


The Effects of Collaborative Writing on Students' Writing Fluency: An Efficient Framework for Collaborative Writing

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Abstract

Collaborative writing is widely researched for its effects on students' writing accuracy; however, previous research studies fail to prove its effects on students' writing fluency. Also, none of the previous studies have investigated the framework for students to compose argumentative essays collaboratively. The purpose of this article is to fill these gaps. Sixty-two sophomore English-major students at a university in Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam, participated in the study. One difference in the treatment between the two groups was the composing stage. Twenty-seven students from the control group composed essays individually after they worked together for idea development to make an outline, whereas 35 students from the experimental group composed essays collaboratively. Data collection was from students' pretests, posttests of both individually and collaboratively written papers, and from the semi-structured interviews. The study reveals that collaborative writing had great effects on students' writing fluency in both collaboratively written papers and individually written papers. Also, the study invented an efficient framework for collaborative writing activities so that writing instructors could employ to their writing classrooms if they wish to.

Keywords

collaborative writing, collaborative written papers, individual written papers, writing fluency, argumentative essays

Introduction

Collaborative or cooperative learning is usually considered an important activity for the students at the tertiary level. Since the 1970s, when the communicative language teaching approach was introduced to English language learning, the instructors often employed pair-work or group-work to help students practice the language together as well as learn the language from each other. This helped move the teacher-centered to student-centered approach and brought many benefits to the language learners. Vygotsky (1978) claimed that language acquisition is a social process and development. The Zone of Proximal Development for the students who learn a language depends much on the interactions among peers and their learning environment. Foley and Thompson (2003) also assert that collaborative learning is an important activity in language classrooms to help students develop their language skills. Bremner (2010) states that instructors frequently employed collaborative learning at universities to help students conduct projects together and share work together. Each person is in charge of one part of the project to be completed faster with better results.

Specifically, in the academic writing classrooms, the instructors/researchers usually employed collaborative/cooperative learning activities to help students work together to brainstorm ideas and create an outline to help each other

conduct their writing. Besides, peer feedback for writing revision was also employed to help learners learn from each other and improve their writing quality (Harmer, 2007; Hyland, 2003; Nation, 2009; Pham, 2019; Pham et al., 2020; Pham & Nguyen, 2020). To take advantage of collaborative learning, some academic writing instructors had students compose essays collaboratively with the hope of having better writing products (Pham, 2013).

Collaborative writing is seen as an effective teaching method and is highly recommended to be implemented in the writing classrooms by many researchers worldwide (Dobao, 2012; Storch, 2011). Collaborative writing can be defined as a written product composed of pair or a group of students who work together to produce one common product (Inglehart et al., 2003). Similarly, Storch (2019) defined collaborative writing as an activity that two or more writers work together to produce a single text. According to Lowry et al. (2004), collaborative writing is a social process in which the group members focus on a common goal, negotiate, collaborate, and

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