



## Student's Perception in Collaborative Learning on Writing Class for Vocational High School

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### Abstract

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*In the context of education at the high school level, the significance of effective writing skills cannot be understated. This qualitative study examines the perceptions of students from the mechanical engineering major at State Vocational High School 1 Karawang regarding collaborative learning in their writing class. The research, conducted through interviews with five respondents, aimed to explore the impact of collaborative writing on their engagement, writing skills, and exposure to diverse viewpoints. The findings indicate a positive influence of collaborative writing, enhancing students' writing abilities and facilitating exposure to a range of perspectives. However, the study also identifies challenges related to scheduling coordination and managing the variety of opinions within groups. Through an inclusive discussion of academic perspectives, this study highlights the various nature of collaborative writing as a potent tool for learning. In conclusion, collaborative writing in English class offers students an approach to improve their writing skills, develop their understanding of different perspectives, and valuable teamwork abilities. By addressing challenges and increasing the role of teachers in guiding students, collaborative writing can become an essential component of a comprehensive and improving educational experience.*

**Keywords:** Collaborative Learning, Collaborative Writing, Writing Class

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## INTRODUCTION

A writing class in a vocational high school is designed to improve student's writing skills in the context of their chosen vocational field. The primary goal of a writing class is to equip students with the ability to effectively communicate and write professionally relevant to their future careers (Yundayani et al, 2020). The content and focus of a writing class in a vocational high school may vary depending on the specific vocational field and the level of the students. However, some common topics and skills that a teacher usually teaches in a writing class for vocational school include technical writing, business communication, report writing, proposal writing, and resume and cover letter writing (Barus et al, 2021).

However, teachers in vocational high school may encounter certain challenges, such as a noticeable skill gap among students, tendencies towards laziness, and a lack of confidence in their writing abilities (Prayitno et al, 2017). Teachers often consider collaborative learning a valuable strategy to address these problems and make a positive learning environment. Collaborative learning offers



a powerful solution by promoting active engagement and peer-to-peer support. In such an approach, students work together in small groups, allowing those with stronger writing skills to assist their peers who may be struggling. This teamwork bridges the skill gap and encourages quality friendship among students, fostering a supportive learning community (Widiati et al, 2016).

Moreover, through collaborative learning, students can motivate one another to overcome laziness and procrastination. As they share responsibilities and hold each other accountable, the collective effort drives them to remain focused and committed to their writing tasks (Wang, 2015). The collaborative nature of the learning process promotes a sense of responsibility and encourages students to invest their best efforts in the shared project. Also, the benefit of collaborative learning for vocational students struggling with confidence is that the student could receive feedback and peer encouragement. Students collaboratively reviewing and discussing each other's writing helps build confidence and resilience. They can witness the progress of their peers and gain insights into different writing styles and techniques, inspiring them to explore new approaches to their work (Storch, 2019).

Although collaborative learning has many benefits, like any learning approach, it also presents challenges during its application. One significant concern with collaborative learning is the potential for unequal participation within groups. Some students may dominate discussions, while others might remain passive, and less to contribute. This can hinder all group members' full engagement and active learning, leading to uneven work and knowledge-sharing distribution. Moreover, group dynamics can sometimes become disrupted due to student conflicts and disagreements. Disagreements might arise over ideas, approaches, or leadership roles, creating tension and hindering effective collaboration. In such situations, teachers must carefully provide open discussions and guide students to resolve conflicts. Another challenge with collaborative learning is the potential for social loafing, wherein some students may rely excessively on their peers and contribute less effort to group tasks. This can lead to a decrease in individual accountability and hinder the achievement of optimal learning outcomes (Zheng et al, 2015). Additionally, group composition can impact the success of collaborative learning. Assigning groups without considering individual strengths and weaknesses may lead to mismatched dynamics and hinder effective collaboration. Ensuring balanced group dynamics are essential for maximizing the benefits of collaborative learning.

With all the benefits and challenges of the collaborative learning method, it is necessary to examine how students perceive collaborative learning used in vocational high school. To make an effective learning strategy, we must know whether this method meets the student's needs. Therefore, it is essential and needed to conduct a study on how the student perception of collaborative learning in writing class. The findings are expected to explain the benefits and challenges the students perceive so we can evaluate the learning condition and suggest an improvement for a better learning experience.

## **METHODS**

The site of this research is located in SMKN 1 Karawang, specifically in the mechanical engineering study program Grade XII. The class consist of 30 students. The participants of this research are 5 students. The researcher used simple random sampling to do this. Sample are chosen at random with selection techniques. The surveys conducted in social science rely on a random selection of survey members, which can be a person, places, or other element for study. The overall survey design relies heavily on random sampling. This class was chosen by the researcher because of the easy access and the researcher was permitted by the school to conduct a study there. Students are interested in learning writing but still unable to find a suitable method.

Observation is used to observe the teaching and learning process, including the implementation of problem-based learning in the classroom and to observe problems teachers and students face during the teaching and learning process. The observation was held in SMKN 1 Karawang Barat from November 28th, 2022, until December 2nd, 2023. Researcher use observation guidelines to make field notes to obtain more detailed information on the teaching and learning process. It was done to get actual and credible information about students' perceptions towards the collaborative writing process. After that, students were asked to write reflective journals to express their feelings before, during, and after the problem-based learning process, specifically in speaking activity. By using self-reflection journals, it is expected that the researcher easily gets the data about their perspective on the problem-based learning process. Here is the question used by the researcher as a form of students' reflection journals is: 1). what do you think of this collaborative writing method in English class? 2). how do you feel about this collaborative writing method in English class?.

Data analysis is the most essential part of every study. Data analysis and interpretation are continuous throughout the study in all qualitative research, so insights obtained in initial data analysis can guide future data collection. In addition, according to Miles and Huberman (1994), organising, categorising or coding large massive of data so that they can be described and interpreted is one thing qualitative researcher must do. In this research, the researcher uses Miles and Huberman's theory in analyzing the data, so there are three steps to do, they are data reduction, data display and drawing the conclusion.

## **RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

### ***Results***

In collaborative writing learning, a central emphasis lies on their understanding of writing concepts. Students are tasked with cultivating their writing proficiency by delving into predefined topics, subsequently expanding upon their concepts. This approach allows students to address issues through their unique perspectives, allowing for exploring diverse viewpoints. Consequently, they can articulate their viewpoints more comprehensively after discussing with their peers. The subsequent insights are gleaned from five respondents, shedding light on

students' perceptions, cognitive processes, and concerns concerning the collaborative writing learning method within a speaking classroom.

As for their perception about collaborative writing, the researcher found variety in student's perception. Some students think that this method is engaging and they were enthusiastic while some student finds it overwhelming because of the time constraint in discussion and the difficulty in processing different point of view. Despite the method running smoothly, there is still challenges that need to be addressed.

- a. This first student expressed a sense of engagement and enthusiasm toward the collaborative writing approach. They found it refreshing, highlighting the interactive nature of working with classmates on writing tasks.
- b. The second student shared their perspective on the collaborative writing learning method, describing it as a positive shift in their English class. They appreciated the increased interactivity and practicality that came with working alongside peers.
- c. The third student offered a nuanced view of collaborative writing, acknowledging its benefits and potential challenges. They expressed appreciation for the opportunity to hear diverse viewpoints but raised concerns about feeling overwhelmed and sometimes overshadowing their ideas during group discussions.
- d. The fourth student reflected on their positive learning experience with collaborative writing. They found motivation in the collective effort to improve writing skills and appreciated the method's practicality. However, they acknowledged the challenge of navigating differing opinions within a group, which could lead to disagreements during the collaborative process.
- e. The fifth student shared their insights into the collaborative writing approach, highlighting its refreshing and helpful nature. They particularly valued the reduction of individual writing pressure and the increased understanding of various perspectives. While they acknowledged the challenge of balancing individual input with group consensus, they proposed potential solutions. One suggestion was incorporating brainstorming sessions before the writing process to streamline ideas and ensure a cohesive approach

The previous study has shown that students view collaborative writing as a positive and engaging learning method. According to a study conducted by Devici (2018), undergraduate students expressed enthusiasm toward collaborative writing, the students describe the method as interactive and very enjoyable to learn writing. A study conducted by Veramuthu and Shah (2020) also showed similarities to the perception of the students. They conducted a study on secondary school students in Selangor, the students found that the opportunity to work together as a group made the writing process less intimidating.

Previous studies show that students agree with the advantages of collaborative writing. It enhances writing skills, as highlighted by Rozimela and Anggraini's study (2020). Moreover, it provides exposure to diverse perspectives, which is a recognized benefit. Qiu and Lee's (2018) study on first-year university students found that collaborative writing encourages critical thinking and empathy by enabling them to consider different viewpoints.

In earlier studies, it has frequently been noted that collaborative writing has the ability to improve students' writing abilities. For instance, Pham's study of undergraduate students in 2021 revealed that collaborative writing helps students improve their writing skill in terms of writing clarity and writing structure. This aligns with the finding in this study which also looks at enhanced writing skills among students.

Collaborative writing has been proven to broaden student's perspectives by introducing them to different points of view. According to studies by Mensah (2015), high school students' knowledge of complex concepts has improved when they work in groups with people with diverse backgrounds and opinions. That similarity is also found in this study, collaborative writing also helps students to understand different perspectives among students at SMKN 1 Karawang.

Collaborative writing offers many benefits to the learning process, but it is also important to address the challenges. Collaborative writing presents several difficulties, such as managing schedule conflicts and managing different perspectives, according to Mulholland and O'Connor's (2016) studies on college students. The same difficulties were identified in a study on college students by Hamilton-Jones and Vail (2014). Coordinating meeting schedule and handling differences among group members proved challenging for students. This study highlights similarity in terms of the challenges of collaborative writing with the previous studies.

Previous studies offer suggestions to combat these challenges and enhance the collaborative writing process. Schnaubert and Bodemer (2019) advised using organized meeting guidelines to make discussions more efficient and minimize scheduling conflicts. They also proposed setting clear guidelines for assessing contributions and offering constructive feedback to address disagreements. These suggestions align with this study as this study identified similar challenges and areas for improvement.

In summary, students' perceptions of collaborative writing mirror the findings of previous studies, highlighting its positive and engaging nature. The advantages have also been often noted, including enhanced writing abilities and exposure to many viewpoints. However, challenges such as scheduling conflicts and differing opinions exist, which previous studies has addressed with suggestions like structured guidelines and clear evaluation criteria. These insights collectively contribute to a comprehensive understanding of collaborative writing and its potential in educational contexts.

### *Discussion*

The responses from students helps the researcher to figure out their perception and experiences of utilizing collaborative writing method in the classroom. Many students view this method positively, finding it both engaging and refreshing. Collaborative writing elevates their writing skills and introduces them into different perspectives and writing styles, creating a deeper understanding of the subject. The interactivity of working as a group improves their shared sense of effort and motivation to boost their skills while adjusting with contemporary educational principles.

However, these responses also bring up some challenges. Challenges such as scheduling group discussions and organizing different points of view within a group can lead to disagreements and tension. This could potentially ruin a seamless collaboration and may influence the overall collaborative work. These challenges highlight the need for well-organized frameworks that allow for flexible scheduling and efficient group decision-making processes.

According to Lane (2016), collaborative learning strategies, such as collaborative writing, encourage involvement, critical thinking, and the development of interpersonal skills - all essential for learning results. The concerns voiced by students also required to be addressed. To solve the time management problem, teachers could set up clear guidelines for scheduling problems. Allowing students to plan their group sessions better. To overcome the problems of different opinions, collaboration dynamics can be well organized by combining defined roles within groups and giving direct guidelines for constructive feedback.

In order to create a more productive atmosphere for collaborative writing, Storch (2017) recommend holding peer-review sessions frequently. These sessions can provide a way for different points of view to meet while also maintaining group responsibilities all together. Furthermore, Ibrahim, et al (2015) point up that maintained communication between teachers and students also plays an important role. holding occasional one-on-one interactions with instructors can provide guidance, helps individual address their issue, and encourage student in a supportive learning environment.

In conclusion, collaborative writing in English class offers students an approach to improve their writing skills and develop their understanding of different perspectives. While the problem of scheduling and processing different opinions persists, previous studies insights bring out that logical frameworks, structured guidelines, and frequent peer-review sessions can solve these problems. The mix of the student's perspective and academic knowledge can highlight the potential of collaborative writing to create an engaging learning experience.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, collaborative writing in English class offers students an approach to improve their writing skills, develop their understanding of different perspectives, and valuable teamwork abilities. By addressing challenges and increasing the role of teachers in guiding students, collaborative writing can become an essentials component of a comprehensive and improving educational experience.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Concerning the research, authorship, and publication of this paper, the author(s) reported no potential conflicts of interest.

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