

The Importance of Using Collaborative Learning Strategy in Learning English Writing

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Abstract

This study investigated the importance of using collaborative learning as a strategy to enhance English writing skills of EFL learners. The study was a classroom based, the participants of the study were 25 female Libyan students from two different secondary schools in Misrata .All students who were chosen randomly were asked to fill in the questionnaire given. The research was done by using a mixed method approach. The data analysis obtained from the questionnaire and observation indicated that the majority of students were positive about collaborative writing although some of them were not interested when engaging collaboratively .It is a suitable and applicable strategy for improving students' English writing performance and to develop their critical thinking. Moreover, working collaboratively has a good impact on all members in a group since collaboration engages students to express their opinions and respect others' opinions; it fosters negotiation, and it engages students to share their knowledge.

ملخص البحث

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تتناول هذه الدراسة أهمية استخدام التعليم التعاوني كاستراتيجية مهمة لتعلم مهارات الكتابة في اللغة الإنجليزية لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في المرحلة الثانوية وتحسين أداءهم الكتابي. المشاركون في الدراسة 25 طالبة ليبية من مدرستين ثانويتين مختلفتين في مصراته. وطُلب من جميع الطلاب الذين تم اختيارهم بشكل عشوائي ملء الاستبيان المقدم لهم. وقد استخدم في هذه الدراسة البحث المدمج (الوصفي "استبيان" والكمي "الملاحظة"). أشار تحليل البيانات الذي تم الحصول عليه من الاستبيان والملاحظة إلى أن غالبية الطلاب كانوا إيجابيين بشأن الكتابة التعاونية على الرغم من أن بعضهم لم يكن مهتمًا باستراتيجية التعليم التعاوني. وأثبتت نتائج البحث أن هذه الاستراتيجية مناسبة وقابلة للتطبيق لتحسين أداء الطلاب في الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية وتطوير تفكيرهم النقدي. وعلاوة على ذلك، فإن العمل التعاوني له تأثير جيد على جميع الطلبة في المجموعة لأن التعاون يُشرك الطلاب في التعبير عن آرائهم والتزود بآراء وافكار الآخرين، ويعزز التفكير ويشرك الطلاب في مشاركة معارفه وانماء قدراته الكتابية.

1. Introduction

Collaborative learning has become an essential strategy and it is used widely in the language classroom. Therefore, one of the most important implications of this strategy is that it enables learners to be involved in activities and exercises that help them achieve a successful communication. Obviously, when learners engage in a group work activity, they have a chance to learn from one another, grow from hearing each other's perspectives, and dive into deeper learning. (Strang , 2014). Furthermore, peer and group work can promote EFL learners with a sense of co-ownership and motivate them to interact on different aspects of writing. such as: content, structure, and language (ed and Lunsford, 1990). Furthermore, working collaboratively in

writing tasks is seen as an effective strategy that help learners improve their grammatical accuracy and increase their vocabulary growth. In terms of enhancing the grammatical accuracy, students can find it more interesting to correct their peers' errors than theirs.

In communicative language teaching, writing is one of the four basic language skills in teaching English as a foreign language. Despite its importance, it does not receive enough attention in schools. Even though it comes as the last skill, but it should not be neglected and needs a lot of attention from the teacher and the student. Therefore, many EFL students find writing the most difficult area of language and encounter many problems while composing simple short paragraphs. In the meantime, some teachers find it hard to assist students' performance in producing pieces of quality academic writing (Abdel-Hack, 2002) .

Teachers have a variety of strategies and methods that can be applied flexibly to achieve writing goals. According to (Clifford, 1991), "The teacher has to encourage learners to write for communication. They should focus on the ideas and meanings they wish to convey rather than on mechanics of writing, such as spelling, and handwriting." (p. 42). The teachers play a major role in teaching writing and they are the only ones who could help prevent problems of writing that could slow the process of learning English Writing. Encouraging students to write to communicate student to student, student to teacher, or to write in a collaborative way can do this. Collaboration in writing helps learners to develop their communicative competence, reduce anxiety and foster self-confidence .

1.1 Research Questions:

1. To what extent can this strategy affect the students 'writing performance?

2. What are the effects of using collaborative writing strategy for secondary school students in teaching English as a foreign language in Misrata?

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Secondary school students in Misrata are facing a lot of problems when dealing with English writing skills because they are not exposed to English language effectively. The first problem they face is the lack of language environments and practice. In addition, there are fewer opportunities to learn new English words or expressions, and how using them is even more challenging. Another factor is that some teachers only focus on errors and ignore strategies of how to compose simple short paragraphs. Furthermore, large classes is considered as a major factor that can obstacle the learning process. In large classes some students may find it hard to get an individual ideas within 45 minutes. Also, the problems students face could be as a consequent of the lack of knowledge in English language such as not being able to build up an adequate vocabulary.

1.3 Significance of the Study

We have chosen the collaborative writing strategy to determine if it can solve such problems so that teachers can manage their time properly and students can build their confidence. Collaboration helps students understand writing as a process, and increase their sense of mastery of what is often considered a complex and difficult task. The best way to learn something is to produce it. When instructing their peers, students learn how to improve their own writing. Some teachers tend to avoid writing in class, perhaps feeling that as it is something that learners should do individually and in silence, it is better done for homework. However, when writing is done as a collaborative activity, it can have many benefits on the learner' writing competence and provides more opportunities for learners to interact in English. By using such strategy, learners can develop their abilities as well as

teachers can raise their awareness of how to use appropriate ways not only to teach writing, but also to teach students the right way to write in a better English. In short, this research has been done to focus on using collaborative learning strategy to learn English writing because it is a suitable and applicable strategy for improving students' English writing performance and to develop their critical thinking.

Many studies have been conducted recently to investigate the effect of using collaborative writing strategies on students' writing performance. Collaborative learning refers to "a small group of learners who are working together as a team in order to solve problems, complete a task, or fulfil a common goal" (Graham, 2005, p.11). Cooperative learning differs from traditional learning because it provides structural opportunities for individuals, who are given specific roles within their groups, to work together to reach common goals. It can be achieved by more than one person and includes activities such as collecting data, brainstorming, planning, making an outline, revising and editing. Collaborative Learning is usually in contrast with traditional classroom environments. When students learn separately, their individual performances do not necessarily affect one another either in a positive or negative way.

The Process Approach to writing is concerned with linguistic writing skills, such as planning, revising, drafting and editing, rather than linguistic writing knowledge such as spelling, grammar, punctuation and vocabulary. (Badger & White, 2000). It concentrates on teaching writing through the process and stages of writing (Belinda, 2006). According to Hedge (1988) Writing Process Approach is an approach to teach writing that allows students to write their own ideas with their own process. The writing process approach includes five steps: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. The steps are not separated and do not happen in a sequence. But, they might occur at the same time. Some people may edit as they revise a draft, while others edit when the whole draft is

completed. Still, others revise as they draft. As the term suggests, the teaching of writing focuses on what goes on when learners write and what the teacher can do to help the learners get into a good writing.

Various studies and researchers have examined the process approach to writing in different situations in order to show the advantages and benefits of this approach. El Koumy (2004) stated that self-assessment of the process of writing encouraged students to develop their thinking skills and writing strategies, so they became able to discover and elaborate their ideas effectively. The results of his study showed that the process group produced a greater quantity of writing than the product group, whereas the product group was better than the process group in terms of the quality of writing. Furthermore, Belinda (2006) noticed that the process approach to writing had been found to be a useful and helpful strategy; however, it could be more effective for students fluent in English in strengthening their writing skills.

However, according to Alnofal (2003), the teaching of writing skills has not been paid much attention compared to the teaching of the skills of reading, listening and speaking. Neomy Storch (2002) conducted a study about collaborative writing: product, process, and students' reflections to investigate collaborative writing. He stated that collaborative writing contributes students to be developed in a higher quality, and they gain an increased level in knowledge, and self confidence. Storch found that pairs produced shorter but better texts in terms of task fulfilment, grammatical accuracy, and complexity.

Collaboration in the English writing skill can be beneficial for ESL students in the sense that it develops the interaction and at the same time learners may gain self-confidence and by completing their written tasks collaboratively, they minimize their anxiety among the language (Raimes,1998,Rollinson,2005). Furthermore, Foster (1998) provides a set of essential benefits required from collaborative writing. Firstly, it increases the learners' motivation. Secondly, collaborative

writing offers community, in the way social interaction can be introduced. In that way, EFL learners manage each other to be supported and guided.

A collaborative Writing Strategy enables learners to improve their critical thinking and deepen their understanding. Also, it makes learning writing more enjoyable and interesting. In collaborative writing, learners share ideas together to reach what is needed from them to be achieved. Moreover, some aspects of CL have been found to have positive results, however, some research findings have revealed a negative side. Storch (2002) noticed that some students were reluctant to work in pairs. They preferred to perform their tasks individually rather than collaboratively.

Many studies have shown how using collaborative learning in the form of collaborative writing in classrooms has a positive effect on students' writing abilities as shown below:

Peer review may give some students a lack of confidence in their writing and they may find it uncomfortable to get involved in group work. Murau (1993) investigated the effect of peer review on writing anxiety. He noticed that students felt anxious, embarrassed and uncomfortable when involved collaboratively with their peers, even though they thought it was beneficial to receive feedback and correct each other. By contrast, Kagan (1994) claims that CL is more appropriate for ESL students because it helps to reduce anxiety and give each student in a small group the opportunity to interact with others.

Collaborative learning in teaching writing skill has a positive impact on the students since it improves the learners' creativity as well as develops a sense of awareness towards learning to write. As Elbow (1975) points out, collaborative writing in the classroom is useful and important, since if someone is stuck in his or her writing, it is better to contact and talk with someone else. He claims that 'two

heads are better than one because two heads can make conflicting material inter-act better than one head usually can't (p. 49). Moreover, Storch (2002) interviewed a sample of ESL students and found that writing collaboratively could encourage them to share responsibility for making decisions on all aspects and categories of writing, including content, structure and language.

Some researchers such as Murray (1978) believes that the effectiveness of collaborative writing is limited to the final stages of the process approach to writing: such as revising and editing. However, Gebhardt (1980) argues that collaborative writing has a positive effect not only in these final stages but also in the beginning stages: for instance, in brainstorming, collecting ideas, planning and outlining. In his opinion, it would be a shame to limit collaboration to the final stages of the writing process because "It seems to me that 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). In addition, Storch's studies (2002 & 2005) indicated that using a collaborative learning strategy in writing classes is effective in beginning activities: namely, brainstorming and discussing collaboratively, and also in final stages such as the peer review and editing stages.

Moreover, peer editing is a strategy that can help learners to solve problems that might be encountered in writing classes. Shull (2001) examined the effectiveness of the collaborative learning strategy that included peer-editing used to improve the writing skills. The researcher aimed to determine if collaborative learning could be an appropriate approach to solving the problems in their writing. Shull found that the writing of students taught using a collaborative learning strategy had improved more than that of the control group. In addition, involvement in writing tasks collaboratively have a beneficial effect on the learners autonomy towards English writing. Ambusher (2012), who conducted a research thesis about developing writing skills of

ESL students through the collaborative learning strategy found out that students involved in collaborative writing produced better written texts in terms of organization, development, coherence, structure, vocabulary and mechanics than students who wrote individually, and those who are engaging in collaborative learning had a positive effect on the attitudes and perceptions of learners.

However, it was also found that collaborative writing did not help them much in terms of the accuracy of their writing (mechanics and structure). The overall conclusions of this study were therefore that not only did students who wrote their essays collaboratively with each other produce better written texts than those who wrote their essays by themselves, but also that involvement in collaborative learning had a positive impact on the students' attitudes towards writing in English (Ambusher, 2012).

On the other hand, Fawcett and Garton (2005), pointed out that Cooperative learning is considered as an effective strategy for problem solving. The findings indicated that children who completed the activity collaboratively reached and achieved a higher number of correct sorting than those who completed it individually.

Furthermore, Storch (2005) investigates in the writing skill in relation to the production, the processing, and at the same time to student's experience on working collaboratively. He made a research in which he asked the learners individually to write a text and the other learners worked in a collaborative way. Therefore, the findings revealed that those who worked in collaboration scored higher rather than who have engaged in their writing task individually. In this way, Storch investigation was based on the influence of individual , and pair writing on the accuracy, fluency and also complexity of learning process. Finally, writing collaboratively is a strategy that helps to increase both the quality and productivity of writing skills.

The value of collaborative writing as means to develop the linguistic and writing conventions of a second language has also been underpinned from a sociocultural perspective (Storch, 2005, Villamil and Degurrero 1996). Their research has noted that in a collaborative situation writers are impelled to make decision about language needed to express their ideas, and thus to formulate the structure in which express those ideas as they produce a text together.

3. Methodology

The researchers used a mixed method approach to investigate the validity of the collaborative learning by using a questionnaire and an observation as well.

3.1 Quantitative research

According to (Creswell, 2012), a quantitative research method is basically about collecting numerical data to explain a particular phenomenon and particular questions seem suitable to be answered quantitatively. Data of this kind are in the form of numbers from precise measurement.

3.1.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaire construction is one of the initial activities that are critical for a pragmatic social science research. Its aim is to supply the researcher with the data he/she needs. A questionnaire is defined by Babbie (1990) as "a document containing questions and other types of its designed to solicit information appropriate to analysis" (p. 377).

3.2 Qualitative research

Qualitative data collection consists of gathering data using forms with general, emerging questions to permit the participants to generate responses gathering word (text) or image (picture) data; and collecting information from a small number of individuals or sites. (Creswell, 2012). The qualitative research method involves the usage

of qualitative data, such as observation, in order to understand and explain a social phenomenon. (Creswell, 2012).

3. 2.1.Observation

Observation is a systematic way of watching and listening to a phenomenon as it takes place. It is a way of gathering data through observing (Creswell, 2012). It is useful in exploring topics that might be uncomfortable for participants to discuss. Observation data collection method has some strengths such as the researcher can record information as it happens, and unusual aspects and behaviours can be noticed during observation. (Creswell, 2012).

3.3 Requirements of Participants and Procedures

In this research study we rely on mixed research methods to collect data ‘first, a questionnaire was used in this study to collect data on how students perceive learning from their teachers by focusing on collaborative writing strategy .

In terms of the method, a questionnaire was employed for this study which contains a set of questions for gathering information from the students. They are good ways for collecting information. The questionnaire was given to the first year secondary schools students. The students were asked to answer twenty questions and tick (√) or cross (×) one of the two options (Agree, Disagree).The second is a classroom observation. The data sources for this observation are from Al Ghiran and Al Yaqada secondary schools in Misurata.

3.4 Ethical Clearance and Confidentiality

General ethical issues, like assessment of risk, confidentiality, access of data, and informed consent were carefully considered in conducting this research study. All the information collected from the principals of the schools, class lecturer, and participants have been kept strictly confidential. The permission to undertake the study was sought from the schools' principals in an English and Arabic form.

Furthermore, the information sheet was constructed in Arabic and English to ensure that conditions were fully accepted and understood by the participants.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Data Analysis and Discussion of Questionnaires

1. Collaborative learning is better than individual learning strategy. The results indicate that the majority of participants about 96% agree that working cooperatively is much better than working individually. Whereas about 4% of participants disagree with this item . Collaborative learning provides opportunities for learners to work together to gain common goals. It is usually contrasted with traditional individualistic classroom environments.
2. Collaborative writing is a strategy used to enhance students' is writing performance. The majority of participants agreed with using collaborative technique whereas 4% of participants disagree with this view. When students work cooperatively, they can improve a wide range of aspects such as productivity, proficiency, grammatical competence and discourse. Cooperative learning in learning English writing skill can increase the productivity and performance of the learners. Therefore, group that work together as a team can achieve much more than who work individually on their own.
3. Working in groups provides learners with the opportunity to write about their activities collaboratively. The whole participants agreed that involving in a group work could give them a chance to talk and express their ideas in collaborative way. The teacher should permit his/her students to continue to interact and communicate as long as the message is clear. Moreover,

collaborative writing also affords students with the opportunity to work together. It is clear that 100% of participants who were engaged in this study agreed that working in groups can be a beneficial strategy for writing effectively. Also, working in pairs can help learners to get more ideas because different people have different ideas, so they can compare the important ideas that make a paragraph. Therefore, group work in writing classes is helpful for both enhancing the grammatical accuracy and learning vocabulary. For example, some learners may be better in grammar, others are good in spelling, and some of them are better in organizing ideas. Moreover, sharing ideas together can play a vital role in deepening the learner's understanding of a particular subject area.

4. In writing classes, it is necessary for English teachers to guide and to concentrate on content rather than on mechanics of writing such as (spelling and punctuation). It is essential that teachers guide their learners while doing writing compositions in order to make the writing processes more obvious for the students. This will make it easy for learners to follow the strategies step- by- step that the teacher suggests. However, the students should be more active than the teacher and they have to prepare the activities, give feedback to students, correct and evaluate the produced texts. In addition, it is implicit for English writing teachers to concentrate on content rather than mechanics of writing. This could give learners a chance to express their ideas and thoughts freely and without restrictions. For example, if students were informed that their teacher would focus on those writing mechanics, they might feel worried and more anxious rather than focusing on the content itself. Murau (1993) investigated the effect of peer review on writing anxiety and noticed that students felt anxious, embarrassed and uncomfortable when involved collaboratively with their peers, even though they thought it was beneficial to receive feedback and

correct each other. However, such writing mechanics are considered to be vital in terms of writing accuracy.

5. Working by myself without help from others is very important for me. The results revealed that about (80%) of participants disagree that working alone without help from their peers is not important for them. However, the rest of participants about (20%) agreed with this statement because they may feel embarrassed and not confident when engaging in a team work. This item is presented in a negative way but it has positive results; which means that students believe that cooperation can suit their interests.

I prefer the pre-writing stage, editing and proofreading in a group rather than individually to facilitate finding ideas for the topic. The results presented that students agreed about using collaborative writing when they are involved collaboratively.

The findings indicated that EFL students thought that talking with friends could facilitate finding ideas for any writing topic. Furthermore, in the pre-writing phase students share ideas, information, and knowledge collaboratively. Thus, doing pre-writing activities in collaborative way helps students to exchange ideas with others and select appropriate ideas for any given writing task. As Elbow (1973) points out, CW in the classroom is useful and important, since if someone is stuck in his or her writing, it is better to contact with others. He claims that ‘two heads are better than one because two heads can make conflicting material interact better than one head usually can’ (p. 49). As, the vast majority of participants (100%) agreed that involving collaboratively in writing activities is much better than involving individually. As a result, collaborative learning during the pre-writing stage helped them a great deal in collecting ideas and vocabulary, discussing with each other, planning and making an outline.

According to (Spack, 1984), "Prewriting techniques teach students to write down their ideas quickly in raw form, without undue

concern about surface errors and form. This practice helps their fluency, as they are able to think and write at the same time, rather than think and then write." Also, the results indicated that the students thought that making an outline and writing down ideas with classmates were good methods that should be used before starting writing.

The students felt that collaboration was beneficial for planning a topic, making an outline, and finding appropriate ideas for any relevant topic. Gebhardt (1980) argues that collaborative writing has a positive effect not only in these final stages but also in the beginning stages. In addition, all students agreed about editing their writing task in groups instead of doing it individually. The editing stage includes various language aspects such as revising grammar, spelling, and punctuation. In addition, working together during the editing and revising phases can help EEL students to overcome difficulties such as correcting mistakes, restructuring ideas, and finding the right vocabulary. According to Murray (1978), the effectiveness of collaborative writing is limited to the final stages of the process approach to writing: i.e., revising and editing.

6. Collaborative writing helps me to learn and use new vocabulary correctly. Most of the students (96%) agreed about collaborative writing since it is helpful in learning new vocabulary and using them in a correct way. The main problem that students face when starting to write is gathering new ideas and writing about them as well as choosing suitable words. Students may lack vocabulary and might have a limited storage of English vocabulary; this makes it difficult for them to start writing. As a result, CL has a positive influence on writing performance of EFL because learners will share ideas, new vocabulary with each other. For example, through collaboration learners can build a wide range of new words and use them in a proper way.

7. I feel more satisfied with my writing when I work in small groups than I work individually to involve me in the writing task and get a good score.

There were 84% of participants who agreed that, they feel more satisfied about their writing when involved in groups rather than in isolation. In contrast, there were 16% of students who disagreed about this point. The findings indicated that students felt more satisfied when writing their topics in collaborative groups than when writing individually. That means collaborative learning helps in increasing the satisfaction of students in English writing. It is clear that most of the students engaged in this study agreed that collaboration in writing helps them to gain good marks in writing compositions. In addition, students who work collaboratively can obtain better results in terms of organization, fluency, complexity and accuracy in the production of written text than those who work individually. In short, Working in groups provides the learners with the opportunity to be motivated and encouraged in English writing. Thus, they will depend on each other in gathering ideas, helping one another in reconstructing their paragraph and it is obvious that they will be satisfied with their final product because it is their own work.

8. Some teachers treat writing skills as a reading and they do not pay attention to writing tasks. It is obvious that English writing is neglected and not considered as important as the other English skills. According to Alnofal (2003), the teaching of writing skills has not been paid much attention compared to the teaching of the skills of reading, listening and speaking. Therefore, secondary students have problems with writing tasks and some of them do not have the ability to write even a paragraph. Thus, this issue has a harmful impact on the student's writing skills because those students do not receive much practice from their teacher. This problem should be taken into consideration by both the teacher and students to accomplish what is intended to achieve .

9. Students' weakness in writing skills results in the lack of writing practice in the classroom. The findings indicated that 8% of students disagreed with this view whereas 92% of participants were in agreement that students' weakness in writing skills results from the lack of reading, writing practice in the classroom because the more they read, the better they write and such tasks are unfortunately neglected by some teachers. This lack could have a negative effect on learning English writing .
10. To develop your English writing, teachers should pay more attention to the writing skill and consider it as an important skill as the other skills. All of the participants involved in this survey were completely in agreement that teachers should pay more attention to the writing skill and consider it as an essential skill as the other skills in order to develop their English writing. Since writing plays a major role in English and develops a wide range of language sub skills such as grammar and vocabulary. Therefore, to improve students writing performance and to achieve a higher achievement in English writing, teachers should focus more on this area of study.

4.2 Data Analysis and Discussion of Observations

1. Individual Learning and Collaborative Learning Strategy to learn English writing classroom observation. According to what we have observed during the observation phase, two teachers noticed that students, who were involved collaboratively, were more active and motivated than those engaged individually. Moreover, an observer, noticed that their writing was good of both students either in collaboration or isolation. Some students claimed that they had not enjoyed learning writing skills before, but that writing had become much easier after involvement in CL. In contrast, for some students, writing in a group takes longer time, whereas writing individually is more proficient and faster than engaging in a group work. In addition, some English teachers treat the writing skill as a

reading and they do not pay attention to writing tasks and the teaching of writing skills has not been taken seriously by some teachers. Therefore, this can have a bad impact on their learning.

2. Students' Interaction Observation. Based on our experience as teacher practitioners, collaboration in writing enables students to interact with each other effectively and make learning writing more interesting. For example, as I am a teacher, I used collaborative learning to arouse the students' interest, make them more active and involve them in the practice activities. Furthermore, collaboration in writing involves the learners in the target language since they build up an adequate mastery of vocabulary from each other. For instance, as I am a teacher, I noticed that students felt more relaxed and enjoyed working in collaborative groups in writing tasks and they asked their teacher to follow and use this strategy.
3. Teachers' Interaction Observation. According to the observation in Al Ghiran Secondary School when attending the first year writing classes on Thursday. I noticed that some teachers teach writing skills seriously, help their students and guide them in writing activities. To illustrate, the teacher gave them a background about the topic then she divided the class into groups ;each group consists of four students working collaboratively. After finishing their writing with the guide of their teacher and the help of mine, the teacher allowed them to read it aloud to the rest of the class with direct correction. In this way students develop their English skills such as: writing, speaking, reading, listening, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and intonation.

Moreover, the teacher used two kinds of correction; direct and indirect correction. For example, when the students finish their writing task, the teacher corrects the mistakes orally without paying more attention to that mistake and after they submitted the writing task to the teacher , she corrects them using an indirect way . For instance, she puts WO, SP, GM, WP without correcting the

mistakes. After that, she returned the papers back to them and they have to correct the mistakes underlined in a collaborative way. It is obvious that this technique that the teacher used is a good one in case of time limited and large classes.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

To conclude, some English teachers tend to ignore writing activities, perhaps because they feel that these tasks are not that important. This research concentrates on the difficulties and problems that learners might encounter when dealing with writing skills and recommended some solutions that could help first year students to minimize those problems and maximize their performance to be proficient in English writing. Therefore, collaborative learning is chosen as a strategy to learn English writing and it is considered as an effective teaching and learning technique by many scholars since collaboration in writing helps students to be involved in the target language effectively. If writing is taken seriously by both teachers and students, writing will be seen easier and full of enjoyment than any other skill. Finally, the researchers recommend English language teachers who teach writing skill to use collaborative writing strategy in order to develop the proficiency of their learners in English language. Group or peer work in learning English writing is beneficial for learners and is more effective and productive for students than working individually.

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