

WHAT INDONESIAN EFL LEARNERS PERCEIVE OF COLLABORATIVE WRITING: EXPERIENCE IN WRITING ESSAYS ONLINE

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ABSTRACT

This study examines online collaborative writing (CW) teaching techniques via asynchronous computer-mediated communication multimodality, i.e., Google Docs. This study attempts to investigate what Indonesian learners perceive concerning writing collaboratively in Google Docs during online learning. This study collected data from 20 Primary School Teacher Education (PSTE) students enrolling in an English 3 (Academic Writing) class at a private university in Indonesia. The findings showed that the participants perceived online collaborative writing as a good way to develop their writing and communication skills. It was found that feedback from peers and the teacher was considered beneficial to the learners' writing development during the implementation of online collaborative writing (OCW). Even though interaction among learners can be enhanced in OCW, learners' lack of participation was one of the drawbacks discovered in this study. It is hoped that this study can contribute significantly to English writing instructors considering the benefits and the drawbacks of OCW before implementing OCW in their university classrooms.

Keywords: *google docs, online collaborative writing, collaboration*

INTRODUCTION

In the past few years, the language educators have seen the shift of English language teaching from traditional face-to-face to online settings as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic (Dhawan, 2020).

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Likewise in Indonesia, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers also need to adjust their teaching practice to technology-based teaching (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020). Even though technological advances bring possibility for teaching and learning process to be conducted during the pandemic, online education has also implicated challenges for teachers and students in English classes (Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2021). Lack of interactions is one of the difficulties encountered in online classes, which has contributed to students' lack of motivation and decreased engagement in the classroom (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Yusny et al., 2021). Therefore, to prosper the interaction between students, many EFL teachers have attempted a number of ways to promote active participation among students, one of which is through collaborative writing (CW) (Neumann & McDonough, 2014).

Writing is highly regarded as one of the necessary skillsets that EFL learners have to possess in order to master the language. In the academic settings, in particular, writing calls for more focus from the learners as it becomes a means of communication to share ideas and opinions with one another (Kilgour et al., 2020). Writing is also considered as a complex activity that requires a lengthy process to undertake critical thinking and concept development, making it the most challenging language skill to learn (Cheung, 2016; Sudirman et al., 2021). Therefore, it is unsurprising that writing requires additional strategy and time to teach so that EFL learners can gain an optimum result.

A number of studies have been carried out in relation to peer CW including the learners' attitudes (Moonma, 2021), the impact on students' English writing (Ardiasih et al., 2019; Bailey & Judd, 2018), the students' interaction (Kitjaroonchai & Suppasetseree, 2021), and the episodes in students' verbalization process.

In the context of online settings, several studies have revealed the advantages of online CW. Ubaldo (2021) reported that EFL learners' attitudes about peer CW in a web-based synchronous setting were generally positive since it aids in better content development, discovering relevant words, and increased mechanical and grammatical accuracy of the writings they generate. Similarly, Moonma (2021) also found that the students perceived that online CW helped increase their motivation to share ideas with each other. Nevertheless, despite its benefits, online CW can also pose some issues as it does not necessarily mean that learners will prefer to collaborate with their peers (Storch, 2005), and they may contribute unequally toward a joint writing task

(Irshad, 2021); thus, making teachers difficult to assess the students' writings particularly in an online setting.

In this present study, however, we seek to fill the gap in online CW with regards to the perceptions of Indonesian EFL students toward their experience in joint writing in an online class. The study intended to answer the research question: What are the perspectives of Indonesian EFL students in online collaborative writing through the use of Google Docs?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Grounded Theory of collaborative learning

Collaborative learning theories are founded on the socio-constructivist thesis that knowledge is socially created by community members and that individuals can obtain knowledge by participating in knowledge societies (Vygotsky, 1978). Thus, learning occurs when learners increase their knowledge in authentic environments through collaboration and information sharing. Language and culture, according to Vygotsky (1978), play critical roles in individual collaboration and communication. As a consequence, the socio-constructivist learning theory is, at its core, a collaborative learning theory. Collaborative learning is defined in education as a process of peer interaction that is guided and organized by the teacher or lecturer or with the assistance of adult. Collaborative learning becomes critical when it occurs within the context of society of practice (Wenger, 1998). A society of practice is made up of people who participate in group learning and disseminate what they have learned through group collaboration. Becoming a member of such a group or community entails learning how to cooperate in the group. Participation in online discourse through technological devices can be viewed as social activity and contextual discourse negotiation in this approach. Collaborative writing is indeed type of a shared knowledge setting in which students form groups of learners to exchange information while they create material.

In an active process, collaborative learning can take many forms, such as the use of technology as a platform and tool. Collaborative learning activities, particularly when aided by collaborative technology, have been linked to a slew of advantages. This benefit can be divided into two categories: social benefits and educational advantages. Students, as in the social benefit, learn how to regulate and demand the emotional management. Students felt a sense of full participation and

less loneliness. The pupils also describe how their involvement and motivation have increased. Thus, the similarity of the aim project in a group necessitates the same motivation and unity to finish the tasks.

Collaborative Writing

The power of collaborative writing stems from collaborative learning. Each writing action, in practice, moves the manuscript from one revision to another. There are also revisions that do not include major changes. As a result, a given document has undergone numerous alterations over time.

Collaborative writing is one kind of collaborative learning strategies amongst the many, but it is much more than that. According to Storch (2019), collaborative writing involves more than one individual who contributes to the construction of a work in such a way that sharing responsibility becomes vital. The premise of teaching writing competence is changing, and teachers must modify their classroom instruction to incorporate new technology while rethinking writing and learning for the twenty-first century. The usage of the Internet in a writing class can also stimulate collaborative writing. With the expansion of computer systems, online collaborative learning is now possible even if students are unable to meet in a lecture (MacDonald, 2008). There have been many attempts made by different institutions to utilize technology in joint operations. Google Docs are an internet suite of digital tools that, in addition to blogs, discussion forums, chat rooms, polls, wikis and learning logs, give lecturers and teachers access to some powerful features that can assist students in the 21st century in developing their writing skills. Students engage in collaborative writing when they create a text together in a group, with members of the group completing it, exchanging ideas, and having the work edited and encouraged by other group members. Students were able to have more fun with the writing process when they worked together. As Jaffe et al. (2021) mentioned, it was discovered that working together on a piece of writing was one of the strategies that had the potential to assist students in developing their writing skills. Students have an easier time developing an idea and taking a criticism or rebuttal from a classmate when they work on it collaboratively.

Google Docs Tool for Collaborative Writing

Google tools have been used for a variety of online learning activities, including collaborative writing, in recent years. Google Docs

is a tool promoted by software designers as being relatively simple to use for anyone who is familiar with a word processor such as Microsoft Word or Open Office Writer. As Cattafi & Metzner (2007) argued that collaborative tools can represent as a knowledge platform for a learning community, allowing members to communicate their insight with the team, post information, collaborate, and critically talk about issues. Some of the fundamental elements of a community of practice, such as an internet presence, a wide range of interactions, communications, involvement, relevant information, and correlation to a broader given topic field of interest, are characterized using collaborative tools. Collaborative tools can be used to support computer-supported collaborative learning, which is the development of collaboration through technology to improve learning. Furthermore, collaborative tools can improve student engagement and group work, as well as facilitate the sharing and distribution of knowledge and understanding among a group of students.

Numerous studies on the implementation of such collaborative tools in educational settings have appeared in recent years. Multimedia files, wikis, and blogs are all examples of common web 2.0 collaboration tools (Rienzo & Han, 2009). As opposed to the common belief, it appears that people are actually locating relevant content online through their own internet searches. Users of Web 2.0 sites can publish their own work online, collaborate on documents with others, and share their creations with the world. The many Web 2.0 tools allow universities to give their students more engaging and relevant educational opportunities. Blogs, wikis, and Google are just a few of the numerous helpful online tools made possible by the Web 2.0 era. Students gain the skills they need to work effectively in small groups through computer-mediated communication and collaborative learning. The groundwork for future social connections and peer learning is laid when kids use technology to interact with peers and others. Anyone with a Gmail account can use Google Docs, an online word processor, to work on a document together. This app is great for real-time collaboration and provides basic editing features.

Google Docs is a web-based suite of productivity tools developed by Google that includes word processor, spreadsheet, presentation, form, and database management tools. A user can make a new document, make changes to an existing one, and save the whole thing to their cloud storage account. Complete versions of all files are kept indefinitely. By checking the document's modification history in

Google Docs, you may see it exactly how it looked at any point in time. A writer has the option of rolling back their work to a previous save. This application lets several people working in pairs or small groups open the same Google Doc at the same time and make changes to it. The instructor can provide real-time feedback by making comments and suggested edits. The lecturer's comments will always be a component of the paper and can be reviewed by the students. The students were able to see the results of the other groups' efforts and the comments made on those efforts, allowing them to benefit from the experiences of those in other groups.

Features of Google Docs that the author finds most useful are listed below. It is possible for multiple people to work on a document at the same time, with each person's edits appearing immediately next to their own colored cursor. Complex edits, such as cut and paste, are resolved without any user intervention, and users can annotate specific sections of text with comments, providing context for their decisions or asking questions about the other author's contribution. These responses can be organized into threads and deleted once the corresponding issues have been closed. All the comments are saved in a separate "discussion" document that can be quickly referred back to; a chat window is also accessible, which is helpful for resolving difficulties in real time; a complete revision history is kept and can revert to earlier versions with ease; and so on.

Because Google Docs is simple and quick, it is ideal for facilitating digital writing workshops that combine peer editing, cooperative grouping, and small group fine-tuned writing instruction. According to Sharp (2008), collaborative editing tools enable a group of people to edit a document at the same time while viewing the improvements made by others in real - time basis. Because of this unique feature, Google Docs is a powerful program that can support collaborative writing in the language classroom. According to Chinnery (2008), Google Docs is an effective tool where learning activities can be designed differently and creatively. For example, an instructor may post a text that is purposefully riddled with errors for students to correct. Similarly, because this program leaves an editing trail, students can easily peer-edit. Chain storytelling is an additional choice, in which an instructor starts a narrative that each student adds to in turn. Furthermore, this tool is useful in general group projects.

Teaching English to non-English Departments

In recent years, teaching English has been introduced and taught as a major innovation of state system in largely treated in the outside of the classroom. Nowadays, lecturers of English as a foreign language in the universities have been paying increasing attention to identify the needs of their students, to students' attitudes towards English and their reasons for learning it. As a lecturer, stepping into a new educational system, it is important to inform yourself of your students' needs and attitude toward English so that from the beginning can set a role in the class.

In countries like Indonesia where English is taught as a foreign language not as a second language, firstly it is important to help the students understand the necessity of learning English (Widiati & Cahyono, 2016). Teaching English in Indonesia as a foreign language refers to the students of Indonesia whose first language is *Bahasa Indonesia*, not English. Teaching English is important to teach the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. In the university, English was used in the textbook or the materials course. Even they are not concern English as their major but it will help to prepare the readiness of future work. Sometimes, the students are not aware on that because of their interest of English is weak. Thus, the innovation is largely needed in teaching English in order to enhance the students' achievement.

The advancement of science and technology requires the communicative competence in English for academic as well as professional purposes. Therefore, English is taught at both the English and non-English study programs of the tertiary level of education. Whether or not English should be taught at the university level is mainly based on the perception that the improvement in the student's English proficiency is significant or non-significant.

However, there is still a discrepancy between the teaching of English at the non-English tertiary level of English competence of education and the English mastery needed to enter the workforce in Indonesia. As the first focuses mainly on the reading skill to support the student in finishing his study, the latter mainly requires the speaking and listening skills of the graduate to be admitted to the workforce. It is important that the students improve their mastery in all four language skills, especially as the graduate needs to compete in entering the workforce which, in fact, requires all the four skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Thus, technology can equip the students' learning and help them work independently in learning (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020). The passive students become active receive the information in the way of their capacity in adapted the technology as the users. Integrating technology into educational practice has proven to be slow and complex. It needs more years from the time, new technologies are first introduced to the point when changes can be observed in students. To date, the successful of it depends on the lecturer or teachers and student's attitude and expectation, organizational support and the technology itself. In fact, it is found that most lecturer and teachers have a lack confidence in technology as well as their technology skills.

Even though the relationship between the technology and educational practice is complex, many studies indicate that technology improve the students learning outcomes. The use of technology can help to improve and enhance the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Because of technology was intrinsically motivating to many students which includes schools and universities, it is particularly well suited to support the students learning as the centered learning. Lecturer or teacher use technology due primarily to present information than to provide hands-on learning for students. Some of them said that they are unclear about policies governing the use of technology. Others add the arguments that they are uncomfortable with investing instructional time to deal with the possible equipment failure or slow internet access. Thus, lecturers or teachers should know and realized that technology provides high-quality, ongoing feedback to the lecturers/teachers and students that can help guide the learning process.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The participants

The participants in the study were 20 Indonesian university students currently majoring in Primary School Teacher Education at President University. The students enrolled in a writing class for two meetings lasting for two and half hours per meeting and were assigned to produce two collaborative tasks. Upon completing the collaborative writing, the students were requested to answer a questionnaire on their experiences in OCW class.

The instrument

The purpose of this research is to investigate how students viewed online collaborative writing (OCW) conducted in the Google Docs. The closed-ended questions were adopted from a previous study conducted by Zorko (2009) related with investigating factors affecting the way students collaborate in Google Docs to develop their English language. The questionnaire consisted of 17 statements grouped into four sections investigating the students' perspectives of their soft skills, interactions within their group, the characteristics of OCW, and their writing skills. The learners had to evaluate the statements using a five-point Likert scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. The second part of the questionnaire was two open-ended questions to explore the students' perceptions about the final writing products, as well as the strengths and the weaknesses of OCW.

The research procedure

The study was carried out for four meetings. The participants were grouped into a group of three or four students. They were asked to choose their partners and collaboratively write two writing tasks. The writing tasks were two argumentative essays which were adopted from IELTS writing task 2. In each meeting, the students had to meet to plan the essays and they had to meet outside of the classroom to write jointly the tasks. After the first essay, the students met the lecturer and received feedback regarding the essay structure and the implementation of OCW. Based on the feedback, the students met together again to revise the essay based on the feedback. At the end of the project, they were given a questionnaire sent via Google Form to explore their experiences in online collaborative writing.

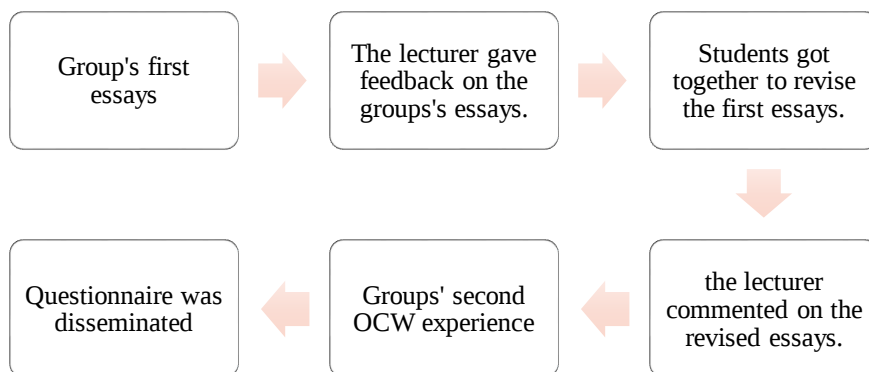


Figure 1. The Diagram of Stages of Online Collaborative Learning

Data Analysis

The quantitative data were calculated in terms of the percentage distribution of the responses in the questionnaire. The qualitative data were analyzed by using N-Vivo on the verbatim interview transcripts. Following Creswell and Creswell's (2017) suggestion, thematic coding was used for the qualitative questions so that the themes and sub-themes could be determined. In the interpretation of the qualitative data, the questionnaire responses were also included to establish a link between both the quantitative and qualitative data. In this way, the study could gain a more holistic perspective.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

Quantitative data

There are four categories in the questionnaire, they are: the way online collaborative writing enhances the students' soft skills, the students' peer interaction within the group, the students' opinion toward OCW activities, and the way OCW benefits the students' writing skills.

Collaborative writing is believed to be important not only in facilitating language learning, but also enhancing soft skills such as increasing communication skills, interpersonal skills, negotiation skills, and critical thinking skills. Table 1 illustrates what students viewed about collaborative writing in increasing their soft skills. Based on the information showed in Table 1, while 35% of the students did not decide their opinions, most students strongly agreed (25%) and agreed (40%) that the activities in online collaborative writing could exercise their communication skills. Next, students commented that during the two sessions of online collaborative writing they were able to work with other students more confidently, with 35% of the students strongly agreed and 45% agreed. As a result, the students indicated that online collaborative writing gave opportunities to negotiate meanings and exchange their ideas among the group members. After two experiences of online collaborative writing, the students reported that the interaction among their group members during OCW could make them more provide unthinkable arguments that stimulated their critical thinking.

Table 1. Students' responses on the way OCW enhances soft skills

<i>No. Statement</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
1. Collaborative online activities enhance my communication skills.	25%	40%	35%		
2. Collaborative online activities enable me to have more confidence working with other students.	30%	45%	25%		
3. Collaborative online activities enhance my negotiation skills.	25%	55%	20%		
4. Collaborative online activities stimulate my critical thinking skills.	30%	60%	10%		

Table 2 shows students' perceptions of their interactions with their group members in OCW. As it can be seen from the table, the responses regarding interaction were rather consistent. For both statements 2 and 4, the same number of students (35% and 50%, respectively) chose strongly agree and agree that OCW provided them opportunities to exercise their thoughts and share them with the group members and receive feedback in return. Owing to the jointly writing experience, almost all of the students agreed that they learned from each other in terms of knowledge and information during the shared writing session, with 40% strongly agree and 50% agree. In addition, 45% of the students chose strongly agree and 40% agreed that every one of them felt responsible for finishing the writing assignments.

Table 2. Students' responses on the interaction with their peers

<i>No. Statement</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
5. Collaborative online activities foster exchange of knowledge, information & experience.	40%	50%			
6. Collaborative online activities give me	35%	50%	15%		

	the chance to express my ideas in the group.				
7.	Collaborative online activities help me to receive useful feedback.	35%	50%	10%	5%
8.	Collaborative online activities help me to have a greater responsibility for myself & my group.	45%	40%	10%	5%

The questionnaire also asked students' perceptions about OCW. For ease of reading, the students' responses could be categorized into two groups, the positive perceptions and mixed-up feelings. While 15% of the students felt that OCW was time consuming and 30% were unsure, most of the students responded otherwise with 30% disagree and 15% strongly disagreed that OCW was a waste of their time. Further, the students also reported their positive opinions towards OCW as 40% of them strongly agree and 35% agreed that OCW should continue to be implemented. In addition, 35% of the students strongly agreed and 45% agreed that OCW gave them meaningful experience in the writing course. However, when asked whether OCW made them enjoy writing in group, 45% of them remained neutral, and when asked whether they could finish faster writing in group, 45% also remained neutral, while other students believed they could do so.

Table 3. Students' responses on their opinions of OCW activities

<i>No. Students' Perceptions About OCW</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
9. Working online in groups is a waste of time.		15%	30%	30%	15%
10. Collaborative online activities should be encouraged.	40%	35%	25%		
11. Overall, collaborative online activities is a worthwhile experience.	35%	45%	20%		
12. Collaborative online activities make us write better	35%	45%	20%		

argument essays.				
13. I enjoy writing more than I did before due to collaborative online writing.	25%	30%	45%	
14. I get more work done when I work with others.	30%	30%	35%	5%

Table 4 illustrates the benefits of OCW in helping to increase the students' writing skills. Responses to statements number 15 and 16 suggested that students learned how to plan and edit argumentative essays and implement the skills when writing alone. In other words, students believed that OCW could increase their writing skills particularly in writing an argument essay.

Table 4. Students' responses on the way OCW benefits their writing

No. Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
15. Collaborative online activities enable me to learn new ways to plan & edit my argument essays.	35%	55%	10%		
16. Collaborative online activities improve my performance.	25%	60%	15%		

Qualitative data

The students also answered the second part of the questionnaire consisting of two open-ended questions inquiring students about the positive and negative sides of OCW. The students' responses were analyzed by using N-Vivo 12 generating five and seven major themes for question number 1 and 2, respectively.

The strengths of OCW

The first open-ended question aimed to know whether the students enabled to reap benefits from the OCW sessions. Figure 2 shows that there are four major themes generated from 20 coded items that OCW has produced, they are: 1) feedback from group mates and the lecturer (6 occurrences), 2) enhanced communication skills (6

occurrences), 3) better performance in the second essay (5 occurrences), and 4) benefits of group work (2 occurrences).

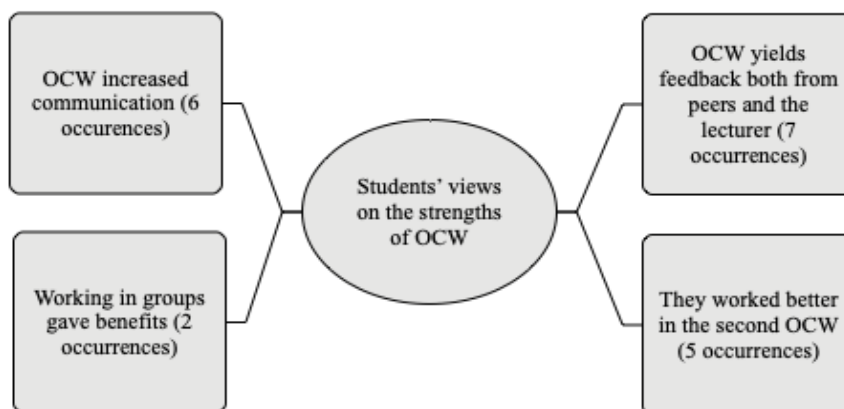


Figure 2. The benefits of OCW

The first theme was the feedback students received during OCW. The students reported that they could deliver ideas, give and receive feedback during the knowledge and essay construction. They realized that this way they were able to know where they did wrong and improve their writing skills. In addition, with the feedback from the lecturers, they got better understanding regarding the structure of the essay so it became easier for them to write the assigned task. Secondly, the students could enhance their communication skills. In order to finish the jointly written product, students had to discuss their ideas and allow others to add more insights. One of the students said that “We put more concern in our task. [We] give others the time to develop their argument and together we discuss which [idea] is better. We also have a better communication.” Because of teamwork and communication, they composed the essay better. The students also added that working in group were able to provide them with new and better ideas which they did not think of before. As a result, one student said, “working in groups [makes the] work feel lighter because more people do it, increase the spirit of socializing, and get more resources.” The final theme was the students had better impressions of the second OCW. Because of there were two sessions of OCW, most students mentioned that in the second session they wrote better and became more

understanding of the essay structure, had better communication, more involvement, and more able to convey ideas.

The drawbacks of OCW

The second open-ended question explored students' views on the drawbacks of OCW. There are 14 occurrences coded and categorized into four emerging themes namely: 1) time management; 2) more revisions needed in the second essay; 3) irresponsible group members; and 4) substantive conflict. The results can be seen in Figure 3.

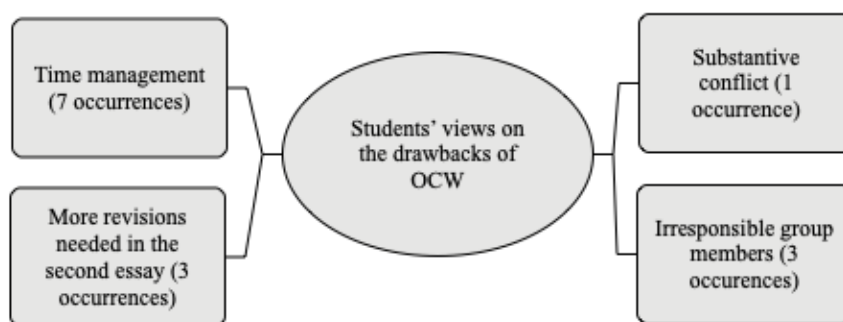


Figure 3. The drawbacks of OCW

First, the students reported that time management was the most challenging issue during OCW. One student said that “Group work takes longer time because we need to find right time to discuss.” Another student mentioned that they were busy and had their own schedule, so they had to gather in the evening. In addition, one student reported that the revision time in the second essay was shorter than the first, so they had difficulties to find the right time to gather. Or, if the time had been set, the members came late to the meeting.

The second concern from the students was the amount of revision that they had to solve before final submission. One of the students mentioned that because of miscommunication among the group it took longer time to revise the second essay compared to the first essay. Another student said that “Thinking about improving an essay is more difficult than writing an essay from the beginning. The thing that was inappropriate requires ideas that are connected between the arguments and the essay coherence.”

The next theme was among members encountered substantive conflict where they had different perceptions of what most important

things to focus on. One student stated, “The weakness [of OCW] is lack of communication between friends. When working on [the] essay, my friends and I focused more on improving the arguments in the essay. My friends and I don't pay much attention to... grammar and others.”

Finally, another drawback that some groups dealt with was irresponsible group members. While one group had one member who were hard to reach so that they had to finish the essays without the person, another group had one person missing, but later joined the group to take part in the group work.

Discussions

The findings of this study suggest that Indonesian EFL students perceived online collaborative writing as a good way to develop their writing and communication skills. In line with previous studies (Yee & Yunus, 2021), students perceived that online collaborative writing provided them advantages, which led to their improved communication skills and writing skills regarding the implementation of OCW during the pandemic online.

The first advantage highlighted by the learners in this study was feedback that they received during the OCW. Storch (2019) states that collaborative writing provides a good strategy to incorporate peer feedback when students are writing together. The findings of this study revealed that students received beneficial feedback from their group mates that could increase their knowledge of how to write a better argumentative essay. During the development of a joint composition task, learners, or co-authors, assist each other to generate ideas and develop them in order to create a well and effectively structured essay. Watanabe (2014) define this process as collaborative dialogue in which learners use language to construct knowledge and solve problem that emerge during the collaboration. Consequently, this experience will facilitate language learning, which leads to learners' perceived positive opinions regarding OCW upon receiving feedback from their peers.

In addition, the findings indicated that teacher feedback is important to make students understand better the tasks. The results showed that the learners felt they could contribute more and comprehend how an argumentative essay worked, after the teacher gave them feedback by asking them to clarify the unclear points and giving them suggestions on how to improve their essays. Therefore, in giving feedback, writing instructors need to consider what type of feedback that can be useful for learners' L2 writing development. Alvarez et al.

(2012) categorize teacher's feedback into four categories such as 1) clarification, 2) correction, 3) suggestion, and 4) correction and/or question plus suggestion feedback. According to their study, when the students were given correction and questions regarding their work, they became more engaged in the essay revision and discussion that led to significant changes in their work. The same results were also found in Guasch et al. (2013) study. After receiving the feedback, the students will revise the essays by clarifying the unclear statements and editing the language expressions. This is believed to make students learn from the previous mistakes that they made in the first draft. Therefore, in this present study we have learned that incorporating both peer feedback and teacher feedback are paramount to the students' L2 writing development so that they may understand what needs to be improved to increase the quality of their work.

Third, the findings revealed that involving students in OCW activities could help students interact with one another so that they could improve their communication skills among their friends and were also able to develop their thinking abilities. In that interaction, the students said that they were able to properly develop ideas in their essays when writing together compared to when they wrote alone. OCW helped make their writing job much easier. Apart from that, they also received feedback from their friends in terms of language and writing techniques so that they could understand how to write argumentative essays according to the writing criteria set by the class instructor. In interacting with peers, they saw different perspectives and everyone had different experiences and knowledge so that with OCW, students feel they were able to develop their ideas more broadly. In other words, they became more critical to see an idea and an argument from many points of view. Therefore, OCW in general helps students communicate by building collaborative dialogue with their group friends so that there is interaction between students.

On the other hand, the learners also think that OCW also has several disadvantages. First, similar to previous studies (Alwaleedi, 2022; Ibrahim et al., 2015), this study also found that interaction among learners did not always occur in OCW. In this study, several participants mentioned that there were members who were not active in joint writing activities. OCW activities in this study were held outside the classroom which were not monitored by the teacher, so students had to jointly arrange a schedule together. Students who arrived late or did

not attend at the time set by the group were considered unable to work together.

Similar to other studies (Alwaleedi, 2022; Storch, 2005), the student there also stated about unequal participation. Since the collaborative writing was conducted virtually, the students had to arrange a schedule and agree to meet at the scheduled time. They had to wait all the group members attend to be able to complete the assignment. In line with previous studies, online CW can also pose some issues as it does not necessarily mean that learners will prefer to collaborate with their peers (Storch, 2019), and they may contribute unequally toward a joint writing task (Irshad, 2022) thus, making teachers difficult to assess the students' writings particularly when conducted in an online setting.

According to Ibrahim et al. (2015), this collaborative activity is also used as an opportunity for students who do not want to contribute in their group, or free riders. As a result, there are members who become passive during the process of writing together, which makes other group members think that studying together is uncomfortable and useless in improving their writing skills (Alwaleedi, 2022; Ibrahim et al., 2015).

Referring to the study conducted by Dobao and Blum (2013) and Storch (2021), there are many factors that influence interaction in a small group such as the learner's perspective on whether CW is positive or negative and what role they play in interaction.

Secondly, learners focus on different aspects during the revision. With regards to the benefits of peer and teacher feedback, even though the students worked better in the second essay, it was found that revising the second essay was more time-consuming. The students had to work longer time to relate ideas so that the essay could be coherent. They had to focus on different aspects, and this caused the discussion to be longer and confusing for them. The same issue was also found in Storch (2005). This could be the reason why in the questionnaire the number of participants choosing between collaborative writing or writing alone indicated somewhat balanced results.

For the classroom implications, getting students accustomed to the collaborative writing process is greatly important. However, the teacher should set up the rules of the writing and the assessment to be used should be shown to the students. Teachers can not expect students to understand the collaborative process on their own (Wilhelm, 2007). Peer feedback, as an example, cannot be expected to occur as

immediate as possible, as not every student will be accustomed to the collaborative work. Even though some students may appreciate the feedback from their peers, commenting on their partner(s) work is still a daunting task. In this case, Carson and Nelson (1996) found that Chinese students aimed for harmony and did not seek conflict. The desire to create a harmonious relationship with their friends causes students to be reluctant to give feedback to their friends. In this respect, Bradley (2014) suggests that allowing more opportunities for students to the process of collaboration can eliminate this unpleasant feeling. Students may find collaboration unusual, particularly in writing, since they rarely conduct such an activity in their experiences.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Findings in the study showed a positive attitude of students towards OCW activities. Yet, there are several issues that can be considered when implementing OCW in writing classes. First, despite the benefits that online collaborative writing offers, this study found that prior to the implementation of OCW, students should be introduced to OCW and carried out trial and error. Exchanging ideas among learners can be challenging as they want to share ideas and to be accepted among their peers. Therefore, to avoid this matter, OCW activities that are done several times are necessary so that learners feel comfortable and understand the process they have to go through. Even though some learners preferred to write individually, they agreed that online collaborative writing can foster their communication skills, critical thinking skills particularly on the development of ideas. Writing requires relevant and coherent ideas that can be developed to produce an effective writing product

The present study, however, still has several limitations that may be examined in further research. This study did not specifically investigate the students' writing improvement, but rather explored the students' perceptions on how OCW might enhance their writing skills. In addition, the study could only carry out the writing class using OCW in a limited time and in a particular writing type (e.g. argumentative essay). Therefore, future studies may address a possible longer time span, a more varied writing task, and another effect of OCW to expand the findings in this research area.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to express our gratitude to President University that has greatly contributed to the completion of this study through the research grant awarded in 2022.

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