



Exploring the Power of Writing Collaboratively

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Article History

Received: 15.02.2024

Accepted: 06.02.2024

Published: 30.03.2024

Abstract: The aim of this article is to explore the numerous advantages of collaborative writing. By engaging in collaborative writing, students can develop many competences essential for their success in many fields. These multi benefits render collaborative learning as a valuable approach that should be recommended in academic and professional settings.

Keywords: Collaborative writing; essays; approach.

INTRODUCTION

Writing essays is a crucial skill that students should master in order to succeed in various fields. It usually requires the individual work of each student, especially for academic purposes. On the other hand, Nggawu et al.(2022) indicated that collaborative writing is strongly recommended as it can greatly improve the quality of students' academic essays.

The collaborative writing approach is where students work together to accomplish an assignment. This approach involves participants' shared ideas, contributions and comments to successfully complete a given task (Bremner, 2010).

This article investigates the tremendous benefits of collaborative essay writing, emphasizing the ways in which joint endeavors can enhance students' communication skills, foster their learning, improve their language skills, promote engagement, unlock their creativity, and prepare them for professional life.

Collaborative writing: Multi -faceted Benefits

Elevate Communication Skills

Collaborative writing enhances students' communication skills, as evidenced by Zohra (2013) and Ahmed & Bedri (2017). When students engage in reciprocal tuition, they have to grasp the ideas presented and clearly articulate them to their peers (Yager, Johnson, & Johnson, 1985). Through this approach, students interact by sharing tasks and responsibilities, creating a learning atmosphere that enhances students' interpersonal skills, sparks their thinking, and boosts their productivity.

Foster Learning

Students' interaction during the collaborative activities promotes their understanding of the concepts (Entwistle & Tait, 1993). Engaging in conversations where learners discuss various ideas leads to a deeper understanding of the topics and encourages the assessment of peers' perspectives. Students learn through self and group evaluation (Meier, & Panitz, 1996).

By writing collaboratively, students participate in a conversation that helps them identify gaps in their composing process (Elola & Oskoz, 2010). This is reiterated by Gass and

Mackay (2007) and Long (1996) who consider interaction as a chance to negotiate meaning, identify gaps, and get feedback. Students can share their knowledge and expertise, gain ideas and skills from each other, and enhance their writing abilities. These interactions contribute to the growth of each student's learning process.

Working collaboratively provides a social setting in which people can share knowledge, pool skills, and participate in group scaffolding (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007). By pooling the thoughts and insights of several students, a richer and more elaborate piece can be composed, drawing from a range of experiences and perspectives.

Enhance language skills

Students' writing performance is greatly enhanced as they continuously practice writing and receive feedback that helps them pinpoint areas that require enhancements. Supiani (2017) mentioned that collaborative writing enhances students' writing skill. Dobao (2012) also considered that when collaborators discuss any task, they gain knowledge about the appropriateness of their ideas and the suitability of their linguistic choices. Alwasilah (2001) considered that collaborative writing empowers students to have excellent and outstanding results. Foley and Thompson (2003) reiterated that collaborative learning is an essential activity in teaching languages as it helps students improve their language skills.

Collaboration teaches students to critique and edit one another's output and fosters a self- assessment culture that leads to the refinement and ongoing improvement of their language skills.

Promote Engagement

Collaborative writing activities enhance students' engagement and motivation. Collaborative writing engages students in their learning process (Slavin, 1980). When students share their thoughts and write their assignments jointly with their peers, they become comfortable in expressing their opinions which can boost their engagement. Youngren (2021) mentioned that collaborative learning has been demonstrated to enhance students' knowledge and understanding by promoting their active participation and interaction.

The nature of collaborative learning compels students to share their ideas and expertise while being aware that their contributions are essential to the whole group's success. This fosters a sense of commitment and responsibility. The group discussions within the collaborative learning activities engage students, reducing distractions and keeping them on -task, an idea that is reinforced by Gere and Abbott (1985).

Unleash Creativity

Collaborative writing allows for greater creativity and idea generation. Engaging in collaborative writing where students share their ideas and receive helpful feedback can ignite their creativity and motivate them to explore fresh ideas and perspectives.

While working together, students are introduced to various perspectives that enrich their knowledge and inspire their creativity (Jacobs & Lawson, 2017). Creativity is promoted when students are engaged in group discussions. When students explain the tasks to each other, they receive multiple benefits. Romero and Siklander (2012) considered that collaboration among students enhances academic creativity. Collaborative learning activities that foster dialogue stimulate innovation and creative thinking. These activities encourage learners to engage in discussions, share ideas, and work jointly to achieve common assignments.

Prepare for professional life

The collaborative learning activities performed prepare students for the group projects that they carry out in the workplace. Bremner (2010) stated that collaborative work helps students learn and practice the tasks that they will encounter at work. Moreover, Dillenbourg (1999) underscores the importance of collaborative learning experiences in enhancing students' ability to work effectively in groups, a highly required skill by most employers. Participating in group activities not only enhances students' academic knowledge but also develops pivotal skills greatly valued in the workplace.

According to Johnson and Johnson (2009) collaboration among students significantly enhances their communication skills, which are crucial for successful group work in any professional domain. By engaging in collaborative learning activities, students develop pivotal skills such as effective communication, negotiation, and conflict resolution, which provide them with the necessary tools for successful collaboration in professional settings.

Conclusion

Engaging in collaborative learning activities offers myriad benefits. It improves students' communication skills, enhances concept understanding, develops language skills, and increases their engagement. It also empowers students to fit in various professional settings and promotes their creativity. Through collaborative learning, students acquire and enhance many essential skills and develop knowledge that is crucial for their success across diverse fields.

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