



Improving the Coherence of Arabic Sentences Using Template-Based GCW (Guided Collaborative Writing) among Students in an Intensive Program (Theme: Shopping)

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Abstract. The objective of this study is to enhance the coherence of students' Arabic sentences by employing Template-Based Guided Collaborative Writing (GCW) centered on the theme of shopping (at-tasawwuq). The study utilized a Classroom Action Research (CAR) methodology comprising two cycles with 36 students enrolled in an intense program. Planning, action, observation, and reflection were all parts of each cycle. Writing tests, observations, questionnaires, and other forms of documentation were used to gather data. This data was then examined using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The results showed that pupils' sentence coherence got a lot better. The average score went up from 61.4 in the pre-test to 72.8 in Cycle I and 84.6 in Cycle II. The N-Gain score was 0.60, which is in the moderate to high range. Students qualitatively exhibited enhanced proficiency in idea development, connector utilization, and the generation of more logical and ordered sentences. Also, 86% of the pupils who responded positively to the strategy's use. These results show that template-based GCW works to make Arabic sentences more coherent by combining cooperation and scaffolding. This work enhances the evolution of more participatory and organized models for Arabic writing teaching.

Keywords: Arabic Writing Talent; Consistency of Sentences; Guided Collaborative Writing; Intense Program; Template.

1. INTRODUCTION

Writing competence (*mahārah kitābah*) is one of the most important things you need to learn when learning Arabic. It needs you to grasp vocabulary, grammatical structures (*naḥwṣarf*), and the ability to put your ideas in a logical order. This skill is often the hardest of all the language skills in intensive programs because students have to not only grasp the language but also write documents on their own and in a structured way (Khalil, 1989). However, what happens in the classroom shows that a lot of kids have trouble making sentences that make sense, especially when they have to connect concepts from one sentence to the next in a logical and smooth way (Sa'diyah et al., 2026).

This issue is intimately connected to a number of important issues. First, pupils' writing is broken up and lacks cohesion because they don't know how to use connectors (*hurūf al-rabṭ*), which are words that connect ideas. Second, students don't get enough practice with the slow development of ideas when they learn in ways that focus on the end result (product-based writing). Third, when students have to finish sentences on their own, the absence of engagement and participation in writing education might cause writer's block. This situation is made worse by the fact that students come from different backgrounds, especially those who

didn't go to a pesantren (Islamic boarding school) first. This makes it harder for them to learn how to write in Arabic.

It's further clearer that these issues need to be fixed right immediately when you remember that being able to write well is an indication of full language ability. Writing sentences that make sense is a key element of how well pupils do in school, no matter what language they are writing in. We need ways to teach that not only focus on the end result of writing, but also help with socializing, coming up with ideas, and thinking while learning (M. Taufik et al., 2024). This suggests that writing instruction needs to be designed as a comprehensive process, emphasizing not only the final product but also the accompanying cognitive and social stages. Interaction between students during the learning process can foster deeper understanding through the exchange of ideas and clarification of meaning.

Furthermore, students' active involvement in the thinking process and the development of ideas contributes to their ability to produce coherent and structured sentences. Therefore, a learning strategy that integrates cognitive, social, and linguistic aspects in a balanced manner is needed to optimize Arabic writing skills. In the past, people have looked into many ways to assist people write better in Arabic. Through process-based writing strategies, students have learned how to prepare, write, and revise their work. Students' writing has also been shown to get better when they work together, as when they write together. This is because they can share ideas and obtain feedback from each other (Alshahrani et al., 2024). Other studies also stress the need of scaffolding in writing instruction, when teachers give students little amounts of help to help them become more independent writers. But most of these studies are still too general and haven't looked closely at how sentences fit together, which is especially important for assisting kids who have problems making sense of sentences.

But using templates or structured frameworks in writing classes is becoming a popular technique to help students learn. Templates can help students get their thoughts in order and show them exactly how to write. But the use of templates and collaborative approaches in Arabic language learning especially to make sentences more coherent in contextual themes like at-tasawwuq (shopping) hasn't been studied very well yet (Widiyanti & Maulana, 2025).

The preceding discussion reveals a notable research gap, particularly the insufficient optimization of instructional strategies that integrate cooperation and template-based scaffolding to alleviate students' difficulties in attaining sentence coherence in Arabic (Salman Paris Nasution et al., 2025). This research introduces a template-based Guided Collaborative Writing (GCW) methodology as an innovative solution that amalgamates the concepts of collaboration, scaffolding, and systematic idea organization (Farhah et al., 2025).

The uniqueness of this study stems from: (1) the integration of the Guided Collaborative Writing model with structured templates in Arabic writing pedagogy; (2) its focused emphasis on improving sentence coherence rather than overall writing proficiency; and (3) its execution within the thematic framework of *at-tasawwuq*, which is closely connected to students' daily experiences, thereby promoting more contextual and meaningful idea development.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research is founded on contemporary theoretical and empirical developments in second language (L2) writing studies, particularly those emerging from 2020 to 2025. Recent studies emphasize that social constructivism serves as a foundational framework for understanding collaborative writing, illustrating that learning is shaped by interaction, the negotiation of meaning, and collective cognitive processes. Recent research demonstrates that collaborative writing fosters linguistic development and increases student involvement and motivation in second language contexts (Masaeed, 2020);(J. Li et al., 2024). Recent empirical findings further demonstrate that students' perceptions of collaborative writing environments significantly influence their writing development, highlighting the importance of interactive contexts in shaping educational outcomes.

The concept of scaffolding has seen significant transformation in recent years, particularly with the integration of digital and AI-enhanced learning environments. Recent studies suggest that scaffolding, whether it comes from instructors, peers, or technology, helps kids think more clearly, be more creative, and write better (W. Li, 2025). It has been shown that scaffolding helps students with hard writing tasks by helping them organize their thoughts and making them less mentally taxing. New studies also demonstrate that AI-mediated scaffolding can be better than traditional scaffolding in L2 writing classes since it can give students support in real time and change as needed (Godoy, 2026).

Second, the concept of scaffolding has undergone significant transformation in recent years, particularly with the incorporation of digital and AI-enhanced learning environments. Recent research indicates that scaffolding, whether provided by educators, peers, or technology, enhances children's clarity of thought, creativity, and writing skills (W. Li, 2025). Researchers have demonstrated that scaffolding assists students with challenging writing assignments by facilitating the organization of their thoughts and reducing cognitive load. Recent studies indicate that AI-mediated scaffolding may surpass traditional scaffolding in L2 writing courses by providing real-time support and adapting to student demands (Godoy, 2026).

Fourth, new studies on writing instruction based on scaffolding support its effectiveness in improving several aspects of writing, including grammar, organization, and coherence. Studies indicate that students utilizing structured scaffolding outperform their peers engaged in conventional learning methods, particularly in writing competencies such as content generation and organization. It has also been proposed that integrating scaffolding with collaborative writing models may serve as a successful pedagogical approach that encompasses both cognitive and social dimensions of learning (Wang et al., 2024).

But these remedies don't work for everything. Recent literature reviews indicate substantial advancements in collaborative writing studies. But there isn't enough focus on tiny writing skills like how effectively sentences flow and fit together, especially while learning Arabic (Naous et al., 2021); (Zhang, 2021). Even though templates and ordered frameworks are becoming increasingly popular as writing tools, there hasn't been much research on how to use them with collaborative and scaffolded techniques (Nurul Haqiqi, 2025).

This study addresses these concerns by providing a template-based Guided Collaborative Writing (GCW) framework that integrates innovative concepts from collaborative learning, scaffolding, and process-oriented writing. The primary objective of this study is to ensure that phrases maintain coherence within a contextual theme (at-tasawwuq). This makes the theory more accurate and encourages new ways to teach Arabic.

3. METHOD

This study used Classroom Action Research (CAR) to help students who were having trouble putting together intelligible Arabic sentences (Kunlasomboon et al., 2015); (Indahri & Djahimo, 2018). It used the Kemmis and McTaggart cyclical paradigm, which includes planning, action, observation, and reflection. There were two cycles of study, each with two meetings (Fitria & Baroroh, 2023). If necessary, changes were made in the next round. There were 36 students in an intensive Arabic program at a college or university, and they all had different levels of skill. The research occurred in a writing course (mahārah kitābah) centered on the theme at-tasawwuq, selected for its pertinence to students' quotidian experiences to foster participation and idea cultivation.

The research was conducted through several stages, namely planning, action, observation, and reflection. In the planning stage, the researcher used template-based GCW to design lesson plans, prepare learning materials, develop research instruments, and create templates for the beginning, middle, and end of the lesson. In the action stage, GCW was implemented by organizing students into groups of four to five members, using structured

templates, conducting group discussions, engaging students in collaborative writing with assigned roles, and providing peer feedback. During the observation stage, the researcher observed students' behavior, interaction, and writing activities, and evaluated their written work. In the reflection stage, each cycle was reviewed to identify strengths and weaknesses in order to improve the following cycle.

Data were collected through writing tests (pretest and posttest), classroom observations, questionnaires, and documentation such as students' work, photographs, and field notes. The research instruments included a paragraph coherence rubric covering cohesion, connectors, idea flow, and structure, observation sheets, and Likert-scale questionnaires based on cohesion and coherence concepts. The data were analyzed quantitatively using mean scores, N-Gain calculations, and cycle comparisons, while qualitative analysis focused on classroom observations, student responses, and behavioral changes. The research was considered successful if at least 75% of students achieved a minimum score of 75, the average scores improved, and student participation significantly increased. This study was grounded in social constructivism theory by Vygotsky, scaffolding theory, the process writing approach, and Halliday and Hasan's cohesion and coherence theory.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The goal of this study was to improve the coherence of students' Arabic sentences using a template-based Guided Collaborative Writing (GCW) method focused on the theme of *at-tasawwuq* (shopping)(Zuhriyah et al., 2023); (Iqsan & Ersan, 2025). The use of two action cycles has greatly improved both the results of learning and the process of learning, as shown by both quantitative and qualitative evidence.

Improvement in Students' Sentence Coherence

The writing exam results reveal that students' sentence structure became a lot better from the first cycle to the second. The average score on the pretest was 61.4, which implies that majority of the students still had problems composing sentences that were clear and made sense. The template-based Guided Collaborative Writing (GCW) method employed in Cycle I raised the average score to 72.8. Things became better, but there were still some problems. It was hard to use connectors and keep the flow of thoughts moving, for example. Things went even better in Cycle II since the templates were better organized and it was clear who was in charge of what in each group. The best thing that happened was that the average score went up to 84.6.

The N-Gain score of 0.60 is in the moderate-to-high range, which implies that the strategy that was utilized was good enough to help pupils make their sentences more coherent. This progress shows that combining collaboration with template-based scaffolding helps students' ideas grow in a steady and organized way. These results are in line with social constructivist theory, which says that social interaction is very important for cognitive development.

The intervention worked since it not only improved the number of students' writing but also the quality of their writing. Kids' writing often had sentences that didn't make sense before they did anything. Their writing often featured ideas that didn't actually link to each other. This meant that students had problems not only with grammar and vocabulary, but also with putting their thoughts together in a way that made sense. A lot of the time, they translated word for word from their own language, which generated phrases that didn't sound right and were hard to understand.

The template-based GCW approach brought noticeable changes to students' writing performance after Cycle I. The structured templates helped students connect ideas more effectively by using simple connectors such as "and," "then," and "because." However, several students still depended heavily on the templates and experienced difficulties in modifying phrases independently, indicating that although the strategy was helpful, some students had not yet fully understood the writing structure. In Cycle II, the strategy improved because the roles of each group member became clearer and the use of templates was implemented more effectively. Each student was assigned specific responsibilities, such as generating ideas, organizing phrases, or checking grammar, which increased participation and accountability. Furthermore, students in Cycle II demonstrated better consistency in maintaining ideas throughout their writing. Their work showed stronger topic development, smoother transitions, and more appropriate use of connectors. Students also began adapting the templates to express their own ideas rather than merely copying them, indicating a deeper understanding of the material. This development shows that students gradually moved from guided practice toward more independent learning, which is one of the main goals of effective language instruction. In addition, interaction within group discussions played an important role, as students were exposed to different perspectives and expressions that helped them improve sentence construction skills. This finding is consistent with social constructivist theory, which emphasizes that learning develops through social interaction and collaboration.

Changes in the Quality of Students' Writing

The general quality of students' writing got a lot better, especially when it came to how well their thoughts flowed and how well they made sense. At first, kids' writing was mostly made up of small, unrelated sentences that worked as separate units instead of sections of a whole. Most pupils didn't employ connectors, which made their writing hard to follow. Readers had a hard time understanding the intended meaning since there was no logical order to the phrases, even though they were grammatically correct. Example before the intervention:

أذهب إلى السوق. أشتري طعاما. السوق كبير. أنا سعيد.

I go to the market. I buy food. The market is big. I am happy. This sample shows a common pattern in the pre-action phase: a group of short statements that don't make any clear connections. You can understand each statement on its own, but there is no way to tell how the ideas are related. There is no coherence in the text because there are no linking devices, and there is no coherence since the overall meaning is not rationally developed.

The template-based GCW technique made a big difference in the quality of students' writing. The most obvious shift was that people started using more connectors, including ثم (then), لأن (because), لذلك (hence), and بعد ذلك (after that). These language tools helped pupils connect ideas, like cause and effect, sequence, and consequence. Their writing got more organized and simpler to read as a result. Example after the intervention:

أذهب إلى السوق مع أصدقائي، ثم أشتري بعض الطعام لأنني أشعر بالجوع. بعد ذلك نجلس في المقهى، لذلك أشعر بالسعادة.

I go to the market with my friends and buy some food because I feel hungry. After that, we sit in a café, so I feel happy. This new example shows a lot of growth in both form and meaning. The learner not only puts phrases together, but they also put ideas in a logical order. Using connectors makes it easy to go from one action to another and makes it apparent what caused what. The content now uses language in a way that is more natural and communicative, rather than just a bunch of random statements.

These changes show that the pupils' writing started to have both cohesiveness and coherence. Cohesion is when you employ words like conjunctions, reference words, and transitional phrases to connect sentences. Coherence, on the other hand, means that the concepts in a text are clear and well-organized. The progress seen shows that pupils were learning more than just how to write good sentences.

How well does the Template-Based Guided Collaborative Writing Strategy work?

The Template-Based Guided Collaborative Writing (GCW) technique was very helpful for students who were having trouble producing sentences that made sense and were coherent. We can see that it works not only by the higher exam results but also by how pupils write, how interested they are, and how confident they are (Arif, 2025); (Supiani, 2022). Several pedagogical aspects that are related to each other assist the effectiveness of this technique. How working together can help lower cognitive load?

One of the main advantages of the GCW technique is its emphasis on collaboration. Instead of working individually, students discussed ideas in groups to generate and organize their writing. This collaborative environment significantly reduced students' cognitive load because they no longer had to manage every aspect of writing such as generating ideas, organizing content, and applying language structures on their own. By sharing responsibilities, students were able to focus on specific tasks, making the writing process more manageable and less overwhelming. In addition, collaboration helped students overcome common writing difficulties, including writer's block and low self-confidence. Through group discussions, students were exposed to different perspectives and expressions, which enhanced their understanding and stimulated creativity. This social interaction also created a more supportive learning atmosphere where students felt more comfortable expressing their ideas and taking risks in writing (Sariasih, 2019). As a result, their anxiety decreased, and they became more motivated and confident in participating actively during the writing process.

Templates are useful tools for building scaffolding. Another important factor contributing to the effectiveness of the GCW technique is the use of structured templates as scaffolding (Husnil, 2025). These templates functioned as cognitive frameworks that guided students in organizing their ideas logically and systematically. Rather than beginning their writing from scratch, students were provided with clear patterns such as "main idea explanation example conclusion," which helped them construct more coherent and meaningful texts. The use of templates simplified the writing process, particularly for beginner learners, because students could focus on developing content within an established structure, reducing confusion and increasing clarity. Through repeated use of these templates, students gradually internalized the structure of cohesive writing, which is a key concept in scaffolding theory because learners become increasingly independent and less dependent on external guidance. Importantly, the templates did not limit students' creativity; instead, they provided a foundation that encouraged students to expand and elaborate on their ideas. As observed in Cycle II, students began modifying and adapting the templates according to their own thoughts, indicating a transition

from guided practice toward independent writing. In addition, the GCW technique implicitly integrated a process-based writing approach. Although not explicitly labeled, the learning activities clearly involved stages such as brainstorming, discussing, drafting, and revising.

This process-oriented approach helped students understand that writing is continuous and dynamic rather than a one-time activity. Before writing, students discussed and clarified ideas with peers, experimented with language and structure during drafting, and received feedback during group collaboration, all of which contributed to the improvement of their writing quality over time. By focusing not only on the final product but also on the writing process itself, students developed a deeper understanding of effective writing strategies, including generating ideas, connecting concepts, and revising texts. This understanding is essential for long-term writing skill development because it enables students to apply these strategies independently in future writing tasks. Therefore, the template-based GCW technique proved effective because it combined collaboration, structured scaffolding, and a process-oriented writing approach to create a supportive learning environment that improved students' writing skills while also increasing their confidence, independence, and active participation in the writing process.

How Students Reacted To The Learning Process

The questionnaire results reveal that students loved using the Guided Collaborative Writing (GCW) technique with templates. A huge 86% of the students said that the learning process was easy to understand, made them feel more confident about writing, and helped them come up with ideas better when they worked together. These answers show that the method worked well for teaching and that people liked it on an emotional level, which is highly crucial for learning a language.

One of the most remarkable aspects about the kids' comments is that they thought the learning process was very obvious. Using ordered templates made it easy to put words together and organize ideas, which helped to clear up confusion and doubt. A lot of students find it hard to write in a foreign language because they have to think about grammar, vocabulary, and how to develop their thoughts all at once. The templates made it easier to meet these goals by breaking the writing process down into smaller, easier-to-handle portions. Because of this, students assumed they knew more about what to do when they had to write.

People felt more sure of themselves after the intervention, which was a huge difference along with clarity. Students reported they could write down their thoughts better after doing the GCW tasks. Using the templates and working in groups both helped gain confidence. When students obtain guidance and chances to succeed in a systematic way, they are more inclined

to believe in their own ability. This fits with what educators say about motivation, which is that being good at something and having fun studying are key for growing self-efficacy.

Another key reason why students regarded things in a good light was because they worked together. While they worked in groups, students could share ideas, speak about how to compose sentences, and give each other feedback. This engagement made studying more fun and lessened the tension that comes with having to write. The group thinking strategy assisted pupils who would have had problems coming up with ideas on their own. It made writing seem less intimidating and more pleasurable. Also, talking to classmates made students more likely to participate and learn from different points of view.

The fact that the students were learning about shopping was another big reason why they did well. Students indicated that this problem was important to their daily lives, which made it easier for them to understand their writing duties. Students could use their personal experiences in areas they knew well, which helped them think of topics and made the writing process more meaningful. This finding emphasizes how vital it is to learn a language in real life. When students study subjects that are important to them, they are more likely to be interested and motivated.

The classroom was also more dynamic because the topic was interesting and the technique of learning was fun. Instead of just sitting and listening to the teacher, the students debated, worked out difficulties, and wrote together. This active participation is vital for deeper learning because it makes students think about what they learn more and use it in ways that matter.

In general, the positive feedback from students shows that the template-based GCW method performed effectively for both the cognitive and emotional sides of learning. The method made the classroom a good and fun place to learn by offering students clear structure, encouraging them to work together, and using themes that were meaningful to them. This helps students get better at writing, stay motivated, and feel more sure of themselves.

Combining with Previous Research

This study's findings align with an expanding corpus of research demonstrating the advantages of collaborative learning and scaffolding in enhancing students' writing abilities. Studies have shown that when kids work together, they may share ideas, figure out what they mean, and learn how to use language better. Scaffolding, on the other hand, helps pupils get better by giving them structured help. In this context, the present study not only corroborates these theoretical premises but also enhances them by integrating both components into a structured, template-driven Guided Collaborative Writing (GCW) methodology.

This study is distinct from other research as it explicitly examines the potential enhancement of sentence coherence in Arabic writing through the integration of cooperation and templates. A plethora of studies have examined writing development in general; however, few have assessed the systematic use of structured templates within a collaborative context, particularly with Arabic as a foreign language. This study presents innovative insights by demonstrating that the integration of diverse approaches can effectively address common issues faced by learners, such as idea production, sentence structuring, and the maintenance of logical coherence.

This study also helps fill a big gap in the research on training methods that assist Arabic speakers compose sentences that make sense. A lot of the research that is already out there is on learning grammar or improving vocabulary. It doesn't often pay enough attention to how vital it is for writing to be clear and consistent. This study offers a practical and educationally sound answer to the problem by stressing the need of template-based scaffolding and directed teamwork. The results suggest that students can compose sentences that make sense and are better connected when they get aid in the form of clear structures and interactive learning environments.

The results also show that the GCW method really works. The average scores of students and the percentage of those who acquired mastery learning both went up a lot. Students' writing got a much better in terms of how well it flowed, how well it was organized, and how well it made sense. Their sentences were better connected, and their essays revealed how ideas were more clearly connected to each other. These improvements suggest that the kids were learning not only how to read and write in a language, but also how to use language to talk to each other.

Furthermore, the collaborative nature of the technique played a significant role in helping students overcome common writing difficulties such as writer's block. Through group discussions, students were able to generate and develop ideas collectively, allowing them to refine their thoughts gradually. The use of templates further supported this process by providing a clear structure for organizing ideas, making the writing activity feel less intimidating and more systematic. As a result, the learning experience became more engaging, organized, and meaningful for students. The findings of this study also support the theoretical assumptions of social constructivism and scaffolding theory in language learning. The study demonstrates that knowledge is constructed through social interaction and strengthened through structured guidance, which gradually encourages learners to become more independent. From a practical perspective, these results suggest that teachers should consider

implementing template-based collaborative strategies in their classrooms, particularly when aiming to improve students' writing coherence. Therefore, this study not only reinforces existing theories but also provides educators with a practical instructional model that can be applied in Arabic language classes to support the development of students' writing skills more effectively.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study conclude that the implementation of a template-based Guided Collaborative Writing (GCW) strategy significantly improves the Arabic sentence coherence of students in an intensive program, particularly on the theme of *at-tasawwuq*. This improvement is evident from both quantitative data, such as the increase in mean scores and learning mastery, and qualitative changes in students' writing, which became more coherent, systematic, and logically connected. The integration of collaboration and templates as scaffolding effectively helped students overcome writer's block and develop ideas progressively, making the learning process more interactive, structured, and meaningful.

The implications of this study are both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, the findings reinforce the relevance of social constructivism and scaffolding in Arabic writing instruction, particularly in developing sentence coherence as a higher-level writing skill. Practically, the GCW strategy can serve as an effective alternative for teaching writing, where templates function as cognitive support and collaborative learning enhances student engagement, interaction, and confidence. Pedagogically, this study emphasizes that writing instruction should not only focus on final products but also prioritize the processes of idea development, interaction, and gradual learning.

Based on the findings and limitations, several recommendations can be proposed. Future research should involve a larger and more diverse sample to enhance generalizability and examine broader aspects of writing skills, such as cohesion, syntactic complexity, and discourse quality. Instructors are encouraged to develop more flexible and adaptive templates according to students' proficiency levels. Additionally, integrating digital technologies, such as collaborative writing platforms, is recommended to further improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the GCW strategy in various learning contexts.

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