

Research Article

Using Collaborative Writing to Improve EFL Sudanese Learners Written Performance

Saeed Sulieman Sorage¹, Nahid Alamin Ibrahim^{2,*} 

¹English Language Department, Red Sea University, Port Sudan, Sudan

²Languages Department, Port Sudan Ahlia University, Port Sudan, Sudan

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of using the collaborative writing method in improving the written performance of EFL learners. A quasi-experimental method was adopted, involving a pre-test and post-test for both an experimental group and a control group. The sample consisted of 30 learners, divided equally into two groups. The experimental group was taught using the collaborative writing method, while the control group received traditional writing instruction. A written test was used as a tool for data collection to assess learners' performance based on six criteria: grammar, vocabulary, organization, unity, coherence, and mechanics. The results revealed that both groups showed improvement after instruction; however, the experimental group demonstrated significantly higher gains. The mean score of the experimental group increased from 9.40 (47.0%) in the pre-test to 15.8 (79%) in the post-test, while the control group improved from 9.06 (45.3%) to 11.06 (55.3%). The findings indicate that collaborative writing is more effective than traditional methods in enhancing writing skills. Therefore, the study recommends the integration of collaborative writing in EFL classrooms to improve learners' writing performance.

Keywords

Collaborative Writing, EFL Learners, Writing Instruction, Experimental Group, EFL Classrooms Improving

1. Introduction

Writing is an essential skill in foreign language context and situation, it gives learners opportunity to express ideas, show understanding, and communicate effectively. One approach that has gained attention recently is collaborative writing, which involves learners working together to plan, draft, revise, and edit text [14].

Collaborative writing encourages interaction, peer work, peer feedback, and shared problem-solving and critical thinking which are believed to enhance both cognitive and linguistic aspects of writing [10]. [8] argues that collaborative learning creates a supportive environment where students can share

ideas and take risks without fear of failure. In the context of EFL learners' class room, collaborative writing is especially valuable because it combines language practice with social and cooperative learning. When learners work in pairs or small groups, they discuss ideas, correct errors, and refine their writing collectively. As [15] notes, interaction in group tasks promote not only linguistic accuracy but also deeper cognitive processing, leading to better language acquisition outcomes. Despite its recognized benefits, many EFL teachers still use traditional teacher-centered approach to writing in-

*Correspondence: NahidAlamin Ibrahim (nahidibrahim7272@gmail.com)

Received: 20 April 2026; Accepted: 21 May 2026; Published: 29 June 2026



struction. In this context, learners often write in isolation, receive minimal feedback, and do not engage in meaningful peer interaction. Collaborative writing addresses these limitations by providing structured opportunities for interaction and feedback which can significantly improve learners' written performance [6].

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Writing is one of the most challenging skills in foreign language learning and teaching, as it requires integration of linguistic knowledge, organization of thoughts, ideas and adequate knowledge of written discourse markers. It is observed that many EFL learners demonstrate poor and weak performance when they write whether an essay, paragraph or discourse. Traditional writing instruction and methods focuses on individual work, which may not give learners enough opportunity to share ideas and learn from each other. As the result, learners' written performance remains weak and poor. Therefore, this study attempts to examine whether using collaborative strategies can help improve EFL learners' written performance.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

This study aims to:

1. Investigate the effect of collaborative writing on EFL learners' written performance.
2. Examine whether collaborative writing improves learners' written performance.
3. Show the importance of using collaborative writing in improving EFL learners' written language skills.

1.3. Research Questions

1. To what extent does collaborative writing affect EFL learners' written performance?
2. How can collaborative writing help improve EFL learners' written performance?

1.4. Hypotheses of the Study

1. To a large extent, collaborative writing affects the writing performance of EFL learners.
2. Using collaborative writing positively affects the written performance of EFL learners.

1.5. Methodology of the Study

The study adopts a quasi-experimental approach using a pre-test and post-test, targeting a specific group of EFL learners majoring in English.

1.6. Definition of Terms

EFL

A foreign language is a language that is not spoken as the

native or official language of a particular country. It is a language indigenous to another nation and is typically learned in a non-native environment. For example, an English speaker living in an Arab country may regard Arabic as a foreign language, while learners studying English in countries where English is not commonly used in daily communication are considered EFL learners [13].

2. Literature Review

2.1. Writing in EFL Context

Writing in EFL Context Writing is widely recognized as one of the most challenging skills for EFL learners. Accordingly, [17] states that writing is a complex cognitive activity that involves generating ideas, organizing content, selecting appropriate vocabulary, applying grammatical rules, and revising texts. EFL learners often struggle with these processes due to a lack of linguistic competence or insufficient exposure to the target language. Similarly, [5] explains that writing is not only a linguistic activity but also a social and cognitive process, requiring interaction between the writer, the reader, and the context. In traditional EFL classrooms, writing is often taught as an individual and product-oriented skill, which may limit learners' opportunities to develop writing strategies and communicative competence.

2.2. Concept of Collaborative Writing

Collaborative writing refers to an instructional approach in which two or more learners work together to produce a single written text. [14] mentions collaborative writing involves shared responsibility in planning, drafting, revising, and editing a text. This approach encourages learners to exchange ideas, negotiate meaning, and provide feedback to one another, whereas [11] defines collaborative writing as learner-centered strategy grounded in interaction and cooperation, where students actively participate in constructing knowledge through social engagement. This definition emphasizes the shift from teacher-dominated instruction to student-centered learning environment. Collaborative writing implies shift from product-based instruction to socially mediated learning where interactions, negotiations, and share ideas become central components of writing. Collaborative writing is learning approach in which learners work together in terms of groups or pairs to plan, write, revise, and edit a text or essay. In collaborative writing, learning is done through discussion, negotiation, peer feedback and outputs.

2.3. Benefits of Collaborative Writing in EFL Class Room

Several studies show the advantages of collaborative writing for EFL learners. It promotes idea generation and content

development through group discussion. Collaborative writing improves grammatical accuracy and vocabulary use through peer correction. It enhances and strength motivation and confidence, as learners feel less anxious when writing with peers. Moreover, it develops critical thinking and communication skills which are essential for academic writing. [1] indicates that collaborative writing supports the development of 21st-century skills such as team work, problem-solving and creativity, making it valuables strategy in modern EFL education. [3], found that students who are participated in collaborative writing tasks demonstrated better writing quality and more positive attitudes towards writing. The learners reported that peer interaction helped generate ideas and reduce writing anxiety. Teacher should move from individual to group text composition. Learning improves when learners discuss, ask, and negotiate ideas while writing. Therefore, writing should include pair and group work. Collaborative writing allows teachers to manage large classes by grouping learners of different language proficiency.

2.4. Challenges of Implementing Collaborative Writing

Despite its benefits, collaborative writing also presents some challenges that both teachers and learners may experience. For example, [11] notes that unequal participation, a lack of clear roles, and students' unfamiliarity with collaborative learning can reduce the effectiveness of this approach. Therefore, teachers play a crucial role in organizing groups, providing clear instructions, and monitoring interaction. Wigglesworth and [14] show that differences in language proficiency are also considered one of the noticeable challenges in implementing collaborative writing. Variations in learners' abilities, vocabulary, and grammatical knowledge can create tension. Lower-level students may feel anxious or dependent, while higher-level learners may feel overburdened. [14] and [2] explain that in collaborative writing learners tend to over-use their first language. Learners may rely excessively on their mother tongue during collaboration, which reduces exposure to the target language and limits language development. [4] also found that teachers may struggle with assessment difficulties when implementing collaborative writing. Assessing individual performance in a group-written text is challenging. Teachers may find it difficult to determine each learner's actual contribution, which raises concerns about fairness. Moreover, [12] prove that classroom management is a major issue in using collaborative writing. Managing multiple groups simultaneously can be demanding for teachers. Monitoring interaction, providing feedback, and ensuring productive collaboration require strong classroom management skills. Based on what has been mentioned above, teachers who intend to use collaborative writing should consider all these challenges. It is also worth noting that collaborative writing requires a competent teacher to create a supportive environment, design an

appropriate classroom layout, and manage the class effectively. Moreover, he or she should understand how to group learners appropriately when introducing them to collaborative writing.

3. Methods

3.1. Participants

The participants in the study consist of thirty (30) EFL learners majoring in English at Red Sea University, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, selected from the same academic level. They are divided into two groups, namely an experimental group (15) and a control group (15).

3.2. Procedure

The experimental group is taught writing using collaborative activities, while the control group is taught writing using the traditional individual method. Both groups take pre-tests and post-tests at different time intervals. The results are collected and analyzed using mean scores and percentages.

3.3. Instrument

The researcher uses a written test (pre-test and post-test) to evaluate and measure EFL learners' written performance.

3.4. Scoring Method

A scoring rubric is used to assess written performance in terms of grammar, vocabulary choice, organization, unity, and cohesive ties.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

The Data is analyzed by SPSS program
Experimental Group Results (Collaborative Writing)

Table 1. Test scores of experimental groups.

Students	Pre -test scores	Post- tests scores
S1	9	15
S2	10	16
S3	8	14
S4	11	17
S5	9	15
S6	10	16
S7	8	14
S8	9	14

Students	Pre -test scores	Post- tests scores
S9	10	20
S10	11	18
S11	9	13
S12	8	16
S13	10	16
S14	9	15
S15	11	18
S16	142	237

Table 2. Mean and Percentage of the pre-test (Experimental group).

Test	mean	percentage
Pre-Test	9.40	47.0%

Calculation
Mean

$$237 \div 15 = 15.8$$

Percentage

$$15.8 \div 20 \times 100 = 79\%$$

Table 3. Mean and Percentage of the Post-Test (Experimental Group).

Test	means	percentage
Post-test	15.8	79%

Calculation
Mean

$$237 \div 15 = 15.8$$

Percentage

$$15.8 \div 20 \times 100 = 79\%$$

Table 4. Pre-test and post test of control group of.

Students	Pre -test scores	Post- tests scores
S16	10	10

Students	Pre -test scores	Post- tests scores
S17	10	12
S18	7	9
S19	6	11
S20	10	12
S21	8	11
S22	9	12
S23	10	12
S24	12	10
S25	8	9
S26	9	13
S27	11	12
S28	5	9
S29	10	13
S30	10	11
Total	136	166

5. Conclusion and Results

The purpose of this study was to examine and investigate the effect of collaborative writing on improving EFL Learner’s written performance. The study used a quasi- experimental design with pre-test and post-test for both experimental and control group. The findings show that learners who taught writing through collaborative writing achieved significantly higher scores than those who were taught through the traditional writing method. It also indicates that, the experimental group showed notable improvement in some linguistics levels and elements. This improvement includes: grammar, vocabulary, organization of topic, coherence and writing mechanism. Although the control group showed some improvements, but their progress was very limited compare with the experimental group. Based on these results, it can be concluded that collaborative writing is an effective instructional strategy for improving EFL Learner’s written performance. Collaborative writing encourages interaction, idea sharing and peer feedback, which contribute positively to the development of writing skills.

Table 5. Comparison of Post-Test Results.

Group	Mean	Percentage
Experimental Group	15.8	79%
Control Group	11.06	55.3%

6. Recommendations

Based on the above findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are suggested:

- 1) EFL teachers are encouraged to use collaborative writing activities to improve learner's writing skills.
- 2) Writing instructions should include pair and group work to promote interaction and cooperation among learners.

Author Contributions

Saeed Sulieman Sorage: Conceptualization, Resources
Nahid Alamin Ibrahim: Data curation, Methodology

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declares no conflicts of interest.

References

- [1] Abbas, M. (2022). Collaborative writing strategy to create skills of 21st century learners. *Al-Ishlah Journal*, 14(1), 55–65.
- [2] Al Dossary, K. (2025). Unlocking potential: Exploring the enduring impact of collaborative writing on lower-proficiency EFL learners. *Educational Process: International Journal*, 15, 1–12.
- [3] Anggraini, R., Rozimela, Y., & Anwar, D. (2020). The effects of collaborative writing on EFL learners' writing skills and their perception of strategy. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 11(2), 335–341.
- [4] Brown, H. D. (2004). *Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices*. New York: Pearson Education.
- [5] Hyland, K. (2003). *Second Language Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [6] Kessler, G. (2009). Student-initiated attention to form in wiki-based collaborative writing. *Language Learning & Technology*, 13(1), 79–95.
- [7] Li, Y. (2023). The effect of online collaborative writing instruction on enhancing writing performance, motivation and self-efficacy of Chinese EFL learners. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1–14.
- [8] Nation, I. S. P., & Macalister, J. (2020). *Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- [9] Nguyen, T., & Phuong, H. (2021). The impacts of collaborative writing on EFL learners' paragraph writing performance. *International Journal of Science and Management Studies*, 4(4), 177–190.
- [10] O'Donnell, A. (2014). *Cognitive Perspectives on Peer Learning*. Routledge.
- [11] Pardede, P. (2024). Writing in EFL Settings: A Review. *Journal of English Teaching*, 10(1), 92–109.
- [12] Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- [13] Stern, H. H. (1983). *Fundamental concepts of language teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- [14] Storch, N. (2013). *Collaborative Writing in L2 Classrooms*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- [15] Swain, M. (2000). The output hypothesis and beyond: Mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning* (pp. 97–114). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [16] Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- [17] Weigle, S. C. (2002). *Assessing Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.