

COLWRIT – Collaborative Online Writing in Google Docs

*Presenting a Research Design*

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*Publication date:*  
2014

*Document Version*  
Accepted author manuscript, peer reviewed version

[Link to publication from Aalborg University](#)

*Citation for published version (APA):*

Andreasen, L. B., Winther, F., Hanghøj, T., & Larsen, B. (2014). COLWRIT – Collaborative Online Writing in Google Docs: Presenting a Research Design. Poster presented at The 13th European Conference on e-Learning, Copenhagen, Denmark.

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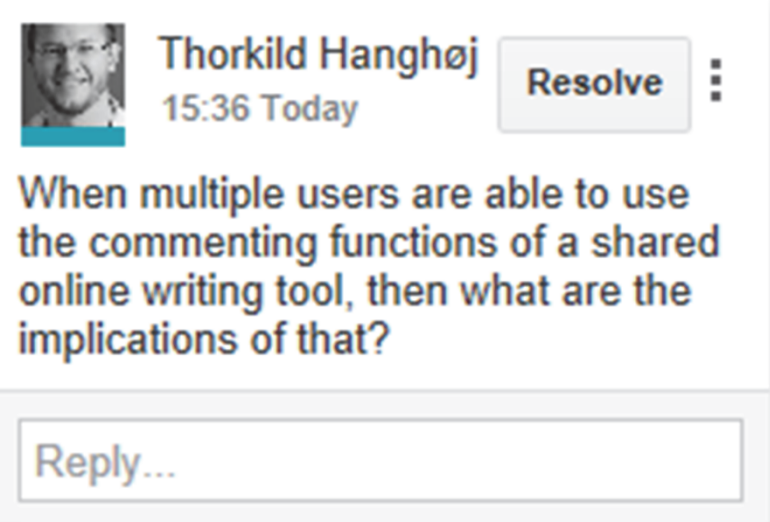


# COLWRIT – Collaborative Online Writing in Google Docs: Presenting a Research Design

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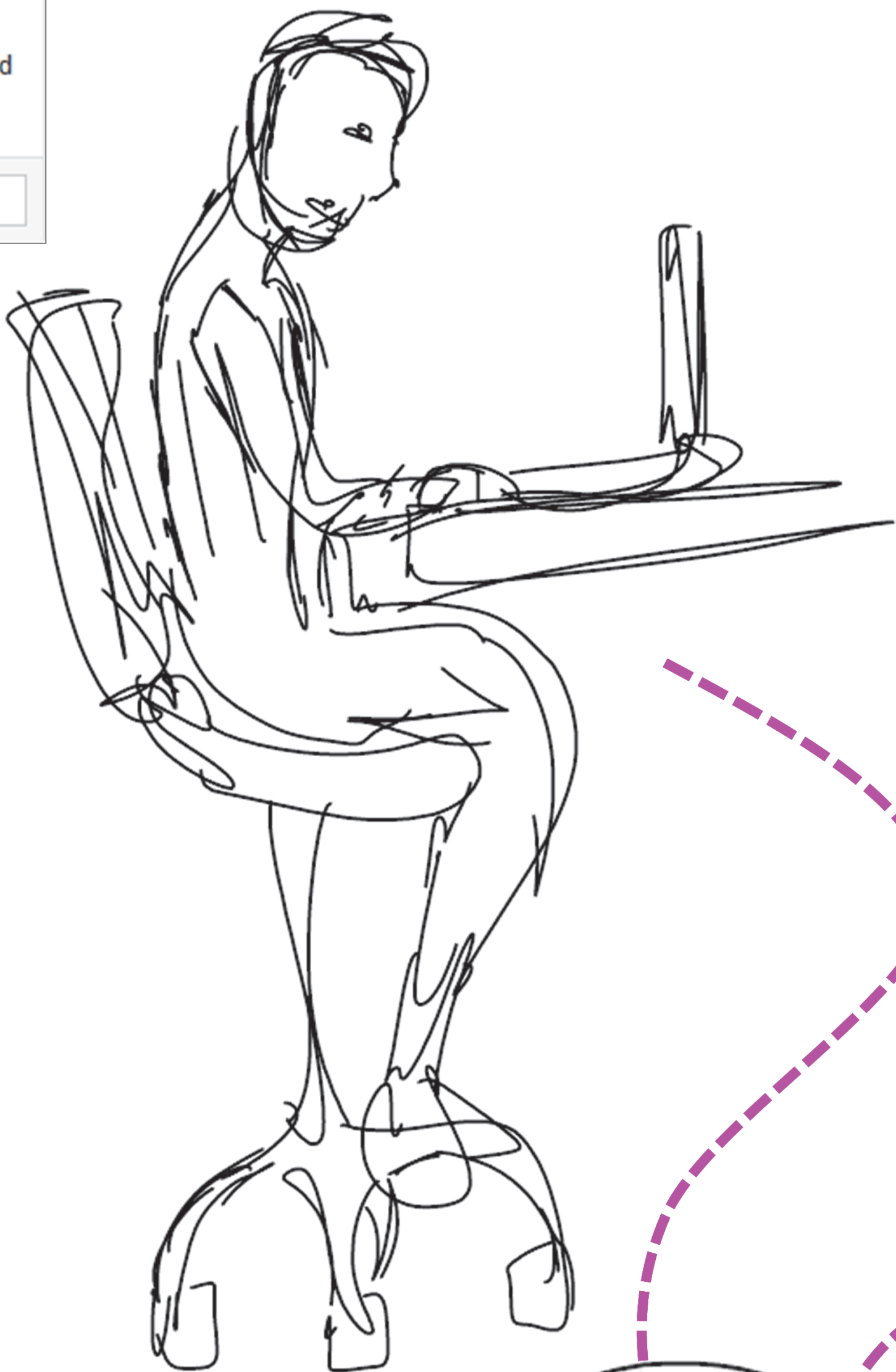


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## Study purpose

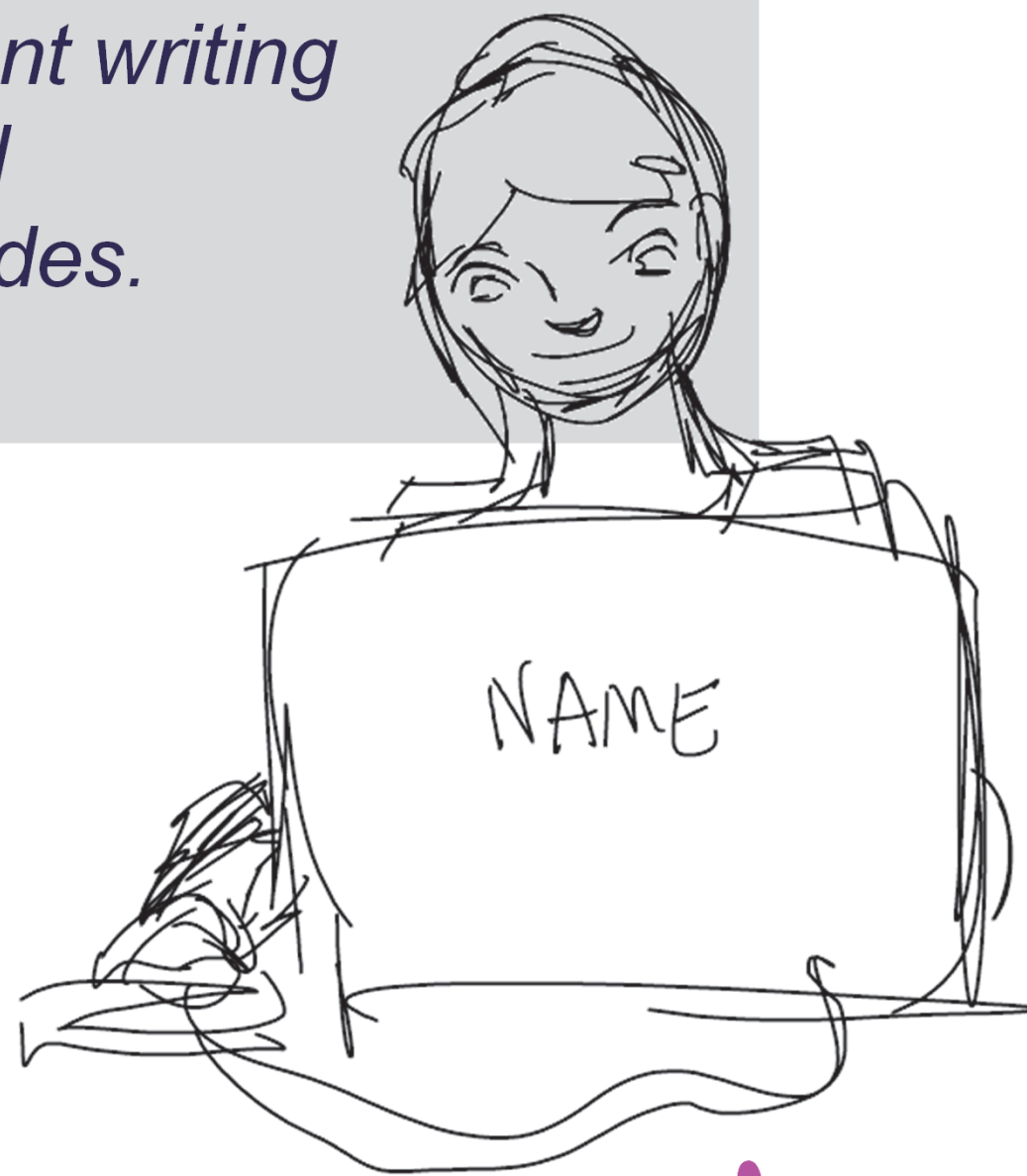
- The emergence of **online collaborative writing tools** (e.g. Google Docs) opens up new opportunities when students are co-producing texts
- The **COLWRIT study** (Collaborative Online Writing) explores how the collaboration and writing processes of university students are affected, when creating their shared text through the use of collaborative writing tools like Google Docs



## Collaborative writing processes

- *CW [collaborative writing] is an iterative and social process that involves a team focused on a common objective that negotiates, coordinates, and communicates during the creation of a common document.*
- *The potential scope of CW goes beyond the more basic act of joint composition to include the likelihood of pre- and post task activities, team formation, and planning.*
- *Furthermore, based on the desired writing task, CW includes the possibility of many different writing strategies, activities, document control approaches, team roles, and work modes.*

Lowry, Curtis & Lowry (2004)



## Ethical implications

- **Agreed consent** will be obtained from all informants (students) in relation to data logging and observations
- All data will be **anonymized**
- All informants (students) are **invited to participate in a research seminar**, where we present and invite for discussion of the preliminary findings of the study

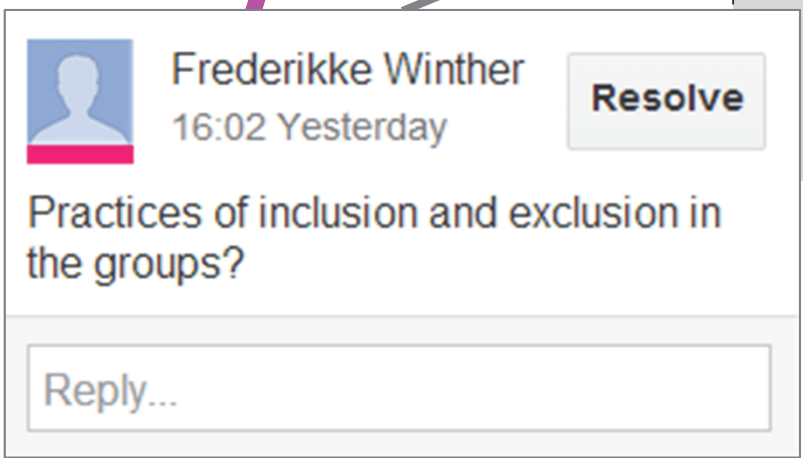
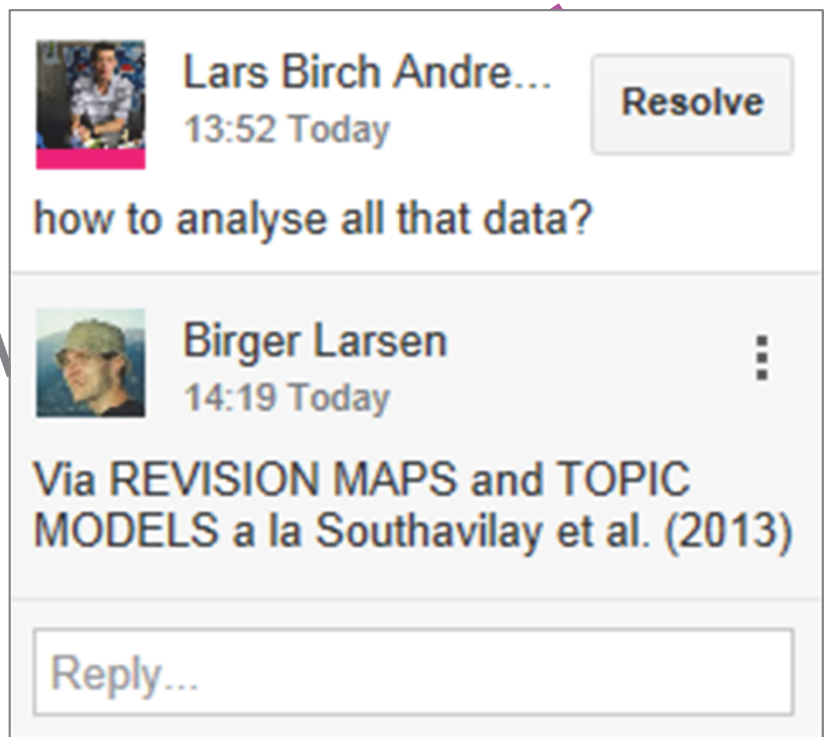


## Mixed methods

- Logging of **all changes** as well as **all comments** in student Google Docs
  - **Automatic analysis and visualisation** of collected data
- Logging and analysis of project related **closed facebook posts** → **Digital Footprints** app
- Pre and post surveys
- **Observation & video** to capture complex interpersonal on/offline working processes
- **Interviews & focus groups** to get students' opinions and feedback
- **Diaries** to capture students' own reflections and important moments
- Different **student groups** involved as **informants** and **co-researchers**
- Study to be carried out during 12 weeks of problem based project work in fall 2014

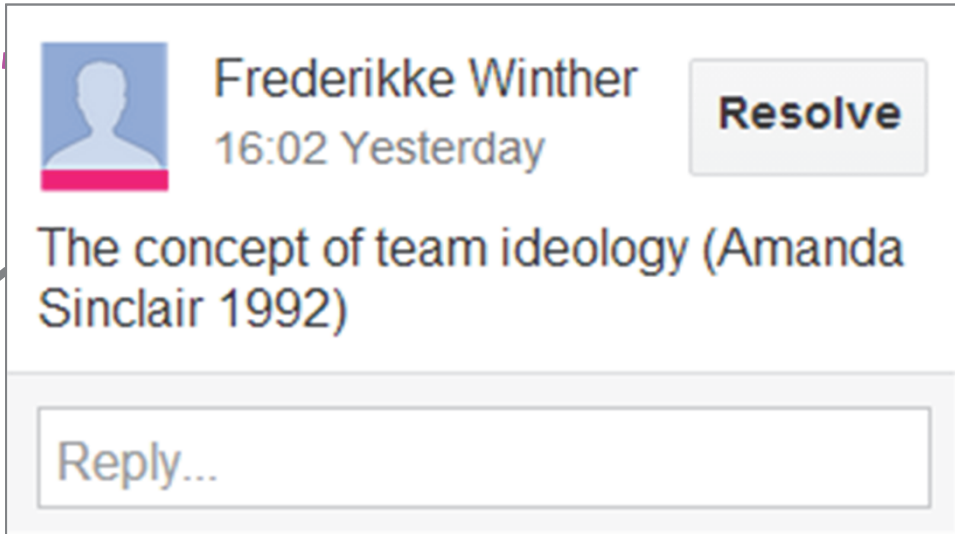
Quantitative

Qualitative



## The tyranny of participation – the dark side of collaboration

- To think that collaborative participation is always a liberating and emancipating mode or strategy is both a **naïve** and a **utopian** point of view.
  - Collaborative participation can lead to **tyranny** of the dominant and hence the reinforcement of oppression and control.
  - Especially in the **absence of reflexivity** and understanding of different ways and approaches to participation.
- cf. Ferreday & Hodgson (2008)
- So **what** is being negotiated during the writing process: work and writing strategies? Or personal and participative legitimacy?
  - And **how** is it being negotiated: by open arguments or subtle indications?



## Expected results

We expect to be able to:

- Describe **significant variation** in the students' approaches to collaborative online writing, especially in relation to the students' **different roles** and **different phases** of the writing process
- Understand different aspects of the **groups' collaboration and negotiation** in relation to **coordinating and creating** a shared text
- Understand the **meaning and interplay of different online and offline resources** (e.g. Google Docs, whiteboards, handwritten notes etc.) in relation to collaborative writing
- Develop **pedagogical guidelines** for the use of Google Docs in relation to project work and collaborative online writing processes

