

## Collaborative Writing in EFL Setting: A Review

### Parlindungan Pardede

Universitas Kristen Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia

[parlpard2010@gmail.com](mailto:parlpard2010@gmail.com)

#### Article History

Received: 5 January 2024

Accepted: 26 January 2024

Published: 15 February 2024

#### Keywords

collaborative writing,  
constructivist learning,  
cultural background, EFL

#### Abstract

Despite the use of various approaches in writing classes, writing is still the most difficult language skill to master for most ESL/EFL learners. To overcome the problem, collaborative writing has been recommended since the 1970's. Since this approach involves learners in the activities of understanding, manipulating, producing, and interacting which facilitates them not only to practice writing, it is believed to be effective in helping the learners become better writers. This article reviews related publications on collaborative writing to provide insights and recent developments in collaborative writing implementation in EFL settings. Research on its implementation in ESL settings does reveal its effectiveness in improving learners' writing skills. However, due to linguistic experience and socio-cultural background differences between ESL and EFL learners, what works effectively in ESL does not automatically work well in EFL. To implement collaborative writing fruitfully in their EFL classes, teachers need to provide a conducive and supportive learning environment and effective guidelines for the entire writing process.

#### How to cite this article (APA, 7th Ed.):

Pardede, P. (2024). Collaborative writing in EFL settings: A review. *Journal of English Teaching*, 10(1), 92-109. <https://doi.org/10.33541/jet.v10i1.5631>

### INTRODUCTION

Among the four language skills, writing is the most difficult to master, not only by second/foreign language learners but also by native speakers. (Ghoneim & H.E.A, 2019; Mastan et al., 2017). Learning to write is a much more complex, challenging, and difficult

process because in their writing students should balance various factors, including content, organization, purpose, audience, vocabulary, and mechanical elements (Rass, 2015). While learning to write, learners engage in a recursive process of planning, formulating ideas, and revising their work to produce final written products. Learning to write is challenging because during the process the learners keep on engaging in cognitive tasks to solve problems and make their thoughts meaningful and concrete, and in motoric activities to express the thoughts in written symbols.

Writing in a foreign language is naturally more complex than in a first or second language. Writing in a first language involves the activities of forming and organizing ideas, initial writing, improving writing, selecting appropriate diction, and editing text. Writing in a foreign language involves all of these activities plus a mastery of the language being used (Wolfersberger, 2003), and harder thinking. An individual used to think in his first language. When he is writing in a foreign language, he needs to think in that language, resulting in an inaccurate translation process from their mother tongue. Consequently, ESL/EFL learners often encounter writing difficulties in terms of grammar, cohesion, coherence, paragraph organization, diction, and spelling (Ariyanti & Fitriana, 2017), usage of plural forms, articles, verb forms, clauses, passive sentences, and prepositions (Hasan & Marzuki, 2017). Research (e.g. Alfaki, 2015; Mohammed, 2018) revealed that linguistics, psychological, cognitive, psychomotor, and pedagogical factors can cause difficulties in mastering writing skills in ESL/EFL learning contexts. These, in turn, can emerge demotivation, fear, and negative attitudes towards writing skills instruction (Ismail et al., 2010), which make the development of writing skills tends to be naturally challenging to a majority of ESL/EFL learners.

To help EFL teachers assist learners in tackling these problems, various approaches have been proposed, among which the product-based approach, process-based approach, and genre-based approach were the most popular before the advent of collaborative writing. However, the implementation of these approaches has not yet succeeded in facilitating EFL learners to be better writers. Writing is still troublesome for most EFL learners in Indonesia (Ismail et al., 2010), Vietnam (Anh, 2019), Oman (Mustafa et al., 2022), Yemen, Iraq (Nasser, 2018), Sweden (Solagha, 2013), Albania (Sogutlu & Veliaj-Ostrosi, 2015), Saudi Arabia (Rass, 2015), Egypt (Ahmed, 2010), and many other countries.

To overcome the problem, researchers and writers (e.g., Tompkins et al., 2014) have currently recommended employing collaborative writing—an approach or strategy in which a single text is produced through the collaboration of two or more writers (Storch, 2019). Unlike the product approach, the process approach, and the genre approach implemented earlier in writing classes, collaborative writing is more effective in helping learners become better writers as it provides more opportunities for learners to work together and solve language problems in pairs or small groups. (Chen & Hapgood, 2019; Zenouzagh, 2020; Zhang, 2018). Bueno-Alaustey and Larumbe, (2017) posited that second/foreign language learning is more effective if done collaboratively, either in pairs or groups. Considering that it has been increasingly implemented in writing

classes at various educational levels and learning contexts (Zhang, 2018), collaborative writing is viewed as one of the most effective approaches to developing writing skills (Anggraini et al., 2020; Meihami et al. 2013; Shehadeh, 2011).

This article overviews the nature and current research on collaborative writing in EFL settings. Some literature reviews have been conducted to provide a better understanding of various topics in collaborative writing. Amirkhiz et al. (2012) analyzed numerous conceptual and research articles to provide the underlying concepts, existing definitions, and types of collaborative writing implemented in first and second-language learning. The results showed that most of the reviewed research focuses on the effectiveness of collaborative writing, students' perceptions of collaborative writing, and peer response activities. Other studies discuss the definition and types of collaborative writing, and some others compare the quality of jointly-produced texts vis-à-vis individually-produced texts. Talib & Cheung (2017) reviewed 68 empirical studies on collaborative writing published from 2006-2016 to present collaborative writing recent development as a pedagogical practice at various levels of education in first and second languages. The results showed that (1) ICT has facilitated collaborative writing implementations; (2) collaborative writing has improved most learners' writing competencies and increased their motivation; and (3) collaborative writing effectively improves student writing accuracy and critical thinking. Lu and Kim (2021) studied 12 empirical research on collaborative writing implementation in K-12 second language classrooms to present new insights into this specific context. The results revealed that writing processes, writing outcomes, and collaborative writing affordances are the major research interests. Many of the selected studies focus on K-12 students learning English with varied writing tasks. Some others deal with collaborative writing implemented in face-to-face, online, and blended learning modes. Svenlin & Sørhaug (2023) systematically reviewed 107 research articles on collaborative writing in first-language primary and secondary school contexts. The findings reveal that most studies focus on the drafting process, and only a few studies deal with brainstorming and outlining activities. Despite the accelerating penetration of technology into the language learning field, only a few articles explicitly study technology-based collaborative writing.

Because the previous reviews analyze publications on first and second-language settings only, there is a need to review the literature on collaborative writing in EFL settings. This article attempts to provide insights and recent developments in collaborative writing implementation in EFL settings. It begins by discussing the nature of collaborative writing to see what collaborative writing is in EFL settings. The next section discusses constructivist learning theory, on which collaborative learning is grounded. After that, the discussion is focused on the major features of collaborative writing, the procedure of collaborative writing, group formation in collaborative writing, and the advantages of collaborative writing, and ICT-based collaborative writing.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **What is collaborative writing?**

Driven by the intention to find a new approach for helping learners to become better writers, collaborative writing emerged in the early 1970s. Pioneered by Bruffee (as cited

in Jafari & Ansari, 2012) who posited that language learners produce better performance in composition when they write in a group than when they write individually, collaborative writing soon gained much attention and has been widely implemented in the second and foreign language learning contexts (Li & Zhang, 2023; Shehadeh, 2011; Zhang, 2018). Generally defined as the joint writing of a text by two or more writers (Storch, 2013), collaborative writing is carried out by assigning learners to work together actively with a partner or other group members to produce good writing. Lowry et al., (2004) defined it as “an iterative and social process that involves a team focused on a common objective that negotiates, coordinates, and communicates during the creation of a common document” Thus, collaborative writing can be seen as a strategy to stimulate learners to intentionally interact in pairs or groups and compose a paper together (Zhang & Chen, 2022; Zhang & Plonsky, 2020).

In literature, various types of collaborative writing have been proposed. Louth, McAllister, and McAllister (1993) differentiated two kinds of collaborative writing. First, is interactive writing, in which team members interact in all stages of the writing process, but individual members are in charge of creating individual pieces of work. This type can also be called peer editing. Second, group writing (or co-authoring), in which team members also interact in all stages, but everyone is responsible for the final product. Saunders (1989) classified collaborative writing into four types: co-writing, co-responding, co-publishing, and helping. In co-writing, members write together and exchange ideas on every task during the writing process to produce one written product. In co-responding, members interact only during the revision process. In co-publishing, members co-publish a collaborative text based on individual texts. During the process of writing, the members have a little discussion because each of them independently writes separate sections of a text. In 'helping; members help one another voluntarily throughout the writing process in a particular manner.

Among the types described above, the most suitable collaborative writing to implement in language education is co-writing. To ensure language learners that it facilitates learning optimally, it must involve two or more members who share ideas and responsibility during the stages of brainstorming, outlining, note-taking planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing through meaningful interaction using written and spoken language, Collaborative writing in language education does not refer to editing activities or providing feedback on other people's writing, because these two activities limit the authors' interactions to only one stage of writing and they do not share joint ownership of the text (Storch, 2013). Collaborative writing in language education is different from a group writing project conducted by having the individuals involved complete their sections, and then an editor assembles them into a more cohesive manuscript. It is also different from writing together which is carried out by collecting the individual manuscripts of various participants to compile them into a larger work (co-publishing) because this kind of writing still relies on each participant's control over their respective contributions (Kittle & Hicks, 2012). As stated earlier, collaborative writing in language education requires shared authorship and shared ownership, so that each

participant has an equal share in the drafting, revision, and presentation of the entire text.

In learning to write through collaborative writing, each learner is involved in the activities of understanding, manipulating, producing, and interacting in the target language they use. In this way, they not only practice writing, but also share knowledge and develop critical thinking, reflective thinking, and decision-making skills. The members' cooperation during the whole writing process (brainstorming, organizing, composing, revising, and publishing) will eventually grow a sense of joint responsibility and positive interdependence for the final product. Both joint responsibility and positive interdependence senses will then promote a sense of co-ownership which will encourage the collaborators to contribute to decision-making on all aspects of the writing: content, organization, and language (Jacobs, 2004). Thus, unlike the traditional belief which views writing as an individual activity undertaken to transmit ideas or feelings from the writer to the reader, as its name suggests, collaborative writing accentuates the role of interactions that facilitate learners to learn from each other (Raja, 2014; Storch, 2007).

### **Collaborative Writing and Constructivist Theory**

Collaborative writing is grounded on the social constructivist learning theory pioneered by Vygotsky (Storch, 2005). Social constructivists believe that human development is inherently a social activity and that children's cognitive development emerges from social interactions. From a constructivist perspective, learning is carried out by individuals by building, creating, discovering, and developing knowledge and meaning for themselves (Liu & Chen, 2010). Therefore, for learning to be effective, students must engage in authentic meaning-making processes, such as discussing ideas in groups, sharing perspectives, and bringing together background knowledge to build a correct understanding of the learning material (Smagorinsky, 2013). The process of sharing through discussion allows learners to discover and reshape what they know and how they know it (Simpson et al., 2010).

Collaboration is necessary to construct meaning and build competence because collaboration opens the gate for students to enter the learning arena called Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and learn with the more skilled or knowledgeable other (MKO), which, according to Shin (2014) refers to "the 'expert writer' of the group, a person who is more proficient in the target language and even a person who has more ideas and experiences about the subject matter" in the context of collaborative writing, i.e., teachers or classmates (Smagorinsky, 2013). Language skills, such as listening, paraphrasing, questioning, elaborating, and explaining play an important role in this process, because they are valuable tools for concept development and higher levels of language proficiency. Opportunities to collaborate meaningfully with peers are also important because students will use language to interact with each other in their unique ways, which are used in teacher interactions (Simpson et al., 2010). In this way, students increase the range and quality of their communication skills.

Apart from building skills or knowledge, collaboration also has positive psychological effects. Vygotsky (in Smagorinsky, 2013) emphasized that thoughts and emotions are closely related. When collaborating with peers, learners experience their

learning firsthand, and this firsthand experience helps them understand each other's skills mastery growth. For example, positive appreciation or criticism from classmates for a student's ideas will further motivate him to increase participation, dare to take more risks and engage more fully in discussions. Conversely, students whose ideas are negatively criticized tend to reduce participation for fear of being disrespected or ridiculed (Smagorinsky, 2013). Therefore, collaborative writing classes need to be packaged into positive and safe learning communities, which facilitate students to share ideas without fear and ridicule, necessary for implementing quality learning. To make this happen, the development of discussion skills, sharing ideas, empathy, adopting various points of view, developing imagination, problem-solving, and a commitment to being involved in drafting, revising, and editing writing are needed to enable meaningful and productive group work (Simpson et al., 2010; Spandel, 2013).

One of the impacts of the social constructivist approach in learning writing is a paradigm shift from writing individually to writing collaboratively. In previous eras, the process of learning to write was considered more effective if done individually. However, applying a social constructivist approach to learning turns out to provide many benefits. Bush and Zuidema (2013) highlighted that various writing activity products in a professional environment, such as memos and personal correspondence, are carried out individually. Yet, writing with a large impact, such as work for public consumption, work that discusses sensitive topics, or work that concerns health, tends to be produced by writing teams through sharing ideas, evaluating each other's contributions, and offering feedback to ensure the quality of the writing. The New London Group (1996) accentuated that the main function of schools is to prepare students to take part in life after graduation. Therefore, providing collaborative writing skills is very important for students.

A social constructivist approach to writing also requires a shift in thinking from teachers as knowledge holders to students as knowledge co-constructors (Mills & Exley, 2014). In collaborative writing, teachers play the role of a facilitator who "provides information and organizes activities for learners to discover their own meaning" (Liu & Chen, 2010). Thus, collaborative writing should be implemented in a student-centered learning environment. An important part of the shift is to let students choose and control what to produce. Learners should even be given opportunities to write about topics passionate to them to help engage them in the writing process. Cremin (2017) found that when learners are given the chance to write about subjects interesting to them, they tend to "invest more of themselves in the process." The beauty of collaborative writing lies in the possibility of groups working together to create texts that none of them could have written individually (Kittle & Hicks, 2012).

In the EFL context, the shift from teacher-centered to student-centered can be one of the crucial factors that teachers should consider. EFL students and teachers, especially those raised in Asian cultures, tend to have high power distance (PD) norms which drives them to conform to hierarchical relationships regarding age, seniority, and rank. This norm can make it difficult for them to accept equal teacher-student relationships, and



thus incompatible collaborative writing (Yasui et al., 2022). Moreover, high power distance can also lead students with better English proficiency to hold more power over peers with less proficiency. Conversely, less proficient students tend to feel inferior and become passive during the learning process. Creating a supportive learning environment to reduce students' and teachers' high PD can be one of the teachers' tasks so that collaborative writing works in their classes.

### **Advantages of Collaborative Writing**

Collaborative writing is beneficial for students because it follows the work patterns and dynamics of a professional writing group which ensures that each member has a stake in the final result for they contribute something of value. This pattern also creates accountability for all group members and fosters discussion and critical thinking, as all students must engage in the activity of sharing ideas, evaluating ideas, and deciding collectively what good writing looks like, and what is needed to help their writing meet those standards. Discussions help students understand and explain the "why" and "how" related to their writing so that they realize the importance of developing strong writing skills (Bush & Zuidema, 2013).

Previous research has provided much empirical evidence about the benefits of collaborative writing in ESL/EFL classrooms. First, collaborative writing facilitates students to be better writers. Students working collaboratively produce better texts in terms of task fulfillment, grammatical accuracy, and complexity (Storch, 2005) because members with high proficiency can help peers improve their writing organization, word choice, spelling, and grammar skills (Wahyuni, 2014). Clifford in Hill (2003) accentuated that since collaborative writing provides students the opportunity to give and receive immediate feedback on language they cannot get when working individually, they can learn more from each other and produce better work than students who work individually. Thus, collaborative writing can effectively overcome writing anxiety or *writing apprehension* (i.e., the negative attitude towards writing experienced by EFL learners because they do not know what to write and how to do it) which leads to poor writing performance (Challob et al., 2016).

The second benefit is that learning to write collaboratively develops critical thinking. Students who learn to write in groups of four produce the highest scores in terms of analyzing, evaluating, and creating information skills. Students who did it in pairs also showed improvements in critical thinking, but not as high as students who studied in groups. Meanwhile, students who learned to write individually did not show increased critical thinking (Moonma & Kaweera, 2021). The third benefit, collaborative writing also increases the awareness of the audience. While writing collaboratively, peers become an immediate audience of the text being constructed. This enables students to be more alert to analytical and critical thinking. Finally, collaborative writing can prepare students for real-world applications, because the experience they get through writing collaboratively develops teamwork which is vital in most professions (Lunsford & Ede, 1990).

### **Major Features of Collaborative Writing**

Based on a literature review and her research, Yong (2010) listed eight major features of collaborative writing in onsite or face-to-face SL/FL classes. These features are classified into (1) defining features, including mutual interactions, negotiation, cognitive conflict, and sharing of expertise; and (2) facilitating features, including affective factors, first language use, backtracking, and humor. A collaborative writing session may include only some of these features. The role of a feature and the way it combines with the others can vary depending on the session's sociocultural contexts.

Interaction is the most important defining feature of collaborative writing. Interactions facilitate learners with abundant opportunities to instigate and challenge ideas, which, in turn, will incite reflective and generative thinking. Negotiation, which includes clarification requests, confirmation checks, and comprehension checks, is an essential part of collaboration and plays a significant role in promoting mutual accountability (Yong, 2010). In a collaborative writing process, cognitive conflict, the third defining feature, is inevitable because anytime learners negotiate variances of opinion to reach an agreement, conflict is likely to occur. Conflict plays an important role in the learning process because it offers a wider understanding of problems—and, thus, boosts problem-solving skills, helps learners to be better thinkers as it lets them learn to resolve contradictory views, and helps learners to cultivate good interpersonal skills. However, teachers should ensure that the students never keep unresolved conflicts as they can be harmful to group function. Sharing of expertise is another essential feature of collaborative writing because when learners with different knowledge, language proficiency, and background experiences work collaboratively, they devote their strengths to the group.

The defining features, particularly cognitive conflict, can be the most critical factor to consider to succeed collaborative writing classes in EFL setting because many EFL learners, particularly those growing up in Asian cultures have a predisposition to be quiet in the classroom. East Asian students in the United States, for instance, are found to be unwilling to respond; reticent, passive, and over-dependent on the teacher (Takahashi, 2019). This is confirmed by Yasui et al. (2022) who found Japanese students to be quiet in the classroom due to (1) the belief that their questions are unimportant and craving not to cause inconvenience to others; (2) hesitancy to express disagreements which might generate conflict; and (3) reluctance to take the risk of making inappropriate statements. Can such cultural labels be generalized to other Asian students? More research is needed to get a clearer understanding of this. What is important is that teachers need to create a comfortable class environment to encourage every student to be a proactive and engaged participant in the learning process. The provision of teachers' and peers' supportive feedback and the elimination of negative responses are worth trying in this case (Bao, 2020).

Affective factors, including commitment, reliability, trust, and respect toward group members are prominent facilitating features in collaborative writing. These factors will create a supportive class, an environment that is free from fear and apprehension. The



second facilitating feature in collaborative writing is the use of the first language. Research has indicated that judicious use of the first language is necessary to avoid ineffectiveness and time-consuming in some EFL learning situations, such as in explaining errors, presenting grammar rules, discussing cross-cultural issues, and checking for comprehension (McCann, 2005; Anh, 2010). Pardede (2018) found that the lower the students' English proficiency, the higher the amount of mother tongue use they expect. In writing courses, Murtisari (2016) found that regardless of their English proficiency, EFL learners self-reported that they applied translation from their first language to support them think more clearly and to convey more complex ideas. Thus, if the mother tongue use helps in idea generation or in choosing the most appropriate diction, learners should be provided with the flexibility to use their first language. Backtracking, referring to "actions performed by the writer to take stock of the ideas and constraints of the text produced so far to bring them to bear on current needs" is a type of reclusiveness in the writing process, in which the writer moves to and fro among the processes of planning, writing, and revision to detect weaknesses, address inconsistencies, and improve his communication (Tarchi et al., 2023). The last notable facilitating feature in collaborative writing is humor. Yong (2010) listed some essential uses of humor: to build fellowship, to create and preserve solidarity, to nurture learning and community, to grow a sense of cohesion, and to moderate or support power relationships.

### **Collaborative Writing Procedure in EFL Classes**

The discussion on the major features of collaborative writing above indicates that viewing from cultural dimensions, collaborative writing is appropriate to implement in first and second-language education settings but can be incompatible with foreign language settings. EFL learners are raised in cultures that have many differences from the Western culture in which collaborative writing was developed. Culture, which is defined as a set of shared beliefs, values, rules, attitudes, and behaviors by which people look at things (Gudykunst, 2003) affects students' learning motivation (Lim, 2004), attitudes to learning (Hannon & D'Y Netto, 2007), learning behaviors (Valiente, 2008), and learning strategies and styles (Ramburuth & McCormick, 2001). Raised in an individualistic culture, they are confrontational and are more solution-oriented while working in a group (Economides, 2008). Thus, in terms of cultural background, first and second-language learners naturally seem to have no significant problems to go through all activities in collaborative writing. In contrast, EFL learners, especially those raised in a collectivist culture, are apt to regard relationships to be more necessary than completing tasks (Trumbull et al., 2001). Besides words, they also count on nonverbal communication patterns, such as using gestures and facial expressions while handling tasks (Francesco & Gold, 1998).

Considering these, to make collaborative writing work well in foreign language settings, teachers need to support students by providing beforehand detailed guidelines for the entire process. At least, students should be sure about the 'rules of the game' covering the what, how, when, where, and with whom to participate in every stage of collaborative writing. To do it, teachers are suggested to ensure that every student has

a clear idea about the steps and how to actively stay on task in each of them. To keep participating and considering every aspect of the writing project, brainstorming to facilitate meaningful interaction and shared-decision making is crucial. ICT has facilitated numerous tools for communication easily anytime and anywhere. Thus, the team members need to use appropriate social media (e.g., WhatsApp, email) for chatting and sharing responses/ideas and Microsoft Word for collaborative revising and editing. Overall, the steps include: (1) forming a group, (2) deciding/determining the topic, (3) planning for researching to gather information for the topic; (4) determining the purpose of writing and structuring the content; (5) drafting, (6) revising, editing, and proofreading, and (7) publishing.

### **Group Formation in Collaborative Writing**

Since collaborative writing is principally writing in groups, group formation is essential. In general, the smaller the group, the more participation each member has. Yet, big groups can promote more comprehensive discussion. Consequently, considering the suitable group size to make collaborative writing run effectively is important. A group with four members is often recommended because the group will obtain many ideas (Richards & Renandya, 2002). Yet, Yong (2006) argued in a group with more than three members, some members might feel left out or some may even leave their responsibilities. Additionally, Richards and Renandya (2002) asserted that teachers need to keep groups together for about four to eight weeks. They also suggested teachers give their students a chance to become comfortable with one another and permit them to form a group identity and bond, and provide them the opportunity to learn how to tackle difficulties.

Group formation can be accomplished in two methods: student-selected and teacher-selected. The student-selected method is preferable to students as it allows them to work with classmates with whom they feel comfortable. This method also potentially provides a safe and conducive environment for members to voice their ideas openly, to be actively involved, and to pool resources (Yong, 2006). Conversely, Richards and Renandya (2002) advocated that the teacher-selected method is better because it enables teachers to create a heterogeneous group. In such a group, students with a high level of proficiency can assist others with a low proficiency level because it has a mix of language proficiency, gender, and diligence.

Some students may resist collaborative writing processes because they feel uncomfortable giving up control of their idea generation to a group, or are reluctant to get involved (Bush & Zuidema, 2013). To prevent such obstacles, teachers are advised to ensure the students that (1) collaborative writing projects are planned thoroughly; (2) the due date is clear; (3) it is based on the understanding that large projects can be broken down into a series of smaller milestones; (4) they can choose writing topics according to their interests; and (5) there is accountability for all students, such as regular consultation with the teacher, or self-assessment conducted after writing is

completed can provide an opportunity for each student to reflect on their specific contributions (Bush & Zuidema, 2013).

Additionally, teachers should also be flexible concerning with the collaboration structures for every class. A collaboration structure that works in a class can be unfit for other classes. Adjusting the social hierarchical order of a class so that the learning process is truly learner-oriented requires teachers' flexibility (Mills & Exley, 2014). In this context, teachers must create a balance between students' responsibility for making contributions to their group and leaving it up to them to make decisions about how these contributions are implemented (Mills & Exley, 2014). Educators should also be aware that some students may be uncomfortable with collaborative writing due to their personal preferences. Yet, collaborative writing is a valuable skill and tool, which is not intended to replace individual writing (Elola & Oskoz, 2017). Thus, teachers must also appreciate the value of individual writing that allows learners to hone a unique authorial voice and the expression of personal ideas, which cannot always be accommodated through collaborative writing. Successful writing learning must balance and meet the development needs of all writers (Spandel, 2013).

### **ICT-Based Collaborative Writing**

The rise and penetration of technology into the education field have made collaborative writing possible not only in onsite classes but also in online and blended learning modes. Web 2.0 tools can be used in language learning as a medium for discussing, submitting written assignments, or reconstructing, revising, and editing texts. More and more writing classes are now using platforms such as Google Docs, wikis, and blogs that facilitate synchronous and asynchronous interactive-participatory writing as collaborative writing learning environments (Brodahl et al., 2011). ICT has offered abundant tools for creating and conveying audio-visual products, visual materials, and end-user software easy to apply for producing new educational practices (Pardede, 2019), including writing. Research on collaborative writing has even shifted from a traditional pen-and-paper approach to a multi-modal computer-assisted approach (Li & Storch, 2017)

The use of ICT in learning to write is supported by four factors. First, technology has a high potential to facilitate learning to write. Apart from offering a learning environment that allows students to learn at their own pace and comfort and solve their learning problems independently (Kademi, 2021), ICT also facilitates writing activities, sharing information, knowledge formation, and provides easier collaboration opportunities in among students (Aydin & Yildiz, 2014), Second, students and college students nowadays like using technology. A video by Fisch & McLeod, (2007) revealed that today's 21-year-old youth have played 10,000 hours of video games, sent/received 250,000 emails or instant messages, and made more than 2.7 billion searches on Google in a month! For the majority of students today, ICT is a more interesting means of learning to write than pen and paper. Third, the use of ICT is very effective in overcoming the limited time that writing classes have. In contrast to traditional collaborative writing classes which often lack time to complete collaborative activities and writing projects, with the help of ICT, students can stay connected and collaborate at any time and from

anywhere, so they can complete their discussion and other collaboration activities. By utilizing social networks, such as Wikis, blogs, or learning management systems (LMS), the problem of time limitations that often arise in traditional writing classes can be overcome. Fourth, ICT offers great potential to improve students' writing skills and writing quality. Various studies reveal that online collaborative writing learning using Google Docs and wikis, both synchronously and asynchronously, improves the quality of text, content, and organization of students' writing (Aljafen, 2018; Alshalan, 2016; Ardiasih et al., 2019; Yim, 2017 ) and their writing performance and abilities (Liu & Lan, 2016; Mudawe, 2018).

The dimension of social interaction in the digital environment, which encourages writing as a social activity, has not only increased interest in implementing ICT-assisted collaborative writing learning (Godwin-Jones, 2018) but has also changed the writing paradigm among today's youth. DeVoss et al. (2010) reiterated that the image of writing in the past was someone sitting alone at a table and writing on paper with a pencil or pen. Next, when you think of a writing class, what you imagine is a room filled with neatly arranged tables. Students sit facing the teacher's table at the front of the room. While lowering their heads, they wrote on notebook paper. For today's teenagers and young people, this picture may seem strange. For them, writing is using a computer. Many of them write regularly (if not daily) on one or more social networks. Most (if not all) of them write short messages to communicate. These indicate they feel more comfortable using digital media for writing than pens and paper (Coskie & Hornof, 2013). ICT can also help EFL learners with collectivist cultures that drive them to be reluctant to criticize or give suggestions to others' work, being fearful that so doing would disturb the group or create disharmony (Carson & Nelson, 1994) to collaborate more actively. ICT nurtures both positive interdependence and individual responsibility and can play the role of the more skilled or knowledgeable other (MKO).

Various studies on ICT-based collaborative writing in EFL settings have been conducted. Li (2023) experimented to investigate the effect of collaborative writing instruction using Tencent Docs on the writing performance, writing self-efficacy, and writing motivation of Chinese EFL learners. Findings showed that the experimental group had significantly higher development in writing performance, motivation, and self-efficacy than the control group. The study of Selcuk (2017) explores Turkish high school EFL learners' perceptions of peer affective factors during a Facebook-based collaborative writing activity. The results revealed that peer affective factors, including giving/receiving praise and giving/receiving motivational phrases, the use of informal language in group discussion, and the use of humor when undertaking the writing task made the students feel comfortable with each other. Such conditions had a positive impact on their writing development. Kitjaroonchai and Suppasetseree (2022) conducted a case study to investigate the effects of online collaborative writing using Google Docs to Asian EFL university learners writing performances. The findings revealed that the collaborative process positively correlates with the students' post-writing performance. ICT-based collaborative writing seems to have great potential to promote students' writing

performance. However, since the implementation of online collaborative writing in EFL contexts is still in its infancy, further investigations are needed to fully explore the learning opportunities provided by the new technologies.

## **CONCLUSION**

Since collaborative writing implementation involves learners in the activities of understanding, manipulating, producing, interacting, and decision-making, it provides more opportunities for learners to work together and solve language problems in pairs or small groups. Through collaborations during the writing process, learners can give and receive immediate feedback. So, they can learn more from each other. The rise and penetration of technology into the education field have made collaborative writing possible not only in onsite classes but also in online and blended learning modes. Collaborative writing research has currently even shifted from the traditional pen-and-paper approach to a computer-assisted approach.

Various empirical research on collaborative writing implementation in ESL settings, including those conducted in onsite, online, and blended learning modes, have revealed the effectiveness of this instructional approach to help students produce better texts in terms of task fulfillment, grammatical accuracy, and complexity; increase students skills in writing organization, word choice, spelling, and grammar skills and overcome writing anxiety. Its success in ESL settings, however, does not automatically guarantee that its implementation in EFL settings will also be successful due to linguistic experience and socio-cultural background differences between ESL and EFL learners. Therefore, before implementing collaborative writing, EFL teachers need to prepare a conducive learning environment and complete guidelines for their students. What is more, to get a better understanding, research on collaborative writing implementation in EFL settings which is still meager is needed. Urgent topics to study include sociocultural dimensions, students' and teachers' perspectives, learning procedures, and writing strategies.

## **References**

- Ahmed, A. H. (2010). Students' problems with cohesion and coherence in EFL essay writing in Egypt: Different perspective. *Literacy Information and Computer Education Journal*, 1(4), 211–221.
- Alfaki, I. M. (2015). University students' English writing problems. *International Journal of English Language Teaching*, 3(3), 40–52.
- Amirkhiz, Y., Yasin, S., Kamariah, A. B., Baki, R., Arshad, A. S., & Karim, H. (2012). A brief review of theoretical underpinnings, definitions and typical configurations of collaborative writing. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 1(4), 197–204. <https://doi.org/10.7575/ijalel.v.1n.4p.197>
- Anh, K. K. H. (2010). Use of Vietnamese in English language teaching in Vietnam: Attitudes of Vietnamese university teachers. *ELT Journal*, 3(2).
- Anh, N. (2019). EFL Student's Writing Skills: Challenges and Remedies. *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education (IOSR-JRME)*, 9(6), 74–84. <https://doi.org/10.9790/7388-0906017484>

- Ariyanti, A., & Fitriana, R. (2017). EFL students' difficulties and needs in essay writing. ... on *Teacher Training and Education 2017* .... <https://www.atlantispress.com/proceedings/ictte-17/25885710>
- Bao, D. (2020). Silence, talk and in-betweens: East Asian students' responses to task challenge in an Australian University. In J. King & S. Harumi (Eds.), *East asian perspectives on silence in english language education* (pp. 17–36). <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781788926775-007>
- Bueno-Alaustey, M. C., & Larumbe, P. M. de L. (2017). Collaborative Writing in the EFL Secondary Education Classroom Comparing Triad, Pair and Individual Work. *Huarte de San Juan. Filología y Didáctica de La Lengua*, 17, 254–275.
- Bush, J., & Zuidema, L. (2013). Professional writing in the English classroom. *English Journal*, 102(4), 107–110.
- Carson, J. G., & Nelson, G. L. (1994). Writing groups: Cross-cultural issues. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 3(1), 17–30. [https://doi.org/10.1016/1060-3743\(94\)90003-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/1060-3743(94)90003-5)
- Challob, A. I., Bakar, N. A., & Latif, H. (2016). Collaborative blended learning writing environment: Effects on EFL students' writing apprehension and writing performance. *English Language Teaching*, 9(6), 229. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n6p229>
- Chen, W., & Hapgood, S. (2019). Understanding knowledge, participation and learning in L2 collaborative writing: A metacognitive theory perspective. *Language Teaching Research*, 25(2), 256–281. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168819837560>
- Cremin, T. (2017). Motivating children to write with purpose and passion. In *The Literate Classroom* (4th ed., pp. 131–140). Routledge.
- Economides, A. A. (2008). Culture-aware collaborative learning. *Journal for Multicultural Education*, 2(4), 243–267.
- Eloa, I., & Oskoz, A. (2017). Writing with 21st century social tools in the L2 classroom: New literacies, genres, and writing practices. *Journal of Second Language Writing*. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1060374317301510>
- Francesco, A. M., & Gold, B. A. (1998). *International organizational behavior*. Prentice-Hall.
- Ghoneim, N. M. M., & H.E.A, E. (2019). Utilizing Ergonomics based instruction to develop college students' EFL creative writing skills. *Faculty of Education Journal*, 34(3), 1209–1218. <https://doi.org/10.21608/muja.2019.106746>
- Gudykunst, W. (2003). *Cross-cultural and intercultural communication*. Sage Publication.
- Hannon, J., & Dý Netto, B. (2007). Cultural diversity online: Student engagement with learning technologies. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 21(5), 418–432.
- Hasan, J., & Marzuki, M. (2017). An Analysis of Student's Ability in Writing at Riau



- University Pekanbaru. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 7(5), 380–388.
- Ismail, N., Elias, S., & Albakri, I. S. M. A. Perumal, P. D. Muthusamy, I. (2010). Exploring ESL Students' Apprehension Level and Attitude Towards Academic Writing. *International Journal of Learning*, 17(6), 475–484.
- Jacobs, G. M. (2004). *Cooperative learning: Theory, principles and techniques*. JF New Paradigm Education.
- Jafari, N., & Ansari, D. N. (2012). The effect of collaboration on Iranian EFL learners' writing accuracy. *International Education Studies*, 5(2), 125–131. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v5n2p125>
- Kitjaroonchai, N., & Suppasetsee, S. (2022). The effects of online collaborative writing via Google Docs on learners' writing performance and interaction: A case study of Asian EFL learners. *English as a Foreign Language International Journal*, 2(6), 6–32. <https://doi.org/10.56498/420262022>
- Kittle, P., & Hicks, T. (2012). Transforming the group paper with collaborative online writing. *Pedagogy*, 9(3), 525–538.
- Li, M., & Storch, N. (2017). Second language writing in the age of CMC: Affordances, multimodality, and collaboration. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 36, 1-5
- Li, M., & Zhang, M. (2023). Collaborative writing in L2 classrooms: A research agenda. *Language Teaching*, 56(1), 94–112. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444821000318>
- Li, Y. (2023). The effect of online collaborative writing instruction on enhancing writing performance, writing motivation, and writing self-efficacy of Chinese EFL learners. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14(June), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1165221>
- Lim, D. H. (2004). Cross cultural differences in online learning motivation. *Education Media International*, 41(2), 163–175.
- Liu, C. C., & Chen, I. J. (2010). The Evolution of Constructivism Theory. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research*, 3(4), 63–66.
- Louth, R., McAllister, C., & McAllister, H. A. (1993). The effects of collaborative writing techniques on freshman writing and attitudes. *Journal of Experimental Education*, 61(3), 215-224.
- Lowry, P. B., Curtis, A., & Lowry, M. R. (2004). Building a taxonomy and nomenclature of collaborative writing to improve interdisciplinary research and practice. *Journal of Business Communication*, 41(1), 66–99. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021943603259363>
- Lu, X., & Kim, S. (2021). A systematic review of collaborative writing implementation in K-12. *Teflin Journal*, 32(1), 50–71.
- Lunsford, A., & Ede, L. (1990). *Singular Texts/Plural Authors: Perspectives on Collaborative Writing* (Issue 1). Southern Illinois University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/357553>
- McCann, K. (2005). Not lost in translation. *IATEFL Issues*, 186.
- Mills, K. A., & Exley, B. (2014). Time, space, and text in the elementary school digital

- writing classroom. *Written Communication*, 31(4), 434–469.
- Mohammed, M. Q. (2018). Difficulties of Iraqi EFL Learners with Substance Errors in Writing. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, 5(3), 131–147.
- Moonma, J., & Kaweera, C. (2021). Collaborative Writing in EFL Classroom: Comparison on Group, Pair, and Individual Writing Activities in Argumentative Tasks. *Asian Journal of Education and Training*, 7(3), 179–188. <https://doi.org/10.20448/journal.522.2021.73.179.188>
- Murtisari, E. T. (2016). Translation skill in language learning/teaching: EFL learners' point of view. *Studies About Languages*, 29, 102–115. <https://doi.org/10.5755/j01.sal.0.29.14580>
- Mustafa, A., Arbab, A. N., & Sayed, A. A. El. (2022). Difficulties in Academic Writing in English as a Second/Foreign Language from the Perspective of Undergraduate Students in Higher Education Institutions in Oman. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ)*, 13(3), 41–53.
- Nasser, S. M. (2018). Iraqi EFL Students' Difficulties in Writing Composition: An Experimental Study (University of Baghdad). *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 9(1), 178. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v9n1p178>
- New London Group. (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures. In *Harvard Educational Review* (Vol. 66, Issue 1, pp. 60–93).
- Pardede, P. (2018). Use of mother tongue in EFL classes of secondary schools in Jabodebek: Students' and teachers' perception. *JET (Journal of English Teaching)*, 4(2), 62–80. <https://doi.org/10.33541/jet.v4i2.831>
- Pardede, P. (2019). Pre-service EFL teachers' perception of Edmodo use as a complementary learning tool. In P. Pardede (Ed.), *EFL Theory & Practice: Voice of EED UKI* (pp. 29–41).
- Raja, N. (2014). The effectiveness of group work and pair work for students of English at undergraduate level in high schools. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Bussiness*, 4(5), 155–163.
- Ramburuth, P., & McCormick, J. (2001). Learning diversity in higher education: A comparative study of Asian international and Australian students. *Higher Education*, 42(3), 333–350.
- Rass, R. A. (2015). Challenges Face Arab Students in Writing Well-Developed Paragraphs in English. *English Language Teaching*, 8(10), 49–59. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v8n10p49>
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in Language teaching: An anthology of current practice* (Vol. 21, Issue 1). Cambridge University Press. <http://journal.um-surabaya.ac.id/index.php/JKM/article/view/2203>
- Saunders, W. M. (1989). Collaborative writing tasks and peer interaction. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 13(1), 101-112.

- Selcuk, H. (2017). ... of student perceptions of peer collaboration through the medium of online short story writing among Turkish public high school EFL learners in a social media .... kclpure.kcl.ac.uk. [https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/files/77084162/2017\\_Selcuk\\_Hasan\\_1154065\\_thesis.pdf](https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/files/77084162/2017_Selcuk_Hasan_1154065_thesis.pdf)
- Shehadeh, A. (2011). Effects and student perceptions of collaborative writing in L2. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 20*(4), 286–305. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2011.05.010>
- Shin, T. W. . (2014). The role of ICT in scaffolding collaborative writing. *The English Teacher, XLIII*(April), 33–47.
- Simpson, A., Mercer, N., & Majors, Y. (2010). Editorial: Douglas Barnes revisited: If learning floats on a sea of talk, what kind of talk? And what kind of learning? *English Teaching: Practice and Critique, 9*(2), 1–6.
- Smagorinsky, P. (2013). What does Vygotsky provide for the 21st-century language arts teacher? *Language Arts, 90*(3), 192–204.
- Sogutlu, E., & Veliaj-Ostrosi, M. (2015). Efl Learners' Challenges In Essay Writing: The Case Of A Non-Public High School In Albania. *Journal of Positive School Psychology, 2022*(4), 3958–3981. <http://journalppw.com>
- Solagha, O. Z. (2013). Writing Difficulties in the Swedish ESL-Classroom How teachers of English deal with students' writing difficulties. *A Degree Project at the Department of Language Education, Stockholms Universitet*, 1–26. <http://su.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:652520/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Spandel, V. (2013). *Creating writers: 6 traits, process, workshop and literature* (6th ed.). Pearson.
- Storch, N. (2005). Collaborative writing: Product, process, and students' reflections. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 14*(3), 153–173.
- Storch, N. (2007). Investigating the merits of pair work on a text editing task in ESL classes. *Language Teaching Research, 11*(2), 143–159. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168807074600>
- Storch, N. (2013). *Collaborative writing in L2 classrooms. : Multilingual Matters*.
- Storch, N. (2019). Collaborative writing. *Language Teaching, 52*(1), 40–59. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444818000320>
- Svenlin, M., & Sørhaug, J. O. (2023). Collaborative Writing in L1 School Contexts: A Scoping Review. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research, 67*(6), 980–996. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2022.2115128>
- Takahashi, J. (2019). East Asian and native-English-speaking students' participation in the graduate-level American classroom. *Communication Education, 68*(2), 215–234. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03634523.2019.1566963>
- Talib, T., & Cheung, Y. L. (2017). Collaborative writing in classroom instruction: A synthesis of recent research. *The English Teacher, 46*(2), 43–57.
- Tarchi, C., Villalón, R., Vandermeulen, N., Casado-Ledesma, L., & Fallaci, A. P. (2023). Recursivity in source-based writing: a process analysis. *Read Writ.*

- <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-023-10482-8>
- Tompkins, G., Campbell, R., Green, D., & Smith, C. (2014). *Literacy for the 21st century*. Pearson Australia.
- Trumbull, E., Rothstein-Fisch, C., & Greenfield, P. M. (2001). *Bridging cultures home and school: A guide for teachers*. WestEd.
- Valiente, C. (2008). Are students using the wrong style of learning? *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 9(1), 73–91.
- Wahyuni, I. (2014). The effect of collaborative and reading habits towards the students' writing of recount text at the grade eight of MTsN Kamang. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Seni*, 15(2), 135–147. <https://doi.org/10.24036/komposisi.v15i2.7423>
- Yasui, K., Stanyon, M., Moroi, Y., Aoki, S., Yasuda, M., Otani, K., & Shikama, Y. (2022). Deconstructing barriers to support Japanese students in group discussion. *Asia Pacific Scholar*, 7(4), 73–75. <https://doi.org/10.29060/TAPS.2022-7-4/CS2783>
- Yong, M. F. (2006). *The nature and dynamics of collaborative writing in a malaysian tertiary ESL setting*. Massey University, New Zealand.
- Yong, M. F. (2010). Collaborative writing features. *RELC Journal*, 41(1), 18–30. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688210362610>
- Zang, M., & Plonsky, L. (2020). Collaborative writing in face-to-face settings: A substantive and methodological review. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 49(March), 100753. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2020.100753>
- Zenouzagh, Z. M. (2020). Syntactic complexity in individual, collaborative and E-collaborative EFL writing: mediating role of writing modality, L1 and sustained development in focus. *Educational Technology Research and ....* <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-020-09818-w>
- Zhang, M. (2018). Collaborative writing in the EFL classroom: The effects of L1 and L2 use. *System*, 76, 1–12. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0346251X17306280>
- Zhang, M., & Chen, W. (2022). Assessing collaborative writing in the digital age: An exploratory study. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 57. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2022.100868>