# Developing Collaborative Academic Writing Skills

# in English in Call Classroom

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## Abstract

The modern system of foreign language teaching impacts a qualitative change in the new methodological approaches with using innovative technologies in the educational process. Spencer Kagan created Cooperative learning structures that make collaborative learning easy to use. It provides students with valuable and ample opportunities to combine language resources and collaboratively build knowledge and writing through interaction. Cooperative learning methods do not require a detailed study of plans, educational materials, and special training. Hence the article depicts University students' implementation of collaborative academic writing skills in a Computer-assisted Language Learning environment. Collaborative writing is interpreted as an action in which students communicate, consult, and make collective decisions during the writing process through computer and create a unique text with shared accountability and co-ownership. In this paper, the crucial types of academic writings are highlighted, and experimental teaching results have proved Kagan's collaborative model as a useful technique for improving students' academic writing skills.

**Keywords:** collaborative learning, academic writing, Kagan's collaborative model, CALL method, writing skills, Call Classroom

## 1. Introduction

In the current century, tremendous changes have occurred in a teacher-centered environment, especially in digital technology (Ashrapova et al., 2020; Kuznetsovaa et al., 2016; Yarmakeev et al., 2020; Valiakhmetova et al., 2019). Hence, this entire situation has made a significant impact on language learning (Blankenship, 1999). Simultaneously, there is "a demand persists for empirical analysis to examine what language students do when they try computer task-based training" (Storch, 2012). Gilbert B. mentions released to the advanced technology that improving writing skills in collaborative web-based environments has become a critical research study in academic writing. It requires further research, which is the following study (Gilbert, 2013: Akhmetova et al, 2019).

Computer-assisted Language learning is the so-called CALL approach widely used, especially in pandemic situations around the world in 2020. In coronavirus educational teaching, computer-assisted Language learning is at the top of most academic curriculum.

One of the well-known learning processes for FLT classes is learning collaborative writing. Collaborative learning has become indispensable in classrooms because it supports attaining higher learning goals. The technology is the primary reason why teachers develop collaborative writing of students. While they discuss and work on a computer, learners also share supplementary materials, useful links to make this collaboration very effective (Amoakohene, 2017; Muhammad, 2020).

Cooperative learning means a small group learning technology. Members of a large group or class are divided into several small groups and act according to the teacher's instructions, specially designed for them. The idea to create cooperative learning technologies to create educational autonomy among students belongs to Spencer Kagan (USA),

who in the late 90s of the XX century (Kagan, 2002).

Spencer Kagan used his proposed techniques as part of existing lessons with no optional requirements for special training. The collaborative teaching model is applied with any educational material, but some have been developed to solve specific methodological problems. For example, some structures regulate the relationships of students working in pairs, others are good for organizing teamwork, and others organize the work of the entire class (Swain, 1995; Chernys et al., 2020).

## 2. Methods

Cooperative Learning created by Spenser Kagan is an education method that applies to small, heterogeneous collections of learners operating together to obtain a common purpose. According to this method, students work collectively in teams, so they are accountable for teammate's training and their own. The method is basically implemented by using structures in the classroom. There are 150 structures, which possess various functions.

We have implemented various Kagan's models of Cooperative Learning during our lessons with 50 students.

Cooperative learning is crucial for English language learners as it really speeds up the studying process. Teachers often model language but hamper students by not providing them with a chance to apply it and master language aspects as rapidly as feasible.

Moreover, computers are used as a useful means in language education and studying in coronavirus educational circumstances. Writing is one of the 4 abilities of language and an extensive form of reasoning. By writing, the authors display their thoughts and opinions. Based on Swain M. and Lapkin S. (2006), there are numerous benefits of writing for teachers as well as students:

a. There is an excellent chance for the writers to manifest what they desire; they form and reform their written elements to their content.

b. Writing provides the privilege of efficient and accurate communication.

c. By writing one's history, one's ideas, activities, and decisions.

Collaborative writing skills are an indispensable part of interaction abilities. Poorly written communication also opens to misinterpretation.

Cited to Storch N., teaching writing varies from teaching other language skills in two regards (Swain & Lapkin, 1998):

a. L2 writing was not observed as a communication skill to be taught and utilized as a support skill in language

education

b. Through the continuous improvement of theory and practice, ESL teaching supported the native English speaker.

Swann has described the goal of writing:

- as assessment;

- as an assistant to critical reasoning, perception, and memory;

- as a method to increase students' knowledge beyond speeches and other formal conferences, to develop students' communication skills;

- as preparing learners as future experts in particular disciplines.

## 3. Results and Discussion

We have organized our lesson content utilizing the Kagan Cooperative structure, informing classroom management as teaching students to social skills, interaction with peers, turn-taking, listening to others' views and sharing information, supporting each other, and respecting each opinion for the lesson.

Nowadays, Kagan Cooperative Learning has been the most heavily studied cooperative learning innovation of all time. Academic writing is a challenging task for second language learners, and it requires remarkable achievements and a high level of writing skills. Nevertheless, there are many activities and recommended things that are helpful and foster students' academic writing. Pre-writing activity in minor groups or working together of two persons can increase different ways of expressing ideas and facilitate academic writing. One of the additional recommendations is reading before writing one of the tools to enlarge vocabulary and notice word combinations and word structure in sentences.

Knowing the audience can facilitate academic writing.

Kagan's cooperative model also showed effectiveness in classroom teaching language. In the classroom, students are divided into minor groups and motivated to work together. Students, in this way, are responsible for every member's performance as well as own.

We explored various activities like "Quiz, Quiz Trade" and "Rally coach" to motivate students to high writing performance. Kagan's model of cooperative learning based on using writing structures leads to effective classroom management. Structures are the core of the Kagan cooperative learning model, which is considered as innovative classroom instruction. The core of the structures is communication and opportunity for students to share their own ideas when every student has the possibility of practicing writing skills in target language communication.

So we foster academic writing skills in collaboration with three given methods and approaches. Students have experienced diversity in the CALL classroom when they have access to social media like Facebook, Twitter, and Skype, it means by communicating with the target language audience in developing writing skills.

Reading Breaking News, BBC news is also aimed at developing academic writing; it's proven that students can enhance academic writing by reading academic articles.

In cooperative learning, teachers divide the classroom into small groups and authentic texts taken through the internet from original newspaper articles or scientific articles. After reading the articles, every group is encouraged to discuss and share ideas and information they have learned from articles. Finally, in the end, students express their thoughts by writing essays and share them within the group.

Furthermore, we list a writing structure description, tips, and writing instruments for each essay type. We represent a data analytic tool as a code and analysis data in experimental teaching.

Thus, in a collaborative learning environment, students have the opportunity to communicate with peers, present and defend ideas, exchange diverse beliefs, question other concepts, and participate actively (Storch, 2013).

Students are taught more effectively with active participation in the learning process. Moreover, the cooperative learning model provides creative thinking and effective problem-solving thoughts (Shayakhmetova et al., 2019).

Computer assistant supported collaborative learning in academic writing demonstrates through information technologies. It improves writing skills through social communications and by sharing materials and social networks interact with people with different levels of a foreign language. Low-level students can promote their knowledge by communicating with high-level students.

Academic writing on the paper presents their knowledge and the way of investigation. Pre-writing activities play a prominent role in academic writing. It helps organize the ideas through discussion and reading before illustrating the paper; it gives more vocabulary to express the ideas. Besides, knowing the readers' audience gives clues on how to represent appropriately to make your writing successful.

To sum up, we withdraw that cooperative learning is an effective way to express written form and oral speech ideas. The cooperative learning models help to plan curriculum productively.

While there is the growth of using computer-assisted language learning, the English-language instructional materials help students achieve the desired learning outcomes that increase the emphasis on integrating computer technology and provide them with learning tools and materials that would otherwise be unaffordable.

## 4. Summary

Our experimental teaching was conducted for four groups of students in 2020. The two groups (TA) were controlled with a traditional teaching approach. The other two groups (CCA) were experimental with implementing Collaborative Academic Writing Skills in the CALL teaching approach. Both four groups studied according to the syllabus and in common educational endeavours. TA and CCA had an equal number of students per 25 in each. The gender and race variables were the same.

Table 1 shows the experimental teaching results of 4 groups according to the average and standard deviation values ($\pm SD$) for TA and CCA groups. A repeated means Manova showed a notable impact of the strategy on learning experience $F_{(1.30)} = 30.61$, $p < .001$, $\eta p.^2 = 0.51$ so that learners announced a remarkably more beneficial learning experience for CCA ($8.130 \pm 1.450$) when contrasted with TA ($6.0400 \pm 1.560$). There was an important part through approach interaction $F_{(5.160)} = 10.00$, $p < .001$, $\eta p.^2 = .25$, created by learners stating that CCA was remarkably more exciting, intellectually exciting, delightful, and dynamic. ($p < 0.001$).

Furthermore, CCA was recognized to be substantially more settled (P=.0240) and presented greater productive feedback (p<.0010).Ultimately, there was no practical approach by class cooperation F (1. 30) = .13, p=0.719, ηp. 2 =.00, meaning that the impact of approach was not reliant on the class attending order (1. interactive and 2. traditional approach or vice versa). A relevant samples t-test likewise showed that CCA learners grasped better preparing for examinations than TA t (31) = -2.14, p=0.040.

Table 1**.** Means (±SD) for TA and CCA on elemrnts associating to the experience of learning

| How much would you think practical courses achieve the following | TA | CCA |
|---|---|---|
| Q1. Making practical course exciting | 5.160(±2.17) | 8.410(±1.70) |
| Q2. Making the practical course pleasant intellectually | 5.630(±2.00) | 8.190(±1.67) |
| Q4. pleasure in the practical course | 6.060(±2.18) | 8.280(±1.69) |
| Q4. Possibilities for an energetic and committed learning approach | 5.560(±2.03) | 8.410(±2.08) |
| Q5. become arranged and operate well | 7.720(±1.53) | 8.590(±1.50) |

Kagan Cooperative Learning is the perfect teaching methodology to teach students writing strategies and skills via computer-assisted learning. It is also a great model to show students how to apply those skills to study content. Students interact with each other in the same group to acquire and practice the elements of a subject matter in order to solve a problem, complete a task, or achieve a goal.

At the end of our experimental teaching, we concluded that the cooperative method is more effective and convenient in the teaching process than the traditional approach.

In the traditional method, students learn for themselves, trying to show themselves in the best way. However, during cooperative learning, they work with the team, and each student tries to win within the group, they try to gain knowledge more deeply. They became closer to each other and supportive. Each member of a group is responsible not only for personal learning what is taught but also for helping his teammates learn, thus creating an achievement atmosphere. Students work through the assignment until all group members successfully understand and complete it.

## 5. Conclusions

This investigation aimed to study developing Collaborative Academic Writing Skills in English in CALL Classroom. Overall, students reported the Collaborative Academic Writing Skills in English in CALL Classroom to be remarkably more engaging, intellectually stimulating, pleasant, attractive and prepared. It granted learners with more productive feedback enabling themselves to display their opinions in a collaborative atmosphere. The learners declared they felt better equipped for their final exams on comprehending the integrative approach. They thought they better perceived the research purposes and statistics topics by cooperation with technology, issues, and games. The extra exciting point is linked to the connections between learners and educators. It appears that through sustaining a teaching approach on the basis of problem-based and computer-based learning with the proper usage of technology, the gap between educators and learners reduced, letting students be more involved and excited with the learning process through exposing their ideas.

Writing collectively helps students in their learning, besides bringing out students' talents. The research demonstrated that using collaborative learning in English as a foreign language acquisition promotes students to become more self-reliant and autonomous. Students can increase communication and interaction skills by participating in EFL collaborative learning activities, and they master the English language. Students get more involved in their learning process and are more skilled in understanding learning material effectively, hence, easily attaining their learning goals while actively participating in learning groups

Cooperative learning fosters not only communicative skills but also writing skills. This method is entirely different compared to one of writing individually with brainstorming, grammar recognition, and self-correction. To my mind, it is necessary to have lectures about collaborative writing before implementing it. Furthermore, writing can be done in a process-based way with step by step instructions. During the work, students enhance their vocabulary, grammar, thinking process, their style of writing.

The cooperative learning model is worth using in any lessons due to its effectiveness, strategies, and principles, which benefit both learners and teachers.

**Acknowledgements**

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