

Fostering Pre-intermediate EFL Learners' Writing Confidence and Writing Fluency through Creative Writing: Investigating the Role of Personality

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Research Paper

IJEAP- 2212-1928

DOR: [20.1001.1.24763187.2022.11.4.2.9](https://doi.org/10.1001.1.24763187.2022.11.4.2.9)

Received: 2022-11-10

Accepted: 2022-12-28

Published: 2022-12-30

Abstract: The importance of communicative skills, especially writing, in today's world is undeniable. Therefore, teachers try to use effective strategies to foster language learners' writing skill. Among the strategies, creative writing has attracted the attention of applied linguists. This study attempted to investigate the effect of creative writing on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' writing fluency and writing confidence. Furthermore, it investigated the role of language learners' personality as a moderator variable, i.e., extroversion/introversion. Participants of this study were 60 EFL learners selected from Daneshgah High School in Zahedan. They were randomly divided into two groups, namely, control and experimental. Writing fluency, writing confidence tests, and personality type indicator scales were used for collecting data. The data were analyzed using t-test and ANOVA. The results of the data analysis revealed that creative writing had a significant effect on learners' writing fluency and writing confidence enhancement. However, the interaction between the treatment and personality was not significant. It is concluded that creative writing can be used as a teaching strategy to foster EFL learners' writing skills.

Keywords: Creative Writing, EFL Learners, Extrovert Learners, Introvert Learners, Writing Confidence, Writing Fluency

Introduction

Learning all four skills in the EFL/ESL is important, but writing is one of the crucial communicative-oriented skills that usually receives less attention in educational contexts and is a tremendously complex problem-solving act (Santangelo, 2014) for most learners. Nowadays, the ability to generate successful and meaningful written communication in a foreign language, both in the classroom and in a real context, is one of the principal objectives for foreign language learners (Klimova, 2012). Eskalieva and Jaksulikova (2021) elaborate on the importance of writing skills and their utilization as a means for writing academic and legal papers, especially those with research and technical purposes as well as preparation of various presentations or generally to develop communicative skills along with the improvement of elements necessary for one's self such as self-understanding.

Similarly, Durga and Rao (2018) noted the importance of writing skills as a necessary component of language learning. Although writing is a complicated cognitive activity, it is an important skill to be acquired; and as it paves the way for effective and successful communication, it is valuable for developing creativity and self-awareness. Therefore, it is a common belief that writing skills may increase the learners' chances to succeed in various situations. Additionally, it should be mentioned that the role of the teachers is vital in this case. They can motivate the learners to create their pieces of writing by utilizing and applying specific grammar and writing rules.

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The review of the related studies reveals that several studies (Amado, 2010; Brownell et al., 2013; Pawliczak, 2015; Setyowati & Sukmawan, 2016, Tok & Kandemir, 2015) investigated the effect of different variables on the learners' writing achievements in EFL. However, the number of studies on the effect of creative writing on the writing fluency and writing confidence of EFL learners is scanty. Moreover, the role of the learners' personality as a moderator variable, e.g., introversion and extroversion, has not been well investigated and documented appropriately to date. This study investigated the impact of creative writing on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' writing fluency and writing confidence. It also investigated the interaction between the learners' personalities and teaching methods regarding their scores on writing fluency and confidence.

Literature Review

In this section, the studies on writing fluency, writing confidence, and EFL learners' personality types and how they might affect the learners' language skills are reviewed.

Related Studies on Writing Fluency and Confidence

Applied linguists have studied fluency as a well-defined concept, for many years, especially in speech and reading research (e.g., Bosker et al., 2013; Segalowitz, 2010; Skehan, 2009). In writing, however, this concept is described more ambiguously. In oral communication, if someone hesitates to complete a sentence or interrupts their speech for a long time, it will be recognized by the listener and will almost certainly affect the interaction. Whereas, when a writer pauses and makes interruptions during writing, this pausing does not affect the interaction between the reader and writer since written texts do not show that a writer paused (Van Waes & Leijten, 2015). Fluency in writing studies has comparable results. Nowadays, it is widely agreed that fluent writing processes involve a short pause time, fewer revisions, and a high production rate (MacArthur et al., 2008). It is particularly common to use this criterion in research papers. The studies of Kellogg (1996, 2004) are instances of this approach to fluency study. He illustrated that as a result of initial planning, cognitive effort decreases during transcription and impacts fluency positively. Two measures of production fluency were introduced by Kellogg in his research and refined the criterion of production rate: During the transcription phase, *Fluency I* is represented by the mean number of words (i.e., the total time spent on the task minus the time spent on planning time); *Fluency II* is a measure of total time spent on a task with several words per minutes' being the most common measure for writing fluency, resulted in more understandable and explainable outcomes (Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001; Wolfe-Quintero et al., 1998).

As argued by Van Waes and Leijten (2015), several studies have shown that fluency is measured not only by the number of words per minute in the final text, which is regarded as a product-based measure, but also by the number of words produced per minute, i.e., involving revisions, that takes the process of writing into account. According to Palviainen et al. (2012), writing fluency is generally linked with the pace of production and quantity of the process throughout the occurred time. Overall, as the proficiency level of a writer improves, the rate of recalling various language elements increases. In this regard, Wolf-Quintero et al. (1998, as cited in Palviainen et al., 2012, p. 50) argued: "Second language learners write more fluently, or write more in the same amount of time, as they become more proficient." Based on the idea of speed as a crucial parameter, a traditional offline measure of fluency is to divide the number of words occurring in the final text by the total time spent on the task (i.e., words per minute)" (Wolf-Quintero et al. 1998, as cited in Palviainen et al., 2012, p. 50).

McLeod (1987) has been primarily interested in the learners' affective reactions to writing and themselves as writers. In this way, writing anxiety was introduced and defined: "writing anxiety is generally understood as negative, anxious feelings (about oneself as a writer, one's writing situation, or one's writing task) that disrupt some part of the writing process" (McLeod, 1987, p. 427). Writing success and the ability to learn writing effectively for learners who show strong apprehension about writing may be restricted. Writing anxiety may prevent the learners from participating in the fields that require writing.

Studies on Creative Writing

Beyhaghi (2016) attempted to determine the effect of short story reading on Iranian tertiary-level EFL students' creative writing ability. The results showed a positive effect on one aspect of creative writing: the use of language and language devices. Based on the participants' views, it was also revealed that the quality of creative writing ability depends on factors such as the participants' writing background, the nature of their written assignments, the amount of feedback they receive, their self-perceived quality of improvement, and the complexity of the creative writing skill that requires more time for practice. It was also revealed that some of the learners enjoyed the experience of creative writing and believed that it gave them a purpose for writing and allowed them to reflect on their personal feelings and ideas. However, they highlighted the necessity of some pre-requisite courses on creative writing. Similarly, Mozaffari (2014) investigated how the group formation method, namely student-selected vs. teacher-assigned, influences the results of the community model of teaching creative writing, i.e., group dynamics and group outcomes. Participants of this study were 32 junior English Literature students over an academic semester. The community model was utilized for teaching creative writing to both classes, but the formed communities in classes were different in terms of their grouping method. Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis revealed that there was a significant difference between the two group formation conditions concerning group outcomes. Group outcomes indicated that teacher-assigned groups are more task-oriented and are thus more successful at accomplishing group task-here revision. The results suggested that group work does not guarantee success and group formation methods should be realized as a key factor contributing to successful group work. Weldon (2009) displayed some of the essential standards for the creative writing assessment in settings such as universities and schools. She also takes the elements of a piece of creative writing into consideration, namely, originality and imagination, use of language, structure, expression, representation of the theme, style development, and maturity. Awareness of the reader and self-reflection can be considered other effective components.

Barbot et al. (2012) introduced the required elements for creative writing achievement in young children. Their primary aim was to assemble different viewpoints on fundamental constituents involved in creative writing by children, including teachers, linguists, writers, and art educators. Accordingly, teaching creative writing inspired the students to write by using their creativity and imagination. It may help the students' writing improve in its components. They also mentioned observation, intrinsic motivation, imagination, and description as key constituents in developing creative writing for their study. Tok and Kandemir (2015) investigated the effect of creative writing on the learners' achievement in writing skill, writing disposition, and their attitude to English through an experimental study in Turkey for four weeks. They found that employing creative writing activities affects writing achievement and writing disposition positively in 7th-grade English language classes. Avila (2015) took some activities, e.g., creative writing tasks, into account in his study. Not only did such activities improve learners' oral and written productivity, but they also significantly impacted their grammatical competence. It is also worth mentioning a vast increase in learners' creativity.

Similarly, Bayat (2016) developed a creative writing instructional program based on speaking activities and explored its effects on the learners' creative writing achievements and writing attitudes. After dividing the learners into two intact groups of control and experimental, creative writing instructional programs based on speaking activities (CWIPSA) were employed in the experimental group, while the standard Turkish curriculum was utilized in the control group. The findings of this study indicated an increase in the writing attitude scores of fourth-grade learners who undertook CWTPSA, as well as a significant difference between the control and experimental groups' scores for writing attitude in favor of the experimental group. Göçen (2019) tried to investigate the impact of creative writing exercises on native Turkish-speaking students' achievement in creative writing, writing attitudes, and motivation to learn their mother tongue. According to the study's conclusions, students' motivation, attitude, and achievement in creative writing were all favorably impacted by participating in writing exercises. Sabet and Khorasani (2015) made an effort to discover the main effect of free writing on the writing fluency of Iranian EFL learners at an Intermediate level of language proficiency

and their attitudes towards free writing. For this aim, 30 female EFL learners were selected and randomly divided into two groups. In the experimental group, learners were supposed to write non-stop for fifteen minutes at the beginning of each session; and in the control group, their fellow participants received regular instructions. The researchers measured writing fluency about 'the number of words written per minute (wpm)', the average number of 'words', 'clauses', and 'T-units'. The results revealed that after 21 sessions of instruction, the experimental group surpassed the control group in all indicators of writing fluency. According to the findings, it was concluded that free writing could be considered an effective technique for improving the writing fluency of Intermediate Iranian EFL learners and generating a positive attitude toward free writing. Peng et al. (2020) were also interested to find out the impact of the linguistic complexity of the input text on EFL learners' alignment, writing fluency, and writing accuracy in the continuation task. For this investigation, similar groups of Chinese undergraduate EFL learners were supposed to read and then continue a simplified and un-simplified form of the same incomplete story whose linguistic complexity matched and exceeded their production ability. The simplified form led to more automatic alignment and more development in writing fluency and accuracy. Monson (2018) gave priority to the importance of a learner's confidence during a writing task. He believed that eliminating the negative outlook on the students' papers and having positive feelings in the learners about their writing can help them become better writers. A positive attitude can be considered a beneficial step towards having more confident writers.

Studies on Personality Traits and Language Skills

Personality as an important factor may affect the learners' ability in language learning. In this regard, the impact of personality types on the learners' writing achievement and the difference in gaining scores in writing abilities and syntax were investigated in different studies (Revola, 2016; Zainuddin, 2016; Zaswita & Ihsan, 2020). For instance, Revola (2016) investigated the existing difference between individuals with different personality types in their writing achievements. According to the data analysis in this study, introvert learners had better performance compared to extrovert learners in their writing skills. Zaswita and Ihsan (2020) examined the effect of personality type on the learners' writing ability. They asserted that extrovert and introvert learners have some deficits and potencies when it comes to language learning. They showed that introvert learners have better scores in writing compared to extroverts; consequently, a significant effect on the learners' personalities on their writing ability was revealed.

Lodhi et al. (2019) focused on the relationship between personality and writing skills at the graduate level. Five sub-areas of writing proficiency, i.e., copying, reproducing, composition, guided writing, and recombination, were chosen to be scrutinized alongside their correlation with two major personality types, i.e., extroversion and introversion. Although it was difficult to determine if extroverts and introverts share any significant differences in writing components, the correlation between introversion and writing proficiency was stronger for introverts than for extroverts. Positive correlations between personality traits and writing proficiency were weak for female learners, while strong correlations were found with male learners. Both introverts and extroverts can take advantage of various teaching strategies when writing components in English classes are taught using various instructional techniques. The impact of personality type on syntax ability in essay writing was examined by Zainuddin (2016). The central aim of his research was to find out the differences in gaining scores in syntax when essay writing. This difference was compared between introvert and extrovert learners at the university of Medan, Indonesia, indicating a significant difference between the obtained scores of introverts and extroverts for their syntax ability. Accordingly, it was demonstrated that introverts performed better than extroverts. The link between extroversion/introversion, language-learning strategies, and whether or not there is any correlation between these personality traits alongside language-learning strategies were investigated by Kayaoğlu (2013). The findings indicated that, except for communicative strategies, introvert learners accomplished a greater range of metacognitive and cognitive strategies than extrovert learners. This study strives to answer the following questions:

Research Question One: Does creative writing significantly affect introvert/extrovert Iranian EFL learners' writing fluency?

Research Question Two: Does creative writing significantly affect introvert/extrovert Iranian EFL learners' writing confidence?

Methodology

Participants

The participants of the study were 60 pre-intermediate Iranian EFL learners (4 intact classes) consisting of 32 males and 28 females, who were selected through convenience sampling. They were all selected from Daneshgah High School in Zahedan, Iran. They were second-grade high school students. To control the effect of the students' L1, only Persian speakers were selected, and Baluch speakers were excluded from the final analysis but kept in the intact classes. The participants' age ranged from 15 to 18. They were divided into two groups, namely, experimental and control; and their proficiency level was estimated to be pre-intermediate based on their scores on the placement test.

Instruments

Language Proficiency Test

The Preliminary English Test (2020), an English proficiency test designed by Cambridge English Language Assessment, was used to ensure the homogeneity of language learners. In this test, the reading section had three parts: multiple-choice items, matching, and cloze tests. The writing section consisted of one part: reading a short story and answering the related questions. The listening section included one part: participants listened to a recorded text and answered some related questions. The participants were not asked to attempt the speaking and listening sections. The reliability of the test was checked using KR-21, and the reliability index was 0.86, which seemed acceptable.

Persian Version of Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (PVEPQ)

The Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ) was invented and devised by Eysenck (1967). It is a 57-item questionnaire that measures two aspects of personality: extroversion/introversion (E scale) and neuroticism and stability (N scale). The items are in yes/no type, and the Persian version of this questionnaire was used for the learners. It was first translated by the researcher, and every effort was made to keep it close to the original version. The translated version was given credit and was confirmed by two experts, one in the field of applied linguistics and the other in the field of psychology. The scoring key shows that 24 items are related to the E scale, and 24 items deal with the N scale. There is a lie scale (9 items) that measures the social desirability of the respondents answering the questions. Learners who achieved a score equal to 14 and lower than 14 were identified as introverts, and on the other side, those who achieved a score above 14 were identified as extroverts in this study. EPQ is a standard questionnaire with high validity and reliability. The reliability of this questionnaire for the participants of this study was calculated and reported to be $\alpha = 0.85$.

Writing Confidence Questionnaire

This questionnaire was created, modified, and conducted by Bayram (2006). It was used to obtain data related to the learners' confidence in writing. It consisted of 32 items that explore learners' feelings and opinions towards writing in English. The items were related to the learners' habits before, during, and after writing. The questionnaire was in English, but the learners were allowed to ask questions if any word or item was ambiguous in the allotted time. Each item was followed by five alternatives, which measured the participants' extent of the answer: "strongly agree", "agree", "partially agree", "disagree" and "strongly disagree". The reliability of writing confidence was calculated through Cronbach's Alpha. The reliability of the pretest was 0.79, but the reliability of the posttest was 0.82.

Fluency Measurement

To measure the writing fluency of the participants, according to Wolf-Quintero et al. (1998), the number of words occurring in the final text was counted and then divided by the total time spent on the tasks.

Data Collection Procedure

The study was undertaken in different steps. First, the pre-intermediate language learners were selected based on the placement test results. Then, they were divided into control and experimental groups. The participants' personality type was identified based on their scores on the personality scale. In the control group, the teacher introduced and discussed various types of paragraphs, and how to organize, write and process them. After the instruction, the participants were given a topic to write about as their homework assignment. However, for the experimental group, besides introducing different types of paragraphs and writing guidelines, processing, and organizing them, the learners were taught several ways to write creatively. In each session, the learners were assigned specific creative tasks to do (related tasks were selected from Hamand (2014) and Paul (2000)'s book). For instance, the participants were given a short story for which they would choose an appropriate title based on their imagination; and they were given a title to write about as creatively as possible through various steps that the teacher had instructed beforehand. The performances of introvert and extrovert learners in the control and experimental groups were compared utilizing the KS test, Univariate analysis of variances, and Descriptive statistics.

Results

Results, including the KS test, pretests, and results for research questions 1 and 2, are presented sequentially.

Results of the KS Test

Before testing the hypotheses, the normality of data distribution was tested. Results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for Pre-tests and Post-tests

Variable	Test	Group	Sig
Writing Fluency	Pre-test	Experimental	0.92
		Control	0.53
	Post-test	Experimental	0.99
		Control	0.98
Writing Confidence	Pre-test	Experimental	0.99
		Control	0.64
	Post-test	Experimental	0.92
		Control	0.25

As Table 1 shows, the data are normally distributed for all pretests and posttests; therefore, the researchers were on the safer ground to use parametric tests. Results are presented in the following sections.

Results of the Pre-test

To check the groups' homogeneity, the researchers employed independent samples-t-tests. Results are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2*Means and SDs of the Groups' Scores on the Pre-test*

Tests	Groups	Statistics	
		SD	Mean
Writing Fluency 1	Control	59.76	23.67
	Experimental	56.31	17.97
Writing Confidence 1	Control	3.10	0.350
	Experimental	3.14	0.361

As seen in Table 2, the control group and experimental groups obtained mean scores of 59.76 (SD=23.67) and 56.31 (SD=17.97) on the writing fluency test 1 (pretest), respectively. Results also show that the mean scores of the control and experimental groups on the writing confidence pretest were 3.10 (SD=0.35) and 3.14 (SD=0.36), respectively. To further analyze the data, independent samples-t-tests were used. Results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3*T-tests for Comparing the Groups' Scores on Writing Fluency and Confidence*

Tests	Levene's test		T-test Statistics		
	F	p	T	df	p
Writing Fluency 1	1.45	.26	.38	58	.79
Writing Confidence 1	1.92	.32	.57	58	.82

Results revealed that the variances of the two groups' scores on the writing fluency pretest were equal ($F= 1.92, p=0.21$), and the difference between groups' mean scores was not statistically significant ($t_{(58)}= 0.38, p=0.79 > 0.05$). Therefore, the researchers were convinced there was no difference between the groups at the onset of the study as far as writing confidence was concerned. It is also seen that the two groups' mean scores on the writing confidence test 1 (pretest) were not statistically significant ($t_{(58)}= 0.57, p=0.8 > 0.05$), indicating that the groups were homogenous in terms of writing confidence.

Research Question 1

To investigate the impact of creative writing on EFL learners' writing fluency and the role of personality as a moderator variable, the groups' scores on the writing fluency posttest were submitted to an ANOVA test. Results, including descriptive statistics and ANOVA, are presented in Table 4.

Table 4*Mean and SD of the Groups' Scores on the Writing Fluency Test (Post-test)*

Personality	Groups	Mean	SD	N
Introvert	Control	54.9	4.00	15
	Experimental	75.80	5.74	15
	Total	65.36	11.67	30
Extrovert	Control	52.93	7.05	15
	Experimental	77.13	1.88	15
	Total	65.03	13.31	30

As seen in Table 4, the introvert learners in the control and experimental group obtained mean scores of 54.9 (SD=4.00) and 75.80 (SD=5.75), respectively. Results also reveal that the extrovert learners in the control and experimental groups received mean scores of 52.93 (SD=7.05) and 77.13, respectively. To check whether or not the differences are statistically significant, the results of the ANOVA test are presented in Table 5.

Table 5*ANOVA for Comparing the Groups' Scores on the Writing Fluency Test*

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	7659.600 ^a	3	2553.200	99.707	.000	.842
Intercept	255062.40	1	255062.40	9960.5	.000	.994
Personality	1.667	1	1.667	.065	.800	.001
Groups	7616.267	1	7616.267	297.42	.000	.842
Personality*Groups	41.667	1	41.667	1.627	.207	.028
Error	1434.000	56	25.607			
Total	264156.00	60				
Corrected Total	9093.600	59				

a. R Squared = .842 (Adjusted R Squared = .834)

As seen in Table 5, the difference between the control and experimental groups is statistically significant ($F_{(3, 56)}=297.42$, $p=0.001<0.05$, $PES=0.84$), suggesting the experimental group outperformed the control group on the posttest. Partial Eta Squared (0.84) also shows that the experiment has a great effect size. Results also show that the interaction between personality and treatment was not significant ($F_{(1, 56)}=1.62$, $p=0.20>0.05$). Therefore, it can be strongly argued that creative writing significantly affects introvert and extrovert language learners' writing fluency.

Research Question 2

To investigate the impact of creative writing on EFL learners' writing confidence and the role of personality as a moderator variable, the groups' scores on the writing confidence posttest were submitted to an ANOVA test. Results, including descriptive statistics and ANOVA, are presented in Table 6.

Table 6*Mean and SD of the Groups' Scores on the Writing Confidence Test (Post-test)*

Personality	Groups	Mean	SD	N
Introvert	Control	2.12	.66	15
	Experimental	3.38	.30	15
	Total	2.75	.81	30
Extrovert	Control	2.18	.62	15
	Experimental	3.32	.45	15
	Total	2.75	.79	30

As seen in Table 6, the introvert language learners in the control and experimental group obtained mean scores of 2.12 ($SD=0.66$) and 3.18 ($SD=0.30$), respectively. Results also reveal that the extrovert learners in the control and experimental groups received mean scores of 2.18 ($SD=0.62$) and 3.32 ($SD=0.45$), respectively. To check whether or not the differences are statistically significant, the results of the ANOVA test are presented in Table 7.

Table 7*ANOVA for Comparing the Groups' Scores on the Writing Confidence Test*

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	21.528 ^a	3	7.1	25.241	.000	.575
Intercept	454.300	1	454.3	1597.907	.000	.966
Personality	21.667	1	22.667	2.63	.207	.028
Groups	21.480	1	21.480	75.552	.001	.574
Personality * Groups	19.667	1	22.667	1.84	.41	.12
Error	15.921	56	.284			

Total	491.750	60
Corrected Total	37.450	59
a. R Squared = .575 (Adjusted R Squared = .552)		

As seen in Table 7, the difference between the control and experimental groups is statistically significant ($F_{(3, 56)}=25.24$, $p=0.001<0.05$, $PES=0.54$), suggesting the experimental group outperformed the control group on the posttest. Partial Eta Squared (0.54) also shows that the experiment has a great effect size. Results also show that the interaction between personality and treatment was not significant ($F_{(1, 56)}=1.84$, $p=0.41>0.05$). Therefore, it can be strongly argued that creative writing significantly affects introvert and extrovert language learners' writing confidence.

Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the effect of creative writing on introvert and extrovert Iranian EFL learners' writing fluency and confidence. With regard to the first research question, findings revealed that creative writing fosters language learners' writing fluency. The findings are consistent with several studies (Biria & Jafari, 2013; Divya, 2019; Hwang, 2010; Nguyen, 2015; Pham, 2021; Temizkan, 2011). The findings are congruent with what Sabet and Khorasani (2015) found. They took the effect of freewriting on writing fluency into account, although we did the same implementation without freewriting, focusing on creative writing instead. The results in both studies revealed an increase in the learners' writing fluency. The reason for the improvement in the learners' fluency can be due to the utilization of creative writing activities throughout ten sessions that provided the learners with an atmosphere in which accuracy, grammatical mistakes, and scoring were not the focus of instruction. The learners produced their best-written works benefiting from their imaginations and creativity to accomplish the required tasks. Since the learners were not worried about the teacher's feedback and the achieving score, they could produce a longer piece of creative writing and eventually became more fluent in writing, more specifically in creative writing.

Considering the second research question, the results also revealed that teaching creative writing was effective in improving the learners' confidence in writing. Such an increase indicates a significant difference between the two groups; therefore, the second null hypothesis was rejected. The findings of this study are parallel with that of Tyson (1997), who emphasized a process approach towards teaching writing, in which self-confidence and motivation were evaluated in a Korean context. The results of this Asian-based study indicated a positive self-confidence improvement with regard to writing, i.e., writing confidence. The present study depicts the same positive increase as well.

Similarly, the findings echo Vecino (2007), who adopted an interesting strategy for addressing creativity in language skill, and suggested that students' feelings with regard to writing can be improved by creative writing. The findings are consistent with Deegan's (2010) study. She focused on a course of creative writing, in which self-efficacy and learners' academic creative confidence in many facets are evaluated. A strong increase in the learners' confidence in this creative confidence course was reported. The present study shows the same writing confidence increase as well. The findings also confirm Atendido and Tayao's (2018) and Bayram's (2006), who aimed to emphasize utilizing portfolios as a self-assessment tool that enhances confidence in writing and promotes positive attitudes toward writing. It was found out that such an effect was undeniable indeed. The present study exploits the same portfolio-based matter, yet it takes creative writing into account as well, and the same confidence increase was also observed in this study. The findings of this study are also congruent with Weldy et al. (2014). They emphasized a two-semester writing-focused program, in which one factor was writing confidence. Such a program successfully improved learners' writing confidence so did this course in the present study.

The next finding is that there is no interaction between the treatment (creative writing) and their personality types. That is, both introvert and extrovert language learners enjoy creative writing. Simply put, creative writing fosters language learners' writing fluency and confidence. This finding is not consistent with the findings of the study undertaken by Mall-Amiri and Nakhaie (2013), who reported

that introverts are better than extroverts in listening tests. One reason for the inconsistency might be the nature of the tests, as this study focused on the writing skill, which is different from the listening test. The findings are also inconsistent with the findings of Revola (2016). He investigated writing achievement within three main personality types, i.e., extroversion, introversion, and ambiversion, which is a group dangling between the first two main personality types. He discovered that the writing skill of introverts far exceeds that of extroverts and ambiverts. The result for extroverts and ambiverts were almost the same. The justification for the difference might be the sample sizes of the two studies, as the sample size in this study was small.

However, the findings of this study are in line with the findings of Hajimohammadi and Makundan (2011). They aimed to examine the effect of self-correction on extrovert and introvert students in EFL writing progress. The obtained results delineated no significant effect on learners' progress in writing with regard to their personality types. The findings are in contrast with Yuliani et al. (2019), who investigated the efficacy of brainstorming and mind mapping in teaching narrative writing texts with regard to extroversion/introversion. They found that both brainstorming and mind mapping played a major role in the writing skill improvement of students, interestingly, with both personality types. Although they did not take the confidence of writers into account, in the present study, such a matter was considered. Before teaching creative writing, the first session of the experimental group utilized various pre-writing techniques, two of which being mind-mapping and brainstorming. However, the findings of the present study did not depict any significant effect with regard to learners' confidence. Although Boroujeni et al. (2015) did not take writing confidence into account, their study investigated whether the two main personalities, i.e., introversion/extroversion, play an important role in students' writing skill. What they realized is in direct contrast to the findings of the current study. They realized that introverts outperform extroverts in writing skill. As the researcher in this study gave credit to writing confidence, creative writing had not played a prominent role in the abovementioned variable in both personalities.

Conclusion and Implications

This study explored the efficacy of creative writing tasks and activities on the writing fluency and confidence of introvert and extrovert learners. As far as creative writing instruction and activities are concerned in the present study, several studies (e.g., Austen, 2005; Ensslin, 2006; Tok & Kandemir, 2015) have made it evident that creative courses and activities can be of great value to be instructed, utilized, and appreciated in EFL context. Due to these studies, creative writing instruction was considered an alternative to the traditional way of teaching, and its benefits were discussed. Creative writing is considered a significant aptitude that leads to communicative competence (Ensslin, 2006). In line with Austen (2005), it can be concluded that creative writing can develop critical readers and inspire a commitment to excellence, and motivate individual bonding. Due to the positive effect of creative writing activities, they are suitable to be included in writing classes in English. These activities deserve a highly valued place within English language classes as much as other kinds of activities (Tok & Kandemir, 2015). When people write creatively, it allows them to use their imaginations freely. In creative writing, learners can utilize their linguistic abilities, go beyond what they can do in oral communication, and express themselves more deeply. This way, they can convey and express their thoughts, feelings, and mental images. Thus, learners of both L1 and L2 find creative writing tasks and activities motivating and encouraging (Tok & Kandemir, 2015). It can also be concluded that creative writing in English can also be used as an alternative to express and demonstrate learning beyond just enabling and assisting it. Creative writing helps language improvement in grammar, vocabulary, and discourse. Creative writing promotes 'playfulness' that paves the way for the learners to be encouraged to play with language creatively and to discover the language and something about themselves. For these reasons, the presence of creative writing in language exercises is advantageous (Cook, 2000).

Based on previous findings and the findings of this study, it can be stated that if creative writing as a distinctive course consisting of various creative writing activities exists within the EFL curriculum in the Iranian context, it can shed light on the concept of creativity, and bring both the learners' and teachers' creativity into the context of learning. It can be considered as a solution for the learners'

problems with the challenge of writing. When such courses and related activities become one of the main focuses of the curriculum, it can not only authorize EFL learners to write concerning their imagination but also promote writing more fluently and confidently. It motivates the learners to realize their innate talent and discover their voice in writing whatever they are interested in, i.e., short stories, poems, biographies, etc. It provides an occasion for the learners that gives more insight and perception of the language they are learning. Creative writing can be of great profit for the learners to feel free for self-expression and put their ideas into words without too much focus on accuracy and specific rules to be obeyed, which makes such a course different from the regular and traditional writing courses and activities.

Despite the outcomes of this study, the researchers should have taken several issues into account, such as recruiting a large sample, learners' level of proficiency, learners' age, and other personality types. Further studies might clarify whether these variables moderate the effect of creative writing on EFL learners' writing fluency and confidence.

Acknowledgement

The authors acknowledge the editors of the Iranian Journal of English for Academic Purposes for their valuable comments and suggestions, which helped us to improve the quality of the manuscript. In addition, we would like to offer our sincere gratitude to all the participants for their cooperation and support.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any potential conflict of interest.

Funding Details

No specific funding has been provided, and the authors received no financial support for the research.

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