English Language & Literature Teaching, Vol.26, No.4 Winter 2020
https://doi.org/10.35828/etak.2020.26.4.39

The Effects of Integrative Tasks on Speaking Performances of Korean EFL Learners*

Suzy Kim
(Korea University of Media Arts)

Kim, Suzy (2020). The effects of integrative tasks on speaking performances of Korean EFL learners. *English Language & Literature Teaching*, *26*(4), 39-59.

This paper explored the effect of an integrative task on speaking performances of Korean EFL learners by shedding light on relationships between reading, writing and speaking. Fifty-one freshmen of college enrolled in a required class participated in this study. Over a treatment period of 14 weeks, the experimental group were provided with writing basic skills and writing tasks connected to reading. Meanwhile, the students of the control group were given journal articles for reading and practice exercises for comprehension. A pre and posttest, which consisted of three questions including describing, narrating, and problem-solving speaking tasks, and survey were administered and *t*-test was utilized for the analysis. As a result, the students who were involved in the integrative task showed significant differences in improvement of their L2 speaking proficiency. Both high and low level students in the treatment group also benefited from the integrative tasks in terms of speaking proficiencies. In addition, the analyses of the survey revealed that the students of the experimental group perceived the integrative tasks as a useful tool for enhancing speaking proficiency of L2. The findings imply that writing, reading and speaking are co-related and the integrative tasks can lead to promote L2 speaking ability.

[second language learning/integrative task/speaking ability/writing/reading]

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized world, fluency in speaking English becomes more crucial to better engage in communication with people all over the world. As growing its

* This work was supported by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea and the National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF-2019S1A5B5A07107380).

importance, many learners in Korean EFL contexts spend much of their time and efforts into learning English on a daily basis, hoping to be better speakers of L2. However, Zhang (2009) reports that speaking is a great challenge for foreign learners as a foreign language environment provides few opportunities to speak English outside of the classroom. Obviously, attaining a certain level of English speaking proficiency does not seem easy for them.

In accordance with the recognition of the significance of L2 speaking in the global era, there have been increasing studies regarding how EFL learners' speaking ability can be developed. Dekeyser (2011) argues that speaking proficiency can be developed through writing activities which encourage the repeated use of language forms, and this leads to automaticity of language use. Moreover, intensive training of written language can be used for improving comprehension and the quality of spoken language (Aaron & Joshi, 2006). In line with this, some researchers (Kim, 2000; Lee, 2006; Lee & Yoon, 2010; Na & Kim, 2014) believe that writing-based approach could be helpful for developing L2 speaking skill as there are similar syntactic patterns in writing and speaking. They concluded that speaking is teachable with various writing activities.

Regarding the speaking skill of L2 learners, on the other hand, Davies and Pearse (2000) state that reading will help learners to decipher new words that they need for conversations. Through reading, language learners will gain vocabulary knowledge, which will facilitate their speaking performance, and their usage of structure in the target language will develop. In a similar vein, other researchers (Cho & Krashen, 1994; Dhoi, 2014; Moon, 2013) illustrate that reading is an effective way for L2 learners to improve their speaking skills. Their findings suggest that educators should put reading into their curriculum for developing speaking proficiency.

As described above, it seems apparent that both reading and writing have a positive impact on L2 speaking. Based on the previous studies on L2 speaking, an assumption is drawn that an integrative approach to reading and writing could affect speaking proficiency of L2 learners. This would create synergistic effects beyond reading or writing. In spite of the effectiveness of reading and writing on L2 speaking, there have been few attempts to explore the effects of an integrative approach on L2 speaking. Therefore, this present study was conducted under the assumption, considering the relationships between reading, writing and speaking. The research questions were formulated as follows.

1) Does the integrative task have an impact on speaking performances of Korean EFL learners?

2) How does the integrative task affect speaking performances of Korean EFL learners at different levels compared the non-integrative task?
3) How do Korean EFL learners perceive the effect of the integrative task on their speaking performances?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Integrative Approach

Integrative teaching in SLA combines one language skill with other language skill such as reading-writing and listening-speaking. In accordance with Hirvela (2004), reading provides a vital source of linguistic and rhetorical input for writing. Reading, like writing, is an act of composing so that when teachers teach writing skills, they have occasions for teaching reading skills as well. Thus, researchers suggest that ESL or L2 teachers should employ strategic methods to integrate the concept into teaching, considering both reading and writing as processes in which students interact with texts meaningfully. Reading to write and writing to read can be the facilitative strategies for instruction in L2 classrooms. In addition, Shanahan (2000) argues that reading and writing are connected and quite similar, and thus their developments should be parallel each other closely. Similarly, literacy can be developed most efficiently when reading and writing are taught together in the classroom (Grabe, 2004).

A recent empirical study reported that reading and writing are interrelated and interdependent. Choi and Sung (2006) conducted research on the journal writing of Korean high school EFL students. They divided participants into three groups: reading, writing, and journal writing. Their findings indicate that students writing journal entries about what they had read positively affected their writing development compared to the other two groups.

In regard with integrative instruction, summary writing has received attention as an effective method for learning reading and writing. An increasing number of studies have reported positive effects of summarizing on writing abilities (Carson, Carrels, Silberstein, Kroll & Kuehn, 1990; Kim, 2010; Taylor & Beach, 1984).

Lee and Min (2010) investigated the effect of summary writing to improve reading comprehension and develop learners' writing abilities. The learners were taught basic rules for summarizing during half of the treatment period and then practiced summarizing using various articles from English newspaper during the other half. The findings revealed that summary writing was beneficial for improving learners' overall reading writing skills.

Similarly, Oh (2010) investigated the influences of summarization as a post reading activity on EFL learners' reading and writing abilities. The students who participated in the study was made of 106 high school students. The results indicated that summary writing tasks assisted the learners to write a more coherent summary and increased their reading comprehension skill.

In short, summary writing is beneficial in enhancing L2 learners' reading and writing skills. However, it seems that summary writing is a complex activity for English low - level students to put it into practice. In order to teach summarizing effectively teach, Hughes (2003) suggested that when using reading materials for students, L2 language teachers need to consider in selecting the materials that can be completely understood by all the students and not too long.

2. L2 Speaking Ability

Speaking is a key to communicate and interact between people in the social context. According to Ur (1996, p.120), "of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), speaking seems intuitively the most important". When people learn their native languages, formal processes are automatic. People do not need to make any effort to acquire their native languages, but they become fluent speakers. However, acquiring foreign languages needs effort as well as patience and much time. Lightbown (2000) states that the most important reason for incomplete acquisition in L2 learning contexts is probably the lack of time available for contact with the language. Fluent speaking is a primary goal for most language learners, but it is not easy for those in EFL settings where the target language is scarcely used

Concerning speaking skills, August and Shanahan (2008) also argues that it is important to build greater knowledge of oral English for reading, and literacy tools provided by instruction can be used to maximum advantages for second language students. In line with this, Schelppegrell and Colombi (2002) point out that second language learners practice using them in their discourses and rely on their own strategies to foster their speaking skills after they acquire linguistic features through the reading. Reading can play a vital role to develop speaking skills. Students who read a lot are more likely to speak well. Students via reading develop in both accuracy and fluency of expressions in their speaking.

Likewise, Kraschen and Terrell (1983) demonstrate that reading enables learners to comprehend better which is an influential factor that can develop speaking competence they need for conversations. Through reading, language learners can learn vocabulary knowledge that may facilitate their speaking performance and their usage of syntactic structure in the target language. Vocabulary knowledge and grammar are

two essential factors of foreign language learning and they both affect learners' speaking performance.

Laufer (1997) furthermore, supported the idea that learners will improve their speaking competence if they have better vocabulary knowledge that they can get through reading. Learners will easily comprehend in the foreign language if they advance their ability to guess the meanings of words from context that will promote their speaking performance.

As for reading and speaking, a recent empirical study reported that extensive reading could be one of the meaningful ways to improve learners' speaking skill. Choi (2014) examined the influences of extensive reading of children's literature on L2 learners' oral proficiencies. The participants in the study were provided to read children's literature of elementary to high school levels over six months. The results showed that extensive reading is an effective way to improve their oral competence and it aids second language learners to develop their ability to understand implied meaning words and enable them to express their ideas and thoughts.

Moreover, Moon (2013) examined the effects of narrative texts to freshman of high school on their speaking abilities. Sixty students were given two different types of narrative and expository texts over sixteen class periods. The experimental group was provided with narrative text, while the control group was with expository text. Some communicative tasks such as jigsaw were given to the students of both groups. As a result, the students in the experimental group achieved higher scores than those in the control group in speaking, meaning a statistically significant difference. It is clear that the narrative text was more helpful as an input of spoken language. However, the findings suggested that reading influenced the speaking proficiency of the students no matter what types of text it is and narrative texts can be a powerful tool for L2 speaking.

In contrast with this, when it comes to speaking skill of L2, Vygotsky (1997) contends that oral and written languages have a number of commonalities since both are forms of speech. Any spoken word can be written down and used in the form of written speech and follow the same rules of grammar to make the linguistic signs realize meaning. In line with this, Collins (1982) comments that constructing meaning when using written letters is analogous in the process of spoken language. Lawrence (1983) acknowledges that speakers and writers both use language to provide an audience with the meaning. The same lexicons and the same syntactic structures with minor variations are used by both speakers and writers.

On the other hand, other researchers insist that writing displays different characteristics compared with speaking. Nunan (2000) holds the view that written language is more structured while spoken language is less structured. The reason is that spoken language represents unedited language and appears less structured in transcripts.

Nonetheless, many empirical studies showed that speaking and writing are positively correlated. Cleland and Pickering (2006) conducted a study in which they tried to investigate the mechanisms used in writing and speaking and constructing different syntactic patterns. The results showed that the syntactic operation rooted in both spoken and written production were identical.

In the light of Korean EFL learning advocacy, Lee (2006) carried out a study to compare Korean EFL learners' oral productions with their compositions. The results revealed that the oral competence in their presentations of EFL college students heavily depends on how much they are able to write, meaning writing and speaking skills are closely co-related. Therefore, the findings suggested that teachers do not need to separate instructing how to speak from how to write and use the same strategies to aid learners improve their writing and speaking skills.

In addition, Lee and Yoon (2010) explored the influences of writing activities on learners' speaking skills. They conducted an in-depth qualitative study with eight students over twenty classes for eight weeks. The study examined any difference in improvement in speaking performance and any qualitative change in discussion and speech activity between a writing-speaking group and speaking only group. According to the result of the study, writing activities had a positive effect on speaking performance in terms of accuracy and fluency. It also showed that there is a qualitative difference in the two groups' speaking performance. It can be concluded that writing and speaking were closely related to each other although there are different aspects of speaking and writing based on the results of a number of studies on L2 speaking.

III. METHOD

1. Participants

The participants in this study included seventy-nine students enrolling in a course, General English 1. The course was held in a H college, Chungnam province and began in spring, 2020. Two classes of four allotted to the researcher were selected for the study. All of the participants were taking a mandatory English course which was mainly offered to freshman of college as a requirement. The two classes were randomly assigned into two groups of the study, but the data of twenty-eight students was excluded for the analysis because of their problems with class attendance. Therefore, the fifty-one students were considered as subjects: the experimental (n = 25, 9 males and 16 females), and the control (n = 26, 17 males and 9 females). The

students of both groups ranged in age from 19 to 23 and mainly majored in media arts. None of them had experience of studying abroad, nor did have experience of writing in English before. The participants were in general considered to be basic users of English, which was confirmed via administering the mock TOEIC (Pagoda, 2017). Based on 20 items of TOEIC reading comprehension test from part 5 and 6, most of the students' scores ranged from 7 to 12 out of 20 points. This indicated a low proficiency level of English. The students of the experimental group engaged in the instruction focusing on the integrative task, while the students of the control group received the instruction with none-integrative task. Based on the scores of TOEIC, both groups were further divided into high and low levels of students to see if the English speaking proficiency of the participants was affected by their levels. The students who earned higher scores than the mean score of the TOEIC were assigned to the high level group and those who earned less than mean score were assigned to the low level. The experimental group consisted of twenty-five students (High: 11 and Low: 14) and the control group consisted of twenty-six (High: 11 and Low: 15). The mean score of the TOEIC test earned by the control group was 11.0 and that of the experimental group was 11.4 out of 20 points of the total test score.

Moreover, in order to examine the extent to which the experimental and control group students were homogeneous, independent t-test was conducted. This ensured that the two groups had similar speaking proficiencies at the onset of the data collection. No significant difference was found between the control group (M = 196.81, SD = 13.70) and the experimental group (M = 200.44, SD = 15.11; t = .901, p = .372).

As classroom materials for reading, the journals of *Annie's mailbox* from a newspaper were utilized. All of the journals selected from newspaper have a colloquial style with familiar topics and are written by letter form. The titles of journal articles used for the reading texts are shown in Table 1 below. For writing, *Ready to Write* was used for the summary writing to provide basic writing skills such as how to paraphrase and how to summarize. Each course lasted for 15 weeks, but all classes were done by online due to Covid-19 pandemic.

TABLE 1

Titles of the Reading Text

Journal Articles	
1. Imposing Friend	6. Fighting Off Noise
2. Love or Family	7. Counting One's Blessings
3. Hiding behind a Smile	8. New Wrinkle with My Daughter
4. Chatterbox Chum	9. Hope for My Friend
5. No Additional Tip	10. One Who Got Away

2. Procedures

At the beginning of the semester all the participants of both experimental and the control group took a pretest to assess speaking skills during the regular class period. As the college decided to operate the semester with non-face-to-face classes due to the global corona-virus epidemic, all classes were rapidly adopted to video lectures and Google classrooms. The class period was two hours and met once a week over 15 weeks. In the first week, orientation was conducted on video, and then the students in the control and experimental groups took a mock TOEIC test posted on the Google classroom as a diagnostic test. Although the students had already been assessed as low level learners based on TOEIC scores, during the first period of the second week, the pretest was administered to ensure the homogeneity of students in the control and experimental groups in terms of their speaking proficiency. After taking a pretest, the students of the experimental group received writing explanations over the first three weeks: how to organize, paraphrase, summarize and express opinions. From the fourth week, the students of the experimental group were asked to summarize what they read and write their opinions to suggest solutions in a response journals.

On the other hand, the students of the control group read the same journals as the experimental group's but practiced exercises for checking the comprehension. The exercises were such as true and false and vocabulary quizzes, and translations into Korean the same as any typical English class in Korea. The students of both groups were assigned to read journals selected from the newspaper, which were distributed by Google docs but they completed different activities afterwards.

All assignments of the students both in the experimental and control groups were supposed to be submitted after task completion. Feedback by Google docs was provided from the researcher on each writing assignment of the students in the experimental group. In week 14, a week before final exam the participants of both groups took the speaking posttest in each class and a survey questionnaire was given to the experimental group to see how perceived the effects of the integrative task on their speaking proficiency. The research procedure is summarized in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2

Description of the Procedure

	Experimental (Integrative)	Control (Non-integrative)
Week 1	Diagnostic Test	
Week 2-3	-Speaking pretest -Learning basic writing skills	-Speaking pretest
Week 4-13	-Reading journals -Summary and response writing -Instructor feedback	-Reading journals -Doing activities: quizzes
Week 14	Speaking posttest and survey	

3. Data Collection

In order to measure the development of the participants' speaking proficiency, a pretest and a posttest were administered. The questions of the tests were adopted from OPIc SOS (Credu, 2014). The pretest was used as a diagnostic tool to determine the participants' speaking proficiency whereas the posttest was used to measure the progress that each student had made. Pre and posttests of the speaking abilities consisted of all three questions asking the students to describe families and memories in school, and express opinions about solving problems. All the questions for a speaking test were posted in the Google classroom. Before the test, guidelines for the test were also distributed for the test takers to acknowledge how to record their answers by mobile phones. All of the participants of the both groups were assigned to record their answers to all the questions within 15 minutes and email it at the designated time. In the second week of the class the speaking pretest was conducted and in the fourteenth week the speaking posttest with the same format and survey were conducted. The speaking pre and posttest were assessed by an English native speaker. He has doctorate in English literature and has been teaching English for decades at college in Korea. In this study, the participants' speaking samples were analyzed and scored by the rubric adopted from the analytic scoring (Jacobs, Zinkgraf, Wormouth, Hartfiel & Hughey, 1981) and partly Brown's (2001). The rubric from Jacobs et al., (1981) consists of five different rating categories. However, language use and mechanics of the rubric were replaced with grammar and fluency respectively from Brown's for the purpose of the study. The perfect score of speaking was 300 points for all the three questions. The data was analyzed using SPSS 18 for descriptive analysis and an independent samples t-test was employed.

A survey questionnaire was designed to examine how Korean EFL learners perceive integrative tasks. The survey classified into two sections: personal backgrounds and perceptions about integrative tasks. In the fourteenth week, the survey was administered within regular class hours. The data were collected using the Google Survey platform. In the first section, participants proceeded to complete the personal background form which aimed to collect demographic information on participants, including name, age, school year, gender, major and experiences of living in English speaking countries and of writing in English. In the second section, the participants were asked to answer a total of 12 questions about the integrative task. The 10 items of them were Likert scale and the questions were about how the treatment helped the participants improve their English speaking proficiency. The items were scored on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The other two items were open-ended questions

asking the attitudes of the participants towards the integrative task. The items asked the participants to discuss the pros and cons of the integrative task. The reliability of the questionnaire was tested to ensure the internal consistency of the questions in survey, which was measured with using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient, and it was determined to be highly reliable with a value of 832.7.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An independent samples *t*-test was used to ensure that two groups had similar speaking proficiencies at the onset of the data collection. No significant difference was found between the experimental (M = 200.44, SD = 15.11) and the control group (M = 196.86, SD = 13.70; $t = .901$, $p = .372$) in terms of their speaking proficiencies before the treatment. The descriptive statistics of their scores and *t*-test results in both speaking pretest are described in Table 3.

TABLE 3

Results of Speaking Pretest

		Pre-test		*df*	*t*	*p*
		Mean	SD			
Speaking	Experimental	200.44	15.11	49	.901	.372
	Control	196.81	13.70			

$p < .05$

1. Effects of Integrative Tasks on Speaking

The first research question was whether integrative tasks have an impact on the speaking performances of Korean EFL learners. *t*-test was conducted to compare test scores attained by the experimental and control group students. The mean scores and standard deviations for speaking posttest are illustrated below.

As summarized in Table 4, the mean score of the experimental group was 225.84(SD = 13.90) and that of the control group was 201.15(SD = 14.06). Based on the results, the difference of the gain scores was significant ($t = 6.30$, $p = .000$). Therefore, it can be concluded that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in terms of speaking proficiency. Besides, it can be assumed that the integrative task influenced the speaking performances of Korean EFL college students.

TABLE 4

Results of Speaking Posttest

Group	Post-test Mean	Post-test SD	*df*	*t*	*p*
Experimental	225.84	13.90	49	6.30	.000
Control	201.15	14.06			

$p < .05$

To investigate the effects of the integrative tasks on speaking, the mean scores of both groups in five dimensions of speaking posttests were compared. As shown in Table 5, the mean score of the experimental group was 47.12 (SD = 3.05) in the content of five language domains. In organization domain, the mean score of experimental and control group was 45.88 (SD = 2.26) and 42.26(SD = 2.78) respectively. The mean score of the experimental group was 44.4(SD = 4.22) in vocabulary, 46.48 (SD = 3.02) in gramma, and 41.97 (SD = 4.38) in fluency. The mean score of the control group was 42.26 (SD = 2.78) in organization, 39.84 (SD = 3.95) in vocabulary, 38.46 (SD = 5.21) in grammar, and 37.42 (SD = 4.49) in fluency. Moreover, Table 5 shows the statistical significance in all five dimensions. According to the results, significant differences were reported in content (t = 5.08, p = .000), organization (t = 5.02, p = .000), vocabulary (t = 3.98, p = .000), grammar (t = 6.68, p = .000), and fluency (t = 3.65, p = .001). Overall the experimental group students noticeably outperformed in all dimensions of speaking compared to the non-integrative task.

TABLE 5

Results of Speaking Posttest in Five Dimensions

Domain	Group	Post-test Mean	Post-test SD	*t*	*p*
Content	Exp	47.12	3.05	5.08	.002
	Con	43.15	2.57		
Organization	Exp	45.88	2.26	5.02	.000
	Con	42.26	2.78		
Vocabulary	Exp	44.40	4.22	3.98	.000
	Con	39.84	3.95		
Grammar	Exp	46.84	3.02	6.68	.000
	Con	38.46	5.21		
Fluency	Exp	41.97	4.38	3.65	.001
	Con	37.42	4.49		

$p < .05$

The results of this study show that the integrative tasks had an effect on improving students' speaking ability. The following spotlights the discussion on the effectiveness of the integrative tasks. First of all, the students' speaking ability of the experimental group

was considerably improved in the content of the five dimensions. It may be partly because reading texts with familiar topics have given the students opportunities to learn how to narrate or describe their daily lives and naturally learn the syntactic patterns. Secondly, integrative tasks was effective in learning how to organize paragraphs. Similar to the results of the content domain, there was a clear improvement in the organization. The mean score of the experimental group students in the posttest shows an apparent improvement (t = 5.02, p <. 05). In general, the results indicated that the integrative tasks also aided the students to learn organization skills of speaking. Thirdly, writing activities based on reading such as summarizing journal articles and writing opinions would have contributed to the students' increased vocabulary knowledge and would have helped appropriate use in accordance with the various contexts. On the basis of the results, all these writing activities in connected with reading seemed valuable for the students to expand their vocabulary knowledge for their better speaking. Fourthly, feedback was offered to every written product by the instructor and it seemed beneficial for the students to reduce grammatical errors. Finally, regular writing practice with reading integrated into the treatment was viewed as influential for the students' fluent speaking. The findings echo Brown's (2001) claims that writing practice can assist learners to store whatever they learn in their long term memory including learning vocabulary, grammar and patterns.

Based on the results of this study, it can be interpreted that integrative tasks are beneficial in speaking enhancement at basic levels of language proficiency and the experimental group benefited from the integrative tasks in improving speaking proficiencies. Writing practice is thus assumed to be an influential factor in promoting the speaking ability of the experimental group. The result of this study may support the findings of the previous studies (Kim, 2000; Lee, 2006; Na & Kim, 2014; Zhu, 2007). As revealed in the previous studies, this present study concerning the relationships between writing and speaking have pointed out that writing and speaking are interrelated and co-related closely, leading to promotion of learners' speaking proficiency.

2. Effects of Integrative Tasks at Different Levels

The second research question addressed the way the integrative tasks affect speaking performances of Korean EFL learners at different proficiency levels compared to the non-integrative tasks. The speaking posttest scores by level of both experimental and control group were described in Table 6. It presents the mean scores and standard deviations of the integrative task of the speaking posttest. The experimental group earned higher scores on the speaking posttest than the control

group. The experimental group scored 225.84 while the control group scored 201.15. In the experimental group, high level students had great gains than low level students. The high level students achieved 234.36 while the low level students scored 219.14. Likewise, in the control group, high level students earned higher score than low level students. The high and low level students scored 210 and 192.20 respectively.

TABLE 6

Descriptive Statistics for Speaking Posttest Scores by Levels

Group	Level	N	M	SD
Experimental	High	11	234.36	12.56
	Low	14	219.14	10.96
	Total	25	225.84	13.90
Control	High	11	210.00	18.49
	Low	15	192.20	9.67
	Total	26	201.15	14.05

Independent *t*-test was conducted to compare test scores attained by the experimental and control group students with different proficiency level. Table 7 shows the results of *t*-test. For both high and low level students, the integrative task was significantly effective in speaking performance (high level, $t = 3.588$, $p = .002$; low level, $t = 7.027$, $p = .000$). This means that the integrative task was significantly more effective for high and low level students in the experimental group than those who completed the non-integrative task.

TABLE 7

Results of Speaking Posttest by Levels

Level	Group	N	M	SD	*t*	*p*
High	Exp	11	234.36	12.86	3.588	.002
	Con	11	210.00	18.49		
Low	Exp	14	219.14	10.96	7.027	.000
	Con	15	192.20	9.68		

$p <. 05$

As shown in Table 8, speaking posttest scores of both groups in five dimensions were compared. Table 8 shows *t*-test results of two groups' scores in five dimensions of speaking posttest. As indicated, high level students in the experimental group performed significantly better than those in the control group in five dimensions of speaking posttest: 47.72(SD = 3.19) in content, 46.72 (SD = 2.05) in organization, 46.74 (SD = 2.67), 46.73 (SD = 2.67) in vocabulary, 48.35 (SD = 43.45) in grammar, and 44.73 (SD = 3.44) in fluency. Likewise, low level students in the experimental group also

performed significantly better than those in the control group in all the five dimensions as well: M = 46.24, SD = 2.97 in content; M = 45.21, SD = 2.26 in organization; M = 42.58, SD = 4.38. in vocabulary; M = 44.93, SD = 1.98 in grammar; M = 39.79, SD = 3.85 in fluency. This suggests that the integrative tasks were effective for both high and low level students in the experimental group to increase their speaking proficiency in terms in the five dimensions of language. They improved in terms of considering what to tell for speaking tasks with grammar that is more accurate and fluent vocabulary as well as with using a more appropriate way. Therefore, the experimental group as a whole improved their speaking ability in general with the help of the integrative tasks.

TABLE 8

Results of Speaking Posttest in Five Dimensions by Levels

Dimension	Group	Level							
		High Level				Low Level			
		M	SD	*t*	*P*	M	SD	*t*	*P*
Content	Exp	47.72	3.19	3.082	.006	46.64	2.97	4.002	.001
	Con	44.09	2.26			42.46	2.64		
Organization	Exp	46.72	2.05	3.131	.005	45.21	2.26	4.567	.000
	Con	43.90	2.17			41.07	2.60		
Vocabulary	Exp	46.73	2.67	3.255	.004	42.58	4.38	3.006	.000
	Con	41.90	4.11			38.33	3.15		
Grammar	Exp	48.35	3.01	4.798	.000	44.93	1.98	9.393	.000
	Con	43.45	1.69			34.80	3.55		
Fluency	Exp	44.73	3.44	3.282	.004	39.79	3.85	2.772	.010
	Con	40.00	3.31			35.53	4.37		

$p <. 05$

3. Participants' Attitude toward Integrative Tasks

1) Questionnaire

In order to examine the participants' perspectives of integrative task, they were asked to complete a questionnaire at the end of the course. They rated their opinions toward the use of integrative task on a five-rating scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In addition, the participants responded to the pros cons on the task. Table 9 shows the results of questionnaires.

TABLE 9

Results of Questionnaire

Questions	Agree --- Disagree					M
	5	4	3	2	1	
1. Journals with familiar topics gave more interests and motivated to speak.	6 (24%)	15 (60%)	3 (12%)	1 (4.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4.04
2. Daily lives stories helped perform descriptive and narrative speaking task	6 (24%)	9 (36%)	9 (36%)	1 (4.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.80
3. Helpful to increase vocabulary knowledge and expressions for speaking	8 (32%)	9 (36%)	7 (28%)	1 (4.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.96
4. Helpful in acquiring speaking accuracy	5 (20%)	8 (32%)	10 (40%)	2 (8.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.64
5. Helpful in acquiring speaking fluency	4 (16%)	10 (40%)	7 (28%)	4 (16%)	0 (0.0%)	3.56
6. Feedback was helpful to increase speaking accuracy.	10 (40%)	8 (32%)	7 (28%)	0 (0%)	0 (0.0%)	4.12
7. Writing own opinions was helpful for performing speaking tasks.	6 (24%)	11 (44%)	9 (36%)	0 (0%)	0 (0.0%)	4.04
8. Summary writing was helpful for performing problem-solving speaking tasks.	8 (32%)	11 (44%)	6 (24%)	0 (0%)	0 (0.0%)	4.08
9. Writing activities were helpful to increase vocabulary knowledge and expressions for speaking.	9 (36%)	9 (36%)	7 (28%)	0 (0%)	0 (0.0%)	4.08
10. All writing activities were helpful to speak fluently.	7 (28%)	12 (48%)	3 (12%)	3 (12%)	0 (0.0%)	3.92

Regarding effects of integrative tasks on speaking, the participants were asked to answer. With question 1, *did reading journals articles with familiar topics give more interests and motivate to speak?* Six participants (24%) responded ‘strongly agree’ and another 15 students (24%) indicated ‘agree’ and the other 3 students (12%) responded ‘almost agree’, and the only participant ‘disagree’ respectively. In their answer to question 2, *did reading journal articles and daily lives stories help perform narrative and descriptive speaking tasks?* Nine students (36%) marked ‘agree’ and another 9 also responded ‘almost agree’, the other 6 students (32%) ‘strongly agree’ and the only student ‘disagree’ respectively. For the third question asking *whether reading was helpful to increase vocabulary knowledge and expressions in terms of speaking proficiency*, 8 students (32%) responded ‘strongly agree’ and another 9 (36%) ‘agree’, the other 7(28%) responded ‘almost agree’, and the only student (1.4%) chose ‘disagree’. Concerning question 4 asking about *their improved speaking accuracy*, 5 students (20%) indicated ‘strongly agree’, 8 students (32%) and 10 (40%) indicated ‘agree’ and ‘almost

agree', and one participant marked 'disagree'. With question 5, *was reading helpful in acquiring speaking fluency*? Less half than students (40%) showed their satisfaction by marking 'agree', and four and 7 participants indicated 'strongly agree' and 'almost agree' correspondingly; however, the only participant disagreed with that.

Related to writing, the participants were also asked to answer. With question 6 asking *whether feedback was helpful to improve their speaking accuracy*, 10 participants (40%) answered 'strongly agree', 32% of them 'agree', followed by 28% of participants 'almost agree'. For question 7, 32% of the participants strongly agreed that *writing own opinions was helpful for performing speaking tasks.* Eleven of the other respondents indicated 'agree' and 'almost agree' for the rest (36%) respectively. For question 8, asking about *summary writing,* 32% of the participants strongly agreed that it was helpful for performing a problem-solving speaking task. Other respondents showed 'agree' (44%) and 'almost agree' (36%), respectively. Concerning question 9, *writing activities were helpful to increase vocabulary knowledge and expressions for speaking*, 40% of the participants responded 'agree' and 9 of the rest 'strongly agree' and 28% of them marked 'almost agree'. For question 10 dealing with *fluent speaking,* nearly half of the participants (48%) agreed that writing practice was helpful for speaking fluency, 28% (strongly agree) and 12% (almost agree) of the participants responded respectively but 12% of them disagreed with it.

2) Open-Ended Questions

The participants responded to the pros and cons about integrative tasks and they are summarized in Table 10. The number in Table indicates the number of reasons when the students answered the question. As for cons, the participants were positive about acquiring grammar and vocabulary from reading and writing. Some of the participants concurred that increased vocabulary and grammar knowledge made them become confident in writing. They also praised that regular writing activities were helpful to perform speaking tasks. Besides, some participants expressed that teacher feedback was useful for them to aware which part of the grammar they are weak; consequently, it led them to acquire accuracy of writing and speaking. In addition, some stated that reading journals with familiar topics gave more interests to read and write and made it easy to understand grammar and syntax, and to learn vocabulary usages appropriated in the contexts. Unlike positive responses on integrative tasks, some of the participants complained that writing practice was consuming work requiring a lot of time and efforts. Moreover, they revealed that they felt uncomfortable to write in English because of the absence of vocabulary and grammar. Furthermore, a few students expressed that it was not easy for them to come up ideas to give proper opinions in

various contexts and feel complicated to write because of their poor writing. However, a majority of the participants positively viewed that integrative tasks were beneficial for improving their writing and speaking proficiency.

TABLE 10
Pros and Cons on Integrative Tasks

		Student No.
Pros	- acquiring grammar rules and vocabulary from reading and writing	12
	- selected journals with familiar topic gave more interests for reading	3
	- useful to perform speaking tasks through regular writing practice	8
	- using critical responses to written products	4
	- gaining confidence in writing	2
	-learning fundamental writing skills	5
Cons	-not easy to write because of absence of vocabulary and grammar	10
	-difficult to give proper opinions in a variety of contexts	3
	-felt too complex to write because of poor writing	8
	-consuming a lot of time	7

V. CONCLUSION

The present study explored whether the integrative tasks can benefit students' speaking improvement in L2. Specifically, it considered the relationships between reading, writing and speaking. The results showed that integrative reading-writing tasks had a positive effect on improving students' speaking proficiency. The students in the experimental group outperformed those in the control group in all speaking tasks: descriptive, narrative, and problem-solving. Such a result may be because regular writing practices in connection with reading helped the students perform speaking tasks better. It is consistent with the results of the previous studies on writing and speaking (Kim, 2000; Lee, 2006; Lee & Yoon, 2010; Na & Kim, 2014). Their finding suggested that speaking can be taught with various writing activities.

This study also attempted to explore the effect of the integrative tasks on the speaking performances of L2 learners at different levels. The results revealed that both high and low in the experimental group significantly perform better than the control group in speaking performance. Based on the *t*-test result, both high and low level students in the experimental group benefited more from the integrative task in speaking performance than those with the non-integrative tasks. Moreover, the results of the study seem to confirm that speaking proficiencies of L2 can be developed via writing activities, leading

to the automaticity of language use (Dekeyser, 2001). Apparently, the results of the study also may support Silva's (1990) argument that writing generally follows a standardized form of grammar, structure, and vocabulary, which is inseparable from the structure of spoken sentences. Consequently, writing practice can maximize students' conscious awareness of the sentence structures while speaking and promote their speaking ability.

Regarding responses to the integrative task, an exploration of students' opinions was analyzed to see if it was helpful in promoting their speaking proficiency. There were both pros and cons discovered in the students' responses to the questionnaires. Students who were fond of the integrative tasks complimented their improvement in speaking skills, and confidence in using L2. On the other hand, those who were dissatisfied with the integrative tasks complained that the tasks were time consuming and boring which mostly resulted from their lack of language ability. According to the results of this study, the dominant of the students thought the integrative task was effective in improving their speaking capacities. Most of the students in the experimental group approved that regular writing activities based on reading led them to better perform speaking tasks. The results of their responses appear to be aligned with those of the empirical study (Zhu, 2007). According to the study, writing practice has a positive effect on speaking performance. Therefore, the results of the current study indicated that the integrative tasks could play a role to promote speaking proficiency L2 regardless of their levels.

The exploration of the impact of the integrative tasks on speaking is the unique aspect of the present study as there has been little research done in Korean EFL contexts although there has been some research on writing. The findings of this study suggest some practical implications for L2 classroom. It is also meaningful that this current study has made a first attempt to discover a new way to teach speaking in EFL settings by exploring the effects of integrative reading-writing tasks on oral production.

However, there are some limitations in this study, which need to be noted. First, the participants were examined over a short period time, 14 weeks. Longer exposure to the treatments could have produced different results. Second, the findings may be limited because of the journal articles chosen as a reading text and writing tasks. Reading materials and tasks should be implemented according to L2 students' proficiency level. If reading and writing tasks are not appropriate levels, improvement of their language proficiency may not be expected. Therefore, language instructors should consider the learners' proficiency level and interests in designing lesson plans to develop EFL learners' speaking skills. Third, the present study only involved Korean English learners at the elementary level. The research needs to be extended to

include from a wider range of English proficiency levels with more number of participants in each group. More participants may lead to different results, which can be generalized to a broader range of classrooms.

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Example in: English

Applicable Language: English

Applicable levels: Elementary and Secondary Level

Suzy Kim (Lecturer)
College of General Education
Korea University of Media Arts
701-708 Saerom Jungang-ro 89, Saerom-dong, Sejong, 30126, Korea
Email: k.suzy810@gmail.com

Received: October 13, 2020
Reviewed: November 24, 2020
Revised version received: December 5, 2020