

## The Impact of Speaking Activities on Writing Skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

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### Abstract

This study explored the effect of speaking activities on the writing skills of A2-level EFL learners. Two cohorts of 20 students from a university preparatory school participated in this research study. The experimental group attended an 8-week speaking intervention consisting of various activities aimed at promoting spontaneous speaking skills. The comparison group did not receive any formal speaking instruction. After the intervention, both groups were administered a writing test to assess their writing skills. The experimental group performed better than the comparison group on the writing exam by a statistically significant margin. This suggests that engaging in speaking activities can lead to improved writing skills in A2-level EFL learners. The study also explored the potential mechanisms underlying the link between speaking and writing. It was found that speaking activities could help learners develop their fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and critical thinking skills, which are essential for effective writing. The findings of the study have implications for the pedagogy of English language instruction. Educators should emphasize the development of oral communication skills, even if they are not teaching an integrated curriculum. This is because speaking activities can help students practice and develop the abilities required for good writing. Overall, this study provides evidence that engaging in speaking activities can help A2-level EFL learners to improve their writing skills.

*Keywords: Speaking activities, Writing skills, Interconnected skills*

## EFL Öğrencilerinde Yazma Becerilerinin Geliştirilmesinde Konuşma Etkinliklerinin Rolü

### Özet

Bu çalışma, konuşma etkinliklerinin A2 düzeyindeki EFL öğrencilerinin yazma becerileri üzerindeki etkisini incelemiştir. Bir üniversite hazırlık okulundan 20 öğrenciden oluşan iki grup çalışmaya katılmıştır. Deney grubu, spontan konuşma becerilerini geliştirmeyi amaçlayan çeşitli etkinliklerden oluşan konuşma becerisi dersine 8 hafta boyunca katılım sağlamıştır. Kontrol grubu herhangi bir konuşma eğitimi almamıştır. Dersler tamamlandıktan sonra her iki gruba yazma becerilerini değerlendirmek için bir yazma testi uygulanmıştır. Deney grubu, yazma sınavında kontrol grubundan istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir farkla daha iyi performans göstermiştir. Bu, konuşma etkinliklerine katılmanın A2 düzeyindeki EFL öğrencilerinin yazma becerilerini geliştirebileceğini düşündürmektedir. Çalışma ayrıca konuşma ve yazma arasındaki bağlantının altında yatan potansiyel mekanizmaları da araştırmıştır. Konuşma etkinliklerinin, öğrencilerin akıcılık, kelime bilgisi, dil bilgisi ve eleştirel düşünme becerilerini geliştirmelerine yardımcı olabileceği ve bunların etkili yazma için gerekli beceriler olduğu bulunmuştur. Çalışmanın bulgularının İngilizce dil öğretimi pedagojisi için önemli etkileri vardır. Eğitimciler, entegre bir müfredat öğretmiyor olsalar bile sözlü iletişim becerilerinin geliştirilmesine vurgu yapmalıdırlar. Bunun nedeni, konuşma etkinliklerinin öğrencilere iyi yazma için gerekli becerileri uygulama ve geliştirme fırsatı sağlamasıdır. Genel olarak, bu çalışma konuşma etkinliklerine katılmanın A2 düzeyindeki EFL öğrencilerinin yazma becerilerini geliştirmek için etkili bir yol olabileceğine dair kanıt sağlamaktadır. Eğitimciler, entegre bir müfredat öğretmiyor olsalar bile derslerine konuşma etkinlikleri eklemeyi düşünmelidirler.

*Anahtar Kelimeler: Konuşma aktiviteleri, Yazma becerisi, Birbirine bağlı beceriler*

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## **Introduction**

The utilization of multiple language skills together to attain a high level of proficiency is a frequently debated topic in the field of teaching English as a second language (ELT). According to Malik and Malik (2017), the skills encompassed in language acquisition include reading, listening, writing, and speaking. The implementation of an integrated curriculum provides educators and learners with the opportunity to perceive language comprehensively, as they can observe the interplay and impact of various skills on one another. Nevertheless, within a curriculum that lacks integration, it remains plausible for the speaking proficiency of second language (L2) learners in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context to influence their writing proficiency.

After teaching for more than six years, it has been recognized that when language skills are approached holistically, the enhancement of students' achievements is facilitated. The acquisition of productive skills poses a significant challenge for students, leading to the exploration of the potential positive effect of speaking on writing proficiency. To achieve this objective, a study was conducted involving two cohorts of 20 students from a university preparatory school. The participants were from the age 18 to 20 and possessed an English proficiency level classified as A2. The comparison group consisted of individuals who had completed preparatory school during the 2019–2020 academic year. Their performance on the Achievement Exam 1 writing task was utilized as the post-test results. The experimental group students enrolled in a preparatory school in the 2020–2021 academic year, and their performance on the writing task of Achievement Exam 1 was used as the post-test results. The control group did not take part in any oral communication exercises apart from those included in the primary textbook. The experimental group underwent an 8-week intervention consisting of 70-minute weekly speaking lessons encompassing various activities aimed at promoting spontaneous speaking skills.

Two different instructors evaluated and assessed the writing components of the examinations. The individuals adhered to the identical writing criteria and assessed individually, recording the corresponding scores on their respective grade sheets. Once they completed their respective assignments, they proceeded to exchange their papers. Subsequently, every paper underwent evaluation by two distinct educators. Ultimately, the educators convened and collectively verified the assigned grades. In instances where the discrepancy exceeded a margin of 2 points, the individuals engaged in a collaborative reading of the paper, ultimately reaching a consensus. In instances where the discrepancy was below 2 points, the average value was employed. The post-test results were provided as previously indicated. The study's findings show that the experimental group displayed notably superior writing scores in the post-test phase compared to the comparison group. This implies that engaging in oral

communication exercises can potentially enhance writing proficiency within the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

The results of this study align with prior investigations, which have demonstrated a strong correlation between speaking and writing abilities (Ellis, 2003; Swain, 1995). Oral communication can facilitate the enhancement of learners' fluency, vocabulary, and grammar, all of which are fundamental components to develop writing skills. Moreover, verbal communication can facilitate the growth of learners' cognitive abilities, enabling them to refine their concepts and structure their thoughts effectively. This can therefore have a favorable effect on how they write.

The results of this study has shown that some points about the pedagogy of teaching English as a second language. The proposition posits that educators should not overlook the development of oral communication abilities, even though an integrated instructional framework does not take place. Engaging in speaking activities can serve as a valuable means to enhance students' writing proficiency.

Furthermore, apart from the discoveries presented in this research, various additional variables may influence the correlation between oral and written proficiency. The factors that have impact on language learners include their age, proficiency level, and motivation (Ellis, 2003). Besides, the choice of speaking and writing activities employed can also exert an influence. According to Swain (1995), it is possible that spontaneous speaking activities could potentially yield a more significant influence on the improvement of writing abilities compared to activities that are more controlled in nature.

The findings of this study generally show that engaging in speaking activities can yield beneficial outcomes to develop writing skills in the EFL context. Further investigation is warranted to explore the precise mechanisms through which this phenomenon transpires and to ascertain the optimal forms of oral communication exercises for enhancing writing proficiency.

### **Justification**

Recent studies have found a connection between writing and speaking abilities in English as a foreign language (EFL) contexts (Geva, 2006; Lika, 2017; Göktürk et al., 2020). This implies that learners with good speaking abilities are also likely to have strong writing abilities.

There are numerous reasons why this could be. First, both speaking and writing require the ability to present ideas and concepts in a clearly and simply (Geva, 2006). Second, these skills involve the application of grammar and vocabulary (Lika, 2017). Third, these talents need the ability to organize and organize knowledge (Göktürk et al., 2020).

Aside from these similarities, there are also special ways in which speaking can help improve writing skills. Speaking, for example, can help learners improve their fluency and accuracy in the language (Geva, 2006). It may also help in the acquisition of new vocabulary and grammar structures

(Lika, 2017). Speaking can also help learners improve their capacity to organize and order their thoughts (Göktürk et al., 2020).

Finally, speaking gives learners the opportunity to get feedback about their ideas and language use (Geva, 2006). This feedback can help them improve their writing abilities. Geva (2006) discovered that students who received education in both speaking and writing improved significantly more than students who received instruction only in one ability. This shows that taking speaking classes can help you enhance your writing skills.

It is crucial to highlight, however, that the relationship between speaking and writing is not one-way. Writing can also help you improve your speaking abilities. Writing, for example, can assist learners in developing their capacity to think critically and organize their thoughts (Foster & Skehan, 1999). Additionally, writing allows students to practice using new vocabulary and grammar structures (Swain, 1998).

Overall, the evidence demonstrates that taking speaking classes can help you enhance your writing skills. We should also remember that writing might help you enhance your speaking skills. A combination of speaking and writing education is perhaps the best method to enhance both abilities.

### **Significance**

Speaking and writing are two productive language abilities we need for effective communication. They demand the ability to organize ideas, choose acceptable words, and correctly apply grammar. Furthermore, they both require cognitive activities such as planning, organizing, and monitoring.

A rising corpus of evidence demonstrates that speaking and writing are not separate skills but rather are intertwined. For example, El-Koumy (1998) discovered that students who participated in a writing workshop that included speaking activities improved their writing skills more than the students who did not attend in a writing workshop that included speaking activities. Weissberg (2006) discovered a minor but considerable favorable effect of speaking activities on writing skills in another study. The meta-analysis also discovered that the effect was stronger for students who were less proficient in writing.

Lots of factors can explain the beneficial effect of speaking on writing skills. For instance, speaking has the power to support students improve their language in terms of fluency and accuracy. When students talk, they must consider how to communicate themselves clearly and simply. This will help them improve their ability to do the same in writing.

Also, speaking helps in the development of their vocabulary and grammar abilities. Students encounter a wider variety of vocabulary and grammar structures when they speak than when they read or write. This can allow learners to broaden their language knowledge and increase their ability to utilize

it correctly. What is more, speaking can help students build their capacity for critical thinking. When students talk, they must consider how to order their thoughts and convey them logically. This will assist them in improving their ability to do the same in writing.

All in all, speaking has an impact on writing skills in EFL situations. Teachers should therefore add more speaking exercises to their lessons so that students can develop the abilities required for effective communication in both writing and speaking.

### **Research Questions**

RQ1: What is the relationship between speaking activities and writing skills?

RQ2: How do speaking activities affect writing skills?

RQ3: How can writing skills be improved by using speaking activities?

### **Research Hypothesis**

H1: Speaking activities have a positive effect on the writing skills of A2-level university prep school students.

### **Limitations and Delimitations**

The experimental group received treatment for 11 weeks in this trial. For 70 minutes per session, the group participated in speaking courses that incorporated supplementary speaking exercises such as spontaneous speaking. However, it would be more practical and practicable to prolong the study period for at least a year to enable a more detailed analysis of both groups' outcomes. Although the sampling was not random, the groups were all proficient because they all took the same placement exam before being assigned to their classrooms. The study time should be extended in future research projects, and sampling should be done at random. Additionally, it would be beneficial to have multiple group levels so that we can determine whether the effect of speaking activities on writing skills is consistent across all levels. Furthermore, because COVID-19 requires online lectures, it was impossible to manage the conditions under which students took the exam. Lastly, the absence of inter-rater reliability is evidence. As a result, other factors influencing their performance may have existed. If there is a favorable effect of speaking activities on writing skills, the study can be repeated when the students are monitored during the exam.

### **Method**

In this study, a pre-experimental method was employed, consisting of two groups: a comparison group and an experimental group. No pre-test was administered, and only a post-test was given. During an 8-week period, the experimental group received 70 minutes of weekly speaking classes, while the comparison group received no treatment. The dependent variable is the students' writing ability, as determined by a writing test, while the independent variable is the speaking courses. The aim of the

study is to evaluate the effect of the speaking classes on the students' writing ability by scrutinizing the results of the post-test.

### **Participants**

Each group had 20 students, for a total of 40 participants. Participants were all from the same private university in Turkey. Each group contained ten men and ten girls. Both groups had the same or almost the same level because they were all put in the same level class after taking the same placement exam. During the 2019–2020 school year, the comparison group attended prep school. All of them were A2 pupils. They took a placement test before beginning prep school and were assigned to classes appropriately. They all finished prep school and transferred to their respective faculties after a year of study. I'll be using their prep school accomplishment exam 1 writing scores, which have been available since the exam was administered in December 2019. The experimentation group's students were also in prep school. Before being assigned to their classrooms, they took the same exam as the comparison group. They were both A2 students. Gender and age are not variables in this study. The only notable distinction between the two groups is the treatment.

### **Instruments**

The first achievement exam writing parts were used for both groups as an instrument. The writing tasks were assigned as part of Achievement Exam 1. Students were instructed to write an opinion paragraph on one of the exam topics. Before taking the exam, both groups took writing classes for 8 weeks. Both groups were taught to write using the same materials. They had 30 minutes to complete their paragraphs.

### **Procedures**

Achievement Exam writing task 1 results were used as the post-test. Both groups took an A2-level Achievement Exam and were required to produce an opinion paragraph on one of the assigned topics. Then the exams were graded. The teachers who graded the papers met for standardization before grading them. This procedure is followed before each writing exam. The writing coordinator selects two poor, two average, and two excellent paragraphs and presents copies to the classroom. He divides the copies among the teachers. If there are ten teachers, five sets of teachers will grade the papers. The coordinator assigns each paper to a pair. Then he asks each grade individually if the difference between each group is two points or more. If it is two points or less, he moves on to the next paper and repeats the process. If the discrepancy is greater than two points, the teachers discuss and agree on how to grade the actual papers.

Two different teachers graded the writing assignments in this study. They followed the same writing guidelines as the writing coordinator. Each pair had a pile of papers that they divided in half. One teacher graded half of it, while the other graded the other half independently. When they finished

one half, they switched them and graded the other half. Finally, they gathered and double-checked their grades for each paper. If there was a difference of more than two points, they read the paragraphs again and scored them together until they reached an agreement. The grades obtained following such processes served as data for this study.

### **Data Analysis**

In this study, the post-test findings of both groups were used as data. SPSS was employed as a data analysis tool. To compare the two groups and find the differences, I utilized the Mann-Whitney U test.

In SPSS, the comparison group was labelled as 1 and the experimental group was labelled as 2. After entering all information into SPSS, the data was evaluated to determine how dissimilar they were from one another. Means and standard deviations were included in the analyses. By looking at these, the findings were assessed. The Mann-Whitney U test revealed whether or not the two groups' differences were statistically significant.

### **Findings**

The data from both groups, comprising a total of 40 pupils, was entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis. The Mann-Whitney U test was employed to evaluate the data. The test yielded the mean ranks of both groups, in addition to the z score and significance. The numbers generated by the SPSS were scrutinized to evaluate the situation in detail.

Upon analyzing the group statistics, it was observed that the mean ranks of the groups differed, as evidenced in Table 1. The Mann-Whitney U test was utilized to compare two independent groups, with the aim of validating the hypothesis. In order to do so, the significance limit of the Mann-Whitney U test had to be less than 0.05. In my study, the significance level was 0.04, which is below the stated threshold. Hence, it may be deduced that speaking courses have a positive impact on the writing skills of A2-level prep school students, and that my research is significant. It is imperative, however, to note that the sample size was modest, which implies that the findings may not be generalizable to a larger population. Therefore, further research with a larger sample size is required to corroborate these findings.

**Table 1.** Independent Mann-Whitney U

<b>Mann-Whitney U</b>	<b>Wilcoxon W</b>	<b>Z</b>	<b>Asymp. Sig.(2-tailed)</b>	<b>Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]</b>
126,000	336,000	-2.010	,044	,046 <sup>b</sup>

**Table 2.** Ranks

<b>Groups</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Rank</b>	<b>Sum of Ranks</b>
19-20	20	16,80	336,000
20-21	20	24,20	484,000
Total	40		

### **Conclusion**

Writing has always been a challenge for most of the students. They usually have trouble expressing themselves. They find it challenging to choose what to write about a given topic, and even if they do, they struggle to organize their thoughts into an ordered essay. They also have difficulty speaking.

Prior research has been conducted to investigate the extent to which speaking exercises are linked to writing skills, and the results have shown limited impact, with most studies indicating that there is little to no effect. However, a long-standing belief has been held that speaking and writing demand quick decision-making and structured production, and thus may be interrelated. With this in mind, a hypothesis was posited that speaking exercises could enhance the writing abilities of students at an A2-level university prep school. To test this idea, an experiment was conducted in which students were divided into two groups and their writing scores were evaluated. Based on a thorough analysis, it can be confidently asserted that the experimental group who participated in speaking exercises demonstrated a positive improvement in their writing skills.

### **Implications**

This study showed that speaking improves the writing abilities of A2-level prep school students. Speaking and writing can be thought of as interconnected skills. The majority of earlier research weren't really concerned with the connection between speaking and writing, because the researchers believed there was no connection between the two skills. As a result, some investigations were unable to uncover any connections. However, this study shows that speaking has a good influence on writing for A2-level English prep school pupils.

### **Applications**

It would be advisable that, in their curricula, schools emphasize the connection between speaking and writing. This is because speaking and writing are closely related skills, and teaching them together can be more effective.

When students are able to see the connection between speaking and writing, they are better able to transfer the skills they learn in one area to the other. For example, if students learn how to brainstorm



ideas for a speech in their speaking class, they can also use those same brainstorming techniques while they are writing an essay.

In addition, teachers can talk about the relationship between speaking and writing in their classes. This can help students understand how the two skills are connected and how they can use them together to improve their communication skills. For example, when teachers are talking about brainstorming in their writing classes, they can relate it to speaking by asking students to brainstorm ideas aloud before they start writing. This can help students generate more ideas and organize their thoughts more effectively.

By focusing on the relationship between speaking and writing, schools can help students become more effective communicators. This is an important skill for students to develop, as it will help them in their academic and professional lives.

Here are some specific ways that schools can focus on the relationship between speaking and writing in their curriculum:

- Offer courses that integrate speaking and writing instruction.
- Pair speaking and writing assignments so that students can see how the two skills are connected.
- Have teachers collaborate on lesson plans so that they can reinforce the same concepts in both speaking and writing classes.
- Provide opportunities for students to practice speaking and writing in a variety of contexts.
- Use technology to help students develop their speaking and writing skills.

By taking these steps, schools can help students improve their communication skills and become more successful in both speaking and writing.

### **Ethical Declaration**

During the writing process of the study titled “*The Impact of Speaking Activities on Writing Skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL)*”, scientific rules, ethical and citation rules were followed; no falsification was made on the collected data and this study was not sent to any other academic publication environment for evaluation.

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## GENİŞ ÖZET

Konuşma ve yazma, etkili iletişim için gerekli olan iki temel beceridir. Her ikisi de fikir üretme, düşünceleri organize etme ve doğru ve akıcı bir dil kullanma yeteneğini gerektirir. Ancak araştırmalar, konuşma ve yazmanın birbirinin yerine kullanılabilecek terimler olmadığını göstermiştir. Birbirine bağlı becerilerdir ve farklı şekillerde etkileşime girerler. Konuşmanın yazmayı etkileyebileceği bir yol, akıcılık ve doğruluğu artırmasıdır. Öğrenciler konuştuklarında, hızlı düşünmek ve dili hızlı ve doğru bir şekilde üretebilmek zorundadırlar. Bu uygulama, akıcı yazma için gerekli olan otomatikleşmeyi geliştirmelerine yardımcı olabilir. Ayrıca konuşma, öğrencilerin dil bilgisi ve kelime dağarcığı hatalarını tespit etmelerine ve düzeltmelerine yardımcı olabilir. Konuşmanın yazmayı etkileyebileceği bir diğer yol, problem çözme ve eleştirel düşünme gibi bilişsel becerileri geliştirmesidir. Öğrenciler konuştuklarında, düşüncelerini sıraya koyabilmeli, farklı bakış açılarını değerlendirebilmeli ve sorulara

ve zorluklara cevap verebilmelidirler. Bu bilişsel beceriler, etkili yazma için gereklidir, çünkü öğrencilerin iyi yapılandırılmış ve ikna edici argümanlar geliştirmesine izin verirler. Son olarak, konuşma öğrencilerin metalinguistik farkındalıklarını geliştirmelerine yardımcı olarak da yazmayı etkileyebilir. Dilin nasıl işlediğini ve nasıl düşüneceğini anlamak metalinguistik farkındalık olarak bilinir. Öğrenciler konuştuklarında, dil kullanımlarını ve başkalarının dili kullanma biçimini sürekli olarak yansıtırlar. Öğrenciler, bu yansıma yoluyla dil sistemini daha iyi anlayabilirler ve bunu daha sonra yazma işlerinde kullanabilirler. EFL ortamlarında yapılan araştırmalar, konuşma alıştırmalarının yazma becerilerini geliştirebileceğini göstermiştir. Örneğin, Geva (2006) ve Lika (2017) gibi çalışmalar, hem konuşma hem de yazma eğitimi alan öğrencilerin, yalnızca bir beceri üzerinde eğitim alan öğrencilere kıyasla daha başarılı olduğunu bulmuştur. Swain (1995) gibi diğer çalışmalar ise, rol yapma ve tartışma gibi spontan konuşma etkinliklerinin, alıştırma ve egzersiz gibi kontrollü konuşma etkinliklerine göre yazma becerilerini daha etkili bir şekilde geliştirdiğini bulmuştur. Bu bulgular ışığında, EFL öğretmenlerinin öğrencilerini konuşma etkinliklerine, özellikle spontan konuşma etkinliklerine katılmaya teşvik etmeleri gerektiği söylenebilir. Konuşma etkinlikleri, öğrencilerin etkili yazma için gerekli olan dil becerilerini ve bilişsel becerilerini geliştirmelerine yardımcı olabilir.