

## A Comparative Study of the Effect of Reading-to-write, Writing-only Tasks on Iranian EFL Learners' Discourse Features

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Received: July 19, 2023

Accepted: November 07, 2023

### Abstract

This study attempted to evaluate the comparative effects of reading-to-write and writing-only tasks on the discourse characteristics of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. In order to accomplish this goal, sixty EFL learners were chosen by OPT. These individuals were then split up into two experimental groups, reading-to-write and writing-only, respectively. Before and after receiving the therapy, the writing pre-and post-tests were given to both groups. In addition, ten out of thirty participants in the reading-to-write group completed the semi-structured interview. The findings showed that reading-to-write activities substantially impacted the writing fluency, syntactic complexity, and grammatical accuracy of the post-test completed by EFL students. The findings also revealed that writing-only activities substantially impacted the EFL learners' writing posttest performance in the areas of writing fluency and grammatical accuracy. Analyzing the discourse features of the writing post-test revealed a sizeable gap between students who had learned to write by reading to write and those who had learned to write only. The findings of the qualitative study showed that the vast majority of students were pleased with the implementation of reading-to-write activities in the various classroom settings and found it was effective in enhancing students' level of writing ability. This study has some implications for teachers and syllabus designers to design appropriate integrative reading to write tasks.

**Keywords:** Discourse features, Reading-to-write, Writing-only tasks

### INTRODUCTION

In the discipline of English for speakers of other languages (ESL/EFL), improving one's writing skills is not a topic of debate among academics. Writing ability is viewed as a model that uses diverse types of language for the purpose of interpersonal communication and has a discernible impact on our lives (Weigle, 2002). According to Steinlen (2018), learners should work toward mastering and developing this talent because it can be used as a measure of academic

performance and success in higher education. It is important to take into consideration discursive aspects in order to improve one's writing ability as a means of enhancing interpersonal communication.

The use of integrated reading-to-write programs by teachers can be beneficial for increasing students' language proficiency and particularly their writing skills. Producing text that is correct, coherent, and substantial is a task that is extremely complex and demanding (Biria & Jafari, 2013). Writing ability is an essential

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and inescapable skill in the process of learning a language.

Actually, the reading-to-write task is a type of pedagogical activity that is viewed not only as a means to show students what good writing looks like (Turbill & Bean, 2006), but also as a tool for boosting writing education (Qin & Liu, 2021). This is because the reading-to-write task is believed to be a way to show students what good writing looks like (Turbill & Bean, 2006). Recent years have seen a significant increase in the amount of focus placed on the reading-to-writing task concerns in SLA. Accordingly, readers and authors are engaged not passively in a monologue, as was traditionally imagined, but rather interactively in a dialogic process by which the thoughts and messages are alternatively transformed to one another (Chastain, 1976). This is in contrast to the traditional assumption that readers and writers are involved in a monologue in which they take on the role of listeners. To be able to read and write well is therefore an essential prerequisite that is necessary for the sustenance of today's increasingly interconnected worldwide communities, which heavily rely on the immediate interchange of information (Weigle, 2013). Reading and writing effectively is required for the sustenance of today's increasingly interconnected global communities. These two talents play large roles in L2 education and are recognized as crucial skills for educational, business, or personal reasons (Gebriel & Plakans, 2013; Koda, 2005; Weigle, 2013; Wolferberger, 2013). Gebriel & Plakans (2013), Koda (2005), Weigle (2013), and Wolferberger (2013) all agree on this point. Reading and writing in a second language are activities that are designed to help students achieve two overarching goals: first, to increase students' comprehension and production in the target language, and second, to assist students in becoming better at interacting with others and learning languages throughout their lives.

Conversation features can be used to build semantic or logical ties between prior and current information, as well as a helpful link between sentences and paragraphs, which eventually makes it easier to interpret the content of the entire conversation (Kalajahi, & Abdullah, 2012). Discourse features can also be used to

generate useful links between sentences and paragraphs. When it comes to creating a text, coherence and cohesion are believed to be two fundamental characteristics that should be planned for in order to write a document that is well-organized. The process of combining and structuring text sentences is not a straightforward one; rather, it resembles the act of stacking bricks one atop the other in order to create a connection between the sentences. According to Halliday and Hassan (1976), a text is more than just a string of phrases, as it might contain sentence units of varying length, as well as grammatical units, semantic units, and so on (p. 291).

Fluency, syntactic complexity, grammatical accuracy, and vocabulary sophistication are the four primary features of language use that are investigated in the current study. Writing fluency is a writer's capacity to produce lengthy and logical writings, and it may be measured by the duration of a writer's production units or translating episodes. Writing fluency refers to the ability of a writer to produce lengthy and logical documents. The range and sophistication of syntactic structures used in the text is referred to as the text's syntactic complexity (Ortega, 2003; Pallotti, 2015); grammatical accuracy refers to the accurate application of sentence structure in writing or speech; syntactic complexity refers to the range and sophistication of syntactic structures used in the text. It is common practice to use the frequency of "unusual" terms found in a sample as an indicator of language competency in assessments of writing and speaking in a second language. Lexical sophistication can be measured by the frequency of "unusual" words found in a sample. (Laufer & Nation, 1995; Kyle & Crossley, 2015) Related research may be found here.

Given the importance of writing skills, there has been very little research conducted on the effectiveness of integrated writing tasks and independent writing tasks on one or two discourse elements (Brown, Hilgers, & Marsella, 1991; Gebriel, 2009). These studies have shown that integrated writing tasks are more effective than solo writing tasks. For instance, Cumming and colleagues (2005) made an effort to investigate the differences between the impacts of utilizing

product-oriented and process-oriented writing tasks on two characteristics of grammatical accuracy and syntactic complexity. They came to the conclusion that task-based writing is more effective than a product-oriented writing job. It was grammatically correct and had a sophisticated syntactic structure at the same time. In addition, the influence of integrated activities on language performances (such as grammatical acquisition, syntactic discourse features, and so on) in Iran and other countries has received very little research attention (Aghaie & Jun Zhang, 2012). Studies that have focused on the discourse aspects while participants completed integrated reading-to-writing tasks are almost nonexistent. In addition, not much effort has been put into contrasting the effects of reading-to-write tasks with those of writing-only activities on the discourse features of Iranian EFL learners (e.g., Asadi, 2012; Davatgari Asl & Moradinejad, 2016). The purpose of the current study was to evaluate the possible impact of integrated reading-to-write and writing-only activities on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' discourse features. This was done with the intention of filling in the gaps that were discussed earlier in the study.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading and writing are no longer viewed as only passive or product-driven activities, but rather as goal-oriented, engaged, and socially-situated pursuits, as a result of recent research (Bernhardt, 2011; Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014). (Bernhardt, 2011; Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014). In addition, it is common knowledge that reading and writing are not solitary activities but rather social activities that take place within a community (McKay, 2002). Therefore, putting more emphasis on the communicative as well as the social parts of reading and writing can lead to improved language competency as well as more effective communication abilities.

According to Rosenblatt (2018), reading and writing are social activities that involve interaction between the reader and the author in the form of a collaborative and conversational process, which results in the creation and exchange of meanings between the two parties. For this process to work, it is necessary for both sides to

participate actively and to bring their unique experiences and goals to the table in order for them to make meaning of what they read and write. According to Hyland (2009), the value of written texts can only be obtained through the collaborative efforts of both the people who make the texts and those who read them. In addition, the quality of a learner's reading and writing performance in a second language (L2) in both English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts is dependent on the learner's sociocultural background, their literacy in their first language (L1), and their sociocultural understanding of the language they are learning (Canagarajah, 2002).

Reading and writing are considered to be reciprocal academic literacy abilities because they share fundamental principles and bodies of information, and because reading and writing are both acts of communication. Reading can provide linguistic and informational input for writing. Writing can benefit from reading. According to Grabe and Kaplan (2014), people who read more frequently also have a tendency to write better than those who do not read as much. Reading and writing are considered to have a reciprocal relationship by Ochoma and Atemie (2022). This is due to the fact that reading and writing have "underlying common processes and knowledge and that they are both communicative acts" (p. 293).

According to Delaney (2008), the act of reading in order to write entails an interaction between the reading and writing processes. This interaction is seen from a constructive point of view. During the process of reading, readers are said to actively engage with the text by doing things like forming predictions, drawing conclusions, and using their past knowledge to construct meaning, as stated by Van Waes and Schellens (2020). In a similar manner, when it comes to the process of writing, writers employ methods such as planning, drafting, and revising in order to effectively generate meaning and communicate their thoughts. Reading and writing are both difficult cognitive activities that entail a variety of different abilities and methods that are intertwined with one another (Hyland & Jiang, 2019).

A number of recent research have highlighted the relevance of evaluating the textual characteristics of the reading-to-write product in order to uncover the ways in which writers organize, choose, and connect material in their writing. These studies have underlined the value of investigating the textual characteristics of the reading-to-write product. It is important to note that this research focused on the characteristics of the product rather than the mental processes involved in the reading-to-writing activity. They mean that the reader or writer uses his or her own understanding of discourse patterns and textual signals, develops a frame, recognizes, recombines, and generates the links. This is what they mean when they talk about organizing. These studies have selected information, which is done based on the reader's or writer's reasons for creating the content as well as their opinions and ideas regarding the subject matter. In the end, there is a process known as connecting, which requires the reader or writer to make use of their prior knowledge in order to integrate the information that they have gained from the text with what they already know. It provides the reader or writer with the opportunity to draw inferences and make use of their prior knowledge.

### **Research on Reading-to-write and Writing-only Tasks**

In the context of learning a second language, a number of research have investigated the differences and similarities between reading-to-write activities and writing-only tasks. In this research, a variety of aspects, such as writing output, topic impacts, language competency, and rater reliability, have been investigated. In spite of the fact that global scores have not revealed any significant differences between the two tasks (Brown, Hilgers, & Marsella, 1991; Lewkowicz, 1994), the ensuing written output is qualitatively unique (Lewkowicz, 1994; Watanabe, 2001).

number of research have been carried out in order to investigate the reading-to-writing task in EFL/ESL situations. The primary objective of these studies was to discover the problems that learners experience and the solutions that

may be utilized in order to improve their performance. For instance, Liu and Yu (2017) looked into the cognitive processes that were required for the reading-to-writing assignment among Chinese students of English as a foreign language. According to the findings of the study, students' reading comprehension abilities, vocabulary knowledge, and capacity to organize ideas all had an impact on the quality of their written work. In order to improve students' ability to write, the authors recommend that teachers of English as a foreign language give students direct instruction on how to improve their vocabulary and reading methods.

In a study that was very similar, Zhang and Yang (2020) looked at how the use of a pre-task preparation technique affected Chinese EFL learners' performance on a reading-to-writing assignment. According to the findings of the study, the pre-task planning method improved learners' writing performance by assisting them in organizing their thoughts and reducing the amount of mental strain they were under. The authors recommend that teachers of English as a foreign language integrate pre-task preparation activities into their writing instruction in order to support the writing performance of their students.

Al-Harbi (2018) conducted research on Saudi students of English as a foreign language to investigate the reading-to-writing task. According to the findings of the study, students have difficulty coming up with new ideas and successfully structuring those ideas in their writing. The findings of the study also demonstrated that giving learners clear training on writing strategies and offering feedback on their writing performance can assist improve the writing skills of learners. The author argues that teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) should concentrate on helping students improve their writing skills through explicit instruction and feedback, and should also add reading activities that help students produce ideas and improve their ability to organize information.

In consideration of the objectives of the study, the following themes emerged as potential topics for investigation:

**Q1.** *Does the use of discourse characteristics change significantly between integrated reading-to-write tasks and writing-only tasks among Iranian intermediate EFL learners? If so, what kinds of differences may we expect to see?*

**Q2.** *Does the use of a writing-only task have any significant effect on the usage of discourse features in the writing ability of Iranian EFL learners? These qualities include fluency, lexical sophistication, syntactic complexity, and grammatical accuracy.*

**Q3.** *Does the use of an integrative reading-to-write assignment have any significant effect on the usage of discourse features in the writing ability of Iranian EFL learners? These qualities include fluency, lexical sophistication, syntactic complexity, and grammatical accuracy.*

**Q4.** *Do students feel that reading-to-write integrative activities have a positive impact on their ability to write?*

**Q5.** *During the reading-to-write activity, what difficulties do students typically encounter?*

## METHODOLOGY

### Participants

The current investigation consisted of qualitative and quantitative parts, both of which were carried out. Sixty of the one hundred students enrolled in the class took part in the quantitative portion of the exam. They attended classes at a private language institute in Tehran known as the Iran-Europe Language Institute, and by the time they graduated, they had achieved an upper-intermediate level of English language ability. The learners who were considered to be upper-intermediate because they had stronger writing skills to be tested were the ones who were selected. The age range of the participants, on average, was 17 to 28 years old and included both males and females. The individuals that took part in the study were chosen using the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) (Syndicate, 2001). The people who ended up being the focus of our attention were chosen from those who had scores that were one standard deviation (SD) either above or below the sample mean. The EFL students at the upper-intermediate level were split into two experimental groups: a) reading-to-write tasks (with a total of 30 participants),

and b) writing-only activities with a total of 30 participants (process writing). The reading-to-write group had a total of thirty participants, and ten of them were chosen to take part in the qualitative portion of the study. The majority of the participants spoke Persian as their native tongue.

### Instruments

The following instruments were used in the present study:

**Oxford Placement Test:** This test was developed in 2001. Its purpose was to standardize students' levels of language competence. The OPT comprised a total of sixty different examinations broken down into three primary categories: reading, grammar, and vocabulary. The examination was given in not one but two modes: cloze tests and multiple-choice examinations.

**Creating Pre- and Post-tests in Writing:** In order to meet the requirements of this investigation, both the pre-test and the post-test were in the form of an essay. The students were to write two essays, one of which would be used as a pre-test and the other as a post-test when they had completed the unit. When choosing the topics for these essays, consideration was given to the students' current levels as well as the degree to which they possessed an understanding of the overarching concept being covered in each of their classes. The range of 150 to 200 words that should be included in each of our writing activities is what we were instructed to aim towards. The writing examples that were handed in by the students were examined by two different raters in order to ensure that there was sufficient inter-rater reliability. This made it possible to conduct an investigation of the reliability of the learners' scores.

**Weigle's analytic scale:** In order to conduct an analysis of the writing tests that the participants had to complete, we resorted to Weigle's analytic scale from 2002. The suitability and applicability of the material that was provided for evaluation, along with good spelling, coherence, writing structure, punctuation, and vocabulary, were the elements that comprised this criterion.

In addition, the raters were given the directive to utilize this rubric in their work.

**Partially-structured Interviews:** For the purpose of elucidating students' opinions regarding the implementation of reading-to-write tasks, the researcher drafted a pair of open-ended questions, and three knowledgeable university professors reviewed and rated them. As part of the preparation for the semi-structured interview, this was carried out. The following are the questions that were asked:

1. Did the reading-to-write integrative assignment help you become a better writer?
2. While participating in the activity that transitioned from reading to writing, what kinds of roadblocks did you experience?

### **Data Collection Procedure**

This study was carried out across three different language institutes in Tehran. After the OPT was given, those students who earned scores one standard deviation (SD) below and above the mean were considered to be participants in the study. Students were chosen at random and then assigned to one of two groups: an experimental group, which consisted of reading-to-write task group students ( $N = 30$ ), and a control group, which consisted of writing-only task group students ( $N = 30$ ). Both the writing-only task (process writing instruction) and the reading-to-write tasks were given to the control group. The experimental group also received the reading-to-write tasks. The procedures for this investigation were carried out in a total of ten separate sessions.

Before beginning to write, both the teacher and the students in the experimental group (also known as the reading-to-write group) completed a reading assignment. The participants of the experimental group were given a reading text to complete in this group. The material was about a topic that was similar to the writing job. At this point in the process, it was asked of the participants that they read the text for a period of fifteen minutes. After that, the reading assignments were removed from them, and they were given instructions to start with the writing assignment instead. The participants' current levels of reading ability were taken into

consideration while selecting the reading passages that were utilized at this stage.

However, in the group that was designated as the control (also known as the group that simply engaged in writing), the procedure was precisely the same as the one that was utilized with the experimental group; the only difference was that the reading component was omitted. In point of fact, this group participated in a 15-minute brainstorming activity instead of the reading part that was scheduled to take place during the allotted time period. The students in this group came up with an idea and structured a discussion around a subject about which they both knew something and were interested.

The classroom sessions for both the experimental group and the control group were organized in the same manner, with the exception of the pre-writing stage. The treatment consisted of three stages: pre-writing, while writing, and post-writing, and it was administered to both groups. After completing the pre-writing step, which was the primary area in which the two groups diverged from one another, the participants were given the instruction to arrange and structure their sentences in a manner that was more ordered before commencing the process of writing. When students had completed the first draft of their work, they showed it to their classmates, received feedback, and then revised it themselves while the instructor offered guidance and assistance throughout the process. In the stage that came after writing, the instructor went back through the student's writing assignments to examine, edit, and reread them. Before the students could write the final draft, the instructor went through all of the written works and corrected any spelling, vocabulary, and grammatical issues she found.

At the end of the 10-week training program, the students were given a post-test in writing to evaluate their progress. During the posttest, the participants had a total of seventy-five minutes to write about the topic that was presented to them.

### **Data Analysis Procedure**

To analyze the collected data, the SPSS software version 24 for analyses. To classify the discourse features, students' essays were coded based on Cumming's et. al., (2005)

scale. To analyze discourse features, the following formulas were used:

1. The measurement of fluency in this study was based on the average number of words, T-units, and clauses per text (Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009).
2. Lexical sophistication was determined by calculating the average word length, which was obtained by dividing the total number of characters by the number of words in each composition (Engber, 1995).
3. Syntactic complexity was assessed by calculating the total number of T-units per composition (Ortega, 2003).
4. Grammatical accuracy was rated on a scale of 1, indicating many errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and word choice per T-unit (Hamp-Lyons & Henning, 1991).

To analyze the last research question, content analysis was applied.

## Results

The classroom sessions for both the experimental group and the control group were organized in the same manner, with the exception of the pre-writing stage. The treatment consisted of three stages: pre-writing, while writing, and post-writing, and it was administered to both groups. After completing the pre-writing step, which was the primary area in which the two groups diverged from one another, the participants were given the instruction to arrange and structure their sentences in a manner that was more ordered before commencing the process of writing. When students had completed the first draft of their work, they showed it to their classmates, received feedback, and then revised it themselves while the instructor offered guidance and assistance throughout the process. In the stage that came after writing, the instructor went back through the student's writing assignments to examine, edit, and reread them. Before

the students could write the final draft, the instructor went through all of the written works and corrected any spelling, vocabulary, and grammatical issues she found.

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Measurement with reiteration. In order to make a head-to-head comparison between the groups' mean scores on pre-and post-tests of discourse aspects (such as fluency, lexical sophistication, syntactic complexity, and grammatical accuracy), an ANOVA and a simple effect analysis was done. The researcher was able to compare the groups on the pre-tests and the post-tests thanks to the basic effect analysis. Additionally, the researcher was able to analyze each group's improvement from the pre-tests to the post-tests. Checks were done to ensure that the assumptions of normality, homogeneity of variances, sphericity, and homogeneity of covariance matrices were met before the results were discussed. The findings demonstrated that all of the hypotheses were valid, with the exception of Box's test of homogeneity of covariance matrices, the results of which can be disregarded if the groups in question had comparable sample sizes, as is the case with this particular investigation.

The descriptive statistics for the two groups' pre-and post-tests of discourse aspects are presented in Table 1, which can be found here. On the pre-tests, the reading-to-write group and the writing-only group had nearly the same mean score, but the reading-to-write group had a higher mean score on the post-test. When discussing the findings of the simple effect analysis, these findings will be reported and discussed in further detail.

**Table 1**  
*Descriptive Statistics of Pretests and Posttests of Discourse Features by Groups*

Group	Time	Test	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Reading to write	Pretest	Writing Fluency	5.283	.113	5.057	5.509
		Lexical Sophistication	5.200	.102	4.996	5.404
		Syntactic Complexity	5.350	.088	5.173	5.527
		Grammatical Accuracy	5.383	.093	5.197	5.569
	Posttest	Writing Fluency	7.200	.096	7.008	7.392
		Lexical Sophistication	7.133	.089	6.955	7.312
		Syntactic Complexity	7.100	.085	6.930	7.270
		Grammatical Accuracy	7.017	.079	6.858	7.175
Writing only	Pretest	Writing Fluency	5.283	.113	5.057	5.509
		Lexical Sophistication	5.200	.102	4.996	5.404
		Syntactic Complexity	5.133	.088	4.957	5.310
		Grammatical Accuracy	5.167	.093	4.981	5.353
	Posttest	Writing Fluency	6.483	.096	6.291	6.676
		Lexical Sophistication	6.433	.089	6.255	6.612
		Syntactic Complexity	6.283	.085	6.113	6.453
		Grammatical Accuracy	6.167	.079	6.008	6.325

Table 2 displays the results of the Between-Subjects Effects. The results ( $F(1,58) = 23, p < .05, \eta^2 = .284$  representing a large effect size) indi-

cated that there was a significant difference between the reading-to-write and writing-only groups' overall means disregarding Time and Test.

**Table 2**  
*Tests of Between-Subjects Effects*

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	17214.063	1	17214.063	17076.360	.000	.997
Group	23.188	1	23.188	23.003	.000	.284
Error	58.468	58	1.008			

Table 3 displays the results of the Within-Subjects Effects. Based on these results it can be concluded that there was a significant difference between overall means on pretests and posttests ( $F(1,58) = 486.10, p < .05, \eta^2 = .893$  representing a large effect size) disregarding tests and groups. There were also significant

differences between tests ( $F(2.78,161.34) = 4.12, p < .05, \eta^2 = .066$  representing a moderate effect size) disregarding Time and groups; and finally, there was not any significant interaction between Time and Test ( $F(2.59,150.76) = .229, p > .05, \eta^2 = .004$  representing a weak effect size).

**Table 3**  
*Tests of Within-Subjects Effects*

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	
Time	Sphericity Assumed	261.813	1	261.813	486.103	.000	.893
	Greenhouse-Geisser	261.813	1.000	261.813	486.103	.000	.893
	Huynh-Feldt	261.813	1.000	261.813	486.103	.000	.893
	Lower-bound	261.813	1.000	261.813	486.103	.000	.893
Time * Group	Sphericity Assumed	13.167	1	13.167	24.447	.000	.297
	Greenhouse-Geisser	13.167	1.000	13.167	24.447	.000	.297
	Huynh-Feldt	13.167	1.000	13.167	24.447	.000	.297



	Lower-bound	13.167	1.000	13.167	24.447	.000	.297
Error (Time)	Sphericity Assumed	31.239	58	.539			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	31.239	58.000	.539			
	Huynh-Feldt	31.239	58.000	.539			
	Lower-bound	31.239	58.000	.539			
Test	Sphericity Assumed	1.081	3	.360	4.125	.007	.066
	Greenhouse-Geisser	1.081	2.782	.388	4.125	.009	.066
	Huynh-Feldt	1.081	2.986	.362	4.125	.008	.066
	Lower-bound	1.081	1.000	1.081	4.125	.047	.066
Test * Group	Sphericity Assumed	.881	3	.294	3.362	.020	.055
	Greenhouse-Geisser	.881	2.782	.317	3.362	.023	.055
	Huynh-Feldt	.881	2.986	.295	3.362	.020	.055
	Lower-bound	.881	1.000	.881	3.362	.072	.055
Error (Test)	Sphericity Assumed	15.195	174	.087			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	15.195	161.345	.094			
	Huynh-Feldt	15.195	173.217	.088			
	Lower-bound	15.195	58.000	.262			
Time * Test	Sphericity Assumed	1.331	3	.444	4.472	.005	.072
	Greenhouse-Geisser	1.331	2.599	.512	4.472	.007	.072
	Huynh-Feldt	1.331	2.779	.479	4.472	.006	.072
	Lower-bound	1.331	1.000	1.331	4.472	.039	.072
Time * Test * Group	Sphericity Assumed	.068	3	.023	.229	.876	.004
	Greenhouse-Geisser	.068	2.599	.026	.229	.849	.004
	Huynh-Feldt	.068	2.779	.025	.229	.862	.004
	Lower-bound	.068	1.000	.068	.229	.634	.004
Error (Time*Test)	Sphericity Assumed	17.257	174	.099			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	17.257	150.766	.114			
	Huynh-Feldt	17.257	161.189	.107			
	Lower-bound	17.257	58.000	.298			

The findings of the first simple effect analysis are presented in Table 4. These results compare the groups' means on the pretests in order to illustrate that the two groups were similar in terms of their knowledge of discourse aspects prior to the administration of treatments. This was done so as to show that there was no significant difference between the groups. The findings indicated that there were no significant differences between the means of the reading-to-write

and writing-only groups on the following: a) writing fluency (M reading-to-write= 5.28, M writing only= 5.28, MD=.000,  $p>.05$ ), b) lexical sophistication (M reading-to-write= 5.20, M writing only= 5.20, MD=.000,  $p>.05$ ), syntactic complexity (M reading-to-write= 5.20, M writing only= 5.20, MD=.000,  $p>.05$ ). As a result, it is possible to draw the conclusion that the reading-to-write and writing-only groups possessed equivalent levels of previous knowledge regarding the discourse feature prior to the application of the treatments.

**Table 4**  
**Simple Effect Analysis Comparing Groups' Means on Pretests of Discourse Features**

Test	(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Writing Fluency	Reading-to-write	Writing only	.000	.160	1.000	-.320	.320
Lexical Sophistication	Reading-to-write	Writing only	.000	.144	1.000	-.289	.289
Syntactic Complexity	Reading-to-write	Writing only	.217	.125	.088	-.033	.466
Grammatical accuracy	Reading-to-write	Writing only	.217	.131	.104	-.046	.480

The results of the simple effect analysis displayed in Table 5 can be employed to explore the first research question; that is to say, to investigate any significant improvement in the reading-to-write group's means from pretests to posttests of discourse features. The results indicated that the reading-to-write group had significant improvement in their means from pretests to posttests of; a)

writing fluency (M pretest= 5.28, M posttest= 7.20, MD= 1.91,  $p < .05$ ), lexical sophistication (M pretest= 5.20, M posttest= 7.13, MD= 1.93,  $p < .05$ ), syntactic complexity (M pretest= 5.35, M posttest= 7.10, MD= 1.75,  $p < .05$ ), and grammatical accuracy (M pretest= 5.38, M posttest= 7.01, MD= 1.63,  $p < .05$ ). Thus; it can be concluded that the first null-hypothesis was rejected.

**Table 5**

*Simple Effect Analysis Comparing Reading-to-write Group's on Pretests of Discourse Features*

Test	(I) Time	(J) Time	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Writing Fluency	Posttest	Pretest	1.917*	.121	.000	1.675	2.158
Lexical Sophistication	Posttest	Pretest	1.933*	.124	.000	1.685	2.181
Syntactic Complexity	Posttest	Pretest	1.750*	.115	.000	1.520	1.980
Grammatical Accuracy	Posttest	Pretest	1.633*	.112	.000	1.408	1.858

\*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

The results of the simple effect analysis displayed in Table 6 can be employed to explore the second research question; that is to say, to investigate any significant improvement in the writing-only group's means from pretests to posttests of discourse features. The results indicated that the writing-only group had significant improvement in their means from pretests to posttests of;

a) writing fluency (M pretest= 5.28, M posttest= 6.48, MD= 1.20,  $p < .05$ ), lexical sophistication (M pretest= 5.20, M posttest= 6.43, MD= 1.23,  $p < .05$ ), syntactic complexity (M pretest= 5.13, M posttest= 6.28, MD= 1.15,  $p < .05$ ), and grammatical accuracy (M pretest= 5.16, M posttest= 6.16, MD= 1.00,  $p < .05$ ). Thus; it can be concluded that the second null-hypothesis was rejected.

**Table 6**

*Simple Effect Analysis Comparing Writing-only Group's on Pretests of Discourse Features*

Test	(I) Time	(J) Time	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Writing Fluency	Posttest	Pretest	1.200*	.121	.000	.958	1.442
Lexical Sophistication	Posttest	Pretest	1.233*	.124	.000	.985	1.481
Syntactic Complexity	Posttest	Pretest	1.150*	.115	.000	.920	1.380
Grammatical Accuracy	Posttest	Pretest	1.000*	.112	.000	.775	1.225

\*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

The results displayed in Table 7 can be employed to compare the two groups' means on posttests of discourse features in order to probe the third research question. The results

indicated that the reading-to-write group had significantly higher means than the writing-only group on posttests of; a) writing fluency (M reading-to-write= 7.20, M writing only=

6.48, MD= .71,  $p < .05$ ), b) lexical sophistication (M reading-to-write= 7.13, M writing only= 6.43, MD= .70,  $p < .05$ ), syntactic complexity (M reading-to-write= 7.10, M writing only=

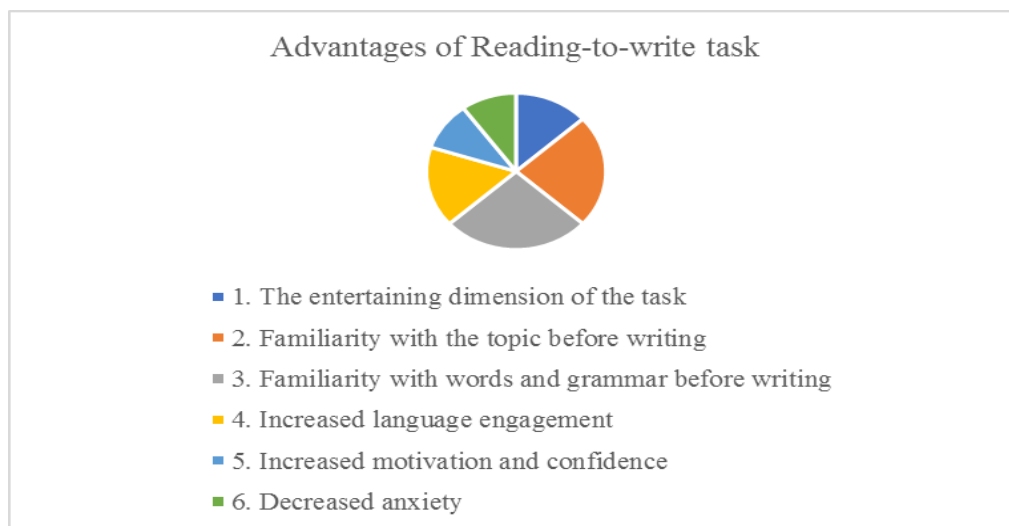
6.28, MD= .81,  $p < .05$ ), and d) grammatical accuracy (M reading-to-write= 7.01, M writing only= 6.16, MD= .85,  $p < .05$ ). Thus; it can be concluded that the third null-hypothesis was rejected.

**Table 7**  
*Simple Effect Analysis Comparing Groups' Means on Posttests of Discourse Features*

Test	(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Writing Fluency	Reading-to-write	Writing only	.717*	.136	.000	.445	.988
Lexical Sophistication	Reading-to-write	Writing only	.700*	.126	.000	.448	.952
Syntactic Complexity	Reading-to-write	Writing only	.817*	.120	.000	.576	1.057
Grammatical accuracy	Reading-to-write	Writing only	.850*	.112	.000	.626	1.074

The fourth and fifth research questions investigated Iranian EFL learners' perceptions of using reading-to-write tasks in the classroom.

The first item of the interview was related to the learners' perceptions of the effectiveness of integrated tasks on writing ability.



**Figure 1**  
*Student Perceptions of the Advantages of Reading to Write*

Regarding the results of this item and through the content analysis, learners listed the following factors: the entertaining dimension of the task (40%), increased language engagement (50%),

familiarity with the topic before writing (70%), familiarity with words and grammar before writing (80%), increased motivation and confidence (30%), and decreased anxiety during writing task (30%).

**Table 8**  
*Learners' perceptions towards the effectiveness of reading-to-write task*

Advantage	Percentage
1. The entertaining dimension of the task	40%
2. Familiarity with the topic before writing	70%
3. Familiarity with words and grammar before writing	80%
4. Increased language engagement	50%
5. Increased motivation and confidence	30%
6. Decreased anxiety	30%

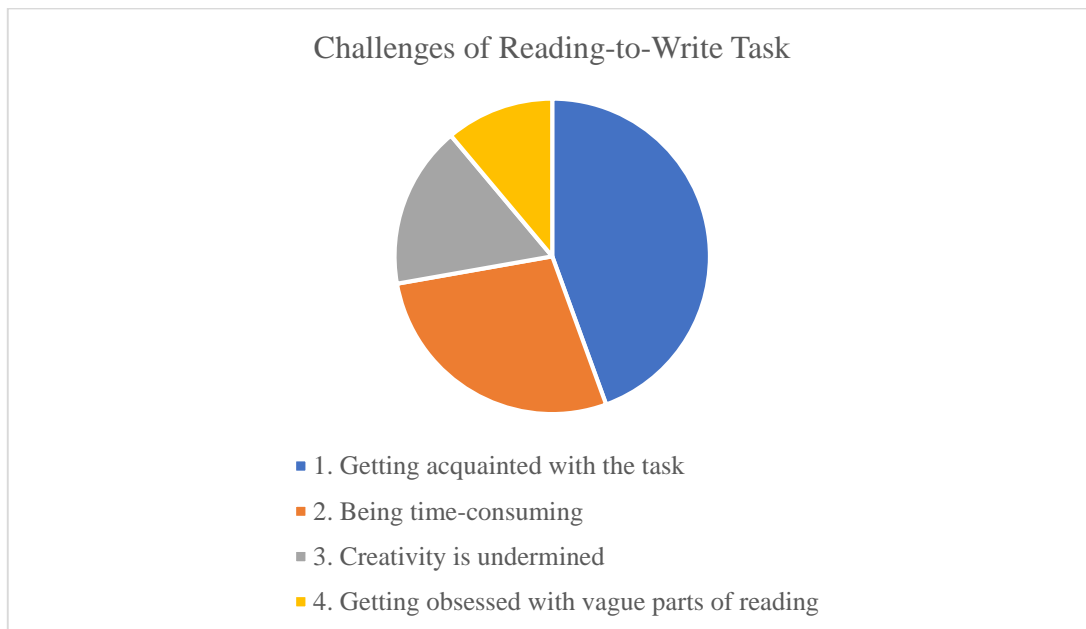
The following are examples of responses given by some of the participants to the question that was asked during the interview. One of the participants brought up the point of reducing anxiety, which is also important for increasing motivation and confidence:

Participant 1: When it came to the written activities, I always found myself to be quite anxious; however, with this sort of task, because there is more preparation time, this anxiety is lessened, and I am able to carry out the tasks with more confidence and more motivation.

Participant 2: Prior to this, I had a lot of trouble locating the appropriate language and grammatical structures for my work. To put it another way, I just couldn't come up with the

words I needed. However, before I even started writing for this class, I already knew most of the words that would be required of me.

Participant 3: I found this activity to be rather entertaining! Reading about and talking about the topic was an activity that a few of my classmates and I really enjoyed doing, and it helped to improve the amount of engagement time we had with the material that we needed to write about. The second topic that was discussed in this interview was the difficulties that learners face when completing activities that need reading to writing. During this portion of the survey, the participants discussed the difficulties that were inherent to the task as well as those that were caused by outside circumstances.



**Figure 1**  
*Student Perceptions of the Challenges of Reading to Write*

The most frequent challenge (80%) that they pointed out were getting acquainted with the task in the first couple of sessions. The next frequent challenge (50%) that students pointed out was the lack of time for accomplishing the entire task, because reading-to-write task is time-consuming. The next challenge they faced (30%) was that they believed this type of task

paralyzes their creativity because after reading, their minds get preoccupied with what they have read and it is hard for them to think differently. Finally, some participants (20%) said that if they do not understand a part of a text, they get obsessed with that part and it occupies a great deal of their cognitive capacity to think freely for writing.

**Table 9**  
**Main Challenges in Using Reading-to-write Task**

Challenge	percentage
1. Getting acquainted with the task and its process	80%
2. Being time-consuming	50%
3. Creativity is undermined	30%
4. Getting obsessed with vague parts of reading	20%

The following are examples of responses given by some of the participants to the question that was asked during the interview. One of the participants brought up the aspect of being familiar with the activity and the procedure involved:

Participant 4: Because the instructions were so difficult to follow, it was initially exceedingly challenging for me to comprehend the steps involved in completing the work. Although I struggled with it at first, I was able to get the hang of it after a few practice sessions.

Another participant voiced his opinion that the reading-to-writing activity required a significant amount of time:

Participant 5 said that this activity absorbed the majority of the time allotted for the class, which resulted in a decreased amount of time available for additional learning opportunities within the class.

Additionally, one of the participants voiced his concern that the nature of the exercise inhibited his ability to be creative when writing:

Participant 6: After reading, I found it difficult to think freely and creatively when it came to writing, which I believe was the most significant problem I experienced. Because of the reading portion of the assignment, I became preoccupied with ambiguous aspects of the reading that I couldn't comprehend, and as a result, I lost the ability to be creative in my writing.

## DISCUSSION

According to the findings of this research, the integrated reading-to-write task had a substantial impact on grammatical fluency and accuracy. On the other hand, this type of task did not produce a meaningful impact on the use of lexical sophistication and the use of grammatical complexity. Recent research has also investigated whether or not integrated reading-to-writing activities improve language skills,

specifically in terms of grammatical fluency and accuracy. The outcomes of this research have been inconsistent, with some studies reporting findings that are comparable to those of the present study, while others have shown that the influence was little.

In a study that was very similar to this one, Li and Li (2020) discovered that an integrated reading-to-write assignment had a beneficial effect on the grammatical accuracy of Chinese students learning English as a foreign language. According to the findings of the study, students who took part in an integrated reading-to-write activity exhibited significantly greater levels of grammatical accuracy than those who took part in a regular writing assignment. These findings are in line with those of the current study, which likewise discovered a significant impact of the integrated reading-to-write task on the participants' ability to accurately and fluently use correct grammar.

In another study that was quite comparable to this one, conducted by Yang (2016), it was discovered that a reading-to-write activity had a favorable impact on the quality of argumentative essays that were written by Korean EFL students. According to the findings of the study, students were better able to apply discourse markers, increase their level of cohesiveness, and develop more convincing arguments after participating in the integrated assignment.

In addition, Wang and Cheng (2017) conducted research in which they investigated how the performance of Taiwanese EFL students who were learning to write was affected by an integrated reading-to-write assignment. According to the findings of the study, the activity had a beneficial effect on the writing quality of the students, particularly with regard to their utilization of complex sentence structures and their grammatical precision.

On the other hand, several research have found that integrated reading-to-write activities

had a relatively small impact on linguistic competence. For example, Deng and Zhang (2019) discovered that while an integrated reading-to-write assignment increased the performance of learners' writing, it did not have a significant impact on the learners' grammatical precision. This was the conclusion of their study. In a similar vein, Shen and Yuan (2020) conducted research in which they found that an integrated reading-to-write activity had a minimal impact on the writing quality of Chinese EFL students.

Cummings et al. (2005) conducted a study to investigate the influence that a reading-to-write assignment has on the writing ability of ESL students. This study also revealed different results than the previous one. According to the findings of the study, participants' writing fluency and complexity, as well as their utilization of cohesive devices, improved as a result of the task. The study, however, did not report on the exact influence that the activity had on the participants' grammatical accuracy.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact that reading-to-write activities and writing-only tasks have on the writing performance of students learning English as a foreign language. The findings imply that the integrated reading-to-write strategy is more effective in enhancing writing fluency, syntactic complexity, and grammatical accuracy of EFL learners' writing posttest compared to the writing-only approach. This is because the integrated reading-to-write approach integrates reading into the writing process. This suggests that including reading activities as part of a curriculum for writing can assist students in developing their writing skills in a more efficient manner. In addition, the findings imply that incorporating discourse aspects into writing activities is one of the most effective ways for learners to dramatically improve their writing skills. In addition, the findings from the qualitative research showed that the vast majority of the students were pleased with the implementation of reading-to-write activities in the classroom, which suggests that this method is well-received by the pupils.

The combination of a task-based approach and a processual writing approach is indeed an exercise that has the potential to put the task-

based process writing approach into action. This was demonstrated by the significant results obtained by the writing-only group on writing performance and discursual characteristics such as fluency and grammatical accuracy. The experimental groups were able to demonstrate improved discursual qualities (Sotillo, 2000; Storch, 2011) based on the activities and processes of writing-based lessons that are taught and learnt in a cooperative environment. These lessons are taught and learned by the experimental groups.

In general, the findings of this study demonstrate how important it is for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing teaching to use a reading-to-write approach. For the purpose of assisting students in developing their writing abilities, instructors and curriculum designers might want to think about including reading activities into the writing curriculum. In addition, the research highlights the significance of discourse elements in writing assignments, indicating that educators should place a primary emphasis on teaching these features in order to improve students' abilities to write. The results of this research provide a significant contribution to the body of previous research on the topic of whether or not it is beneficial to include reading and writing skills in EFL writing training.

The pedagogical implications of an integrated reading/writing strategy have the potential to have major effects on a variety of stakeholders involved in the process of language acquisition. The implementation of this strategy demands a transition on the part of educators away from the traditional role of lecturers and toward that of learning facilitators and coordinators. They need to hone their skills in coming up with lesson plans and curricula that successfully combine reading and writing in order to be successful. In addition, teachers need to have a comprehensive comprehension of how to make effective use of reading materials to enhance the writing abilities of their pupils.

Students have the ability to increase their language competence in a more well-rounded manner through the use of this approach. Students are able to develop their ability to think critically, to analyze texts, and to write effectively when reading and writing are combined. They can improve both their reading comprehension

and their writing abilities simultaneously. They can develop their writing talents. Additionally, kids are able to improve their vocabulary, grammar, and language structure in a manner that is better contextualized and has more significance for them.

This strategy calls for a great amount of work and planning, particularly in the areas of curriculum and language pedagogy. At every stage of a student's education in a language, the reading and writing skills they develop should be integrated into the classroom experience. In order to accomplish this, the current curriculum would need to be revised so that they are in line with the aims and purposes of an approach that integrates reading and writing. In addition to that, it would need for the creation of brand-new pedagogical resources and evaluation methods that successfully combine reading and writing.

The fact that this study had very few restrictions meant that the researcher ought to proceed with caution when trying to extrapolate the findings to apply to other contexts. The first and most obvious drawback was the limited size of the sample. The number of participants was insufficient to make any broad generalizations, especially with regard to the gender variable. The current analysis, which focused on specific aspects that influence Iranian students' ability to learn English as a foreign language, did not meet the criteria for being considered a thorough study of the process of learning a foreign language. This may have had an effect on the validity of the research and caused a variety of problems for both the internal and the external validity of the investigation.

Regarding the suggestions for next research, this study addressed just two types of integrated writing tasks, namely the reading-to-write tasks and the writing-only tasks. Both of these types of activities are considered integrated writing tasks. It would be beneficial to conduct research on the metacognitive methods that EFL students use when completing different forms of integrated writing tasks, such as listening-to-write, listening-reading-to-write, summary writing, response writing, and so on. One possible piece of advice would be to expand the size of the sample and broaden the range of peo-

ple who took part in the study by inviting participants from a number of different universities and schools that offer instruction in English. In addition, forthcoming research could gain by being conducted in a manner that is both more rigorous and meticulous. There is also the possibility that the individuals who took part in this research were students at private language institutes. It is possible to propose that it be carried out in different settings, such as schools and universities. One further idea that could be considered is carrying out the research in a number of different skill levels, such as beginning, intermediate, and advanced.

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