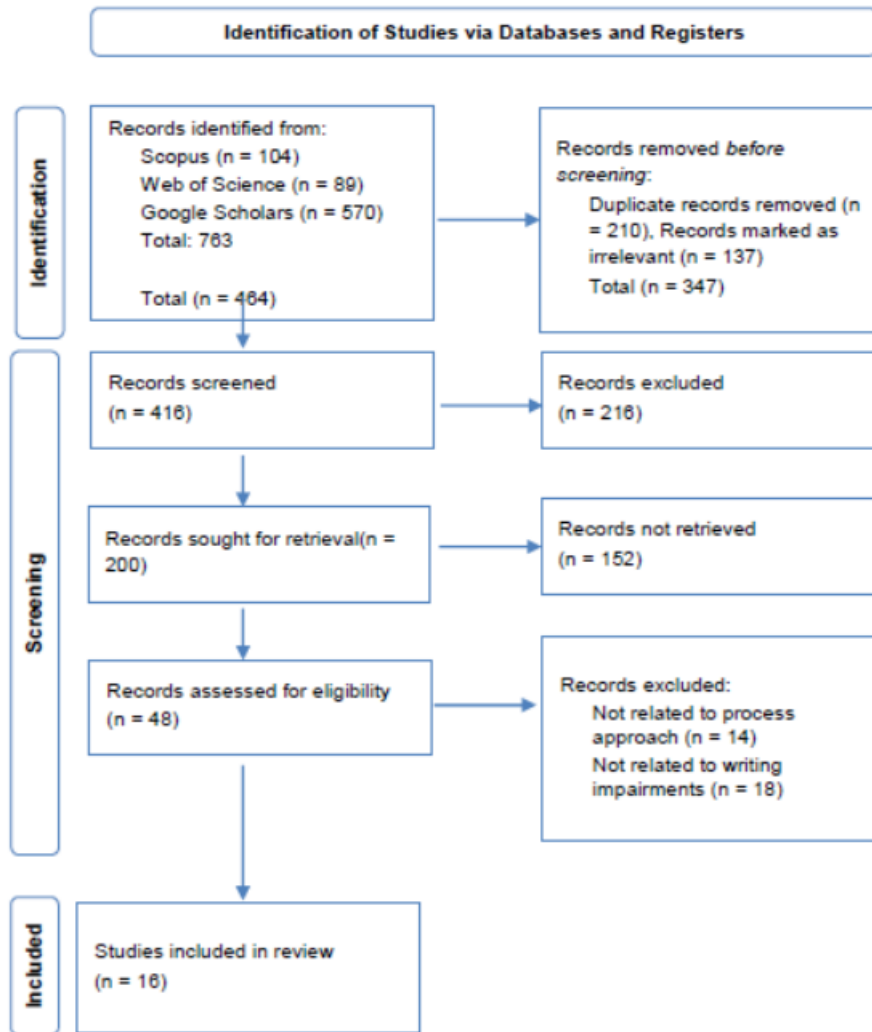

Figure 1. PRISMA Diagram of the Selected Studies

4. Findings and Discussion

This section will elaborate on the article reviewed based on sources and years, study designs, objectives, and findings. The findings from the selected studies are interpreted, emphasizing the key insights, trends, and patterns within the literature. The focus is on summarizing and presenting the synthesized data coherently.

4.1 Article Reviewed Based on Sources and Years

The search phrases were directly cited in 10 publications via periodicals, which include 1 book, 1 proceeding, and 8 journals. They are *International Journal of Academic Research in Business & Social Sciences, Conhecimento & Diversidade, TEFLIN Journal, International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research, The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher, REiLA: Journal of Research and Innovation in Language, International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling, 3L: Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies, Asian Journal of University Education, LSP International Journal, Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction,* and *Journal of Research, Policy & Practice of Teachers and Teacher Education*. Table 3 lists all the sources of the reviewed publication followed by the years of publication.

Table 3. Article Reviewed Based on Sources and Years

Sources	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
International Journal of Academic Research in Business & Social Sciences	0	1	1	2	1
Conhecimento & Diversidade	0	0	0	0	1
TEFLIN Journal	0	0	0	0	1
International Journal of Learning, Teaching, and Educational Research	0	0	0	0	1
The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher	0	0	0	0	1
REiLA: Journal of Research and Innovation in Language	0	0	0	1	0
International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling	0	0	0	1	0
3L: Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies	0	0	0	1	0
Asian Journal of University Education	0	0	0	1	0
LSP International Journal	0	0	1	0	0
Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction	0	1	0	0	0
Journal of Research, Policy & Practice of Teachers and Teacher Education	1	0	0	0	0

As can be seen in Table 3, 12 journals published a topic related to the writing process approach. The most common journal published about the topic under study is the International Journal of Academic Research in Business & Social Sciences (n=5), while the rest only 1 publication per journal. Out of 16 selected studies, there are 1 publication in 2019, 2 publications in 2020, 2 publications in 2021, 6 publications in 2022, and 5 publications in 2023. This shows the steady increase in publications on this topic from year to year.

4.2 Study Design, Objectives, and Findings

In terms of study design, most of the reviewed studies are semi-structured interviews and classroom observations (Ramasamy & Zainal, 2023a; Ramasamy & Zainal, 2023b; Govindarajoo et al., 2022; Selvaraj & Aziz, 2020; Jalaluddin, 2019). The rest of the studies used systematic literature review (Jack & Hashim, 2023; Ramamuthie & Aziz, 2022), integrative review (Ganapathy et al., 2022), mixed-method design (Palpanadan et al., 2023), experimental study (Yu et al., 2023), multiple case research (Abd Rahim & Jaganathan, 2022), survey questionnaire (Othman et al., 2022; Thandevaraj et al., 2021), daily journals and structured interview (Chai et al., 2022), qualitative written assessment (Wan Ibrahim & Othman, 2021), and descriptive case study (Singh et al., 2020). Table 4 presents the study design, objectives, and findings for all 10 reviewed articles.

Table 4. Study Design, Objectives, and Findings

Author(s) and Year	Study Design, Objectives, and Findings
Jack & Hashim (2023)	*Objective*: This paper presents an analysis of a systematic review based on past studies on writing tools implemented in ESL classrooms. The studies reviewed are from the year 2018 until 2021, with a total number of 16 articles. This systematic review attempts to identify the tools used in teaching writing skills. *Method*: Systematic Literature Review *Finding*: The results reveal that these tools significantly affected students' writing skills and progress in ESL classrooms. Lastly, this systematic review also includes the disadvantages of using writing tools in writing lessons.
Palpanadan et al. (2023)	*Objective*: this study was conducted to investigate the writing instructions cpracticed by the teacher trainees in selected ESL primary classrooms in Malaysia. The study scrutinized the details of the two writing approaches used concerning the product approach and process approach. *Method*: Mixed-Method Design *Finding*: The strategies of the Process Approach were found to be useful but the participants were unable to apply them rampantly due to time, institutional, and pedagogical factors. Thus, this study recommends that educational intuitions and policymakers focus on more sophisticated writing strategies and approaches to enhance the writing abilities among students to cultivate independent

writing skills and habits.

Ramasamy & Zainal (2023a)

Objective: This study explores the perceptions of English as a second language (ESL) teachers on the role of dialogic discourse in affording students opportunities for the construction of knowledge and investigates their practices in affording students with the opportunities to construct knowledge collectively through the discourse structure.

Method: Semi-structured interview and classroom observation

Finding: The findings show that ESL teachers' use of dialogic discourse strategies facilitates the construction of knowledge collectively among the students. This study expands our current understanding of how ESL learning occurs through classroom discourse.

Ramasamy & Zainal (2023b)

Objective: This study explored the perceptions of four rural L2 teachers who were participants in professional development on dialogic teaching and investigated their classroom practices using the approach.

Method: Semi-structured interview and classroom observation

Findings: The findings of this study indicated that the teachers perceived dialogic teaching as a meaningful interactive discourse structure that facilitated L2 learning and, to an extent, demonstrated a pedagogical shift that took advantage of the dialogic teaching principles and talk repertoire introduced during the professional development.

Yu et al. (2023)

Objective: This study examined motivation, learning strategies, learning outcomes, and their mutual correlations in mobile English language learning via two experiments.

Method: Experimental study

Findings: Results suggested that in mobile English language learning, (a) motivation was significantly stronger than in traditional English language learning; (b) students adopted significantly more learning strategies than in traditional English language learning; (c) learning outcomes were significantly better than in traditional English language learning; and (d) motivation, learning strategies, and learning outcomes were positively correlated in both learning approaches at the significance level .025.

Abd Rahim & Jaganathan (2022)

Objective: The present study aims to examine the 'Written Languaging' (WL) effect of Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) on low proficiency L2 learners' writing accuracy.

Method: Multiple Case Research

Finding: The finding shows that WL's provision on the WCF did not facilitate the low proficiency of L2 learners' writing accuracy because the L2 learners' writing accuracy could improve only with teachers' WCF. The study is significant to the pedagogical teaching of writing development for lower proficiency L2 learners, particularly in applying the mediational tool in the provision and processing of WCF and the complementary pedagogical strategy to WCF.

Chai et al. (2022)

Objective: By using an action research design lens, this study aims to describe the process of using the WH-questions strategy and poetry to improve writing skills among Year 5 primary school learners. The process consisted of four steps: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

Method: Data were collected using a multimodal approach, including students' daily journals and structured interviews.

Finding: Based on the data obtained, it was found that the intervention used had successfully improved my learners' writing skills, especially in constructing correct simple sentences. I learned how to plan, conduct, and evaluate WH-questions strategy as well as how to modify poetry writing to teach writing skills in English language lessons in the post-pandemic times.

Ganapathy et al. (2022)

Objective: This paper presents a conceptual framework that has been developed to promote creativity among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Malaysian indigenous students, specifically in the teaching of writing. The objectives are to introduce the factors that contribute to indigenous students' low English proficiency, highlight the writing challenges of indigenous students, propose a genre pedagogical framework to address their writing challenges and simultaneously, motivate their learning via creative practices, and discuss past studies on the efficacy of a genre-based writing pedagogy that promotes creativity.

Method: This paper employed an integrative review approach in sourcing and critically analyzing relevant literature.

Finding: This paper enhances understanding of the practicality of genre writing in addressing the writing challenges of low-proficiency indigenous students. The proposed framework has the potential to serve as a reference point for other EFL teachers involved in teaching indigenous students globally.

Govindarajoo et al. (2022)	*Objective*: The purpose of this research was to identify the common errors made in English writing by Malaysian Chinese primary year 6 ESL students and to determine the extent of the influence of the first language, Mandarin in ESL writing.

Method: Interview and classroom observation

Finding: The highest and most prominent grammar errors revealed in the analysis were in the areas of tenses, object pronouns, plurals, auxiliary verbs, prepositions, and articles. These errors were found to be caused by the influence of the mother tongue through direct translation from the Mandarin language.

Othman et al. (2022)

Objective: This study investigates how writing prophecies influence writers' own self-imposed beliefs and how this belief is affected by other imposed expectations and finally these impact the results of the writing activity.

Method: Survey Questionnaire

Finding: It is safe to say that writers have love-hate relationships with writing. Some begin by liking but they get disheartened with low marks. Some like and are motivated to write better with good marks. The love-hate relationship that writers have towards writing can be depicted in the form of a writing prophecy.

Ramamuthie & Aziz (2022)

Objective: This paper aims to provide a systematic review of the studies done in the past pertaining to the effectiveness of digital tools in improving English as a Second Language (ESL) students' writing skills.

Method: Systematic Literature Review

Findings: It was found that digital tools improved the students' writing skills and developed their language knowledge, particularly grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and punctuation. Moreover, students became autonomous learners as they had access to explore knowledge virtually beyond the physical classroom.

Thandevaraj et al. (2021)

Objective: This paper aims to investigate the use of Twitter as a casual learning approach in enhancing students' writing skills. ESL lessons via ZOOM were conducted with the integration of Twitter's threads as the casual learning approach to help students to be more interested in writing, which in a way will help to enhance their writing skills.

Method: A questionnaire was distributed to the students to investigate their feedback on the use of Twitter as a platform to help them enhance their writing skills.

Findings: Findings have shown that students are more comfortable using Twitter as one of the platforms to help them enhance their writing skills. The students participated more when Twitter was used in the lessons as part of the writing activity. One of the reasons might be because of the flexibility and the casualty. The result of this study shows that utilizing Twitter in ESL teaching and learning has a positive impact on both educators and students.

Wan Ibrahim & Othman (2021)

Objective: This paper presents an error analysis focusing on the types of errors found in students' written test scripts to identify the weaknesses of students' writing abilities.

Method: The study adopts a qualitative approach where the students' written assessment texts were collected.

Findings: It is found that students have an idea of how to write the answers to the task but seem to have difficulties putting the ideas in the correct structure.

Selvaraj & Aziz (2020)

Objective: This study focuses on students' perceptions after employing a flow chart technique in scaffolding students' narrative writing.

Method: Semi-Structured Interview

Findings: The findings show the participants were satisfied and found that the technique was easy to employ and useful as it improved their achievement in narrative writing. Besides that, students admitted that the teacher's scaffolding method and collaboration among peers were effective in the intervention process.

Singh et al. (2020)	*Objective*: This research focuses on ESL teachers' strategies to foster higher-order thinking skills to teach writing to weak ESL learners in two selected secondary schools in Malaysia. ESL teachers' strategies to foster higher-order thinking skills to teach writing to weak ESL learners were captured and encapsulated to enable the ESL learners to understand and master higher-order thinking to improve their writing.
	Method: A qualitative descriptive case study design
	Findings: Findings showed that ESL teachers selected strategies to foster higher-order thinking skills to teach writing including the general procedures in implementing higher-order thinking skills for teaching writing and major considerations at each stage of the implementation. ESL teachers exposed learners to the general procedures of the higher-order thinking skills which were explaining and helping students to understand what higher-order thinking is, leading students to connect to concepts in writing, helping students to infer through real-life situations, using more graphic organizers, and teaching problem-solving skills.
Jalaluddin (2019)	*Objective*: Although writing is teachable, the conversion of thought into written form is a difficult activity that requires organized pedagogical approaches and complementary skills. This is a case study that discusses the practices of the process approach in teaching ESL writing and its practicality.
	Method: Observation and Interview
	Findings: Findings managed to identify five different techniques used by the teacher in trying to implement the process approach in writing. This process managed to show the students the fallacy of assuming too much in writing and the need to provide more detail, or where they were being repetitious of ideas and getting off track. Changes could be seen in terms of words and elaboration in the second draft throughout the learning process until the compositions were produced.

Based on Table 4 above, there is a visible research gap in terms of study design and subject participants of the reviewed studies. The qualitative approach (interview, classroom observation, systematic literature review, integrative review, multiple case research, daily journals, written assessment, and descriptive case study) dominates the study design compared to quantitative (experimental study, survey questionnaire) and mixed methods. The subject participants are predominantly students at the secondary school and university levels.

4.3 Writing Process Approach and Its Adaptation in Malaysia

The phrase "writing approach" has changed over time to represent the paradigms and approaches in the writing research and instruction fields. Writing was traditionally seen as a product-oriented activity, with the final written product and its conformance to pre-set norms and frameworks being the main points of emphasis. Traditional educational approaches that prioritised grammar, syntax, and writing mechanics had a big impact on this viewpoint (Coneys, 2018). On the other hand, modern definitions of the writing method emphasise a process-oriented viewpoint. With this change, authors are now acknowledged as dynamic, recursive individuals who go through several phases of planning, drafting, revising, and editing (Wan Ibrahim & Othman, 2021). Instead of focusing only on the final product, the writer's thought processes and techniques are highlighted. Numerous ideas in education and cognitive science that emphasise the value of self-regulation, metacognition, and the social context of writing have impacted this shift in perspective (Hadi et al., 2021).

Moreover, the modern perspective on the writing method recognises the impact of society on writing. It acknowledges that writing is influenced by a cultural, social, and linguistic background in addition to being an individual cognitive activity of a writer. This viewpoint emphasises how crucial it is to comprehend the many settings in which writing takes place as well as the various functions it accomplishes (Jack & Hashim, 2023). There have been many changes in the historical trajectory of writing teaching in Malaysian secondary schools, especially since the Process Approach was introduced and developed. Malaysian education was formerly dominated by the conventional Product Approach, which placed more emphasis on the written product than the writing process. However as international pedagogical trends developed, the value of the writing process became increasingly apparent, and Malaysian schools gradually began implementing the Process Approach (Tze Pheng et al., 2021).

Unlike its predecessor, the Process Approach places more emphasis on the stages of writing, such as prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. This strategy was thought to be a more comprehensive approach that would help students comprehend and value the complexities of writing. The benefits of this strategy quickly became apparent, despite early resistance to its acceptance, which was mostly caused by ingrained ideas in traditional teaching methodologies. For example, a study conducted by Ganapathy et al. (2022) on the genre-based pedagogical approach showcased how well it worked to improve the writing abilities of Malaysian indigenous pupils known as Orang Asli.

Nonetheless, there have been difficulties along the way for the Process Approach in Malaysian secondary schools. For example, the incorporation of technology has had both positive and negative effects. Although technology has the potential to improve writing instruction, its adoption has frequently been hampered by a lack of funding and technical assistance (Selvaraj & Aziz, 2020). Furthermore, the adoption and adaptation of the Process Approach have been shaped by Malaysia's cultural setting and diverse language landscape. The emphasis has been on the necessity of a culturally sensitive method, such as the cultural-techno-contextual approach, to make writing instruction more applicable and successful for Malaysian students (Govindarajoo et al., 2022).

4.4 Components of Process Approach in Writing

The process approach to writing has been a central focus for scholars and educators who want to improve students' writing abilities, particularly those who do not speak English well. Teaching writing to elementary school students presents unique problems, especially in Malaysia, where English is taught as a second language (Othman et al., 2022). These students are expected to write narratives as a component of their public primary school assessment (Ramasamy & Zainal, 2023a).

Nevertheless, these students' writing accomplishment criteria frequently fall short of expectations (Thandevaraj et al., 2021). It has been investigated how to scaffold and enhance the narrative writing process through the use of cutting-edge instruments and methods, such as flow charts. These methods have demonstrated the potential to improve students' narratives' coherence and organisation, which has resulted in notable gains in post-test scores and narrative writing assessment components (Selvaraj & Aziz, 2020).

Using information and communication technology (ICT) in ESL writing is another approach that has attracted interest. Digital comics are one of the many digital technologies that have been incorporated into the teaching and learning process to encourage students who are not as proficient writers (Jalaluddin, 2019). Teacher candidates in Malaysia have voiced favourable opinions on using digital comics and ICT to teach ESL writing to students who do not perform well academically. The majority of people think that the many benefits of digital comics might encourage students to write in English and pique their curiosity (Ganapathy et al., 2022; Yunus et al., 2011). The Process Approach highlighted the steps of writing from ideation to drafting to revision. Yet, each step may be improved even more by incorporating digital tools, which will make the process more dynamic and interesting (Palpanadan et al., 2023). Digital comics, for example, can be used as visual cues during the brainstorming phase to assist students in better organising and visualising their thoughts. Digital technologies can offer immediate feedback during the drafting phase, enabling students to edit their work in real-time. Lastly, collaborative digital platforms can help with peer review and feedback during the revision stage, creating a more positive and cooperative writing atmosphere (Ramasamy & Zainal, 2023b; Wan Ibrahim & Othman, 2021).

Notwithstanding the apparent advantages of incorporating digital tools into the process method, many obstacles persist. The possible over-reliance on technology, which could take away from the fundamental ideas of the process approach, is one of the main worries. Teachers need to find a middle ground where digital technologies complement conventional writing methods rather than take their place. Furthermore, in some educational environments, especially in rural areas or schools with inadequate funding, the accessibility of these digital tools may be restricted (Jack & Hashim, 2023; Singh et al., 2020). There are many components of the Process Approach. Among the most common components of the Process Approach in writing include planning, brainstorming, and mind-mapping. Below is the explanation of each component.

4.4.1 Planning

Throughout the writing process, planning is essential because it provides the framework for the ideas and concepts that authors develop and arrange. Planning was historically neglected in favour of more emphasis on the finished product over the writing process in traditional writing teaching (Binu, 2021). However, the importance of planning has come to be understood more and more as pedagogical approaches have developed, particularly when it comes to the learning of second languages (Singh et al., 2020; Chai et al., 2022).

Planning is essential when it comes to helping low-proficiency learners of English as a Second Language (ESL) handle the challenges of writing. Low-proficiency L2 learners frequently struggle with both grammatical and non-grammatical errors in their writing (Abd Rahim & Jaganathan, 2022). Good planning techniques can act as mediational tools, improving learners' capacity to take in criticism and sharpen their writing. This is especially important as these students are trying to close the proficiency gap between what they can do now and where they want to go (Wan Ibrahim & Othman, 2021). Moreover, as Chai et al. (2022) pointed out, integrating techniques like the WH-questions might enhance the planning stage even more. These techniques can greatly improve students' written outputs by helping them come up with ideas and organise their thoughts. The focus on planning highlights how crucial it is in determining the writing experiences and results of students as the area of ESL writing education develops.

Planning is an essential step in the writing process, particularly for those who are learning English as a second language (ESL). Writing planning is extremely important, especially in Malaysia where English is taught as a second language. The value of cooperative planning in an academic writing course for Chinese-speaking ESL pre-university students in Malaysia was highlighted by Jalleh and Mahfoodh's (2021) study. According to this qualitative study, students thought that collaborative planning was a crucial teaching strategy that helped them exchange ideas, improve their writing, and become more self-assured. Planning was collaborative, which facilitated a more fruitful interchange of viewpoints and ideas, which improved the writing process.

Nonetheless, there are differences in the English language competency of ESL students in Malaysia. The differences in writing abilities between Malaysian ESL students were brought to light by Singh et al. (2020). Some people write well, while others have serious

difficulties. Their studies supported scaffolding models and modules designed to teach writing skills, especially to English language learners who struggle. The results emphasised how scaffolding helps low-proficiency ESL learners learn and write. The methods used by teachers, who showed proficiency in teaching English, particularly to students with lower skill levels, demonstrated the efficacy of the model (Ganapathy et al., 2022).

Another study by Govindarajoo et al. (2022) examined typical writing errors made by Malaysian Chinese primary year 6 ESL students and evaluated the impact of their native language, Mandarin, on their ESL writing. The findings of this study revealed that auxiliary verbs, plurals, articles, object pronouns, tenses, and prepositions were the most common areas of grammatical error. The mother tongue's impact and the direct translation from Mandarin were blamed for these mistakes. These results highlight the value of prewriting and planning exercises in addressing these issues and enhancing ESL students' writing abilities (Selvaraj & Aziz, 2020). In addition, Wan Ibrahim and Othman (2021) carried out an error analysis of the writing produced by Malaysian students to identify areas in which they were lacking. The study found that although students had ideas about how to answer writing assignments, they had trouble correctly organising their thoughts. This highlights the need to use efficient planning strategies to help students arrange their ideas and logically write about them (Yu et al., 2023; Palpanadan et al., 2023).

4.4.2 Brainstorming

Writing is a complex and diverse process, especially in an academic setting. Brainstorming is one of the strategies that has been used to help organise and generate ideas. The process of brainstorming is used to produce a wide range of concepts or answers related to a certain issue or topic. It promotes independent thought and the impromptu sharing of ideas, frequently in a social context (Othman et al., 2022).

The approach of brainstorming has gained widespread recognition for its ability to spark ideas and promote creativity in a variety of domains, including writing for English as a Second Language (ESL). It has long been known that brainstorming, as a teaching method, may encourage creativity and produce a wide range of ideas, particularly when it comes to writing training. The method has been modified for use in a variety of educational settings, including the instruction of writing to English as a Second Language (ESL) students. It is based on the ideas of free association and unrestricted idea creation. For example, Badriah et al. (2023) adapted the STAR writing method by emphasizing the value of organised brainstorming in promoting the logical exposition of ideas. Their research demonstrated how important it is to give teachers time contracts and direction so they may efficiently think and finish their writing assignments within the allotted amount of time.

Brainstorming is a tool that can be used outside of the classroom to help teach ESL learners. In their discussion of a more comprehensive rhetorical framework for composition teaching, Wadden and Peterson (2017) emphasised the integration of reading, research, and revision processes with brainstorming. They contended that while general guidelines for teaching writing may be elusive, useful guidelines, such as efficient brainstorming strategies, can be tailored to match particular curricula and educational environments. Additionally, brainstorming has become a key strategy in the pedagogical approaches to K–12 ESL writing training. Bhowmik and Kim (2022) noted several instructional strategies that are frequently used in K–12 ESL writing education, such as the use of genre-based and SFL-oriented activities. According to their research, brainstorming can greatly improve young ESL students' writing skills when paired with these strategies.

Brainstorming strategies in ESL writing classrooms might be especially helpful for low-proficiency learners in Malaysia where there is a wide range of English competence. Low-competence Malay ESL learners frequently use code-switching during formal classroom sessions (Nordin et al., 2013). This suggests a problem with vocabulary and language structure. Before beginning the writing process, students can produce and arrange their ideas in an orderly manner through the practice of brainstorming, which may help close this gap.

Another study by Subon and Norseha (2023) highlighted the significance of vocabulary in writing for ESL students. They underlined that linguistic proficiency, reading comprehension, and academic success are all directly correlated with vocabulary size. According to their research, the majority of students with different proficiency levels were able to improve the quantity of their vocabulary after a 10-week intervention utilising the Contextualized Word Family (CWF) Model. Consequently, during brainstorming sessions, this increased vocabulary size can be utilised to generate written content that is richer and more varied.

In addition, the genre-based approach to teaching report writing using graphical data has been investigated as a way to help ESL students prepare for college. Learners can acquire control over the report-writing genre with the use of an organised training cycle that incorporates steps like text exploration and context investigation. Brainstorming methods can be used in conjunction with such organised ways to improve the writing process as a whole (Jack & Hashim, 2023; Ramasamy & Zainal, 2023a). Students' writing skills increased in a variety of categories, including topic, language use, and vocabulary. Incorporating brainstorming techniques into intense programmes like this can enhance the results even more by giving students a forum to freely share and organise their ideas (Chai et al., 2022; Ganapathy et al., 2022; Palpanadan et al., 2023).

4.4.3 Mind-Mapping

In recent years, digital technologies have been added to the traditional pen-and-paper brainstorming process to help streamline the process. For example, academic reading and summary writing have been enhanced by the use of digital mind-mapping technologies (Selvaraj & Aziz, 2020). These resources provide concepts with a visual depiction, making it easier for students to understand how various concepts relate to one another. These tools are especially helpful for group brainstorming sessions as their digital format makes editing and

collaboration simple.

Numerous research have examined the usefulness of mind mapping, either traditionally or digitally, in the context of English writing. For example, a study by Chalak and Rastgoo (2021) examined how language learners felt about using digital versus traditional mind-mapping methods in English writing workshops. The results showed that students thought well of mind mapping, particularly when it came to the digital method. Students who used the technique were able to better organise their texts, indicating that mind mapping can be especially helpful in helping students prepare their English writing assignments.

It has been shown that as a visual representation of ideas and concepts, mind mapping is a useful aid for improving writing abilities in English as a Second Language (ESL) learners, especially for those with low competence levels. Mind mapping can act as a bridge to enable students in Malaysia, where there is a wide range of English competence, to arrange their ideas and thoughts more logically (Wan Ibrahim & Othman, 2021). Students can see the links between concepts with mind maps since they are visual, which makes writing more structured and less intimidating. Promising outcomes have been observed when mind mapping is used in ESL writing classes, particularly in blended learning settings. While blended learning has its advantages, Othman et al. (2021) pointed out that learners may become demotivated if they lack vocabulary and competency. However, because mind mapping provides students with an organised method for thinking and structuring their thoughts, they can overcome these obstacles with the help of essay construction and word memory at the same time.

Although mind mapping has many benefits, there are drawbacks to using it in ESL classes. For this tool to be used properly, teachers must be knowledgeable and trained in its use. The way mind mapping is incorporated into the curriculum and presented to students will determine how effective it is as a teaching technique. Instructors are essential in helping students grasp the advantages and goals of mind mapping and in assisting them with its appropriate use (Ramamuthie & Abdul Aziz, 2022).

It is also important to remember that mind mapping is only one technique among several that may be used for brainstorming and idea organisation, even though it can be a very effective tool in these situations. It must be used in conjunction with other writing techniques and strategies to be effective. As noted by Subon and Norseha (2023), expanding one's vocabulary is essential to enhancing writing abilities. As such, although mind mapping can help with concept organisation, a more thorough strategy involving vocabulary development is required for the development of writing skills.

4.5 Overcoming Writing Impairments for Low-Proficiency Learners

Writing impairment is a complex topic that requires in-depth investigation, especially for English as a Second Language (ESL) learners in Malaysia. As stated in Sustainable Development Goal #4, having fluency in the English language is essential for attaining high-quality higher education, particularly in oral communication (Ramalingam et al., 2023). Though the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2015–2025 places a strong emphasis on technology integration, students have noted verbal communication difficulties, especially when interacting with teachers in blended learning settings. These difficulties carry over to written communication when idea transmission becomes an even more difficult task. Learners' motivation affects their reading and writing skills, which are strongly related. Since learners may not be exposed to a wide variety of vocabulary and sentence patterns that are necessary for efficient writing, a lack of motivation might result in writing impairment.

Additionally, the general application and inclination for language learning strategies (LLS) contribute significantly to the enhancement of writing abilities in ESL students (Chai et al., 2022; Yu et al., 2023). The techniques that students use might help or hurt their ability to write. For example, learners who use a variety of LLS may be more proficient in vocabulary, grammar, and writing mechanics than learners who only use a few strategies. Another factor to take into account is the word usage of advanced Malaysian upper primary school students, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak (Jack & Hashim, 2023). Writing requires a strong vocabulary, and any deficiencies in this area might have a negative impact on the written work's quality. The key vocabulary employed by advanced learners in extended writing offered insights into the areas that need to be improved to increase writing proficiency.

Learners' choices, needs, strategies, cultural backgrounds, and experiences all have a significant impact on English, which is acknowledged as a second language in Malaysia. Yu et al. (2023) examined the language learning methods (LLS) Year 4 ESL students in a Malaysian primary school used, with a particular emphasis on enhancing writing abilities. The study underlined how crucial it is to provide ESL students with a wide variety of LLS when teaching them writing skills and how important it is for teachers to be aware of the techniques their students employ to improve their writing. In a subsequent study, Gul et al. (2023) investigated the viewpoints of students regarding the oral feedback methods their teachers employ to foster academic writing skills. The results showed that grammatical-based, procedural-based, clarification-based, and correction-based feedback are among the effective oral feedback techniques. The development of ESL learners' academic writing skills can be greatly impacted by these feedback techniques, which is why they are important.

The emergence of social media platforms has also had an impact on how students communicate and learn. The impact of social media in helping ESL learners improve their speaking and writing abilities gave students the chance to interact with others, exchange ideas, practise their abilities, and get motivated. One suggestion for improving the speaking and writing abilities of ESL students is to incorporate social media into the educational framework (Ganapathy et al., 2022; Ramasamy & Zainal, 2023a; Jack & Hashim, 2023).

5. Conclusion

This study has identified that degree to which learners of English in Malaysia are proficient in the language depends on several factors,

such as their learning preferences, cultural backgrounds, and past experiences.

The transition from face-to-face instruction to distance learning, particularly amid the COVID-19 pandemic, has made matters worse for Malaysian ESL students. Although post-pandemic techniques like the WH-questions and poetry have been used to enhance writing abilities, there is no thorough examination of their efficacy in the literature, particularly when considering the process approach to writing. The combination of poetry and WH-questions was highlighted by Chai et al. (2022), however, the study was restricted to Year 5 primary school students, creating a vacuum in our knowledge of the wider implications for various age groups and proficiency levels.

Finally, given the striking disparities between the Mandarin logographic writing system and the English alphabetic scripts, the influence of the first language, especially Mandarin, on ESL writing among Malaysian Chinese learners has been noticed (Govindarajoo et al., 2022). However, there is no thorough examination in the literature of how this impact shows up in ESL learners' writing faults and how teachers might use the process approach to solve these issues. As a result, even while studies have been conducted on a variety of ESL writing-related topics in the Malaysian setting, there is still a large vacuum in the literature when it comes to the experience and implementation of the process approach in writing, particularly for novice writers. This gap highlights how much more study is required to offer a thorough understanding and strategies to both educators and students.

6. Future Research Directions

This article has established a groundwork for future research on the application and experience of the process approach in writing for low-proficiency English as a second language (ESL) learners in the Malaysian context. The systematic literature review (SLR) highlighted in the articles the importance of investigating the historical development of writing issues, comparing writing abilities across various competence levels, and considering the process approach's application from a global viewpoint. Among the most important components that can be applied to improve writing skills include planning, brainstorming, and mind mapping. Although, greater attention is given to English competence, but there is still a lack of research on the particular strategies used by ESL students, particularly when it comes to writing abilities. Therefore, future studies are recommended to study strategies used by ESL students for their improvement in writing skills. Furthermore, there is a noticeable gap in the literature addressing the unique challenges faced by Malaysian ESL learners in mastering the Complexity, Accuracy, and Fluency (CAF) dimensions, especially in the area of writing accuracy, even though these dimensions are frequently used to measure second language production and proficiency. The study by Palpanadan et al. (2023) brought attention to problems with tenses, sentence structure, and vocabulary, among other things, but it skipped over investigating the root reasons or possible fixes from the standpoint of the process approach.

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