

## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE UTILIZATION OF COLLABORATIVE LEARNING TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING IN ACADEMIC WRITING**

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Collaborative Learning refers to the process which provides participants the opportunity to explore, discuss, cooperate, and develop learning capabilities especially writing. The students' writing achievement at the sixth semester of UIN Raden Intan Lampung is mostly still considered low ( $<70$ ) and does not reach the college minimum score criteria. In relation to this issue, the present study attempts to 1) explore the effects of collaborative learning on students' critical thinking in academic writing, 2) to find out which critical thinking aspect is mostly improved through collaborative learning, and 3) to find out whether collaborative learning can improve the students' writing achievement. This research employs mix method (quantitative and qualitative research design) that involves 32 students of the sixth semester as the sample of the research chosen using probability samples, observation and document analysis were conducted to observe the students' collaborative learning activities. Meanwhile, in order to find out the effects of collaborative learning on students' writing achievement, there were two writing tests administered, namely pre-test and post-test.

The result showed that that 1) Students' critical thinking in collaborative learning activities mainly happened in group drafting and revising, and the critical thinking skills were Inference, Explanation, and Self-Regulation.; 2) In collaborative learning instructions, based on the students' perception on the frequency of critical thinking application results, the students mostly used their problem solving skills (Analysis), but seldom interpreted by making collaborative predictions based on possible options and actual evidence (Interpretation); 3) Collaborative learning can improve students' writing achievement. The mean of the students' academic writing scores after collaborative learning increased 11.56 from the pre-test 67.19 to the post-test 78.75. The result analysis of Paired sample t-test showed that t-value was higher than t-table  $10.227 > 2.042$  with the Sig. p value  $.000 < \alpha=.005$ . Therefore, this study might be the window for further studies to explore and to be focused on specific analysis of the effects of collaborative learning on each aspect of writing improvement.

**Key words:** *collaborative learning, critical thinking, academic writing.*