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The Effect of Collaborative Writing on EFL Pupils' Writing Proficiency

The Case of Third Year Literature and Philosophy Stream Pupils at Amouria Larbi Secondary School, Biskra

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Dedication

I dedicate this modest work to:

My beloved parents whom I owe my success

My precious mother, **Hind Salima Badr,** *I am forever indebted to you*

My loving father, **Abderahmmen,** *whose love and support guided me all the way to success*

My source of motivation, inspiration and happiness

My dearest sister, **Ilhem Narimen**.

My adorable brothers, **Mohammed Houssem Eddin** *and* **Zakaria.**

My grandmother, for always including me in her prayers.

I would also like to dedicate this work to my teacher, **Mr Mohammed Kantaoui.**

Acknowledgement

In the name of ALLAH, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, All praise is due to ALLAH.

I shall pay my deepest gratitude to ALLAH the Almighty for giving me the strength and the health to finish this modest work.

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Abstract

Writing is a complex skill in that it includes many variables such as grammar and organization of ideas; however, these variables may prove to be difficult for EFL pupils to demonstrate. Henceforth, it is paramount for the teacher to implement various methods and strategies to help his or her pupils enhance their writing productivity. The current study aims to investigate the effect of collaborative writing on EFL pupils' writing proficiency; it also attempts to explore EFL pupils' attitudes and perceptions towards the implementation of pair and group work in written expression sessions. A descriptive method was adopted to collect qualitative data where twenty-one (21) third-year, literature and philosophy stream, pupils at Amouria Larbi Secondary School participated in a class observation and a focus group discussion. The attained data from the first tool revealed that the majority of third-year, literature and philosophy stream, pupils writing proficiency has improved in terms of punctuation, sentence structure, cohesive devices and vocabulary. Moreover, data collected from group discussion yielded that third-year, literature and philosophy stream, pupils have positive attitudes towards the implementation of collaborative writing. Therefore, it is recommended for teachers to incorporate collaborative writing in their classrooms more often for the purpose of remediating their pupils' writing difficulties.

Keywords: The writing skill, collaborative writing, EFL pupils, writing proficiency.

List of Abbreviations

CW: Cooperative Writing

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development

PF: Peer Feedback

L1: First language

Q: Question

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General Introduction

Introduction

Writing is an essential skill in life. It is a medium for human communication and a way of expressing ideas and thoughts. To write effectively and accurately in a foreign language is a problematic activity because it involves a wide range of sub-skills. In ELT context, the teacher has to play an inevitable role in helping EFL learners enhance their writing performance by employing a different set of techniques, strategies that will foster their learning. Collaboration in foreign language learning is seen as an effective pedagogical tool that encourages the active interaction among EFL students and presents an opportunity to practice and develop this skill gradually.

Statement of the Problem

Compared to the other language skills, writing, as a productive skill, is considered as a complex one since it requires the implementation of a considerable number of processes such as the organization of ideas both coherently and syntactically and the appropriate choice of words in order to produce a good piece of writing. Teaching and learning writing proves, to some extent, to be a challenging task for both EFL teachers and learners. Hence, various techniques and methods were introduced by scholars to improve learners' writing proficiency, collaborative writing is among them. Since teaching has shifted from teacher-centred into student-centred, their roles in the teaching learning process have changed as well. The teacher is no longer the imparter of knowledge, and the learner is now actively engaged in building his or her knowledge through participating in meaningful communication and working collaboratively with his or her peers. Providing a collaborative learning environment will help EFL students communicate their ideas effectively in a written form.

Research questions

Based on what has been stated in the previous section, two research questions are endeavoured to examine in the study:

1- How does collaborative writing affect EFL pupils' writing productivity?
2- What are EFL pupils' perceptions and attitudes towards collaborative writing?

Hypotheses

To answer these questions, some hypotheses have been set:

1- Collaborative writing enhances EFL pupils' writing productivity and accuracy.
2- EFL pupils have positive attitudes towards working in groups.

Significance of the study

This study will prove to be significant for both teachers and students. Since English has become an international language and is being taught at all levels in Algeria, the need to communicate using it either in a spoken or a written way is of higher importance for EFL learners. Developing the four language skills, and most importantly, the writing skill of EFL secondary school pupils through interacting and working collaboratively to produce a piece of writing will encourage students' autonomy and reduce their anxiety about L2 writing; in addition, it will increase their motivation and self-confidence to express their ideas; consequently, improve their writing performance and develop it for future assignment either for academic purposes or business purposes. As for teachers, they need to be aware of the appropriate techniques used to facilitate their students' writing ability and implement it to promote better performance.

Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to investigate the effect of collaborative writing on EFL students' writing performance. This study also attempts to find out EFL student's attitudes towards using group and pair works to teach the writing skill and to raise teachers' awareness about the utility of collaborative writing.

Research methodology

This study is carried out at Amouria Laarbi Secondary school, Rass el Miaad, Biskra. The sample consisted of twenty-one (21) third year, literature and philosophy stream secondary school pupils. Two tools were chosen to conduct this study and collect the data. To start with, a class observation is conducted to identify the effect of collaborative writing on EFL students writing performance. Additionally, a focus group discussion is used to provide information about pupils' perceptions and attitudes towards collaborative writing. To reach the objectives of this research, a descriptive method was employed.

Limitations of the study

The present study witnessed some obstacles that hindered us from fully achieving the intended aim. 2021 circumstances did not work in our favor because Covid-19 presented a real challenge where we had to respect the safety measures such as physical distancing and avoiding crowds. The administration prevented group work unless it followed certain precautions. Additionally, the period of time allotted to conduct the practical side of this research was not sufficient; we were highly restricted by time. Moreover, due to the small number of the sample, the results cannot be generalized for the whole population. The research focused mainly on investigating secondary school pupils' attitudes and perceptions; on the other hand, it neglected the perception of the teacher whose role is significant in the teaching and learning process.

Structure of the study

The research in hand is divided into three chapters. The first two chapters deal with the theoretical part whereas the last chapter is devoted to the practical part.

Chapter one will deal with various definitions of the writing skill, its importance. It will also discuss the writing process and the writing approaches along with some difficulties encountered by EFL pupils in performing writing tasks and the sources behind these difficulties. Chapter Two will discuss the definition of collaborative writing, its importance and its characteristics. Additionally, it will describe collaborative writing strategies, patterns and activities and shed some light on the teacher and the student's role in collaborative writing. Chapter three; however, will tackle the analysis of classroom observation; this will be followed by an analysis and interpretation of the focus group discussion.

Chapter One

An Overview on the Writing Skill

Introduction

Most EFL pupils can write, but only a few of them can master the skill of writing. There is a difference between jotting down ideas on paper, and actually organizing them coherently, syntactically and, most importantly, academically and here lies the difficulty

This chapter presents an overview of writing and its importance. It introduces writing components, its approaches and tackles the writing processes. Additionally, it seeks to deal with the difficulties encountered by pupils in writing, as well as the sources behind these difficulties.

1.1. Definition of Writing

At a basic level, writing is a productive skill that represents language through graphic symbols. On the other hand, it is a concept that many researchers have different interpretations about. For Harmer (2007), "Writing is the process- that is, the stages the writer goes through in order to produce something in its final form. This process may, of course, be affected by the content of the writing, the type of writing, and the medium it is written in. This process has four main elements: planning, drafting, editing and final draft" (p.4). As for Nunan (1989), writing is defined as an intellectual activity. It is tremendously complicated in that the writer has to take into account the sentence and what goes beyond it. i.e., he has to write a grammatical, appropriate as well as cohesive and coherent structure, all at the same time. However, Fischer (2001) claims that there is no general, fixed definition that can be applied to all the writing systems that we have and ever had.

1.2. Importance of Writing

It is said that writing cannot possibly compete with the other skills; it is the last one to be acquired; therefore, it is known as the least significant skill because according to Doff (1995), If we think only of long-term needs, writing is probably the least important of the four skills for many students; they are more likely to need to listen, to read and speak than to write it. Their need for writing is most likely to be for study purposes and also an examination skill. But that does not deny its outstanding position in the hierarchy of language skills; it allows students to accomplish personal, intellectual and professional purposes. Bello (1997) argues that writing has a huge role to play in language acquisition; this is mainly because it enables learners to clearly and effectively communicate their ideas by using words, sentences and

other elements of language, as well as giving them the opportunity to implement whatever grammar rules and vocabulary they were taught in class in order to master them. Graham (2007) also believed that the writing skill is one of the indicators of academic success, along with being an important condition for communicating in daily life. On the other hand, Elbow (1973) states that other than writing, there are better ways for EFL students to communicate, but nevertheless it remains a principal skill in that it helps them to develop the other language skills.

1.3. Components of Writing

In order to produce an organized, coherent, correct and a clear piece of paper, writers have to take into account a various number of elements. (Starkey, 2004). According to Raimes (1983), the mastery of the writing skill requires the combination of nine components which are purpose, audience, organization, content, writer process, grammar, syntax, mechanics and word choice.
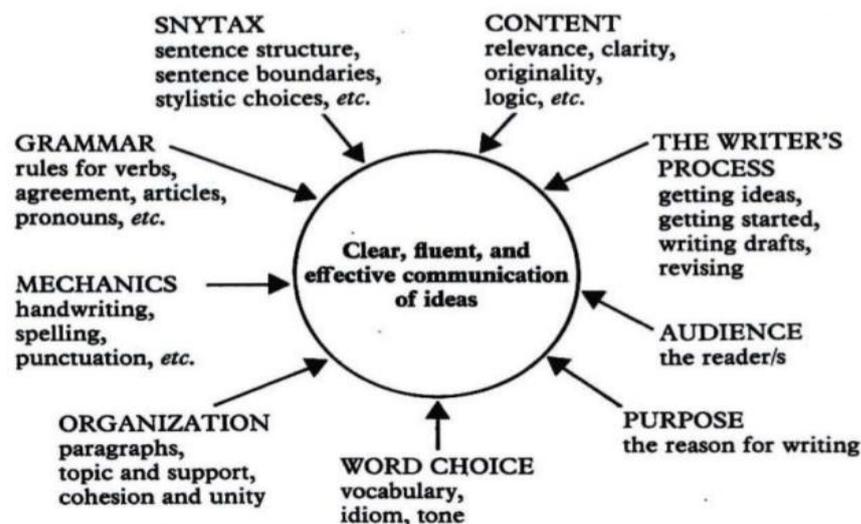
Figure 1. Processing a Piece of Writing (Retrieved From Raimes, 1983, p.6)

1.3.1. Organization

Organization means linking ideas and arranging sentences in a logical order. It is the first step that writers need to undergo; its techniques are free writing and brainstorming. Organization plays a crucial role in leading the reader to believe what is being written. In this vein, Starkey (2004) states that "organization also benefits the reader… you will guide your reader from your first to last sentence. He or she will be able to see how the various points make in your essay work together and how they support your thesis" (p.2)

1.3.2. Clarity

What makes an essay readable and comprehensive to the audience is its clarity and accuracy. In order to convey clear massages and fully understand a text and its intended meaning, writers have to clarify their writings. Therefore, Starkey (2004) mentions some key aspects to achieve clarity. Firstly, learners should avoid using ambiguous words or phrases that have more than one interpretation. Additionally they have to be concise and precise by using the active voice instead of the passive voice and powerful adjectives and adverbs. The last aspect is avoiding wordiness; learners should eliminate unnecessary repetition of ideas.

1.3.3. Coherence

Pollard (2008) defines coherence as" the way a piece of writing is organized; a logical progression of ideas and careful organization within and between paragraphs" (p.50). Coherence is a crucial aspect of any type of writing; it is linking ideas in a form of a chain and sequencing them to flow smoothly from one idea to another in order to produce a good, well-connected and understandable piece of writing. (Murray and Hughes, 2008).

1.3.4. Word Choice

According to Starkey (2004), appropriate use of lexical items is governed by two aspects, denotation and connotation. The former is the literal meaning of the word and the latter is the implied meaning which can be positive, negative or neutral. Selecting proper words to convey a certain message is a highly sensitive process because it may offend or confuse the readers. Henceforth, diction is a crucial element that contributes to either the success or failure of communicating ideas to the audience.

1.4.   Teaching Approaches of Writing

Teaching the writing skill in EFL classrooms witnessed various changes. In the past, model Writing was seen as good way to master the writing proficiency. Correct spelling, grammar and organization reflects the students writing ability; for instance, teaching writing was in a form of copying from a model in which a student writes a composition and the teacher corrects it. However, with the coming years, students were given the chance to express their ideas creatively in writing. (Harmer, 2004). According to scholars, there are three basic approaches: the product approach, the process approach and the genre approach.

1.4.1. The Product Approach

This approach is mainly concerned with the final result and it focuses on the correct use of grammar, cohesive devices, appropriate vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, linking ideas and information in order to clearly develop and organize the content of the product and produce an error-free, coherent text. (Hedge, 1998)**.** That is to say that it focuses on structure and form and neglects meaning. Hedge, T. (1988) claims that: "in the product approach, a model is provided and various exercises undertaken to draw attention to its important features. Students are then required to produce a similar or parallel text." (p. 165).

Producing a piece of paper using the product approach consists of four stages. First, familiarization is the stage of studying and analyzing the linguistic features of the text and the structure of the sentences. Next, students move to controlled writing where they practice the language used in isolation. In the third stage called guided writing, students produce a parallel text similar to the model text and put an emphasis on the organization of ideas. As a final step, students are given the total freedom to produce their final text. (Pincas, 1982)

1.4.2. The Process Approach

Unlike the product approach, the process approach focuses on how writing is produced and the stages writers undergo to produce a good piece of writing. It focuses on the skills of planning, drafting, revising and publishing. Nunan (1991) argues that generating and outlining ideas, producing multiple drafts, reviewing and receiving feedback plays a major role in improving students' writing skills. It is also is defined as "a cyclical approach. In this approach, students are needed to move back and forth while going from one stage to another stage and taking part in the writing activities" (Palpanadan, Bin Salam & Bte Ismail,2014,p. 790).

The process approach has various stages. Hedge (1998) introduces the steps of producing a

being motivated to write → getting ideas together → planning and outlining → making notes → making a first draft → revising replanning redrafting → editing and getting ready for publication
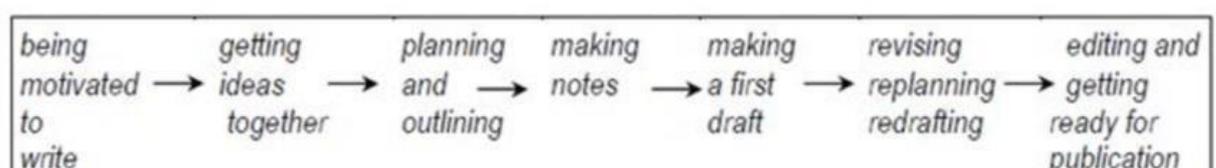
Figure 2. The process of writing (Retrieved from T. Hedge, 1998, p.51)

In addition, Zamel (1983) describes the writing process as a "non-linear, exploratory and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning" (p. 165). According to White and Arndt (1991), two steps are undertaken in the writing process: the pre writing and the actual writing activities.
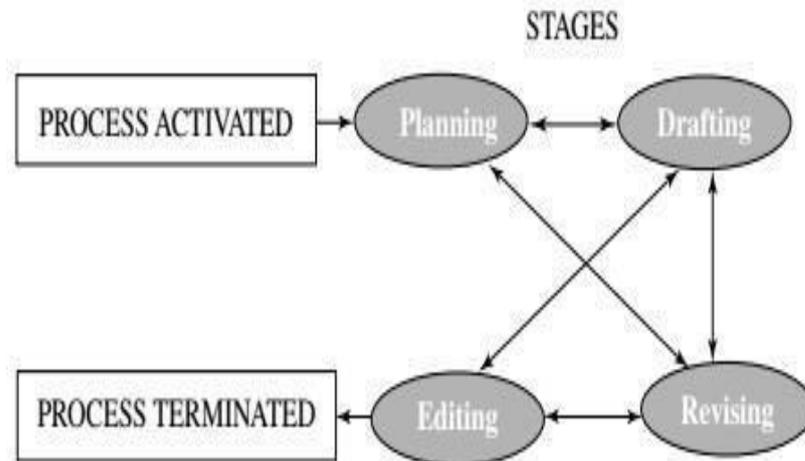
Figure 3. Stages of writing according to process approach (Seow, 2002, p. 315)

The process approach has a relation with cooperative learning. Silva (1990) claims that the process approach stages allow students to work in a positive collaborative environment, and more precisely, in the pre writing and revising stage.

1.4.3. The Genre Approach

Swales (1990) explains the notion of genre as "…a class of communication events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes" (p. 58).

This approach puts an emphasis on the social and cultural context of language use within a piece of writing in addition to the purpose of writing (Vygotsky, 1978). Moreover, it is seen as "underpinned by the belief that learning should be based on explicit awareness of language"; hence, students can improve their writing ability via analyzing "expert" texts (Hyland, 2003, p. 22). So, the teacher provides his students with a model text that are familiar with its genre, and then they analyze it together in terms of structure in order to produce a piece of writing. Furthermore, Hyland (2007) characterized the genre approach into seven aspects that are explained as follows:

- Explicit: There are no implicit aims. At the start of the writing process, the targeted aim is thoroughly clarified.

- Systematic: it emphasizes content as well as context.

- Needs-based: objectives and aims are selected according to students' needs.

- Supportive: The teacher encourages students and teaches the structures of each genre to facilitate the work for them.

- Critical: it allows students to study the variations within a valued text then criticize those values.

- Consciousness-raising: teachers will scrutinize texts, and therefore be able to help students in their writing.

1.5. The Writing Process

Writing is not only about producing a final product; in fact, it also entails mastering a set of abilities, skills that lead to that product. Henceforth, in order to produce something in its final written form, the writer has to go through different stages known as stages of the writing process. These are prewriting, drafting, reviewing / revising, editing, and publishing. The writing process is a bit like a wheel, in other words, and we tend to go round it and across it in many directions. (Harmer, 2011).

1.5.1. Pre- writing

In this stage, writers plan what they are going to write by brainstorming ideas, generating notes related to the topic and organizing an outline taking into consideration the purpose, the audience and the content structure of their piece of writing. (Harmer, 2004).

1.5.2. Drafting

Galko (2004:49) defines this stage as follow "Drafting means writing a rough, or scratch, form of your paper. It's a time to really focus on the main ideas you want to get across in your paper." Students are allowed to change their ideas while discovering the appropriate ones to use in the final version. The first version is often called draft in which writers tend to focus more on the organization of the ideas rather than syntax, punctuation and spelling. (Harmer, 2004).

1.5.3. Revising

According to Harmer (2004), at this step, students read their drafts to comment on the organization of the ideas, change diction and clarify meaning. Schmitz (2012) states that the examination of the paper is made to make ideas more accurate and convincing. (p. 224). In this step, we can provide a check list or does a peer review.

1.5.4. Editing

Schmitz (2012) states the following: "Editing, often, involves adding or changing words, and fixing any problems in grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure". (p. 424). That is to say that editing is to check and review what has been written in order to improve its grammar, punctuation, form and organization.

1.5.5. Publishing

After having made many changes and correcting mistakes, the final copy is ready to be published. Harmer (2004) says" this may look considerably different from the original plan and the first draft because things have changed in the editing process. But the writer is ready now to send the written text to its intended audience". (p, 32).

According to Harmer, the writing process does not follow one direction: planning, drafting, editing then the final version; on the contrary, it is recursive. It takes different directions where writers re- plan, re-draft and re-edit until they reach the real final version. This process is similar to the wheel in which writers can move forward and backward among these activities whenever they need so as it is represented in Figure 1:
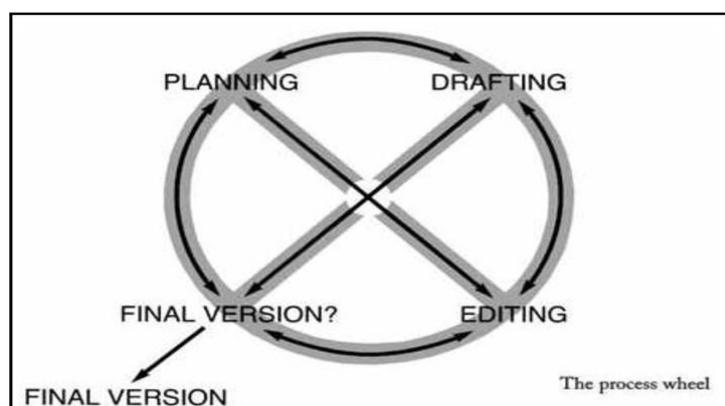
Figure 4. The Process Wheel (Retrieved from Harmer, 2011, p. 326)

1.6.   EFL Students' Writing Difficulties

Students perceive writing as a complex skill; Raimes (1983) reports that this is because it is related to many aspects of language such as punctuation, spelling and overall, grammar. Jordan (1977), on the other hand, claims that writing difficulties go beyond just grammar; they extend to reach format and organization of ideas.

1.6.1. Punctuation

Punctuation isn't always as easy as it looks, if you fail a rule you'll get a completely different meaning than what you intended to put. Carol and Wilson (1993) claim that misuse of punctuation marks such as a full stop (.), comma (,), apostrophe (') and semi-colon (;) cause ambiguous sentences that are hard to decipher. Peck and Coyle (1999); however, state that the most common difficulty, in punctuation, that EFL students struggle with is sentence structure. They believe that "There are two main mistakes that all writers of English make. They either produce would-be sentences that are not sentences but merely fragments; or they produce would-be sentences that are not sentences but two or more sentences run together: sometimes a comma is used to link the two sentences, and sometimes the two sentences are simply fused together" (p.77).

1.6.2. Spelling

Incorrect spelling can ruin a piece of writing. Students' essays nowadays are judged by their good spelling of words. Students find spelling difficult because of different accents, they tend to add a letter to a word for example: were, where, omit it or substitute it by another one like, accept, except (Harmer, 2001).

1.6.3. Grammar

In order to be good at writing, EFL students have to be familiar with basic grammatical norms and patterns. These include punctuation and spelling, in addition to other aspects. Grammar difficulties are found in the following elements: Subject-verb agreement, confusion between sentence, phrase and clause, misuse of verb tenses, articles (Ellis, 2008).

1.6.4. Format

In writing, it is vital for EFL students to know the components of an academic essay such as the topic sentence, thesis statements and introductory paragraph; they also have to be aware of the appropriate placement of these elements. However, it can be difficult to do as such. Most learners fail to write a thesis statement for many reasons: It is usually an announcement of a subject, not a statement, the statement is either too broad or too specific; and the statement has more than one idea (Langan, 1996).

1.7. Sources of EFL Students' Writing Difficulties

In the previous section, it was established that EFL students face some difficulties in writing. The occurrence of such difficulties could be the result of many factors such as lack of practice, lack of reading and interference of mother language.

1.7.1. Lack of Practice

Mastering any skill requires a certain amount of dedication and discipline. Writing is a productive skill that needs a lot of practice to overcome its difficulties. Grabe, & Kaplan (1996) confirm that writing isn't an innate skill as much as it is an acquired one, it can be developed through putting enough time, effort and practice into it. Similarly, Hedge (1988) states the following: "my own experience tells me that in order to become a good writer, a student needs to write a lot" (p.11).

1.7.2. Lack of reading

Reading and writing have a strong interrelationship where they complement each other. In fact, many scholars, including Raimes (1983) believe that people who read a lot are more guaranteed to become competent writers. According to him, "the more our students read, the more they become familiar with the vocabulary, idiom, sentence patterns, organizational flow, and cultural assumptions of native speakers of the language" (p.50)

1.7.3. Interference of mother language

Along with the lack of reading and practice, there is another source that could be behind the difficulties students encounter in writing academic essays. Interference of mother language is an obstacle that many learners struggle with. Friedlander (1997) asserts that students think in their L1 when they are writing essays in the target language (English here). This happens when they transfer their writing abilities and background knowledge from their first language to the target language.

Conclusion

As established, writing is one of the important tasks a student has to master; therefore, this chapter was dedicated to defining the skill of writing and highlighting its importance. It also introduced writing process and its stages. The remaining of the chapter was devoted to discussing teaching approaches along with investigating the difficulties encountered by students in academic writing, and the sources behind these difficulties.

Chapter Two

Collaborative Writing in EFL Classrooms

Introduction

Language is a means of communication that people use to interact and express their ideas either orally or written, and as far as the teaching and the learning processes are concerned, promoting interaction in the EFL classroom is done through implementing cooperative language learning strategies to develop EFL learners' language skills. Since writing is considered a complex process, a considerable number of methods and techniques are used to teach it; among them is collaborative writing where students work in pairs or small groups to produce written texts. The writing activities that exist in third year textbook "New Prospects" are designed to promote group work; however, the huge number of students in Algerian classes prevented from implementing collaborative writing properly.

This chapter is devoted to tackle collaborative writing; its definition and importance. It will discuss collaborative writing features, patterns and strategies. Also, it will provide some collaborative writing activities. Finally, it will deal with the teacher-student role in collaborative writing.

2.1. Definition of Collaborative Writing

Barkley et al (2005) states that collaborative writing is the participation of the whole group members in the stages of the writing process to compose a good piece of writing. Writing collaboratively means several writers working together to produce one document; writers take part not only in the soliciting of ideas about the document, but also in the remaining sections of the writing process that will form the final product by collecting them at the end of it. (De Silva, 2005). Moreover, Lowry et al. (2004) defines it as follow:

> An interactive and social process that involves a team focused on a common objective that negotiates, coordinates, and communicates during the creation of a common document. The potential scope of [Collaborative Writing] goes beyond the more basic act of joint composition to include the likelihood of pre- and post-task activities, team formation, and planning. Furthermore, based on the desired writing task, [Collaborative Writing] includes the possibility of many different control approaches, team roles, and work modes.

(p. 72-74)

According to Harmer (2001), involving students in collaborative writing encourages the steps of writing. To ensure the participation of all the group members in completing this

steps, he suggests that each one writes his o her first draft than they collect their drafts for further suggestions, exchange of ideas and edits in order to come up with the final version.(p.12). Haring Smith (1994) states that collaborative writing is the contribution of more than one author in the process of creating a written text where all the members share the responsibility of producing this final product by working together. (p.36). Moreover, many scholars such as Gebhardt (1980); Berg, 1999; Storch (2005) believed that cooperative writing is similar to peer feedback (PF); since PF also allows learners to edit or revise each others' compositions. Thus, cooperative writing is a process that includes learners generating ideas together, discussing the assignment, peer revising and editing to finally produce a shared piece of work.

2.2. Importance of Collaborative Writing

A considerable number of studies have emphasized the significance of collaborative writing in foreign language learning and how it plays a vital role in the teaching and learning process. It proved to be an effective strategy that benefits students to develop their writing skill and improve its quality. For instance, it enhances students' interaction, decrease their anxiety and increase their self-confidence, risk-taking, toleration and motivation. (Johnson & Johnson, 1998; Raimes, 1998; Reid & Powers, 1993; Rollinson, 2005; as cited in Garofalo & Mulligan, 2012). In this vein, Zimmet (2000) states that working groups enhances students' self-esteem, self-assessment and self-confidence where the shyest students can feel secured to participate in discussions. Additionally, Montero (2005) states that "Collaborative writing presents not only a highly motivating learning experience for EFL/ESL students, but also a creative pedagogical tool for teachers" (p. 38).

Furthermore, Harmer (2001) reports that working in groups is beneficial in terms of the writing process it especially the planning and the final version stages. He adds that it gives students the opportunity to learn from each other and share the responsibility of completing the task in hand either successfully or failingly. (Harmer, 2004, p. 73). Gebhardt (1980) claims "collaborative writing strategies should be applied to finding a promising topic, generating details on the topic and locating the intended audience for a paper" (p. 73). That is to say that it is useful in both the primary steps of the writing process and the final steps. According to a study conducted by Storch (2005) that tackled collaborative writing as a product and a process the results reveals that the texts produced when working in pair and groups had a great grammatical accuracy and linguistic complexity compared to the product written individually.

As for the writing process, it indicates that interaction among members was higher especially when generating ideas, organizing them, discussing and planning their texts. (p.169)

2.3. Theories of collaborative writing

By the 1970's, theoretical perspectives that supports and suits the principles of collaborative writing have arisen due to the pedagogical studies done by researchers in the field   of   teaching and learning of the writing skill, and more specifically, regarding the significance of cooperative writing. Both the socio cognitive and the cognitive theories form the theoretical framework of these studies.

2.3.1. The Socio Cognitive Theories

To begin with, Vygotsky (1978) views learning as a social activity; he explains that knowledge is co-constructed and developed by learners through social interaction then internalized by individuals. Hence, incorporating group work in writing class activities promotes interactive learning. He maintains that higher mental abilities and cognitive functions develop during a social context on two levels: firstly, at the social level between individuals when having dialogues, and secondly, at the cognitive level within the learner. The latter Internalize, transform, and use equivalent cognitive functions independently as they socially interact with others. He states that cooperating with competent and experienced persons improves a student's way of thinking and promotes his or her understanding. (Kellough and Kellough, 1999, p. 302).

Another important theory developed by Vygotsky (1978) is the concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). He claims that people have two levels of development, the current state of knowledge and the potential state. The former is already reached independently, and the latter is capable of reaching with the assistance, guidance and collaboration with knowledgeable peers. However, Luis C. Moll (1989) suggests another explanation to the notion of the zone that is "to use meditational means collaboratively to create, obtain, and communicate meaning" (p. 60). This suggests that the creation of meaning, mastery of skills and applying the knowledge does not occur independently under the guidance of the teacher, but through participating in collaborative activities. In addition, Lantolf (2000) view ZPD as "collaborative construction of opportunities for individuals to develop their mental abilities" (p.17).

2.3.2. The Cognitive Theories

Moreover, the cognitive theories including Long's interaction hypotheses and Swain's output hypotheses have an influence on second language acquisition. Firstly, Long (1983) claims that to make an input more comprehensible, people are allowed to engage in verbal interaction to negotiate meaning and repair communication breakdowns; this hypothesis encourages the use of pair and group work in the classroom. On the other hand, Swain (1985) states that language output plays a major role as well in SLA; learning language require production of spoken and written language, yet this develops only their fluency not accuracy. He, later on, replaced the term output by languaging which consists of two forms: private speech and collaborative dialogue. (Swain, 2006, 2010; Swain et al, 2002, 2009, 2011). Private speech is an inner speech directed to oneself when facing difficulties in problem solving tasks, sometimes called self – explanation. (Anton and DiCamilla, 1998; Diaz and Berk, 1992). And, the speech directed to others when working in groups is called collaborative dialogue. It occurs when encountering problems while performing a written task collectively. (Chang and Wells, 1988)

2.4. Features of Collaborative Writing

The defining features of collaborative writing differ according to the socio cultural context. Some of these are mutual interaction, negotiation, conflicts and sharing of expertise.

2.4.1. Mutual interaction

Social interaction is a fundamental component of this kind of writing. According to Storch (2002) "mutuality is defined as the degree of engagement with each other's contribution". (p.127). Working in groups allows students to work on different portion of the same text in which they share their understanding, knowledge and opinions to achieve one common goal. (Daiute & Dalton, 1993). This group of people is referred to as the community of practice where the amount of interaction among them is known as mutual engagement. (Wegner, 1998). From his perspective, the focus is on the social work that occurs and how to interact with others in order to develop an identity. (ibid).

Moreover, Miell and Macdonald (2000) suggest that mutually engaged states require "the presence of reasoned dialogue, the exploration of the ideas of no more than one person and the attempt to integrate these" (p.12)..

2.4.2. Negotiation

Pica (1994) states that negotiation occurs when participants face problem in understanding messages while interacting; it involves clarification requests, confirmation checks and comprehension checks. The interlocutors respond by repeating, elaborating or simplifying the original message. Michael P. Breen and Andrew Littlejohn (2000) propose three types of negotiation which are personal, interactive and procedural. The first type involves individual's mental processes. The second type implies using language to demonstrate understanding of the message or the opposite in order to clarify it either by modifying or restructuring the language being used. However, procedural negotiation is used to reach agreements about work conditions and solve problems. Negotiation is significant is collaborative writing since it promotes mutual accountability, develops learners' autonomy and enhances shared decision making. (Dale, 1997).

2.4.3. Cognitive Conflict

According to Dale (1994), conflicts are likely to happen when working collectively because there might be different conflicting views. Henceforth, it is advisable that the teacher informs his students about the occurrence of such a phenomenon. From a positive perspective, conflicts can be productive in which help people to perceive the problems from different angles which leads to a broader understanding of the problem. Even if the problem is not resolved, the participant gains cognitive development when negotiating different opinions in a positive social environment. (Daiute & Dalton, 1988)

2.4.4. Shared Expertise

The knowledge, skills, language proficiency, background experience differs from one person to another. Each group member has his own writing strengths, when joined together, they develop. In collaborative writing, students share what they master; some are good at suggesting ideas and generating examples, other at structuring sentence, spelling, organizing the ideas and editing. (Dale 1997; Ohta 1995, 2001).

The sharing of expertise enhances the learner's zone of proximal development, produces better quality and richer final written products, makes their learning process meaningful and productive and most importantly improves their writing skills. (Dale, 1994)

2.5. Patterns of Collaborative Writing

According to Reither and Vipond (1989) teaching writing in collaborative classrooms which are learner-centered classes takes three forms: co-authoring, work shopping and knowledge making.

For them, co- authoring is sharing learning strategies, interacting with each other to perform a written task. Also, William defines workshops as classrooms where students "share their work with one another and teachers intervene regularly as students develop compositions through several drafts". (p.103). Work shopping is done through giving feedback and commenting on each other's work. Last but not least, knowledge making means building knowledge through collecting the personal experience and strategies brought up to the class by others and who share the same field of knowledge.

Additionally, Saunders (1989) introduces other types of collaborative writing tasks which are co-writing, co-publishing, co-responding, co-editing and writer-helpers.

- Co-writing: in this type of writing, students discuss their ideas together and collaborate during the whole writing process stages to produce one single final product that gathers their shared knowledge.

- Co- publishing: after dividing the tasks between them, group members work on their different drafts independently, but they plan, review and correct their works together. At the end, they compose a collective final version in which they share its responsibility and ownership without neglecting their contributions on it.

- Co-responding: even though group members share their knowledge, ideas and strategies and interact with each other in the different stages of writing, the final version is done individually and they are the sole owners of it. This type is referred to as peer feedback, where students play the role of both a writer and a critical reader to his or her chosen peer.

- Co-editing: known as peer editing; group members provide help only in the editing stage in which they proofread and correct their peers' individual drafts.

- Writer-helpers: no feature of collaboration is demonstrated in any stage of the writing process; however, students may ask for help, guidance and feedback at any moments.

Storch (2002) presents other patterns of interactions used in collaborative writing classes represented in the following figure:
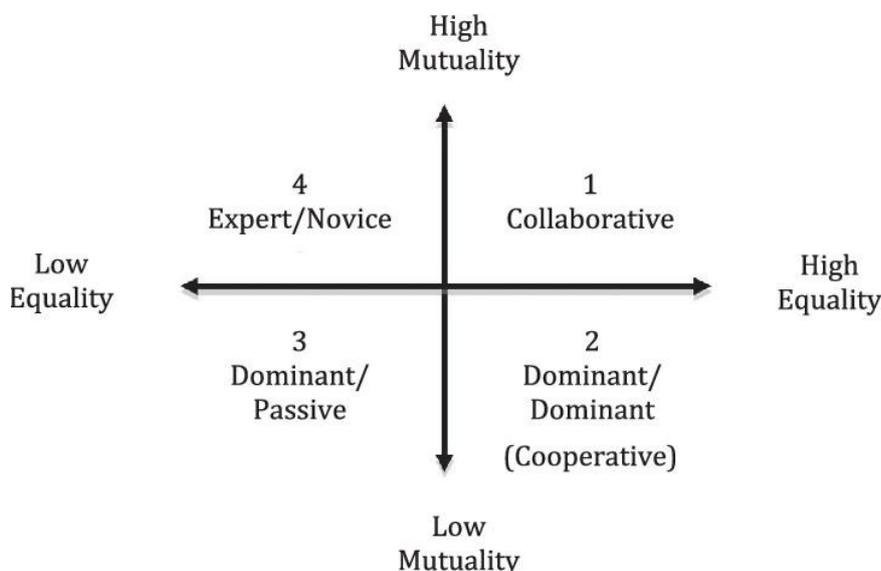
Figure 2.1 A Dyadic Interaction Model (Storch, 2002, p.128)

2.6. Collaborative Writing Activities

There are different collaborative activities that can be used to teach writing sessions. The implementation of such activities facilitates group work and fosters student's engagement in writing processes; in addition, it motivates them to help and learn from each other. Some of these activities are listed below:

2.6.1. Round Table

This activity is performed through putting one piece of paper and one pen on the table, then the teacher asks questions and each group member writes an idea or answer the question; when the time is over, they stop writing and start discussing their answers. (Kagan, 1994 as cited in Jolliffe, 2007). Mandall (2009) explains that round table activity is considered a brainstorming activity where each group member has to provide an answer to the question. As a result, all students become motivated to contribute and participate in achieving one common goal. (ibid, 2001, p.198). In this vein, Crandall (1999) states that it is beneficial at the pre-writing stage because it is "excellent for capturing ideas in brainstorming, for developing common background information, and for identifying possible directions for future activities" (p. 231).

2.6.2. Write Around

In this activity, the teacher gives its students a sentence starter and the members of the group try to complete the story by adding other sentences then pass it to his mate who in turn will suggest another sentence to get a completion to the story. After few rounds, groups will be given time to edit their stories and add a conclusion. (Mandall, 2009).

Baliya (2013) thinks that it is one of the cooperative learning activities that can develop students' writing abilities, promote peer interaction and ensure the involvement of all group members while performing the task. It is mainly used in creative writing o summarizing.

2.6.3. Write Pair Share

Similar to think pair shares activity, write pair share is another cooperative learning strategy that contains three steps. Firstly, individuals write their ideas and answers concerning the question in hand alone. Then, they discuss these ideas in pair or small groups to ensure that no one is left out. Finally, they share their final product and present it to get feedback from the whole classroom. (Isbahi , 2014). Jolliffe (2007) suggests that it can be used at the warming up stage and a brainstorming activity.

In addition to the pre mentioned activities, roam the room, roving reporter, base groups and two stay and two stray are other cooperative writing activities that can be applied during the warm up phase (ibid).

2.7. Collaborative Writing Strategies

There are various models to teach collaborative writing. Lowry et al (2004); Ritchie and Rigano (2007) and Onrubia and Engel (2009) have suggested multiple strategies.

First, Lowry et al (2004) mentions five types of collaborative writing strategies.

2.7.1. Single author writing

This strategy is applicable when the writing task is simple; only one representative of the whole group is assigned to perform the task; he plans drafts and reviews on behalf of the team.
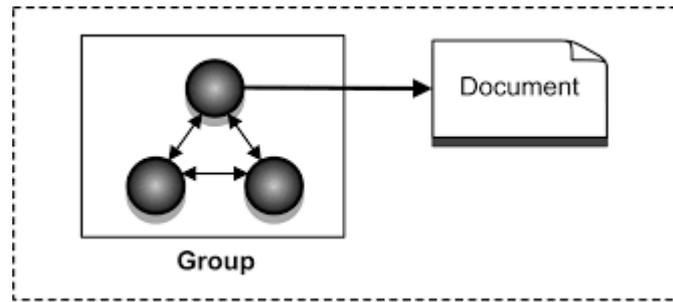
Figure 2.2 Group Single-Author Writing (Retrieved from Lowrey et al., 2004: p.76)

2.7.2. Sequential Single Writing

Every single member in the group is assigned to write a passage at a given time, and then passes it to the member next to him, one after the other in a form of a chain until they come up with one single text. This kind of collaborative writing has advantages such as encouraging interaction, learning from others' writings, identifying their mistakes and correcting them. As well as, disadvantages such as disagreement between group members, or even trying to change each other's ideas.
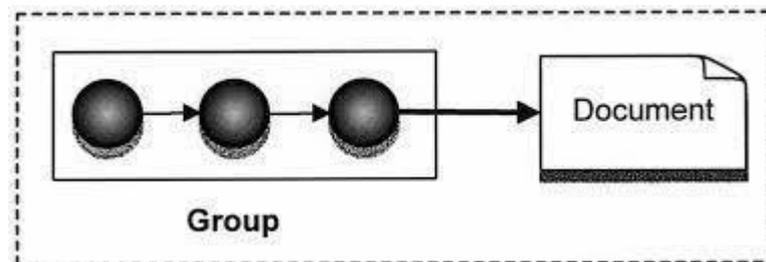
Figure 2.3 Sequential Single Writing (Retrieved from Lowrey et al., 2004: p.76)

2.7.3. Parallel Writing

In this model of collaborative writing, the group members divide the tasks between them then they start working on their parts at the same time. Parallel writing has two types; stratified division parallel writing and horizontal division parallel writing. In the first type, the group members split the roles between them, and each individual works on his or her part according to his or her assigned role. In the second type, the group members divide the tasks between them and each one is responsible on completing his or her task.
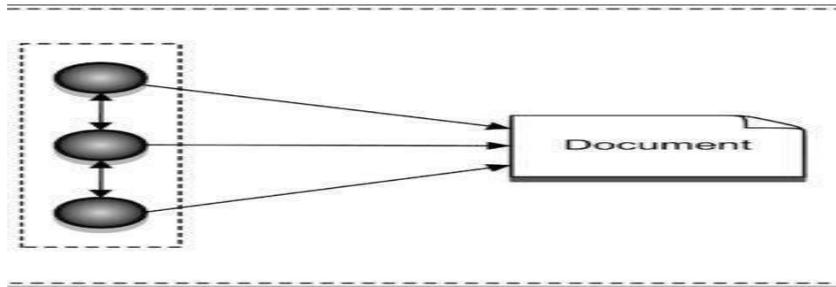
Figure 2.4 Parallel Writing (Retrieved from Lowrey et al, 2004: p.77)

2.7.4. Reactive Writing

The group members in reactive writing model work cooperatively and at the same time to produce their final product. They plan, review and edit together.

Figure 2.5 Reactive Writing (Retrieved from Lowrey et al., 2004: p. 80)

Second, Ritchie and Rigano (2007) propose three types of co-authoring and collaborative writing which are as follow: turn writing, lead writing and writing together side by side.

- Turn writing is a cooperative strategy where members divide the work into different sections, after that a lead author will merge the sections together.
- In lead writing, only one person takes the responsibility of writing the first draft. However, the entire group member will hold the responsibility when the lead is rotated totem.
- Writing side by side means members of group plan and think of the ideas together also discuss and edit the content of the written text in which one of them is acting as a scribe.

Third, according to Onrubia and Engel (2009), there are five strategies of collaborative writing among them is integrating construction.

- Integrating construction is when all the group members synchronically discuss the topic, repeatedly revise it and comment on the suggestions and changes done by other members to produce a good piece of writing.

2.8. Teachers', Students' roles in Collaborative writing classes

The teaching and learning approaches have shifted from teacher-centered to learner centered; consequently, the role of both of them, inside the classroom, has changed.

2.8.1. The Teacher's Role

McDonnell (1992) states that the role of the teacher in collaborative writing classes is a facilitator, observer, monitor, organizer and an adviser who guides his student towards achieving their objectives. (Mekki, 2016, p. 64).

Johnson et al (1994) believes that the teacher has to play several roles in cooperative classes; he needs to prepare a well-organized learning environment, organize the students into groups, assign them roles, choose the appropriate teaching materials, manage time and set the objectives of the task. (Richard & Rogers, 2001, p.199)

Harel (1992) thinks that the teacher's role in collaborative activities is to ask questions to the group members to develop their critical thinking. Additionally, prepare the students before carrying out the task, and provide help and assistance; however, his role is to give fewer instructions and fewer interventions. (ibid)

2.8.2. The Student's Role

According to Rogers and Richard (2001), all the group members are active learners who collaboratively work on achieving one common goal. All participants are involved and engaged in the writing activity in order to promote cooperation among team members. Each member is responsible on monitoring, directing and evaluating his or her own learning.

The role of students in cooperative learning activities varies depending on his or her personality. Jacob (2006) claims that there are five roles of the students which he describes as follow (as cited in Mekki, 2016, p.65):

Student's role is as facilitator in which is the member who coordinates the group's works. Indeed, student is considered as recorder's responsibility which means recording what the group has accomplished. Also as reporter tells others about the group's work and time keeper helps the group be aware of time constraints, keeps the group on tasks and fills in for missing group members. Yet, as observer of collaborative skill checks if group members are using a particular collaborative skill deemed important to the group's interaction.

(p.65)

Moreover, Posner & Baecker (1992) state that in collaborative writing activities the learner can take different roles from the roles listed below:

The role	Description
Writer	A team member who is responsible of writing one part of the written product
Consultant	An external individual who does have neither the ownership nor the responsibility of creating the final version; however, his job is to provide feedback.
Editor	A team member who have both the ownership and the responsibility o written product and is responsible on the changes and edits on the style And content of document.
Reviewer	Either an external or internal group member who provide feedback but does not have the right to suggest changes in content.
Team leader	A group member who owns authorship and responsible for planning, organizing, guiding and motivating the team members.

Table 1. Roles of the students in Collaborative writing groups (P. B .Lowry, Curtis and M. R. Lowry, 2004, p.64)

Conclusion

Collaborative writing is considered to be an effective learning strategy that reinforces EFL pupils' writing proficiency. Therefore, this chapter provides a definition of collaborative writing. It also shows the benefits of implementing this type of writing on EFL students. Moreover, it presents the various theories that support cooperative learning. In addition, it provides collaborative learning patterns, features and its different strategies and activities. At the end, it discusses the role of both the teacher and the learner in collaborative writing.

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Chapter Three

Data Analysis and Results

Introduction

The second chapter presents the field work of the study, its methodology, design, tools and results. It seeks to investigate the effect of using collaborative writing on EFL pupils' writing performance and find out their attitudes towards this strategy. Additionally, it tests the stated hypothesis in general introduction that suggest that collaborative writing enhances EFL students' writing performance, and they have positive attitudes towards using group and pair work.

For the purpose of reaching the aim of the study, this part will include four sections. The first section deals with the methodology; the second section includes population description, whereas the third section covers the results and the last one includes discussions of the findings.

3.1.   Methodology

A descriptive method was used to accomplish our research and reach our main aim. To collect data, classroom observations and focus group discussions were conducted at Amouria Larbi Secondary School,Rass el Miad, Biskra,. This study relies on the qualitative approach in order to gather the necessary data that describes to what extent collaborative writing is beneficial to developing EFL pupils writing skills. After the permission of the administration and the teacher, pupils were being observed while they were being taught in order to determine whether this strategy is effective in improving EFL student's writing proficiency or not. Then, nine open-ended questions of semi-structured interview were asked to elicit pupils' perception on the implementation of collaborative writing.

3.2.   Participants

Third year secondary school pupils at Amouria Larbi ,Rass el Miaad, Biskra, during the academic year 2020-2021 were chosen to be the population of the study. Twenty-one pupils (21) from Literature and Philosophy class were the sample of this study. The sample consisted of ten (10) boys and eleven (11) girls and their ages ranged from 18 to 20 years old. Literature and philosophy stream pupils were chosen on the assumption that English subject is of a higher importance for them. Additionally, the choice of third year is because of the activity of Think Pair Share in the course book that serves as a good tool to teach writing sessions.

Pupils   were informed that their participation will be crucial for the validity of our research; therefore, their attendance is obligatory and they have to provide convenient answers.

3.3. Classroom Observation

3.3.1. Description of Classroom Observation

To start with, classroom observations took place on February 2021 during four (4) sessions. It was structured through the use of a checklist. The checklist contains three (03) sections; the first one is concerned with the traditional classroom, the second and the third section deals with classroom observation during using group work. The two first sections tackle five observed items which are the physical setting, the learner's engagement and participation, the teacher's role, time management whereas the items observed in the third section are concerned with student management in the cooperative learning class. The main aim of this tool is to gather live data on the effect of collaborative writing on pupils' writing productivity.

The teacher tried to gather as much ideas as she can so that they can make use of the notes to develop their articles. After that, she moved to the planning phase that did not take much time. Pupils then were asked to start writing their first drafts individually. Due to shortage of time, the rest of the activity was postponed to the next session. The next day, the pupils brought their writing for further editing and reviewing before submitting the final version. The pupils read their products and the teacher commented on them before providing them with a model to follow.

In the next observational session, on February 21st, during the academic year 2020-2021, from 8.45 am to 9.10 am, the teachers followed her usual lesson procedures, only this time; the teacher divided the class into five groups of four pupils. The teacher changed the topic of the textbook into an expository article about child labour. In the warm up stage, she used some pictures to elicit necessary vocabulary. Then, when they formed groups, pupils developed notes related to the topic and shared them with the whole class. Shortly afterwards, groups moved directly to the drafting phase. The teacher was providing help whenever needed; surprisingly, four out of five groups were able to finish and present their work where their assigned one pupil to read on behalf of the team.

On February 24ᵗʰ from 11:10 am to 11:55 am, another classroom observation session took place. The lesson procedures were the same as the previous one; however, the topic and the tasks were different. Also, this time the pupils were engaged in collaborative writing.

3.3.2 Analysis of Findings from classroom observation

Section one: The traditional classroom

Item one: the physical setting

The classroom setting is organized in traditional way; three rows facing the whiteboard and each pupil sitting alone. The teacher is setting in the middle facing her pupils. The classroom lacks technological materials that would facilitate the teaching learning process and there were empty tables and chairs that disrupt the view. Even when performing the task, pupils kept the same sitting arrangement. The classroom size was large, and the space between the rows allowed the teacher to move freely between them and provide help whenever needed. The corridors outside the classroom are calm. Moreover, the number of the pupils is acceptable compared to the size of the classroom.

Item two: the learners' engagement

In the first session that took place in February, 1ˢᵗ 2021 from 8.45 am to 9.30 am, pupils were asked to write an opinion article about applying ethics in business. In the warm up stage, the teacher was able to attract pupils' attention, but only few pupils who were engaged with lesson especially during the brainstorming stage. When they finished with gathering ideas, they moved to the planning stage in which they discuss the organization of the article. Pupils were familiar with the format of an article; therefore, the majority participated. Then, she asked them to start writing their first drafts individually; however, the majority was not able to write a complete draft. Time was not enough, so it was assigned to be done at home. In this session, the teacher talking time exceeded the pupils talking time; the pupils were passive learners who relied on their teacher, and they showed a lack of interest in the session.

The second session started in February 2ⁿᵈ, 2021 from 9.10 am to 9.55 am. Pupils were asked to read their writings; however, they only few who finished it at home. The teacher tried to correct their mistakes and provide feedback, but the rest of the pupils neither did pay attention to her remarks nor took notes. They were waiting for the teacher to provide them with a model as they usually did.

Item three: the learners' participation

Based on the data collected during the two observational sessions, pupils were reluctant to speak or share their ideas. They showed low participation; this may be due to the lack of interest in the topic or difficulty to speak and think in English. Out of twenty-one pupils, only eight were actively participating and reacting. The teacher tried to engage her pupils by relating the topic to their daily life, motivation them and praising them; she tried to create a positive atmosphere. Pupils who were shy refused to read their products, others were not able to form a sentence due to their weak level and some do not have the linguistic knowledge that would help them write. All these factors contributed to the low participation of the pupils.

Item four: the teacher's role

In the 21st century the teacher's role is supposed to be a facilitator more than a controller; however, based on what have been observed during the two sessions, the teacher took control of the whole session. She had a significant role to play in the discussion of ideas; she was responsible on writing down pupils' ideas on the whiteboard. Additionally, she was the only source of knowledge and the leader of the writing stages. From another perspective, the teacher played the role of a mentor, supporter and guider during the revising and editing stage. She kept encouraging her pupils to participate even in Arabic.

Item five: time management

Every lesson has to be governed with a lesson plan that contains the steps and the time allotted for each section. As far as the writing lesson is concerned, the teacher followed the usual steps of teaching it which are warm up, brainstorming, planning, drafting, editing and publishing. According to the classroom observation, and since the session is only 45 minutes, the teacher devoted 5 minutes to warm up stage in which she tries to introduce the topic of the written passage by asking questions let the pupils discover it. The next ten minutes are dedicated to the brainstorming stage where the pupils are asked to give ideas and examples concerning the topic. The planning stage takes 10 minutes as well, and they try to organize and discuss the format of the writing. In the remaining 20 minutes, pupils start writing their first drafts and the teacher keeps checking and providing help. The teacher showed a great control of the time, but the correction was postponed to the next session.

Section two: cooperative classroom

Item one: the physical setting

In February 21st, from 8.45 am to 9.30 am, the teacher started the session with brief warm up about child labor. Before moving to the second step, the teacher asked her pupils to form groups of four. Since the classroom was large, it was easy to arrange the tables in a short period of time and leave a space for the teacher to easily move between the groups and observe their behaviors. The classroom atmosphere was joyful, productive and suits cooperative learning environment. The pupils were motivated and delighted to work in groups. The pupils were given the freedom to move and change their places the whole session. The arrangement of the setting and providing the appropriate atmosphere is of a great importance because it develops interaction between classmates, teaches them teamwork, fosters learner's autonomy and pupils take control and responsibility of their learning.

Item two: the learners' engagement

When the teacher used group work to teach the writing sessions, the learners' engagement has increased. Through the classroom observations, all the group members were engaged in discussions during the different stages of the writing process. Individuals were interacting with each other, with the teacher and with members from other groups as well. In the drafting phase, all the pupils were fully engaged in the activity; this implies that collaborative writing allows pupils to take risks while writing and expressing their ideas. Also, some members spend time discussing the appropriate vocabulary and the choice of words. As for the revising and the editing phase, group members who show a good level in grammar, punctuation and other aspects of the language shared their knowledge to produce a good piece of writing.

Item three: the learners' participation

According to the teacher observation, the rate of participation in collaborative writing activities compared to individual writing was high. The pupils were active participants who showed high interest in sharing their knowledge with the team members; they provided examples and facts that helped them develop and enrich their writing. Also, pupils participated in meaningful dialogues during the revision stage. It presented a good opportunity to discover different opinions and strengthen their weaknesses.

Item four: the teacher's role

The teacher's role in collaborative writing sessions is passive. The pupils took control of the teaching process. Based on the two observational sessions, the teacher was acting as facilitator and an observer. She provided guidance and feedback whenever needed. The teacher was able to manage the session effectively. In the third session, the teacher showed the pupils a picture and asked the groups to suggest a title for it. She proceeded by showing them different pictures to help them generate as many ideas as they can. The group members brainstormed together before sharing them with others. When the whole group agreed on the format of the passage, they were asked to start drafting. She, from time to time, checks the groups and motivates them to work together and respect each other. The groups were given the freedom to choose their roles within the team and the teacher did not intervene.

Item five: time management

Even though the steps of the writing session remain the same, the time devoted for each step differs. The classroom observation revealed that working in groups to produce a written passage takes less time than working individually. In the two observation sessions that took place on February 21st , from 8:45 am to 9:30 am, and February 24th from 11:10 am to 11:55 am, pupils did not take much time when asked to form groups. The teacher directly moved to the brainstorming stage; she gave them time to think of the ideas then they discussed them with the whole class and wrote the most important ones on the whiteboard. The brainstorming and the planning stage took less than 15 minutes; therefore, there was enough time for the drafting, the editing and the publishing phase. The groups were able to finish the task and present it to the classroom.

Section three: Student's Management in the Cooperative Learning Class

Item one: group formation

Selecting group members can be either through teacher-assigned groups or students-chosen groups according to their interest, preferences or randomly at the beginning of the session, the pupils were asked to form groups; the selection process of the members was done in two different forms. Some choose to work with their friends, and others choose his or her classmate sitting next to him or her. The teacher did not participate in the selection of the

members, yet she tried to ensure that the group has mixed academic abilities, social skills, gender, attitudes and personality. Taking the responsibility of forming a group motivates pupils to participate more and develop a sense of ownership. When asked to work in groups, pupils showed a great level of acceptance and a positive reaction; they were motivated to be involved in collaborative work.

Item two: collaborative learning features

During the different writing stages, the observer focused on both the product and the process of collaborative writing. The topic was ethical investments. Concerning the product, she noticed that both the first draft and the final version contain less syntactical, structural mistakes. Concerning the process, the pupils helped one another, provided constructive feedback; the atmosphere was supportive and creative. The teacher chooses the write around activity as a brainstorming activity; she gave them time to think about the topic, and then they share and discuss their answers as a group. This enhances interaction. At the end of the discussion, each group agrees on the most relevant arguments and counterarguments to maximize the opportunity of speaking reinforce negotiation and social skills. Pupils then started writing their first draft. The observer noticed the involvement of all the team; some were directing the discussion, others correcting vocabulary and spelling and others checking time. Before writing the final version, groups exchanged drafts for further error checking. By the end of the session, teacher was able to achieve the lesson objective.

Item three: students' roles

Compared to the role of students in traditional classes, in cooperative class's pupils can take the role that best suits their personality. Classroom observation showed that pupils' self-confidence has increased because they were able to show their point of strength. The observers noticed that pupils played various roles among them are the recorder who is responsible of writing, material monitor who brings and return material like dictionaries, the leader who directs the discussion, and the cheerleader who encourages his peers, a noise manager who controls misbehaviors and the task master who keeps the group on task. However, some pupils' role was more dominants then others.

Item four: collaborative writing challenges

Similar to writing individually, collaborative writing can be challenging. In the two observational sessions, pupils encountered some difficulties and problems while working in groups. Firstly, the observer noticed that some members were lost and were not able to identify their roles within the group. Other felt embarrassed to engage in discussion because of their weak level in English. Some pupils took control over the whole task and did not give the chance to his or her mates to participate or express their opinions. Low achievers may take advantage and rely on their friends. Cooperative learning classes can be noisy and destructive; the teacher may find it difficult to manage the classroom and maintain pupils' discipline.

Item five: The language of interaction

Unlike individual writing, the pupils working in groups were frequently using their mother tongue in the discussion. Although the teacher is forbidden from using Arabic in the class, the pupils are still allowed to use it. The observers noticed that some pupils were able to express their ideas in Arabic better than English, but this was not a problem since they are working in a heterogeneous group where other members were able to translate their classmates' ideas.

3.4. Focus Group Discussion

3.4.1. Description of Focus Group Discussion

To accomplish this work, a focused group discussion is used as the second data collection tool. The discussion took the form of an interview directed to third-year secondary school pupils. Different group members were interviewed after the sessions, and it lasted 60 minutes.

The interview compromised nine open-ended questions. Questions from 1 to 3 tackled pupils' perception about the writing skill in general. While the rest of the questions (from 4 to 9), were devoted to eliciting pupils' perceptions and attitudes towards the implementation of Collaborative writing and the extent to which they benefited from it.

The interviewer explained and clarified both the aim of the research; additional probing questions were asked to clarify the questions. To avoid miscomprehension and lack of information because of English language difficulties, the students were interviewed in both Arabic and English.

3.4.2. Analysis of Findings from focus group discussion

Section one: Pupils' Perceptions towards Writing

Q1. "Do you like writing?"

From the whole groups, only eight pupils answered with yes; the majority of pupils declared that they do not like writing in English. On one hand, they said,*' I like writing because I can express my ideas and thoughts*"; however, the remaining pupils agreed on the following:" I hate writing because I feel myself uncomfortable and it is a difficult task "this answer represents

Q2. "How do you evaluate your writing proficiency?"

When the interviewees were asked about their writing proficiency, 12 pupils reported," my level in writing in English is weak", six pupils claimed that their writing proficiency is average; participant (1) said," I can write a paragraph, but full of the grammar, punctuation and spelling mistakes" participant (6) also said" I usually write good paragraphs". Only three pupils said that they have a good level in writing; participant (15) said," I always take the best mark in written expression". This indicates that the pupils have problems, and this hinders their learning of the language.

Q3. "What are the aspects you are likely to find difficulties in?"

This question was asked in order to reveal participants' frequent writing deficiencies. The pupils were asked about the difficulties they encounter when the write. Almost the majority of them shared the same difficulties. These aspects were in grammar, vocabulary, cohesion and coherence, etc. participant (1) declared," I have the ideas in Arabic but I am unable translate them into English". Participants (19) said "I do not know how to use the appropriate linking words". Participant (2) said" I have a poor level in English; I find it difficult to write a sentence and develop it into paragraphs". In this vein; participant (7) explained" I do not have sufficient background knowledge". Seven other participants

answered" we rarely practice writing, so it is impossible for us to develop our writing proficiency after all these years". Overall, the answers that were provided showed that pupils have poor writing abilities which are poor vocabulary, lack of creativity, problems in sentence structure.

Section two: The Pupils' Attitudes towards implementing collaborative writing

Q1. "Do you prefer to work in groups, pair or individual? "Why?"

When pupils were asked if they preferred to work in groups, pair or individual, fifteen 15 answered that they prefer to work in groups, four 4 in pair and only two preferred to work individually. Participant (16) answered the following," I understand the lesson better when I work with my classmates rather than alone". Participant (10) "working in groups is fun and I enjoy it". One of the four participants said," if we work in a group, the teacher cannot evaluate who wrote and who did not, and this is not fair; not like working in two"; another one responded "my friend and I understand each other and we have the same way of thinking that is why I like to work only with him". As far as the two remaining participants, participant (18) said "my English level is weak, and I feel embarrassed to share my ideas, I would look like a stupid'. This implies that pupils have positive attitude toward working in groups. At the middle of this discussion, the researcher intervened and raised a sub-question "'how do your teachers usually teach you written expression? Is it motivating or boring? "Regarding the sub-question, the participants answered that most of the time they write individually and perform all the writing steps alone. Some said that it is motivating because they can depend on themselves and take full responsibility of their work, but most of them find it boring.

Q2. "Have you enjoyed working in groups?"

The purpose behind asking this question is to know how pupils perceived collaborative writing. When all the group members were asked if they had enjoyed collaborative writing actives, nineteen pupils said they did, and two did not enjoy the experience.

Participant (13) said" I did not enjoy the session; writing took much time and they wasted my time instead of focusing on the task, they kept chatting and laughing, I did the whole work by myself then they took the same mark as mine".

Participant (14) answered" it is difficult to agree on ideas and convince others and the discussion was not organized; there was a lot of noise"

On the other hand, pupils who enjoyed working in groups, one of them answered" I spent a good time during the session; I had the chance to discover my abilities". In general, the majority of pupils were satisfied and showed enthusiasm in the next session.

Q3." What are the benefits of working in groups?"

The aim of this question is to discover the advantages of using collaborative writing in the written expression sessions. From the pupils' perspective, participating in cooperative classroom environment is beneficial, yet six participants have neither positive nor negative attitudes towards it. Participant (15), for instance, said" I feel confident when I work in pair or groups". Others said that they become enthusiastic and wait passionately for the session because they enjoy the atmosphere. Participant (12) said:" I feel responsible and I like to take different roles in the team". Group work is an effective strategy; it fosters' learners' autonomy, enhances the quality of their productions. Sharing information enriches their background knowledge; also, it increases their participation. In addition, it did not only develop their linguistic skills, but also their social skills. Participants (5) answered:" collaborative writing helped me develop my communicative skills and thought me how to think critically". It increases motivation, self-confidence and decreases anxiety; also, it encourages peer correction and negotiation of ideas.

Q4." Does writing in groups help you improve your writing skill? How? "

The interviewer asked the pupils if collaborative writing helped them improve their writing skill, and in which way it did. The purpose of this question is to know if group work is beneficial or not. The majority of the participants' answer was that yes, it did. Participant (7) said:" I learned new vocabulary from my classmates when we were writing the first draft". Participant (21) added:" collaborative writing improved my writing skills; now I know how to use appropriate link words and write well-structured sentences". Some participants answered that they learner new expressions and writing techniques and developed their writing style. These answers suggest that collaborative writing has an effective impact on students' writing proficiency; they overcome their grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and spelling problems.

Q5.'' What are the challenges that you faced when working in groups?''

Regarding this question, the challenges that most pupils agreed on were that some pupils do not accept the feedback and others' opinions, not all members participated in the writing activity. Participants (8) said:'' I was not able to concentrate because of the noise; all the group members were talking at the same time''. Participant (17) reported,'' they did not take my opinions into consideration; they neglected me because of low level in English''. From the pupils 'answers, we can conclude that collaborative writing has disadvantages; the teacher has to consider many things before implementing it. For instance, he or she needs to ensure the equality of division of tasks and the assignment of the appropriate roles according to pupils' personality. Lack of organization and time management was another challenge; participants (13) said:'' sometimes, when I am with my best friend in the same group, we lose focus and do not concentrate on the task, but rather, we talk about other things especially if the teacher is not watching us''. Others said that it is time consuming; some students take much time to grasp the information and they do not agree on things easily.

Q6.'' What are your perceptions of collaborative writing?''

In order to gather information about pupils' perceptions about the implementation of collaborative writing, the interviewer asked about the pupils' opinion regarding working in groups. The majority of the participants said that it was beneficial; only five pupils said that it did not have any effect on their level of writing. Participant (14) said:'' it was a useful, helpful and motivational; group work is a successful learning and teaching strategy''. However, the entire group member enjoyed the experience of working cooperatively. Pupils perceived collaborative writing as a process of encouraging, sharing responsibility, communicating, interacting, respecting and trusting each other.

3.5.   Discussions of the results

The physical setting arrangement and group size have a significant impact on the success of collaborative writing. It allowed the teacher to manage the groups and keep them highly attentive which leads us to another factor that is the role of teacher. The latter varied during the whole session. Teachers have to be aware when to intervene and when to step aside. All these aspects have to be taken into consideration when arranging cooperative classroom activities. Moreover, pupils' lack of engagement is due to pupils' reluctance and dependence on the teacher as the only source of knowledge; however, their motivation to

participate more is boosted when their work is praised and valued. Before incorporating group work, collaborative learning features have to be carefully studied.

Based on the results obtained from focus group discussion, the majority of pupils have average level in writing; yet they like it. Furthermore, the data collected highlights some major difficulties, the first ones are grammar and spelling; these grammatical problems and spelling mistakes denote that pupils either lack the practice of grammar rules, or other languages' interference. The second difficulty is punctuation; this could be interpreted by the pupils' lack of knowledge about basic grammar rules. Difficulties in cohesion and coherence come next and this implies that pupils are not aware of the difference between the two and their function, in addition to their lack of prior knowledge. Moreover, difficulties in vocabulary derive from the fact that pupils have limited word choice; this could be explained by their lack of reading. They also encounter difficulties when writing individually such as difficulties in generating ideas and organizing paragraphs. So, they prefer to write in groups. Cooperative classrooms offer opportunities for pupils to express their thoughts and ideas freely

The benefits of collaborative writing are numerous. Based on what have been observed, group work promotes participation and encourages productivity in all language aspects. In addition, it sets a cooperative, helpful and funny atmosphere which motivates the learners. Additionally, pupils' perceptions have changed positively; low achievers had benefited from working in groups more than pupils who have a good level in English. pupils showed a high level of satisfaction with collaborative writing. Performing written tasks within groups was useful during the entire writing stages. In the pre-writing, pupils enjoyed listening and discovering others' ideas, the planning phase helped them structure their paragraphs accurately. As far as the editing and the revision phase are concerned, a peer feedback was effective, and helped pupils correct their mistakes and spot their weaknesses.

Conclusion

At the end of the analysis of both the classroom observation and the focused group discussion, it can be concluded that third-year secondary school pupils at Amour Larbi secondary school, Biskra have positive attitudes towards collaborative writing. The gathered data confirmed the effectiveness of collaborative writing in improving pupils' writing proficiency in terms of syntax, vocabulary, format, punctuation and coherence.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The present thesis was conducted to investigate the effect of collaborative writing on EFL pupils' writing proficiency, and their perceptions and attitudes towards it. This study is composed of three chapters. The first two chapters tackle the theoretical part and the literary review of the study. The first chapter gave a general overview about the writing skill; on the other hand, the second chapter deals with collaborative writing. The third chapter; however, is the practical part.

In order to affirm or nullify our hypothesis, a descriptive method was adopted. A classroom observation and a focus group discussion were conducted to third year secondary school, literature and philosophy stream, pupils. A descriptive method was adopted at Amouria Larbi Secondary School, Ras El Miad, Biskra. The sample of this study is composed of twenty-one pupils. Furthermore, the aim of the first tool was to investigate the effect of implementing collaborative writing on the writing proficiency of the pupils; whereas, the second tool was to find out pupils' perceptions and attitudes towards collaborative writing.

According to the obtained results from both tools, the majority of pupils have positive attitudes towards collaborative writing. The latter proved to have an effective impact on their writing proficiency. The qualitative data gathered from the focus group discussion revealed that collaborative writing does not only improves students' linguistic skills, but also enhances their social, problem solving, and communicative skills.

These results affirm, to a large extent, our hypotheses which states that using collaborative writing improves EFL students writing proficiency. And the students confirmed that they, indeed, have a positive attitude towards collaborative writing.

The current study has proved that the case study has an average level in writing; alas, this can be largely improved if teacher incorporate cooperative learning strategies. Therefore, we recommend that teachers use group and pair work more frequently in the writing sessions.

Recommendation and pedagogical implications for further research

According to the findings of this research that attempts to investigate the effect of collaborative writing on EFL pupils' writing performance, the following recommendations are made for further research:

For Teachers

- It is recommended that teachers implement cooperative learning strategies such as group work in teaching not only reading and writing sessions, but also listening and speaking.
- Teachers ought to raise students 'awareness of collaboration and teamwork skills
- It is advisable that teachers use different set of activities in the warm up stage to grab student's attentions.
- Teachers should vary the teaching material when dealing during the different writing stages (brainstorming, drafting, editing and publishing) to increase students' engagement.
- Teacher should assign more writing homework to encourage students to practice writing.

For Pupils

- Pupils should use English more than Arabic while having discussions during collaborative writing activities.
- Pupils need to practice reading more often to enrich their knowledge and vocabulary, in addition to learn different sentence structures.
- Pupils have to provide positive, constructive feedback to each other.
- Pupils have to be aware of their roles and their responsibilities within the groups

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Appendices

Appendix A: Classroom Observation Checklist

Classroom Observation checklist

Teacher: **Date:**

Observer: **Time:**

Class Observed: **Session:**

Aspects	Traditional classroom	Cooperative classroom
The physical setting	- - -	- - -
Learners' engagement	- - -	- - -
Students 'participation	- - -	- - -
The teacher's role	- - -	- - -
Time management	- - -	- - -
Group formation	- - -	- - -
Collaborative learning features	- - -	- - -
Students' role	- -	- -
Collaborative writing challenges	- - -	- - -
The language of interaction	- -	- -

Appendix 2: Focus Group Discussion Questions

Question 01: Do you like writing?

Question 02: How do you evaluate your writing proficiency?

Question 03: What are the aspects you are likely to find difficulties in?

Question 04: Do you prefer to work in groups, pair or individual? And why?

Question 05: Have you enjoyed working in groups?

Question 06: What are the benefits of working in groups?

Question 07: Does writing in groups help you improve your writing skill? In which way?

Question 08: What are the challenges that you faced when working in groups?

Question 09: What are your perceptions towards the use of collaborative writing?

ملخص الدراسة

تعتبر مهارة الكتابة مهارة معقدة، لكونها تتضمن العديد من المتغيرات مثل القواعد اللغوية و تنظيم الأفكار. تشكل معظم هذه المتغيرات صعوبة للتلاميذ الذين يدرسون اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية . لذلك ، من الضروري أن يقوم المعلم بتنفيذ أساليب واستراتيجيات مختلفة لمساعدة تلاميذه على تعزيز إنتاجيتهم الكتابية. تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى استقصاء تأثير الكتابة التعاونية على كفاءة تلاميذ اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في الكتابة. تحاول أيضًا استكشاف مواقف وتصورات هؤلاء التلاميذ تجاه تنفيذ العمل الثنائي والجماعي في جلسات التعبير الكتابي. تم اعتماد المنهج الوصفي كوسيلة لجمع البيانات النوعية. شارك في هذا البحث إحدى و عشرون تلميذ سنة ثالثة ثانوي شعبة آداب و فلسفة بثانوية عمورية العربي بسكرة من خلال المشاركة في ملاحظة صفية و مناقشة جماعية مركزة . كشفت النتائج المتحصل عليها أن مهارة الكتابة لاغلبيه تلاميذ سنة ثالثة ثانوي شعبة آداب و فلسفة بثانوية عمورية العربي قد تحسنت من حيث علامات الترقيم، وهيكل الجملة، وأدوات الربط والمفردات علاوة على ذلك أسفرت البيانات التي تم جمعها من المناقشات الجماعية أن تلاميذ السنة الثالثة، شعبة الأدب والفلسفة، لديهم مواقف إيجابية تجاه تنفيذ الكتابة التعاونية لذلك يوصى المعلمين بدمج الكتابة التعاونية في فصولهم الدراسية في كثير من الأحيان بغرض معالجة الصعوبات الكتابية لتلاميذهم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مهارة الكتابة، تلاميذ اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية, الكتابة الجماعية , الكفاءة الكتابية