

How is the Students Acceptance of Collaborative Writing Tools: The Case of Netboard

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Abstract. Collaborative learning, a pedagogical approach fostering group participation to solve problems, serves as the foundation of this study. The aim is to gauge students' acceptance of Netboard, an integrated technology tool for collaborative writing. The objective is to discern whether students harbor positive or negative attitudes toward the technology employed. To achieve these objectives, a quantitative research design was adopted. A questionnaire, derived from previous studies, served as the primary instrument for data collection. This questionnaire was administered to a convenient sample of 58 students enrolled in a private university who had experienced the collaborative writing approach during the 2022/2023 academic year. The collected data underwent analysis using descriptive statistics. The study revealed a positive attitude towards the utilization of Netboard as a collaborative writing tool, described through affective, behavioral, and cognitive indicators. In summary, this study highlights students' positive attitudes towards Netboard as a collaborative tool.

Keywords: Attitude, Collaborative Writing, Netboard

Introduction

Writing is one of the skills needed to learn English as a foreign language, but it still becomes a challenge for students. The students need literacy competence, especially knowledge related to the topic, to develop their ideas into writing (Mazulfah et al., 2023). This research was inspired by the current condition at a private university in Pekanbaru, where writing would be too burdensome for students with limited literacy. In practice, some of the students experienced failure in writing due to limited vocabulary, insufficient English ability, shyness, and low engagement ability to discuss with their friends. To avoid this redundant phenomenon, collaborative learning has been considered the appropriate approach to teaching writing in English as a foreign language (EFL).

Collaborative learning has gathered the attention of researchers and educators over the years. It is defined as the process of two or more writers working together to produce a single text (Storch, 2019; Zhai, 2021). Collaborative writing helps the learning process become more creative (Etfita & Wahyuni, 2021). The students learn to adapt to different cultures when communicating with other people. This will ultimately contribute to creating a better teaching quality and learning environment for students. This learning approach gained numerous benefits for EFL learners, including increased engagement, enhanced language acquisition, improved communication skills, and greater cultural awareness. Collaborative learning fosters a supportive environment where learners can interact with peers, practice language skills, and gain confidence in their abilities (Ravana et al., 2024).

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Furthermore, collaborative learning promotes student involvement by encouraging them to actively use available technologies to create, share, contribute, and comment on content in different file formats that can be accessed or updated online. This improves the learning environment. Focused on the needs and interests of the student, college lecturers must prioritize the educational benefits of collaborative learning tools and be willing to explore and integrate the technologies to enhance student learning through social interactions and cognitive processes during collaborative learning (Teng et al., 2020).

It can be considered that among various learning techniques for writing, collaborative writing has been suggested as a useful one to improve students' motivation (Limeranto & Mbato, 2022; Suparto et al., 2021). Furthermore, collaboration while learning to write causes students to think about problems related to their language. Learning to write collaboratively with instructor comments as feedback can provide EFL students with more efficient practice, and thus significantly help students improve their English writing skills. With collaborative learning, it is hoped that teaching and learning writing skills can be made more efficient and more interesting (Anshu & Yesuf, 2022; Valizadeh, 2022).

Then (Alwaleedi, 2022; Salem Aldossary, 2021) said that collaborative is a very beneficial learning strategy that promotes collective work in second language (L2) writing classes. Furthermore, collaborative writing involves assigning more than one student, in pairs or small groups, to accomplish a certain task. In such activities, students collaborate, negotiate ideas and meaning, and create a single text. It is widely accepted that when students participate in cooperative and collaborative activities, more experienced students assist less experienced pupils.

In this study, the researchers implement collaborative learning through the Netboard platform to assist the students in developing their writing ability. Netboard was chosen because it is a free web platform that can be accessed through the page <https://Netboard.me/>. It looks like a virtual wall that can be integrated with various technology-based learning media in the learning process. By integrating Netboard into the learning process, it is hoped that it can form an interactive digital learning media in delivering material to students, especially in learning to write collaboratively. With interactive learning media, students can interact actively (Gustiani, 2020) and lecturers can monitor their activity. Apart from that, using the Netboard application can provide a new learning atmosphere that is not monotonous. Based on the explanation, this research aims to determine students' acceptance of collaborative writing carried out on Netboard. Do the students positively or negatively accept Netboard as a collaborative writing medium?

Theoretical Framework

Writing has become a difficult task for non-native students since English is not their means of communication (Ocak Kılınç & Yüksel, 2024). As (Nurkamto et al., 2024) mentioned, mastering writing needs special attention to help students to write effectively. To achieve an effective writing process, the students must arrange their writing goals and define the idea development and organization (Volkan Demirel & Seçkin Aydın, 2019). The lecturer must determine the student's condition, whether they can do the writing task independently, with the help of another student, or be paired with more experienced students.

The process-genre approach to teaching writing skills in a foreign language can be difficult due to procedural, linguistic, and generic knowledge complexities. A study examined solitary and collaborative teaching settings, concentrating on cognitive burden. The findings revealed that collaborative learning was more successful at enhancing written quality and optimizing cognitive load. This research adds to our understanding of cognitive burden in language learning. (Jiang & Kalyuga, 2022).

Considering the situation, collaborative learning may incorporate student participation. Involving students in cooperative writing tasks can foster their understanding of mutual significance and cultivate their ability to cooperate effectively in group discussions (Pham, 2023). In addition, collaboration can foster a high degree of dedication and exceptional performance among students as they learn from their peers. In addition, they

noted that collaborative talks exemplify the practice of collective writing, while peer review techniques enhance students' writing abilities, which may be applied across various courses and disciplines in higher education institutions in different circumstances (Ojha & Acharya, 2021).

Additionally, collaborative learning in English writing can increase student interest and involvement. Students can collaborate with their peers and share their ideas in real life through important projects. Students, in particular, saw collaborative writing assignments as beneficial to their L2 writing improvement because they believed that peer scaffolding and criticism allowed them to advance beyond their existing level of proficiency. This viewpoint is consistent with social constructivism, which states that knowledge is created through social interaction by actively sharing ideas and experiences. (Elgün Gündüz, 2023; Kitjaroonchai & Suppasetsee, 2021; Thirakunkovit & Boonyaparakob, 2022).

Previous research (Hsu, 2019) has demonstrated that EFL learners who collaborated with partners on a supporting medium could increase the content quality and linguistic accuracy of their individual writing more than students who wrote alone. Another study (McDonough & De Vleeschauwer, 2019) comparing independent and collaborative prewriting planning revealed mixed results. Thai EFL authors were divided into two groups: half prepared independently during practice problems, while the other planned jointly before composing. The multivariate results revealed that students who planned alone increased their analytic ratings, whilst those who planned collectively improved their accuracy.

Materials and Method

The study implemented a quantitative design to describe and comprehend the students' attitudes toward Netboard as the means for collaborative writing. The researcher collected the students' perceptions through questionnaires, which were adapted based on King-Fong (2004), Al-Tamimi & Shuib (2009), and Abidin et al (2012). The questionnaire is divided into three indicators: emotional (items 1–6), behavioral (items 7–12), and cognitive (items 13–17). The sample purposively chooses since they have experienced writing collaboratively through Netboard. The students ($n = 58$) in the 2022/2023 academic year were assigned to complete the questionnaire to gather information on the collaborative discussion in writing through Netboard. The data gathered were analyzed by using the Likert scale formula and interpreted into positive and negative attitudes. If the score is below 40%, it means the students have a negative attitude toward the items of collaborative discussion writing on the Netboard. On the contrary, it indicates a positive attitude if the score calculated is more than 40%.

Results and Discussion

Results

The researcher distributed a form of questionnaire to find out the students' attitudes toward collaborative writing on Netboard. Then, the questionnaire responses were analyzed by interpreting the students' answers on each item of attitudes. The obtained data Likert-type were transformed into numerical values as strongly disagree (SD) = 1, disagree (D) = 2, agree (A) = 3, and strongly agree (SA) = 4. Then, the responses were calculated to get the total score. The result can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1.
Students' Responses to Collaborative Discussion on Netboard

Aspects	Items	SD	D	A	SA	Total Score
Affective	Statement 1	0	0	28	28	196
	Statement 2	0	5	45	6	169

	Statement 3	0	3	37	16	181
	Statement 4	0	4	45	7	171
	Statement 5	1	5	35	15	176
	Statement 6	0	4	41	11	175
Behavior	Statement 7	0	16	36	4	156
	Statement 8	2	21	30	3	146
	Statement 9	0	6	42	8	170
	Statement 10	1	0	27	28	194
	Statement 11	0	11	37	8	165
	Statement 12	1	9	40	6	163
Cognitive	Statement 13	0	2	33	21	187
	Statement 14	0	2	30	24	191
	Statement 15	1	4	38	13	175
	Statement 16	0	7	24	25	186
	Statement 17	1	22	30	3	147

The questionnaire results presented in Table 1 provide a comprehensive overview of students' attitudes towards collaborative writing in Netboard. The results are categorized into three main indicators: Affective, Behavioral, and Cognitive.

Affective Indicators (S1-S6)

These statements aim to uncover the emotional responses and feelings of the students towards the implementation of collaborative writing in Netboard. They delve into the students' preferences and emotional engagement with the process of learning writing collaboratively. For instance, statements may inquire about their enjoyment, satisfaction, or comfort level while using Netboard for collaborative writing activities.

Behavioral Indicators (S7-S12)

This set of statements examines how students' attitudes translate into their actions and behaviors during collaborative writing sessions on the Netboard. It seeks to understand whether positive or negative attitudes influence their participation, cooperation, and overall engagement in the collaborative writing process. Questions may focus on aspects such as their willingness to contribute, interact with peers, or adhere to the guidelines of collaborative writing.

Cognitive Indicators (S13-S17)

The cognitive indicators aim to uncover the students' intellectual perspectives, thoughts, and opinions regarding collaborative writing in Netboard. They delve into the students' perceptions of the effectiveness, utility, and challenges associated with using Netboard for collaborative writing tasks. Questions may explore their understanding of the collaborative writing process, the benefits they perceive, and any concerns or suggestions they may have for improvement.

By analyzing responses across these three indicators, researchers can gain insights into the holistic nature of students' attitudes towards collaborative writing in Netboard. This comprehensive understanding can inform educators and policymakers in optimizing the use of Netboard for fostering collaborative writing skills among students.

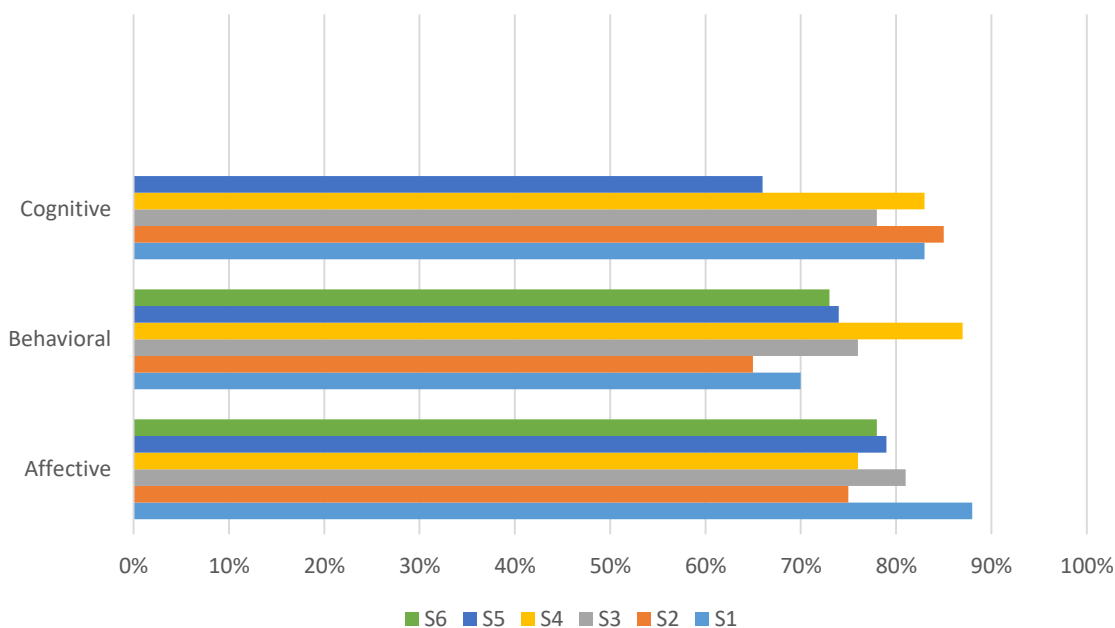


Figure 1.
Students' Responses

Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the distribution of students' attitudes towards collaborative writing in Netboard, depicted as percentages. For the Affective indicator, The initial statement (S1) indicates that 88% of students derive pleasure from their writing class, suggesting a high level of overall satisfaction with the writing learning environment. After that, 75% of students express pleasure in writing collaboratively using Netboard (S2). Despite being slightly lower than the pleasure derived from the writing class itself, it still reflects a substantial majority of students who enjoy the collaborative writing experience facilitated by Netboard. A significant 81% of students (S3) express a preference for using Netboard as a tool to enhance their writing proficiency. This indicates a strong belief among students in the efficacy of Netboard for improving their writing skills. Then, It is noted that 76% of students (S4) prefer completing writing assignments on Netboard rather than using traditional paper-based methods. This preference suggests that students find Netboard to be a more convenient and effective platform for completing writing tasks. Following the use of Netboard in collaborative writing, 79% of students express a preference for continuing their writing learning in the classroom (S5). This indicates that despite utilizing Netboard for collaborative writing, students still value the traditional classroom setting for further learning and instruction. The (S6) sixth statement reflects that students have demonstrated enthusiasm for writing in Netboard, although specific percentages are not provided. This suggests that students generally show positive attitudes towards writing on the Netboard platform.

Furthermore, the behavior component in (S7) reveals that 70% of students consistently engage in collaborative writing through Netboard because they find it challenging to write solo. It suggests that collaborative writing provides a supportive environment where students can overcome individual writing difficulties through collective effort and interaction. According to (S8), 65% of students express their ability to participate in writing exercises at home even if they cannot attend class. This indicates that Netboard provides students with flexibility and accessibility, allowing them to continue their writing practice outside of the classroom environment. The next statement (S9) indicates that 76% of students are excited about participating in collaborative writing on Netboard. This

enthusiasm suggests that students perceive collaborative writing as an engaging and enjoyable activity, fostering their motivation to actively contribute to the writing process. Then, a significant 87% of students believe that engaging in collaborative writing through Netboard can greatly enhance their writing proficiency (S10). This strong belief indicates students' confidence in the effectiveness of Netboard as a tool for improving their writing skills. According to (S11), students express confidence in completing all assigned tasks through engaging in collaborative writing on the Netboard. This confidence reflects students' trust in the collaborative writing process to support them in achieving their writing goals. The last statement suggests that 73% of students believe that engaging in collaborative writing through Netboard is more convenient compared to traditional methods. This preference for convenience highlights the practical benefits of using Netboard for collaborative writing tasks, such as easy access to resources and the ability to collaborate remotely. These behavioral indicators collectively demonstrate students' active engagement, enthusiasm, and confidence in utilizing Netboard for collaborative writing activities, emphasizing its perceived effectiveness in overcoming writing challenges and enhancing writing proficiency.

Regarding the cognitive component, 83% of students perceive Netboard as a valuable collaborative writing tool due to its ability to facilitate learning from any location and at any time, using any available materials (S13). This perception highlights the versatility and accessibility of Netboard, enabling students to engage in collaborative writing activities regardless of their physical location or the resources they have access to. (S14) stated that 85% of students believe that engaging in ongoing collaborative writing using Netboard can enhance their knowledge and proficiency. This belief reflects students' confidence in the efficacy of Netboard for fostering continuous learning and skill development in writing. Furthermore, Netboard offers students the opportunity to view the work of their peers, which can assist them in expanding upon their ideas, as indicated by 78% of students (S15). This feature fosters a collaborative learning environment where students can gain insights from their peers' writing and build upon each other's ideas. After that, It is noted that 83% of students are perplexed as to why Netboard has not been integrated since their initial exposure to writing (S16). This suggests that students perceive Netboard as a valuable tool for writing instruction and are puzzled by its delayed implementation in their learning experience. Last, according to (S17), 66% of students express the belief that the chosen learning approach, presumably involving the use of Netboard, is suitable not only for passing examinations but also for enhancing their motivation and proficiency in writing. This recognition underscores the perceived benefits of Netboard in fostering intrinsic motivation and skill development beyond academic requirements. Overall, students recognize Netboard as a valuable tool for enhancing their writing skills, fostering collaborative learning, and promoting continuous improvement in writing proficiency.

Discussion

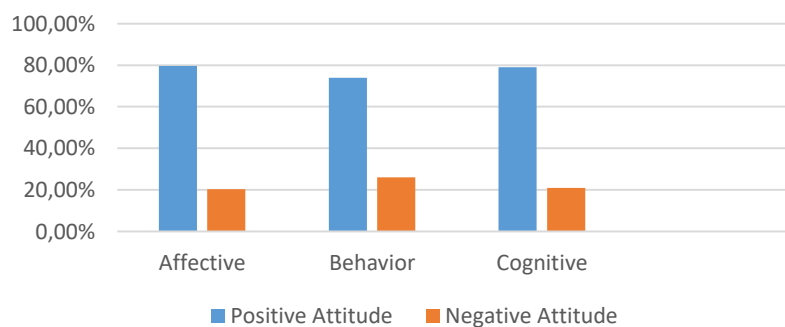


Figure 2.
Students' Attitude toward Collaborative Writing in Netboard

Regarding the affective indicators, 79.6% of students displayed a favorable disposition toward writing on the Netboard. Students expressed feelings of joy, enthusiasm, and appreciation for collaboration in Netboard. Additionally, the platform was found to enhance academic writing skills through collaborative writing. However, 20.4% of students expressed negative attitudes towards these indicators. Research findings indicate that the majority of students have a good attitude toward emotional indicators. This finding aligns with (Mozaffari, 2023), who investigates how EFL learners' attitudes toward collaborative writing influence their level of participation in group activities. Positive attitudes, such as enthusiasm or motivation, are expected to correlate with increased engagement and active involvement in the writing process. Her study also examines the relationship between EFL learners' attitudes and their learning outcomes in collaborative writing. Positive attitudes are hypothesized to contribute to improved writing skills, language proficiency, and overall learning effectiveness.

The behavior indicator conveyed majority of 74% of students had a favorable disposition toward the behavioral indications. Students reported that the Netboard platform was easily accessible and also contributed to the expansion of knowledge and awareness. Nevertheless, a notable 26% of students had a negative perspective towards the behavioral indications. Additionally, many students encountered challenges with the assignments on the Netboard, developing the idea in writing somewhat difficult. Based on the findings of the research on behavioral indicators, it can be inferred that most students possess a favorable disposition towards behavioral indicators. According to (Barrett et al., 2021), their research highlighted how second-language learners interact with collaborative writing projects made possible by computer-assisted tools and methodologies. This includes investigating how learners establish rapport, build trust, and form relationships with peers in a collaborative writing setting. Overall, the behavioral part of the study sheds light on how second language learners interact and engage in collaborative writing activities enabled by computer-supported tools and approaches in higher education settings. It gives information on the behavioral factors that shape students' collaborative writing experiences and outcomes.

79% of students who participated in the cognitive indicators had a favorable attitude toward the cognitive component. They think that using the Netboard will allow them to practice writing consistently, understand writing better, and get assistance to write. This perception is in line with (Alsahil, 2024) where the students indicated the utilization of collaborative writing media could enhance their writing skills, help them develop ideas, and broaden their writing skills. Nevertheless, 21% had a bad attitude regarding the cognitive signs and had trouble developing ideas correctly. This relates to the theory's attitude component, which leads to the expression of views, notions, or opinions regarding the attitude object (Wu, 2023).

Conclusion

The current study examined how well students in a writing class, using attitude theory, accepted Netboard as a collaborative tool. The results demonstrated a favorable perception of Netboard as a collaborative writing tool that integrates technology, as evidenced by students' joy, enthusiasm, and appreciation for cooperation. The conclusions of the present study validate Netboard's ability to enhance the efficacy of collaborative writing and provide valuable recommendations for educators considering technology options for group projects. It is noteworthy that the utility of the tool extends beyond group composition and will only grow in importance as we transition to online delivery methods. In addition to collaborative writing, this application can be utilized to provide prompt feedback and encourage teamwork.

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