# THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COLLABORATIVE WRITING IN IMPROVING STUDENTS WRITING SKILL AT 11<sup>TH</sup> GRADE OF SCIENCE CLASS AT SMA PERTIWI AMBON

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Abstract. As one of productive skill in the foreign language context, writing skill can be figured as the most difficult skill for EFL learners. Therefore EFL teachers should implement meaningful teaching technique to help learners improve their writing skill. One of the techniques that recommended by the experts is collaborative writing. It is the teaching technique which is focused on work collaborative in writing process. This technique is adapted from the collaborative learning strategy in which this technique is useful to treat students to work collaboratively in writing process. The collaborative works can be done in pairs or in a group. Therefore, this study is aimed at describing the useful of implementing collaborative writing technique in improving the students' writing skill. The research consists of the subject from SMA Pertiwi Ambon comprised of 13 students in XI-Science class. The data was collected from classroom observation and field notes, test, questionnaire and interview. The research methodology that used in this research was classroom action research under mix method qualitativequantitative design. The findings of the study revealed that by implementing the collaborative writing technique, the students can improve their writing skill and it can be shown through the result of their writing paragraphs. Through the implementation of this technique, the students can share their ideas, organize their ideas, write the outline and develop their writing after they work both in pairs or in a group. They also did a peer feedback, revise and write their final product of their writing. Moreover, they have positive respond towards this technique and build a good interaction in working on their writing paragraphs. As the conclusion, this technique is useful to be implemented in classroom writing activities. To implement this technique optimally, teachers need to consider the characteristics of students background knowledge on writing in English, the given topic and the time for learners to practice their writing skill. The more the students have chance to work collaborative the better they produce their writing skill.

Keyword: Collaborative writing technique, writing skill, writing process

#### Introduction

Writing is the most difficult skill to be mastered in any language learning, yet it is one of the required skills for learners since it is a productive skill that is

used to figure out what learners have understood and learned about a particular academic subject. As productive skill, writing does not only focus on producing a product in the form of text, but the most importantly is to developing effective writing through the process of writing. Writing is not merely considered as a product but a complex process that eventually results in that product. It is a specialized skill that requires the process of thinking, drafting and revising procedures (Brown, 2002, p.335). There are four stages of writing process proposed by Harmer (2002) known as the process wheel containing: Planning, Drafting, Editing, and Final Version. In planning, it is an activity that encourages learners to write. This is the first step that learners have to do before they write a text. The activity provides learning experiences for learners including brainstorming. Other stages, drafting and editing are the core of writing process that are related to the need of learners' ability to extract ideas and sharing ideas with other learners to help them develop their texts. In writing, whether individual or in pairs or in small groups, learners automatically need other develop their written text. These cover various activities including the discussion, interaction, research and language study which should be facilitated appropriately in the classroom so that learners can create a good writing.

Nowadays, learners have problem in writing because they were not trained to go through the writing process. The processes of writing needed to help the writer direct their writing clearly. In the process of writing, the needs of others to collaboratively work for discussion and ideas sharing are important to develop the ideas, to generate ideas, and to put ideas into sentences to be a good paragraph. The problems that occur when create a text is the learners have difficulties in the process of creating a good writing that contains the process of generating ideas, developing ideas and putting the ideas into a good writing. It derived a conclusion toward the problem is learners are not trained to write through process.

In the process of writing, learners are required to understand the stages of writing to help them producing a good and qualified writing text. In doing so, learners need to know their strengths and weaknesses (Hedge, 2005: 121). Related to this, the need of other learners as a partner is needed to discussion, to exchange perspective and to give feedback. Collaborative work in the process of writing will help learners to understand the process of writing deeply and aware of their quality of writing to produce a good writing. The researcher then contends to use Collaborative Writing technique to facilitate EFL learners develop writing skills. Collaborative writing is the process of two writers or more to produce a written text. This technique has its origin from collaborative learning which help learners in understand the whole process of writing through process of interaction, discussion and share knowledge. Based on the previous researcher, Storch (2005) reported that collaborative writing techniques encourages learners to involve and contribute in the process of making decision toward all aspect in writing: content, structure and language use. Collaborative writing technique helps learners to develop their writing ability including; generating ideas as the part of planning, improve their grammatical knowledge, increase new vocabulary and decision making in organizing ideas as the part of drafting and editing stages.

#### **Review of Literature**

# The Essence of Writing Skill in a Foreign Language Classroom

Writing is not a spontaneous skill or acquired easily. In fact, according to Nunan (1999:271) it is viewed as 'probably the most difficult thing to do in language'. Writing skill can be defined as an ability to communicate ideas into the written form. According to Brookes; Arthur; Grundy (1990) as cited from Homstad & Thomson (1994) in writing there is an integration between communicative practice and humanistic principles that involve some elements to support both integration which are: 1) having something meaningful to say, 2) reaching an audience, 3) working in small groups, 4) working collaboratively, 5) developing register awareness, and 6) talking naturally.

Nowadays, in learning English as a Foreign Language, writing is important to prove that besides oral skill learner need to express their though, knowledge ideas into written form. In academic world especially for EFL learner, writing is the most difficult subject because it has some important elements that should be acquired to be proficiency in this skill. Writing has process to create a good and qualified product. It means, writing is a skill that required human to go through a process. Writing process involve process to generating ideas and thoughts into words and sentences.

In writing especially for EFL class, learners have to know and understand the elements of writing. The researcher agreed that the EFL learner should be trained and taught to know the elements of writing in order to make their text understandably and qualified. Moreover, learners should acquire writing skill by improving their knowledge about the elements. The other aspects that prove in which a learner has improved their writing skill is focusing on the usage, structure and correct form of learners' writing (Zamel, 1982).

# The Essence of Writing Process

Writing process is classified as a process approach in learning. Process approach is the process of discovery learning. Writing process is a process approach to writing that entails some components because writing process is a process which requiring discovering meaning (Temesgen, Olana\* & Etana, 2015). Process means a long steps or stages exist in a period of time. Meanwhile, through the process a writer must know how to write, organize thoughts and message in an appropriate way, writing process helps learners to focus on the process of creating text through the various stages. As a process, writing activity has some of stages consists of generating ideas, drafting, revising and editing. According to Harmer (2002) there are four stages of writing process as follow:

# **Planning**

Planning which is also sometimes called as pre-writing. This is the stage where learners have a bit time to collecting ideas and information towards the topic through brainstorming, clustering or making WH-questions (Temesgen, Olana\* & Etana, 2015). Learners can use graphic organizers, drawing, pictures, or lists to help them during this stage. This prewriting stage helps learners to

focusing their thoughts. It is a good time for learners to narrow or expand what they will be writing about. This beginning stage is a great time for learners to organize their thoughts onto paper.

### **Drafting**

The drafting stage is the second step in the writing process. During this stage, learners use the information from the prewriting stage and extract it into a rough draft. The goal is learners could take the jumbled thoughts that they had brainstormed and put it into sentences. Drafting is the stage where writer puts the ideas and all information to be expressed on written form.

# **Editing**

The other meaning by editing is revising the written text that has been written. In editing or revising, the writer considers the feedbacks by others in which either teacher or others learner. The aim of this step is to improve the quality of the text. This stage focuses on improving learner writing. Learners rethink, rework, and refine their writing. Learners apply their knowledge of language skills and sentence structure in order to become better writers. It require a careful attention toward every word in the text (Temesgen, Olana\* & Etana, 2015). This step takes a lot of time and usually requires a peer, other learners, or teacher to help.

#### Final Version

The last stage is final draft. In this stage, the process of rewrite and approved writing is needed before the publishing. This step requires the writer to putting the piece of writing into the final version. In addition, the publishing is the last stage which include in final stage. Final version is a stage when the writer done with editing, revising and rewrite, and come to the final stage of the writing process to share the final product (Temesgen, Olana\* & Etana, 2015).

Moreover, in creating good pieces of writing, the writer or learners have to concern with the whole process of writing. In creating and producing a good writing text, it must goes through a good writing process. In the writing process the interaction is always needed. It can be conclude that creating good pieces of writing need to apply whole stages of writing process which is also include collaboration through interaction between teachers and learner or among the learners.

# Problems in Teaching and Learning in Writing Activity

Nowadays, writing also known as the key to get success for learners in any level of education. For learners, have a good writing skill bring many benefits. Writing surely is very important to every learner in academic level so it should be taught meaningful and significant. Although writing is an essential and important

skill, sometimes learners are not interested in it. In fact, learners often have many basic obstacles in written works about spelling, grammar, punctuation and organization. According to Msanjila (2005) there are six common problems in writing which is faced by learners in creating their writing. Those problems are capitalization, punctuation, inexplicitness, poor organization or illogical sequence, spelling and the most common problem is grammatical errors. The impact will be serious if the problem in the process of teaching and learning cannot be solved. By having a qualified language instructor, adequate teaching materials and various effective teaching technique will slowly reduce these writing problems.

# Concept of collaborative writing technique in writing activity

The concept of group work or pair work in foreign language classroom is in line with the theoretical framework of Vygotsky's (1978) view about constructivism theory. Constructivism theory explained the social activity that should be involved in language learning to achieve the central goal of language learning, the cognitive development occur in social interaction with other member of society. Based on the basic concept of language learning collaborative writing is one of the techniques that in line with the concept.

In collaborative writing learners involve in the process of making important decision to generate and develop ideas and structuring the content about their text. Collaborative writing also enables learners to deal with different views and arguments, which could create their way of thinking and develop their thinking toward academic writing. This technique also gives chance for learners to understand the writing process through interaction among members in group.

# The procedure of collaborative writing in writing acivity

Collaborative writing (Storch, 2011) is an activity that involve coauthoring of a text by two or more writers. This technique enabled learners to interact with each other over different aspects of writing and they also have opportunities to learn and explore the language they are using through discussion about what ideas that they use to develop their content of writing together. In conducting collaborative writing in writing activity the researcher believes that learners' problem will be solved. The procedure of collaborative writing helps learners to follow and understanding the writing process. Collaborative writing technique begins with: first, learners will be divided into group. Next step, the teacher will give big topic for the groups. The learners in group need to create their title based on the topic that given by the teacher. Third, learners in group will work collaboratively in creating a good writing by following the whole stages in writing process. Collaborative writing technique requires learners to create a product in the form of written text through the collaboration process. In the process of producing a written text, learners will work together and definitely build interaction which will help learners to generate their own ideas by sharing ideas with all members in group.

#### Research Problem

Their problem is that they are not trained the whole process of writing in which they can collaboratively work to generate ideas, develop the idea and put the ideas into good paragraphs to produce a good written text. The other problems are lack of vocabulary, sentence structures also become contributing factors why their writing achievement is low. Conversely, these linguistic problems can be diminished if the learners are facilitated to write through process. To solve the problems above, the researcher offers collaborative writing. believes that this technique can improve learners writing skill. Specifically, this study is addressed to explaining the use of collaborative writing to improve learners' writing skill and also explaining learners' interactions in the groups during the implementation of collaborative writing technique in the process of writing.

# **Research Methodology**

This research has been conducted in an EFL writing activity. This research used classroom action research design under mixed method (qualitativequantitative) methodology. Furthermore, the researcher used mix approach qualitative and quantitative to get the data. For research design, the researcher had qualitative-quantitative research method in which classroom action research becomes a research design to apply Collaborative Writing technique. The participant of this research was 15 learners of the second grade learners of XI-IPA of SMA Pertiwi Ambon. The technique of data collection used by the researcher is mix approach of qualitative and quantitative. There are 4 instruments used to help the researcher to collect the data which are observation, test, and questionnaire and group interview. Observation and group interview were used to get the qualitative data whereas test (pre and post-test) and questionnaire were used to collect quantitative data.

Based on the steps offered by Costello (2011), the researcher collaborated with the teacher and tried to determine the steps of the classroom action research are:

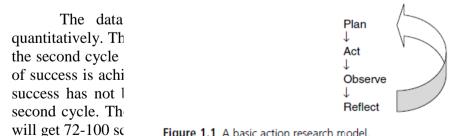


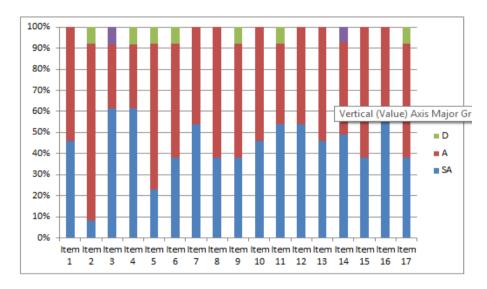
Figure 1.1 A basic action research model.

# **Findings & Discussion** Result of Field Notes

During the process of writing, teacher found that learners developed their writing with more ideas compared to their writing in the pre-test. In the process, the teacher routinely controlled and motivated the learners' work also corrected students' error. Some learners showed their enthusiastic to practice their skill. The use of collaborative writing in the classroom makes the learners felt that learn with their friend in group is enjoyable which means that the learners felt more enthusiastic to learn with their friends.

# Result of Questionnaire

The main point of the questionnaire are; learners' view on the implementation of collaborative writing in writing activity, learners perception about gaining knowledge through discussion and interaction with friends in group, and the influence of writing collaboratively toward learners improvement in their writing skill. The summary of the result can be shown into the following table.



The result of the questionnaire presents the data such as; it can be seen that 54% of learners liked to write collaboratively in small group and 61% of the learners hoped to use collaborative writing in writing activity. It was because learners felt comfortable when writing with friends in group. There are 54% learners agreed that they could learn from their friends in group which can help them enriched their writing skill. Learners gave contribution through their ideas during the process of collaborative writing and sometimes they got feedback toward grammar error from their friends. Besides, through collaborative writing activity, 54% of learners agreed that their member in group helped them to understand the systematic structure of writing composition. There are 62% learners deal with the interaction among member in collaborative writing which could improve their writing skill. The important thing in writing is when the writer can develop and generates ideas to create a good writing content. In line with that, 62% of learners agreed that through collaborative writing they got help take role in generate and develop ideas. From the explanation above, the researcher concludes that collaborative writing technique is very helpful in improving learners writing skill through interaction and participation in small group discussion.

# The Result of Test

The result of test is one of the ways to confirm the researcher that collaborative writing technique that implemented in writing activity help learners in improving their writing skill. During the process of collaborative writing the researcher expected that the process of discussion and interaction help learners to learn from their friend and gain knowledge through group interaction among members. The expectation of the researcher seemed happen reviewed from the result of pre-test and post-test that can be shown into the following table:

**PRE-TEST** 

No	Name	Content	Organization	Grammar	Vocabu- lary	Mechanics	Total
1	Learner 1	13	7	5	7	2	34
2	Learner 2	13	8	6	7	2	36
3	Learner 3	18	14	12	13	4	61
4	Learner 4	13	7	11	7	2	40
5	Learner 5	14	12	11	8	3	48
6	Learner 6	14	7	10	9	3	43
7	Learner 7	13	8	6	6	2	35
8	Learner 8	18	11	12	11	4	54
9	Learner 9	13	7	5	7	2	34
10	Learner 10	17	10	12	11	4	54
11	Learner 11	15	11	7	7	2	42
12	Learner 12	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	Learner 13	13	7	5	7	3	35

POST TEST

No	Name	Content	Organi- zation	Grammar	Vocabu- lary	Mechanics	Total	Description
1	Learner 1	17	8	8	8	3	44	The content still need to be elaborate. The information still needs more explanation. But it is better than the pre-test. The organization is very poor because the idea is not well communicated in the paragraph.

						Γ	ı	Tru .
								The grammar is errors so the text
								can't be
								understand.
								Overall this
								learner try hard
								but still need
								more practice.
								This learner
								starts with the
								complete step to
								develop writing.
								The content is developed
								enough. She put
								some
								information/
	Learner	22	16	10	1.6		7.0	description of cat.
2	2	22	16	18	16	4	76	The content
								relevant with the
								topic, the
								brainstorming
								and the outline.
								The organization, grammar,
								vocabulary and
								mechanics are
								overall good.
								The content of
								this text is very
								good. It is well
	Learner	20	10	2.1	10	,	0.0	organized. The
3	3	28	19	21	18	4	90	grammar is well structure and she
								use appropriate
								vocabulary. Very
								good.
								This learner
								needs
								improvement in
								the content. He
								needs to add
4	Learner	17	17	19	17	4	74	more on the content. But the
+	4	1/	1/	19	1/	+	/4	important
								knowledge of the
								subject "cat" has
								been informed.
								The other point
<u> </u>								overall good.
								This learners use
								well structure of
								grammar, appropriate
								vocabulary that
5	Learner	23	16	20	16	4	79	related with the
	5					-		topic. The content
								is clear enough to
								be understand.
								The organization
								and mechanics

							1	also good.
6	Learner 6	23	18	17	16	4	77	The content of this text from this learner is good. Almost very good. The content is developed enough. She tell and well describe about the subject. The use of grammar and vocabulary is coherence. Overall good.
7	Learner 7	23	17	14	14	4	72	The learner has good content and many vocabularies. But the vocabulary sometimes is not appropriate and sometimes making errors in write this text. She needs improvement in grammar.
8	Learner 8	27	17	21	18	5	88	From the very first time I read the text, I can conclude that this learner is good. She develop her writing by follow the all step with great. The brainstorming, outline and draft are related. The content is developed very good. Grammar and organization also good.
9	Learner 9	17	13	13	10	3	56	This learner needs improvement in the content, grammar and organization of his text.
10	Learner 10	24	16	19	14	4	77	The content is good. Mostly relevant to the subject but it is better to elaborate more. The overall grammar, organization and vocabulary also

								the mechanics are good.
11	Learner 11	24	15	15	15	4	73	The grammar sometimes error. But the content is good. The rich knowledge of the subject. The organization and mechanics are good.
12	Learner 12	22	14	18	15	4	73	Good at all, but improvement is always needed to be better. Just for the organization of the draft. But I is already classified as a good.
13	Learner 13	24	15	18	15	4	76	The full content and good grammar makes this learner deserve good score. The content is developed based on the outline and brainstorming. The grammar and vocabulary is coherence. The organization also good

From the result of the test, the researcher can conclude that this technique is success in help learners improve their writing skill. There is a significance improvement from the learners based on their post-test compared with their pretest.

The data that has been collected by the researcher brought the researcher to discuss the findings of this research. The researcher found that even though sometimes work collaboratively brought difficulties for the team with different style and more ideas, but the implementation of collaborative writing what has been done by the researcher was a useful, important and beneficial technique in writing class that helped learners to write effectively. First, the result of the research showed that learners have better improvement after the implementation of collaborative writing technique. Improvement that showed by the learners caused by some factors such as; learner feel more comfortable to work collaboratively, learners have the best way to organizing ideas by working in group, learners are motivated to explore their thought in work collaboratively and learners could learn from others learners in the group. This result is in line with Phipps, Kask and Higgins (2001), who found that learners thought that collaborative learning was a useful and effective strategy that positively motivated them to learn effectively.

Second, collaborative writing technique is tools that can help learners improve their writing skill. By using this technique the problem that found by the researcher in the preliminary study can be faced. The problem which learners face such as rarely be trained to apply and less of understanding about the process of writing could be reduce. In the implementation of collaborative writing, learners are encouraged to learn by groups. In the groups, learners are required to work collaboratively. During the process of work collaboratively, researcher found that learners often construct their knowledge by sharing their thought toward the topic which discussed in the group. The crucial thing that found during the use of collaborative writing is, learners have better improvement in their writing compared from the pre-test and post-test. The content, fluency, organization of their ideas in produce a written text have better improvement. Besides, learners' grammatical error also decreased. In their pre-test, learners made a lot of error in their grammar. After, the implementation of collaborative writing learners' grammatical error is decreased. It is because through work collaborative in group they have learned little by little about sentence structure and grammar. The purpose of merging learners with different potential of knowledge is to help them learn from the other. The result of the research has shown that collaborative writing success to help learners in improve their skill.

Afterwards, the use of collaborative writing technique train learners how to work collaboratively in groups to go through the whole process of writing. The implementation of collaborative writing technique in writing activities explain that collaborative writing successfully train learners to encouraging each other, sharing responsibility with each other, and communicating to solving problem with each other.

In the implementation of collaborative writing all the learners were trained to practice all the stages and activities include in process of writing namely; prewriting which contain brainstorming, drafting, revising and editing. According to Kroll (2003), the activities and stages of the writing process (pre-writing, drafting, revising and editing) are important. This result was in line with Bagetune & Wasson (2006), who showed that learners' writing quality had improved and their perceptions had changed for the better after practicing the stages and activities of writing collaboratively.

According to Cooper (1986) expresses that writing is not only a cognitive activity but a social activity which requires L2 learners to interact and discuss ideas in pairs or small groups. In collaborative writing learners learn through interaction. First, learners need interact with others to share the knowledge and communicating their thought to deliver meaning of their writing. By collaborating with each other in creating and communicating meaning, learners are able to engage in the composition process with more clarity and understanding. In collaborative dialogue during the process of writing, which emerges when learners engage in problem-solving together, they deliberate about the best way to articulate their meaning. In the process of writing which implementing collaborative writing, communicating through interaction is the crucial part.

Second, besides interact to deliver meaning of their writing, learners need interact to discuss about the content of the writing. The learners have to discuss

from the first step in make certain about the title of their writing. Continued to the other next stages in writing process, interactions are always emerging. generating ideas to put in the written text and develop the content, the role of interaction is needed.

Furthermore, learners confirmed their understanding to others and often the different perspective; it was become the thing that requires learners spent much time to interact with their other learners. Problem solving in writing process exist through interaction. To expressing thought to others and gives comment towards other thought also classified as the collaborative dialogue or interaction during the process of writing collaboratively.

Moreover, writing is a set of process through which ideas are created and expressed. Means, interaction are needed to help learners created and expressed their ideas. Through collaborative writing it is easier for the learners to interact because during the process of writing which contain some stages, learners work collaboratively in small group. This provides language learners with opportunities to interact in collaborative situations, in which two or more learners do activities together. From the result of the research, the researcher found that learners participate actively in a collaborative learning context and construct their linguistic knowledge through interacting with other learners.

#### **Conclusion**

Collaborative writing technique was found useful and effective in teaching and learning writing skills. The results showed that Collaborative Writing was beneficial for the whole process of writing. Furthermore, the implementation of collaborative writing technique brings improvement for the learner. It was established that learner could offering their viewpoints about the topics discussed and learners' voices were heard in a different way which is through the written form. Besides, learners also learn through interaction, discussion, comparison and construction of knowledge during the process of work collaboratively. The attitudes and perceptions of learners had also developed after their involvement in Collaborative Writing. The result of the research concludes that Collaborative Writing technique is a solution to help learners problem faced in writing class. This technique gives opportunities for learners to improve their skill through the process that they go through in writing activity. It is also encourage learners to sharpen their thought by extract ideas and share knowledge through collaborative work.

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