

## Students' Online Experiences in Online Collaborative Writing with Focus on Language Rules

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### ARTICLE HISTORY

Received : 2022-04-07

Revised : 2022-07-28

Accepted : 2022-07-31

### KEYWORDS

Online collaborative writing

Students' experience

Language rules

Writing skill

### Abstract

Collaborative works among pairs, groups or one pair with another pair are favoured to accomplish, particularly in writing tasks. Students cannot undertake collaborative revision face-to-face during classroom instruction in EFL writing during the pandemic. Therefore, online collaborative revision has become a practical solution, especially in the context of EFL writing classes. This study aims to apprehend students' experience in online collaborative writing revision in the L2 writing context, focusing on language rules. This study employed qualitative research with a narrative inquiry as a research design. A proportionate interview with probability sampling is used as the main instrument to collect data from the EFL students at the Department of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Lancang Kuning. Five students from the seventh semester who had taken an argumentative writing class were chosen as the participant. The findings reveals, through experiencing online collaborative writing revision, students were knowledgeable and well-improved in revising their writings, particularly on language rules. The analysis showed the students managed to share multiple perspectives on how they are experiencing the online collaborative writing revision. In conclusion, online collaborative writing revision helps students with their writing revision through the feedback they obtain during the activities in the class and makes them have an exceeding writing performance. The expected contribution from this research is to gain an exceeding description of students' needs in implementing online collaborative writing revision.



### 1. Introduction

In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language that learners have difficulty mastering. For English writing, students should be encouraged to use the target language to perform writing performance or tasks (Daud et al., 2016). Moreover, writing is grounded in expectation, in which the process of writing involves creating a text that the writer assumes the reader may expect and the process of reading involves working out what the writer is trying to do (Hyland, 2018). Students need to practice and learn further about English writing than students who use English as their first language and should focus on various writing skills such as planning, organising, spelling, and word choice (Ghoneim & Elghotmy, 2019).

As mentioned above, English is a foreign language in the Indonesian context, and students face lots of struggling phases while they keep practising English

writing. Daud et al. (2016) affirm that limited exposure to the language and the print media the main reason for students' lack of vocabulary and language skills because English is not the student's primary language. Therefore, students should possess an effective technique or strategy in promoting writing performance. One of the practical techniques or strategies is collaborative revision. Students apply it as feedback from the teacher or peer to advance numerous aspects of writing (Yu & Lee, 2016b). Zhang & Hyland (2018) mention that feedback addresses more error categories and has advantages that focus on comments for content and organisations. By having feedback or revision, students can boost writing accuracy (Fukuta et al., 2019) and their fluency (Ismail, 2011). Moreover, by giving feedback, the teacher or peer aid students by supplying words or rewriting ideas or exact matters to stimulate students to write clearly, as long as this is done naturally and relaxing (Hajeid, 2018).

Unfortunately, in the past two years, the COVID-19 outbreak appeared and hit almost all over the world, including Indonesia, students have no access to collaboration with teachers or peers in the classroom. Hence, online collaborative revisions have become an effective solution in the context of writing classes. Online media now has more promising and exciting features, which make students create new writing experiences for students, especially in the L2 writing class. As attested by Halim et al. (2019), online platforms that facilitate people's writing have developed artfully and provided numerous features that assure a thrilling user experience of editing and publishing.

Numerous kinds of research have investigated the effectiveness of using online collaborative writing revision, but there is limited research on the students' experience in using online collaborative revision. Collaborative revision is required to assist students' L2 writing skills. The narrative of students' experiences in online collaborative revision encourages students to amplify their writing skills and attain a better description of students' needs in implementing online collaborative writing revision. It merely focuses on students' experiences in online collaborative revision in L2 writing. Further, as a result, this research aims to narrate students' experiences in online collaborative revision in L2 writing and provides knowledge and an overview of students' experiences in online collaborative revision in L2 writing. The research is essential to conduct to know and draw students' experiences. To ascertain how the online collaborative experience of the students in revising writing that emphasizes on language rules, the researcher applied narrative inquiry in which proportionate interviews were conducted with five participants using a probability sampling method.

Outcomes from interviews may depict and offers a different perspective in the form of a collaborative revision experience online by using a blog and its comment section as a medium. Blogs are currently one of the most efficient writing media and are an easy-to-use user interface. Besides that, it is also the selection of lecturers at this university to teach students in online writing skills in English (Hamuddin, et al., 2020). This research may present an overview of how English students can utilise the blog media and the benefit they will acquire. The results are presumed to be the latest descriptions and insights in online collaborative revisions and can be implemented in future learning or teaching. The expected contribution from this research is to procure an exceeding description of students' needs in implementing online collaborative writing revision.

## 2. Literature Review

Writing at school means students apply their writing skills while in the learning process. Writing is

both individual performance and social practice (Deane, 2018), representing hard work that comes with reward and confidence after utilising critical thinking skills and cognitive effort (Alhusban, 2016). Writing activities implemented within the scope of a mother-tongue curriculum aim to gain a certain level of expression that will help students to facilitate their daily life (Yildirim et al., 2020), and writing is an essential means of communication that has a vital role in constructing knowledge, supporting thinking, and constructing meaning (Ghoneim & Elghotmy, 2019; Coelho, 2020). Deane (2018) says everyday school writing tasks support various other educational goals in school, particularly when students are acquiring knowledge from reading.

Writing is seen as a process of discovery as the writers attempt to uncover their way while they are struggling to think, compose and put their ideas together (Ismail, 2011; Fareed et al., 2016), and L2 writing involves countless stages, which are not necessarily sequential or consecutive, but instead hold different indicators than the other (Obeid, 2017). L2 writing is a complex, varied, and changeable phenomenon manifested by various groups of learners creating multiple types of texts in different socioeconomic circumstances (Malovrh, & Benati (Eds.) 2018). For numerous EFL students, English writing appears to be challenging (Ghoneim & Elghotmy, 2019). Furthermore, everyday school writing practices may affect students' beliefs and perceptions about writing, even if schools contribute appropriate instruction in long-term writing as well (Deane, 2018).

Additionally, collaborative writing increases students' participation in class, and their writing partakes a better version after sharing a thought, planning, and collaborating on writing tasks. In collaborative writing, students participate equally in producing the text, plans, and suggestions for the composition of the joint text and together solve the problems that arise during writing (Nykopp et al., 2019). Many students actively engaged in collaborative writing and indicated that individual regulation supplied opportunities to set goals, plan, and strategies, and monitor and evaluate their thinking process, allowing them to stay on track and focus every week on their collaborative writing (Cho & Lim, 2017) and in collaborative writing, roles contributions to text creation are not split up. However, there are mutual engagement and a coordinated effort by all group members or pair throughout the composing process (Storch, 2018). Furthermore, as mentioned by Alghasab (2016), high levels of collaborative behaviours emerged, including writing collaboratively by adding to, expanding on, and correcting each other's texts, and engaging in a collaborative dialogue by questioning, elaborating on, and suggesting alternatives to each other's language use.

Further, feedback is pivotal for L2 learners since the lack of some English aspects. Feedback from the teacher or other students helps to increase these lack aspects on their writing tasks, for example, the writing idea, the grammatical aspects, etc. Data analysis revealed that each feedback approach had a role to play in text revision and that multiple sources of feedback should be implemented in a writing classroom (Yu & Lee, 2016b). As stated by Zhang & Hyland (2018), ESL teachers may offer comprehensive corrective feedback on student writing, giving feedback on some issues such as number usage and abbreviation. Besides, the teacher usually spends much time correcting students' writing papers, giving credential notes, and showing students how to deal with the dictionary process and receive feedback to achieve better results (Hajeid, 2018). Feedback comes from other students as they collaborate in writing class. Storch (2018) defines that during collaborative writing, learners can receive and afford feedback where it is on all aspects of writing. The explanations are proposed in a way that may be perhaps more developmentally appropriate. Also, the feedback is provided writing activity context and may trigger a chain of suggestions and counter it.

Likewise, experience talks about something that someone has experienced or gone through. English second language students have gone through countless experiences while learning English and trying to increase their skills, especially in improving writing skills. Hohn (2013) explains that experience is a central aspect of this interaction and thus a communicative, historical and cultural phenomenon. Students partake in many experiences in class, which are different for each student since the experience is challenging to define since it is reflexive and as ever-present as swimming in water to fish (McCarthy & Wright, 2004). Experience is a multi-layered phenomenon; individuals make sense of experience through cultural, cognitive, subconscious, and personal interpretive layers by negotiating norms and dominant values, attending to immediate human relationships, and through an individual's context within prominent societal and historical positioning (Fox, 2008). Moreover, having and sharing an

experience involves verbal and nonverbal translation contextualised through culture, history, politics, and language (Fox, 2008).

Learning in a collaborative setting is a social interaction involving a community of learners and teachers, where members acquire and share experience or knowledge. As for the collaboration revision method, students were allowed to read, review, and correct other class members' writing. López-Pellisa et al (2021) explained that when collaborative writing includes peer feedback, students respond more reflectively and constructively, they discuss the content of their writing, and as a result, they make significant changes on their own writing. With constructive feedback that student writers got student readers, they can learn about their writing problems (Suwantarathip & Wichadee, 2014). Online collaborative revision is where students revise their writing online as the online writing platforms allow students to comment on published work asynchronously without physical space (Lee et al., 2019).

### 3. Method

This research used narrative inquiry as a research design to collect the data. Creswell (2012) defines narrative research as where the researcher elaborates on individuals' lives, collects and informs them, writes a narrative about their experience, and captures daily, standard forms of data similar to individuals.

This research was conducted in an argumentative writing class at the English Education Department Faculty of Teachers Training and Education, University of Lancang Kuning. In determining the sample, probability sampling was used where the probability of each participant who has been selected is similar. The researchers chose five students from the 7th semester who have learned argumentative writing class, were experienced in implementing collaborative writing and had a good experience in online collaborative revision. To conclude, electing five subjects was for the consideration to study the subjects deeply in terms of the subjects' experiences in doing collaborative revision.

<p><b>Name :</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b></p> <p><b>This interview is provided to tell your experience in online collaborative writing revision in L2 writing.</b></p> <p><b>Language Rules</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are your concerns in language rules in online collaborative revision during argumentative writing class, now and in the future?</li> <li>2. How will the feedback from online collaborative revision help you write revisions then, now, and in the future?</li> <li>3. Why do you think online collaborative revision makes your language rules better than before revision during the class, now, and future?</li> </ol>
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Figure 1. Interview's Prompts

In collecting data, this research utilised one instrument. The researcher used open-ended questions and One-on-One interview with five students, asking some questions related to their online collaborative revision experiences. Moreover, the interview is a construct based on the indicators of a successful writer. In conformity with Yu & Lee (2016a), a successful writer employs L2 writing criteria such as language rules, vocabulary, and essential writing skills, including the topic sentence, body, and concluding. The argumentative writing class lecturer has validated the questions for the interview.

After collecting the data from the interview, the writers analysed and interpreted the data to identify students' experience in online collaborative revision in L2 writing. To analyse the data in this research, the writers applied three analytical tools for narrative inquiry: broadening, burrowing, and storying and re-storying by Connelly and Clandinin (Kim, 2020). The first tool was broadening the data, which was about creating a general description of the participant's character or values or the social, historical, or cultural milieus in which this research was taken place by looking at the writers' field notes and the literature review. The second is burrowing, and the writers made a thorough data investigation that has been collected, which related to the details that the participants experienced. The third is, storying and retelling the story of the participant's experiences. To ensure that the findings and interpretations of this qualitative research are accurate, the researcher use member checking. Member checking is a process in which the researcher asks one or more participants in the study to check the accuracy of the report (Creswell, 2013).

## 4. Results

This study is an attempt to apprehend students' experiences with online collaborative writing revision in the context of L2 writing, with an emphasis on language rules. By utilising a narrative inquiry approach, this study involved five participants from the 7th semester who had experience using online collaborative writing and revision methods. The results of this study are expected to offer knowledge and an overview of students' experiences in online collaborative revision in L2 writing.

In keeping with the students' experience in online collaborative writing revision, the participants talked about what is their concerns with language rules during the writing process, how they got used to the feedback they got and revised their writing, and shared their opinion on how collaborative writing revision makes their language rules better than before the revision. Moreover, the participants apportioned their perspectives on how it is now and, in the future, which is different from when they experienced online collaborative writing revision.

### 4.1. Language Rules

*Students' experiences on their concerns about language rules in online collaborative revision during argumentative writing class, now and in the future.*

[...] the language rules that I was concerned about were **grammar, tenses, punctuation, and whether the sentence is coherent** or not ... in the present ... I started to pay attention to diction and notice if my sentences are coherent and do not deviate from the topic, (and) in the future, I hope that I can apply all language rules so that my writings have decent quality. Given that our online writing can reach and can be read by people from all over the world.

[P1:E1: 02.05]

[...] I am afraid of **my grammar and the suitability of the grammar** that I analyse or the accuracy of the grammar that I analyse ... in the future (I think) I already get used to writings ... (because) my knowledge about grammar is improved.

[P2:E1: 02.13]

[...] The **language rules are a very worrying** thing for me. All the language rules make it hard for me to write whatever it is, such as I have to think whether these sentences should use -ed, -es, or -ing (which is) it makes me have to be careful in writing [...]

[P3:E1: 02.26]

[...] in collaborative revision, I **concern about grammar punctuation and capitalisation** ... in the future I (think) I (will) never think about the different (language) rules ...

[P4:E1: 02.03]

Sadly, there had been **no online collaborative revision** going on during my time in argumentative class, we got told to write an essay, (and) there was a brief session at the end where 1-2 of our essays were displayed on the projector and got commented by the lecturer ... (and I) cannot really think of different rules for in the future, considering it's just one class in one semester.

[P5:E1: 02.15]

Students' concerns about the correctness of language rules in EFL writing were obvious. Additionally, subjects have some concerns about language rules such as grammar, tenses, punctuation, etc. It reflects their awareness of the demand for grammar mastery as a language component to support students' competence in L2 writing, as Zhang and Hyland (2018) assert that error categories experienced by students in L2 writing might occur, and teachers provide feedback. Meanwhile, an appreciation was given to the students who are motivated in querying for feedback both from the teacher and from peers (Wahyudin, 2018). English is a foreign language for the research subjects, they should pay attention to the

language rules to avoid misunderstanding, especially in writing.

*Students' Experiences on feedback from online collaborative revision help their write revision then, now, and in the future*

[...] during the class I **didn't get any feedback** from **my classmates** ... because previously my blog posts were reviewed by my lecturer ... for now, feedback for revision in **online collaborative writing revision is really needed**, considering that you know I am quite active in writing articles and sending manuscript to journals ... in the future I hope I can do the same with my peers. So that, this can sharpen my analytical and critical thinking skills ...

[P1:E2: 03.10]

[...] the feedback **helps me write the revisions** because, as you know, I **don't have enough knowledge** about grammar in writing, so it helps me ... for now it makes me get used to (writing) and I know how to write with grammar carefully based on the feedbacks and in the future I (think) I can make a better writing because I already got knowledge (about language rules) and I already get used to writings.

[P2:E2: 03.15]

P3: **Feedback** from **online collaborative** revision **helped me**. I can figure out what I should use in the sentence and perfecting my sentence.

[P3:E2: 03.22]

P4: ... for the feedback, I think it's **really important** when I write the writings because feedback can motivate me to revise my writings to be better than before ... in the future maybe I will make a better version of my last article ... and then I need the feedback from ... who knows **better about language rules** ...

[P4:E2: 03.18]

P5: ... back then there was **barely any feedback** and **no revision prompts** on the essay I wrote ... (and) now there's still no feedback ... in the future, I'd like to have feedback on what I write so I can actually feel motivated to revise essays on assigned, random and generic topic.

[P5:E2: 03.47]

*Students' Experiences on online collaborative revision makes their language rules better than before revision during the class, now, and future.*

I **didn't get any feedback in class**, I didn't get too much attention on language rules in my writing. But when I checked mine, I **became aware to grammar errors**. Even now, I find it much more detailed when analysing a text and how to correct it properly. In the future, I hope the same thing. Giving feedback with colleagues so that the quality of our online writing is getting better.

[P1:E3: 04.12]

[...] I think it makes me better because, as we said before, **my grammar knowledge is still lacking**, and while revision, I got knowledge through the feedbacks during the class and now it makes me get used to writing so if we already get used to (writing) our (writing) also got better because we already have the knowledge and additional knowledge about grammar ...

[P2:E3: 04.27]

As I said earlier, it before most of my wrong grammar can be corrected, and I know **helps my language rules like grammar** if the sentence is like this, what it should be like.

[P3:E3: 03.56]

P4: [...] the feedback I think **it's really important** ... because readers' feedback makes my language rules better (than before), and I get enthusiast to continue my writings ... maybe in the future I can improve my language rules so I can make the readers more easily to comprehend my writings [...]

[P2:E3: 04.36]

P5: ... (if I got revision) I would think that **it improved my writing quality** since I got outsider perspective, (and) now I don't collab on the essay but research articles and fanfiction in former's case receiving comment from peer-reviewers obviously poked the holes in my writing, and in the future, they'd be food for thoughts for my own future revision comments to others ... receiving enthusiastic feedback from readers obviously makes me enthusiastic to continue story and in the future they'd be something to look back for which paragraph I did amazingly and which I wrote less amazingly.

[P2:E3: 04.27]

As attested by the participants' statements, online collaborative revisions lead them more aware of and pay attention to the language rules in their writings and peers. They feel that the feedback given to each other helps enhance their writing skills and its quality. In addition, they understand about language rules which they did not know before. Now it is one of the essential matters that must be considered.

## 5. Discussion

In conformity with the interview, participants had some concerns about language rules in terms of writing. The participants' concern in language rules is grammar, tenses, punctuation, capitalisation, and whether the sentence is coherent. The finding is also in line with Fukuta et al., (2019), which they found that the participants paid attention to grammar when they were given feedback and succeeded in more error correction than when they did not receive feedback. During the online collaborative revision, participants acquire feedback to aid them revise their writings and derived from the findings, the participants approve that the feedbacks help them revise their writings. In

line with (Hanjani & Li, 2014; Chen and Xia, 2013) that in students' interaction in collaborative revision, they offered and received advice that could help them improve writing to a high quality. Besides, according to Alvarez, Espasa & Guasch (2012), students made a good use of teacher feedback and performed some action to improve their writings under revision.

In Keen's (2020) study, the revision shows that student writing tends to include a precise description of events than the writing they have made. This strategy may lead them to be more competent writers when they are motivated, and strategic about writing (Graham et al., 2019). These current findings align with Faraj (2015), which in his research results show that after getting enough knowledge about the writing process, the number of students can write a good introduction for their writing with a percentage up to 66%. Obtain knowledge, improve language rules, and get enthusiasts to continue the writings are the answer from participants when the researcher asks their opinion about why online collaborative revision makes their language rules better than before the revision.

In accordance with the current findings, collaboration enhances students' tasks easier since they may receive ideas from diverse perspectives and vary their writing according to their colour. Storch (2018) add that collaborative writing provides learners with the experience needed to work and write together, and its tasks give learners opportunities to not only focus on language use but also the target language and use it for a range of functions that are typically the purview of the language teacher. Furthermore, Wu et al. (2015) assert that in the EFL writing classrooms in the 21st century, there is a growing emphasis on collaboration among students and teachers. Mainly, when students receive feedback about their work before the writing assignment is finalised and submitted, they can take advantage of temporary reactions from others as they develop their writing assignments and not simply submit an assignment written as a self-contained effort and receive a grade. The current study agrees with López-Pellisa et al. (2021) who indicated that when students receive peer criticism on their collaborative writing, they reply reflectively and constructively, they analyse the subject of their writing, and as a result, they make major improvements to their own work.

Moreover, the participants get to know how to create a more focused and on target, interesting, and coherent topic sentence from their advice in online collaborative revision. The findings exhibited that from what the participants' have experienced, they assume that online collaborative revision had a good impact on their writing because the feedback from their colleagues is helpful. It is in line with Bikowski & Vithanage (2016) who found that students in

collaborative revision web-based writing experienced statistically significant writing improvement. Additionally, writing together may offer students occasions to use the target language in a meaningful context and share their knowledge on language use and combined with the repetition of the same draft, which enabled learners to produce a better final text (Hidalgo & Lázaro-Ibarrola, 2020). Through collaborative interaction, students feel freer to explore and discuss other relevant ideas that can enrich their writing tasks (Taalas et al., 2018) and collaborative writing gives some benefits to students during the learning process i.e., enhance their collaboration, communication, and problem-solving skills.

Collaborative writing help students on deliver their idea and give some benefits to their writing tasks. The students have further interaction in the class as it involves social relations between group members (Nykopp et al., 2019) and giving or getting some feedback for their writing revision, where collaborative revision allows students to produce more grammatically accurate text (Villarreal & Gil-Sarratea, 2020). Hidalgo & Lázaro-Ibarrola (2020) believe that collaborative writing combines the benefits of oral interaction and writing tasks. During the interaction, learners engage in meaningful use of the target language and have opportunities to negotiate for meaning and produce modified output. The collaboration affects global accuracy measures and obtained better accuracy scores than individuals, resulting in accurate texts and of better quality on holistic measures of content, structure, and organisation of ideas. However, limited or no gains were observed for complexity and fluency (Villarreal & Gil-Sarratea, 2020).

The high chances of students' language rules improvement in their writings after experiencing online collaborative revision proves that it can be an effective way to improve students writing performance. It is in line with Ismiati and Pebriantika (2020) idea, which found that during the process of discussion in collaborative writing, students were active in giving their idea of what they wanted to write in their writing. Coffin (2020) also addressed similar results that both students and instructors evaluated collaborative writing practice favourably, influencing cooperation, communication, and problem-solving abilities. The results of this study is in agreement with (Cho & Lim, 2017) who discovered that numerous students actively engaged in collaborative writing and indicated that individual regulation provided opportunities to set goals, plan and strategies, and monitor and evaluate their thinking process, allowing them to stay on track and focus every week on their collaborative writing. Receiving references also could help students while they are examining their writing. They can constantly remember parts of their writing which were mostly corrected or revised by the peers (Ismiati &

Pebriantika, 2020). It is considered adequate to stimulate students constantly to recall what writing errors they have made and may not repeat them in subsequent writings.

As the participants experiencing online collaborative revision before, they shared that their writing becomes more cohesive and coherent. The findings of this current study give contribution to in highlighting that collaborative writing revision can be the one innovation for students in improving the quality of their writing in the classroom. Hanjani and Li (2014); Hanjani (2016); Bikowski & Vithanage (2016); Kılıçkaya (2020) reveal the same argument regarding this, their findings exhibited mutual, and both partners benefited from joining the revision task.

These proofs portray collaborative writing revision can be incorporated in EFL writing pedagogy as a method to improve writing and revision skills. Zhang & Hyland (2018), in their research's findings exposed that different source of formative assessment have a great potential in facilitating student involvement in writing tasks and they highlighted some of those pedagogical implication for promoting students' engagement with educators and the feedback. To conclude, the effective engagement of students with responses to their writings allows them to unlock the benefits of this collaborative writing revision strategy.

The outcomes of this current study may illustrate and provide a new perspective in the form of an online collaborative editing experience utilizing a blog and its comment area as a medium. Some research has proven this media empowered students to write and engage them in collaborative writing with peers and revision process (Yim & Warschauer, 2017; Thomas, 2017; Melly, 2018; Zheng, Yim, & Warschauer, 2018; Pham & Nguyen, 2020; Rahayu, 2021). They can post questions, comments, reactions, and feedback on their classmates' blogspots i.e., essays, and content (Al-Jarf, 2022). This inferred that social media especially blog as the media of writing benefits broaden chances for second language learners to engage in writing in their everyday lives and can develop students' writing growth in the classroom.

## 6. Conclusions

The present study was designed to display how students experience online collaborative writing revision in L2 writing is. This study has shown that each participant had a different opinion towards the online collaborative writing revision they experienced in writing class. It was also portrayed that during the time students experienced online collaborative writing revision; they found out that the revision helps them with their writing, getting more comprehension they can apply at present and in the upcoming future. To summarise, online collaborative writing revision assists students with their writing revision through feedback received throughout class activities,

resulting in students having an exceptional writing performance. This research has provided a comprehensive overview of students' requirements for adopting online collaborative writing revision. Additionally, the outcomes are supposed to represent the most recent descriptions and insights from online collaborative revisions and can be implemented in future learning or teaching.

## 7. Suggestion

This study suggests lecturers implement online collaborative writing revision effectively in writing class to acquire feedback and have a better final version of the student's writing after revision. The present study has a small number of participants, there were only five students from argumentative writing classes in the Faculty of Education and Teachers Training. Therefore, the future researcher should concentrate on investigating how students solve their writing problems while experiencing online collaborative writing revision with a more significant number of participants and augmented data, which is not only from the interview.

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