



THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

**Collaborative Writing in Arabic as a Second Language (ASL)
Classrooms in Saudi Arabia: A Mixed-method Study**

Mohammed Ali Alwaleedi
Bachelor of Arabic
Master of Applied Linguistics

*A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at
The University of Queensland in 2018
School of Education*

Abstract

The prevalence of collaborative writing to facilitate second language (L2) learning in writing instruction is theoretically and pedagogically supported by recent research. Whilst numerous studies have documented the potential benefits of collaborative writing in the context of English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) and other European languages, limited attention has been given to collaborative writing in other L2 contexts, such as Arabic as a second language (ASL). This is somewhat of a surprise given that interest in learning Arabic as a Second Language (ASL) has grown exponentially in recent times in many countries around the globe with multiethnic, multilingual, and multi-religious communities. This justifies the need of research on the teaching and learning of Arabic as an L2, especially research on ASL writing skills which is still in its infancy. Informed by Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, the study investigates collaborative writing practice in the context of ASL in Saudi Arabia in order to shed light on this largely unexplored context.

This study employed an embedded quasi-experimental mixed methods research design that involves the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data from classrooms where communication occurred in Arabic. In particular, the researcher embedded qualitative methods (e.g. audiotaping classroom observations and taking field notes during the intervention, and conducting semi-structured interviews with teachers and students at the end of the treatment) to investigate the process of an intervention (e.g. patterns of interactions students formed during collaborative writing activities and how they resolved Language Related Episodes (LREs) during their interaction) and to explain the teacher and student perceptions regarding their collaborative writing (CW) experiences. Quantitative methods, on the other hand, were used to understand the frequency distribution of LREs used in group work and to evaluate the effect of CW on students' writing outcomes.

The analysis found four patterns of small group interaction: a) collaborative, b) expert/expert/novice/novice, c) cooperative, and d) dominant/dominant/passive/passive. These patterns were examined based on Storch's (2002) dyadic interaction model drawing on Damon and Phelps' (1989) criteria of *equality* and *mutuality*. Patterns of small group interaction generally remained stable

over time across groups. The genre of writing tasks and the duration of tasks did not influence the patterns. The study also found that the implementation of collaborative writing approach had a positive impact on the frequency and outcome of LREs, but it did not really influence the students' focus of LREs. In particular, the experimental groups generated more LREs than the control groups. Despite individual difference among group members, the experimental groups paid more attention to language and were more successful at resolving language related problems than the control ones. Learners' and teachers' perceptions shaped their learning and teaching collaborative writing experiences. Lastly, there were significant differences in the overall writing performance of the students in the experimental and control groups as measured by the tests and these differences could be attributed to the CW intervention implemented across the three tasks over a 12-week semester. The difference between the experimental and control groups can be distinguished by linguistic and rhetorical features found in their texts.

These findings are discussed with reference to Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory (SCT), particularly to the three aspects of the theory: Zone of Proximal Development, Mediation, and Scaffolding. Vygotskian sociocultural theory is relevant to the study, as this framework promotes social interaction among learners in L2 learning so that they can learn from each other to co-construct knowledge about language. The findings have significant theoretical and pedagogical implications, particularly in the ASL setting. This study sheds light onto the growing body of collaborative L2 writing literature and research. It also extends methods and theories that can be used to study collaborative L2 writing and the ways it can be better implemented in the ASL context. The study contributes to the field of collaborative writing in the ASL setting in examining how ASL students approach the writing tasks by working in small groups; it discusses what happens in the collaborative group and why collaborative writing facilitates ASL students to be successful in academic writing. Further studies in collaborative writing are required in a larger setting and in many different ASL contexts.

Declaration by Author

This thesis is composed of my original work, and contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference has been made in the text. I have clearly stated the contribution by others to jointly-authored works that I have included in my thesis.

I have clearly stated the contribution of others to my thesis as a whole, including statistical assistance, survey design, data analysis, significant technical procedures, professional editorial advice, financial support and any other original research work used or reported in my thesis. The content of my thesis is the result of work I have carried out since the commencement of my higher degree by research candidature and does not include a substantial part of work that has been submitted to qualify for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution. I have clearly stated which parts of my thesis, if any, have been submitted to qualify for another award.

I acknowledge that an electronic copy of my thesis must be lodged with the University Library and, subject to the policy and procedures of The University of Queensland, the thesis be made available for research and study in accordance with the Copyright Act 1968 unless a period of embargo has been approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.

I acknowledge that copyright of all material contained in my thesis resides with the copyright holder(s) of that material. Where appropriate I have obtained copyright permission from the copyright holder to reproduce material in this thesis and have sought permission from co-authors for any jointly authored works included in the thesis.

Publications during Candidature

Peer-reviewed paper

Alwaleedi, M. A. (2017). Examining language related episodes (LREs) of Arabic as a second language (ASL) learners during collaborative writing activities. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 7 (4), 256-263.

Conference Paper Presentation

Alwaleedi, M. A. (2017). *Collaborative Writing in Arabic as a Second Language Classrooms: Teacher and Student Perceptions*. Presented in the 4th International Linguistics and Language Studies Conference. 7-8 July, 2017. Turkey: Istanbul.

Publications included in this Thesis

Alwaleedi, M. A. (2017). Examining language related episodes (LREs) of Arabic as a second language (ASL) learners during collaborative writing activities. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 7 (4), 256-263. – incorporated as Chapter 5

Contributor	Statement of contribution
Mohammed Ali Alwaleedi (Candidate)	Conception and design (100%) Analysis and interpretation (100%) Drafting and production (100%)

Manuscripts included in this Thesis

Alwaleedi, M. A., Gillies, R., & Hamid, O. (*in press*). Collaborative Writing in an Arabic as a Second Language (ASL) Classroom: A mixed-method study. *Language, Culture, and Curriculum*. – incorporated as Chapter 4 and 7.

Contributor	Statement of contribution
Mohammed Ali Alwaleedi (Candidate)	Conception and design (85%) Analysis and interpretation (90%) Drafting and production (100%)
Robyn Gillies	Conception and design (5%) Analysis and interpretation (5%)

	Drafting and production (0%)
Obaid Hamid	Conception and design (10%) Analysis and interpretation (5%) Drafting and production (0%)

Contributions by others to the thesis

No contributions by others.

Statement of parts of the thesis submitted to qualify for the award of another degree

None

Research Involving Human or Animal Subjects

This research involved human participation. The consent form and the participant information sheet are included in Appendix 5.

The ethic approval number : 15-041
Name of approving committee member : Annemaree Carroll
Date : 17 December 2015

Acknowledgements

The writing of a thesis is a journey of discovery. Like any journey, it has required much thought, planning and dedication to a task which one hopes can make a positive difference in one's field. But, while those qualities have been essential, it would not have been possible for me to complete my journey without the ongoing support of a number of people who not only believed that my project was worthwhile but who also believed that I had the capacity to complete it.

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisors, Prof Robyn Gillies and Dr Obaid Hamid for their helpful guidance, assistance, encouragement, comments and constructive feedback throughout the completion of this thesis. Without your expertise, mentoring and willing support, this thesis would not have been possible.

To the students who participated in this study. Your willingness to cooperate enabled me to obtain the information necessary to answer the questions driving my research. I am very grateful to you.

I wish to acknowledge my sincere gratitude to my wife, Nada Alamari. You provided me with the vital love and support that I required throughout this journey. I also extend my thanks to the Faculty of Sciences and Arts at King AbdulAziz University and many friends who provided their support and encouragement.

Last, but certainly not least, to my father and mother. I am sincerely thankful for your prayers, understanding, and patience which have helped me throughout my life.

Financial Support

This research was supported by a King Abdulaziz university scholarship.

Keywords

applied linguistics, arabic as a second language, second language writing, mixed-methods study, collaborative writing, small group interaction, sociocultural theory, saudi arabia.

Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classifications (ANZSRC)

200401, Applied Linguistic and Educational Linguistic, 80%

200318, Middle Eastern Languages, 20%

Fields of Research (FoR) Classification

2004, Linguistics, 80%

2003, Language Studies, 20%

Table of Content

Table of Content	x
List of Figures.....	xiii
List of Tables	xiv
List of Abbreviations.....	xv
Chapter 1. Introduction	1
Background.....	1
Aim and Scope.....	5
Research Questions	6
An Overview of Research Design.....	7
Context.....	12
Significance of the Study.....	14
Outline of The Thesis	14
Chapter 2. Literature Review.....	18
Collaborative Learning.....	18
Theories underpinning Collaborative Learning	20
Sociocultural Theory	22
Sociocultural Theory in L2 Learning.....	27
Collaborative Learning and other SLA theories	30
Comprehensible Input Hypothesis	30
Interaction Hypothesis.....	32
Comprehensible Output Hypothesis.....	33
Collaborative Approach to the L2 Classroom	35
Collaborative Work: Pair and Group Work.....	36
L2 Writing Pedagogy	38
Approaches to Writing Instruction.....	40
Collaborative Approach to L2 Writing	43
Collaborative Writing in L2 Classrooms.....	45
Roles of Collaborative Writing in L2 Classrooms	46
Research on Collaborative L2 Writing.....	49
Arabic as a Second Language (ASL).....	63
Key Gaps in the Literature.....	65
Summary.....	68
Chapter 3. Research Methods.....	70
Purposes of Educational Research	70
Educational Research Approaches.....	71
Quantitative Research.....	71
Qualitative Research.....	72
Mixed-method research	73

Research Design.....	76
Setting.....	78
Participants.....	79
Data Collection.....	80
Research Instruments.....	85
Pre- and Post-Tests.....	86
Analytical Writing Rubric.....	86
Observations.....	87
Semi-Structured Interviews.....	89
Field Notes.....	89
Data Analysis.....	90
Summary.....	94
Chapter 4. Patterns of Small Group Interaction.....	95
General Patterns of Small Group Interactions.....	95
Features of Small Group Interactions.....	113
Summary and conclusion.....	131
Chapter 5. Language Related Episodes (LREs).....	135
Frequency of LREs in the Experimental and Control Groups.....	136
Resolution of LREs: Four Case Study Small Groups.....	141
Discussion and Summary.....	160
Chapter 6. Teacher and Student Perceptions.....	164
Learner Perceptions.....	165
Learning Benefits on L2.....	166
Learner Preference on Group Size.....	169
Teacher Perception.....	171
Discussion and Summary.....	172
Chapter 7. Effects of Collaborative Writing on Students' Writing Skills.....	174
Students' Writing Quality.....	175
The difference between experimental and control groups: Linguistic and Rhetorical Features.....	180
Discussion and Summary.....	186
Chapter 8. Conclusions and Implications.....	189
Summary of the Study.....	190
Summary of the Findings.....	194
Main Findings.....	195
Pattern of small group interaction and their different features.....	196
Language Related Episodes (LREs).....	199
Learners' and Teachers' Perceptions of Collaborative Writing.....	201
Students' Writing Quality.....	202

Implications of the Study.....	205
Limitations of the Study	209
Directions for Further Research.....	210
References	213
Appendices	230
Appendix 1. Classroom Observation Notes.....	230
Appendix 2. Interview Questions.....	231
Appendix 3. Analytic Scoring Rubric for Writing.....	235
Appendix 4. Examples of students’ writing from their pre- and post-tests.....	236
Appendix 5. Consent Form, Participant Information Sheet and Ethics Letter	244

List of Figures

Figure 1. A Dyadic Interaction Model (Storch, 2002, 2013).....	50
Figure 2. The Educational Research Process Cycle (Creswell, 2015, p. 8).....	71
Figure 3. An Embedded Quasi-Experimental Study Mixed-Method Design.....	77
Figure 4. A Dyadic Interaction Model (Storch, 2002, 2013).....	91

List of Tables

Table 1. The main features of three research methods (Creswell, 2015)	74
Table 2. Research questions and their methods	74
Table 3. A quasi-experimental design	77
Table 4. Participants and the design of the experimental and control groups	80
Table 5. Writing task prompts	84
Table 6. The Taxonomy of codes for on-task episodes (Storch, 2001b).....	92
Table 7. Research Purposes, Data, and Anticipated Findings	93
Table 8. Patterns of interaction in the experimental and control groups across the tasks	97
Table 9. The frequency of interaction patterns across the experimental and control groups.....	97
Table 10. Selected groups as a case study.....	113
Table 11. Frequency of requests and questions per group	114
Table 12. The percentage of types of requests and questions in each group	115
Table 13. Occurrences of explanations.....	121
Table 14. Frequency of repetitions across the three tasks.....	123
Table 15. Frequency of collaborative completions across the three tasks	125
Table 16. Frequency of simultaneous talks across the three tasks	125
Table 17. Frequency of phatic utterances across the three tasks	127
Table 18. Pronoun types as percentage of total pronoun for each group.....	129
Table 19. Frequency of LREs in Experimental and Control Group Interaction.....	139
Table 20. Focus of LREs in Experimental and Control Group Interaction.....	139
Table 21. Outcome of LREs in Experimental and Control Group Interaction.....	141
Table 22. The proportion of non-interactively resolved LREs expressed as a percentage.....	153
Table 23. Level of engagement in the resolution process of on-task LREs expressed as a percentage	154
Table 24. Tests of Normality.....	176
Table 25. Tests of Homogeneity of Variances	176
Table 26. Means and standard deviation of the total of pre- and post-test scores for the experimental and control groups.....	177
Table 27. Results of ANOVA for pre- and post-test scores	178
Table 28. Mean total and component scores on the pre-test	178
Table 29. Mean total and component scores on the post-test	179
Table 30. The patterns of interaction in the experimental and control groups across the tasks.....	197

List of Abbreviations

ASL	Arabic as a Second Language
CW	Collaborative Writing
ESL	English as a Second Language
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
L1	First/native language
L2	Second/Foreign language
SCT	Sociocultural Theory
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
TBLT	Task-based Language Teaching
NS	Native Speaker
NNS	Non-native Speaker

Chapter 1. Introduction

Background

This doctoral research investigated the role of collaborative learning (CL) in the development of second language (L2) writing skills in Arabic as a Second Language (ASL) classrooms in Saudi Arabia. This introductory chapter provides an overview of the study with reference to the background, the research problem and the research questions guiding the study.

Collaborative learning has been widely used in many areas of L2 learning and teaching. CL refers to working together towards a shared goal (Barkley, Cross, & Major, 2005). This approach is commonly used in colleges or universities, as it facilitates learners to construct L2 knowledge together to accomplish a common goal at the end of collaborative work. CL has come to be known by different names including cooperative learning, collective learning, learning communities, team learning, peer learning, and peer teaching. Even though there is one common defining feature for all these terms, which is working in groups, CL encompasses the entire learning process. In other words, learners are responsible for each other's learning in a CL group. What is more important is that they assist one another to understand the subjects of their learning.

Given the various benefits of CL reported in the literature (Barkley et al., 2005; M. H. Nguyen, 2013; Tabatabaei, Afzali, & Mehrabi, 2015; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2012b; Zarei & Gilani, 2014), L2 researchers have investigated the implementation of CL in L2 learning to improve learners' language skills. For instance, studies in the L2 context have investigated the nature of collaborative talk (Swain, 2000; Swain & Lapkin, 1998), the effect of collaborative work on learning L2 grammar (Lesser, 2004), L2

speaking (M. H. Nguyen, 2013; Tabatabaei et al., 2015), and L2 reading (Karabuga & Kaya, 2013; Momtaz & Garner, 2010; Zarei & Gilani, 2014). There has also been an increase in interest in writing as a space for L2 learning through CL, giving rise to collaborative writing (CW) and CW activities in English as a Second or Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) contexts (Fernández Dobao, 2012; Fernández Dobao & Blum, 2013; Fong, 2012; Kuiken & Vedder, 2002; Shehadeh, 2011; Storch, 2001a, 2005, 2011, 2013; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009, 2012a, 2012b).

CW as a potential site for L2 learning is based on a social constructivist perspective on learning. This view fundamentally derives from the work of Vygotsky (1978), who hypothesized that human development is naturally facilitated by social activity. Informed by a Vygotskian sociocultural framework, Swain (1995, 2005) argues that writing as a language output can be viewed as a way to develop learners' skills in the L2. The written modality of language may equally contribute to L2 learning achievement, as L2 learners master language for literate purposes (Alshammari, 2011; Kern & Schultz, 2005). In other words, learners' writing skills can enhance their L2 competence (Harklau, 2002). Thus, writing is an essential means of L2 learning and can be a major source for L2 learners to improve their L2 proficiency.

Working collaboratively in writing tasks can benefit learners during the whole process of writing, creating a positive impact on learners' writing outcomes (Storch, 2011, 2013; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2012a). Generally, working together in pairs and small groups facilitates learners' interaction to achieve group goals in learning (Gillies, 2014; Johnson & Johnson, 2014). In other words, through interaction, learners can negotiate their different views of their own learning so that they can learn from one another. Therefore, supported by Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural framework, CW is

considered as an effective approach to improve L2 learners' writing outcomes (Storch, 2013).

Given its learning potential, a lot of research has been conducted on CW (Fernández Dobao, 2012; Fernández Dobao & Blum, 2013; Fong, 2012; Kuiken & Vedder, 2002; Shehadeh, 2011; Storch, 2001a, 2005, 2011, 2013; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009, 2012a, 2012b). However, this research has mainly focused on English as a second or foreign language; limited attention has been given to CW in other second or foreign language contexts. For instance, very few studies have investigated the use of CW in the context of Arabic as a second language (ASL). The present study seeks to examine CW in the context of ASL in Saudi Arabia to substantiate its effectiveness as reported in the literature by drawing on a language other than English.

In the past two decades, interest in learning Arabic as a Second Language (ASL) has grown exponentially in many countries around the globe with multiethnic, multilingual, and multi-religious communities (e.g. Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Australia, United States, United Kingdom and some European countries) (Al-Rajhi, 2013; Aladdin, 2010; Brosh, 2013). The global significance of Arabic can be understood from the fact that Arabic is the fifth most commonly spoken language in the world. This interest is not restricted to Muslim countries where Arabic is used as the language for prayer and reciting religious texts (e.g. the Holy book, *Al-Qur'an*) (Dahbi, 2004); it is also used increasingly in globalised marketplaces (Crystal, 2010). There is thus a growing demand as well as a widely perceived need to learn Arabic in schools and universities in many countries across the world. This justifies research on the teaching and learning of Arabic as an L2.

Based on research by Aladdin (2010), Brosh (2013) and Isleem (2014), the major reasons for studying Arabic include interacting with Arab and Middle Eastern communities, to have a better understanding about the value of Islamic cultures, and to establish mutual relationships in education, economy, and socio-political interests. Therefore, learning ASL can be used as a means to promote better communication and understanding between the Arab communities and the rest of the world.

However, there are many challenges for ASL learners when it comes to learning and practicing Arabic in their daily life compared to other commonly taught languages such as English. These challenges are related to not only insufficient resources such as curricula, instructional materials, assessments and teaching strategies, but also to political issues such as the confrontation between people in western countries and in Muslim societies. As a result, learning ASL is not as popular or common as other languages. Thus, one of the solutions to meet the challenges in learning Arabic may be to develop its own theory and pedagogy. Arabic needs to be taught and learned on its own terms (Wahba, Taha, & England, 2013). This calls for research on the teaching and learning of ASL in different contexts.

While there are many aspects of ASL that need to be learned in order to be proficient, writing is one of the most difficult skills for ASL learners. This is because Arabic has complex morphological and syntactical systems, *as well as an issue with orthography* that are highly inflected compared to, for example, English and other European languages (Wahba et al., 2013). According to Jassem (1996), the most notable difficulty in writing for ASL learners is Arabic grammar (e.g. the use of Arabic tense, subject-verb agreement, verb phrases, mood, and voice). On the other hand, writing

may provide L2 learners opportunities to use their existing linguistic resources and produce new language knowledge.

Research on ASL writing skills is currently at its initial stage. Only a handful of studies have investigated ASL learners' compositions to understand deficiencies in their writing (Salim, 2000; Shakir & Obeidat, 1992). Shakir and Obeidat (1992), for instance, investigated cohesion and coherence in ASL *learners'* essays and found that incoherence in their text production was attributed to their inadequate knowledge of cohesive devices. In the same line, Salim (2000) studied writing processes and strategies used by American learners of ASL demonstrating their poor performance in writing tasks. In order to make writing tasks more effective, ASL learners, in particular, should be able to use a variety of writing strategies in the process of planning, generating ideas, reviewing, and revising writing texts. ASL *learners'* choices of writing strategies may greatly affect the level of their writing performances (Salim, 2000). Given that collaborative writing strategy has been found beneficial in English as an L2 writing contexts as evident in many relevant studies, it is important to investigate whether and to what extent the use of CW in the context of ASL is effective in developing ASL learners' writing skills.

Aim and Scope

This study investigated the effect of the implementation of collaborative writing activities based on the framework of Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory (SCT) particularly on the three aspects of the theory: Zone of Proximal Development, Mediation, and Scaffolding. Vygotskian sociocultural theory is relevant to the study, as this framework promotes social interaction among learners in L2 learning so that they can learn from each other to co-construct knowledge about language. For example,

when L2 learners work collaboratively in a writing task, they can participate in producing one written text with a shared responsibility. The study also explored how Arabic teachers and learners perceived the implementation of CW in writing tasks after a substantial period of engagement in collaborative writing tasks. The study sought to capture the reciprocal relationship between collaborative writing practices and the development of learners' writing skills.

To achieve the aim of the study, classroom-based writing activities were designed which promoted a CW approach that was embedded in a common framework of task-based language learning considering the quality of learners' Arabic writing tasks based on five component areas including content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics of writing. As part of the research, the researcher also examined how learners engaged with CW tasks, and how teachers and learners reflected on the experience of CW practice after a certain period of treatment.

Research Questions

As the review of the relevant literature in Chapter 2 illustrates, there has been little research that has examined CW and its effects on students' writing skills in the ASL context. The majority of the existing studies have compared learners' writing performance in the individual versus pair or small-group setting predominantly in ESL and EFL contexts. The main purpose of the current study was therefore to examine the potential of CW in developing learners' L2 writing ability in the ASL context. I investigated four research questions in this study:

1. How do ASL learners engage with each other during the writing tasks?

2. Is there a difference between collaborative writing groups and traditional small groups in terms of the frequency of Language Related Episodes (LREs) produced and how LREs are resolved?
3. How do ASL learners and teachers perceive the implementation of a collaborative writing approach?
4. Is there a difference in students' ASL writing performance in collaborative writing groups and traditional small groups? What are the linguistic and rhetorical features of writings in the two instructional modes that may explain the differences in their performance?

An Overview of Research Design

To investigate the above questions, this study used an embedded quasi-experimental mixed methods research design (i.e. data collection and analysis were conducted quantitatively and qualitatively). The basis of this design was that a single data set is considered insufficient to address different research questions (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Thus, different types of data were required to complement the application of a quasi-experimental design, and thereby addressing the main goal of the study. In the present study, the researcher embedded qualitative methods (e.g. audiotaping classroom observations and taking field notes during the intervention, and conducting semi-structured interviews with teachers and students at the end of the treatment) to investigate the process of an intervention (e.g. patterns of interactions students formed during collaborative writing activities and how they resolved Language Related Episodes (LREs) during their interaction) and to explain the teacher and student perceptions regarding their CW experiences. Quantitative methods, on the other hand,

were used to understand the frequency distribution of LREs used in group work and to evaluate the effect of CW on students' writing outcomes.

Sixty-four male adult ASL students participated in the study. They were enrolled in Arabic language preparation programs in an Arabic language institute. The students came from a wide range of first language backgrounds including French, German, Bahasa Indonesia, Malay, Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, Pashto, Dhivehi, Spanish, and Portuguese. The participants' willingness to participate in the research and their availability influenced the sampling process. Of the 10 classes in the program, four classes taught by two Arabic native teachers participated in the study. These classes had similar characteristics. Based on the students' entrance examination scores, they were considered to have a high-intermediate level of Arabic proficiency. They ranged in age from 20 to 23 years. Since they did not share a common language, Arabic was the only language used for instruction in the classroom.

The study was conducted in four parallel classes. Each class consisted of 16 students. Two of the four classes were set as experimental groups while the other two groups were controls. Thus, both experimental and control groups had thirty-two students each. The experimental and control classes were taught by two different teachers who used the same syllabus and textbook materials provided by the institute. However, *in* each class, the students were divided into small groups each of which consisted of four students.

Following the design of the study, the researcher first administered a pretest to both experimental and control classes before the intervention. During the 12-week intervention, all participating classes were given three types of writing tasks: descriptive, narrative, and argumentative texts. Each task (500-word text) was

completed in three weeks (i.e. 50 minutes per meeting each week). During the classroom observation, the researcher observed how learners participated in co-constructing the writing tasks. This process included brainstorming, planning, drafting, and revising. Once the intervention completed, a post-test was administered to experimental and control groups.

A pretest-posttest design was employed in order to investigate student participants' performance before and after the experimental manipulation (Creswell, 2015). Hence, it enabled the researcher to examine the effect of CW on students' writing outcomes. Both experimental and control groups whose participants were randomly assigned by class completed pre- and post-tests. Results of these tests were used and compared to see any changes or differences across the groups before and after the intervention. For pre- and post-tests, participants were assigned to write 500-word descriptive texts which were developed by the researcher.

Participants' pre- and post-tests were assessed by using an analytical writing rubric (see Appendix 3.). The writing rubric was used to determine the difference in the students' writing performance between the two groups on the pre- and post-tests. The writing rubric includes six component areas: topic development, organization, details, sentences, wording, and mechanics on a 4-point scale. Each component may receive a mark of one (the lowest mark) to four (the highest), thus 24 was the highest score a participant text could get. The rubric is based on the fact that composition consists of different components (Weigle, 2002), which enables teachers to retrieve information from students' writing performance. Moreover, it is deemed to be more suitable for L2 writing contexts as it provides assessment with more details (Weigle, 2002).

The contribution of CW in improving ASL learners' writing outcomes was examined by comparing results of both groups' pretests and posttest scores. This comparison was conducted by using *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) version 23.0 application. This application was applied to compare results of pre- and post-tests from experimental and traditional groups. Since the study was primarily a quasi-experimental design with non-equivalent comparison groups (i.e. no control group assignment through the mechanism of random assignment due to inadequate resources to conduct randomization), the analysis procedure employed one way *analysis of variance* (ANOVA) to statistically control differences or extraneous variables between treated and comparison groups that may affect results of the experiment (Green & Salkind, 2003; Hinkel, Wiersma, & Jurs, 2003). Through this procedure, the researcher was able to examine the effect of collaborative writing (i.e. as an independent variable) on ASL learners' writing outcomes (i.e. a dependent variable) although student participants are not assigned randomly to treated and comparison groups.

Then, to assess how ASL students approached collaborative writing tasks and engaged with each other's contribution, the researcher audiorecorded classroom observations and took field notes during their writing activities focusing on their collaborative dialogues (i.e. language related episodes (LREs)). Both audiorecordings and field notes were transcribed and analysed. Following Storch (2001b), the analysis of the qualitative data was conducted in two phases: global analysis and micro-level analysis. In Phase 1, qualitative global analysis was used to classify the overall patterns of interactions. The researcher transcribed recordings of learners' verbal interaction and analysed how each small group in both the experimental and control classes engaged with the CW tasks. The researcher used Storch's (2002) dyadic interaction model drawing on Damon and Phelps' (1989) criteria of (1) *equality*, identified as the degree

of participants' contribution to the joint tasks; and (2) *mutuality*, measured as the degree of engagement with a peer's contribution. Examining pair interaction patterns of ESL tertiary students by setting up equality and mutuality along two axes, as shown in Figure 1 below, Storch (2002) classified four patterns of interactions: 1) collaborative (high level of equality and mutuality); 2) dominant/dominant (high level of equality, but low level of mutuality); 3) dominant/passive (low level of equality and mutuality); and 4) expert/novice (high level of mutuality but unequal contribution). The inter-rater reliability was conducted for coding categories in order to increase trustworthiness of the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Based on a holistic view of the qualitative data (i.e. primarily the transcriptions data of students' verbal interactions), in Phase 2 (the micro-level analysis), the researcher purposefully selected four small groups (i.e. Group 2 and 6 from the experimental classes, and Group 5 and 6 from the control classes) which were typical from both experimental and control classes. In particular, the selection was based on the principle of maximum variations (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Hence, it allowed the researcher to conduct an in-depth case study of each group and to explain them in detail. In this phase, the researcher closely examined how the four selected small groups approached the CW tasks within each group along with the important features which related to each pattern of small group interaction. Specifically, the analysis identified types of activities in on-task episodes while engaging in CW tasks.

Finally, to elicit teachers and learners' reflections on the implementation of CW in the ASL context, semi-structured interviews were conducted after the post-tests were given. The interviews were audiorecorded and used to generate qualitative data about *teachers'* and students' perceptions of CW. Once the interview data were transcribed,

thematic analysis was conducted to examine how teachers and students perceived the implementation of CW in the ASL writing classroom.

Context

The study was conducted in an Arabic language institute for non-native speakers of Arabic, which was a part of a public university situated in Makkah, the Holy city in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This institution was established in 1975 and became a part of the college of Islamic shariah (law). Since 1979, this institute has been operating independently, being approved by the Crown Prince. The ultimate objective of establishing the institute was to teach Arabic to Muslims from all over the world which is also the language of the Holy Qur'an. In addition, the institution educates Muslims in the basic principles of Islamic laws apart from reading and understanding the Holy Qur'an and hadith (i.e. the records of traditions or sayings of the Prophet Muhammad which are regarded as the second major source of Islamic law and moral guidance). In other words, not only does this Saudi government-owned institute teach Arabic to learners who come from non-Arabic speaking countries to learn about Islam, or study and conduct research studies regarding the structure of Arabic in teaching and learning Arabic at universities in Saudi Arabia, but it also trains teachers to teach Arabic at schools. There are thirty-five Saudi teachers employed in the institute and they hold bachelors, masters and PhD degrees in the field of language, literature, linguistics, and Arabic language learning.

Currently, the institute offers two distinctive programs: *Diploma* in Arabic language teaching and bachelor in Arabic teacher preparation. In the *Diploma* program, students are required to complete 120 contact hours within two years at four levels. Each level consists of 30 contact hours approximately fifteen weeks excluding examination and

registration weeks. In the teaching and learning process, instructors use a main Arabic textbook for every level as well as Compact Discs (CDs) containing other supporting instructional materials. To assess learners' progress, there are two assessment tasks: mid-term tests that make up forty percent of the total score and another sixty percent for final tests. Specifically for the mid-term tests, two to three different types of test (i.e. oral or written tests, and the combination of the two types of test) are administered which varies among instructors. Unlike the *Diploma* program, the bachelor program requires students to complete 160 contact hours within four years or at eight levels that range from 19 to 21 contact hours for each level. These two programs provide a variety of language related courses such as Reading, Writing, Conversation, Phonetics, Qur'an, Calligraphy and Writing, Grammar, Literary texts, Rhetoric, and other language skills. Modern technologies are deployed in classrooms to facilitate instructional processes in order to create a conducive learning environment. Those who complete this *Diploma* program with high Grade Point Average (GPA) (i.e. approximately 3.5 out of 4.00 scale or more) or finish their bachelor degree in an Arabic teacher preparation program can proceed to one of the university colleges (e.g. Arabic language and literature, Islamic law, and Da'wah programs) to complete bachelor degrees or postgraduate degree programs sponsored by the university.

In order to be admitted in the programs, students are required to take a placement test prior to their study commencement since they come from various parts of the world with different levels of Arabic proficiency. The results of this placement test place them in their appropriate levels in the program. The admission process of the institute is highly competitive. If they pass all admission requirements, the institute provides them with many benefits such as free accommodation in the student lodge, monthly allowance, and annual reunion airfares to their countries.

Significance of the Study

Given that there has been little or no research that has specifically investigated the effects of collaborative writing on teachers and students' perceptions in the context of Arabic learning, this study was significant to teachers in Saudi Arabia as well as to Arabic learners. Firstly, the findings of this study will have the potential to provide a better understanding of how teachers and students' reflections are related to their classroom practices. As a result, it will have the potential to enhance the participating teachers' understandings of how to improve the writing skills of their students. This information will be eventually used to enhance Arabic learners' writing outcomes. Secondly, methods used in this study may be adapted to be used in further studies related to investigating collaborative writing in ASL classrooms. Thirdly, the outcomes of this study will benefit the current curriculum by providing empirical evidence on the application for employing collaborative writing approach into Arabic language curriculum. Lastly, this present study will have the potential to benefit future Arabic learning and teaching curriculum development, Arabic teacher education and professional development, and ultimately Arabic learners' writing performances in particular.

Outline of The Thesis

This introductory chapter provides an overview of the study with reference to the background, the research design and the research questions guiding the study. Working collaboratively in writing tasks can benefit learners during the whole process of writing, creating a positive impact on learners' writing outcomes. Given its learning potential, several researchers in the area of CW have reported the effects of CW on students' joint final texts, and generally showed that students who participated in CW

tasks produced high quality texts (e.g. Fernández Dobao, 2012; Storch, 2005; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009). Still, the findings across the studies were mixed. The present study mainly seeks to examine CW and its effect on L2 students' writing outcomes in the ASL context.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature related to collaborative learning in L2 writing research. It begins with a brief explanation of the collaborative learning concept and theories underpinning collaborative learning, particularly sociocultural theory (SCT). It then explains Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories in connection with the development of collaborative learning followed by a discussion of the use of collaborative approach in L2 classrooms. Relevant studies on how teachers and students perceive the implementation of collaborative writing are also reviewed. Finally, the last part of this chapter briefly describes Arabic as a Second Language (ASL) context.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the research design of the present study. This chapter first reviews the educational research and the main characteristics of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches. It then discusses the rationale for selecting an embedded quasi-experimental mixed-method design including participants, tasks, and the research procedure. In collecting and analyzing the data, the present study employs a mix-method approach combining quantitative and qualitative research methods in order to capture various perspectives. Finally, an explanation of how the present study collects and analyses data quantitatively and qualitatively is provided.

Chapter 4 first begins with the overall patterns of interaction and some of the important features of each pattern. Excerpts from the data transcripts and the researcher's field

note are used to describe these varied patterns of interaction. The second part of chapter reports results in more detailed examination of the data. Even though these results are described for the complete data set (i.e. 32 small groups from both the experimental and control classes), the researcher presents and discusses the data of four small group more comprehensively in the second part of the chapter. Having analysed the data, the researcher identified the four main patterns of interactions among the experimental and control groups across the three given tasks. The findings suggest that different treatments may influence different patterns of interaction in the class. In particular, different patterns of interaction probably result in different learning outcomes. These results justified Storch's (2002) study that, for instance, students who worked in a collaborative pattern as well as an expert/novice pattern of interaction obtain greater benefits from collaborative writing activities. Therefore, an awareness of the nature of small group interaction can facilitate language learning in ASL classrooms.

Chapter 5 presents the results regarding the differences between collaborative writing groups and traditional small groups in terms of the frequency of LREs produced and how small groups resolved LREs. The findings of this study confirm that the implementation of collaborative writing approach may affect positively their focus and outcome of LREs, but did not really influence the frequency of LREs. Overall, in spite of individual difference among group members, the experimental groups paid more attention to language and were more successful at resolving language related problems than the control ones.

Chapter 6 discusses the findings of the teachers' and students' perceptions of traditional group work and collaborative writing experiences in the ASL writing classroom. Regarding the teacher perception, the findings suggest that although the teachers felt

very optimistic about the effectiveness of these approaches, the implementation of these approaches were quite challenging for them. In the case of student perception, from both experimental and control groups being interviewed, the participants generally felt quite positive about writing activities using collaborative writing approach and traditional group work. However, while the majority of experimental group students found the writing activities useful in many ways, many students in the control groups found writing in groups did not benefit them.

Chapter 7 focuses on the effect of collaborative writing implementation on the ASL students' writing development. The chapter sheds light on CW experience that may have led to enhanced performance on the post-test writing task of the experimental groups. The findings suggest that there were significant differences in the overall writing performance of the students in the two groups as measured by the tests and these could be attributed to the CW intervention implemented in the research site. The findings also suggest that in terms of the differences between the experimental and control groups on linguistic and rhetorical features, the experimental group students not only showed improvement on the use of linguistic features, but also utilized more rhetorical features compared to those working in traditional group work.

The last chapter presents the final discussion by linking the findings together across the previous chapters to obtain an overall picture of the implementation of a collaborative writing approach in ASL writing classrooms. This chapter also discusses the implications of the present study for collaborative writing in the ASL contexts. It presents the conclusions and recommendations for practice from the study. This chapter also provides some suggestions for future research studies that build on the findings from this research.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

This chapter reviews the literature related to collaborative learning in L2 writing research. It begins with a brief explanation of the collaborative learning concept and theories underpinning collaborative learning, particularly sociocultural theory (SCT). It then discusses Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories in connection with the development of collaborative learning followed by a discussion of the use of a collaborative approach in L2 classrooms. Relevant studies on how teachers and students perceive the implementation of collaborative writing are also reviewed. Finally, the last part of this chapter briefly describes Arabic as a Second Language (ASL) context.

The study explores how collaborative writing influences ASL learners' linguistic knowledge as well as their Arabic writing outcomes. Although there has been substantial research on CW in the context of English as an L2, there is still little research on the use of collaborative approach to learning Arabic.

Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning is an important classroom-based learning approach which allows learners to be responsible for their own learning through interaction (Bruffee, 1995, 1999). Although the term “collaboration” is often used interchangeably with “cooperation”, Ingram and Hathorn (2004, p. 218) argue that both philosophically and historically, “cooperative” and “collaborative” have been understood in different ways.

As they explain:

Cooperation is defined as individuals working in a group with each one solving a portion of the problem by dividing up the work. Collaboration is the interdependence of the individuals as they share ideas and reach a conclusion or produce a product. If a group of students were given a story

to write, they could cooperate by assigning each member a portion of the story to write and then stitching the parts together. In contrast, to collaborate the students would discuss each part of the story, contributing their ideas and discussing them until they reached consensus, writing the story together. (Ingram & Hathorn, 2004, p. 218)

Despite these subtle differences, both cooperation and collaboration seek to facilitate learners to work in groups to accomplish shared learning objectives. The present study prefers the term ‘collaboration’ as it encompasses the entire process of learning to achieve shared goals. Collaborative writing in ASL classrooms, for instance, includes students’ responsibilities for their own learning and other’s learning through assisting one another to understand the ASL knowledge through CW activities. In other words, the term ‘collaboration’ not only promotes social skill learning among learners, but also allows them to work together to solve learning problems, to search for shared understanding and to construct knowledge that eventually contributes to create a product in learning (e.g. jointly written texts).

Collaborative learning is an approach that can enhance learners’ achievement and positive learning outcomes (Johnson & Johnson, 2003, 2005). It is believed that collaborative learning is more productive than individual or competitive learning (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). According to Slavin (2011), collaborative learning advocates not only learners’ academic achievement, but also their social skills development. To optimise the potential of collaborative learning, Johnson and Johnson (2003) suggested five basic requirements that learners should have during their collaboration: 1) positive interdependence; 2) face-to-face interaction; 3) individual accountability; 4) interpersonal and small-group skills; and 5) group processing. Under these five conditions, collaborative learning occurs as learners interact with other group members, support each other in completing a task, co-construct their knowledge and skills, and contribute to their own learning. As a result, learners can benefit from

what their group members offer during the completion of a task. This process is known as internalization where learners change their interpersonal experiences into intrapersonal competence while interacting with their group members (Vygotsky, 1978).

Research has pointed out many benefits of using CL. The following eight advantages of collaborative learning are commonly cited (Murdoch & Wilson, 2008, p. 24):

- 1) Every learner can benefit from the learning;
- 2) It is time efficient;
- 3) It can enhance learners' critical thinking and learning;
- 4) It promotes social learning;
- 5) It can increase learners' self confidence that is important in learning;
- 6) It gives learners opportunity to appreciate their peers in the interaction;
- 7) Collaborative skills are essential in real life; and
- 8) It can improve learners' communication skills and responsibilities.

Of the eight points on the benefits of collaborative learning, it is important to focus particularly on four of them (i.e. item 4-6 and 8) that optimise in-class learning experiences and outcomes. To explain why such benefits accrue to CL, I will need to refer to the theories underlying the approach. This is what is undertaken in the next section.

Theories underpinning Collaborative Learning

Focusing on the importance of interaction in a group, theories of collaborative learning *have shifted* to understand how group-learning variables (e.g. group composition, group size, communication tools, and tasks) play their roles to mediate interaction as well as the learning process. Collaborative learning is seen as the intertwining of individual and group aspects to develop learning (Dillenbourg, Baker, Blaye, &

O'Malley, 1996). This relates to the nature of pair or group work in collaborative learning where two or more individuals (equipped with their own independent cognitive systems) are involved in learning interactions. In collaborative learning research, if the unit of analysis is the individual, research addresses how messages from one cognitive system are received by another. On the other hand, when investigating the group as the unit of analysis, it examines how group members with different cognitive systems collaborate to produce a shared understanding of a particular learning subject. To understand these two different units of analysis in collaborative learning research, there are two theoretical frameworks underpinning collaborative learning: socio-constructivist and *sociocultural*.

The socio-constructivist framework explains the role of interaction with others in constructing knowledge. This approach is influenced by Piaget's (1948) theory that basically focused on individual aspects in cognitive development. The socio-constructivist view considers individual cognitive development as the result of social interactions. Some studies have documented that peer interaction facilitates learning through the mediating process called 'socio-cognitive conflict' (i.e. conflict between different perspectives of two or more subjects) (Doise, Mugny, & Perret-Clermont, 1975; Tudge & Rogoff, 1999; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009). In other words, social interactions can be a catalyst to solve different views in order to reach an agreement on a solution. Therefore, learners in pair and group work can benefit from conflicting views on a subject that leads to a new knowledge building.

The *sociocultural* framework, on the other hand, is influenced by Vygotsky's (1978) views. This framework emphasizes the relationship between individual cognitive development and social interaction. For instance, learners in pair or group work can

develop their knowledge after participating in collaborative problem solving. This knowledge development also relates to the process of internalization, mediation, and scaffolding from other group members that take place in ‘zone of proximal development’ (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978).

With regards to the significance of social interaction in learning, the present study is mainly based on the Vygotskian sociocultural framework. The following section briefly explains how collaborative learning is informed by sociocultural theory (SCT) (Vygotsky, 1978).

Sociocultural Theory

Sociocultural theory is a popular theory proposed by Lev Vygotsky (1978), a Russian psychologist. This emerging theory basically emphasizes the contribution of society in individual development. The SCT is a constructivist theory that posits that as individuals interact with others, they learn to make meaning from these experiences. In other words, interaction between adults and children and among peers in learning plays an important role for individual development of higher order functions. Thus, SCT not only focuses on how collaborative work in pairs or small groups influences individual learning; it also illustrates how instruction and learning occur. The following is a brief review of sociocultural theory in L2 learning with reference to three basic tenets of SCT which are relevant to the study, namely Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), mediation, and scaffolding.

Zone of Proximal Development

The concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is an essential aspect in SCT. It has been applied to L2 learning classrooms where teachers assist or ‘scaffold’ learners’ development through interaction and provide mediational tools to foster development.

According to Vygotsky (1978, p. 86), the ZPD is “the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers”. In other words, it refers to what a learner can achieve with assistance which he/she cannot yet do independently.

Although the initial concept was particularly related to the assistance of more competent adults in interaction, some researchers such as Swain and Lapkin (1998) and *Lantolf (2000)* have further developed the area of the ZPD by including culturally constructed tools (e.g. technologies) along with human assistance. As a result, the concept of ZPD may explain the cognitive development achieved by the assistance of educational tools. This, in turn, describes how technological tools can be used in L2 learning through synchronous or asynchronous interactions.

There have been some studies that show how the concept of ZPD supports the collaborative approach in L2 learning (e.g. Donato, 1994; Edstrom, 2015; Fernández Dobao, 2012; Storch & Aldosari, 2013). For instance, Storch and Aldosari (2013) found that learners could build on each other’s contributions through collective scaffolding. They also claimed that even less proficient students could support their more proficient peers as one of the most important things in pair work was the interaction patterns, not the students’ actual proficiency level. Similarly, Edstrom (2015) also confirmed the importance of interaction patterns. He found that collaborative interactions in L2 writing could create productive working atmospheres which allowed them to share ideas and to pool their L2 knowledge. That is, in the learning process, students can develop “their own L2 knowledge and extend the linguistic development of their peers” (Donato, 1994, p. 52).

In summary, the notion of ZPD in SCT is significant in collaborative L2 learning. The learning setting of pair or group work allows learners to interact and learn from more competent learners to solve L2 learning problems. It is expected that a learner can perform a task in L2 learning later independently.

Mediation

According to *Lantolf (2000)*, one of the basic tenets of SCT is that the mind is mediated. In other words, an individual does not build a direct relationship with the world, but this relationship is mediated by the use of tools or mediators. Vygotsky (1978) classified three types of mediators, namely physical tools (e.g. pens), psychological tools (e.g. language), and other human beings (Kozulin, 1998). These three types of mediators to some extent, have led SLA researchers to investigate their implementation in real classroom settings. For instance, in a computer-supported language classroom, L2 teachers assign their students to complete their writing tasks collaboratively by using computers (a physical tool) to facilitate interaction with other group members. Students also use language (a psychological tool) to negotiate ideas and meaning with others during classroom interactions. It can be seen that student interaction, language use, and technology integration in L2 classrooms can mediate L2 learning.

Based on SCT, learning is social interaction. Learning is mediated through interacting with others, exchanging ideas, concepts and actions (Vygotsky, 1978). This premise has provided SLA teachers with new aspects to explore their teaching practice from the nature of teacher-learners and learner-learner relationships. Many studies have examined the application of both approaches in SLA classrooms (Anton, 1999; Gibbons, 2003; Tan, Wigglesworth, & Storch, 2010; Topping, Miller, Thurston, McGavock, & Conlin, 2011; Watanabe & Swain, 2007; Yoon & Kim, 2012).

Regarding the teacher as a mediator in the classroom, traditionally, a teacher introduces learners to new knowledge and assists them until they fully understand the concept. Nowadays, teachers' roles have become more interactive and visible, as they have been influenced by SCT. A teacher is no longer a person who transmits the knowledge, but rather acts as a facilitator who assists learners to construct new knowledge and engage them in their own learning process. This is in line with what Gibbons' (2003) study showed. In her study, she investigated the interaction between teacher and learners in a content-based classroom. She documented that the teacher not only assisted learners to enhance their English language skills, but also developed their knowledge in the subject matter. Thus, it can be said that teacher-learners interaction is vital to learners' cognitive development as long as the content is meaningful. Particularly, learning process and development occur when teachers know how to be a good mediator in their teaching practice.

Another approach to the interaction is peers as mediators. Peer interaction can facilitate learners to develop their skills in the L2. In developing learners' writing skills, for instance, many studies have explored how peer interaction mediates the writing process (Fernández Dobao, 2012; Kuiken & Vedder, 2002; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2012a, 2012b). These studies have shown that negotiations among learners happened during the writing process. As a result, learners' writing skills were improved as they could exchange ideas and discuss them with their peers. For instance, Fernández Dobao (2012) found that learners who wrote in pairs and small groups could produce more LREs and correctly solve them since they shared more linguistic resources. In the same vein, Wigglesworth and Storch (2012a) argue that students working in pairs collaboratively performed the tasks successfully – writing shorter but grammatically more accurate essays. In particular, collaboration had a positive effect on learners'

linguistic accuracy of the essays completed. Thus, peer interaction is an essential mediator for successful L2 learning.

Scaffolding

Another main concept of SCT is scaffolding which refers to appropriate assistance or tools provided in the ZPD to complete certain tasks in L2 learning. Scaffolding is the main mechanism used by teachers to assist learners in the L2 learning process. Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) proposed six functions of scaffolding, namely 1) recruit novice's attention; 2) simplify the task; 3) maintain the task direction towards its goal; 4) mark the important features; 5) control disturbance and frustration; and 6) model idealized solutions. Once a learner can perform a task independently, this scaffolding is eventually removed.

In addition, Greenfield (1984) noted that scaffolding is not only able to assist learners during the completion of a task, but also to give information about how to work on the same task independently later. This is in line with Van Lier's (1996, p. 199) observation that "scaffolding is strategic behavior determined by close and continual scrutiny of what is easy and difficult for learners, guided by the long term sense of direction and continuity, a local plan of action, and a moment to moment interactional decision-making". Thus, scaffolding is a social tool to assist *learners* to move from their current developmental level to the potential level.

Numerous studies have used the notion of scaffolding and demonstrated improvements in learners' cognitive development in collaborative L2 learning settings (Fernández Dobao, 2014b; Fernández Dobao & Blum, 2013; Kim & McDonough, 2008; Kuiken & Vedder, 2002; Storch, 2001a; Topping et al., 2011; Tudge & Rogoff, 1999; Watanabe & Swain, 2007; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009, 2012b). Most of these studies

also indicate that collaborative work among peers helps learners produce the L2 in accurate forms. For example, Fernández Dobao (2014b) reported that when students pooled their knowledge and resources, they could scaffold each other and co-construct L2 knowledge. As a result, they could achieve a performance level which was beyond their individual competence level. Likewise, Wigglesworth and Storch (2009, 2012b) found that students collaborated to solve their language-related problems which resulted in promoting L2 learning. In other words, some scaffolding provided is mutual through interactions. Therefore, the impact of scaffolding on learners' interaction is significant in their L2 development.

Sociocultural Theory in L2 Learning

SLA theorists consider interaction as a springboard where L2 learning takes place. For instance, learners learn the L2 through interpersonal activity, such as interacting with their teachers, who provide 'scaffolding' in learning. This concept is related to sociocultural theory in L2 learning that is fundamentally influenced by Piaget (1948) and Vygotsky's (1978) theoretical perspectives on learning in groups.

Both *Piaget* and *Vygotsky* support the role of social interaction as being central to the foundation on which the collaborative approach in the L2 instruction is built. They are interested in the effects of a social framework on individuals' cognitive development. Both basically view the concept of the developmental process and the cognation between the individual and the social context. In other words, they consider that the aspects of individual cannot be isolated from the social factors (Tudge & Rogoff, 1999). For instance, learners acquire the knowledge of the world (e.g. language) through activities involving interaction with others as they progressively develop.

Even though Piaget and Vygotsky have some perspectives in common regarding the roles of social interaction in individual's cognitive development, they hold opposing views on how individuals acquire and develop their knowledge and skills. While the Piagetian account of development mainly considers that learning is initiated by cognitive conflict (i.e. resulting from conflictual circumstances where children having equal level of advancement exchange viewpoints in order to incorporate new information into their existing knowledge), the Vygotskian concept of development not only entails cognitive conflict, but also social interaction which first influences how new information is processed, transformed, and internalised as soon as learners become more competent.

Specifically, Vygotsky argues that learners' potential development level is determined through guidance from adults or in interaction with more advanced peers. The development occurs in the zone of proximal development (ZPD) that is central to Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development based on the roles of culture and social interactions (known as sociocultural theory). The ZPD not only encompasses learning processes through 'scaffolding' (e.g. feedback about their level of understanding) from more competent peers, but also cognitive development when children eventually are able to work independently on given tasks. In relation to L2 learning, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory considers language acquisition as a communicative and collaborative activity in which social interaction is paramount, and this activity reflects the learner's culture and beliefs (Aukrust, 2010; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Thus, as one of the approaches in the SLA, collaborative language learning is influenced by the Vygotskian sociocultural theory.

In contrast with the Vygotskian tradition, Piaget's theory views social influences on the concept of learners' development as less significant. Piaget mostly focuses on cognitive conflict brought by individuals' discrepancies between their beliefs in viewing the state of the world and new information they are experiencing (Gillies & Ashman, 2003; Tudge & Rogoff, 1999). As a result, they may try to adapt their ways of thinking to better fit their current experiences. Still, Piaget's early work (1932) stated that cognitive conflict could emerge in social interaction. For example, in a discussion forum, learners may hold different viewpoints on a subject. Subsequently, they review their own understanding and try to resolve the disagreement by searching for new information to construct better understanding about the case. From this example, it can be seen that learners' cognitive development is influenced by social interaction among peers when they are confronting their views. This concept was later known as 'socio-cognitive conflict' which was first introduced by Doise, Mugny, and Perret-Clermont (1975) and was at the crossroads of the Piagetian cognitive conflict and *sociocultural* theory. Therefore, interaction among peers is a main catalyst to exchange viewpoints which facilitates learning for learners.

To conclude, the Vygotskian and Piagetian theoretical perspectives show two views on how learners are likely to learn from each other even though they are just beginners. Basically, both of these views are complementary in emphasizing the significance of pairing in shared thinking processes in learning. While Vygotsky as a social constructivist considers that learners need mediation or scaffolding from adults or more competent peers to produce learning in the process of social interaction, Piaget as an individual constructivist focuses on how learners learn from confronting different viewpoints in the interaction, seeking more information to agree with each other, and accommodating differences in order to have a better understanding. Furthermore, the

notion of mutual cooperation is a shared learning process because the essence of both the Vygotskian and Piagetian perspectives is to suggest the concept of intersubjectivity (i.e. where higher mental function is jointly carried out by an individual with other people). This concept can develop a classroom design performing a community of learners. This concept can be implemented in L2 classrooms to promote learning and critical thinking such as in L2 writing classrooms.

Collaborative Learning and other SLA theories

Collaborative learning provides L2 learners with negotiated interaction that drives language learning in pairs and small groups. The collaborative approach is strongly endorsed by other dominant theories of SLA including the Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1985; Pica, 1994, 1996), the Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1985, 1996), and the Comprehensible Output Hypothesis (Swain, 1985, 1995, 2005).

Comprehensible Input Hypothesis

Input relates to language which is available for learners through both listening and reading (Gass & Mackey, 2006, 2007). Input in most SLA frameworks is an important aspect in L2 learning process. It gives learners the essential evidence from which they can learn to form linguistic hypotheses, as exposure to the L2 itself is not adequate to acquire the L2 (Gass & Mackey, 2007). It implies that the input which is available to learners has to be comprehensible (Krashen, 1985). If not, they cannot form the hypotheses required for learning and forming interlanguage grammar. However, there has been some disagreement in the field of SLA related to Krashen's (1985) comprehensible input hypothesis in terms of the role of language input. While in many approaches to SLA it is considered an important element, others regard input to play a

secondary role (Ellis, 2008). Nevertheless, what has been changed in connection with the role of input in L2 learning is the notion of how input is processed and internalised by learners (Doughty & Long, 2008). Gass (1997) believes that no one can acquire an L2 without language input. What is more, input contributes to the development of individual linguistic system in SLA theories known as interlanguage

To support Krashen's hypothesis, several researchers have suggested modification in the original proposition to come up with three potential types of comprehensible input, namely pre-modified input, interactionally modified input, and modified output (Ellis, 1995, 1999; Ellis & He, 1999; Gass & Varonis, 1994; Long, 1996). According to Long (1996), pre-modified input covers any type of language input which has been simplified before exposing it to learners; on the other hand, interactionally modified input stems from input modification that happens once learners find difficulties in understanding messages in their interaction with other interlocutors while modified output involves learners' attempts to modify their output to make it more comprehensible to interlocutors.

Likewise, input can be made comprehensible through negotiation in interaction (Pica, 1996). In other words, through negotiation, "learners work linguistically to achieve the needed comprehensibility, whether repeating a message verbatim, adjusting its syntax, changing its words, or modifying its form or meaning in a host of other ways" (Pica, 1994, p. 494). Many SLA studies indicate that negotiated interaction can make L2 input become more comprehensible to learners (Gass & Mackey, 2007; Gass, Mackey, & Pica, 1998; Long, 1996). Therefore, it is believed that negotiated interaction in which learners have chances to interact with competent interlocutors (e.g. native speakers) provides them with comprehensible input (Pica, 1994, 1996).

To conclude, input is essential in the development of SLA. Input alone nevertheless cannot facilitate L2 learning. Unless it is negotiated in the interaction, input is not useful in L2 learning. Interaction in collaborative learning, for instance, is one of strategies to optimize input in L2 learning. Assigning L2 learners to work collaboratively in pairs or small groups can provide them with opportunities to engage in discussing language concepts which in turn not only improve their language skills, but also *increase* their linguistic knowledge input.

Interaction Hypothesis

The implementation of peer or group learning satisfies the requirements of the interaction hypothesis. Long's (1983, 1985) interaction hypothesis was based on Krashen's (1985) comprehensible input hypothesis as it is important for learners to acquire the L2, so that the comprehensible input should be one level ahead from learners' current level of proficiency ($i+1$). Interaction deals with communication where there is some indication that an utterance is not completely comprehended, and interlocutors have to interrupt the flow of communication so that both parties understand messages delivered (Gass & Selinger, 2001). Negotiated interactions frequently take place when non-native speakers (NNSs) are involved in a conversation.

Long (1980) pointed out that exchanges involving NNSs showed forms that did not appear when native speakers (NSs) were involved. When non-proficient NNSs are involved in a conversation, for instance, confirmation and comprehension checks and clarification requests take place. Long's (1996, pp. 451-452) updated interaction hypothesis proposes that "negotiation for meaning, and especially negotiation work that triggers interaction adjustments by the NS or more competent interlocutor, facilitates acquisition because it connects *input*, internal learner capacities, particularly

selective attention, and output in productive ways”. Further, according to Gass and Torres (2005), interaction can be considered as an attention-drawing tool which draws attention to unknown parts of language input. Interaction can also direct learners’ attention to a specific discrepancy between what learners know about the L2 and what the L2 actually is, or a part of L2, that learners have no or little information about. Hence, language learning can occur through interaction.

Allwright (1984) states that classroom pedagogy involves a process of live interaction among learners. During interaction, they produce comprehensible output that turns out to be sources of input for other learners. There are some factors (e.g. lexical, phonological and syntactic as well as cultural issues) that can cause misunderstandings during the interaction. Learners use strategies to sort these misunderstandings out by seeking clarification or correct information. Then, teachers or other learners provide feedback that “tests their hypotheses and refine their development knowledge of the language system” (Hedge, 2000, p. 35). In other words, feedback can facilitate language development.

In summary, both input and interaction can promote the development of SLA. Particularly, interaction between teachers and learners or between learners can be useful sources for learners to notice gaps in their L2 through interactional adjustments. Collaborative learning as one of interactional adjustments can facilitate both input and interaction simultaneously.

Comprehensible Output Hypothesis

Another hypothesis, which is important in interaction and SLA theories, is Swain’s (1985, 1995, 2005) comprehensible output hypothesis. This hypothesis justifies how collaborative learning is useful in L2 learning. Swain (1985) pointed that learners need

to generate comprehensible output, as comprehensible input alone is not adequate to facilitate SLA. Alternatively, comprehensible output can be an essential source of L2 learning in conversations. She added that this is a better way to know the extent of learners' linguistic knowledge by using the knowledge in productive ways. In 1985, nevertheless, output was merely regarded as a way to produce what has been learned and the notion of output as part of learning mechanism was not recognised (Gass & Selinger, 2001). Then, Swain (1995) suggested that output may stimulate learners to transform semantic and strategic processing in comprehension into complete grammatical processing for language production. Therefore, output has a potential role in the development of morphology and syntax.

Having noted her three comprehensible output functions (i.e. noticing, hypothesis-testing, and metalinguistic functions) in 1995, Swain (2000, 2001) replaced 'pushed output' with 'collaborative dialogue'. This replacement is a result of the influence of sociocultural theory and some criticisms made by some researchers (e.g. Krashen (1995) and Van Lier (2000)) who noted that terms such as 'input' and 'output' make L2 learning become machine-like processing. According to Swain (2000, p. 102), collaborative dialogue is "the dialogue in which speakers are engaged in problem solving and knowledge building". In this kind of dialogue, language is considered to address two functions, namely cognitive (i.e. it facilitates the process of knowledge) and social (i.e. it is the primary tool to interact with others).

Since Swain's hypothesis suggests that collaborative learning can help learners to produce the L2 or to 'language' about the L2, examples in which learners discuss the L2 aspects are called 'languaging' or known in SLA theory as Language Related Episodes (LREs). Lesser (2004, p. 56) attempts to define this term as "when learners

1) question the meaning of a linguistic item; 2) ask about the correct spelling/pronunciation of a word; 3) ask about the correct grammatical forms; and 4) correct their own use or others' usage of words, forms, or structures".

Some research shows that LREs indicate learners' L2 development (Lesser, 2004; Swain & Lapkin, 1998; Williams, 2001). For instance, Swain and Lapkin (1998) reported that LREs enable learners to build forms and meaning collaboratively when they want to produce the L2. Thus, LREs can present the language use during L2 learning process.

Collaborative Approach to the L2 Classroom

Extensive research has been conducted on how the collaborative approach enables students to develop L2 proficiency in the classroom (e.g. Cheung & Slavin, 2012; Pan & Wu, 2013; Partridge & Eamoraphan, 2015; Puzlo, Keyes, Cole, & Jiménez, 2013). These studies have established that having students working collaboratively is a powerful pedagogical practice in learning the L2 which can generate positive effects on their L2 skills. Specifically, student collaboration in a joint activity facilitates social interaction in the L2 classroom through negotiation, discussion, and feedback. For instance, Cheung and Slavin (2012) synthesized studies on outcomes of all types of programs likely to improve English reading outcomes for Spanish-dominant EFL learners in an elementary school. They found that an extensive use of collaborative learning and one-on-one tutoring approaches were promising interventions. These two approaches enabled EFL learners to extensively use their developing language skills in meaningful contexts. Similarly, Pan and Wu (2013), who investigated the effect of cooperative learning to improve reading comprehension of EFL freshmen, found statistically significant differences approving of cooperative learning instruction,

especially for low- and medium-proficiency learners. That is, the results show that those students who received cooperative learning instruction on reading comprehension tasks performed better than those who got traditional lecture instruction. Cooperating with their peers provided them with encouragement and support that led to the development of students' reading skills.

As informed by Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, language acquisition takes place when learners interact with others and work together in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). In other words, they move from peer assistance to exercising autonomy in solving their own learning problems.

Collaboration between the teacher and learners and among learners is an important factor in a learner-centered classroom, which also constitutes the main feature of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Richards, 2006). L2 learning process is no longer considered as one-way knowledge transmission from teachers to learners (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Peer learning has an important place in the L2 learning process, which is central in the collaborative learning classroom (Topping, 2005). Therefore, it is important to investigate the effectiveness of collaborative learning in a classroom so that teachers can encourage learners to actively participate in classroom activities.

Collaborative Work: Pair and Group Work

Common practice in second language (L2) classrooms today has evolved into interactional and productive forms. Working collaboratively in pairs or small groups is widely considered as beneficial for L2 learning. In other words, students learn the L2 more effectively when they work in pairs or small groups. For instance, research has revealed that students working in pairs or groups engage in their tasks using the L2

more than teacher-led activities (Tan et al., 2010). This collaborative practice provides students with opportunities to interact, develop interpersonal relationship, assist one another, and share ideas related to given tasks (Gillies & Ashman, 2003; Gillies & Boyle, 2010; Gillies & Cunnington, 2015; Slavin, 2011, 2015; Topping, 2005; Topping et al., 2011).

Many studies have supported the implementation of pair and group work in L2 settings. Investigations conducted on Long's (1985, 1996) interaction hypothesis such as Pica, Holliday, Lewis, Berducci, and Newman (1991), A Mackey (1999), Tan et al. (2010), Storch and Aldosari (2012), Fernández Dobao (2014b), and Shin, Lidster, Sabraw, and Yeager (2015) have reported that when students complete tasks in pairs or small groups, they are involved in negotiating (e.g. recasts, confirmation, and requests for clarification) that makes input more comprehensible and focuses on developing their linguistic knowledge. These studies demonstrate that the interaction hypothesis plays an important role in L2 learning.

In a similar vein, Storch (2002) found that pair work can benefit learners in language learning even though they do not always collaborate in a pattern which is favorable in language learning. Learners tend to assist each other (i.e. offer and receive each other's assistance like corrective feedback) when they work in expert/novice relationships. *According to Ferris (2011), corrective feedback (e.g., grammar correction) enables student to improve their texts.* In contrast, when learners work in a dominant/passive or a dominant/dominant pattern, there is little chance for language learning to take place. The few studies that have examined the pair interaction in L2 settings reveal similar findings (Ives, 2004; Watanabe, 2004; Watanabe & Swain, 2007). They found that a dominant/passive pattern of interaction, for example, did not facilitate L2 as

passive learners tended to feel intimidated during collaborative work. In other words, passive learners did not benefit from their interaction with dominant ones.

Considering the benefits of the use of pair and small group works in a collaborative approach to learning, teachers have to focus on how students perceive and interact with one another to complete a task as a part of their instruction, and create a supportive learning environment. Moreover, structuring student interaction patterns may show how well students learn and how they feel about each other, particularly in the L2 classroom, because this pedagogical practice can create meaningful communication among students and allow them to take part in problem-solving and communication activities to reach task objectives. This also enables students to immerse themselves in the use of L2.

To conclude, the instructional use of pair or small groups can boost students' own and their peer's learning (Johnson & Johnson, 2009, 2014). Any task in any course can implement pair and small-group approaches to achieve shared learning objectives where there is a reciprocal responsibility to accomplish each group participant's success. In this view, interaction in pair and small group work may benefit learners in improving their L2 writing skills.

L2 Writing Pedagogy

Writing in a second foreign language (L2) is a complex process (Hyland, 2003; Shukri, 2014; Smith, 2001). It involves cognitive, affective, social, and cultural aspects (Raofifi, Chan, Mukundan, & Rashid, 2014). These aspects influence L2 learners in the writing process. For instance, cognitive aspects (i.e. the process of L2 internalisation) play an important role when learners practice their L2 linguistic and content knowledge

(e.g. vocabulary use and discourse styles in the L2) to produce a written text. During this process, learners may make errors that are gradually eliminated once they internalize the L2. Social, cultural and affective factors also affect L2 learners' writing performance. As an example, highly motivated learners tend to perform better on their writing than those who perceive writing tasks as a useless activity. Therefore, teachers need to be aware of such aspects in the writing process so that they can assist learners to deal with challenges in developing their L2 writing skills.

In academic settings, L2 writing has a main function, namely to extend learners' knowledge when they are required to perform assessment tasks. For example, when students enter higher education, they need to understand how academic writing works including writing components, rhetorical structures, and other writing conventions so that they can effectively write different academic genres including project reports and essays. The writing skills that they develop in universities enable them to progress into their specialised fields as they can produce academic reports within their fields of interest through their academic writing performance (Hyland, 2004). Moreover, in tertiary education, students are often assessed predominantly by their writing skills. They are assigned to produce essays, project reports, and other writing tasks as evidence for their understanding of materials taught in courses. Thus, writing skills are critical for performing writing tasks successfully; these skills are even more critical for L2 learners who write in a language other than their L1.

Given the crucial role of writing skills instruction in formal settings, writing teachers have to identify various factors that influence L2 learners' writing development. One way to assist learners to develop their writing skills is to identify problems they encounter in writing and employ pedagogical interventions that develop their

metacognitive awareness of writing (*Negretti & Kuteeva, 2011*). One critical factor in developing learners' language skills is having a learning strategy. Research has shown that L2 learning strategies are useful for language learning that relate to learners' performance (Kummin & Rahman, 2010; Zhang & Zhang, 2013), language proficiency (Hong-Nam & Leavell, 2006; Lai, 2009), L2 motivation (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Khatib & Sarem, 2012; Matsumoto, 2009; Wharton, 2000; Xu, 2011), and learning styles (Liu & He, 2014; Xu, 2011). Despite the great number of studies that have been conducted in the area of L2 learning strategies, there is still a need to further investigate its effectiveness on L2 skills, such as writing.

Approaches to Writing Instruction

There are three main approaches in writing instruction, namely product-, process-, and genre-based approaches (Badger & White, 2000; Kern, 2000) that have been deployed to develop L2 learners' writing skills. Each of these approaches is described in some detail in this section.

Product-based Approach

This traditional approach focuses on sentence structures, organization, and grammatical aspects of model texts. Learners are assigned to analyse and imitate a range of models usually provided in textbooks so that they can produce their own writing. Put differently, learners are “engaged in imitating, copying, and transforming model of correct language” (Nunan, 1991, p. 87). Teachers emphasize the importance of accuracy in copying in order to allow learners to be aware of grammatical accuracy of structure by being exposed to texts and internalize the components of structures into larger units (Schmidt, 1995).

Nevertheless, the emphasis of product-based writing is the final product in order to assess its accuracy, not the process of writing. Thus, teachers have paid little attention to how to effectively intervene during the writing process. Further, this approach might be useful for beginner writers who learn many grammatical structures and how to use vocabulary items in their contexts. Focusing on a final product in writing activity may not be effective for intermediate or advanced learners as it particularly limits their creative writing capacity and does not provide guidance on the way writers produce their pieces of writing. Due to the dissatisfaction with this approach (Hyland, 2003, 2004), a new rationale has emerged for explicating the writing process. This process includes the phases of pre-writing, writing, revising, and re-writing.

Process-based Approach

The idea of process writing has accompanied by a shifting focus from grammatical accuracy to communicative language teaching. According to Tribble (1996, p. 37), process approaches focus on “writing activities which move learners from the generation of ideas and the collection of data through to the ‘publication’ of a finished text”. In other words, the process-based writing approach focuses on creative writing where learners produce their opinions with a stress on meaning rather than form. This enables learners to practice and develop their writing skills. During the recursive process of drafting and revising, learners can obtain feedback from their teachers or peers and find some writing strategies to respond to from such feedback. Specifically, teachers can assist learners to develop drafts of what they want to write and improve on them to complete given tasks.

However, there have been some criticisms of this approach as it is time-consuming and involves a long process of writing and re-writing which is often not suitable when

students are being assessed on what they can write independently. *When writing in L2, students pay too much attention to the form or to finding appropriate words, that may limit their focus on formulating ideas or planning their writing (Cumming, 2001).* Further, teachers may need to overcome some issues related to large class sizes, particularly in most EFL/ESL contexts. Since one of the roles of teachers is to facilitate learning and not provide direct guidance to every learner, *learners* can also face some problems when it comes to different features of writing conventions. As a result, there is an emerging issue that learners need to be familiar with different conventions of various genres of writing through explicit instruction.

Genre-based approach

A dominant approach to writing focuses on different genres of writing (Johns, 2003). This approach arises due to insufficient attention being given to different forms and functions of writing in classrooms. This approach allows learners to copy available models of writing genres and understand their different goals that come along with particular linguistic features. Hyland (2003) points out that this approach suggests that explicit instruction is an effective strategy to teach learners the different linguistic features of each genre. It enables learners to develop their linguistic competence from different genres and improve their writing skills in a variety of genres. Further, it is believed that if learners are exposed to this approach, they can become more creative as they learn how to write different genres. Therefore, when it comes to practice, teachers need to fully understand how to implement this approach in the classroom.

All in all, these three approaches are complementary despite the different nature of writing. Integrating these approaches in writing in a classroom can facilitate learners to develop their L2 writing skills. In other words, L2 learners may benefit from the

strengths of each approach in their writing practices. In Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), writing should not be taught as an object of study. Rather, writing activity is considered as a system of communication while producing a text. Therefore, to develop L2 learners' written communication skills, collaborative writing can be used to facilitate them in communicating their ideas during text production. Through collaborative writing, L2 learners in group work participate in writing activities as writers and readers simultaneously. In this perspective, collaborative writing can develop both learners' communicative competence and their L2 knowledge. The following section further discusses the concept of collaborative writing and its roles in L2 classrooms.

Collaborative Approach to L2 Writing

A large number of studies on L2 learning strategies have addressed L2 writing strategies (deLarios, Manchon, Murphy, & Marin, 2008; Lee, 2011; Raoofi et al., 2014; Sasaki, 2002, 2004, 2007; Wong, 2005). Some studies have focused on the role of writing strategies in L2 learners' writing performance (McMullen, 2009; L. T. C. Nguyen & Gu, 2013). For instance, Nguyen and Gu (2013) found that writing strategies instruction could effectively improve L2 learners' writing performance.

Studies have also been conducted on the relationship between writing strategies and L2 writing skills. Many studies investigating the relationship between writing strategies and L2 writing competence have revealed that learners' writing skills are strongly related to writing strategies (Bai, Hu, & Gu, 2013; Chien, 2012; Raoofi et al., 2014; Sasaki, 2004). Learners who have high writing proficiency employ more writing strategies such as planning, revising, and reviewing strategies (Chien, 2012). In similar studies, Bai et al. (2013) and Raoofi et al. (2014) have demonstrated that L2 writing

strategies (e.g. drafting, editing, and evaluating) were positively related to English language proficiency.

Another factor contributing to the improvement of L2 learners' writing skills is the design of appropriate writing tasks. L2 teachers have to be able to select writing tasks that facilitate L2 learning and promote communication in L2 classrooms. According to Van Avermaet, Colpin, Van Corp, Bogaert, and Van den Branden (2006), L2 teachers need to consider a task as a bridge between the comprehensible input and output production. In other words, as a classroom activity, tasks require L2 learners to comprehend, interact, and produce an outcome in the L2. Further, L2 teachers need to design tasks that stimulate learners' active involvement regardless of the stock of their linguistic resources in order to achieve their communicative goals in L2 learning.

Previous research has also revealed that a task-based approach in L2 writing classrooms is effective in providing a practical and helpful way to enhance L2 learners' writing skills (Asgarikia, 2014; Cao, 2012; Marashi, 2012; Min, 2014; Seifollahi & Tamjid, 2012; Tiwari, 2014). Generally, the findings of these studies show that writing tasks can be regarded as a tool to explore ideas and learn how the L2 works in a written mode of communication. Even though during the completion of writing tasks L2 learners may face difficulties regarding linguistic resources, the experience can provide opportunities for L2 learners to identify their linguistic strengths and weaknesses. It is expected that they will acquire the L2 naturally by accomplishing various writing tasks.

Briefly, as a productive skill, the skill of writing is crucial not only for L2 learners to master in order to improve their communication skills, but also for language teachers to find strategies on how to best teach this skill especially in L2 contexts. In other words, it is important to understand how L2 learners learn to write in the L2 and how

language teachers design such writing activities to teach them effectively and involve their active participation in classrooms. Of course, this is not an easy task for teachers to encourage L2 learners to participate in writing tasks when it comes to manage especially big classrooms. Accordingly, since L2 writing activities are considered as the process of meaning construction and language production involving social activity in the L2 classroom from a sociocultural perspective, collaborative approach in writing activities can be taken into account in L2 learning.

Collaborative Writing in L2 Classrooms

The notion of collaborative writing as a tool to establish the linguistic knowledge and writing conventions of the L2 has been based on Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural perspective. In collaborative work, learners attempt to work together to establish shared understandings as part of individual understandings. In other words, knowledge is built when individuals work together to reach a shared goal in the course of collaborative meaning-making through a particular discourse (Wells, 2000). Likewise, in collaborative writing, learners are prompted to decide the language required to articulate their ideas. Thus, they need to construct a written text where they can insert their ideas. In the process, they actively participate and interact with others in negotiating meanings as a way to acquire information from each other in a writing activity. Apparently, teachers are no longer considered as the only actor in learning who transfers knowledge to learners in this learning context. Rather, a classroom is seen as an important context in which learners build new knowledge and experience meaningful interaction with the teacher and among themselves.

Research in collaborative writing has supported the value of dialogue in classroom interaction among learners (Kim & McDonough, 2008; Swain, 2000; Swain &

Watanabe, 2013; Yeh, 2014). Collaborative dialogue can facilitate learners to participate in problem solving and knowledge construction. In L2 learning, it can assist learners to build their linguistic knowledge and focus on using language on their own (Swain, 2000; Swain & Watanabe, 2013). During collaborative writing, for instance, learners actively participate in dialogue that prompts them to pay attention to gaps in producing a written text. Therefore, they not only reflect their own language use in text production but also gain better understanding about language use in a written text.

In summary, as a learner-centered approach, collaborative writing is the joint authoring or collaborative authorship of a written text in which more than one writer discusses, negotiates, coordinates, and contributes to assigned writing projects (Storch, 2011, 2013). From this definition, collaborative writing is different from peer-feedback or peer-editing activities viewed as part of the writing process. Furthermore, collaborative writing does not necessarily split a task into equal parts for each writer to complete individually, and later amalgamate the different parts to complete a task (which is usually done when learners work ‘cooperatively’). Rather, a collaborative writing activity takes place when learners construct a written text collaboratively as a result of the process of language output (i.e. knowledge construction of writing features) through peer interaction. Hence, collaboration in writing activities can be beneficial for enhancing L2 learners’ performance in composing a written text in the target language.

Roles of Collaborative Writing in L2 Classrooms

There have been numerous studies that support the use of CW in L2 classrooms either in pairs or small groups particularly at the tertiary level (Fernández Dobao & Blum, 2013; Humphrey & Macnaught, 2011; Khatib & Meihami, 2015; Kuiken & Vedder, 2002; Sajedi, 2014; Shehadeh, 2011; Storch, 2001a, 2005; Wigglesworth & Storch,

2009, 2012a, 2012b). Collaborative writing activities in the L2 classrooms provide opportunities for learners to participate in the co-construction of knowledge and articulate their ideas to compose a jointly written text, to foster reflective thinking practice among them, and to raise their awareness of audience.

Firstly, collaborative writing allows learners to incorporate their knowledge of writing and linguistic features to support each other. Research in the L2 learning has shown that learners can effectively assist each other's development since they can act as both experts and novices (Fernández Dobao, 2012; Fung, 2010; Storch, 2001a, 2011). For example, Storch's (2001a) study has shown how adult L2 learners at tertiary level participated in pair work of text construction. She found that, in most pair work, one learner took responsibility for managing the structure of the text while the other member expressed his or her opinions towards the details to include in the text. Even though both members contributed to the text composition, there were times when they had some difficulties in reaching an agreement through confirmation and elaboration. In addition, Shehadeh (2011) found that even though there was a significant improvement in terms of content and organization of written texts, learners found it difficult to assist each other when it came to accuracy which was due to the lack of learners' language knowledge. Therefore, collaborative writing through peer interaction requires not only composing a joint text, but also a joint understanding of the text organisation and language knowledge.

Another positive effect of collaborative writing activities is to promote reflective thinking among learners working together in a joint text. Reflective thinking is part of the thinking process of an individual involving meaningful and continuous examination (Dewey, 1991). Reflective thinking in learning is facilitated by providing learners with

critical questions and challenging each other's beliefs and perceptions in order to develop their existing knowledge. In collaborative writing activities, the reflection process can assist learners to review their writing tasks in order to achieve task objectives assigned by teachers. The reflective practice not only makes changes of written text possible, but also allows learners to be in charge of their own learning and to turn the thoughtful practice into a potential learning situation as a crucial process of self-discovery learning through peer interaction. Moreover, the reflective practice can also be achieved through peer-feedback. Once peer-feedback is integrated in the form of reflective dialogues among learners, they can benefit from the reflective practice. This is in line with what Wigglesworth and Storch (2012a, 2012b) have investigated showing that corrective feedback from peers in writing provided learners with potential L2 learning benefits particularly on how to improve their accuracy (i.e. linguistic knowledge). Briefly, reflective practice in collaborative writing promotes learners' awareness about their own learning and allows them to effectively engage in peer interaction in completing writing tasks. As a result, they can continually evaluate their work and make appropriate changes in their writing process.

Finally, collaborative writing can raise learners' audience awareness in their jointly written texts. Audience awareness in writing is an important aspect of socio-cognitive development designed to create meaningful communication through written text to a targeted audience. In a joint writing activity, learners can undertake a peer review or act like a reader once the final writing is completed in order to evaluate whether what they write is readable. Tsui and Ng (2000) found that peer comments on learners' writing tasks can enhance their sense of audience. As a result, learners can make some substantive revision of the text which best fit their intended meaning based on peer review results and raise their awareness of a targeted audience while writing. This

finding is consistent with a study conducted by Nehal (2004) showing that learners performed better in writing when they asked their peers as a reader. This process can assist them to revise the text while visualizing their audience.

Collaborative writing activities in the L2 classrooms provide opportunities for learners to participate in the co-construction of knowledge and articulate their ideas to compose a jointly written text, to foster reflective thinking practice among them, and to raise their awareness of audience. Therefore, through peer feedback and active engagement in the writing process, they can construct a well-written text collaboratively.

Research on Collaborative L2 Writing

Previous studies have investigated learner interaction during collaborative L2 writing activities. There are five main strands of classroom-based collaborative writing studies: patterns of interaction, task types, focus on form, perceptions and writing quality.

Patterns of interaction

In this strand, Storch's (2002) study has been a seminal piece of research. She conducted a longitudinal study (i.e. over 12-week semester) involving ten ESL college students who worked collaboratively in three different tasks: a text reconstruction task, an editing task, and a composition task. Having analysed their interactions, she found four patterns of dyadic interaction: collaborative, expert/novice, dominant/dominant, and dominant/passive (see Figure 1.). These patterns are different in terms of the level of mutuality and equality. While mutuality is defined as "the degree of engagement with each other's contribution", equality refers to "the level of control over the direction of the task (p. 127)." Collaborative patterns are characterized by high level of both mutuality and equality, while dominant/passive patterns are low on both mutuality

and equality. Dominant/dominant patterns have low mutuality but high equality whereas expert/novice patterns display high mutuality but low equality.

She also examined the relationships between student interaction and language learning by analysing if language features the students discussed in collaborative tasks emerged in their subsequent individual tasks. She found that there were language opportunities through their interactions which was evident in a subsequent task. In particular, the findings show that collaborative and expert/novice patterns benefited the students regarding language learning. On the other hand, dominant/dominant and dominant/passive patterns missed the learning opportunities since the students did not engage with each other's contributions in order to learn from one to another. As a result, when completing their individual tasks, the students made similar errors.

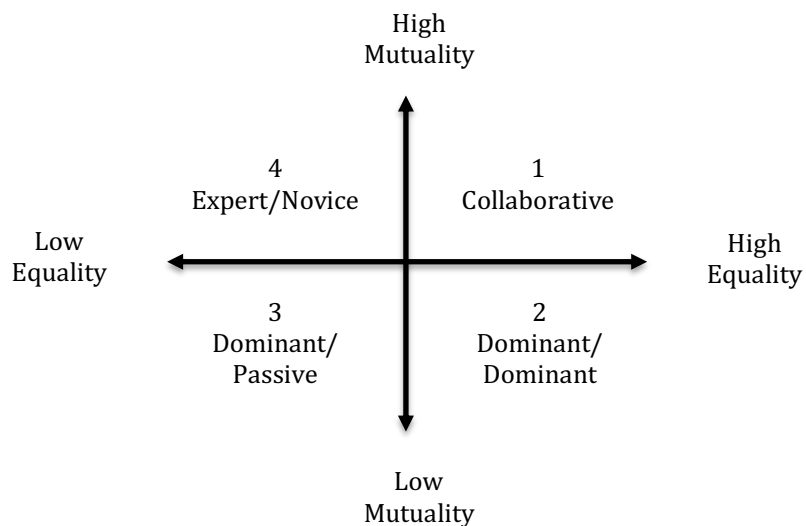


Figure 1. A Dyadic Interaction Model (Storch, 2002, 2013)

Several studies have used Storch's (2002) dyadic interaction model to investigate how patterns of interactions affect the number of Language Related Episodes (LREs) produced and the L2 use during interactions (Storch & Aldosari, 2013; Watanabe & Swain, 2007), to determine how student proficiency impacts on patterns of interaction (Kim & McDonough, 2008), and to examine a correlation between patterns of interaction and language learning (Watanabe & Swain, 2007). Studies in interaction patterns have shed light that these patterns may influence the production of LREs and language learning.

For instance, Watanabe and Swain (2007) and Storch and Aldosari (2013) conducting collaborative writing research further found that a collaborative pattern may result in better language learning opportunities. Pairs of students who exhibited a collaborative pattern of interaction produced more LREs than those who displayed other pattern types. In addition, in Watanabe and Swain's (2007) study, students who exhibited a collaborative pattern of interaction had the highest post-test scores. These results justified Storch's (2002) study that students who worked in a collaborative pattern obtain greater benefits from collaborative writing activities.

Patterns of interaction may also influence how much students used the L2 during their interactions. In Watanabe and Swain's (2007) study, students in collaborative and expert/novice pairings exhibited more turns in LREs rather than those in other pairings. Storch and Aldosari (2013) found that low proficiency students demonstrated longer turns in their interaction when working in a collaborative pattern, either with other low proficiency students or with higher proficiency students. On the other hand, more advanced students playing an expert or a dominant role talked more during their turns.

Therefore, based on these studies, it is clear that a collaborative pattern of interaction is ideal as students have an equal amount of control over the tasks and engage with each other's contributions. Watanabe and Swain (2007) and Storch and Aldosari (2013) also affirm that patterns of interaction provide more positive impacts on students' CW experiences than proficiency levels.

Task Types

Task type may affect how students focus on language learning during CW activities. Storch (2013) classifies tasks into two types: form-focused tasks (e.g. dictoglosses) and meaning-focused tasks (e.g. essays, data commentary tasks, and jigsaws). Dictogloss and Jigsaw have been used in several CW studies as reported below.

In a dictogloss task, students are required to listen to a text and take some notes (Storch, 2013). *According to Wajnryb (1990), dictogloss consists of four phases when used in a classroom: preparation, dictation, reconstruction, and correction.* In collaborative writing activities, students compare their notes and reconstruct an original text as accurately as possible while working collaboratively. A number of studies have used dictogloss tasks in CW activities (e.g. Kim, 2008; Kim & McDonough, 2008; Kuiken & Vedder, 2002; Lesser, 2004).

For instance, Kuiken and Vedder (2002) involved thirty-four Dutch high school students to complete two dictogloss tasks. While the experimental group students worked in small groups (i.e. 3 or 4), the control group completed the tasks individually. These two tasks were designed in order that the students used examples of passive voice sentences. They found that the experimental and control groups did not show any significant differences in terms of post-test scores and the frequency of the use of passive voice in their texts. Nevertheless, the analysis results of their collaborative

interaction transcripts describe both elaborate (i.e. more engaged) and simple (i.e. short) noticing of the passive voice. Moreover, there were more instances of noticing in one of the tasks used than another one despite the variation of the noticing level across the small groups. This shows that the linguistic content of the text should be considered when designing a task.

Jigsaws have also been used in several CW studies (e.g. Lapkin, Swain, & Smith, 2002 ; Swain & Lapkin, 2001). Even though there are different types of jigsaws (e.g. some use texts; others use pictures), these studies used the tasks consistently (i.e. pictures of a series of story events are used). While one student receives half of the pictures, the other student gets another half. These two students describe their pictures to each other without looking at each other's pictures. Prior to writing up their stories, they determine the order of events.

Lapkin et al. (2002), for example, used both dictogloss and jigsaw tasks in their research. Eight French students working in pairs completed one task of each type. The results showed that the jigsaw task resulted in more different vocabulary use than the dictogloss task. It was because the students performing the dictogloss task were limited by the lexical item they heard when listening to the text.

In a larger-scale study, Swain and Lapkin (2001) compared these two task types. Students from two Grade 8 French immersion classes completed the tasks in pairs. While one class worked on a dictogloss task, the other did a jigsaw task. Pre- and tailor-made post-tests were administered to evaluate language learning. In terms of the time required to finish the tasks, the final text quality, and post-test scores, the researchers found no significant difference between jigsaw and dictogloss classes. There was also

no significant difference between the two classes regarding the number of LREs produced.

However, after a further examination of the LREs produced in each class, Swain and Lapkin (2001) documented that the tasks affect students' focus in various ways. While the dictogloss administered audio input leading students to analyse words, the jigsaw dealt with visual input resulting in students to use adjectives (e.g. shapes and colors). Unlike the jigsaw, the dictogloss enabled students to reproduce more correct form in their writing since they received accurate linguistic *input*. In particular, despite no significant difference regarding the text quality, students in the dictogloss class produced the target form (e.g. pronominal verbs) more accurately than those in the jigsaw class.

In more recent studies, Fernández Dobao (2012) and Fernández Dobao and Blum (2013) administered jigsaw-like tasks. Unlike true jigsaw tasks, these tasks allowed students to look *at* all the images. They did not need to exchange information. They just reordered the images sequentially before writing up the tasks.

Other kinds of meaning-focused tasks have also been used in CW activities. For instance, short narrative and descriptive texts (Shehadeh, 2011) and informative texts (DiCamilla & Antón, 2012) have been applied for beginning L2 instruction. For intermediate and advanced students, a wide variety of tasks have been used in CW classes such as short composition (Storch, 2001a, 2002; Storch & Aldosari, 2013), a data commentary task (Storch, 2005), an open-ended image prompt (Brooks & Swain, 2009), and essays (Watanabe & Swain, 2007; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009). These meaning-focused tasks are more open-ended, containing unfixed content. Unlike

jigsaw tasks which give student pictures as content to write about, these types of meaning-focused tasks provide students with opportunities to discuss both content and language use. Therefore, if the aim is to enable students to learn to write, to use language to communicate meaning, or to construct their own sentences while encouraging students' attention to form, the composition-based tasks (i.e. true collaborative writing tasks) are probably most appropriate options (Storch, 2013).

Focus on Language

Another strand of research on CW have examined students' focus on language by investigating Language-related Episodes (LREs) while completing CW tasks. Swain (2000) claims that as learners work together, they share ideas and pool their knowledge to reach their shared goals. Collaborative activities enable them to collaborate to solve language related problems. They engage with language as a cognitive tool to reflect on language and facilitate problem-solving, called as 'languaging' (Swain, 2006). 'Languaging' is defined as "the process of making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience through language" (Swain, 2006, p. 89). Swain also argues that 'languaging' is a potential source of L2 learning. For instance, in the case of collaborative writing, learners deliberate with their peers in small groups, not only to talk about how to write a text, but also to discuss metalinguistic aspects of language itself. During the writing process, there are many kinds of language problems that may arise and be solved together, and thereby contribute to language learning. Languaging or collaborative dialogues has been operationally defined as language-related episodes (LREs) (Swain, 2005, p. 1). Swain and Lapkin (1998, p. 321) define LREs as "any part of a dialogue where the students talk about the language they are producing, question their language use, correct themselves and others." In general, LREs can be categorized

into; form-focused (e.g. morphology and syntax), lexical-based (e.g. word meaning and word choices), and mechanics (e.g. the punctuation, the spelling, and the pronunciation) (Storch, 2007).

Under this frame, a growing number of studies have investigated learners' collaborative dialogues during the completion of different written tasks (Abadikhah, 2012; Fernández Dobao, 2012; Storch, 2007; Swain & Lapkin, 1998; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009). These studies mainly focus on language-related episodes (LREs). For example, in Swain and Lapkin's (1998) seminal work, they investigated the peer interaction among French as a Foreign Language students when doing a jigsaw task. They found two types of LREs: form-focused LREs where students discuss grammatical units (e.g. syntax, verb uses, and spellings), and lexis-focused LREs where they discuss vocabulary and meaning of words and phrases. Their study suggests that CW tasks provide students with opportunities for language learning as evidence given in their LREs.

Further, Storch (2007) investigated the nature of learners' talks during the completion of a text editing task. The task required learners to change the text in order to improve its accuracy. Involving 9 pairs, one triad, and 16 individual students, the study revealed that the participants in pairs focused more on grammar (67% of all episodes) than lexis (31%). Most LREs were correctly resolved (80%). Similarly, Storch and Wigglesworth (2007) involved advanced ESL students to complete two writing tasks (i.e. an argumentative essay and a data commentary report). They found that students produced many LREs during the CW tasks, and resolved most of the LREs correctly in both tasks. The findings also show that students focused more on lexical choices than grammatical accuracy since they were highly proficient in English.

In a more recent study, Abadikhah (2012) studied the effect of mechanical and meaningful production of output when learning English relative clauses. The study involved thirty-six Iranian EFL learners divided into two groups: control (mechanical output) and experimental (meaningful output) groups. The participants in pairs completed three tasks over an 8-week period. The result showed that the experimental group generated a higher number of LREs (58%) than the control one (42%). The finding suggests task types could influence learners' focus either on meaning or form.

In a similar vein, Fernández Dobao (2012) examined the performance of intermediate Spanish learners in a university context. The learners were assigned in groups, in pairs, or individually to complete a written task as a follow up lesson of past tense grammar. The study showed that the groups produced the most accurate texts, followed by the pairs and the individuals. Further, the groups produced a bigger number of LREs than the pairs, and had a higher percentage of correctly resolved LREs.

Another similar study was conducted by Amirkhiz, Bakar, Samad, Baki, and Mahmoudi (2013). They investigated orientations towards *the metatalk* of EFL dyads (i.e. Iranian) and ESL dyads (i.e. Malaysian). The dyads were assigned to complete fifteen collaborative writing tasks. The findings indicated that EFL dyads attended more to the language features than ESL dyads. This could be due to the different status of English in their countries and their educational experiences.

In summary, findings from these studies suggest that learners' collaborative work may lead to deliberations on language aspects which can modify or consolidate learners' current linguistic knowledge. Even though task types and learners' proficiency level may influence the frequency of LREs produced, the analysis of LREs may explain how learners discuss language aspects and learn from their peers' feedback.

Teacher and Student Perceptions

The effectiveness of CW has been evidenced by teachers' and students' perceptions and self-reports of their experiences of CW. A few studies have documented how teachers (e.g. Blair, 2008) and students (e.g. Fernández Dobao & Blum, 2013; Shehadeh, 2011) perceived CW.

Teacher Perception

Teacher perceptions, expectations, and instructional materials strongly influence learners' writing performance in a classroom (Barkaoui, 2007; Dornyei, 2001). According to Williams (2003), teachers should engage their students so they see writing tasks as useful tools to promote effective learning processes. Moreover, when teachers set goals and strategies in writing classrooms, they have to involve students in deciding which strategies they can use to reach different learning objectives. Teachers, for instance, can encourage students to work in pairs or small groups to provide constructive feedback on each other's writing performance. In addition, teachers should be able to design appropriate writing assessments that have been acknowledged by students before they come to write their tasks. Therefore, teachers can measure and evaluate students' progress in writing tasks so that they can identify areas in students' writing skills that need to be improved.

Studies on teacher's attitudes and perceptions are crucial in designing classroom instructions. *Teacher instruction* is strongly related to their perceptions, beliefs, and motivation level (Chacón, 2005; Ghasemband & Hashim, 2013). In other words, their perceptions of tasks that they design to facilitate the learning process have a direct impact on teaching practices. However, little research has examined how teachers

perceive the implementation of particular instructional strategies in the classroom such as CW activities.

One study conducted by Blair (2008) found that teachers perceived themselves to play a significant role in the development of their students' writing self-efficacy during the six week collaborative writing activities. Even though this study only involved high school English teachers, they believed that learners could benefit from the CW activities with regards to their overall writing skills.

Other studies have also revealed that teachers' beliefs and practices of peer feedback play a vital role in L2 writing classes (Shulin, 2013; Zhao, 2010; Zhu & Mitchell, 2012). However, Shulin (2013), for example, found mixed results. Her study focused on teachers' perspectives regarding peer feedback. She found that some teachers viewed peer feedback as mainly useful for spelling and grammatical errors. Teachers found only few students commented on structure and content of the writing. Therefore, in their practice, although some teachers believed that peer feedback influenced their students' writing performance, some were questioning the effectiveness of peer feedback in writing and practiced what they believed was more suitable.

Based on these studies, it can be concluded that teachers' beliefs and perceptions may influence their capabilities not only in designing instructional materials and managing classrooms particularly in applying the CW approach, but also their students' achievement.

Student Perception

Students' perceptions of collaborative writing activities in ESL and EFL contexts have been examined in a number of studies. The first study addressing this issue is by Storch

(2005). Her study involved five students who completed writing tasks individually and in 18 pairs. Most of the 18 pairs involved in the study responded positively in the interview sessions about collaborative writing tasks. Writing in pairs gave them opportunities to collect their resources, observe and learn from each other, particularly in voicing their opinions. Moreover, CW activities allowed them to learn grammar and demonstrate gains in the size of their L2 vocabulary. Nevertheless, two learners found a writing activity more as an individual task than pair work. Even though 36 learners were very positive about the CW, five of them were reserved due to their lack of confidence in their language proficiency and critical thinking skills.

Similarly, another study conducted by Shehadeh (2011) found that the majority of 18 students participating in jointly writing tasks were very positive of their experiences. CW benefited them in many ways (e.g. helped them in generating ideas, planning the structure, negotiating, and providing feedback one to another). Moreover, this activity enhanced their self-confidence in expressing opinions and providing feedback for others.

Students' attitudes toward the CW activities have been investigated in different learning contexts. Fernández Dobao and Blum (2013), for example, explored fifty-five students of Spanish as a Second Language (SFL) regarding their attitudes and perceptions on CW activities. They were divided into two groups: half of them worked in pairs and the rest were in groups of four. While most of them reacted positively to the experience, four of the 55 students tended to work individually. Further, students who worked in pairs found this activity as beneficial since it allowed active participation, whereas those in groups could gain a better understanding of CW due to

knowledge sharing and language development. Therefore, activities assisted them to develop both their lexical and grammatical skills.

In summary, although there have been some studies that have investigated teacher and student perceptions of CW, these studies have mainly focused on English as an L2. Therefore, the present study also seeks to contribute to this topic by focusing on CW in relation to ASL. In addition to investigating the role of CW in developing ASL learners' writing skills development, the study examines teachers' and students' experiences and perceptions of CW in the ASL class. The next section provides a detailed description of the ASL context with reference to existing research on CW in this context.

Writing Quality

Several studies have investigated the effects of CW on students' final texts by comparing their individual pre- and post-tests of writing (e.g. Fernández Dobao, 2012; Shehadeh, 2011; Storch, 2005; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009). Despite their mixed results, these studies report that CW has a positive impact on the text quality.

Storch (2005), for instance, compared students who worked in pairs with those working individually on a data commentary task in an ESL writing class at an Australian university. She analysed the texts based on three quantitative measures: fluency, complexity, and accuracy. Qualitative scores were also given in terms of a global evaluation rubric. The findings showed that the texts produced by pairs marked higher regarding their accuracy and complexity than those completed individually. The pairs also produced shorter texts compared to the individual ones. In other words, the pairs included less unnecessary details than the individuals did in their writing tasks. As a result, the pair-written texts were much clearer than those written individually. In

addition to the findings, Storch found that the pair-written texts scored higher in terms of a qualitative evaluation rubric than those written by the individuals.

Similarly, Wigglesworth and Storch (2009), with a larger number of students (n= 144), examined the processes and products of individual and collaborative writing. Using similar quantitative measures as Storch's (2005) study, they found that pair-written texts were more accurate than those written individually.

Another study in this strand was conducted by Shehadeh (2011). Using an experimental design, he investigated the differences between individually- and jointly-written texts. Throughout a 16-week semester, 9 pairs of students and 20 individual students were assigned to write 12 descriptive texts. Their pre- and post-tests were scored based on a holistic rubric consisting of organisation, content, grammar, mechanics, and vocabulary. He found that pair-produced texts were not significantly different from individual-produced texts in terms of the grammatical accuracy. Although Shehadeh's (2011) study slightly differed from the studies conducted by Storch (2005) and Wigglesworth and Storch (2009), the holistic evaluation results suggest that CW had a positive impact on organisation, vocabulary, and content.

In a more recent study, Fernández Dobao (2012) analysed how the number of students participating in CW affected the final texts. She involved 111 intermediate FL students of Spanish at a U.S. university to complete a jigsaw task individually (n= 21), in pairs (n= 30), and in groups of four (n= 60). Using three similar quantitative measures (i.e. fluency, complexity, and accuracy) as above studies, she found that groups wrote more accurate texts than either pairs or individuals, and pairs wrote more accurate texts than individuals despite insignificant differences. Like Storch (2005), she found that

individuals wrote longer texts than both pairs and groups. However, in terms of complexity, there was no significant difference among the three groups.

To conclude, Storch (2005), Wigglesworth and Storch (2009), and Fernández Dobao (2012) found a positive result of CW regarding the aspect of accuracy. However, it was not the case for Shehadeh's (2011) study. This was probably because the participants in his study had a very low level of proficiency that prevented them from providing feedback on grammar to each other. Regarding organization, content, and vocabulary measures, the participants showed some improvement in the study.

Arabic as a Second Language (ASL)

Even though English as an L2 has become the main focus of research in SLA due to its global status, interest in teaching Arabic as a Second language (ASL) has grown remarkably in recent years. One major reason for which people have traditionally learned Arabic is to be able to read the Holy Qur'an which relates to Muslims worldwide. More recently, the goal of learning Arabic has been related to the importance of the Arab world's economy, politics, and culture, particularly in terms of their similarities and differences with the Western world. There has been a high demand of Arabic proficient specialists in the Western countries and foreign language policies in many European countries (e.g. *Germany* and *Sweden*), and the United States (Bouteldjouné, 2012; Versteegh, 2013) have responded to this demand. The implementation of this language policy in these countries seeks to address the need of communication among people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds migrating to their countries and to strengthen their countries' economic competitiveness particularly in relation to the Middle East. Consequently, the number of ASL learners has quadrupled recently as they learn it for various purposes (Wahba

et al., 2013). However, this highly increased interest in learning Arabic is not matched with the growing need of instructional materials, teaching strategies, and professionally prepared teachers (Al-Batal, 2007; Al-Rajhi, 2013; Alshammari, 2011). Like other languages, teaching and learning ASL requires knowledge of complex theories and language pedagogy skills. Therefore, there is a need for equipping teachers with teaching approaches and skills, adequate resources, and more varied materials in Arabic pedagogy.

Historically, throughout the Islamic world, Arabic learning was introduced in the classroom with the principles of reading and writing which is primarily to read religious texts such as the Holy Qur'an. In its development, like in many other languages, the grammar-translation and audiolingual methods were used to teach ASL. As more research in the acquisition of ASL has been conducted with reference to learner motivations and learning styles and strategies, there are more practices (e.g. the use of peer learning, the integration of technologies into classroom instructions) to meet objectives of communicative competence in Arabic (Aladdin, 2010; Bouteldjouné, 2012; Brosh, 2013; Hamidin, 2015; Husseinali, 2006; Isleem, 2014). Nevertheless, how students learn ASL and the various aspects of Arabic proficiency such as writing has remained almost an unanswered question.

There has been scanty research on the processes and strategies used in ASL writing tasks. Some studies have shown deficiencies in relation to writing aspects (e.g. cohesive, coherence, and grammatical aspects) in Arabic written tasks. For instance, an investigation conducted by Shakir and Obeidat (1992) illustrated incoherence in text development which was the result of inappropriate use of cohesive devices and the absence of focus on contexts. In a similar vein, Salim (2000) studied what strategies

proficient and less proficient American ASL learners used in the writing process. His findings showed that less proficient learners suffered a low level of writing aptitude and lack of understanding of language structure that might have been caused by high level of frustration in the writing process. These findings confirm the findings of Gafoordeen's (2013) research. He found that proficient learners had better understanding of planning and structuring texts, generating ideas, and revising. These studies imply that appropriate approaches in writing activities are vital to meet L2 writing objectives. *Moreover, learning strategies used by learners may facilitate a learning task which contributes to the development of their language learning (Chamot & O'Malley; Cohen, 1998).* It is also expected that teachers can manage to design writing tasks and provide learners with strategies to improve their writing performance.

Key Gaps in the Literature

Even though a growing number of research studies on classroom-based collaborative writing have been carried out in a wide range of L2 learning contexts, no study has investigated CW and its effect on students' Arabic writing skills in a Saudi tertiary context. Thus, the researcher conducted a classroom-based CW project at an Arabic language institute situated in Makkah. Regarding the areas of CW, several gaps are identified that have shaped the basis of the present study.

Previous studies investigated patterns of interaction in CW and claimed that different patterns of interaction affected students' perceived learning experiences and outcomes (e.g. Kim & McDonough, 2008; Storch, 2002; Storch & Aldosari, 2013; Watanabe & Swain, 2007). Nevertheless, what needs to be further examined is the influence of students' engagement with tasks on CW text quality. Therefore, the present study

delved into how students worked during completing CW tasks and the relationship between the patterns formed with joint writing products.

Furthermore, numerous studies have used a wide variety of collaborative tasks in their CW projects such as text construction, data commentary, dictogloss, and jigsaws tasks (e.g. Fernández Dobao & Blum, 2013; Kuiken & Vedder, 2002; Lapkin et al., 2002 ; Swain & Lapkin, 2001). These researchers argued that task type influenced how students approached writing tasks, whether they focused on language, or meaning, or both of them. However, not much research has used collaborative writing tasks such as short compositions (Storch, 2002; Storch & Aldosari, 2013), short descriptive and narrative texts (Shehadeh, 2011), and essays (Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009). These collaborative writing tasks not only encouraged students to learn to write in the L2 while composing sentences on their own, but also enabled them to focus on form. Thus, the present study used three meaning-focused CW tasks (i.e. writing narrative, descriptive, and argumentative texts) as they required students to compose a full text from the beginning until the end.

Further, previous CW research shows that while completing CW tasks, students engaged in verbal interaction related to formal features of language (e.g. verb tense, and the use of articles). A number of studies analysed the language-related episodes (LREs) of students' verbal interactions during collaborative tasks such as dictogloss (e.g. Kuiken & Vedder, 2002) and jigsaws (e.g. Swain & Lapkin, 1998). However, there is a scarcity of research on LREs when students worked on collaboratively meaning-focused writing tasks (e.g. Storch, 2005; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009), particularly in the context of ASL. Thus, the researcher explored the occurrences of LREs by analysing transcripts of students' verbal interactions when they interacted in

collaborative ASL writing tasks in each stage of the writing process (e.g. brainstorming, drafting, editing stages).

The next gap is related to teachers' and students' reflection on their CW experiences. While there has been a trend for researchers to examine how students perceived their CW experiences (Fernández Dobao & Blum, 2013; Shehadeh, 2011), very few studies have investigated teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of CW in L2 writing classrooms (Blair, 2008). Therefore, the present study explored both teacher and student perceptions of the implementation of CW.

Several researchers in the area of CW have also reported the effects of CW on students' joint final texts, and generally showed that students who participated in CW tasks produced higher quality texts (Fernández Dobao, 2012; Storch, 2005; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009). Still, the findings across the studies were mixed. In this study, the researcher attempted to delve into the effect of CW on students' writing skills in the ASL context.

Finally, in terms of research methodology, most studies in CW tend to use a quantitative approach (e.g. pre- and post-test experimental design) (Kim & McDonough, 2008; Shehadeh, 2011; Watanabe & Swain, 2007). Other studies in CW have been conducted under a qualitative paradigm (Storch, 2002). While quantitative and qualitative research provide various perspectives, and each of them has its weaknesses (Creswell & Clark, 2011), the researcher in the present study employed a mixed-method approach (i.e. the combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches) to provide a more complete understanding of CW than what either approach can provide.

Against this background of the theoretical and empirically verified benefits of CW, the present study investigated CW and its effectiveness on L2 learners' writing outcomes

in an under-researched context in relation to a language other than English i.e. Arabic as a second language (ASL). Given the limited use of CW in Saudi Arabia, particularly in the ASL class, the study also examined students' patterns of interaction during CW, and teachers' and students' perceptions of the implementation of CW.

Summary

In conclusion, collaborative writing activities in the L2 classroom provide opportunities for learners to participate in the co-construction of knowledge and articulate their ideas to compose a jointly written text, to foster reflective thinking practice among them, and to raise their awareness of audience. Existing research has documented the positive impact of CW on L2 learners' writing performance with reference to individual versus pair or small-group settings predominantly in the EFL (Khatib & Meihami, 2015; Meihami, Meihami, & Varmaghani, 2013; Sajedi, 2014) and ESL (Fernández Dobao, 2012; Fernández Dobao & Blum, 2013; Fong, 2012; Storch, 2011; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2012a) contexts. However, to date, not much research has investigated collaborative writing (CW) and its effects on learners' writing outcomes in the ASL context.

Having reviewed the literature in the area of CW research, the present study examined CW in the context of ASL in Saudi Arabia to substantiate its effectiveness as reported in the literature by drawing on a language other than English. In particular, the following four research questions were formulated for the purpose of the study:

1. How do ASL learners engage with each other in performing collaborative writing tasks?
2. Is there a difference between collaborative writing groups and traditional small groups in terms of the frequency of Language Related Episodes (LREs) produced and how LREs are resolved during small group interaction?

3. How do ASL learners and teachers perceive the implementation of a collaborative writing approach?
4. Is there a difference in students' ASL writing performance in collaborative writing groups and traditional small groups? What are the linguistic and rhetorical features of writings in the two instructional modes that may explain the differences in their performance?

Chapter 3. Research Methods

This chapter provides an overview of the research design of the present study. This chapter first reviews the educational research and the main characteristics of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches. It then discusses the rationale for selecting an *embedded* quasi-experimental mixed-method design. This is followed by a discussion of practical design features including research participants, tasks, and the research procedure. In collecting and analyzing the data, the present study employs a mix-method approach that combines quantitative and qualitative research methods in order to capture various perspectives. Finally, an explanation of how the present study collects and analyses data quantitatively and qualitatively is provided.

Purposes of Educational Research

According to Creswell (2015, p. 25),

Educational research involves asking a question, collecting data, and analyzing data to determine the answer to the question. It helps educators understand problems or issues through the accumulation of knowledge. It can assist educators in improving practices, and it focuses attention on important policy issues being discussed and debated by decision makers. In addition, engaging in research provides valuable conceptual writing and presenting skills for students.

In this regard, the purpose of educational research is to uncover a breakthrough or investigate better approaches in pedagogy that contribute to deeper understandings of effective teaching practices. In effect, educational research is a series of actions designed to acquire information about how students learn and how instructors teach them effectively. Thus, educational researchers need to understand the main purposes of research and their characteristics to develop better understandings of the teaching and learning process. As shown in Figure 2, the process of research involves:

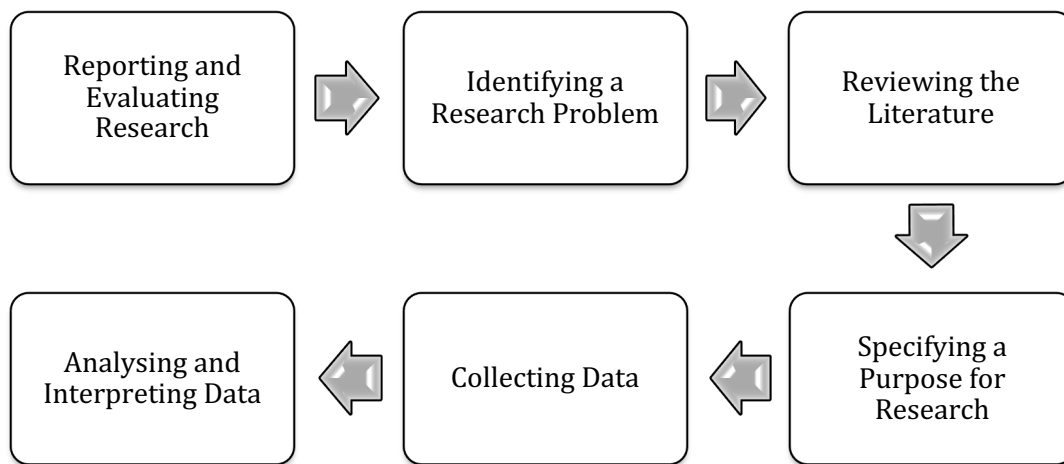


Figure 2. The Educational Research Process Cycle (Creswell, 2015, p. 8)

Since educational research emphasizes the importance of interaction between the teacher and learners and between learners in order to provide information on the teaching and learning process, it is important that educators broaden the range of research methods in order to study the pedagogical process. To better understand the use of multiple research methods in the present study, the researcher reviews characteristics of three main research approaches to educational research.

Educational Research Approaches

Quantitative Research

Quantitative research is usually described as the explanation of the relationship between variables by collecting statistical data with instruments from particular samples (Creswell, 2015). This research approach begins with an experimental study where a hypothesis is set and justified with numerical data and quantification analysis (e.g. comparing groups based on their pre-tests and post-tests after certain treatments) (Mackey & Gass, 2005). Quantitative research uses a deductive approach to respond

to research questions. For instance, a researcher using a quantitative approach first builds up relevant theories to the research topic, and limits its scope by testing a hypothesis. From data collected and the analysis undertaken, a researcher can then address the research questions or hypotheses in order to interpret the findings of the analysis based on initial predictions or prior studies.

In the same vein, Creswell (2015, p. 13) states that quantitative research defines a research problem “through a description of trends, provides a major role for the literature through suggesting the research questions to be investigated, creates purpose statements, research questions, or hypotheses that are specific, narrow, and measurable, collects numeric data from a large number of people using instruments with preset questions and responses, and compares groups or relates variables using statistical analysis and interprets results by comparing them with prior predictions and past research”. Therefore, this top-down approach will then result in supporting or rejecting the initial theory.

Qualitative Research

The term ‘qualitative research’ is interchangeably used with terms such as ‘naturalistic’, ‘ethnographic’, and ‘subjective’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Qualitative research is suitable for research issues where there is a need to explore the variables. According to Creswell (2015, p. 16), there are various characteristics in every stage of the research process. These characteristics are:

1. Exploring a problem and developing a detailed understanding of a central phenomenon;
2. Having the literature review play a minor role but justify the problem;
3. Stating the purpose and research questions in an open-ended way to capture the participants’ experiences;

4. Collecting data based on words (e.g. from interviews) or from images (e.g. photographs) from a small number of individuals so that the participants views are obtained;
5. Analyzing the data for description and themes using text analysis and interpreting the larger meaning of the findings; and
6. Writing the report using flexible, emerging structures and evaluative criteria and including the researchers' subjective reflectivity.

Similarly, Mertler (2006) explains qualitative research as a method to collect data that involves observations and interviews. This research approach is conducted in natural settings without controlling the environments and consists of rich descriptions of human behaviors and perspectives. As opposed to a deductive approach in quantitative research, qualitative research employs an inductive approach where an investigator observes particular contexts and ends with generalisations or theories.

Mixed-method research

Since quantitative and qualitative approaches are considered two different designs with each of them having benefits and *limitations*, educational researchers, to a greater extent, have been interested in employing 'mixed methods' or 'triangulation' (i.e. use more than one methods in a single project) to have more reliable results (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2008). These two terms are used interchangeably since it is believed that there is no data collection that best describes a study and all research methods have *limitations*. Due to the importance of multiple perspectives in data collection and analysis, triangulation may have various types described by Patton (2002, p. 556):

1. Methods triangulation: checking out the consistency of findings generated by different data collection methods;
2. Triangulation of sources: checking out the consistency of different data sources within the same method.
3. Analytical triangulation: using multiple analysts to review findings.
4. Theory/perspective triangulation: using multiple perspective or theories to interpret the data.

In the light of this information, multiple methods, sources, analyses, and perspectives can provide research with more valid and reliable data. With regards to method triangulation, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) differentiated between “within-methods” (i.e. the use of multiple research strategies in a single method such as qualitative interview and observations) and “between-methods” (i.e. the use of multiple methods in a single study such as a quantitative quasi-experimental study and qualitative ethnography). The selection of one of these methods really depends on the need of a researcher in conducting a study. Since one research method can complement other methods, it is recommended that researchers mix a number of quantitative and qualitative methods in their projects. The summary of the main characteristics of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods research is given below (Creswell, 2015).

Table 1. The main features of three research methods (Creswell, 2015)

Features	Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research	Mixed-methods Research
Process	Deductive	Inductive	Inductive and Deductive
Data	Numerical	Words/Images	Mixture variables
Research Problems	Prediction	Contextual	Multiple objects
Condition	Controlled	Natural	Mixture forms
Results	Objective	Subjective	Pragmatic
Reports	Statistical	Narrative	Comprehensive

With reference to the importance of triangulating sources, the present research used multiple research methods to combat the limitations of a single method. In other words, a mixed-method research design was used to address four research questions as follow.

Table 2. Research questions and their methods

Research questions	Methods
---------------------------	----------------

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do ASL learners engage with each other in performing collaborative writing tasks? 2. Is there a difference between collaborative writing groups and traditional small groups in terms of the frequency of LREs produced and how LREs are resolved during small group interaction? 3. How do ASL learners and teachers perceive the implementation of collaborative writing approach? 4. Is there a difference in students' ASL writing performance in collaborative writing groups and traditional small groups? What are the linguistic and rhetorical features of writings in the two instructional modes that may explain the differences in their performance? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom Observation • Field notes • Classroom Observation • Field notes • Semi-structured interview • Classroom Observation • Field notes • Pre- and post-tests
--	--

The study was conducted in two stages. Firstly, quantitative data were gathered at the beginning of treatment by assigning pre-tests (i.e. a descriptive writing test) for both experimental and control groups. Once the treatment was completed, the last part of the quantitative data was collected from their written tasks and post-tests (which was similar to pre-test). Secondly, during the intervention, qualitative data were collected by observing the classroom interactions among students (i.e. audiotaping their verbal interactions within their groups). Teachers and students were then interviewed at the completion of the study in order to understand how they perceived their experiences during the treatment.

Therefore, the present study addressed the research problems comprehensively as it combined the process of data gathering and analysis from both quantitative and

qualitative research approaches. As a wide range of research methods were employed, they complemented each other (Creswell, 2015; Trochim & Donnelly, 2007).

Research Design

The study employed an embedded quasi-experimental mixed methods research design (i.e. data collection and analysis were conducted quantitatively and qualitatively) (see Figure 3). The basis of this design was that a single data set was not sufficient to address different research questions (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Thus, different types of data were required to complement the application of a quasi-experimental design, and thereby addressing the main goal of the study. In the present study, the researcher embedded qualitative methods (e.g. audiotaping classroom observations and taking field notes during the intervention, and conducting semi-structured interviews with teachers and students at the end of the treatment) to investigate the process of an intervention (e.g. patterns of interactions students formed during collaborative writing activities and how they resolved Language Related Episodes (LREs) during their interaction) and to explain the teacher and student perceptions regarding their CW experiences. Quantitative methods, on the other hand, were used to understand the frequency distribution of LREs used in group work and to evaluate the effect of CW on students' writing outcomes.

As shown in Figure 3, the researcher implemented a qualitative data collection plan during the intervention in the experiment. In particular, an *embedded* quasi-experimental mixed-method design comes with quantitative research conventions while collecting qualitative data. This design let the researcher investigate and observe learners in classroom settings in order to examine the outcomes of their collaborative writing experiences on their writing performances. Further, it allowed the researcher

to see how ASL learners dialogued collaboratively in assigned tasks and how they behaved and negotiated within their groups either in experimental or control classrooms. The summary of the use of a quasi-experimental study with a mixed methods design is shown in Figure 3 below.

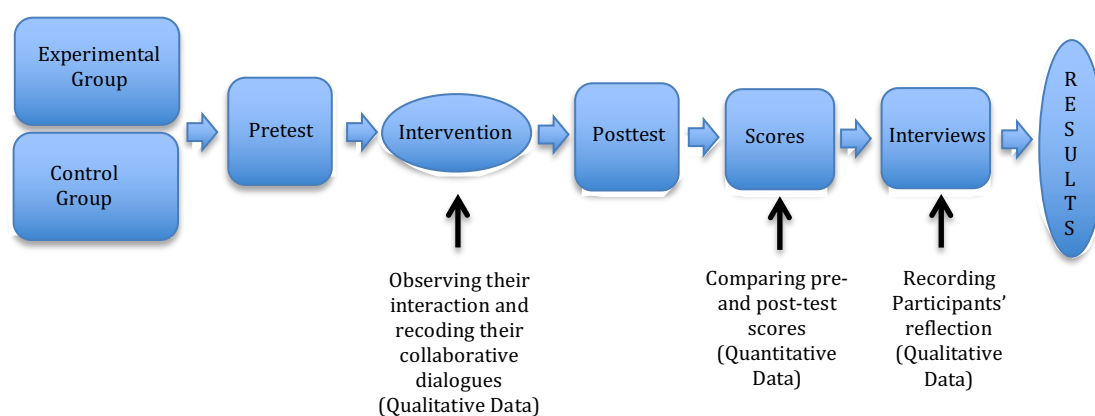


Figure 3. An Embedded Quasi-Experimental Study Mixed-Method Design

As can be seen in Figure 3, a quasi-experimental design was employed as it allowed an evaluation of the relationship between CW tasks and the development of students' writing skills (Creswell, 2015). This design was selected to allow the researcher to address the research questions regarding the effect of collaborative writing approach on ASL learners' writing outcomes. It also provided the researcher with the opportunity to observe their interactions in writing activities.

To conclude, this study compared two experimental groups that used a collaborative writing approach with two control groups that used traditional group work in writing with reference to their pre- and post-tests, behaviors, interactions, and their perceptions of their collaborative writing experiences. The control groups in the study did not receive an intervention on collaborative writing even though they also worked in small groups as seen in Table 3 below. *In particular, while the experimental classes implemented a collaborative writing approach (i.e. in which group members worked*

together more or less sequentially on different aspects of writing tasks), control classes were involved in traditional group work (i.e. in which group members split the tasks and worked on different aspects of writing tasks more or less concurrently).

Group	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
Experimental	Yes	Collaborative Approach	Yes
Control	Yes	Traditional Group Work	Yes

The non-equivalent control group design with pre- and post-tests was used in the study as it was considered as “one of the most frequently used quasi-experimental designs in educational research” (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 283). Moreover, classes in schools or colleges have been organized naturally and are considered to share the same characteristics (Best & Kahn, 2006).

Setting

The project was conducted during a twelve-week semester in 2016 at an Arabic language institute of approximately 3,500 non-native students, which is a part of a public university situated in Makkah, Saudi Arabia. The institute has three main objectives: 1) to teach Arabic to learners who come from non-Arabic speaking Muslim majority countries; 2) to conduct research on Arabic teaching and learning; and 3) to provide training to instructors to teach Arabic to non-native Arabic learners. The institute has played an important role in Arabic teaching and learning in Saudi Arabia.

The institute has three departments: Language and Culture, Teacher Training, and Teacher Preparation. The Department of Language and Culture deals with designing and administering a program for Arabic as a Second Language (ASL) teaching

prepared for non-native speakers from all around the globe. The ASL program is the main course in the department. During the enrollment process, the institute administers a placement test for ASL learners in order to classify them into appropriate levels in the program since they have different levels of Arabic proficiency. This two-year program consists of four semesters of study with twenty contact hours each *week*. The main goal of the program is not only to develop ASL learners' language skills in general, but also to prepare them to continue their academic study in one of the Saudi universities.

Participants

Sixty-four male adult ASL students participated in the study. They were enrolled in Arabic language preparation programs in the Arabic language institute. The students came from a wide range of first language backgrounds including French, German, Bahasa Indonesia, Malay, Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, Pashto, Dhivehi, Spanish, and Portuguese. *The participants'* willingness to participate in the research and their availability influenced the sampling process. Of the 10 classes in the program, four classes taught by two Arabic native teachers participated in the study. These classes had similar characteristics. Based on the students' entrance examination scores, they were considered to have a high-intermediate level of Arabic proficiency. They ranged in age from 20 to 23 years. Since they did not share a common language, Arabic was the only language used for instruction in the classroom.

As shown in Table 4, the study was conducted in four parallel classes. Each class consisted of 16 students. Two of the four classes were set as experimental groups while the other two groups were controls. Thus, both experimental and control groups had thirty-two students each. The experimental and control classes were taught by two

different teachers who used the same syllabus and textbook materials provided by the institute. *Due to logistical reasons (i.e., a limited number of teachers participating in the study and the teaching timetable), the researcher decided to allocate one teacher (Teacher A) to teach two control classes, and the other (Teacher B) to the two experimental classes.* However, while the experimental classes implemented a collaborative writing approach (i.e. in which group members worked together more or less *sequentially* on different aspects of writing tasks), control classes were involved in traditional group work (i.e. in which group members worked on different aspects of writing tasks more or less *concurrently*). In each class, the students were divided into small groups each of which consisted of four students.

Table 4. Participants and the design of the experimental and control groups

Class	Condition	Learning Approach	Groups	Teacher
1	Control	Traditional Group Work	1, 2, 3, 4	A
2	Control	Traditional Group Work	5, 6, 7, 8	A
3	Experimental	Collaborative Approach	9, 10, 11, 12	B
4	Experimental	Collaborative Approach	13, 14, 15, 16	B

Data Collection

Teacher Workshop

At the start of research, the researcher set up a workshop for teachers participating in the study (teachers who taught the experimental and control classes). It was held twice a week for three consecutive weeks, with sessions lasting 50 to 60 minutes. Although the workshop was meant only for the two teachers who participated in the study, it was also attended by additional four teachers who wanted to learn a new approach to teaching ASL. The workshop helped teachers to understand what collaborative writing

(CW) was, how it worked and how it differed from traditional group work (TGW). The teachers developed an understanding of the principles of CW and TGW. They were given clear demonstrations of assigning, managing and observing processes, activities and outcomes of group work. At the end of the workshops, the teachers were expected to be able to understand their roles in group work activities so that they can encourage students to provide feedback, to collaborate, and to discuss problems encountered during writing activities. However, the researcher did not ask the teacher in the control group classes to implement CW. He was asked to continue his usual TGW style of teaching. The researcher's observation of his teaching in the control classes confirmed that he was following his own way of teaching.

In the first workshop in Week 1, the researcher prepared handouts and power point slide presentations on CW and its difference with TGW. In the beginning, the teachers were invited to share their teaching experiences in writing classes. Then, a brief summary of the research project was introduced including its significance in ASL writing development and how it could be implemented in the writing class. The researcher also recommended relevant books about collaborative learning and its application in L2 writing to the participants. In the second meeting, ASL students' writing samples were examined. Then, potential challenges that teachers may face in implementing CW activities in the classroom were discussed and feedback was generated.

In Week 2, the first meeting covered the review of CW concepts before the teachers participated in the workshop activity. Then, the teachers were formed into two groups. Each group consisted of three members. Each group was given a writing task (i.e. writing a descriptive text) and a writing rubric (see Appendix A) as guidelines to

produce a text. The teachers then worked in their group collaboratively to produce a jointly written text. In the second meeting, the challenges that they faced during the collaborative writing activity were discussed. After the written texts (essays) produced by the two groups were swapped, the teachers in each group assessed the work using the rubric previously provided.

In Week 3, the workshop participants spent the two sessions reviewing the previous meetings about how CW was implemented in the workshops. The process led to repeating some of the discussion and activities. All questions from the teachers were discussed. Their level of understanding of and their confidence in implementing CW was evaluated informally. All participants appeared positive about their learning and experience in the three weeks and were confident about doing it on their own.

Implementation of the CW intervention

Following the teacher workshop, a 12-week CW intervention, as outlined in Table 5, was implemented. The major activities in the implementation phase are discussed below in detail.

Pre- and Post-Tests

As can be seen from Table 5, prior to any treatment, both experimental and control classes (all 64 students) were asked to write a 500-word descriptive text in Arabic in Week 1. They were prompted to describe their own country individually in 50 minutes. This writing task was considered a pre-test. At the end of the treatment in Week 10, they were asked to write a 500-word descriptive text about their experiences in writing in small groups in 50 minutes. This was considered the post-test.

Writing Tasks

During the 12-week intervention, all participating classes were given three types of writing tasks: descriptive, narrative, and argumentative texts. Each task (500-word text) was completed in three weeks (i.e. 50 minutes per meeting each week). During the classroom observation, the researcher observed how learners participated in co-constructing the writing tasks. This process included brainstorming, planning, drafting, and revising.

In the experimental classes, the teacher explained to the students how collaborative writing worked. The teacher emphasized the importance of the shared responsibility in completing the writing tasks. The teacher tended to act as a facilitator. At the beginning of the collaborative writing task, the teacher ensured that the students understood the concept of collaborative writing. When they started working, many groups collaboratively worked on all stages of the writing tasks. In other words, they worked sequentially and had no labour division. They exhibited equal amounts of contributions and high engagement with each other's contributions. Others groups formed an expert/novice pattern, where one or two group members acted as an 'expert', while the rest was 'novice'. In this case, the 'expert' members encouraged the 'novice' ones to actively participate in the group work. They sometimes scaffolded the novice members when they faced difficulties in the activities.

On the other hand, in the control classes, the teacher let the students work in the groups as they traditionally did. Based on the class observation, most of the groups tended to split the tasks into several sections for individual responsibility. They displayed a clear division of labour (i.e. working concurrently) and had a high degree of coordination. After they decided the topic for the writing task, the group members rarely talked to

each other to discuss what they did. Each group member seemed to focus on their parts. They later combined their individual work to be one group writing piece at the end of the task. Some groups had one or two members did the writing for the others who tended to take passive roles in the group.

Once they completed their joint written texts in the groups, they were given a post writing test, writing 500-word descriptive texts (see Table 5). The test was completed individually, similar to the pre-test given at the beginning of the intervention. Both pre- and post-test were assessed by using an analytical writing rubrics. Further explanation about the writing rubric will be described under the sub-section 'Analytical Writing Rubric' in this chapter.

Table 5. Writing task prompts

Week	Prompts	Activities
Week 1	Pre-test: <i>Describe your own country in 500 words.</i>	The students completed the test in 50 minutes individually.
Week 2-4	Task 1 (Descriptive Text): <i>Describe your first day in Makkah (or you can choose your own topics)</i>	Brainstorming, planning, drafting, and revising
Week 5-7	Task 2 (Narrative Text): <i>Narrate your visit to Madinah (or you can choose your own topics)</i>	Brainstorming, planning, drafting, and revising
Week 8-10	Task 3 (Argumentative Text): <i>What do you think about marriage during study period or after graduation? (or you can choose your own topics)</i>	Brainstorming, planning, drafting, and revising
Week 11	Post-test): What do you think about cooperative writing and/or collaborative writing?	The students completed the test in 50 minutes individually.
Week 12	Semi-structured interviews with the students and the teachers	

To encourage interdependence among group members when completing the three writing tasks, the teacher in the experimental group in particular emphasised the importance of shared responsibility for the group to work during the first collaborative writing task. To start the activities, the teacher, for instance, provided them with options regarding the topic selections for the writing tasks. That is, the students could develop either the topics given by the teacher or the ones they agreed on in their groups. Most groups chose to develop their own topics they generated during the pre-writing activities. They selected a particular topic which each group member was familiar with.

The teacher also ensured that the students understood the equally important role each group member had in the group throughout the task completion. If the students faced difficulties (e.g., task-related issues and problems regarding power dynamic and relationship formed in the groups), the teacher acted as a facilitator to address the problems. The teacher eventually let the students in the group to make decisions regarding their work. For instance, in the revision process, each group member pooled their resources before deciding to change errors (e.g., regarding grammar, spellings, and punctuation) in their texts. Thus, during all stages of the collaborative writing activities, they had a sense of ownership of the joint text.

Research Instruments

The data collection techniques in this study involved the use of different research instruments, including pre- and post-tests, observations, semi-structured interviews with learners and teachers, and researcher fieldnotes. Descriptions of these instruments are outlined below.

Pre- and Post-Tests

In this quasi-experimental study, a pretest-posttest design was employed in order to investigate student participants' performance before and after the experimental manipulation (Creswell, 2015). Both experimental and control groups whose participants were randomly assigned by class completed pre- and post-tests. Results of these tests were used and compared to see any changes or differences across the groups before and after the intervention. For pre- and post-tests, participants were assigned to write 500-word descriptive texts. The following section illustrates the writing rubric used to rate participants' written texts.

Analytical Writing Rubric

Participants' written texts were assessed by using an analytical writing rubric (see Appendix 3.). The rubric is based on the understanding that composition consists of different components (Weigle, 2002), which enables teachers to retrieve information from students' writing performance. Moreover, it is deemed to be more suitable for L2 writing contexts as it provides assessment with more details (Weigle, 2002). As noted earlier in Chapter 2, previous studies investigating the effect of CW tasks on L2 learners have also used a similar analytical writing rubric to assess written texts and showed insightful results (e.g. Shehadeh, 2011).

The writing rubric includes six component areas: topic development, organization, details, sentences, wording, and mechanics on a 4-point scale. Each component may receive a mark of one (the lowest mark) to four (the highest), thus 24 was the highest score a participant text could obtain. The writing rubric was used to determine the difference in the students' writing performance between the two groups on the pre- and post-tests. Prior to being used in the present study, the rubric was used by the researcher

and his colleagues to assess L2 students' written output in their regular writing classes over the past years, and it was considered to be robust. To ensure the consistency of the scoring rubric, inter-rater reliability (i.e. the consistency of a measure evaluated by two different raters) was conducted for both students' pre- and post-test essays. Six essays were randomly selected and were scored by another rater. After discussing the scoring criteria for each task with another rater and independently scoring the essays, the overall inter-rater reliability was 0.95 through a measure of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient employing the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) Version 23. In particular, the two raters' scores were consistent. Therefore, the researcher found that the rubric was reliable for the study.

Observations

As a frequently used method in classroom research, it is important to observe learners' behaviors and interactions in real-life situations during the treatment activities. According to Creswell (2015, p. 211), observation is "the process of gathering open-ended, firsthand information by observing people and places at a research site". Observation is also considered "a useful means for gathering in-depth information about such phenomena as the types of language, activities, interactions, instruction, and events that occurs in second and foreign language classrooms" (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 187). In other words, it allows researchers to directly record actual interaction in a natural setting. However, direct observation may influence participants' behaviors being investigated. Therefore, the researcher involved as an outsider or a nonparticipant observer whose role was apparent to participants during the classroom observation. This role could make student and teacher participants comfortable in classroom activities.

During the 12-week intervention, the student participants were assigned into four classes. While two classes worked with collaborative approach (the experiment groups), the other two worked in traditionally groups (control groups). In each class, the participated were given three types of writing tasks: descriptive, narrative, and argumentative texts. Each task (500-word text) was completed in three weeks. During the classroom observation, the researcher kept field notes of the observations. The researcher examined how learners actively participated in co-constructing writing tasks given. This process included brainstorming, planning, drafting, and revising. In particular, the researcher not only took fieldnotes, but also recorded their dialogues in producing written texts collaboratively.

Collaborative dialogues took place when participants had to interact with peers in their groups to solve language related problems discussed during CW activities. According to Swain (2000, p. 102), “collaborative dialogue is dialogue in which speakers engaged in problem solving and knowledge building”. In other words, it provides ASL learners with opportunities to use the L2 with their peers while producing jointly written texts. In the study, the recorded collaborative dialogues were analysed based on language-related episodes (LREs). As a result, the analysis provided a better understanding of the processes and products of L2 learning during CW activities.

LREs are “any part of dialogue where students talk about the language they are producing, question their language use, or correct themselves or others” (Swain & Lapkin, 1998, p. 326). When dealing with linguistic problems, L2 learners commonly discuss these problems in order to solve them. There are three types of LREs: 1) form-focused LRE (i.e. grammatical elements such as subject-verb agreements, tenses, or word formation); 2) lexical-focused LRE (i.e. a specific word to make meaning); and

3) mechanical-focused LRE (i.e. the spelling of a specific word). Swain (2000) states that the analysis of collaborative dialogues provides rich information about L2 learners' cognitive and their knowledge building processes. Therefore, it is important to observe and record participants' collaborative dialogues as a tool to identify aspects of language participants may encounter during CW activities.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Interviews are essential means for collecting information in studies involving human experiences and views which participants have on issues investigated. Interviews are typically structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. Of the three types, a semi-structured interview is more flexible in nature as a researcher may have a general idea of the interview flow (Creswell, 2015). In other words, more open questions can be created in a semi-structured interview to gain additional information. For this reason, the research employed semi-structured interviews with student and teacher participants (see Appendix 2). All interviews were held in Arabic and were audiotaped.

Field Notes

Research fieldnotes are considered essential data in observation (Creswell, 2015). Fieldnotes can be used to record any detail of information during observation or interview sessions. There are two different types of fieldnotes: descriptive and reflective. While descriptive fieldnotes "record a description of the events, activities, and people (e.g. what happened), reflective field notes record personal thoughts that researchers have that relate to their insights, hunches, or broad ideas or themes that emerge during the observation (e.g. what sense you made of the site, people, and situation)" (Creswell, 2015, p. 215). Therefore, the researcher had to be able to differentiate between what was observed and what was inferred during the classroom

observation. All fieldnotes were systematically classified and organised in order to be used in any future stage of the research.

Data Analysis

In general, the data generated in the project were analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively. To address research questions regarding patterns of interaction, the frequency of LREs and how the participants resolved LREs, and teacher and student perceptions, qualitative data (i.e. recordings of learners' collaborative dialogues, observation field notes, recorded interviews with learners and teachers) were analysed. Following Storch (2001b), the analysis of the qualitative data was conducted in two phases: global analysis and micro-level analysis. In Phase 1, qualitative global analysis was used to classify the overall patterns of interactions. The researcher transcribed recordings of learners' verbal interactions and analysed how each small group in both the experimental and control classes engaged with the CW tasks. The researcher used Storch's (2002) dyadic interaction model drawing on Damon and Phelps' (1989) criteria of (1) *equality*, identified as the degree of participants' contribution to the joint tasks; and (2) *mutuality*, measured as the degree of engagement with a peer's contribution. Examining pair interaction patterns of ESL tertiary students by setting up equality and mutuality along two axes, as shown in Figure 4 below, Storch (2002) classified four patterns of interactions: 1) collaborative (high level of equality and mutuality); 2) dominant/dominant (high level of equality, but low level of mutuality); 3) dominant/passive (low level of equality and mutuality); and 4) expert/novice (high level of mutuality but unequal contribution).

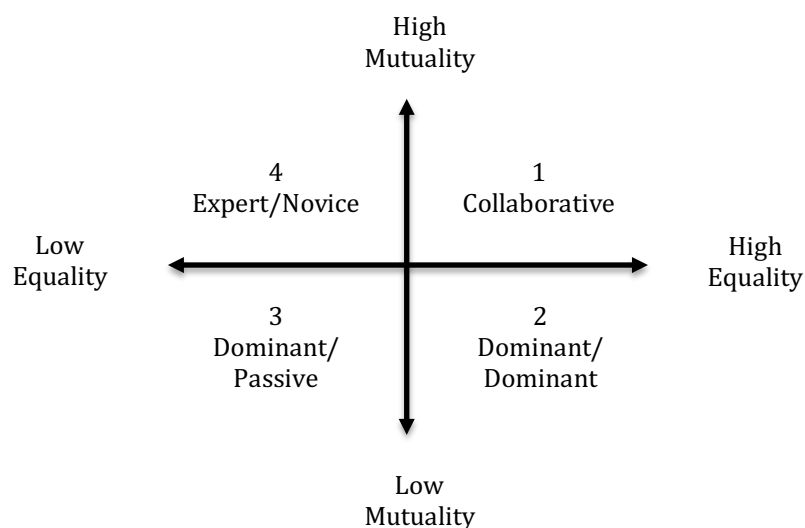


Figure 4. A Dyadic Interaction Model (Storch, 2002, 2013)

Based on a holistic view of the qualitative data (i.e. primarily the transcription data of students' verbal interactions), in Phase 2 (the micro-level analysis), the researcher purposefully selected four small groups (i.e. Group 2 and 6 from the experimental classes, and Group 5 and 6 from the control classes) which were typical of both experimental and control classes. In particular, the selection was based on the principle of maximum variations (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Hence, it allowed the researcher to conduct an in-depth case study of each group and to explain them in detail. In this phase, the researcher closely examined how the four selected small groups approached the CW tasks within each group along with the important features which related to each pattern of small group interaction. Specifically, the analysis identified types of activities in on-task episodes while engaging in CW tasks. Table 6 shows the taxonomy of codes for on-task episodes. Interview data were then analysed to explain how teachers and students perceived their experiences in CW tasks.

Table 6. The Taxonomy of codes for on-task episodes (Storch, 2001b)

Activites	Definitions/Examples
1. Requests and Questions	e.g. <i>What do you think?</i> (request for an opinion), <i>What can I say?</i> (self-directed question).
2. Explanations	They can be provided as responses to requests (solicited), or as an elaboration on a suggestion made (unsolicited). e.g. <i>I think..., because..., it means...</i>
3. Repetitions	There are two types of repetitions: self- and other-repetitions.
4. Simultaneous talk and collaborative completions	Simultaneous talks where the two or more group members talk at the same time; collaborative completions where one group member completing an utterance initiated by the other group members.
5. Phatic utterances	“Utterances that have no content, but serve to maintain the flow of conversation” (Lockhart & Ng, 1995, p. 654) e.g. <i>ok, yeah, ummm, oh</i>
6. Pronouns	Pronouns used by group members to address each other. e.g. first person singular (<i>I</i>), second person (<i>you</i>), first person plural (<i>we</i>)

To address the last research question, quantitative data (i.e. students’ pre- and post-test scores) were analysed statistically by using *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) version 23.0 application. This application was applied to compare results of pre- and post-tests from experimental and traditional groups. Since the study was primarily a quasi-experimental design with non-equivalent comparison groups (i.e. no control group assignment through the mechanism of random assignment due to inadequate resources to conduct randomization), the analysis procedure employed one way *analysis of variance* (ANOVA) to statistically control differences or extraneous variables between treated and comparison groups that may affect results of the experiment (Green & Salkind, 2003; Hinkel et al., 2003). Through this procedure, the researcher was able to examine the effect of collaborative writing (i.e. as an independent variable) on ASL learners’ writing outcomes (i.e. a dependent variable), although student participants were not assigned randomly to treated and comparison groups. The following table outlines the research purposes, data sources, data analysis, and anticipated findings.

Table 7. Research Purposes, Data, and Anticipated Findings

Research Questions	Data sources	Data analysis	Anticipated Findings
RQ1. Examining how ASL learners engage with each other during the writing tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recorded collaborative dialogues in producing jointly Arabic written texts Field notes 	Thematic analysis of the transcripts	Description of how <i>learners</i> worked during the production of their jointly ASL written texts.
RQ2. Investigating the differences between collaborative writing groups and traditional small groups in terms of the frequency of LREs produced and how LREs are resolved during small group interaction?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recorded collaborative dialogues in producing jointly Arabic written texts Field notes 	Content analysis for identifying Language related Episodes (LREs)	Description of how <i>learners</i> contributed to the production of their jointly ASL written texts
RQ3. Investigating ASL teachers' and learners' perceptions on CW approach	Recorded semi-structured interview with teachers and learners	Thematic analysis of interviews	A better understanding of how teachers and learners reflected on their CW experiences in the classroom.
RQ 4. Examining the difference in learners' ASL writing performance in collaborative writing groups and traditional small groups, and the linguistic and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparing pre- and post-writing tests scores Learners' written texts Field notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistical analysis by employing ANOVA Content analysis for identifying the linguistic and rhetorical features of writings 	Estimation of whether there were significant differences between treated and comparison groups after giving such a treatment, and

<p> rhetorical features of writings in the two instructional modes that may explain the differences in their performance </p>	<p> explanation of linguistic and rhetorical features of writings in the two instructional modes </p>
--	--

Summary

This chapter described how the study was designed and implemented in ASL writing classrooms. The chapter described three different approaches to educational research, their features, and their strengths and weaknesses. It then reviewed the rationale for choosing an embedded quasi-experimental mixed-method design. It described the setting where the study was conducted including participants, research instruments, data collection and analysis. Moreover, detailed information about the source of data used in the study and the analysis process was presented with regard to the four research questions. The next four chapters (Chapters 4 to 7) report on and discusses the findings of the data analysis regarding the patterns of interaction, the nature of Language Related Episodes (LREs), teacher and student perceptions, and the effect of CW on students' writing skills.

Chapter 4. Patterns of Small Group Interaction

The purpose of the study was to investigate the implementation of CW and its effects on ASL students' writing skills. The data analysis and the interpretation of the results were based on the framework of Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory (SCT). This chapter focuses on addressing the first research question: "How do ASL learners engage with each other during the writing tasks?". In particular, patterns of interaction along with the characteristics that *define these* patterns identified during classroom observations and in students' verbal interactions are presented.

This chapter begins with the overall patterns of interaction and some of the important features of each pattern. Excerpts from the data transcripts and the researcher's field notes are used to describe these varied patterns of interaction. The second part of chapter reports results from the more detailed examination of the data. Even though these results are described for the complete data set (i.e. 32 small groups from both the experimental and control classes), the researcher presents and discusses the data of four small groups more comprehensively in the second part of the chapter. The researcher provides transcripts of student verbal interaction in order to illustrate how different treatments may have influenced patterns of interaction. In particular, the researcher reports on how different patterns of interaction may facilitate language learning that probably result in different learning outcomes.

General Patterns of Small Group Interactions

In ASL writing classes, patterns of interaction attributed to how small groups of ASL students negotiated and engaged with each other while jointly completing three writing tasks – narrative, descriptive, and argumentative texts – within a 9-week period were explored. The activities designed for the study were completed inside the class. As

noted in Chapter 3, there were four classes consisting of 16 students in each participating in the study (n=64). Two classes were set as experimental groups while the other two groups were controls. While experimental groups employed a collaborative writing approach, the control groups just used traditional group work. The two groups were taught by different teachers. Students' verbal interactions within their groups were recorded and transcribed, and their behaviors were noted during the classroom observations. Therefore, the primary data sources consisted of recordings of students' verbal interactions and field notes.

Drawing on the work by Storch (2002) cited earlier in Chapter 2, 48 transcripts across the three given tasks were coded. To establish the reliability of the findings, inter-rater reliability was ensured. The researcher and a colleague coded a randomly chosen sample of 15 transcripts (about 5 transcripts from each task type). This sample represented 31% of the data set. Applying Miles and Huberman's (1994, p. 64) formula to assess inter-rater reliability of the coding, where the total number of agreements are divided by the total number of ratings, the inter-rater reliability was 95% (an acceptable level of coding reliability).

The researcher identified the four main patterns of interactions among group members across the tasks (see Table 8): collaborative (i.e. when group members worked together, negotiated, engaged with all parts of the tasks); dominant/passive (i.e. while one or two group members dominated the group work, the rest took a more passive stance); cooperative (i.e. group members divided the tasks and there was no engagement with each other's contribution); and expert/novice (i.e. when one or two group members acted as 'expert' and invited the other members to engage with the tasks and assisted

them during the process). The frequency of these patterns of interactions in the experimental and control groups is reported in Table 9.

Table 8. Patterns of interaction in the experimental and control groups across the tasks

Groups	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3
Experimental			
1	Collaborative	Collaborative	Collaborative
2	Expert/Novice	Expert/Novice	Expert/Novice
3	Expert/Novice	Collaborative	Expert/Novice
4	Expert/Novice	Collaborative	Dominant/Passive
5	Dominant/Passive	Expert/Novice	Collaborative
6	Collaborative	Collaborative	Collaborative
7	Expert/Novice	Expert/Novice	Collaborative
8	Collaborative	Expert/Novice	Collaborative
Control			
1	Dominant/Passive	Dominant/Passive	Cooperative
2	Dominant/Passive	Cooperative	Cooperative
3	Cooperative	Cooperative	Expert/Novice
4	Expert/Novice	Cooperative	Cooperative
5	Dominant/Passive	Dominant/Passive	Dominant/Passive
6	Cooperative	Cooperative	Cooperative
7	Dominant/Passive	Cooperative	Dominant/Passive
8	Dominant/Passive	Dominant/Passive	Dominant/Passive

Table 9. The frequency of interaction patterns across the experimental and control groups

Patterns of interaction	Experimental	Control
Collaborative	12	-
Cooperative	-	11
Dominant/Passive	2	11
Expert/Novice	10	2

The researcher illustrates these patterns of interactions by presenting excerpts from *the transcriptions of students' verbal interactions* in both the experimental and control groups. Further instances and more in-depth analysis of the important characteristics of the patterns will be provided in the second section of the chapter.

Experimental Groups

In general, the experimental (collaborative writing) groups showed a high level of engagement among group members which was the most defining feature of a collaborative writing approach (see Excerpt 1). During their interactions, they had opportunities to initiate ideas and pool them to allow reflective thinking. The learners' engagement drew out the competence of each group member to create complementary contributions to the jointly produced texts. Some features of negotiation were also observed in the experimental groups such as clarification requests, confirmation checks, and comprehension checks. This negotiation enabled learners to promote mutual accountability and to enhance critical self-reflection and joint decision-making in the writing process. Thus, they were able to reach consensus after negotiating different opinions. Further, since each group member had different levels of language proficiency, knowledge and experiences, they shared their expertise. While some were good at content and organization, others had more knowledge of grammar and writing mechanics, for example. These interactions were observed at all stages of writing including brainstorming and planning (pre-writing), drafting, and editing. The experimental groups tended to be more student-centred as they equally contributed to the tasks and mutually engaged with each other's contribution. They also shared authority and responsibility and showed mutual respect. They highlighted group members' abilities and contributions to the writing tasks.

Collaborative Pattern

Excerpt 1 below was selected from the interaction in one of the experimental groups (i.e. Group 6) – comprising Harith (H), Balam (B), Sayifullah (S), and Nadir (N) and was coded collaborative. They jointly contributed to develop the topic of their essay

and engaged with each other's ideas. They extended each other's ideas (e.g. lines 22-25, 28-33). They engaged with each other's opinions by providing positive feedback in order to confirm their agreements (e.g. lines 23, 25, 29-32, 34-35). There are also a few examples of requests for opinions (e.g. lines 25, 29, 36). The brainstorming process seems to run smoothly as they proceed to the next idea to write in their composition (e.g. line 39). Hence, both equality and mutuality are high in this interactional pattern as displayed in Excerpt 1.

- Excerpt 1 (Experimental Group (6) – Descriptive Task)
Group 6 brainstormed the topic to be developed in their essay.
- 22 S انا أحد أفكارى .. التي أنا كتبتها هي لا بد ... نذكر سبب في تعلم اللغة العربية
[one of my points... that I wrote is we have to... mention reason for learning Arabic]
- 23 H ممتاز سيف الله ... وأنا كتبت مثل ذلك لأنها هي مثل أساس في تعلم اللغة
[excellent Sayifullah... and I wrote like that because it is like a basic in learning the language]
- 24 B أقول ممكن ... من ممكن نتفق في الفكرة الواحدة ... بعدين نكتبها في النهاية
[I say maybe... maybe we could agree in one idea... then we wrote it at the end]
- 25 H أحسنت ... وأنا أتفق معك ... ما رأيكم يا شباب؟ ما نكتب السبب؟... نادر؟
[excellent... I agree with you.. what do you think guys? What reason do we write?... Nadir?]
- 26 N ... أنا كنت ... أفكر في...
[I was... no nothing...]
- 27 H كنت ماذا؟ ... قل.. لا بد تكون شجاعا (بتبسم)
[was what?... say it... you need to be courageous (smiling)]
- 28 N كنت (٧) في اعتقادي نكتب سبب هو... من أجل التعلم دين الإسلام
[I was (7) in my opinion we write the reason ... for learning about Islam]
- 29 H ممتاز أحسنت يا نادر ... ما رأيكم؟
[Excellent! well done Nadir... what do you think?]
- 30 S صح... هو سبب كويس
[right... it is a good reason]
- 31 B جيد (٥) أنا عندي نقطة ... سبب ثاني ... أفضل ممكن
[good (5) I have a point... another reason.. maybe better]
- 32 H د عادي ... نستطيع نكتب أكثر من سبب واحد
[ok... we could write more than one reason]
- 33 B سبب ثاني هو ... حتى نعود بلادنا ونعلم الناس القرآن الكريم
[another reason is... we could go back to our countries and teach people the Noble Qur'an]
- 34 S كذا؟ أحسنت ... أنا أقول أن نكتب هذا .. قصدي تعليم قران يكون سبب الأول هكذا؟ ترون ...
[good... I say we write this... I mean teaching Qur'an is the first reason... you see this?]

- 35 H نعم لأن هذا أهم سبب في تعلم لغة العربية
[yes because this is more important in learning Arabic]
- 36 S وأنت يا نادر؟
[and you Nadir?]
- 37 N إيوا ... هو سبب مهم نكتبه في الأول
[yeah ((slang))... it is important reason we write first]
- 38 H أحسنتم يا أصدقائي (بيتسم)
[well done my friends (smiling)]
- 39 B هيا نسمع في الفكرة ثانية
[lets hear the second idea]

Excerpt 2 also illustrated this collaborative pattern of group interaction. It showed how the argumentative text was jointly drafted by Redaullah (R), AboBakr (Abo), Hafiz (H), and Abdullah (Abd). They completed each other's sentences (e.g. lines 244-245, 249-252), or reformulated each other's contributions (e.g. lines 246-248). Therefore, this pattern of interaction provided the students with learning opportunities.

- Excerpt 2 (Experimental Group (1) - Argumentative task)
Group 1 drafted their text.
- 244 H:: وكذلك حينما حينما يعود...
[also when when he gets back...]
- 245 R: يعود من الجامعة
[gets back from university]
- 246 H: نعم... من الجامعة إلى بيته
[yes... from university to his house]
- 247 Abd: إلى منزله؟
[to his home]
- 248 H: (بيتسم) صحيح إلى منزله أحسن
[(smile) right to his home better]
- 249 R: يجد ... يجد ااا الطعام جاهزا
[he finds ... finds aaa the food ready]
- 250 Abo: أولا يقابل أولاده ثم... يجد الطعام
[first he meets his kids then... he finds the food]
- 251 H: طيب ... يعود من الجامعة إلى منزله ...
[ok... he gets back from university to his home...]
- 252 R: فيقابل أولاده
[then he meets his kids]
- 253 Abo: ايوه؟
[yeah?]
- 254 Abd: ويجد الطعام جاهزا
[and finds the food ready]
- 255 R: اها ممتاز
[aha excellent]

During the interaction, they equally contribute to the tasks, and mutually engage with each other's contribution. Once disagreements over grammatical or vocabulary choices emerge, collaborative small groups tend to resolve such disagreements. They often offer justifications and explanations to convince other group members. In Excerpt 3, Harith (H), Balam (B), and Nadir (N) disagreed about the verb form (spreads vs spread). Instead of forcing his viewpoint, Harith drew Balam and Nadir's attention to link the word "history" with past tense (lines 131-137). Nadir eventually accepted the resolution (line 138) since he could understand the justification for it.

- Excerpt 3 (Experimental Group (6) - Descriptive task)
They were on drafting stage.
- 131 B: نقول مم ولقد تنتشر اللغة العر-
[we say mm the Ara- language spreads]
- 132 H: تنتشر؟
[spreads?]
- 133 N: نعم... فيه خطأ؟
[yes... something wrong?]
- 134 H: أعتقد نكتب انتشرت ... أنت تتكلم في تاريخ تاريخ اللغة العربية؟
[I think you write spread ((past form)) ... you are talking about Arabic language history history?]
- 135 N:: نعم ...
[yes...]
- 136 B: تاريخ... طيب تاريخ يعني متى؟
[history... ok history means when?]
- 137 H: في القديم
[in the past]
- 138 N: طيب... تستخدم فعل ماضي إذا كتبت في القديم ... صح؟
[ok... you use past tense when you write in the past ... right?]
- 139 H: اها... صح... أعتقد هذا
[aha... right... I think so]

In Excerpt 4, the group members were deliberating regarding verb tense for the verb 'get'. Sayifullah was clearly uncertain about the correct tense (line 300). Harith attempted to suggest the present tense 'gets' by stressing the use of adverb of time 'once a week'. Harith also used confirmation request "maybe he gets out?" (line 304). Nadir confirmed the choice (line 305).

- Excerpt 4 (Experimental Group (6) - Argumentative task)
They were on editing stage

- 299 H: "في الجامعة ويقوم بالمذاكرة في المكتبة وخرج مع أهله مرة واحدة في الأسبوع" (يقراً النص)) مم نقول
خارجاً مع أهله ... أو ...
[“at the university and he studies at the library and got out with his family once a week” ((reading text)) mm we say going out ... or ...]
- 300 S: ماذا؟ تقصد خرج؟
[what? You mean got out?]
- 301 H: نعم ... هي ...
[yes... it ...]
- 302 N: هنا هي (٥) فعل ماضي... ثلاثة أحرف يعني فعل ماضٍ...
[here it is (5) past tense ... three letters means past tense...]
- 303 S: نقول ... خرج مع أهله ...
[we say ... he got out with his family]
- 304 H: ممكن يخرج؟ يخرج مع أهله مرة ... مرة واحدة في الأسبوع
[maybe he gets out? Gets out with his family once... once a week]
- 305 N: نعم ... أعتقد ذلك ... صح يخرج يخرج
[yes... I think so... right he gets out he gets out]

As *Excerpt 4* displays above, in collaborative small groups, no group member acts as an ‘expert’. Rather, all members act as equal novices, providing suggestions and asking for confirmations from each other. The decision of the correct grammar is resolved through a dialogic process of mutual assistance.

Excerpt 5 also shows evidence of co-construction reached via dialogic interaction. Here Hafiz, Redaullah, and AboBakr discussed the choice of correct word form (‘test’). The initial assistance was provided by Redaullah questioning Hafiz’s choice of the noun form of the word ‘test’ (line 140). As a result, Hariz considered the use of word ‘test’ (line 141), and supported by AboBakr, they all agreed that the noun form of the word is required in this context. Here, it can be seen that the language learning happens when they discuss the choice of word forms.

- Excerpt 5 (Experimental Group (1) - Argumentative task)
They were on drafting stage
- 137 H: في يختبر في ... في المادة
[in he is tested in... in the subject]
- 138 R: يختبر في ...
[he is tested in ...]
- 139 H: نعم يختبر في المادة ... و مم ينجح فيها بدرجة عالية
[yes tested in the subject... and mm he passes with high grade]
- 140 R: يختبر أو؟ ...
[he is tested or?...]
- 141 H: يختبر هو فعل مضارع ...

- 142 Abo: [tested is present tense ...]
 اها... بعد حرف جر لا بد نقول اسم... اختبار؟
 [aha ... after the proposition we have to write in noun form... test?]
- 143 R: نعم اختبار... نكتب اختبار
 [yes test... we write test]

Another important linguistic characteristic in the transcripts of small groups working collaboratively was that they often used first person plural pronouns ‘we’, as shown in Excerpt 6. Balam, Nadir, and Harith commonly use ‘we’ (e.g. lines 42, 45, 47, 48). The pronoun is employed to show a joint ownership and accountability on task completion. Storch (2002) also found in her data the frequent use of first person plural in the dialog of collaborative pairs. She contends that the predominant use of first person plural differentiated collaborative with non-collaborative group work.

- Excerpt 6 Experimental Group (6) - Descriptive task.
 They were on brainstorming stage
- 42 B: هذا سبب... ما رأيكم نقول سبب الثاني هو ناس يريدون ...
 [this is a reason... what do you think we say the second reason is people want...]
- 43 H: الناس (ال)
 [the people (the)]
- 44 B: الناس يريدون يعرفون الإسلام
 [the people want to know about Islam]
- 45 N: اها... ممتاز ثم نذكر بعد ذلك سبب الذي قاله بالام... ما هو يا بلام؟
 [aha... excellent then we mention the reason Balam said ... what is it Balam?]
- 46 B: مم ... سبب أن اللغة العربية هي لغة العلوم ... فيتعلمون الناس لكي يستفيدوا منها
 [mm... reason is the Arabic language is the language of knowledge... so the people learn to benefit from it]
- 47 H: فكرة جيدة... دعونا نكتبها عشان ما ننساها...
 [good idea... lets write so we don't forget it]
- 48 N: يا شباب... ما رأيكم لو ... نكتفي بأفكار قليلة وبعدين ... يعني نفصل فيها... بالتفصيل؟
 [guys... what do you think if ... have few ideas and then... I mean we elaborate in it... in detail?]
- 49 H: مم ... طيب ما في مشكلة ...
 [mm... ok no problem...]

Expert/Novice Pattern

Excerpt 7 displays an expert/novice pattern of interaction. The talk comes from Group 2 – Anas (An), Shakir (Sha), Shoab (Sho), and Asafar (As) – when they were at the revision stage. It shows that Anas and Shakir took the lead and assumed the role of

‘expert’. Anas (e.g. line 133) and Shakir (e.g. line 126) encouraged the novice (Asafar and Shoaib) to get involved in the discussion by requesting their opinions. They seemed to assist Asafar and Shoaib by giving explanations (e.g. lines 128, 131, 135, 137). As a result, Shoib, for instance, shared his opinion (e.g. line 136), and confirmed (e.g. line 130) that he understood the explanation provided. Despite low equality, the interaction in Excerpt 7 shows low to moderate mutuality.

Excerpt 7 (Experimental Group (2) – Narrative Task)
Group 2 revised their essay. They discussed about the use of article and punctuation.

- 119 An "وفي طريق عودتنا إلى مكة المكرمة طلبنا من أستاذ محمد التوقف..."
["In our way back to Makkah we asked teacher Mohammed to stop..."]
- 120 Sha أعتقد لا بد نقول الأستاذ وليس أستاذ
[I think we have to say الأستاذ ((teacher with the definite article)) not أستاذ ((teacher without definite article))]
- 121 Sho لماذا نقول هذا ... يمكن نقول ... مثل بعض
[Why we say that... we could say.. like some]
- 122 Sha لا بد نكتب مع ... المعرفة ... لأننا نتكلم في الشخص المعروف ... الأستاذ
[because we need to write with d-e-f... the definite... because we are talking about known person... the teacher]
- 123 An أحسنت يا شاكر ... صحيح... أنا قد نسيت هذا (بيتسم)
[well done Shakir... right.. I forgot this (smiling)]
- 124 An "طلبنا من الأستاذ محمد التوقف حتى نرى جبل أحد والأستاذ وافق ورأينا الجبل... " نحتاج نضع فاصلة هنا ... صحيح؟
["we asked the teacher Mohammed to stop to see the mountain Ohud and the teacher agreed and we saw the mountain..." we need to put comma here.. right?]
- 125 As مم (٦) لا أعرف ... لماذا نضع فاصلة؟
[mmm (6) I don't know... why we put comma?]
- 126 Sha أنا أعرف ... لكن أريد أن أسمع من شعيب
[I know... but I want to hear from Shoaib]
- 127 Sho (بيتسم) ما أعرف
[(smile) I don't know know]
- 128 An لأن الجملة انتهت ... بعد ذلك لابد نضع فاصلة .. صحيح يا شاكر؟
[because the sentence has finished... after that we have to put a comma... right Shakir?]
- 129 Sha نعم صحيح
[yes right]
- 130 Sho اها
[aha]
- 131 An "وقد شاهدنا من أعلى الجبل من مناظر عجيبة أشياء كثيرة" ... ممكن نكتب (ال) هنا ...
["and we saw from the top of the mountain wonderful views"... we may write ال ((the definite article)) here?.. right?]
- 132 As اها... أعتقد صحيح
[eeh.. I think right]
- 133 An متأكد؟
[sure?]
- 134 As لا ... لماذا نضع ال ((ال التعريف))?
[no... why we put ال ((the definite article))?]

- 135 An نعم... لا بد نكتب قبلها (ال)
[yes... we have to write ال ((the definite article)) before مناظر ((views))]
- 136 Sho ال نع ... ريف
[d-f-i-... definition?]
- 137 Sha ممتاز... هي اسمها (ال) تعريف ... أحسنت يا شعيب
[excellent... it is called definite article... well done Shoab]

Excerpt 8 also shows that the small group talk of the expert/novice pattern has several important characteristics of collaborative patterns described earlier. Shakir and Anas contributed to the task via requests (lines 69, 71) and explanations (lines 76, 77). On the other hand, Shoaib and Asafar attempted to join the discussion by sharing what they understood (lines 73, 75) and showing an agreement (line 78).

- Excerpt 8 (Experimental Group (2) - Narrative task)
This group was on brainstorming stage
- 69 Sha: ونكتب عن مم عن ... عن ... عن معرض أسماء الله المعروض كويس؟
[and we write about mm about... about... about Allah's ((The Almighty God)) names exhibition good?]
- 70 An: مم ما أدري ... ممكن
[mm I don't know ... maybe]
- 71 Sha: شباب ... هل نحتاج نكتب عن كيف اخت- كيف تم اختيارنا؟
[guys... do we need to write about how they cho- how have we been chosen?]
- 72 An: اها سؤال جيد (يضحك) ... أعتقد ذلك
[aha good question (laugh) ... I think so]
- 73 Sho: ونكتب كذلك عن ماذا عملنا ... يعني أنشطة في الطريق صح؟
[we also write about what we did... I mean activities in the way right?]
- 74 As: اففف متعب تفكير (بيبتسم)
[off thinking is tiring (smile)]
- 75 Sho: نكتب نقول نحن ... أو نقول أنا في الكتابة؟
[we write we... or we say I in the writing?]
- 76 An: أعتقد نقول نحن أحسن ...
[I think we better say we...]
- 77 Sha: نعم نحن... لأن الأستاذ يقول نكتب بالجماعة...
[yes we... because the teacher says we write in group...]
- 78 As: طيب
[ok]

Further, as Excerpt 8 shows, Shakir and Anas acting as 'expert', attempted to make sure joint contribution, assisting the 'novice' – Shoaib and Asafar – to come to a decision. For instance, this happened when they were discussing the choice of subject 'we' to be written in the text. Even though Asafar was still uncertain and thinking of what they would use in the sentence (line 74), Shakir's prompting (line 71) led to Asafar's success in solving the problem regarding the use of subject 'we' (line 78).

Anas also provided encouragement via agreement (line 72). In Excerpt 8, Shakir and Anas guided questions and expressions of support to encourage Shoaib and Asafar to reach a resolution instead of forcing their opinions. In particular, dialogue can be used to invite the novice in the process of resolving a problem.

Similarly, Excerpt 9 shows how Ujang (U) encouraged Abdulrahman (Ar) and Abdulqader (Aq) to contribute to the activity. Here the group were trying to reconstruct the given sentence “the teacher has a good role in teaching students”.

- Excerpt 9 (Experimental Group (4) - Descriptive task)
They were on editing stage.
- 304 U: "والمعلم يقوم بدور جيد.."
[and the teacher has a good role..."]
- 305 Aq: جيد
[good]
- 306 U: "دور جيد ... في تعليم الطلاب"
[“good role in teaching the students”]
- 307 Aq: في تعليم الطلاب
[in teaching the students]
- 308 U: ما رأيكم؟ ... ااا
[what do you think? ... aaa]
- 309 Abd: لكن ااا
[but aaa]
- 310 Ar: ايوه؟...
[yeah?...]
- 311 Abd: اااه... لسؤال هو هل ... هل هناك كلمة ممكن تكون أفضل من جيد ؟ كلمة مثل مم مثلا فعال ... المعلم يقوم بدور فعال في تعليم الطلاب... ما رأيك؟
[aah... the question is ... is there a word better than good? A word like mm for example effective ... the teacher has an effective role in teaching students ... what do you think?]
- 312 U: مم... ما أعتقد ممكن تقول فعال هنا
[mm... I don't think saying effective fits here]
- 313 Aq: مم
[mm]
- 314 U: في هذه الحالة يعني...
[in this case you mean...]
- 315 Abd: لكن ... لكن أنا لست أنا لست متأكد بس أشعر
[but... but I'm not sure but I feel]
- 316 Ar: ايوا ايوا طيب (يضحك)
[yeah yeah yeah ok (laugh)]
- 317 Abd: وأنت
[and you]
- 318 Ar: نعم أعتقد ذلك
[yes I think so]
- 319 Abd: (يضحك)
[(laugh)]
- 320 Aq: المعلم يقوم بدور
[the teacher has a role]
- 321 Ar: فعال؟
[effective?]

- 322 U: جيد في تعليم الطلاب
[good in teaching students]
- 323 Aq: مم ... (يزيل)
[mm ... (rubs out)]

Discussion on "good role in teaching the students" was initiated by Ujang (lin 306). Abdulqader tried to think the noun collocation (line 307). Ujang asked other opinions and was responded by Abdurrazaq (Abd) with a tentative suggestion (lines 311, 315). Abdulrahman also seemed to go with the flow of discussion (lines 316, 318). When Abdulrahman offered his opinion (line 321), Ujang just corrected it (line 322). To conclude, like the collaborative pattern of interaction, the expert/novice pattern of interaction also facilitated language learning as shown in Excerpts 7-9.

Control Groups

Control groups, on the other hand, involved little social interaction among group members. At the beginning of the writing process, they had already shared their responsibilities (see Excerpt 10). Few conflicts or differences in opinions were observed during the writing process. They tended to focus only on their individual part. Little negotiation or engagement with each other's contribution occurred between the group members. They did not pool their resources to create the joint writing tasks. Further, in control groups, there were group members who played more authoritative roles than others. Therefore, it was more directive than collaborative, as closely monitored by the researcher.

Cooperative Pattern

Excerpt 10 exemplifies an interaction pattern classified as cooperative. The group consists of Zayan (Z), Maiz (M), Arish (Ar), and Aish (Ai). There seems to be a clear division of labor in Excerpt 10. When Maiz read the text aloud so everyone could hear

it, he asked Zayan's help (line 208). However, Zayan stated that it was Maiz's role to edit the essay (line 209). In some instances, Aish, Arish and Zayan provided feedback in order to confirm the uncertainties in the text (e.g. lines 211, 215, 217, 223). Even though each group member contributed to the essay, there is limited engagement with each other's feedback. In other words, the interaction is moderate on equality, but low on mutuality.

Excerpt 10 (Control Group (6) – Descriptive Task)

- They edited their essay – the use of prepositions, the article and word choices.
- 208 M: "ويقوم بمساعدتك عند حاجتك إليه... ممكن تساعدوني... (بيتسم) في مراجعة؟"
[he helped you when you are in need of him... can you help me... (smiling) in the editing?]
- 209 Z: هذا دورك... ما فيه مشكلة تفضل... أكمل
[this is your role... no problem go ahead... continu]
- 210 M: شكرا "وإذا ما حضرت إلى جامعة هو يعطيك الدرس عندما يعود"
thanks "and if you don't attend to university he will give you the notes when he"
[come]
- 211 Ai: لا... لا.. هي صحيحة في صحيحة.. أكمل
[no... no... it is true in ture ... continue]
- 212 M: "وصديق المثالي هو"
["and your ideal friend is..."] ((friend is without the definite article))
- 213 Z: قف
[stop]
- 214 M: ماذا؟
[what?]
- 215 Z: الصديق... فيه أل... اكتبها
[friend ... there is (al) ... write it]
- 216 M: طيب.. ال " والصديق المثالي هو يعطيك من المال إذا أنت تحتاج... ودين الإسلام يحث.. بحث؟ ما يحث معناها؟
] [ok... (al) "and the ideal friend gives you the money when you need it... and Islam urges..."] urge? What urge means
- 217 Ar: يعني... يعني يشجع يكون أصدقاء
[it means... meaning encourage to be friends]
- 218 M: اها.. فهمت... أكمل؟
[?aha... understood... Shall I continue]
- 219 Ar: نعم
[yes]]
- 220 M: "ودين الإسلام يحث على الص... ما؟ الكلمة هذي؟"
["islam urges to ..."] what? What is this word?
- 221 Ar: أين؟

- [where?]
- 222 M: هنا ((يشير إلى الكلمة))
[here ((pointing to the word))]
- 223 Ar: على الصداقة ... يحث على الصداقة
[on friendship... urge on the friendship]
- 224 M: "يحث على الصداقة لأن الله يحبها"
[“urge on the friendship because Allah ((God)) loves it...”]

A similar pattern was emerged from Excerpt 11. When Yaseen (Y) discussed the sentence ‘the guys get married’, Omar (O) did not seem to agree with the word ‘the guy’ and offered a suggestion ‘the student’ (lines 188-189). However, Yaseen did not have any willingness to consider Omar’s suggestion. Rather, he imposed his opinion in order to resolve it. Similarly, Mohammed (M) tried to invite Ghiyasudden (G) into the discussion, but Ghiyasudden showed no interest to talk about it (lines 191-194). It is evident that they focused on separate parts of the task – there was no reformulation or seeking confirmations. There was an inability to engage with each other’s suggestions.

Excerpt 11 (Control Group (1) - Argumentative task)

- They were on drafting stage.
- 188 Y: نكتب هنا ... مم وقد يتزوج الفتى...
[we write here ... mm and the guy gets married...]
- 189 O: مم.. الفتى؟ ما تقول الطالب؟
[mm... the guy? You don't say the student?]
- 190 Y: لا لا... الفتى أحسن... نقول وقد يتزوج الفتى ... و ... و ثم بعد ذلك يكون يكون مشغولا في ...
[no no ... the guy is better... we say the guy gets married... and...then after that he would be busy with...]
- 191 M: قياس الدين
[Ghiyasudden]
- 192 G: نعم؟
[yes]
- 193 M: تذهب xxx
[do you go xxx]
- 194 G: xxx
[xxx]
- 195 M: في xxx ويذهب بأهله ... بأهله إلى الس- السوق نعم ... وبعد...
[with xxx and he goes with his family ... with his family to shop- shopping yes... and after...]
- 196 Y: تقول أهله وأولاده؟
[you say his family and his kids?]
- 197 M: لا لا بس أهله... نكمل...

- 198 G: [no no just ((slang)) his family... we continue...]
 كم بقي؟
 [how much time left?]
- 199 M: باقي... مم واحد اثنين ثلاثة ثلاثة أسطر
 [still ... mm one two three three lines]
- 200 G: طيب... حصة القادمة نحن في التعديل النص
 [ok... next class we do text editing]
- 201 Y: ايوه
 [yeah]
- 202 G: استاذ يقول xxx
 [teacher says xxx]
- 203 M: مطعم ال xxx
 [the restaurant of xxx]
- 204 G: طيب
 [ok]

Further, Excerpt 12 showed the group members' inability to engage with each other's suggestions. While Maiz (M) was uncertain about the verb use and asked about it to Arish (Ar) (line 252), Zayan (Z) and Ai (Aish) did not show any attempt to contribute to it. They just let Maiz (M) edit the text alone (lines 258, 261).

Excerpt 12 (Control Group (6) - Descriptive task)
 They were on editing stage.

- 252 M: "ويكون صديق المثالي يحب الخير في الناس ويعطي صديقه نصيحة عندما يكون خاطئا" مم ((يقرأ النص))
 و ثم (٧) هذي ايش
 ["the ideal friend loves doing good to people and gives his friend an advice when he is wrong" mm ((reading text)) and then (7) what is this ((slang))]
- 253 Ar: فين؟
 [where ((slang))?]
- 254 M: هذي
 [this]
- 255 Ar: ويع- ويعطيه
 [and he gi- and he gives him]
- 256 M: "ويعطيه الذي يريد وأيضا يساعده إذا كان فقيرا"
 ["and he gives him what he wants and helps him too when he is poor"]
- 257 Ar: ايوا
 [yeah]
- 258 M: "وإذا اشترى حاجة جديدة لأولاده هو لا بد لا بد يعطي صديقه أولاده منها حتى ينسبطوا وينشرح صدرهم" مم
 (٦)
 ["and when he bought a new stuff for his kids he should he should give his friend's kids of them so they get happy" mm (6)]
- 259 Z: متى تنتهي الحصة؟ xxx
 [when does the class finish? xxx]
- 260 Ai: xxx
 [xxx]
- 261 M: "في بعض الوقت يكون الصديق هو تعبان" مم هنا هو هو لا ... الصديق تعبان ... "يكون الصديق تعبان فلا يوجد أحد لا بد صديق يكون موجودا..."
 ["sometimes a friend he is sick" mm here he he no... the friend is sick... "the friend is sick and he doesn't find anyone..."]

Dominant/Passive Pattern

Group 5 from the control groups in Excerpt 13 displayed a dominant/passive pattern of interaction. While Aneel (An) was quite active and dominated the discussion, Azyz (Az), Adil (Ad), and Ifham (I) showed limited participation (passive). As can be seen in Excerpt 13, Aneel explained how to complete the task and asked other group members to be involved (lines 1, 8). However, Adil and Azyz did not do their work. Rather, they talked about something irrelevant to the task. Thus, the interaction in Excerpt 13 was low both on equality and mutuality.

- Excerpt 13 (Control Group (5) – Argumentative Task)
Group 5 brainstormed the topic to be developed in their essay.
- 1 An: عزيز وعادل... أنتم تفكرون ثم تكتبون أفكار في الورقة... ثم.. بعدين نبدأ في المرحلة الكتابة.. موافقين؟
Azyz, Adil... you think first then write your ideas in the paper.... Then... then.. after that we start writing stage... agree?
- 2 Ad: طيب
ok.
- 3 Az: ايوه
Yeah
- (after a while, Az and Ad are talking in French about off-topic matter – the university enrolment process)
- 4 An: عادل... عزيز..
Adil...Azyz..
- 5 Ad: نعم؟!
Yes!?!
- 6 An: هل انتهيتم؟
Did you finish?!!
- 7 Ad: باقي ما خالصنا.... ممكن نحتاج زيادة وقت
Not yet... maybe we need more time
- 8 An: سف.. ما اقدر... أنتم فقط تتكلمون كلام مو مفهوم ولا تفكرون..... لكن أنا أكتب أفكار كلها .. طيب..
بعدين واحد يكتب في الورقة..
Sorry I can't... you just kept talking in a different language and you don't think... but I will write down the ideas and then one of you write the essay.

A similar pattern was displayed in Excerpt 14. Nasheed (N) and Yameen (Y) were reading the text while editing it (lines 266, 268, 270, 272). They seemed to appropriate the task and proceeded to complete it on their own. In particular, Nasheed's and Yameen's turns were long monologues where they edited the text on their own. Their dominance perhaps contributed to the passive stance taken by Maumoon (M) and Adeeb (A). Maumoon's and Adeeb's turns tended to be short and mostly consisting of one word turns (lines 267, 269, 271).

- Excerpt 14 (Control Group (8) - Narrative task)
They were on the editing stage
- 266 N: "وبعد أن وصلنا إلى الفندق ... استقبلنا رئيس الفندق ... لا لا نقول مدير ... مدير الفندق " استقبلنا مدير الفندق وأخذنا إلى طاولة كبيرة فيها الأكل والشرب " مم فيها ... في اوك "فيها الأكل والشرب ... " (يقرأ النص) نعم ... "ثم ذهبنا جميعنا إلى النوم حتى نبدأ يومنا لا لا رحلتنا (٥) رحلتنا " حتى نبدأ رحلتنا في الصباح " مم نعم ... تكمل؟
[‘and after we arrived the hotel... the hotel boss...’ no no we say manager... the hotel manager “the hotel manager received us and took us to a big table that has food and drink...” ((reading text)) yes...’ then we all went to sleep so we start our next day...’ no no our tour (5) our tour “ so we start our trip in the morning” mm yes ... you continue?]
- 267 M: أنا؟
[me?]
- 268 N: نعم ... طيب... أبدأ من وفي اليوم التالي... "وفي اليوم التالي استيقظنا لصلاة الفجر " نقول معلم ... "استيقظنا استيقظنا لصلاة الفجر وبعد الصلاة جلسنا حتى شروق الش- " نقول شروق أو ... أو طلوع ... شروق شروق الشمس " جلسنا حتى طلوع الشمس وبعد ذلك ذهبنا في مطعم الفندق " (يقرأ النص) ((٧)) ذهبنا إلى نحذف في ... " ذهبنا إلى مطعم الفندق وأكلنا وتناولنا طعام الإفطار "
[yes ... ok ... I start from in the next day...’ in the next day we woke up for morning prayer” we say teacher...’ we woke up we woke up for morning prayer and after the prayer we remained sitting until sunri-“ we say sunrise or... or rise? ... sunrise sunrise “ we remained sitting until sunrise and after that we went in the hotel restaurant” ((reading the text)) (7) we went to we omit in...’we went to the hotel restaurant and we ate we had brea- beakfast”]
- 269 A: الفطور
[the breakfast]
- 270 Y: أنا أكمل ... فقرة واحدة "وذهبنا إلى معرض تاريخ مدينة المنورة" (يقرأ النص) تاريخ المدينة المنورة المنورة "وذهبنا إلى معرض تاريخ المدينة المنورة ... ورأينا " نغير هذه إلى وشاهدنا أفضل ..
[I continue... one paragraph “and we went to Madinah Munawwarah history exhibition” ((reading text)) Almadinah Almadinah Almunawwarah “and we went to Almadinah Almunawwarah history exhibition... and we saw...” we better change this to watched...]
- 271 M: ايوا
[yeah]
- 272 Y: "وشاهدنا صور المدينة المنورة قديما وكنا منبهرين " منبهرين؟ ... نعم منبهرين " وكنا منبهرين مما شاهدنا ثم انطلقنا بعد ذلك بالباص إلى جبل اسم جبل سلع وهو كبير جدا من أكبر جبال المدينة المنورة" نتكلم عنه أكثر... أو ؟ لا يكفي هذا
[“and we watched Almadinah old photos and we were amazed” amazed?... “yes amazed “and we were amazed of what we watched and then we moved by bus to a mountain named Sela mountain and it is very big of the biggest mountains in Almadinah Almunawwarah” we talk more about it ... or? no this is enough]

From the excerpts above, it can be seen that while Groups 6 and 2 (experimental groups) displayed collaborative and expert/novice patterns of interaction, group 6 and 5 (control groups) showed cooperative and dominant/passive patterns. The experimental groups tended to have a moderate to high level of mutuality. As a result, language learning can occur among group members. For example, in Excerpt 2, the students learned from each other about the grammatical aspect (e.g. the use of the definite article). The ‘expert’ student provided feedback and explained the use of the definite article to the ‘novice’ student in their essay. On the other hand, the control groups were low on mutuality. Their interaction was limited to their contribution to the completion of the tasks without benefiting from the discussion, and thereby having less opportunities for language learning. In other words, the experimental groups learned better than the control groups as shown in the excerpts above.

Features of Small Group Interactions

To describe the differences between the four patterns of small group interaction identified from the analysis in the first part of the chapter, a closer analysis of the important features of each pattern will be provided for four case study small groups.

The four small groups selected for closer examination are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Selected groups as a case study

Patterns of interaction	Selected small groups	Participants’ name
Collaborative	Group 6 (experimental)	Harith (H), Balam (B), Sayifullah (S), and Nadir (N)
Expert/Novice	Group 2 (experimental)	Anas (An), Shakir (Sha), Shoaib (Sho), and Asafar (As)
Cooperative	Group 6 (control)	Zayan (Z), Maiz (M), Arish (Ar), and Aish (Ai)
Dominant/Passive	Group 5 (control)	Aneel (An), Azyz (Az), Adil (Ad), and Ifham (I)

The researcher selected the four-case study small groups sequentially and purposefully from the analysis in the first part of the chapter. The selection was based on the

principle of maximum variation (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Moreover, the selected groups represented a case of each pattern of how the groups worked and demonstrated a distinctly consistent pattern of interaction. Therefore, it allowed the researcher to provide sufficient qualitative details of each case under examination.

The features were analysed based on the taxonomy of codes for on-task episodes adapted from Storch's (2001b) study (see Chapter 3, Table 6). Below, each of these characteristics is presented.

Requests and Questions

Requests and questions were expressed in various forms in the data. There were three types of requests (i.e. requests for information, requests for confirmation, and requests for confirmation checks from others) and two types of questions (i.e. polar questions and rhetorical questions) identified in the data. A total of 609 requests and questions were identified in the four selected small group on-task talk. Table 11 displays the frequency of requests and questions each group on each task and in total.

Table 11. Frequency of requests and questions per group

Small Group	Narrative	Descriptive	Argumentative	Total
Experimental Group 6 (Collaborative)	78	68	101	247
Experimental Group 2 (Expert/Novice)	76	43	78	197
Control Group 6 (Cooperative)	8	13	24	45
Control Group 5 (Dominant/Passive)	60	37	23	120

From Table 11, it was clear that the collaborative group (Experimental Group 6) had the highest number of requests and questions in their talk (247), followed by the expert/novice group (Experimental Group 2) – 197 occurrences, and the dominant/passive group (Control Group 5) – 120 occurrences. On the other hand, the lowest number of requests and questions was identified in the cooperative group (Group 6) – 45 occurrences. Although dyads and small groups are different regarding the number of group members and the time needed to work on each task, this result is similar to the findings documented by Storch (2001b). She found that collaborative dyads used more frequent questions than dominant/dominant dyads (where there was lack of interaction within the dyads).

Table 12 shows the distribution of the type of requests and questions found in the data of the four selected groups. It is presented as a percentage (rounded off to the nearest number) of the total number of requests and questions for each group.

Table 12. The percentage of types of requests and questions in each group

Groups	Requests			Questions	
	Info	Conf	Conf (others)	Polar	Rhetorical
Experimental Group 6 (Collaborative)	55%	19%	10%	13%	3%
Experimental Group 2 (Expert/Novice)	43%	29%	20%	2%	6%
Control Group 6 (Cooperative)	30%	45%	7%	1%	17%
Control Group 5 (Dominant/Passive)	40%	17%	24%	4%	15%

Table 12 displays that requests for information were the most frequent for all the four groups, ranging between 30% to 55% of all requests and questions. This comparatively high frequency of such request types was probably because of the nature of the three tasks. Particularly in completing argumentative tasks, the students were prompted to request opinions and explanations from other group members. Requests for information took a higher percentage in the collaborative small group talks (55%). Then, they formed 43% and 40% of requests in the expert/novice and dominant/passive group talks respectively. In contrast, there was only 30% of requests in the cooperative small group talks.

Requests for confirmation ranged between 17% and 45% of all requests and questions. The highest number of such requests was found in the small group's talks displaying a cooperative pattern (45%). Such requests were frequently used by the cooperative group members to decide the division of tasks within the group, and to edit the tasks. They were also relatively common in the case of the expert/novice group (29%) where two group members (Anas and Shakir) took a leading role to assist others (Shoaib and Asafar) to complete the tasks, and therefore producing a larger number of requests and questions.

Requests for confirmation checks from other group members were between 7% and 24%. The researcher could not find a clear relationship between patterns of small group interaction and such requests. It was found that such requests were relatively frequent in the dominant/passive small group talks (24%) and in the expert/novice small group talks (20%).

Polar and rhetorical questions were relatively infrequent in the data. For polar questions, 13% of such questions were found in the data of the collaborative small

group talks. These types of questions ranged between 1% and 4% of all requests and questions in the case of other small groups. Regarding rhetorical questions, the highest percentage of such questions was found in the cooperative small group talks (17%). In the case of all other small groups, such questions ranged between 3% and 15%. However, the researcher found no distinct relationship between these two kinds of questions and patterns of small group interactions.

Below different types of requests and discussions identified in the data are presented and discussed.

Requests

1. Requests seeking information

This type of request referred to elaborate responses (e.g. opinions, definitions, explanations, and suggestions). They could be in the form of statements of uncertainty or direct Wh-questions. For instance, Excerpt 15 below exemplified both requests for an explanation and for an opinion (line 227). Excerpt 16 showed a request for information (line 181) and Excerpt 17 a request for the meaning of the word line 161.

Excerpt 15 Request for an opinion and explanation
(Experimental Group (2) - Narrative task (Drafting stage))

- 227 An: نكتب عن المتحف؟ أم الحديقة؟ ... ما رأيك يا شاكر؟
[we write about the museum?... or the park?... what do you think Shakir?]
- 228 Sha: مم ... متحف أولا لأننا زرناه قبل ...
[mm... museum first because we visited it before...]
- 229 An: طيب ... متحف أولا
[ok ... museum first]

Excerpt 16 Request for information
(Experimental Group (2) - Narrative task (Brainstorming stage))

- 181 Sho: جبل سلع ... يقع في مكة؟
[Sela mountain... located in Makkah?]
- 182 An: لا ... هو في المدينة مم أعتقد أننا سنزوره
[no... it is in Almadinah mm I think we will visit it]

Excerpt 17 Request for a definition
(Experimental Group (6) - Descriptive task (Drafting stage))

- 161 H: ما معنى كلمة فصيح؟
[what does fluent mean?]
162 N: مم فصيح يعني ... يتكلم جيدا
[mm fluent means... he speaks well]

2. Requests seeking for confirmation of one's own recommendation

Requests seeking for confirmation were employed to obtain a response to one's own opinion. Their forms could be a statement with a question tag, a statement or a phatic expression with a rising intonation. A simple confirmation (e.g. 'yeah'), a disconfirmation (e.g. 'no') usually followed by a counter recommendation or just by a counter recommendation, and repetitions were used to respond to these requests. Sometimes, there were elaborations following confirmations and disconfirmations. For instance, in Excerpt 18, the request is replied by a confirmation through repetition, while in Excerpt 19, is replied by a counter recommendation.

Excerpt 18 Request for a confirmation replied by a confirmation
(Control Group (5) - Descriptive task (Drafting))

- 73 M: في جبل النور؟
[in Alnoor mountain?]
74 G: ايوه صح... في جبل النور
[yeah right... Alnoor mountain]

Excerpt 19 Request for a confirmation replied by a counter recommendation
(Control Group (6) - Argumentative task (Drafting stage))

- 122 Z: خمسة وعشرين طالبا ... صحيح خمسة وعشرين؟
[twenty five student ... right twenty five?]
123 M: عشرون طالبا فقط... عشرون
[twenty students only... twenty]

3. Requests seeking for confirmation of the other group member's recommendation

Few studies on student interactions have documented differences between clarification requests to obtain clarification of the previous speaker's aim and confirmation checks to obtain confirmation of the previous speaker's aim (e.g. Long, 1983; Storch, 2001b). In the present study, similar to Storch (2001b), the researcher labelled questions (e.g. 'what do you mean?', 'excuse me'), phatic expressions stated with rising intonation (e.g. 'eh?', 'umm?'), requests with repetition of part of all of the previous speaker's statement using rising intonation (see Excerpt 20 below), as confirmation checks. Confirmation checks were usually responded by either self-repair, repetition, a yes/no answer, or explanation.

There were two confirmation checks in Excerpt 20 below (lines 282-283). Line 282 was a repetition confirming the choice of word, and line 283 adds another word to complete the noun phrase. In Excerpt 21, the answer to the request was an explanation with a complete sentence (line 179).

Excerpt 20 Confirmation check
(Experimental Group (2) - Narrative task (Editing))

- 281 As: ذهبنا إلى صالة مطار
[we went to the airport terminal]
282 Sha: المطار؟
[the airport]
283 Sho: المطار؟ صالة المطار؟
[the airport? The airport terminal?]
284 Sha: أها (موافقة)
[aha ((agreement))]

Excerpt 21 Request for clarification coded as confirmation check
(Experimental Group (6) - Descriptive task (Drafting stage))

- 176 S: والعربية لغة ... واللغة العربية هي ... لغة القرآن وهي ... مم لغة أهل الجنة ... ويتحدث بها ثلاث وعشرون دولة ...
[Arabic is the language.. the Arabic language is ... the language of Qur'an and it is ... mm the language of paradise ... and 23 countries spoke it ...]
178 N: اقرأ من أول؟
[read from the beginning]
179 S: واللغة العربية هي لغة القرآن وهي لغة أهل الجنة ... لغة أهل الجنة ... ويتحدث بها سكان ثلاث وعشرون دولة

[the Arabic language is the language of Qur'an and is the language of paradise ...
the language of paradise ... and the population of 23 countries spoke it]

Questions

1. Polar Questions

Polar questions took the form of 'or-choice' (Storch, 2001b) where the speaker gave options to the listener as shown in Excerpt 22.

Excerpt 22	Polar question (Experimental Group (2) - Narrative task (Brainstorming))
22	An: "وبعد أن رأينا ... رأينا أو شاهدنا؟" [“and after we saw ...” we saw or we watched?]
23	Sho: مم شاهدنا [mm we watched it]

2. Rhetorical Questions

The researcher also found some rhetorical questions or self-directed questions which did not need an answer from the listener such as in Excerpt 23.

Excerpt 23	Rhetorical question Experimental Group (6) - Argumentative task (Drafting stage)
168	N: العنوان لا بد أن يكون في الفقرة الأولى، صح؟ [The topic sentence should be in the first paragraph, right?]
169	H: أنت تعرف الإجابة [you know the answer]

Explanations

The next important characteristic found in the data of small group dialogues was the use of explanations. There were two types of explanations: solicited (i.e. as an answer of requests) and unsolicited (i.e. as a further explanation on a recommendation offered) (Storch, 2001b). Explanations generally came with phrases 'I mean' ..., 'I think' ..., and

‘because...’. Explanations could be related to the content of the text, word or grammatical choices depending on the group member’s knowledge.

A total of 189 occurrences of explanations were found in the small group talk data. Table 13 shows instances of explanations across all four groups. In general, 55.5% of the explanations were solicited (S) whereas the rest (44.5%) was unsolicited (US). While solicited explanations were frequently used to answer requests or questions, unsolicited explanations were commonly used to support a counter recommendation. The focus of each explanation varied across the three tasks including grammatical explanations, contents, meaning of words, and vocabulary use.

Table 13. Occurrences of explanations

Small Group	Narrative		Descriptive		Argumentative		Total	
	S	US	S	US	S	US	S	US
Experimental Group 6 (Collaborative)	12	6	17	8	16	16	45	30
Experimental Group 2 (Expert/Novice)	13	5	7	8	10	7	30	20
Control Group 6 (Cooperative)	3	3	3	5	4	5	10	13
Control Group 5 (Dominant/Passive)	5	6	7	7	8	8	20	21
							105	84
							55.5%	44.5%

By providing explanations, the students could clarify and structure their understanding about a topic being discussed during the group work (Storch, 2001b). In Excerpt 24, for instance, an explanation was provided to answer a confirmation request (line 36). Asafar revised Anas’s suggestion, changing the verb form from past tense to simple present (line 34). Then, Anas added –s ending to the verb form (line 35). Asafar sought

confirmation (line 36), and Anas confirmed by giving a fairly short explanation regarding the grammar rules (line 37).

Excerpt 24	Explanation (solicited) Experimental Group (2) - Descriptive task (Editing stage))
33	An: "وأستاذ في الجامعة درّس الطلاب ..." [“the teacher at university taught the students...”]
34	As: يدرّس [teach]
35	An: يدرّس [teaches]
36	As: صحيح؟ [right?]
37	An: (بيتسم) نعم صحيح ... لأن المدرس لا يزال يدرّس [(smile) yes right ... because the teacher still teaching]

In Excerpt 25, there was an unsolicited explanation regarding the use of the definite article. Zayan (Z) and Maiz (Z) agreed that the definite article ‘the’ was needed. While Zayan mentioned it, Maiz added a short explanation of the use of definite articles (line 102).

Excerpt 25	Explanation (unsolicited) (Control Group (6) - Descriptive task (Editing stage))
101	Z: " وفي بعض أحيان .. " هنا نحتاج نكتب (ال) التعريف [“and sometimes ...” here we need to write (the) definite article]
102	M: أيوا مضاف إليه ... لا بد أل [yeah genitive construct]
103	Z: آها ((موافقة)) [aha ((agreement))]

Repetitions

The presence of repetition was quite common in small group talks. Table 14 below displays the frequency of repetitions found in the data across the four groups. The most frequent repetitions were found in the collaborative and expert/novice small group talk data. For instance, in the argumentative task, the highest number of repetitions was found in the experimental group data – 75 occurrences for Group 6 and 54 occurrences

for Group 2. Comparatively, a fewer number of repetitions was found in the control group data – 5 occurrences for Group 5 and 12 occurrences for Group 6.

Table 14. Frequency of repetitions across the three tasks

Small Group	Narrative	Descriptive	Argumentative	Total
Experimental Group 6 (Collaborative)	48	37	75	160
Experimental Group 2 (Expert/Novice)	34	14	54	102
Control Group 6 (Cooperative)	11	9	12	32
Control Group 5 (Dominant/Passive)	12	7	5	24

There were two types of repetitions: self- and other-repetitions. Self-repetitions were usually used to add emphasis. Excerpt 26 below had two forms of repetitions. The first repetition was a self-repetition since Aneel (An) suggested the noun phrase 'several trees' in the text, and he repeated his suggestion for emphasis (line 230). An other-repetition was made by Azyz (Az) to show an agreement or a response to a confirmation request by repeating the suggested noun phrase (line 231).

Excerpt 26 Repetition (a self- and other-repetition)
(Control Group (5) - Narrative task (Drafting stage))

230 An: ... وعدنا عددا من أشجار ... عددا من أشجار ...
[and we found several trees ... several trees...]

231 Az: ... نعم ... عددا من أشجار ...
[yes ... several trees...]

Other-repetition was found in Excerpt 27. Anas (An) corrected what Shoaib (Sho) mentioned regarding his choice of noun (line 300). In line 301, Shoaib repeated the suggested word before moving to the next sentence.

Excerpt 27	Repetition (other-repetition) Experimental Group (2) - Narrative task (Editing stage)
299	Sho: "ووصلنا للغرفة متأخرين..." [“and we arrived the room late...”]
300	An: ووصلنا الفندق... الفندق [and we arrived the hotel.... The hotel]
301	Sho: "الفندق ... "ووصلنا الفندق متأخرين" [the hotel... ‘and we arrived to the hotel late’]

In the data, repetitions were quite easy to identify (Storch, 2001b). The researcher paid attention to the type of repetition (self- and other repetitions), what was repeated, and who made the repetition. However, the researcher did not include paraphrases as they were not immediate, or simultaneous talks. In addition, a single repetition was an utterance repeated several times in the same turn.

Simultaneous talk and collaborative completions

While simultaneous talks occurred when the two group members talked at the same time, collaborative completions took place when one group member completing an utterance begun by the other member. Further, collaborative completions generally started with a repetition of part or the whole of the previous speaker’s turn (Storch, 2001b). Table 15 presents the number of collaborative completions for the four groups across the three tasks. In general, more occurrences of collaborative completions were found in the collaborative and expert/novice small group talks than in the cooperative and dominant/passive small group talks. The variation in the frequency of collaborative completions was specifically apparent in the small group talk on the argumentative task. There were more collaborative completions in the collaborative (39) and the

expert/novice (32) small group talks than those in the cooperative (9) and the dominant/passive (3) small group talks.

Table 15. Frequency of collaborative completions across the three tasks

Small Group	Narrative	Descriptive	Argumentative	Total
Experimental Group 6 (Collaborative)	21	20	39	80
Experimental Group 2 (Expert/Novice)	20	15	32	67
Control Group 6 (Cooperative)	8	6	7	21
Control Group 5 (Dominant/Passive)	3	4	3	10

Simultaneous talks could be coded as interruptions or overlaps. In the present study, the researcher coded the simultaneous talk in terms of the focus of the utterance. If the group members talked about the same issue, it was coded as ‘same focus’. If talking about different issues, it was then coded as ‘different focus’ (Storch, 2001b). Table 16 sets out the number of simultaneous talk instances found in the four small groups across the three tasks. The same patterns appeared when such instances were closely examined. It was found that the simultaneous talks, for instance in the argumentative text, were relatively more frequent in the collaborative (48) and expert/novice (36) small group talks. On the other hand, there were a smaller number of simultaneous talks found in the cooperative (9) and dominant/passive (1) small group talks.

Table 16. Frequency of simultaneous talks across the three tasks

Small Group	Narrative	Descriptive	Argumentative	Total
--------------------	------------------	--------------------	----------------------	--------------

Experimental Group 6 (Collaborative)	19	24	48	91
Experimental Group 2 (Expert/Novice)	21	15	36	72
Control Group 6 (Cooperative)	4	6	9	19
Control Group 5 (Dominant/Passive)	2	1	1	4

To understand how collaborative completions and simultaneous talks occurred during the group work, the researcher presents some instances regarding such talks.

Excerpt 28 from the small group talk of Harith (H), Balam (B), Sayifullah (S), and Nadir (N) included an instance of simultaneous talk. In lines 281 and 282, Sayifullah and Harith uttered the same word ‘prefer’, and therefore was coded as ‘same focus’.

Excerpt 28	Simultaneous talk Experimental Group (6) - Argumentative task (Drafting stage)
280	H: وعدد كبير من الطلاب يفضلون [many students prefer]
281	S: يفضلون [prefer]
282	H: ... يبتسم) يفضلون ... نكتب يفضلون زواج مبكر ... [(smile) prefer ... we write they prefer early marriage...]
283	N: نعم ... اكتبها [yes ... write it]

In Excerpt 29, there were an example of collaborative completions (lines 314-315), and an instance of simultaneous talk (lines 316-317). The instance of simultaneous talk was coded as ‘same focus’.

Excerpt 29	Collaborative completions and simultaneous talk Experimental Group (2) - Descriptive task (Editing stage)
314	As: وضرب أروع ...

- 315 Sha: [hit ((past tense form))]
يضرب؟
[hits? ((present tense form))]
- 316 An: مم نعم يضرب ... فعل مضارع
[mm yes hits ... present tense]
- 317 As: فعل مضارع ... نعم
[present tense ... yes]

Phatic utterances

Lockhart and Ng (1995, p. 654) define phatic utterances as “utterances that have no content, but serve to maintain the flow of conversation”. For instance, they included expressions such as ‘طيب’ (okay), ‘ايوه’ (yeah), ‘اها’ (aha), ‘امم’ (umm), along with emotive expressions (e.g. ‘what a nice word’), and cues for clarification or further information (e.g. ‘حقيقة’ (seriously?)). In the data of the study, phatic utterances were quite frequent. They had different functions such as back-channelling prompts to encourage the speaker to continue (e.g. ‘امم’ (umm), ‘ايوه’ (yeah)), agreement or confirmation (e.g. ‘طيب’ (ok), ‘ايوه’ (yeah), ‘اها’ (aha)), and acknowledgement (e.g. ‘ايوه’ (yeah)). Some of these functions were also used via non-verbal cues (e.g. smiles, nodding, facial expressions). Nevertheless, in the present study, the researcher only focused on verbal cues of these functions since the main data source was from the audio recordings.

Table 17 shows the number of phatic utterances for the four small groups across the three tasks. It can be seen that the collaborative and expert/novice small groups used more phatic utterances than the cooperative and dominant/passive small groups did across the three tasks. For instance, in the narrative task, the collaborative small group used a higher number of phatic utterances (124) in their talk compared to the dominant/passive group who had a smaller number of such utterances (33).

Table 17. Frequency of phatic utterances across the three tasks

Small Group	Narrative	Descriptive	Argumentative	Total
Experimental Group 6 (Collaborative)	124	78	32	234
Experimental Group 2 (Expert/Novice)	64	70	32	166
Control Group 6 (Cooperative)	39	26	29	94
Control Group 5 (Dominant/Passive)	33	19	26	78

Phatic utterances also served different functions across small groups. For instance, in Excerpt 30, the expression ‘mm’ in line 275 was made in response to Arish’s suggestion (line 274). It seemed to signal Zayan’s uncertainty. As a result, Arish changed his suggestion by including further explanation to convince Zayan (line 276).

- Excerpt 30 Phatic expression
(Control Group (6) - Descriptive task (Editing stage))
- 273 Z: "ويحب الخير في الناس ... في"
[“he loves good in people...” in]
- 274 Ar: حرف في ... نغيرها للام ... للناس...
[the letter in ... we change it into to]
- 275 Z: مم ...
[mm ...]
- 276 Ar: للناس ... لأنك تقدم شي للناس ... لا بد نضع لام ...
[for the people ... because you provide something to people]

In Excerpt 31, Asafar’s expression in line 68 indicated requests for clarification of Shakir’s suggestion. To clarify his suggestion, Shakir offered a short explanation (line 69).

- Excerpt 31 Phatic expression
(Experimental Group (2) - Narrative task (Drafting stage))
- 66 As: ثم قفزنا ... في الباص
[then we jump ... in the bus]
- 67 Sha: تقول ركبنا ...
[you say rode]
- 68 As: أه؟
[aha?]
- 69 Sha: نعم ركبنا لأن القفز يكون من الأعلى إلى أسفل

[yes we rode because jumping is from up to down]

Pronouns

The researcher analysed the use of pronouns when group members addressed each other. The researcher only focused on a single pronoun in one turn even it was repeated by the speakers due to performance type slips. In addition to frequency count of various types of pronouns to be considered during the analysis process, the researcher also analysed their distribution, how they were used, and what followed them (Storch, 2001b). There were three distinctive types of pronouns: ‘*I*’ (first person singular), ‘*You*’ (second person singular), and ‘*We*’ (first person plural) the students used to address each other. The percentage of each type of pronoun of the total number of pronouns used by the small groups on each task is presented in Table 18.

Table 18. Pronoun types as percentage of total pronoun for each group

Small Group	Narrative (%)			Descriptive (%)			Argumentative (%)		
	I	You	We	I	You	We	I	You	We
Experimental Group 6 (Collaborative)	41	8	51	35	10	55	25	8	67
Experimental Group 2 (Expert/Novice)	45	35	20	45	36	19	47	39	14
Control Group 6 (Cooperative)	35	45	20	33	50	17	36	47	17
Control Group 5 (Dominant/Passive)	39	32	29	46	35	20	39	35	26

Table 18 shows that the collaborative small groups frequently used first person plural pronouns more than first or second person singular pronouns during the discussion. It can be seen from the percentage of the pronoun ‘we’ used in their talk across the three

tasks (ranging from 51% to 67%). In the case of the cooperative small group, the students tended to use the second person singular pronoun (approximately 45%-50%). In both the expert/novice and dominant/passive small groups, first person singular pronoun was predominantly used (around 39%-47%).

The three types of pronouns also had different functions when used by the students during their group work. For instance, a non-collaborative orientation was shown by the use of first person singular pronouns as a distancing device (e.g. 'I think', 'I see') (see Excerpt 32 – 34), and as an attempt to control the task (see Excerpt 35)

Excerpt 32 (Control Group (6) - Argumentative task (Brainstorming stage))

16 M: أعتقد نكتب فكرة ثانية أولا
[I think we write the second idea first]

Excerpt 33 (Control Group (5) - Descriptive task (Editing))

188 G: أنا ما أرى هذا صحيح ... أنا أرى نكتب
[I don't see this right ... I see we write]

Excerpt 34 (Experimental Group (6) - Argumentative task (Brainstorming stage))

29 H: رأبي يختلف عن رأي رضا الله ... أنا أعتقد
[my opinion is different from Redaullah's opinion ... I think]

Excerpt 35 (Experimental Group (2) - Narrative task (Drafting stage))

144 Sha: لا نكتب هذا ... أنا سأكتب ... سأكتب فكرتي عن ... زيارة الحديقة
[don't write this ... I will write ... I will write my idea about ... the park's visit]

Nevertheless, some instances showed the use of first person singular pronouns as an agreement with the other group member's opinion. When used in requests or followed

by first person plural (i.e. 'we'), these instances indicated collaborative orientation to the group work (see Excerpt 36 and 37).

Excerpt 36 (Control Group (6) - Descriptive task (Editing stage))

196 M: نعم أنا أتفق معك... نضع (ال)
[yes I agree with you ... we put (the)]

Excerpt 37 (Experimental Group (2) - Descriptive task (Editing stage))

297 An: أنا أقول مثل اوجانج ... ممكن نضع كلمة مخلص هنا ...
[I say like Ujang ... we might put the word loyal here ...]

Likewise, second person pronouns could indicate a non-collaborative orientation when used to direct other group members (see Excerpt 38 and 39), but a collaborative orientation when used to encourage other group members to participate (see Excerpt 40 and 41).

Excerpt 38 (Control Group (5) - Descriptive task (Editing stage))

211 G: كان يجب ألا نكتب بدون تسألني ... مم اكتب في أفضل
[you should not have written without asking me ... mm write in better]

Excerpt 39 (Experimental Group (6) - Descriptive task (Brainstorming stage))

25 B: لكن ما ذكرت ما ذكرت أسباب أكثر ... فقط اثنان
[but you did not include did not include more reasons ... just two]

Excerpt 40 (Control Group (6) - Descriptive task (Drafting stage))

76 Ai: ما رأيك زيان؟ نكتبها؟
[what is your opinion Zayan? We write it?]

Excerpt 41 (Experimental Group (2) - Descriptive task (Drafting stage))

132 Sha: تريد نكتبها؟ ... تريد نكتبها؟
[do you want to write it? ... do you want to write it?]

Summary and conclusion

From Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, previous studies on CW have increasingly described CW as a socially mediated process, and therefore working in pairs or small

groups is seen essential in the L2 writing classroom. In the present study, the researcher investigated how CW was implemented in the ASL writing classrooms. Using an embedded quasi-experimental mixed-method research design, the data collection and analysis were conducted quantitatively and qualitatively. When the experimental and control groups were assigned to work in small groups, they displayed relatively different patterns of interaction. In the present study, the researcher used Storch's (2002) dyad interaction model drawing on Damon and Phelps' (1989) criteria of (1) *equality*, identified as the degree of participants' contribution to the joint tasks; and (2) *mutuality*, measured as the degree of engagement with a peer's contribution.

Having analysed the data, the researcher identified four main patterns of interactions among the experimental and control groups across the three given tasks. In particular, the experimental groups mostly demonstrated collaborative (i.e. when group members worked together, negotiated, engaged with all parts of the tasks) and expert/novice (i.e. when one or two group members acted as 'expert' and invited the other members to engage with the tasks and assisted them during the process) patterns of interaction. In contrast, the control groups predominantly showed cooperative (i.e. group members divided the tasks and there was no engagement with each other's contribution) and dominant/passive (i.e. while one or two group members dominated the group work, the rest took a more passive stance) patterns of interaction.

These findings are similar to those reported in Storch's (2002, 2009) longitudinal classroom study, except with a cooperative pattern found in the present study. Examining pair interaction patterns of ESL tertiary students by setting up equality and mutuality along two axes, Storch (2002) classified four patterns of interactions: 1) collaborative (high level of equality and mutuality); 2) dominant/dominant (high level

of equality, but low level of mutuality); 3) dominant/passive (low level of equality and mutuality); and 4) expert/novice (high level of mutuality but unequal contribution).

Based on the important characteristics of these patterns, similar to Storch's (2002) research, the researcher found that the experimental groups displayed collaborative and expert/novice patterns of interaction had opportunities for L2 learning. These patterns facilitated them to engage with each other's ideas as they worked together. In a similar vein, Watanabe and Swain (2007) and Storch and Aldosari (2013) conducting collaborative writing research also found that a collaborative pattern may result in better language learning opportunities. In particular, pairs of students who exhibited a collaborative pattern of interaction produced more Language Related Episodes than those who displayed other pattern types (i.e. dominant/dominant and dominant/passive patterns of interaction). In addition, in Watanabe and Swain's (2007) study, students who exhibited a collaborative pattern of interaction had the highest post-test scores. These results justified Storch's (2002) study that students who worked in a collaborative pattern as well as an expert/novice pattern of interaction obtain greater benefits from collaborative writing activities.

Unlike the experimental groups, the control groups tended to adopt cooperative and dominant/passive patterns of interaction. For instance, in a cooperative pattern of interaction that shared similar traits with a dominant/dominant pattern of interaction in Storch's (2002) study, the students seemed to have limited engagement with other group members. As a result, there was lack of co-construction of knowledge. In the case of dominant/passive small groups, there was also very limited negotiation happening. The dominant group members imposed most decision regarding language choices to the passive members who offered little input.

In addition, to better understand how each small group worked in both the experimental and control classes, important characteristics (i.e. the frequency of requests and questions, explanations given, collaborative completion and simultaneous talk, the use of repetitions, the use of phatic utterances and pronouns) in the interaction of four selected small groups were closely examined. In collaborative and expert/novice small groups, for instance, the researcher found that the group members used a larger number of requests and questions, compared to those in cooperative and dominant/passive small groups. These requests and questions had various functions during small group interaction, such as to draw the group members' attention to particular language features and to allow them to provide and receive feedback about language. Regarding the explanations offered during the interaction, collaborative and expert/novice small groups also tended to explain some information about language use than cooperative and dominant/passive small groups did.

The findings suggest that different treatments may influence patterns of interaction in the class. Thus, different patterns of interaction probably result in different learning outcomes. Ultimately, an awareness of the nature of small group interaction can facilitate language learning in ASL classrooms. The next chapter, I present the examination results of the differences between the experimental groups and the control groups

Chapter 5. Language Related Episodes (LREs)

This chapter focuses on addressing the second research question: “What are the differences between collaborative writing groups and traditional small groups in terms of the frequency of Language Related Episodes (LREs) produced and how LREs are resolved during small group interaction?”. In particular, the frequency of LREs and how each group in different patterns of small group interaction resolved LREs identified in both the experimental and control groups during classroom observations and in students’ verbal interaction are presented.

This chapter begins with the overall frequency of LREs found in the experimental and control groups. Instances of each type of LREs identified in the data are presented. Next, the chapter reports on how four small groups (i.e. two experimental and two control groups) resolved LREs in more detailed examination of the data. Excerpts from

the data transcripts and the researcher's field notes are also analysed to describe the students' language use within each group.

Frequency of LREs in the Experimental and Control Groups

Similar to Storch (2001b), the researcher coded and categorised LREs based on the focus of students' attention when they talked about the language they produced during the completion of their joint tasks (especially in the editing stage). There were three types of LREs: Form-focused (e.g. grammatical choices), Lexis-focused (e.g. vocabulary choices), and mechanics-focused (e.g. punctuation and spelling) (Swain & Lapkin, 2001). The following are typical instances of each type of LREs found in the data.

Form-focused LREs

The researcher categorised any segment in utterances of small group talk as form-focused LREs with reference to problems of grammatical accuracy in both morphological and syntax levels (e.g. verb tense, word order, article, prepositions and transitions). Examples of such form-focused LREs are given below.

Excerpt 42 (Experimental Group (2) - Narrative task (talking about articles))

- 142 Sha: "ولما صعدنا إلى حافلة.." [“and we rode bus...” ((without the definite article))]
 143 An: ال... اكتب ال قبل حافلة... الحافلة [“(al)... write (al) before bus... the bus]
 144 Sha: "ولما صعدنا إلى الحافلة.." [“and when we rode the bus...”]

Excerpt 43 (Control Group (5) - Descriptive task (talking about verb tense))

- 144 M: "وقد أرى في مسجد الحرام مناظر.." [“I see in the holy mosque views...”]
 145 G: قف... رأيت.. رأيت في المسجد الحرام.. ليس أرى

- 146 M: [stop... saw... saw in the holy mosque... not see]
لماذا؟ ... كلمة خطأ
[why?... wrong word?]
- 147 G: نعم... أنت تقول في الماضي... تقول رأيت... عدلها
[yes... you talk in the past... you say saw... edit it]
- 148 M: أها... رأيت في الم " رأيت في المسجد الحرام"
[aha... I saw in the m-o "I saw in the holy mosque"]

Excerpt 44 (Experimental Group (6) - Descriptive task (talking about the preposition choices))

- 276 S: "واستفدت مع اللغة عربية أش..."
[“I benefited from Arabic language t-h-..”]
- 277 B: مع ... أو من؟ من اللغة العربية؟
[with ... or from? From Arabic language?]
- 278 S: من ... ايوه .. صح... من
[from... yeah... right.. from]

Lexis-focused LREs

Deliberation about word choices and meaning of words or phrases was labelled as lexis-focused LREs. Examples of such lexis-focused LREs are given below.

Excerpt 45 (Control Group (1) - Argumentative task (talking about word choices ‘prefer’))

- 99 Y: بعض الطلاب يفضلون...
[some students p-r-e ... prefer...]
- 100 O: ايوه...
[yeah]
- 101 G: يفضلون... صح أكمل
[prefer... right continue]
- 102 Y: طيب
[ok]

Excerpt 46 (Experimental Group (2) - Narrative task (talking about word meaning))

- 103 Sho: ما معنى مناظر؟
[what does landmarks mean?]
- 104 An: يعني (٥) أشياء جميلة ... تراها ... فهمت؟
[it means (5) beautiful things ... you see them ... understand?]
- 105 Sho: ايوا
[yeah]

Excerpt 47 (Control Group (5) - Narrative task (talking about alternative ways of expressing ideas))

- 22 G: ولما فرغ... فرغنا لا لا ... انتهينا من العشاء مم ... قابلنا صديق ... زميلنا في الجامعة محمد
[when we f-i-n- ... finished no no ... finished ((replaced word)) our dinner mm
... we meet a friend ... our classmate at university Mohammed]
- 23 O: زميلنا نعم زميلنا
[our classmate yes our classmate]
- 24 M: ايوه
[yeah]

Mechanics-focused LREs

Spelling, punctuation, or pronunciation were identified as mechanics-focused LREs.

Examples of such mechanics-focused LREs are given below.

Excerpt 48 (Experimental Group (4) - Descriptive task (talking about punctuation))

- 203 U: هنا ضع علامة استنهام
[here put question mark]
- 204 Aq: فين؟
[where]
- 205 U: بعد كلمة...
[after the word ...]

Excerpt 49 (Experimental Group (6) - Descriptive task (talking about spelling))

- 245 M: مكبرة ببيع
[Bake'e ((pronounced the letter wrongly)) Cemetery]
- 246 Z: لا لا ... لا بد تقول ببيع ق ق ما ببيع ... يعني تقول بالقاف... واضح؟
[no no ... you have to say Bage'e g g not Bake'e ... meaning you say with G
... clear?]
- 247 M: بك.. قي... ببيع ... مثل هذا؟
[Bak .. ge ... Bage'e ... like this?]
- 248 Ar: نعم... الببيع ... الببيع
[yes ... bage'e ... bage'e]
- 249 M: الببيع ...
[the bage'e...]

The researcher constructed frequency distributions of LREs in order to get a comprehensive picture of the data. Quantitative data analysis using SPSS 23 – a statistical package for the social science – was conducted in order to see if there were

differences between students in the experimental and control groups. As shown in Table 19, LREs were rather frequent in both groups. The experimental groups produced a total of 986 and the control ones 789 LREs. The researcher used the Mann-Whitney *U* test in order to compare differences between two independent groups (i.e. the experimental and control groups) based on frequency, focus, and outcomes of LREs. The results of the Independent-samples Mann-Whitney *U* Test showed that this difference was statistically significant ($U = 64, p = .039$) with alpha set at the standard $p < .05$ for all statistical tests. Even though the experimental groups spent slightly more time on task, the analysis of LREs per minutes indicated that LREs were more frequent in the experimental group interaction than in control group interaction ($U = 58.9, p = .029$). Thus, most of the experimental groups produced a larger number of LREs than the control ones.

Table 19. Frequency of LREs in Experimental and Control Group Interaction

	Experimental (n=32)			Control (n=32)		
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD
LREs	986	69.08	23.01	789	49.66	20.35
Minutes	402	26.28	3.98	351	24.47	4.50
LREs per minutes		1.48	.80		1.34	.58

Table 20. Focus of LREs in Experimental and Control Group Interaction

	Experimental (n=32)				Control (n=32)			
	Total	Mean	SD	%	Total	Mean	SD	%
Form-Focused LREs	471	26.18	11.46	47.78	381	22.78	8.23	48.28
Lexis-Focused LREs	412	25.80	14.16	41.78	355	22.57	9.45	44.99
Mechanics-Focused LREs	103	6.76	3.84	10.44	53	3.34	2.13	6.73

In terms of the focus of LREs, both groups focused on grammar and lexis. 47.78% of the LREs produced by the experimental groups focused on grammar and 41.78 on lexis. Likewise, 48.28% of the LREs in the control groups were form-focused and 44.99% were lexis-focused. The experimental groups produced a higher number and percentage of mechanics-focused LREs than the control groups, and this difference was statistically significant ($U = 55, p = .014$). Only 103 mechanics-focused LREs occurred in the experimental groups and 53 in the control groups (See Table 20).

Lastly, Table 21 displays the results of the outcome. Obvious differences can be seen between the experimental and control groups with regards to the resolution of the LREs. The experimental and control groups had a slightly different number of incorrectly resolved LREs; 241 and 178 respectively. *One explanation could be that the students in the experimental groups spent much time to negotiate the LREs. As they discussed, there were too many ideas from the group members to consider. They were sometimes uncertain about the language features they were discussing. Thus, they had a relatively higher number of incorrectly resolved LREs than the control groups did. On the other hand, in the control groups, some students took the initiative to resolve the LREs independently.*

While the experimental groups were able to correctly resolve 69.87% of the LREs they produced (a total of 689 LREs), and just had 5.68% of unresolved LREs (a total of 56 LREs), the control groups could only produce 35.23% of correctly resolved LREs (a total of 278 LREs) and had 42.21% of unresolved LREs (a total of 333 LREs). The Independent-sample Mann-Whitney U Test confirmed that the differences in the percentage of correctly resolved LREs ($U = 63, p = .039$) and unresolved LREs ($U = 59, p = .042$) were statistically significant (See Table 21).

Table 21. Outcome of LREs in Experimental and Control Group Interaction

	Experimental (n=32)				Control (n=32)			
	Total	Mean	SD	%	Total	Mean	SD	%
Correctly Resolved LREs	689	47.58	19.96	69.87	278	20.98	9.38	35.23
Unresolved LREs	56	4.80	3.16	5.68	333	22.18	11.54	42.21
Incorrectly resolved LREs	241	17.76	7.45	24.45	178	9.24	4.33	22.56

To conclude, *the implementation of collaborative writing approach may have positive influence on the frequency and outcome of LREs, but not on the focus of LREs*. Overall, in spite of individual differences among group members, the experimental groups paid more attention to language and were more successful at resolving language related problems than the control ones. *Unlike the control groups, the experimental group members actively participated in language deliberation. They also had more linguistic resources to exchange during the discussion than the control groups. However, the control groups had little engagement with each other. They focused on their own parts which were divided at the beginning of the task. Thus, the experimental groups successfully resolved language related problems as they worked collaboratively and scaffolded each other.*

Resolution of LREs: Four Case Study Small Groups

In order to have a better understanding why the experimental groups were more successful at resolving linguistic-related problems than the control ones, four small groups (i.e. two experimental and two control groups) were further examined to understand how they resolved the LREs. During the analysis of how each small group resolved on-task LREs, the researcher looked at not only sequences of utterances, but also how each group member accepted resolutions.

In general, the examination showed that the collaborative and expert/novice small groups were able to reach correct resolutions for a higher percentage of their problems since they actively engaged in the discussion, and had more linguistic resources than the control groups. Through the interactions, they were able to pool and share their knowledge to solve problems encountered. Evidence of collective scaffolding (i.e. learners in small groups pooling their language resources to co-construct grammatical knowledge or sentences which are beyond their individual level of competence) (Donato, 1994) frequently occurred in the data of the experimental groups. The following two instances illustrate the process.

- Excerpt 50 (Experimental Group (6) – Mechanic-focused LREs)
- 313 B: "كذلك هو ممكن الإستفادة من مساعدات التي يقدمها الجمعيات خيرية لمساعدة طلاب في الزواج"
[also, he might be able to benefit from assistance voluntary organisation provide to students wanting to get married]
- 314 H: طيب... لماذا أنت كتبت كلمة (الاستفادة) بهمزة قطع؟
[well... why did you write the word "benefit" with a detached hamzah?]
- 315 B: أتوقع هي صحيحة...
[I think it is correct...]
- 316 H: لا... هي ليست صحيحة... أخبره يا نادر عن سبب كما درسنا في قواعد كتابة العربية...
[no... it is not correct. Tell him the reason Nadir as we studied in the Arabic spelling rules]
- 317 N: ...ايوه... كلام حارث صحيح... لأن الفعل هنا خمسة حروف، فلا بد نضع همزة وصل
[yeah (slang)... Harith is right... because the verb here consists of 5 letters... so we have to put a linking hamzah]
- 318 S: صحيح... وأنا أيضا درست ذلك...
[true... I also studied that...]
- 319 B: خلاص... نضع همزة وصل
[ok (slang)... we put a linking hamzah]

In Excerpt 50, Harith pointed out that the word "الاستفادة" (benefit) should not be used with "همزة القطع" (a detached hamzah) (line 314). He thought that the spelling for the word was not correct, but Balam had a different opinion (line 315). Harith tried to

convince Balam by asking Nadir to explain what they have studied in the Arabic spelling rules (line 316). Then, Nadir explained why they needed to put “همزة الوصل” (a linking hamzah) instead (line 317). Further, Sayifullah added that he also had studied about the spelling rules. Finally, every one accepted the explanation from Nadir and Sayifullah, and Balam revised the spelling error.

Excerpt 51 shows that four students were discussing the correct use of adjective, noun, and the gender of Arabic nouns. Firstly, Asafar wanted to confirm the use of the phrase “ضخم المبنى” (the huge building) since he realised he had always issues when dealing with the rules of making a phrase in Arabic (line 255). Then, Anas proposed his idea about it. He thought the use of “ضخم المبنى” (the huge building) was not correct in the sentence (line 256). He explained that in Arabic grammar, noun has to come before an adjective. Anas reminded every one about the topic of the grammar rule – the adjective and noun rule. Asafar also offered the correct stem “مبنى ضخم” (building huge) (line 261). Further Asafar noticed another rule in using “ال” to determine the gender of noun since adjectives should be matched with the noun in terms of either masculine or feminine, and singular and plural (line 263). In the end, they were able to resolve the grammar problems they encountered in the writing process.

Excerpt 51 (Experimental Group (6) – Form-focused LREs)

- 255 As: " ...وهو عبارة... اه.. عن ضخّم المبنى"
[and it is ... ah... a huge building]
- 256 An: ... أعتقد أن هنا خطأ نحوي... لأنه لا بد الاسم يأتي قبل صفة... وليس العكس مثل الانجليزي
[I think here is a syntactic error... because noun has to come before an adjective in Arabic... not the opposite like English]
- 257 Sha: تقصد.. هنا .. قاعدة صفة والموصوف.. صحيح؟
[you mean the adjective and noun rule right?]
- 258 An: لا ... هي ليست صحيحة... أخبره يا نادر عن سبب كما درسنا في قواعد كتابة العربية... نعم... وهي التي درسناها قبل اسبوعين
[yes, we studied this topic two weeks ago...]

- 259 Sho: ايوه... كلام حارث صحيح... طيب.. ماذا يمكن نكتب؟ عندي مشكلة دائم في هذه قاعدة..
[ok, what can we write? I have always a problem with this rule]
- 260 An: ص هذا طبيعي... لأننا نتعلم لغة جديدة
[this is normal, because we are learning a new language]
- 261 As: خلا طيب.. صح.. اه.. إذا نكتب "مبنى ضخم" بدل من ذلك
[ok... right,, so we write "building huge" instead]
- 262 Sha: نعم
[yes]
- 263 As: هل لا بد نحذف (ال) من (المبنى)
[Do we need to remove (ال) from (المبنى)?]
- 264 An: نعم أعتقد... لأنني أنا قرأت مثل ذلك في كتاب قواعد
[I think yes, I read that in the grammar book. Right?]
- 265 Sha: أحسنت يا أنس... نعم لا بد يكون صفة مثل الموصوف في التذكير وتأنيث وتعريف وتتكبير
ومفرد والجمع
[well done Anas. The adjective needs to be matched with the noun in terms of feminine and masculine, and also the singular and plural]
- 266 Sho: شكرا لكم يا أصدقائي الآن هذه قاعدة صارت واضحة لي
[thank you my friends, now, this rule is very clear to me]

Most of the learners in Excerpt 50 and 51 are novices but they can collectively resolve the problems. Even though some learners lacked the linguistic resources required to make accurate use of language, other learners provided help to correct the use of language. Further, these examples reveal that collaborative writing approach offers opportunities for peer collaboration and co-construction of linguistic knowledge.

Unlike the experimental groups, the control groups (i.e. the cooperative and dominant/passive small groups) tended to be more passive in their discussion. In Excerpt 52, for instance, Zayan and Maiz questioned the meaning of the word "مواجهتنا" (our beds) (lines 281-282). Even though Arish tried to explain the meaning of the word, others (Zayan, Maiz and Aish) did not seem to understand the meaning (lines 284-286). They did not try to figure out the meaning of the word. They were not really interested in discussing further and just skipped the part (line 287). They tended to adopt a more passive role.

Excerpt 52 (Control Group (6) – Lexical-focused LREs)

- 280 Ar: " ... وصلنا إلى فندق متأخرين... تعشينا... وبعدها ذهبنا إلى محاجهنا"
[we arrived hotel late... had dinner, then we went to "محاجهنا" (our beds)]
- 281 Z: محاجهنا ؟!!! ما هذه الكلمة؟ ممكن ليس عربية...
[محاجهنا" ?!!!, what is this word ?!! maybe not Arabic]
- 282 M: ت ماذا تقصد يا عريش بكلمة "محاجهنا"؟
[Arish, what do you mean by "محاجهنا"?)
- 283 Ar: اعتقد واضح... هو مكان نذهب فيه للنوم...
[I think it is clear... the place we go to for sleeping]
- 284 M: لم أفصد معنى مقصود... هل أحد فهم ما قصده؟
[I didn't get it... did anyone get it?]
- 285 Ai: ص هذا طبيعي لا
[No]
- 286 Z: خلا أنا أيضا ما فهمت
[me too, I didn't understand]
- 287 M: ما يهم... دعونا نكمل
[doesn't matter... let's continue]

Likewise, in Excerpt 53, Group 5 showed how they left the discussion of a mechanical-focused LRE unresolved. Othman asked Ghalib if they needed to put a punctuation mark (i.e. a semicolon) into a sentence (line 189). Mahmoud agreed with Othman's idea, but Ghalib did not (line 193). Since Othman could not convince Ghalib by giving an explanation about it, Ghalib just left it. Ghalib also did not explain further why it was not appropriate to put a semicolon in the sentence. It seemed that the discussion about the use of a semicolon here was unresolved.

Excerpt 53 (Control Group (5) – Mechanical-focused LREs)

- 188 G: "وبعد ذلك قال لنا الأستاذ ... لماذا" ...
[“and after that the teacher said to us... why”...]
- 189 O: نكتب شي هنا؟
[we write something here?]
- 190 G: ماذا تقصد؟
[what do you mean?]
- 191 O: بعد القول يعني... اه مثل نقطتان فوق بعضهما
[after saying I mean... ah like semicolon]

- 192 G: اها... يعني هو قال شيئا نكتب نقطتان؟
[aha... you mean he says something we put semicolon?]
- 193 M: ايوه صح
[yeah right]
- 194 G: ما أعتقد صح... نتركها مثل ما هي
[I don't think it is right... we leave it as it is]
- 195 O: امم... طيب
[mmm... ok]

A closer analysis of how the LREs were resolved was conducted on the four case study small groups. Based on Storch (2001b), there were two patterns of how the groups resolved LREs: 1) interactive (i.e. where more than one group members involved in the process of resolution) and non-interactive (i.e. where only one group member solved the episode) episodes; and 2) the level of involvement (e.g. low, medium, or high) when the small groups interacted with each other during the resolution process.

To check for the reliability of the LREs, inter-rater reliability was considered. The researcher and a colleague coded a randomly chosen sample of 30 LREs from a range of transcripts. Applying Miles and Huberman's approach to inter-rater reliability (1994, p. 64), where the total number of agreements are divided by the total number of ratings, the inter-rater reliability was 94% (an acceptable level of coding reliability).

1. Interactive and Non-interactive Episodes

Non-interactive episodes occurred when only one group member solved a problem in the group discussion. Excerpt 54 showed a non-interactive episode. Group 5 worked on a descriptive task. Ghalib proposed some idea units in Line 39, then he himself changed the idea units by adding another new idea unit (line 40). In this case, other group members (i.e. Othman, Mahmood, and Abdullah) did not provide any contribution to the task. Therefore, the episode was labelled non-interactive.

Excerpt 54 (Control Group (5) - Descriptive task)

G: ... وكانت ... نقول في الظهر؟ مم ... الفكرة الأولى ... نكتب عن ... عن الجو لما وصلنا ... بعدين نتكلم عن ...
مم عن الناس في المملكة ... لا لا أول شيء نكتب عن الجو بعدين ... كيف كنا نشعر ... مم
38 [and was... we say at noon? mm ... the first idea... we write about... about the
39 weather when we arrived... then we talk about the people in the kingdom... no no
40 first thing we write about the weather then ... how we felt... mm]

Interactive episodes, on the other hand, involved more than one group members participating in the resolution process. In other words, one or two group members responded to recommendations given by the other group members. Thus, the researcher coded any episode that contained an elicited response from other group members as interactive (Storch, 2001b). Each interactive episode was then coded for the involvement level shown by each group member.

2. Level of Involvement (Interactive Episodes)

Similar to Storch (2001b), the researcher found three different types of interactive episodes: a) interactive-low; b) interactive-medium; and c) interactive-high.

a. Interactive-low

In this episode, the interaction was minimal or requests and questions for assistance were skipped. Most instances were related to a phatic utterance or to responses which showed the lack of ability to assist other group members (e.g. 'I have no idea). For example, Excerpt 55 showed an interactive-low episode in which Group 2 worked on the argumentative task, and discussed the choice of language. Shakir talked about the word choices between '*help him*' or '*take care of him*' (line 74). However, Anas responded by saying that all options were correct and asked Shakir to be quick (line 75).

- Excerpt 55 (Experimental Group (2) - A Lexis-focused LRE coded as interactive-low)
 74 Sha: ((يكتب)) وفي مرحلة عمرية ... وفي سن متأخرة ... لا لا نكتب مم إذا كبر في السن يكون عند... لديه أولاد ... رجال يساعده؟ ... او... يهتمون ... يهتمون به؟
 [((writing)) and in on stage... and in a late stage of life... no no we write mm when he gets older he will have ... have kids ... men to help him?... or... take care ...take care of him?]
- 75 An: كلها صح ... بسرعة ...
 [they are all correct... quickly...]

Excerpt 56 also displayed an interactive-low episode. It was between Ghalib and Othman when Ghalib proposed an idea to be written into the text, but Othman just repeated the last bit of Ghalib's suggestion.

- Excerpt 56 (Control Group (5) - the generation of an idea)
 22 G: وكانت الأجواء مم ماطرة ممطرة في الليل
 [the weather was rainy ... rainy at night]
- 23 O: ممطرة؟ ... في الليل
 [rainy?... at night]

b. Interactive-medium

This episode showed some involvement by group members. For instance, unidirectional assistance (i.e. where a group member requested information such as the use of an article or verb tense, and other group members responded) was labelled an interactive-medium episode. In Excerpt 57, when Asafar read a sentence, he did not use the definite article. Shakir emphasized the use of the definite article (line 152), and repeated by Asafar.

- Excerpt 57 (Experimental Group (2) - unidirectional assistance)
 151 As: "وشكرنا مدير فندق علي ..."
 ["and we thanked hotel manager for..."]
- 152 Sha: ال ... الفندق
 [the... the hotel]

- 153 As: الفندق ... مدير ... الفندق
[the hotel... manager... the hotel]
- 154 Sha: نعم
[yes]

Episodes in which a group member added one or two words to an idea unit were also categorised as interactive-medium. Excerpt 58, for instance, illustrated how Ghalib completed the phrase ‘the Kabsah’ Mahmoud emphasized (line 100) by adding more words to it (line 101).

Excerpt 58 (Control Group (5) – Generating an idea)

- 99 G: ... والسعوديون يحبون ... يأكلون الكبسة؟ ... وهي مم مثل ... تتكون من رز واللحم ...
[the Saudis love ... eating kabsah? ... and it is like ... consists of rice and meat...]
- 100 M: الكبسة (يضحك)
[the Kabsah (laugh)]
- 101 G: و ... و ... وهم ناس يحبون يفعلون ... يف يف يعملون الخير خصوصا في وقت الحج
[and...and... and they are people who love doing... d-oi- d-o-i doing good especially during hajj ((pilgrimage)) time]
- 102 M: نعم
[yes]

Episodes in which two group members or more started and resolved simultaneously were also categorised as interactive-medium, as illustrated in Excerpt 59.

- Excerpt 59 (Experimental Group (6) – simultaneous correction)
- 239 H: وينتقل للتدريس ف ...
[he moved to teach a-...]
- 240 B: في الجامعة
[at the university]
- 241 H: في الجامعة (بيبتسم)
[at the university (smile)]

c. Interactive-high

The interactive-high episode describes how two or more group members were involved actively in the discussion. For instance, in Excerpt 60, Anas initiated an idea (line 39). Then Shakir revised the idea which was confirmed by Shoaib (line 41).

Excerpt 60	(Experimental Group (2) – Generating an idea)	
39	An:	زواج بعد الدراسة الطالب يكون عنده وظيفة [marriage after study the student has a job]
40	Sha:	مم ... ما نقول وظيفة ... نقول عنده مال ... [mm... we don't say job... we say he has money...]
41	Sho:	ممتاز... نكتب يكون عنده مال [excellent... we write he has money]
42	An:	نعم [yes]

LREs in which each group member engaged with each other's contributions were also labelled interactive-high. For instance, Excerpts 61 and 62 illustrated how group members pooled their resources to negotiate resolutions (i.e. co-constructed assistance), and Excerpt 63 described how group members responded to each other's suggestion even though there was no co-construction process taking place.

Excerpt 61 showed an episode focusing on language use. Its resolution process was categorised as interactive-high. In particular, the group members provided assistance which was bi-directional or co-constructed (Storch, 2001b). When Balam read a sentence, Harith questioned the use of the gender of an adjective 'early' which was not correct (lines 331-332). Balam tried to confirm if it needed to be revised. However, Harith was not really sure (line 334). Sayifullah then explained the rule of the use of the gender in a noun phrase (line 335) which was repeated by Harith (line 336). Both Harith and Balam seemed to agree and accepted the suggestion.

Excerpt 61 (Experimental Group (6) - Co-constructed assistance)

- 331 B: ... الزواج المبكرة يساعد...
[early marriage helps...]
- 332 H: مبكرة؟! مبكرة!
[early ((feminine form))?! Early ((masculine form))]
- 333 B: مم مبكرة ... تقصد نستبدلها؟
[mm early ((in feminine form)) ... you mean we replace it?]
- 334 H: ... لا لا
[no no...]
- 335 S: ... رضاء الله يقصد تكون مبكر ... لأن لازم تكون مذکر ... مثل الزواج ...
[Redaullah means to be early ((masculine form))... because it has to be masculine... like marriage...]
- 336 H: ايوه ... صفة تكون مثل الموصوف
[yeah... adjective is the same with the noun]
- 337 B: ايوه (موافقة)
[yeah (agreement)]

Excerpt 62 contained another episode which illustrated the co-construction process. When Shoaib read the sentence, Shakir questioned the verb form ‘arrive’ (line 104). Still, Shoaib was not aware that the verb form used in the sentence was incorrect (line 105). Shakir then revised the verb form into past tense ‘arrived’ (lines 106, 108) until Shoaib realised it. Anas then explained why the past tense was used (line 111). Thus the co-construction process not only dealt with the resolution of the episode, but also the justification for the correction which was accepted by each group member.

Excerpt 62 (Experimental Group (2) – Co-construction assistance)

- 103 Sho: وبعد أن نصل ... إلى مزرعة خيل ... الخيول
[and after we arrive ... to horse farm... horses]
- 104 Sha: أن نصل؟
[we arrive?]
- 105 Sho: نعم ... آها
[yes... aha]
- 106 Sha: وصلنا
[and we arrived]
- 107 As: آها؟
[aha?]

- 108 Sha: وبعد أن وصلنا
[and after we arrived]
- 109 Sho: آها ... فعل ماضي؟
[aha... past tense?]
- 110 Sha: نعم ... الفعل الماضي
[yes... the past tense]
- 111 An: ايوه ... لأننا نحن الآن نكتب عن رحلتنا ... قبل اسبوعين
[yeah... because we are now writing about our trip... two weeks ago]
- 112 As: آها ... (موافقة)
[aha... (agreement)]

Excerpt 63 exemplified an episode coded interactive-high but no co-construction involved. However, there was negotiation within the group. Balam used the word ‘benefit’ in the sentence, and Sayifullah asked for further explanation (lines 70, 72). Although Balam provided an explanation and the resolution was reached, Sayifullah did not seem satisfied with Balam’s response.

Excerpt 63 (Experimental Group (6) - negotiation but not mutually acceptable)

- 69 B: ويستفيد منها الطلاب ...
[the students benefit from it...]
- 70 S: كيف؟
[how?]
- 71 B: يستفيدون ...
[benefit...]
- 72 S: كيف يعني؟
[how?]
- 73 B: مم ... مثل يبحثون وظيفة
[mm... like they search for jobs]
- 74 S: ايوا
[yeah (feeling uncertain)]

Further, the researcher calculated the proportion of episodes across the four selected small groups to see how many of them were resolved interactively along with the level

of engagement in the process of decision making or non-interactively. Table 22 presents results for the nature of LREs for four small groups across the three tasks which were resolved non-interactively.

Table 22. The proportion of non-interactively resolved LREs expressed as a percentage

Selected Small Groups	Descriptive	Narrative	Argumentative
Experimental Group 6 (Collaborative)	21%	18%	22%
Experimental Group 2 (Expert/expert/novice/novice)	32%	28%	26%
Control Group 6 (Cooperative)	53%	64%	50%
Group 5 (control) (Dominant/dominant/passive/passive)	70%	73%	84%

Table 22 displays the non-interactively resolved episodes in the data of the four selected small groups. The table shows a relationship between the patterns of interaction and the proportions of non-interactively resolved episodes.

As the table shows, a large proportion of episodes was non-interactively resolved by the small groups that showed a dominant/dominant/passive/passive (Group 5) and a cooperative (Group 6) patterns of interaction. For instance, in the case of Control Group 5 (Ghalib, Mahmoud, Abdullah, and Othman), a large proportion of the episodes was non-interactively resolved: 70% on the descriptive task, 73% on the narrative task, and 84% on the argumentative task. In the case of Control Group 6 (Zayan, Maiz, Arish, and Aish), the cooperative small group, the proportion of episodes resolved non-interactively ranged from 50% on the argumentative task to 53% and 64% on the descriptive and narrative tasks respectively.

On the other hand, the proportion of on-task LREs resolved non-interactively was comparatively stable and typically below 25% for the collaborative small group across the three tasks (Experimental Group 6). In this group, each group member engaged with each other's contribution by resolving episodes initiated by the other group member.

In the case of the expert/expert/novice/novice small group (Experimental Group 2), the proportion of non-interactive LREs decreased over time: from 32% on the descriptive task to 28% and 26% on the narrative and argumentative tasks respectively. This lower rate of non-interactive episodes indicates higher engagement by Shoaib and Asafar as 'novices' in the decision making process. This higher engagement may also be attributed to the students' confidence which increased over time, and therefore they participated in the resolution process more actively. Table 23 presents the results of LREs resolved interactively, differentiating between episodes in which the engagement level was low (L), medium (M), and high (H).

Table 23. Level of engagement in the resolution process of on-task LREs expressed as a percentage

Selected Small Groups	Descriptive			Narrative			Argumentative		
	L	M	H	L	M	H	L	M	H
Group 6 (experimental)	10%	47%	27%	11%	44%	36%	9%	35%	40%
Group 2 (experimental)	36%	26%	19%	38%	25%	23%	42%	23%	26%
Group 6 (control)	28%	14%	25%	26%	13%	39%	30%	21%	15%
Group 5 (control)	17%	23%	21%	14%	19%	18%	8%	14%	13%

Table 23 shows that a considerable proportion of on-task LREs was resolved with a high level of involvement and mutual collaboration in the collaborative small group. Here, in the case of Harith, Balam, Sayifullah, and Nadir (Experimental Group 6), the

result of interactive-high LREs was approximately over 25% on each of the three tasks. Moreover, for this group, the total of interactive-high and interactive-medium LREs was over 70% of all on-task episodes. In particular, in the case of Experimental Group 6, the combination of on-task LREs resolved with both a high and medium level of engagement ranged from 71% on the descriptive task to 75% and 80% on the argumentative and narrative tasks respectively.

In the case of the expert/expert/novice/novice small group (Experimental Group 2, Anas, Shakir, Shoaib, and Asafar) , even though the result of interactive-high LREs increased over time (from 19% on the descriptive task to 23% and 26% on the narrative and argumentative tasks respectively), a comparatively high proportion (over 35%) of the interactive LREs was resolved with low level of engagement. In other words, while Anas and Shakir as ‘experts’ mostly resolved a large proportion of the on-task LREs, the contribution of Shoaib and Asafar as ‘novices’ in the decision making process was restricted to phatic utterances and repetitions (expressing encouragement or agreement).

Table 23 indicates that in the case of the cooperative pattern of interaction (Control Group 6), the percentage of resolved LREs with a relatively high level of engagement was on the descriptive (25%) and narrative (39%) tasks, but not on the argumentative task (15%). Nevertheless, the high level of engagement in the decision making process in this small group was unusual because they imposed their own recommendations. In particular, there was generally no co-construction process, as shown in the collaborative small group. Rather, the interactive-high episodes in this group displayed a sequence of suggestions from each group member.

Table 23 also shows that in the case of the dominant/dominant/passive/passive pattern of interaction (Control Group 5), the proportion of resolved LREs with a high level of involvement fell over time (the students worked on the three tasks in a chronological order). For instance, it decreased from 21% on the descriptive task to 18% on the narrative task and 13% on the argumentative task. A similar continuous decrease was also seen in on-task LREs resolved with a medium level of involvement. The dominant group members – Ghalib and Mahmoud – tended to resolve a lot of the episodes with little suggestion from other group members, Abdullah and Othman, who had minimal involvement.

Therefore, the examination of on-task LREs indicated substantial differences between the four patterns of small group interaction. The four case study small groups demonstrated these variations. In the collaborative patterns of small group interaction, the data for Experimental Group 6 indicated that even though Harith and Balam initiated on-task LREs via questions and requests across the three tasks, a significant proportion of the episodes involved Sayifullah and Nadir in the process of resolution. A large percentage of all on-task LREs interactively resolved by this group (approximately from 84% to 91% on each task), and in a high percentage (over 25%) of on-task LREs, each group member was actively involved in the decision making process. Below, Excerpt 64 from the small group talk exemplifies this level of engagement.

Excerpt 64 (Experimental Group (6) - Collaborative pattern)

202 S: وفي الجامعة جامعة أم القرى عدد متزوجين من ... من الطلاب يكون ... ممم
[at the university Um AlQura university the number of ... of married students is ... mmm]

203 H: نقول بلغ ... أحسن
[we say reached... better]

204 B: من طلاب بلغ

[of students reached]

- 205 S: عدد المتزوجين من الطلاب بلغ؟ بلغ المئة
[the number of married students reached? Reached a hundred]
- 206 N: ايوه
[yeah]
- 207 H: ايوه
[yeah]

Excerpt 64 started with Sayifullah reading a sentence. He paused as he was not certain about the verb form used in the sentence (line 202). Harith recommended the use of the verb 'reached' (line 203). Balam and Sayifullah accepted the input while adding a word 'hundred'. Nadir and Harith agreed on the idea. The episode was categorised as interactive-high and showed how each group member pooled their knowledge and reached a correct solution which was also known as 'mutual scaffolding' (Storch, 2001b; Swain, 1995).

In the case of the expert/expert/novice/novice small group – Anas, Shakir, Shoaib, and Asafar, a high proportion of on-task LREs were resolved with a high level of involvement (see Table 23). In particular, Shoaib and Asafar as 'novices' gradually contributed to the resolution process. It was because Anas and Shakir tended to encourage Shoaib and Asafar in the decision making process and they successfully did so. The following excerpt illustrates this type of engagement.

- Excerpt 65 (Experimental Group (2) – Expert/Expert/Novice/Novice pattern)
- 189 An: وفي الصباح خرجنا ... خرجنا من الفندق إلى الحاء الحافلة... وذهبنا إلى متحف مدينة
[and in the morning we got out... we got out of the hotel to the bu- the bus... and we went to to Al Madina museum]
- 190 As: ممم ايوه ممتاز... لكن ... اوك اوك
[mmm yeah excellent... but... ok ok]
- 191 An: لا؟
[no?]

- 192 As: صح صح... لكن أنا أريد ... (بضحك)
[right right... but I want... (laugh)]
- 193 Sha: تفضل... قل ماذا تريد تقول
[please... say what you want to say]
- 194 As: بس أريد نذكر ... نكتب
[I just want to mention... write]
- 195 An: ممم
[mmm]
- 196 As: ذهبنا إلى جبل أحد في الأول
[we went to Ohud mountain at first]
- 197 An: اها
[aha]
- 198 As: وشفنا مكان المعركة... معركة الأحد
[and we saw the battle spot... Ohud battle]
- 199 Sha: نعم
[yes]
- 200 As: ايوه... بس كنت أريد نكتب هذا
[yeah... I just want to write this]
- 201 Sha: بس هذا؟
[just this?]
- 202 As: ايوه
[yeah]
- 203 An: نكتب عندما خرجنا من فندق ذهبنا إلى جبل أحد وبعدين نكتب... نكتب في الزيارة المصنع
[we write when we got out of the hotel we went to Ohud mountain and then we write... we write about museum visiting]
- 204 As: ايوه ايوه
[yeah yeah]
- 205 Sha: طيب... خرجنا من الفندق... من الفندق في الصباح
[ok... we got out of the hotel... of the hotel in the morning]
- 206 Sho: بعد الفجر
[after Fajr prayer]
- 207 Sha: بعد الفجر... وذهبنا إلى جبل أحد ورأينا مكان معركة
[after Fajr prayer... and we went to Ohud mountain and we saw the battle place]
- 208 Sho: ايوه
[yeah]
- 209 As: وبعد ذلك ذهبنا إلى متحف تاريخ المدينة
[and after that we went to Almadinah history museum]
- 210 An: ممتاز
[excellent]

Excerpt 65 began with Anas generating idea units (line 189). Asafar wanted to add his idea but was not really sure (lines 190, 192). Shakir encouraged Asafar to express his idea via a request (line 193) and a question (line 201) whereas Anas invited Asafar via backchannelling utterances (e.g. lines 191, 195). Anas started to revise the idea and added Asafar's idea (line 203). Shakir also completed the idea (line 205) and added Shoab's opinion (line 207). Thus, the episode indicated evidence of high involvement and the process of co-construction.

In the case of Control Group 6 (Zayan, Maiz, Arish, and Aish), the cooperative small group, each group member resolved equal number of on-task LREs. A high proportion of episodes were non-interactively resolved (from 70% to 84% as indicated in Table 22). Unlike in the case of collaborative and expert/novice small groups, if a high level of engagement took place, it would deal with disagreements among group members. Two or more group members tended to force their ideas to others without trying to listen and incorporate each other's suggestions. The following excerpt illustrates how this group deliberated in an episode.

Excerpt 66 (Control Group (6) – Cooperative pattern)

- 32 Z: نكتب في زيارة مسجد قباء ...
[we write about our visit to Qiba masjid...]
- 33 M: لا لا... بداية نتحدث عن وصولنا في الفندق وماذا فعلنا
[no no... first we talk about our arrival to the hotel and what we did]
- 34 Z: لكن هذا تكلمنا عنها في الأول ... شوف... ((يشير إلى الفكرة))
[but we talked about this at the beginning ((pointing to the idea))]
- 35 M: نعم نعم... ولكن هذا ليس كاف... نكتب كيف وصلنا في الفندق... بعدين بعدين من كان في الاس- يستقبلنا وهكذا
[yes yes... but this is not enough... we write how we got to the hotel... then then who rece- received us and so on]
- 36 Z: أنا لا أتفق معك... دعنا نكتب
[I don't agree with you... let's write]
- 37 M: ما فيه مشكلة... نتكلم في فندق بالتفصيل... بعدين مدرس يشوف كتابة
[no problem... we talk about the hotel in details... then the teacher sees our writing]

38 Z: مو ممكن... قباء هو من معالم مدينة... هنا لا بد نتحدث في الزيارة المدينة... و... وما رأينا... مو نتكلم في فندق
 [impossible... Qiba is of Almadinah landmarks... here we have to talk about our visit to Almadinah ... and... and what we saw... not talking about the hotel]

Excerpt 66 showed how Zayan initiated the episode by expressing his idea (line 32) and Maiz seemed to disagree (line 33). Although Zayan tried to explain his idea, Maiz did not seem to accept it (line 35). The group did not reach consensus as disagreements kept arising between Zayan and Maiz (lines 36-38). They were not able to resolve disputes in their arguments. As a result, they found it difficult to accomplish a good quality decision making process.

In the case of Control Group 5 (Ghalib, Mahmoud, Abdullah, and Othman) that displayed a dominant/dominant/passive/passive pattern of interaction, Ghalib and Mahmoud mostly took the lead and appropriated the tasks. Little input was provided by Abdullah and Othman across the three tasks. It was evident in the percentage of on-task LREs resolved non-interactively: 70% on the descriptive task, 73% on the narrative task, and 84% on the argumentative task (see Table 22).

Discussion and Summary

With regards to the second research question, the results of the Independent-samples Mann-Whitney *U* Test indicated that there was a significant difference ($U = 64, p = .039$) between those writing in traditional group work and those using a collaborative writing approach. In particular, most of the experimental groups produced a larger number of LREs than the control ones. However, both groups had similar focus in that students in both the experimental and control groups paid more attention to form- and lexical-based LREs than the mechanical-based LREs. The results were contrary to earlier remarks by Lesser (2004) who investigated the impact of a collaborative writing

approach on the type of LREs (i.e. grammatical and lexical items). He found that while the experimental groups who employed CW approach focused more on grammatical than on lexical items, the control groups tended to focus more on lexical than grammatical items. Like Lesser (2004), Malmqvist (2005) examined how CW affected the focus of LREs in written German texts. He found that the collaborative small groups attended mainly to grammatical items than meaning and lexical items. Giving support to Lesser's (2004) and Malmqvist's (2005) findings, Amirkhiz et al. (2013) also found that EFL dyads tended to focus more on the language aspects than ESL dyads. A possible explanation of the differences is that the students not only may have limited understanding and knowledge of the linguistic features, but also had different language learning experiences. Thus, based on the mixed findings of these studies, J. Lantolf and Thorne (2007, p. 206) argued that "learners appear to have their own agendas for which aspects of the language they decide to focus on at any given time. The agenda does not necessarily coincide with the intent of the instructors".

Considering the outcomes of the LREs produced, the experimental groups produced not only more LREs, but also a higher percentage of these LREs which were correctly resolved. However, although the learners working in the control groups also produced a considerable number of LREs, they could not resolve most of their problems. This finding confirms that any gain in the students' resolved LREs from the experimental groups may be attributed to the collaborative writing practices. In other words, their CW experience led to enhanced performances on the writing tasks.

In the case of the collaborative small group (the experimental group), for instance, a large proportion of on-task LREs displayed co-construction in the resolution process. Group members pooled their ideas to achieve consensus and engaged with each other's

suggestions to complete their tasks. Unlike the collaborative small group, the cooperative small group (the control group) also showed high levels of engagement across the three tasks, but there was no process of co-construction. Rather, most episodes showed how each group member insisted their own suggestions without considering others' suggestions. These findings are similar to what Storch (2001b) found in her study investigating pair work in completing composition, editing and text reconstruction tasks. While the collaborative pairs resolved most on-task LREs with a high level of engagement and mutual assistance, the dominant/dominant pairs only showed a series of suggestions and counter suggestions rather than a co-construction process. That is, what the researcher found in the cooperative small groups regarding how the LREs were resolved was quite similar to the dominant/dominant dyads in Storch's (2001b) study: there were disagreements and an inability to involve each other in the process of resolution.

In the expert/expert/novice/novice (the experimental group) and dominant/dominant/passive/passive (the control group) small groups, the expert and dominant group members tended to take the lead in the discussion and to appropriate the tasks. The main difference found between these two small groups was that while the expert group members encouraged the novice ones to contribute to the resolution process, the dominant group members mainly took control over the three tasks which resulted in non-interactively resolved LREs (Storch, 2001b). In addition to the expert/expert/novice/novice small groups, the novice group members were more active and confident over time to initiate and resolve on-task LREs.

Similar findings have been reported by previous studies (e.g. Fernández Dobao, 2012; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009). The result of these studies shows that collaborative

problem solving activities may occur when learners implemented a collaborative approach. During the CW activities, they tended to share ideas, actively engage in the discussion, and pool their linguistic resources to resolve LREs. Specifically, Fernández Dobao (2012, p. 55) stated that “the higher level of success achieved by the groups was quite often the result of the different members sharing their knowledge and collaborating to solve their problems, rather than just impact of one single strong student” as in the case of the collaborative small groups in the present study. Thus, the results of the present study confirm that the experimental groups, the collaborative small groups in particular, scaffolded each other and co-constructed knowledge more often than the control groups.

In summary, the analysis of LREs showed that the experimental groups generated more LREs than the control groups. Regarding the focus of the LREs, both experimental and control groups focused on grammar and lexis. However, in terms of mechanics-focused LREs, the experimental groups produced a higher number of the episodes than the control ones. In addition, the experimental groups were more successful at resolving language related problems than the control ones. The results also indicated that the experimental groups (the collaborative and expert/novice small groups) produced fewer non-interactively resolved episodes than the control groups (the cooperative and dominant/passive small groups) across the three tasks. In particular, the experimental groups generally showed a high level of engagement in the resolution process, and therefore produced a substantial proportion of on-task LREs resolved interactively.

Chapter 6. Teacher and Student Perceptions

This chapter focuses on addressing the third research question: “How do ASL learners and teachers perceive the implementation of a collaborative writing approach?”. In particular, the data collected through semi-structured interviews with both learners and teachers from the experimental and control classes were analysed by using a qualitative approach of thematic analysis. Having been transcribed, reduced, and coded into themes, the interview data are then presented.

This chapter first begins with the interview data of learners from both the experimental and control groups. The second part of chapter reports how teachers reflected on their classroom activities. Excerpts from the interview data transcripts are used to describe themes emerging from the interview analysis.

Learner Perceptions

The third research question of the current study was related to the students' perceptions of traditional group work and collaborative writing experiences. Of sixty-four student participants, sixteen students from both control and experimental (8 each) were available for one-on-one semi-structured interviews with the researcher a week after the post-test. The researcher went in with an a priori approach by asking specific questions based on previous studies to help the researcher find out what students' perceptions were. For this purpose, the researcher analysed the students' responses to the main six interview questions (see Appendix 2), comparing the responses provided by those writing in traditional group work and those writing collaboratively.

A qualitative approach of thematic analysis was used to analyse interview data. This approach was part of the mixed-methods design used in the study. Also, this approach which generated perception data provided another way of understanding the effects of CW. Braun and Clarke (2006) state that this approach can be used to “identify, analyse, and report patterns (themes) within the data” (p.79). The researcher chose this approach because it offers “rigorous thematic approach which can produce an insightful analysis that answers particular research questions” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 97). Moreover, this method went well with the research question by assisting the examination of the interview data based on two viewpoints: firstly, from a data-driven viewpoint; and secondly, from the research question viewpoint in order to check the consistency of research question and information provided. Based on the analysis of learner perception data, two major themes were identified. In this section, the researcher summarizes and highlights the main findings related to these themes.

Learning Benefits on L2

All students interviewed in the experimental groups responded very positively about their collaborative writing experiences. *They felt that CW was beneficial not only to enhance their writing skills and develop their Arabic language particularly grammar knowledge and their vocabulary, but also to provide them opportunities to work in team.* In other words, CW enabled them to generate ideas and pool them together in order to write a joint text.

For instance, Balam, one of the students from Group 6 (the experimental group), said: “my writing is much improved grammatically. I now use new *vocabulary items* and most of these *vocabulary items* I learned from my friends when we were doing CW. Each task has got its own way of writing. So the range of *vocabulary items* also differed”. His response was in line with Harith who said that: “obviously we all have learnt more things in this CW experience. This method boosts language acquisition. We have learnt when verbs are written in nominative case or in accusative case or in jussive case. Also we have learnt all the rulings regarding adjectives. And amazing thing is we learnt it from students”. His statement was supported by Sayifullah who explained that: “I think I have made great improvements in terms of vocabulary and decrease in grammatical errors. Before I used to have many ideas on topics but I could not express those ideas. When we did CW when I briefly mention my ideas, my friends helped me to put those ideas into words”. Nevertheless, though he liked working in small groups, he felt that working in pairs was more beneficial. He added: “While I experienced large group and I like it, I personally believe working in pairs is much better as it gives me more chances to interact and discuss and practice my language”. Nadir, the last group member in Group 6, further elaborated that: “collaborative writing gives us the opportunity to teach others and more time to manifest our linguistic skills

through discussion. My writing has improved a lot in the sense that I make lesser grammar errors and my writings are now rich in advanced vocabulary. In other words, we improved ourselves as we progressed from one task to another. Our errors decreased and quality of writing got improved.

Likewise, Group 2 perceived the CW activities positively although they were concerned about some aspects during the activities. For instance, Anas said: “I believe my writing has improved greatly as I practice writing for 12 weeks. I noticed that the more I participated the more I benefited. And some friends are very supportive to other students”. Similarly, Shoaib added: “I have improved a lot in my writing production participating to this writing program”. Then, Shakir extended: “I think it’s very effective. We had stormy discussions before writing each article and then in the editing stage we benefited a lot when we ourselves corrected the grammar mistakes”. Although Shakir considered this activity was good, he was concerned about a few things: “the limited amount of time allocated for the subject hindered us from showing our potential. So, there is room for improvement”. Further, Asafer elaborated: “CW helps us to learn more things from others, and to improve ourselves. We get an opportunity to share our knowledge with others. But the problem is that some students don’t contribute to the discussion”. Overall, the students’ responses in the experimental groups (Group 6 and 2) during the interview sessions show very positive attitudes toward CW activities despite a few concerns raised by Group 2 during the activities.

From the control groups (Group 6 and 5) , most of the participants felt quite positive about writing in traditional group work (cooperative writing). They found the writing activities useful in many ways even though some students had not experienced writing in groups. They used to study Arabic focusing on its grammar aspects. For instance,

Zayan from Group 6 said: “Back home, the course was mainly focused on Arabic basic grammar and it was delivered in a traditional way. The course teacher couldn't speak Arabic. He just knows the rules. Here, I feel more confident about my writing in terms of grammar, word choices etc”. Aish added: I haven't learnt how to write Arabic in a professional way before. I just start learning when I enrolled in this institute (three semesters ago).” He further mentioned that: “Back in Seychelles, we used to learn Arabic as a subject of rote memorization. But when we came here we realised language learning is a natural process. And cooperative learning took this natural process to a whole new level. I'm really glad to be part of this study as I learned so much of the language in all aspects (e.g. grammar, word choice, connection words and more). In our traditional writing course, the teachers focused on correcting students' grammar mistakes and don't give much attention to other skills such as practicing the language for written production. If we were asked to write, the teacher assigned the task individually”. In other words, the Arabic subject had been one of the compulsory subjects they needed to pass at their schools back in their home countries. Most of the time, their language classes focused more on grammar. When it came to a writing activity, it would be assigned individually.

Having participated in traditional group work in completing the writing tasks, most students in the control groups felt that their writing skills have greatly improved. For example, Maiz from Group 6 stated: “My writing is much improved grammatically. I prefer writing in a large group because there would be much more ideas and discussions, compared to writing individually or in pairs. I noticed that the more I participated the more I benefited. And some friends are very supportive to other students. I think I have built up confidence in writing all types of writing after this experience of TGW”. Then, Arish said: “Incorporating more writing classes is very

important in teaching Arabic language. Through writing classes even pronunciation mistakes can be identified. Because if students cannot differentiate between sounds, they will make mistakes when writing letters that represent those sounds”. In line with above statements, Aneel from Group 5 said: “Group work in writing tasks helps to exhibit our linguistic skills especially communication skills and reflect in language deeply in a group environment. I’ve seen an improvement in my writings especially the increase use of new words”. Therefore, involving them in cooperative writing allows them to engage in language deliberation and practice their language skills.

However, a few group members in the control groups felt group work on writing activities was unnecessary. For instance, Adil from Group 5 said: “this activity takes too much time to complete one piece of writing. For example, it took one whole week to complete the descriptive writing. The brainstorming session ran on for two days”. He was also concerned that: “most of the discussion time was taken by one person (Ifham). We got very less opportunity to express ourselves. I think teacher intervention is required in such circumstances. He should have reminded Ifham not to trample on other students’ right to express their views and suggestions”. Then Aneel added: “I didn’t participate well in my group work because I didn’t have many ideas on the topics they chose. They chose topics according to the wish of majority”. Thus, due to bad group work management and the lack of teacher intervention, some group members in control groups did not benefit from the group work on writing activities.

Learner Preference on Group Size

In general, most of students in the experimental groups enjoyed working in the small group. For instance, Harith (Group 6) explained that: “I benefited greatly from other students when they pointed out the errors I made while speaking. We learn quickly and

what we learn in this method will stay forever in our memory, because we tend to remember the things we do in a friendly environment”. However, Harith also said that he found it difficult to engage with other group members (e.g. Balam). Harith said: “Balam is a slow learner and he has not still picked up the most basic grammar topics like genitive constructs. Actually, he was shy because he thought he was intellectually lower than others. So we felt that trying to get him on board will be a waste of time. In the argumentative writing, we cheered him up and he made some improvements”.

Unlike the experimental groups, few students in the control groups interviewed felt that writing cooperatively did not benefit them very much. For instance, Azyz, from Group 5, considered the activities were time consuming. He explained that: “it takes too much time to complete one piece of writing. For example, it took one whole week to complete the descriptive writing. The brainstorming session ran on for two days. I think it wastes a lot of time. In our normal (previous) classes we used to write our essays within 3 days. He then added: “to some extent, most of the discussion time was taken by Shihab. We got very few opportunities to express ourselves.” He preferred writing individually to cooperatively.

Slightly different with Azyz, Ifham tended to write in pairs rather than in small groups even though he felt quite positive about the cooperative writing. Ifham said: “I prefer writing in pairs [which] is more useful. When writing in pairs it would be highly conspicuous if you were not participating. But in a large group you can stay passive not noticed by others”. Therefore, while most students in the experimental groups showed a strong preference for working in small groups, several students in the control groups stated a preference for writing in pairs or individually.

Teacher Perception

The study also analysed teachers' views on traditional group work and the collaborative writing approach. As stated earlier, there were two teachers involved in the study. *However, the semi-structured interviews were conducted only with Teacher B who taught the experimental classes* after completing the student interviews. The researcher went in with an a priori approach by asking specific questions based on readings to help the researcher find out what students' perceptions were. For this purpose, there were mainly 18 questions asked of the teacher. A qualitative approach of thematic analysis was also used to analyse the interview data. Below is the highlight of the main findings from the teacher interview.

When questioned about his previous experiences about implementing collaborative writing approach in writing classes, Teacher B responded that it was his first experience teaching Arabic writing employing the approach. Although he felt very optimistic about the effectiveness of the approach, the implementation of the approach was quite challenging for him. In particular, Teacher B found it difficult to prepare and manage the writing classes due to the students' different cultural backgrounds and language proficiencies. Teacher B said that: "I spent about five hours. The heterogeneous nature of the classes concerned me most. There are some new batches where students can barely speak in Arabic. So distribution of students for groups will be a tall order." He added: "students differ in their abilities, cultural backgrounds and ideologies."

Despite the challenges, Teacher B believed that the collaborative writing approach was beneficial to some extent. In particular, Teacher B noticed that the students in the experimental classes enjoyed the collaborative writing tasks. Teacher B responded that: "I think collaborative writing helps in engaging students in the lesson. When students

attempt to write a joint article, they learn from one another. Along the way, sometimes they discuss the grammar points they come across while writing. Expert students benefit from the teaching aspect of collaborative writing. Novice students get the opportunity of one-to-one learning which fosters quick learning.” This is because Teacher B observed the novice students in the experimental groups discuss grammar. Teacher B felt that in the experimental groups, the students were collectively responsible for their own work. They had much time to discuss their ideas when drafting their texts in order to produce well written texts together. To conclude, Teacher B considered collaborative writing approach is feasible to be implemented in the institute. He further said: “we can implement collaborative learning for the first and second semester”.

Discussion and Summary

With respect to the third question, most of students’ interview responses from both groups demonstrated that they were very positive of traditional group work and collaborative writing experiences. In particular, while most students in the experimental groups benefited from the collaborative writing activities, some students in the control groups felt pessimistic about the group work and preferred working in pairs or individually to small groups. Indeed, Fernández Dobao and Blum (2013) found a similar result that some learners felt better if they worked with less people or even alone because they could not see the effectiveness of working together. On the other hand, all students interviewed from the experimental groups were very supportive of CW tasks. Most students seemed to realise the positive impact of CW tasks on grammar, organisation, and the content of their texts along with the learning advantages of writing with peers when they participated. They preferred working in the small

groups as they could have more opportunities to share ideas and obtain assistance from peers. The results were consistent with other studies (Lin & Maarof, 2013; Shehadeh, 2011) showing that the student enjoyed the CW experience and felt a positive influence of collaboration on their writing abilities. Furthermore, Fernández Dobao (2012) and Wigglesworth and Storch (2009) found that collaborative tasks provided learners to pool their individual ideas and knowledge although not everyone was active during group discussion in small groups. They also argued that working in pairs allowed more interaction since the students were easier to participate.

Regarding teacher perception of CW, the teacher believed that CW could be a powerful tool to enhance students' writing skills. This perception corresponds with the findings of Storch (2002) and Fung and Hoon (2008) which showed that collaborative writing activities resulted in better quality texts. The shared expertise among group members clearly helped students generate more ideas and produce better written essays. Of course, teachers play an important role in CW tasks to prepare, manage, and facilitate the activities in order to encourage students to actively participate in the collaborative work.

However, there are some aspects that should be taken into account when assigning collaborative tasks in the writing classrooms, such as the choice of topics and the students' language proficiency. This finding concurs with Fung and Hoon's (2008) study that suggests that when assigning the students on CW tasks, the teachers should pay attention to the level of students' language proficiency. The teachers should monitor and make sure that every group member has equal opportunities to participate in the discussion and no one dominates the discussion.

In summary, this chapter discusses the findings of the students' and teachers' perceptions of traditional group work and collaborative writing experiences in the ASL writing classroom. In the case of student perception, from both experimental and control groups being interviewed, the participants generally felt quite positive about writing activities using collaborative writing approach and traditional group work (cooperative writing). However, while the majority of experimental group students found the writing activities useful in many ways, many students in the control groups found writing in groups did not benefit them. Thus, the findings suggest that there was a possible link between the students' perceptions and their level of achievement – which will be discussed in the next chapter. Regarding the teacher perception, the findings suggest that although the teachers felt very optimistic about the effectiveness of these approaches, the implementation of these approaches were quite challenging for them.

Chapter 7. Effects of Collaborative Writing on Students'

Writing Skills

This chapter focuses on addressing the fourth research question: “Is there a difference in students' ASL writing performance in collaborative writing groups and traditional small groups? What are the linguistic and rhetorical features of writings in the two instructional modes that may explain the differences in their performance?”. In particular, the data were collected through conducting pre- and post- writing tests from the experimental and control classes. Students' written texts were assessed by using an analytical writing rubric (see Appendix 3.). The writing rubric includes six component areas: topic development, organization, details, sentences, wording, and mechanics on

a 4-point scale. Each component may receive a mark of one (the lowest mark) to four (the highest), thus 24 was the highest score a participant text could get. In order to see if there were significant differences between students in the experimental and control groups, two one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were conducted. A *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) version 23.0 application was applied to compare results of pre- and post-tests from experimental and traditional groups. Since the study was primarily a quasi-experimental design with non-equivalent comparison groups (i.e. no control group assignment through the mechanism of random assignment due to inadequate resources to conduct randomization), the analysis procedure employed one way *analysis of variance* (ANOVA) to statistically control differences or extraneous variables between treated and comparison groups that may affect results of the experiment (Green & Salkind, 2003; Hinkel et al., 2003). Through this procedure, the researcher was able to examine the effect of collaborative writing (i.e. as an independent variable) on ASL learners' writing outcomes (i.e. a dependent variable) although student participants are not assigned randomly to treated and comparison groups. Having analysed the data, the outcomes are then presented.

This chapter presents the results of the one way ANOVA that was conducted on the pre- and post-test results from both the experimental and control groups. The second part of chapter discusses the differences between the experimental and control groups in terms of linguistic and rhetorical features. Excerpts from the students' written texts are used to describe linguistic and rhetorical features being analysed.

Students' Writing Quality

Before conducting Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to determine if there were differences in the students' writing score improvements in the two conditions, first the

normality of the pre- and post-test scores was tested. The tests of normality (i.e. the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests) were used to see whether the samples were normally distributed. As can be seen in Table 24, the scores of both groups at the pre- and post-test were not statistically significant ($df = 32, p > .05$). That is, it can be observed that the data of the sample was normally distributed. This cleared the way for the use of ANOVA to analyse the data.

Table 24. Tests of Normality

Scores	Groups	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-Test	Experimental	.196	32	.053	.884	32	.053
	Control	.145	32	.087	.957	32	.223
Post-Test	Experimental	.237	32	.080	.858	32	.075
	Control	.128	32	.20	.930	32	.069

Further, to ensure that the samples assigned to both experimental and control conditions were not initially different, tests of homogeneity of variance were run for both pre- and post-tests. The Levene's test for equality of variances shows that the variance of both groups in the pre-test was equivalent since the obtained p -value (.059) was greater than .05 (see Table 25). Thus, it can be claimed that the variances for the two groups on the pre-test were homogeneous—i.e., the two groups were not significantly different in terms of writing ability before undergoing the treatment. On the other hand, the obtained p -value (.018) of the post-test from both groups was lower than .05. Therefore, it can be observed that the treatment was effective enough to make a significant difference in writing performance between the experimental and control groups.

Table 25. Tests of Homogeneity of Variances

Scores	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Pre-Test	1.912	14	47	.059

Post-Test	2.314	14	48	.018
-----------	-------	----	----	------

As stated earlier, the fourth research question was concerned with the difference in students' writing abilities between those working in traditional groups and those working collaboratively. Table 26 shows the descriptive statistics for collaborative writing approach (experimental groups) and traditional group work (control groups) of their pre- and post-test scores. As mentioned earlier, students' written texts were assessed by using an analytical writing rubric consisting six component areas. Before the intervention, the mean scores of control and experimental groups were 12.50 and 13.81 respectively, which were increased to 15.28 and 19.31 respectively. These descriptive statistics suggest that the students' writing abilities were enhanced by the two treatments over a 9-week period.

Table 26. Means and standard deviation of the total of pre- and post-test scores for the experimental and control groups

Scores	Groups	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Pre-Test	Control	12.50	32	4.143
	Experimental	13.81	32	4.561
	<i>Total Average</i>	<i>13.16</i>	<i>64</i>	<i>4.372</i>
Post-Test	Control	15.28	32	4.191
	Experimental	19.31	32	4.238
	<i>Average Total</i>	<i>17.30</i>	<i>64</i>	<i>4.649</i>

In order to determine whether there were significant differences between pre- and post-test scores of experimental and control groups, two one-way ANOVAs were performed. Table 27 indicates the results of tests of between subject effects for pre- and post-test scores.

Table 27. Results of ANOVA for pre- and post-test scores

ANOVA		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Pre-Test	Between Groups	954.078	16	59.630	11.194	.093
	Within Groups	250.360	47	5.327		
Total		1204.437	63			
Post-Test	Between Groups	1127.112	15	75.141	15.397	.000
	Within Groups	234.248	48	4.880		
Total		1361.359	63			

As can be seen from Table 27, the experimental and control groups had no statistically significant differences in their pre-test mean scores ($p = .093$, $p > .05$). However, in their post-test mean scores, there were statistically significant differences ($p = .000$, $p < .05$) between the students working in traditional groups and those working collaboratively. An examination of Table 26 shows that the students in the experimental condition obtained higher post-test collaborative writing scores than students in the control condition.

The students' performances in the experimental and control groups were also examined in terms of the six components of the writing rubric: topic development, organization, details, sentences, wording, and mechanics. The data from pre- and post-test scores were analyzed by employing an independent-samples *t*-test with the level of significance set at .05.

Table 28. Mean total and component scores on the pre-test

Components	Max. Scores	Experimental		Control		t	Sig.*
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Topic Dev.	4	2.28	1.085	2.22	.975	-1.103	.076
Organization	4	2.44	0.914	2.06	.840	-.987	.054

Details	4	2.5	1.016	2.16	.884	-1.230	.087
Sentences	4	2.41	0.837	1.97	.695	-1.850	.098
Wording	4	2.16	0.767	2.19	.738	-1.350	.075
Mechanics	4	2.09	0.818	1.88	.793	-1.110	.065
Total	24	13.81	4.561	12.5	4.143	-1.205	.093

* $p < .05$

Table 28 shows no significant differences between the two groups with reference to the six component scores. In particular, Table 28 indicates that the total and sub-scores between the two groups were similar. That means the students' writing abilities from both experimental and control groups in Arabic writing were quite elementary even though they were considered to be at a high-intermediate level in terms of the program entrance test scores. While the students of both groups demonstrated knowledge of topic development, text organization, some details to support the chosen topics, and some basic *vocabulary items* in their written task performance, they displayed major problems in such aspects of grammar as تقديم الصفة على الموصوف (i.e. using adjectives before nouns), حروف الجر (i.e. prepositions), التعريف والتوكيد (i.e. definite and indefinite nouns), and الإضافة (i.e. genitives), and many errors in spelling and punctuation.

After the 9-week intervention, as seen in Table 29, unlike those in control groups, the students from experimental groups benefited from the collaborative writing approach as they made some significant improvements on organization, sentences, mechanics, although not on topic development, details, and wording.

Table 29. Mean total and component scores on the post-test

Components	Max. Scores	Experimental		Control		t	Sig.*
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Topic Dev.	4	3.06	1.014	2.66	1.035	-1.103	.076
Organization	4	3.28	.924	2.47	.950	-2.387	.000
Details	4	3.25	.880	2.34	.787	-1.870	.089
Sentences	4	3.09	.777	2.31	.644	-2.850	.000

Wording	4	3.16	.677	2.63	.660	-1.950	.079
Mechanics	4	3.56	.619	2.75	.916	-2.110	.000
Total	24	19.31	4.238	15.28	4.191	-3.826	.000

* $p < .05$

In summary, there were significant differences in the overall writing performance of the students in the two groups as measured by the tests and these could be attributed to the CW intervention implemented in the research site.

The difference between experimental and control groups: Linguistic and Rhetorical Features

Previous studies have investigated the differences of the texts produced by students collaboratively in terms of fluency, accuracy, and complexity (Shehadeh, 2011; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009). They have reported that CW tasks could foster L2 development: the quality of students' written productions. Thus, in the present study, in order to further understand the difference between the experimental and control groups after the intervention, linguistic and rhetorical features of writings in the two instructional modes were examined. These features were related to the rubric (see Appendix 3) that guided the writing task performance by students and their scoring by the raters. The linguistic features were related to sentences, wording and mechanics while rhetorical features were related to topic development, organization and details. For instance, students received a good score on linguistic features when they could write complete sentences with correct grammar, or use outstanding vocabulary to support a topic correctly. Regarding rhetorical features, if students could express a strong understanding of a topic and write it clearly and effectively, they received a high mark on this component. One writing sample from each group at pre-and post-test was randomly selected for this examination (see Appendix 4).

Linguistic Features

In general, from the students' pre-test essays, it was found that they wrote a few short sentences without elaboration or further detail. They also committed many grammatical mistakes. However, unlike their pre-test essays, the post-test essays from the experimental group, in particular, showed a significant improvement with regard to sentences and mechanics. Compared to this group, the post-test essays from the control group showed very little improvement.

For example, in the experimental group essay for the pre-test (See Appendix 4), Hafiz just listed short sentences without elaboration. His writing contains a large number grammatical errors which weakened his writing as he could not use appropriate verb types (e.g. line 1 سمعت أنت تأتي لزيارة بلدي "I heard you visited my country" should be سمعت أنك سوف تأتي لزيارة بلدي "I heard you will visit my country) and correct use of prepositions (line 2 تأتي في بلدي , wrong preposition, it should be تأتي إلى بلدي). These are two major problems Hafiz suffered from in writing. Also, the majority of his sentences did not provide complete thoughts. Regarding wordings, he wrote what he was asked to do (i.e. 15 lines). Then, for the mechanics, he had quite a few number of spelling (مكان ولادتي "my birth place" should be مكان ولادتي) and punctuation errors. As a result, most of his writing was incomprehensible.

However, in his post-test essay, he improved significantly. He could produce different lengths of sentences (e.g. lines 7, 8, 16 and 17). Further, he used different kinds of verbs appropriately (e.g. past tense line 1, present tense line 10 and future tense line 18). Also, it was amazing that of the majority of his prepositions (e.g. lines 1 مررت في "found" وجد فرصة للتحدث مع زملائه 7 "I experienced in the semester", line 7

a chance to talk with his peers”) and verb types in most of the paragraphs were used correctly. And most of his sentences expressed complete thoughts.

In terms of wordings, he did not write more words than he had done in the pre-test essay. This might be because of the time constraint. He also tended to focus on checking the essay rather than continuing his writing. With regard to mechanics, he showed a lot of improvement. He was very good at spelling as he could write most of the words correctly using *punctuation* in the right place (e.g. comma in lines 3, 5, 15, semicolon in lines 8 and 13, and full stop in lines 6,9,11).

From the control group, Abu Bakr’s essays (see Appendix 4) were examined as examples. In his pre-test essay, most of the sentences he used were very short, consisting of 4 to 5 words (e.g. lines 1, 2, 5 & 11). The use of short sentences weakened his essay. Moreover, his essay had numerous errors that made it difficult for the reader to follow his ideas. For example, in line 5, the student used a wrong adjective to describe the country هذا بلد محدث (It is a modern country); he was supposed to write (هذا بلد حديث), (e.g. in line 3, he did not mention the verb in the beginning of the sentence) اقتصاد فرنسا من مصادر مختلفة (France’s economy from different resources) as he was supposed to write (يعتمد اقتصاد فرنسا على مصادر مختلفة). In addition, in line 11 he wrote القوم في حال خطير (the Muslims is in a dangerous situation). The adjective should have matched the noun in terms of gender. He made the adjective masculine where it should have been feminine since the noun was feminine. Another example is when he wrote the sentence بيع السفينة الحرب (selling war ships), (e.g. line 4), القوم في حال خطيرة, (e.g. line 4), because this was a genitive. The possessive must be indefinite but he made it definite using the article (ال).

Then, in terms of wordings, he used very basic vocabulary. Most of the words used did not create a very clear picture of the writing. For mechanics, he had a big number of spelling and punctuation errors. For instance, spelling errors can be found in line 1 ورئسها (its president) where it should be ورئيسها, in line 5, عاصمتها (its capital city) where it should be وعاصمتها, in line 7 البلد (the country) where it should be البلد. The punctuation errors also can be seen in line 5 عاصمته باريس هي مدينة جميلة (its capital city is Paris it is beautiful city) where it should be عاصمتها باريس ؛ وهي مدينة جميلة. As a result, the reader would find it hard to get a clear picture of his pre-test essay.

In his post-test essay, he showed just a little improvement. For instance, he showed improvement in terms of the length of sentences compared to his pre-test essay. The improvement could be seen in lines 1 and 2 and in lines 12, 13 and 14. Grammatical errors were many but not as many as in the pre-test (e.g. in line 8, he wrote تعليم لغة where it should have been تعليم اللغة as this is a genitive construction, the second part needs to be made definite by adding the article (ال). For wordings, he did not show much improvement in his writing. Words used were still basic. Lastly, in terms of mechanics, it can be seen that he improved a bit compared to his pre-test. For example, لا بد أن يتحدث مع أشخاص في نفس درجاته ؛ لأن في الفصل ممكن يتكلم مع المدرس وهو فوقه في اللغة والطالب. (Students should talk to someone in his level, because in the normal class, student just talk to the teacher, so he is afraid from making mistakes). Here, the student used the semi colon (;) which is in Arabic grammar is written just before mentioning the reason. Regarding punctuation, there was not much improvement as some types of errors the student made in the pre-test were the same types of errors in the post-test (e.g. line 1 هذه الطريقة للتعلم جيدة جدا لأن سمحت للطالب.... (this way of teaching is very good because it allows student...) where it should be لأنها سمحت ؛ لأنها سمحت

....للطالب) so he had to use the semicolon to state the reason or to explain more about the sentence.

To sum up, the differences found in the students' essays from the experimental and control groups could be due to the intervention– the way the CW (i.e. experimental) groups worked and interacted. That is, they negotiated during the completion of collaborative tasks so that they could learn from one another. In addition, they could also make changes throughout the writing process based on the group input.

Rhetorical Features

In terms of rhetorical features, the findings showed that very few Arabic rhetorical features were used in the students' pre-test essays from both experimental and control groups. However, the students' post-test essays from the experimental group displayed more frequent use of Arabic rhetorical features than the ones from the control group. The following are examples of rhetorical features found in two students' pre-and post-test essays from both experimental and control groups.

With regard to pre-test essays, it was found that both groups used a small number of Arabic rhetorical features. This might be because they had just completed one course in Arabic rhetoric (i.e. Introduction to Arabic rhetoric). As a result, they were not really familiar with it. For instance, in the control group's pre-test essay, Abu Bakr wrote الأشجار تتراقص على جوانب الطريق (Trees are dancing on the road sides). In Arabic rhetoric, this type of rhetoric is called personification (i.e. a thing, an idea or an animal is given human attributes). Here, the student personified 'the tree' as a dancing being.

Unlike control group students, in the experimental group, Hafiz wrote وفي جنوب بلادي (In the south of my country in the winter, you see the mountains just like diamonds when the ice are in the top of them). This type of rhetoric is called simile (i.e. a comparison, showing similarities between two different things). Here, the student identified mountains (الجبـال) which were like diamonds (الـلالـيـة). From the pre-test essays of both control and experimental groups, it can be seen that the use of Arabic rhetoric was very limited. This may be because they had some grammatical issues which affected how they described the objects in their writing.

In the post-test essays, the student from the experimental group demonstrated significant improvement in his essay. The experimental group students used more complex features such as similes. For example, Rezaullah wrote ترانا ونحن منهمكين في الكتابة مثل الطيور عندما تجتمع على الأكل (if you see us while we are writing, we are like birds when they gather food). Here, the student used an interesting simile, as there were multiple senses of similarities. In particular, the image of hard-working students was like the image of birds gathering food – both were hard-working.

Since the experimental group students had more time to negotiate ideas, it was found that they frequently used Arabic rhetoric in their writing. Another type of rhetorical feature that the experimental student used is called المقابلة (counterpoint). For example, the student wrote هذه الطريقة جدا مفيدة، خصوصا تعتمد على تعاون وأنا هنا أذكر مثلا هو: كدر الجماعة خير من صفو الفرقة (this approach is very useful as it depends on collaboration. Here I remember an Arabic proverb: ‘an imperfect unity is better than being pure but divided’).

On the other hand, Umamah from the control group did not show significant improvement in terms of his use of rhetorical features in his essays. In both his pre- and post-tests essays, only one or two types of figures of speech were found—personification, metaphor, and simile. In other words, the student still used very basic rhetorical features.

In conclusion, in terms of rhetorical features, the differences between the experimental and the control group can be attributed to the collaborative writing practice. Unlike the control groups, the experimental groups managed to engage in the group discussion during collaborative writing activities to develop their knowledge of Arabic rhetorical features. As a result, they could use them more frequently in their jointly produced essays.

Discussion and Summary

This study was conducted to examine the effects of collaborative writing tasks in ASL classrooms. The study employed a quasi-experimental design involving mixed methods approaches. With regards to the first research question, the results of ANOVA from the pre- and post-tests indicated that while there was no statistically significant difference ($p = .093$, $p > .05$) between the students in the experimental groups and those in the control groups in their pre-test scores, their post-test mean scores demonstrated significant differences ($p = .000$, $p < .05$) between those writing in traditional group work and those using collaborative writing approach. In particular, the mean post-test scores of the experimental groups were slightly higher than the control groups. Their CW experience may have led to enhanced performance on the post-test writing task. In other words, since the students in the experimental groups had an opportunity to negotiate and to reflect on the language use (e.g. linguistic and

rhetorical aspects in Arabic writing) during their collaborative writing tasks, they could engage in problem-solving activities. As a result, they could improve their writing skills. Thus, the gain in the students' writing scores from the experimental groups may be attributed to the collaborative writing practices.

This finding could be framed in terms of the SCT perspective supporting the claim made in SCT that learning is a socially situated activity (Vygotsky, 1981). Group collaboration provided the power for the students to learn new content. The finding of this study also supported the SCT viewpoint of the importance of various constructs such as the ZPD, scaffolding and mediation. For instance, regarding the concept of the ZPD, this study provided evidence how expert and novice students learned from each other how to best express themselves in writing. They constructed the group ZPD collaboratively through collaborative dialogue (Swain, 2006), scaffolding, and providing feedback to one another. In addition, the study supported the importance of different mediational means that the students used to improve their learning (Lantòlf & Thorne, 2006). Evidenced in this study were the ways the students pooled their linguistic resources and shared personal knowledge and experiences to negotiate ideas and solve problems that arised during the collaborative writing activities.

However, the effects of CW varied from one area of writing to another. The results of *t*-test indicated the writing performance of the experimental groups improved in terms of organization, sentences (grammar), and mechanics, but not on topic development, details, and wording (see Appendix 2). These results support earlier remarks by Shehadeh (2011) and Sajedi (2014) that collaborative writing has significant impact on increasing students' writing performance in L2 specifically in the area of content, organization, vocabulary, but not on grammar and mechanics. A possible explanation

for the lack of significance is that the students not only had limited understanding and knowledge of the given topics, but also may have found it challenging to select appropriate vocabulary items to write when completing their tasks.

Regarding details, the lack of significance was predictable because most of the students, based on the evaluation of their essays, focused more on grammatical accuracy (sentences) than on details. Indeed, the finding supports the claims made by previous studies (Fernández Dobao, 2014a; Sajedi, 2014; Storch, 2005; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2007) who stated that CW may result in the improvement of students' language accuracy in their writing. Another possible explanation is that probably the students could not help each other to work on details of their writing due to their modest proficiency levels in Arabic.

In terms of the differences between the experimental and control groups on linguistic and rhetorical features, the experimental group students not only showed improvement on the use of linguistic features, but also utilized more rhetorical features compared to those working in traditional group work. A possible reason is related to how students in the experimental group discussed the topic. Whatever topics they discussed, they covered all aspects of language such as linguistic and rhetorical features. On the other hand, the control group did not have long discussions on given topics. They just discussed very quickly and split the work among them. This finding is in line with what Jafari and Ansari (2012) found in their study investigating the effect of collaboration on Iranian EFL learners' writing accuracy. While the experimental groups were assigned to write in pairs, the control ones wrote individually. They found that the experimental group wrote more accurate texts than those in the control groups. This result may be because students in the experimental groups focused on linguistic or

grammatical accuracy and the interaction in the revision stage that resulted in more accurate texts. Furthermore, Nixon and McClay (2007) found that students who worked in collaborative groups obtained higher scores than those who wrote individually regarding ratings of communicative quality as well as linguistic accuracy and organisation.

However, the fact that the experimental groups performed better than the control ones in terms of linguistic and rhetorical features is on the contrary to the study of Fernández Dobao (2012). She found no statistically significant difference in accuracy between students who wrote collaboratively and those who worked individually.

All these factors may have led to the variable impact of CW on particular areas of writing. Overall, the most significant impact of CW is that as the students wrote collaboratively, their writing showed notable improvement in terms of organization, sentences, and mechanics. One explanation is that CW activities provided the students with more opportunities to negotiate and receive feedback from their peers on those aspects while writing. Further, when working in small groups collaboratively, the students were able to pool their resources to produce better quality texts.

Chapter 8. Conclusions and Implications

This chapter reviews the four research questions that guided the research in the study, and presents the final discussion by linking the findings together across the previous chapters to get an overall picture of the implementation of collaborative writing approach in ASL writing classrooms. This chapter also discusses the implications of

the present study for collaborative writing in the ASL contexts. It presents the conclusions and recommendations for practice from the study. This chapter also provides some suggestions for future research studies that build on the findings from this research.

Summary of the Study

This study investigated the process and the effect of the implementation of collaborative writing activities based on the framework of Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory (SCT), particularly on the three aspects of the theory: Zone of Proximal Development, Mediation, and Scaffolding. Vygotskian sociocultural theory is relevant to the study, as this framework promotes social interaction among learners in L2 learning so that they can learn from each other to co-construct knowledge about language. For example, when L2 learners work collaboratively in a writing task, they can participate in producing one written text with a shared responsibility. The study also explored how learners engaged with CW tasks, and how Arabic teachers and learners perceived the implementation of CW in writing tasks after a substantial period of engagement in collaborative writing tasks. The study sought to capture the reciprocal relationship between collaborative writing practices and the development of learners' writing skills.

A classroom-based writing activity was designed which promoted a CW approach that was embedded in a common framework of task-based language learning considering the writing process (i.e. the patterns of interaction, the types of Language Related Episodes (LREs) produced and how they were resolved), the perceptions of students and teachers, and the the quality of learners' Arabic writing tasks. This study used an embedded quasi-experimental mixed methods research design (i.e. data collection and

analysis were conducted quantitatively and qualitatively). The basis of this design was that a single data set was not sufficient to address different research questions (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Thus, different types of data were required to complement the application of a quasi-experimental design, and thereby addressing the main goal of the study. In the present study, the researcher embedded qualitative methods (e.g. audiotaping classroom observations and taking field notes during the intervention, and conducting semi-structured interviews with teachers and students at the end of the treatment) to investigate the process of an intervention (e.g. patterns of interactions students formed during collaborative writing activities and how they resolved Language Related Episodes (LREs) during their interaction) and to explain the teacher and student perceptions regarding their CW experiences. Quantitative methods, on the other hand, were used to understand the frequency distribution of LREs used in group work and to evaluate the effect of CW on students' writing outcomes.

The study was conducted in four parallel classes over a 12-week semester . Each class consisted of 16 students. Two of the four classes were set as experimental groups while the other two groups were controls. Thus, both experimental and control groups had thirty-two students each. The experimental and control classes were taught by two different teachers who used the same syllabus and textbook materials provided by the institute. However, while the experimental classes implemented a collaborative writing approach (i.e. in which group members worked together more or less *sequentially* on different aspects of writing tasks), control classes were involved in traditional group work (i.e. in which group members worked on different aspects of writing tasks more or less *concurrently*). In each class, the students were divided into small groups each of which consisted of four students.

Given that the study aimed to examine the potential of CW in developing learners' L2 writing ability in the ASL context, four main research questions guided the investigation including:

1. How do ASL learners engage with each other during the writing tasks?
2. Is there a difference between collaborative writing groups and traditional small groups in terms of the frequency of Language Related Episodes (LREs) produced and how LREs are resolved?
3. How do ASL learners and teachers perceive the implementation of a collaborative writing approach?
4. Is there a difference in students' ASL writing performance in collaborative writing groups and traditional small groups? What are the linguistic and rhetorical features of writings in the two instructional modes that may explain the differences in their performance?

The first and second research questions dealt with the interactional patterns of ASL students and the characteristics differentiating these patterns, and the types of Language Related Episodes (LREs) produced and how they were resolved. The theory used in the study was sociocultural theory which was mainly on the work of Vygotsky. Previous studies have examined patterns of interaction among pairs (e.g. Storch, 2002; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009) and small groups (e.g. Edstrom, 2015) within a sociocultural theoretical framework. Other studies have investigated the types of LREs and how they were resolved (e.g. Abadikhah, 2011; Fernández Dobao, 2012). Therefore, this study extends the relatively small body of research on the writing process by investigating the patterns of small group interaction, the types of LREs produced and how they were resolved. The main source of data to address these two

questions was the audiotapes of classroom observations and field notes during the intervention, which later were transcribed and analysed.

The third research question was related to the teachers' and students' perceptions of traditional group work and collaborative writing experiences in the ASL writing classroom. To address this question, the researcher interviewed the student and teacher participants after the intervention ended. The interviews were audiorecorded and used to generate qualitative data about teachers and students' perceptions of CW. Once the interview data were transcribed, thematic analysis was conducted to examine how teachers and perceived the implementation of CW in the ASL writing classroom.

The fourth research question aimed to examine the the effect of CW on students' writing outcomes. In this exploration, a pretest-posttest design (a quantitative method) was employed in order to investigate student participants' performance before and after the experimental manipulation. Both experimental and control groups whose participants were randomly assigned by class completed pre- and post-tests. Results of these tests were used and compared to see any changes or differences across the groups before and after the intervention. For pre- and post-tests, participants were assigned to write 500-word descriptive texts which were developed by the researcher. Both experimental and control groups whose participants were randomly assigned by class completed pre- and post-tests. Results of these tests were used and compared to see any changes or differences across the groups before and after the intervention. For pre- and post-tests, participants were assigned to write 500-word descriptive texts which were developed by the researcher.

Student participants' pre- and post-tests were assessed by using an analytical writing rubric (see Appendix 3.). The writing rubric was used to determine the difference in

the students' writing performance between the two groups on the pre- and post-tests. The writing rubric includes six component areas: topic development, organization, details, sentences, wording, and mechanics on a 4-point scale. Each component may receive a mark of one (the lowest mark) to four (the highest), thus 24 was the highest score a participant text could obtain. The rubric is based on the fact that composition consists of different components (Weigle, 2002), which enables teachers to retrieve information from students' writing performance. Moreover, it is deemed more suitable for L2 writing contexts as it provides assessment with more details (Weigle, 2002).

The contribution of CW in improving ASL learners' writing outcomes was examined by comparing results of both groups' pretests and posttest scores. This comparison was conducted by using *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) version 23.0 application. This application was applied to compare results of pre- and post-tests from experimental and traditional groups. Since the study was primarily a quasi-experimental design with non-equivalent comparison groups (i.e. no control group assignment through the mechanism of random assignment due to inadequate resources to conduct randomization), the analysis procedure employed one way *analysis of variance* (ANOVA) to statistically control differences or extraneous variables between treated and comparison groups that may affect results of the experiment (Green & Salkind, 2003; Hinkel et al., 2003). Through this procedure, the researcher was able to examine the effect of collaborative writing (i.e. as an independent variable) on ASL learners' writing outcomes (i.e. a dependent variable) although student participants are not assigned randomly to treated and comparison groups.

Summary of the Findings

The main findings of the study are presented in this section. The following section discusses these findings in detail.

Main Findings

- Four main patterns of small group interaction were identified in this study: while the experimental groups displayed collaborative and expert/expert/novice/novice patterns, the control groups showed cooperative and dominant/dominant/passive/passive patterns of interaction across the three tasks. These patterns were examined based on Storch's (2002) dyadic interaction model drawing on Damon and Phelps' (1989) criteria of equality and mutuality.
- Particular linguistic traits are more common in several patterns of small group interaction than others.
- Patterns of small group interaction generally remain stable. The genre of writing tasks and the duration of tasks did not influence the patterns.
- The implementation of collaborative writing approach may affect positively the frequency and outcome of LREs, but did not really influence *the focus* of LREs. In particular, the experimental groups generated more LREs than the control groups. Despite individual difference among group members, the experimental groups paid more attention to language and were more successful at resolving language related problems than the control ones.
- Learners' and teachers' perceptions *shape* their learning and teaching collaborative writing experiences.
- There were significant differences in the overall writing performance of the students in the *experimental* and control groups as measured by the tests and

these could be attributed to the CW intervention implemented across the three tasks over a 12-week semester.

- The difference between the experimental and control groups can be distinguished with linguistic and rhetorical features found in their texts.

Further discussion of these main findings is presented based on the four research questions of the study.

Pattern of small group interaction and their different features

This study found four distinctive patterns of small group interaction: collaborative, expert/expert/novice/novice patterns, cooperative and dominant/dominant/passive/passive patterns of interaction. The researcher used Storch's (2002) dyadic interaction model drawing on Damon and Phelps' (1989) criteria of (1) *equality*, identified as the degree of participants' contribution to the joint tasks; and (2) *mutuality*, measured as the degree of engagement with a peer's contribution.

In the case of the experimental groups, collaborative pattern of small group interaction show that both equality and mutuality are high. In such small groups, they jointly contribute to develop the topic of their essay and engage with each other's ideas – they show evidence of co-construction reached via dialogic interaction. They extend each other's ideas. They also engage with each other's opinions by providing positive feedback in order to confirm their agreements. An expert/expert/novice/novice pattern of interaction is one that displays low equality, but low to moderate mutuality. That is, the 'expert' group members attempted to make sure joint contribution by assisting the 'novice' group members to come to a decision. Their dialogue can be used to invite the novice in the process of resolving a

problem. In the case of control groups, a cooperative pattern of interaction is one that is moderate on equality, but low on mutuality. It displays little social interaction among group members. At the beginning of the writing process, they start sharing their responsibilities. Even though each group member contributes to the essay, there is limited engagement with each other's feedback. Finally, a dominant/dominant/passive/passive pattern of small group interaction is one that is low both on equality and mutuality. Here, one or two group members are quite active and dominate the discussion, the rest shows limited participation (passive).

Table 30 summarises the findings, showing the number of small groups identified to display distinctive patterns of interaction across the three tasks.

Table 30. The patterns of interaction in the experimental and control groups across the tasks

Groups	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3
Experimental			
1	Collaborative	Collaborative	Collaborative
2	Expert/Novice	Expert/Novice	Expert/Novice
3	Expert/Novice	Collaborative	Expert/Novice
4	Expert/Novice	Collaborative	Dominant/Passive
5	Dominant/Passive	Expert/Novice	Collaborative
6	Collaborative	Collaborative	Collaborative
7	Expert/Novice	Expert/Novice	Collaborative
8	Collaborative	Expert/Novice	Collaborative
Control			
1	Dominant/Passive	Dominant/Passive	Cooperative
2	Dominant/Passive	Cooperative	Cooperative
3	Cooperative	Cooperative	Expert/Novice
4	Expert/Novice	Cooperative	Cooperative
5	Dominant/Passive	Dominant/Passive	Dominant/Passive
6	Cooperative	Cooperative	Cooperative
7	Dominant/Passive	Cooperative	Dominant/Passive
8	Dominant/Passive	Dominant/Passive	Dominant/Passive

The table shows that patterns of small group interaction were comparatively stable. Patterns of interaction formed in Task 1 persisted across the rest of the tasks. Only two

groups (Group 4 and 5) in the experimental groups showed a dynamic pattern of interaction. For instance, Group 4 moved over time from an expert/novice to a collaborative, and finally to a dominant/passive pattern of interaction. On the other hand, in the control groups, Group 3 and 4 showed a dynamic pattern of interaction across the three tasks (e.g. Group 3 moved from a cooperative pattern in Task 1 and 2 to an expert/novice pattern in Task 3).

In a more detailed analysis, important characteristics (i.e. the frequency of requests and questions, explanations given, collaborative completion and simultaneous talk, the use of repetitions, the use of phatic utterances and pronouns) in the interaction of four selected small groups were closely examined. In collaborative and expert/novice small groups, for instance, the researcher found that the group members used a larger number of requests and questions, compared to those in cooperative and dominant/passive small groups. These requests and questions had various functions during small group interaction, such as to draw the group members' attention to particular language features and to allow them to provide and receive feedback about language. Regarding the explanations offered during the interaction, collaborative and expert/novice small groups also tended to explain some information about language use than cooperative and dominant/passive small groups did.

The results of the current study confirm what previous studies have reported regarding patterns of dyadic interaction (e.g. Storch, 2002) and small group (triadic) interaction (e.g. Edstrom, 2015) that the collaborative and expert/novice patterns of interaction are superior than the cooperative (i.e. dominant/dominant) and dominant/passive patterns of interaction. While both collaborative and expert/novice patterns of interaction allow better engagement by all group members to share ideas and to pool knowledge or to

provide scaffolded assistance during writing activities, cooperative and dominant/passive interaction styles result in unproductive working conditions – escalating tension among group members.

The next section highlights on how these four distinguished patterns of small group interactions dealt with Language Related Episodes (LREs) during the interaction and how they resolved them.

Language Related Episodes (LREs)

The researcher examined the frequency of LREs and how each group in different patterns of small group interaction resolved LREs identified in both the experimental and control groups during classroom observations and in students' verbal interaction. Following Storch (2001b), the researcher coded and categorised LREs based on the focus of students' attention when they talked about the language they produced during the completion of their joint tasks (especially in the editing stage). There were three types of LREs: Form-focused (e.g. grammatical choices), Lexis-focused (e.g. vocabulary choices), and mechanics-focused (e.g. punctuation and spelling) LREs (Swain & Lapkin, 2001).

In terms of the focus of LREs, both experimental and control groups focused on grammar and lexis. However, the experimental groups produced a higher number and percentage of mechanics-focused LREs than the control groups (see Chapter 5). Regarding the resolution of LREs, the experimental groups were more successful at resolving linguistic-related problems than the control ones. The analysis shows that the collaborative and expert/novice small groups are able to reach a correct resolution with a higher percentage of their problems since they actively engage in the discussion, and have more linguistic resources than the control groups. Through the interactions, they

are able to pool and share their knowledge to solve problems encountered. Evidence of collective scaffolding (i.e. learners in small groups pool their language resources to co-construct grammatical knowledge or sentences which are beyond their individual level of competence (Donato, 1994)) were also seen during the classroom observation. Unlike in the experimental groups, the control groups (i.e. the cooperative and dominant/passive small groups) tend to be more passive in their discussion. As a result, they are unable to resolve LREs successfully. For instance, in the cooperative small groups, although they show high levels of engagement across the three tasks, there is no process of co-construction. Rather, most episodes show how each group member insisted on their own suggestions without considering others' suggestions.

Moreover, the findings suggest that the experimental groups (the collaborative and expert/novice small groups) produce less non-interactively resolved episodes than the control groups (the cooperative and dominant/passive small groups) across the three tasks. In particular, the experimental groups displayed a relatively high level of engagement in the resolution process, and therefore produce a substantial proportion of on-task LREs resolved interactively.

Similar findings have also been documented in previous studies of dyadic interaction (e.g. Fernández Dobao, 2012; Storch, 2005; Watanabe & Swain, 2007) and small group interaction (e.g. Edstrom, 2015) explaining that collaborative problem solving activities were likely to take place if all group members applied a collaborative orientation and wanted to engage with each other's contributions. The findings of this study confirm that if one group member showed either a dominant or a passive behaviour, it can lead to lower LRE frequency and the number of correctly resolved

LREs. Unfortunately, not all small group interaction can offer equal opportunities for co-construction of knowledge.

The following section presents how learners and teachers perceived CW activities.

Learners' and Teachers' Perceptions of Collaborative Writing

The study found that all students in the experimental groups felt very positive about CW activities. They thought CW is beneficial not only to enhance their writing skills, but also to provide them opportunities to develop their Arabic language particularly grammar knowledge and their vocabulary size. That is, CW enables them to generate ideas and pool them together in order to write a joint text. Most of their perspectives on CW tasks were similar to the findings in previous CW studies (e.g. Fernández Dobao & Blum, 2013; Shehadeh, 2011; Storch, 2005). Likewise, most students in the control groups felt quite positive about writing in traditional group work (cooperative writing). Despite the fact that they have no experience to write in small groups, they felt the group writing activities are meaningful. In other words, they felt that their writing skills improved much. However, some students in the control groups felt that the writing activities in small groups are not useful and waste too much time to finish a piece of writing.

In addition, the study also found that most students in the experimental groups enjoyed working in the small groups. They felt that sharing with other group members could add up their ideas in writing and help them in solving grammar problems. The writing activities in small groups also gain their vocabulary size. Unlike the experimental groups, few students in the control groups tended to work in pairs or individually. They found it difficult to express themselves in a group of four. They could not negotiate well with other group members. As a result, they were just being passive during the

interaction as other group members tried to dominate the discussion. Thus, while most students in the experimental groups show a strong preference for working in small groups, several students in the control groups prefer to write in pairs or individually.

The study also analysed teachers' perspectives on traditional group work and the collaborative writing approach. Although it was their first experience to assign students in small groups to write a text, they felt enthusiastic about the affordance of these approaches. In particular, the teacher who taught in the experimental class observed that the students enjoyed the CW tasks. He felt that the students could learn from their peers regarding grammar in writing tasks. Unlike the teacher of the experimental class, the teacher who taught in the control class felt that the students did not write the text jointly. He noticed that they spent to work individually on each part of the writing text. Some students in the control class tended to be passive while others dominated the discussion. In summary, both teachers thought that group work in writing activities can be a potential tool to enhance students' writing skills if the activities are well designed and monitored to make sure each group member has equal opportunities to participate in the discussion and no one dominates the discussion.

The following section illustrates how CW tasks had an impact on the students' writing outcome. In particular, the section shows there is a significant difference between the experimental and the control groups in terms of their pre- and post-test results and linguistic and rhetorical features found in their essays.

Students' Writing Quality

To evaluate students' writing quality, their pre- and post-test essays were assessed by using an analytical writing rubric (see Appendix 3.). The writing rubric includes six component areas: topic development, organization, details, sentences, wording, and

mechanics on a 4-point scale. Each component may receive a mark of one (the lowest mark) to four (the highest), thus 24 was the highest score a participant text could get. The writing rubric was used to determine the difference in the students' writing performance between the two groups on the pre- and post-tests.

The scores of the pre- and post-tests were then analysed statistically by using SPSS version 23.0 application. This application was applied to compare results of pre- and post-tests from experimental and traditional groups. Since the study was primarily a quasi-experimental design with non-equivalent comparison groups (i.e. no control group assignment through the mechanism of random assignment due to inadequate resources to conduct randomization), the analysis procedure employed one way *analysis of variance* (ANOVA) to statistically control differences or extraneous variables between treated and comparison groups that may affect results of the experiment (Green & Salkind, 2003; Hinkel et al., 2003). Through this procedure, the researcher was able to examine the effect of collaborative writing (i.e. as an independent variable) on ASL learners' writing outcomes (i.e. a dependent variable) although student participants are not assigned randomly to treated and comparison groups.

The study found that, unlike those in control groups, the students from experimental groups benefited from collaborative writing approach as they made some significant improvements on organization, sentences, mechanics, although not on topic development, details, and wording. In other words, there were significant differences in the overall writing performance of the students in the two groups as measured by the tests and these could be attributed to the CW approach. Previous research on dyads and small groups have also documented a significant effect of CW on improving students'

L2 writing (e.g. Shehadeh, 2011; Storch, 2005; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2007). For instance, Shehadeh (2011) found that CW had an overall significant impact on enhancing students' L2 writing skills although the effect varied from one area to another – the impact was significant in the areas of vocabulary, organization, and content, but not grammar or mechanics. This may be related to the proficiency level of the students. When the students' English proficiency level was low, the students could not assist each other, for instance, with the required grammatical accuracy. However, as shown in the current study, despite a low Arabic proficiency level, as long as the students worked collaboratively, CW had a significant effect on the areas of sentences (grammar), organization, and mechanics.

Furthermore, the study also found that, regarding the linguistic and rhetorical features, the experimental groups performed better than the control ones. For instance, with regards to the linguistic features (e.g. sentences and mechanics), the experimental groups displayed a more significant improvement than the control ones. That is, the experimental groups could produce different lengths of sentences and used different kinds of verbs appropriately in their essays. Moreover, most of the sentences written expressed complete thoughts. Similarly, in terms of rhetorical features, the experimental groups demonstrated significant improvement in their post-test essays. In particular, they displayed more frequent use of Arabic rhetorical features (e.g. personification, metaphor, and simile) than the ones from the control groups. It was because they had more time to negotiate ideas and received feedback from their peers. Consequently, the experimental groups could use rhetorical features more frequently in their jointly written essays.

Implications of the Study

This study has important theoretical and pedagogical implications *First*, theoretically, since the study was framed within sociocultural theory (particularly the constructs of ZPD and scaffolding), the findings of the study provided support for viewpoints in the sociocultural theory: “interactions as developmental processes” in learning (Ohta, 2000, p. 54), and different skills among group members enabling several important constructs in SCT such as the ZPD and scaffolding to arise in groups (Donato, 1994). Regarding the validation of the concept of ZPD, this study, for instance, provided evidence that both ‘expert’ and ‘novice’ learners constructed collaborative the group ZPD through languaging (i.e., collaborative dialogue) (Swain, 2006), scaffolding, and providing feedback to one another. It is worth mentioning that this study confirmed the SCT viewpoint of the fluidity of expert and novice roles (Donato, 2004) by showing the ways where group members took turn in performing these roles. Further, the findings of the study confirmed the claims made in SCT that learning is a socially situated activity (Vygotsky, 1981) by showing evindece of the ways where students learned through interactions with each other within their groups. The study also supported a claim that learning language not only showed cognitive development but also create social relationships among group members (Storch, 2001a).

The current study also added to the body of literature on CW from the view of sociocultural theory. The findings of the study confirmed the main claim made in SCT that learning is embedded in the social and cultural contexts of the students. In particular, it emphasized the role of sociocultural theory in examining and elaborating interactions in CW activities in L2 contexts, such as in ASL classrooms. This study suggested that CW activities where students jointly wrote their essays enable them to

get opportunities to communicate meaningfully and purposefully, and to engage them in thinking processes that may be a potential source of L2 learning.

Another significant theoretical contribution of the study is that the findings of the study indicated that the effect of CW not only influences the language accuracy (i.e. grammatical accuracy), but also the aspects of organization and mechanics. In relation to the quantitative data (see Chapter 7), the results of the study indicate that some aspects of students' L2 writing (i.e. sentences, organization, and mechanics) significantly improved because of the CW approach. Based on the interview data (see Chapter 6), CW benefited them in terms of grammar and vocabulary. Most students in the experimental groups, for instance, felt positive about CW activities as CW activities allowed them to share and pool ideas, negotiate, plan and produce their jointly produced texts. The findings of the study supported the importance of different mediational means that the students used to improve their learning (Lantòlf & Thorne, 2006). Evidenced in this study were the ways the students pooled their linguistic resources and shared personal knowledge and experiences to negotiate ideas and solve problems that arised during the collaborative writing activities.

Second, pedagogically, the results of the study provide empirical evidence of the benefits of CW in the L2 writing classroom. The findings indicated that CW activities can provide students with a positive environment in the classroom – promoting student collaboration *in L2 learning. In addition, CW activities increase their achievement and motivation to improve their writing skills. They can help and build on each other's contributions.*

Another important pedagogical contribution of the study is the pertinence of CW to the teaching and learning process in the ASL writing context. As mentioned earlier, given

that there has been little or no research that has specifically investigated the effects of CW on students' writing skills in the context of Arabic learning, this study was significant to teachers in Saudi Arabia as well as to ASL learners. In particular, the findings of this study had the potential to provide a better understanding of how ASL teachers should design CW activities in their classrooms to enhance ASL students' writing outcomes including group formation and instructional designs.

Regarding group formation, for instance, teachers should consider their students' individual characteristics and learning styles when assigning them into small groups. If students agree that the teacher should decide upon the group members, implementing a careful selection strategy may be better than randomly selecting the group members, as the teachers in this study did. This technique will minimise students' reservation to work with other group members who are either dominant or too passive. Then, assigning them to work in smaller groups (e.g., in groups of two or three members) would be more effective than working in bigger groups. As the findings suggested, in the group of four, one member often tended to have little contribution and engagement because of lack of motivation or peer domination. Lastly, as it is not always possible for students to work with group members who can perfectly match their preferences, they need to practice to develop their social skills along with changes of peers and groups. This leads to the next pedagogical implication which relates to the instructional designs.

Given that the participants had limited prior knowledge of different types of writing and lack of experience in group work as indicated in the findings, teachers should provide more various resources related to the writing genres to the class and incorporate them into their teaching instructions. To assist students for the group work completion,

the findings suggested that teachers should structure and gradually present the tasks in relation to the level of difficulty, complexity, and quantity by taking into account some aspects such as students' level of Arabic proficiency and their experience with collaborative writing activities. The researcher would suggest that teachers should introduce how the activities are assessed including the writing rubric used. To increase their motivation to do the collaborative writing tasks, teachers may assign some portion of the course score to student participation in the activities, adding to the basis for assessment.

Teachers should also recognise the differences and the similarities between cooperative and collaborative group work, and introduce them to their students. If necessary, teachers should train their students to work in group so that students understand the group work conditions and achieve successful learning. At the beginning of the tasks, for example, teachers can assign students particular roles and stress the significance of shared responsibility for the group work. Teachers have to make sure that students understand the equally important role each group member has in the group. As indicated in the findings, teachers should be facilitative to address task-related problems and conflicts occurring in the groups regarding power dynamics and relationships formed during the interaction.

In summary, this study shed both theoretical and pedagogical light on CW particularly in the ASL setting. The study provides a wider concept of L2 acquisition which involves not only cognitive processes but also participation and activities (Lantòlf & Thorne, 2006), as shown in the study that CW activities can facilitate student participation and discussion in producing good quality essays. In other words, CW activities can contribute to students' L2 learning.

Limitations of the Study

The current study has several limitations. *Firstly*, the relatively small sample size and the specific age group in a specific learning context may be a limitation in generalizing the results. Results from a study with a larger sample might differ from the findings of the current study. Moreover, the findings of the study were obtained from investigation conducted with ASL students in an Arabic language institute. Thus, the findings of the study may differ from those of tertiary, secondary, or primary students who learn other languages as first, second or foreign language such as English.

Secondly, the time constraints and the small number of writing tasks may limit the generalizability of the results. Only nine weeks (i.e. 50 minutes per meeting each week) were available to complete three writing tasks for data collection. Even though the researcher observed and audiotaped the verbal interactions of the students during the activities, language output of the three writing tasks over a short period of time may not really have an impact on the language development of the students in the ASL writing classrooms. A longer period of data collection and a wide range of writing tasks can reduce the imminent limitations of the study.

Thirdly, although semi-structured interviews may be an appropriate tool to elicit teachers' and students' perceptions of CW activities (Shehadeh, 2011; Storch, 2005; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2007), using surveys as another tool in collecting more personal views from the participants seems to be useful since not all students could express their perspectives very well about their CW experiences. Further, only 16 out of 64 participants were available to be interviewed. If more participants were able to be interviewed, it might have shed more light to the results of the study.

Finally, in the current study, the students' pre- and post-test essays were assessed by global scales (i.e. an analytical writing rubric (see Appendix 3)) based on the two raters' assessment on the students' performance on six components of writing: topic development, organization, details, sentences, wording, and mechanics. Therefore, the writing measures used in the study may influence the results of the study and limit the generalizability of the results. In particular, the results of the study using different measures such error-free clauses (i.e. quantifying the proportion of error-free clauses with regards to the total number of all clauses used in a text) as measures of grammatical and lexical accuracy (e.g. Storch, 2005; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2007) may differ from the current study and Shehadeh's (2011) study which used an analytical writing rubric.

Despite these limitations, the study has attempted to address the research questions well and has several important findings. The study has revealed the patterns of small group interaction from both the experimental and control groups, types of LREs and how they were resolved during the interactions, teachers' and students' perceptions of CW, and the effect of CW on the students' writing outcomes.

Directions for Further Research

The study has filled some gaps in the growing body of the literature on CW and reported several important findings of a small scale mixed-method study in the ASL setting. However, some other aspects require further research.

First, despite being perceived as a solitary activity, writing has become a social activity in an interactive classroom setting. Moreover, collaborative group work can promote peer learning as learning is considered as an interactive process among students.

Regarding L2 writing, CW has been increasingly examined to explain how CW benefits L2 students while using the target language meaningfully. In the current study, the ASL students were assigned in small groups of 4 students over a 9-week semester. Through the small group writing activities, the students exchanged their ideas and co-construct knowledge in order to write their three different joint essays. The pedagogical implication of CW when the groups work with different group members in different tasks should be further investigated.

Second, few studies have documented the concern of L2 teachers about students who worked in dyads or small groups used their first language (L1) instead of the L2 (e.g. Shehadeh, 2011; Storch & Aldosari, 2010). These studies found that the students during the pair work activities frequently used L1 for task management and for discussions about vocabulary. In the current study, since the students came from a wide range of first language backgrounds including French, German, Bahasa Indonesia, Malay, Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, Pashto, Dhivehi, Spanish, and Portuguese, they used L2 (i.e. Arabic) during CW activities. Further research regarding the effect of the use of L1 or L2 in CW activities in second or foreign language settings on task fulfilment and L2 learning is needed.

Third, it is important to examine the quality of students' joint texts during CW activities and compare them with their texts when completed individually. In the current study, the researcher just assessed the students' pre- and post-test essays. Future studies may need to closely examine linguistic, rhetorical, and discourse features of students' joint texts and the features of individual texts produced after the CW activities in order to better understand how CW impacts on students' writing outcomes.

Fourth, this study was conducted in face-to-face CW activities in the ASL context. Recently, there are writing activities in the ASL context that use technology applications (e.g. Wikis and Google Docs) to assist students to write collaboratively outside of the classrooms. Accordingly, future research need to explore the use of the technology applications in CW activities particularly in the ASL context and how it mediates group interactions when completing CW tasks.

Finally, the growing body of research on CW activities has mainly investigated interactions among students. However, investigation about the interaction between students and teachers during CW activities are scarce. In the current study, the researcher only addressed the teachers' perceptions of CW. In addition, some students interviewed commented on the role of teachers in CW activities. Nevertheless, the researcher did not discuss it since the focus of the study was student interaction within their small groups, not teacher-student interaction. Thus, Further studies need to delve into the active participation of teachers in CW activities, and examine how teachers can facilitate students' L2 learning in CW activities.

To conclude, this study has found not only that there are distinct patterns of small group interactions, as confirmed by previous studies (e.g. Edstrom, 2015; Hanjani & Li, 2014; Storch, 2009), but that distinct patterns of small group interaction have significant contributions to the ASL students' language development. However, not all patterns of small group interactions can facilitate language learning (Storch, 2002, 2005, 2013). The results of this study show that when the students adopted collaborative and expert/expert/novice/novice, language learning may take place. Compared to cooperative and dominant/dominant/passive/passive patterns, collaborative and expert/expert/novice/novice patterns may provide the student with opportunities for

L2 learning. It can be seen from the implementation of collaborative writing approach that has had a positive impact on the outcome of LREs (in which the students successfully resolved LREs) and the on students' overall writing performance. This positive impact can also be reflected from how the students perceived the collaborative writing. Thus, this study confirms the relevance of Vygotskian sociocultural theory to small group learning in the ASL context. In other words, the research argues that interaction is important for language learning.

References

- Abadikhah, S. (2011). Investigating language-related episodes during mechanical and meaningful output activities. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 1(2), 281-294.
- Abadikhah, S. (2012). The effect of mechanical and meaningful production of output on learning English relative clauses. *System*, 40(1), 129-143.
- Al-Batal, M. (2007). Arabic and national language educational policy. *The Modern Language Journal*, 91(2), 268-271.

- Al-Rajhi, A. (2013). A plan for the future of teaching Arabic: A viewpoint from within the Arab world. In K. M. Wahba, Z. A. Taha, & L. England (Eds.), *Handbook for Arabic language teaching professional in the 21st century*. New York: Routledge.
- Aladdin, A. (2010). Non-muslim Malaysian learners of Arabic (NMMLAs): An investigation of their attitudes and motivation towards learning Arabic as a foreign language in multiethnic and multicultural Malaysia. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 9, 1805-1811.
- Allwright, R. (1984). The importance of interaction in classroom language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 5, 156-171.
- Alshammari, A. H. A. (2011). *The development of L2 writing in a computerized process-centered learning project*. (Doctor of Philosophy Dissertation), The University of Queensland, Queensland.
- Amirikhiz, S. Y. Y., Bakar, K. A., Samad, A. A., Baki, R., & Mahmoudi, L. (2013). EFL/ESL learners' language related episodes (LREs) during performing collaborative writing tasks. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 4(3), 473-479.
- Anton, M. (1999). The discourse of a learner-centered classroom: Sociocultural perspectives on teacher-learner interaction in the second-language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 83(3), 303-318.
- Asgarikia, P. (2014). The effect of task type, strategic planning and no planning on written performance of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 98, 276-285.
- Aukrust, V. G. (2010). Language and literacy in educational settings. In V. G. Aukrust (Ed.), *Learning and cognition in education*. Oxford: Elsevier.
- Badger, R., & White, G. (2000). A process genre approach to teaching writing. *ELT Journal*, 54(2), 153-160.
- Bai, R., Hu, G., & Gu, P. Y. (2013). The relationship between the use of writing strategies and English proficiency in Singapore primary schools. *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 1-11.
- Barkaoui, K. (2007). Teaching writing to second language learners: Insights from theory and research. *TESL Reporter*, 40(1), 35-48.
- Barkley, E. F., Cross, K. P., & Major, C. H. (2005). *Collaborative learning techniques: A handbook for college faculty*. New Jersey, US: Jossey-Bass.
- Best, J., & Kahn, J. (2006). *Research in education*. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc. .

- Blair, C. W. (2008). *High school English teachers' perceptions of their students' writing self-efficacy*. (Ed.D Dissertation), Northcentral university, Ann Arbor.
- Bouteldjoune, A. (2012). *Motivation in foreign language learning settings: The case of Arabic in the USA*. (Master of Arts Thesis), Southern Illinois University, Carbondale.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*, 77-101.
- Brooks, L., & Swain, M. (2009). Languaging in collaborative writing: Creation of and response to expertise. In A. Mackey & C. Polio (Eds.), *Multiple perspectives on interaction: Second language research in honor of Susan M. Gass* (pp. 128-187). New York: Routledge.
- Brosh, H. (2013). Motivation of American college students to study Arabic. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 3*(19), 27-38.
- Bruffee, K. (1995). Sharing our toys: Cooperative learning versus collaborative learning. *Change, 27*(1), 12-18.
- Bruffee, K. (1999). *Collaborative learning: Higher education, interdependence and the authority of knowledge (2nd)*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Cao, L. (2012). A feasibility study of task-based teaching of college English writing in Chinese EFL context. *English Language Teaching, 5*(10), 80-91.
- Chacón, C. T. (2005). Teachers' perceived efficacy among English as a foreign language teachers in middle schools in Venezuela. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 21*, 257-272.
- Cheng, H., & Dörnyei, Z. (2007). The use of motivational strategies in language instruction: The case of EFL teaching in Taiwan. *Innovations in Language Learning and Teaching, 1*(1), 153-174.
- Cheung, A. C. K., & Slavin, R. E. (2012). Effective reading program for Spanish-dominant English language learners (ELLs) in the elementary grades: A synthesis of research. *Review of Education Research, 20*(10), 1-45.
- Chien, S. C. (2012). Students; use of writing strategies and their English writing achievements in Taiwan. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, 32*(1), 93-112.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education*. New York: Routledge.
- Creswell, J. W. (2015). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.

- Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2 ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Crystal, D. (2010). *The Cambridge encyclopedia of language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cumming, A. (2001). Learning to write in a second language: Two decades of research. *International Journal of English Studies*, 1(2), 1-23.
- Dahbi, M. (2004). English and Arabic after 9/11. *Modern Language Journal*, 88(4), 628-631.
- Damon, W., & Phelps, E. (1989). Critical distinctions among three approaches to peer education. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 58, 9-19.
- deLarios, J. R., Manchon, R., Murphy, L., & Marin, J. (2008). The foreign language writer's strategic behavior in the allocation of time to writing processes. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 17(1), 30-47.
- Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (2005). *The handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dewey, J. (1991). *How we think*. Buffalo, N.Y: Prometheus Books.
- DiCamilla, F., & Antón, M. (2012). Functions of L1 in the collaborative interaction of beginning and advanced second language learners. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 22(2), 160-188.
- Dillenbourg, P., Baker, M., Blaye, A., & O'Malley, C. (1996). The evolution of research on collaborative learning. In E. Spada & P. Reiman (Eds.), *Learning in humans and machine: Towards an interdisciplinary learning science* (pp. 189-211). Oxford: Elsevier.
- Doise, W., Mugny, G., & Perret-Clermont, A. (1975). Social interaction and the development of cognitive operations. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 5, 367-383.
- Donato, R. (1994). Collective scaffolding in second language learning. In J. P. Lantolf & G. Appel (Eds.), *Vygotskian approaches to second language research* (pp. 33-56). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Donato, R. (2004). Aspects of collaboration in pedagogical discourse. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 24, 284-302.
- Dornyei, Z. (2001). *Teaching and researching motivation*. New York: Longman.
- Doughty, C. J., & Long, M. H. (2008). *The handbook of second language acquisition*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

- Edstrom, A. (2015). Triads in the L2 classroom: Interaction patterns and engagement during a collaborative task. *System*, 52, 26-37.
- Ellis, R. (1995). Modified oral input and the acquisition of word meanings. *Applied Linguistics*, 44, 449-491.
- Ellis, R. (1999). *Learning a second language through interaction*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R., & He, X. (1999). The roles of modified input and output in the incidental acquisition of word meanings. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 21, 283-301.
- Fernández Dobao, A. (2012). Collaborative writing tasks in the L2 classroom: Comparing group, pair, and individual work. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 21, 40-58.
- Fernández Dobao, A. (2014a). Attention to form in collaborative writing tasks: Comparing pair and small group interaction. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 70(2), 158-187.
- Fernández Dobao, A. (2014b). Vocabulary learning in collaborative tasks: A comparison of pair and small group work. *Language Teaching Research*, 18(4), 497-520.
- Fernández Dobao, A., & Blum, A. (2013). Collaborative writing in pairs and small groups: Learners' attitudes and perceptions. *System*, 41, 365-378.
- Ferris, D. (2011). *Treatment of error in second language student writing*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Fong, L. S. (2012). Benefits of collaborative writing for ESL advanced diploma students in the production of reports. *US-China Education Review*, 4, 396-407.
- Fung, Y. M. (2010). Collaborative writing features. *RELC journal*, 41(1), 18-30.
- Fung, Y. M., & Hoon, T. B. (2008). Teachers' perceptions on collaborative activity in ESL writing class. *Pertanika Journal Social Science and Humanity*, 16(2), 279-284.
- Gafoordeen, N. (2013). Writing strategies use: Arabic as a foreign language in Sri Lankan context. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4(26), 92-98.
- Gass, S. (1997). *Input, interaction, and the second language learner*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

- Gass, S., & Mackey, A. (2006). Input, interaction, and output. *AILA Review*, 19, 3-17.
- Gass, S., & Mackey, A. (2007). Input, interaction, and output in second language acquisition. In B. VanPatten & J. Williams (Eds.), *Theories in second language acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Gass, S., Mackey, A., & Pica, T. (1998). The role of input and interaction in second language acquisition. *Modern Language Journal*, 82, 299-307.
- Gass, S., & Selinger, L. (2001). *Second language acquisition: An introductory course*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Gass, S., & Torres, M. J. A. (2005). Attention when? *TESOL quarterly*, 5, 27-63.
- Gass, S., & Varonis, E. (1994). Input, interaction, and second language production. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 16, 283-302.
- Ghasemolandi, F., & Hashim, F. B. (2013). Teachers' self efficacy beliefs and their English language proficiency: A study of nonnative EFL teachers in selected language centers. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 103, 890-899.
- Gibbons, P. (2003). Mediating language learning: Teacher interactions with ESL students in a content-based classroom. *TESOL quarterly*, 37(2), 247-274.
- Gillies, R. M. (2014). Cooperative learning: Developments in research. *International Journal of Educational Psychology*, 3(2), 125-140. doi:10.4471/ijep.2014.08
- Gillies, R. M., & Ashman, A. F. (2003). An historical review of the use of groups to promote socialization and learning. In R. M. Gillies & A. F. Ashman (Eds.), *Co-operative learning: The social and intellectual outcomes of learning in groups*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Gillies, R. M., & Boyle, M. (2010). Teachers' reflections on cooperative learning: Issues of implementation. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26, 933-940.
- Gillies, R. M., & Cunningham, R. (2015). *Cooperative learning: The behavioural and neurological markers that help to explain its success*. Paper presented at the Research Conference 2015, Southbank, Melbourne.
- Green, S. B., & Salkind, N. J. (2003). *Using SPSS for windows and macintosh: Analysing and understanding data*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Greenfield, P. (1984). A theory of teacher in learning activities of everyday life. In B. Rogoff & J. Lave (Eds.), *Everyday cognition: its development in social context*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

- Hamidin, N. M. (2015). *Learning style in Arabic language*. Paper presented at the The 2nd International Conference on Arabic Studies and Islamic Civilization, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- Hanjani, A. M., & Li, L. (2014). Exploring L2 writer's collaborative revision interactions and their writing performance. *System, 44*, 101-114.
- Harklau, L. (2002). The role of writing in classroom second language acquisition. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 11*(4), 329-350.
- Hedge, T. (2000). *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hinkel, D. E., Wiersma, W., & Jurs, S. G. (2003). *Applied statistics for the behavioral sciences*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Hong-Nam, K., & Leavell, A. G. (2006). Language learning strategy use of ESL students in an intensive English learning context. *System, 34*(3), 399-415.
- Humphrey, S., & Macnaught, L. (2011). Revisiting joint construction in the tertiary context. *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy, 34*(1), 98-116.
- Husseinali, G. (2006). Who is studying Arabic and why? A survey of Arabic students' orientations at a major university. *Foreign Language Annals, 39*(3), 395-412.
- Hyland, K. (2003). *Second language writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hyland, K. (2004). *Genre and second language writing*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press.
- Ingram, A., & Hathorn, L. (2004). Methods for analysing collaboration in online communications. In T. Roberts (Ed.), *Online collaborative learning: Theory and practice*. Hershey, PA: Idea Group Inc.
- Isleem, M. (2014). *Developing attitudes toward learning Arabic as a foreign language among American university and college students*. Department of Languages, Cultures, and Linguistics. Bucknell University
- Ives, D. (2004). Three NS-NNS upper primary school pairs: A case study. *Australian Language and Literacy Matters, 1*(4), 11-16.
- Jafari, N., & Ansari, N. A. (2012). The effect of collaboration on Iranian EFL learners' writing accuracy. *International Education Studies, 5*(2), 125-131.
- Jassem, A. J. (1996). *Fi turuq ta'lim al-lughah al-arabiyyah lil 'ajanib*. Kuala Lumpur: A. S Noordeen.

- Johns, A. M. (2003). Genre and ESL/EFL composition instruction. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Exploring the dynamics of second language writing* (pp. 195-217). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2003). Student motivation in co-operative groups: Social interdependence theory. In R. Gillies & A. Ashman (Eds.), *Co-operative learning: The social and intellectual outcomes of learning in groups* (pp. 136-176). London: Routledge.
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2005). Cooperative learning. In S. Lee (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of school psychology* (pp. 117-120). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2009). An educational psychology success story: Social interdependence theory and cooperative learning. *Educational Researcher*, 38, 365-379.
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2014). Cooperative learning in 21st century. *Anales de Psicología*, 30(3), 841-851.
- Karabuga, F., & Kaya, E. S. (2013). Collaborative strategic reading practice with adult EFL learners: A collaborative and reflective approach to reading *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 106, 621-630.
- Kern, R. (2000). *Literacy and language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kern, R., & Schultz, J. M. (2005). Beyond orality: Investigating literacy and the literary in second and foreign language instruction. *The Modern Language Journal*, 89(3), 381-392.
- Khatib, M., & Meihami, H. (2015). Linguaging and writing skill: The effect of collaborative writing on EFL students' writing performance. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 6(1), 203-211.
- Khatib, M., & Sarem, S. N. (2012). An investigation of motivational strategies used by L2 language teachers to promote English language learning: A case of Iranian high school students. *Advances in English Linguistics*, 1(4), 85-90.
- Kim, Y. (2008). The contribution of collaborative and individual tasks to the acquisition of L2 vocabulary. *Modern Language Journal*, 92, 114-130.
- Kim, Y., & McDonough, K. (2008). The effect of interlocutor proficiency on the collaborative dialogue between Korean as a second language learners. *Language Teaching Research*, 12(2), 211-234.
- Kozulin, A. (1998). *Psychological tools: A sociocultural approach to education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Kramsch, C. (1995). The applied linguist and the foreign language teacher: Can they talk to each other? *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, 18, 1-16.
- Krashen, S. D. (1985). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Kuiken, F., & Vedder, I. (2002). Collaborative writing in L2: The effect of group interaction on text quality. In G. Rijlaarsdam, S. Ransdell, & M. Barbier (Eds.), *Studies in writing*. Neatherland: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Kummin, S. A., & Rahman, S. (2010). The relationship between the use of metacognitive strategies and achievement in English. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 7, 145-150.
- Lai, Y. C. (2009). Language learning strategy use and English proficiency of university freshmen in Taiwan. *TESOL quaterly*, 43(2), 255-280.
- Lantòlf, J., & Thorne, S. (2006). *Sociocultural theory and the genesis of second language development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lantolf, J., & Thorne, S. L. (2007). Sociocultural theory and second language learning. In B. VanPatten & J. Williams (Eds.), *Theories in second language acquisition* (pp. 197-221). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Lantolf, J. P. (2000). Introducing sociocultural theory. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 1-26). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Lapkin, S., Swain, M., & Smith, M. (2002). Reformulation and the learning of French pronominal verbs in a Canadian French immersion context. *The Modern Language Journal*, 86(4), 485-507.
- Lee, E. (2011). *Exploring L2 writing strategies from a sociocognitive perspective: Mediated actions, goals, and setting in L2 writing*. (Ph.D Dissertation), The Ohio State Univesity,
- Lesser, M. (2004). Learner proficiency and focus on form during collaborative dialogue. *Language Teaching Research*, 8, 55-81.
- Lin, O. P., & Maarof, N. (2013). Collaborative writing in summary writing: Student perceptions and problems. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 90, 599-606.
- Liu, J., & He, Q. (2014). The match of teaching and learning styles in SLA. *Creative Education*, 5, 728-733.
- Lockhart, C., & Ng, P. (1995). Analyzing talk in ESL peer response groups: Stances, functions, and content. *Language Learning*, 45(4), 605-655.

- Long, M. H. (1980). *Input, interaction, and second language acquisition*. Doctoral Dissertation. University of California. Los Angeles.
- Long, M. H. (1983). Native speaker/non-native speaker conversation and the negotiation of comprehensible input. *Applied Linguistics*, 4(2), 126-141.
- Long, M. H. (1985). Input and second language acquisition theory. In S. Gass & C. Madden (Eds.), *Input in second language acquisition*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Long, M. H. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In W. C. Ritchie & T. K. Bathia (Eds.), *Handbook of language acquisition* (pp. 413-468). New York: Academic Press.
- Mackey, A. (1999). Input, interaction, and second language development: An empirical study of question formation in ESL. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 21, 557-587.
- Mackey, A., & Gass, S. (2005). *Second language research: Methodology and design*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Malmqvist, A. (2005). How does group discussion in reconstruction tasks affect written language output? *Language Awareness*, 14(2), 128-141.
- Marashi, H. (2012). The impact of using task-based writing on EFL learners' writing performance and creativity. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 2(12), 2500-2507.
- Matsumoto, M. (2009, November 2009). *Second language learners' motivation and their perceptions of teachers' motivation*. Paper presented at the The International Conference on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- McMullen, M. G. (2009). Using language learning strategies to improve the writing skills of Saudi EFL students: Will it really work? *System*, 37(3), 418-433.
- Meihami, H., Meihami, B., & Varmaghani, Z. (2013). The effect of collaborative writing on EFL students' grammatical accuracy. *International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences*, 11, 47-56.
- Mertler, C. (2006). *Action research: Teachers as researchers in the classroom*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook (2nd edition)*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Min, H. (2014). The effects of task-based teaching approach on college writing classes. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 9(3), 182-186.

- Momtaz, E., & Garner. (2010). Does collaborative learning improve EFL students reading comprehension? *Journal Linguistic and Language Teaching*, 1(1), 15-36.
- Murdoch, K., & Wilson, J. (2008). *Creating a learner-centered primary classroom: Learner-centred strategic teaching*. London: Routledge.
- Negretti, R., & Kuteeva, M. (2011). Fostering metacognitive genre awareness in L2 academic reading and writing: A case study of pre-service English teachers. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 10, 95-110.
- Nehal, R. (2004). Investigating the audience awareness of ESL writers. *South Asian Language Review*, 14(1&2), 1-23.
- Nguyen, L. T. C., & Gu, Y. (2013). Strategy-based instruction: A learner-focused approach to developing learner autonomy. *Language Teaching Research*, 17(1), 9-30.
- Nguyen, M. H. (2013). EFL students' reflections on peer scaffolding in making a collaborative oral presentation. *English Language Teaching*, 6(4), 64-73.
- Nixon, R., & McClay, J. K. (2007). Collaborative writing assessment: Sowing seeds for transformational adult learning. *Assessing Writing*, 12(2), 149-166.
- Nunan, D. (1991). *Language teaching methodology: A textbook for teachers*. London: Prentice Hall.
- Ohta, A. S. (2000). Re-thinking interaction in SLA: Developmentally appropriate assistance in the zone of proximal development and the acquisition of L2 grammar. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 51-78). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pan, C., & Wu, H. (2013). The cooperative learning effects on English reading comprehension and learning motivation of EFL freshmen. *English Language Teaching*, 6(5), 13-27.
- Partridge, B. J., & Eamoraphan, S. (2015). A comparative study on students' foreign language classroom anxiety through cooperative learning on grade 10 students at Saint Joseph Bangna school, Thailand. *Scholar*, 7(172-185).
- Patton, M. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Piaget, J. (1932). *The language and thought of the child* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Piaget, J. (1948). *The language and thought of the child* (3rd ed.). London: Routledge.

- Pica, T. (1994). Research on negotiation: What does it reveal about second language learning conditions, processes, and outcomes? . *Language Learning*, 44, 493-527.
- Pica, T. (1996). Do second language learners need negotiation? . *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, 34, 1-21.
- Pica, T., Holliday, L., Lewis, N., Berducci, D., & Newman, J. (1991). Language learning through interaction: What role does gender play? *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 13, 343-376.
- Puzlo, K., Keyes, C. S., Cole, M. W., & Jiménez, R. T. (2013). Language differentiation: Collaborative translation to support bilingual reading. *Bilingual research journal: The journal of The National Association for Bilingual Education*, 36(3), 329-349.
- Raofi, S., Chan, S. H., Mukundan, J., & Rashid, S. M. (2014). A qualitative study into L2 writing strategies of university students. *English Language Teaching*, 7(11), 39-45.
- Richards, J. C. (2006). *Communicative language teaching today*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sajedi, S. P. (2014). Collaborative summary writing and EFL students' development. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 98, 1650-1657.
- Salim, A. K. (2000). Learning strategies and writing processes of proficient vs. less proficient learners of Arabic. *Foreign Language Annals*, 33(1), 522-533.
- Sasaki, M. (2002). Building an empirically-based model of EFL learners' writing processes. In S. Ransdell & M. L. Barbier (Eds.), *New directions for research in L2 writing*. Amsterdam: Kluwer Academic.
- Sasaki, M. (2004). A multiple-data analysis of the 3.5-year development of EFL student writers. *Language Learning*, 54(3), 525-582.
- Sasaki, M. (2007). Effects of study-abroad experiences on EFL writers: A multiple-data analysis. *The Modern Language Journal*, 91(4), 602-620.
- Schmidt, R. (1995). Can there be learning without attention. In R. Schmidt (Ed.), *Attention and awareness in foreign language learning* (pp. 9-64). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

- Seifollahi, M., & Tamjid, N. H. (2012). The effect of mixed planning on the fluency and complexity of EFL learners' writing performance. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46, 764-770.
- Shakir, A., & Obeidat, H. (1992). Aspects of cohesion and coherence in AFL student written texts. *Al-Arabiyya*, 25, 1-28.
- Shehadeh, A. (2011). Effects and students perceptions of collaborative writing in L2. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 20, 286-305.
- Shin, S., Lidster, R., Sabraw, S., & Yeager, R. (2015). The effects of L2 proficiency differences in pairs on idea units in a collaborative text reconstruction task. *Language Teaching Research*, 1-21.
- Shukri, N. A. (2014). Second language writing and culture: Issues and challenges from the Saudi learners' perspective. *Arab World English Journal*, 5(3), 190-207.
- Shulin, Y. (2013). EFL teachers' beliefs and practices regarding peer feedback in L2 writing classrooms. *Polyglossia*, 24, 74-79.
- Slavin, R. E. (2011). Instruction based on cooperative learning. In R. E. Mayer & P. A. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of research on learning and instruction*. New York: Routledge.
- Slavin, R. E. (2015). Cooperative learning in elementary schools. *Education 3-13: International Journal of Primary, Elementary and Early Years Education*, 43(1), 5-14.
- Smith, B. (2001). *Learner English: A teacher's guide to interference and other problems*. United Kingdom: United Kingdom Press.
- Storch, N. (2001a). How collaborative is pair work? ESL tertiary students composing in pairs. *Language Teaching Research*, 5(1), 29-53.
- Storch, N. (2001b). *An investigation into the nature of pair work in an ESL classroom and its effect on grammatical development*. PhD Thesis. Department of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics. The University of Melbourne.
- Storch, N. (2002). Patterns of interaction in ESL pair work. *Language Learning*, 52(1), 119-158.
- Storch, N. (2005). Collaborative writing: Product, process, and students' reflections. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 14, 153-173.
- Storch, N. (2007). Investigating the merits of pair work on a text editing task in ESL classes. *Language Teaching Research*, 11(2), 143-159.

- Storch, N. (2009). *The nature of pair interaction. Learners' interaction in an ESL class: Its nature and impact on grammatical development*. Saarbrücken, Germany: VDM Verlag.
- Storch, N. (2011). Collaborative writing in L2 contexts: Processes, outcomes, and future directions. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 31, 275-288.
- Storch, N. (2013). *Collaborative writing in L2 classroom*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Storch, N., & Aldosari, A. (2010). Learners' use of first language (Arabic) in pair work in an EFL class. *Language Teaching Research*, 14(4), 355-375.
- Storch, N., & Aldosari, A. (2012). Pairing learners in pair work activity. *Language Teaching Research*, 17(1), 31-48.
- Storch, N., & Aldosari, A. (2013). Pairing learners in pair work activity. *Language Teaching Research*, 17(1), 31-48.
- Storch, N., & Wigglesworth, G. (2007). Writing tasks: The effects of collaboration. In M. P. G. Mayo (Ed.), *Investigating tasks in formal language learning* (pp. 157-177). London, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Swain, M. (1985). Communicative competence: Some rules of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In S. Gass & C. Madden (Eds.), *Input in second language acquisition* (pp. 235-253). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Swain, M. (1995). Three functions of output in second language learning. In G. Cook & B. Seidlhofer (Eds.), *Principle and practice in applied linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Swain, M. (2000). The output hypothesis and beyond: Mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. In J. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 98-114). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Swain, M. (2001). Examining dialogue: another approach to content specification and to validating inferences drawn from test scores. *Language Testing*, 18, 275-302.
- Swain, M. (2005). The output hypothesis: Theory and research. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook on research in second language learning and teaching*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Swain, M. (2006). Languaging, agency and collaboration in advanced second language learning. In H. Byrnes (Ed.), *Advanced language learning: The contributions of Halliday and Vygotsky* (pp. 95-108). London: Continuum.

- Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (1998). Interaction and second language learning: Two adolescent French immersion students working together. *Modern Language Journal*, 82, 320-337.
- Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (2001). Focus on form through collaborative dialogu: Exploring task effects. *Researching pedagogic tasks: Second language learning, teaching and testing*, 99-118.
- Swain, M., & Watanabe, Y. (2013). Languaging: Collaborative dialogue as a source of second language learning. In C. A. Chapelle (Ed.), *The encyclopedia of applied linguistics*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. .
- Tabatabaei, O., Afzali, M., & Mehrabi, M. (2015). The effect of collaborative work on improving speaking ability and decreasing stress of Iranian EFL learners. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(4), 274-280.
- Tan, L. L., Wigglesworth, G., & Storch, N. (2010). Pair interactions and mode of communication: Comparing face to face and computer mediated communication. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, 33(3), 1-24.
- Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (2008). *Foundations of mixed methods research: Integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches in the social and behavioral sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Tiwari, K. (2014). Measuring the effect of task-based language teaching methodology on writing skills among the engineering students at a rural place in A.P. - A case study. *An International Journal of Language, Literature, and Culture Studies*, 1(2), 145-163.
- Topping, K. J. (2005). Trends in peer learning. *Educational Pyschology: An International Journal of Experimental Educational Psychology*, 25(6), 631-645.
- Topping, K. J., Miller, D., Thurston, A., McGavock, K., & Conlin, N. (2011). Peer tutoring in reading in Scotland: Thinking big *Literacy*, 45(1), 3-9.
- Tribble, C. (1996). *Writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Trochim, W. M. K., & Donnelly, J. P. (2007). *The research methods knowledge base*. Mason, OH: Thompson.
- Tsui, A. B. M., & Ng, M. (2000). Do secondary L2 writers benefit from peer comments? *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 9(2), 147-170.
- Tudge, J., & Rogoff, B. (1999). Peer influences on cognitive development: Piagetian and Vygotskian perspectives. In P. Lloyd & C. Femyhough (Eds.), *Lev Vygotsky: Critical assessments* (Vol. 3). London: Routledge.

- Van Avermaet, P., Colpin, M., Van Corp, K., Bogaert, N., & Van den Branden, K. (2006). The role of the teacher in task-based language teaching. In K. V. d. Branden (Ed.), *Task-based language education: From theory to practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Van Lier, L. (1996). *Interaction in the language curriculum: Awareness, autonomy, and authenticity*. London: Longman.
- Van Lier, L. (2000). From input to affordance: social interactive learning from an ecological perspective. In J. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 245-259). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Versteegh, K. (2013). History of Arabic language teaching. In K. M. Wahba, Z. A. Taha, & L. England (Eds.), *Handbook for Arabic language teaching professional in the 21st century*. New York: Routledge.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes (new edition)*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Wahba, K. M., Taha, Z. A., & England, L. (2013). *Handbook for Arabic language teaching professionals in the 21st century*. New York: Routledge.
- Wajnryb, R. (1990). *Grammar dictation*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Watanabe, Y. (2004). *Collaborative dialogue between ESL learners of different proficiency levels: Linguistic and affective outcomes*. (Unpublished Master Thesis), The University of Toronto, Canada.
- Watanabe, Y., & Swain, M. (2007). Effects of proficiency differences and patterns of pair interaction on second language learning: Collaborative dialogue between adult ESL learners. *Language Teaching Research*, 11(2), 121-142.
- Weigle, S. C. (2002). *Assessing writing*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Wells, G. (2000). Dialogic inquiry in education: Building on the legacy of Vygotsky. In C. Lee & P. Smagorinsky (Eds.), *Vygotskian perspectives on literacy research: Constructing meaning through collaborative inquiry* (pp. 51-85). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Wharton, G. (2000). Language learning strategy use of bilingual foreign language learners in Singapore. *Language Learning*, 50(2), 203-243.
- Wigglesworth, G., & Storch, N. (2009). Pair versus individual writing: Effects of fluency, complexity and accuracy. *Language Testing*, 26(3), 445-466.
- Wigglesworth, G., & Storch, N. (2012a). Feedback and writing development through collaboration: A socio-cultural approach. In R. M. Manchón (Ed.), *L2 writing development: Multiple perspectives*. New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

- Wigglesworth, G., & Storch, N. (2012b). What role for collaboration in writing and writing feedback. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 21*, 364-374.
- Williams, J. D. (2001). The effectiveness of spontaneous attention to form. *System, 29*, 325-340.
- Williams, J. D. (2003). *Preparing to teach writing: Research, theory, and practice*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Wong, A. T. (2005). Writers' mental representations of the intended audience and of the rhetorical purpose for writing and the strategies that they employed when they composed. *System, 33*(1), 29-47.
- Wood, D., Bruner, J., & Ross, G. (1976). The role of tutoring in problem solving. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 17*, 89-100.
- Xu, X. (2011). The relationship between language learning motivation and the choice of language learning strategies among Chinese graduates. *International Journal of English Linguistics, 1*(2), 203-212.
- Xuu, W. (2011). Learning styles and their implications in learning and teaching. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 1*(4), 413-416.
- Yeh, H. (2014). Exploring how collaborative dialogues facilitate synchronous collaborative writing. *Language Learning & Technology, 18*(1), 23-37.
- Yoon, B., & Kim, H. K. (2012). *Teachers' roles in second language learning: Classroom applications of sociocultural theory* United States: Information Age Publishing, Inc.
- Zarei, A. A., & Gilani, M. S. (2014). On the effectiveness of collaborative techniques on L2 reading comprehension. *Journal of Scientific Research and Studies, 1*(4), 58-64.
- Zhang, L., & Zhang, L. J. (2013). Relationship between Chinese college test takers' strategy use and EFL reading test performance: A structural equation modeling approach. *RELC journal, 44*(1), 35-57.
- Zhao, H. (2010). Investigating learners' use and understanding of peer and teacher feedback on writing: A comparative study in a Chinese English writing classroom. *Assessing Writing, 15*, 3-17.
- Zhu, W., & Mitchell, D. (2012). Participation in peer response as activity: An examination of peer response stances from an activity theory perspective. *TESOL quarterly, 46*(2), 362-386.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Classroom Observation Notes

Project: **Collaborative Writing in Arabic as a Second Language (ASL)**
Classrooms in Saudi Arabia: A Mixed-method Study

Setting:

Time:

Date:

Length of observation:

Observer:

Descriptive notes

Reflective notes

--	--

Researcher's extended reflective notes (this should be completed as soon as the observation finishes)

Appendix 2. Interview Questions

Interview Questions for Students

A. Background information

1. Can you tell me about your learning experience of Arabic?
 - a. When (from whom, with what) did you learn Arabic?
 - b. Have you ever taken a writing class in the Arabic-speaking countries or Saudi Arabia?

B. Perceptions of Collaborative Writing (CW) or Traditional Group Work (TGW)

2. What are your overall perceptions about this twelve-week writing program?
 - a. What are your perceptions on your written production?
 - b. What are the differences before and after participation in this program?
3. Can you tell me about your perceptions of CW/TGW?
 - a. What about writing in pairs, individually, or in a large group?
 - b. What strategy did you use during CW/TGW?
4. Can you tell me about a relationship between writing and learning Arabic?
 - a. What were your perceptions of writing activities in Arabic?

- b What things did you notice when you got involved in writing activities?
- c What relationship is between writing and learning Arabic?

C. Experiences in doing writing tasks in group

- 5. How was the performance of Task 1, 2, or 3 compared to the other two tasks?
 - a. Which task were you most/least interested in? If so, why?
 - b. Which task are you confident in performing by yourself in the future?

D. Challenges and opportunities in CW/TGW practices

- 6. Can you tell me about your classroom atmosphere?
 - a. What was your behavior in the writing classes?
 - b. What about the teacher's intervention in the writing classes?
 - c. What interruption or influence did you get from other groups? If so, what else?
 - d. What are the benefits of using CW/TGW in writing activities?

Interview Questions for Teachers

A. Background information

- 1. How long have you been an Arabic as Second Language (ASL) teacher?
Where did you obtain your qualifications (Teaching Diploma, BA, MA, PhD)?
- 2. How would you describe yourself as a student in each of those training programs? Did you use any strategies to study or teach Arabic well?
- 3. How would you describe the interactions between teachers and students back then?
- 4. From what sources did you learn Arabic before you were admitted to higher education?

B. Perceptions of Collaborative Writing (CW)/ Traditional Group Work (TGW)

- 1. Are you aware that CW/TGW is considered as a good approach in the ASL writing contexts? How come? Do you think CW/TGW is important to language learning particularly in L2 writing? Why? Why not?

2. What do you understand by ‘CW/TGW’? How would you sum up your views, in some sentences, on what it means to you?
3. How come do you develop the views you hold today about CW/TGW?
 - a. Is it an issue in your training programs (pre-service or in-service)?
 - b. Have you worked in other contexts where CW/TGW is considered important?
 - c. Do you think you were aware of CW/TGW when you studied Arabic in high school or university?
4. In general, what do you think are the teachers’ most important roles in CW/TGW? How do you see your role in helping students manage their learning in CW/TGW practices?
5. What do you think your students expect you to do for them? Do you and your students have similar opinions on peer or teacher roles? How?

C. Experiences in Implementing CW/TGW in ASL settings

1. In general, how significant is CW/TGW practices in the ASL classroom at your college? Please explain.
2. How much time did you spend on preparing the writing lesson plans? What concerned you most before you started planning?
3. What do you think are the most interesting features of your writing lessons? Why?
4. In general, how good are your students at writing Arabic collaboratively?
5. Do you do anything to encourage your students to write or work collaboratively outside ASL classrooms? What?

D. Constraints and opportunities in CW/TGW practices

1. What difficulties prevented you from doing CW/TGW in your classes?
2. What factors affect your teaching decision?
3. How did/would you overcome those challenges?
4. In general, how does the ASL teaching and learning environment at your college enable or hinder the implementation of CW/TGW?

Appendix 3. Analytic Scoring Rubric for Writing

(Adopted from <http://noonanamericanlit.pbworks.com/f/SAD+6+Writing+Rubric.pdf>)

	TOPIC DEVELOPMENT (stays with the topic)	ORGANIZATION	DETAILS	SENTENCES	WORDING	MECHANICS (writing tools)
	Overall understanding of purpose, topic, feelings, and creativity	Writing is organized •clear and sequenced •clear use of paragraphs	Writing shows examples that support / describe the topic	Sentences are complete and correct and differ in length and type	Wording includes •vocabulary •word choice (uses a variety: run, scurry, hasten, rush) •the right word for the right place	Correct •spelling •capitalization •punctuation
4	•very strong understanding of purpose (inform, entertain, describe, or persuade) •outstanding knowledge of topic •expresses very strong feelings and excitement (voice) •creative and interesting	•effective organization •clear, complete beginning, middle, end •ideas are connected •clear flow of events support topic •always indents paragraphs and uses topic/main idea sentences	•many details elaborated •all details support topic •all details are interesting and exciting	•many different sentence lengths •many different kinds of sentences •correct English (grammar) •sentences are complete thoughts	•outstanding vocabulary supports topic •many descriptive words •words used correctly •words create exciting mental pictures	Correct: •spelling •capitalization •punctuation •when a classmate reads your paper he/she understands what was written
3	•strong understanding of purpose (inform, entertain, describe, or persuade) •strong knowledge of topic •expresses strong feelings / excitement (voice) •creative and interesting	•strong organization •clear beginning, middle and end •most ideas are connected •smooth flow of events support topic •usually indents paragraphs and uses topic/main idea sentences	•several details, some elaboration •most details support topic •most details are interesting and exciting	•several differences in sentence length •several different kinds of sentences •few mistakes in English (grammar) •most sentences are complete thoughts	•strong vocabulary supports topic •several descriptive words •most words used correctly •words create mental pictures	A few mistakes in: •spelling •capitalization •punctuation •when a classmate reads your paper he/she understands, but asks some questions
2	•some understanding of purpose (inform, entertain, describe or persuade) •some knowledge of topic •expresses some feelings / excitement (voice) •some creativity	•some organization •some beginning, middle, end •some connection of ideas •some order of events, but not clear •some use of paragraphs •some indenting of paragraphs and use of topic/main idea sentences	•some details, just listed •some details support topic •some details are interesting and exciting	•some differences in sentence length •some different kinds of sentences •several mistakes in English (grammar) •some sentences are complete thoughts	•basic vocabulary follows the topic •some descriptive words •some words used correctly •some words create simple pictures	Some errors in: •spelling •capitalization •punctuation •when a classmate reads your paper he/she needs to ask many questions to understand what was written
1	•limited understanding of purpose (inform, entertain, describe, or persuade) •limited knowledge of topic •expresses limited feelings / excitement (voice) •limited creativity	•limited organization •limited use of beginning, middle, end •limited or no connection of ideas •limited or no order of events •no paragraphs used	•few details, just listed •few details support topic •few details are interesting and exciting	•few differences in sentence length •sentences are short •few kinds of sentences •sentences are simple •many mistakes in English (grammar) •sentences are not complete thoughts	•simple vocabulary •simple vocabulary repeated •few words used correctly •no mental pictures created	Many errors in: •spelling •capitalization •punctuation •when a classmate reads your paper he/she cannot understand it

Appendix 4. Examples of students' writing from their pre- and post-tests
Experimental group

Pre-test

الاختبار القبلي حافظ منصور

أراد زميل لك القدوم إلى بلدك لقضاء إجازته السنوية لمدة شهرين، وطلب منك المساعدة في اقتراح أفضل الأماكن للزيارة.

في ما لا يقل عن خمسة عشر سطرا، صف بلدك معرّف بها

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
يا عزيزي صديق من جبالتي في بلدي سمعت انك تأتني لزيارة بلدي
الجد لله جبالتي الله ان شاء الله تأتني في بلدي تدي احلام
واجسين الله ما كنت وانشياء كثير في بلدي الاجل
انا اجتلك إلى مدينة بلدي اسمه دالي انقل
ديت ، ولعد هذا انكن تميم إلى البحر كركس
بارت وهي مشهور هو الذي مشهور لورقه
الشاوي - جيبه يفلونج جبال وهي اكي واجمل
في بلدي ثم نذهب إلى بحاات بلدي اسمه
جانجور وهي بحروف للنزجها اسمها السب
صايس ، ولعد انت تدي في قديتي الذي أنا
ولدت اسمه عيناكي شادرا استنى اذا انتي دخلنا
ثم بعد ان شاء الله نكون سرور اجدا اريد انك
تخرف عن بلدي جبالتي انشاء كثير مثلا
من حديثنا عن بلد هيتة وهي مشهور جدا
لمساحد كل العالم في بلدي نحن مساهمون
لسمه ~~ج~~ وتعرف بالمائة انت تكون
تجيب تدي الناس في بلدي لأننا الناس في
قليل مكانين لكن كلهم فرجانت

Translation

- 1- My dear my friend welcome to my country. I heard you come to visit my country
- 2- Thanks god you are welcome god will you come in my my country you see beautiful
- 3- the best places and many things in my country. first
- 4- I take you to city my town name Dakabeng
- 5- Rech, after that we go to the sea Karkas
- 6- Bazer and it is famouse with leaf
- 7- tea. Next to it mountains Javlong and they are bigger and more beautiful
- 8- in my country. In the south of my country in the winter, you see the mountains just like diamonds when the ice are in the top of them Then we
- 9- go to place where I was born name Alis
- 10- Mas, then you see in my village that I born name Ainatay Shadrasity when finish trip
- 11- then after god will we are very happy. I want you
- 12- know my country well and learn lots of things for example
- 13- about our freedom and city very famous
- 14- for mosques for all the world. In our country we are muslims 99%. You are
- 15- impressed you see people in my town because here people
- 16- few populations. But they all happy.

الاختبار البعدي حافظ مظهر

مررت في الفصل الدراسي الحالي بتجربة التعلم التعاوني في مادة (الإنشاء) في ما لا يقل عن خمسة عشر سطرا، تحدث عن تجربتك في فصول التعلم التعاوني من حيث الايجابيات والسلبيات.

مررت في الفصل الدراسي بتجربة التعلم التعاوني في مادة (الإنشاء) هو مادة التي تشغل عقل الطالب، وهي تحتاج التفكير والتفكير المهمان. والآن والحمد لله قد جربت التعلم التعاوني في هذه المادة واستفدت كثيرا، ووجدت أنني منفتح جدا. إن هناك الإيجابيات والسلبيات. من الإيجابيات أن الطالب وجد قوته المتعددة في فهم اللغة العربية أكثر من قبله. إن هذا لا بد الطالب يتناقشون دون مساعدة من الأستاذ. وهذه طريقة التعلم أيضا تساعد الطالب في توليد أفكار كثيرة. وهذا يقلل من حجابهم لتقويتهم كثيرا. ومن إيجابيات كذلك أن الطلاب يتناقشون في جموعهم، ويحسون بعضه كثيرا. وهذا يجعلنا نشعر حين كثيرا ونحب مادة. من السلبيات التي وجدت قليلة. منها مشاركة بعض الطلاب في فهم مجموعة، أو اهتمام فقط بتشاركها. وهذا ليس مفيد. أيضا بعض طلابه هم الذين لا يقولون أفكار من الطلاب ليس هم الذين. ولكن بالصراحة الحمد لله استفدت كثيرا، وأريد نقل هذه تجربة إلى الطلاب في المدارس. نقلها بالأسان.

Translation

- 1- During this semester, I have experienced cooperative learning
- 2- in the subject (Insha'a), the insha'a is a subject that make students' minds
- 3- work, and it needs thinking and excellent ideas. And now
- 4- thanks god, i experienced CL in this subject
- 5- and benefited very much. I found that I'm very pleased. but
- 6- there are pros and cons.
- 7- One benefit is that student found a chance to talk to
- 8- their classmates in Arabic language more than before; because here students have
- 9- to discuss without help from the teacher.
- 10- This method also helps students in generating
- 11- big ideas, this thinking make them critical well. another
- 12- benefit is that students discuss in a friendly environment and they love
- 13- each other a lot. And that make us happy and therefore love the subject.
- 14- One drawback I found is some students in group don't participate;
- 15- for example a group of 4 people, just 2 participate, this
- 16- not useful. Also some students are good don't accept ideas from
- 17- lower students.
- 18- In conclusion, I benefit too much , and I will transfer this experience
- 19- to my students in my country. Thank you teacher.

Control Group

Pre-test

يو بكر كوناتي
مستوى رقم ٢

أراد زميل لك القدوم إلى بلدة لمدة شهرين صيف بلدة محرفا
بها في كل غيما لا يقل عن ١٥ مترا

فرنسا بلد في غرب أوروبا، تشكلها الجمهورية ورائسة فرنسا
ملائد مدا بلد محدث وهو من أحدث في العالم. نقده اليورو والدخول
فيه لازم الأثيرة للناس غير من أوروبا. اعتماد فرنسا من مصادر مختلفة
ومنها المزرعة وبيع المصينة الحرب، مصنع الملابس و عطور و أكسموارات
شهيره. عاصمة باريس هي مدينة جميلة وشهيره جدا في العالم.
فرنسا يدد غير مسلمين ولكن وجود المسلمين فيه حتى الإسلام هو
دين الثاني في الدد، ممكن الأول. يوجد المساجد والمطاعم خلال
والحمد لله. أصبح حال المسلمين محب فيه لأن وقع الإرهاب فيه من
بعض سنوات فالفرنسيون يخافون من الإسلام ولا بد أن تكون منتهبه
في مكان الذي لا يوجد مسلمين. أيضا الآن القوم في حال فطير من إرهاب
الأخر فيوجد العسكري في كل مكان ويمكنك أن تسأل الشرطي هناك
في المطار ويحك منك فاستعد بهذا. لو تزور فرنسا لا بد أن تذهب إلى
باريس يوجد فيها أشياء عجيبه وجميلة ثانيا انصب إلى الجنوب

Translation

- 1- France is a country in western Europe. It is a republican and its president Fransua
- 2- Auland. This country modern. It is one of the modern in the world. Its currency Euro. Enter
- 3- must be with visa for non european people. Its economy from different sources
- 4- such farming, selling war ships, cloth design , perfumes and accessories
- 5- famous. ? Paris is city beautiful and very famous in the world.
- 6- France country non muslim but Muslims are existed. Even Islam
- 7- second religion in the country. Maybe first. There are mosques and restaurants halal
- 8- thanks god. Muslim have hard situation because terrorist since
- 9- three years French are scared of Islam and you will be suspected
- 10- if you go to non muslim suburbs. Also
- 11- there are soldiers everywhere. Police may search you in the airport
- 12- so be ready. If visit France go to south, trees are dancing on the road sides.
- 13- Paris it has many beautiful and interesting things. Second go to south
- 14- To Marsilia or Nice weather is good and the beach of the best in Europe.
- 15- Another more important news is travelling from Saudi to France takes six hours
- 16- it is better if you travel in first class.

يو بكر مونا
صنوي (٤) رقم (٥)

الاختبار البعدي

١٤

مررت في الفصل الدراسي الحالي بتجربة التعلم التعاوني في مادة (الإنشاء).

في ما لا يقل عن خمسة عشر سطراً، تحدث عن تجربتك في فصول التعلم التعاوني من حيث الايجابيات والسلبيات.

هذه الطريقة المتعلم جيدة جداً لأن سمحت للمالبب الاستفادة من
مدرسه وزملائه وأيضاً أنا سُجل النوار بين الطلاب يمكنه
أن يسمع صوتي وأخطاه فيسمعني بعد ذلك وهذه الطريقة
سمحت للفرح والضحك أكثر أن الطالب يحتاج إلى هذه الطريقة
الطريقة والطريقة الهامة لأن يوجد في الأولى فوائد ليست
بموجودة في الثانية والله عكسها يمكن الطالب أن
يتكلم بدون خوف والجدال ورأي وهذه أشياء مهمة في
تعلم لغة لا يستطيع أن يستفيد بالقراءة والاستماع والكتابة
لا بد أن يتعدت مع أشخاص في نفس درجته لأن في الفصل
عام يمكن يتكلم مع المدرس وهو فوقه في اللغة والطلاب
يتفاه أن يفكر وفكر قبل الكلام وفي الآخر لم يقول
شيئاً يمكن بنفسه لا يمكن أن أتكلم في الخارج لأنني
مشغول بعملي وعمله وأدري أن عندي عدم في
المحبة ورأيت أن محادثتي أفضل من هذه البروس
فالحمد لله وجزاؤه لله فسرنا وأسأل الله أن نحصل الاختبار
في الدكتورنة
وجدت زملائي من مشغولون في هذه الطريقة وأظن
أنهم استفادوا منها

Translation:

- 1- This teaching method good because it allows students to benefit from
- 2- Teacher and his peers also if the dialogue is recorder he can
- 3- Listen to his voice and his mistakes so then correct them after that. And this method
- 4- Allows laughing and enjoyment. I think student needs to this
- 5- Method and important **method not existed in other methods** (NOT UNDERSTOOD)
- 6- Student can
- 7- talk without any fear and express opinion and this are important things in
- 8- learning language. He can't benefit from reading , listening and writing
- 9- he has to talk to people in the same level, because in the class
- 10- he doesn't talk with teacher and better students in the language
- 11- student is afraid to make mistakes and he thinks before talking and in the end say
- 12- nothing maybe.for me I can't talk in talk outside because
- 13- I am busy with my family and work and I know I am lasy in
- 14- the study and I saw my conversation better in this subjet
- 15- thanks god and thank you teacher.
- 16- I found my peers are active in this method and I think they benefit from it

Appendix 5. Consent Form, Participant Information Sheet and Ethics Letter

Consent Form

Project Title : Collaborative Writing in Arabic as a Second Language (ASL)
Classrooms in Saudi Arabia: A Mixed-method Study
Supervisor : - Prof. Robyn Gillies
- Dr. Obaid Hamid
Investigator : Mohammed Ali Alwaleedi

I _____ understand the aim of the project. I understand that I have been invited to participate in the study and to give permission to be recorded during classroom interaction and interview sessions to be used as the data source for this project. I understand that my participation is voluntary and there are no foreseeable risks added risks apart from those risks involved in everyday living.

I understand that my confidentiality will be guaranteed and I can withdraw at any stage of this project without any penalty and prejudice.

The Ethics Committee of the School of Education at the University of Queensland has approved this study.

Signature of participant: _____ Date:

Participant Information Sheet_

Project Title : Collaborative Writing in Arabic as a Second Language (ASL)
Classrooms in Saudi Arabia: A Mixed-method Study
Supervisor : - Prof. Robyn Gillies
- Dr. Obaid Hamid
Investigator : Mohammed Ali Alwaleedi

Dear Participant,

My name is Mohammed Ali Alwaleedi and I am undertaking research for my Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) program in the School of Education at the University of Queensland. I would like to invite you to participate in my project. I also would like to get your permission to be an observer in the classroom during this project, and record your discussions during your group interactions and interview sessions. It is anticipated that the project will run for 12 weeks. You will be asked to complete a pre-test and a post-test of your proficiency of Arabic writing skills. At the completion of the project, you will be interviewed about your perceptions of learning Arabic as a second language. This interview will be audio recorded.

This project aims to investigate the role of collaborative learning (CL) in the development of second language (L2) writing skills in Arabic as a Second Language

(ASL) classrooms in an Arabic language institute for non-native speakers of Arabic, which is a part of a public university situated in Makkah, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In particular, it will investigate the effect of the implementation of collaborative writing (CW) activities on learning Arabic as a L2. It will also explore how Arabic teachers and learners perceive the implementation of CW in writing tasks after the 12 weeks of engagement in collaborative writing activities. It is expected that this study will capture the reciprocal relationship between collaborative writing practices and the development of learners' writing skills

All the information collected will remain strictly confidential and will only be used by myself and my advisors to determine the learning that occurred during the CW activities. There are no foreseeable added risks in this project apart from the risks of everyday living. Approval from the Institute (The Umm Al-Qura) has been obtained to conduct this research in your class.

If you decide not to give your permission to participate, this will not affect your educational program in any way. As this is a curriculum-based language intervention, all students (participants and non-participants in the study) will receive the same level of instruction from their teacher. You are free to withdraw from the project at any time and this will not affect your educational program in any way.

At the completion of the project, I will be available to discuss the results of the project with you. If you want access to your test results, they will be made available to you. At the completion of the project, I will discuss the outcomes of the project with the teachers and the students at an information session in the Institute.

This study has been cleared in accordance with the ethical review guidelines and processes of The University of Queensland. These guidelines are endorsed by the University's principal human ethics committee, the Human Experimentation Ethical Review Committee, and registered with the Australian Health Ethics Committee as complying with the National Statement. You are free to discuss your participation in this study with myself (uqmalwal@uq.net.au) or my advisors (Professor Robyn Gillies: r.gillies@uq.edu.au or Dr. Obaid Hamid: o.hamid@uq.edu.au). If you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the School Ethics Officer on 3365 6502.

Mohammed Ali Alwaleedi
School of Education
University of Queensland
Brisbane, QLD 4072, Australia
Mobile phone: +61431475293

Ethics Letter



The School of Education

CRICOS PROVIDER NUMBER 00228

18 December 2015

Mr Mohammed Alwaleedi
School of Education

Email: mohammed.alwaleedi@uqconnect.edu.au

S/N: 41935196

Ethical Clearance Number: 15-041

Dear Mohammed,

I am pleased to advise that on 17 December 2015 ethical clearance was granted for your project *Collaborative Writing in Arabic as a Second Language (ASL) Classrooms in Saudi Arabia: A Mixed-method Study*.

I would also like to remind you that any correspondence associated with your project (consent forms, information sheets etc.) must be printed on official UQ letterhead (available from the School of Education Front Office).

It is important that the School of Education receives for our records a final copy of all Information Letters and Consent forms.

If you have any questions regarding this matter please do not hesitate to contact me.

I wish you well with your studies.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Michelle Weston'.

Michelle Weston
Senior Administrative Officer
(Research Higher Degrees)