

Towards a blueprint for successful collaborative writing in educational and professional settings

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Peer collaboration in writing has been shown to be effective for Learning to Write and Writing to Learn (Graham, McKeown, Kiuwara, & Harris, 2012; MacArthur, Schwartz, & Graham, 1991; Onrubia & Engel, 2009; Storch, 2005; Yarrow & Topping, 2001). That is why collaborative writing is often implemented in educational contexts. However, not only in educational contexts but also in professional contexts (academia, policy making, administration, journalism) collaborative writing has become common practice. Very frequently, written documents are the end-product of a collaborative process involving multiple actors, writers *and* readers (e.g. research articles; group proposals, public policy documents; journalistic texts (Perrin, 2011; Lowry, Albrecht, Nunanmaker, & Lee, 2003; Sleurs, Jacobs, & Van Waes, 2003)).

However, for peer collaboration to have a positive effect on either writing or learning outcomes, a few conditions need to be met. One of the crucial factors determining the effectiveness of peer collaboration in revision in an educational context for example is instruction and/or support (Min, 2005; Van Steendam, Rijlaarsdam, Sercu, & Van den Bergh, 2010). Another important component for peer collaboration in writing may be group composition (Patchan, Hawk, Stevens, & Schunn, 2012; Van Steendam, Rijlaarsdam, & Van den Bergh in press).

It is the complex interplay of individual, collaborative and contextual factors in collaborative writing and revision that we want to look at in this special issue. More specifically, the special issue aims at providing an overview of the most recent findings about collaborative writing and revision. Collaboration is conceptualized as either pupils or students, from primary school children to higher education students, or adult professionals writing (planning, composing, revising) collaboratively, either in a face-to-face context or online (via e-learning). We welcome both quantitative and qualitative studies that investigate peer collaboration in the context of writing (planning, drafting, revising) in three domains: Learning to Write in L1 and L2, Writing to Learn and Workplace Writing (technical and professional communication). Studies on Learning to Write and Workplace Writing should include the effect of peer collaboration on the writing product and/or writing process and writing-to-learn studies should (also) test the effect on learning processes and/or outcomes (domain knowledge). Additionally, also studies which shed light on methodological issues are invited. Ideally, the different contributions will result in a blueprint for effective and efficient collaborative writing.

We are especially interested in studies investigating one or more of the following:

- effective instructional strategies and/or scripting in collaborative writing
- (effective) interaction (interactional patterns) in collaborative writing
- effects of group composition in collaborative writing
- effects of individual characteristics in collaborative writing
- effects of task (e.g. task complexity) on collaboration processes and quality of processes and the resulting writing product
- any combination of one or more of the previous factors

TIMELINE

