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Exploring Students' Attitudes Towards The Implementation of Collaborative Writing: The case of 3rd Year students at Oran2 University

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Abstract

Collaborative learning is a crucial social-affective strategy in EFL classes, fostering shared expertise and decision-making among researchers in knowledge construction and language skills development, especially in academic writing. Good writing calls for good writing techniques, including collaborative writing. This approach encourages teamwork, critical thinking, and active engagement towards creating a well-structured piece of writing. Using collaborative writing in the classroom makes students more involved in all the writing processes—that is, in brainstorming ideas, compiling and arranging data, drafting, editing, and rewriting. Thus, the current investigation examines the attitudes and experiences of third-year English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students at the University of Oran 2, Algeria, toward collaborative writing and its effect on overcoming writing limitations. Using a mixed-methods approach, the researcher collected data through a four-section questionnaire administered to one hundred (100) students, semi-structured observations of collaborative writing projects, and analysis of student-generated essays. The quantitative analysis revealed that most students had participated in collaborative writing tasks. Though they had some reservations about time constraints and unequal participation, students generally expressed positive attitudes towards its advantages of English language learning and error correction. Qualitative data highlighted different interaction patterns and the negotiation of meaning within the group. Analyzing students' papers revealed notable increases in organizational skills, comprehension and analysis, production standards, and discourse coherence. Although students preferred group projects to individual assignments, issues with group coordination and unequal contribution became clear as primary concerns for pedagogical relevance. The study found that the students often struggle with academic writing due to various reasons. However, implementing collaborative writing positively impacted students' attitudes towards academic writing, especially for weaker and average students. This approach helped overcome challenges such as time constraints, understanding objectives, structuring, presentation, and methodological issues. Collaborative writing significantly improved students' logical structure, clarity, understanding, analysis, production standards, and communication skills. The results imply that, in this EFL environment, collaborative writing has a significant potential to improve academic writing abilities; nevertheless, organized implementation is necessary to address the inherent challenges.

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الكلمات المفتاحية

الكتابة التعاونية؛
التحرير الأكاديمية؛
اللغة الإنجليزية
كلغة أجنبية؛
المهارات اللغوية

الملخص

يعد التحرير المشترك استراتيجية اجتماعية-عاطفية مهمة في أقسام اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. فقد أثبت الباحثون أن التحرير المشترك بين عدة متعلمين يساهم في تطوير الخبرة المشتركة واتخاذ القرارات أثناء بناء المعرفة وتطوير المهارات اللغوية، خاصة في مجال التحرير الأكاديمي. من أجل ذلك، يتقصى هذا البحث ا كشف أهمية التحرير المشترك من خلال فحص مدى تأثيره على إنتاجية الطلاب. قمنا بإجراء دراسة حالة باستخدام منهجيات كمية ونوعية في إجراءات جمع البيانات. وقد اخترنا أربعين طالبًا في السنة الثالثة في جامعة وهران 2 لإكمال الاستبيان. ومن خلال تفسير وتحليل وملاحظة أوراق الطلبة. أشارت النتيجة إلى أن التحرير المشترك يحظى بتقدير كبير واعتراف بأهميته بسبب تأثيره المهم على كيفية إدراك الطلبة للعمل الجماعي وتحرير المقالات الأكاديمية. وهو ما يتيح تطوير الشعور بالانتماء بين المتعلمين و يجعلهم يدركون الهدف من مهارة الكتابة. فعلى الرغم من أنه يتم تطويرها بشكل فردي، الا ان الكتابة هي مجموعة من الأفكار التي يتم التواصل بها مع الآخرين في نفس مجال الاهتمام. يساعد التحرير الا كاديمي متعلم اللغة على إنتاج بيانات مقدمة بوضوح، بحيث يفهم المؤلفون أنهم يجب أن يكونوا أكثر شمولاً وإقناعاً عند الكتابة لقراء آخرين.

1. Introduction

Within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) pedagogy, collaborative learning, an effective strategy, finds theoretical roots in social constructivism. This pedagogical approach calls for the deliberate grouping of students into coherent units charged with the group performance of learning goals. Using the synergistic dynamics of collaborative learning, students actively co-create knowledge and concurrently foster responsible assistance in their education. Collaborative learning creates a fascinating milieu whereby language learners can explore and interact with many issues using reciprocal idea exchange and shared decision making (Allen, 1987).

Writing the macro-instructional language skill requires a communicative effort aiming at the passage of a coherent set of ideas to a particular audience, showing a recursive feature equivalent to the performed processes inherent in group work. Thus, a specialized application of collaborative learning, or cooperative writing, entails the ongoing participation of two or more students in the recursive phases of planning, ideation, meaning negotiation, drafting, and revision of a shared textual artifact. This approach helps one to develop written proficiency with a more reflective and goal-oriented attitude (Sajedi, 2014).

Within academic pedagogical models, teachers deliberately use group writing to foster students' writing proficiencies within a supportive learning environment that creates

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constructive feedback systems during the revision and careful proofreading processes. Writing goes beyond simple transcription and develops into a critical thinking practice whereby student-writers objectively participate in the deliberative processes necessary for the substantive improvement of their academic writings. The group's choice of the most exact and contextually appropriate shared language forms helps to reduce the proofreading load usually assigned to teachers. Essential to this approach is the need for every group member to offer intellectual and pragmatic support during the preparation, composition, and revision stages, so that they can contribute synergistically throughout the whole writing process. This pedagogical approach promotes the timely, relevant, and unique contribution of intellectual resources from every group member (Hyland, 2003; Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Veramuthu & Shah, 2020).

Since most Algerian students face many obstacles when producing academic essays, this research aims to illuminate the significance of collaborative writing as a useful strategy for developing students' writing skills. It also attempts to understand Algerian students' attitudes toward the implementation of collaborative writing. To this end, the researcher tries to answer the following research questions:

- What are the L3 English language students' attitudes towards collaborative writing?
- To what extent does collaborative writing help overcome the main hindrances of the written expression tasks?

Subequently, we propose the following hypothesis:

- Due to various cultural factors, the L3 students are not used to collaborative work and the accompanying challenges of implementing such a strategy, so they do not prefer collaborative writing to complete their assignments.
- Collaborative writing is a very significant social-affective strategy in an EFL context. It encourages students to write in a motivating environment and develops a sense of community, problem-solving, and shared decision-making.

2. Literature review

2.1. collaborative writing

Inspired by socio-constructivist pedagogical models, collaborative learning is a deliberately used, socially conscious approach involving student integration in the group performance of learning goals (Van & Tran, 2023). Through the interactive exploration and practical application of diverse subject matter, enabled by the reciprocal exchange of intellectual expertise and the shared decision-making processes, this collaborative paradigm helps students exercise greater control over their learning process (Allen, 1987). Especially macro-level instructional language skills, like writing, show a recursive quality fit for the processes inherent in collaborative learning itself (Agustin & Roni, 2021). Thus,

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writing as part of a collaborative approach involves two or more students working together in the joint planning, textual production, meaning negotiation, and revision of a particular composition. This pedagogical method develops a reflective and goal-oriented attitude to written communication. Moreover, group writing creates an engaging learning environment and helps language students develop self-efficacy and shared responsibility (Sajedi, 2014).

Using well-known pedagogical ideas, teachers in tertiary environments employ group-writing projects to help students become more communicative in an engaging and interactive classroom. Good writing calls for good writing techniques including collaborative writing. This approach encourages teamwork, critical thinking, and active engagement towards creating a well structred piece of writing. Using collaborative writing in the classroom makes students to be more involved in all the writing processes—that is, in brainstorming ideas, compiling and arranging data, drafting, editing, and rewriting (Khamouja, 2025).

This method creates an environment where students receive reciprocal feedback during proofreading and editing, transcending the conventional private writing feature. Writing becomes a dynamic exercise in critical thinking, in which team members position themselves and define specific writing responsibilities to contribute purposefully towards collective decision-making targeted at raising the general quality of their scholarly output. Not only does careful choice and improvement of a mutually agreed-upon rhetorical form simplify the writing process, but it also clearly reduces the proofreading responsibilities placed on teachers (Hyland, 2003; Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Collaborative writing not only improves the quality of student work but also develops important teamwork abilities and a better awareness of the rhetorical and linguistic choices included in academic discourse by encouraging a shared responsibility for the final product (Veramuthu & Shah, 2020).

2.2. Features of Collaborative Writing

Inspired by the framework elaborated by Yong (2010), collaborative writing becomes a precise social constructivist pedagogical tool, especially in foreign language education. Its natural qualities have spurred academic research on the possible advantages of including it in several writing assignments, particularly in essay composition. Depending on the particular educational setting and the active participation of the students, academic studies have aimed to define the essential characteristics and the qualifying elements that mark the efficacy of group writing.

2.2.1. Defining Features

- *Mutual interaction*

Collaborative writing fosters an energetic atmosphere conducive to generating and critically evaluating ideas. The interactive nature of this instructional method facilitates student engagement in reciprocal exchanges, fostering in-depth discussions on the subject

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and the intricacies of the writing process. According to Wenger (1998), this recursive engagement within a communal practice cultivates a collective identity, whereby a common understanding of the tasks emerges from continuous interpersonal interactions.

- *Negotiation*

In instances of communicative divergence, learners' processes of revision and structural adjustment are essential components of thoughtful engagement in collaborative writing environments. Through negotiations, students engage in intra-group debate to clarify ambiguities, authenticate views, and reach a consensus on various perspectives. Negotiation can manifest at intrapersonal (internal cognitive processing), interpersonal (interactive communication adjustments to indicate understanding or misunderstanding), or procedural (consensus on problem-solving methods and decision-making protocols) levels, as proposed by Breen and Littlejohn (2000).

- *Cognitive conflict*

The potential disruptive impact of cognitive conflict on group performance in collaborative writing necessitates careful consideration of temporal and task-related factors. Despite these obstacles, well-managed conflict may stimulate the development of students' creative abilities and interpersonal skills, enhancing their writing quality. Addressing cognitive differences, as suggested by Tocalli-Beller (2003), enhances problem-solving abilities, sustains motivation and engagement, and fosters the idea of solving conflicting perspectives.

- *Shared expertise*

Aggregating diverse skill sets in collaborative writing groups fosters compensatory and complementary learning strategies. Students with superior language skills may assist in clearly expressing their classmates' thoughts, while others may take charge of time management and the critical assessment of the developing written work. According to Ohta's (2001) framework, this shared knowledge facilitates students' advancement within their zone of proximal development. Through the collaborative use of their abilities, students engage in the co-construction of information, improving the learning process's significance and efficacy.

2.2.2. Facilitating features

- *L1 Use*

Learners often show a purposeful code-switch to their native language (L1) to perform important cognitive processes in group writing projects (Nation, 2003). This use of L1 helps to verify semantic meaning, improves higher-order cognitive processes, and usually promotes the first phases of idea generation. This inclination, therefore, calls for translation as a compensatory tool to lessen the inherent linguistic restrictions faced by authors of foreign languages (Qi, 1998).

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- *Backtracking*

Producing a final written work always requires a significant movement between the first drafts and the final product. Manchon et al. (2000) define backtracking as the performance of activities made by authors to express thoughts that fit the general needs of the writing assignment. This recursive participation improves attentional focus, helps to create problem-solving techniques, and encourages a focus on textual coherence instead of isolated micro-level elements.

- *Humor*

The dynamics of collaborative writing depend on humor by nature. Acting as a socio-emotional management tool and friendly communication, humor is important for developing empathy among group members working on shared projects. As Holmes (2000) advises, using humor helps to create a good learning environment and builds a group identity.

2.3. Procedures of Collaborative Writing

In EFL contexts, teachers need to explain the collaborative writing process, including what, how, when, where, and with whom to perform the tasks. Such an approach helps the learners cover the entire process, participate purposefully, and consider aspects of the writing development. The following section will summarize the different steps of the collaborative writing procedure (Pardede, 2024).

Teachers should help students by giving them thorough instructions for the full process in advance to make collaborative writing in foreign language contexts effective. At the very least, teachers should make it clear to students what, how, when, where, and with whom they should participate in each step of collaborative writing. Teachers should ensure that every student comprehends the processes and knows how to actively stay focused during each step. Brainstorming to promote meaningful engagement and shared decision-making is essential to participants' continued participation and consideration of all writing project aspects. ICT has made many tools for easy communication possible at any time and from any location. As a result, the team members must use Microsoft Word for group editing and revision, and suitable social media (such as email and WhatsApp) for sharing comments and thoughts. In general, the procedures are as follows: (1) establishing a group; (2) selecting a topic; (3) organizing research to get information for the topic; (4) deciding on the goal of writing and organizing the content; (5) drafting; (6) editing, proofreading, and rewriting; and (7) publishing (Latifah et al, 2020, Pardede, 2024).

2.3. Challenges Implementing Collaborative Writing

Despite the advantages of collaborative writing, educators—whether native or non-native speakers— consistently encounter significant hurdles. Kruck and Reif (2001) identified some issues in implementing collaborative writing. Initially, forming

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collaborative units is necessary to complete course projects, particularly those grouped by the teachers rather than self-organized groups. Teacher-formed groups will encounter difficulties due to the intricate interpersonal dynamics and the first stage of establishing member proficiency. This variation may lead to prolonged disputes and conflict, wasting valuable time and effort in the primary writing endeavor. Most students collaborate with familiar peers or those with whom they have already worked, utilizing the self-selected technique to efficiently achieve their writing session objectives. A further challenge emerges when various group members engage unequally in completing the writing task, resulting in specific individuals dominating the group. Such activities can impede other group members from actively participating in the writing endeavor.

While collaborative writing is crucial for aiding students in problem-solving and enhancing teamwork, another obstacle pertains to conflict resolution. The teacher is prepared to intervene whenever the students attempt to resolve emerging conflicts and progress. His incessant interference in resolving internal matters results in misunderstandings and conflicts among the members. The teacher must recognize the significant collaboration among the team of students to avoid complications (Hafid & Grandana, 2021).

3. Methodology

3.1. Context

Designed within the Faculty of Foreign Languages at the University of Oran 2, the present study was conducted in the Department of English Language. Mohammed Ben Ahmed is a recent development in regional higher education; the University of Oran 2 opened in September 2014. Its roots are in a structural reform of the 1967-founded University of Oran that went through a divisional process producing two separate entities: the University of Oran 1 and the University of Oran 2. This contextual background highlights the particular institutional settings in which the research was carried out, thus offering a necessary basis for knowledge of the educational environment and the features of the student population under analysis.

3.2. Participants

One hundred third-year English language learners at the University of Oran 2 (N = 100) took part in this study. Over four months, from September 2024 to January 2025, data collection included group writing projects and questionnaire completion. Under a semi-structured observation approach, the researcher methodically evaluated the students' interactional dynamics and involvement during the group writing projects. This triangulation of data-collecting techniques sought to provide a holistic knowledge of the elements under investigation inside the particular chosen academic setting.

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3.3. Procedure

Using qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments together in a mixed-methods approach guaranteed the validity and reliability of the study results. As the primary quantitative tool, third-year English language students at the University of Oran 2 answered a four-section questionnaire. This questionnaire sought to explore their perceptions of collaborative writing fully. It used Likert scales to compile information on past participation in collaborative writing, opinions of its advantages and disadvantages for language acquisition, views on its efficacy in addressing particular challenges in English written expression, and the influence of cultural elements on preferences for individual rather than group academic tasks. The questionnaire included demographic questions with scaled responses to quantitatively evaluate students' participation and attitudes on collaborative writing in their academic and cultural setting in Algeria.

Two main approaches were used simultaneously to gather qualitative data: the direct observation of students' interactional dynamics and engagement and the analysis of written papers turned in by the students, producing specific pieces of their collaborative efforts and linguistic results. The use of questionnaires, observations, and papers' analysis helped strengthen the validity and reliability of the study findings through the strong triangulation of data sources.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1. The Questionnaire

- *Demographic and Group Participation Data*

Table1.

Gender Distribution and Age Rage

VARIABLE	VALUE	STATISTICAL TEST	SIGNIFICANCE
GENDER DISTRIBUTION	Male: 37%, Female: 63%	χ^2=6.76	p=.009*
AGE RANGE	20-24 years (varied)	-	-

The study reveals several key demographic trends with important implications. First, the gender distribution shows a significant skew, with females comprising 63% of respondents compared to 37% males (χ^2=6.76, p=.009). The significantly higher proportion of female respondents (60%) may influence study outcomes, as research suggests: Female students often show more positive attitudes toward collaborative learning. Second, the age range is between 20 and 24 years, indicating that the results most likely represent young adults, potentially limiting applicability to older age groups.

- *Students Use of Collaborative Writing*

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Table 2.

Collaborative Writing Use

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
YES	93	93.0
NO	7	7.0
TOTAL	100	100.0

The overwhelming majority of students (93%) reported participating in group writing projects, with only a tiny minority (7%) indicating no involvement. This extremely skewed distribution was statistically significant ($p < .001$), demonstrating that collaborative writing has become a fundamental curriculum component. The near-universal adoption suggests that either: Group writing is strongly encouraged or required by instructors, or Students naturally gravitate toward collaborative approaches in writing tasks. The minimal resistance (7% non-participation) could represent either: students with strong individual learning preferences, those excluded from group work opportunities, or cases where projects did not require collaboration.

- *Collaborative Writing Frequency*

Table3.

Collaborative Writing Frequency

FREQUENCY	PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
VERY FREQUENTLY	55.0	55.0
OFTEN	27.0	82.0
SOMETIMES	14.0	96.0
RARE	4.0	100.0

The analysis of collaborative writing frequency reveals a strong culture of regular group work among students, with participation patterns showing statistically significant trends toward frequent engagement ($Z = 5.67$, $p < .001$). A striking 55% of students report collaborating "very frequently," while an additional 27% participate "often," collectively representing over four-fifths of respondents (82%) who regularly engage in collaborative writing. This high-frequency participation suggests that collaborative writing has become institutionalized as a core pedagogical practice rather than an occasional activity. Only a minimal 4% of students indicate rare participation, reinforcing the near-universal adoption of this approach. The robust model fit ($\chi^2 = 2.34$, $p = .504$) confirms these patterns hold consistently across different student groups. These findings imply that collaborative writing is systematically embedded in course designs or has become a student-preferred standard practice. While the overwhelming participation rates validate current teaching approaches, the small percentage of infrequent participants (4%) warrants attention to ensure inclusive learning opportunities. The data supports maintaining current collaborative practices while suggesting the need for differentiated support structures to

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accommodate varying student needs and optimize learning outcomes across different task types and proficiency levels.

- *Students' Perceptions on Collaborative Writing*

Table 4.

Students' Perceptions on Collaborative Writing

Likert Scale Analysis (1=SD, 2=D, 3=N, 4=A, 5=SA)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	% Agreement (A+SA)	% Disagreement (SD+D)
I like working on writing assignments alongside other students.	3.91	1.21	72%	13%
Writing with others gives me more assurance than writing by myself.	3.72	1.30	63%	17%
Working on group projects fuels more ideas for my own work.	3.93	1.12	72%	10%
Working with peers teaches me a lot.	4.16	1.04	80%	7%
Working with others helps me see and fix my writing mistakes.	4.26	0.98	85%	4%
Group writing helps me produce better work.	3.87	1.20	70%	13%
I would rather tackle writing tasks alone.	2.04	1.32	17%	65%
Collaborative writing is sometimes time-consuming and ineffective.	3.30	1.25	45%	25%
Some group members do not participate equally.	4.11	1.05	75%	7%
Collaborative writing is beneficial for learning English.	4.37	0.85	89%	3%

The data reveal overwhelmingly positive attitudes toward collaborative writing, with firm agreement on its benefits for English language learning (89% agreement, mean=4.37) and error identification (85%, mean=4.26). These findings align with Vygotsky's social learning theory, suggesting students effectively leverage peer interactions to improve linguistic accuracy and metacognitive awareness. However, a

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significant paradox emerges: while 65% actively reject individual work (mean=2.04) and 70% believe collaboration enhances output quality, 45% simultaneously acknowledge its time-consuming nature (mean=3.30).

This tension implies that students tolerate process inefficiencies because they value the cognitive and social gains, a phenomenon explainable through the lens of social interdependence theory, where perceived collective benefits outweigh individual costs. The most critical operational challenge surfaces in group dynamics, with 75% reporting unequal participation (mean=4.11), indicating widespread free-rider problems necessitating structural interventions like role specialization.

Notably, the high consistency in responses (Cronbach's α=0.88) and gender-neutral patterns (except females reporting marginally stronger belief in mistake correction, p=.02) suggest these perceptions are deeply institutionalized rather than demographic artifacts. Culturally, the rejection of individual work (only 17% prefer solo tasks) contrasts with reported societal values favoring individual achievement, implying that classroom practices may successfully counteract broader cultural norms. For educators, these results underscore the need to scaffold collaborative processes—perhaps through phased workflows (individual drafting → peer review → group synthesis) while implementing accountability mechanisms like peer evaluations to mitigate participation inequality. The data ultimately presents collaborative writing as a pedagogically practical but managerially demanding approach requiring deliberate instructional design to optimize its benefits.

- *Obstacles in Written Expression*

Table 5.

Students Hindrences

HINDRANCE	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION	% HIGH DIFFICULTY (1+2)	% LOW DIFFICULTY (4+5)
DEVELOPING SUBJECTS AND IDEAS.	4.02	1.02	7%	73%
ARRANGING IDEAS AND FRAMEWORK.	3.70	1.20	15%	60%
SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION AND GRAMMAR.	4.20	0.95	5%	80%
SELECTING SUITABLE LANGUAGE AND IDIOMS.	3.88	1.12	11%	67%
KEEPING DRIVE AND OVERCOMING WRITER'S BLOCK.	3.63	1.25	17%	55%

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BELIEVING MY WRITING IS GOOD.	3.38	1.30	23%	47%
KNOWING PROJECT EXPECTATIONS.	3.78	1.15	13%	64%
READING COMMENTS ON MY WORK.	4.30	0.90	4%	84%

Students reported varying levels of difficulty across different aspects of writing, with notable strengths and challenges. The highest competence was seen in *grammar/sentence construction* (mean=4.20) and *processing feedback* (mean=4.30), where over 80% reported minimal difficulty, suggesting practical prior training in these technical skills. Similarly, *idea development* (mean=4.02) and *language selection* (mean=3.88) were not significant hurdles, with 67–73% expressing confidence. However, three areas emerged as persistent challenges: *writer's block* (mean=3.63), *self-confidence in writing quality* (mean=3.38), and *organizing ideas* (mean=3.70). Nearly a quarter (23%) struggled believing their work was good, while 17% faced motivational barriers like maintaining focus.

Interestingly, while most students understood project expectations (64% low difficulty), a subset (13%) found them unclear, potentially indicating gaps in instruction clarity. The strong performance in receiving feedback (84% low difficulty) contrasts with lower confidence in intrinsic skills, highlighting an opportunity to leverage peer/instructor comments to bolster self-assurance. Overall, the data suggest students excel in mechanical and externally guided aspects of writing but need targeted support for motivation, self-efficacy, and structural organization.

- *Cultural Elements and Collaborative Writing*

Table 6.

Cultural Impact

STATEMENT	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION	% AGREEMENT (A+SA)	% DISAGREEMENT (SD+D)
GROUP WORK TOOK SECOND PLACE TO INDIVIDUAL WRITING.	2.45	1.30	20%	55%
WORKING ALONE MAKES ME MORE AT EASE THAN IN GROUPS.	2.56	1.25	22%	48%
WORKING ALONE HELPS BETTER HIGHLIGHT MY SKILLS.	3.01	1.20	33%	37%

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GROUP COORDINATION AND AGREEMENT CAN BE DIFFICULT.	3.80	1.15	65%	15%
INDIVIDUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT HAS MORE WEIGHT IN ALGERIAN SOCIETY.	2.93	1.25	35%	35%

The data present a nuanced picture of students' attitudes toward collaborative work within Algeria's educational context. While 35% acknowledge that Algerian society traditionally values individual accomplishment, students prefer group work in practice, with only 20-22% agreeing that individual work takes precedence or feels more comfortable. This suggests that classroom culture may be successfully countering broader societal norms. However, significant practical challenges remain, as 65% of students report difficulties with group coordination, underscoring the need for better-implemented collaborative frameworks.

Interestingly, students appear divided on whether individual work better displays their skills (33% agree vs. 37% disagree), revealing lingering ambivalence about assessment in group contexts. These results highlight a cultural-educational transition where collaborative values are adopted despite implementation hurdles and traditional societal preferences. The findings imply that while cultural barriers to group work may be overstated, structural support—including more precise guidelines, conflict resolution strategies, and hybrid assessment models—could further strengthen collaborative learning outcomes. Ultimately, the data suggest that instructional culture holds more sway than societal values in shaping students' approaches to group work. However, careful attention to coordination challenges remains essential for maximizing the benefits of collaboration.

4.2. The observation

- *Pre-observation Information*
  - *Task Description*

The study explored the use of collaborative writing in Algerian higher education, focusing on a five-paragraph academic essay assignment. The essay, designed to assess students' logical framework and critical thinking, was written by four students in a working group using Google Docs. The study analyzed the work's genre, structural restrictions, and technical medium to understand its impact on student learning outcomes.

  - *Group Formation*

Group-building strategies used in collaborative writing influence student involvement and effectiveness. A mixed-method approach combines instructor-directed and student-initiated strategies, taking personal preferences and academic ability into account.

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- *Time Allocation*

Every assignment has a deadline. One week is devoted to preparation after a session explaining the main aspects to be included and the specific strategies to be implemented. Another session is devoted to feedback provision to give the students an opportunity to reconsider their primary deficiencies and accordingly reconstruct the evaluated essays. Given the complexity of the work and the academic load, the allotted time offers a consistent assessment of the time set out for the collaborative writing program to determine how it affects the results of the group writing assignments.

- *Learning objectives*

Focusing on particular writing techniques, the collaborative five-paragraph academic essay production promotes clarity, concision, and knowledge of appropriate language, vocabulary, and stylistic standards. It also underlines the need for appropriate integration and citation of sources. Through peer criticism and several points of view, collaborative writing requires students to strategize and negotiate ideas with others. The main objectives are to sharpen critical thinking skills, develop interpersonal skills, and support students in sharing collective responsibility.

- *While- Observation (during the collaborative writing)*

- *Interaction*

The study aims to determine the common interaction patterns among groups of collaborative writers working on specific assignments. It focuses on in-person observation during specified collaborative work periods and the study of revision histories, comment patterns, and contribution records. Groups displaying an even distribution of textual contributions showed a more collaborative attitude. Resistance was noted among members who were disengaged or only marginally involved. The main characteristic of the dominant-passive pattern was a notable difference in one member's decision-making power and contribution capability. One member guiding others demonstrated an unequal distribution of cognitive load by the emergence of the Expert-Novice pattern.

- *Negotiation of Meaning*

The primary goal is to observe how groups of students negotiate their comprehension of work requirements, subject matter, and the developing written text. Observations were based on in-person noting. Explicit requests for explanation, questions to investigate several interpretations, and argumentation marked by different points of view or conflicts show how meanings are negotiated. Working together, students developed each other's ideas and combined several contributions to create shared knowledge. The results revealed different degrees of active negotiation to establish a common comprehension and knowledge construction. While some groups exhibited diminished overt negotiation, others showed consistent interactions. The study intends to investigate the correlation between the quality of final written work and the understanding of negotiation inside groups. The researcher finds out every student's degree of

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involvement. Indicating frequent communication, suggestions, active writing, and focused attention.

- *Use of Resources*

The study centers on how collaborative writing groups use learning materials. It shows how students handle linguistic and conceptual difficulties using dictionaries, grammar checkers, notes, and other tools. According to the report, whereas grammar checkers are employed to fix grammatical mistakes, students utilize dictionaries for exact vocabulary choices and corrections. Observations of particular ideas or vocabulary from course materials point to using previous notes or materials. Additional resources include web search engines and course materials. According to the study, several collaborative writing groups used resources for varied purposes; some depending on group experience, and others being proactive in searching and applying resources. Knowing these patterns in resource use will help students in a group writing enhance their learning strategies.

- *Post observation*

The observation points out several advantages of teamwork: better grammatical and lexical accuracy, more fluency, richer idea generation and content depth, well-organized and logically developed essays, better argumentation skills, and improved task and subject matter understanding. Students in group assignments reported more grammatical and lexical accuracy, a more coherent writing style, and a broader spectrum of ideas and points of view. The study also revealed that group writing enhanced students' grasp of the topic and argumentation ability. These advantages were not always clear-cut for every group.

The study focused on documenting the difficulties experienced by students throughout the completion of group writing assignments. The participants noted several problems: unjust contribution, "free-riding", scheduling conflicts, poor communication, interpersonal conflict, dominant decision-making, technical platform problems, cultural familiarity with collaborative learning, and difficulty matching writing styles. These problems caused conflict, annoyance, and possible imbalance in the quality of the shared product. The study also revealed that some students showed uncertainty or hesitation about collaborative learning techniques, maybe because of cultural values stressing personal achievement. The study also revealed that groups with different degrees of writing ability occasionally struggled to match their styles and guarantee constant quality. These results might guide following pedagogical interventions and shed light on the complexity of collaborative writing.

4.3. The analysis of the student's papers

This part describes the approach and results of a study on the written works of more than one hundred Algerian students studying English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The study searched for the potential impact of collaborative writing on developing different academic writing skills.

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- *Approach*

To measure students' writing competency and track the progress of particular skills, the researcher used holistic scoring—a technique based on set criteria that evaluates the general quality of writing. The study recognized that some students first show resistance and cultural elements could affect learning decisions, especially in collaborative tasks in foreign language settings. Four separate writing assignments in the course required the production of five-paragraph academic essays on various topics. The first writing assignment before the intervention was a diagnostic test to assess every participant's writing skills. 25 smaller groups, each comprising four students, were further divisions of the sample. These collaborative writing assignments were started using a mixed approach:

- Teacher-Selected Groups (n=12 groups): Based on the teacher's evaluation, twelve groups were formed about variables including perceived skill levels and the potential for effective teamwork.
- Student-Selected Groups: The remaining thirteen groups were created depending on student preferences, enabling students to select their friends.

Throughout the study period, the students mostly used Google Docs as a co-authoring and communication tool to collaboratively finish the writing assignments. Following accepted academic guidelines, the study of the final versions for every writing task concentrated on four main areas:

- Evaluate the logical development of ideas, the presence of different organizational structures (e.g., introduction, body paragraphs with topic sentences, conclusion), and the general coherence and clarity of the written work.
- Assess the students' degree of comprehension using their capacity to grasp the assigned themes, their analytical involvement with the content, and their awareness of the task objectives.
- Address production standards and scientific conventions by emphasizing compliance with academic formatting rules, appropriate citation of referenced sources, and general essay presentation consistently and academically. This category included perceived cases of possible artificial intelligence-generated content.

This evaluated the students' general academic writing competency, capacity for meaningful conversation on the subject, and the clarity and effectiveness of their idea and concept expression.Many of the students' publications showed deficiencies in composition and consistency. After comments on the first initiative, most groups showed an apparent ability to edit and generate academically styled, satisfactorily constructed essays. Most group assignments were logically presented, orderly arranged, and showed improvement in organizational abilities.

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- *Comprehension:*

The First group's work showed a surface awareness of the writing challenges, sometimes offering logical explanations lacking thorough analysis. Still, constant production and comments helped improve analytical skills and comprehension. Most group assignments from the last writing task showed a firm grasp of the issues. They offered analysis ranging from good to exceptional, implying an improved ability to interpret the research questions logically.

- *Production Standards and Scientific Conventions:*

Although some first group presentations showed inconsistent reading problems resulting from formatting mistakes, most group writings displayed commendable compliance with production standards. Usually, accepted ideas were based on appropriate references to materials, indicating a higher awareness of academic standards in the collaborative learning environment.

4. Mastery of Communication

Some groups first showed awareness of the ideas, but sometimes struggled with appropriate academic standards for effective communication. Customized feedback significantly improved the coherence and clarity of their communication in their final product in the collaborative context. Though showing slow development towards more logical, clear, and confident academic communication, most pieces were understandable and expressed ideas with more clarity of objectives.

4.4. Discussion

In the EFL context, students are usually reluctant to write academically. Due to many motives, the language learners' focus is on the possible ways to quickly achieve the objectives, paying less attention to the systematic scaffolding towards consistent progress. The result showed the students' positive attitudes towards collaborative writing, especially for the weak and average ones. Though the respondents are not used to writing academically in groups, implementing collaborative writing changed their attitudes towards this approach. The findings confirmed and emphasized the importance of collaboration in learning, particularly in improving writing skills.

In general, the experiment reflected the significant role of practice in-group. The collaborative writing strategy helps the learners overcome most of the challenges in writing classes. Time constraints, difficulties understanding the writing objectives, structuring, presentation and methodological issues are all discussed in groups to ensure better presentation and communication of well-established productions. Harmonizing the groups and giving students a chance to engage in motivating collaborative tasks aided in mitigating the main hindrances EFL students encounter during the learning process. Collaborative writing helped significantly improve the students' papers' logical structure

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and clarity of writing, understanding and analysis, production standards and scientific conventions, and communication skills.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, collaborative writing is highly valued among EFL students, weighing its significance in reducing the burden of language skills development. This research offers conclusive evidence for the advantages and integration of collaborative writing in the Algerian higher education context. Students have positive attitudes and often participate in collaborative writing assignments. According to the examination of their written works, teamwork helps to improve important academic writing abilities.

The study, however, also draws attention to several crucial issues that must be resolved to maximize the effectiveness of collaborative writing:

- Unequal Participation: The predominance of "free-riding" calls for applying techniques meant to guarantee responsibility and ensure that every group member makes a significant contribution.
- Difficulties in coordination point to a need for better rules, team-building instruction, and potentially systematized group work methods.
- Time Efficiency: Although students appreciate the advantages, the supposed time-consuming nature of teamwork calls for careful task design and time management strategies.
- Effective collaboration depends on every student clearly understanding task expectations.
- Encouraging students' confidence in their writing ability depends on using constructive feedback and potentially incorporating motivating strategies to help them.

The study's results provide insightful analysis to teachers in these and similar environments. Teachers can improve their pedagogical strategies to maximize collaborative writing for enhancing student learning outcomes by appreciating its advantages and addressing its challenges. According to the findings, the instructional environment can greatly influence students' participation in and attitudes toward collaborative learning, even if cultural norms might present some initial considerations.

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