

## THE IMPACT OF WRITING PRACTICES ON ENHANCING PRODUCTIVE SKILLS AMONG PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS

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### Abstract

Writing and speaking are the productive skills of a language which share similar elements. However, there has been rare endeavor to examine the effect of writing practice on both speaking and writing improvement of the learners. Therefore, in this study we tried to check the impact of writing practice on the productive skills among pre-intermediate EFL learners. To do this study, 50 Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners were selected among 75 students at a private English Language Institute. Then, the selected participants were divided into two groups; one experimental (n=25) and one control group (n=25). After that, a test consisted of both speaking and writing was administered as pretest. Then, the experimental group received the treatment which was learning productive skills through excessive writing practices. The control group did not receive any treatment and they were taught in the classroom using traditional methods of teaching. The treatment took eleven sessions of 60 minutes each under the guidance of the supervisor. After the treatment, both groups took the post-test of speaking and writing. Data were analyzed by one-way ANCOVA. The results indicated that not only writing proficiency, but also the speaking proficiency of the experimental group had significantly improved. The findings revealed that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group ( $p < .05$ ) on the post-test. Finally, implications arising from the findings and suggestions for further research were explained.

*Keywords:* Productive skills, Writing Practice, Writing proficiency, Speaking proficiency,

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Preliminaries**

Some people who have learned a second language are better at speaking it than at writing it while others are better at writing it. Those with better speaking skills may find that their writing skills eventually catch up with their speaking skills. On the other hand, their writing skills may never catch up because they get fossilized at some point in the learning process. Unfortunately, there has been little empirical investigation of the relationship between speaking and writing abilities for people learning a second language (“L2”). Learning a second language includes the involvement of four pivotal skills; listening speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is a definitive and final ability that students should learn. It is an essential communication skill that cannot be gained; it can be socially transmitted or can be learned through formal direction. Among the four skills of language, writing and speaking are productive skills. Of course, there are notable differences between them. All normal people learn to speak while writing should be instructed to them. In contrast with talking, composing forces more noteworthy requests on the students since there is no quick criticism in composed collaboration. The writer needs to prognosticate the reader's interaction and create a text which comport to Grice's (1975) cooperative principle. Based on this principle, the writer should attempt to compose a reasonable, important, honest, useful, fascinating, and paramount content. The reader, then again, expounds the text regarding the writer's assumed purpose if the essential pieces of information are accessible in the content. Phonetic exactness, lucidity of introduction, and association of thoughts are on the whole basic in the adequacy of the informative demonstration, since they give the essential pieces of information to understanding.

Moreover, developing the four principal skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing is indispensable for learning a new language; therefore, rehearsing the four modalities in differing degrees and amalgamation is a benignant way of teaching a foreign language (Oxford, 1990). As indicated by Jordan (1997), in learning a second language it is stressed that all the language skills ought to be worked on simultaneously and concentrating on one skill should not cut off learning the other skills. The language learning skills have been segregated into two primary groups containing receptive (listening and reading) and productive (writing and speaking) skills. Inspecting the interrelatedness among the ingredients of skills in every group as well as their reciprocal influence can result to the advancement of their factual usage in practicable teaching processes. This research chiefly centralized on the productive skills and the one-directional impact of writing practice on the speaking performance was investigated.

Speaking is characterized as the interpersonal function of language through which meaning is created and transmitted (Hughes, 2013) and “writing is an approach to yield language you accomplish naturally when you speak” (Meyers, 2005, p. 2). Hinkel (2013) claimed that acquiring an appropriate level of linguistic bases is essential for developing writing skill to empower students to overcome a range of lexical and grammatical skills needed for writing progression. According to Silva (1990), writing commonly pursues a standardized form of grammar, structure, and vocabulary which is inextricable from the structure of spoken sentences. As a result, writing practice not only aggrandize students’ vigilant notification of the sentence structures while speaking but promote their speaking proficiency. El-Koumy (1998) carried out a study interrogating the influence of dialogue journal writing on EFL students’ speaking proficiency, in which the findings uncovered the considerable performance of the experimental group. He appends that multiple investigations have dealt with writing skill from various perspectives but not presuming it as a means of speaking proficiency growth. Considering the resembling syntactic models in writing and speaking, the relevance between writing and speaking has been surveyed (Cleland & Pickering, 2006). Furthermore, Zhu (2007) demonstrated that high proficiency students write and speak better than low language proficiency ones. Regarding the extant relationship, the current study tried to examine the impact of writing practice on speaking development of pre-intermediate level students through the following questions.

## **1.2. Objectives and Significance of the Study**

There have been rare similar studies which examined the effects of writing practice on improving Iranian EFL learners’ speaking skill. Therefore, the main objective of the present study is to inspect the possible impacts of writing practice on Iranian EFL learners’ speaking improvement. This study aims to enhance Iranian EFL learners’ speaking through teaching them to practice writing more.

The findings of the present study may help Iranian EFL learners to be more fluent speakers through practice writing frequently. The current study can contribute to the existing literature on speaking instruction by examining the role of practice in writing. The results of the current study can encourage English teachers and material developers to provide the students with their favorite topics to maximize their learning. In addition, results of this study may convince English instructors and material developers that one source of L2 English speaking problems is the lack of practice in writing.

### **1.3. Research Questions and Hypotheses**

This study is an attempt to answer the following research question:

RQ1. Does writing practice have any significant effect on improving Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' speaking skill?

RQ2. Does writing practice have any significant effect on improving Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' writing skill?

This study is designed to test the following null hypothesis:

HO 1. Writing practice does not have any significant effect on improving Iranian EFL learners' speaking skill.

HO 2. Writing practice does not have any significant effect on improving Iranian EFL learners' writing skill.

## **2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

### **2.1. Second language writing**

"Writing is a mandatory gadget for learning and communicating. We utilize writing as an inductor to collect, maintain and extend information" (Graham, MacArthur, & Fitzgerald, 2013, p. 5). As the result of various metamorphoses in opinions toward writing practice and its momentous role for second language learning, miscellaneous pedagogical approaches are suggested by diverse scholars (Matsuda, 2003), as well as a number of theories to protect teachers' genuine training and comprehending of L2 writing. The theories are viewed as components of a jigsaw and the goal of a modern theory is not to substitute the antiquated one but to function as a supplement (Hyland, 2003). Matsuda (2003) alludes that the approaches consist of writing as sentence-level structure, writing as discourse-level structure, writing as a process, and writing as language utilization in context. However, the categorization proposed by Hyland (2003) comprises of some more dimensions consisting of concentrating on language structure, text function, content (themes and topics), creative articulation, writing processes and genres and contexts of writing. The classifications reveal that guided writing is embedded into the first phase, writing as sentence-level structure. At this stage writing is assumed as a product that concentrate on text units, vocabulary selection, grammatical specifications, content, organization and cohesive instruments (Hyland, 2003). A proficient teacher requires to be able to teach sentence structures such as grammar, punctuation, capitalization, etc., and teaching these skills can simplify learning the sentence constructions in addition to boosting the quality of the entire text (Graham et al., 2013).

Moreover, Matsuda (2003) claims that controlled composition was likewise suggested at the first step and Pincas (1962) accentuates the significance of controlled and guided composition in similar stage in order to barricade mistakes happening owing to L1 to L2 transmutation. Matsuda (2003) also believes that controlled writing was produced out of behavioral and habit formation theory of learning, in which the emphasize was on the sentence level progression through replacement exercises (p. 19) that can obliterate the possibility of making mistakes (Pincas, 1982). Above all, Hyland (2003) elucidates training writing skill in four distinguished phases. The first phase entitled acquaintance tends to teach some grammatical structures and words. Via the second phase which is controlled writing, learners accomplish sentence-based activities. In the third phase writing happens based on a sample text which is named guided writing, and the last phase manages open writing exploiting the taught patterns. He likewise believes that task-based writing assignments by performing workouts suchlike complete in the gaps can be assisting and useful to controlled writing, and they can upgrade the students' attention on attaining accuracy and preventing mistakes (Pincas, 1982; Matsuda, 2003).

## **2.2. Interrelation between writing and speaking**

Albeit writing and speaking are two segregate skills of language with special discrepancies, they both belong to the taxonomy of productive skills and because of sharing many similar members they are very much interdependent (Jordan, 1997). Writing appears too hard for students and learning to compose is even more intransigent. A teacher requires to create a convenient perimeter for learners to cheer them to compose and prepare them with obvious objectives and sensible expectances of what they aim to write (Graham et al., 2013). Weissberg (2006) believes that students can enhance their language skills in addition to their social interplay skills through vital writing practice, since oral and written skills share the identic strategies such as topic choice and giving remarks.

Writing can facilitate comprehension and reminiscing of the learning purpose. (Graham et al., 2013). Nation and Newton (2009) remark that, written input can be a very authoritative factor to patronize speaking. In a study on the impact of written input on communication, Newton (1995) discovered that all the vocabulary utilized by learners for negotiation are the ones present in their written input. The advancement of verbal working memory of the oral proficiency can straightly affect the quality of the writing assignments (MacArthur et al., 2008).

Concerning the relation among writing and speaking, Cleland and Pickering (2006) administered an examination in which they attempted to explore the mechanisms utilized in writing and speaking building distinctive syntactic examples, however they characterized syntactic priming as the propensity of the speaker to reduplicate formerly utilized syntactic structures. Applying three various tests with the utilization of syntactic priming, findings demonstrated that the syntactic operation rooted in both spoken and written production were similar. The consequence of their investigation is congruent with MacArthur et al.'s (2008) results that "There is a considerable interrelation between the sophistication of grammar or syntax in terms of density and embedding used in speech and writing" (p.172).

Zhu (2007) carried out a research in which the relationship between speaking and writing skill in college-level students was contemplated. In their examination the syntactic development of 10 college-level ESL students currently studying in an American university was decomposed both in speaking and writing, and the consequences revealed that there is a positive connection among college-level ESL students' speaking and writing proficiency. The result demonstrated that high skilled students had both superior writing and speaking potency than the low proficient ones. The common crucial cognitive potencies among writing and oral language makes the two especially related to each other (MacArthur, Graham, & Fitzgerald, 2008).

Generally, going through diverse studies related to writing and speaking skills, it was indicated that numerous researchers have worked on these two skills independently or in some instances concerning their help to throughout language learning, but none of these researches examined the reciprocating connection among writing and speaking. In general, theoretically it is believed that there is a noteworthy relationship among writing and speaking skill (Brown, 2001; Bygate, 1987; Luoma, 2004; Nation & Newton, 2009; Newton, 1995; Rivers, 1981; Zhu, 2007) but empirically the sole and the most pertinent study is the one carried out by El-Koumy (1998), in which he propounded the impact of dialogue journal writing on the speaking proficiency of the learners. Thus, this examination intended to explore the effect of writing practice on speaking improvement of pre-intermediate EFL learners, which has seldom come to the focus of consideration in studies administered by other researchers.

### **2.3. Empirical Background**

Rausch (2015) in a study researched the possible relation among speaking and listening skills for English learners. In addition to the analysis of standardized test consequences in these areas, pre- and post-test findings and student studies were checked to specify the impact of teaching in discursive speaking on students' potency to write contentiously. Discoveries contained:

1. English learners would be best served by premeditated layout of speaking training which utilizes scaffolding and analysis of instances to train standard academic language models and heuristics.
2. Such deliberate teaching of speaking seems to be transmissible, also profiting English learners' writing skills. However, while students are able to outstretch skills relating to critical analysis and organization, they will require extra training on skills, for instance, spelling and other conventions, which are monopolized to writing.
3. Instructing rhetoric through applying speaking amplitude additionally exhibits the merit of accentuating the requirement for lucrative schematization. The time-bound nature of speaking, which doesn't permit for considerable pausing or reconsideration, obliges learners to adopt beneficent planning propensities that, when exchanged to writing, become extremely advantageous.

Furthermore, Fathali and Sotoudehnama (2015) utilizing a pretest-posttest controlled group plan in a quasi-experimental approach examined the impact of guided writing practice on the speaking proficiency of Iranian EFL students. Two elementary intact classes which were arranged based on the institute's placement test were chosen for the examination. The homogeneity of the students was investigated via Key English Test (2007) as the pretest of the research, and the classes were randomly divided into the experimental group (n=26) and the control group (n=26). The experimental group was furnished with 10 guided writing worksheets in the last 15 to 20 minutes of the class, while the control group went through the method of a usual institute class in which they dealt with workbook activities within the aforesaid time. The quantitative analysis of the posttest utilizing an independent samples t-test demonstrated that not only writing proficiency, but also the speaking proficiency of the experimental group had outstandingly developed. Furthermore, at end of the semester a semi-structured interview investigated the experimental group learners' attitudes toward the function of writing practice in enhancing their speaking skill. The content analysis of the interview transcriptions uncovered

that the learners keep positive attitudes toward the guided writing worksheets at the end of the term, though they did not have the identical attitude at the outset.

To sum up, there is a consensus among researchers about the developmental relationship between the speaking and writing abilities of L1 children. Children start to speak their L1 long before they begin to write it because they need to learn written symbols and technical skills before starting to write. Writing a language is, after all, an artificial act that cannot be achieved without training and guidance. Therefore, it is natural for children to speak better than they write for a certain period of time. Kroll (1981), for example, compared younger (3rd and 4th graders) and older (6th graders) children's speaking and writing performances when they explained a board game in the two modalities. He found that the younger children produced more information when speaking than when writing while the older ones produced a similar amount of information in both modalities. Moreover, the younger children wrote in the same manner as they spoke while the older ones tended to use a different form of explanation between the two modalities. That is, the older children's speaking and writing were more clearly differentiated than the younger children.

Kroll (1981) used these findings to construct a model of language development in children: preparation, consolidation, differentiation, and integration. In the preparation stage, children's writing abilities are minimal compared to their speaking abilities. Their writing gradually improves in the consolidation stage, but their writing skills still greatly depend on their speaking skills. In the differentiation stage, the children begin to use different structures and styles between speaking and writing. Finally, in the integration stage, they choose an appropriate register for effective communication in both speaking and writing. The register is chosen in accordance with various factors such as the context, audience, and purpose.

Kroll's model suggests that children's writing proficiency develops on the basis of their speaking proficiency and that there is a strong connection between speaking and writing skills in L1 children as well as in L1 adults. Cayer and Sacks (1979), for example, investigated the writings of eight L1 English students with basic writing skills who were studying at a community college. Their writing showed various features of speech, indicating that their oral language ability greatly affected their written language ability. That is, their oral and written languages were not completely differentiated even at the college level.



A strong connection between the two modalities in L1 adults has also been suggested by the results of a syntactic processing study. Cleland and Pickering (2006) examined how adult L1 speakers produce language in different modalities. They found that L1 speakers use the same mechanism for syntactic encoding in speaking and writing, which corroborates the close connection between the two modalities in L1 adults.

### **3. METHOD**

#### **3.1. Participants**

To carry out this study, 50 Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners were selected among 75 students at a private English Language Institute. Then, they were randomly assigned into the experimental (n=25) and the control group (n=25) of the study. Albeit the learners' placement as pre-intermediate was determined by the Institute's placement test which was a rigid criterion; however, to make sure of the homogeneity of the participants in the two groups regarding their writing and speaking potency, which were the major focus of the study, all participants took the speaking and writing parts of a sample of Cambridge Key English Test (2007). The participants were all male and their age range was between 13 to 18. The first language of all participants was Persian.

#### **3.2. Instrumentation**

The writing and speaking parts of Key English Test (KET) was applied as the pre-test of the study. Cambridge examinations cover all four language skills-listening, speaking, reading and writing. They are planned around four necessary qualities: validity, reliability, impact and practicality." (University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, 2008, p. 2). Speaking section has two parts (Interview, Collaborative task) which must be taken it with another candidate. There were two testers. One tester talks to student and the other tester listens. Both examiners give scores for students' efficiency. The writing section has four parts (Word completion, Open cloze, Information transfer, Guided writing). Although the reliability of KET has been previously surveyed and approved by the University of Cambridge, the researchers once more investigated the reliability of the speaking section, the main concern of the study, through the parallel speaking tests of the study. The reliability was found to be 0.96, which showed the test to be reliable for the present study (Larson-Hall, 2010).

Finally, another sample of writing and speaking sections of KET was performed as posttest of the study to examine the impact of treatment, i.e., writing practice on productive skills. Also, the reliability of the posttest was also checked resembling to pretest and it was .091.

It is worth mentioning that with regards to the pre- and post-tests instruments, although these two tests were using two different sets of questions, they were statistically equivalent.

### **3.3. Data Collection Procedures**

In the first step, 50 homogeneous pre-intermediate participants were selected and randomly divided into two groups- experimental group and control group. Then both groups were pretested through a test containing the writing and speaking sections of the sample Key English Test (2007). Students of both experimental and control groups were at pre-intermediate level, based on Language Institute's classification which was in turn based on the results of language learners' performances on an Oxford Quick Placement Test, and they studied *Interchange* of Cambridge University Press. After that, the researcher practiced the treatment on experimental group which was using writing practice. Both experimental and comparison groups passed a period of 12 sessions, in which each session lasted about 70 minutes. In a typical institute class, the teacher teaches the student's book for about 70 to 75 minutes, and during the remaining time students can work on the workbook exercises or any additional activities provided by the teacher to improve second language learning. The workbook exercises contain a diversity of activities suitable with vocabulary and grammar structures of the targeted unit. Regarding the workbook activities, the researchers ask students to work in pairs and talk about the activities and give their opinions. Furthermore, during the treatment, the researcher provided multiple extra assignments for experimental group on writing including writing about 150 words on a topic and then practice it for speaking. In each session, one topic was given to the whole group and ask them to write whatever they know about it; then after practicing it, they should speak what they have written. In another activity, the researcher gave a text to students and asked them to summarize it, then speak whatever they understand from the text. Moreover, the researcher gave a sequence of pictures which the student must wrote a short story and finally every student loudly spoke what he wrote. It is worth mentioning the many activities including writing model texts such as letters, postcards, and personal information writings were also performed in the experimental group.

The control group of this study elapsed a typical institute class and dealt with their workbook exercises for about 25 minutes at the end of each session, whereas the experimental group learners were prepared with various writing activities during the last 25 minutes at the end of every session. At the end of the term the writing and speaking section of another sample of the Key English Test was utilized as the posttest of the research. The writing and speaking tests

were all registered, transcribed and scored based on Cambridge ESOL examination instruction for speaking at the pre-intermediate level. To make sure about the reliability of the speaking scores, pre-test and post-test transcriptions were rescored by another teacher who was present in the exam sessions as well. In order to examine the internal consistency of the two sets of scores by the two raters, Cronbach Alpha coefficient was utilized (Dornyei, 2007). Internal consistency of the scores were affirmed by the Cronbach Alpha 0.913 for the pre-test scores and 0.963 for the post-test scores respectively.

### 3.4. Data Analysis Procedures

After gathering the data through the above-stated instruments, the scores of each group were calculated and compared with each other. The data were analyzed with the help of SPSS (Statistical Firstly, in order to check the normality of the data, Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test was applied. Package for Social Science) software. Then, one-way ANOVA were also applied to get the final results.

## 4. RESULTS

Table 1: *One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test (Groups' Pre and Post-tests)*

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Exp. Speaking. Pretest	.126	25	.200*
Exp. Speaking. Posttest	.165	25	.077
Cont. Speaking. Pretest	.146	25	.177
Cont. Speaking. Posttest	.152	25	.140
Exp. Writing. Pretest	.117	25	.200*
Exp. Writing. Posttest	.188	25	.063
Cont. Writing. Pretest	.140	25	.200*
Con. Writing. Posttest	.234	25	.071

In data analysis, first of all, the normality of distribution was investigated. For normality, Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test was used. According to Table 4.1, the distribution of all scores on pre and post-tests is normal. Indeed, the significance values in Table 1 indicate that the *P* value has been higher than .05 ( $P > .05$ ) and therefore the normality assumption was met. This made it feasible for us to run the one-way ANCOVA test, the results of which are given below.

#### 4.1. Writing Practices and Speaking Skill

The first objective of the present study was to see whether writing practices had any effect on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' speaking skill. To attain this aim, the researcher had to compare the Speaking posttest scores of the EG and CG learners, for which an independent-samples *t* test could be conducted. However, to control for any possible pre-existing differences between these two groups on the speaking pretest, and compared their posttest scores accordingly, one-way ANCOVA was conducted.

Table 2: *Descriptive statistics for comparing the speaking posttest scores of the EG and CG learners*

Dependent Variable: Speaking posttest			
Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Experimental Group	17.34	2.54018	25
Control Group	13.32	1.84210	25
Total	15.33	2.99082	50

In Table 2, it could be observed that the posttest mean score of the EG learners ( $M= 17.34$ ) was considerably larger than the posttest mean score of the CG learners ( $M= 13.32$ ). In order to see whether this difference was large enough to be statistically significant, the researchers had to look down the *Sig.* column and in front of the Groups row in Table 3:

Table 3: *Results of One-Way ANCOVA for comparing the speaking posttest scores of the EG and CG learners*

Dependent Variable: Speaking posttest						
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	272.220 <sup>a</sup>	2	136.110	38.517	.000	.621
Intercept	127.901	1	127.901	36.194	.000	.435
Speakingpretest	70.215	1	70.215	19.870	.000	.297
Groups	203.119	1	203.119	57.480	.000	.550
Error	166.085	47	3.534			
Total	12188.750	50				

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Corrected Total	438.305	49
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a. R Squared = .621 (Adjusted R Squared = .605)
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If you take a look at the row labeled Groups in the leftmost column of Table 3, and read across this row, under the *Sig.* column, you can pinpoint the  $p$  value, which should be compared with the alpha level of significance (i.e., .05). This  $p$  value was found to be smaller than the alpha level of significance (.000<.05), which indicate that the difference between the two groups of EG (M= 17.34) and CG (M= 13.32) on the Speaking posttest was in fact statistically significant. This would mean that providing writing practices in experimental group's classroom was more fruitful than traditional instruction in improving the speaking skill of the Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners. Therefore, the first null hypothesis of this study was rejected.

This significant difference between the Speaking posttest scores of the EG and CG learners is graphically represented in Figure 1 below:

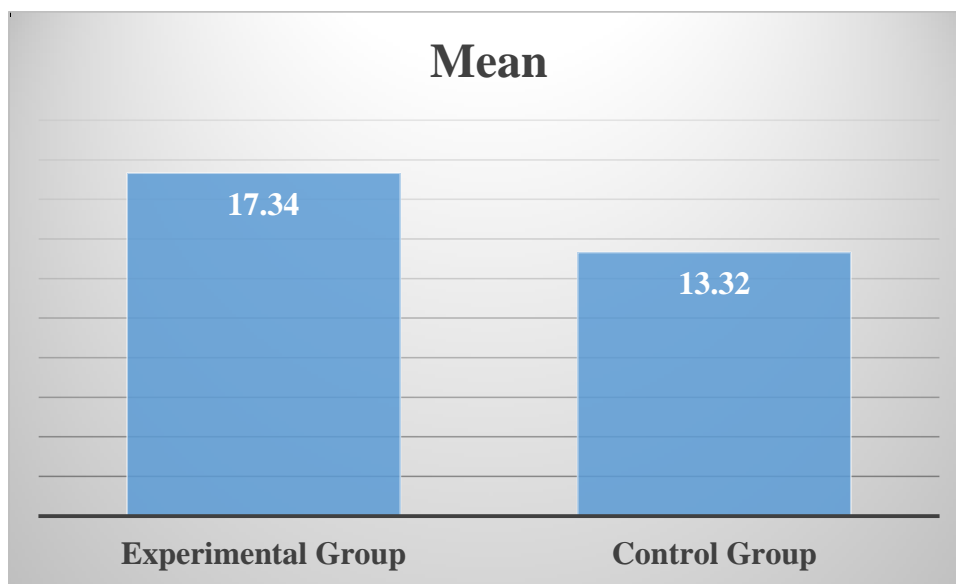


Figure 1: Speaking Posttest Mean Scores of the EG And CG Learners

It could be clearly seen that in Figure 1 that the difference between the speaking posttest scores of the EG and CG learners was statistically significant, which means that, as stated above, the provision of writing practices in experimental group's classroom improved the speaking skill of the Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners.

#### 4.2. Writing Practices and Writing Skill

The second purpose of the present study was to investigate whether writing practices had any effect on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' writing skill. To reach the second aim of the study, the researchers exactly followed the statistical procedure used in the preceding research question; that is, measures were taken to conduct a one-way ANCOVA and compared the writing posttest mean scores of the EG and CG learners, while controlling for any possible differences between the writing pretest of the two groups of learners. The results obtained from this ANCOVA analysis are displayed in Tables 4 and 5:

Table 4: *Descriptive statistics for comparing the writing posttest scores of the EG and CG learners*

Dependent Variable: Writing posttest			
Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Experimental Group	17.96	1.93067	25
Control Group	13.92	1.57242	25
Total	15.94	2.68336	50

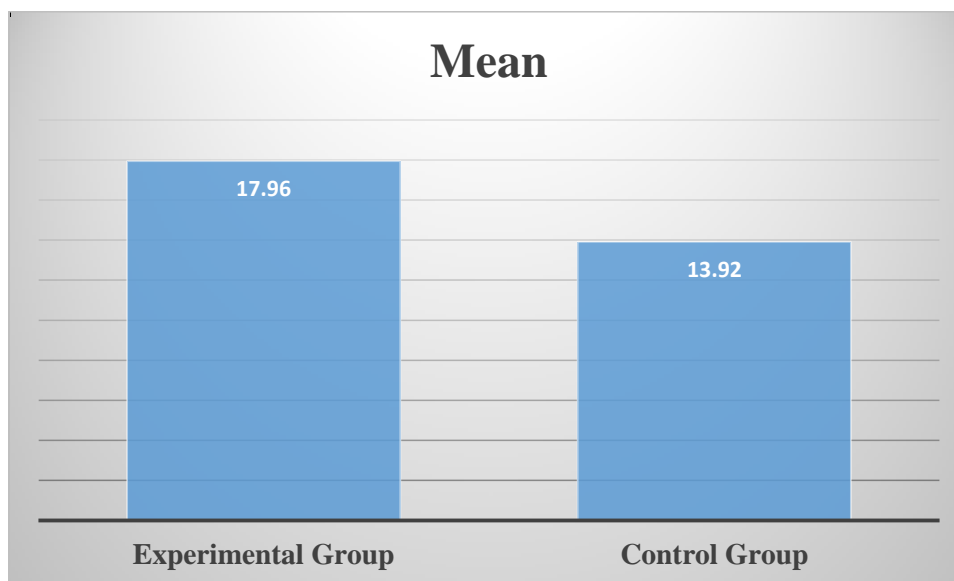
Regarding both groups' performance on the writing posttest, as shown in Table 4, it could be seen that the posttest mean score of the EG learners (M= 17.96) was remarkably higher than the posttest mean score of the CG learners (M= 13.92). To check if this difference was large enough to be statistically significant, the researchers had to look down the *Sig.* column and in front of the Groups row in Table 5:

Table 5: *Results of One-Way ANCOVA for comparing the writing posttest scores of the EG and CG learners*

Dependent Variable: Writing posttest						
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	219.633 <sup>a</sup>	2	109.816	38.753	.000	.623
Intercept	221.682	1	221.682	78.229	.000	.625
Writing pretest	15.613	1	15.613	5.510	.023	.105
Groups	199.958	1	199.958	70.563	.000	.600
Error	133.187	47	2.834			
Total	13057.000	50				

Corrected Total	352.820	49
a. R Squared = .623 (Adjusted R Squared = .606)		

A one-way between groups ANCOVA was conducted to explore the impact of writing practices on writing skill. Considering the row labeled Groups in the leftmost column of Table 5, the Sig. is smaller than 0.05, therefore the difference between the groups was statistically significant ( $p=.000 < .05$ ). The better performance of experimental group in the writing posttest ( $M=17.96$ ) in contrast with the control group ( $M=13.92$ ) is surely due to implementing writing practices. Thus, the second null hypothesis of this study was also rejected. The significant difference between the writing posttest scores of the EG and CG learners is graphically represented in Figure 2 below:



*Figure 2: Writing Posttest Mean Scores of the EG And CG Learners*

Figure 1 clearly showed that the difference between the writing posttest scores of the EG and CG learners was statistically significant, which means that, implementing writing practices in experimental group's classroom enhanced the writing skill of the Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners.

Results of the posttest indicated the positive effect of writing practice on both writing and speaking ability development of the learners. Based on the results of the study, the authors now believe that writing practice is beneficial, not only in support of writing proficiency, but also in

speaking enhancement at the pre-intermediate levels of language proficiency. Furthermore, the findings of the study support the previous study carried out by El-Koumy (1998) who checked the impact of dialogue journal writing on EFL students' speaking skill, in which results demonstrated that the experimental group equipped with dialogue journal writing, considerably outperformed the control group regarding speaking development.

According to Rivers (1981), absence or lack of systematic practice in primal stages of language learning can bring deficiencies in advanced levels. Since pre-intermediate level students are repeatedly persuaded to work on writing high-handedly, they usually state themselves via connective phrases and extravagant types of native language. As a result, Hyland (2003) stresses the significance of the four stages of familiarization, controlled writing, guided writing and ultimately open writing in the process of instructing and rehearsing writing skill, and he take to account this hierarchy as an indispensable factor for learners' writing advancement. Accordingly, it is essential to pay attention to the appropriate way of writing practice from the primary stages of language learning in order to hamper fossilization of inaccurate forms.

Concerning the connection among writing and speaking, many researchers believe in resemblances and discrepancies between these two skills. These comparisons and contrasts contain both theoretical (Brown, 2001; Bygate, 1987; Chastain, 1976; Jordan, 1997; Luoma, 2004) and practicable dimensions (Cleland & Pickering, 2006; El-koumy, 1998; Hyes, 1988; Zhu, 2007).

It is believed that although writing and speaking are two segregated skills, they both belong to the productive skills of language and they share some identical elements, these two skills are related to each other but with diverse ways of production (Cleland & Pickering, 2006; Oxford, 1990).

Although numerous scholars trust in the diversity among spoken and written language theoretically, this study as a practicable one showed that writing can be fruitful for the progression of both writing and speaking proficiency. In other words, the theoretical differences between writing and speaking have not functioned as impediments in contributing one to the other.



The findings of this study are in line with Fathali and Sotoudehnama (2015) who checked the impact of guided writing practice on the speaking proficiency of Iranian EFL students. The quantitative analysis of the posttest utilizing an independent samples t-test demonstrated that not only writing proficiency, but also the speaking proficiency of the experimental group had outstandingly enhanced.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The major concern of the present study was to explore the effectiveness of writing practice training on productive skills of the EFL students. Findings of the current study revealed that writing practice can affect both writing and speaking improvement of the pre-intermediate EFL learners significantly. It can be deduced that, writing practice not only can help writing proficiency, but can also be highly beneficial in advancing speaking proficiency of pre-intermediate learners. Through the consequences of the speaking and writing post-test, it was manifested that students had progressed significantly utilizing accurate grammatical structures and vocabulary items. Hence, the findings of the study can urge the EFL teachers to train predestinated grammatical structures via writing practice, in order to hinder the fossilization of fallacious structures which may occur through speaking practice. The study can likewise notify the EFL teachers about the importance of the interrelation among language skills and the significance of consisting writing practice in the syllabus of language teaching classes even at the pre-intermediate levels. Moreover, the result of the present study can work as a guideline for material developers in designing English course books and stress the merits of consisting various types of writing practice for pre-intermediate level students. The results of the present study can help EFL learners to improve their speaking and writing through writing practices. Regular writing practice almost always leads to greater production. Teachers are also the chief beneficiary of the findings of this study. Through using writing practices teachers can have active and interesting classes while teaching. Thanks to writing practices, teachers have more to offer students in the process of language learning. Through using writing practices teachers can turn book-oriented classes into students-oriented classes.

Further studies can also be performed for adults and higher levels of language proficiency with other types of writing. It is worth noting that the learners of this research were only males and carrying out a further examination with female students may result into various results.

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