International Journal of Research in English Education (IJREE)

Original Article **Published online: 30 December 2024.**

The Impact of Cloze-Elide vs. Grammaticality Judgment Tasks on Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Paragraph Writing Ability: An Input-Enhancement Approach

Afsaneh Khanalizadeh[1]*

* Correspondence:
Khanalizadehafsaneh2@gmail.com
1. Tonekabon Branch, Islamic Azad University,Tonekabon, Iran

Received: 29 July 2024
Revision: 15 December 2024
Accepted: 29 December 2024
Published online: 30 December 2024

Abstract

Writing is a crucial means of communication. Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners face a difficult problem in becoming proficient writers. Employing various methodologies and incorporating diverse exercises yield distinct effects on writing proficiency. The objective of this study was to examine the influence of cloze-elide and grammaticality judgment tasks on the paragraph writing proficiency of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. In order to achieve this objective, a total of 90 intermediate EFL learners who were enrolled in a private language institute in Guilan province were chosen using the availability sampling method. These learners were then divided into three groups. Initially, OPT served as the placement test. Subsequently, a preliminary assessment of writing skills was conducted among all research groups. Subsequently, experimental group 1 underwent 10 sessions of English paragraph writing using cloze-elide tasks, experimental group 2 underwent 10 sessions of English paragraph writing using grammaticality judgment tasks, and the control group received a placebo in the form of English paragraph writing using the existing method. Finally, a posttest of writing was given to the three groups in the study. The findings of a repeated-measures two-way ANOVA indicate that introducing a new task, either cloze-elide or grammaticality judgment, can enhance the performance of EFL learners in paragraph writing abilities.

Keywords: writing; communication, cloze-elide, grammaticality judgment, ANOVA

1. Introduction

Education is a fundamental element of society and plays a vital role in the progress of a nation. In order to ensure that all parties involved, namely students and teachers, are aware of the direction of the learning process. The identified goals must be achieved by action (Van Woezik et al., 2019). The primary obstacle faced by individuals who are not native English speakers is acquiring proficiency in the language. Fluency in English is crucial for students since it is the predominant global language used in several domains such as technology, education, politics, and commerce (Karimi & Sanavi, 2014). Mastery of the four essential language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—is necessary for language studies. According to Setyowati and Sukmawan (2016), writing is often acknowledged as the most challenging and intricate language proficiency in comparison to other abilities. Writing is one of the four LSRW (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) abilities involved in language acquisition. A writing system comprises written symbols that represent the sounds, syllables, or words of a language. These symbols utilize techniques such as capitalization, spelling, punctuation, word form, and function.

Writing is crucial since it serves as the primary means of communication, surpassing all other forms of media. Hence, students must possess proficient writing skills to effectively meet their academic and professional requirements. Teachers can foster students' writing proficiency by providing instruction on writing methodologies and fundamental principles, including grammatical conventions and ample writing exercises. Proficient writers invariably excel in effectively conveying their ideas and accomplishing their goals. They should practise writing for their many advantages and future success. The objective of the writing process is to instruct students on how to write in a cohesive manner, including appropriate language and spelling. Two primary factors in language teaching are the essential instances of the target language that need to be provided as input, and the timing of when this input should be delivered. In the absence of a distinctive technology, a simple and essential strategy will be selected (Sharwood Smith, 1993). The question of whether it is suitable to analyze the input's structural qualities or if making explicit comments on language structure is unproductive is subsequently resolved through more pragmatic approaches. Hence, it is important to furnish students with comprehensive input.

Input was initially utilized in the field of information processing. It delineates the manner in which a learner encounters the target language in its many manifestations or the linguistic data to which they are primarily exposed within the framework of second language acquisition (Sharwood Smith, 1993). Hulstijn (2001) suggests that receiving appropriate input is crucial for the development of a second language (L2). According to certain research (e.g., Sharwood Smith, 1993; VanPatten, 1996), when the language components of input are more prominent, learners are more inclined to focus on them and process them as intake. VanPatten's (2002) theory of input processing posits that students prioritize processing material for meaning above processing it for form, as a result of their limited processing capacity. This could be seen as a psycholinguistic rationale for using concentrate-on-form tactics to direct learners' emphasis towards linguistic forms. In order for learners to make progress in the development of their second language (L2), it is required to pay some amount of attention to the linguistic forms involved. This has been supported by studies conducted by Nassaji and Simard (2010), Rassaei (2013), and VanPatten (2002). Enhancing the salience of linguistic features in the input is a strategy to capture learners' attention and familiarize them with linguistic structures. According to Lee and Benati (2007), increasing the prominence of language characteristics in the input prompts learners to focus on these features, which is beneficial for second language development. This study investigates the impact of two forms of input-based training, specifically cloze-elide and grammaticality judgment tasks, on the paragraph writing proficiency of intermediate Iranian learners of EFL.

1.1 Statement of the Problem and Purpose of the Study

Writing is a skill that may be readily obtained with practice. Writing, like art, can only be enhanced through practice. Not all narratives conclude with passive voice imperatives. Students are urged to enhance their language proficiency through guidance. Learning is a personal endeavor that requires active engagement from the individual. Contrary to popular belief, psychologists argue that the process of learning is not analogous to a sponge absorbing water. Teachers must possess the necessary qualifications and employ several instructional approaches to enhance students' writing skills.

Previous research (Budiaman et al., 2021) indicates that mastering writing is essential for children learning English. There have been various approaches to teaching writing, but most of them are no longer feasible due to the potential for hindering the student's learning process. Several tasks, such as the grammaticality assessment task and cloze elide

task, help improve writing skills. These two objectives and treatment frameworks are crucial and noteworthy. If the teacher successfully implements them, there will be a substantial and beneficial transformation in the instruction of writing, particularly within the Iranian EFL learning context. The objective of this study is to investigate the impact of cloze-elide tasks compared to grammaticality judgment tasks on the paragraph writing proficiency of Iranian intermediate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. The objective is to determine the impact of two distinct activities on the proficiency of learners in writing paragraphs. Consequently, the participants will be separated into two experimental groups and one control group.

1.2 Research Questions

This study aims to assess the efficacy of the grammaticality judgment task and cloze-elide task in improving the paragraph writing skills of Iranian intermediate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, with a focus on the input-enhancement strategy. In order to achieve this objective, the following research topics and hypotheses are taken into account:

RQ1: Do cloze-elide tasks significantly affect Iranian intermediate EFL learners' paragraph writing ability?

RQ2: Do grammaticality judgment tasks significantly affect Iranian intermediate EFL learners' paragraph writing ability?

RQ3: Is there any significant difference between cloze-elide vs. grammaticality judgment tasks on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' paragraph writing ability?

1.3 Hypothesis of this study

H01: There is no significant difference between cloze-elide vs. grammaticality judgment tasks on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' paragraph writing ability

2. Review of the Literature

Davies (1975) first coined the term "cloze-edit" test. Nonetheless, Bowen (1978) conducted the initial observational study on this test. The cloze-elide test (also referred to as the intrusive word procedure, content recovery, content intrusion, doctored content, mangled content, and negative cloze test (Alderson, 2000, p. 225)) was originally employed as a reading speed assessment where test takers were instructed to cross out additional words in a document (Monitoring, 1987). In other terms, a test taker is required to eliminate unnecessary incorrect embedded words within a text (Alderson, 2000; Weir, 1990), effectively turning the cloze-elide test into an error recognition exercise (Monitoring, 1987). As a result, numerous researchers consider the cloze-elide test as a "speeded reading" assessment (Davies, 1975), or a "timed reading assessment" (Valette, 1967) aimed at forecasting academic reading skills since students must quickly skim and evaluate a text to remove superfluous embedded words (Dow, 2013). Brown (2004) defines the cloze-elide test as "a type of test that inserts words into a text that actually do not belong in the text" (p.204). A test taker's objective is "to identify and cross out the intrusive words" (p.204). When developing this test, three elements must be considered (Farhady, 1996). First, the selection of a suitable text that has an appropriate level of difficulty and length is the key task. Therefore, the chosen text should align with the curriculum requirements that correspond to the students' proficiency level (Baker, 2011). Likewise, Lee (2008) emphasizes that both text type and content type are essential factors in text selection for the cloze-elide test.

The second aspect is the selection and determination of the precise locations for the words to be inserted. Alderson (2000) mentions "pseudo-random" and "rational" addition techniques. Monitoring outlines various logical methods for altering a text by adding unnecessary words. The respondent is expected to make the text meaningful by recognizing the unnecessary word, thus showing their adequate application of language syntactic rules and vocabulary proficiency. Monitoring also highlights that other forms of word insertions that create noise disrupt the order or type of word (part of speech). However, constructing a valid cloze-elide test necessitates considerable knowledge and effort; hence, Monitoring advises the random addition of words that incorporates nearly all possible types of cloze-elide errors; however, it is crucial to modify the randomness of the approach to prevent the arbitrary inclusion of making sense within the context of the passage.

Additionally, Farhady (1996) asserts that the "random addition method" (p.225) is the most effective strategy. In this methodology, the words in the passage must be numbered; then, random numbers should be selected to insert extra words either before or after the corresponding word designated by that number.

The ultimate emphasis is on the choice of words to be included. Per Farhady (1996), a lexicon utilized in word selection represents the best option. Nonetheless, certain scholars have identified limitations when employing this technique (Keeping an eye on, 1987). Bowen (1978) claims that random incorporation can lead to inconsistent results: "some additions are very prominent, whereas others manage to somewhat conceal themselves" (p.3). Furthermore, Bowen indicates that embedded words must "damage the linguistic or lexical integrity" (p.14), while embedding the words randomly allows some to be positioned appropriately without requiring removal. Pastry Cook (2011) offers a solution to this issue. She recommends that, at the outset, unnecessary words should be integrated in a random fashion; then, the test developer must modify the words to ensure they are not "conspicuous by their placement" and guarantee they are "damaging grammatically" (p.8).

Another vital aspect in the choice of unnecessary words is the type of words that fosters a more accurate approach. Unnecessary words ought to be selected within the same frequency and register range as the initial section, comprising one-half function words and one-half content words. This seems essential due to an eye-tracking study's findings showing that students more frequently process content words than function words. The other critical challenge in constructing a cloze-elide test is the incorporation of words from the academic word list or the 2,000 high-frequency words (Dough Puncher, 2011).

Keeping an eye on (1987) asserts that the scoring method is a consideration in the cloze-elide test, where students are likely to commit two kinds of errors: omissions (O) and commissions (C). The former refers to instances when an unnecessary word is not removed. The optimal number of these mistakes corresponds to the number of unnecessary embedded words present in the text. The latter takes place when a vital word in the passage is taken out by the student. The occurrence of these errors fluctuates from omitting words critical for upholding "the important grammar to merely reflecting the complex inclination by the student" (p.26).

The first empirical analysis of the cloze-elide test was conducted by Bowen (1978), who emphasized the high validity of this method in relation to subsets of the Michigan test of English language proficiency, the Michigan test of aural comprehension, and a written composition test, concluding that this approach could be a valid, reliable, and practical option. Findings from additional studies have also indicated moderate-to-high correlations between the cloze-elide test and other language proficiency assessments such as listening comprehension, reading comprehension, vocabulary, and grammar, as well as predictive control regarding the diagnostic capabilities of test takers (Elder & von Randow, 2008).

3. Methodology

3.1 Design of the Study

This study employed a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design, a well-established research approach that has been widely utilized for many years. This design facilitates a straightforward evaluation of the effects of an intervention on a group of participants. This study employed this design to gather and examine data on the influence of cloze-elide and grammaticality judgment tasks on the paragraph writing proficiency of EFL learners. This section concentrates on the methods employed to examine the effectiveness of two significant tasks, namely cloze-elide and grammaticality judgment, in enhancing the paragraph writing skills of Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

3.2 Participants

The study included 90 intermediate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners who were all studying the same textbook at a private language institute in Guilan province. The participants were selected via availability sampling. Initially, a subject selection process was conducted by administering the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) (Appendix 1), a general English test. The purpose of this test was to determine the participants' competence level and ensure that they were similar in terms of language ability before the experiment. Furthermore, the participants were categorized into experimental 1, experimental 2, and control groups. Table 1 presents the data regarding the individuals included in each group.

Table 1. Demographic information of students

Gender	NO	Age Range	L1	L2	OPT Range
Male	53	19-27	Persian	English	25-30
Female	37	19-28	Persian	English	26-31

3.3 Instruments

3.3.1 Oxford Placement Test (OPT)

The placement test used in this study was the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) version 2, 2001. OPT is an on-demand computer-adaptive or paper-based test designed for non-native speakers of English. It assesses language proficiency levels according to the Pre-A1, A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2 levels of the Common European Framework of Reference.

3.3.2 Pretest/Posttest

In order to conduct a pretest and posttest, the researcher employed a standard IELTS writing task taken from the IELTS assessments (Zemach & Islam, 2005). The subjects for the pretest and posttest are listed in Appendix 2. The duration required to compose an exposition on this subject matter was 60 minutes, with a stipulation to produce approximately 250 words. The scoring of both the pretest and posttest was done according to the IELTS scoring rubrics.

3.3.3 Paragraph Writing Course Book

The book "Paragraph Writing: From Sentence to Paragraph" authored by Dorothy Zemach and Carlos Islam in 2004 was utilized for this study. This book comprises a compilation of advantageous writing subjects and methodologies, accompanied by exercises and assignments to guarantee acquisition of knowledge. The researcher utilized this book during both the implementation and assessment phases, employing the grammaticality judgment and cloze-elide problems it provided. Certain units did not include cloze-elide or grammaticality judgment exercises. The researcher constructed the cloze-elide or grammaticality evaluation tests depending on the objectives of the lecture.

3.4 Procedure

First, OPT was used as the placement test. Then, a pretest of writing was administered to all groups of the study and then, the experimental group 1 received 10 sessions of English paragraph writing through cloze-elide tasks, the experimental group 2 received 10 sessions of English paragraph writing through grammaticality judgment tasks, while the control group received a placebo (English paragraph writing through the existing method). At the end, a posttest of writing was administered to the three groups of the study. The researcher followed the following detailed steps to do the study:

1. The Oxford Placement Test, OPT, was administered to 120 students to ensure their homogeneity. 90 intermediate students who received scores within 25-31 on OPT and were considered intermediate, were selected for this study.
2. Students *were* grouped randomly into three groups; the group which was treated with cloze-elide tasks, the group which was treated with grammaticality judgment tasks, and the group which was the control group.
3. The writing pretest was administered to all the selected students.
4. In session 1, the students of all groups were taught on “Beginning to Work” where the aim was on recognizing and writing complete sentences, learning how to begin and end a sentence, learning the common features of a paragraph, identifying the topic of a paragraph, and identifying strong and weak paragraphs. At the end of each session, a cloze-elide task was used in experimental group 1, a grammaticality judgment task was utilized in experimental group 2, and a routine task from the book was used in the control group. The cloze-elide and grammaticality judgment tasks were developed by the researcher based on the objectives of each lesson.
5. In session 2, the students of all groups were taught on “giving and receiving presents” where the main objectives are identifying topics and main ideas, identifying strong and weak topic sentences, practicing topic sentence composition, combining sentences using conjunctions, and learning how to use commas in sentences with conjunctions.

6. In session 3, the students of all groups were taught on "A Favorite Place" where the aim was developing paragraphs with descriptive details, using lists to brain storm, learning to edit lists, combining sentences containing adjectives, and writing about the places.
7. In session 4, the students of all groups were taught on "An Exceptional Person" where the objective was to use word maps to brainstorm, practice using adjectives in sentences, learn to write concluding sentences, learn when to use capital letters, and write about people.
8. In session 5, the students of all groups were taught on "Trends and Fads" the aim of which was reviewing descriptive vocabulary, using free writing to brainstorm, reviewing what a paragraph contains, developing peer feedback skills, and writing a paragraph about a trend.
9. In session 6, the students of all groups were taught on "White Lies." The objectives were identifying opinions and examples in supporting sentences, using discussion to brainstorm, and writing a paragraph about your opinions.
10. In session 7, the students of all groups were taught on "Explanations and Excuses" the aims of which were developing paragraphs which explain cause and effect, combining sentences with *so* and *because*, practicing further with word maps and free writing, and writing a paragraph about explanations and excuses.
11. In session 8, the students of all groups were taught on "Problems" the objectives of which were expressing personal feelings and problems, practicing using *would like to, want to,* and *have to,* learning to order supporting sentences logically, editing lists by ordering ideas logically, and writing about problems or difficulties.
12. In session 9, the students of all groups were taught on "Strange Stories". The objectives were to use time expressions, learn to identify the main parts of a narratives, practice ordering the events in a narrative in a logical way, and write a paragraph about interesting experiences. In session 10, the students of all groups were taught on "Differences" the goals of which were using double lists to brainstorm, using *whereas* and *however* to make comparisons, learning to organize a comparison paragraph, comparing different situations, and writing a paragraph about the life changes.
13. In the last session, the writing posttest was administered among the three groups.

3.5 Data Analysis

This study employed a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design, a well-established research approach that has been widely utilized for many years. This design facilitates a straightforward evaluation of the effects of an intervention on a group of participants. This study employed this design to gather and examine data on the influence of cloze-elide and grammaticality judgment tasks on the paragraph writing proficiency of EFL learners. The data was analyzed using a repeated-measures two-way ANOVA, a statistical method employed when participants from different groups are evaluated on the same measure (dependent variable) multiple times, such as before and after an intervention.

4. Results

This section involves an analysis of the results acquired from a repeated-measure ANOVA. When conducting a repeated-measures ANOVA, it is important to investigate the within-subject factor, between-subject factor, and their interactions. The independent variable in this study is the test, which has two levels: pretest and posttest. The between-subjects components in the study consist of three groups: control, grammaticality evaluation, and cloze-elide.

4.1 Inter-rater Reliability

Three raters were employed to rectify and evaluate the tasks. The inter rater reliability was assessed by analyzing the data in Table 2 The table displays a coefficient of 0.853 for the interclass correlation, which surpasses the threshold of 0.7 and is deemed acceptable. As a result, there is a strong level of dependability among the three raters.

Table 2. Interclass correlation coeffiecient

	Inter Class Correlation	95% Confidence Interval		F test for True Value 0			Sig.
		Lower bound	Upper bound	Value	df1	df2	
Single Measures	.423	.411	.786	5.639	29	58	0.000
Average Measure	.853	.693	.911	5.739	29	58	0.000

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics generated by SPSS are easily understandable. Comparing means provides insight into the potential impact's direction. The study's descriptive statistics are presented in Table 3. As seen, there are three distinct groups consisting of a total of 90 participants. These groups include the control group (30 participants), the cloze elide group (30 participants), and the grammaticality assessment group (30 participants). According to the Table, the mean scores of all groups were similar to each other when the researcher conducted the pretest. Following the execution of the treatment and the administration of the posttest, the control group maintained their performance at the same level, whereas the experimental group demonstrated improvement in their performance. However, it remains uncertain if these disparities are substantial. The researcher employed a repeated-measures ANOVA to ascertain whether there were noteworthy disparities among the groups.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of the three groups

			Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Pretest	Treatment	Cloze	2.8667	1.22428	30
		Control	2.5667	1.27802	30
		GJT	3.2333	.97143	30
		Total	2.8889	1.18459	90
Posttest	Treatment	Cloze	8.8333	.87428	30
		Control	3.2833	1.50679	30
		GJT	5.7333	1.52978	30
		Total	5.9500	2.63943	90

To have a deeper comprehension of the alterations in the averages prior to and subsequent to the treatments, refer to Figure 1.

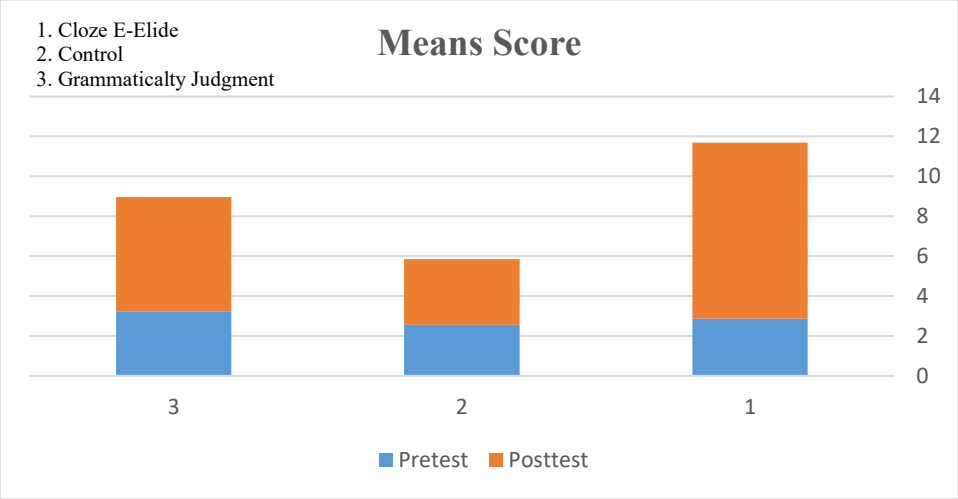

Fig. 1. Means of control and experimental groups before and after treatment

4.3 Multivariate Tests

Table 4 displays the Multivariate M test. This table mostly emphasizes Wilks' Lambda. Wilks' lambda quantifies the effectiveness of each function in segregating situations into distinct categories. It is similar to the total amount of variation in the discriminant scores that cannot be explained by differences among the groups. Upon examining the interaction between the test and grouping, a notable distinction is evident (Value= 0.300, F= 101.473, Hypothesis df= 2.000, Error df= 87.000, p= 0.000). This distinction is accompanied by a substantial impact (Partial Eta Squared= 0.700), indicating that the test, acting as the within-subject factor, has influenced variations among the groups. The test results (Value= 0.179, F= 400.256, Hypothesis df= 1.000, Error df= 87.000, p= 0.000) indicate a significant effect, with a high effect size (Partial Eta Squared= 0.821).

Table 4. Multivariate tests

Effects	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Examination	Pillai's Trace	400.256	1.000	87.000	0.000	.821
	Wilks' Lambda	400.256	1.000	87.000	0.000	.821
	Hotelling's Trace	400.256	1.000	87.000	0.000	.821
	Roy's Largest Root	400.256	1.000	87.000	0.000	.821
Examination* Treatment	Pillai's Trace	101.473	2.000	87.000	0.000	.700
	Wilks' Lambda	101.473	2.000	87.000	0.000	.700
	Hotelling's Trace	101.473	2.000	87.000	0.000	.700
	Roy's Largest Root	101.473	2.000	87.000	0.000	.700

4.4 Assumption of sphericity

The assumption of homogeneity of fluctuation of contrasts, often known as sphericity, must be met in order to confidently depend on the p-value generated by the standard repeated-measures ANOVA. Table 5 indicates that there is no P value due to the presence of only two levels of repeated measurements. Consequently, there is only a single set of distinction scores available, and there is no other data to compare them with in order to show a breach of sphericity. Consequently, the analysis conducted in this study did not encounter any problems related to the assumption of sphericity. Sphericity is present in a repeated measures design when the variances of the differences across all combinations of levels are identical. However, in cases where there are only two levels of a factor, such as in this particular scenario, sphericity violations are not possible. Consequently, the premise of sphericity was considered to be fulfilled, and the results of Mauchly's Test of Sphericity confirmed that the statistics were not significant and that no substantial or essential corrective procedures were required.

Table 5. Assumption of sphericity; Mauchly's test of sphericity (a)

Within Subject Effect	Mauchly's W	Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig.	Greenhouse-Geisser	Epsilon Huyuh-Feldt	Lower-Bound
Examination	1.000	.000	0	.00	1.000	1.000	1.000

4.5 Test of Within-Subject Effects

This section displays the outcomes of the repeated-measures ANOVA test. This section of the study determines whether there was a statistically significant difference in the means at various time points. As previously mentioned, because to the uncertainty regarding the conformity of the data to the assumption of sphericity, it is not feasible to directly interpret the results from the first row (Sphericity Assumed). Nevertheless, according to Table 6, there exist more options that can be employed, such as the "Greenhouse-Greisser" technique, which is a statistical approach for correcting the absence of sphericity in a repeated measures ANOVA. Using the alternatives will not affect the outcome because the data is the same in both the test (Type III Sum of Squares= 421.668, df= 1, Mean Square= 421.668, F= 400.256, p= .000, Partial Eta Square (Main Effect Size) = 0.821) and the interaction between the test and the grouping (Type III Sum of Squares= 213.803, df= 2, Mean Square= 106.901, F= 101.473, p = .000, Partial Eta Square (Main Effect Size) = 0.700). When the p-value is less than 0.05, researchers have evidence that a main effect is statistically significant among the observations of the outcome or within-subjects. Conversely, when the p-value is greater than 0.05, researchers have evidence that a main effect is not statistically significant among the observations of the outcome or within-subjects. Post hoc pairwise comparisons should be used to determine within-subject differences when a significant main effect is found, as was the situation in this case (p-value = 0.000).

Table 6. Test of within-subjects effects

Source		Type III Sums of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Square
Posttest	Sphericity Assumed	421.668	1	421.668	400.256	0.000	.821
	Greenhouse-Geisser	421.668	1	421.668	400.256	0.000	.821
	Huyunh-Feldt	421.668	1	421.668	400.256	0.000	.821
	Lower-bound	421.668	1	421.668	400.256	0.000	.821
Posttest* GJT & CE Treatment	Sphericity Assumed	213.803	2	106.901	101.473	0.000	.700
	Greenhouse-Geisser	213.803	2	106.901	101.473	0.000	.700
	Huyunh-Feldt	213.803	2	106.901	101.473	0.000	.700
	Lower-bound	213.803	2	106.901	101.473	0.000	.700
Error (Posttest)	Sphericity Assumed	91.645	87	1.053			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	91.645	87	1.053			
	Huyunh-Feldt	91.645	87	1.053			
	Lower-bound	91.645	87	1.053			

4.6 Multiple Comparisons

The significance of the difference is uncertain among the various pairings of means, even though the differences between the means of the levels within the participants are high enough to be statistically significant. Multiple comparisons are used to analyze all potential multiple meanings in this context. Table 7 displays three separate comparisons of the means for the control group, cloze elide group, and grammaticality assessment group. All the discrepancies become significance. SPSS employs an adjusted p-value to address the issue of multiple comparisons. In column 1, an asterisk is appended to the value to indicate that a significant mean difference has been achieved.

Table 7. Multiple comparisons

	Treatment (I)	Treatment (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower bound	Upper bound
Tukey HSD	Cloze	control	2.9250	26.437	0.000	2.2946	3.5554
		GJT	1.3667	26.437	0.000	.7363	1.9971
	Control	Cloze	-2.9250	26.437	0.000	-3.5554	-2.2946
		GJT	-1.3667	26.437	0.000	-2.1887	-.9279
	GJT	Cloze	1.5583	26.437	0.000	-1.9971	-.7363
		control	2.9250	26.437	0.000	.9279	2.1887
BonFerroni	Cloze	control	1.3667	26.437	0.000	2.2796	3.5704
		GJT	-2.9250	26.437	0.000	.7213	2.0120
	Control	Cloze	-1.5583	26.437	0.000	-3.5704	-2.2796
		GJT	-1.3667	26.437	0.000	-2.2037	-.9130
	GJT	Cloze	1.5583	26.437	0.000	-2.0120	-.7213
		control	2.9250	26.437	0.000	.9130	2.2037
Games-Howell	Cloze	control	1.3667	.28258	0.000	2.2428	3.6072
		GJT	-2.9250	.22314	0.000	.8300	1.9034
	Control	Cloze	-1.5583	.28258	0.000	-3.6072	-2.2428
		GJT	-1.3667	.28291	0.000	-2.2414	-.8753
	GJT	Cloze	2.9250	.22314	0.000	-1.9034	-.8300
		control	1.5583	.28291	0.000	.8753	2.2414

4.7 Profile Plots

This section presents the modifications that took place during the study. Figure 2 illustrates that the first scores in the pretest were nearly identical for all three groups. However, following the therapy, the control group exhibited no substantial alteration when compared to the two experimental groups. Furthermore, the cloze elide group demonstrated greater advancement in contrast to the grammaticality judgment group.

Fig. 2. Estimated marginal means of pretest (1) and posttest (2)

5. Disccusion

The results indicate that incorporating a new activity, such as cloze-elide or grammaticality judgment, can enhance the performance of EFL learners in paragraph writing.

Is there a substantial impact on the paragraph writing skills of Iranian intermediate EFL learners when they are exposed to cloze-elide tasks? According to the data presented in Tables 2 and 6 and Figure 2, the average score of the pretest was M=2.86. However, there was a considerable improvement in the students' performance in the posttest, with an average score of M=8.83. Thus, the null hypothesis, which posited that "Cloze-elide tasks have no significant impact on the paragraph writing ability of Iranian intermediate EFL learners," may be rejected.

The second research inquiry was "To what extent do grammaticality judgment tasks impact the paragraph writing proficiency of Iranian intermediate EFL learners?" According to the data presented in Tables 1 and 6 and Figure 2, the average score of the pretest was M=3.23, while the students' performance in the posttest showed a considerable improvement (M=5.73). Thus, the null hypothesis, which posited that "Grammaticality judgment tasks do not have a significant impact on the paragraph writing ability of Iranian intermediate EFL learners," can be refuted.

The third research inquiry pertained to whether there exists a notable disparity in the paragraph writing proficiency of Iranian intermediate EFL learners while employing the cloze-elide method vs the grammaticality judgment assignments. The data shown in Tables 2, 6, and 7 indicate that all observed differences were statistically significant. This includes the difference in averages between the cloze elide group and the grammaticality judgment group (Mean difference= ±1.3667, Std. Error= 0.26437, p-value= 0.000, Lower bound= -0.7213, Upper bound= 2.0120). Thus, the null hypothesis, which posited that there is no substantial disparity in the paragraph writing abilities of Iranian intermediate EFL learners between the cloze-elide and grammaticality judgment tasks, may be refuted.

Khoii and Tabrizi (2011) examined the process of input augmentation to boost the writing skills of EFL students. They employed two writing tasks, enhancing the input using the Adobe Flash CS4 Professional Program. The tasks were unscrambling messages or completing requests, which required the pupils to rearrange sentences to form a paragraph, and an editing assignment that involved performing cloze-elide tests. This study had seventy female students who shared the same characteristics and were focused on learning English as a second language (L2). The participants were divided into one control group and two experimental groups. Initially, a writing pre-test was administered to each participant in order to assess their writing proficiency at the start of the study. Throughout the 8-week treatment duration, the primary experimental group received writing tasks in an animated format and employed computers to complete them collaboratively. The second experimental group received a comparable input in the paper-and-pencil

format but performed the tasks in groups. The control group, however, did not receive the cloze-elide and message unscrambling tasks or any form of multimedia treatment. Instead, they practiced writing in a conventional manner by analyzing the writing samples provided to them in class. At the conclusion of the treatment, a post-test consisting of paragraph writing was delivered to all three groups. The results indicated that both experimental groups outperformed the control group. Specifically, the group that received both visual and auditory stimuli performed better than the group that used traditional paper and pencil methods. This supports the hypothesis that enhancing input through interactive media allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the content, enhances student knowledge, and ultimately leads to the development of more proficient writers. The results demonstrated the effectiveness of using cloze-elide and unscrambling tasks to enhance students' writing proficiency. By comparing the findings of this study with those of Khoii and Tabrizi (2011), it is evident that the use of cloze-elides can improve the acquisition of writing skills.

In a separate study, Nikoopour and Bargnil (2020) examined the impact of employing the mixed cloze method on the reading and writing skills of intermediate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. A total of sixty students participated in a PET test. Out of these, 48 students who were similar in characteristics were chosen and divided into two groups: an experimental group with 25 individuals and a control group with 23 individuals. Subsequently, both groups underwent a preliminary assessment of their writing and reading comprehension abilities. Unlike the control group, which only focused on practicing writing and reading paragraphs, the experimental group was given a combination of cloze examples and exercises during 14 sessions. Finally, both groups completed a posttest that consisted of reading comprehension and writing skills. Two raters evaluated the written assessments of both groups before and after the test. Pearson Correlation was used to assess inter-rater reliability. The findings indicated that the experimental group had superior performance compared to the control group in both reading comprehension and paragraph composition. Nevertheless, it was determined that the contact had negligible influence on the students' reading and writing proficiency. Nikoopour and Bargnil (2020) confirmed the results of this study, showing that the utilization of cloze-elides can enhance reading comprehension.

Ul Ain and Saeed (2017) conducted a study to examine the relationship between introversion and extroversion and language writing proficiency. Additionally, they investigated if introversion hinders second language writing proficiency. Introversion and extroversion are typically considered to exist on a single spectrum, where being high in one implies being low in the other. Extroverts are those who are bold, sociable, and engage actively with others, whereas introverts tend to be more reserved and avoid social gatherings. The researchers employed a mixed method approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods, for the study. The study's sample consisted of graduate students from the Department of English at Islamia University Bahawalpur, Pakistan. The data was gathered from a sample of 200 individuals who had completed their postgraduate studies, as well as 20 individuals who were English language instructors. The researchers employed a questionnaire, a free writing test, and structured interviews as instruments for gathering data. The Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI) questionnaire was accepted and modified. The data was collected and analyzed using SPSS, employing statistical procedures such as means, standard deviations, and an ANOVA Test. The findings indicated that the majority of the pupils exhibited extroverted tendencies. The study concluded that introverts outperformed extroverts in the majority of writing subscales. This study provided evidence that introversion does not hinder the acquisition of writing skills. Additionally, it was noted that introverts exhibited greater creativity compared to extroverts. The prevailing consensus among English language teachers confirmed that introverts exhibited superior writing skills compared to extroverts. The final discovery of this study indicated that language proficiency was a predictor of grammaticality, rather than extroversion/introversion. The findings of this study align with previous research, as they demonstrate the positive impact of incorporating grammaticality judgment tasks on the writing proficiency of EFL students.

6. Conclusion

Writing is considered one of the four essential LSRW (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) skills previously mentioned. It is a collection of written symbols that represent the sounds, syllables, or words of a language. These symbols use techniques like as capitalization, spelling, punctuation, and word shape and function. Teachers can foster students' writing proficiency by providing instruction on writing processes, grammar standards, and engaging in writing exercises. Students with proficient writing skills consistently excel in effectively conveying their thoughts and accomplishing their goals. The present study aimed to assess the effects of cloze-elide activities and grammaticality assessment tests on the paragraph writing skills of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. The study aimed to assess the

effects of cloze-elide and grammaticality evaluation tasks on the paragraph writing skills of Iranian intermediate EFL students. Consequently, the participants were divided into two experimental groups and one control group. During the pretest, their performance was nearly identical. However, during the posttest, notable disparities were observed, which proved beneficial in tackling the three research concerns of this study.

The initial research inquiry was "Does the utilization of cloze-elide tasks have a significant impact on the paragraph writing proficiency of Iranian intermediate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners?" The students' performance on the posttest showed a significant improvement. Since there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest results, we can reject the null hypothesis that stated "Cloze-elide tasks do not have a significant impact on the paragraph writing ability of Iranian intermediate EFL learners." The second study inquiry was "Does the utilization of grammaticality judgment tasks have a significant impact on the paragraph writing proficiency of Iranian intermediate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners?" The students' performance on the posttest showed a significant improvement. As there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest results, the null hypothesis stating that "Grammaticality judgment tasks do not significantly impact the paragraph writing ability of Iranian intermediate EFL learners" was rejected.

The third research question investigates whether there is a significant difference in the paragraph writing skills of Iranian intermediate EFL learners while using cloze-elide tasks compared to grammaticality judgment tests. All the findings, including the difference between the means for the cloze elide group and grammaticality assessment groups, were found to be significant when considering the multivariate comparisons. Thus, the null hypothesis, stating that there is no significant difference between cloze-elide and grammaticality judgment tasks in terms of their impact on the paragraph writing skill of Iranian intermediate EFL learners, was also rejected. Using either cloze-elide tasks or grammaticality assessment tasks does not have a substantial impact on the writing performance of EFL students. The use of cloze-elide and grammaticality evaluation problems had a similar impact on the paragraph writing skills of Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

6.1 Pedagogical Implications of the Study

The results of this study have consequences for many populations. Primarily, language educators, specifically those teaching English, can consult the outcomes to address the challenges associated with designing educational materials for EFL courses, with a specific emphasis on developing composition skills and paragraph writing proficiency. Employing cloze-elide or grammaticality judgment problems in course books might be advantageous for augmenting the writing proficiency of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. The study's findings can be utilized by various educational materials and program designers to create targeted learning materials that enhance students' language proficiency. These materials should incorporate predefined objectives and effective learning techniques that encourage students to actively participate in classroom activities.

EFL teachers can utilize the findings of this study to enhance their teaching methods through the implementation of strategies such as cloze-elide and grammaticality judgment exercises. These techniques foster a collaborative L2 learning environment within the classroom. Students can be categorized into several groups and assigned collaborative assignments to enhance their overall language proficiency, with a specific focus on improving their writing skills. EFL students can enhance their language proficiency, particularly in paragraph writing, through collaborative activities such as cloze-elide exercises and grammaticality judgment tests. By working together in pairs or groups, students can assist each other in completing these tasks and develop various parts of their language skills.

6.2 Future Directions

This study investigated the effects of cloze-elide and grammaticality judgment tasks on the paragraph writing proficiency of Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. The scope of this study was restricted to Iranian students at an intermediate level who reside and study in Guilan province. Other researchers may have the opportunity to investigate EFL pupils from diverse situations and ethnic backgrounds. Furthermore, this research specifically targeted pupils at an intermediate level. This necessitates a comprehensive investigation into various degrees of proficiency in order to examine the impact of this particular treatment on each level. Finally, this paradigm is excellent for analyzing the varying impacts that various activities may have on distinct writing genres.

References

Alderson, J. C. (2000). *Assessing reading.*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Baker, B. A. (2011). Use of the cloze-elide task in high-stakes language proficiency. *Spaan Fellow Working Papers in Second or Foreign Language Assessment, 9,* 1-16.

Bowen, J. D. (1978). The identification of irrelevant lexical distraction: An editing task. *TESL Reporter*, *12*(1), 1–3, 14–15.

Brown, H. D. (2004). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.

Budiaman, B., Komarudin, K., Nuruddin, N., & Kustandi, C. (2021). Learning design on social studies through digital book in senior high school. *International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies*, *16*(9), 154-166.

Davies, A. (1975). Two tests of speeded reading. In R. Jones & B. Spolsky (Eds.), *Testing language proficiency* (pp. 119- 127). Arlington, VA.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Dow, S. E. (2013). *The invisible students in the classroom: How to include the introverts without excluding the extroverts* (Education and Human Development Master's thesis). Paper 268. Brockport, NY: Digital Commons.

Elder, C., & von Randow, J. (2008). Exploring the utility of a web-based English language screening tool. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, *5*(3), 173–194.

Farhady, H. (1996). Varieties of cloze procedure in EFL education. *Roshd Foreign Language Teaching, 12*, 217-229.

Hulstijn, J. H. (2001). Intentional and incidental second language vocabulary Learning: A Reappraisal of Elaboration, Rehearsal and Automaticity. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction* (pp. 258-286). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139524780.011

Karimi, P., & Sanavi, R. V. (2014). Analyzing English language learning needs among students in aviation training program. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *98*, 852-858.

Khoii, R., & Tabrizi, A. (2011). The impact of input enhancement through multimedia on the improvement of writing ability. In *International Conference. ICT for Language*.

Lee, S. H. (2008). Beyond reading and proficiency assessment: The rational cloze procedure as stimulus for integrated reading, writing, and vocabulary instruction and teacher–student interaction in ESL. *System, 36*(4), 642-660.

Nassaji, H., & Simard, D. (2010). Introduction: Current developments in form-focused interaction and L2 acquisitions. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, *6,* 773–778. doi:10.3138/cmlr. 66.6.773

Nikoopour, J., & Bargnil, M. (2020). Scrambled cloze procedure: Does it influence EFL learners' reading comprehension and writing performance? *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *11*(5), 815-824.

Rassaei, E. (2013). Corrective feedback, learners' perceptions, and second language development. *System*, 42, 472–483. doi:10.1016/j.system.2013.05.002

Setyowati, L., & Sukmawan, S. (2016). EFL Indonesian students' attitude toward writing in English. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ)*, *7*(4), 365-378

Sharwood Smith, M. (1993). Input enhancement in instructed SLA. Theoretical Bases. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 15,* 165-179.

ul Ain, Q., & Saeed, S. (2017). Relationship of personality traits and writing skills among EFL learners at post graduation level. *Asian Innovative Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, *1*(1), 12-25.

Valette, R. M. (1967). *Modern language testing: A handbook*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc.

Van Woezik, T., Reuzel, R., & Koksma, J. (2019). Exploring open space: a self- directed learning approach for higher education. *Cogent Education*, *6*(1), 1615766.

VanPatten, B. (1996). *Input processing and grammar instruction in second language acquisition*. Greenwood Publishing Group.

VanPatten, B. (2002). Processing instruction: An update. *Language Learning, 52,* 755–803. doi: 10.1111/1467-9922.00203

Weir, C. J. (1990). *Communicative language teaching.* London, UK: University of Reading.

Zemach, D. E., & Islam, C. (2005). *Paragraph writing: From sentence to paragraph*. Macmillan.