

## The Transformative Roles of Cooperative Learning in Promoting EFL Students' Writing Competence

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### ABSTRACT

Cooperative learning is primarily aligned with the transformative roles that it can play in responding to EFL students' writing skills. This review article investigates the personal, relational, educational, institutional, and global aspects of cooperative learning transformatively. Personal efforts to improve writing skills highlight the relevance of diverse small-scale teamwork. Individual student efforts are the gold standard for adopting coordination and teamwork. More significantly, students want to regain self-confidence by adopting socio-emotional skills that improve their collaboration and involvement. It also maintains a positive attitude and a sense of pride in the face of institutional transformation. The main reason is that institutional policy, which heavily encourages writing competence, attempts to help students develop and update their knowledge, communication, creativity, responsibility, and competence capacities. As a result, transformative learning brings together the strengths of small-scale personal, relational, educational, and institutional activities to develop networked relationships in academic communities. Furthermore, cooperative learning functions well in writing contexts to assist students in accepting democratic ideals, attitudes, and principles. Cooperative learning thus plays transformative roles while enhancing students' writing competence in global contexts to re-articulate ideas that transformational values arise through in-class writing activities that contribute to global cooperative learning.

**Keywords:** cooperative learning, transformative role, writing competence, EFL writing

### ABSTRAK

Pembelajaran kooperatif memainkan peran transformatif dalam menanggapi keterampilan menulis siswa-siswa yang mempelajari Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa asing. Artikel ulasan ini menyelidiki aspek personal, relasional, pendidikan, institusional, dan global dari pembelajaran kooperatif secara transformatif. Upaya personal untuk meningkatkan keterampilan menulis menyoroti relevansi kerja tim skala kecil yang beragam. Upaya individu siswa adalah standar utama dalam mengadopsi koordinasi dan kerja sama tim. Lebih penting lagi, siswa-siswa ingin mendapatkan kembali kepercayaan diri dengan mengadopsi keterampilan sosio-emosional yang dapat meningkatkan kolaborasi dan keterlibatan mereka. Selain itu, mereka menjaga sikap positif dan rasa bangga dalam menghadapi transformasi kelembagaan. Alasan utamanya adalah bahwa kebijakan kelembagaan yang mendorong peningkatan kompetensi menulis, berupaya untuk membantu mereka mengembangkan dan memutakhirkan pengetahuan, komunikasi, kreativitas, tanggung jawab, dan kapasitas kompetensi. Akibatnya, pembelajaran transformatif menyatukan kekuatan kegiatan personal, relasional, pendidikan, dan kelembagaan skala kecil untuk mengembangkan hubungan jaringan dalam komunitas akademik. Selanjutnya, pembelajaran kooperatif berfungsi dengan baik dalam konteks menulis untuk membantu para siswa dalam menerima cita-cita, sikap, dan prinsip demokrasi. Pembelajaran kooperatif dengan demikian memainkan peran transformatif dalam meningkatkan kompetensi menulis dalam konteks yang mengartikulasikan kembali gagasan bahwa nilai transformasional muncul melalui aktivitas menulis di kelas yang berkontribusi pada pembelajaran kooperatif global.

**Kata Kunci:** pembelajaran kooperatif, peran transformatif, kompetensi menulis

## INTRODUCTION

The core principle of cooperative learning is aligned with enhancing students' capacities to contribute to academic success, which comes from a solid foundation of collaboration to transform into remarkable writing competence. The term "writing competence" links to a comprehensive understanding of the topic, text, context, grammar, and writing conventions, from which the primary role of cooperative learning is to encourage in-class writing as a means of inspiration and motivation to reach one's full potential. When it comes to feedback, a predetermined trigger of learning to write significantly reflects progress advancement, embodied in a teamwork policy, effective cooperative management system, and cooperative skills. As a result, EFL students of different backgrounds perform better than expected in writing, allowing them to be fully developed in learning environments that encourage individual and group efforts to express ideas in related essays.

Several studies on cooperative learning with varying results are worth considering. Geletu's research findings (2022) demonstrate that the cooperative learning method emphasizes involvement, which significantly aims to increase students' achievement. The teacher's profoundly influenced science-based instruction engages students in authentic situations. Compared to the initial efforts, this method can mainly boost a fundamental difference deeply connected to the professional position of a teacher in carrying out instructional tasks, which is the most satisfying aspect of the study's results. More importantly, students actively participate in learning activities to develop and update their knowledge, communication, creativity, responsibility, and competence capabilities.

When such research findings are slightly put into the context of EFL writing, it is apparent that students are independent in achieving distinct proficiency levels. In other learning opportunities, they can participate in group writing exercises that follow the vogue of science-based guidelines and the teachers' professional role in guiding them to become imaginative and knowledgeable writers. Hence, writing is more practical and in line with their learning requirements, thanks to the advocacy of written feedback for improving their writing skills (Schillings et al., 2020). However, according to Guptill et al. (2016), writing can go beyond what is acceptable for students to claim about how they perform when they write essays to demystify the approval of academic writing rules through assignments. Their eagerness to write and share meaningful ideas with readers is inextricably linked to developing their writing skills and transformative roles.

Students participate in various writing activities to learn how to conduct small-scale research from which they can plan, write based on an outline, and follow writing rules. It involves linguistic and non-linguistic domains - grammar, mechanics, fluency, organization of thoughts, mastery of the topic, actual issues to update, originality of ideas, and cultural terms, to name a few. Moreover, as a means of delivering nonverbal messages from the author to the readers, writing is susceptible to transformations that drive them to change their mindsets, take action, and develop their soft and hard skills in leading modern life in specific circumstances.

In line with such focal points, this article discusses how cooperative learning plays transformative roles while promoting students' writing competence in EFL contexts worldwide. The likelihood of learning to write cooperatively re-articulates insights on the ground that transformative values emerge through in-class writing activities concerning the fundamental principles to consider in cooperative learning.

### **The Transformative Roles of Cooperative Learning as a Means of Promoting EFL Students' Writing Competence**

#### *The Personal Efforts to Develop Writing Competence*

Writing within a cooperative learning framework emphasizes the importance of

heterogeneous small-scale teamwork. Individual students' efforts are the leading benchmark in implementing coordination. It is closely related to how writing competence in students is maximized in any way, including through constructive teamwork. They demonstrate the team's communication capacity and intensity, especially when writing tasks demand ongoing individual effort and peer feedback.

The benefits of making personal efforts include increased self-confidence and internal motivation to contribute to the team. However, without the support of a team, individual students might miss out on comments, critiques, and recommendations pertinent to writing assessments. By using a structured writing rubric, they are propelled to be more proactive and even more productive in their writing, as well as in helping each other to solve problems and create pedagogical messages from each problem in the form of group work.

How can cooperative learning improve the writing skills of EFL students? The obvious answer to this question is that students can demonstrate their abilities in the form of writing grades by fully mastering all writing-related skills, including both linguistic and non-linguistic writing domains. A robust learning environment with learning spaces for constructing strategic knowledge and self-regulated learning influences students' writing competence (Bai & Wang, 2020). Instead, a cooperative learning model that employs a method to create authentic materials constantly has a learning-free space.

### *The Relational Power of Cooperation*

Writing is a learning process that requires students' active participation to examine cognitive and metacognitive aspects (De Smedt et al., 2022; Shahsavari, 2019; Teng, 2020; Teng, 2020). When discussing the subject in the context of writing exercises, the former focuses mainly on how students can promote their potential writing skills by reconstructing concepts and identifying the root causes of issues. The latter is more complex in that it considers what is beyond the writing scope to pursue a complete understanding of knowledge. Instead, it delves deeply into writing strategies and processes that allow them to set goals, take notes, and develop a comprehensive understanding of writing as an entity involving other aspects such as cooperation, assessment, revisions, self-evaluations, self-reflections, and connections.

Segundo-Marcos et al. (2022) contend that cooperative learning significantly affects how students perform in doing tasks. They must enhance their self-control and working memory when promoting learning processes, planning, and developmental changes. The bottom line is that additional factors, such as cognitive flexibility and socio-emotional skills, are required for them to solve problems. These factors are less likely prevalent in socio-emotional and cultural learning interactions, let alone the difficulties faced in demonstrating empathy, care, and assertiveness.

Learning projects jointly undertaken to regain confidence in implementing socio-emotional skills can strengthen students' cooperation and involvement. In this sense, daily learning difficulties should not be avoided but will bravely be faced through collaboration and encouragement to increase their competence. As an integral part of prioritizing assertiveness or consensus in in-class interactions, cooperative learning positively enhances students' empathy, which is the most crucial component. Students become fully aware of the demand for immediate action and are put in the shoes of other people who have experienced incidents. As a result, they develop deep concern, a desire to listen, and an understanding of the networked connections in everyday life. They are not alone, but by working cooperatively, they strengthen cohesion and make room for empathy in a world experiencing an empathy crisis.

The use of words and even nonverbal communication demonstrates socio-emotional factors that play an essential role in shaping a sense of social concern, solidarity, and empathy. Students who practice these positive attitudes, which begin in the classroom with simple

practices, will become promising writers in the future, changing the mentality and mindsets about relationships and social sense of empathy. In essence, cooperative learning is critical. It is always placed within the framework of developing a sense of unity, honing social sensitivity, and paying close attention to those around them who consistently speak out, representing critical voices and voices of truth.

### *Educational Values of Transformation*

Cooperative learning emphasizes the formation of unity, a unique entity, and the application of rules to accomplish shared objectives. These values are similar to those of transformation compatible with collective activities that can sharpen memory acuity and enhance learning outcomes. The group's strength lies in understanding how students carry out the mission of change through roles and responsibilities, intense communication, positive interdependence, and group evaluation.

Future changes stem from the embryo of cooperative learning, an approach that positions them as agents of cooperation and motivators. Students must respect differences and create opportunities for group members to evaluate each other's writings with complete dedication and responsibility. Students collaborate to achieve desired results and solve complex problems because this model is based on social goals. Furthermore, they comprehend and apply the concepts to reinforce understanding and knowledge, remarkably increasing the educational value as a reward for collective spirit and responsibility.

The transformative values of cooperative learning include the development of democratic attitudes, expressly accepting one another's differences in ethnicity, race, culture, socioeconomic status, abilities, and weaknesses, and turning them into strengths when fostering social skills in the context of EFL writing.

In practice, communication continues to respect group members' rights by creating a sense of comfort for writing to open up golden opportunities for the formation of involvement, decision-making, conveying opinions, and avoiding domination. In addition, cooperative learning has an emotional impact on students by relieving stress, increasing empathy, mutual agreement, and assertiveness in building relationships with others, all of which lead to learning success and group productivity (López-Mondéjar & Pastor, 2017).

### *The Institutional Esprit de Corps*

Because cooperative learning can encourage students to promote teamwork in carrying out academic traditions, it is critical to maintain a positive attitude and a sense of pride in the face of institutional transformation. The primary reason is institutional policy, which promotes writing competence through cooperative learning to foster equal participation, individual responsibility, interaction, autonomy, and group heterogeneity. The collective strength as a life value extends beyond small-scale efforts in groups and the entire class. Individual students' and teamwork's excellence is rooted in the institution's excellence, which forms a unit representing the values of ethnicity, diversity, personality, achievement, and involvement following cooperative skills (Jacobs & Renandya, 2019).

Cooperative learning activities are designed to accommodate how educational institutions support social interaction in the classroom by providing a conducive communication space for students to improve their cognitive and metacognitive abilities. They can also actualize socio-emotional interactions and demonstrate the value of cohesion, motivation, and team spirit (Isohätälä et al., 2020). Other essential factors include cognitive flexibility, self-efficacy, metacognition, and academic achievement (Wang & Jou, 2020). However, teachers who are consistent in applying professional standards when implementing cooperative learning impact students' abilities, as evidenced by their learning outcomes.

Pedagogical guidelines must emphasize the value of social communication skills, participation in learning, responsibility, and the creation of learning opportunities for all students (Geletu, 2022).

Students are given equal opportunities to enhance their knowledge while respecting diversity during the learning process, which is reflected in institutional support to ensure long-term equity. Students understand and apply equity as a guide for participation in class activities, which is even more extreme. Other challenging aspects of cooperative learning entail responsibility rotation, multilingual cooperation, and turn-taking (Buchs & Maradan, 2021). These activities help students understand the meaning of diversity and its preservation, linguistics and culture, language heritage, and family stories, all of which have become essential components of cooperative learning principles.

### *The Global-oriented Actions*

The global transformation of cooperative learning concerning EFL students' writing is the crystallization of transformative learning, which combines the strengths of small-scale personal, relational, educational, and institutional activities to foster networked connections in academic communities. Cooperative learning is used effectively in writing contexts to help students embrace democratic values, beliefs, and principles. Students can conduct cooperative investigations to address issues that, in the future, will bring forward learning social justice, comfort, challenges, sociocultural changes, critical insights, and knowledge production (Boylan et al., 2023). Students participate in instructional learning activities (Namaziandost et al., 2019; Namaziandost et al., 2020) as a step toward significant changes that encourage them to progress. Everything is possible if the teacher allows for participation, collaboration, innovation, and motivation in writing activities appropriate to the level of complexity of the student's skills. They can improve their language skills in class through discussion, interaction, feedback, communication, and self-reflection.

Collaborative culture begins at a young age with and through solutions to common problems. Involving students in proactive activities allows them to organize the work structure through consistent peer feedback. The role of cooperative learning is to promote changes in the academic community and multidisciplinary teamwork (Liebech-Lien, 2020). In the context of vocabulary learning, cooperative learning emphasizes semantic mapping, which allows them to learn more new words (Vakilifard et al., 2020). The more vocabulary students learn and use when writing essays, the better prepared they are for tough competition across regions and nations.

Cooperative learning can benefit students by innovating through in-class tasks and projects to identify and solve problems. To spot the differences between cooperative innovation projects and task conflict, the teacher plays a role in mediating how ambiguous and tacit knowledge is obtained from sharing open groups in a constructive debate approach based on local knowledge and experience (Mu et al., 2021). It can be integrated into competitive tasks (Aotani et al., 2021) and student-centered learning tipped to use authentic materials, attractive features, and feedback (Yassin et al., 2019). Thus, the teacher's roles are to help students fully engage in learning activities and to avoid ambiguity and conflict when addressing learning materials. Interactions and constructive debates aim to investigate how local knowledge is transformed into a global exchange of ideas rooted in real-life experiential learning aspects.

Cooperative learning effectively supports EFL writing activities because it emphasizes the importance of motivation, self-confidence, and responsibility while reducing nervousness. Most importantly, students learn to solve problems, maintain a positive attitude, and share and exchange ideas (Ghufron & Ermawati, 2018). Furthermore, they believe cooperative learning can improve their writing skills by utilizing stages such as pre-writing, drafting, and final revisions, emphasizing proofreading and editing (Beiki et al., 2020). In reality, such writing

stages necessitate cooperation, promotion, and positive interdependence (Knoche, 2022), which can boost self-esteem and allow students to express and compare ideas logically and systematically under EFL writing principles.

Cooperative learning activities at the local level contribute to the world by fostering views, policies, positive attitudes, and skills in designing, implementing, and overseeing writing activities that are advantageous for developing concepts and accomplishments. Students enjoy cooperative learning because it is successfully used in EFL classes (Tamimy et al., 2023). Additionally, cooperative learning significantly impacts students' psychosocial outcomes (Møgelvang et al., 2023). In this way, following the previous explanation, cooperative learning can foster the potential for excellence in writing in teamwork and awaken transformative awareness that writing in the context of cooperative learning brings change and inspiration for the advancement of the world.

## CONCLUSION

The personal, relational, educational, institutional, and global dimensions of transformative cooperative learning result in a motivational and advancement-driven knowledge of writing. It is supported by a conducive learning environment, friends, teachers, and educational institutions. In addition, several studies on cooperative learning emphasize the crucial role of teamwork, cooperative management, cooperation, and collaborative skills in enhancing students' writing prowess and abilities.

Stronger relationships are made possible by teamwork synergy, which also affects how intensely people discuss issues out loud and encourage one another to do better. Another asset is the importance of various forms of education, which brings to various light aspects of life and its issues, particularly those related to the writing industry. Finally, the institutional spirit enhances the importance of cooperative learning, which is implemented alongside social cohesion, developing a sense of comfort and security that is socio-emotionally intended to increase understanding, enthusiasm for team learning, and academic achievement. The interconnectivity of these elements is nothing other than the global impact of cooperative learning application, particularly the formation of group strengths, powerhouses for the birth of generational excellence, and the role of significant changes for the better through modest actions but with extensive worldwide effects.

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