

Collaborative Writing from Multiple Online Sources: An In-Progress Study (Poster)

Rachel Segev Miller
The MOFET Institute
aki.segev@gmail.com

כתיבה שיתופית של מיזוג מידע ממקורות אינטרנטיים מרובים: מחקר בתהליך (פוסטר)

רחל שגב מילר
מכון מופ"ת
aki.segev@gmail.com

Abstract

Writing from multiple sources, both textual and visual, is a crucial skill for learning, research, and work in the 21st century. Other related crucial skills are the ability to collaborate (NEA, 2012) and the ability to read and write in English, the lingua franca of this century.

However, writing from sources is also a highly demanding skill (Nelson & King, 2023), and research (e.g., MacArthur et al., 2023) has indicated that both school and university students struggle with such tasks. Very few studies (e.g., Mateos et al., 2020) have investigated the explicit instruction of collaborative writing from sources, but they used a limited number of only printed sources.

Despite extensive research over the last twenty years on synthesis strategies and processes both in L1 and L2 (Yoo, 2025), the English curriculum in Israel, unlike the Hebrew curriculum, does not refer to these at all. English textbooks and matriculation exams still reflect the single-text paradigm and a focus on product rather than process.

The aim of this study, then, was to investigate how EFL students collaboratively performed a synthesis from multiple textual and visual online sources on a topic of their choice. It focused on one group of three 7th-graders, members of a Parkour club, who chose to write about their common interest.

The major research instrument was the think-aloud, which is considered a reliable instrument to tap the cognitive processes underlying the performance of reading and writing tasks (Cohen, 2014). The participants thought aloud and recorded themselves while

- (1) reading the entry "Parkour" from Wikipedia and watching three videos – one from an American educational site suggested by the researcher, and two they chose from YouTube;

- (2) comparing and contrasting the sources by means of a table;
- (3) drafting and revising a synthesis text based on the table.

Two other instruments were

- (1) two semi-structured group interviews, before and after their performance of the task, relating, respectively, to their task representation, and to their self-efficacy and motivation to engage in similar tasks in the future;
- (2) the interim products (the table and draft), and the final written product, evaluated with a model developed and validated by the researcher elsewhere.

The preliminary findings from the analysis of the think-aloud protocols indicate a consistent pattern of collaboration between the participants and their successful use of metacognitive strategies, such as planning, and cognitive strategies relevant to the task, such as selecting, organizing, and connecting.

Keywords: Synthesis strategies, collaborative writing, online sources, think-aloud.

References

- Cohen, A. D. (2014). *Strategies in Learning and Using a Second Language* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.
- MacArthur, C. A., Traga Philippakos, Z. A., May, H., Potter, A., Van Horne, S., & Compello, J. (2023). The Challenges of Writing from Sources in College Developmental Courses: Self-regulated Strategy Instruction. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *115* (5), 715-731.
- NEA (2012). Preparing 21st-century Students for a Global Society: An Educator's Guide to the "Four Cs". <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/A-Guide-to-Four-Cs.pdf>
- Nelson, N., & King, J. R. (2023). Discourse Synthesis: Textual Transformations in Writing from Sources. *Reading and Writing*, *36*, 769-808.
- Yoo, J. (2025). Reading-Writing Connections: A Systematic Review of Second Language Synthesis Writing. *L2 Journal*, *17* (1), 1-55.